

Annual Report 2023



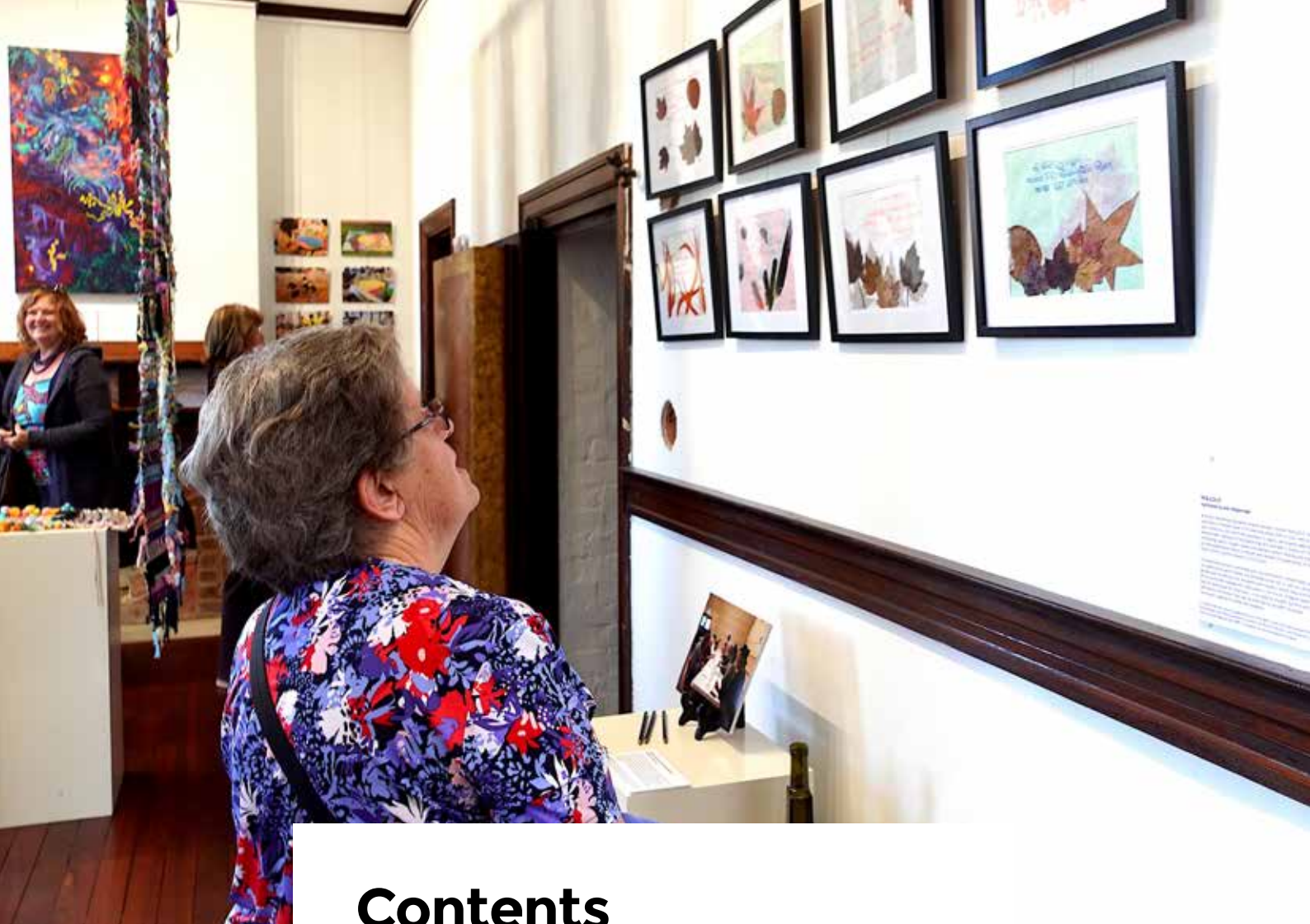
**Arts Mid North Coast acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Nations and Traditional Custodians. Our work is based across the lands of the Gumbaynggirr, Dunghutti/Thunghutti and Biripi people of the Mid North Coast of NSW.**

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Tortuga Festival, Port Macquarie. Photo: Lucy Humphries.

# Chairs Report

On behalf of the Board of Arts Mid North Coast, I'm very pleased to be able to present this report for 2023 which has been a year of significant change and renewal for the organisation.

