



murray arts

SUPPORTING CREATIVE INDUSTRIES



annual report

2023

www.murrayarts.org.au



Image: 'Koala' by Crysta Carpenter



murray arts

SUPPORTING CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Acknowledgment of Country

Murray Arts acknowledges the traditional custodians and caretakers of the land and waters on which we are privileged to work. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and encourage everyone to champion the emerging leaders of the future.



At Murray Arts we value:

- Artistic endeavour, creativity and integrity
- The arts as a medium to challenge us and explore our humanity
- The opportunity to participate, express ourselves and access all artforms
- Community wellbeing through the arts
- The ability of the arts to connect us



Albury is a thriving artistic community. The range and scope of the projects funded has something to appeal to almost everybody and I thank Murray Arts for its leading role in administering CASP.

Member for Albury Justin Clancy



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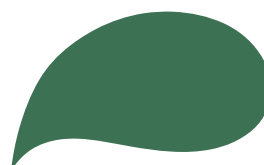
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Thank you



Murray Arts regional footprint:





Welcome to

Murray Arts

Murray Arts is a connector between creatives and their community.

We focus on the facilitation, participation and promotion of arts and cultural development on the Border and wider region. We are advocates for our region's creative community and the industries they serve.

Our footprint borders the Indigenous Nations of Duduroa, Yaithmathang, Bangerang, Wiradjuri, Yorta Yorta and Wavaroo and encompasses the local government areas of Albury City, Greater Hume Shire, Federation Shire, Wodonga City, Indigo Shire and Towong Shire.

Chair's Message

Consolidation and Change

This has been a year of consolidation and change for Murray Arts. Stepping into the leadership role of Chair in the final year of my six-year tenure on the Murray Arts Board, my focus was on taking a holistic review of all our governance practices and providing a clear and coherent way forward for our next strategic planning phase in 2024.

We developed a number of new policies and began looking at the process of renewing our constitution and forming supportive sub-committees and councils.

As four Board Members, including myself, complete their tenure in the new year, I wish to thank Councillor David Thurley, David Gordon and Rachael Gadd for their commitment to Murray Arts and our creative community. We look forward to new board members joining the team and bringing new ideas and energy to Murray Arts.

We farewelled Alyce Fisher as our Executive Director and welcomed Lauren Black into the role. Alyce was not lost to us entirely though, providing support to Lauren during the hand over period and stepping into the role of Creative Director of Limelight 3.0. We wish Alyce well in her future endeavours.



I believe Murray Arts has an exciting future in the region as an interconnector bringing artists, business, and community together. I am pleased to see the administrative and governance support being lent to the development of the Burrinja Gallery Working Group under the Murray Arts umbrella which aims to help establish a First Nations-led gallery in our region.

I would like to thank those who show their continued investment in regional arts through their funding and support; Create NSW, Regional Arts NSW, the statewide RADO Network and our much-valued member councils.

Donna Caffrey

Chair of the Murray Arts Board of Directors

Executive Director's Report



This year marked the middle year of our current Strategic Plan (2022-2024), with our three key areas of First Nations Arts Development, Capacity Building and Core Service Delivery. The nature of our business model means that we need to remain open and nimble to challenges and opportunities as they arise and 2023 was no exception.

In February, the then NSW Arts Minister, the Honourable Ben Franklin MLC, announced the 2023 Rescue and Restart Funding Program, an unexpected and welcome funding boost for NSW Regional Arts Development Organisations (RADO's). Through this funding we began planning and engaging regional artists and creative practitioners for Limelight 3.0 as well as boost our First Nations creative development activity.

Our involvement in the greater NSW Regional Arts Network (RAN) and Regional Arts NSW (RANSW) allowed us to put local artists forward to be part of new professional development programs focused on youth and women; HORIZONS and Work of Art.

The launch of the Murray Arts Creatives Directory, was a key milestone and a great resource for organisations wishing to connect with our creative community. A big thank you goes to all our contracted staff who have come on board this year to help deliver these projects and key services.

I benefitted from the generous guidance of former Executive Director, Alyce Fisher, who ensured that myself and my new team, Julien Bonnel, Executive Support & Grants Officer and Mark John Martyn, First Nations Creative Development Officer, had all the knowledge needed to take the reins and run with it. Your sustained dedication to Murray Arts and the creative community is much appreciated.

Finally, after years of Murray Arts having no home base, we are settled in the T&G building, Albury CBD, and look forward to continuing to support the incredible creative community we have here on the Border and wider region.

