

Culture Art & design Visual art

Your guide to the best art exhibitions not to miss this year

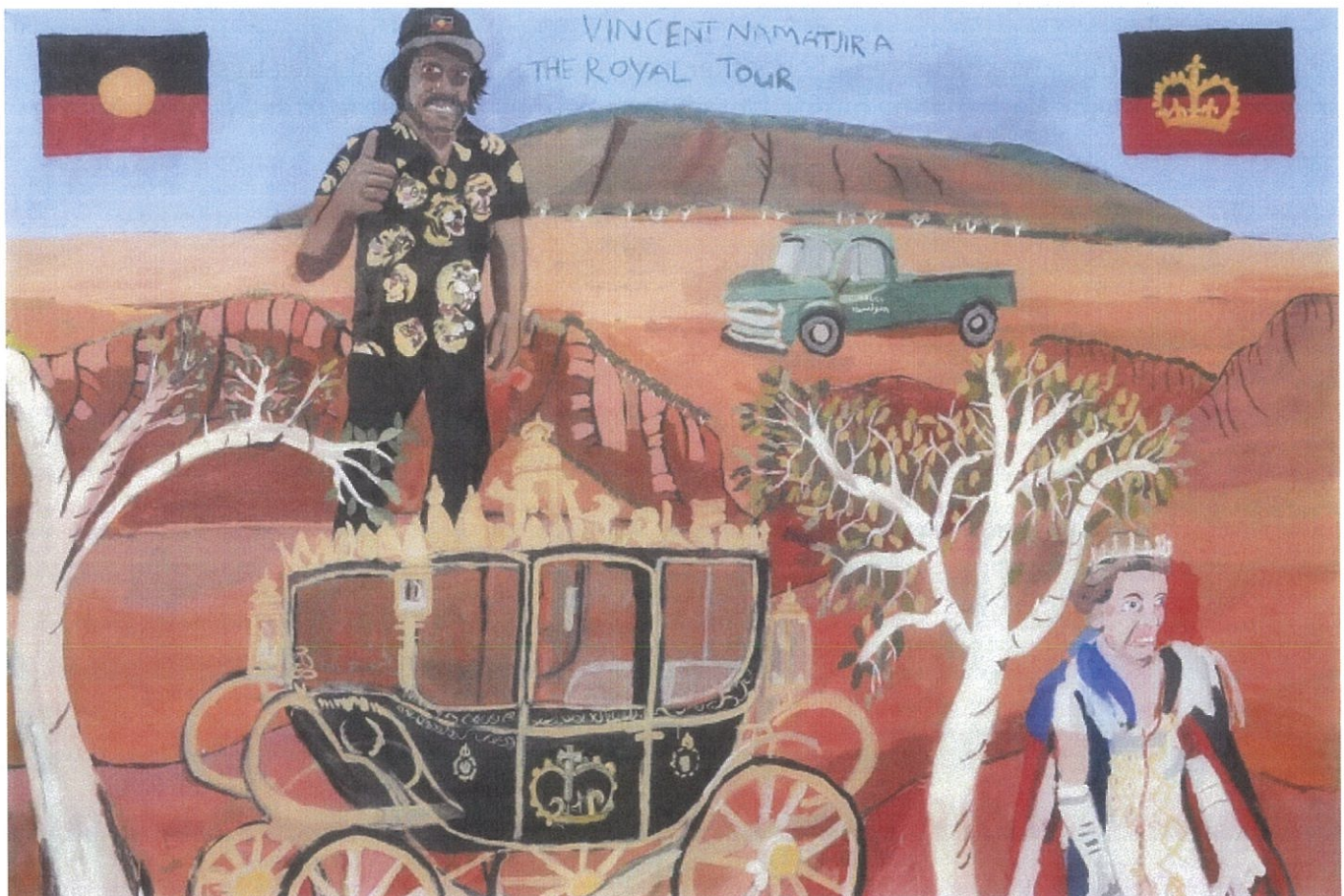


Kerrie O'Brien

January 29, 2023 — 5.00am

Choosing your favourite art exhibition of the year ahead is a tricky task for anyone, but when art is your full-time focus it's even more challenging. We asked directors of the top galleries around the country to nominate one must-see show but, recognising the challenge, allowed them a cheeky second pick.

The results range from large shows to small, blockbusters long-awaited through to the independent and up-and-coming. It's a cracker year for the visual arts so get your diary out and start planning a few arts-led trips. Frontrunner on my wishlist: the recently announced [Yoshitomo Nara show \(February 26–June 25\) in Perth](#).



Detail of Vincent Namatjira's *The Royal Tour (Vincent and Elizabeth on Country)*, 2022. IWANTJIA ARTS

Mary Mulcahy, director, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery

I'm looking forward to [*Vincent Namatjira: Australia in Colour* \(October 23–January 24\)](#) at the [Art Gallery of South Australia](#). I love the combination of colour and satire in his work and look forward to the delicious laugh-out-loud moments but also the moments of reflection (often uncomfortable) when the more you look, the more layers of meaning you uncover.

I'm not sure what works will be featured but I hope it will have some of his paintings of world leaders like the Queen or Donald Trump, with their cultural offerings to the world – quirky and funny but with layers and layers of commentary on things like colonialism and world politics.

Also: *Jimmy Possum: an unbroken tradition* at Launceston's Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (until May 28). The exhibition showcases a unique style of chair-making from Tasmania's Meander Valley, a tradition that started in the late 1800s and continues today.

Adam Worrall, director, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory

I can't wait to see Jordan Wolfson's *Cube* at the National Gallery of Australia – I hear it is likely to go on show later this year. The work is a lifelike, large-scale mirror cube with arms and it crawls around the floor, flashes and dances to music; it also has facial recognition software so it can sense where you are and will engage with you in the space. I'm sure it's going to be a challenging work, but it's an important next step for contemporary art.

Wolfson is best-known for his interactive, animatronic sculptures and his works always ask questions about technology, mass media and the tension between reality and artificiality. He's made this incredibly provocative and engineered sculpture, he is leading the world in doing this; there are artists doing similar things but no one is doing it as well as him. I'm sure I will be horrified and terrified when I actually see this work, but that's what often comes with interacting with his work, they create amazing experiences. From a visitor's perspective, it's art giving you something you didn't necessarily expect and sometimes that's an amazingly positive experience and sometimes it's challenging.

I have no doubt *Cube* will be incredibly popular, there will be massive queues to see it as there are with every major work that he has delivered, but it will be interesting to see if it has any lasting effects.

Also: *Michael Zavros: The Favourite with eX de Medici: Beautiful Wickedness* (June 24–October 2), QAGOMA



A selection of Karla Dickens' work at Campbelltown. DOCUMENT PHOTOGRAPHY

Rhana Devenport, director, Art Gallery of South Australia

I am really looking forward to seeing *Karla Dickens, Embracing Shadows* at Campbelltown Arts Centre. Wiradjuri artist Karla Dickens is a bricoleur of unloved yet potent materials.

Female identity, racial injustice and, more recently, the aftermath of the 2022 Lismore floods are themes present over Dickens' three decades of practice. Her work was a major feature of AGSA's 2000 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: *Monster Theatres* where her art transfixed audiences with its wry humour and a near magical transformation of preloved and unloved materials into potent micro-worlds of juxtapositions and ideas.

Also: *Tomas Saraceno: Oceans of Art*, MONA, until July 24.



Rhana Devenport, director of Art Gallery of South Australia.



A piece from Diego Ramirez's show he says is "inspired by the social mediatisation of Pemex's spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2021" at MARS Gallery. DIEGO RAMIREZ AND MARS GALLERY

Colin Walker, director, Art Gallery of Western Australia

The one I'm really, really looking forward to is by [Diego Ramirez called *Vampires of the earth at the MARS Gallery*](#) (April 27–May 20). Diego is really provocative and really smart. What he's looking at with this exhibition about the greed of extractive capitalism and its living death is consistent with what us West Australians think about these types of things.

He worked with the gallery on our *Speech Patterns* publication towards the end of last year, to accompany the show by contemporary artists Nadia Hernandez and Jon Campbell, and I was just dying to see what his work looks like – and now I'll get to see it far sooner than I realised. He contributed an essay about one of Jon's works called *What are we f---ing looking at* – he did a great essay, called *You're looking at a f---ing catalogue essay*, it was really witty and quite pointed, I'll get to see that writ large in his work.

For me, Ramirez's work hits a few touchpoints that are really relevant to this point in time.



Director of the Art Gallery of Western Australia
Colin Walker.

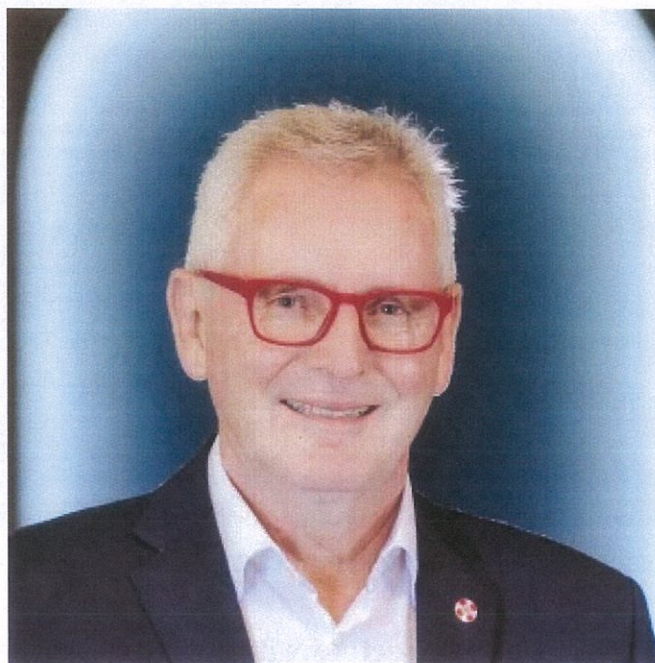
Also: Ryan Presley's exhibition *Fresh Hell* at Gertrude Contemporary (Feb 11- March 26). Obviously he's relatively young but he's been doing some really interesting work, I remember him back from *Hatched* at Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts in 2011. I've been watching his career develop, this show is bringing together some works he's been doing for past 8 or 9 years, first time major solo.

This was not intentional but I realised they are both looking at things from a Catholic perspective as well, how religion and economics come together in different ways. It's quite an interesting juxtaposition, not just as individual exhibitions.

Chris Saines, director, Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art

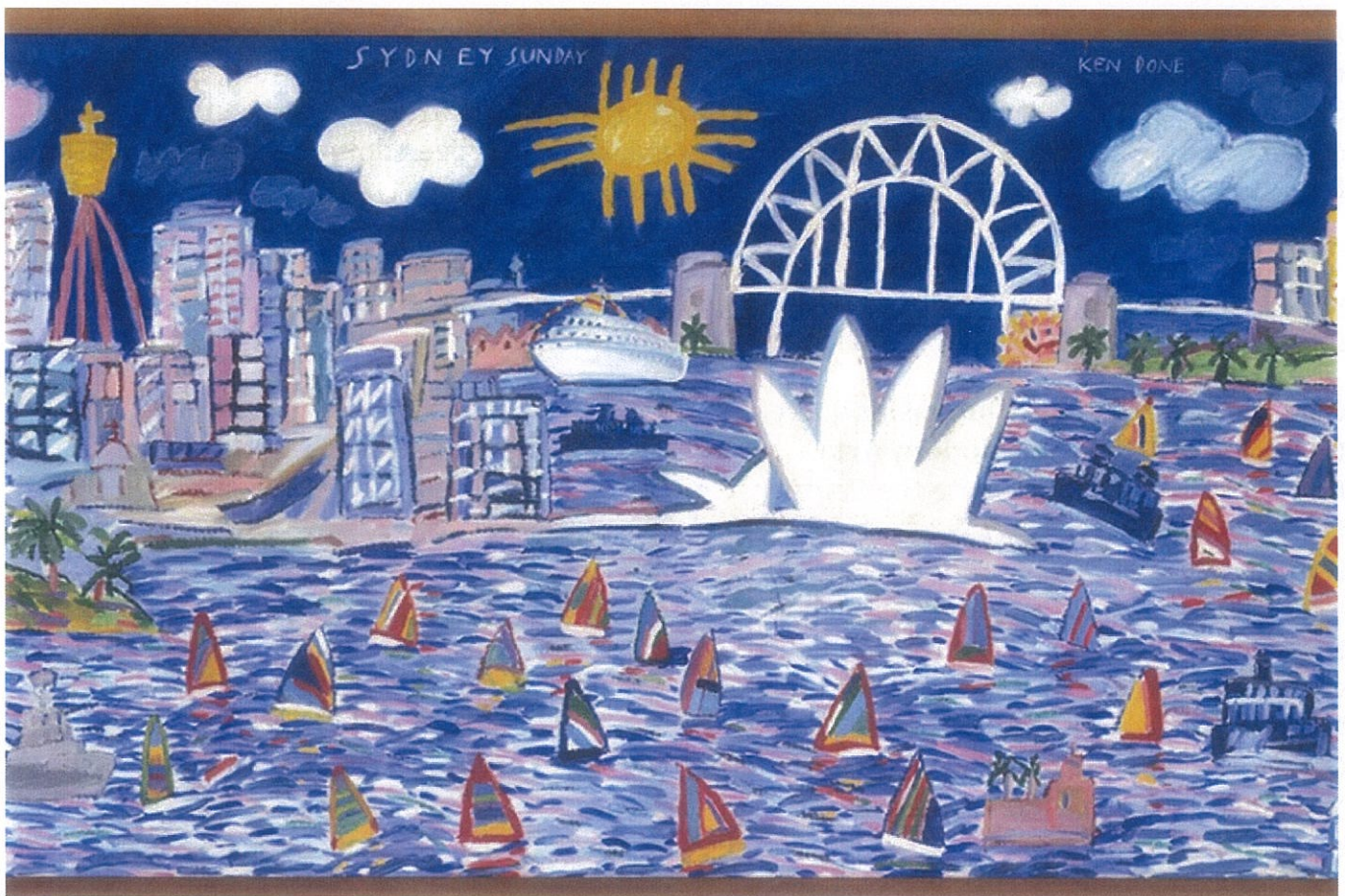
For many reasons, I nominate the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (July 13–16). It draws together artists from all around remote and regional Queensland into one major show at the Cairns International Convention Centre, with other exhibitions at venues including Northside Contemporary, Cairns Regional Gallery and The Tanks at the Botanic Gardens. You move all around the town to see everything.

The calibre and the diversity you see at CIAF has grown since its inception and this year will be very exciting too. QAGOMA bought several works there last year, as do other galleries. It's not as well known as it should be. There is an extraordinary group of art centres serving Queensland such as Aurukun, known for their camp dogs. This year there's a new artistic director for CIAF, Françoise Lane and I'm really interested to see what she produces in 2023.



Chris Saines, director, Queensland Art Gallery |
Gallery of Modern Art JOE RUCKLI

Also: The National 4, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Carriageworks and the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, March 24–July 23.



Sydney Sunday, 1982 by Ken Done. COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

Tony Ellwood, director, National Gallery of Victoria

My pick is [Australiana: Designing a Nation](#) at Bendigo Art Gallery (March 18–June 25), which asks us to consider who we are as Australians through more than 300 works of art, design and fashion. Ranging from the kitsch to the profound, the works explore ideas of nationhood, vernacular and popular culture, as well as the deep cultural and spiritual connection between First Nation peoples and Country.

The exhibition features treasures of Bendigo's collection, including designs from their growing collection of Australian fashion. It also spotlights new acquisitions, including exquisite gowns by Marrithiyel fashion designer Paul McCann and Vincent Namatjira's *The Royal Tour (Vincent and Elizabeth on Country)*.

A highlight is certain to be a new body of work by Melbourne-based artist Kenny Pittock. For *Australiana*, Pittock will create 100 Australian Ice-Creams in his signature sculptural ceramic style. Through their melting forms and recognisable imagery, these irreverent sculptures conjure a sense of nostalgia for the viewer and remind us of the transience of youth – gone as quickly as an ice-cream on a 40-degree day!

I'm especially delighted that we have the opportunity to share some icons from the NGV Collection with audiences in Bendigo for this exhibition, including *Shearing the rams* by Tom Roberts and *The movie star* by Tracey Moffatt.

Michael Brand, director, Art Gallery of New South Wales

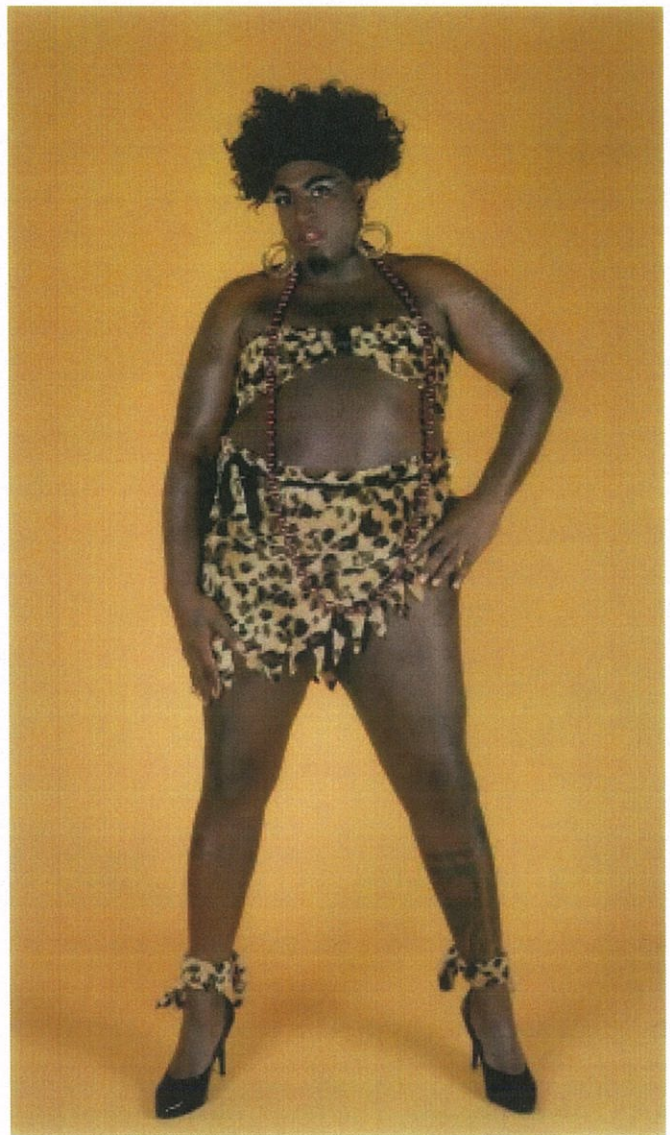
I'm excited that Heide Museum of Modern Art is hosting *Catherine Opie: Binding Ties* (April 1 to July 9), the first survey exhibition in this region of the world-renowned Los Angeles artist. It will combine key works from across her oeuvre with a focus on portraiture: early works exploring gender and sexuality; alternative conceptions of the nuclear household – chosen family portraits that transcend traditional familial ties – to more recent musings on solidarity

and collective action in the face of proliferating global crises. In 1994, Heide exhibited 18 of Opie's portraits in *Persona Cognita*, curated by Juliana Engberg, and the artist's first exhibition in Australia.

I first met Opie when I was director of the J. Paul Getty Museum when she participated in OpenStudio, a project conceived for the Getty in 2009 by another Los Angeles-based artist, Mark Bradford. Other artists included Graciela Iturbide, [Kerry James Marshall](#) and [Kara Walker](#) along with Melbourne-based Jon Cattapan. I've been following her photography practice ever since.

Her work is held in over 60 public art museums around the world, including ours in Sydney. Opie is also chair of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Department of Art, and is deeply engaged with the Los Angeles arts community. Her photographs reflect her interest in current conversations about the fragility of democracy, about freedom and about queer lives.