We are incredibly lucky to live on the beautiful Mid North Coast which is recognised as a culturally rich and vibrant region. Arts Mid North Coast has helped build the capacity of our artist and creative sector so that our communities continue to benefit from diverse cultural experiences.

The Board farewelled long-serving Executive Director, Kevin Williams, in January after a decade in the role. Kevin's passion for the arts and his significant experience within the broader arts community gave him an insightful understanding of the opportunities across the region, and he provided stability and consistency in his leadership role. We all continue to wish Kevin all the best.

After being a valued member of Kevin's team for five years, the new Executive Director, Olivia Parker, swiftly transitioned into her role in February. Her proactive and collaborative approach and adept management have left a lasting impression on the Board.

We also had two board members come to the end of their 6 year terms as community representatives – Shelley O'Keefe and Lorrae O'Brien. Being a practicing artist herself, Shelley brought a valuable perspective to board discussions and decisions. Shelley was a strong advocate for artists, and her contributions to the Board will be missed. As Head Teacher in Creative Design and Ideation at TAFE, Lorrae contributed to the board's understanding of the role of higher education and creative industries. She also had a good grasp of organisational issues which helped in her role on the HR sub-committee.

We therefore welcomed two new board members during the year. Alex Jones is a practicing lawyer and ABC journalist/news producer. She brings a younger perspective to the board, as well as

knowledge of media relations and creative industries law.

Madeleine Lawler is CEO of Regional Development Australia MNC, and has previously worked in Local Council. She has a passion for bringing the arts

into mainstream and business discussions, and its important role in the economic development of the regions.



As always, my thanks go to all the Board members for being such a collegial and forward thinking group who have always used their own expertise and local experience for the benefit of our whole region. The Board itself has very supportive, inclusive, and professional culture and I appreciate and value the contribution of each individual Board member.

Arts Mid North Coast appreciates the support from our major funding organisation, Create NSW and the guiding role and support from Regional Arts NSW and the RADO Network. We also acknowledge the significant contributions made by our five participating councils. We know that 2024 will see local government elections and may indeed see change in some Council representation on our Board. However, we are confident our member councils will continue to recognise the importance of creativity and culture here on the Mid North Coast.

*Rob Turner*

Rob Turner - Arts Mid North Coast Chair



# Message From the Executive Director

I am delighted to present my first Annual Report as Executive Director for Arts Mid North Coast. It has been a journey of growth and transformation, and I am incredibly proud to highlight the accomplishments and progress we have made in the past year.

2023 was a year marked by change and artistic reawakening in our region, with an array of significant cultural events. Among these notable events were the reopening of our beloved Bellingen Memorial Hall, the inauguration of the long-anticipated Yarrila Place in Coffs Harbour and the opening of Saltwater Freshwater Arts' new gallery space on Gumbaynggirr Country. These venues offer essential spaces for artists to showcase their talent and creativity and for diverse voices to be celebrated and embraced.

In 2023, major projects reached their culmination, including our two-year creative bushfire recovery program with an exhibition at the Nambucca Phoenix Gallery. Our Regional Arts Network project Regional Futures, concluded with an Exhibition and Symposium at Casula Powerhouse, and the 'Journeys' online digital exhibition was launched in partnership with the Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMaGA) Mid North Coast Chapter. Alongside these artistic achievements, the winds of change swept through the state, with a new Government and launch of a new NSW Cultural Policy, "Creative Communities".

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our Board of Directors for their unwavering support throughout this journey. Their guidance, dedication, and commitment have been instrumental in driving our organisation's success and achieving our mission of promoting

and celebrating art and culture in our region. Additionally, I would like to express my appreciation to Create NSW and our Council partners for their ongoing support, which ensures that the arts continue to enhance the liveability and vibrancy of our communities.



I am equally grateful to our staff members, Jasmine, Mark, Johnny, Dianne, Lisa and Skye for their efforts and commitment to excellence. It is through their passion, creativity, and hard work that we have been able to accomplish so much in 2023. A special thank you as well to my predecessor Kevin Williams for his mentorship and support during the year.

In 2024 Arts Mid North Coast will build upon our successes and embark on a new strategic plan, which will be informed by research and a series of community consultations. I am looking forward to better understanding the needs and aspirations of our artists and creative communities so that we can continue to empower them and build a thriving cultural sector on the Mid North Coast.

