

EASTERN
RIVERINA
ARTS



2020

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

About

EASTERN RIVERINA ARTS

Eastern Riverina Arts (ERA) is a small organisation providing big opportunities to artists and creative people in our region.

We work in collaboration with the eight Councils of Bland, Coolamon, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Lockhart, Junee, Snowy Valleys, Temora and Wagga Wagga. Eastern Riverina Arts works within these communities to support creative practitioners, stimulate creative activity and enterprise, and increase participation in the arts.

We are part of the NSW Regional Arts Network, and supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW.



Executive Director's Report

During a volatile year, Eastern Riverina Arts delivered in spades.

The sheer scale of project delivery undertaken by ERA's team in 2020 marks a new high for the organisation. On top of our core work, our small team managed 3 existing major projects (Artstate, Platform and the Lagoon project) and commenced work on 2 more (Create Space and Arbour Festival).

Each of these projects builds capacity across our service region, and brings in significant external funding into to support artists and businesses across our region. All of this work provided capacity building, income and new opportunities to local artists, groups and councils in a year when the arts sector was enduring such hardship.

To meet these challenges we became a more nimble organisation, employing cloud-based project management software and data solutions so that we could maximise our output during lockdown, and spread our workforce wider across our service area.

In 2020 Scott Howie vacated the Executive Director's position to take on Artistic Direction for Artstate Wagga Wagga, and then pursue new opportunities. After 10 years in the role, Scott leaves a considerable legacy and we are grateful for his contribution.

2021 will be a big year with renewed vision, a raft of new and ongoing projects and a whole lot of work to achieve for our communities. We look forward to working with you!

Tim Kurylowicz
Executive Director

Artstate Wagga Wagga

128

ARTISTS EMPLOYED
FROM OUR REGION

75+

ARTS PROGRAM EVENTS &
PERFORMANCES

250

CONFERENCE DELEGATES
IN PERSON & ONLINE

2742

LIVE AUDIENCE

1375

ONLINE AUDIENCE

The fourth and final Artstate went above and beyond to deliver a Covid-safe arts festival and conference event showcasing the best of regional arts, writing, performance and cultural engagement.

184 artists were paid for their participation in Artstate events and exhibitions, with 128 of these coming from the Eastern Riverina Arts region.

Scott Howie delivered an Arts Program like no other. 39 Covid-safe performances, exhibitions, installations and experiences were staged and livestreamed, featuring countless original collaborations, new works and a host fringe events across our region.



Program Highlights

Artstate Wagga Wagga



Wagga Wagga: To Dance To Celebrate

Starting the conference in the spirit of Yindjamarra

Directed by Jonathan Jones, in close collaboration with senior Wiradjuri Elders including Uncle Stan Grant Snr and Aunty Isobel Reid, the Artstate opening ceremony featured a new video work, and live performance by Wiradjuri dancer Joel Bray. This opening ceremony proudly asserted the meaning of “Wagga Wagga,” welcoming delegates to the festival precinct.



Call

A city-wide soundscape experience

Each morning of Artstate started with a call to action from the balcony of the Civic Theatre. Structured improvisations by rising young opera singer, Lisette Bolton and cellist, Clare Brassil, were streamed across Wagga Wagga to hot cars with kick-ass stereos strategically placed around the city, filling the sky with the sound of hope and beauty. Call was also streamed online. Call was directed by Scott Howie.



Artstate Wagga Wagga



Old:New

Artists reinterpret historical objects for innovative new exhibition

An initiative of Eastern Riverina Arts; this exhibition had eight local artists respond to works from a local museum in each of their eight Local Government Areas. It shines new light on unique objects from eight of the Riverina's museums and starts conversations about what we keep, why we collect and how history informs the present. In 2021 Old:New will tour to Coolamon, Temora and Lockhart. This project was made possible with support from the Regional Arts Fund.

