



# Arts Access Victoria Annual Report 2023



# Acknowledgment of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land, the People of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to their elders past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land and waterways.





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We Produced  
**289**  
New Works



We presented  
**38**  
Exhibitions & Performances



## 2023 in Numbers



We Have  
**127**  
Strategic Partnerships



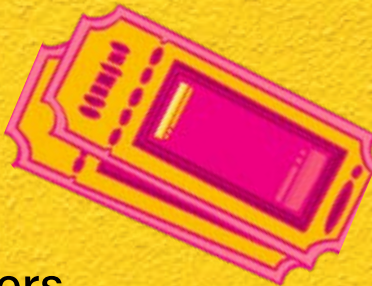
We supported  
More Than  
**1,700**  
Artists

We Received Over  
**40,000**  
Information Requests

We Ran **1,690**  
Creative Workshops  
& Mentorships



We Engaged  
**78,000**  
Audience Members



**4,800**  
People Subscribe  
To Our eNews



Our Websites Had  
**135,000**  
Views

**27,000**  
Accounts Follow  
Us On Social Media





# About AAV

Arts Access Victoria (AAV) is the state's peak body for arts and disability. Since 1974, AAV has been a leader in disability arts practice, access and cultural equity. AAV is disability-led. AAV produces and platforms the work of Deaf and Disabled artists. AAV's goals are to:

- Define and build cultural equity for Deaf and Disabled people
- Target and shift the barriers and conditions that maintain cultural inequity
- Position AAV as a resilient and dynamic powerhouse to extend its role and impact.

We want everyone represented in all areas of the arts, screen and creative industries. We believe art is a tool for change. We celebrate the aesthetic potential of disability and access. We share authentic stories that are ours to tell. We produce and platform excellence in disability arts and culture.

AAV shares unique and untold stories that challenge the issues that frame the lives of Deaf and Disabled people. It places Deaf and Disabled artists, not at the margins, but centre stage. Recognising them instead as significant and invaluable contributors to the Australian cultural landscape.

## What is Plain English?

This Annual Report is in Plain English. The Plain English Campaign started in the UK in 1974 by Chrissie Maher OBE. Chrissie shredded hundreds of official documents in Parliament Square, London as a protest. She was angry because people were not receiving government money they were owed. The forms and paperwork to receive their money were too difficult to understand. Chrissie Maher wants us to make information accessible for all. Here in Australia, most people read up to a Year 7 or 8 level of literacy. Let's use Plain English to include everyone.





# Chair's Report



It has been another incredible year for Arts Access Victoria and I continue to be astounded by the impact of the work.

I thank our funding partners, particularly Creative Australia, Creative Victoria and the Victorian Government, the City of Melbourne, and the City of Port Phillip.

I would like to thank the AAV Board for their support and service to the organisation. They continue to bring their passion, dedication and experience to the organisation. I would like to extend special thanks and acknowledgement to our outgoing Chair, Amanda Lawrie-Jones, a wonderful leader and colleague. I would also like to thank other outgoing Board members Brad Sadler and Brooke Daly for their valuable time and commitment.

This year, we celebrate our 50th year and farewell our fearless CEO/Artistic Director Caroline Bowditch for her support and leadership. Caroline has forged a new path for cultural equity in Victoria, and across the country during her time with AAV. We have all witnessed the artists we work with occupying new spaces and creating new paths. It has been wonderful to watch and learn.

We are on the lookout for our next CEO to continue building on the foundations of the past 50 years and take us into the next phase of Disabled and/or Deaf leadership. Thank you to Deputy CEO/ General Manager Nikki Zerella for her continual dedication and commitment, and the impressive Management team. Thank you to all the AAV staff, who embody care, creativity and advocacy every day.

And finally thank you to the artists we work with. I've loved the stories, music, images and objects that I have experienced this year. Thank you.

**Nic Vogelpoel**

# CEO's Report



A huge focus of energy at AAV in 2022 went into Alter State. Artists and entire studios were swept up in developing works for the festival. Did the pace slow down in 2023? No!

The year started with a bang! Everyone at AAV was energised and programming new exhibitions and performances. The first half of the year was full to the brim of events. Joy and colour were everywhere. Talks and ideas barrelled along across partnerships and festivals.

This spirit of determination of the artists, staff and the sector sustains me. As the year went on, we developed some new programs with a view to the future. The Transmit Residency, facilitated by Andi Snelling, invited artists to get confident in their own creating. It seeded friendships and artistic connections. The Evolve residency brought together Deaf and

Disabled leaders from around Australia. The week of conversation asked, What might the future of Disability Arts hold?

By now you may know that I am leaving AAV. I feel it's important for myself and the organisation to open ourselves to new adventures and challenges. I am satisfied that I have added to the strong foundations of the organisation and it's stability for the future. I want to give the next Deaf or Disabled leader the opportunity I have enjoyed. In 2024 AAV marks it's 50th anniversary. I thought that a year of celebration would be a great note to leave on.

I will cherish my time at AAV and am proud of all that we have achieved during my time as CEO/Artistic Director. I'm proudest of the new partnerships that have been brokered, the new funding opportunities that we have opened and offered to Deaf and Disabled artists and having the regular opportunity to connect with artists through The Gathering.

Thank you to all the AAV artists for your trust, generosity and brilliance. I can't wait to visit your next exhibition and attend your performances.

To the AAV staff and Board, there aren't really enough words. Thank you for your tireless support, ongoing passion and unwavering integrity.

It's been a wonderful journey at AAV. I can't wait to see how you all change the artistic landscape over the next 50 years.

**Caroline Bowditch**



# Uncle Greg Muir

As part of NAIDOC week we were proud to present 'Uncle Greg Muir: Retrospective.' The exhibition ran 3 – 8 July at No Vacancy Gallery, and Online on the Arts Access Victoria website.

The exhibition of paintings spanned decades of practice by Uncle Greg. There were over 30 paintings in the No Vacancy Gallery and 55 paintings presented online.

The exhibition included a celebration event including a Welcome To Country by N'arweet Carolyn Briggs, a performance by the Djirri Djirri dancers and live music by Alejandro Aguanta. Stephanie Kabanyana Kayandekwe MC'd the event.

Uncle Greg Muir was unfortunately unable to attend due to illness. However Uncle Greg dialed in and greeted guests virtually with a live stream. This was also projected in the space as part of the speeches.