Also: *Roppongi Crossing*, a triennial of Japanese contemporary art (Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, until March 26).



Catherine Opie's *Divinity Fudge*, 1997. COURTESY
REGAN PROJECTS



Adrian Villar Rojas's Tank gallery installation *The End of Imagination*. JÖRG BAUMANN

Dr Nick Mitzevich, director, National Gallery of Australia

I'm looking forward to the exhibitions in Sydney Modern, the new building that's part of the Art Gallery of NSW. The reuse of the historic tanks, as part of the redevelopment of the gallery, provides an extraordinary, theatrical backdrop to the work of Adrian Villar Rojas in *Adrian Villar Rojas: The End of Imagination*.

Villar Rojas' site-specific sculptures, combined with the scale, mood and surreal nature of the Tank will make for an unforgettable experience.

Also: [Margaret Olley: Far From A Still Life](#) leading up to her birthday in June, at the Tweed Regional Gallery and Margaret Olley Art Centre (March 22–October 8). The show will celebrate Margaret's remarkable life and work.



Kerrie O'Brien is a senior writer, culture, at The Age and The Sydney Morning Herald. Connect via [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) or [email](#).

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Revive will support the \$17 billion arts industry, which employs an estimated 400,000 Australians. Photo: [Shutterstock](#).

Revive: \$286 million National Cultural Policy revealed

The new cultural policy 'puts the arts back where they are meant to be – at the heart of our national life,' according to Prime Minister Albanese.

30 Jan 2023

Richard Watts

Four new bodies focused on the autonomy of First Nations arts and culture, the development of contemporary music and the literary sector, and workplace safety in the arts sector, will be established as part of the Federal Government's new **National Cultural Policy**.

To be known as 'Revive', the policy is designed to correct the 'calculated neglect' of the previous decade, according to Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, who launched the cultural plan in Melbourne this morning (Monday 30 January).

'Revive puts the arts back where they are meant to be – at the heart of our national life,' Albanese said.

'It is literally through the arts that we build our identity as a nation and a people,' he added.

Among its key elements, Revive will create quotas for Australian content on streaming services, matching similar policies already in place in many countries overseas; and establish the role of an Australian poet laureate in order to give greater prominence to the literary sector.

Revive will also see funding returned to the Australia Council, which will itself will be reformed and renamed as Creative Australia.

Speaking at the Revive launch at Melbourne's Esplanade Hotel, Minister for the Arts Tony Burke MP said: 'This policy, Revive, restores the place of art, of entertainment, of culture, for all Australians.'

He also stressed the intrinsic values of the arts alongside their economic value. 'Today, the Albanese Labour Government has a message for you. You touch our hearts *and* you are a \$17 billion contributor to the economy.

'You create art and you create exports. You make works and you provide work. You are entertaining and you are essential. You are required,' he said.

New investments in the arts

The new cultural policy is accompanied by a \$286 million investment over four years, of which \$241 million is new funding. A further \$45 million has been redirected from a COVID insurance scheme that is no longer needed, **according to *The Conversation***.

A significant percentage of this investment will go to the Australia Council for the Arts, which is to be rebranded as Creative Australia.

A total of \$44 million over four years will be returned to the Australia Council, addressing the damage caused by George Brandis' **\$104.8 million cut in 2015**, and the subsequent **\$5.4 million cut by Mitch Fifield in 2017**. The Turnbull Government **subsequently returned \$61 million** to the Australia Council in 2017, meaning that this latest \$44 million restores the infamous Brandis cuts in full.

An additional \$199 million is being directed towards the establishment of Creative Australia and its new functions, an Australia Council spokesperson said.

Creative Australia will also become home to four new industry bodies: Music Australia, Writers Australia, the Centre for Arts and Entertainment Workplaces (a new body focused on workplace safety in the arts, addressing bullying and sexual harassment, and establishing workplace safety standards) and a new, First Nations-led body designed to ensure autonomy for First Nations people in the cultural sector.

'We're getting Creative Australia the resources that the Australia Council had been robbed of and also providing new structures to deliver autonomy for First Nations, work protections for arts workers, the capacity to provide strategic direction for contemporary music and writers, and one organisation that will now interact with the whole of the sector – funded, philanthropic and commercial: all three together in Creative Australia,' said Burke.

Revive also includes a commitment to cracking down on fake Indigenous art, an \$80 million investment towards the creation of a new National Aboriginal Gallery in Alice Springs, and a similar commitment to an Aboriginal Cultural Centre in Perth.

The Australian screen sector has been calling for an Australian content quota on streaming services such as Netflix, Disney+ and Amazon Prime for many months.

‘In the second half of this year, legislation will be introduced to the Parliament and on 1 July next year, Australian content obligations will apply to the streaming companies,’ Burke said.

A streaming quota that requires such services to reinvest 20% of their combined estimated \$2.4 billion annual revenue into local content would result in the investment of \$480 million a year into new Australia content (approximately 400 hours of new content a year).

Burke also promised support for the Australian video games industry. ‘We’ll restore the games fund for Screen Australia that was abolished nearly 10 years ago,’ he said.

Art for all

The Prime Minister stressed the new cultural policy’s focus on supporting the arts in all its forms.

‘This is a framework that empowers our arts, entertainment and cultural sectors wherever you encounter them – from the gallery to the mosh pit to your favourite reading chair,’ he said.

Albanese also noted that the policy was intended to ensure the accessibility of the arts for all.

‘The arts cannot be left simply to those who can afford to do it,’ he said.

The details of Revive announced at the launch do not include additional funding for national collecting institutions such as the National Gallery and the National Library in Canberra, where budget cuts have resulted in a number of challenges for the institutions.

If new funding is to be made available for them, it is expected to be delivered in May, when full details of Revive and its funding priorities will be revealed as part of the next Federal Budget.

ArtsHub will explore the ramifications and details of Revive in further articles over the coming days.

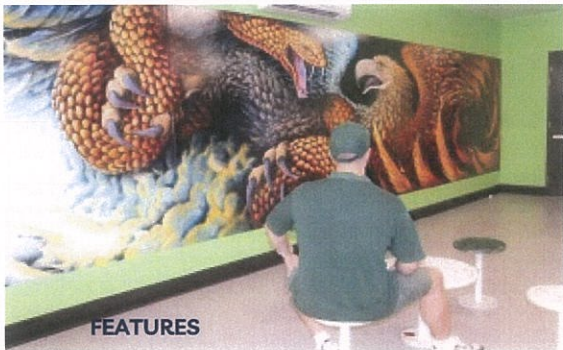


Richard Watts

Richard Watts is ArtsHub's National Performing Arts Editor; he also presents the weekly program SmartArts on Three Triple R FM, and serves as the Chair of La Mama Theatre's volunteer Committee of Management. Richard is a life member of the Melbourne Queer Film Festival, and was awarded the status of Melbourne Fringe Living Legend in 2017. In 2020 he was awarded the Sidney Myer Performing Arts Awards' Facilitator's Prize. Most recently, Richard was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Green Room Awards Association in June 2021. Follow him on Twitter: @richardthewatts

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Prison art around Australia

How art programs are helping prisoners unlock their creative skills and work towards a more successful rehabilitation.

DR DIANA CARROLL

10 Visual arts

CHRISTOPHER ALLEN



Great Southern Land gallery
National Museum of Australia

"Not sharks again!" – a friend exclaimed as we walked past the Australian Museum. "Wasn't it dinosaurs last time?" Alas yes, and the promotional line on the website urges "submerge yourself in Sydney's newest hands-on family exhibition".

We will return to the idea of submerging yourself, but the really fatal word here is "family", which is code for children.

The trouble with most of Australia's museums is that they seem bogged down in the assumption that museums are places you take children, either as a family during the holidays or as school groups in term time. Much of their programming is accordingly childish and exhibitions, as I pointed out many years ago, often seem to be designed and set up by the junior education team rather than by scientists or scholars.

Even when museums are centres of scholarship and carry out serious research programs, these seldom seem to end up producing exhibitions of substance.

It's as though the research activities were completely separate from the exhibition program, the former having no public face while the



Jason McCarthy

The great 'immersion' trap

The populist approach to museum design invites visitors into a passive experience from which they learn very little

latter is designed as a kind of low-brow, populist and semi-educational entertainment.

Some of the best museum exhibitions we have had in recent years – in various capital cities –

have been touring shows from the British Museum, and it should be possible to attract similar loans from other great museums around the world. There are countless institutions in Italy alone, great and small, with which connections could be made. This is also true of our art galleries, which have made little or no effort to build international networks beyond the most obvious and laziest options.

It would also be particularly valuable to develop relations with Asian museums. We have had loan exhibitions from China, Japan and other countries, but much more could be done. The Powerhouse's 500 Arhats exhibition from Korea last year was a fine example. This is the kind of thing the Australian Museum needs to aim for if it is ever to escape the dreary shark-dinosaur cycle.

Ultimately, however, the problem also lies with the collection itself. As archaeology is mainly at the Nicholson (now part of the combined Chau Chak Wing Museum at the University of Sydney) and applied arts are at the Powerhouse, the museum is left essentially with natural history and ethnology, although it is reopening an Egyptian gallery and indeed has announced a blockbuster Egyptian exhibition about Ramses the Great in November this year, unfortunately with the compulsory populist subtitle "gold of the Pharaohs".

I wrote about the museum's origins and longer-term plans in January 2021, just two years ago, after a first stage of renovations had fallen far short of the plans first conceived in 2016. Notably, the hideous suspended mezzanine in the central courtyard (known as the Still Addition) between the historic wings had still not been demolished. This could not be removed until further space was made available, and that would mean building a new wing on the corner of William and Yurong streets.

The plan, as I understand it, was for the new building to house the ethnology collection while natural history would occupy the older complex. But two years later nothing seems to have happened and the state government, which has poured money into the Art Gallery of NSW's dubious expansion, seems to have forgotten the museum, which is by rights part of an axis of fundamental institutions that are all within a few minutes' walk in the cultural heart of Sydney, together with the AGNSW and the State Library.

Perhaps, sharks notwithstanding, it has been hard to make a natural history museum seem exciting or urgent, although one would have thought that in an age of unprecedented environmental awareness that should have been

possible. But there could be a greater difficulty with the idea of an ethnology museum today, even though the AM has an extremely rich collection not only of Australian Indigenous material, but of the cultures of the South Pacific.

The problem, however, is one that faces cultural institutions of all kinds today, and that is an increasing demand that Indigenous peoples have control over how their cultures are studied and how artefacts are collected, displayed and explained.

To some extent this is just common sense; it would be absurd for an institution not to avail itself of advice and information that could be acquired from members or even descendants of an ethnic or linguistic or social group, when that is useful and relevant.

But the idea that any group should be permitted to dictate how their story is told is unacceptable and must be firmly resisted. We would not countenance, for example, the suggestion that the Germans, or for that matter the French, the Russians, even the English or Americans, should set the rules for what historical and cultural materials we collect about them, how we undertake research on them and how we publish or exhibit the results of that research.

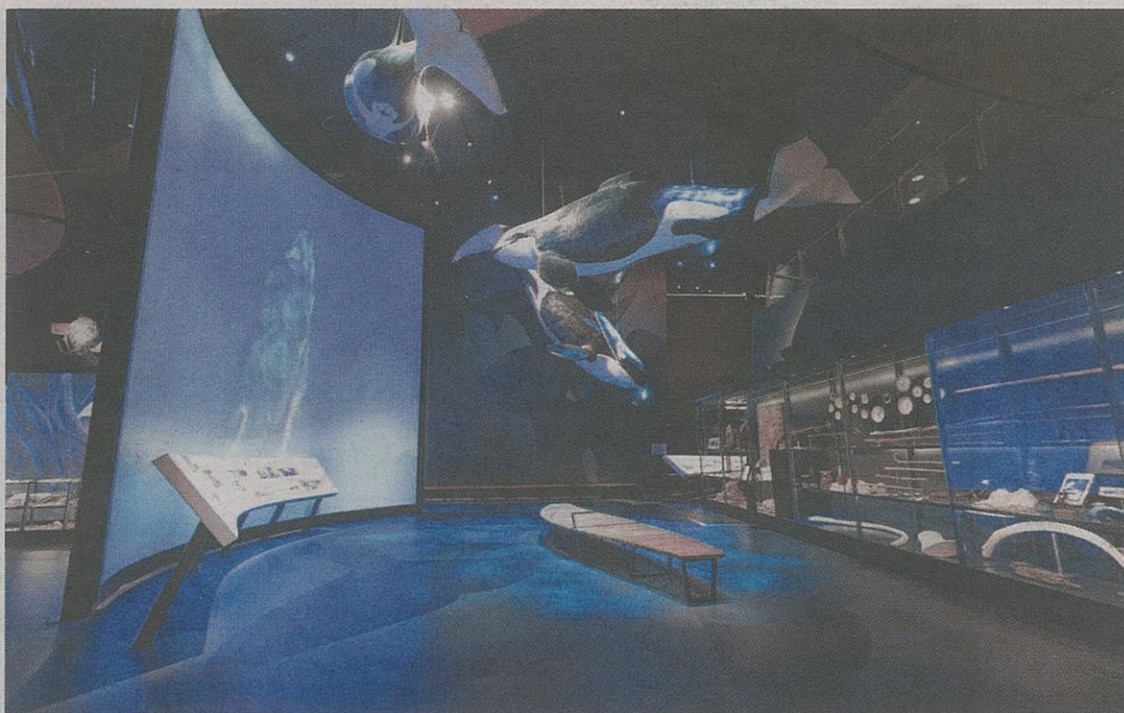
Imagine if the Catholic Church sought to control how historians or journalists investigated and reported on its activities. And in fact churches, political parties and other organisations have long sought, as far as they could, to restrict and control information in their own interests. In an open society, however, scholars, journalists and others are free to investigate and comment on these groups, limited only, and quite rightly, by laws of defamation and incitement to violence.

But there is the difficulty: how can you have a real museum of ethnology when the overriding message is already mandated: that Indigenous cultures are good and admirable. How can you look with any objectivity at their various customs, rituals and beliefs, some of which may indeed be admirable or impressive, while others may be odd or repugnant, like various forms of ritual mutilation in initiation ceremonies? How can you even talk about the origins and migrations of populations when these facts contradict various creation myths?

The same kinds of difficulties help to explain most of the peculiarities of the new Great Southern Land gallery at the National Museum of Australia in Canberra. This begins in a way that is visually impressive but of questionable scientific value, as we walk through an entrance corridor of giant kauri tree trunks, multiplied into a forest by mirrors on either side. Then we encounter a display about Aboriginal people collecting and eating the nuts from the trees' giant cones. This is interesting enough, but it is not the beginning of the story of the Australian continent, in whose immemorial chronology the activities of any humans at all represent a mere instant.

The style of the opening is a foretaste of the whole exhibition design, which brings us back to the Australian Museum's invitation to submerge ourselves with their sharks. That is to say that it is conceived, in a word that has become popular in large-scale contemporary art of the Biennale kind, as an "immersive" experience.

One display follows another, or rather blends



This page: Martin Ollman



into it in a continuous flow in which it is often hard to know whether you have moved from one topic to another or are still floating in the immersion or submersion of the previous thematic pond.

Immersion is a populist approach to museum design because it invites visitors into an essentially passive and boundless experience in which they feel by turns surprised, impressed, touched or amused – or indeed guilty or fearful about the future of the environment – but from which they emerge again without having really learnt anything, because learning requires a degree of distance, articulation and critical detachment.

This is not to say that the exhibition does not try to convey certain messages. Various Aboriginal myths are presented as though they were equivalent to scientific knowledge, when of course, like all myths, they represent very different ways of thinking. A passage like this from one of the didactic boards gives an idea of the level of confusion: "Mighty movements of earth, water, air and fire – in rocks and rivers, storms and bushfire. Spirits and ancestral beings who create and renew country. Plants, algae and bacteria making the oxygen in the air we breathe."

Clockwise from facing page: View from inside the Great Southern Land gallery at the National Museum of Australia; Life-sized models of three Orcas on display in the Great Southern Land Gallery; and Bunya tree models on display in the gallery

The approach is impressionistic, and each broad theme is represented by large-scale visual effects, videos, projections, etc., as well as boards with photographs and commentary, and display cases with various artefacts. The choice of themes is both vague and arbitrary – thus "rhythms, flows and connections", and "life, home and kin" – and the objects hanging or on shelves in glass cases are presented with very little explanation, so that even for someone who has a general familiarity with the material, it is almost impossible to make sense of the displays.

This kind of approach, especially when the themes are so gratuitous and even tendentious, makes it impossible to tell the story that the gallery should be presenting, which is that of the formation of Australia, the forces that shaped its environment before the arrival of man, and then the impact of human presence here. We want to see where the Indigenous people came from, how they arrived in the continent, how they spread and divided into different cultural and linguistic groups.

We want to learn what impact they had on the environment, including the hunting of the early megafauna into extinction and the effect that practices of burning had on the natural environment. I think it was Tim Flannery who pointed out that repeated burning favoured the spread of the eucalypts over conifers that recovered less well from fire. What effect did land clearing by fire and the changes in prevailing flora have on the soil?

We want to know how these peoples learned to cope with their difficult environment and why they settled into a particular accommodation with it and did not discover any other technologies.

Why was there no neolithic revolution in Australia? Was it because the environment was unfavourable to this development, or simply because the Indigenous people were cut off from the stimulation of outside influences?

And then of course we want to see what happened in the course of settlement; how fast did colonial society spread, how quickly did bush turn into farmland? What were the pressure points where conflict between the communities broke out? How has land occupation expanded, but also changed, over the past couple of centuries, when perhaps more land is occupied, but the population lives in massive cities rather than in the country?

How has our mismanagement of particular parts of the environment, like our river systems, interacted with the more general crisis of greenhouse gases?

The only way to tell a story like this effectively is through a chronological sequence of topics. The general picture of "country" and its successive inhabitants might be less flattering to all of us, but visitors would come out with a much clearer understanding of the factors that today threaten our environment and way of life.

PUBLIC WORKS

Rhonda Sharpe, Owl, 2022. Araluen Art Collection. Acquired 2022. On display in exhibition, Innovation in Three Parts, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, Northern Territory, until March 8.

Bronwyn Watson

Since 2008, an arts centre in the Larapinta Valley Town Camp, Alice Springs, has been the creative hub of a group of women renowned for their vibrant embroidered soft sculptures. The Yarrenyty Arltere artists create sculptures that depict facets of their lives – from the local wildlife to customs of hunting and collecting, and social issues. To make the sculptures, the women use repurposed blankets dyed with colours sourced from local plants, tea, and corroded metal. The sculptures are then embellished with woollen thread, feathers, and found objects.

One of the Yarrenyty Arltere artists is Luritja woman Rhonda Sharpe who has been making her stitched creations for more than 20 years. She has regularly exhibited throughout Australia and internationally and has won numerous awards such as the Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art awards. In 2021 she was the overall winner of the Woollahra Small Sculpture Award in Sydney. Her work is also in the collection of the Araluen Arts Centre in Alice Springs and one of her soft sculptures, Owl, is currently on display in an exhibition, Innovation in Three Parts.

Owl is based on a little owl sitting in a tree, Sharpe says. “He loved sitting in the tree looking for mice because he was hungry,” she says. “It was good he was looking for mice because there are too many mice in the desert running around everywhere.” At the Araluen Arts Centre, director Felicity Green says that Sharpe creates “fabulous” soft sculptures.

“In 2021 the Araluen Arts Centre acquired two Night Birds by Rhonda Sharpe and these quirky, beautiful, little sculptures captured the hearts of our curator and myself. We considered them standout works,” Green says. “In 2022 again Rhonda’s work stole our hearts, and we acquired her Owl for the Araluen collection as well.”

