

BENALLA ART GALLERY



Annual Report
2022

CONTENTS

About Benalla Art Gallery	4
Vision and Mission	5
The Year at a Glance	6
Mayor's Message	8
Chair's Welcome	10
Director's Report	12
Exhibitions	14
Engagement	40
Education	52
Collection	60
Reach	72
Benalla Art Gallery Foundation	74
Friends of Benalla Art Gallery	78
The New Benalla Art Gallery	80
Support	82
Benalla Art Gallery Team	84

Benalla Art Gallery acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which it resides and extended community lands which it seeks to serve. We respect the Elders past, present and future, and honour the resilience, wisdom, dignity, scientific knowledge, stories, and art of the world's longest surviving culture.



Benalla Art Gallery, c. 1980s

ABOUT BENALLA ART GALLERY

The concept for the Benalla Art Gallery dates from 1965 and was driven by a small group of local citizens. The Gallery was initially based in the RSL Hall in Nunn Street in 1968, and interest in a purpose-built art gallery was generated.

In 1972, Laurence H. Ledger made an offer of his collection to the City of Benalla, and a further \$75,000 towards the cost of a new gallery building. This gallery proposal was put to a compulsory community ballot in 1973, and won resounding support. The Gallery and its fledgling Collection quickly established a firm footing as a key focal point for community civic pride.

Noted architects Philip Sargeant and Colin Munro were appointed to design the purpose-built Benalla Art Gallery, perched between the banks of Lake Benalla and the Benalla Botanical Gardens. The new Gallery opened in its picturesque setting in 1975, and has since provided the foundation of Benalla's artistic and creative culture.



Benalla Art Gallery, 2021
Photo: Serana Hunt-Hughes

VISION

Benalla Art Gallery is the physical, experiential, and conceptual meeting point in North East Victoria; a place that reflects the diversity of our stories and the contribution of all Australians as creators of culture.

MISSION

Benalla Art Gallery presents a progressive, inclusive, and responsive art program for its community and visitors in order to deliver transformational social, cultural, and economic benefit.

THE YEAR AT A GLANCE

75,874

Exhibition Visitors

3,739

Education, Engagement
and Event Participants

31

Exhibitions and
Public Realm Artworks

1

Student Exhibition

2

Touring Exhibitions

3

Collection Exhibitions

76

Artists Exhibited

284

Collection Works Exhibited

84

Public Programs

32

Education Programs

6

Other Events

3.4

Gallery Staff (FTE)

245

Gallery Members

17

Gallery Volunteers

600

Volunteer Hours Donated

62

Friends of Benalla Art Gallery

11

Benalla Art Gallery

Collection Works Acquired

\$30 M

Benalla Art Gallery

Collection Value



Cr Bernie Hearn
Mayor of Benalla Rural City

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

The Benalla Art Gallery team had a successful year in 2022, despite the challenges faced in recent years. They achieved notable milestones in terms of visitor numbers, national recognition, and Collection development. The success of the gallery can firmly be attributed to the hard work and dedication of the staff and volunteers, as well as the support of the Gallery's numerous partners.

These achievements echo the themes of the Benalla Rural City Council Plan 2021-2025, particularly Community, Liveability, Economy and Leadership. The Gallery's exhibitions and programs contribute to the theme of Community by telling the stories of the region and its people, while providing a cultural hub for our community. The Gallery team has shown a commitment to building Benalla's reputation as an arts and cultural destination and the Gallery now plays a key role in growing cultural tourism to the region, aligning with the themes of Liveability, Economy and Leadership.

The Gallery's new Strategic Plan 2023-2030 aligns with the Council Plan by guiding the Gallery's journey to being recognised as a leading cultural destination in North East Victoria. The Gallery team is working hard to make this a reality, through developing and promoting exhibitions and programs that attract visitors to our region while delivering quality cultural experiences to the Benalla community. Furthermore, the Gallery's plans for redevelopment will enhance the visitors' experience and contribute to the Council's vision of creating a vibrant and attractive city.

I look forward to seeing what the Gallery team have planned for 2023. I'm sure the members, visitors and gallery partners share this excitement as our Gallery continues to surprise and delight our community for another year.

Cr Bernie Hearn
Mayor of Benalla Rural City



Between the Details:
Video Art from the ACMI Collection
Audience members enjoy Deborah Kelly's
The Gods of Tiny Things at the
exhibition launch
Benalla Art Gallery, 2022



Barbara Alexander, A.O.
Benalla Art Gallery Committee Chair

CHAIR'S WELCOME

Welcome to the Benalla Art Gallery Annual Report for 2022.

It was wonderful to see life get back to normal after a devastating two years dealing with the pandemic and the affect continuous lockdowns had on the normal day to day activities of a busy gallery such as Benalla Art Gallery.

During the year our exhibition schedule was wide and varied showcasing many and various works from far afield as well as highlighting the work of our local artists. Our visitor numbers were up to well over 70,000 which included attendance at launches, and educational and workshop events, such as *Art on Saturdays*, *Little Artists* and our School Holidays program, which are part of our inclusive program for residents and visitors alike.

We worked with Benalla Rural City in our advisory capacity, engaging with the architects for the redevelopment of the Benalla Art Gallery as part of an initial funding grant of three million dollars, from the Victorian Government, which will include additional storage for our prestigious art collection, as well as alterations to office and cafe space. The physical work will commence in 2024.

Members of the Committee also participated in workshops to support the establishment of a Benalla Art Gallery Foundation, spearheaded by the Chair of the Benalla Art Gallery Acquisition Trust, Winsome McCaughey A.O. who has undertaken the onerous task with dedication and success.

One of the roles of the Benalla Art Gallery Committee is to oversee the Strategic Plan for the gallery, resulting in a new guiding document for 2023 - 2030. This is an inspirational document setting out the way forward in a collaborative, inclusive and thought-provoking fashion. It is a document well worth reading and I commend it to you

On behalf of the Benalla Art Gallery Committee, I thank our Director, Eric Nash, and his staff, for all the tireless work they have all put into bringing the gallery back to life. As well as our team of volunteers who add their own skills and dedication.

Barbara Alexander, A.O.
Chair, Benalla Art Gallery Committee



Benalla Art Gallery *Little Artists*
free art program for under 5s, July 2022



Eric Nash
Director, Benalla Art Gallery

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

It gives me great pleasure to present Benalla Art Gallery's Annual Report for 2022, a year in which the Gallery not only bounced back from the disruptions of recent years, but achieved significant milestones in visitation and participation, strategic planning, and collection development. The Gallery was recognised with a nomination for 'Best Small Museum or Gallery' at the 2022 Victorian Museum and Galleries Award.

Through the efforts of the Gallery team of staff and volunteers, and the support of numerous partners, the Gallery welcomed 75,874 exhibition visitors in 2022, with a further 3,739 participants in 116 education and engagement programs.

The Benalla Art Gallery Collection, valued this year in excess of \$30 million, continues to be a source of inspiration and appeal for visitors. There has been much progress behind the scenes funded through the Australian Government's Community Heritage Grant, and the Ledger Charitable Trust. Most notably, Caroline Field completed a Significance Assessment, underlining the Collection's historical, artistic, and community value; while Annabelle Williams made substantial progress realising the Gallery's Digitisation Project and transition to new Collection Management software.

The release of this Annual Report coincides with the adoption of a new Benalla Art Gallery Strategic Plan 2023-2030. This critical document, which was developed throughout 2022, will guide Benalla Art Gallery's journey to become the meeting point in North East Victoria, providing a vibrant and vital cultural platform that supports the arts and social connectivity.

Benalla Art Gallery is committed to helping build Benalla's growing reputation as a compelling arts and cultural destination. Through the Gallery's profile and the recognition of the quality of its exhibitions and programs, Benalla Art Gallery plays a lead role in growing cultural tourism to the region, and in turn delivers significant economic benefit.

Special projects play an important role in visitor attraction, and in 2022 the Gallery achieved this through two outstanding exhibitions which were part of the *PHOTO 2022 International Festival of Photography—Oculi: Acts I-VII*, and *Atong Atem: Banksia*. Visitor feedback indicated the exhibitions and related programs were the primary reason for 67% of visitors travelling to Benalla. 19% of those guests were from interstate, and a further 59% from elsewhere in the state, and on average travellers stayed 2.2 nights. Similarly, Benalla Art Gallery closed 2022 as the Australian premiere venue for *Between the Details*, a stunning new travelling exhibition of video art from the ACMI Collection.

The Gallery's program is about telling the stories of this region and its people, and this was exemplified by *Bush Diwan*, developed in partnership with the 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, and inspired by the important story of Siva Singh. Likewise, Jacqui Stockdale returned to Benalla with *The Outlaws' Inn*, drawing inspiration from the history and mythology of Ned Kelly and his gang.

This has been a year of heartening immediate outcomes, but some of the major achievements of 2022 have been the investments in our future. Most significantly, a Master Plan for redevelopment has now been largely completed by Williams Boag architects, with Stage 1 construction imminent. With the continued support of our local and arts communities, I look forward to realising this vision for our Gallery and delivering an even more enjoyable, inspiring, and thought provoking experience for all.

To the team and volunteers at Benalla Art Gallery, I thank and commend you for your hard work and dedication. To our Committee, Foundation Trustees, Friends and Council peers, thank you for your support and guidance. To our Members and visitors, including those who may have discovered the Gallery for the first time, thank you for your patronage and I look forward to welcoming you to Benalla Art Gallery again in 2023.

Eric Nash
Director, Benalla Art Gallery

EXHIBITIONS

The 2022 calendar year saw Benalla Art Gallery deliver 31 Exhibitions and Public Realm Activations in total across the Ledger, Bennett, and Simpson galleries, the Gallery Shop, and expanding into the surrounding Benalla Botanical Gardens.

A range of exhibitions—curated in-house, toured to Benalla, or developed in partnership with artists and peer institutions—explored a variety of media and were rich in content relevant to our region and community.

Highlights included celebrations of the artistic talents within our region such as Pauline Fraser's *Contemplating Nature* and the annual student *Showcase*; nationally celebrated artists engaging directly with the community such as through 2021 *Archibald Prize* winner Peter Wegner's exhibition *The Centenarians*; and contemporary responses to stories of our region such as Jacqui Stockdale's *The Outlaws' Inn*, and *Bush Diwan*, developed in partnership with the 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art.

