

# BENALLA ART GALLERY



Annual Report  
*2025*

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Benalla Art Gallery acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which it resides, and extended community lands which it seeks to serve. We respect the Elders past, present and future, and honour the resilience, wisdom, dignity, scientific knowledge, stories, and art of the world's longest surviving culture.



Benalla Art Gallery, c. 1980s

## ABOUT BENALLA ART GALLERY

The concept for the Benalla Art Gallery dates from 1965 and was driven by a small group of local citizens. The Gallery was initially based in the RSL Hall in Nunn Street in 1968, and interest in a purpose-built art gallery was generated.

In 1972, Laurence H. Ledger made an offer of his collection to the City of Benalla, and a further \$75,000 towards the cost of a new gallery building. This gallery proposal was put to a compulsory community ballot in 1973, and won resounding support. The Gallery and its fledgling Collection quickly established a firm footing as a key focal point for community civic pride.

Noted architects Philip Sargeant and Colin Munro were appointed to design the purpose-built Benalla Art Gallery, perched between the banks of Lake Benalla and the Benalla Botanical Gardens. The new Gallery opened in its picturesque setting in 1975, and has since provided the foundation of Benalla's artistic and creative culture.



Benalla Art Gallery, 2021  
Photo: Serana Hunt-Hughes

## VISION

Benalla Art Gallery is the physical, experiential, and conceptual meeting point in North East Victoria; a place that reflects the diversity of our stories and the contribution of all Australians as creators of culture.

## MISSION

Benalla Art Gallery presents a progressive, inclusive, and responsive art program for its community and visitors in order to deliver transformational social, cultural, and economic benefit.

## THE YEAR AT A GLANCE

# 63,710

Exhibition Visitors

# 3,887

Education, Engagement  
and Event Participants

# 29

Exhibitions and  
Public Realm Artworks

# 7

Collection Exhibitions

# 135

Artists Exhibited

# 162

Collection Works Exhibited

# 127

Public Programs

# 27

Education Programs

# 23

Other Events

# 4.8

Gallery Staff (FTE)

# 211

Gallery Members

# 13

Gallery Volunteers

# 966

Volunteer Hours Donated

# 31

Benalla Art Gallery  
Collection Works Acquired

# \$34 M

Benalla Art Gallery  
Collection Value



Cr Bernie Hearn  
Mayor of Benalla Rural City

## MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Arts and culture continue to play a vital role in shaping the identity, liveability, and economic strength of Benalla Rural City, and the achievements of Benalla Art Gallery throughout 2025 again demonstrate the extraordinary value of investing in creativity within regional communities.

During a significant year of transition and renewal, the Gallery welcomed more than 63,000 exhibition visitors and delivered a dynamic program of exhibitions, education initiatives, public programs, and community partnerships that engaged audiences of all ages. From major exhibitions such as *Mary Tonkin: Rambles* and *Looking back: celebrating 50 years through the Benalla Art Gallery Collection*, to workshops, concerts, school programs, and community art therapy sessions, the Gallery continued to provide meaningful opportunities for connection, learning, and cultural participation.

Importantly, the Gallery's influence extends far beyond its walls. Through partnerships with schools, community organisations, artists, festivals, and local businesses, Benalla Art Gallery contributes significantly to tourism, economic activity, social wellbeing, and community pride across our region.

As our Gallery embarks on the exciting next phase of redevelopment and transitions, Council remains proud to support the organisation's future, as it continues to enrich the cultural life of Benalla, while strengthening its reputation as one of regional Victoria's leading creative destinations.

Our Pop-Up Art Gallery space will continue with exhibitions and programs at Bridge Street, Benalla, as we await the opening of the redeveloped Gallery.

Cr Bernie Hearn  
Mayor, Benalla Rural City



Barbara Alexander, AO  
Benalla Art Gallery Advisory  
Committee Chair

## CHAIR'S REPORT

2025 has been a year of challenges and opportunities for the Benalla Art Gallery, as we moved into a Pop-Up space in Bridge Street, while the preparations for the Gallery's Stage 1 Redevelopment occurred.

Throughout this important period of transition, the Gallery continued to demonstrate remarkable ambition, adaptability, and community connection. Across 29 exhibitions and public realm activations, 135 artists were presented through a program that balanced nationally significant contemporary practice, collection-based exhibitions, emerging regional talent, and deeply engaged community initiatives. The launch of the Pop-Up Benalla Art Gallery through *Reconfigured* marked a particularly exciting milestone, ensuring the organisation remained active, visible, and accessible as redevelopment preparations progressed.

The Advisory Committee has been greatly encouraged by the continued enthusiasm shown by visitors, Members, artists, donors, volunteers, and the broader community throughout this transformative period. There is a shared excitement about what the redevelopment will mean for the future of the Gallery, and for Benalla as a cultural destination within regional Australia.

On behalf of the Advisory Committee, I extend sincere thanks to the Gallery staff, Foundation Trustees, Council, supporters, and volunteers whose dedication and professionalism have guided the organisation through this pivotal year. Together, we look forward with confidence to the opportunities and renewed cultural possibilities that lie ahead for Benalla Art Gallery.

Barbara Alexander, AO  
Chair, Benalla Art Gallery Advisory Committee



Eric Nash  
Director, Benalla Art Gallery

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The 2025 calendar year represented a significant period of transition, reflection, and renewal for Benalla Art Gallery. Across a dynamic program of exhibitions, public programs, education initiatives, and community partnerships, the Gallery continued to strengthen its role as a leading regional cultural institution while preparing for the next chapter in its history through redevelopment and the launch of the Pop-Up Benalla Art Gallery.

Throughout the year, the Gallery welcomed 63,710 exhibition visitors and delivered 29 exhibitions and public realm activations featuring the work of 135 artists across the Gallery, Gallery Shop, public realm sites, and temporary venues. The exhibition program balanced major survey exhibitions, contemporary practice, collection-led presentations, and community-driven initiatives, while continuing to foster strong partnerships with artists, organisations, and festivals across Victoria and beyond.

Highlights included *Mary Tonkin: Rambles*; *Simeon Ayres: A Cartography of the Heart country... a courtship of belonging*; *Allan Mitelman: The marks we make*; and *Looking back: celebrating 50 years through the Benalla Art Gallery Collection*, marking the fiftieth anniversary of the Gallery's purpose-built home.

The Gallery's commitment to supporting artists at all stages of their careers remained central in 2025. *SHOWCASE* once again celebrated emerging regional talent, while Gallery Shop exhibitions and ongoing partnerships with Arts Project Australia provided important professional and commercial opportunities for local and nationally recognised practitioners.

Participation in the *Benalla Street Art Festival* further reinforced the Gallery's connection to contemporary practice and public engagement through exhibitions and performances by Baby Guerrilla and Jason Parker.

Engagement programs continued to expand in scale and diversity, with 127 public programs delivered to almost 2,900 participants. These included artist talks, workshops, concerts, performances, school holiday activities, and community-focused initiatives designed to foster creativity, social connection, and lifelong learning. The continuation and expansion of the Gallery's *Art Therapy* program represented a particularly meaningful development, providing free, inclusive opportunities for creative expression, wellbeing, and community connection through weekly facilitated sessions.

Education remained a cornerstone of the Gallery's activities in 2025, with 27 programs delivered to more than 530 participants in partnership with 10 schools and education providers across North East Victoria. Programs such as Little Artists reinforced the Gallery's important role as an accessible and welcoming learning environment within the region.

The development and care of the Benalla Art Gallery Collection also remained a key focus throughout the year. Thirty-one works were acquired in 2025, including by leading Australian artists such as Bill Henson and Mary Tonkin, further strengthening the depth and diversity of the Collection through the generosity of artists and donors. Collection displays including *Nocturne* and *Reconfigured* ensured audiences continued to engage with significant holdings while celebrating both longstanding favourites and recent acquisitions.

This year's achievements are a testament to the dedication, creativity, and professionalism of the Gallery team and volunteers during a period of significant change. I extend my sincere thanks to my staff and volunteers, Advisory Committee members, Foundation Trustees, partners, supporters, artists, and donors for their continued generosity and guidance. Finally, I thank our Members, visitors, and community for their ongoing enthusiasm and support as Benalla Art Gallery embarks on an exciting new chapter.