Over 65 guests attended the celebration and many hundreds more visited the exhibition. A beautiful catalogue was produced and is being archived in library collections.

Uncle Greg's work was acquired by several state and local collections.

'Uncle Greg Muir: Retrospective' honours the important legacy of a generous artist with a rich history.

**"I can't imagine my life without painting because when I paint, I am free like a bird."**

**– Uncle Greg Muir**

Credit: Uncle Greg Muir: A Retrospective. Photo by TJ Garvie.





# The Other Film Festival

TOFF is a ground-breaking disability-led program. Placing Deaf and Disabled people at the centre of the Australian screen industry. Founded in 2004, TOFF is Australia's first international disability film festival. leader in the global disability screen advocacy movement. We champion and present the breadth of disability-led screen work:

- film and television
- immersive work
- digital and visual arts

Hosting hybrid programs of virtual and in-person attendances in Melbourne each year. We offer Deaf and Disabled makers and audiences an accessible place for high quality and compelling events. Along with professional development opportunities. Our main 2023 event partners are:

- ACMI
- MIFF
- St Kilda Film Festival
- Emerging Writers Festival

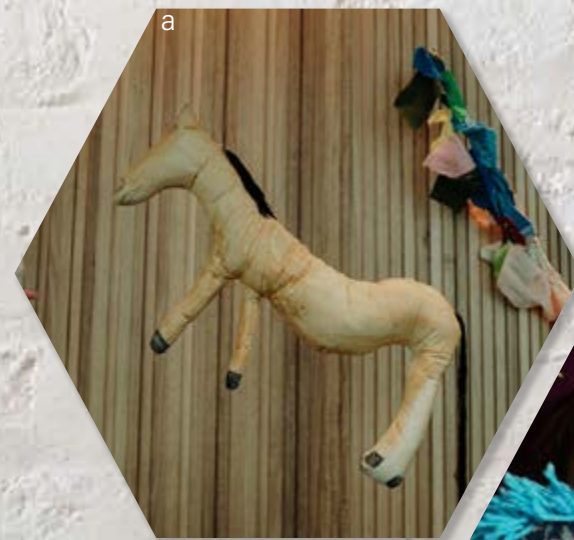
The Other Film Festival is proudly supported City of Melbourne and Screen Australia.



Australian Government



Credit: Portraits and soft sculptures photographed at the Resistance Red Carpet Event by Raphael Recht. - a:/k Soft Sculpture by Get Out Artists d: Theo Psathas e: Maddy f: Mily i: Heather White j: Elvin Lam. Portraits from Beyond I Wanna Go (Resistance screening program), photographs by Cheryl Dunn - b: William Scott c: Lulu Sotelo h: Avery Babon g: Christine Szeto l: Rosa Giron





# Resistance Screening Program and Red Carpet

The Other Film Festival presented a free online film festival on ACMI's Cinema 3 website. Resistance screened ten films from Thursday 23 November – Thursday 7 December. All films were free, audio described, captioned and available across Australia. International feature documentaries and Australian shorts explored resistance in many forms.

The proudly disability-led festival team includes Artistic Director Fiona Tuomy and curatorial team Kath Duncan, CB Mako, Fury and Milly Cooper.

Audience reached were over 4,000. The feedback was very positive. We received many requests for radio interviews.

Roll out the red carpet! We held a party for the Resistance program with our Red Carpet Event at ACMI on 6 December.

The event was hybrid with over 100 people attending or streaming live. AAV artists Heather White, Lorraine Hayes, Michael Gelsi, Theo Psathas, Marc Sobello and Valma Lathma performed and exhibited. The event had music by DJ Kin. Audio describer Josh Lynzaat was on hand to detail all the incredible red carpet looks. Hosted by Caroline Bowditch, CEO / Artistic Director, AAV.

Speakers included:

- Councillor Jamal Hakim, City of Melbourne
- Caroline Pitcher, CEO, VicScreen
- Seb Chan, Director & CEO, ACMI
- Llewellyn Michael Bates, Writer & Producer
- Fiona Tuomy, Artistic Director, The Other Film Festival
- Elvin Lam, Filmmaker and 2022 Lesley Hall Award Winner
- Sophie Smyth, 2023 Lesley Hall Award Winner





# Residencies

## Transmit Residency

The Transmit Residency was a professional development opportunity for Deaf and Disabled artists. Performance maker Andi Snelling led a week of artmaking. Andi is particularly interested in embedding access into performance. A group of eight artists were selected to participate. They could join in person or online. All artists taking part were paid a fee.

The residency ran Monday 17 April – Friday 21 April at Studio WXYZ, North Melbourne.

The Transmit Residency was an opportunity to provide professional development for artists, who often miss out due to access reasons. The disability-led space created a strong and meaningful experience for those involved.

**“It was truly one of the best weeks of my life.”**  
– Transmit Residency artist



Credit: Andi Snelling and Transmit participants during the residency. Photo by Kate Disher-Quill.

## Evolve Residency

The Evolving Arts and Disability in Australia Residency is a partnership between Arts Access Victoria and DADAA with support from Creative Australia (formerly Australia Council for the Arts). It was a week of discussions and critical conversations to help inform future directions in arts practice and advocacy in the sector.

Over 80 current and future Deaf and Disabled leaders applied to be part of the residency. Nine Deaf and Disabled leaders were selected.

The residency was based at the Arts Access Victoria offices. Some of the participants or guest speakers joined us online. Caroline Bowditch was joined by David Doyle, Executive Director at DADAA, to host and facilitate the sessions. Guest speakers included:

Fiona Tuomy (The Other Film Festival and Arts Access Victoria),	Heidi Everett (Schizy Inc),
Gaelle Mellis (Tutti Arts),	Janice Florence (Weave Movement Theatre and Arts Access Victoria), and
Gayle Kennedy (Writer),	Kath Duncan (Performer, Writer).

A full report on the proposals and ideas from the residency was delivered to Creative Australia for future sector planning.



Rafeif Ismail, Ebony Wightman, Michael Chan, Harmonie Downes, Margot Morales, Jeremy Hawkes, Anna Molnar, Irene Holub and Beau Windon from the Evolving residency in front of the AAV offices. Photo by Kate Disher-Quill.