Sharpe is a highly skilled and exciting artist who draws on everyday lived experiences for inspiration, Araluen Arts Centre curator Stephen Williamson says. “Owl demonstrates Rhonda’s extraordinary ability as an artist that comes from years of creative activity. Creating artworks allows her to express herself and her artworks make her feel strong and proud. Owl demonstrates the artist’s signature style where she uses stitching to successfully convey the key forms of the bird



through the use of bold colours. This is a highly original and engaging creation that demonstrates amazing innovation, skill, and a sense of fun. It’s wonderful.”

The soft sculptures of Rhonda Sharpe and the Yarrenyty Arltere artists are also featured in a National Gallery of Australia touring exhibition, the 4th National Indigenous Art Triennale: Ceremony, on display this year at the Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, and then the Samstag Museum of Art, Adelaide.

Materials: soft sculpture
Dimensions: 34 x 33 x 15cm

Saleroom

Bill Whiskey Tjapaltjarri, who was born in 1920 in Pitjantjatjara country around Uluru, was first introduced to painting in 2004 at the age of 85 at the Watiyawanu Artists collective in Alice Springs. He had a short but successful career as a painter before he died in 2008. He was also well regarded as a traditional healer and keeper of sacred knowledge. One of his paintings was the top sale at an Indigenous Art auction held by Leonard Joel in Melbourne. Whiskey’s synthetic polymer paint on Belgian linen, Rockholes Near The Olgas, from 2006, sold for \$40,000 (including buyer’s premium) from a pre-sale estimate of \$20,000 to \$30,000. Other notable sales included another work from Pitjantjatjara country. The Watarru Collaborative’s synthetic polymer paint on linen, titled Ilpili, sold for \$22,500 from a pre-sale estimate of \$9000 to \$12,000. A painting by Jakayu Biljabu (born c1937) from the Manyilyarra language group also sold above its pre-sale estimate. The diptych, Minyi Puru Pitu, an important Seven Sisters dreamtime story about the sisters travelling through the desert, fetched \$18,750 from a pre-sale estimate of \$6000 to \$8000.

Bronwyn Watson

Cancel culture threat to future of the arts: Dark Mofo director

Exclusive

Gabriella Coslovich

Leigh Carmichael, the founding creative director of Hobart's wildly successful Dark Mofo festival, has revealed the strain he was under during the 2021 *Union Flag* controversy and questioned the art world's willingness to discuss controversial ideas. "I can't even do what I want to do any more," he tells *The Australian Financial Review Magazine*. "And I don't know if the world even wants it."

Union Flag, by Spanish artist Santiago Sierra, and programmed by Carmichael for the 2021 Dark Mofo festival, was to feature a British flag soaked in blood donated by Indigenous people from across the globe. The work had been intended as a denouncement of colonialism but instead triggered accusations of racism and a campaign to force Carmichael from the helm of the festival he created 10 years ago. Amid the furore the artwork was cancelled, and Carmichael has since revealed that this year's Dark Mofo festival will be his last.

He admits the backlash was partly warranted by provocative and poorly thought-through marketing. But he's still processing the aftermath and wondering what it says about the future of the arts.

"I thought the art world was a safe space for [discussing ideas] ... but it's not a safe space any more," he says. "At the moment the left is just as nasty as the right. I think about it now and I think, was it really that bad? I think both David [Walsh, founder of the MONA art gallery] and I were burnt and now really understand the consequences of public outrage. You start to self-censor a little bit just to protect yourself."

The Dark Mofo festival, a spin-off from Walsh's MONA, has given Hobart

a transformative jolt, drawing thousands of visitors during the midwinter lull in tourism and bringing in millions at the box office. As well as planning his final festival for mid-2023, Carmichael is in the final stages of selecting his replacement as creative director. His morale has been boosted by the quality of candidates, seeing it as a vindication that Dark Mofo has not been harmed by the controversy.

Applicants have been whittled to a shortlist of six and an announcement is expected next month.

It's not a safe space any more. You start to self-censor a little bit just to protect yourself.

Leigh Carmichael, Dark Mofo director

The shortlisted candidates hail from the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany, Australia and New Zealand. "I feel really confident about the list we have and about the future of the festival," Carmichael says.

Carmichael's influence on Hobart won't end when his time at Dark Mofo does. His next chapter involves working with Melbourne developer Riverlee, on an entire city block in the centre of Hobart, to create a multi-venue cultural, commercial and hospitality precinct known as In the Hanging Garden.

The block is bordered by old buildings that conceal an internal courtyard with a central cathedral-like spire and various levels of seating, where people can eat, drink, relax and listen to music amid trailing greenery. Central to the development will be an upgrade of the historic Odeon Theatre that has been spared demolition and will have a hotel



"Both David [Walsh, from MONA] and I were burnt and now really understand the consequences of public outrage": Dark Mofo's Leigh Carmichael. PHOTO: ADAM GIBSON

rise above it to make the venue financially viable.

Carmichael says that Walsh, his boss, has signed on as a joint financial partner in the venture, an imprimatur that ensures the future of the \$300 million to \$400 million urban renewal project.

"He [Walsh] did have the ability to kill it dead and that would have been the end of it ... I would have been devastated," Carmichael says.

Instead, he's thrilled to have the backing of Walsh and a new project to

shape and shake up the cultural life of his native city. "David asked me: 'What, do you want to be a property developer or something now?' and I said no, not really ... but if I can work with Riverlee and government to get some venues upgraded and secured for the future, that would be a positive contribution. I feel I'm in a unique position to do that."

Gabriella Coslovich's feature on Leigh Carmichael appears in the Arts issue of AFR Magazine, out on Friday.

*The Australian Financial Review, Wednesday January 25, 2023
page 3*

*The Australian
Financial Review Magazine,
February 2023
pages 9, 24-26*

Outgoing Dark Mofo creative
director Leigh Carmichael in
his Hobart studio.
Photograph by Adam Gibson





APPETITE FOR THE EXTREME

After a tough two years culminating in a furore, Leigh Carmichael is soon to move on from his role as creative

AT 47, LEIGH CARMICHAEL REMAINS THE PICTURE OF urban cool, dressed in head-to-toe black: jeans, T-shirt and a relaxed designer jacket. Time has added a few streaks of silver to his shoulder-length, light-brown hair but hasn't messed with its enviable thickness. The creative director of Hobart's midwinter festival, Dark Mofo, looks well, but the past couple of years have not been easy.

There was a pandemic to contend with, a health scare and a changed cultural landscape that had Carmichael questioning whether the world even wanted what he had to offer any more. The pandemic, in some ways, was the easiest challenge – Carmichael and his boss, MONA owner David Walsh, quickly cancelled Dark Mofo in 2020. In 2021, the festival was back, but was almost derailed by the mother of all backlashes against Carmichael for programming an artwork that met with widespread disdain.

Union Flag, by Spanish artist Santiago Sierra, would have featured the British flag soaked in the blood of First Nations people from across the globe. It was meant to condemn the violence perpetrated by colonialists, not just in Australia and not just at the hands of the British Empire. But that interpretation didn't cut it. A bluntly worded call-out for First Nations people to donate blood to soak the British flag ("we want your blood" went the post on social media) provoked outrage and was denounced as another act of violence.

The wrath was not unanimous – Tasmanian Aboriginal activist Michael Mansell publicly supported Carmichael and the Sierra project. But the condemnation was sweeping and searing; MONA curators and staff leading the charge, denouncing the project as "an abomination", "tone-deaf", exploitative and retraumatising. Brian Ritchie, artistic director of MONA's summer festival, *Mona Foma*, called the Sierra project "a gimmick and publicity stunt disguised as a mediocre artwork". Many called for Carmichael to resign.

"That was the hardest year of all," says Carmichael, sitting in a cafe in central Hobart. He acknowledges that the marketing had veered into clickbait. "The call for blood was in poor taste at best. We were calling for volunteers from First Nations people across the world, from 150 countries, and we only actually required one First Nation person from Australia, so it was not only poor taste but it delivered a confusing message."

Carmichael is no stranger to controversy. Over the years he has upset Christians by erecting giant upside-down crosses along the Hobart waterfront and angered animal activists with a performance piece by Austrian artist Hermann Nitsch that featured a slaughtered bull. The latter resulted in him facing death threats, but the show went on.

Not so with *Union Flag*. When the protests against Sierra's artwork reached fever pitch, Walsh and Carmichael made the fraught decision to cancel the artwork three months out from the festival. Going ahead risked Dark Mofo going under. "Artists were pulling out, staff were threatening to leave, the team were writing letters to David trying to get me

sacked," Carmichael says. "Even after we cancelled it, we still lost three-quarters of the artists that we had programmed."

Sierra decried the response to his work as "superficial and spectacular" and compared it to a "public lynching". A Dark Mofo regular, Sydney artist Mike Parr, who faced protests of his own when he buried himself in a steel container for three days under a busy Hobart road, was similarly appalled, calling the decision to cancel cowardly and lacking in leadership. It was a classic case of damned if you do, damned if you don't.

Carmichael says that he and Walsh had discussed the risks of the project early on and almost didn't include it in the festival because it was so far left that it felt didactic. "It was anti-colonisation, it was anti theft of land, it's what's happening in Russia now. We were kind of prepared for a backlash. What we didn't see coming was that it would come from the hard left, and the First Nations community."

When Dark Mofo launched in 2013, causing offence and upsetting the mainstream was obligatory for an avant garde arts festival. A healthy dose of the unconventional made it stand out from the pack. Mainlanders flocked to party, feast, dance and roam across an edgy, eclectic program of music, art and food, in warehouses, wharves and other found spaces, including an industrial park alive with fire and noise, culminating in a nude swim to celebrate the winter solstice. The concept was so good that Melbourne, a city that likes to think of itself as Australia's cultural capital, copied it, launching its own midwinter festival in 2021. Provocation has been at the heart of MONA itself. Walsh famously once said that if people didn't picket and protest about the contents of his iconoclastic museum (which delves into the sexually graphic, the macabre, the scatological and the profane), he would be hugely disappointed.

But the times have changed, and they're acutely socially conscious – and censorious. With the controversy over Sierra's artwork, Carmichael, the once cool-new-kid-on-the-block, found himself being depicted as a racist old dinosaur. "I thought the art world was a safe place for [discussing ideas] ... but it's not a safe space any more," Carmichael says. "At the moment the left is just as nasty as the right. I think about it now and I think, was it really that bad? We were asking volunteers to donate blood. Yep, I can get the offence. I know it's strong ... it was meant to kick Australians in the face, it certainly did that, but not in the way that I was expecting."

He tells me that he even had a journalist from the ABC on the phone wanting to know why Dark Lab (the company that Carmichael directs and that administers Dark Mofo) was an "unsafe" place for artists to work. "I just couldn't cope with that, it was so offensive," Carmichael says. "We added it up, we had 120 First Nations artists participate in the festival over eight years, with no complaints, not one complaint, no HR issues, and some of those same artists were calling for our heads."

director for Dark Mofo. But he's not quite finished courting controversy yet.

STORY BY GABRIELLA COSLOVICH PHOTOGRAPHY BY ADAM GIBSON

"It's a bit of a shame, you walk around the streets, 'oh, there's the guy that hates Aboriginals', and I have to wear that, but it's not even f---ing true." After this year, Dark Mofo will no longer be Carmichael's concern, and you can sense his relief. "I can't even do what I want to do any more, and I don't even know whether the world wants it," he says, wearily. Does he worry that the festival risks becoming blander in this reactive new age? "I think there's always that potential, and I hope it doesn't, but I think that both David and I were burnt and now really understand the consequences of public outrage. You start to self-censor a little bit just to protect yourself."

THE NEXT TIME WE TALK, BY PHONE IN DECEMBER, Carmichael is in Melbourne interviewing candidates to replace him as the head of Dark Mofo. "I feel really good about it, it's like a weight off my shoulders," he says. He's thrilled with the candidates who have applied, seeing their calibre as vindication that despite the public pounding he received over *Union Flag*, people still want to work with Dark Mofo. And people still want to participate: attendances at last year's festival were close to pre-pandemic levels, with just under 50,000 attendees, and \$3.6 million in box office sales.

Nevertheless, Carmichael is moving on. He'll remain director of Dark Lab and pursue other goals, including a return to his first love, painting, and an urban renewal project in the heart of Hobart, finding new ways to reinvigorate his native city, and himself. The latter project is a \$300 million to \$400 million, five- to 10-year redevelopment of an entire city block in central Hobart, which he's working on with Melbourne developer Riverlee. The precinct is an 8000-square-metre area bounded by Liverpool, Murray, Bathurst and Watchorn streets and is around the corner from the cafe where we met in late October. That rainy Hobart afternoon, we headed over to have a look.

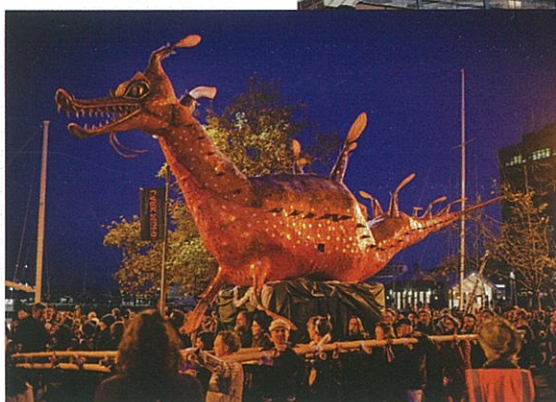
Named In The Hanging Garden for the greenery that spills, creeps and cascades across walls and from beams, the precinct was trialled at the 2019 Dark Mofo festival. It was a Berlin-esque jumble of old buildings and outdoor spaces incorporating music venues, a nightclub, bars, pop-up kitchens, a beer garden and a central "Cathedral" with an 18-metre-high pitched roof. The rain seeped in, the floor coverings weren't right, but what it lacked in comfort it made up for in atmosphere. The Cathedral began as a "ridiculous pop-up venture", says Carmichael. "It's now changed the direction of where the entire precinct is headed."

The precinct's other centrepiece is the historic Odeon Theatre, which Dark Mofo has used as a venue since its first festival in 2013. It was leased from Riverlee, which bought the Odeon in 2009 with plans to demolish it. Most recently, the 106-year-old theatre had been the home of the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and then the Christian City Church. It was unoccupied for a couple of years until Dark Mofo resuscitated it with live music, performances and talks.

"Everyone had forgotten that it was even there," says Carmichael. "We were using it for the first two to three years knowing that it was likely to be demolished at any time. We weren't so worried because we didn't realise its value until a year or two in. Then we thought, 'wow, this is irreplaceable.'" That new appreciation led him to publicly object to the Odeon's demolition. That's when Riverlee's development director, David Lee, got in touch. "I said, what is your interest in the Odeon, and why are you so against the demolition of it?" says Lee. "We left that meeting and I effectively said, let's try and save the Odeon, if we can find a way to do it, and find a way to make it commercial, we're on board."

Now Carmichael is collaborating with

Right: Hanging Garden precinct masterplan.
Below: The Dark Mofo Ogoh-Ogoh sculpture.
Bottom: The contentious social media post for *Union Flag*.



**"WE WERE KIND OF PREPARED
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Riverlee on the entire block, which will be a cultural, commercial and hospitality mixed-use precinct. The Odeon will be saved, but a hotel will be built above it, and that's a commercial reality Carmichael is prepared to accept. "I think that's a win, it's better than a whole spanking new building that none of us like, which was the original plan," he says.

On the day that we meet, Carmichael is ecstatic because Walsh, who holds the purse strings, has agreed to become a joint partner in the precinct. It's yet another way in which Walsh is backing Carmichael – having funded him to create Dark Mofo, a festival that, in many ways, has been just as consequential for Hobart as Walsh's museum. Walsh chipping in money for the development will mark the next chapter in how Australia's most famous gambler is reshaping his city. "This is a big step now that David is coming into the redevelopment of the site," says Carmichael. "I went home last night really excited, and I've woken up kind of exhausted."

CARMICHAEL SEES HIS NEW ROLE developing the Hanging Garden precinct as "a natural evolution" in a career that has essentially been spent revolutionising Hobart. He first worked for Walsh in communications and design before construction on MONA had begun and then became the museum's

creative director. In 2016, following some friction between him and Walsh, Carmichael left that role to focus on Dark Mofo and head DarkLab, the company Walsh launched as a think tank for new projects – and as a means of giving him and Carmichael some space. "I really enjoy seeing Hobart thriving," he says. "I have an opportunity very few people have, in David's orbit, and having connected with Riverlee and this amazing precinct in the city."

That's not to say it was an obvious move for him. Like many mid-career professionals, he grappled with what to do next. "David [Walsh] asked me, 'What, do you want to be a property developer or something now?', and I said, no, not really, that's not really my thing, but I feel that if I can work with David Lee and Riverlee and government to get some venues upgraded and secured for the future, that would be a positive contribution. I feel I'm in a unique position to do that. So I feel somewhat obligated to embrace the opportunity that I have."

Carmichael is also working on a major public art project at Ida Bay in Tasmania's south, predicted to attract 30,000 people a year. The work, *Transformer*, by American artist Doug Aitken, is a three-armed pavilion with an angled, mirrored interior that creates a constantly changing, kaleidoscopic view of the surrounding ancient landscape. He works on the national stage too, through his position on the board of the Australia Council for the Arts. As for his deeper creative needs, they'll be fulfilled by programming events at the Hanging Garden, which, he points out, is "a 12-month-a-year cultural precinct". He's keen, for example, to commission a contemporary version of Euripides' Greek tragedy *The Bacchae*.

Time out during COVID-19 also gave Carmichael the opportunity to pick up his paint brushes again. I ask him what genre of painting he's doing. "Just abstract," he says. "They're not that good. I wasn't really brave enough to be an artist because I had the anxiety of needing to pay the rent and I did want a family, so I probably wasn't prepared for the sacrifices required and the risk involved. Dabbling on the side is not really the same, but I'm enjoying it." Carmichael and his wife, Angela, a former state netball player, have been together since high school and have three children.

We walk up to his painting studio on the third floor of the Victorian-era Tattersalls building, another part of the Hanging Garden precinct bought by Riverlee in 2017. It's a simple room with white walls and raw wooden floorboards splashed with paint. Along the wall rest some unfinished canvases that look like swirling storm clouds – if storm clouds were a furious, raging red – and even unfinished, there's a



distinct energy about them. "I've been thinking of the death of Semele when Zeus revealed himself and Dionysus was born," Carmichael explains.

Like so many Greek myths, it's intense. Semele, a mortal woman, has an affair with the god Zeus and becomes pregnant to him. When Zeus' wife Hera discovers the liaison, she tricks Semele into testing Zeus' love for her. Semele asks Zeus to reveal himself in his full godly splendour, as a thunderbolt. Zeus is forced to grant her wish, knowing that Semele will die in the process, as is the destiny of any mortal who looks upon the image of a god. Zeus saves their unborn child by plucking it from Semele's womb and sewing it into his thigh. The child is Dionysus.

From the start, MONA and Dark Mofo have drawn inspiration from ritual and myth, and Walsh and Carmichael's symbolic guide has been Dionysus, the Greek god of wine, art, ecstasy, madness, fertility, theatre, pleasure and mayhem. Like the ancient Greeks, Carmichael has an appetite for the extreme, and sometimes this can look like he's pushing the boundaries of "good taste". His programming of Nitsch and Sierra are part of that continuum. And he's not done yet. Carmichael confides that for this year's Dark Mofo he's signed up Austrian choreographer Florentina Holzinger's *A Divine Comedy*, a contemporary dance and theatre production involving an all-female cast whose nude onstage antics range from the slapstick to the onanistic (and not the simulated kind) in a wild exploration of art, gender, and the stifling ideals of female beauty that confront women at every turn in a capitalist, patriarchal society.