Benalla Art Gallery showed the value of regional participation in statewide events by presenting two top quality exhibitions in the *PHOTO 2022 International Festival of Photography*; *OCULI: Acts I-VII*, and *Atong Atem: Banksia*. The Gallery's Festival participation extended to activation of the public realm through temporary public art, the launch of a new nightly projection facade, and a focused weekend of programming.

Visitors had the opportunity to engage with 25% of the Benalla Art Gallery Collection through three curated exhibitions; the continuing *Re-generation*; February's *The Human Figure*; and *The Ledger Collection*—a celebration of the lasting legacy of Laruence Ledger MBE and Erma Ledger.

In total, the variety of exhibitions attracted in excess of 75,000 visitors.

14

Major Exhibitions

76

Artists Exhibited

12

Gallery Shop Exhibitions

677

Artworks Exhibited*

5

Public Realm Artworks

284

Collection Works Exhibited

*Artworks counted from Major Exhibitions only



Nick Selenitsch:
Form & The Universe of Colour
Install image, 2021

Exhibition Program

Nick Selenitsch: *Form & The Universe of Colour*
continuing to 6 February 2022
Bennett Gallery
2022 Attendance: 2,433

Form & The Universe of Colour brought together a collection of recent works by Nick Selenitsch and an ambitious new project specifically developed for Benalla Art Gallery. Thematically, the exhibition focused on the most basic of artistic characteristics: Form and Colour. Works from recent solo exhibitions & (2020) and *The Nature of Things* (2016) were presented alongside a site-specific chalk drawing, O, which encouraged the contributions of visitors and particularly young audiences over the Summer holiday period.

Pauline Fraser: *Contemplating Nature*
continuing to 13 February 2022
Simpson Gallery
2022 Attendance: 2,447

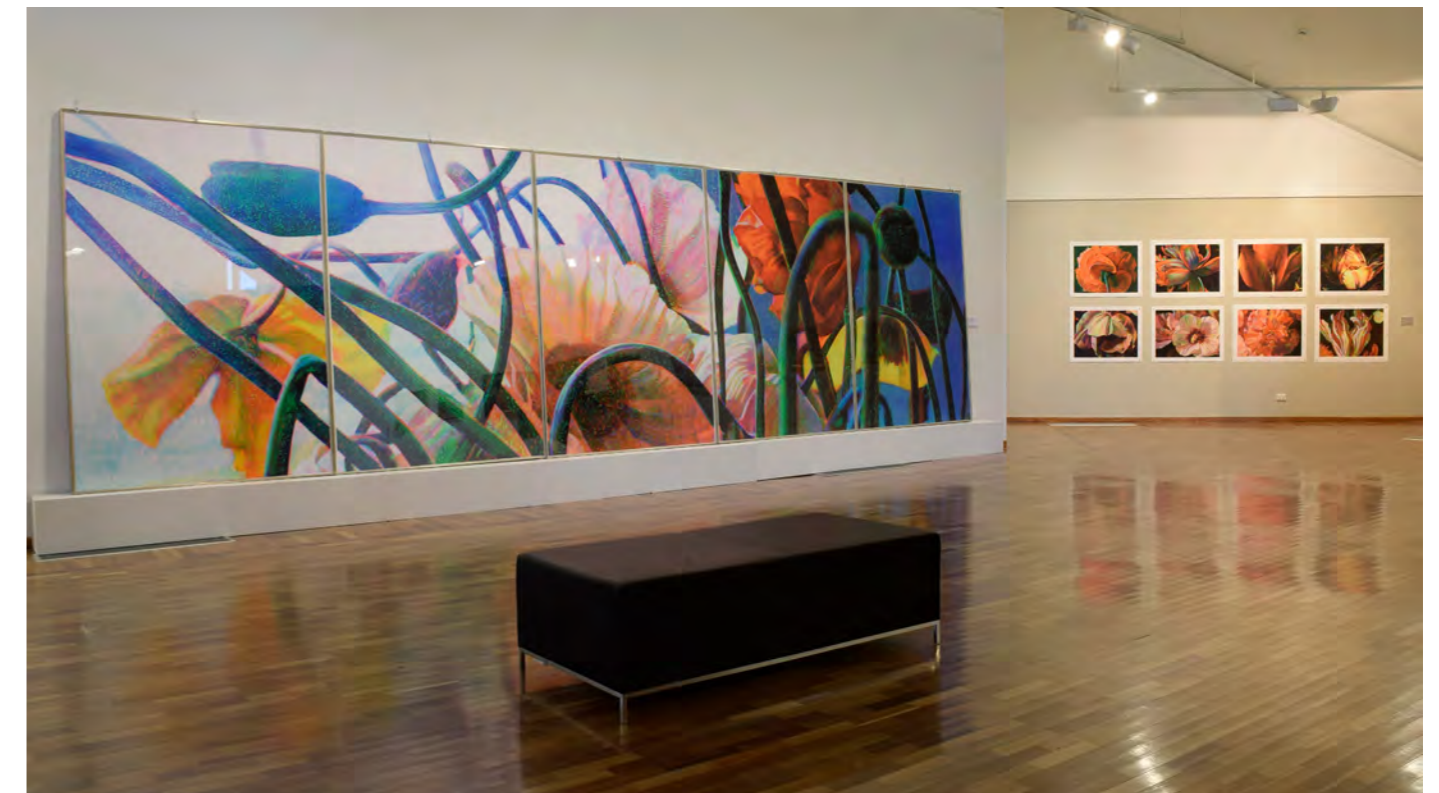
In *Contemplating Nature*, nationally regarded artist Pauline Fraser explored the Lurg landscape surrounding her home studio through an expansive body of prints and ceramics. While environmental concerns associated with this landscape have driven her practice for multiple decades, the genesis for this body of work was a heightened emotional response brought about by two powerful converging forces; the recent extreme bushfire season which devastated Victoria's north east while amplifying the drama of the landscape, and a global pandemic which both forced and allowed Fraser to forge an even closer connection to her home surrounds.

Re-generation

Benalla Art Gallery Collection
continuing to 20 February 2022
Ledger Gallery
2022 Attendance: 3,313

Re-generation celebrated Benalla Art Gallery's position within the beautiful Botanical Gardens, a setting of heritage significance established in the 19th century. Developed in consultation with Curatorial Assistant Selina Wilmott, the exhibition showcased floral and botanical highlights from the Benalla Art Gallery Collection. Exhibited works paid homage to the diverse traditional and contemporary approaches to this genre in Australian art, whilst also exploring the relationship between the Gardens and the Gallery. The exhibition also encouraged community reflection about their relationship to the Gardens through the inclusion of projected historical and submitted images.

Re-generation:
Benalla Art Gallery Collection
Install image, 2021



Pauline Fraser:
Contemplating Nature
Install image, 2021



My recent exhibition was an outstanding success, for me as an artist, both personally and professionally. The opportunity to exhibit artwork portraying my investigations into an environment near Benalla, a focus of my artistic endeavours for a prolonged period, was unique and inspirational. So wonderful to have had this opportunity to connect with an audience who admired my work, and who shared this same connection to place.

Overall, I received brilliant recognition, at the official opening, in local newspapers, online and by word of mouth. The public acknowledgement has been an incredible boost to my professional standing as an Australian artist.

Pauline Fraser

Adrienne Doig: It's All About Me!

A Bathurst Regional Art Gallery touring exhibition
 11 February to 3 April 2022
 Bennett Gallery
 2022 Attendance: 4,792

Through the lens of self-portraiture, Adrienne Doig tackles the everyday with good humour and wit. The Wangaratta-raised artist, now based in the Blue Mountains, returned to North East Victoria with her momentous survey exhibition, *Adrienne Doig: It's All About Me!* The exhibition drew upon the past three decades of the artist's practice and fused historical references and humour to respond to the everyday and reflect on the now.

Adrienne Doig:
It's All About Me!
 Install image, 2022



The Human Figure

Benalla Art Gallery Collection
 18 February to 10 April 2022
 Simpson Gallery
 2022 Attendance: 3,006

Benalla Art Gallery presented a suite of key figurative works from the Benalla Art Gallery Collection. This exhibition explores the ways in which artists have depicted the human figure across time. Many of these works were of anatomical interest, showing how the human body behaves in repose and in motion. On another level, these works highlighted evolving social norms, such as fashion and self representation.



Above:
The Human Figure:
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection
 Install image, 2022

Right:
 Ivan Durrant presents an artist talk as part of the *First Mondays* program to coincide with his work featuring in *The Human Figure*
 Photo: Doug Spowart



As part of a touring exhibition 'It's All About Me!', a survey show of my work was mounted at Benalla Art Gallery in early 2022. The exhibition in Benalla has been a highlight of the tour. Having grown up in north east Victoria this was an important occasion for me. The location is beautiful, the exhibition spaces are good and the gallery is very well run and organised.

Adrienne Doig



The Ledger Collection
Benalla Art Gallery Collection
Install image, 2022

The Ledger Collection

Benalla Art Gallery Collection

4 March 2022 to 14 May 2023

Ledger Gallery

2022 Attendance: 28,732

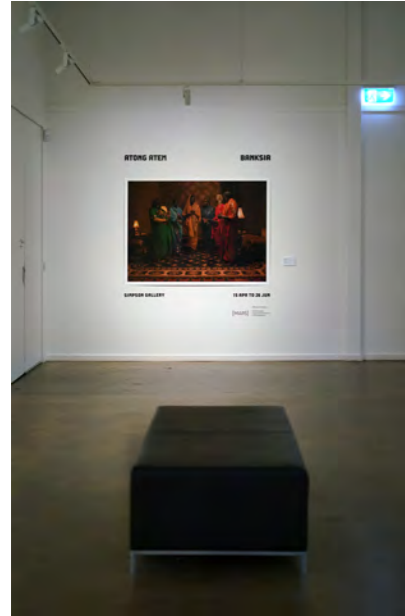
Laurence (Laurie) Ledger MBE, his wife Erma Ledger and their farming enterprise 'Wooleen' are arguably Benalla Art Gallery's most significant patrons to date. In 1972, the Ledgers donated 150 works from their personal collection of Australian art, coupled with a monetary donation of \$75,000 for the design and construction of the Benalla Art Gallery. The Ledgers' generosity was further demonstrated through a subsequent gift of Laurie's entire collection, and an Acquisition Trust Fund of \$200,000.

