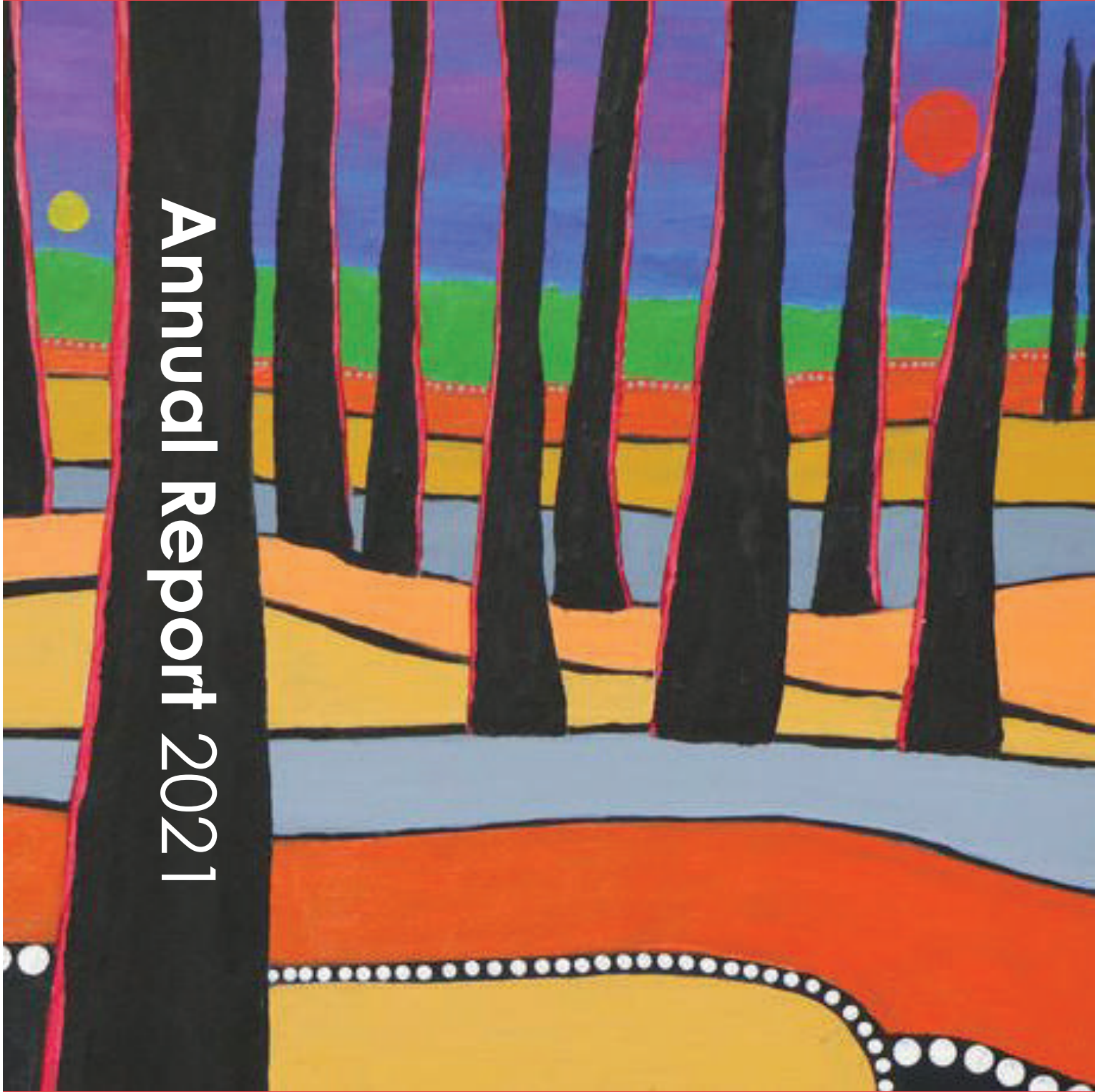


western  
riverina **ARTS**

Annual Report 2021







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## **Ngiyani Yindyamali Aboriginal Mayiny Murrubandha Mayinny galangga Australia Ngangaagi**

***We respect Aboriginal peoples as the first peoples and custodians of Australia.***

We would like to acknowledge the Wiradjuri people, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live and work, and pay our respects to the Elders, past and present, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Please be advised that this document may contain images and references to deceased people.

