



## Regional Galleries Association of SA Annual Report 2021/2022

The Regional Galleries Association of South Australia is the peak body for not-for-profit galleries in South Australia.

As a united voice our mission is to advance and protect the interests of public galleries within regional communities.

We do this with great enthusiasm through visibility advocating for the role galleries play in healthy communities, professional development for members and enticing collaborators with mutual interests to join us.

We aim to have a vibrant network of regional galleries enriching local communities, artists and the arts across regional South Australia.

2021-22 continued to be challenging for the association. The pandemic still affected our daily actions, decisions, and as a volunteer organisation supported by individuals who are often full-time employees and/or artists, time is a hard commodity to find. However, with a group of very dedicated individuals the organisation has continued to keep members engaged in the range of development activities and events that the organisation has put on throughout the year.

### Strategic Priority One: Maintain and Grow Membership

*WHY: to maintain financial stability, to increase the skills base across regional South Australia and to increase the visibility and impact of our work.*

*HOW: We will do this by building and maintaining a cohesive collaborative network of regional galleries, building support for members and broadening the membership base.*

#### Membership

The financial year 2021-22 saw RGASA's membership at 30 with 5 new members, and Gawler and Onkaparinga galleries showing an interest in joining as well. This growth is surprising in an environment with limited fact-to-face engagements and activities. This has been primarily driven by the high level of uncertainty that has been created by the ongoing pandemic.

RGASA has continued to attract large numbers of people from non-membership organisations who engage with the organisations activities, demonstrating a need and desire to connect more broadly with the visual arts, university and local government sectors. Of particular interest has been the

Study Tour and Forum. The organisation will continue to see these events as important cornerstones of its activities.

The Study Tour attracted several personnel from Metropolitan organisations – galleries and Councils. Which again demonstrates that the association activities are relevant to metropolitan members. It was a popular activity for members and reinforces the desire for members to network and see other member venues. The feedback received via the post event survey, which is summarised below, has been very positive – indicating it is relevant and useful for gallery staff and volunteers.

The Forum did attract several personnel from Metropolitan organisations – galleries and Councils. This event is a good response to feedback received recently regarding the value of our events for metro members. The membership attendance was lower than non-members which demonstrates a broad interest but whether this translates into new membership is still unknown. Some regional members who were unable to make it, did ask if the event was going to be recorded or webcast, which was not the case but is something to consider down the track.

RGASA continues to provide an important role within the not-for-profit sector in South Australia and visual arts in the regions.

### Strategic Priority Two: Professional Development and Networking for Members

*WHY: to increase the capacity of members to deliver high quality, valued outcomes in their communities.*

*HOW: We will do this through targeted training and networking opportunities for members, relationships with the broader public gallery sector.*

#### ACTIVITIES

**Study Tour:** The event is designed to offer participants an opportunity to learn how other galleries and cultural venues operate, network and make connections with other members and see the work of and meet artists – both local and those from further afield undertaking residencies. Delegates on the 2022 tour enjoyed learning more about First Nations culture, public art and artist residencies.

Galleries:           Sauerbier House, Port Noarlunga  
                           Fleurieu ArtHouse, McLaren Vale  
                           Choral Street Arts Space, Victor Harbor  
                           Victor Harbor Regional Gallery, Victor Harbor  
                           Southeast Arts Centre, Goolwa  
                           Signal Point Gallery, Goolwa  
                           Willunga Gallery, Willunga  
                           Murray Bridge Regional Art Gallery  
                           Heysen Gallery, Hahndorf

Other                   First Nations Tour with Mark Koolmatrie at Ratalang, Port Elliot  
 Activities:           Public Art Walk at Murray Bridge

**Arts and Culture Tourism Forum:** The Forum was a half day event involving a series of presentations from industry professionals for Regional Galleries Association SA members and other interested sector professionals, students and volunteers.

Panel – What is Cultural Tourism:

Shaun DeBruyn – CEO Tourism Industry Council SA (TICSA)  
Marika Davies – Arts Officer Port Augusta Council  
Melinda Rankin – Director, Fabrik AHC

Australian Silo Art and Wellbeing Report:

Amelia Green – Research Fellow, Griffith University

Strategy, Stats + Visitor Profiles:

Adam Stanford – Senior Manager, Strategy + Insights, SATC

Cultural Tourism Innovation – What does it take to make it great?