Lauren Black

Executive Director



We continue to offer exceptional value to our community with our core daily service taking on many forms.

Supporting Creative Industries

Murray Arts' role in supporting and developing regional arts is underpinned by three key areas of our current strategic plan:

- **First Nations Arts Development**
- **Capacity Building**
- **Core Service Delivery**

A major focus for Murray Arts has been First Nations Arts Development. We established the Aboriginal Artist Network (AAN) which supports artists in each stage of their artistic journey, from emerging to established, as well as forging connections through art to our greater community.

We are proud to be the custodians of Burraja Gallery and facilitators of the Kinder Kulture early learning program.

Murray Arts continues to provide the region's creatives with professional development opportunities and prospects to strengthen their artistic skills and confidence by producing a diverse program of workshops, panels and networking events.

We continue to offer exceptional value to our community with our core daily service taking on many forms, including auspicing projects, brainstorming solutions, giving expert advice, sitting on panels for local, state, and federal government bodies, writing letters of support, hosting events, commissioning works, and providing that valuable link between creatives and their community.

2023 Highlights

During 2023, Murray Arts provided support and assistance to 25 community initiatives, partnered with 12 council, non-for-profit and corporate organisations, auspiced 4 creative projects, wrote 20 letters of support, published 20 e-newsletters, funded 24 artists grants and participated in three state-wide projects. Below is a snapshot of that activity:

LORE Screening:

Yackandandah Public Hall, an immersive sound and light experience of local Indigenous stories, music and dance featuring a collaboration between Helen Newman of Nomad Films, Uncle Tunny Murray (Wiradjuri), Uncle Sam Wickman (Arrente Wati), Johnny Murray (Duduroa Dhargl), Tamara Murray (Barkindji/Yorta Yorta), the late Richard Kennedy (Dhudhuroa).

Kinder Kulture:

Preschool & Early Learning First Nations program engaged 500+ students across five kindergartens and five libraries.

Here Now & Always Art Market:

Aboriginal Regional Arts Alliance featuring Stephen Berger (Central Arrente), Patricia Cerminara (Gamilaroi), Tamarra Murray (Barkindji/Yorta Yorta), Dr Trehna Hamm (Yorta Yorta), Darren Wighton (Wiradjuri) and Mick Bogie (Wiradjuri).



‘LORE was an excellent installation, and we were so thrilled to help host it. It was hugely impactful and appreciated by the audience, and was also a great model for what great partnerships can be.’

Chris McGorlick
Arts Yackandandah



Smart Arts Professional Development Workshop 'How'd you get that gig?':

HotHouse Theatre, featuring Wiradjuri Educator Ruth Davys, Artist Kirrily Anderson and Circus Performer and Producer Ben Lewis.

Reflections On A River Red Gum:

Partnership with NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) Environment & Heritage Group (EHG) and Water for the Environment (W4TE) featuring 24 artists in a group exhibition at Albury Library/Museum and Henty Machinery Field Days.

NELLEN Creatives Arts Forum:

Hyphen Wodonga, featuring Designer Emily Carrington, Choreographer Tim Podesta and Musician Fanny Lumsden and attended by North-East Victorian emerging artists.

Regional Futures:

NSW Regional Arts Development Network project featuring 28 regional artists resulting in a group exhibition and artist-led symposium.

Horizons:

NSW Regional Arts Development Network youth creative mentorship program featuring 75 regional emerging artists.

Work of Art:

Regional Arts NSW professional development project funded by Women NSW and featuring 70 regional female artists.

Core and Grant Supported Projects

Burraja Gallery

Launched in July 2016, Burraja Gallery is the only dedicated local First Nations Art Gallery on the Border. We advocate for all First Nations artists who live, work or connect to our region, and provide an opportunity for dialogue and connection between the wider community and our First Nations community.

In 2023, Burraja Gallery shifted from its popup location on Olive Street, Albury to an online model www.burrajagallery.org.au with an annual exhibition.

In December, we celebrated the 5th North East Water Aboriginal Art Prize at the Burraja Cultural Centre, Gateway Village. From humble beginnings in 2017, the Art Prize has grown and evolved over the years, bringing on new partners, including North East Catchment Management Authority (NECMA), Australian Gas Infrastructure Group (AGIG) and Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service (AWAHS). The Prize showcases a cross-section of contemporary local Aboriginal art with this year featuring 12 artists and 3 prize winners.



Green House Residency Workshop Program

GreenHouse National Artist Residency is an initiative of HotHouse Theatre and is open to performing artists from across Australia. The residential program invites creative risk takers to experiment, explore innovative interdisciplinary collaborations and strengthen the creative capacity of artists to develop exceptional new Australian stories for the stage.

