

# ARTS MARGARET RIVER 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



Excellence, Engagement,  
Creativity and Sustainability



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## ARTS MARGARET RIVER 2020 IN REVIEW

Arts Margaret River is a not-for-profit cultural community organisation. As the major arts umbrella organisation in the Shire of Augusta-Margaret River for more than four decades we aim to involve all members of the community in all forms of the arts. We are in the South West Boojarah region in Noongar booja (country). Noongar have lived in this part of booja since the Nyittingy – creation times and we share in over 75,000 years of living culture and knowledge of the country on which we now create new stories and art.

Arts Margaret River is a vital lifeline for our community, and is the heart of our artistic community, helping to connect, support and elevate the arts regionally, nationally and internationally. We advocate for our artists and community and create a space where people can come together from all walks of life and share in the positive effects that the arts has.

Our aim is achieved through a variety of programs: music of all forms, theatre and dance performances, visual art exhibitions and events, workshops, community celebrations including free outdoor concerts and activities and the largest regional Readers and Writers Festival in WA.

### **Management Team**

Our office staff includes Michelle Wright (General Manager), Stephanie Kreutzer (Marketing/events), Kaye Campbell (Finance & Administration) and Sian Baker (Readers & Writers Festival Director). A large, dedicated number of volunteers also assist with many tasks.

### **The Board of Management**

The Board of Management steers the not-for-profit business of Arts Margaret River. Its volunteer members are elected for terms of twenty four months at Annual General Meetings held in March each year. The current Board of Management comprises eight members including a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

The key task of the Board is to ensure there are adequate financial and other resources needed to sustain Arts Margaret River's programs. This involves employing our small professional staff, careful control of all our expenditure, income and community relationships. It also involves overseeing our compliance with the Licence Contract between the Shire of Augusta Margaret River and Arts Margaret River (see below), and with the legal requirements of the State's Department of Commerce and the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission.

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

For Calendar Year 2020

As Acting President, I am mindful of the efforts of so many people to maintain Arts Margaret River as a vibrant and positive community force, providing cultural and artistic programs for the benefit of our community.

There is no doubt that 2020 was an extraordinary year. It was a year when we all experienced change and hardship. Restricted gatherings and travel have changed many social habits and behaviours. There remains little clarity on when restrictions on public gatherings and event attendances will return to pre-Covid levels.

Our finances remain healthy due to strong Federal Government support (JobKeeper and ATO CashFlow Boost). Our funding bodies also provided much needed support (Shire of Augusta Margaret River, LotteryWest, Tourism WA and Regional Arts WA).

We recorded a profit of \$27,616 and our bank reserves have increased by \$35,102.

Many commentators are noting that adoption of technology has been brought forward by several years (if not decades). Examples include the increased use of on-line shopping, electronic meetings rather than face-to-face meetings, and increased use of on-line payment systems. Although they may not be immediately apparent, each of these has longer-term ramifications for Arts Margaret River.

Travel restrictions have altered the demographics of our region's visitors. Spending habits and expectations are not as they were. Hospitality and tourism, including the conference industry, are being forced to realign their offers.

In a year of change and new perspectives, this is equally true at Arts Margaret River.

In our industry, programs are negotiated, budgeted and scheduled one to two years in advance. This means that we must remain agile and responsive. This is especially so when funding bodies are flagging that they will have different aspirations and funding criteria moving forward.

We started the year with the aim of re-inventing ourselves after six years as a "venue manager" at the old Cultural Centre. As the year progressed, we realised it was less a matter of re-inventing ourselves as it was a return to our core purpose.

Arts Margaret River was established, and still exists, to improve the quality of life of people in the Margaret River region through the provision of cultural and artistic programs.

Our Constitution cites our purpose as being to:

1. act as co-ordinating agency and as spokesperson for the performing and fine arts of Margaret River and surrounding districts and for those organisations engaged in extending cultural appreciation, through the presentation of performing and fine arts;
2. promote and develop public interest and family participation in performing and fine arts;
3. work in close collaboration and liaison with all bodies interested in the presentation of performing and fine arts; and to
4. encourage the provision of facilities for all kinds of artistic expression and the study and appreciation of artistic expression in all forms.

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*"Whether it is health, education, economy, or faith, the arts improve our communities and our lives, and they lend themselves to practical, solution-oriented philosophies to bind us socially and improve the world in which we live."*

ROBERT L. LYNCH

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During 2020 we were unable to present our usual complement of shows and events. Many were cancelled and others moved forward, but at the end of the year we were fortunate to have a full program of 14 events scheduled for calendar 2021.

This meant that our management team spent a large proportion of their time on rescheduling and renegotiating performance contracts and grant funding.

This was our 47th year of continuous operation, a history of which we are very proud, and not matched by many other similar organisations in the country.

This longevity would not be possible without the continued support of you - our members. Despite a difficult year with fewer performances, our membership remained strong. At the end of 2020 we had 230 members, compared to 354 family members and 5 corporate members a year earlier.

Neither would we be such a strong organisation without the support of our generous volunteers. The number of our active volunteers remained sound at 59, (compared with 144 in 2019). Despite fewer events, 727.25 hours were worked by these stalwarts, (down from the 3,533 hours in 2019) as there were fewer opportunities.

We are appreciative of their continued support, and our 2021 program relies on your continued support. Our community also celebrates your contribution. I would note in passing that the Board of Management are part of this volunteer group, and their combined time commitment in 2020 was 550 hours. This is an essential component of keeping our organisation strong.

Your Board of Management was transformed during the year, with 5 new members, including a new President and Treasurer:

Dr Helen Whitbread – President  
David Shelton – Treasurer  
Elizabeth Hogarth (Acting President)  
Christopher Young; and  
Katrina Lombardo.