The works have formed the foundation of the Collection and featured in many exhibitions. By 1993 the Ledgers had donated to Benalla Art Gallery more than 450 works created from the 1840s through to the 1980s. Presented in the Salon style, this exhibition—likely the most expansive exhibition celebrating this donation in the Gallery's history—featured around half of the Ledgers' total gift.

The exhibition spanned early colonial settlement in Australia; the Heidelberg School; Impressionism by Australian and French artists; through to Modernism—at home and abroad.

The most interesting collection and presentation of Australian art I have seen – engaging.

Gallery visitor



Atong Atem: Banksia
Install image, 2022

Atong Atem: Banksia

Official exhibition of
PHOTO 2022 International Festival of Photography
15 April to 26 June 2022
Simpson Gallery
2022 Attendance: 3,668

Exploring the lesser-known history of Australia's first African settlers, *Banksia* considered migrant stories from a non-colonial perspective. The video—accompanied by an arresting score by Melbourne composer Jerry Agbinya—and photographic series worked in conjunction to reveal otherwise obscured layers of history on a cinematic scale.

The works highlighted the experience of African men and women who arrived on the First Fleet in 1788—a colonial history that started long before Atem's own family arrived from South Sudan in 1997.

Benalla Art Gallery presented for the first time a gallery exhibition of the photographic stills, in concert with a nightly outdoor screening of the video work *Banksia*.

Oculi: Acts I-VII

Official exhibition of
PHOTO 2022 International Festival of Photography
29 April to 17 July 2022
Bennett Gallery
2022 Attendance: 6,896

Oculi, an Australia-based collective of 18 photographers united by a shared commitment to the power of visual storytelling, transformed Benalla Art Gallery with their exhibition *Acts I-VII*—first conceived as a reformulation of the philosopher Rudolph Steiner's *Seven Year Life Stages*.

The exhibition explored seven universal experiences that lie at the heart of our existence: love and fear, trauma and grief, freedom and oppression, control and uncertainty, belonging and exclusion, science and spirit, life and death.

Featuring new and existing work from its members—some unseen, some revisited and some in collaboration with the Benalla community—*Acts I-VII* marked Oculi's third decade as a photography collective. The presented projects, interwoven with reflections from the artists about their work and process, revealed a group considering its roles, responsibilities, archives and desires amidst two years of social and environmental upheaval. *Acts I-VII* provided a reminder of what connects us and a prompt for contemplation.

The exhibition was curated by OCULI members Aishah Kenton, Abigail Varney, Alana Holmberg, Tajette O'Halloran, and Rachel Mounsey in conversation with Natasha Christia.

OCULI: Acts I-VII
Install image, 2022
Photo: Sean Davey





Top:
Benalla Centenarian Sylvia Draeger
with artist Peter Wegner

Bottom:
Peter Wegner completing his portrait of
Benalla Centenarian Bill Gregory

Peter Wegner: The Centenarians

1 July to 28 August 2022

Simpson Gallery

2022 Attendance: 3,111

The Centenarians celebrated a project which commenced in 2013 when acclaimed artist Peter Wegner drew his Aunty Rita. This formative sitting inspired Wegner to seek out other Centenarians who were still living lives with mobility, curiosity and purpose. In the eight years since Rita's portrait, the artist had completed portraits of well over 100 Centenarians across Victoria and New South Wales.

This exhibition featured twenty Centenarian portraits, including three of Benalla subjects; Bill Gregory, Sylvia Draeger, and Jean Fuleky.

Bush Diwan

Developed by 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art

5 August to 16 October 2022

Bennett Gallery

2022 Attendance: 5,597

Curated by Amrit Gill and Reina Takeuchi, and featuring works by artists Manisha Anjali, Anindita Banerjee, Perun Bonser, Monisha Chippada, Sukhjit Kaur Khalsa, and Amardeep Shergill, *Bush Diwan* was a contemporary reimagining of Benalla local Siva Singh's story from the perspective of artists from South Asian diasporas and First Nations communities.

The Punjabi word diwan means gathering or religious event, an important practice in community formation and connecting to a place. Inspired by Siva Singh and the offerings his community leadership left behind, *Bush Diwan* asked us to consider the processes of migration, reconciliation with homeland, and how his migratory narrative continues to resonate in contemporary Australia.

Siva Singh arrived in Australia in approximately 1896, and worked as a hawker in Benalla and the surrounding regions from 1898. He established himself as part of the local community—widely recognised for his distinctive pink turban—and owned a 320 acre farm by 1915.

Siva Singh took on the duties of a Granthi or custodian of the Sikh scriptures in Benalla and surrounding regions. Following the arrival of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji (Sikh scriptures) in Australia, he arranged an Akhand Path, a ceremonial continuous reading, on his farm on 16 December 1920. Attended by approximately 30 Sikhs, the ceremony was performed for Hernam Singh.

Photographed by William John Howship, it was the first known Akhand Path that included the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji in Australia. Siva Singh is also remembered for his personal fight against the White Australia Policy, which saw him struck off the electoral roll, despite having voted in three previous elections. While his court case was initially thrown out, and Siva Singh ordered to pay the legal costs, he regained the right to vote in 1925 after a decade-long legal battle.

From moving-image to stills, sound to ritualistic performance, and textiles to installation, *Bush Diwan* presented six artists whose works responded to the universal story of Siva Singh and his contribution to Sikh history and anti-racism movements in Australia.

4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art and Benalla Art Gallery acknowledge the advocacy, research, advice and support of others who have left a legacy of stronger awareness and understanding of Siva Singh's story, and directly assisted in developing and delivering Bush Diwan and associated public programs: Benalla Migrants Association; the Sikh communities of Benalla, Shepparton and northeast Victoria; Benalla Historical Society; Australian Indian Historical Society; Shepparton Sikh Gurdwara; Tandoori Hut Benalla; and Benalla Migrant Camp.



Bush Diwan
Install image, 2022
Photo: Sean Davey

Michael Cook: Invasion

2 September to 23 October 2022

Simpson Gallery

2022 Attendance: 2,338

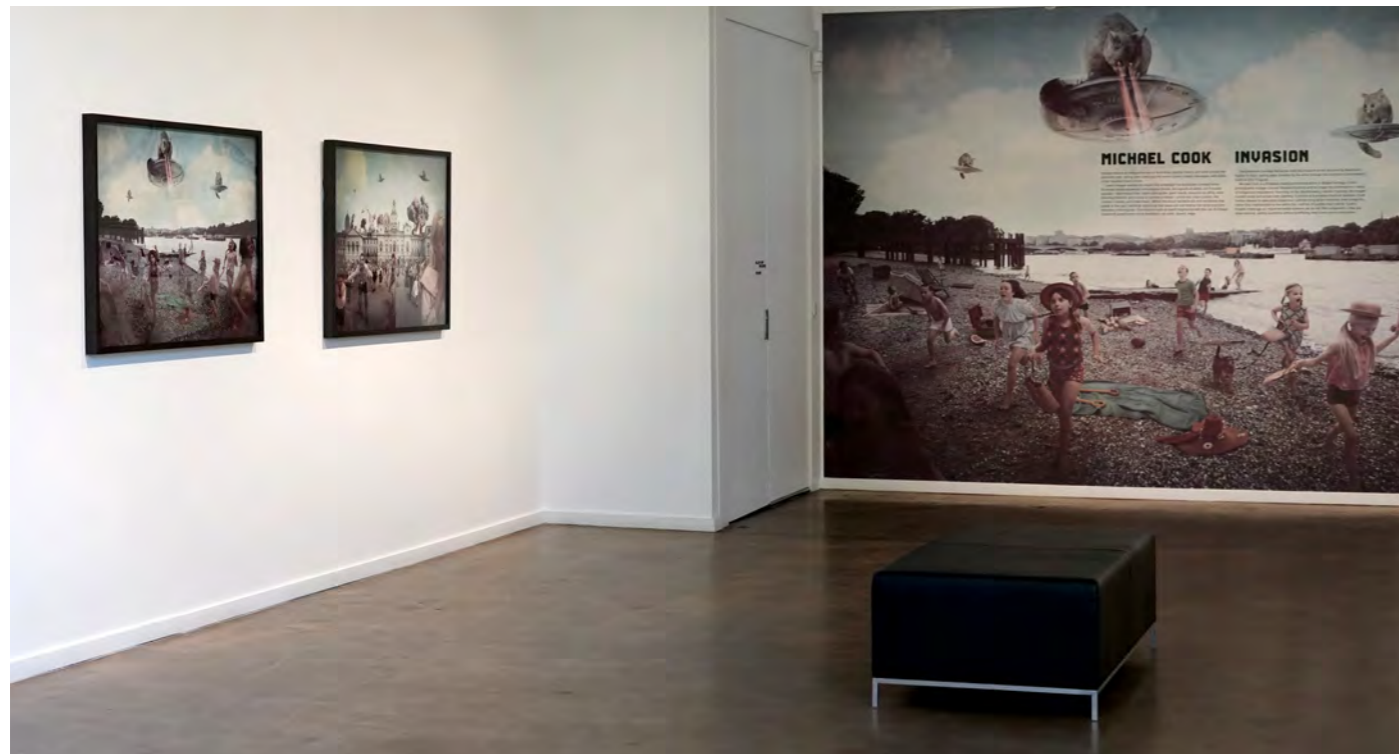
Michael Cook's *Invasion* series places an imaginative eye on Australian colonial history and turns around the dominant view, taking alien creatures into iconic London-based cityscapes with white urban residents their victims.

Cook's images expressed the shock that enveloped the Australian continent when European people appeared on Aboriginal shores. The drama of such an event was heightened by the artist through the use of vintage-inspired B-grade horror movie aesthetics—an ironic 'spoofy' edge.

The exhibition comprised five works acquired by Benalla Art Gallery in 2021, having been donated by the artist through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program.