# Festivals

## Alter State Festival

Alter State is a ten-year partnership between Arts Access Victoria and Arts Centre Melbourne. Throughout this partnership we will present Alter State festivals every two years. We held a digital program in 2021 to preview the festival for audiences. 2022 was the first full festival experience.

In 2023 Arts Centre Melbourne and AAV developed ideas and planning for the 2024 program. We welcomed new Creative Producer, Jodee Mundy to the Alter State team.

Alter State is a celebration of disability, creativity and culture. We can't wait to present more Alter State in 2024.

## Radical Access

Arts Access Victoria signed a ten-year partnership with Melbourne Fringe called Radical Access. This program aims to radically shift accessibility in the independent arts sector.

This year Radical Access co-commissioned a major new performance work with Chunky Move. Fayen d'Evie was selected to present, ~~~~~ "...derelict in uncharted space..."

This bold work included livestreaming, audio description and captioning as part of the structure of the work. It was based on the story of Star Trek fans from the 1970s making radio plays of the TV show for blind audiences. It was innovative and impressive.

Radical Access was proud to support Melbourne Fringe performances:

'The Birth and Death of a Physical Artist' by roya the destroyer and Peter Sette.

'I Am (Not) This Body' by Leisa Prowd was a work from The Warehouse Residency with Arts House.

**Radical Access: The Future of Access** in the Arts was a panel event at the State Library Victoria in July. Melbourne Fringe's Access Advisor Carly Findlay hosted. Speakers were Ana Tiquia, Fayen d'Evie, Asphyxia, Alistair Baldwin, Andy Jackson, and Melinda Smith.



Credit: ~~~~~ "...derelict in uncharted space..." Photo by Gianna Rizzo.



# Music

## Mini Snug Rock

Snug Rock is the name for AAV's accessible music events. Mini Snug Rock was an event at The Channel, Arts Centre Melbourne on 28 May.

Irene Zhong, Evelyn Ida Morris, Luna Vexa, and Magnets performed live. The event was MC'd by Artemis Muñoz. All artists were part of a panel discussing access and the music industry.

The event was livestreamed and in person. All Snug Rock events are relaxed performances, and Auslan interpreted and captioned.

## Mini Snug Rock at Soundbox

ALWAYS LIVE partnered with AAV to present a live performance by Katie Dey. The event was MC'd by Jes Layton. This was part of the Soundbox Live series, in a bespoke performance space on the forecourt of Arts Centre Melbourne.

Katie Dey performed a set for audiences at the venue and online. AAV ensured the event included Auslan interpretation. We provided information on access provisions such as having a quiet space with clear signage and briefed Katie and Jes to provide visual description in their performances.

## Eliza Hull and Liz Martin at the Melbourne Recital Centre

'Into the Space Between the Notes' was a night of music by Eliza Hull and Liz Martin. The event took place at the Melbourne Recital Centre on Saturday 26 August. Eliza and Liz each gave a performance of their original compositions. Caroline Bowditch interviewed the artists about their work prior to the performances. The night was a Disability-led showcase of artistry and accessibility.

Credit: Irene Zhong at Mini Snug Rock, Photo by Kate Disher – Quill.





# Young People

## Capturing the City

Capturing the City brings young artists from across Melbourne to SIGNAL. Artists are from Ashwood School, Berendale School, Yarrabah School, Kangan Institute, and Victoria University Polytechnic's Western Futures and Transition Education programs. In 2023 the groups met during Terms 2 and 3.

In Term 2, artists explored zine making. A huge array of zines were created. Some subjects included musical theatre, football teams, public transport, the Great Ocean Rd and much more. Artists toured local zine landmark, Sticky Institute. A launch event displayed all the zines.

During Term 3 the artists gave a theatre performance on the banks of the Yarra. Workshops explored character development and narrative. The performance showed characters created in the workshops along Flinders Walk and inside SIGNAL. One group made a film which we showed on the day as they couldn't make the performance.

Capturing the City is supported by Engage! Funding with thanks to SIGNAL.



Credit: Capturing the City participants and performance. Photo by Kate Disher – Quill.

## Nexus

Nexus is a professional development program for young Deaf and Disabled people interested in a career in the arts. The program runs over 8 sessions and is online and in person. The program covers topics such as self-promotion, budgeting, grant writing, and advocacy. It is powerful to learn from successful Disabled arts leaders in a room of peers. Two Nexus participants gained employment in the arts after completing the program. Two others joined other AAV programs to continue to build their arts career. Nexus is supported by the Victorian government through Engage!

**"I was so out of my depth at the beginning and I learnt so much practical information and advice"**  
– Nexus participant



**"AAV are like rock stars!"**  
– Capturing the City artist



**"I'm gonna miss hanging out with everyone! Also Kath Duncan's session was so good and helped me finish off an assignment for my uni creative writing class and I got a H1 so I think the sessions are already paying off"**  
– Nexus participant



# Future Reset

Future Reset is a program by VicHealth. It aims to increase social connection among Victoria's young people. VicHealth has funded nine arts organisations to host events and programs to enhance mental wellbeing through art and creativity, led by young people.

We formed a Co-Design group to develop programming for our Future Reset Maker Space. In 2023 we launched our program at The Gathering, at The Channel Arts Centre Melbourne.

The Maker Space pilot program was 6 art workshops or 'taster' sessions. These were presented in person and online. All workshops were led by Deaf and Disabled artists. The young people who took part made connections and became friends. Participants were chatting about mental health, busting harmful myths and supporting each other. Some of them had only met on the workshop day.

In 2024 the Maker Space program presents a full year of workshops. There will be 30 workshops (14 in person, 13 online, 2 hybrid) led by Deaf and Disabled artists. Artists have the option to present work at an exhibition at the Library at the Dock Gallery at the end of the year.

The Maker Space program has developed partnerships with SIGNAL and The Channel, Arts Centre Melbourne.

## Making friends with Maker Space: one young person's story

In our pilot program for Future Reset Maker Space, one young artist had just moved from interstate. With no friends and artistic connections, she took a chance on our program. The young person attended the first workshop, air dry clay with Pey Chi, and made her first friend in Melbourne. Together they signed up for the rest of the workshops and hung out in-between the workshops. She said she felt like she didn't have to mask. She shared that she had a difficult schooling experience and didn't feel supported as a young disabled person in the state she lived. Not only was she excited to be surrounded by other Deaf and Disabled people her age, she was excited to see an established Deaf and Disabled artists leading the workshops.