## **Message From The Chair**

I wish to thank to Aanya and Camille who have kept WRA out there and available through great social media and personal contact during a period when the word "pivot" became an integral part of organisational speak. The last two and a half years have clearly shown the importance of our artistic community to the general wellbeing of our region and the importance of this organisation to that community through the assistance, contact, recognition and promotion that it provides.

Our increased funding has made the operating picture a great deal more sustainable and has, this year, allowed us to increase hours for our dedicated and very hard working Communications Officer. The changes in funding and our ability to choose will allow us to not only run the CASP program but to also continue the Micro Grants that have proved so successful since the idea was first proposed to Regional Arts NSW by our Executive Director.

Following Elizabeth Rogers resignation and the restructure of Regional Arts New South Wales the organisation has a new CEO in the superbly capable Dr Tracey Callinan. Tracey will bring her vast experience working in the Arts Sector including time as an the Executive Director of Arts Out West to her role. Julie Briggs, has finished her term as Chair of the RANSW Board and has been replaced by Dr Jane Kreis. Jane was previously a Regional Arts Development Officer/Executive Officer, Arts North West, and Director, Theatre Network NSW, she is currently the Services Leader Cultural Development and Programs at Coffs Harbour City Council. Having these position filled by people who have experience actually working for as well as with RADO's and who therefore know what it is like to work directly with regional arts and artists can only be an advantage.

To extend the trifecta we also have a new Minister in The Hon. Ben Franklin who includes Arts, Aboriginal Affairs and Youth in his portfolio. I have now had the pleasure of meeting Mr Franklin on a couple of occasions and can genuinely say that his commitment to and understanding of Regional Arts give me great hope for the road ahead and the development and support of our sector. Mr Franklin attended the last Advisory Council meeting in Sydney addressing



us in the morning then returning in the afternoon to sit down for some real discussion with the Advisory Council. He was honest and direct and refreshingly forthcoming about his views on all three of his portfolio areas. He recommended the Wellbeing Recovery Initiative to Support Regional Youth funding program and reiterated that he was always happy to speak with Regional Arts NSW (RANSW) and the Network of Regional Arts Development Organisations (RADOs) on these topics. He also advised that he is passionate about regional museums and is keen to see these spaces revitalised and asked for the Advisory Council's feedback on potential funding programs for this sector. Jane accurately described the conversations on the day as "frank and fearless, considered and inspired". This applied to all around the table and to conversations with both the Minister and the Create NSW representatives.

It is my sad duty to advise that our founding Chair, Julie Briggs, will not be accepting nomination for the role of Deputy Chair. She has advised that she will be tabling her resignation from the board at our next meeting. Julie has been a part of this Board since its inception and has been involved in every stage of its development. She was a fantastic Chairperson and her experience and unfailing ability to just muck in when times are tough as a Deputy Chair has helped this organisation to get to the place where we now are. I cannot adequately express my thanks to her for everything that she brings, that she is and for what she has given to this organisation.

## Message From The Executive Director

2021 marked the ten-year anniversary of Western Riverina Arts, and its largest budget to date that was managed during a complex time. It was the second year of dealing with the Covid-19 Pandemic that heavily impacted arts and culture in the Western Riverina. Much of the planned program for Western Riverina Arts was affected by restrictions and closures. The year also saw the mass postponements for the second year in a row of major festivals and personal creative businesses. Conversely, it was also a time of new creative ventures for some. By necessity we dealt with changes both within our operations and within our program. On the operational side the organisation went through another stage of the ongoing Create NSW Review. The response to the review was significant across the regional network and entailed visits by senior staff from the Department of Premier and Cabinet. We hosted meetings across Griffith, Leeton, Narrandera and Murrumbidgee and these were substantially represented by the arts and cultural community and our member councils. In October the NSW Minister for the Arts announced an increase of \$32,000 in core funding for every Regional Arts Development organisation.