Top: Benalla Art Gallery Director Eric Nash in discussion with artist Michael Cook. Photo: Doug Spowart

Bottom: *Michael Cook: Invasion* Install image, 2022



Showcase 2022

21 October to 20 November 2022

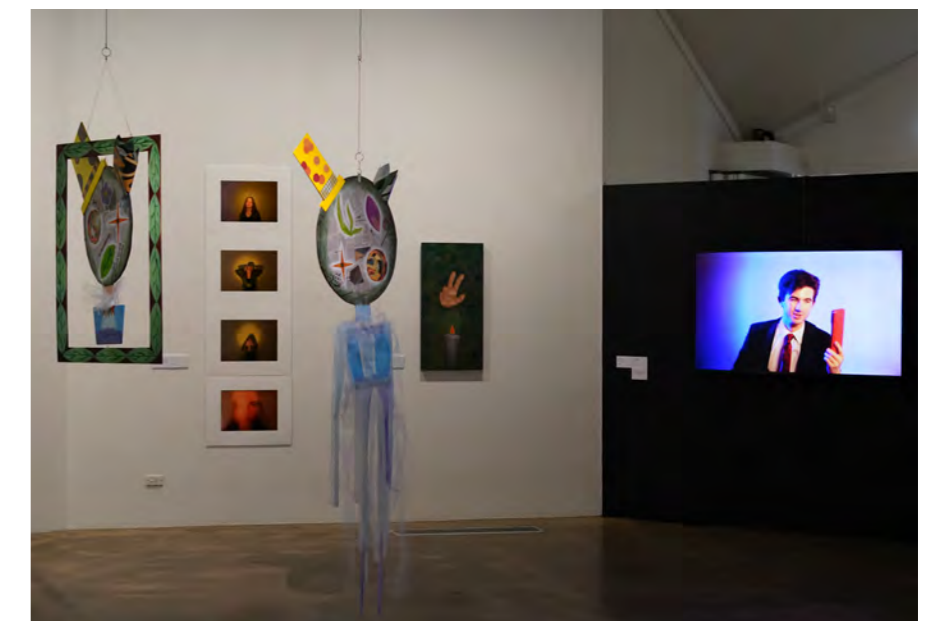
Bennett Gallery

2022 Attendance: 2,960

Showcase 2022, an annual exhibition celebrating the artistic talents of Benalla and North East Victorian students, featured over 40 works by 21 talented students hailing from Benalla P-12; FCJ College; Euroa Secondary College; and Galen Catholic College, Wangaratta.

Featured in the exhibition were drawings, paintings, prints, photography, sculpture, new media, and graphic design. The exhibition also included a rotating display of student preparatory support material, such as folios and notebooks, providing visitors with greater insight into the development of works.

The exhibition continues to provide students from across the region the opportunity for artistic recognition in a public art space. Representative of a range of media and topics, this exhibition highlighted the creativity and diverse talents of young and emerging artists within our community.



Showcase 2022 Install image, 2022



Jacqui Stockdale:
The Outlaws' Inn
 Install image, 2022

Jacqui Stockdale: The Outlaws' Inn

28 October 2022 to 29 January 2023

Simpson Gallery

2022 Attendance: 4,402

Benalla Art Gallery presented *The Outlaws' Inn* by Jacqui Stockdale, a nationally recognised artist who hails from Benalla/Wangaratta.

The exhibition explored the history and mythology of the Ned Kelly story, with Stockdale fascinated by dominant narratives of Australian colonial folklore. Recent work by the artist has been “propelled by a question I asked myself as a young girl riding bareback through the hills of ‘Kelly country’... what really happened here?”

The installation evoked the feeling of entering The Ann Jones Inn, Glenrowan, the site at which the Kelly Gang ‘imprisoned’ 62 locals without resistance. As the hours passed waiting for the constabulary’s train, the Gang are believed to have insisted on drinks being poured, and for everyone to enjoy music, singing and dancing.

Stockdale speaks of an intent to create an environment where visitors “feel privy to a siege, a wake, or a bushranger’s family reunion.”

The exhibition featured as a signature exhibition of the 2022 *Benalla Festival*, and Gallery programming during the Festival period included a free concert by the Benalla Classical Guitar Ensemble; an exhibition celebration; Auslan interpreted youth workshops at the Village Arts Precinct; and a resulting piece of street theatre titled *The Last Hoorah*. The exhibition and programs were made possible with funding provided through Inland Rail.

Between the Details: Video Art from the ACMI Collection

An ACMI touring exhibition

9 December 2022 to 26 February 2023

Bennett Gallery

2022 Attendance: 2,179

Benalla Art Gallery closed the 2022 exhibition program with an Australian premiere of a new exhibition from ACMI (Australian Centre for the Moving Image).

Between the Details: Video Art from the ACMI Collection showcased six moving image artworks by Australian artists Kaylene Whiskey, Jason Phu, Deborah Kelly, Zanny Begg, David Rosetzky, and Christian Thompson, and celebrated ACMI's vibrant collecting and commissioning program.

ACMI Director and CEO, Seb Chan, said: "ACMI has a proud history of supporting the creation of new Australian moving image works through its commissioning and collecting programs. As part of our touring exhibitions, it's a joy for us to bring six works to the Benalla Art Gallery via *Between the Details: Video Art from the ACMI Collection*. The featured works demonstrate—in distinct ways—how the moving image can powerfully engage our emotions, our memories and our imaginations."

Benalla Art Gallery's hosting of *Between the Details: Video Art from the ACMI Collection* was made possible with support from Panasonic, local sponsor Ray White Benalla, and through the Victorian Government through the Living Local Regional Grants Program and Engage!

The works in this exhibition were commissioned by ACMI, Artbank, Carriageworks, City of Melbourne, Melbourne Art Foundation, Professor Cav. Simon Mordant AO and Catriona Mordant AM, John Allsopp (Web Directions), Bundanon Trust, and assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts.



Audience member enjoying Deborah Kelly's *The Gods of Tiny Things* 2019
Benalla Art Gallery, 2022



Visitors speaking with artist Pauline Fraser at the end of year Gallery Shop event

Gallery Shop Exhibitions

1 January to 31 December 2022

In 2022, Benalla Art Gallery activated a new program of Gallery Shop Exhibitions, displayed in two cabinets prominently positioned at reception, and programmed from applications received. Throughout the year, eleven exhibitions were presented by the following artists:

- Pauline Fraser
- Maggie Hollins
- Lorna Hobbs
- Susie Buykx
- Joan Mullarvey
- Border & North East Basketmakers Group
- Liz Walker
- Molly Herry-Carscallen
- Melanie Ball (Appliquez Moi)
- Juliet Ferguson
- Edie Black

Audiences were encouraged to engage more deeply with the practices of these artists through a number of artist talks and exhibition celebrations, while an end of year Gallery Shop event brought together the majority of 2022 exhibitors to present new work.

The new program was designed to better promote and support local and regional creative practices. In total, over \$20,000 of sales were generated through the exhibition program, a direct response to the Australia Council for the Arts' *The Arts in Regional Australia: A Research Summary* (2017) which concluded that "artists living in the regions earn almost a third less than their city counterparts for creative work." A majority of Gallery Shop exhibitors have become regular stockists at Benalla Art Gallery and continue to derive income.

Benalla Art Gallery continued to present work by artists from Arts Project Australia through a collaboration with the onsite cafe, Munro & Sargeant.



Top Left: Visitor viewing new work by Lorna Hobbs at the end of year Gallery Shop event



Top Right: Ceramic works displayed as part of Susie Buykx's Gallery Shop exhibition *Teepee Fired Pots*



Bottom Left: Artist talk by Joan Mullarvey



Bottom Right: Edie Black's *Song to the Siren Pendant* displayed as part of the Gallery Shop exhibition *Complex Ground*

I think it quite understandable that having done pottery for many years, I was somewhat nervous and overwhelmed to be offered an exhibition at Benalla Art Gallery.

My real love, which I have been doing for some years, is tee pee firing, where for the second firing the pots are placed upon a bed of sawdust in a tee pee made from fence palings, and covered with random fuel. It has been a truly wonderful experience. The gallery staff are such a delightful group of people, whom I now consider friends. They welcomed me with open arms, and praised my work, which did give the old morale a boost! Their ability at arranging and displaying my pots was amazing, I hardly recognised it as being my work. I feel extremely privileged to have been given this opportunity and thank each member of staff from the bottom of my heart.

Susie Buykx

Public Realm Artworks
April to December 2022

Benalla Art Gallery's program expanded into the public realm in 2022 through temporary works and nightly projections in conjunction with the program of major exhibitions.

In April, Benalla Art Gallery activated a new after-dark projection space to provide an outdoor venue for contemporary video artwork; live artistic events; greater insight into the Benalla Art Gallery history, Collection and exhibitions; and support community arts events in the Benalla Botanical Gardens.

The after-dark projection space was equally funded by the RACV Community Foundation, the Victorian State Government through the North East Victoria Tourism Board, and the Victorian State Government's \$2.5M Building Works Package.

The program commenced with nightly screenings of Atong Atem's video work *Banksia* in conjunction with the Simpson Gallery exhibition. The year's program continued with *Lost Negatives*, a documentary produced by Jake Lloyd Jones of Merja Media exploring Dean Sewell's *Russia Files* (1996) and the process of developing the photos after so many years; and Anindita Banerjee's *Transient Temples* and Sukhjit Kaur Khalsa and Perun Bonser's *See you at the train station* presented in conjunction with the major exhibition *Bush Diwan*.

The 2022 projection program concluded with Jacqui Stockdale's first film work, *The Secret Story of the Outlaws' Inn*, made in collaboration with Iranian-Australian animator and illustrator, Shirin Shakhesi. Benalla Art Gallery acknowledges the support of Inland Rail for this project.

Presented from April to July in the Benalla Botanical Gardens, Rachel Mounsey's *Space Between Strangers* was a temporary art installation of large scale tin type portraits of Benalla community members.



Top: Rachel Mounsey's *Space Between Strangers* presented in the Benalla Botanical Gardens
Photo: Sean Davey

Bottom: *Atong Atem: Banksia* projected nightly from 15 April to 26 June 2022

Created in a make-shift darkroom during a one-week residency at Benalla Art Gallery, the portraits reflected a single captured moment following an intimate one-hour conversation between sitter and the artist.

Commissioned to accompany *ACTS I-VII*, Oculi's exhibition at Benalla Art Gallery exploring seven modes of being, *Space Between Strangers* explored these same seven modes with the local community: love and fear, trauma and healing, freedom and oppression, belonging and exclusion, spirit and science, uncertainty and control, life and death.