**"I've been begging for a situation like this.  
I could live here forever."**

**– Maker Space artist**

Credit: Future Reset Maker Space Tasters participant. Photo by Laure Du Ve.





# Mentorships

Arts Access Victoria connects Deaf and Disabled artists with mentors to achieve individual goals. Mentoring is a one-on-one relationship to support career development at all levels and across all artforms.

The professional development that many participating artists have achieved through the program has led to notable public outcomes for individual artists. This includes exhibition, performance and screen-based outcomes.

## Residencies and Exhibition opportunities: Mentee Melissa Pym

Melissa Pym has been in the Mentorship Program for 3 years working with mentor Tara. Melissa lives on the very outskirts of Melbourne. Due to chronic health issues, Melissa is unable to leave the house most of the time.

Melissa's practice encompasses sculpture, drawing, painting and installation. She hosts a successful YouTube channel. Melissa's confidence as an artist has grown markedly through her mentorship, which is conducted entirely online.

In 2023 Melissa was invited to join the Yarra Sculpture Gallery's Summer Residencies. With the assistance and support of Tara, as well as Andrea from YSG during the period of the residency, Melissa was able to be an artist-in-residence remotely.

This experience brought a great deal of benefits to Melissa and her creative practice. She felt part of a community. She was able to focus entirely on her practice for a sustained period. It allowed her an opportunity to create a cohesive body of work. She also gained new clients and online audiences.

Melissa's "Bed Installation" was chosen to be featured in Sydney University's "Dreams and Debuts" exhibition in December 2023. This was a direct result of Melissa's mentorship and residency activities.

**"I could give myself permission to focus on my art and block out the rest of the world and responsibilities for a time."**

**- Melissa Pym, mentee**

Credit: Melissa Pym installation as part of the Yarra Sculpture Gallery summer residency. Photo courtesy of the artist and Yarra Sculpture Gallery





# Studios

## Art Day South

Art Day South focused on creative and artwork development in 2023.

A highlight of the year was a Meet and Share day with Sydney-based artist Digby Webster. This was part of The Other Film Festival x St Kilda Film Festival. Artists shared their works and created artwork together with Digby Webster. Artists enjoyed the opportunity to discuss and learn from new peers.

Three Art Day South artists Heather White, Lorraine Hayes and Michael Gelsi performed and exhibited at The Other Film Festival's Red Carpet Event in December.

A selection of Art Day South works were proudly exhibited at the AAV offices during 2023.

**"We're all friends. We do artwork at Art Day South. And we are showing off our style and individuality. They're colourful and all different designs and patterns... This is my way to show everyone my art."**

**– Art Day South artist**

Credit: a: Katina Anapaikos at work at a new painting at Art Day South, 2023. b: Heather White, A Colourful Horse, 2022 (detail). c: Edward Treloar showing his works at Digby Webster TOFF event, Photograph by Theresa Harrison. d: Jonathon Thompson Robot sculpture. e: Bobbi soft sculptures at TOFF Red Carpet event f: Artwork by Roslyn g: Linda Harman performing with balls. h: Robert Brown in an original jacket artwork.



**"They listen to me here (Get Out!) I can express myself through words and art. "**

**- Jenna Bailey, Get Out! artist**

## Get Out!

Get Out meets fortnightly on Saturdays in the South-east. Get Out! make visual and performance artworks and visit galleries in the region. This year Get Out! explored gender, sexuality and self-expression. This included the development of drag performances and personas. Get Out! question stereotypical narratives for Deaf and Disabled people.

In 2023 Get Out! members exhibited and performed as part of The Other Film Festival Red Carpet Event. Jenna Bailey and Get Out! poems were republished within Diverse City, a new VALID publication.

Get Out! held an end of year Studio Gathering, inviting friends and family to view their works and performances created this year. This event enabled artists to practice and test performances in front of a trusted audience. Get Out! have connected with the Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery and North Community centre, working towards future exhibition opportunities in 2024.

## Finding new expression at Get Out! Patricia McDonald and Holly Hough

Patricia McDonald and Holly Hough joined Get Out! early in the year. They had previously worked with Art About in Rosebud. Lockdowns had interrupted their artmaking. Now Get Out! has offered them a social and energising space to express themselves. Holly is enjoying developing dances and performances with peers. Holly is a natural performer and is confident on the stage. Patricia McDonald works with colour and line, and creates expressive, abstract artworks. Both artists believe the studio has benefitted their wellbeing, social lives and overall happiness.



“That was great, looks really good”

– Lisa, about her animation



## Artstop

This year Artstop has grown bigger and artists are strongly connected to the studio.

‘Shining a light into the darkness’ was Artstop’s first exhibition since 2018. This successful exhibition included 6 artists who had never exhibited before. It was a beautiful coming together of more experienced studio artists, and less experienced ones. Artists worked together to curate how the works were to be hung in the space, and shared what their concepts were. In addition, none of the artists had Audio Described before and all of them gave it a go. The opening night was a great event, and many artists sold a number of their works.

The exhibition ‘Prism’ is a moving-image work screened as a public art projection. This work continues in 2024 at A Park Close to Home, Sydney Rd, with thanks to Merri-bek council and the Little Projector Company.

Credit: Artstop’s Prism projections, with The Little Projector Company and Merri-bek Council.

## Way Out West

Way Out West (WOW) meet fortnightly on Saturdays in St Albans. WOW developed the exciting new work ‘Happy Place’ for Alter State in 2022. In 2023 WOW worked on extending this new multi-artform work.

WOW held an Open Studio in 2023. This was something the artists initiated. They wanted to perform for family and friends and present their sound and visual artworks. The artworks were exhibited at the St Albans Community Centre for several weeks.

“I’m excited to perform to my friends. My friends and family are all going to come. I’m going to sing for them”

– Kate Niddrie, Way Out West

Credit: Way Out West performance as part of Open Studio day.





# Nimbus

Nimbostratus' was a major exhibition at Bundoora Homestead Art Centre. The exhibition ran 4 October – 17 December. It included an opening event, and artist talks.

The artworks included drawing, printmaking, painting, sculpture, video and even AI. There was an online gallery and all works were audio described. The exhibition catalogue featured an essay response by art historian Tara Heffernan.

Since 2018 Nimbus have been based at the Bundoora Homestead Art Centre. Nimbus work out of the Nebula pop up art space on site. 'Nimbostratus' was the first exhibition by Nimbus at the Homestead.