Eric Nash  
Director, Benalla Art Gallery

## EXHIBITIONS

The 2025 calendar year saw Benalla Art Gallery deliver a dynamic program of 29 exhibitions and activations across the Ledger, Bennett and Simpson galleries, the Gallery Shop, public realm sites, and the newly established Pop-Up Benalla Art Gallery. Presenting the work of 135 artists and 368 artworks—including 162 works from the Collection—the year was marked by both continuity and transformation as the Gallery prepared for its next chapter.

The year opened with the continuation of major survey exhibitions, including *Juan Ford: A Survey* and *Ron Robertson-Swann: Illusion and Gravity*, reinforcing the Gallery's commitment to presenting significant Australian practices. Collection-led exhibitions remained central, with *Nocturne* and *Some of our favourites* offering audiences renewed access to much-loved works, while *Looking back* celebrated 50 years of the Gallery's purpose-built home and its enduring cultural legacy.

A strong engagement with landscape, place, and environment was evident in exhibitions such as *Simeon Ayres: A Cartography of the Heart country*; *Mary Tonkin: Rambles*; and *Anna Mackrell: A Well Structured Nature*, each presenting deeply personal and immersive responses to the natural world. Historical and cultural narratives were explored through *Ntaria and beyond* and *Allan Mitelman: The marks we make*, highlighting both First Nations art and the legacy of abstraction in Australia.

The Gallery's connection to contemporary practice and community was further strengthened through the *Benalla Street Art Festival* presentations, including exhibitions by Baby Guerrilla and Jason Parker, while *SHOWCASE*, celebrated emerging regional talent. The year concluded with *Reconfigured*, launching the Pop-Up Benalla Art Gallery and signalling a period of renewal, adaptability, and continued audience engagement as the organisation transitions toward redevelopment and future growth.

# 14

Major Exhibitions

# 135

Artists Exhibited

# 13

Gallery Shop Exhibitions

# 368

Artworks Exhibited\*

# 2

Public Realm Activations

# 162

Collection Works Exhibited

\*Artworks counted excludes Gallery Shop Exhibitions

## Exhibition Program

### ***Juan Ford: A Survey***

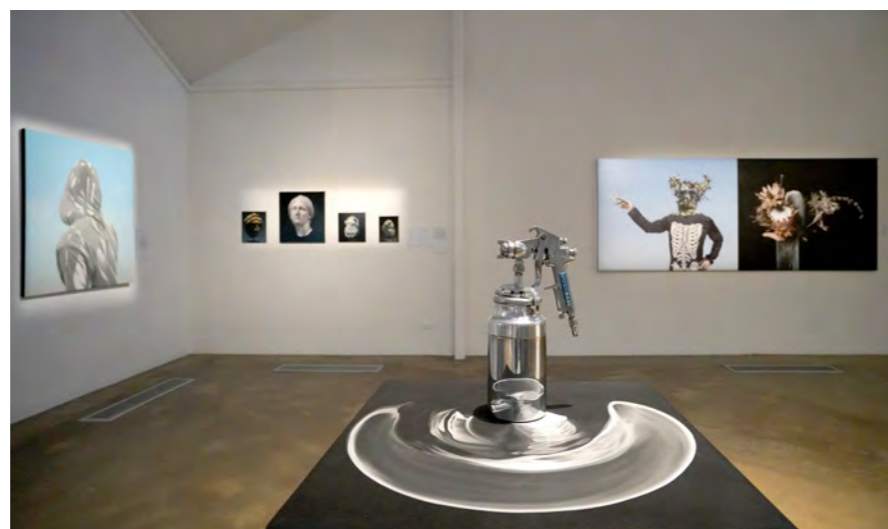
Curated by Dr Vincent Alessi  
Continuing to 27 January 2025  
Bennett Gallery  
2025 Attendance: 2,823

Juan Ford reflected that “Art involved observation, contemplation, reaction, flow, resistance, time, [and] feeling; all processed by the body and filtered through a medium,” with the process itself forming a slow kind of thought.

This survey exhibition presented twenty years of his practice, tracing the development of his technical virtuosity, visual language, and conceptual concerns.

Organised thematically, it showed how Ford consistently explored key questions throughout his career, demonstrating deep engagement with ideas, traditions, and contemporary issues. The exhibition celebrated him not only for his skill but for his ongoing commitment to explore pressing, enduring questions.

Publication Sponsor – Gordon Darling Foundation



*Juan Ford: A Survey*  
Install image, 2024

### ***Ron Robertson-Swann: Illusion and Gravity***

Continuing to 17 February 2025  
Simpson Gallery  
2025 Attendance: 2,932

*Illusion and Gravity* drew directly from Ron Robertson-Swann’s collection, offering insight into the early painting and sculptural work of one of Australia’s most significant abstractionists. The featured paintings, from the same period as the seminal *The Field* exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria, reflected his interest in the physical dynamics and sculptural qualities of painting.

As Charles and Kate Nodrum noted, his sculpture employed straight, curved, fabricated, and found steel, welded and painted in monochrome, while his paintings evolved from straight lines and thin polychrome surfaces in the 1960s to curvilinear forms and richer surfaces in the 1970s.

Supported by Charles Nodrum Gallery



*Ron Robertson-Swann: Illusion and Gravity*  
Install image, 2024



*Nocturne: Benalla Art Gallery Collection*  
Install image, 2024

### ***Nocturne: Benalla Art Gallery Collection***

Continuing to 28 September 2025

Ledger Gallery

2025 Attendance: 22,860

Drawn from the Benalla Art Gallery Collection, *Nocturne* presented 46 works by 24 of Australia's leading artists. Spanning all media, the exhibition explores multiple interpretations of the theme 'nocturne', specifically focussing on the scenes, sounds, and movements 'of the night'.

### ***Some of our favourites: Benalla Art Gallery Collection***

1 February to 3 March 2025

Bennett Gallery

2025 Attendance: 1,541

*Some of our favourites* celebrated a selection of much-loved works from the Benalla Art Gallery Collection, bringing into focus the enduring appeal of artworks that had resonated with audiences over many decades. Developed in response to frequent enquiries about the location of key Collection works when not on display, the exhibition offered visitors a rare opportunity to revisit paintings that had become deeply embedded in local cultural memory.

Rather than interrogating a single curatorial theme, *Some of our favourites* acknowledged the personal and subjective nature of audience attachment to art. Childhood associations, nostalgia, atmosphere and mood all played a role in shaping these responses.

The exhibition reaffirmed the importance of the Collection not only as a record of artistic achievement, but as a shared and cherished resource held in trust for the community.



*Some of our favourites:*  
*Benalla Art Gallery Collection*  
Install image, 2025

### ***Simeon Ayres: A Cartography of the Heart country... a courtship of belonging***

21 February to 27 April 2025

Simpson Gallery

2025 Attendance: 5,111

In 2025, Simeon Ayres presented a body of work that explored landscape through aerial, map-like perspectives alongside traditional pictorial forms. His practice approached the landscape as a living, intelligent presence, attentive to its hidden voices, liminal spaces and underlying patterns. Working through walking, listening and close observation, Ayres treated mapmaking as a respectful engagement with country, allowing its 'creatureliness' to emerge.

Created without drones or satellite imagery, the works stripped away human interventions to speculate on pre-settlement landscapes and deep time. Themes of relationality, regeneration and change were central, tracing rivers, fire cycles and unseen systems beneath the ground. Living in the Strathbogie Ranges, the self-taught artist brought a deeply personal and intuitive approach to representing place.



*Simeon Ayres: A Cartography of the Heart country... a courtship of belonging*  
Install image, 2025



*SHOWCASE*  
Install image, 2025

***SHOWCASE: 2024 Art and Design student exhibition***

7 March to 23 March 2025

Bennett Gallery

2025 Attendance: 1,551

The artistic talents of Benalla and North East Victorian senior Art and Design students were celebrated as part of the annual *SHOWCASE* exhibition.