Holzinger is a rising star of the European dance and performance world, but her work is not for everybody. Walkouts are par for the course. After being rejected by several traditional dance academies, Holzinger began to experiment with alternative ways of using the dancer's control of the body. As she told *The New York Times* recently: "If I'm training my body to pee on cue, then I'm exerting control over my body. It could be seen as a form of dance technique, even if it's not a grand jeté or a tendu." The commissioning of a performer who can pee on cue suggests that the quietly spoken Carmichael does not wish to go quietly. He believes deeply in works such as *A Divine Comedy* and their norm-shattering ideas. Their intensity seems connected to the ancient myths that fascinate him.

HOBART HAS CHANGED DRAMATICALLY SINCE MONA opened in 2011. More money, more hotels, more restaurants and bars, more mainlanders moving down – and consequently an acute shortage of affordable housing. The capital feels livelier, more outward facing, but still grapples with pervasive social problems such as high levels of illiteracy and welfare dependence, and a health system in crisis. Hobartians feel strongly about the unique character of their low-rise city, and development proposals are often a flashpoint, as seen with the protests against a cable car to kunanyi/Mount Wellington, and the University of Tasmania's proposed move from Sandy Bay into the CBD. Lines fracture between those who believe in development at all cost, and those who want to see Hobart, a city with a harbour setting to rival Sydney's, grow in a way that is sustainable, authentic, well-designed, and embraces and protects its natural environment.

One of the biggest debates is the future of Macquarie Point. The last large tract of prime waterfront land in the city, Macquarie Point had been earmarked for development, with a masterplan that had been designed with the input of Carmichael and MONA in collaboration with Tasmanian

Aboriginal writer and academic Greg Lehman. The centrepiece, revealed in 2016, was to be a Truth and Reconciliation Art Park, to celebrate Tasmania's First People, and acknowledge the island's violent colonial past. There would also have been an Antarctic and Science precinct.

But in September last year, the plan was abandoned without consultation by Tasmanian Premier Jeremy Rockliff, who, in his quest to establish an Australian Rules football team in the state, buckled to the AFL's demands that Macquarie Point become the site of an AFL football stadium. The AFL has made a Tasmanian football team contingent on the state building a \$750 million stadium, and the AFL wants that stadium at Macquarie Point. Premier Rockliff and AFL chief Gill McLachlan have been promoting the benefits of the stadium, aided by the city's only major newspaper, Murdoch-owned *The Mercury*. The state government initially pledged to pay \$375 million, half of the stadium's cost, and wanted the federal government and private investors to foot the rest.



In June, Carmichael will direct his 10th and final Dark Mofo.

However in late December, Rockliff asked Prime Minister Anthony Albanese for \$240 million, saying the stadium's reviewed cost was \$715 million.

The proposal is deeply divisive. In November, 300 people attended a Hobart Town Hall public meeting, and among those speaking about the stadium was Booker Prize-winning Tasmanian author Richard Flanagan. Flanagan mocked the stadium as "Rockliff and Rupert's wart". "Follow the money," he said, pointing out that: "*The Mercury's* support for the project was clouded by its parent company's commercial interests in broadcasting the AFL." The state government has assured that the Truth and Reconciliation Art Park will remain on the site, but with no funding announced for it and with the demands on space that a stadium will make, there are concerns the park will become

tokenistic. In the words of Lehman, who also spoke at the town hall meeting, the Truth and Reconciliation Art Park "cannot end up as a front lawn for a sports ground".

Carmichael was central to the MONA vision for Macquarie Point. But he now supports the football stadium, perhaps in resignation, or perhaps having lost the energy to fight for his original vision. "It's a lot better than where they were going, which is apartments and carving it off to the private sector," he says. After years of delays and stagnation, the first major development announced for Macquarie Point, in November 2021, was luxury apartments by Melbourne developer Milieu. That announcement floored and upset Carmichael, who saw it as dilution of MONA's original idea. "The stadium for me was a relief," he tells me. "Thank god that opportunity will be something for the people and not a bunch of developers from Melbourne doing a half-arsed version of the Docklands."

"I don't think a stadium is the best solution, but it's a better solution than where we were going ... I could be mortified if they just dump a stock-standard stadium there, and they don't think about the connectivity and they don't think about how it integrates around it properly, and it could be an absolute disaster, there's no doubt about it."

The stadium is opposed by Independent MP Andrew Wilkie and Senator Jacqui Lambie, who will not support federal money going towards it. There is dissent too in the Liberals' own ranks; Federal MP Bridget Archer and Tasmanian senator Jonathon Duniam are against taxpayer money going towards the stadium. Others continue to back the MONA vision for Macquarie Point, among them Brian Corr, president of Hobart Not Highrise, who tells me he has been contacted by many people who are appalled by the domineering behaviour of the AFL. "I am a big fan of what MONA was trying to do there, partly because I trust MONA," Corr says. "They think outside the box and their motives are good."


But Carmichael has run out of fight when it comes to Macquarie Point. "I think it's going to happen," he says. "They will find the money for the stadium; they won't find the money for an arts precinct, that's sad. I fought for a couple of years and it was a losing battle, so I had to decide whether to continue to fight a losing battle or to focus on this space [Hanging Garden] where I could make a difference. We had done our bit, because we had put forward a plan that the community loved, but no one could pay for, so we put the state government in a difficult position. It's hard to go back once you have emotionally moved on." Ironically, the state government, having dumped the MONA vision for Macquarie Point, is pushing the stadium by arguing that its impact could be comparable to that of MONA.

What Carmichael will do is give Macquarie Point a send-off that will take him full circle. For his final Dark Mofo, he will revive the popular Dark Park, which was a fixture of early festivals and held at Macquarie Point. As a rambling industrial zone on the waterfront, Macquarie Point was the perfect fit for Dark Park, ablaze with open fires and light and sound installations. It was the site for the festival's high point: the ritualistic burning of the Ogoh-Ogoh sculpture, based on a Balinese purification ceremony.

And, in a way, just getting the show back on the road is the key to how Leigh Carmichael communicates his vision for what his home town of Hobart can be. "Given that this is our 10th year, and we know that the stadium is coming, we are really focusing on activating that precinct to the best we can ... It will be exciting to be running it again. It will be nice to show the public just how good that space is." ●

The Financial Review Magazine,
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After 14 years raising their family in their unique public art gallery home, Corbett and Yueji Lyon are moving out and leaving it all behind.

STORY BY **JANE ALBERT** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **BENNY CAPP**

IN A FEW MONTHS' TIME, A SMALL BUT EMOTIONAL private demolition ceremony is going to take place in the leafy Melbourne suburb of Kew. There won't be heavy machinery, just a hammer and perhaps a crowbar, because the renovation in question simply involves knocking a pre-designed hole through a timber wall in a house. But knocking through this wall represents the end of an era and is significant not just for the owners, but for the public at large; in particular, lovers of contemporary Australian art.

The wall in question separates two privately owned public art galleries. On one side is Lyon Housemuseum, which displays a significant collection of contemporary Australian art and has been home for 14 years to Melbourne architect Corbett Lyon, his wife Yueji and their two (now adult) daughters, Carlin and Jaqlin. On the other side is Housemuseum Galleries, which also exhibits contemporary art and design from the Lyons' collection.

Post-demolition, not only will the two buildings become one, they will belong to the Australian public, along with the valuable art collection they house, a gift from the Lyon

family. Worth an estimated \$56 million, it is an extraordinary act of philanthropy from a couple who began collecting in the early 1990s. But now, after a decade and a half living in and running this unique public gallery, the Lyons are moving to Mount Martha on the Mornington Peninsula, leaving their home and artworks behind.

"We will definitely have a small celebration to make the occasion," says Lyon, in his characteristically low-key way. "It will be a fabulous thing then, for visitors who will arrive at the public museum, because the whole thing will be a public museum by then and we're leaving a lot of our furniture and artefacts. It's not an inconsequential gift but we've never thought about any of it as ours. Perhaps the home a little bit, because it has been our home."

THE CLOSING OF THIS INCREDIBLE CHAPTER WILL BE swift, by the simple act of removing a wall, but the story itself began more than 40 years ago. A third-generation architect (his daughters now represent the fourth), Lyon travelled to Venice in 1980 after graduating from the University of

Pennsylvania. It was a life-changing trip. While fellow graduates visited the big city art museums such as the Louvre in Paris or London's National Gallery, Lyon was profoundly moved by the intimate nature of the personal art collection he discovered in situ in the home-gallery of American art collector, mining heir and socialite Peggy Guggenheim, who had died a year earlier.

"All her furniture was there, the Calder bedhead, her dining table and these fabulous Pollocks and pictures she'd personally collected, all presented in this bespoke setting. I took that memory away and [kept it] for many years," Lyon says. "Here was a very personal museum where you learnt something about the collector, the artists and most importantly the connection between the two."

Within 10 years, Lyon had begun his own contemporary Australian art collection, guided by respected Melbourne gallerist and friend Georges Mora, who advised him to look for artists with a distinct voice, spend time getting to know them and their work, never collect for investment and – perhaps most importantly – never invest historically, collect



for now, collect your contemporaries and collect in depth. It was sage advice. Today the Lyons own one of the country's most comprehensive collections of influential contemporary artists, 350 works from 60 artists including Patricia Piccinini, Howard Arkley, Callum Morton, Brook Andrew and Shaun Gladwell. And the collection is growing; new works from the Ken Sister Collaborative, Jonny Niesche and 2022 National Photographic Portrait Prize winner Wayne Quilliam were purchased in the past 12 months, many of them cleverly displayed in the two bespoke galleries.

Back in the 1990s, however, the conundrum was where to house it all. It was 1993 when Lyon fell in love and married Shanghai-born former computer analyst and programmer Yueji, who expressed great surprise the first time she visited his small South Yarra apartment crammed with large contemporary artworks. Yueji soon proved an equally passionate and discerning collector and, despite the couple moving to a house in Bulleen, displaying the art between that home and the eponymous Melbourne architectural firm Lyon had founded with his two brothers, there simply wasn't room for the art and their young family.

"I began to think about designing a building that would do two things: accommodate our growing family – our girls were four and six – and our expanding art collection; and most importantly, be able to share it with the public. There are plenty of private collections that never see the light of day; this was about sharing. It was a pretty bold idea and many of our friends thought we were crazy," Lyon chuckles.

The Lyon Housemuseum opened its doors in 2009, an expansive, stylish hybrid house that doubles as a public art museum that Lyon insists is a world first. (Like Peggy Guggenheim, 18th-century New York architect and art collector John Soames and 19th-century New York industrialist Henry Frick had lived in their houses before adapting them as galleries.) Indeed, Lyon coined the phrase "housemuseum". While the home does contain two small self-contained areas that are off limits to the public, most rooms double as domestic and public

spaces, including the kitchen (a cafe) and Lyon's study (an archive for visiting academics). Today the couple has personally guided through their home and their expanding collection more than 20,000 tourists; art and architecture students; directors from the Peggy Guggenheim Museum, the Tate; designer and presenter Kevin McCloud and even James Bond in the guise of Pierce Brosnan, a keen painter.

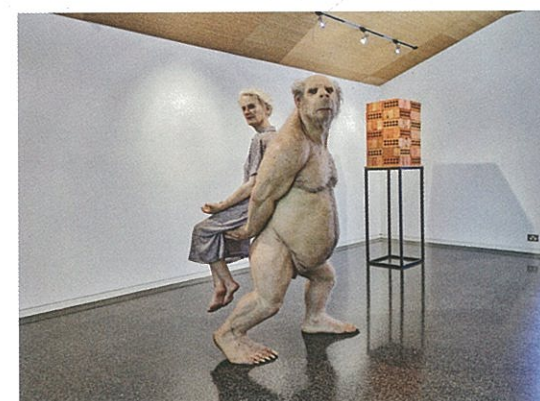
It was fellow collector Marc Besen who, during a tour of the Lyon Housemuseum in 2009, suggested Lyon expand his property holding. Besen and his wife, Eva, have collected what is arguably the most comprehensive collection of modernist Australian painters, including Sidney Nolan, Albert Tucker and Fred Williams, and displayed it to the public in their gallery, TarraWarra Museum of Art, since 2002. "Marc looked through the side window and said: 'If that block of land ever comes up for sale, you must purchase it,'" says Lyon. "Yueji blanched at the thought." As luck would have it, an auction sign was erected on the block a week later, and the couple snapped up what was essentially land value only; Lyon transformed the dilapidated house and tennis court into a large public museum with flexible exhibition space, complementing the existing dwelling. The Public Housemuseum Galleries opened in 2019.

"Put very simply, the idea was these two buildings would be designed like siblings sitting side by side in the street. If you stand and look at the front they have a very similar profile, except the new building is a bit bigger and is clad in bluestone [the Housemuseum's exterior is zinc], giving it a sense of being a permanent public building." A modest entry fee and a portion of the ticket price to events, artist talks and workshops offset the running costs of both galleries.

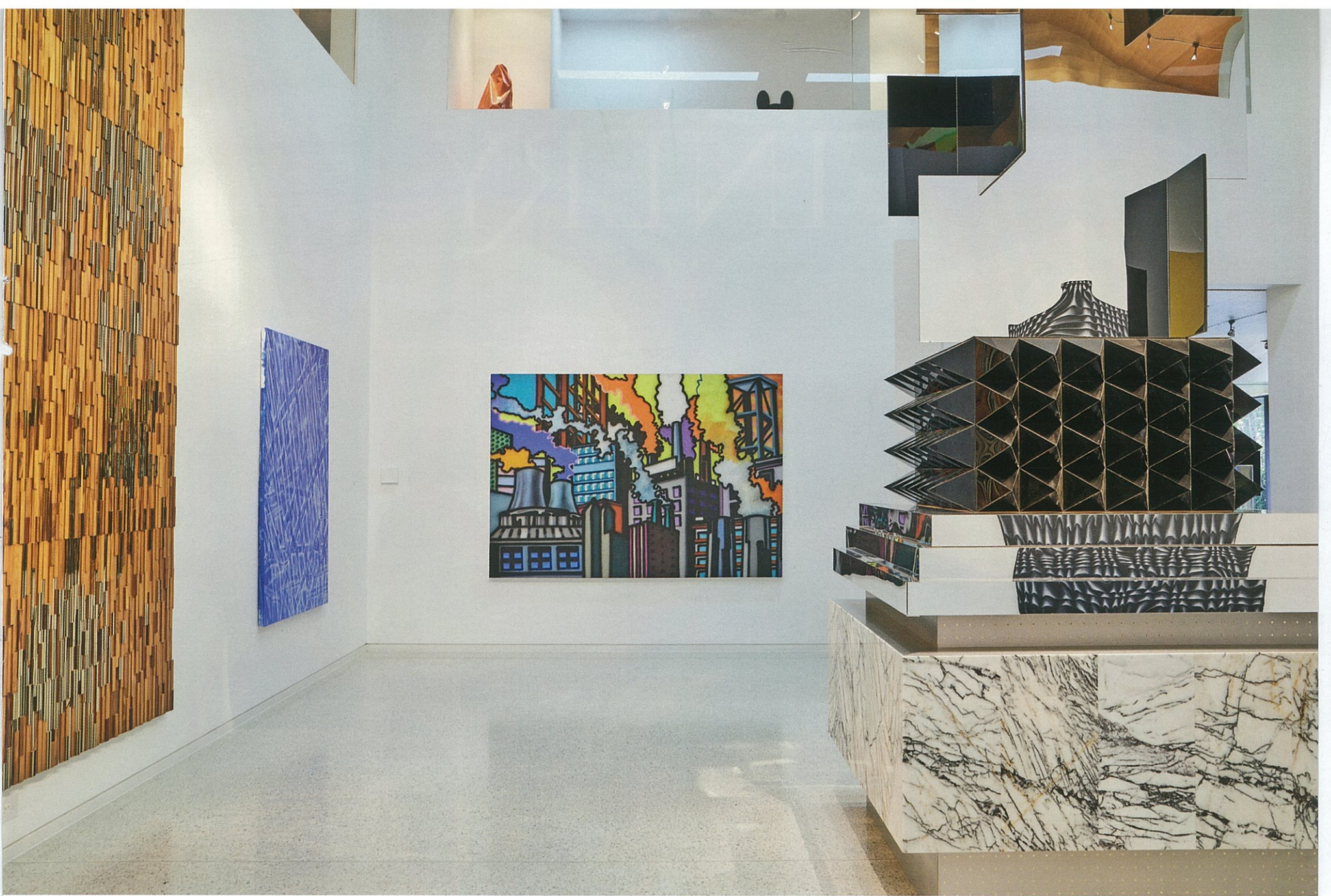
As publicly shared private lives go, it has been an interesting experience. "In the early days the girls, and to a certain extent Yueji, were challenged by people walking through the house," Lyon concedes. However, Yueji warmed to the idea, managing the tours, events and exhibitions and personally conducting the weekday tours; Lyon does the

weekends. "We both derive enormous pleasure from seeing people engage with the art in the strange spaces in the Housemuseum, so in that sense it's been very worthwhile, and we've built up very good working relationships with the artists. I think our two girls would say it was tremendous to grow up in the Housemuseum and engage with all the incredible visitors."

PROMPTED BY HIS VISITS TO THE PEGGY GUGGENHEIM Collection in Venice and the Sir John Soane's Museum in London, Lyon established a foundation in 2012 that will ultimately own and run the collection and buildings that house it, for the public, in perpetuity. "I thought how wonderful that was that those collectors had the foresight to gift and preserve their collections in this unique environment ... this idea of sharing it with the public in perpetuity," Lyon says. "It's a nice legacy project for Yueji and me, but I don't



Clockwise from top left: The Lyons with Jonny Niesche's *Heart of Surface*, 2022; inside the Housemuseum; Polly Borland's *Her Majesty, The Queen, Elizabeth II (gold)*, 2001; Patricia Piccinini's *The Carrier*, 2012, and behind it, Hany Armanious' *Limerick*, 2012.



think [it's about that], it's about seeing the enjoyment people may have by continuing to be able to visit these galleries." After seeking advice from Besen, Lyon established the foundation and its board of six, comprising three independent directors and three family members including Jaqlin, and two more independent appointments pending. Interest from the corpus will continue to fund the museums' operations well after ownership has changed hands. While establishing the foundation, Lyon began applying for a planning amendment that would ultimately change the use of the Housemuseum from a private dwelling to a public museum. "Once we donate the Housemuseum we're not allowed to live there ... hence us moving out," he says. The conjoined building will reopen to the public in the second half of the year, known simply as the Lyon Housemuseum.

A few summers ago the Lyons visited Mount Martha, the coastal town where Lyon and his three brothers regularly holidayed from their home in Brighton when they were young. "It was a wonderful place to relax, and I said to Yueji, 'What about we build a house here?' and - I don't think either of us would ever use the word 'retire', architects never retire - but we thought we might move down there. It was a beautiful day and [there was a] block of land for sale with a lovely view and a really nice connection to our childhood summers. So, we bought the property."

In a beautiful continuation of the legacy that is these four generations of architects, Lyon has co-designed the new house with Carlin. "It has been a fabulous, fabulous

**"THERE ARE PLENTY OF PRIVATE
COLLECTIONS THAT NEVER SEE
THE LIGHT OF DAY; THIS WAS
ABOUT SHARING."**

Corbett Lyon



Top and above: Howard Arkley's Shadow Factories, 1990; and Fabricated Rooms, 1997-99.

experience," he says. The couple moves next month, and a small new apartment in Melbourne will provide a city pad. As to the thoughtfully and lovingly curated art collection, Lyon insists the plan is to give the vast majority to the foundation, possibly retaining just one or two pieces, and put their collecting years behind them. "Many collectors call time and stop collecting," he says. "Our feeling is in the next couple of years, we'll round out the collection. Thirty-five years is a very long time, and it's been a wonderful partnership between the two of us, a life's project."