Emilya Colliver – Author, Entrepreneur and Founder, Culture Scouts  
and Art Pharmacy

### **Summary of Professional Development and Networking Opportunities**

The Forum provided opportunities for members to meet with each other and people from other non-member organisations. Being held at the Art Gallery of SA provides a great opportunity to see current exhibitions and the Forum also provides an opportunity to bring volunteers and other stakeholders from their community to network and learn. Arts and Cultural tourism is a relatively new field for our members and this was a great opportunity for them to consider it more fully and think about the following:

- Understanding the breadth of arts and cultural tourism and the potential to develop initiatives and partnerships within this space
- Understanding visitor data and profiles to better attract attendances
- Developing experiences that specifically attract visitors
- First Nations Cultural Tourism opportunities
- Partnering with Tourism Bodies and Operators to develop projects and initiatives

The event also enabled RGASA to foster relationships with both SATC and TICSA which are new relationships for the organisation. These will continue to grow over time with the RGASA looking to strengthen partnerships in this space.

Silo Art – Amelia Green – the speaker who came down from Queensland to talk about her Silo report further toured to other locations in SA with the support of local stakeholders including the Murraylands Tourism Association. Meetings with representatives from the Murray Bridge Gallery were included in her tour.

The Study Tour provided opportunities for members to meet with each other and people from other non-member organisations. Unlike other shorter events, the length of the study tour allows for much stronger deeper connections to be made with a range of activities encouraging dialogue and learning. Most who attend the event indicated that they have connected with a person and/or venue that they will follow up after the event to connect with and continue to share resources and knowledge.

The following provides an overview of the topics that were discussed throughout the event:

- Public art development and visiting artworks in-situ
- Artist residencies – talking with venues and artists who have participated in residencies
- Retail development and merchandising
- Programming – exhibitions and other activities
- First Nations Culture
- Infrastructure development and broader planning and development of venues
- Working with Councils / Local Government

- Governance / operational models and systems for community, commercial and Council operated facilities
- Financial management, fees and charges / commissions etc.

In addition to the Forum and Study Tour, the AGM was hosted by the Barossa Regional Gallery.

The organisation experimented with an online networking meeting because of the ongoing impacts of the Pandemic. Anecdotally, it seems members prefer to meet online rather than try to make a trip to Adelaide and get an update from the Executive.

The RGASA executive will undertake a survey of members to ascertain their preferred method of engagement outside of forums, summits and study tours. It may be that the organisation needs to make greater use of online meetings.

### Strategic Priority Three: Advocacy, Development and Marketing

*WHY: to enable us to function as a highly visible and influential sector and an attractive partner in both the visual arts sector and more broadly as a significant partner in recreation, wellbeing, tourism and economic development within members' communities.*

*HOW: Clear and accessible distribution of information to members and stakeholders, representation at relevant national organisations and alliances (NAVA, NPGA, AMaGA) and keeping the website current and useful.*

An organisation the size of RGASA relies on the strength of partnerships to carry out meaningful work. Our chief partners are the organisations, including many Local Government agencies who support our members' ongoing operations. As a peak organisation, it is our role to work with a range of partners to assist the sector more broadly.

Locally, we continue an association with **AMaGA (Australian Museums and Galleries Association)** and maintained our working relationships with galleries and organisations right across the state. Primarily this has been via the attendance, when they have been held, at the monthly AMaGA breakfast forums.

The RGASA maintained its connections with the national cohort of gallery peak bodies again this year as an active member of the National Public Galleries Alliance.

The Alliance meets regularly to talk about major issues, network and share information and for the duration of 2022 it has been part of a regular catch up with the National Association of Visual Arts (NAVA). Key areas for discussion this year have been the development of the National Cultural Policy, ongoing data collection for public galleries nationally and NAVA's code of conduct. RGASA made a submission to the Federal Government as part of their consultation for the new National Cultural Policy and contributed to NAVA's new Code of Conduct

At a national level, we have maintained our relationships with the national not-for-profit gallery sector through the NPGA.

The **Art Gallery of South Australia, Country Arts SA, ArtLab, Ku Arts and the SA History Trust** continue to be supportive partners to RGASA. With access to venues, advice and ongoing relationships with individual members.

RGASA has participated in a number of meetings with various South Australian organisations with the view to establishing a peak body that represents the interests of the Arts. In addition, it

continued to advocate for members grant applications for particular projects such as the Port Pirie Regional Council's Pilot Project Grant Application 101 of Arts Business for Regional Artists.

### **EDMs – Electronic Newsletter**

EDMs continues to be an important tool for RGASA for advocating good news stories, information sharing, Association updates and reporting, tips and tricks, opportunities, and notification of special projects.

EDMs were distributed to members and key industry people in September 2021 and February 2022.