Nimbus worked with the Homestead curatorial team leading up to the exhibition. They explored curatorial processes in depth. This included:

- Selection of artworks
- Working with themes
- Relationship of works to each other, and the room
- Layout and presentation

'Nimbostratus' demonstrated this considered approach.

Credit: a - g: Artworks from 'Nimbostratus' a: Leeann Preddy, Flowers. b: Country, Jane Tomlinson. c: Fiona Taylor, Cockadoododo. d: Jane Tomlinson, Before. e: Nicole Tsourlenes, Julia Number Five. f: Leeann Preddy, The Old Gum Tree g: Jo Kiriazis, Modern Geometry. h: Blues on Blue on Blue by Aleshanee Faery. Photograph courtesy of the artist and The Dax Centre.



Aleshanee Faery  
Blues, 2018  
Monochrome, 20 x 30 cm  
Art & Design Centre

## Blue on Blue on Blue by Aleshanee Faery

'Blue on Blue on Blue' showcased works by Aleshanee Faery. The exhibition was in partnership with The Dax Centre.

Aleshanee Faery exhibited beautiful abstract, geometric prints, that utilised tones of blue. Surrounding herself with shades of blue helps to improve her wellbeing and reminds her of the sea and sky.

The exhibition ran 20 July – 25 August.

An opening event was held 28 July. An online gallery of the works was on the AAV website.



## SRS Studios

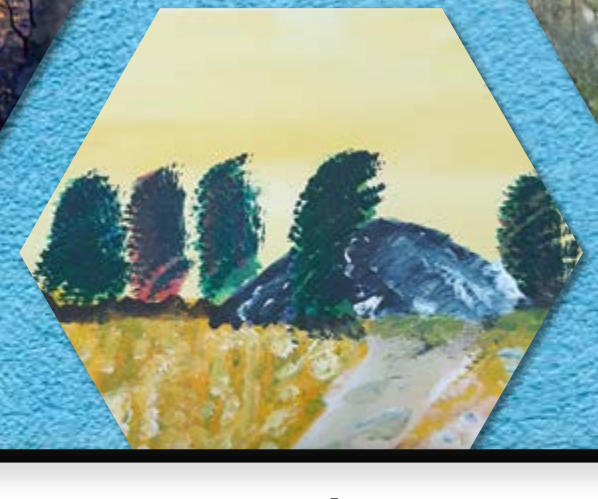
AAV runs 8 arts studios in Supported Residential Services (SRS) across Melbourne. These studios offer the opportunity for people to develop their artistic skills across many art forms. This year we worked with 65 artists and presented two fantastic exhibitions. The SRS program increased its sessions this year to run 40 weeks of the year. The increase has led to greater engagement from artists who are happy to have more time to make art.

### From Here to There at Louis Joel Arts Centre

This group exhibition involved 55 artists from across all SRS Studios. Artists' works responded to the theme of movement. Of the body, of the mind, of time. This exhibition was loved by the artists, venue and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. Four works from the exhibition were acquired by the Department for their collection. The launch event included an introduction by Karen Ingram, Manager of Louis Joel and speech by Caroline Bowditch. It was MC'd by Northern Terrace artist, Anthony Davies (supported by Rachel Edwards), Spoken Word by Brunswick Lodge artist Stefano Conti and a musical performance by Willows artist, Irene Ryan.

**"I enjoyed talking with each other, the girl singing, Caroline talking, the old man talking his poem, I feel like I like the art, my art and others, there were some beautiful artworks, I liked looking at all the art, we had a good time, I liked the food and drink"**  
– Nghi, Artist, Queens Lodge

Credit: Artworks from 'From Here to There' and 'Land and Seascapes' a: Aerial View of Bulging Rocks and Green Grass By Anthony Davies. b: Water Lilies and 'Rebbit' By Irene Ryan. c: Birds in Nature By Jing He. d: Angry Eyes By Peter Strang. e: Smokey By Leeann Preddy. f: Mountains and Lake By Tony Dowling. g: Misty By Leeann Preddy. h: Paninosa By Sonya Gowan. i: Mountain and Fields by Tony Dowling. j: Fragmented Space By Stefano Conti. k: Female Magpie By Vincent Gamon.



### Land and Seascapes at the Dax Centre

Leeann Preddy and Tony Dowling exhibited their paintings. The launch was attended by many residents from SRS and board members and patrons of the Dax Centre.

**"How does art make you feel?"**

**"It makes me feel smart and it relaxes me"**

- David, Queens Lodge on being part of the SRS program



# Grants and Auspicing

## Auspicing

AAV supports artists to apply for grants. When artists are successful we can auspice their grant. This means managing their funding and payments on behalf of the artist.

We work with funding bodies to develop and advocate for more accessible funding. We host information sessions and provide feedback on grant design.

This year we were proud to work with Creative Victoria on new infrastructure grants.

## Maker Space Infrastructure Grants

Making Space is an infrastructure grants program designed to improve accessibility in Victorian creative workspaces and venues. Delivered by Arts Access Victoria on behalf of the Victorian Government, this program is about Deaf and Disabled creatives and audiences making space and taking space.

The program offered grants from \$50,000 - \$100,000.

We designed the funding process to be as accessible as possible, within the Victorian Government guidelines. We formed a panel of Deaf and Disabled industry professionals to assess all the applications. We provided advice to applicants, and feedback to unsuccessful applicants. Seven organisations or collectives were awarded grants to improve access online and at their venues.



Credit: Paul Ryan, Photography.

"I won the grant. Very exciting project for me. My big thanks to you for helping me win the grant"

– Auspiced Artist



## Training

Arts Access Victoria is trusted by Australia's leading arts organisations for disability-led training. We work across the creative sector to increase access, inclusion and representation of Deaf and Disabled people. We have five different training offerings that we tailor to each organisation we deliver to. In 2023 we supported over 21 organisations with training programs. These included ACMI, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne Arts Precinct, Live Nation and more.

Our training offerings are;

- The Water We Swim In
- Cultural Safety in a Disability Context Masterclass
- Creating welcoming environments
- Addressing Ableism in the Workplace: Recruiting and retaining Deaf and Disabled Staff
- Accessible Arts Practice

The Gathering. Photos by Kate Disher – Quill.