Having lived around and amidst such a vast personal body of work, surely it will be a wrench to shut the door on the Housemuseum and its precious art? "The thing Yueji and I talk about endlessly is that the Housemuseum is still there and the public museum is still there. So any time we want to go and reacquaint ourselves with our friends - and these works are friends, [Piccinini's] *Truck Babies* have sat in our living room for 12 years, they're part of the family - we can always go back and visit, so that's well and good enough," Lyon says.

When it comes to what they are about to give away to the public, Lyon is modest. "We've always genuinely felt we've been the custodians of the artworks for the artists. We don't [feel like we're] doing ourselves out of some serious cash, we've been really privileged to have held on to them for the time we have, and we're very keen now for them to go into a situation of public ownership where they can be enjoyed by other people, hopefully for a very long time." ●

SKY FALL

He travels the world photographing the landscape in his own unique way. Roger Fishman's latest adventure?
Flying over the Outback

By Mark Day

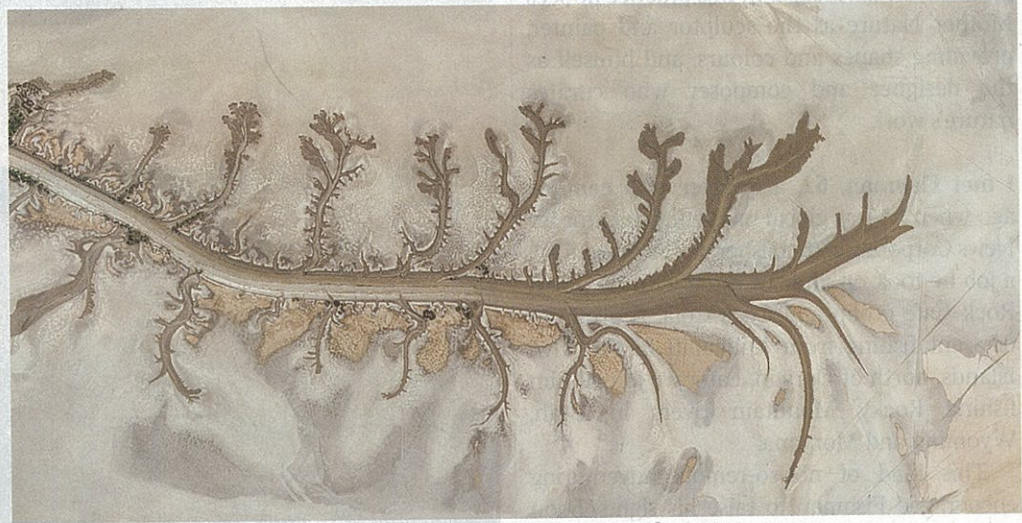


R

oger Fishman is hanging out of a helicopter 500ft above salt flats near Carnarvon, WA. He swings his Hasselblad camera and – click – captures an image that resembles a painting by Aboriginal artist Rover Thomas. A tiny salt pan comes into view between Esperance and Kalgoorlie, WA. Fishman's Cessna circles and – click – the salt pan suddenly becomes a bowl of crème brûlée with a slurp of strawberry cream.

We're now over Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre in South Australia in a fixed-wing Airvan, doors open, in a tight turn above an amazing "mound spring" that brings colour, shape and surprise to the glistening all-white salt surface. Click.

This is Australia as you've rarely seen it before. Fishman, a self-described "artist and



*The Weekend Australian, Magazine, January 28-29, 2023
pages 20-24*

Opening pages, clockwise from main:
landscape near Esperance; coast off
Broome; dry water course, Lake Eyre.
This page, Roger Fishman at work; Lake
Dundas, WA; Mark Day. Opposite page,
pink lake near Esperance, top; mound
spring, Lake Eyre; Lake McLeod



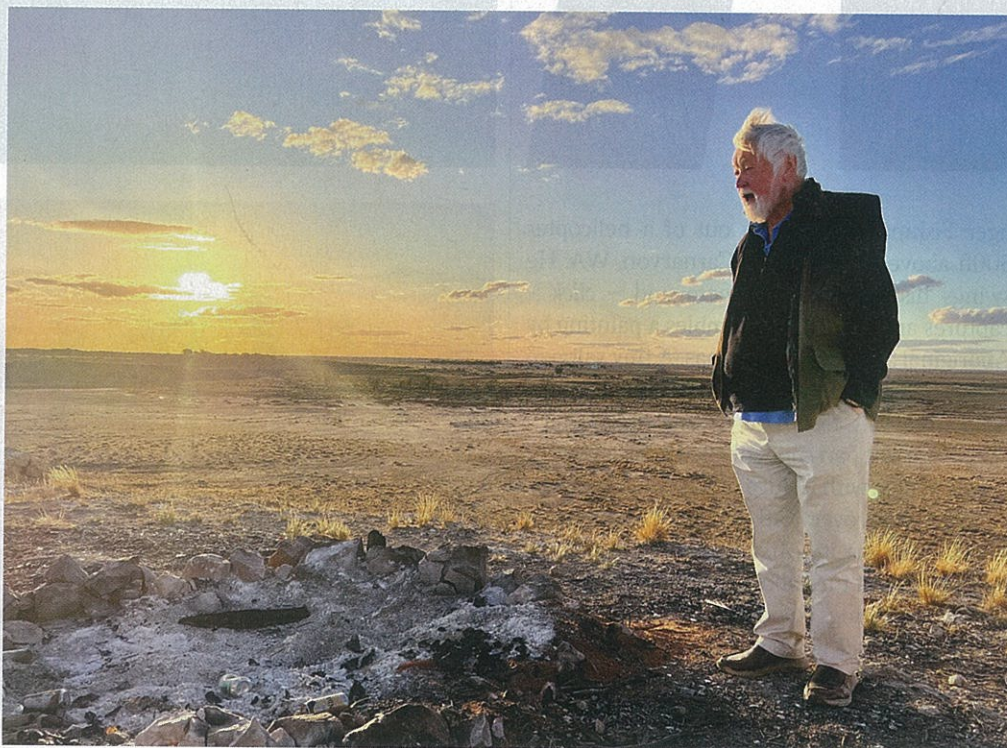
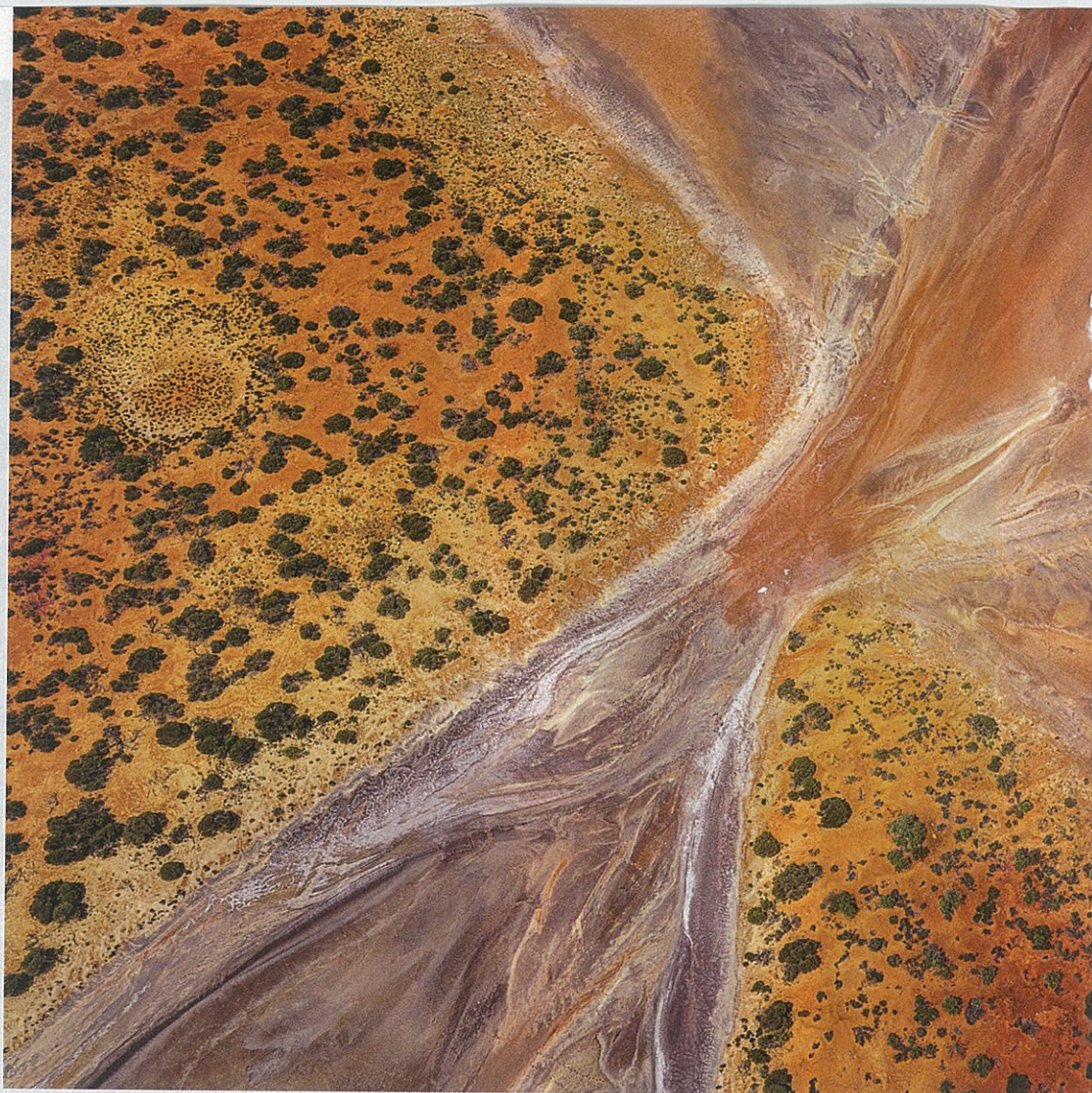
adventurer" from the US, spent three weeks late last year flying low over Australia and photographing the landscape. He logged 39 flights in five helicopters and two planes, producing thousands of images in his unique style.

Fishman has previously photographed Greenland, Iceland, Antarctica and Namibia from the air and now has shot landscapes around Broome, Derby, Carnarvon, Shark Bay, Esperance, Kalgoorlie and Lake Eyre. He will be back. "This country is unique," he says. "It has the most geographic diversity I have ever seen... it is quite remarkable."

Remarkable, too, is Fishman's own journey; an impoverished kid who rose to the top of the marketing and advertising world and then made a life-changing U-turn, reinventing himself as an adventurer with a dream to chronicle wildlife in remote parts of the world. That was before he took to the skies to make art from the landscape. In this practice he sees Mother Nature as the sculptor and painter, providing shapes and colours, and himself as the designer and composer who curates nature's work.

I met Fishman, 62, a quarter of a century ago when he was global marketing director for News Corporation (publisher of *The Australian*), a job he took on after working with the Hard Rock Café group and Coca-Cola. A group of us went fishing from Milikapiti in the Tiwi Islands, north of Darwin. Later we joined him fishing Rocky Mountain rivers in Utah, Wyoming and Montana.

This kind of not-so-remote adventuring encouraged Fishman to raise his sights. Soon he was sharing icy waters with grizzly bears in

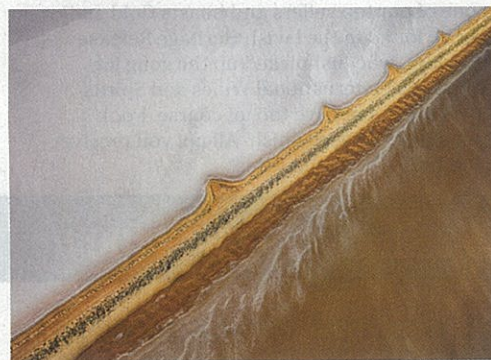


The Weekend Australian Magazine, November 22-23, 2023
page 22-24



"I'm shooting nature in the abstract. I'm looking at Mother Earth as a contemporary artist"

Fishman image of the same landscape looks like... well, that's for you to decide. "Taking an image out of its context does not change what it is, but it changes how we interpret it and what we feel about it," he says. "Your brain starts to question, 'What is it?' You start to imagine, 'Is it this?' Is it that? What does it feel like? What does it look like? It opens your imagination and



Alaska and coming face-to-face with lions in Botswana. In Africa he hid under his vehicle as an angry elephant stomped around looking for him, and in the Falkland Islands he crawled through penguin poo for close-ups of king penguins and their chicks. The foul penguin poo stuck to his clothes and boots. "The only way I could clean it out of my boot treads was to use one of my toothbrushes," he says. "But then I discovered I'd brought only one toothbrush on the trip..."

Some years after our fishing adventures we met in his hometown of Los Angeles and he showed me some of his wildlife pictures. By then he was running his own consulting company, specialising in marketing via social media, and was the father of a son, Jack, whose birth was the beginning of an epiphany for Fishman. All his life to that point, he had tried to shrug off his challenging childhood – he and his mother had relied at times on food stamps to survive. "When you grow up poor you realise you have to earn your way through

life," he says. "I had to figure it out on my own... I did 80- to 90-hour weeks, dedicated to discipline and commitment, focused on what I had to achieve. When Jack was born it made me think that we tell our children that they can be anything, that they can do anything, and I said, 'Well, if that's what I'm teaching my son, I must make sure I am living that truth as well.'"

So, what was essentially a hobby, photographing wildlife, became a new focus, a new mission, a new obsession, perhaps – and a new life. "I'm now shooting nature in the abstract," he says. "I'm looking at Mother Earth as a contemporary artist, making contemporary art."

The key to the images Fishman creates and sells is that they are shapes and designs taken out of context. If you look at Google Maps images of the salt flats between Carnarvon and Lake McLeod on Australia's west coast, you see amid a parched red/brown terrain a patchwork of stark white rectangular ponds, where sea water is evaporated to harvest salt. But a

Fishman image of the same landscape looks like... well, that's for you to decide. "Taking an image out of its context does not change what it is, but it changes how we interpret it and what we feel about it," he says. "Your brain starts to question, 'What is it?' You start to imagine, 'Is it this? Is it that? What does it feel like? What does it look like?' It opens your imagination and it opens your heart in the purest sense – exploration and wondering."

Fishman started planning his Australia trip in 2019 but was foiled by the pandemic, which grounded him until October last year. Then he flew to the WA coast with his pair of Hasselblad H6D cameras, a back-up Sony A7R 4 and a drone. I joined him at William Creek, 50km west of Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre, for four days of boys' own adventuring, flying multiple sorties over the lake and the Painted Hills area south-west of the tiny town.

With our Wrightsair pilot Jordon Bunder we explored the vast lake for hours, swooping as low as 500ft to shoot items of interest. Bunder became a spotter for the artist, counting down on the intercom: "Good patterns approaching; four seconds – three – two – one..." then banking



Crème brûlée:
salt pan near Esperance

sharply to give Fishman a straight-down shot through the open double doors.

The lake was extraordinary. Water glistened on its surface but it was far from full (it has since dried up, which is normal over summer; it's expected to start filling up again around March). In places it was stark white, then drab khaki, then pink, then pitted with white-on-white patterns crafted in salt by wind and water.

The lake sits on top of Australia's Great Artesian Basin and in many places the underground water leaks onto the surface through mound springs, the mineralised water staining the salt and leaving amazing patterns on the surface.

Fishman prefers to work from helicopters, where he can manoeuvre into position and carefully frame his shots; in fixed-wing aircraft he often must instantly snap through gaps between the wheels and wing struts as subjects flash by. He created thousands of images in Australia, and each night downloaded his day's work for sorting and reviewing after his field mission. "It's a very disciplined and lengthy process," he says. He has uploaded some Australian images to Instagram (@rogerfishman) and his website, rogerfishman.com, and will release more in coming weeks.

His images, printed on top-quality paper, mounted and framed, can be ordered online, but he is also keen to do a gallery exhibition in Australia. "Or maybe an outdoor show," he muses. "It's Australia, so it's got to be big. You can't do a show of Australian artwork and make it small. How about the sails of the Opera House? Now, wouldn't that be something..." ●

12 Mighty Australian Reds



These mighty Aussie reds normally sell for up to \$42 a bottle – they're yours today for an impressive \$14.99 a bottle! In Shiraz, savour the concentrated Pastor's Son Barossa Shiraz from the estate of the late, great Peter Lehmann and the divine Chapel Hill The Prophet McLaren Vale Shiraz, made by the talented Michael Fragos. The lovely Six Word from Padthaway adds some rare Touriga to Shiraz to make a deliciously moreish blend, great for summer. Get out your biggest glasses for the mighty Adaptaur Durif, a big red that is literally made to accompany a steak – fire up the BBQ for this one! John Quarisa's velvety Caravan Merlot is one of our top sellers and boasts Gold and Double Gold. More Gold can be found in the lavish Heritage Release Cabernet Sauvignon from Taylors, who just picked up the gong for Best Shiraz in the World at the 2022 International Wines and Spirits Competition. Their Cabernets are impressive too, of course. Look forward to lush dark fruit on a long, smooth finish. All up, you receive \$334 worth of wine for just \$179.88 – don't miss this!

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THE AUSTRALIAN WINE

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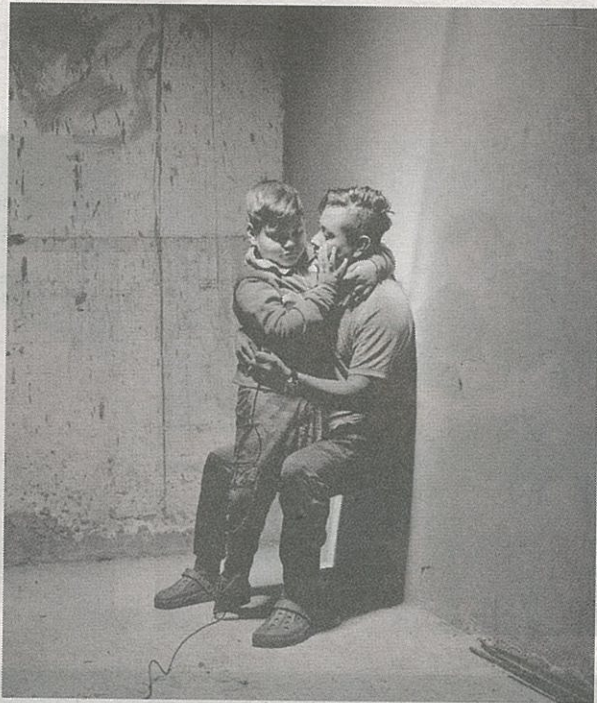
WINNER
Silent Strength Wayne Quilliam



Siegi Steph Connell



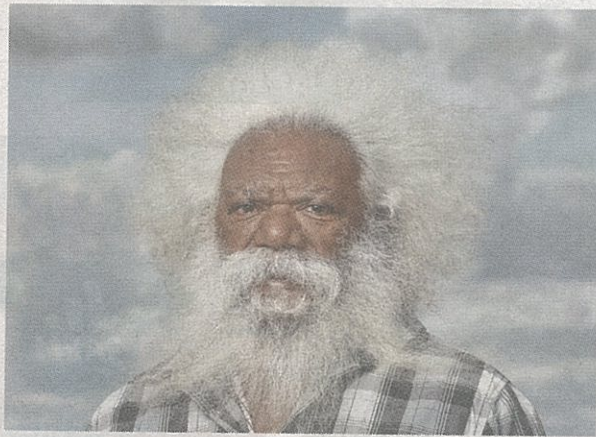
Keenan Emma Pegrum



HIGHLY COMMENDED
Carlos Soyos, 34, a migrant from Guatemala City and his son, Enderson Soyos, 8, take a self portrait at El Buen Samaritano migrants selter, Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico. Adam Ferguson



The Shuttle Andrew Rovenko



ART HANDLERS' AWARD
Cordy in the Clouds Adam Haddrick



PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD
Flora and Fauna, Giara: White Cockatoo Luther Cora



Tween Twilight Natalie Grono

Photographic MEMORIES

The most striking collection of images, capturing the strength and breadth of Australian photographic portraiture, has arrived in Adelaide

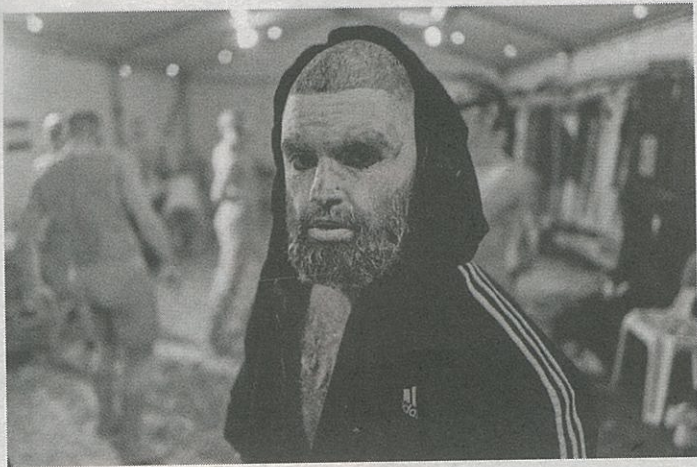
Here is a small selection of the vast range of works that will be on display when The National Portrait Gallery's National Photographic Portrait Prize for 2022 hits Adelaide today. The exhibition is in the David Roche Foundation House Museum (TDRF) until April 1. Museum director Robert Reason said Roche himself would have "been fascinated to see the strength and breadth of Australian photographic portraiture today". Visitors can also hear from Sandra Bruce, one of the judges of the prize, and artist Luther Cora.