*Olivia Parker*

Olivia Parker - Executive Director



'Banjo' performance by Got Ya Back Productions. Photo: Cal Howard.



# About Us

As the region's peak arts organisation, Arts Mid North Coast (Arts MNC) supports and collaborates with government, communities, organisations, businesses and individuals to build capacity and create opportunities for the arts and creative industries. We service the five local government areas of Port Macquarie-Hastings, Kempsey, Nambucca Valley, Bellingen and Coffs Harbour on the traditional lands of the Biripi, Dunghutti and Gumbayngirr Nations.

First established in 1998 as the Holiday Coast Arts Council, it changed its name in 2000 to Arts Mid North Coast and became part of a NSW network of Regional Arts Development Organisations (RADOs) in NSW, each providing strategic direction for sustainable arts and cultural development in their region.

Arts MNC is a member of Regional Arts NSW and part of a network of 15 RADOs with a remit to support and build the capacity of regional artists and cultural organisations, and to deliver projects and programs that have a regional relevance to promote cultural and artistic expression, encourage community engagement, and foster a sense of identity and belonging across the region.

Our organisation's core funding is through the NSW Government through Create NSW with member contributions from five Local Government partners in the Mid North Coast region – Port Macquarie Hastings Council, Kempsey Shire Council, Nambucca Valley Council, Bellingen Shire Council and City of Coffs Harbour.

Arts Mid North Coast operates as a Not-For-Profit incorporated association with DGR charity status overseen by 11 Board members; one appointed by each of our partner Councils and six community representatives.



Regional Futures: Box of Possibilities exhibition. Artwork and photo: Ronnie Grammatica.

# Our Strategic Plan 2022-2024

Arts Mid North Coast's work is guided by our four-year strategic plan 'Looking Forward' as well as KPIs set by our main funding body Create NSW.

## Positioning Statement

*We put the arts and artists front and centre in all we do*

## Vision

*The Mid North Coast, a vibrant and diverse region embracing the creation, understanding and appreciation of the arts in fostering economic, community, cultural and environmental opportunities and benefits.*

## Purpose

*Arts Mid North Coast, the region's peak arts organisation, supports and collaborates with government, communities, organisations, business and individuals to build capacity and create opportunities for the arts and creative industries.*

## Strategic Intent

- Taking a more active role in collaborating with others to be a leading voice in the region on the importance of the arts
- Broadening the scope of our partnerships and collaboration to include all those that will enhance our knowledge, expertise and collective impact as well as strengthening our connections with existing partners
- Building on our strengths to further enhance the capacity of those involved in the arts and their experiences of us and our services
- Taking practical and systematic steps to improve our profile so that all interested in the arts understand who we are and what we do.

## Strategic Priorities/Goals

- To generate increased opportunities for access, participation, training and education in the arts and creative industries (Capacity)
- To celebrate through increased visibility and awareness of the region's creative and cultural activity and opportunities (Celebrate)
- To develop and foster strategic partnerships, projects and networks that benefit the region's arts and cultural sector (Collaboration)
- To encourage and support the arts, creative industries and cultural development in all strategic processes to provide leadership and ensure positive outcomes for local, community and regional initiatives (Advocate)
- To be an agile, dynamic, effective, accountable and sustainable organisation utilising relevant best practice technology and skills to promote and achieve excellence (Governance)

# Ronnie Grammatica

*Photo media Artist*



University - Port Macquarie  
November 2023

# Goal 1 - Capacity

*To generate increased opportunities for access, participation, training and education in the arts and creative industries. To celebrate through increased visibility and awareness of the region's creative and cultural activity and opportunities.*

Arts MNC delivers a range of professional development programs, education and training to help build the capacity of our artists and creative communities. In 2023, we undertook the following programs:

## Artist Professional Development

With funding from Create NSW Regional Audience Development Program, Arts MNC coordinated a series of Artist Professional Development workshops:

**Maintaining Health & Wellbeing in the Creative Industries** - delivered by Monica Davidson from Creative Plus Business, this workshop explored ways that creative professionals can purposely bring wellbeing practice into their everyday lives. As part of NSW Small Business Month, Arts MNC received additional funding for two workshops in Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie.

**Smartphone Photography for Art** - Artists often require images of their work to enter competitions, for portfolios and social media. Local photographer Ronnie Grammatica delivered this hands-on workshop in Port Macquarie teaching artists how to get good-quality images of their work using their smartphones.