Horizons Made Wide

Riverina Visual Arts transform cityscape



Unconstrained by the walls of a gallery, this survey exhibition transposed large-scale decals of works from Riverina artists onto buildings, windows and footpaths around the historic Fitzmaurice St precinct. Horizons Made Wide transformed a cityscape over the Summer months and gave local artists exposure to tens of thousands of passers-by. This exhibition was curated by Eastern Riverina Arts' Executive Director Tim Kurylowicz.

Artstate Wagga Wagga

Ash Dust Air Anthology

Young Writers respond to drought, fires and a pandemic

In 2020 Regional NSW has suffered drought, been devastated from the summer bushfires and is now dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. Eastern Riverina Arts asked young writers to try to conjure a little bit of truth and beauty out of all this ash, dust and air. The anthology was edited by local writer Gabrielle Tozer, and is available for sale through the Eastern Riverina Arts Website.

PROGRESSION

these times are
stagnant
progressively unmoving
or moving backwards?
it's hard to tell
when I will feel the growth that adulthood promised
when I will be able to step beyond what I am now
and progress
I can see the person I want to be
but how do I get from A to B?
am I being held back by unavoidable coincidences
or an inability to grow?
fear and doubt have defined my short adult life
maybe next year I can rewrite my story

by Mackenzie Tooth, from ash dust air 2020

Major Project

LAGOON

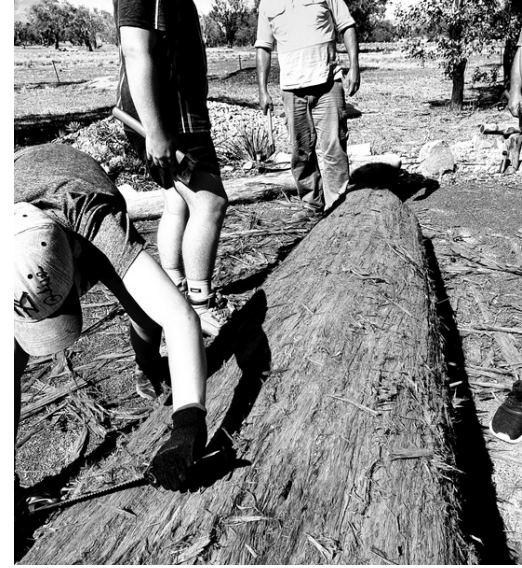
2020 was a big, exciting year for **Lagoon**, our intergenerational project helping to reconnect local First Nations men to cultural and traditional practices.

Canoe Making workshops were delayed by bushfires, and then Covid lockdowns, but went ahead in August in a Covid-safe way. During these workshops, two stringybark canoes were made in traditional Wolgalu/Wiradjuri style in the Tumut and Brungle regions, and a red gum bark canoe was made in Wagga Wagga. Workshop participants also participated in spear and trap making.

The project culminated in November with **Muriin**, one of the key attractions at Artstate Wagga Wagga. The three canoes floated on the highly significant Wollundry Lagoon for the duration of Artstate, a focal point demonstrating living culture and celebrating Aboriginal creativity and achievement.

