

# ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT

## **DJÄKAMIRR**

CARETAKER OF PREGNANCY OF PREGNANCY AND BIRTH

*A documentary produced in partnership with community*



## LOGLINE

Follow L̄awurrpa and Sarah, on their journey through ancestral time, country and culture to empower community and reclaim childbirth.

## SYNOPSIS

Filmed in remote Arnhem Land, DJÄKAMIRR follows L̄awurrpa and Sarah on a unique journey through ancestral time, country and culture. As mutual trust develops between the two women, they hope to empower YolŪu and reclaim 60,000 years of birthing culture from the stronghold of Western medicine. This is their story of working with community to pilot the training of djäkamirr- the caretakers of pregnancy and birth.

## TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Year of Release:	2021
Film:	colour
Aspect ratio:	16x9, 4k – 3840 x 2160
Shooting format:	h.264 HD (1-1-1) 4K, Panasonic GH5
Genre:	Documentary
Country of Origin:	YolŪu Country, North East Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, Australia
Languages:	Djämbarrpuyŋu & English

## TRAILER

<https://vimeo.com/516523163/04700160ab>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQLFtzjL\\_RQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQLFtzjL_RQ)

## DIRECTORS STATEMENT

For over 60-000 years Yolŋu childbirth happened on-country with skilled djäkamirr- midwifery caretakers -using ancestral wisdom and bush technologies to support women and babies. Yolŋu flourished.

Since the recent arrival of Western missionaries in the 1920s and the removal of childbirth to hospital, Yolŋu have been suffering. Women are now disconnected from their support systems and the region has profound health inequities including the highest rate of preterm birth in Australia.

DJÄKAMIRR is a privileged insight into the aspirations of remote First Nations communities to reclaim their birthing culture from the stronghold of Western medicine; and be part of the solutions to improve health. Filmed over a two year period on-country in Arnhem Land, the documentary is a rare invitation to experience Yolŋu women's culture and hear their aspirations for maternity services. This is a journey of hope, demonstrating that when Yolŋu and Balanda (non-Yolŋu) Australians work together, positive change and community empowerment is possible.

## LOCATION

DJÄKAMIRR is a two year project, filmed on the ancestral homelands of the Yolŋu First Nations people in North East Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, Australia. It is a collaborative

project with community based on the strength of relationship and the importance of connection. Yolŋu have a strong cultural identity and speak Yolŋu Matha as their first language/s. The region is remote and despite the wealth of Australia, has inequitable health outcomes and poor access to many basic services. The documentary explores childbirth from the perspectives of Yolŋu women in Galiwin'ku, a small town on Elcho Island.



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### CREW

#### **ĹÄWURRPA MAYPILAMA- Co-DIRECTOR, Co-WRITER & CULTURAL LEADERSHIP**

Ĺäwurrpa Maypilama is a multilingual senior research fellow at the Molly Wardaguga Research



Centre. She is a Yolŋu Elder, Cultural Authority, resident of Galiwin'ku and a passionate advocate of redesigning childbirth health services to meet the needs of Yolŋu. DJÄKAMIRR is her first foray in documentary film making, direction and writing. Maypilama has a background in primary school teaching and education, with 20 years' experience in applying Yolŋu research methods and methodologies. She received an honorary doctorate in recognition of this work from Charles Darwin University and has an

Associate Diploma in Teaching from Bachelor Institute of Indigenous Training and Education.

<https://researchers.cdu.edu.au/en/persons/elaine-maypilama>

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### PAT JOSSE- Co-DIRECTOR, VIDEOGRAPHY & EDITING

Pat Josse is a multilingual freelance videographer, editor, sound engineer, director, producer and musician. He is an innovative resources creator and technical expert with more than 20 years multifaceted experience throughout Australia and international work in Asia Pacific and Europe. DJÄKAMIRR is his first collaboration co-directing with Maypilama. Short film and documentary credits include: NDIS Testimony by Elaine Maypilama, Aboriginal Cosmology, Organise a Djäkamirr, Borderlands, Tatts Finke Desert Race & other documentaries.



<https://www.linkedin.com/in/patrick-josse-a2822651/>

### SARAH IRELAND-Co-WRITER, INTERVIEWER, PROJECT MANAGER

Sarah Ireland is a medical anthropologist, nurse and midwife. She has a clinical background in remote area nursing and midwifery with experience delivering primary health care in collaboration with First Nations communities and practitioners. Ireland has First Class Honours and a Doctorate in medical anthropology. DJÄKAMIRR is her first incursion into writing for screen, documentary making and production.