**Preparing for an Exhibition** - As well as a solid body of work, and a compelling concept, artists must also develop a strategic approach to project delivery and audience engagement in preparation for an exhibition. Held in Port Macquarie, facilitator Ronnie Grammatica, provided guidance on exhibition logistics, including timelines, checklists, crafting artist and exhibition statements, documentation strategies, and social media planning to effectively communicate the artistic vision to the audience.

## Country Arts Support Program (CASP)

In previous years, our CASP grants from Create NSW were themed to align with strategic priorities, but in 2023, we opted for an open approach to gauge community project interests. This change resulted in a higher application rate, with 10 projects funded, reflecting the diversity of community-driven initiatives. Projects include:

- Bellingen Community Arts Council for Bellingen Shire Arts Trail Weekend
- Hayley Egan for the Bellingen Singers
- Alejandra Ramirez for Hybrid solo exhibition at Archive MNC
- Alfira O'Sullivan for Stuarts Point Art House 'Art for Community'
- Port Macquarie Historical Society for Mono Couture exhibition
- Lucy Frost for Tortuga Festival Community Program
- Marg Coutts for Welcome Blanket refugee community project
- Soraya Touma for Song Room project
- Antonio Mazzella for Zany Zanni Street Band
- Nambucca Valley Phoenix for Chris Edwards & Edward Barnes Artist in Residency

## Youth Music Development

Since 2022, Arts MNC has been supporting the Ready Set Go Youth Music program in Macksville funded by the Alcohol & Drug Foundation. 25 young people aged 12 - 18 participated in the program in 2023. Through workshops and practical sessions led by local industry professionals, the program equips participants with both musical abilities and valuable life skills to support their personal growth and development. Some participants have continued their professional growth, forming bands and actively performing at local events and venues.

Arts MNC also partnered with APRA/AMCOS to bring their SongMakers workshops to the region. Prominent Australian songwriters and music producers worked with budding young musicians over 2 consecutive days, to write and record new songs. Workshops were delivered in two locations - Bellingen Youth Hub and the Grow the Music studios in Toormina. Local musicians Josh Matheson and Lizzy Rutten were engaged as mentors on the program.

Our focus on youth music development expanded to Port Macquarie in a new collaboration with Dark Alley Records. Arts MNC supported a PMHC Community Grant for a series of all-ages gigs at the Cage venue featuring local young musicians.

In 2024, Arts MNC will continue to grow our focus on youth music through our partnership with Music NSW to develop more opportunities for local youth.

## Resources & Opportunities

Throughout the year, we publish a range of opportunities and resources aimed at boosting the capacity of individual artists, arts organisations and communities.

These include:

- **SmartArt**, offering a comprehensive toolkit through our website covering essential topics like creative business skills, marketing, media, audience development, policy development, digital engagement, funding opportunities, professional development, and networking.
- **Artist Opportunities** published through our website, e-newsletter, and social media platforms, featuring a plethora of job openings, grant opportunities, and an expanding array of online workshops and webinars.

## Funding Advice & Letters of Support

One as of our core services, Arts MNC provides project and funding advice to artists and community groups and organisations. In 2023 we provided Letters of Support to various funding bodies for 26 projects some of which include:

- PMHC Glasshouse Regional Gallery
- Lucy Frost for Tortuga Festival
- CHCC Yarilla Arts & Museum
- Mujaay Ganma Foundation
- Joseph Douglas
- Salvatore Rossano for Taranta Festival
- Nambucca Phoenix for MNC Disability Art Prize
- DanceHouse for Ngioka Bunda Heath 'Birrpai'
- Dorrigo Bluegrass Festival
- Saltwater Freshwater Arts
- Port Macquarie Museum
- Bellingen Arts Council
- Bellingen Youth Orchestra
- Becoming U (Uniting)



Blind Pretty performance at Ready Set Go, Macksville. Photo: Caleb Casey.

## Goal 2 - Celebrate

*To celebrate through increased visibility and awareness of the region's creative and cultural activity and opportunities.*

### Creative Recovery Exhibition

After the 2019/2020 Black Summer Bushfires, Arts MNC initiated a Creative Recovery program funded by the Bushfire Community Recovery & Resilience Fund, Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal, and Primary Health Network. To mark the program's completion and showcase the contributions of local artists and communities, Arts MNC organised an exhibition at the Phoenix Gallery Bowraville, featuring artworks from fire-impacted communities across the region.