The Pandemic set off a number of grant streams across the nation. Western Riverina Arts ran the Rescue and Restart Grant initiative for Create NSW that allowed us to run our first Micro Grants round. Our 2021 general program was focussed on communication and grant funding assistance and we took great measures to engage with the arts and cultural community in various ways. Our program remained fluid in order to quickly adjust to the changing health and travel restrictions throughout the year.

Moving forward, the Western Riverina Arts team is committed to remaining a flexible service organisation to our regional arts and cultural community.

## Communications

Communications continues to be a vital conduit between Western Riverina Arts and the communities we service.

Online communications were as important as ever in 2021 as over 40 events and festivals across our region were cancelled or postponed and we needed to stay connected. We continued to focus on digital content across our four social media platforms, our comprehensive monthly newsletters and website to inform about grants, opportunities, events and news from our region. Over 950 pieces of content were shared on Western Riverina Arts platforms to our 5,983 followers.







## Stats

**16** projects in 2021

**34** letters of support

**\$1,073,764** worth of funding applied for

**\$657,964** worth of funding brought into the region

Growth in social media following **10.25** %

Posts shared on social media **952**

Page views on WRA website **9,851** v1.8%

E-news Subscribers **493** ^ 14.9%

Facebook Follows **2,975**

Facebook Likes **2,638** ^ 8.4%

Instagram Followers **1,650** ^ 15.3%

Twitter Followers **823** ^ 2%

LinkedIn Followers **42** ^ 82%



# Financial Summary

<b>Income</b>	<b>\$ 2021</b>	<b>\$ Budget</b>	<b>\$ Difference</b>	<b>Note</b>
Grants	471,775	498,060	(26,285)	1)
Other Income	45,869	5,500	40,369	2)
Interest	147	1,000	(853)	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>517,791</b>	<b>504,560</b>	<b>13,231</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>				
Program and Project Expenses	252,586	307,960	(55,374)	3)
Operating Costs	63,564	59,192	4,372	4)
Salaries and Wages	138,096	130,028	8,068	5)
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>454,246</b>	<b>497,180</b>	<b>(42,934)</b>	
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>63,545</b>	<b>7,380</b>	<b>56,165</b>	6)

1) Carried over to 2022

2) COVID-19 incentive grants

3) Funded projects scheduled for delivery in 2022

4) Increase in all sector areas of services

5) Additional team member appointed in 2021

6) Retained surplus to 2022 carry overs of funded projects

In 2021 Western Riverina Arts was in an increased cashflow position in that the region was still locked into Covid restrictions. Western Riverina Arts administered the Restart and Rescue grants on behalf of the NSW Government. Treasurer Anthony Morton noted that the 2021 Audited Financial Statements reflected that the organisation was in a secure financial position and noted the additional Covid-19 grant activity which had expanded the program area considerably. He also noted the increase in operational funding from Create NSW.





# 2021 WRA Micro Grants

In 2021 Western Riverina Arts offered Micro Grants valued between \$300 - \$800 to individuals and organisations. This one-time funding from the NSW Government was distributed in the hope that it would assist people during the pandemic, and also produce outcomes that can continue beyond the current crisis.

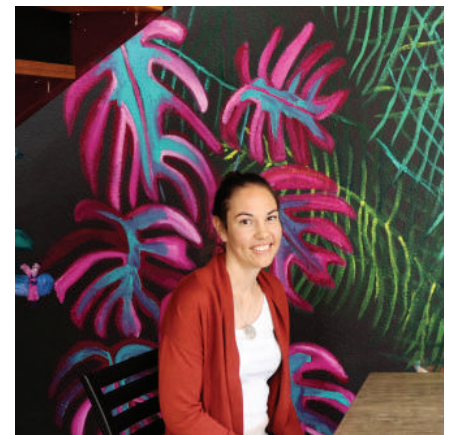
26 projects funded | 86 participants | 161 attendees | 12 workshops | 3 exhibitions