Each residency includes a requirement of the artist to deliver a community workshop that shares their unique artistic skill or experience with our community. These workshops are produced by Murray Arts in partnership with HotHouse Theatre and AlburyCity Cultural Activation team.

In 2023, we partnered with Retro Youth, Border Show Business Academy, Sharyn Hill School of Performing Arts & Creative Expression, Alphabet Crew, Flying Fruit Fly Circus, Murray Youth Performing Arts, Hume Dance School and Le Beat Dance Studio to deliver six workshops.



Students received an amazing insight into physical performance. Thank you to Murray Arts for offering us this workshop.

Border Show Business Academy, GreenHouse Residency Workshop Program

UNLOCKED Professional Development Microgrant Program

The UNLOCKED micro-grant program was an initiative developed as a response to the massive disruption that COVID-19 caused across the creative sector. Designed to support professional and creative development of individual independent creatives in the Murray Arts footprint, UNLOCKED continues to attract a record number of applicants and act as a connector for our local creative community.

Thanks for this terrific news! Really excited and grateful to be receiving this. Thanks again for the support provided to so many artists.

Brendan Hogan, Artist & UNLOCKED grant recipient

Country Arts Support Program (CASP)

CASP is an NSW Government grass roots funding program, in its 36th year, aimed at supporting a creative and vibrant regional NSW art scene. Murray Arts is now in its second year of solely administering the program and have achieved an extremely efficient turn around, from close of submissions to informing successful applicants. We were happy to support the following projects in 2023:

- Community Movement Connections: A Multicultural Dance Exchange – Erika Okamura \$3,993
- Music Student Workshops & Professional Concerts Weekend – Murray River Fine Music \$3,300
- Milawa Dreaming Mural – Street Art Walking \$5,000
- Albury Wodonga Lab – BORDERS Project - \$4,707



2023

Financial Performance

Murray Arts total revenue for 2023 was \$400,931 and we achieved a surplus of \$29,746.

We continue to draw income from a variety of sources including multi-year agreements with Create NSW and our Local Government Partners and one-off grant income from Federal, State and local sources.

Auspicing grants on behalf of individuals, collectives and groups continues to be a valued and accessed service of Murray Arts, plus Burraja Gallery and programs such as Kinder Kulture, creative workshops and Creatives Directory aid towards our earned income.

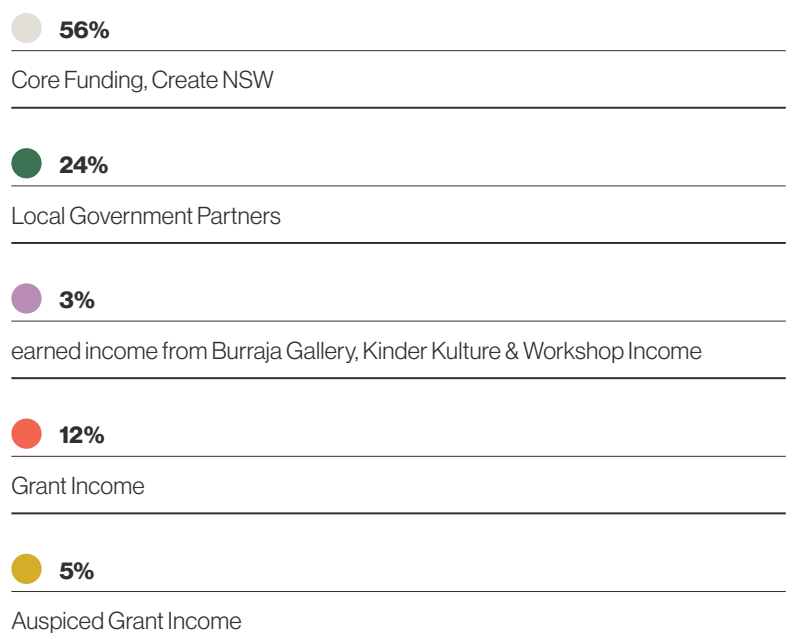
Overall, Murray Arts is in a healthy financial position with our reserves available to grow the organisation and its services moving into a new strategic planning period.

You can read our full audited 2022 financial report at:

<https://murrayarts.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/2023-Signed-Financial-including-Signed-Audit-Opinion.pdf>



Murray Arts Income sources:



Congratulations on bringing the project into the world! You could feel the enthusiasm in the room to have this platform in our region. Well done.