The exhibition provided 2024 students from across the region the opportunity for artistic recognition in a public art space. Representative of a range of media and topics, this exhibition highlights the creativity and diverse talents of young and emerging artists within our community.



*Baby Guerrilla: Dancing with Gravity*  
Install image, 2025

***Baby Guerrilla: Dancing with Gravity***

Presented as part of the 2025 *Benalla Street Art Festival*  
10 April to 4 May 2025

Bennett Gallery

2025 Attendance: 4,784

Baby Guerrilla's work is layered and open-ended, inviting diverse interpretations shaped by the viewer's own insights and emotions. The exhibition *Dancing with Gravity* spanned early works through to recent paintings. Drawing on themes of human connection and our relationship with the Earth, her early street works depicted tiny, floating women—partly autobiographical figures embodying vulnerability, longing, and transformation. Often suspended mid-air or held by others, these figures existed in states of transition, reflecting both the fragility and resilience of the human experience.

***Jason Parker: Rise, Ruin, Renew, Repeat***

Presented as part of the 2025 *Benalla Street Art Festival*

10 April to 4 May 2025

Bennett Gallery

2025 Attendance: 4,784

*Rise, Ruin, Renew, Repeat* explored the eternal cycle of creation and destruction through contrasting expressions of struggle and transcendence. One half featured oil paintings on concrete—meticulously crafted then shattered by hammer blows—embodying decay and despair. The other celebrated life and renewal through large, dance-inspired works that evoked movement and divine connection. Collaborating with dancers, musicians, and makers, Jason Parker created an immersive experience that replaced literal storytelling with emotional intensity. As visitors moved through realms of chaos and order, they were invited to reflect on impermanence and renewal—the resilience that allows new beginnings to emerge from ruin.

*Jason Parker: Rise, Ruin, Renew, Repeat*  
Install image, 2025





Anna Mackrell: *A Well Structured Nature*  
Install image, 2025

**Anna Mackrell: *A Well Structured Nature***

2 May to 9 June 2025  
Simpson Gallery  
2025 Attendance: 2,322

*A Well Structured Nature* presented a retrospective of Anna's expressive landscape and flower paintings inspired by the Strathbogie Ranges in north-east Victoria. Grounded in themes of place, belonging, light, and tone, her works captured the stillness, isolation, and quiet beauty of rural life. From plein air studies atop Mt Wombat to intimate still lifes painted from fleeting blooms, Anna translated her deep connection to the land into layered explorations of colour and mood. Her paintings—of trees, fields, roads, and skies—reflected both personal familiarity and a broader contemplation of nature's structure, resilience, and poetry within the Australian landscape she called home.

**Mary Tonkin: *Rambles***

16 May to 20 July 2025  
Bennett Gallery  
2025 Attendance: 4,739

*Rambles* presented large, immersive paintings alongside the pencil, charcoal, and ceramic studies that informed them. Created en plein air in the damp, fern-rich bush of Corhanwarrabul / Mt Dandenong, the works captured shifting light, seasons, and sensations over time. Rooted in the landscape where she grew up, Mary Tonkin's practice embodied deep attentiveness and physical engagement with her surroundings. Her paintings conveyed the tactile immediacy of being within nature—its forms, sounds, and atmospheres—inviting viewers into an ever-present moment that blurred boundaries between observation, memory, and sensation.



*Ntaria and beyond, the Hermannsburg School of Art*  
Install image, 2025

***Ntaria and beyond, the Hermannsburg School of Art***

12 June to 13 July 2025  
Simpson Gallery  
2025 Attendance: 1,879

This exhibition introduced six new Ntaria watercolours that recently entered the Benalla Art Gallery Collection; a generous gift by Peter and Wendy Fishley. Although Melbourne-based now, Peter and Wendy were previously farmers at Terip Terip in the nearby Strathbogie Ranges. Complementing these acquisitions were existing Ntaria works from the Collection and loans from Shepparton Art Museum.

*Mary Tonkin: Rambles*  
Install image, 2025





Allan MITELMAN  
*Untitled [Reference # 25]* 2017  
 watercolour on paper  
 15.25 x 18.5 cm  
 2023.080  
 Donated through the Australian  
 Government's Cultural Gifts Program by  
 Celeste Douglas, 2023  
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection  
 © Courtesy of the artist  
 Photo: Christian Capurro

***Allan Mitelman: The marks we make***

17 July to 28 September 2025

Simpson Gallery

2025 Attendance: 3,032

The Gallery presented an exhibition celebrating the work of Allan Mitelman, one of Australia's foremost abstract artists and a significant figure in the history of abstraction. Spanning more than forty years of practice, the exhibition showcased Mitelman's exceptional skill as a painter, draughtsman and printmaker, and his mastery of diverse media including watercolour, ink, pencil, charcoal, acrylic and oil paint. His works invited close contemplation, rewarding sustained looking through their subtle surfaces, material sensitivity and visual resonance. The exhibition was drawn from a generous gift of forty works donated in 2023 by the artist's daughter, Celeste Douglas. Mitelman's distinguished career included major national and international exhibitions, and his works are held in important public collections worldwide.

***Looking back: celebrating 50 years through the Benalla Art Gallery Collection***

25 July to 28 September 2025

Bennett Gallery

2025 Attendance: 3,875

Benalla Art Gallery presented an anniversary exhibition marking fifty years of its iconic purpose-built home on the edge of Lake Benalla in 2025. Pairing key moments from the Gallery's history with artworks from corresponding eras, the exhibition showcased the breadth and diversity of the Collection while honouring the community support and vision that shaped its foundation. The exhibition reflected on the Gallery's cultural legacy and looked forward to its future redevelopment, celebrating its enduring role in Benalla's artistic and creative life.

Mr Laurence Ledger MBE making a speech on the front deck at the opening of the new Art Gallery building 18th April 1975 – view from crowd seated below





Reconfigured  
Install images, 2025

**Reconfigured**

14 November 2025 to 26 January 2026

Pop-Up Benalla Art Gallery

2025 Attendance: 2,500

*Reconfigured* marked a significant milestone as the first exhibition presented to launch the Pop-Up Benalla Art Gallery, following the closure of the Modernist gallery building for redevelopment.

Presented at the Gallery's temporary home at 75 Bridge Street East, the exhibition reflected the organisation's own process of reconfiguration, bringing together works that explored the reuse and adaptation of materials, compositions and ideas.

A central feature was an interactive work by Mark Galea, created for fellow artist Robert Jacks. Comprising 36 panels arranged in a six-by-six grid, the painting invited visitors to actively reinterpret the work by rearranging its components. Community-submitted configurations were reviewed by the curator and selected layouts were periodically installed, embedding audience authorship directly into the exhibition.

The exhibition also showcased a wide selection of works from the Benalla Art Gallery Collection, including recent acquisitions exhibited for the first time alongside well-known favourites, spanning drawing, painting, photography and sculpture.

These were complemented by textiles created by the Benalla U3A Patchwork and Craft group, whose contribution highlighted the role of community making, collaboration and generosity within the Gallery's broader cultural ecosystem.

Nikki James prepares a Smoking Ceremony  
to launch the Pop-Up Benalla Art Gallery,  
14 November 2025





Miles Howard-Wilks *Magpie and Toadstools and a Lady Bug* 2020  
glaze, terracotta, 10.5 × 10 × 14 cm  
MHC20-0008  
© Copyright the artist  
Represented by Arts Project Australia,  
Melbourne

### Gallery Shop Exhibitions

1 January to 31 December 2025

Throughout the year, Benalla Art Gallery continued its program of Gallery Shop Exhibitions, displayed in two cabinets prominently positioned at reception, and programmed from applications received by artists of the region. Throughout the year, nine exhibitions were presented by the following artists:

- Bruce Hargrave
- Bev Aisbett
- Felicity Pasztaleniec
- Sue Plumb
- Lisa Brand
- Helen and Leon Pappas
- Kerryn Amery
- Jan Donaldson
- James Stojko

This program is designed to better promote and support local and regional creative practices. Considerable proceeds were generated through the sale of artworks, a direct response to the Australia Council for the Arts' *The Arts in Regional Australia: A Research Summary* (2017) which concluded that "artists living in the regions earn almost a third less than their city counterparts for creative work." Many Gallery Shop exhibitors have become regular stockists at Benalla Art Gallery and continue to derive income.