In these publications we included two good news stories in each of our EDMS. These good news stories included:

- Interview with Marika Davies and her path to learning about First Nations Art in Australia
- Clare Art House - Artists Leading the Way
- Big Ideas + Opportunities for Art Museum on Kangaroo Island
- RGASA Port to Port Study tour - Photo Gallery
- Overview of the new RGASA Executive Team

### **Strategic Priority Four: Exhibitions and Public Programming**

*WHY: to maintain an active facilitation role in the development of vibrant, challenging and relevant programming opportunities for member galleries and to provide a conduit between curators, artists and regional galleries.*

*HOW: We will do this by collaborating with AGSA and Country Arts SA; and facilitate and encourage exchanges between member galleries and with metropolitan galleries*

With changes to funding models and Country Arts SA stepping back from its direct relationships with RGASA access to touring visual arts exhibitions has diminished. However, individual galleries over the years have forged direct relationships with AGSA and Country Arts have strengthened. The galleries benefiting from these relationships include Port Pirie, Murray Bridge, Burra, and Bordertown. Most of these galleries are directly supported by Local Government and/or have benefited from the Country Arts Project Grants Program.

RGASA took the decision in early 2020, to concentrate its resources on professional development for members. However, our fruitful relationships with partners continue to thrive and we provide a conduit for collaborative programming opportunities through our member networking channels.

Through EDMs we encourage our members to apply for grants, and promote exhibitions suitable for tour and exchange.

### **Strategic Priority Five: Good Governance**

We will maintain a strong and vibrant organisation to fulfil our commitments to members and key stakeholders, ensuring programs, services and advocacy are relevant to the regional gallery sector and holding at least four gatherings a year of members. The executive developed a governance guide to ensure matters are not forgotten throughout the year. Significant changes with bank practices to reflect the increase in risk with online security has meant the organisation has had to manage changes of bank signatories to reflect the changes in the executive in a timely way.

Operational Funding remains positive and ArtsSA funding was confirmed for the 2022 and RGASA was invited to apply for funding for 2023. Arts SA Funding together with membership fees ensure

that key development and networking opportunities are provided to members (and others) throughout the year.

### **Membership Fees**

Whilst the Association recognises that it is essential to maintain a tiered system of fees to remain inclusive of all regional public galleries and to encourage membership, members agreed to maintain the existing fees.

### **Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee met electronically throughout the year to manage the affairs of the Association and the directions for professional development and marketing strategies. The executive committee meets at least quarterly with additional meetings called for special business. The meeting of the Executive committee aligns with the Associations Constitution and it met eight times during the 2021-2022 financial year.

General meetings of members will occur twice per annum (August and at the AGM) additional meetings may be called for special business requiring a vote. Members will also gather for events, professional development opportunities, and sharing of successes and challenges. Only one face-to-face meeting was held with members during the 2020-21 year because of COVID risks. An online meeting was held May 2022.

Due to COVID 19 the AGM did not occur until December 2020. For several years the AGM has been delayed and this has created some challenges when there is a change of the executive which is out of sync with the reporting period.

### **2021-22 Membership**

- ART MUSEUM OF KANGAROO ISLAND Kangaroo Island
- BALAKLAVA COURTHOUSE GALLERY Balaklava
- BAROSSA REGIONAL ART GALLERY Tanunda
- BAY DISCOVERY CENTRE Glenelg
- BELALIE ART GALLERY Jamestown
- BURRA REGIONAL ART GALLERY Burra
- CLARE ART HOUSE Clare
- COORONG ART GALLERY Tailem Bend
- FABRIK Lobethal
- FLINDERS UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM
- GALLERY M Oaklands Park
- HAHNDORF ACADEMY Hahndorf
- JAMFACTORY Adelaide and Seppeltsfield
- KAPUNDA COMMUNITY GALLERY Kapunda
- MILLICENT GALLERY Millicent
- MURRAY BRIDGE REGIONAL GALLERY Murray Bridge
- NARACOORTE ART GALLERY Naracoorte
- NAUTILUS ART CENTRE Port Lincoln
- NEWMARCH GALLERY Prospect
- PORT PIRIE REGIONAL ART GALLERY Port Pirie
- RIDDOCH ART GALLERY Mount Gambier

- ROXBYPINK ART GALLERY Roxby Downs
- SOUTH COAST REGIONAL ART CENTRE & SIGNAL POINT GALLERY Goolwa
- VICTOR HARBOUR REGIONAL GALLERY Victor Harbour
- THE MILL Adelaide
- WALKWAY GALLERY Bordertown
- MIDDLEBACK FOYER GALLERY Whyalla
- MCCORMICK CENTRE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT Renmark
- SAUERBIER HOUSE Onkaparinga
- CITY OF HOLDGAST BAY Brighton

**2021-22 Executive**

- Chair – Helen Macdonald
- Treasurer – Serena Wong
- Secretary – Ursula Halpin
- Committee Members: Kerry Youle; Rachel McElwee; Marika Davies, Naomi Fallon, Melinda Rankin

Kerry Youle resigned from the executive in March 2022 so that she could concentrate on her own creative practice.