TDRF Museum, 241 Melbourne St, North Adelaide.
Open: Tuesday to Saturday 10am-4pm. Entry: \$12 adult. \$10 concession. Children under 12 free

The Advertiser

08 SAWEEKEND JANUARY 28-29, 2023

pages 08-09



The hoodie Jaco Nash



The Matriach Joey Chan

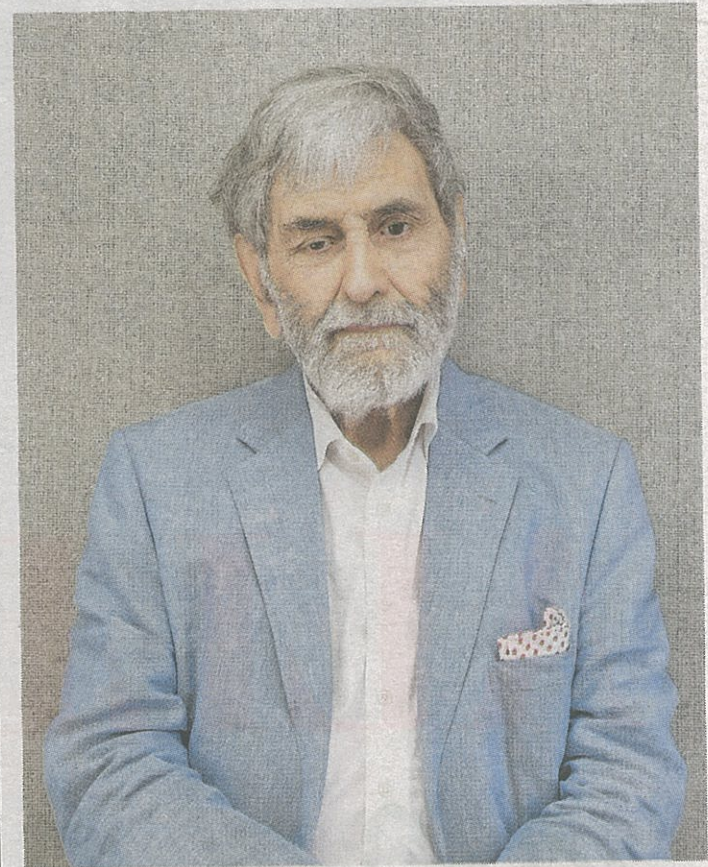


Where Have All The Flowers Gone The Huxleys



JAMIE BIANCA in the style of Grace Kelly Tom Evangelidis

FEATURE



Barry Jones AC Rod McNicol

Arts sector seeks expanded cultural policy

Tom McIlroy

Businesswoman and State Library of Victoria president Christine Christian has challenged federal Labor to provide long-term, holistic funding for Australia's \$111 billion arts sector, warning the new national cultural policy could be make-or-break for some cultural institutions.

Arts Minister Tony Burke will unveil Australia's first national cultural policy in a decade next week, and expectations are growing that it will include millions in new funding for the arts in the May budget.

Ms Christian – a leader in financial services and private equity, and a director of businesses, including Auctus Investment Group and Tanarra Credit Partners – said the arts had been badly hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and bold new leadership was needed. Funding and government support were crucial, she said.

"We've now arrived at a tipping point where really clear leadership to address this issue is required," she said.

"We need a long-term vision, and we need some long-term funding. It is really important at this point that the federal government looks beyond mere election cycles and short-term political capital.

"It's an opportunity for the current



government to provide a genuine legacy, to build on the cultural offering that will continue to enrich the lives of Australians for centuries to come."

Mr Burke will unveil the policy in Melbourne on Monday. It follows six months of national consultations and builds on arts policies introduced by the Keating and Gillard governments.

The policy's themes will include

"First Nations first" and "a place for every story", as well as "the centrality of the artist", "strong institutions" and "reaching the audience".

Mr Burke has already indicated that the May budget would provide badly needed extra funding for cultural institutions, although the budget process is still under way.

The arts and entertainment sector

Looking for a game-changer ... Christine Christian: "The arts are vital to the flourishing of a rich national culture and a free society."

contributed about \$14.7 billion in value-added gross domestic product in 2018-19, before the pandemic. Arts think tank A New Approach puts the value of Australia's cultural and creative economy at \$111.7 billion, or about 6.4 per cent of the whole Australian economy.

Labor is being advised by an expert panel in the development of its arts

policy, including philanthropist Janet Holmes a Court; chief executive of the Australia Council for the Arts Adrian Collette; performer Alysha Herrmann; performer and choreographer Sinsa Mansell; visual artist Kitty Taylor; author Christos Tsiolkas; and historian, author and broadcaster Clare Wright.

Ms Christian told *The Australian Financial Review* arts and cultural institutions had been funded piecemeal for too long. Key offerings and critical infrastructure were at risk, including at institutions such as the National Gallery of Australia and the National Library.

She urged Mr Burke and Prime Minister Anthony Albanese to be ambitious and seize the moment. Melbourne's historic State Library was founded as the first public library in Australia 166 years ago. Founder Sir Redmond Barry wanted to create a "people's university" in the fledgling colonial capital.

"This national cultural policy will provide a road map for Australia's future," Ms Christian said. "The arts are vital to the flourishing of a rich national culture and a free society, and our research tells us that a majority of Australians do favour public support of the arts.

"We are optimistic about the policy, and we hope it will be a game changer."

Jewish heirs sue the Guggenheim over Picasso work

WILL PAVIA
NEW YORK

Heirs of a German-Jewish businessman are suing the Guggenheim in New York claiming that a Picasso now worth at least \$US100m (\$142m) that he sold while fleeing Nazi persecution should be returned to them by the art gallery.

Woman Ironing was painted in 1904 near the end of Picasso's Blue Period when the young artist, grief-stricken after the suicide of a friend, was living in squalor and choosing to paint the beggars and low-paid workers of Paris.

In 1916, Heinrich Thannhauser, a Jewish art dealer in Munich, sold the painting to Karl Adler, one of the owners and managers of a

large German leather manufacturing company.

After the Nazis came to power Adler, who was also Jewish, was forced to relinquish his position on the company's board and fled Germany with his wife Rosi on June 29, 1938, moving across borders while trying to gather enough money to get to Argentina.

The lawsuit filed by his heirs says that because Adler had been subjected to a flight tax by the Nazi government, which also blocked access to his accounts in Germany, he was effectively forced to sell the Picasso and to accept 6887 Swiss francs, a tiny fraction of the sum he had considered accepting six years earlier.

Rosi died in Buenos Aires in 1946 and Adler died in 1957, at the age of 85, leaving three children

Carlota, Eric and Juan Jorge. The plaintiffs include Carlota's grandson Thomas Bennigson, charities that were the beneficiaries of Eric, and the heirs of the widow of Juan Jorge. The claim says that these are the rightful owners of a painting that has hung in the Guggenheim since 1978, and demands that the work be returned, or that they be paid between \$US100m and \$US200m for it.

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation said the claim was "without merit" as it did not concern a painting "stolen or seized by Nazi authorities" but one that was sold by a German Jewish businessman with "extensive international business holdings" to a Jewish art collector.

Woman Ironing was bought by Justin Thannhauser, the son of

Heinrich, who had originally sold it to Adler, and Thannhauser had a longstanding relationship with the Adler family and had also been subject to Nazi persecution, the gallery said.

It said the deal was done when both men were outside Germany.

Thannhauser brought his collection from Europe to the US and said he would bequeath Woman Ironing to the Guggenheim in 1963, the gallery said. It said two of Adler's children, Carlota and Eric, lived near the Guggenheim at the time and raised no complaints about the bequest. The gallery even contacted Eric in the 1970s while researching the provenance of the painting and he "did not raise any concerns about the painting or its sale".



THE TIMES

Picasso's Woman Ironing

The Australian, Wednesday, January 25, 2023 page 9



Zhao Liang, in traditional dress, with Arts Minister Andrea Michaels and artist Khanh Mai in front of the Lunar New Year mural at the Festival Centre. Picture: Ben Clark

HOPPORTUNITY TO CELEBRATE

EVANGELINE POLYMENEAS

THE Year of the Rabbit is upon us and the Adelaide Festival Centre is celebrating with a dazzling new show - and a striking mural.

In Tale of the Fire Phoenix, Zhao Liang's storytelling is about a forest that faces drought and a phoenix that wishes for the rain. The performance is an interactive musical journey for all ages, with sessions beginning on January 28.

"As this project began in 2020, it was an important

reflection period for me, as an individual and as an artist," said Ms Liang, the artistic principal and founder of the School of Chinese Music and Arts.

"I decided that it was timely to be writing music around the tale of a phoenix, a mythical bird that is talked of by many cultures.

"I hope this seeks to connect with diverse audiences from different cultural backgrounds."

In a tribute to the Year of the Rabbit, artist Khanh Mai

created a mural on a wall of the Festival Centre. "Khanh Mai has done an extraordinary job creating this beautiful mural to celebrate Lunar New Year at the Adelaide Festival Centre," Arts Minister Andrea Michaels said.

"South Australia is all the richer for our diverse multiculturalism and art is a powerful way of sharing our cultures with one another."

Tickets for Tale of the Fire Phoenix are on sale at adelaidefestivalcentre.com.au

The Australian Financial Review Magazine,
February, 2023 page 14

CURRENCY



HOTA opened in May 2021 and then had a pandemic to contend with, so gallery director Tracy Cooper-Lavery was determined to make 2023 a big one for the Gold Coast's Home of the Arts. And what better way to do so than with a world premiere exhibition? *Pop Masters: Art from the Mugrabi Collection, New York*, will include 40 works never shown before in Australia from artists such as Jean-Michel Basquiat (above), Keith Haring and Andy Warhol, alongside works by Katherine Bernhardt, Damien Hirst, KAWS, Julian Schnabel and Tom Wesselmann. Pop in after a morning on the beach. Tickets from \$25. Opens February 18. hota.com.au

Portrait of an artist activist

YOU CAN GO NOW! (M)

In cinemas
David Stratton



Richard Bell is an award-winning Aboriginal artist and activist or, as he says, "an activist masquerading as an artist". Abrasive, confrontational, witty and angry, he is the focus of this very good documentary that also serves as a reminder of the Indigenous protest movement of the past – notably the establishment of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy and the 1967 referendum and its aftermath.

Underlying it all is the understandable anger and frustration of Indigenous Australians when faced with the disinterest and even opposition of former prime ministers such as John Gorton and Billy McMahon.

Bell's artworks often feature original photographs that he re-colours in vivid hues, and he's influenced by Roy Lichtenstein among others.

You Can Go Now! uses archive footage very effectively to show the links between Indigenous Australians and the Black Power movement in the US.

Bell formed a friendship with US activist and artist Emory Douglas that was clearly fruitful for both of them.

Interviewees include Gary Foley and the current Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Linda Burney. As we approach the referendum on the voice, this film is essential viewing.



January 28-29, 2023 **Review**

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The Weekend Australian, Review, January 28-29, 2023 page 15

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Andy Warhol. Image: Supplied.
VISUAL ARTS

Career and money advice from Andy Warhol

Often heralded as the artist who turned art into commerce and commerce into art, Andy Warhol's pithy sayings contain lessons for the modern day creator.

30 Jan 2023

[ArtsHub](#)

With his roots as a commercial artist, Andy Warhol embraced capitalism, transforming the artist figure into a brand identity and paving the way for a new attitude to commercial success in the arts.

'Warhol bent the American consumerist system to artistic ends throughout his career – embracing capitalism at a time when many in the creative sphere viewed it sceptically, if not with outright hostility,' wrote Andrew M Goldstein for Blouin Artinfo.

Australian audiences are soon to get a taste of Warhol's success with the exhibition **Andy Warhol and Photography: A Social Media** at the Art Gallery of South Australia, and another, **The Legends of Pop Art** (including the works of Andy Warhol alongside Keith Haring and Jean-Michel Basquiat) at HOTA, Home of the Arts on the Gold Coast. One of the things these artists have in common is their interest in 'selfies' – even if the word didn't exist in Warhol's day.

Warhol once stated he would endorse anything with his name. In an earlier exhibition where Warhol's works were paired with those by Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, at the **NGV International** (2016), on display were a block of concrete, Brillo boxes and, of course, soup cans with Warhol's signature.

'Being good in business is the most fascinating kind of art. Making money is art and working is art and good business is the best art,' he famously said.

That approach has become a catchcry for a **growing body of 'artpreneurs'** who do not shy away from the money-making potential of creativity.

But aside from the commercial brilliance, there is a controversial side to Warhol's capitalism. He was unashamed about exploiting his acolytes and plagiarising their ideas. Gallerist Muriel Latow was said to have **come up with the ideas for his soup cans and paintings of dollar bills**.

Warhol paid her \$50 and made millions from the reproduceable works [...] So what can a contemporary arts professional learn from Warhol's commercial success? Keeping in mind that even the controversial or limiting aspects of an artist's career contain teachings, we've collected a host of pithy sayings by Warhol on the topics of business, commerce, money, art and life to derive lessons for the modern day artist.

On art and money...



Menu

'You know it's ART, when the cheque clears.'

'Success is when the cheque don't bounce.'

'Do you know that the Campbell's Soup Company has not sent me a single can of soup?'

'I'd asked around 10 or 15 people for suggestions. Finally, one lady friend asked the right question "Well, what do you love most?" That's how I started painting money.'

'Business art is the step that comes after art. I started as a commercial artist, and I want to finish as a business artist. Being good in business is the most fascinating kind of art. During the hippie era people put down the idea of business. They'd say "money is bad" and "working is bad". But making money is art, and working is art – and good business is the best art.'

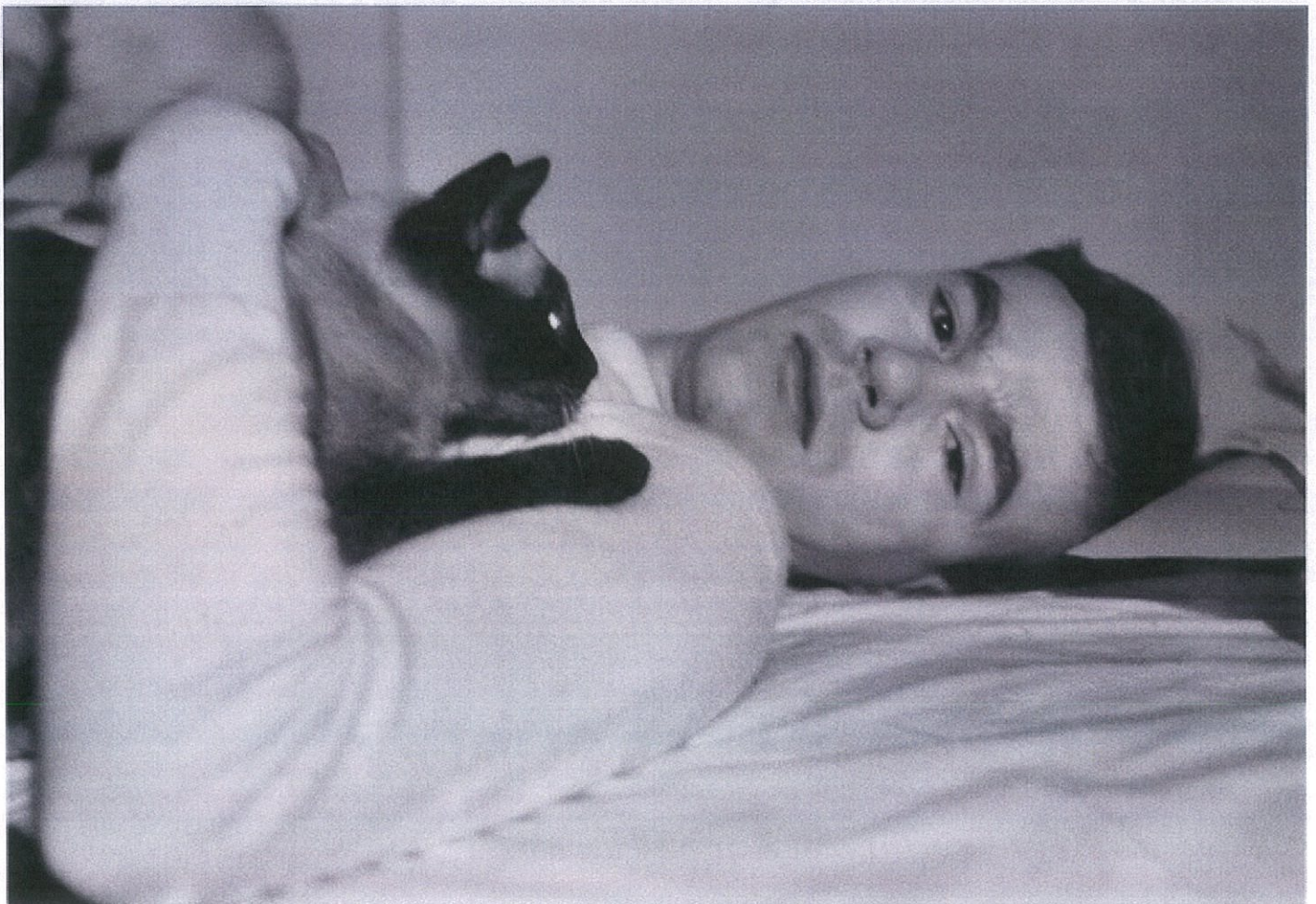


Image: Supplied by National Gallery of Victoria as featured in '**Andy Warhol / Ai Weiwei**'.

On marketing and publicity...