Benalla Art Gallery also sustained a partnership with Arts Project Australia, presenting four solo exhibitions:

- Fulli Andrinopoulos
- Miles Howard-Wilks
- George Aristovoulou
- Ruth Howard



Top Left: James Stojko *Eucalyptus Swanpool* 2021, oil on board, 41.5 × 50.5 cm

Top Right: Ruth Howard *Untitled* 2022  
glaze, earthenware, 11 × 10 × 7 cm  
RHC22-0011 © Copyright the artist  
Represented by Arts Project Australia,  
Melbourne

Bottom Left: Bev Aisbett *Wildlife* 2023,  
print, ed. 4/100

Bottom Right: Sue Plumb *Fecund*  
Pearl, cubic zirconia, sterling silver (Mitsuro  
Hikimi)





Desmonde DOWNING  
*Ned Kelly as Bushranger* 1956  
 watercolour, pencil, fabric on paper  
 on cardboard  
 29.0 x 27.0 cm [sheet];  
 51.6 x 43.8 cm [frame]  
 Gift of the Visual Arts Board  
 Contemporary Art Collection,  
 Australia Council, 1984  
 1984.12  
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Public Realm Artworks**  
 Throughout 2025

Benalla Art Gallery’s program expanded into other public facilities in 2025, through the staging of two exhibitions at the Benalla Visitor Information Centre:

**Desmonde Downing: *Threads of Kelly***  
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection  
 7 November 2025 to 22 March 2026  
 Benalla Visitor Information Centre  
 2025 Attendance: 2,552

Showcasing watercolour illustrations by Desmonde Downing from the Gallery’s Collection, *Threads of Kelly* celebrated the distinguished theatre artist renowned for her innovative set and costume designs for major Australian productions of the 1950s and 1960s. The exhibition featured costume designs for *Ned Kelly* (1956) and demonstrated her commitment to theatrical realism and experimental stagecraft. Displayed in dialogue with the Benalla Historical Society’s Kelly collection, the exhibition offered audiences a rich encounter with Australia’s cultural and theatrical history.

**Andrew Bond: *A Few Good People I Know***  
 2 December 2025 to 29 January 2026  
 Benalla Visitor Information Centre  
 2025 Attendance: 1,209

A Few Good People marked Ruffy-based artist Andrew Bond’s shift to portraiture, drawing on his background in graphic design and community-focused practice. Featuring study drawings and finished paintings, the series honoured everyday individuals whose generosity and contributions often go unrecognised. Through an accessible and thoughtful approach, Bond explored likeness, process and personality, inviting viewers to reflect on the people who enrich their own lives and communities.



Top:  
 Andrew Bond artist talk

Right:  
 Andrew Bond:  
*A Few Good People I Know*  
 Install image, 2025



## ENGAGEMENT

Benalla Art Gallery continued to strengthen its role as a vital cultural and community hub in 2025 through a broad and evolving program of engagement activities. Across 127 programs involving almost 2,900 participants, the Gallery delivered meaningful opportunities for audiences of all ages to connect with art, artists, ideas, and each other through accessible and creative experiences.

Regular programs throughout the year included guided tours, *First Mondays* discussion programs, School Holiday Workshops, *Art on Saturdays* artist-led workshops, exhibition celebrations, concerts, and live performances.

These initiatives deepened audience engagement with the exhibition program while supporting creative participation, lifelong learning, and social connection across the region.

Partnerships remained central to the Gallery's engagement approach, while the Gallery also supported local creative practitioners through employment, presentation, and professional development opportunities.

As the Gallery prepared for redevelopment and transitioned into the Pop-Up Benalla Art Gallery, engagement programs continued to foster connection, creativity, and cultural participation, ensuring the Gallery remained deeply embedded within the everyday life of the community while building momentum toward an ambitious future.

# 127

Engagement Programs

# 6

Concerts and Performances

# 2,899

Program Participants

# 9

Exhibition Celebrations

# 14

Artist and Industry Talks

# 38

Workshops



Top to Bottom:  
 Vince Jones Quintet performing at Benalla Art Gallery, 2025  
 Limelight Touring Company's performance of *The Shoe Horn Sonata* at Benalla Art Gallery, 2025

Right:  
 Acacia Quartet performing at the Benalla Town Hall, 2025

## Engagement Program

### Concerts and Performances

11 April, 25 April, 4 May, 18 May, and 30 November 2025  
 2025 Participation: 267

Benalla Art Gallery continued to present a dynamic live performance program in 2025, with five events spanning theatre, music, and dance engaging diverse audiences:

- Jason Parker: *Rise, Ruin, Renew, Repeat* dance and musical response performance (2 sessions)
- Limelight Touring Company: *The Shoe Horn Sonata* theatre performance
- Vince Jones Quintet in concert
- Affinity Quartet: *'Take Four' Chamber Music for Everyone*
- Acacia Quartet in concert

Live performance offerings remain an integral part of the Benalla Art Gallery program, building on strong local affection developed across the past forty years. The 2025 program comprised events presented by some of the country's leading classical and jazz performers, contemporary offerings in extension to major exhibitions, and a special theatre performance to mark ANZAC Day.



Jason Parker: *Rise, Ruin, Renew, Repeat* dance and musical response performance presented for the 2025 Benalla Street Art Festival.  
 Photo: James Bugg



Top: Fleur Rendell and Mary Tonkin in conversation for *First Mondays*

Bottom: Simeon Ayres *First Mondays* artist talk

### ***First Mondays***

Monthly throughout 2025  
2025 Participation: 289

Originating from a program presented for the University of the Third Age (U3A), *First Mondays* is an eclectic, ever-changing, curated program of talks and tours.

The talks include discussions on works from the Collection, deeper explorations into current exhibitions by artists, and topical discussions by contemporary artists and senior figures in the sector.

Talks presented in 2025 were:

- Ron Robertson-Swann  
Artist  
Artist talk coinciding with solo exhibition, *Illusion and Gravity*
- Danny Lacy  
Artistic Director at Shepparton Art Museum (SAM)  
Industry talk exploring Danny's career and forthcoming programming at SAM
- Simeon Ayres  
Artist  
Artist talk coinciding with the solo exhibition, *A Cartography of the Heart country... a courtship of belonging*
- Anna Mackrell  
Artist  
Artist talk coinciding with the solo exhibition, *A Well Structured Nature*
- Mary Tonkin  
Artist  
Artist talk in conversation with Benalla Art Gallery's Fleur Rendell, coinciding with solo exhibition, *Rambles*
- Kate Jenvey  
Artist  
Talk exploring the practice of a significant local artist



Mark Galea *First Mondays* artist talk

- Anderson Hunt  
Artist  
Talk exploring the practice of a significant local artist with specific focus on public art projects
- Jan Donaldson  
Artist  
Artist talk coinciding with the solo Gallery Shop exhibition Arts Project Australia partnered solo exhibition, *Objects of Being*
- Kristen Retallick  
Artist and Producer  
Talk exploring the practice of a significant local artist and producer
- Mark Galea  
Artist  
Artist talk coinciding with work featured in the Collection and group exhibition, *Reconfigured*



Right: Ron Robertson-Swann artist talk for *First Mondays*

### **School Holiday Workshops**

Summer, Autumn, Winter, and Spring 2025  
2025 Participation: 166

Benalla Art Gallery staged 14 free and low-cost workshop activities during school holidays in 2025. Workshops were designed and facilitated by Gallery staff and professional artists, both local and visiting.

Children and their guardians were invited to try their hand at a range of art mediums and genres, from collage and sculpture to watercolour and drawing; portraiture and *plein air* painting to creating paste-ups with leading Australian street artist Baby Guerrilla.

A number of highlight programs were delivered in partnership, such as the annual *NGV Kids on Tour* programs, and workshops presented in partnership with local arts and cultural organisations such as Benalla Migrants Association.