Participants, including artists and community members, shared their firsthand experiences with the fires and discussed how engaging in creative activities through the program positively impacted their health, well-being, and reconnection with their communities and local environment. Arts MNC and Dr Emma Gentle, researcher on the project, also presented outcomes of the program evaluation at the Social Impact in the Regions Conference in Coffs Harbour.

### SHINE Festival

Every year we celebrate the NSW Heritage Festival through our promotion of SHINE. With the 2023 theme of Shared Stories, Arts MNC published weekly stories showcasing the heritage of our region and promoted over 30 events during April and May. Stories included were of Kendall, Bowraville, Port Macquarie, Bellingen, Gladstone, Smithtown, Nambucca, Kempsey, Dorrigo, Laurieton, Sawtell, Woolgoolga, South West Rocks and Urunga.

During this time, we also received a Highly Commended award at the NSW Heritage Awards for our 2022 Shine Festival.

### Mid North Coast Art Files

Launched in late 2023, the Mid North Coast Art Files is a new video series produced by Arts MNC and shines the spotlight on artists and creatives from the Mid North Coast. Each episode provides a glimpse into their working lives, studio spaces, inspirations and techniques, unveiling the diversity of art and artists that call our region home. For the first series of Art Files, we focused on the successful CASP recipients and their projects. Two episodes were released in 2023 including:

- Episode 1: Nambucca artist Alejandra Ramirez interview in the lead-up to her first solo exhibition at Archive MNC, with insights into her studio practice and work process.
- Episode 2: Tortuga Festival directors, Lucy Frost and Gordo Gamsby interview about their performance backgrounds, and the triumphs and challenges of putting on a regional cabaret/circus festival.

Videos are one of the most effective ways to engage audiences online, and Arts MNC will continue to invest in this medium to promote and celebrate the arts in our region.

### Arts Mid North Coast Website

Working with our digital consultant Thirtyfour, we finished the 2023 year with our website relaunch, implementing many of the recommendations identified in our 2021 audit. Our new site includes improvements to our home page design, site navigation, mobile layouts and landing pages as well as upgrades to our server and core software for better usability and increased page speeds.



Our revamped website features the following sections that increase the visibility and awareness of creative events, places and opportunities in our region:

- **Whats On:** As the region's only free events calendar, our Whats On guide is one of the most regularly visited sections of our site. In 2023 we published over 300 events across various artforms including art exhibitions, music, theatre and dance performances, festivals and workshops. During summer we featured creative activities for kids, with over 50 events in the 2023 /24 school holidays.
- **Creative Coast Cultural Trails:** our comprehensive directory features around 200 listings including Aboriginal experiences, galleries, public art, museums, markets, heritage places, cultural walks, performance spaces, written word and creative eating places.
- **Creative Places:** showcases some of our smaller townships with a defined creative identity including Bellingen, Bowraville, Dorrigo, Gladstone, Kendall, Sawtell, South West Rocks and Woolgoolga. In 2023, we added Wauchope in our list of Creative Places.
- **Venues Guide:** listing over 150 venues for event organisers including cafes, clubs restaurants, theatres & performance spaces, halls, galleries & museums.

## Social Media

Our active presence on social media saw a steady growth of followers on Facebook (3,500 Followers) and Instagram (1,773 Followers). In 2023 we grew our Facebook reach by 66.1%% with posts reaching a total of 46,257 people and on Instagram we increased reach by 20.2% reaching 11,787 people. Our increased use of videos and reels has garnered significant popularity and contributed positively to user engagement levels.

We are currently reassessing our presence on Twitter (now known as 'X') to determine its ongoing relevance in reaching our audiences, particularly given the platform's recent decline in user engagement. In response, we have activated our LinkedIn profile to foster broader engagement within the arts sector. Additionally, we are exploring content creation on TikTok as a strategic move to connect with a younger demographic and expand our outreach efforts across diverse platforms.

## Arts Blast

Our monthly newsletter, Arts Blast is distributed to over 1600 subscribers, up from 1500 in the previous year. Artsblast features major news stories of our work and projects, as well as showcasing key events, news and opportunities from the region.

## Goal 3 - Collaboration

*To develop and foster strategic partnerships, projects and networks that benefit the region's arts and cultural sector.*

### Journeys

'Journeys' is an online exhibition featuring objects and stories from Mid North Coast museums and collections, and the many NSW State Heritage and historic places they are associated with. Launched in 2023, in partnership with the Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMaGA) Mid North Coast Chapter, 'Journeys' continues Arts MNC's work in broadening audiences for regional museums using online digital platforms.