This project was commissioned by Photo Australia for the *PHOTO 2022 International Festival of Photography*, and assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body. This project was made possible by the Australian Government's Regional Arts Fund, which supports the arts in regional and remote Australia. Supported by the Restart Investment to Sustain and Expand (RISE) Fund, an Australian Government initiative.

ENGAGEMENT

Benalla Art Gallery seeks to engage the community through a comprehensive range of activities and programs. The Gallery is deeply embedded in and enriches the daily life of the community.

In 2022, the Gallery presented over 80 engagement programs for more than 2,300 participants. Many programs deepened and enriched visitor experiences of the exhibitions on display.

Regular programs in 2022 included:

- Artist Talks
- Guided Tours
- School holiday workshops for ages 8 to 15
- Workshops for adults facilitated by professional artists
- Exhibition Launches
- Concerts
- Industry Talks

84

Engagement Programs

3

Concerts

2,310

Program Participants

9

Exhibition Celebrations

24

Artist and Industry Talks

40

Workshops

Engagement Program

The Power of Cultural Infrastructure

30 January, 19 February, and 12 March 2022
2022 Participation: 120

The Power of Cultural Infrastructure series commenced in December 2021 with a presentation by Katrina Sedgwick OAM, Director and CEO of ACMI. Benalla Art Gallery presented a further three talks in 2022 by leaders in the cultural sector.

The series was designed to provide insight into the social, economic, and cultural achievements of the speakers' respective institutions, and more broadly of the cultural sector.

Talks presented in 2022 were:

- Nicole Durling
Executive Director, CRAFT and former
Director of Collections and Exhibitions, MONA
Going outside the Gallery
- Bree Pickering
Director, MAMA Albury
Creating Spaces for Stronger Communities
- Tarragh Cunningham
Assistant Director,
Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art
Opportunities and Experiences

The series was developed and presented with support from partners MPavilion and RACV, with the talks also recorded and published via the Gallery website.





Top: Adrienne Doig artist talk

Bottom: Oculi's *First Mondays* talk
Photo: Sean Davey

First Mondays

Monthly throughout 2022

2022 Participation: 333

Originating from a program presented for the University of the Third Age (U3A), *First Mondays* is an eclectic, ever-changing, curated program of talks and tours.

The talks include discussions on works from the Collection, deeper explorations into current exhibitions by artists, and topical discussions by contemporary artists and senior figures in the sector.

Talks presented in 2022 were:

- Anna White
Artist
In my father's garden video art screening and discussion
- Ivan Durrant
Artist
Artist talk coinciding with the presentation of Durrant's Benalla Art Gallery Collection work, *To kill a mockingbird (Backpackers)*
- Adrienne Doig
Artist
Artist talk coinciding with the major survey exhibition, *Adrienne Doig: It's All About Me!*
- Alana Holmberg, Aishah Kenton, Rachel Mounsey, and Abigail Varney
Oculi photographers
An introduction to the exhibition *ACTS I-VII*
- Robyn Sloggett AM
Director, Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation
An introduction to artwork conservation
- Peter Wegner
Artist
Artist talk coinciding with the solo exhibition, *Peter Wegner: The Centenarians*



Top: Jason Smith speaks on the life and practice of Clarice Beckett
Photo: Doug Spowart

Bottom: Amrit Gill's *First Mondays* talk

- Jason Smith
Director and CEO, Geelong Gallery
The Life and Work of Clarice Beckett coinciding with the presentation of Beckett's Benalla Art Gallery Collection work, *Spring morning*
- Brenda Wellman
Curator, Education and Programs, Benalla Art Gallery
An exploration of Wellman's curation of the major Collection exhibition, *The Ledger Collection*
- Amrit Gill
Artistic Director and CEO,
4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art (4A)
An insight into Gill and 4A's practice of *Curating Migration Stories*, as evidenced in the exhibition *Bush Diwan*
- Claire Bridge and Chelle DeStefano
Artists
A talk exploring Bridge and DeStefano's project *What I Wish I'd Told You*, which centred on Deaf voices, identity, language and culture
Presented in collaboration with + Concepts
- Jacqui Stockdale
Artist
Artist talk on Stockdale's artistic fascination with *Folklore Narratives, Masquerade and 'The Outlaws' Inn'*

Recently, I sat in the audience to hear the First Mondays talk by members of the Oculi Collective surrounded by their wonderfully curated exhibition 'ACTS I-VII'. The photographers spoke from the heart. I felt a strong emotional response to their frank disclosures of the personal impact they experienced while documenting trauma. The connection between the works on display and the experiences of the photographers added a deeper understanding of our shared humanity.

Maggie Hollins

PHOTO 2022 International Festival of Photography
 13 to 15 May 2022
 2022 Participation: 365

Benalla Art Gallery has enthusiastically participated in the *PHOTO International Festival of Photography* since its inception; presenting Damien Shen's *A stone from another mountain* in 2021, and this year delivering a more ambitious offering of exhibitions, public programs, and outdoor activations.

In 2022, Benalla Art Gallery presented Atong Atem's photographic exhibition *Banksia*, in concert with nightly screenings of the video work on a newly activated projection facade. In parallel, the Gallery hosted Oculi's expansive exhibition *Acts I-VII*, and with the support of Photo Australia installed associated portraits by Oculi member Rachel Mounsey in the nearby Botanical Gardens.

A focused weekend of programming was staged from 13-15 May, including:

- Oculi Panel Talk: *The Power of Collective*
- Oculi Exhibition Celebration: *Acts I-VII*
- Oculi Panel Talk: *Documenting Trauma*
- Atong Atem Artist Talk and Exhibition Celebration: *Banksia*
- Oculi Slide Night
- Oculi Guided Exhibition Tour: *Acts I-VII*

Surveying of participants over this weekend revealed the exhibitions and programs were the main reason for visiting for 67% of respondents—19% of those guests being from interstate, and a further 59% from elsewhere in the state. These visitors spent an average of 2.2 nights in Benalla, injecting over \$250 each into the local economy.



Top: Oculi's *Documenting Trauma*
 Panel Talk
 Photo: Doug Spowart

Bottom: Atong Atem presenting an
 artist talk
 Photo: Doug Spowart



Concerts

30 July, 4 November and 19 November 2022
2022 Participation: 223

Following significant COVID impact to Benalla Art Gallery's popular music program in 2020 and 2021, the Gallery resumed staging concerts from July 2022. The three concerts staged in 2022 were:

- Jonathon Glonek performs Paganini's *24 Caprices*
- Benalla Classical Guitar Ensemble perform a mixture of folk, pop and classical music
- Aequales Ensemble perform Beethoven's *String Trio in D major, Op.9 Nr.2* and Brahms' *Piano Quartet in A major Op.26*.

The resumption of the concert series was well received by the local community, many who have been involved in the staging of concerts at the Gallery across the past forty years. The continuing affection for Gallery concerts was evidenced by an average attendance of 74 in 2022.



Jonathon Glonek performs
Paganini's *24 Caprices*

School Holiday Workshops

Summer, Autumn, Winter, and Spring 2022
2022 Participation: 211

Benalla Art Gallery staged 16 free and low-cost workshop activities during school holidays in 2022. Workshops were designed and facilitated by Gallery staff and professional artists, both local and visiting.

Children and their guardians were invited to try their hand at a range of art activities, from plein air painting and street art, to printmaking and paper folding, from mosaics, soft sculpture, felting and fashion, to portrait masterclasses and bushranger paintings.

A number of highlight programs were delivered in partnership, such as the annual *NGV Kids on Tour* programs, and workshops presented by The Village Festival in the lead up to the *Benalla Festival*.



Autumn School Holiday *Paper Folding*
workshop participant

Art on Saturdays

Summer, Autumn, Winter, and Spring 2022
2022 Participation: 161

Benalla Art Gallery offered a variety of art workshops for adults and youth during 2022, inviting participants to immerse themselves in creative activities guided by professional artists.

In total, 20 sessions were presented in 2022:

- *Plein Air Painting* with Mark Dober
- *Linocut* with Fleur Rendell (2 sessions)
- *Wet Felting* with Annie Longmuir
- *Nuno Felting* with Annie Longmuir
- *Soft Pastels* with Jennifer Paull (3 sessions)
- *Botanical Watercolours* with Margaret Zaal
- *Illustration and Drawing* with Mimi Leung
- *Painting in Abstraction* with Anthea Kemp
- *From Subject to Painting* with Frank Burgers (2 sessions)
- *Papier Mâché Sculpture* with Taro Iiyama (2 sessions)
- *Portrait Masterclass* with Peter Wegner
- *Life Drawing* with Janet Leith (2 sessions)
- *Botanical Printmaking* with Maggie Hollins
- *Modern Expressionism* with Andy Pye

In addition to providing a social outlet and capacity building for community members of all artistic skill levels, the *Art on Saturdays* program continues to provide a valuable employment opportunity for artists of the region.



Top: Anthea Kemp teaches Painting in Abstraction

Right: Participants share their outcomes from Maggie Hollins' Botanical Printmaking class



EDUCATION

Benalla Art Gallery is a key learning resource for students and educators in North East Victoria. It is committed to providing a meaningful experience for learners and educators at all levels to engage with works of art through learning programs that address current curricula.

Students can develop new skills and perspectives through creative programs for schools that extend learning beyond the classroom. Tours and workshops provide inspiration for students at all levels.

In 2022, Benalla Art Gallery continued to play a significant role in the education of students in the region, recognising that students who actively engaged with arts, culture and creative activities have higher levels of motivation and self-discipline, better self-esteem, higher life satisfaction and were better at bouncing back from academic setbacks.

Highlights from this year's Education program include partnering to deliver the inaugural FCJ Arts Festival; programs in partnership with the Tomorrow Today Foundation; hosting the Australian Children's Laureate; and free monthly creative programs for under 5s.