1. **Keri Weymouth** Ipad and art software to assist with mural creation and digital workshops at Tirkandi Inaburra
2. **Hape Kiddle** Custom-made plinths for exhibitions
3. **Dorothy Roddy** Hanging system and installation for the permanent 'Moments in Time' exhibition at Yanco Agricultural Institute's Recreation Hall
4. **Sharon De Valentin** Travelling encaustic art kit
5. **Jason Richardson** Videography & production for children's craft and activities series
6. **Crops and Sequins Styling** Projector for presentations and workshops
7. **Lee Blacker-Noble** Development of a new body of work, her resulting final solo exhibition 'Past Glories' was exhibited at Leeton Museum and Gallery
8. **MAKE Group** Art supplies for weekly group activities
9. **Leeton Museum and Gallery** Hook system
10. **Isis Ronan** Supplies for the free 'Open Studio Sessions' & paint for mural at Tambourine Art Studio
11. **Yanco Public School** Dance costumes
12. **Laurelle Lewis** Formatting for childrens e-book 'Jasper and the Elemenopy'
13. **Linzie Ellis** Artist fees for mural at Mick's Bakehouse
14. **Mona Magazine** Regional writing & stakeholder workshops
15. **Madeline Proud** Audio mixer, speaker & speaker stand for live gigs
16. **Sonia Undy** Weaving art supplies
17. **Hilary Manning** Worked with Redbak Studios and Ron Arel Photography to professionally record harp performances
18. **Young Griffith First Nations Recipient** Art supplies
19. **Janine Murphy** Building gallery window at Collect Studio in Yenda
20. **Linzie Ellis** Development of a new body of work
21. **Caroline Tuohy** Childrens writing workshops in Booligal and Carrathool
22. **Yanco Agricultural Institute** Framing artworks for the 'Moments in Time' exhibition at Yanco Agricultural Institute
23. **Narrandera Arts and Cultural Advisory Committee** Hook and cable system for public art exhibitions at the Narrandera Arts & Community Centre
24. **Art Deco Writers Group** Printing and artwork costs for three chapbooks
25. **Leonie Napier** Artist fees for the development, writing and editing of Bloodshed at the Banquet play
26. **Cory McKenzie & Allan McKenzie Snr** Project artist fees

Projects











*"Thanks to Western Riverina Arts I now have a portable studio for demonstrations and dedicated technology to use in my studio." - Sharon De Valentin*

*"The Micro Grant has really helped establish the Open Studio Sessions. It allowed me to have the session just as I envisioned rather than what I could afford independently which in turn has helped the community understand my intentions. It has really become a safe space for all different types of creatives. I am extremely thankful and I'm sure the wider community is too." - Isis Ronan*

*"It has been a wonderful experience seeing my book come to life and sharing it with the world, thanks to Western Riverina Arts." - Laurelle Lewis*

*"Western Riverina Arts have led my creative practise from a spare room and into regional galleries." - Jason Richardson*

*"The support and encouragement of Western Riverina Arts has given me courage to step out and have a dream become a reality." - Leonie Napier*

*"Thank you also to Western Riverina Arts for funding the opportunity for women to access our free workshops around the Riverina." - Mona Magazine*

*"What a wonderful opportunity this enabled our students to have." - Brooke Williams*



## Networking Party

The 2021 WRA Networking Christmas Party was held at the Narrandera Arts and Community Centre. We had 63 attendees register for an evening of networking with artists, creatives and professionals from across our region.

Entertainment on the night was provided by Griffith solo musician Madeline Proud and we also premiered the five tracks produced by local musicians as a result of the 'Recording Sessions' initiative with The Cad Factory.