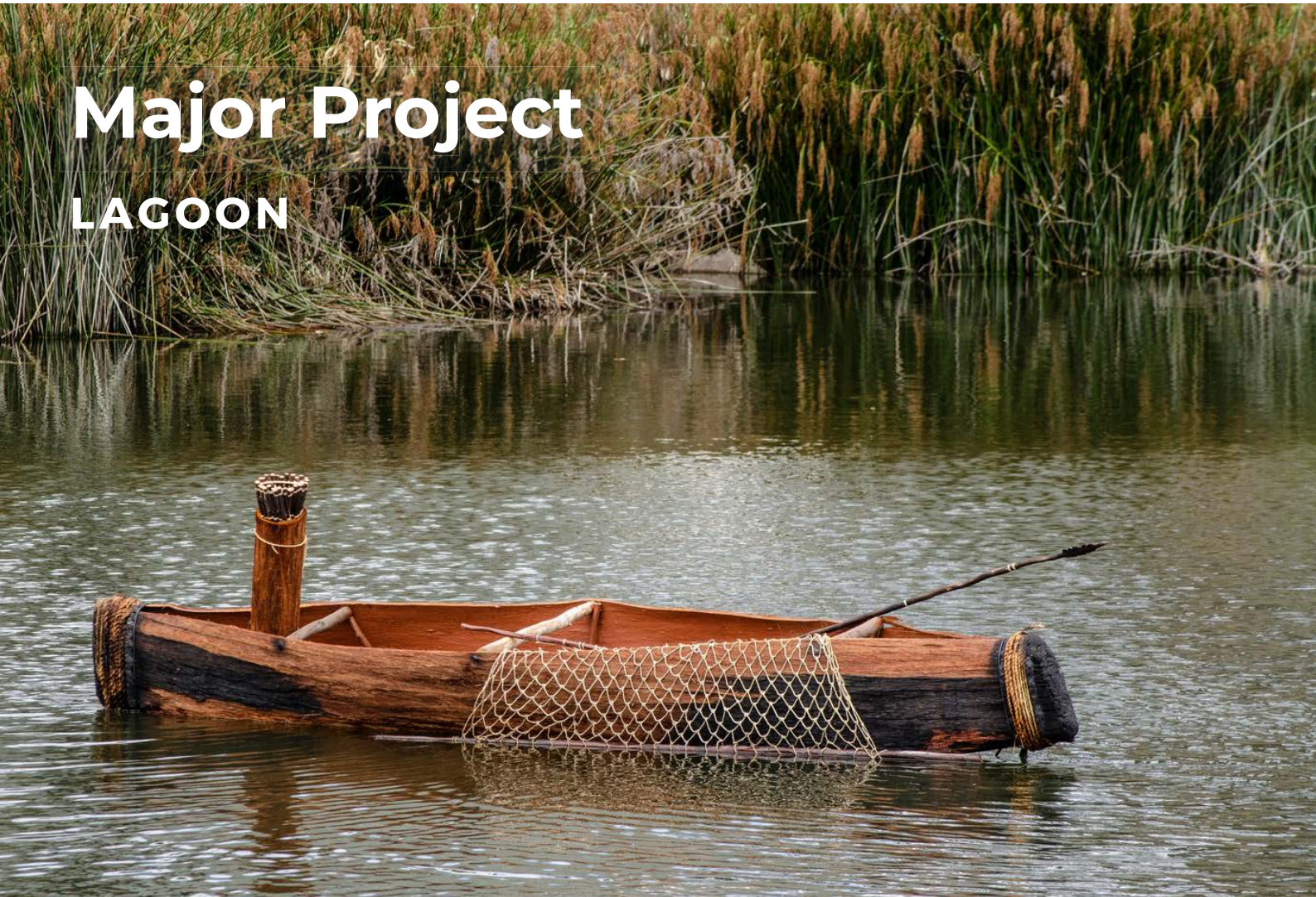
Watch the inspiring Lagoon project video at easternriverinaarts.org.au/lagoon/





Major Project

LAGOON



Major Project

PLATFORM

Eastern Riverina Arts' Platform Project continued its track record for innovation in 2020 with a big change of direction due to Covid.

With the cancellation of all major events in March, the Eastern Riverina Arts team coordinated Platform Live – a livestreamed showcase of talks, readings and live performances led by artists with disability. **Platform Live** included live audio description, captioning and Auslan interpretation to maximise accessibility – and was lauded for setting a new standard in accessible cultural content streaming.

The project's funding has now concluded, and an independent project evaluation was conducted by Accessible Arts which gathered feedback from festival goers, festival organisers, and the artists involved in the project.

Platform project legacies include:

- The Platform artspace is still owned by Eastern Riverina Arts and is available for hire at festivals and events. See platformriverina.com/hire for information.
- Ezy-Dun portable accessible bathroom is managed by project partner IDEAS and is available for hire at festivals and events through the IDEAS website.
- The Festivals Guide to Accessible Events has now been published, and is available as a resource to festival organisers wanting to make their events more accessible and inclusive.
- Event Ramp Kits were gifted to all 8 of our member Councils to assist community and council-run events in our region to be more accessible.