Dinosaur wall paste-ups created by young participants during a school holiday workshop with Baby Guerrilla

### **Art on Saturdays**

Summer, Autumn, Winter, and Spring 2025  
2025 Participation: 114

Benalla Art Gallery offered a variety of art workshops for adults and youth during 2025, inviting participants to immerse themselves in creative activities guided by professional artists.

In total, 14 sessions were presented in 2025:

- *Colour Linocuts* with Fleur Rendell
- *Botanical Gardens, drawing and painting* with Janet Leith
- *Creating with Nature* with Felicity Pasztaleniec
- *Mapping the otherworld* with Simeon Ayres
- *Mother's Day Message* jewellery making with Sue Plumb
- *Flowers in oils* with Anna Mackrell
- *Mosaics* with Kate van Nooten (2 sessions)
- *Memory Postcards* – Paper sculpture, photography and VR workshop with Isobel Knowles and Van Sowerwine
- *Australian Birds in colour pencil* with Kate Jenvey
- *Paper Folding* with Elaine Murphy
- *Watercolours* with Jana Brook
- *Wreath Making with Native Flowers* with Felicity Pasztaleniec (2 sessions)

In addition to providing a social outlet and capacity building for community members of all artistic skill levels, the *Art on Saturdays* program continues to provide a valuable employment opportunity for artists of the region.



Left: Participant arranging composition in the *Colour Linocuts* with Fleur Rendell workshop

Right: Participant creating work in the *Watercolours* with Jana Brook workshop

**Art Therapy with Bree Marchbank**

July to December 2025  
2025 Participation: 167

Following a successful four-week pilot in 2024, Benalla Art Gallery delivered a weekly, term-based program of Art Therapy sessions from July 2025.

Supported by the Benalla Art Gallery Foundation and Scobie and Claire Mackinnon Trust, the program was designed and facilitated by local artist Bree Marchbank, who has extensive training and experience in community healing and art therapies.

Recognising art therapy as a powerful tool to create, heal and thrive, these sessions were offered free to the Benalla community. Participants were introduced to sensorimotor practices which encouraged personal and creative expression through painting, nature, clay, movement, music, and meditation.

The program proved impactful, with testimonials from participants including:

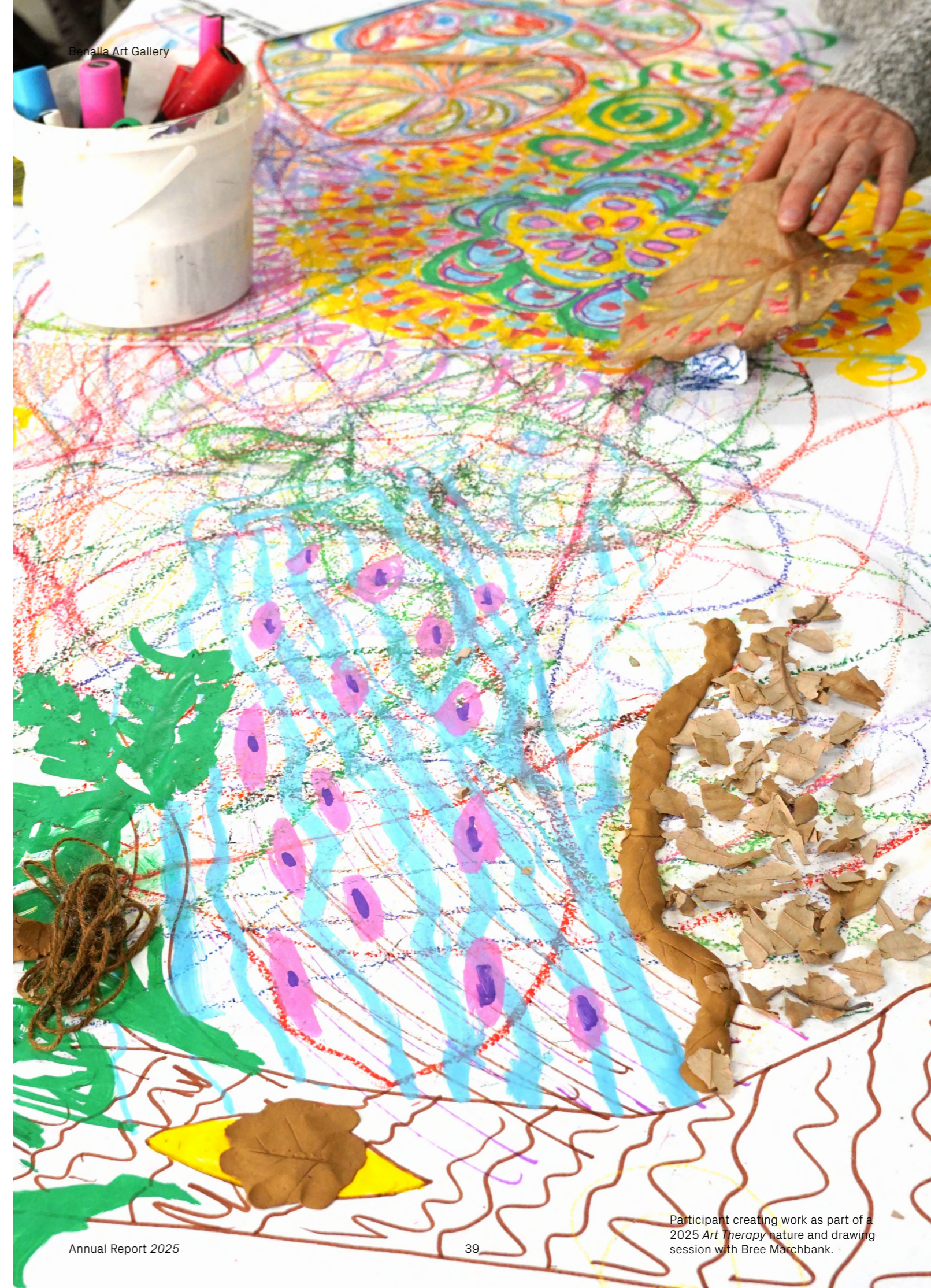
*“A fantastic experience and a safe space to explore emotions and creative expression.”*

*“The best thing about the workshops was the connection to community and myself, healing, exploring my creativity.”*

*“I loved it, pleased that the gallery is opening to community and exploring wider engagement.”*

*“A sense of coming together and belonging to something.”*

Continuing into 2026, the program will continue to be offered to the general community, with dedicated sessions also planned for community groups such as Waminda Community House and Cooida Aged Care.



## EDUCATION

Benalla Art Gallery continued to play an important role as a regional learning resource in 2025, delivering accessible and engaging arts education opportunities for students, educators, families, and early learners across North East Victoria. Through a diverse suite of curriculum-aligned and creative learning programs, the Gallery fostered curiosity, confidence, critical thinking, and creative exploration for participants of all ages and abilities.

In 2025, the Gallery delivered 27 education programs for more than 530 participants and partnered with 10 schools and education providers throughout the region. Programs supported learning from early childhood through to secondary education, offering meaningful opportunities for participants to engage with artworks, exhibitions, and creative processes in ways that extended learning beyond the classroom.

Regular education initiatives included guided school tours, the monthly *Little Artists* early years program, and PEEP workshops presented in partnership with the Tomorrow Today Foundation. These programs encouraged children and families to explore creativity through storytelling, movement, drawing, painting, sculpture, and sensory play, while also supporting the development of visual literacy, motor skills, self-expression, and social connection.

Research from the Victorian Department of Education continues to affirm the importance of arts education in improving student engagement, wellbeing, resilience, and creative and critical thinking. Through inclusive and high quality learning experiences, Benalla Art Gallery contributes to these outcomes while reinforcing the essential role of arts and culture in lifelong learning and regional community life.

# 27

Education Programs

# 534

Program Participants

# 10

School and  
Education Provider  
Partners

## Education Program

### *PEEP workshops*

23 to 25 July 2025

2025 Participation: 111

Benalla Art Gallery partnered with the Tomorrow Today Foundation to present workshops as part of the Foundation's Parents Early Education Partnership (PEEP) Program in 2025. The workshops were held across multiple daily sessions from 23 to 25 July.