## Artist of the Month

In 2021 we continued the Artist of the Month project, an in-depth study of artists and an online resource able to be used in various applications. This meet and greet project continues to prove to be a great way to form strong relationships with the artists in our region. Outcomes from these projects included radio interviews with ABC Riverina Radio and increased awareness of artists. In 2021 artists interviewed included:

- Succa Mum AKA Isis Ronan**
- Lee Blacker-Noble**
- Lillardia Briggs-Houston**
- Kerri Weymouth**
- Vita Vitelli**
- Kristy-Lee Agresta**







## Joyce Spencer Mentorship

The Joyce Spencer Fellowship attracted a high level of applications in its year, so much so that the panel decided to award a mentorship as well. Sonia Undy was awarded the mentorship and worked with Aunty Gail Manderson and Julie Montgarrett to further explore her beautiful Wiradjuri and Yorta Yorta weaving practices. Griffith Regional Art Gallery facilitating the mentorship session.

## Joyce Spencer Fellowship

The Joyce Spencer Fellowship's aim is to support a regional NSW textile artist or collective to deliver a new artwork or exhibition, made possible with funds from the Spencer family and Western Riverina Arts, in partnership with the Cad Factory.

Hilary Peterson was awarded the second Joyce Spencer Textiles Fellowship. The Fellowship is aiding Hilary in presenting a new exhibition in 2022 at the Spiral Gallery, that explores the ecologies of the Pambula Wetlands: *"I am thrilled to be the recipient of the Joyce Spencer Textile Fellowship and grateful for her bequest that will allow me the time to produce a cohesive body of textile work that also expresses my wider environmental concerns and interest in wetlands. I am inspired by Joyce's creativity, commitment to innovation and sharing through teaching and hope to further her legacy."*







## Museum Development Officer

Western Riverina Arts partnered with Leeton Shire Council to establish a Museum Development Officer. The MDO's role is to help develop, upskill and implement strategic planning to help the local museum network. The project and position was funded for 18 months via the Foundation for Rural Regional Renewal - Investing in Rural Community Futures initiative.

Petra Player was awarded the position that would go on to assist the six museums in the Leeton Shire: Leeton Museum and Gallery, the Yanco Powerhouse Museum, the Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum, the museum at the Yanco Agricultural Institute, the Rocking Horse Museum at Murrumbidgee and Antiques and Oil Leaks in Wattle Hill.

## Recording Sessions

Western Riverina Arts partnered with The Cad Factory to create an opportunity for four songwriters living in the Narrandera, Leeton, Griffith and Murrumbidgee LGAs to record an original song for free in the Cad Factory studio. All recording costs, mastering and meals were covered - support which was valued at \$1,000 per recording session.

Through this partnership we had two aims, to provide real support for creative endeavour and to contribute to making a post-COVID world more musical. The final selected artists include:

- Xavier Beauchamp: A While Ago
- Arora Kiddle: Say It When You're Sober
- Damian Thorne Feat. Shane Ronan: Crying Children
- Raylene Waye : Are You OK
- Dwayne Broome: Won't Ever Be The Same







## Binging Back The Plains Wanderer From The Brink Exhibition

Twelve artists were commissioned to create a response to the critically endangered Plains-Wanderer whose population has declined by 93% since 2001 and raise awareness for its conservation and management. This touring exhibition was funded by South West Arts, NSW Local Land Services and Australian Government National Landcare Program. This exhibition was supported by Western Riverina Arts, Create NSW and Murrumbidgee Council.

Exhibiting artists: Christina Whitehouse, Ghostpatrol, Ian Campbell, Jan Lawler, Josephine Duffey, Kate Smith, Krysta Hallum, Pam Wettenhall, Robyn Davis, Samantha Davies, Sue Burke & David Franzke and Miranda Brett.



## Bark Painting Repatriation

In May 2020 Wiradjuri Artist Veronica Collins was given guardianship of a bark painting that had been part of Neil Piloni's family for over six decades. From that moment on, Veronica began a quest to return it to its Traditional Owners. Investigative research discovered that it belonged to the Anindilyakwa People of Groote Eylandt. Ten months later in February 2021 Hape Kiddle was tasked with delivering it by hand to the Anindilyakwa Traditional Owners on Groote Eylandt N.T. from Griffith in regional NSW.



