



A journey into the stories and spectacular landscapes  
of the Daly River region in the north-west of the  
Northern Territory.

# Tales from the Daly

NAUIYU NAMBIYU

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A **STUDY GUIDE** BY KATY MARRINER



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During the months of October to May, the Daly River region is lashed with monsoonal storms. The people of the area are aware of dangers that lurk during the wet season. Stories are told of the Wabuymem, a little grey spirit that lives in the banyan tree and lays in wait for curious children. The Wabuymem stalks them and lures them away from their families into the banyan tree never to be seen again.

Wangung, a young boy out hunting with his grandparents does not listen to their advice. His fate is sealed when he disturbs the Wabuymem.

### About the filmmaker

*This story is one I had heard many times during my visits. It is the story of the Wabuymem, a little grey spirit that lives in the banyan tree. The old people say that it calls out to children, follows them and captures them, hiding them in the banyan tree forever. It is a story told to children to stay close when out bush and not to wander off. This is a dramatic telling of the story.*

– Steven McGregor, director

Steven McGregor is an Indigenous writer and director from the Northern Territory. McGregor has worked his way from production assistant in a government video unit to his role as a producer and director with CAAMA Productions. His credits as a filmmaker include *Apethekai*, *Willaberta Jack*, *My Brother Vinnie* and *In a League of their Own*.

### CAAMA Productions

*Tales from the Daly – Nauiyu Nambiyu* was produced by Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) Productions, the film and television production branch of CAAMA, in association with Imparja Television.

The Central Australian Indigenous Media Association (CAAMA) began operations in 1980 and was the first Aboriginal group to be allocated a broadcasting license. The Aboriginal people of central Australia own CAAMA and its objectives focus on the social, cultural and economic advancement of Aboriginal peoples. CAAMA produces media products that engender pride in Aboriginal communities, while informing and educating the wider community.

Established in 1988 CAAMA Productions is part of the CAAMA media group. CAAMA Production's primary purpose is to represent Indigenous people, culture and language in film and television. CAAMA



Productions was the recipient of the 2005 Film Australia Stanley Hawes Award for Outstanding Contribution to Australian Documentary.

Visit CAAMA at <http://www.caama.com.au> to learn more about CAAMA and CAAMA Productions.

### Nganampa Anwernekenhe

*Tales from the Daly – Nauiyu Nambiyu* is part of the *Nganampa Anwernekenhe* television series. *Nganampa Anwernekenhe* is produced by Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) Productions, the film and television production branch of CAAMA, in association with Imparja Television.

Over 180 programs have been produced since the *Nganampa Anwernekenhe* television series was initiated in 1988. The primary aim of the series is the maintenance of Aboriginal languages and culture. *Nganampa Anwernekenhe* also provides an opportunity for Indigenous filmmakers to work on an Indigenous language television series. Each program must have an Indigenous Australian in the key creative roles which include writer, director, cinematographer and sound recordist.

Visit Australian Screen at <http://aso.gov.au/titles/series/nganampa-anwernekenhe/> to learn more about *Nganampa Anwernekenhe*.

This study guide to accompany *Tales from the Daly – Nauiyu Nambiyu*, a short film directed by Steven McGregor, provides information and suggestions for learning activities in English, Humanities and Social Sciences, Indigenous Studies and Media.

Teachers should preview *Tales from the Daly – Nauiyu Nambiyu* before showing it to students. The film would appeal to students in upper primary classes and is suitable for secondary students at all levels.

*Tales from the Daly – Nauiyu Nambiyu* is in Ngen'giwumirri language and is subtitled in English.

Duration: 22 minutes

**ABOVE:**  
The Wabuymem calls to Wangung



## Imparja Television

Imparja Television is an Australian television network broadcasting to remote eastern and central Australia. 'Imparja' is an Arrernte word meaning footprints. The word is used to indicate that Imparja Television aims to service Arrernte people wherever they may live. Imparja Television describes its range as a footprint. The network is unique in Australia and the world, being totally owned and controlled by Northern Territory and South Australian Aboriginal shareholders.

Imparja Television delivers information and communication services to the community, while promoting Indigenous culture and values.

Visit Imparja Television at <<http://www.imparja.com>>.

Find out more about Imparja Television at <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imparja\\_Television](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imparja_Television)>.



## USING IN THE CLASSROOM

Teachers may select from the following information and activities to support students' viewing and close analysis of *Tales from the Daly – Nauiyu Nambiyu*.

### MAKING A START

- Did you enjoy watching *Tales from the Daly – Nauiyu Nambiyu*?
- What happens in *Tales from the Daly – Nauiyu Nambiyu*? Write a fifty-word synopsis of the plot.
- Who are the main characters? Write a fifty-word profile for each character.