"Thanks so much for your guidance and advice. This is so exciting. We couldn't have done it without you"

– Arts organisation client



## Consultation

Every day we provide advice to artists and organisations on accessibility in the arts. We are at the forefront of creating accessible arts experiences for all. We employ Deaf and Disabled expert advisors to provide feedback to clients. All work is Deaf-led and Disability-led.

A major project in 2023 was the Melbourne Arts Precinct (MAP Co). Our advisory team gave feedback on the design plans and on the drafts of the Disability Action Plan. We gave expert advice on the Public Realm design with a team with diverse access needs. This advice has informed the first draft of the Disability Action Plan. Our advisors have also attended two site tours at Federation Square to review current access. This is an example of a project with long-term impact. We look forward to this project continuing to grow and shape future access in the arts.



# Awards

## AAV and Music Victoria's Amplify Award

The Arts Access Victoria Amplify Award is part of the Music Victoria Awards. We have been working hard to advocate for Deaf and Disabled Victorian musicians over many years. This award is part of that legacy.

Katie Dey was the 2023 Amplify Award winner!

The nominees for this year's award included Artemis Muñoz, BATTs, Jimmy from Thornbury and Mathilde Anne.

The award was presented at a ceremony at BMW Edge, Federation Square on Tuesday 31 October.



## Lesley Hall Scholarship



Sophie Smyth is the 2023 winner of the Lesley Hall Scholarship. Sophie is a neurodivergent singer, actor, writer, and sometimes dancer based in Naarm. Sophie received the award at The Other Film Festival Red Carpet Event. The Lesley Hall Scholarship is an annual program for Victorian Deaf and Disabled artists and advocates.

"I heard recently that being an artist is about being in conversation with all the artists who came before you, and I think that's even more true about being a disabled artist, and advocate, and human."

– Sophie Smyth

## Stella Young Award

2023 marked a significant year for the legacy of Stella Young.

On 30 March 2023 a statue of Stella was unveiled in Stella's hometown of Stawell. Janice Florence and Caroline Bowditch were consultants to the project and attended the event.

A documentary on Stella's life by filmmaker Sarah Barton was previewed to test audiences in 2023 and is awaiting release.

Artemis Muñoz is the 2023 Stella Young Award artist!

Artemis received the award at the May Gathering. They make performance, cabaret, comedy and more. Artemis is proud to be a working queer, bi-racial and disabled artist and they are passionate about making the arts better for their communities.



"It is exceptionally validating to be receiving this honour. To know that I have the respect of my community means everything to me."

– Artemis Muñoz



# Networking

## The Gathering

The Gathering is a forum for Deaf and Disabled artists held on the last Wednesday of every month (except January and December). It is hosted by CEO Caroline Bowditch, with a range of industry guests. The Gathering is always online on zoom, and sometimes hybrid (both in-person and online).

The Gathering is a disability-held space, using a self-determination framework.

Highlights of the 2023 Gathering included;

- Three hybrid (in-person and online) sessions presented at Arts Centre Melbourne
- Guest speakers from Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF), Creative Australia, Vic Health, APRA AMCOS, Arts Centre Melbourne, AAV's Evolve Residency and artists from AAV's Youth programs
- Increase in attendances from previous year (nearly 20% higher)
- And more.

In June we celebrated Disability Pride with a hybrid session at The Channel – Arts Centre Melbourne. During this important conversation we created a Disability Pride Pie.

The Gathering continues in 2024 and will run on the last Tuesday of the month.



"Our perspectives are both unique and highly valuable, something that we wouldn't have access to without the disability community"

– Gathering participant



# Finance

Arts Access Society Inc. Trading as Arts Access Victoria (ABN 34 192 751 897)  
For the Year Ended 31 December 2023

AAV completed the year with an operational deficit of \$316,437 due to income recognized in 2022 for projects related to 2023 according to the new audit and accounting standards and an overall deficit of \$202,847 due to an increase in our trust fund investment value by \$113,590. AAV is still feeling the effects of COVID-19 with an impact to our NDIS funded activities, our NDIS reserves covered this deficit in Arts Access Society Inc ABN 34 192 751 897 Board's Report For the Year Ended 31 December 2023 3 funds. We received State government funds that has allowed us to build our workforce and to continue running our programs and expanding activities. AAV has maintained its financial position.

## Statement of Profit or Loss

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
Revenue	4	2,201,129	3,193,326
Employee benefits expense		(1,813,365)	(1,729,558)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	5	(89,793)	(72,829)
Program cost		(331,860)	(787,471)
Marketing and communications		(37,844)	(20,090)
Infrastructure cost (Admin)		(289,888)	(302,069)
Interest expense - leases		(4,508)	(813)
Surplus/(deficit) from continuing operations		(366,129)	280,496
<b>Investment activities:</b>			
<b>Interest &amp; dividend income</b>		49,692	15,933
Net gain/(loss) on financial assets - FVTPL		113,590	(65,540)
<b>Gain/(loss) on investments</b>		163,282	(49,607)
<b>Surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>		(202,847)	230,889
Other comprehensive income for the year		-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>		(202,847)	230,889

## Statement of Financial Position

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	1,861,306	1,377,490
Trade and other receivables	7	70,661	27,646
Other assets	8	31,686	18,840
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		1,963,653	1,423,976
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>			
Other financial assets	9	1,127,299	1,030,350
Property, plant and equipment	10	27,983	38,450
Intangible assets	11	38,449	76,197
Right-of-use assets	12	25,392	59,249
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>		1,219,123	1,204,246
<b>Total Assets</b>		3,182,776	2,628,222
<b>Liabilities</b>			
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables	13	212,654	232,747
Lease liabilities	12	26,187	33,427
Employee benefits	15	187,442	165,041
Income in advance	14	1,197,019	421,190
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		1,623,302	852,405
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Lease liabilities	12	-	26,187
Employee benefits	15	48,486	35,795
<b>Total Non-current liabilities</b>		48,486	61,982
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		1,671,788	914,387
<b>Net Assets</b>		1,510,988	1,713,835
<b>Equity</b>			
Reserves	16	460,000	460,000
Retained earnings		1,050,988	1,253,835
		1,510,988	1,713,835
<b>Total Equity</b>		1,510,988	1,713,835



# Our Board



## Amanda Lawrie-Jones — Chair

Amanda Lawrie-Jones has lived experience of disability and is a skilled Disability Inclusion Consultant with decades of organisational capability experience. She manages her own business and has successfully created impact and meaningful change in both government and non-government sectors. In 2018, Amanda was a finalist in the National Awards for Disability Leadership in the category of 'Change Making.'