The repatriation was significant and historic because it is the only known painting that has representation of a creation being of that land. Now that it's back on Country, it is unable to be viewed by women and children. Veronica's tireless work to repatriate the painting has forever connected Wiradjuri and Anindilyakwa People, both culturally and spiritually.

A coming together event was held at the Griffith Regional Art Gallery on 11th March 2021 to honour Veronica's quest.



# MURRUMBIDGEE SHORT STORY COMPETITION



## Murrumbidgee Short Story Competition

We partnered with Narrandera Arts and Creative Network to provide an opportunity to inspire people to be creative through short story writing. Winners received cash prizes and their stories published on our website.

We received a fantastic response with thirty three original short stories being submitted across three categories. Open Winner: Jason Richardson with Alien Melody, Under 18 Winner: Jessica Wells with Empty and Under 12 Winner: William Maynard with Helen's Story.

Our blind judging panel included Sue Killham, Sarah Tiffen, Jane Carte and Hilary Manning.

## Creative Riverina

Creative Riverina is the go-to online directory and database for artists, creatives and arts organisations of all types from Riverina NSW. In 2020 Western Riverina partnered with Eastern Riverina Arts the project's initiator, to expand these platforms across our regional footprint.

The online database is also accompanied by a supportive online Facebook group. Artists and arts organisations can share their ideas and events or simply connect.

As at May 2022 the Creative Riverina project has:

- 252** database listings
- 392** Facebook group members
- 458** combined social media followers
- 5,300+** posts using the #creativeriverina hashtag
- 16,480+** website pageviews in 2021

The logo for Creative Riverina is displayed on a yellow background with a white dotted pattern. The word 'Creative' is written in a white, cursive font, and 'RIVERINA' is written in a white, bold, sans-serif font. Below the logo, the website address 'CREATIVERIVERINA.COM' is written in a black, bold, sans-serif font.