<https://researchers.cdu.edu.au/en/persons/sarah-anne-ireland>



### SHELLIE MORRIS- Narration

Shellie Morris is a multi-award winning songwoman who sings and creates in around in around 17 Aboriginal languages, many considered “sleeping”. Since discovering her Wardaman and Yanyuwa roots over 20 years ago, she has tirelessly worked to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians, especially in the Northern Territory. Poignant, knowledgeable and full of humour, Morris’ illustrious career has balanced being one of Australia’s most celebrated singer-songwriters with her unwavering commitment to healing through music within communities. Armed with personal experience of connection and disconnection, Shellie imparts the importance of having a voice, listening to one another and that every individual is important.

<https://www.shelliemorris.net/bio.html>



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### RACHEL BAKER- Translation

Rachel Baker is a Yolŋu woman from Elcho Island, Northern Territory. She is a registered Interpreter and founder of Elcho Clothing which supplies the Brand Yapa Skirts, Australia wide. Baker provides cultural and linguistic support to many researchers and projects. She is a passionate mentor of young people; and delivers suicide prevention and awareness programs across North East Arnhem Land. Baker is also an accomplished Pandanus Weaver and regularly teaches these Yolŋu skills to small groups.

<https://www.facebook.com/www.elchoclothing.com.au/>



## PRODUCTION

### ONE20 PRODUCTIONS

DJĀKAMIRR is the debut documentary for One20 Productions and demonstrates a genuine commitment to working in partnership with community.



### MOLLY WARDAGUGA RESEARCH CENTRE - Co-Production

The Molly Wardaguga Research Centre was established in April 2019 and is dedicated to the late Molly Wardaguga, Burarra Elder, Aboriginal Midwife, Senior Aboriginal Health Worker and founding member of the Malabam Health Board in Maningrida, Arnhem Land. Molly was an important contributor to the Australian discourse regarding the importance of Birthing on Country. Her work and mentoring in Aboriginal health and research; and maternal and infant health, in particular, has galvanised many advocates to improve maternity services for

Indigenous  
Australians.

Molly's vision to support women's cultural and birthing aspirations, especially those living in remote locations, will endure through the Molly Wardaguga Research Centre.

<https://www.cdu.edu.au/mwrc>



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### NORTHERN INSTITUTE- Co-Production

The Northern Institute is a hub for research expertise, leadership and impact for stakeholders. Northern Institute's researchers are recognised nationally and internationally as leaders in their fields. Our research teams work through partnership with context experts locally and content experts internationally to bring together a deep understanding of people, policy and place. Our researchers explore and adapt theory and methodologies to key research issues. Researchers focus on sharing research outcomes through a number of avenues that relate to the range of stakeholders we work with. Our capacity is developed through the involvement with PhD and Masters by Research students who can examine issues deeply, through partnership with stakeholders as well as the Public Policy postgraduate programs offered online to policy makers and policy partners internationally.

<https://www.cdu.edu.au/northern-institute/overview>



### PRAISE

*'This is an outstanding and extraordinary piece of work that should be required viewing for midwives, doctors and nurses in their education programs...the whole film is a lesson to us all as Australians working within our undeniably racist health system.'*

*Emeritus Professor Lesley Barclay AO, PhD*

The University of Sydney

Distinguished Fellow; Australian College of Midwives, Australia

*'This film is powerful, stunning and an inspiration for all Aboriginal women and non-Indigenous midwives.'*

*Professor Rhonda Marriott, AM, PhD Murd., RN, Midwife*

Centre Director, Ngangk Yira: Murdoch University Research Centre for Aboriginal Health and Social Equity, Australia

*'A journey of exploration recognising and sharing thousands of years of cultural knowledge and practice.'*

*Marni Tuala*

President -Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives  
Australia



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*'The stark urgency of this human rights issue and the rationale for 'Birthing on Country' have never been so clearly illustrated.'*

Nicky Leap

Professor of Midwifery  
Faculty of Health, University of Technology Sydney

*'...A celebration life and an acknowledgement of a new season, an expression of cultural rights'*