Much of the background work for this project was completed by community museum volunteers from Coffs Harbour, Dorrigo, Bellingen, Nambucca, Bowraville, South West Rocks, Kempsey, Port Macquarie, Laurieton, Tinonee, Wingham and Tuncurry.

### RADO Network Collaborations: Regional Futures

In 2023, the NSW Regional Arts Network (RAN) presented the Regional Futures Exhibition and Symposium at the Casula Powerhouse, Western Sydney. The event was the culmination of a two-year strategic project funded by Create NSW delivered by the 15 member organisations of the Network, including Arts MNC.

Two artists from the Mid North Coast - Kit Kelen and Ronnie Grammatica, were selected to participate in a series of exchanges and development of new work for the exhibition. These artists were also included in a collaborative exhibition, "Regional Futures: Box of Possibilities" at the Manning Regional Art Gallery in partnership with Orana Arts.

### Cultural Tourism

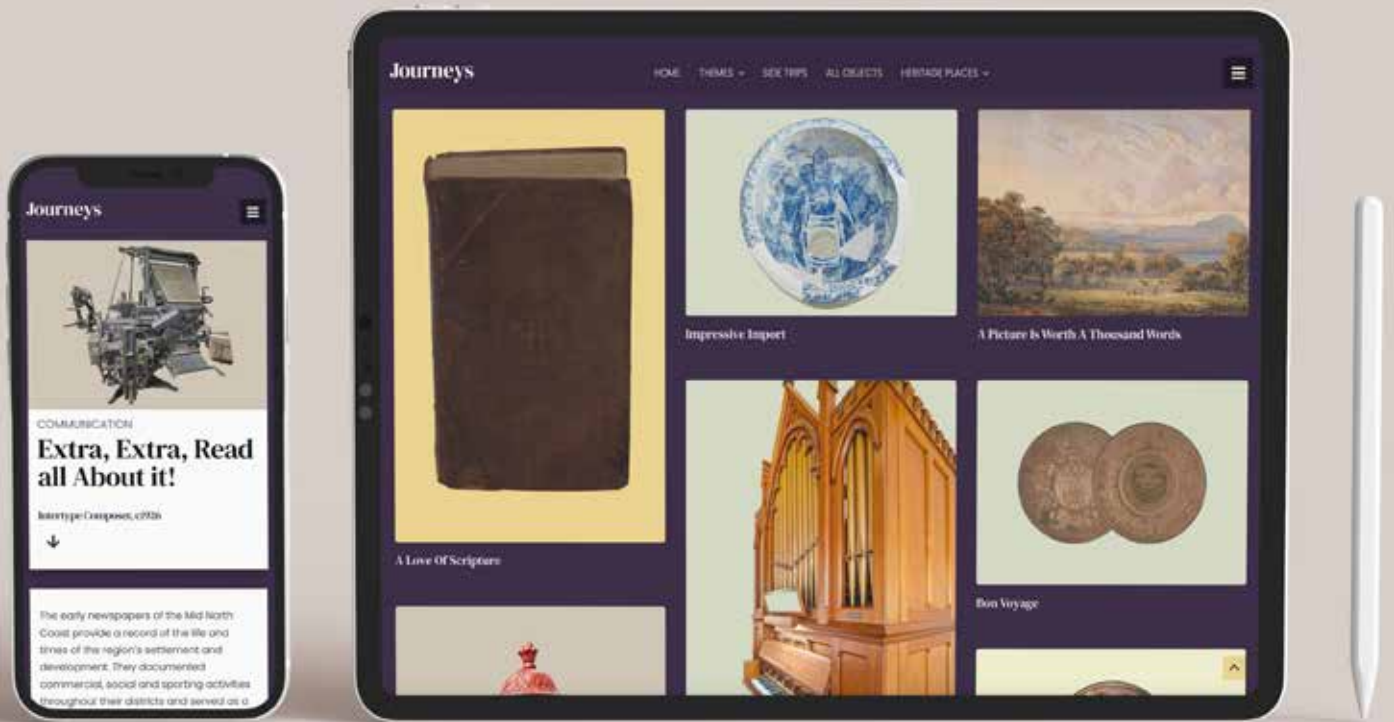
Having a strong background in delivering cultural tourism projects, Arts MNC was part of the working group to oversee this next RAN strategic project. Our Cultural Tourism project involves identifying opportunities for regional cultural tourism and the development of initiatives between the Network, Create NSW and Destination NSW. Arts consultants Patternmakers were engaged to undertake the research component of the project on behalf of the Network, to commence in early 2024.

