

EXPLORE From generations to generations

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Indigenous Alice Springs comic book artists
Stick Mob put final touches on inspirational sequels

At a local arts centre in Alice Springs, a group of young Indigenous artists is preparing banners and merchandise ahead of launch day. The group, called Stick Mob¹, have been working diligently on the hotly anticipated second series of their comic books after breaking out into the niche industry in 2021. Born from the dreams of four high school students—and featuring mutants, cyborgs and phantasms—Stick Mob brings to life unique, central desert stories through their imaginative art.

Their inaugural releases—*Mixed Feelings*, *Exo Dimensions* and *Storm Warning*—took a deep dive into a range of topics, from climate change to intergenerational trauma and healing, set against the backdrop of life in Central Australia.

When their series launched in 2021, writer-illustrators Alyssa Mason, Seraphina Newberry and Lauren Boyle became the first female Aboriginal graphic novelists to be published in Australia. [...]

Alyssa Mason, now in her early-20s, said the creations had filled the group with pride, and inspired them to keep making new work. [...]

For Seraphina Newberry, the work is an opportunity to create a brighter future for her hometown of Alice Springs. She said many young Indigenous people, including herself, had faced adversity but that it does not need to define their lives.

"We're showing them that Alice Springs, or the youth, or whatever is happening in town, is not all bad," she said. "There's some really great stuff coming from this community, and the fact that we're all working together and we're actually thriving² and not, essentially, just being really closed off."

abc.net.au, 2024

1. Aboriginal term for a family or clan group 2. grow

WAY 1

1. Look at the illustration and tick the correct boxes.

- The main character is... ☐ a human ☐ an animal ☒ a hybrid creature
- The colours suggest this is a scene from... ☐ the coast ☒ the desert ☐ the city
- This picture is... ☐ realistic ☐ dreamlike (abstract) ☒ a mix of both

2. Read the text and highlight the information you find about Stick Mob, then sort it in this table.

City/Region of origin	Members of the group	Type of art	First projects
Alice Springs, Central Australia	A group of young Indigenous artists (Alyssa Mason, Seraphina Newberry, Lauren Boyle)	Comic books (graphic novels)	Mixed Feelings, Exo Dimensions, Storm Warning

3. Circle the themes their art addresses.

ENVIRONMENT

SPORTS

COOKING

GENERATIONS

ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

ANIMALS

4. Read the last paragraph (l. 22-26) and underline the positive words or expressions.

5. Explain why their work is important. You can use the following words.

community • together • traditions • stories • generations • impact

Their work is important because it helps the community by showing how people can work together. They tell stories that come from their culture and connect generations. This has a strong impact on young people and helps protect their traditions.

WAY 2

1. Look at the illustration and write a short description of it, focusing on its atmosphere and characters.

A person with a bird-like mask is sitting on a platform at sunset. In the background, a colourful snake floats in the air. The image is peaceful, mysterious, and symbolic. The patterns and colours evoke the Aboriginal culture.

2. Highlight all the information about Stick Mob and briefly introduce them.

Stick Mob is a group of young Indigenous artists from Alice Springs. They started in high school and create comic books about life, culture, and imagination in Central Australia.

3. a. Read this word cloud. Underline the words referring to their inspiration and circle the words associated to the themes in their work.

environment
generations dreams
First Nations people imagination
aboriginal youth life

b. Say what made the Stick Mob artists special when they published their first books.

They were the first Aboriginal women to publish graphic novels in Australia.

4. Sum this up into one sentence.

Stick Mob is a group of young Aboriginal artists who use imagination and cultural inspiration to talk about real-life issues and community values.

5. Focus on Seraphina Newberry's comments. Explain how Stick Mob's art reflects their culture and impacts young First Nations people.

Seraphina says their art shows that good things are happening in the community. It helps young people feel proud, work together, and share their culture.