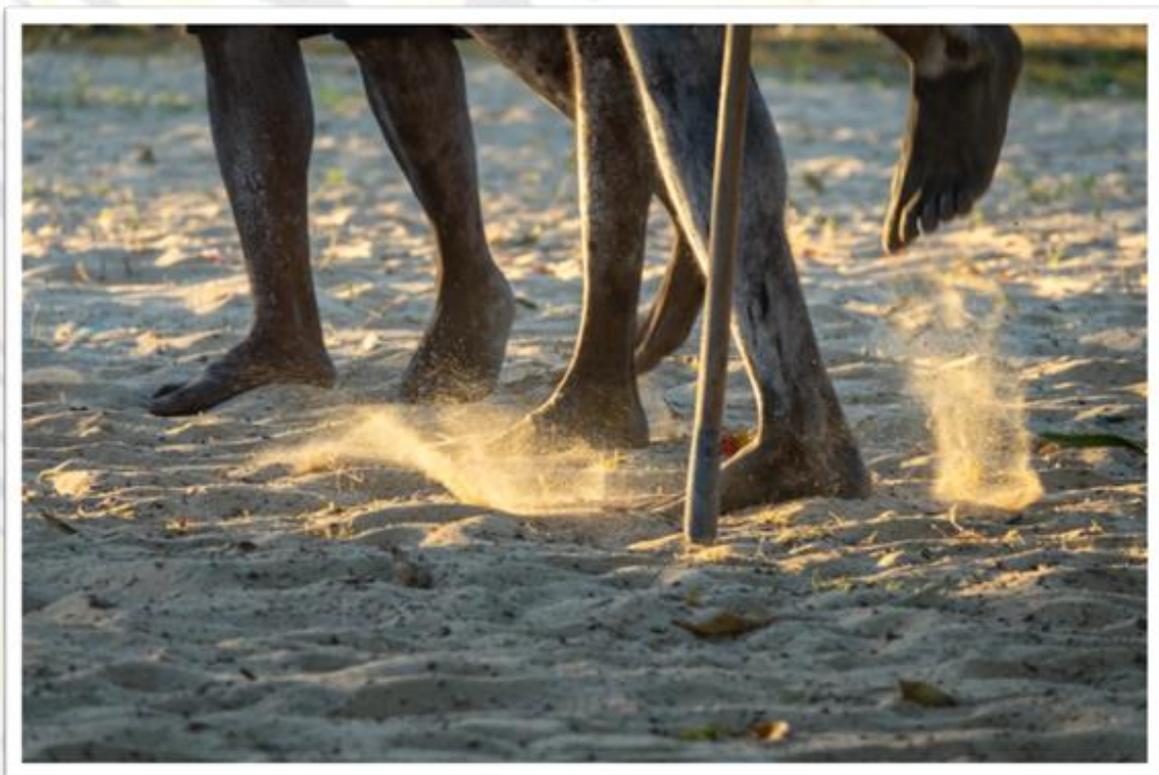
Dr. Janine Mohamed,

CEO Lowitja Institute, Australia

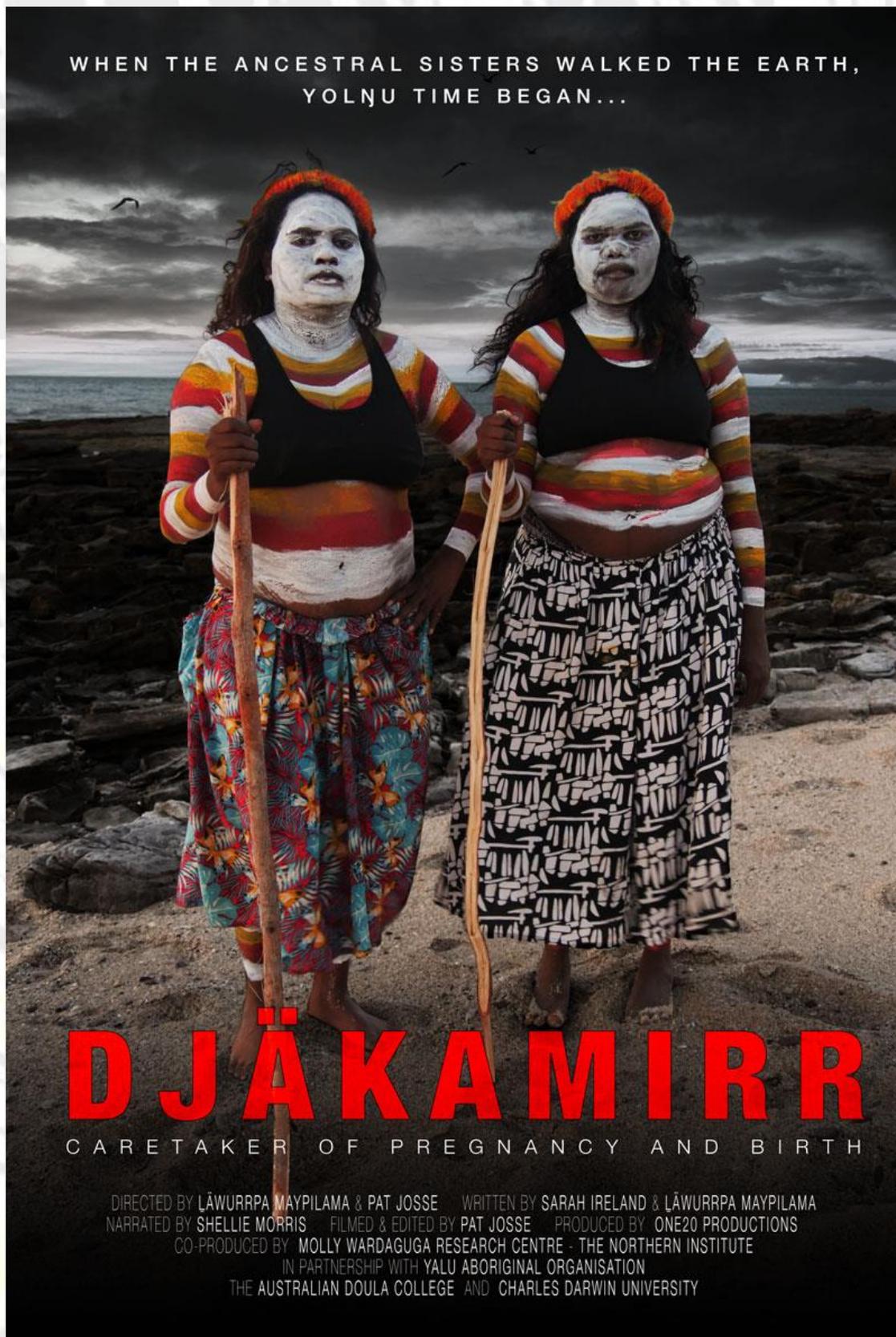
*'This beautifully crafted film is packed with powerful and important messages. Several years of dedication and commitment to finding ways for two cultures to understand have resulted in an exemplar for culturally competent care and compassion in Australian maternity service provision.'*