**Creative  
RIVERINA**

**CREATIVERIVERINA.COM**



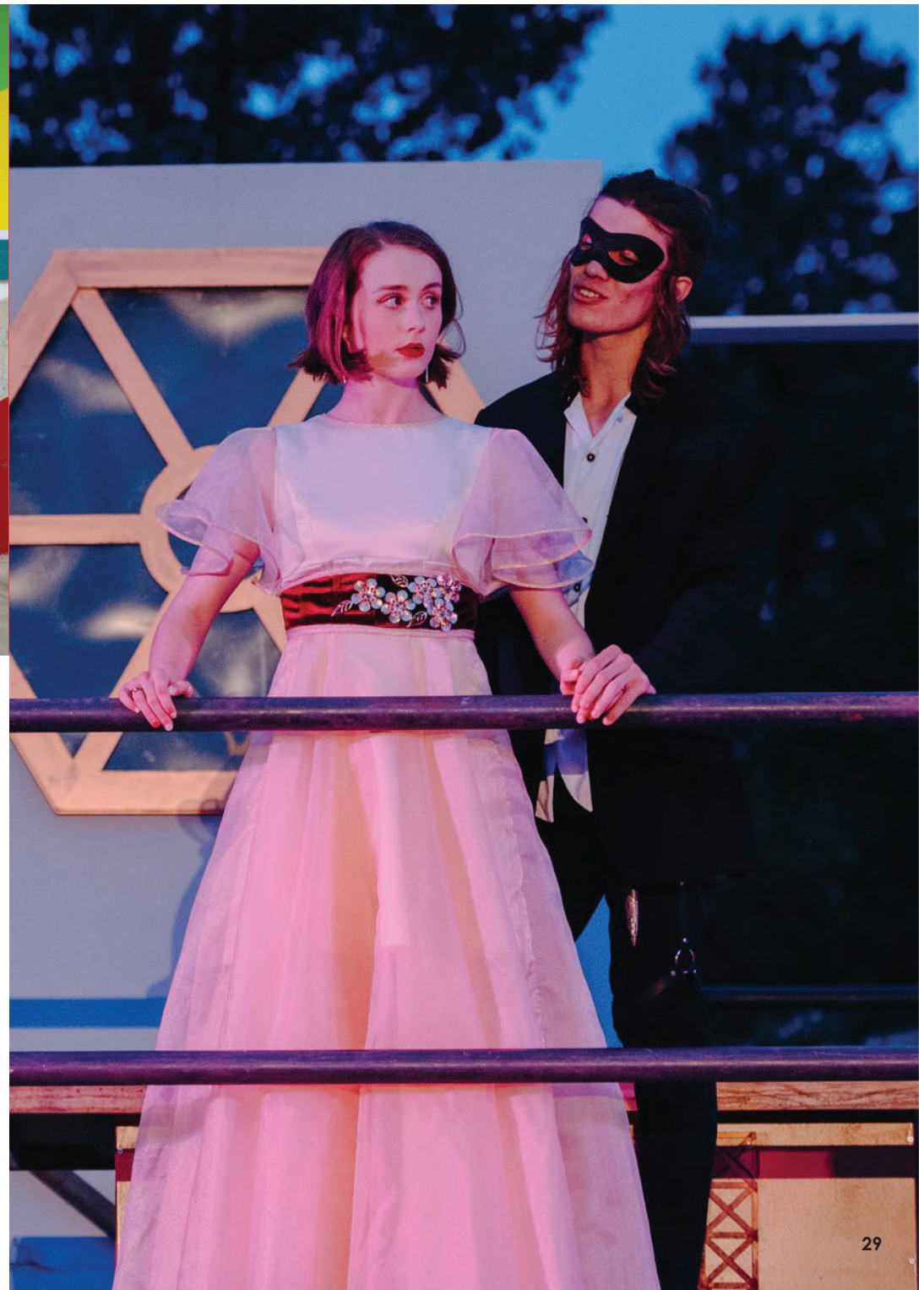
# Professional Development

Camille Whitehead

- Governance workshop BEC Business Advice
- What is good writing? workshop with Ce7en and RANSW
- Intro to photography workshop with f.stop
- Fundraising & Donor workshop with Sues Vos
- Creative + Business Grant Writing workshop
- Curatorial Crash Course with Penny Grist, Curator National Portrait Gallery







## Partnerships & Support

- Custodian Exhibition - Hape Kiddle: Funding Support
- Bloodshed at the Banquet: Sponsor
- Harp Deco: Sponsor
- Museum of Miniature Art: Funding Support
- GRAPA's Romeo + Juliet: Sponsor
- Leeton Shire Council's Make Music Day: Funding Support
- Henry V: In-kind Support
- The Penny Paniz Acquisitive Arts Competition & Exhibition: Sponsor
- Banna Lane Festival: Artist Pass Donation



# Governance

## About Western Riverina Arts

Western riverina arts (WRA) is a not-for-profit organisation that works in partnership with our member councils to support, develop and promote the arts in the western riverina. Formally launched in 2011, WRA is part of a network of 14 regional arts boards in NSW, coordinated by Regional Arts NSW. Western riverina arts is funded by the NSW state government through Create NSW, and through contributions from its member councils.

With a population of over 40,000 people and several high-profile artists the Western Riverina has an active, diverse and rich cultural life. Western riverina Arts is the peak arts conduit organisation in the region and aims to support the needs and culture of our communities, acting to ensure the vitality and sustainability of arts and culture by:

- Developing audiences
- Encouraging community capacity
- Developing pathways for artists and creative communities
- Promoting cultural events
- Initiating project activity
- Strengthening regional cultural development
- Connecting creative communities

## Member Councils and Funding Partners

- Murrumbidgee Council
- Narrandera Shire Council
- Leeton Shire Council
- Griffith City Council
- Regional Arts NSW – Peak Regional Arts Body
- Create NSW – Core Funding Partner