32

Education Programs

1

School Arts Festival

1,217

Program Participants

12

School and
Education Provider
Partners

1

Student Exhibition

21

Student Artists
Exhibited



FCJ students take part in the Cinespace Smartphone Stories workshops as part of the FCJ Arts Festival

Education Program

FCJ Arts Festival

2 to 3 May 2022

2022 Participation: 300

FCJ College partnered with Benalla Art Gallery to assist in coordinating and hosting its inaugural Arts Festival, which saw students from all year groups take part in a range of artistic activities, including painting, felting, stencil street art, observational drawing, tie-dyeing, documentary photography artist talks, performance poetry, Celtic singing, and smartphone video editing.

Participating local and visiting artists were afforded artist fees by FCJ College.

FCJ College Principal, Shaun Mason, explained he was “really keen to see the arts expand at FCJ, and this was an opportunity for students to be involved with performing arts and visual arts. We had a great relationship with the gallery connecting us to local artists, it was just wonderful.” Mr Mason also noted students were already looking forward to next year in light of the success of the first festival and FCJ’s partnership with the Gallery.

PEEP workshops

May and November 2022

2022 Participation: 261

Benalla Art Gallery partnered with the Tomorrow Today Foundation to present workshops as part of the Foundation’s Parents Early Education Partnership (PEEP) Program in 2022. The workshops were held over various dates, including a fortnight of regular programs in November.

PEEP participants take part in a range of activities during the November sessions at Benalla Art Gallery



Tomorrow Today explained, “Our little budding artists had the chance to express their creativity at the Benalla Art Gallery in November. The Gallery is a wonderful asset for Benalla and our PEEP families explored the Gallery and participated in art-making experiences which help develop self-expression, visual processing and motor skills.”

PEEP is a regular program staged by Tomorrow Today, helping parents to develop their parenting skills and increasing their understanding of their children’s development. PEEP groups are for parents, carers and their children, from birth to kindergarten.

Tomorrow Today is a local Foundation working to enable the people of Benalla to create a stronger, more resilient and prosperous rural community. The Foundation’s major project is the Education Benalla Program.



Australian Children's Laureate with Gabrielle Wang

22 November 2022

2022 Participation: 120

Benalla Art Gallery hosted Gabrielle Wang, the 2022-2023 Australian Children's Laureate, who presented two free workshops offered to schools throughout Benalla.

Gabrielle Wang is an author and illustrator born in Melbourne of Chinese heritage whose stories are a blend of Chinese and Western culture with a touch of fantasy. Gabrielle explains her *Imagine a Story* workshops "encourage all children to use their imaginations regularly by reading, drawing and writing stories."

The workshops prompted visual and literary creativity, and imparted important messages:

- Exercise imagination as much as possible by reading, writing and drawing
- Read books by diverse authors about diversity
- Make your local and school libraries your favourite go-to places
- Get inspiration for your own art or stories by visiting art galleries

In delivering the program, the ACL Foundation aims to "enrich the lives of young Australians through the power of story" and is a great supporter of children's literacy and, by association, children's authors.





Little Artists programs in
April, June, July, and August 2022

The impact the 'Little Artists' program has had on my daughter has been amazing. It has given her the opportunity to learn different aspects of art and composition in a fun and relaxed setting. Seeing her connect with other 'little artists' and teaching her to observe things with a different perspective has encouraged her creative side to blossom. From this, we have incorporated more art into our home life as this program has given us the tools to explore more ways to make art from a variety of materials and express ourselves in a different way. The Benalla community is lucky to have such a wonderful program that is free and available for young children. Introducing art to our children at a young age gives them the opportunity to see the world in the most amazing way.

Jo Geddes

Little Artists

Monthly throughout 2022

2022 Participation: 169

Benalla Art Gallery's *Little Artists* program is developed specifically for pre-school children. The program incorporates a combination of reading, movement, singing and games with creative activities to encourage young children, along with their parents and carers, to have fun while learning about art.

Sessions are free and are scheduled for the first week of each month from February to December, and regularly link with exhibitions on display or significant works from the Benalla Art Gallery Collection.

In 2022, the *Little Artists* sessions were:

- February - Abstract Colour Field Collage
- March - Paper Roll Dolls
- May - Modernist Landscapes
- June - A Story of Images
- July - Animal Pinch Pots
- August - Colourful Fabric Wall Hangings
- September - Spring Time Flower Collage
- October - Yarn Picture Art
- November - Ned Kelly Masks
- December - Paste and Create Ornaments

COLLECTION

The Benalla Art Gallery Collection has a storied 50 year history. The past 12 months have been a particularly important period with significant acquisitions, research, digitisation, and planning for future storage needs.

Collection Storage

1 January to 31 December 2022

Planning for the future storage and care of the Collection is well underway. It was announced in late 2020 that Benalla Art Gallery would receive \$3m in State Cultural Infrastructure Project funding to enable Stage 1 redevelopment works. Part of Stage 1 will be the provision of additional Collection storage, and significant progress has been made to this end through the architectural planning progressed in 2022.

Speaking about the project, Benalla Rural City Mayor, Cr Bernie Hearn reflected, “Nearly fifty years after construction, the Benalla Art Gallery building—while beautiful—is ageing and is no longer fit for purpose to meet the challenges that the next fifty years will bring. Collection storage has been beyond capacity for over a decade. We know this is a critical issue and are excited to have received the funding to deliver a solution.”

Significance Assessment

1 April to 31 July 2022

Benalla Art Gallery undertook a Significance Assessment of its Collection in the first half of 2022, with funding through the Community Heritage Grants. Completed by respected Art Consultant Caroline Field, the Significance Report was based on Significance 2.0, a guide to assessing the significance of collections, developed by the Collection Council of Australia Ltd.

Peter WEGNER
Bill Gregory [born 15.12.1921] 2022
pencil and bees wax on paper
64 x 48 cm
2022.002
Donated by the artist, Peter Wegner, 2022
Benalla Art Gallery Collection
© Courtesy of the artist
Photo: Christian Capurro



Born in Murtree
Bill Gregory born 15th December 1921
Five daughters
19 grand children
29 great grand children

I started an electrician appraiser in 1939

My first car was a 1921 chev ute I paid £25 for it

Benalla

Benalla Art Gallery Director Eric Nash said the Assessment “will be a critical guiding document, looking beyond the Collection’s financial value to better understand the importance of the Collection to people and communities. Caroline Field determined the Benalla Art Gallery is of historical, artistic and community significance, and has also prepared a number of recommendations for us as to how the Collection would be best cared for, added to, promoted, and made accessible.”

Caroline Field said, “being aware of the strong reputation the Benalla Art Gallery enjoys for its contemporary and traditional art collections, along with the influence of the personalities that assisted the local community in shaping the Collection during its formative years, I was very pleased to formally examine the significance of this impressive collection.”

“The report outlines the historical, community and aesthetic significance of the Collection in light of its reflection of important events in Australian history and the heritage of this region of Victoria. It also evaluates the nature of the Collection with its large body of work by women artists and a well represented Indigenous art collection, and its function in recounting historical and contemporary stories.”

“Discovering the growth and consolidation the Collection has undergone was heartening, and I commend the Gallery and its legacy of directors and wish it all the best for the future.”

Digitisation and Collection Management Reform

1 July to 31 December 2022

Funding through the Ledger Charitable Trust enabled the contracting of a Collections Manager throughout 2022/2023. The Gallery engaged Annabelle Williams, who had previously been Benalla Art Gallery’s AMaGA Working for Victoria Regional Digitisation Support Officer, and is a Masters qualified objects conservator and co-convenor of the AICCM’s Emerging Conservators Special Interest Group.

Important milestones achieved by Williams in 2022 have included finalising the transition of Benalla Art Gallery’s Collection records to a specialised collection management software; practical completion of digitisation of works in the Collection; and the publishing of over 600 artwork images on the Benalla Art Gallery website. In 2023, Williams will continue to progress Benalla Art Gallery’s copyright project.

Acquisitions

1 July to 31 December 2022

The last 12 months have also seen a number of important acquisitions. In July, the Gallery confirmed a donation of three Centenarian portraits of local residents by 2021 *Archibald Prize* winner, Peter Wegner.

Benalla Art Gallery then exhibited five works from nationally celebrated photographer Michael Cook’s *Invasion* series, which were donated by the artist through the Australian Government’s Cultural Gifts Program in 2021 and confirmed in 2022.

Also confirmed through the Australian Government’s Cultural Gifts Program was a donation by Dr Douglas Kagi of 73 artworks, largely works on paper, by 13 recognised Australian artists including Alun Leach-Jones, Arthur Boyd, Euan Macleod, Kim Westcott, Sidney Nolan, Tim Storrier and Tracey Moffatt.

Separately, with funding through the Robert Salzer Foundation and the Benalla Art Gallery Acquisition Trust, an acquisition of seven contemporary works on paper was confirmed in late July. Benalla Art Gallery was one of three successful applicants to the Robert Salzer Foundation, and acquired four photographs by Atong Atem, and three lumachrome glass prints by Judith Nangala Crispin.

In November, Benalla Art Gallery was also a grateful recipient of a direct donation of *Space Between Strangers*, the suite of 27 tin type portraits of the Benalla community by Oculi photographer Rachel Mounsey.