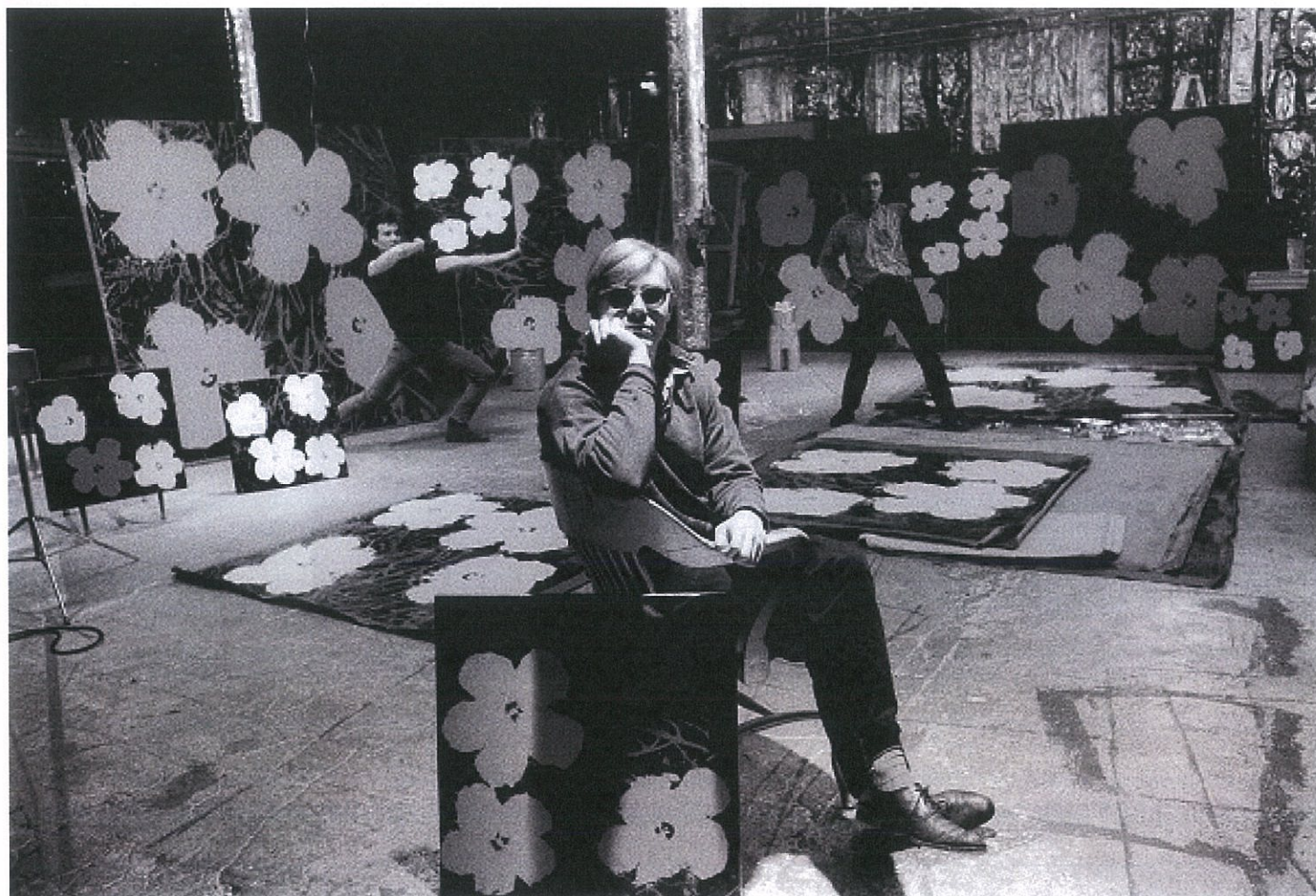
[Menu](#)

'It's not what you are that counts, it's what they think you are.'

'People are always so boring when they band together. You have to be alone to develop all the idiosyncrasies that make a person interesting.'

'In the future, everybody will be world famous for 15 minutes.'

'Publicity is like eating peanuts. Once you start you can't stop.'



*Image: Supplied by National Gallery of Victoria as featured in **'Andy Warhol / Ai Weiwei'***

On what it takes to be an artist...

'I never wanted to be a painter; I wanted to be a tap dancer.'

'Don't think about making art, just get it done. Let everyone else decide if it's good or bad, whether they love it or hate it. While they are deciding, make even more art.'

‘An artist is somebody who produces things that people don’t need to have.’



Menu

‘You have to do stuff that average people don’t understand because those are the only good things.’

‘An artist is someone who produces things that people don’t need to have but that he – for some reason – thinks it would be a good idea to give them.’

‘The idea is not to live forever, it is to create something that will.’

‘I just do art because I’m ugly and there’s nothing else for me to do.’

On the meaning of art...

‘Pop art is for everyone.’

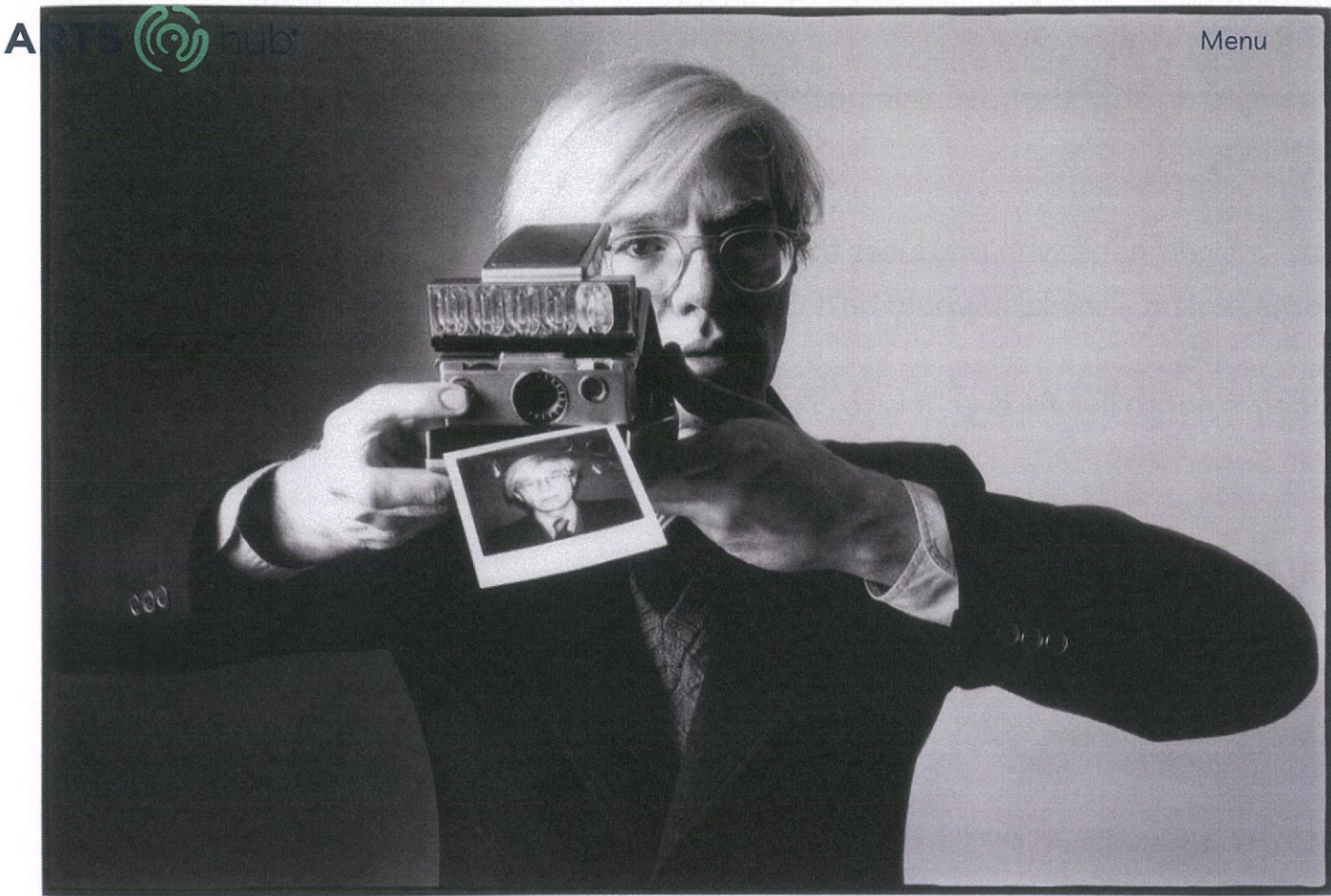
‘Art is what you can get away with.’

‘I’m afraid that if you look at a thing long enough, it loses all of its meaning.’

‘You need to let the little things that would ordinarily bore you suddenly thrill you.’

On the fear of missing out...

‘I’m the type who’d be happy not going anywhere as long as I was sure I knew exactly what was happening at the places I wasn’t going to. I’m the type who’d like to sit home and watch every party that I’m invited to on a monitor in my bedroom.’



'Andy Warhol and Photography', poses the artist as the original influencer. Image: Courtesy Art Gallery of SA.

On success...

'If something's going to happen for you, it will, you can't make it happen. And it never does happen until you're past the point where you care whether it happens or not. I guess it's for your own good that it always happens that way, because after you stop wanting things is where having them won't make you go crazy.'

On growth, career and change...

'They always say time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself.'

'When people are ready to, they change. They never do it before then, and sometimes they die before they get around to it. You can't make them change if they don't want to, just like when they do want to, you can't stop them.'

‘Sometimes people let the same problem make them miserable for years when they could just say, “So what”. That’s one of my favourite things to say. “So what”.’ [Menu](#)

‘As soon as you stop wanting something, you get it.’

‘It does not matter how slowly you go, so long as you do not stop.’

‘Sometimes the little times you don’t think are anything while they’re happening turn out to be what marks a whole period of your life.’

‘I wake up every morning. I open my eyes and think: here we go again.’

‘People need to be made more aware of the need to work at learning how to live because life is so quick and sometimes it goes away too quickly.’

*This article was first published on the occasion of the exhibition, **Andy Warhol | Ai Weiwei** at NGV International (11 December – 24 April 2016).*

Andy Warhol and Photography: A Social Media is showing at the Art Gallery of South Australia from 3 March – 14 May 2023, to coincide with Adelaide Festival, while **The Legends of Pop Art** – including the works of Warhol – is showing at y HOTA, Home of the Arts on the Gold Coast 18 February – 4 June 2023.



ArtsHub

Built upon a proud 22-year heritage, ArtsHub is Australia's leading independent online resource dedicated to the world of the arts. Our passionate team actively pursues a vision of being a world-class arts and culture publishing, media and marketplace business that significantly contributes to developing a dynamic, diverse and prosperous arts industry.

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March Studio has designed the Outback Museum of Australia (OMOA) in Charleville, south-west Queensland. Artist **PERFORMING ARTS** order: Supplied.

26 new theatres and galleries opening in Australia in 2023, and beyond

The building boom continues for the arts, with an impressive line-up of new theatres, galleries and cultural centres opening their doors in 2023, and beyond.

27 Jan 2023

Gina Fairley

Despite the building industry facing continued supply delays as an outcome of the pandemic, a swag of new galleries and theatres are set to open in 2023, offering optimism for the arts sector after a tough few years.

Builds, refits and refurbes opening in 2023



With an impressive glass façade, the expanded QPAC will open this year. Render: Supplied.

Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC) (Qld)

Opening: 2023

Cost: \$175 million

Queensland's new state-of-the-art theatre is taking shape in Brisbane's South Bank cultural precinct. The \$175 million infrastructure project at the **Queensland Performing Arts Centre** will make it the largest performing arts centre in Australia, with five venues and the potential to welcome an additional 300,000 visitors per year.

The design includes a new 1500-capacity, state-of-the-art theatre, and will incorporate significant First Nations public artwork. Blight Rayner and Snøhetta make up the principal consultant design team, with a ripple glass façade a key feature offering transparent foyers. Lendlease is the managing contractor for the project, which began March 2020, and Lendlease Building Queensland is managing the construction. The timing is considered key in the lead-up to the 2032 Olympic Games.

South East Centre for Contemporary Art (SECCA) (NSW)

Opening: expected April 2023

Cost: \$3.6 million

Formerly **Bega Valley Regional Gallery (BVRG)**, SECCA is the only publicly-funded art gallery in south-east NSW, using this as key to the gallery's new branding. The redeveloped gallery will comprise two exhibition spaces – expanding it from 180 square metres to 290 square metres – and one workshop/project space, which is available for hire, as well as a small gallery shop.

The council has worked with Sibling Architecture to complete the design and building works began in late 2021.

It's estimated that the new gallery will boost tourism by \$3.4 million per year. Half of the \$3.6 million price tag for the project has been secured from the Australian Government's Building Better Regions Fund.

Read: **When persistence is a gallery: Bega to welcome SECCA**

Artspace and Gunnery redevelopment project (NSW)

Opening: 2023 (to be announced)

Cost: \$9 million

The transformation project is being supported by over \$9 million from the NSW Government and has been designed by Dunn & Hillam Architects. The revitalised facilities will include expanded galleries, additional free artist studios, general upgraded amenities and public access to the gallery's 35-year program archive. There will also be a new flexible learning space. Artspace will reopen in 2023.

Borderville Theatre (NSW)

Opening: December

Cost: \$3.9M

Menu

The **Borderville Studio Theatre** will expand the Flying Fruit Fly Circus' existing headquarters with a custom-built performance space for circus arts. A \$3.3 million investment from the NSW Government's Creative Capital fund is supporting the construction of a new 100-seat studio theatre in Albury.

Geelong Arts Centre (Vic)

Opening: late 2023

Cost: \$140 million

The new **Geelong Arts Centre** is set to become Victoria's biggest regional arts centre upon completion. The facility will include a 500-seat theatre that expands to an 800-person capacity in 'live gig' mode, as well as a hybrid theatre with 250 seats connected to the Little Malop Street Plaza, a black box theatre, an outdoor atrium, more dining options, a new office and new back-of-house and administration facilities. It has been designed by ARM Architecture.

The Victorian Government has invested \$140 million in the project, which is being delivered by a partnership between the Geelong Arts Centre, Creative Victoria, Development Victoria and Lendlease (the project's builder). It is due to be completed by late 2023.



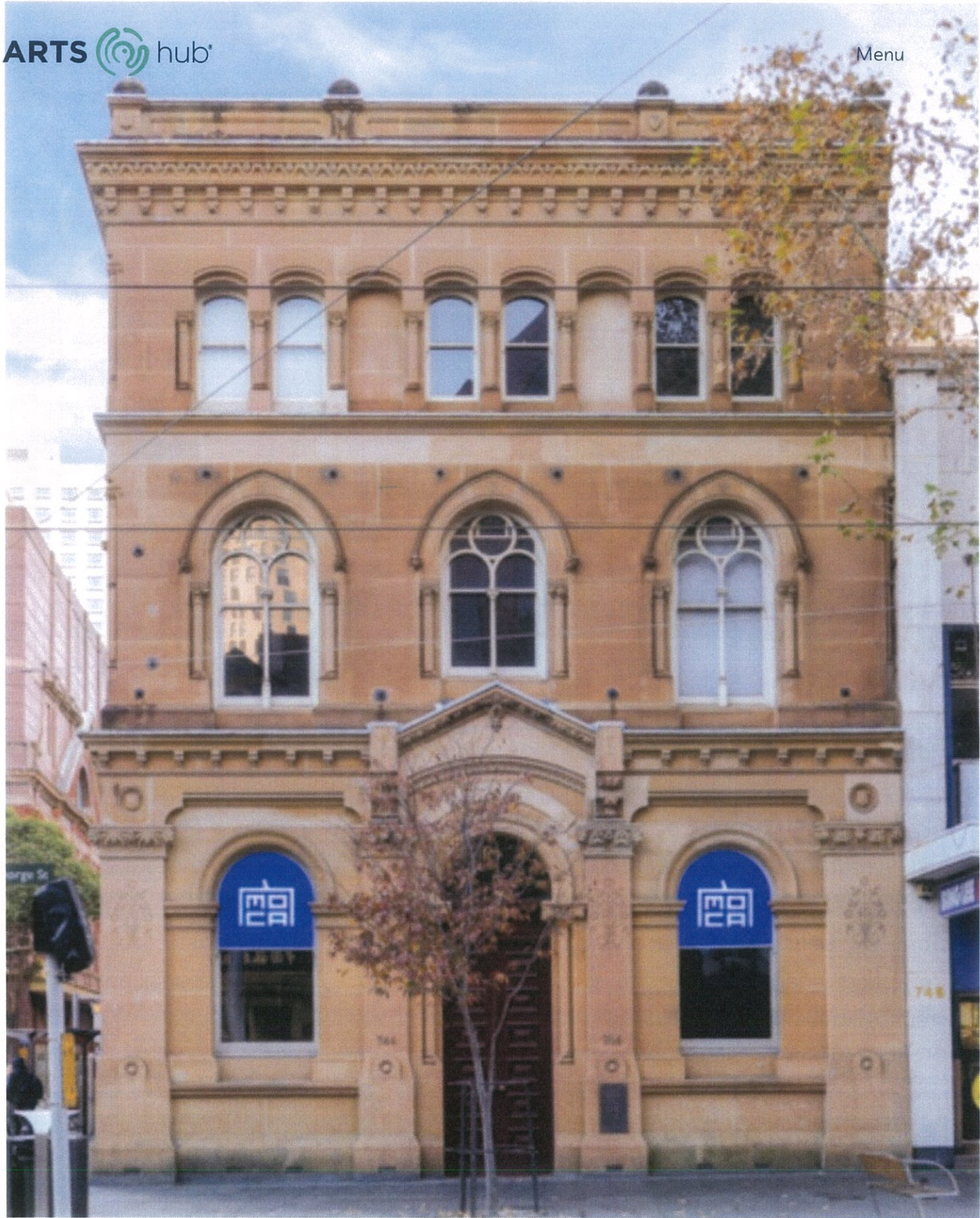
The Round redevelopment project is due to open mid-2023. Render: Supplied.

Whitehorse Performing Arts Centre, aka The Round (Vic)

Opening: mid-late 2023

Cost: \$68 million

The Whitehorse Performing Arts Centre Redevelopment is expected to open later this year, taking on the new name and branding as **The Round**. Positioned in a parkland setting, it's been designed to be viewed by both by park users and venue attendees. The Round will feature an auditorium that seats 600-plus, a 200-seat studio theatre, creative rehearsal studios, an improved soundshell for outdoor events and a new \$10 million car park for the precinct. It will host an expanded range of shows, functions and events. Construction is expected to be completed in mid-late 2023. The council has invested \$68 million in the building.



Opening in June 2023, the Museum of Chinese in Australia will focus on storytelling.
Image: Courtesy MOCA.

Museum of Chinese in Australia (NSW)

ARTS  hub
Opening: June 2023

Menu

Cost: not disclosed

Situated on a prominent corner alongside the Haymarket tram stop, in Sydney's iconic Chinatown, **MOCA** – the Museum of Chinese in Australia – will be a landmark gallery. The building dates back to 1875, and was the Haymarket Library before becoming the site for MOCA. Headed by CEO Tony Stephens and Director of Engagement Yan Zhao, it is being described as a home for stories of past, present and future generations of Chinese Australians, and will also be a centre for research and exchange.



Foundation Theatres and The Star have announced plans to transform the 4000-seat Event Centre at The Star Sydney into a two-theatre complex. Render: Supplied.

Foundation Theatres, Sydney (NSW)

Opening: 2023

Cost: not disclosed

Foundation Theatres' vision is to complete the Sydney theatre landscape by providing the Broadway-style New Theatre and the Live Room by 2023. The project will be funded privately and deliver to Sydney the theatre infrastructure necessary to accommodate the city's growing needs for the next decade. The new complex will feature a 1550-seat

Broadway-style theatre on two levels, capable of hosting large-scale musicals, dance, drama, concerts, ballet and opera with a full fly system and orchestra pit (New Theatre); and a 1000-seat comedy and live entertainment theatre (Live Room). Foundation Theatres anticipates the new theatres will open in 2023.

Cowes Cultural and Community Centre, Phillip Island (Vic)

Opening: mid-late 2023

Cost: \$51.8 million

The redevelopment of the **Cowes Cultural and Community Centre** involves replacing the existing centre on Phillip Island. The new facility will encourage a range of community activities and events. With a 14-month construction program, the building will be in line with council's Climate Change Action Plan, built, designed and certified to Passivhaus Standards – making it the most environmentally significant building in the region.