**TOP LEFT: Wangung is told the stories of his country.**

**TOP RIGHT: The Daly River Crossing, Brown Duck Dreaming**

- Write a fifty-word description of Wangung's relationship with his grandparents.
- Describe the geographic setting of the story in fifty words.
- Write a list of the themes of *Tales from the Daly – Nauiyu Nambiyu*. Share your list with the class. Which theme do you think is the most important?
- Documentary or short fiction film? What words would you use to label *Tales from the Daly – Nauiyu Nambiyu*?
- Draw a concept map that shows the connections between *Tales from the Daly – Nauiyu Nambiyu* and your world.

### ORAL TRADITION

*These stories are told to us by our old men and women. Remember to always listen to our stories because it might help you when in danger from a snake or sorcery man or the little grey spirit.*

– Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr Baumann

The term 'oral tradition' refers to the transmission of cultural material through speech.





**CREDITS**

**CAST**

**Wangung**  
Adam Sambano

**Grandmother**  
Christina Yambeing

**Grandfather**  
Peter Martin

**Narrator**  
Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr Baumann

**CREW**

**Director**  
Steve McGregor

**Photography**  
Allan Collins

**Editor**  
Haig Stewart

**Composer**  
George Papanicolaou

**Series producer**  
Tanya Fraser

**Executive producer**  
Ray Lillis

**Principal investor**  
Screen Australia



The practice of telling oral stories is an important aspect of Aboriginal culture. Specific cultural practices, histories, languages, laws and family relationships have been passed on in this way. These stories link past, present and future generations of Indigenous Australians.

*Tales from the Daly – Nauiyu Nambiyu* continues this tradition.

- ‘Water is our dreaming.’  
– Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr Baumann  
What is the meaning of the term ‘Dreaming’ in Aboriginal culture?  
What does Miriam-Rose teach the audience of *Tales from the Daly – Nauiyu Nambiyu* about water?
- Who is Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr Baumann? What is her role in the telling of the stories of the Daly River region? What else do we learn about her?
- ‘Our old men and ladies, they used to tell us stories. They told us about the sugar glider.’  
– Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr Baumann  
What do we learn about the sugar glider?  
Do you know of any other Dreaming stories about native Australian animals?

*Tales from the Daly – Nauiyu Nambiyu* tells the story of a little boy called Wangung who does not listen to his grandmother and grandfather’s warnings about the Wabuymem.

The Wabuymem is a little grey spirit that lives in the banyan tree. It lies in wait for curious children and then lures them away from their families.

- Draw a Wabuymem.  
Download an image of a banyan tree.  
Make a collage of the two images.
- Why tell the story of the Wabuymem?  
Can you think of other examples of scary stories told to children? Why would people want to scare children? See *BUNGALUNG*, another film from CAAMA that deals with a similar issue.  
One of the main emotions in this story is fear.  
Write about a time you were scared.
- What does the story of the Wabuymem allow us to understand about Aboriginal people’s lives and their relationship with the land?

**ABOVE: Wangung is intrigued by the Banyan Tree.; The Daly River has many moods.**



## THE DALY RIVER REGION

The Daly River region is located between Darwin and Katherine and begins where the Katherine and Flora Rivers intersect and flow west to the Timor Sea.

- Have you ever visited the Daly River region?

Locate the Daly River region on a map of Australia. Use print and electronic texts to find out more about the region and about the Aboriginal people who live there. Share your findings with others in the class.

A useful starting point is the Indigenous Language Map located at <http://www.abc.net.au/indigenous/map/>. Continue your research at <http://en.travelnt.com/explore/katherine/daly-river.aspx>.

- ‘The wet season of the Top End brings great changes to the landscape and I wanted to capture the power and beauty of these storms.’ (Steven McGregor)  
What moments confirm that McGregor has achieved this aim?

Ngan’gikurunggurr is an Indigenous language spoken in the Daly River region. This language is



**ABOVE: Wangung and his family move through the country; Regarding the Daly**

often simply referred to as Ngan’gi. There are two dialects: Ngan’gikurunggurr and Ngen’giwumirri. Learn more about this language at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ngangikurunggurr\\_language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ngangikurunggurr_language).

## CREATE

Working with a partner, write and illustrate your own cautionary tale.

Your cautionary tale will be collated with the cautionary tales written and illustrated by others in the class, to form a collection of cautionary tales.

## EXTENDED ANALYSIS

- Complete a detailed analysis of *Tales from the Daly – Nauiyu Nambiyu*. Your analysis should provide:
  - A synopsis of the documentary
  - A description of the roles played by Indigenous Australians.
  - An explanation of the filmmaker’s purpose.
  - An assessment of the film’s portrayal of Indigenous Australia.
  - A comment on how the film uses various documentary techniques.
  - Your judgement of the documentary’s worth.

*Tales from the Daly* is available on DVD from Ronin Films, PO Box 680, Mitchell, ACT 2911. Phone (02) 6248 0851  
Email: [orders@roninfilms.com.au](mailto:orders@roninfilms.com.au)





ABOVE: Wangung's fate is sealed.



SCREEN  
AUSTRALIA



Ronin Films PO Box 680 Mitchell, ACT 2911  
ph: (02) 6248-0851 fax: (02) 6249-1640

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