1,141

Total Collection Works

\$30 M

Total Collection Value

3

Collection Exhibitions

284

Collection Works Exhibited

5

Collection Works Loaned to
Peer Institutions

11

Collection Works Acquired

98%

Collection Digitised
[1,121 of 1,141 works]

54%

Collection Images
Viewable Online
[621 of 1,141 works]

1,228

Online Collection
Search Users

Acquisitions in Detail

1 January to 31 December 2022



Peter Wegner
Jean Fuleky 2022
[born 07.11.1921]
pencil and bees wax on paper
64 × 48 cm
2022.001
Donated by the artist,
Peter Wegner, 2022
Benalla Art Gallery Collection
© Courtesy of the artist
Photo: Christian Capurro



Peter Wegner
Sylvia Draeger 2022
[born 10.07.1921]
pencil and bees wax on paper
64 × 48 cm
2022.003
Donated by the artist,
Peter Wegner, 2022
Benalla Art Gallery Collection
© Courtesy of the artist
Photo: Christian Capurro

Peter Wegner
Bill Gregory 2022
[born 15.12.1921]
pencil and bees wax on paper
64 × 48 cm
2022.002
Donated by the artist,
Peter Wegner, 2022
Benalla Art Gallery Collection
© Courtesy of the artist
[pictured page 61]



Judith Nangala Crispin
On a night of meteor showers and lit uranium mines, Jeremy, released from his chickenhawk body by a passing truck, unfolds his thousand eyed wings 2022
 Lumachrome glass print, cliché-verre, chemigram, drawing. Roadkilled chickenhawk, sand, vegemite, household and decomposition chemicals, rodinal, graphite, biro, bromide, wax, and marbles on Fomapan fibre paper, with collaged hand-drawn eyes, exposed 47 hours in rainlight in a geodesic dome
 46.8 × 74.6 cm [image];
 67.0 × 94.7 cm [sheet]
 Edition 1 of 10
 2022.004
 Acquired with the assistance of The Robert Salzer Foundation and the Benalla Art Gallery Acquisition Trust, 2022
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection
 © Courtesy of the artist
 Photo: Christian Capurro

Judith Nangala Crispin
At season's end, fireflies fill the ribbon barks, down by Shoalhaven river. Sunny, lost to traffic, waits all night for dawn, for waking fireflies, and weaves a new body from their glow 2022
 Lumachrome glass print, cliché-verre, chemigram, drawing. Road-killed juvenile hare, twigs, marbles, wax, ochre and seeds on fibre paper, exposed 46 hours in a geodesic dome
 41.6 × 74.6 cm [image];
 61.8 × 94.9 cm, [sheet]
 Edition 2 of 10
 2022.005
 Acquired with the assistance of The Robert Salzer Foundation and the Benalla Art Gallery Acquisition Trust, 2022
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection
 © Courtesy of the artist
 [pictured overleaf]
 Photo: Christian Capurro



Judith Nangala Crispin
Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, hatched in fire and lifting, triumphant over the burning Murray River, on an umbilicus of light 2022
 Lumachrome glass print, cliché-verre, chemigram, acid wash and drawing. Three still born guinea fowl chicks, hen lost to old age, acid, sand, Vegemite and sesame seeds on fibre paper, exposed 23 hours in a geodesic dome in natural sunlight
 51.3 × 75.0 cm [image];
 71.5 × 94.9 cm [sheet]
 Edition 1 of 10
 2022.006
 Acquired with the assistance of The Robert Salzer Foundation and the Benalla Art Gallery Acquisition Trust, 2022
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection
 © Courtesy of the artist
 Photo: Christian Capurro

Atong Atem
Hamam 6 2021
 digital photograph
 73.1 × 100.0 cm [image];
 81.0 × 107.6 cm [sheet]
 Edition 7 of 12 + 2AP
 2022.007
 Acquired with the assistance of The Robert Salzer Foundation and the Benalla Art Gallery Acquisition Trust, 2022
 © Courtesy of the artist



Judith Nangala Crispin
*At season's end, fireflies fill the
ribbon barks, down by Shoalhaven
river. Sunny, lost to traffic, waits
all night for dawn, for waking
fireflies, and weaves a new body
from their glow [detail] 2022*





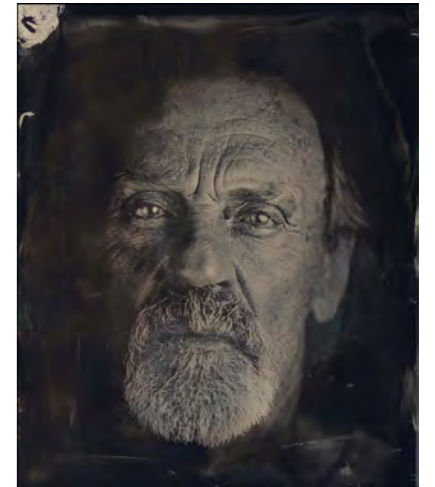
Atong Atem
Water 1 2021
 digital photograph
 73.2 × 100.0 cm [image];
 80.8 × 107.7 cm [sheet]
 Edition 2 of 12 + 2AP
 2022.008
 Acquired with the assistance of
 The Robert Salzer Foundation
 and the Benalla Art Gallery
 Acquisition Trust, 2022
 © Courtesy of the artist



Atong Atem
Malaang in blue 2020
 digital photograph on Ilford
 Smooth Pearl print
 90.0 × 59.8 cm [image];
 94.7 × 64.6 cm [sheet]
 Edition 1 of 10 + 2AP
 2022.009
 Acquired with the assistance of
 The Robert Salzer Foundation
 and the Benalla Art Gallery
 Acquisition Trust, 2022
 © Courtesy of the artist



Atong Atem
Yellow Dress 2 2022
 digital photograph on Ilford
 Smooth Pearl print
 90.0 × 59.9 cm [image];
 95.7 × 65.6 cm [sheet]
 Edition 1 of 10 + 2AP
 2022.010
 Acquired with the assistance of
 The Robert Salzer Foundation
 and the Benalla Art Gallery
 Acquisition Trust, 2022
 © Courtesy of the artist



Rachel Mounsey
Space Between Strangers 2022
 Suite of 27 tintype portraits
 90.0 × 59.9 cm [image];
 95.7 × 65.6 cm [sheet]
 2022.011
 Donated by the artist, Rachel
 Mounsey, 2022
 © Courtesy of the artist



REACH

Benalla Art Gallery was a source of consistent and positive media coverage throughout 2022, enhancing not only the reputation of the Gallery, but contributing positively to Benalla's overall image and visitor profile.

Highlights included:

- *Traveller* article *Best regional galleries in Australia*
- *Time Out Melbourne* article *The top regional galleries to visit in Victoria*
- Profiles and advertisements in national sector magazines, *Art & Australia*, and *Art Almanac*
- *The Centenarians* double-page, illustrated review by Christopher Allen in *The Weekend Australian* arts and culture liftout, *Review*
- National *ArtsHub* e-bulletin feature on *Bush Diwan*
- *Public Works* column on Jacqui Stockdale by Bronwyn Watson in *The Weekend Australian*
- Weekly local and regional print press including Benalla Ensign, and Mansfield, Shepparton and Wangaratta newspapers
- Regular local and regional radio interviews including ABC Mornings and Edge FM Wangaratta
- ABC radio statewide coverage through interview with David Astle
- Social media promotion by reputable peer galleries and artists with extensive followings

3,163

Facebook Followers

6%

Facebook Follower Growth

3,597

Instagram Followers

21%

Instagram Follower Growth

212K

Post Impressions on Facebook and Instagram

24K

Unique Website Users

61K

Website Page Views

2,971

EDM Subscribers

19

EDMs Sent

38%

Average EDM Open Rate
(12% above average Arts Sector Open Rate)



Winsome McCaughey AO
Chair, Benalla Art Gallery Foundation

BENALLA ART GALLERY FOUNDATION

In 2025 the Benalla community celebrates the Golden Jubilee of our beautiful, award-winning Art Gallery building. In 2022 the Benalla Art Gallery Foundation (formerly the Trust) focussed on laying the groundwork for a campaign to raise the significant funds needed to support a major redevelopment of the Gallery. That focus continues in 2023.

In 2019, the community and Council funded the *Benalla Art Gallery Feasibility Study, Business Case & Concept Plan* by Urban Enterprise. This highlighted the Gallery's problems and the opportunities, showing us that the building's size and condition, plus low staffing levels risk the Gallery becoming unviable. But it also found a major Gallery redevelopment would bring huge social, economic and cultural benefits to the city and region. The Study identified 'Option 3' as the redevelopment one that would bring maximum benefits to the City. It's interesting to note related research by leading arts and cultural thinktank, [A New Approach](#). This excellent website provides overwhelming global evidence of the arts' transformative power—from individuals to cities.

The Benalla Art Gallery is the legacy of determined fundraising efforts by earlier generations. These gave Benalla fifty years of wonderful arts and cultural experiences. Now we know the Gallery building urgently needs upgrading and that more resources are needed to fund adequate staffing levels for key programs, it is *critical* for the community, the Council and the Foundation to cooperate on fund raising. Capital costs for the Gallery redevelopment are likely to be in the order of \$16M; current staffing levels are half the number recommended for a gallery of this size.

In November 2022, following long negotiations, the Benalla Art Gallery Acquisition Trust officially became 'The Benalla Art Gallery Foundation'. This is great news because the powers of the Trust were limited to acquisition of art works,



Surface featuring Zoe Porter (Mural/
Costume), Tegan Nash (Dance), Exploko
(Sound), Molly James (Circus). Presented
by Live Art Benalla and hosted by Benalla
Art Gallery. Photo: Doug Spowart

cultural materials and cultural services. Now, the Foundation has power to seek funds in support of capital works. The Directors of the Foundation express their sincere thanks and appreciation to Mr Paul Ellis, Senior Counsel Commercial with Maddocks Melbourne and his team, for the pro bono assistance provided in changing the BAG Acquisition Trust into the BAG Foundation, over a two-year period. The Foundation also thanks the team at Aldous & Hill, Chartered Accountants Benalla, for their generous administrative support and guidance on diverse matters.

During 2022, the Foundation developed phase one of our Investment Strategy. Directors express their sincere thanks to Mr Andrew Miller, Investment Advisor, LGT Crestone Wealth Management Limited, Chair of The Miller Foundation and local rural producer, for his pro bono assistance to the Foundation in this matter.

Raising funds of the magnitude of \$16M in a small rural city is a large, complex challenge. We are very fortunate to have Ms Lin Bender AM, acting as pro bono Consultant and Strategic Advisor to the Foundation. Ms Bender has extensive experience in the philanthropic sector and is an expert in strategy and change management. She kindly facilitated the three community gatherings the Foundation convened in 2022 (see below) which were designed to further the community's understanding of modern fundraising methods and key elements in fundraising campaigns; and to stimulate ideas and suggestions on how to tackle a BAG campaign in the Benalla context:

- *Trust Fundraising Roundtable (February 2022):* brought together people from the key parties that support the Gallery to look at the benefits a Gallery redevelopment could bring Benalla; plus the ways in which other communities are collaborating using modern fundraising methods
- *Trust Fundraising Workshop #1 (July 2022):* provided high-level information on the key elements, activities and resources involved in successfully mounting largescale fundraising campaigns.
- *Trust Fundraising Workshop #2 (October 2022):* looked at the practical implications of implementing a large-scale Gallery Redevelopment Fundraising Campaign in the Benalla context.