Roxy Community Theatre, Leeton (NSW)

Opening: late 2023

Cost: Stage One \$5 million committed and Stage Two ongoing funding

The **Roxy Redevelopment Project** will see adaptive reuse and restoration of the facility to achieve a multifunctional and fully accessible theatre and civic space that honours the building's special heritage values. The project will be delivered in two stages.

Stage One will see a roof replacement, removal of the raked floor to provide a level area for retractable seating to allow for a function space, disabled access to facilities, other building maintenance, and new heating and cooling systems. Stage Two will include renovation of the former Movie Café.

The Roxy Redevelopment Project is being funded by the Australian Government under the Murray-Darling Basin Economic Development Program, the NSW Government through the Regional Cultural Fund, as well as Leeton Shire Council.

Brisbane Motor Museum (Qld)

Opening: mid-2023

Cost: not disclosed

The Brisbane Motor Museum will be situated in Banyo – approximately 20 minutes north of the Gold Coast – with its doors due to open mid-2023. As reported by *The Race Torque*, it will be one of more than 50 Australian members of the Australasian Motor Museums Association, joining the Gold Coast Motor Museum also in Queensland. The new museum will display classic cars, memorabilia and artworks. It will also include a library, gift shop, café and meeting room for car clubs.

Australian Museum's Project Discover Stage 2 (NSW)

The reopening of the Australian Museum (AM) following stage one of **Project Discover** in November 2020 marked the first step. Since then, it has continued to roll out its massive staged redevelopment, with \$57.5 million spent on refurbished public and exhibition spaces last year. The AM's website quietly announced that will continue into 2023, delivering stage two of Project Discover with the opening a new Pasifika Gallery, developed in consultation with community, in 2023.

In the pipeline for 2024 opening



Architect's impression of the new Northern Territory Art Gallery. Render: Supplied, courtesy of the NT Government.

Northern Territory Art Gallery, Darwin (NT)

ARTS hub
Opening: 2024

Menu

Cost: \$88 million

In November last year, Australian construction company Sitzler was **announced as the winner of the tender to build the \$88 million Northern Territory Art Gallery** (NTAG), previously referred to as the State Square Art Gallery (first budgeted at \$50 million). Designed by local architecture practice, Ashford Architects with Clare Design and Hully Liveris, the three-storey gallery will be situated in Darwin's CBD.

The Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT) will be developing exhibitions and programs for NTAG's opening, and will operate the gallery on behalf of the Northern Territory Government. Completion of NTAG is slated for 2024, followed by a period of approximately six months to build and install exhibitions before the gallery opens. The gallery will also have an Aboriginal name, to be determined in consultation with local Aboriginal groups prior to its opening. It will be the centrepiece of **Darwin's \$200 million Civic and State Square Masterplan**.



Architectural illustration of the Newcastle Art Gallery expansion, produced by David Dulloy. Render: Supplied.

Newcastle Art Gallery (NSW)

ARTS  Opening: mid-2024

[Menu](#)

Cost: \$40 million

Newcastle Art Gallery (NAG) will see its 43-year-old building extended east along Darby Street and Queen Street with an eye-catching glass façade, a street-level café and a retail shop. Its overall exhibition space will be expanded by 250% (an additional 1600 square metres). Construction on the building is scheduled to begin in mid-2023. The \$40 million project is supported by \$5 million from the Australian Government under the Regional Recovery Partnerships program and \$5 million from the New South Wales Government, as well as a \$10 million bequest from Valerie Ryan and \$500,000 in funding from the Margaret Olley Art Trust through the Newcastle Art Gallery Foundation. For [project updates](#).

Australian War Memorial (ACT)

Opening: southern entrance external works completed 2023, next reveal in 2024, and full works finished by 2028

Cost: estimated \$455 million

Work on the **Australia War Memorial** redevelopment has commenced, including a new southern entrance, a new Anzac Hall and glazed link, new gallery fitouts in the main building (creating additional exhibition galleries), an extension to the CEW Bean Building to house a new research centre and reading room, and a parade ground and landscaping works to accommodate increased attendance at events.

The iconic façade of the sandstone Commemorative Area – housing the Roll of Honour, Pool of Reflection and Hall of Memory – will not change. The architectural designs of the Memorial's new buildings were approved November 2021. Various architects have been charged with different components of the build, including Scott Carver, Lyons Architecture and COX Architecture.

Outback Museum of Australia (OMOA), Charleville (Qld)

Opening: date to be announced

Cost: estimated \$8.4 million

In October last year, Melbourne's March Studio was selected to design the Outback Museum of Australia (OMOA) in Charleville, south-west Queensland, following an

international competition and a shortlisting process. March Studio's design features a large rammed earth exhibition and multipurpose spaces or pavilions (total building footprint 700 square metres), which will cluster around a central garden.

The roof is constructed from sheets of Aramax that double as rainfall catchments. The jury described the design as 'being of human scale, materially honest and presenting a unique curatorial opportunity'. A Federal Government contribution of \$7.94 million has helped get the project across the line with its projected budget at \$8.4 million. The Outback Museum of Australia was **first proposed in 2021**, with a masterplan produced by Griffith University in a collaboration with Murweh Shire Council. It will be built in Charleville on a former air base where 4000 US troops were stationed during World War II.

And on the more distant horizon

Geelong Gallery

Opening: early 2027
Estimated cost: \$110-120 million

In December 2021, **Geelong Gallery** completed a business case for expansion in conjunction with the City of Greater Geelong and Regional Development Victoria through the Enabling Tourism Fund. It put forward the case for an investment in the range of \$110 million to \$120 million over five years from federal, state and local governments along with philanthropic sources, to revitalise and expand Geelong Gallery. The project is aiming for an early 2027 reveal.



Powerhouse Ultimo renewal concept design. Render: Supplied.

Powerhouse Ultimo

Opening: to be announced

Estimated cost: \$500 million

In December 2022, **Powerhouse Ultimo released its building design**, selected by an expert jury following a national design competition. The winning concept was designed by an Australian team comprising Architectus, Durbach Block Jagers Architects, Tyrrell Studio, Youssofzay + Hart, Akira Isogawa, Yerrabingin, Finding Infinity and Arup Architects. The controversial site had a turnaround moment in June 2021, when the NSW Government announced a \$480 to \$500 million investment into the site's renewal.



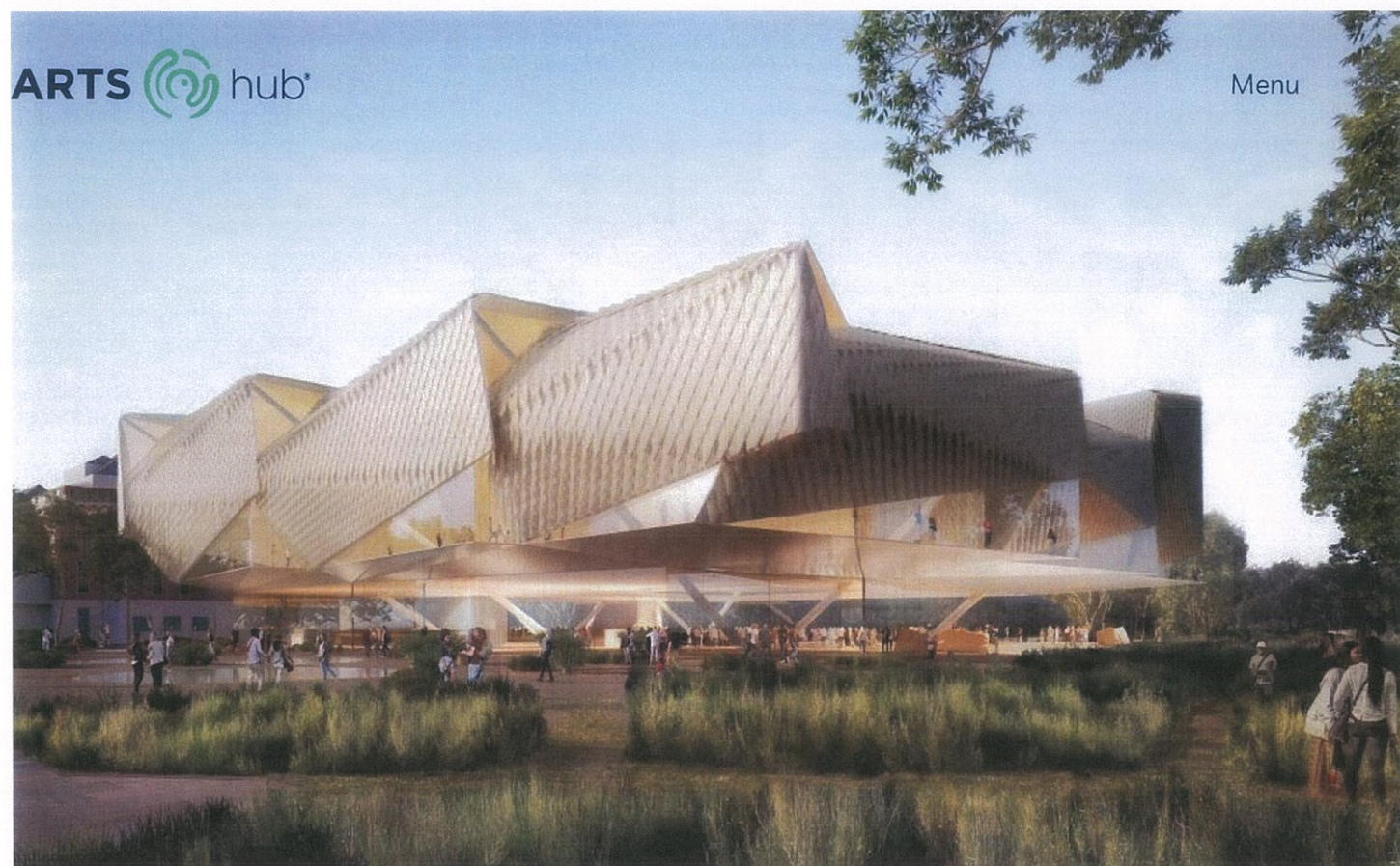
Powerhouse Museum, architect's impression. Render: Moreau Kusunoki/Genton.

Powerhouse Parramatta (NSW)

Opening: 2025

Cost: \$900 million

As the first NSW state cultural institution to be based in Western Sydney, Powerhouse Parramatta at 30,000 square metres will be the largest museum in NSW, and the largest cultural infrastructure project in NSW since the Sydney Opera House. Of that space, 18,000 square metres will be dedicated to exhibitions and education programs. Lendlease was awarded the contract in late-2021 to deliver the museum, designed by the architectural team of Japanese firm, Moreau Kusunoki and Genton. Construction commenced in 2022 and the building is expected to open in 2025.



Concept design for Adelaide's Aboriginal Art and Cultures Centre. Render: Supplied.

Aboriginal Arts and Cultures Centre, Adelaide (SA)

Opening: 2025

Cost: \$200 million

The final design for Adelaide's \$200 million **Aboriginal Art and Cultures Centre** (AACC) as a centrepiece of the Lot Fourteen precinct, was awarded to Woods Bagot, in partnership with Diller Scofidio + Renfro. Construction commenced in December 2021. The 11,500-square-metre building's design was based on layers that reflect Aboriginal connection to Country, place and kin. Key is a gathering space in the centre to create a gateway for cultural exchange. The AACC is scheduled to open in 2025.



Artist impression, Vietnamese Museum Australia, scheduled to open 2025. Render: Supplied.

Vietnamese Museum Australia (Vic)

Opening: 2025
Cost: to be determined

In late 2019, \$9.45 million in funding was secured for this project from state and federal governments, with a site for the **Vietnamese Museum Australia** purchased in 2020, on Donaldson Street in Footscary (Vic). Construction will start this year, with the museum

expected to be completed in 2025. It will become the seventh multicultural museum of



Artist impression, Bendigo Art Gallery, aiming to open doors in 2025. Render: Supplied.

Bendigo Art Gallery (Vic)

Opening: potentially 2025

Cost: estimated at \$48 million

Bendigo Art Gallery is currently fundraising for a **redevelopment** that will increase both its exhibition and education facilities. The gallery said of its ambition: 'Funding will need to be secured by June 2023 for this project to go ahead, so we have enough time to complete the redevelopment in time for the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games. Bendigo has been announced as a co-host for the Games where we are looking forward to being the cultural hub showcasing our program on a world stage. If funding is not secured by June next year, we will pause the project until after the Games.'

The redevelopment is expected to take approximately two years and cost \$48 million. In September 2022, the City of Greater Bendigo and Bendigo Art Gallery appointed architecture firm Jackson Clements Burrows and Clare Design to guide the gallery's new expansion project. Initial artist impressions for the new building were released and in

November the gallery announced it had secured funding at a state level as well as \$600,000 from Greater Bendigo City Council.

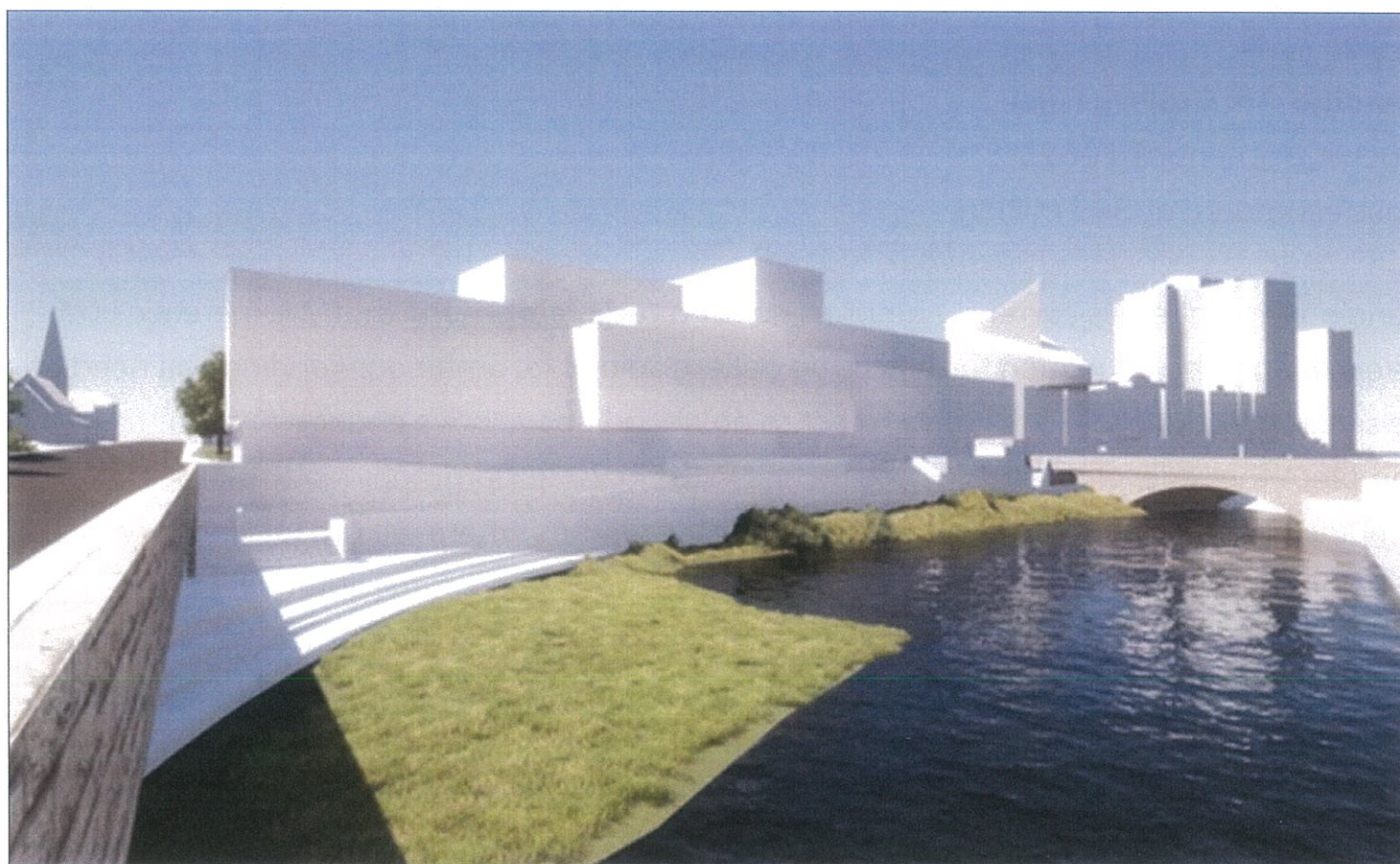
[Menu](#)

National Aboriginal Gallery and National Indigenous Cultural Centre, Alice Springs (NT)

Opening: 2025, construction to commence in 2023

The National Aboriginal Gallery will be the centrepiece of the Territory Arts Trail, dedicated to the display, celebration and interpretation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art. The Northern Territory Government committed an initial \$50 million to the gallery project as part of its \$100 million investment in a nationally significant Arts Trail throughout the territory.

Since its initial announcement five years ago, however, the project has faced a degree of pushback over the location. Last year, the Northern Territory Government was in the final stage of acquiring Alice Springs' Anzac Oval to house the centre, with construction scheduled to begin in late 2023, and a completion date for 2025. In April 2021, Tracy Puklowski was appointed as Director for the new gallery.



Parramatta Riverside Theatres are a step closer. Artist's impression. Render: City of Parramatta.

Parramatta Riverside Theatres (NSW)

ARTS hub
Opening: 2027

Menu

Cost: to be determined

Long on the table for consideration, this week (late January 2023), the City of Parramatta approved the business case for the redevelopment of its Riverside Theatres venue on the banks of the Parramatta River. A concept reference design was approved by the council in May 2022, and council is now seeking approval for a planning proposal to increase the height limit on the site from 15 metres to 28 metres.

The redevelopment will create a new 1350-seat proscenium arch lyric theatre, a refurbished 760-seat playhouse theatre, a new 430-seat multi-mode drama theatre, and a 75-seat digital studio and cinema. In total, the redeveloped venue will more than double the capacity of the existing theatre. A design competition will be launched in 2023, with the redeveloped theatre slated to open in 2027.



Daytime render of winning design concept by Angelo Candalepas and Associates, and public green space, facing south. Render: Darstudio.

The Fox: NGV Contemporary (Vic)

Set to become Australia's largest gallery of contemporary art and design, **The Fox: NGV Contemporary** will be designed by Angelo Candalepas and Associates, with interior design by Sue Carr AM, and landscape architect, ASPECT Studios Melbourne. The design team is led by Kirstin Bauer and also supported by emerging local architects Richard Stampton Architects and BoardGrove Architects. The Fox: NGV Contemporary will have more than 13,000 square metres of dedicated display space for art and design. A **donation of \$100 million** towards the construction by Lindsay Fox AC, Paula Fox AO and their family in 2022 secured the gallery's naming rights.

Canberra Theatre Centre (ACT)

Opening: proposed 2025

Cost: yet to be determined

A **redeveloped Canberra Theatre Centre**, including a new major theatre, is currently seeking submissions from a consortia of three shortlisted design and technical partners, expected to be appointed in the first quarter of 2023. The expansion will encompass a new 2000-seat theatre building, refurbishment of The Playhouse, significant expansion of the Courtyard Studio and increased flexibility of the spaces. Design, public consultation and approval processes will take around two years.

Projects announced, but not commenced

- **Kingston Arts Precinct** in Canberra (still on the drawing board, expected completion 2025)
- A new \$316.5 million **First Nations cultural precinct for Canberra**, and
- Mona's proposed \$466 million development (currently paused).



Gina Fairley

Gina Fairley is ArtsHub's National Visual Arts Editor. For a decade she worked as a freelance writer and curator across Southeast Asia and was previously the Regional Contributing Editor for Hong Kong based magazines Asian Art News and World Sculpture News. Prior to writing she worked as an arts manager in America and Australia for 14