

Artwork story

Grounded Voices, Rising Futures

Across this continent, from the mangrove-lined coasts of Larrakia Country (Darwin) to the red earth of Djaara Country (central Victoria), from the winding rivers of Bundjalung land (northern NSW) to the city streets of Wurundjeri (Melbourne), Wiradjuri (central NSW), Dharawal (south-eastern Sydney/Illawarra) and Kurna Country (Adelaide), voices rise.

They rise from Country, from community, and from lived experience. These are the grounded voices of First Nations women and gender-diverse people whose strength, cultural knowledge and leadership continue to shape YWCA's work across Australia.

Grounded Voices, Rising Futures honours these voices—steady, sovereign and enduring—as they grow into a collective force. Rooted in identity, story and intergenerational knowledge, each voice carries the weight of truth and the light of possibility. They speak of survival and systemic injustice, but also of care, cultural safety and self-determined futures. Through its housing, leadership and advocacy work, YWCA is committed to listening deeply, walking alongside, and supporting these voices to lead change.

This artwork story reflects YWCA's vision for reconciliation: a future where equity cannot exist without justice, and where the leadership of First Nations people—particularly women and gender-diverse people—is centred and respected. Reconciliation is not a symbol. It is an ongoing practice of learning, building and acting. Learning through truth-telling and cultural immersion. Building respectful, long-term partnerships with First Nations communities. Acting by creating opportunities, elevating voices, and embedding cultural safety across all parts of the organisation.

Through their Innovate RAP, YWCA reaffirms its commitment to walking together. This artwork is both a celebration and a call to action—to rise, to reckon, and to imagine a future shaped by those who have always led.