## 2021 Staff

Aanya Whitehead – Executive Director

Camille Whitehead – Projects and Communications Officer

## 2021 Board Members

Susan Carey Killham - Narrandera Shire Council Representative, Chair

Julie Briggs - Narrandera Community Representative, Vice Chair

Faith Bryce - Murrumbidgee Shire Council Representative

Melanie Toscan - Murrumbidgee Community Representative

Anne Napoli - Griffith City Council Representative

Oumi Karenga-Hewitt - Griffith Community Representative

Suesann Vos - Leeton Shire Council Representative

Ken Dachi - Leeton Community Representative

Anthony Morton - Griffith Co-opted Member, Treasurer

## Front Cover Detail of Unfilled, Veronica Collins

**2** Mural at Yanco Agricultural Institute, Lee Blacker-Noble **4** Weaving samples at Joyce Spencer Mentorship session, Aunty Gail Manderson **8** Mural at Greengecko Garden Centre, Isis Ronan **10** Mural at Mick's Bakehouse, Linzie Ellis **11** Video still from harp performance, Hilary Manning **11** New body of work, Linzie Ellis **12** Moments In Time Exhibition, Dorothy Roddy **12** Julia Greiner with new projector, Crops & Sequins Styling, image supplied **12** Video still from Five Flying Things, Jason Richardson **12** Lee Blacker-Noble works on new artworks for her Past Glories exhibition **12** Janine Murphy with the newly refurbished gallery window at Collect Studio, Yenda **12** Hape Kiddle's custom-made plinths **13** Mural development at Tambourine Art Studio, Isis Ronan **13** Madeline Proud performing at Western Riverina Arts Christmas Networking Event **13** Digital art workshop at Tirkandi Inaburra, Kerri Weymouth **13** Mural at Mick's Bakehouse, Linzie Nardi **13** Laurelle Lewis and her book Jasper and the Elemenopy **13** Sharon De Valentin and her travelling encaustic art kit **14** Actors at the Bloodshed at the Banquet dress rehearsal, written by Leonie Napier, image supplied **15** Camille Whitehead and Aanya Whitehead at Western Riverina Arts Christmas Networking Event **16** Charlee Fraser wears pieces by Ngarru Miimi Photo: Sonny Vandeveldt; Make-Up Director: Jennifer Horsley / MECCA; Hair Director: Richard Kavanagh / REDKEN; Creative Director: FNFD, image Vogue Australia **17** Isis Ronan **17** Lee Blacker-Noble **17** Lillardia Briggs-Houston, image supplied **17** Wiradjuri Walk featuring collaborative work by Kerri Weymouth and Bohie Palecek **17** Vita Vitelli in her home studio **17** Kristy-Lee Agresta at ROR Space, Griffith **18** Gallery view of Boardwalk, 2012, ANCA Gallery, ACT, Hilary Peterson, image supplied **19** Joyce Spencer Mentorship at Griffith Regional Art Gallery, Sonia Undy, Dr Julie Mongarrett and Aunty Gail Manderson **20** Damian "Dookie" Thorne at the Recording Sessions, image The Cad Factory **21** Aanya Whitehead, Suesann Vos and Petra Player in front of Leeton Museum and Gallery **22** Detail of 'Plains-Wanderer on the Edge' by Sue Burke & David Franzke from the Bringing Back The Plains-Wanderer From The Brink Exhibition **23** Neil Piloni hands over guardianship of the painting to Wiradjuri Artist Veronica Collins on 29.5.20, Anindilyakwa Traditional Owner Dennis Maminyamaja receives the painting that was delivered in person to Groote Eylandt by Hape Kiddle 19.2.21 **26** Curatorial Crash Course with Penny Grist, Curator National Portrait Gallery **27** Intro to photography workshop with F.Stop Workshop at Griffith Regional Art Gallery **28** 2021 Banna Lane Festival artists George Rose, Reubsz, MAN.De and Allan McKenzie Senior at meet and greet event **29** GRAPA's Romeo + Juliet, image Ben Ceccato

## Back Cover Lynne McQuillan





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