At the request of Workshop participants, Ms Bender assisted the Foundation to develop a Fundraising Strategy for the Gallery — for the consideration of all parties wishing to be involved. In doing so, Lin drew on her own deep knowledge of philanthropy, and on ideas arising from the Workshops. The Foundation Directors wish to express their deep thanks and appreciation to Ms Lin Bender AM for so generously

contributing her knowledge, skills and time to Benalla throughout 2022, including facilitating events, driving the Foundation Fundraising Strategy drafting process and providing advice on an 'as needs' basis. Directors also thank the special guest advisors who accompanied Ms Bender to one or more events, Professor Jody Evans, Melbourne Business School and Ms Maggie Maguire OAM.

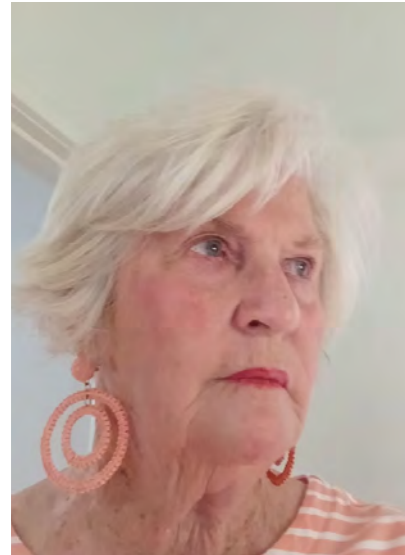
Key elements of the Fundraising Strategy - and ones that will be top Foundation priorities for 2023 include:

- Establishing a Gallery Capital Campaign Committee comprised of high level, influential people to help the community, Council and Foundation raise the funds for the building redevelopment
- Raising funds for the Gallery to develop an integrated Customer Relationship Management System so that *everyone* associated with the Gallery in any way can be encouraged to become a supporter
- Recruiting and engaging a professional BAG Foundation Development Manager (part-time) to drive the Gallery Campaign, and secure the funds to keep this position going during the second and third years.

In relation to Development Manager, Foundation Directors wish to express their deep gratitude to Mrs Mary Tallis, Gallery Life Member, for her very valuable donation to the Foundation. Thanks to this generous gift, the Foundation will be in the position to engage a part-time professional person and to work with the community, the Friends and the Council on a Fundraising Campaign for the Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment.

The Directors wish to thank the Councillors of the Benalla Rural City Council, the Council Senior Executive, the Benalla Art Gallery Director and team, the Friends of the Gallery and the many Benalla community people who helped the Foundation in 2022. We are very grateful for your interest, involvement, encouragement and support.

Winsome McCaughey OA,
Chair of The Benalla Art Gallery Foundation



Jane Grimwade
President, Friends of Benalla Art Gallery

FRIENDS OF BENALLA ART GALLERY

The year 2022 was an unusual year for the Friends due to COVID. Membership was down significantly and some events were cancelled.

Brad Hearn, the past President of the Friends, stepped down at the AGM in September after three years and has remained on the Committee. I would like to thank Brad for his fine leadership for the last three years.

My new Committee is made up of talented people that will steer the Friends through this period of change especially in the direction of membership and in support of the Foundation currently under the stewardship of Winsome McCaughey AO.

In my new short tenure I would like to thank the current and past Committee members for their support; Ellen Crocker and Brad Hearn who collectively as past presidents bring a wealth of knowledge to the Committee alongside Angeline Daniels, Pamela O'Connor, Mike Ross and Neville Gibb, as returning Committee members, and Gail O'Brien as the Council representative with her enthusiasm and energy. Also my thanks outgoing Committee members David Palmer and Helen Price who made a significant contribution in turbulent times. I would also like to thank Margaret Richards for her tireless support of the Friends and Gallery as she retires and I will certainly seek her wisdom.

A very successful lunch with Max Allen, along with a bus trip to *Elvis* at Bendigo Art Gallery was held during the year, but unfortunately due to flood our pre-Christmas cocktail party had to be cancelled. The year 2023 brings a new flush of enthusiasm, and morning coffee parties are planned to introduce a younger group to the Gallery and exhibitions.

The very popular seasonal program will remain on the agenda as the Friends will continue to support and work alongside Eric for all exhibitions.

The membership of the Friends has grown considerably as we enter another year and it is rewarding to see the community embracing the Gallery and participating in supporting a positive future.

There are 62 financial members currently. A recent emphasis has been on providing professional training for Committee members, which is now nearly complete. To embrace our professionalism the Friends will undertake the development of a Strategy in tandem with the Art Gallery and Foundation.

The Friends would like to extend our thanks and appreciation of wine donated to our Gallery openings by Tallis Wines. It is a very generous offer and very much appreciated by the Friends and the Benalla Art Gallery.

I am looking forward to an exciting year ahead as the Friends grow and reflect the new journey for the Art Gallery.

Jane Grimwade
President, Friends of Benalla Art Gallery



Visitor watching Monisha Chippada's
ilū (2018) at the launch of *Bush Diwan*
Photo: Sean Davey

THE NEW BENALLA ART GALLERY

While delivering a progressive, inclusive, and responsive art program across four main pillars of activity in 2022, Benalla Art Gallery also worked tirelessly behind the scenes to advance transformational projects geared towards an even brighter future.

Chiefly, Benalla Art Gallery progressed plans towards a redevelopment. This major project commenced in 2019, with the completion of a *Feasibility Study and Business Case* by Urban Enterprise, confirming the multifaceted social benefit and a Benefit Cost Ratio in excess of 2.0 to be derived from redevelopment.

Recognising these findings, Stage 1 redevelopment has been enabled through State Cultural Infrastructure Project funding of \$3 million.

Stage 1 funding will enable critical outcomes, including the development of a Masterplan for the entire redevelopment by leading architects, Williams Boag (WBa), and physical works to enhance the Gallery experience, hospitality offering, and to improve staff and Collection spaces.

Simultaneously, Benalla Art Gallery developed a new *Strategic Plan 2023-2030*, and through this process set an ambitious new Vision of becoming the meeting point in North East Victoria, providing a vibrant and vital cultural platform that supports the arts and social connectivity.

As detailed in previous reports by Winsome McCaughey AO and Jane Grimwade, these major renewal projects have run parallel to the revitalisation of the Benalla Art Gallery Foundation, and the work of Friends of Benalla Art Gallery.

Our New Benalla Art Gallery will generate a confluence of inspiration and ideas to activate culturally related social and economic opportunities.



Mayank Gupta speaks on behalf of the Benalla Migrants Association at the launch of *Bush Diwan*
Photo: Sean Davey

SUPPORT

Industry benchmarking highlights that while Benalla Art Gallery is currently resourced as a small regional gallery, it performs more like a medium regional gallery through the frequency and quality of its exhibition and program outputs. We recognise the following financial supporters, program partners, and in-kind supporters for their invaluable contributions in 2022, without which this would not be possible.

- + Concepts
- 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art
- Arts Project Australia
- Australia Council for the Arts
- Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI)
- Australian Children's Laureate Foundation (ACLF)
- Australian Government's Community Heritage Grant
- Australian Government's Regional Arts Fund
- Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMaGA)
- Baddaginnie Run
- Bamba
- Bathurst Regional Art Gallery
- Benalla Art Gallery Foundation
- Benalla Historical Society
- Benalla Migrants Association
- Benalla Migrant Camp
- Benalla P-12
- Benalla Rural City Council
- Borinya Wangaratta Community Partnership
- Carlisle Arts
- Cinespace
- CRAFT
- Cre8ive
- Creative Victoria
- Devenish Primary School
- Euroa Probus
- Euroa Secondary College
- FCJ College Benalla
- Friends of Benalla Art Gallery

- Galen Catholic College, Wangaratta
- Geelong Gallery
- Goulburn Valley Grammar School
- Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation
- ILFORD
- Inland Rail
- Ledger Charitable Trust
- Live Art Benalla (LAB)
- Mansfield Steiner School
- MARS Gallery
- Melbourne Business School
- MPavilion
- Murray Art Museum Albury (MAMA)
- National Gallery of Victoria (NGV)
- Oculi
- Panasonic
- Photo Australia
- Public Galleries Association of Victoria (PGAV)
- Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA)
- RACV
- Ray White Benalla
- Regional Arts Victoria
- Shepparton Art Museum (SAM)
- Shepparton Sikh Gurdwara
- Tallis Wine
- Tandoori Hut Benalla
- The Village Festival
- Tomorrow Today Foundation
- Tourism North East
- University of the third Age (U3A)
- Victorian Government's Living Local Regional Grants Program
- Victorian Government's Engage! Program
- Vitae Veritas
- Williams Boag architects (WBa)

BENALLA ART GALLERY TEAM

Staff

Eric Nash
Director

Brenda Wellman
Education & Public Programs Curator (0.8FTE)

Katherine Hauptmann
Administration and Customer Relations Officer (0.6FTE)

Trish McGann
Art Gallery Assistant (0.4FTE)

Tegan Nash
Education & Public Programs Curator (0.2FTE, from April)

Alex Ross
Art Gallery Assistant (0.2FTE, to September)

Rachael O'Brien
Art Gallery Assistant (0.2FTE)

Sonia Gherdevich
Art Gallery Assistant (0.2FTE, from October)

Benalla Art Gallery Committee

Barbara Alexander AO
Chair

Councillor Danny Claridge
Council Representative

Councillor Peter Davis
Council Representative (to November)

Councillor Punarji Gunaratne
Council Representative (from November)

Tim Abdallah
General Member

Jane Grimwade
*Friends of Benalla Art Gallery Representative
(from November)*

Brad Hearn
*Friends of Benalla Art Gallery Representative
(to October)*

Winsome McCaughey AO
General Member

Bess Nolan-Cook
CEO Tourism North East Victoria

Anna Parle
General Member

Fiona Stephens
General Member

Alice Tallis
General Member

Cover image:
OCULI: Acts I-VII
Install image, 2022
Photo: Sean Davey

VISIT
Botanical Gardens
Bridge Street
Benalla VIC 3672

FREE ENTRY
Mar—Aug, 10AM—4.30PM
Sep—Feb, 10AM—5PM
Closed Tuesdays

CONTACT
T 03 5760 2619
E gallery@benalla.vic.gov.au
W benallaartgallery.com.au

CREATIVE VICTORIA

BENALLA
ART GALLERY

BENALLA

RURAL CITY