“

It's the first time in my arts career that I have been paid properly

ARTIST

The accessibility of the space for all ages. It's great

FESTIVAL GOER

I didn't want to come out! Peace in the storm

FESTIVAL GOER

”



Andy Jackson



Michelle Roger



Madeleine Stewart

Major Project PLATFORM



Alison Paradoxx - slam poet, accompanied by AUSLAN interpretation, live streaming.

CASP

COUNTRY ARTS SUPPORT PROGRAM

In partnership with Create NSW, we coordinated the Country Arts Support Program (CASP) grant round, which will deliver \$17,214 to community art projects in Lockhart, Bland Shire and Wagga Wagga in 2021.

Bland Shire Council - Bland Indigenous Outdoor Museum (\$5,000)

Bland Shire Council is building an Indigenous Outdoor Museum at the Coinda Park/Wetlands Precinct located in Wyalong to celebrate and showcase our rich Wiradjuri history and culture. The museum will host indigenous sculptures and artefacts to be viewed by residents and tourists.

Riverina Community College - Nemesis (\$2,255)

The Nemesis is a six-episode, six-minute radio drama, reminiscent of radio dramas in the past and will engage listeners with a thrilling spy drama set in the 1980 in a mythical country. The Nemesis radio drama will be available to aged care facilities and community groups.

Lockhart Shire Council - All One under the Australian Sun (\$5,000)

'All One under Australian Sun' an artwork inspired by respect, acknowledgement of Wiradjuri people. Workshops will provide school children at Lockhart Central School and St Josephs Lockhart with an understanding of Reconciliation, Aboriginal culture and heritage, and an opportunity to develop skills, employment opportunities and raise the artists' profile.

Create Hub Riverina Multicultural Women's Creative Group (\$4,959)

The Multicultural Women's Creative Group will be a weekly creative engagement program for women from refugee backgrounds. Through the workshops, women will engage in creative expression and share cultural and tradition arts practices from their multicultural backgrounds, as well as learn contemporary arts practices, facilitated by local artist, Elaine Camlin.

Our Core Work

Despite the challenges of COVID and Bushfires, our work continued unabated in 2020.

We established **Creative Riverina Catchups** via zoom to maintain face to face meetings and sector development throughout the year. The establishment of the **Creative Riverina Facebook Group** created a new platform for local creatives to collaborate and share information.

Our **Window Gallery** showcased emerging and established artists from across the region.

We provided direct Communications support to more than 200 local artists, exhibitions and events.

The **Creative Riverina** database extended to cover creatives working in the Western Riverina region this year, and grew almost 175% to now have more than 200 artists and creative worker listings.

We held more than 100 meetings with artists and groups, and supported the development of more than 70 projects originating in our region.

Auspicing

We provided direct assistance to 28 artists and community groups seeking auspicing support for projects and wrote a further 40 Letters of Support to worthy proposals and projects across our region