### Horizons Youth Creative Industries Launchpad

A project led by South West Arts and funded through Regional NSW, 75 young people from across NSW will be supported in a creative industry mentoring and career development program over 18 months. Five young artists were selected from the Mid North Coast following an EOI process. In early 2024, participants will be paired with an industry mentor who will support them as they work towards a showcase event.

### Regional Arts NSW

As a member of Regional Arts NSW, Arts MNC partnered in their Work of Art program funded by Women NSW. The program of work for regional based creative women, helps develop skills, strategies, confidence and connection to grow their creative enterprise. Our region had the highest number of applicants, with 7 women successful. Coffs Harbour was chosen as one of the regional hubs where participants met in person for a full day workshop with facilitator Monica Davidson.



Screenshot of the Journeys online exhibition including mobile and tablet views

## Music NSW

Arts Mid North Coast continues to work in partnership with Music NSW supporting their Regional Music Development program. In 2023, we welcomed their new Regional Music team which included the continuation of Ali Buckley as Regional Music Coordinator (RMC) for the Mid North Coast, Orana and Upper Hunter and David Brugner as Regional Manager and RMC for Northern Rivers and North West region. Their work to deliver development opportunities for regional musicians included the launch of their Sister Cities regional tours which saw four acts from the Mid North Coast take part including Blind Pretty, Tanuki, YT Dingo and Fitzroy Lee feat. Fluxa.

In 2024, through funding from the Regional Arts Fund, Arts MNC will partner again with Music NSW to deliver another round of our successful MiNi (digital) Concert series providing a digital platform to showcase the abundance of musical talents emerging from our region.

## Music in the Regions

We also continued our support for Music in the Regions touring classical music across regional NSW. Arts Mid North Coast assisted with finding suitable venues for their Mid North Coast tour of Duo Blockstix. The tour brought recorder player Alicia Crossley and percussionist Joshua Hill to audiences at the Coramba Hall, Nambucca Heads Golf Club, Kendall Community Hall, and a new venue – Dorrigo Gazette Theatre. Music in the Regions also delivered a community outreach program to Nambucca Heads library, Scotts Head and Stuarts Point public schools.

## Other Collaborations

- APRA/AMCOS Songmakers program in Bellingen and Toormina
- Dark Alley Records The Cage All Ages Gigs
- Partnership with Arts North West to support two Bellingen musicians Oscar Eager and Emiliano Beltzer to perform at Fiesta La Peel Multicultural Festival, Tamworth.



Regional Futures Symposium, Casula Powerhouse. Photo: Damon AMB

## Goal 4 - Advocate

*To encourage and support the arts, creative industries and cultural development in all strategic processes to provide leadership and ensure positive outcomes for local, community and regional initiatives*

### NSW Arts & Cultural Policy

With the new Government elected in March, the development of a new Cultural Policy 'A New Look at Culture' was announced and released at the end of 2023 titled 'Creative Communities'. Arts MNC actively participated in the consultation period, engaging with Local Council staff and artists to understand their insights and ideas to inform a new policy. We also attended an online Town Hall with the Minister contributing to the discussion, and made a comprehensive submission outlining the key areas where regional arts needed support and investment.

Along with the Regional Arts Network, we led and drafted a submission on behalf of the Network outlining key issues relevant to Regional Arts Development Organisations. During a Network meeting hosted by Regional Arts NSW, we also provided direct feedback to the Shadow Minister for the Arts and Create NSW.

