

Creative expression

Most new arrivals to the Northern Territory will be struck almost immediately, as I was, by the lush creative life that exists here. I am referring not just to the obvious: the vibrant Aboriginal art industry, the calendar of creative celebrations or the rich array of inspired activity that can be found at Mindil Beach on many evenings during the Dry. Rather, I am referring to the creative expression that helps to power so much of our life and work in the Territory.

Darwin's status as a creative hub has been well-substantiated through research by the university's School for Social and Policy Research, in conjunction with the universities of Wollongong and South Australia. Entitled "Creative Tropical City: Mapping Darwin's Creative Industries Project", the research project highlights Darwin's potential to become a national leader and hub for creative innovation and inspiration. The researchers have mapped Darwin's creative industries, and identified where our creative specialists live, work and seek their inspiration. They have identified a prosperous artistic life in the capital.

But there remains plenty of creative endeavours that occur largely under the radar and this edition of *Origins* helps to draw them into the spotlight. The feature articles reveal some of the creative expression that is at large



on our campuses. They highlight CDU's formal and informal roles in nurturing and developing the creative spirit both off campus and on.

The cover of this edition, for example, shows slices of the graffiti wall that adorns one of our computer labs on Casuarina campus. The idea came from several staff members collaborating with five local graffiti artists and NT Police to offer a legal forum for the expression of art. It is a spectacular result and certainly enjoyed by the VET students who use the lab.

You will read the inspiring story of a talented young tenor who left his homeland in China to build a career in opera, and about the exotic designs of our fashion specialists and how they are impacting on the wider community. You will also have the opportunity to consider what constitutes the "Darwin aesthetic" in architecture.

This edition also delves further into the life of Charles Darwin in the run-up to our Charles Darwin Symposium, which celebrates the 200th anniversary of his birth and the 150th anniversary of the publication *On the Origin of Species*.

I hope you enjoy this edition and that you are inspired to join us and our co-hosts, the Northern Territory Government, at the Symposium.