The workshops offered children and families the opportunity to express their creativity and develop self-expression, visual processing and motor skills.

PEEP is a regular program staged by Tomorrow Today, helping parents to develop their parenting skills and increasing their understanding of their children's development. PEEP groups are for parents, carers and their children, from birth to kindergarten.

Tomorrow Today is a local Foundation working to enable the people of Benalla to create a stronger, more resilient and prosperous rural community. The Foundation's major project is the Education Benalla Program.



PEEP participant showing their Ned Kelly mask artwork, coinciding with the showing of the Sidney Nolan and Portalegre *Glenrowan tapestry* within the exhibition *Nocturne*, during the July PEEP sessions at Benalla Art Gallery

### *School Tours*

Throughout 2025

2025 Participation: 207

Benalla Art Gallery facilitated tours for a range of kindergarten, primary and secondary classes in 2025. Groups visited from across the broader North East Victorian region, evidencing the value of the Gallery's offering across the expanded region. Young participants benefitted from an enjoyable introduction to the Gallery setting, while primary and secondary groups were guided through current exhibitions with a view to supporting curriculum-based learning objectives.

Benalla Art Gallery Director Eric Nash hosts a talk and demonstration about artwork conservation and presentation for students from Galen Catholic College, Wangaratta





Little Artists programs throughout 2025

### **Little Artists**

Monthly throughout 2025

2025 Participation: 166

Benalla Art Gallery's *Little Artists* program is developed specifically for pre-school children. The program incorporates a combination of reading, movement, singing and games with creative activities to encourage young children, along with their parents and carers, to have fun while learning about art.

Sessions are free and are scheduled for the first week of most months, and regularly link with exhibitions on display or significant works from the Benalla Art Gallery Collection.

In 2025, the *Little Artists* sessions were:

- February - *Creating with Shapes*
- March - *Watercolour Maps*
- April - *Coil and Nature Clay*
- May - *Printing with Nature*
- June - *Landscape Painting with Objects*
- July - *Collage Portraits*
- August - *Sensory Sculptures*
- September - *Mark Making*
- October - *Collage Feast*
- November - *Character Costumes*
- December - *Holiday Hangs*

## COLLECTION

2025 represented another year of significant growth and development of the Benalla Art Gallery Collection.

Informed by the 2024 Preservation Needs Assessment, the Gallery secured further Community Heritage Grants funding in 2025 to undertake conservation treatment of four significant works: *Nu Speak Tower* by Jan Senbergs; *Joe Byrne exhibited at Benalla* by Albert Tucker; *The Barwon* by Louis Buvelot; and *Fabric Fantasy* by Annemieke Mein.

The last 12 months have also seen a number of important acquisitions, largely thanks to the generosity of numerous donors. Works acquired in this period are detailed on the following pages.



John BORRACK  
*Late Light from Tawonga Gap* [detail] 2005-2024

John BORRACK  
*Late Light from Tawonga Gap* 2005-2024  
watercolour and gouache on paper, mounted  
65 × 101 cm  
2025.001  
Donated by the artist, 2025  
Benalla Art Gallery Collection

stretched over PQ hoop  
122 × 198.5 cm  
2025.004  
Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Emmanuel and Effie Pseftoudis, 2025  
Benalla Art Gallery Collection

Trevor Turbo BROWN  
*Mother Possum with her Babies and Forest Friends* 2008  
synthetic polymer on linen stretched over PQ hoop  
122 × 198.5 cm  
2025.002  
Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Emmanuel and Effie Pseftoudis, 2025  
Benalla Art Gallery Collection

Gareth SANSOM  
*Prim* 2009  
oil and enamel on linen  
155 × 244 cm  
2025.005  
Gift of Geoff and Nola Wallis, 2025  
Benalla Art Gallery Collection

Trevor Turbo BROWN  
*Lazy Koalas not Doing Notin* 2008  
synthetic polymer on linen stretched over PQ hoop  
122 × 198.5 cm  
2025.003  
Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Emmanuel and Effie Pseftoudis, 2025  
Benalla Art Gallery Collection

Kirstin BERG  
*Black Flower* 2011  
Graphite, fire ash (collected from Beechworth area after Black Saturday fires of 2009), water colour pigment, steel pins, 300g Arches water colour paper. Framed in black wood (mountain ash) with glass  
117 × 86 × 8 cm  
2025.006  
Gift of the artist, 2025  
Benalla Art Gallery Collection

Trevor Turbo BROWN  
*Mother Swan Swimming With Her Babies* 2008  
synthetic polymer on linen

Wes WALTERS  
*Untitled landscape 2* c.1983-85  
acrylic on canvas  
190 × 220 cm  
2025.007  
Gift of Ren Walters, 2025  
Benalla Art Gallery Collection



**Wes WALTERS**  
*Untitled*  
*landscape 4* c.1983-85  
acrylic on canvas  
190 × 220 cm  
2025.008  
Gift of Ren Walters, 2025  
Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Guy STUART**  
*Lock Span* 1969  
ten identical, ready-made  
stainless steel bowls purchased  
from a convenience store; a  
number of flat wooden discs,  
slightly smaller than the  
diameter of the lip of each bowl;  
G-clamps of the kind found on a  
woodworking bench  
61.0 × 133.0 × 61.0 cm;  
base: 195 × 90 × 11 cm  
2025.009  
Gift of Carol Stuart, 2025  
Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Guy STUART**  
*Lock Span - a study for a  
sculptural project* c.1969  
pastel on paper  
102 × 72 cm  
2025.010  
Gift of Carol Stuart, 2025  
Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Clifford Possum**  
**TJAPALTJARRI**  
*Corkwood Dreaming  
at Conniston* 1986  
acrylic on canvas  
91 × 121 cm [canvas];  
94 × 124 cm [frame]  
2025.011