### Local Government Advocacy & Support

In 2023 Arts MNC provided strategic advice and submissions to:

- Kempsey Council Arts & Cultural Plan
- City of Coffs Harbour Tourism Strategy
- Coffs Harbour City Council Arts & Cultural Grants Assessment Panel
- Port Macquarie Hastings Council Graffiti Management Mural Project assessment panel
- Nambucca Valley Council River Foreshore Public Art Trail
- Kempsey Shire Council Youth Arts Festival

### Leadership & Advocacy activities

- Support and promotion of National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) Art as Work campaign.
- Support and promotion of Live Performance Rates for musicians.
- Staff participation in Support Act Aussie Music T-Shirt campaign.
- Arts sector representation at Social Impact in the Regions Conference, leading conversations and engagement around use of arts and creative activities for social impact and community work.
- Presentation to NSW Local Government staff on Public Art projects and engagement for Create NSW Public Art Toolkit.
- Represented Creative Industries at Careers Talk for Parents by Business NSW in Coffs Harbour
- Attendance at Destination NSW workshop, Port Macquarie

## Goal 5 - Governance

*To be an agile, dynamic, effective, accountable and sustainable organisation utilising best practice technology and skills to promote and achieve excellence.*

### Board of Directors

Arts Mid North Coast is an incorporated association overseen by 11 Board members; one appointed by each of our partner Councils and six community representatives. Council appointments may also nominate a seconded officer if the Board member is not able to attend meetings.

The Board meets quarterly either face to face or online, with an Annual General Meeting mid-year when the election of position holders are held for the following year.

In 2023, two of our long-standing Board members, Lorrae O'Brien and Shelley O'Keefe finished their terms on Arts Mid North Coast. Following a board skills audit and an Expressions of Interest process assessed by a sub-committee of the Board, two new members were elected to the June AGM: Madeleine Lawler and Alexandra Jones.

### 2023 Board Members

Rob Turner - Chair  
 Cr. Susan Jenvey - Deputy and Treasurer  
 Debbie Sommers - Secretary  
 Cr. Steve Allan  
 Donna Ballard  
 Cr. Tony Judge  
 Lucilla Marshall (with seconders Georgie Perri and Vivien Mitchell)  
 Lorrae O'Brien (until June)  
 Shelley O'Keefe (until June)  
 Cr. Kinne Ring  
 Stephanie Sims  
 Alexandra Jones (from June)  
 Madeleine Lawler (from June)

### Sub-Committees

Sub-committees are formed from members of the Board with support from the ED for various tasks such as policy reviews, HR and grant assessments. Subcommittees provide advice and report back to the Board for endorsement on matters.

**CASP Grants:** Susan Jenvey, Georgina Perri, Olivia Parker

**Board Recruitment:** Rob Turner and Olivia Parker

**Policy Review:** Cr Tony Judge, Debbie Sommers and Alexandra Jones

**Human Resources:** Lorrae O' Brien, Stephanie Sims, Rob Turner.

### Governance Training

Board Members and the Executive Director are encouraged to actively take opportunities to develop their Governance skills and attended the following training programs in 2023:

- Regional Arts NSW Governance Training
- Not-for-Profit Financial Management with Governance Institute

### Finance

The 2022 Annual Accounts were audited by HMM Accountants of Forster and 2023 accounts have been prepared for audit by the same company.

## IT Operations

Having previously operated on a patchwork of Gmail and Google Office, Arts MNC successfully migrated to Microsoft 365 as a means to mitigate data risks effectively while optimising productivity and collaboration capabilities. This also allowed us to clear a backlog of data stored on our server.

## Staffing

Arts Mid North Coast employs a full time Executive Director, a part-time Projects Officer (3 days/week) and part-time Communications Officer (4 days/week). Finance, web design/development and some program management is contracted out to local services providers.

Olivia Parker commenced in the role of Executive Director following the retirement of Kevin Williams in early 2023. Kevin was retained as interim Projects Officer until July to complete projects and support the new ED with the transition and handover of work.

Our long standing Finance Manager John Stewart also retired in July 2023, with Dianne Wall being appointed to the position.

Lisa Hort was employed as p/t Creative Recovery Officer (contract) until March 2023.

In October 2023, Skye Petho was engaged p/t as Program Coordinator (contract).

## Professional Development

Communications Officer, Jasmine Avery completed a Mobile Content Creation course through Australian Film Radio & Television School (AFTRS) - providing new skills to develop more video content for our communications and social media. Jasmine also completed a Certificate IV in Arts & Cultural Administration through TAFE NSW.

## 2023 Staff List

Olivia Parker - *Executive Director*  
Kevin Williams, *Interim Projects Officer*  
Jasmine Avery - *Communications Officer*

## Sub-Contractors

Skye Petho - *Program Coordinator*  
Lisa Hort - *Creative Recovery Officer*  
Mark Carpenter - *Designer & Digital Consultant*  
John Stewart - *Finance (until July 2023)*  
Dianne Wall - *Finance (from August 2023)*

# 2023