Sophie Holvast, MAMA, Creative Directory Launch

Our People

Murray Arts Board of Directors is a not-for-profit incorporated association, governed by a volunteer board:

Donna Caffrey, Chair
Robert Sherwood Duffield, Vice Chair
Cr David Thurley, Treasurer
David Gordon
Rachael Gadd
Dr Treahna Hamm (Yorta Yorta)
Kevyn Morris (Jagera)
Cr Aaron Nicholls
Camille Whitehead
Alyce Fisher, Public Officer

The Murray Arts Strategic Advisory Council is made up of representatives from our six local government areas:

Cr David Thurley, AlburyCity
Cr Diane Shephard, Indigo Shire Council
Cr Jenny O'Neill, Greater Hume Council
Cr Aaron Nicholls, Federation Council & Alternative Councilor David Fahey OAM
Emily Jones, Executive Assistant Governance, Tourism & Promotions Officer Greater Hume Council
Karen Walls-Smyth, Cultural Projects Coordinator for City of Wodonga
Treahna Hamm, Independent Artist Yorta Yorta
Erin Davis-Hartwig, Independent Artist Indigo Shire
Barbara Pritchard, Independent Artist Towong Shire

Murray Arts Staff & Contractors:

Alyce Fisher, Executive Director
Lauren Black, Executive Director (from September 2023)
Nat Ord, Engagement & Communications Officer
Tiffany Ward (Yorta Yorta), Aboriginal Arts Officer, Burraja Gallery Support
Rod Brammich, Bookkeeper
Helen Newman, Creative Directory Project Manager & Creative Advisor Limelight 3.0
Glennys Briggs (Taungurung/Wiradjuri/Yorta Yorta), Curator North East Water Art Prize Exhibition
Narelle Vogel, Project Manager Smart Arts & Reflections on River Red Gum
Julianna Toth, Communications Support & Burraja Gallery Marketing Plan
Aimee Chan, Communications Support
Julianne Piko, Graphic Design and Communications
Kate Horowith, Website Support



A new beginning

As Murray Arts continues to evolve and grow to better service our creative community, we are making changes and refocusing our efforts. 2024 will see Murray Arts develop our next strategic plan based on our key role as connectors in the community and staying true to our three new pillars: Support, Promote and Advocate. We have already begun work on an exciting range of new projects and look forward to sharing their success with you along the way.

Project 1

Burraja Gallery Independence Project

Project 2

Rebrand, Website Redevelopment and Communications Strategy

Project 3

Cultural Council Establishment



Create NSW
Arts, Screen & Culture

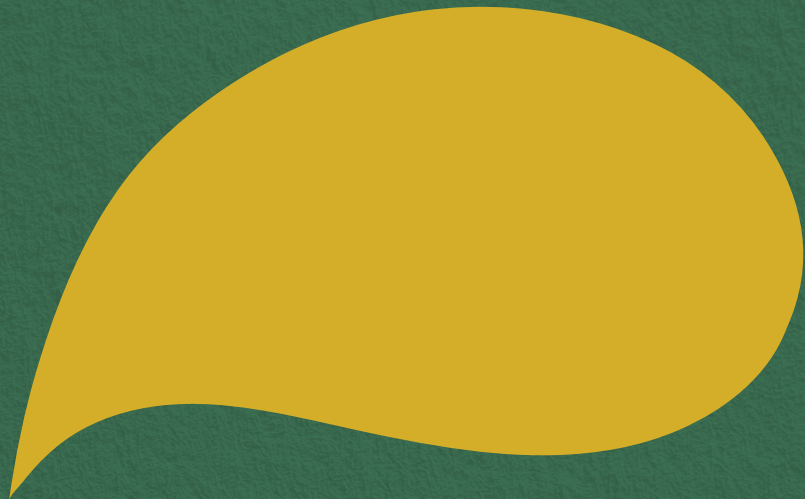
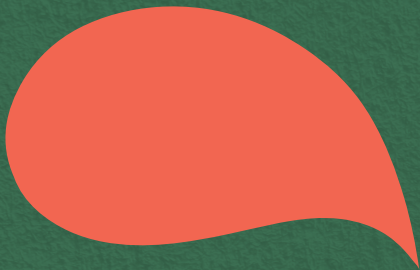
REGIONAL
ARTS
NSW



**ABORIGINAL REGIONAL
ARTS ALLIANCE**
Aboriginal Corporation ICN: 9066

Murray Arts acknowledges the ongoing support of our Member Councils





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www.murrayarts.org.au | www.burrajagallery.org.au

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