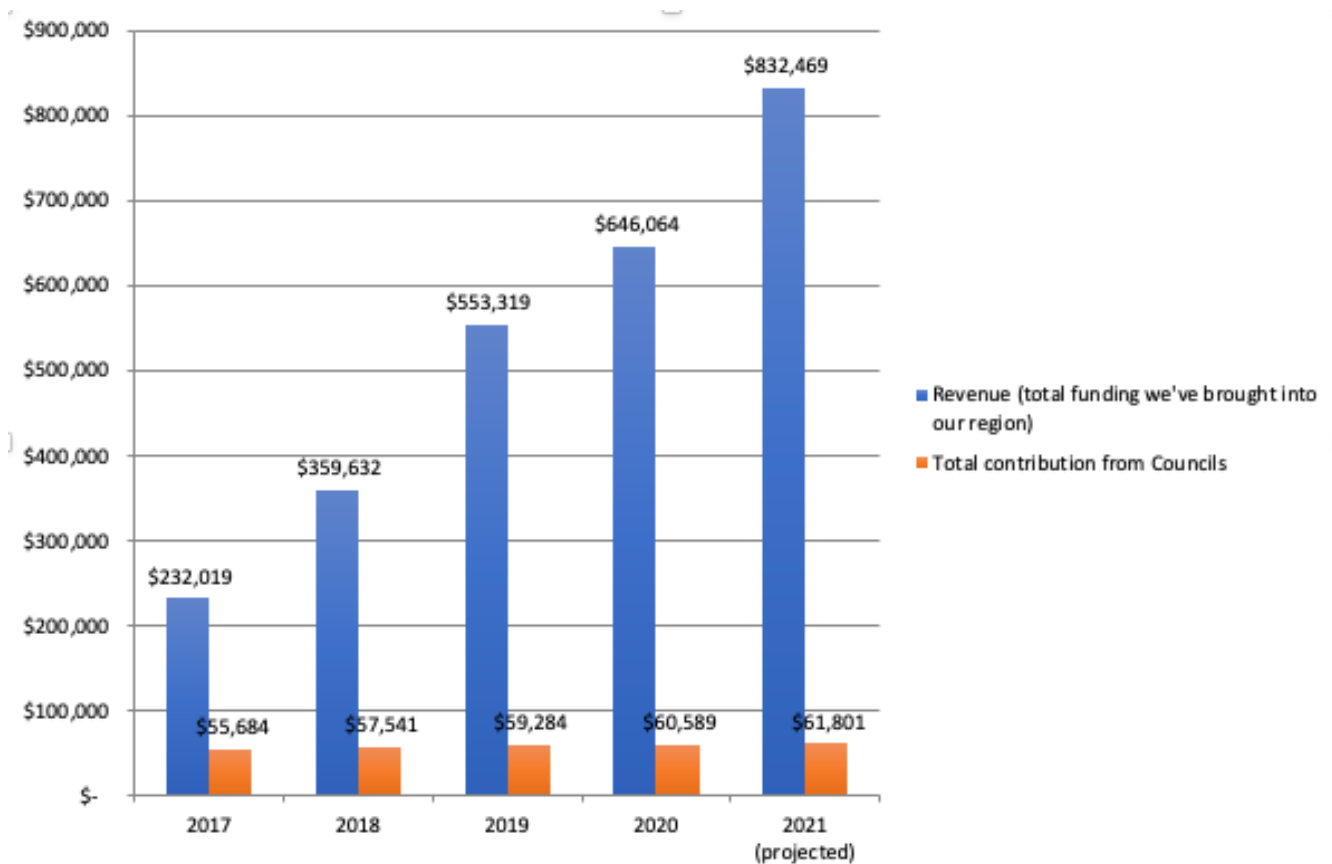
In 2020 there were 13 new projects and 12 ongoing projects being auspiced by Eastern Riverina Arts. With Covid delaying a range of these, a focus in 2021 will be to assist past grant recipients to complete and acquit their projects.



Delivering strong returns for our region

Eastern Riverina Arts continues its track record for growth, delivering strong returns on our members' investment

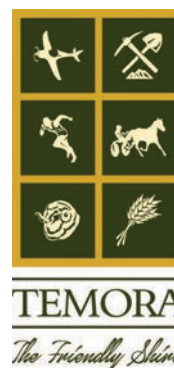
In 2021, ERA-led projects such as the Arbour Festival, Lagoon, Create Space (Renew Wagga), and Arts Restart will distribute more than \$500K in artist fees, production fees and worker salaries across our region, above and beyond the core services we provide to our region.



Supporting creative practitioners,
stimulating creative activity and
increasing participation in the arts.



Eastern Riverina Arts acknowledges the financial and in-kind support of its member Councils



PHONE
+61 2 6921 6890

LOCATION
98 Fitzmaurice Street
WAGGA WAGGA NSW 2650

EMAIL ADDRESS
exec@easternriverinaarts.org.au

ABN 93 195 464 075

WWW.EASTERNRIVERINAARTS.ORG.AU