Donated through the Australian  
Government's Cultural Gifts  
Program by Danny and Pat  
Claridge, 2025  
Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Hugh SAWREY**  
*"The Blackall Picnic Races"*  
*Central QLD* c. late 1980s  
oil on canvas board  
50.8 × 61 cm [board];  
69.1 × 79.3 cm [frame]  
2025.012  
Donated through the Australian  
Government's Cultural Gifts  
Program by Danny and Pat  
Claridge, 2025  
Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Anniebell**  
**MARRNGAMARRNGA**  
*Yawkyawk* 2007  
natural earth pigments dyed on  
woven pandanus  
(Pandanus spiralis)  
207 × 94 cm  
2025.013  
Donated through the Australian  
Government's Cultural Gifts  
Program by Geoff Allen, 2025  
Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Bill HENSON**  
*Untitled #135* 1985-86  
type C photograph  
128 × 100 cm  
Edition 8 of 20  
2025.014  
Donated through the  
Australian Government's Cultural  
Gifts Program, 2025  
Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Bill HENSON**  
*Untitled #120* 1985-86  
 archival inkjet pigment print  
 128 × 100 cm  
 Edition 13 of 20  
 2025.015  
 Donated through the  
 Australian Government's Cultural  
 Gifts Program, 2025  
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Bill HENSON**  
*Untitled #25* 1985-86  
 type C photograph  
 128 × 100 cm  
 Edition 7 of 20  
 2025.016  
 Donated through the  
 Australian Government's Cultural  
 Gifts Program, 2025  
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Bill HENSON**  
*Untitled #103* 1985-86  
 archival inkjet pigment print  
 128 × 100 cm  
 Edition 6 of 20  
 2025.017  
 Donated through the  
 Australian Government's Cultural  
 Gifts Program, 2025  
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Bill HENSON**  
*Untitled #149* 1985-86  
 archival inkjet pigment print  
 128 × 100 cm  
 Edition 9 of 20  
 2025.018  
 Donated through the  
 Australian Government's Cultural  
 Gifts Program, 2025  
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Bill HENSON**  
*Untitled #128* 1985-86  
 archival inkjet pigment print  
 128 × 100 cm  
 Edition 18 of 20  
 2025.019  
 Donated through the  
 Australian Government's Cultural  
 Gifts Program, 2025  
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Bill HENSON**  
*Untitled #19* 1985-86  
 type C photograph  
 128 × 100 cm  
 Edition 7 of 20  
 2025.020  
 Donated through the  
 Australian Government's Cultural  
 Gifts Program, 2025  
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Bill HENSON**  
*Untitled #23* 1985-86  
 type C photograph  
 128 × 100 cm  
 Edition 8 of 20  
 2025.021  
 Donated through the  
 Australian Government's Cultural  
 Gifts Program, 2025  
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Bill HENSON**  
*Untitled #3* 1985-86  
 type C photograph  
 128 × 100 cm  
 Edition 9 of 20  
 2025.022  
 Donated through the  
 Australian Government's Cultural  
 Gifts Program, 2025  
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Bill HENSON**  
*Untitled #136* 1985-86  
 type C photograph  
 128 × 100 cm  
 Edition 5 of 20  
 2025.023  
 Donated through the  
 Australian Government's Cultural  
 Gifts Program, 2025  
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Bill HENSON**  
*Untitled #26* 1985-86  
 type C photograph  
 128 × 100 cm  
 Edition 6 of 20  
 2025.024  
 Donated through the  
 Australian Government's Cultural  
 Gifts Program, 2025  
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Bill HENSON**  
*Untitled #83* 1985-86  
 archival inkjet pigment print  
 128 × 100 cm  
 Edition 9 of 20  
 2025.025  
 Donated through the  
 Australian Government's Cultural  
 Gifts Program, 2025  
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Bill HENSON**  
*Untitled #95* 1985-86  
 archival inkjet pigment print  
 128 × 100 cm  
 Edition 12 of 20  
 2025.026  
 Donated through the  
 Australian Government's Cultural  
 Gifts Program, 2025  
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Bill HENSON**  
*Untitled #142* 1985-86  
 type C photograph  
 128 × 100 cm  
 Edition 5 of 20  
 2025.027  
 Donated through the  
 Australian Government's Cultural  
 Gifts Program, 2025  
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Bill HENSON**  
*Untitled #61* 1985-86  
 archival inkjet pigment print  
 128 × 100 cm  
 Edition 6 of 20  
 2025.028  
 Donated through the  
 Australian Government's Cultural  
 Gifts Program, 2025  
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection

**Bill HENSON**  
*Untitled #127* 1985-86  
 type C photograph  
 128 × 100 cm  
 Edition 9 of 20  
 2025.029  
 Donated through the  
 Australian Government's Cultural  
 Gifts Program, 2025  
 Benalla Art Gallery Collection



Mary TONKIN  
*A scream,  
Kalorama (study)* 2022  
oil on linen  
58 × 100 cm  
2025.030  
Donated through the  
Australian Government's Cultural  
Gifts Program by Mary Tonkin, 2025  
Benalla Art Gallery Collection

John SCOTT  
*[mock up of Lock Span  
at scale]* 1969  
black and white photograph  
72.0 × 72.0 cm  
2025.031  
Gift of Carol Stuart, 2025  
Benalla Art Gallery Collection

Top:  
Mary TONKIN  
*A scream, Kalorama (study)* 2022

Right:  
Guy STUART and John SCOTT  
*Lock Span* sculptural maquette, pastel  
drawing, and mock up photograph featured  
in the Benalla Art Gallery exhibition  
*Reconfigured*  
Install image, 2025





Winsome McCaughey AO  
Chair, Benalla Art Gallery Foundation

## **BENALLA ART GALLERY FOUNDATION CHAIR'S REPORT**

2024/25 was a year of significant growth and quiet evolution behind the scenes. In the first half of the year, our Board focused on building strong foundations for deeper, community-led involvement in the Foundation's work. This honours and follows the outcome of intensive community consultation over recent years, which led to the term 'People's Gallery' being coined for our much-loved Art Gallery, and ultimately led to the establishment of the Benalla Art Gallery Foundation in 2022.

We worked closely with the former Friends of Benalla Art Gallery to conclude and celebrate the extraordinary contribution they made over the past 30 years. Their legacy helps shape the future, and we remain deeply grateful for their enduring impact.

Building on this legacy, the Foundation established a committee comprised of three key Working Groups: Community Awareness, Donor Engagement, and Special Events. Each plays a vital role in broadening our reach and strengthening community connection. I wish to acknowledge and thank our dedicated Working Group co-convenors, Andrew Ashton, Gail O'Brien, Georgina Burston, Wendy Clark, Dennis O'Brien and Alana Johnson AM, and every Committee member for their energy and commitment.

In preparation for our first public fundraising campaign, we formed a Finance & Investment Committee to oversee corpus growth and ensure rigorous financial oversight. We thank Paul Coughlin for his expert contribution to this area. Thanks also to the two generous donors who enabled us to engage the consultancy team, PW Strategy for three days per week. Led by Penny Whitehead and assisted by Bron Dunwoodie (Donor Support and Events)

and Wendy Clark (Philanthropy), the team has driven our Business Development, put in place a modern foundation infrastructure and built the engagement and capacity of our community. Wendy concluded her role in April 2025, however, remains a much-valued Honorary Donor Advisor and Co-Chair of the Donor Engagement Working Group. The Board also extends its thanks to Rhys Jewell, Partner, Corrs Chambers Westgarth who commenced pro bono legal services this financial year – supporting our 12-month transition from a Public Ancillary Fund (Item 2 DGR) to a Cultural Organisation (Item 1 DGR).

A major milestone in 2024/25 was the successful launch of our inaugural Giving Campaign in March 2025. We are deeply grateful to the 124 donors who contributed so generously, and to everyone who participated in this important step in our development. We were especially pleased to establish 19 Named Funds through the campaign – an enduring legacy made possible by the long-term commitment of individuals, couples and families who share our vision. Several significant contributions deserve special mention. We warmly thank the Messenger Family, with special tribute to the late Pauline Messenger; the Tallis Family; Mavourneen Cowen; the Scobie and Claire Mackinnon Trust; and the J & C Abdallah Trust. We also acknowledge, with deep appreciation, the many members of our Donor Circles, whose support was a powerful demonstration of collective belief in the future of Benalla Art Gallery. Our heartfelt thanks go to James and Katherine Murray, who generously hosted a memorable evening for Melbourne-based supporters in their home – an occasion which not only brought people together but helped build momentum around a bold shared vision for the Gallery's future.

To my fellow Board members – Dr Sheryl Coughlin, Margaret Richards OAM, Bill Dobson, Sue Clark, and Councillor Peter Davis – thank you for your unwavering support and stewardship throughout the year.

The Board continues to play a vital advocacy role, working alongside Benalla Rural City Council and the Benalla Art Gallery Advisory Committee in securing investment needed for the Gallery's long-term future. We remain focused on engaging our community, philanthropic partners and stakeholders to ensure the Gallery continues to thrive as a regional cultural leader.

With our framework firmly in place, our focus now turns to expanding the Gallery's impact by upgrading its facilities and reimagining what's possible for future generations. The current building limits the Gallery's ability to host major exhibitions and deliver the immersive, inclusive experiences audiences increasingly expect. Larger exhibitions not only bring exceptional art to regional communities, but also generate significant economic and cultural benefits. To remain relevant and reflective of contemporary practice and community identity, the Gallery needs spaces designed for changing audiences and ambitions.

The Board of the Benalla Art Gallery Foundation invites and welcomes all those who care about our community and region's cultural, social and economic wellbeing, to join with us, with our Committee, our generous donors, Council and our whole local community in working together to realise a bold, exciting future for the Benalla Art Gallery – our 'People's Gallery'.