Amanda joined the AAV board in 2018. She has been Chair since 2021.

## Nic Vogelpoel - Vice Chair



Nic has over 15 years experience leading strategy design, implementation and evaluation in public health, international development, sustainability and in disability services. He is co-Director of Day Four Projects, a specialist consultancy working internationally. Nic started his career with Access Arts in Queensland and has worked in the sector in Australia and the UK.

Nik joined the AAV Board in 2022. He became Vice Chair in 2023.

## Brooke Daly - Vice Chair



Brooke is a marketing, communications and strategy specialist with 17 years of leadership experience spanning the UK, Europe, Asia and US. She holds a Master of Arts (Communications) degree, and spent a decade working in the arts and screen, including the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA), Creative Partnerships Australia, Abbotsford Convent and Film Victoria. She has also worked in the mental health sector, and recently ran the Environmental Film Festival Australia.

Brooke joined the AAV Board in 2022. She became Vice Chair in 2023.

## Laura Purbrick — Treasurer



Laura Purbrick has significant experience advising Non-Profit organisations and Family Offices in the area of finance and investment strategy. Her industry experience includes working as a Director at PwC, ANZ Private Bank as well as JANA. Laura has strong interest in the arts and is passionate about giving back to the community and considering the positive social impact of our actions, both as individuals and our collective impact as a community.

Laura joined the AAV Board in 2022.

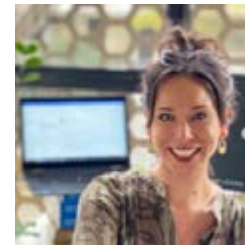


## Brad Sadler

Brad has an extensive history of senior executive management in local government, community, aged and disability services. He is the Founding Director of Dana Consulting and Director of Illuminate Yoga Studio, where he currently teaches yoga and meditation. Brad has been active in the arts as a musician, singer/chorister, performer and director in community-based theatre.

Brad joined the AAV Board in 2012.

## Erin Kanygin



Erin is a former musical theatre performer turned audience member and lover of the arts. She now works as a Legal Transformation Lawyer at Gilbert + Tobin where she specialises in legal automation, artificial intelligence, and other forms of digital disruption. Erin has a passion for access to justice and has always been strongly committed to giving back to the community having volunteered extensively for various not-for-profits in Australia, Canada and Brazil. Erin is truly honoured to be a board member for Arts Access Victoria. She was previously involved with AAV as an "Observer" of the board through the Observership Program.

Erin joined the AAV Board in 2023.

## Jodi Nicks



Jodie lives with disability and is a senior adviser for disability and accessibility with the Victorian government. She is driven to creating more inclusive communities for people with disability, particularly for those experiencing multiple, intersecting forms of systemic discrimination. Jodie worked as a performing artist for many years. In 2016 she was awarded the inaugural Funds in Court Inspire award in recognition of her professional contribution to performing arts and for creating a more inclusive society through her work. J

odie joined the AAV Board in 2022.

## Sam Martin



Sam Martin (he/him) is a Deaf Gay/Queer creative producer and director passionate about the many facets of identities, inclusivity, navigating English and Auslan, and empowering and encouraging Deaf and queer communities. He has worked and continues to work within theatre and film with a range of exciting projects. His award-winning short film "Deafying Gravity" was shown internationally and continues to tour nationally.

Sam joined the AAV Board in 2022.