Professor Pat Brodie

Midwifery Advisor, WHO Collaborating Centre for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Development, UTS, Sydney



POSTER



WHEN THE ANCESTRAL SISTERS WALKED THE EARTH,  
YOLŪ TIME BEGAN...

# DJÄKAMIRR

CARETAKER OF PREGNANCY AND BIRTH

DIRECTED BY LÄWURRPA MAYPILAMA & PAT JOSSE    WRITTEN BY SARAH IRELAND & LÄWURRPA MAYPILAMA  
NARRATED BY SHELLIE MORRIS    FILMED & EDITED BY PAT JOSSE    PRODUCED BY ONE20 PRODUCTIONS  
CO-PRODUCED BY MOLLY WARDAGUGA RESEARCH CENTRE - THE NORTHERN INSTITUTE  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH YALU ABORIGINAL ORGANISATION  
THE AUSTRALIAN DOULA COLLEGE AND CHARLES DARWIN UNIVERSITY

### PARTNERS

#### AUSTRALIAN DOULA COLLEGE

The Australian Doula College is an integrated organisation providing education, support and continuity of care for Birth and End of Life Doulas and anyone needing support through any one of life's many transitions. Doula training is possible throughout Australia and the world with the Australian Doula College. We cover a multitude of subjects starting at conception, working through the mechanics of labour, your fears and feelings, possible fears and challenges for parents, homebirth, hospital policies and procedures, post-natal issues, breastfeeding and postnatal doula-ring, just to name a few. <https://www.australiandoulacollege.com.au/>



#### YALU ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

Yalu is an Aboriginal Corporation delivering programs, research and community education to strengthen health and well-being from a foundation of cultural integrity. Our organisation was established in 2002 and we began working with our community, Universities and research organisations to facilitate research programs focused on the Yolŋu way of life and from that, have now grown into a nurturing centre providing employment and services across Galiwinku. We are grounded in our commitment to facilitate two-way learning of Yolŋu Rom (Law) and western ideology with mutual understanding and respect. <https://www.yalu.org.au/about-1>



#### CHARLES DARWIN UNIVERSITY

Charles Darwin University (CDU) is based in the capital city of Darwin at the heart of Australia's tropical north. It is the Australian university located most closely to the Asia-Pacific region. CDU has all the advantages of a dual-sector university including flexibility in study options – as a recognised leader in online education – creativity, adaptability and freedom to embrace the history and traditions of First Australians and the multitude of nations represented by our international student population. <https://www.cdu.edu.au/about-cdu>



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### MEDIA CONTACT

For all media enquires please contact project manager Sarah Ireland: [Sarah.ireland@cdu.edu.au](mailto:Sarah.ireland@cdu.edu.au) & +61 477 786 243.

### WEBPAGE

[www.birthingoncountry.com/djakamirr](http://www.birthingoncountry.com/djakamirr)



### CALL TO ACTION

<https://www.birthingoncountry.com/djakamirr-action>

