



Didgeri Air Art's clients visit outback Aboriginal communities in a light aircraft.

"Many people don't fully understand Aboriginal art yet they know they like it," explains Ms Read. "But when they experience the features in the country represented in the painting – you can actually see them comprehend the significance."

Helen Read tailors the tours to suit her clients' time or cost restraints. But all concerned know that when travelling to remote area communities, anything can happen. Even the best planning cannot stop thunderstorms wiping out landing strips, communication breakdowns, people being away on ceremonial business, or a funeral in a community that means that all visitation may be off.

"I tell them there are no guarantees. They can spend that money but they may not meet

the people they hope to. They might get to the community and find it's not possible to enter because of various cultural things going on. That happens," she says.

However clients, who often pay over A\$5000 each for the tour, remain undeterred. For them, the chance to see the newly created paintings and meet the artists is worth the chance.

"Some of the paintings are really powerful, impacting, strongly visual images," says Sydney collector Colin Laverity.

"White people can't really know what these paintings are about but you know that they come from a background of amazing religious cultural history that's as deep or meaningful as anything you and I know about." ■



Didgeri Air Art Tours' owner Helen Read enables her clients to understand the Aboriginal peoples' deep connection with their homelands

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