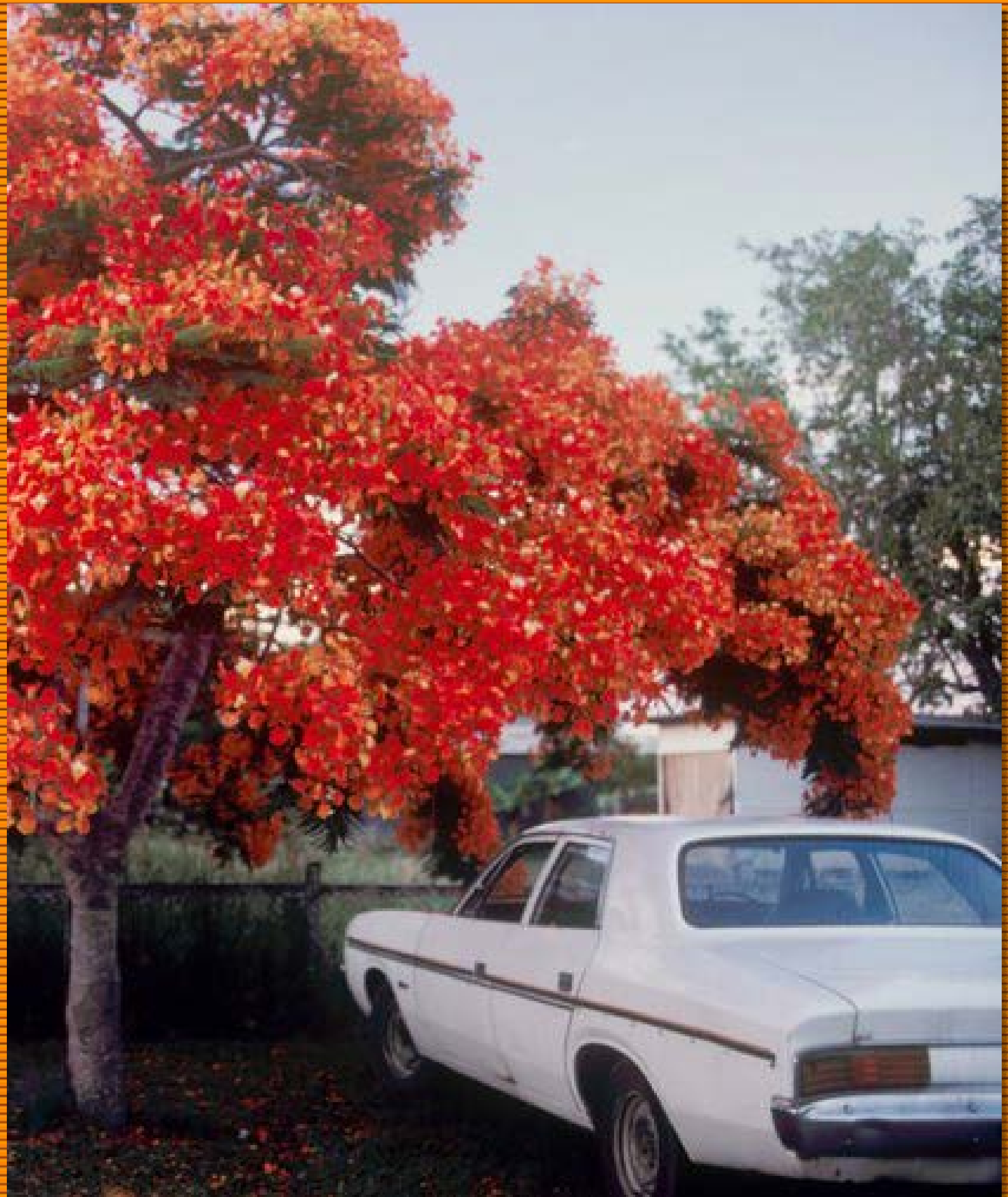


# Our Staff

We thank the amazing staff that made our artistic and outreach activities in 2023 possible.

Aaron McMurray	Ellie Purseglove	Lily Nguyen
Alanah Guiry	Emilie Wright	Lindy Chadwick
Alister Karl	Erin Dick	Louise Barbon-Elliott
Andrea Hughes	Evelyn Morris	Maddy Elrick
Angela Mirecki	Fina Po	Margaret Mayhew
Annalies Visser	Fiona Tuomy	Mathew Wooden
Anthea Kemp	Fury	Milly Cooper
Ara Dolatian	Geoff Robinson	Natalie Bartsch
Artemis Munoz	Gordon Traill	Natalie Williams
Arty Owens	Helen Graham	Nikki Zerella
Ayse Ayranci	Holly Watson	Pegs Marlow
Caoife Power	Jamie Rawls	PJ Noack
Carl DiQuinzio	Janice Florence	Quinn Clements
Carlos Parraga	Joanna Leigh	Rachel Edwards
Caroline Bowditch	John Englezos	Rhian Hinkley
CB Mako	Juliana Qian	Sabina Knox
Chris Barry	Julianne Nguyen	Sarah Fiddaman
Christopher Gooch	Julianne Ryan	Sebastian Fowler
CJ Jonathon	Juliet Rowe	Sophie McPike
Dale Gorfinkel	Kate Symons	Stephanie Sposito
Danielle Marlow	Katherine Watson	Tania Smith
Dannika Horvat	Laura Hook	Tara Kingston
Dave Van De Leur	Lefa Singleton	Theresa Harrison
David Baker	Leisa Shelton	Tim Reid
David De Roach	Liam Hancock	Timothy Woodward
David Harris	Lily Montgomery-Primmer	Victoria Fitzpatrick
David Rosetzky		Wairimu Mukii

Credit: Paul Ryan, Photography.





# Our Supporters and funders

We thank all our funders, partners and supporters for making AAV's artistic and outreach activities in 2023 possible.



Accessible Arts NSW  
Access To Arts  
ACMI  
ALWAYS LIVE  
AMAGA  
APAM  
APRA AMCOS  
Artplay  
Arts Access Aotearoa  
Arts Access Australia  
Arts Access Darwin  
Arts Centre Melbourne  
Arts House  
Arts Industry Council of Victoria  
ArtsHub  
Ashwood School  
Association of Asia Pacific Performing Arts Centres  
Ausdance Victoria  
Australian Ballet  
Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM)  
Bayside Special Development school

Berendale School  
Bowery Theatre and St Albans Community Centre  
British Council  
Brunswick Lodge SRS  
Brunswick Uniting Church  
Bundoora Homestead Art Centre  
Bunjil Place  
Cassandra Gantner Foundation  
Chippendale Lodge SRS  
Chunky Move  
Cinespace  
City of Banyule  
City of Boroondara  
City of Brimbank  
City of Casey  
City of Darebin  
City of Frankston  
City of Greater Dandenong  
City of Greater Geelong  
City of Kingston  
City of Maribyrnong  
City Of Melbourne

City of Port Phillip  
City of Whittlesea  
City of Wyndham  
City of Yarra  
Collingwood Yards  
Creative Australia  
Creative Victoria  
Curtin University  
DADAA  
Dax Centre  
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing  
Department of Health  
Department of Infrastructure Transport, Regional Development and Communications  
Diversity Arts Australia  
Emerging Writers Festival  
Engage!  
Express Media  
Feral Arts  
Flinders University  
Footscray Community Arts

Footscray House SRS  
Geelong Arts Centre  
Greenhaven SRS  
Hobsons Bay City Council  
Horsham Rural City Council  
Incite ArtsISPA  
Koorie Heritage Trust  
La Mama Theatre  
Louis Joel Arts & Community Centre  
Lucy Guerin inc  
Maroondah City Council  
Melbourne Fringe  
Melbourne Arts Precinct (MAPCO)  
Melbourne International Film Festival  
Melbourne International Comedy Festival  
Melbourne Recital Centre  
Melton City Council  
Melton Willows SRS  
Merri-bek City Council  
Midsumma

Moonee Valley Council  
Mpavillion  
Multicultural Arts Victoria  
Music Victoria  
National Gallery of Victoria  
Next Wave  
National Gallery of Victoria  
No Vacancy Gallery  
North Grampians Shire  
Northern Terrace SRS  
Orchestra Victoria  
Park Towers Management  
Public Libraries Victoria  
Queens Lodge SRS  
Queensland University of Technology  
Regional Arts Victoria  
Rising Festival  
Royal Ave SRS  
Royal Botanic Gardens  
Schinzy Inc  
School House Studios  
Screen Australia  
Services Australia

SIGNAL  
Southwest TAFE  
St Kilda Film Festival  
State Library of Victoria  
Sticky Institute  
Sydenham Grace SRS  
The Wheeler Centre  
Theatre Network Australia  
Undercover Arts Festival  
University of Melbourne  
University of Queensland  
VAPAC  
Vic Health  
Victoria University  
Victorian Government  
Victorian Music Development Offices  
Vision Australia  
Visit Victoria  
Wikimedia  
Wild at Heart  
Willows SRS  
Yarra Sculpture Gallery