Winsome McCaughey AO  
Chair, Benalla Art Gallery Foundation

If you'd like to find out more about the Benalla Art Gallery Foundation, attend an event, donate or volunteer, visit [benallaartgallery.com.au/support](https://benallaartgallery.com.au/support)



## WITH THANKS

Benalla Art Gallery and the Benalla Art Gallery Foundation would like to thank the following donors and supporters for their contributions in 2024/25:

### *General Gifts*

- J and C Abdallah Trust
- The Calvert-Jones Foundation
- Mavourneen Cowen
- The Scobie and Claire Mackinnon Trust
- The Messenger Family
- James and Katherine Murray
- William Parris
- Murray Stapleton

### *Named Funds*

- Neville and Jan Arnott
- Georgina Burston Family
- L J Burston
- Sue and Nick Clark
- Coughlin Family
- Friends of the Benalla Art Gallery
- Bill and Kerry Dobson
- Jane and Norton Grimwade Family
- Grubb Family
- Punarji Hewa Gunaratne
- Holmes Family
- Kirkwood Family
- Peter and Jill Lloyd – Karn Station
- Clan McPherson: Winsome McCaughey and Snow Barlow
- Messenger Family
- James and Katherine Murray
- Sabine and Mike Smyth
- Fiona and Frank Stephens
- The Tallis Family

### *Patron Donor Circle*

- Diana Gibson AO
- Patricia Melgaard
- Meredith Paez

### *Champion Donor Circle*

- Kerry Amery
- Kate and Anthony Beggs
- David Blore
- Annie Cuming
- Dorothy Falkiner
- Vanessa Mahon
- Jane and Andrew Marriott
- Suzy Martin
- Gay Morton
- Robyn and Damon Sutton
- Patricia Thompson
- Jenny and David Williams

### *Visionary Donor Circle*

- Randolph and Barbara Alexander AO
- Anonymous donor
- Ken and Marilyn Bourke
- Wendy and Peter Clark
- Celeste Collins
- Angeline Daniels

- Bronwyn Dunwoodie
- Sally and Stewart Gough
- Helen Haines MP
- Rosemary Inglis
- Rozie Kennett
- Melinda Martin
- Angus and Di McMillan
- Eugenie Miechel
- Pamela and Barry O'Connor
- Karen and Steve Viant

### *Founder Donor Circle*

- Katrina Bailey
- William Besley
- Marcus Bolger
- Irene Cain
- Kerrie Cooke
- Peter Dunn
- Jeni Dunn
- Liz Gallagher
- Anna Gourlay
- Janice Hilton
- Maggie and Brian Hollins
- Rosie Koop
- Elizabeth Leviny
- Betty Lindsay
- Kirstin Mann
- Diane Martin
- Wendy Oliver
- Liz Sadler
- Dawn Stephens
- Linda Tullberg
- Keith Redenbach
- Merike Redenbach

- Max and Margaret Richards OAM
- Pamela Robinson AM
- Alex Ross
- Margaret Walshe
- Penny and Stuart Whitehead
- Fiona Whitewood

---

#### ***Community Donor Circle***

- Vivienne Drew
- Catherine Fuller
- Julie Hooper
- Patricia Mitchell

---

#### ***Directors***

- Winsome McCaughey AO, Chair
- Dr Sheryl Coughlin, Company Secretary
- Margaret Richards OAM, Treasurer
- Bill (John) Dobson
- Sue Clark
- Councillor Peter Davis

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#### ***Finance and Investment Committee***

- Bill Dobson
- Margaret Richards OAM
- Paul Coughlin

---

#### ***Special Events Working Group***

- Andrew Ashton
- Gail O'Brien
- Bec Amos
- Jane Ashton
- Chris Barnes
- Lou Correll
- Ellen Crocker
- Gail Davies-Brown
- Neville Gibb
- Louise Gourlay
- Jane Grimwade
- Margaret Richards OAM

---

#### ***Donor Engagement Working Group***

- Georgina Burston
- Wendy Clark
- Anna Parle
- Fiona Stephens
- Alice Tallis
- Mary Tallis
- Sue Clark

---

#### ***Community Awareness Working Group***

- Alana Johnson AM
- Dennis O'Brien
- Jane Grimwade
- Linda Tullberg
- Winsome McCaughey AO

---

#### ***Board Special Support***

- Barbara Alexander AO
- Pamela O'Connor

---

#### ***Business Development Team***

- Penny Whitehead
- Wendy Clark  
*(July 2024–April 2025)*
- Bronwyn Dunwoodie  
*(Commenced February 2025)*

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#### ***The Foundation also acknowledges with special thanks***

- Peter Keane, CEO, Benalla Rural City Council
- Courtney Naughton, Manager of Economic Development and Sustainability
- Eric Nash, Director, Benalla Art Gallery
- Katherine Archer, Administration and Customer Relations Officer, Benalla Art Gallery
- Geoff Hill, Director, Aldous & Hill Chartered Accountants
- Laura Hodge, Aldous & Hill Chartered Accountants
- Will Mahon, Atticus Design
- Karl Phillipson, Code Garden

## GALLERY PARTNERS

Benalla Art Gallery thanks the following financial supporters, program partners, and in-kind supporters for their invaluable contributions in 2025, without which this would not be possible.

- Arts Project Australia
- Australian Art Orchestra
- Australian Government's Community Heritage Grants
- Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMaGA)
- Benalla Art Gallery Foundation
- Benalla Cinema
- Benalla Festival
- Benalla Historical Society
- Benalla Migrants Association
- Benalla P-12
- Benalla Rose City Probus Club
- Benalla Rural City Council
- Benalla Scouts
- Benalla Street Art Festival
- Benalla Visitor Information Centre
- Cathedral College, Wangaratta
- Catholic College, Wodonga
- Charles Nodrum Gallery
- Creative Australia
- Creative Victoria
- Earth Spirit Yoga
- FCJ College Benalla
- Galen Catholic College, Wangaratta
- Gordon Darling Foundation
- Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation
- Limelight Touring Company
- Live Art Benalla (LAB)
- Mansfield Secondary College
- Mansfield Steiner School
- Munro & Sargeant Cafe
- National Gallery of Australia (NGA)

- National Gallery of Victoria (NGV)
- Peranbin Primary College, Baddaginnie
- Public Galleries Association of Victoria (PGAV)
- Rotary Club of Benalla
- Scobie & Claire Mackinnon Trust
- Shepparton Art Museum (SAM)
- St Albans Secondary College
- Tallis Wine
- The Albert & Barbara Tucker Foundation
- Tomorrow Today Foundation
- Tourism North East
- University of the Third Age (U3A), Benalla
- University of the Third Age (U3A), Wangaratta
- Waminda Community House
- Williams Boag architects (WBa)

## **BENALLA ART GALLERY TEAM**

### **Staff**

Eric Nash  
*Director*

Brenda Wellman  
*Curator*

Katherine Archer  
*Administration and Customer Relations Officer*

Fleur Rendell  
*Education & Public Programs Curator (0.6 FTE)*

Tegan Nash  
*Education & Public Programs Curator (0.4 FTE)*

Trish McGann  
*Art Gallery Assistant (0.4 FTE)*

Rachael O'Brien  
*Art Gallery Assistant (0.2 FTE)*

Sonia Gherdevich  
*Art Gallery Assistant (0.2 FTE)*

### **Benalla Art Gallery Committee**

Barbara Alexander AO  
*Chair*

Councillor Punarji Gunaratne  
*Council Representative*

Councillor Jillian Merkel  
*Council Representative*

Tim Abdallah  
*General Member*

Andrew Ashton  
*General Member*

Winsome McCaughey AO  
*General Member*

Elizabeth Costello  
*Tourism North East Victoria Representative*

Anna Parle  
*General Member*

Fiona Stephens  
*General Member*

Alice Tallis  
*General Member*

Cover image:

*Jason Parker: Rise, Ruin, Renew, Repeat*  
Performance documentation, 2025

Photo: James Bugg

VISIT  
Botanical Gardens  
Bridge Street  
Benalla VIC 3672

FREE ENTRY  
Mar—Aug, 10AM—4.30PM  
Sep—Feb, 10AM—5PM  
Closed Tuesdays

CONTACT  
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E [gallery@benalla.vic.gov.au](mailto:gallery@benalla.vic.gov.au)  
W [benallaartgallery.com.au](http://benallaartgallery.com.au)

CREATIVE VICTORIA 

**BENALLA**  
**ART GALLERY**

**BENALLA**  
  
RURAL CITY