They complement the three incumbent Board members:

Michael Sorensen – Vice President

Jeanette Sangmeister - Secretary

Anne Shepherdson (Life Member)

Unfortunately, due to tragic family circumstances, Dr Helen Whitbread reluctantly resigned from the Board in November and I was appointed in an acting role as interim President.

At that time Bu Wilson was appointed as a casual appointee and now stands for election in the AGM.

I would like to thank Helen for her strong leadership and contribution during her short term, and David Shelton for his contribution as Treasurer.

I would also like to thank the retiring Board members for their contributions in previous years, and in leaving the “new guard” with a financially strong and well-managed organisation, strongly positioned to take on the new challenges ahead of us:

Fred Affleck – Past President

Rob Rumball – Past Vice President

Pierre Every – Past Treasurer

Mignon Birch – Past Finance Committee member.

It was not only at Board level that we experienced significant change. Our personnel have also undergone a transformation, with long-serving General Manager Andrew Frith resigning. I also want to thank Andrew for his dedication and for managing a seamless transition to our new General Manager – Michelle Wright.

Michelle had previously been Event Manager for our signature event – the annual Readers and Writers Festival. She has embraced the role with a ton of energy and several fresh new ideas. The 2021 program is now established and I am sure we will see more positive results in the coming years under Michelle’s stewardship.

Tanya Purdue also resigned during the year as Creative Director for the Readers & Writers Festival to spend more time with her young family. I also wish to thank Tanya for her strong contributions in making the Festival the showcase that it has become.

Highly talented and experienced Sian Baker who now assumes the role as Festival Director has replaced her.

The importance of the continued and highly valued efforts of our Marketing Manager (Stephanie Kreutzer) and Finance/Admin Manager (Kaye Campbell) cannot be overstated. They are both long serving members of the management team without whom we would struggle.

To all of our members, volunteers, staff and Board I wish to thank you for your persistence, patience and perseverance during a most unusual year.

Elizabeth Hogarth  
Acting President



## PERFORMING ARTS

### SUNDAY SUNDOWNERS—FREE COMMUNITY CONCERTS

**9, 16 & 23 February**

**Cowaramup, Pioneer Park**

**Tickets:** Free community event

**Paid Audience:** Free event 1500pax

**Performance Fee:** \$4200, band fees



### HAPPY HOLIDAY HUNT

**Thursday 16 July, 10am—1pm**

**Tickets:** \$5

**Paid Audience:** 110

**Performance Fee:** n/a

Catering for children of all ages, the Happy Holiday Hunt gave kids an opportunity to get outdoors and have fun as they raced the clock to complete a number of hunt challenges.

Participants were given a map showing 14 various locations to visit where they had to answer questions, complete activities or collect items to score points. six local businesses participated with a couple providing prizes and giveaways. After completing the hunt sheet, they raced back to Arts Margaret River for a sausage sizzle, more activities and prize draws.

Tickets were limited to 110 children and we sold out prior to the event.



## MAGIC BEACH

**Wednesday 14 October 10am & 12.30pm  
- Margaret River HEART**

Tickets: \$15 - \$5 range

Paid Audience: 370

Performance Fee: 70% of ticket sales and 17% Royalties

Alison Lester AM's classic book came to life on stage in a wonderful world of text, song, light, shadow and movement for children aged 3-8 and their adults.

The two shows were pre-sold to school groups with limited tickets available to the general public due to COVID capacity restrictions.

As the two-live performances sold out, a LIVESTREAM performance was screened on the large screen in the Studio venue at 10am followed by a live meet and greet with the actors. Tickets to the livestream were \$5 each and was attended by 51 people.



## THE BYSTANDER PROJECT

**Augusta Hotel – Friday 23 October 7.30pm  
Cowaramup Hall – Saturday 24 October  
7.30pm & Sunday 25 October 7pm**

Tickets: \$25 - \$20

Paid Audience: 240

Performance Fee: \$14,327



Bystander is a community-based project that transforms the real-life experiences of people living in the Augusta Margaret River Shire into a unique, live performance.

With the help of Arts Margaret River, Whiskey & Boots (Mark Storen & Georgia King) with photographer/musician Holly Garvey & musician Tom Garvey collected stories and photos from people in the region. These accounts were turned into a performance that was shown in Augusta and Cowaramup.

12 locals from Augusta, Cowaramup and Margaret River participated in the project. The actors and musicians from Perth were in residence for three weeks prior to the shows to conduct the interviews and take the photographs which were performed at the live shows and then also recorded and displayed as part of a two week exhibition at the Margaret River Hotel.

The shows were well attended and an enormous amount of positive feedback and community buzz was generated around the project.



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## **2020 CANCELLED EVENTS DUE TO COVID:**

Playlist - April 2020

Grace Under Pressure – rescheduled for 2021

New Owner – Saturday May 2020

Mission Songs – Friday May 2020

Melbourne International Comedy Festival – May 2020

Ones & Zeros – August 2020

Dads – rescheduled for 2021

ACO – rescheduled for 2022

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## **2020 ARTS HUB MEMBERSHIPS**

Membership – 230 members



## READERS & WRITERS FESTIVAL

The 2020 Readers & Writers Festival was cancelled in early March with all pre-sold festival passes and tickets refunded.

As we usually held a raffle at the event each year to help raise funds, this year we decided to sell tickets online. A stellar array of books as well as the chance to win tickets to next year's event and some lovely local wines were offered as prizes. Tickets were \$5 each and 320 tickets were sold.



Ticket sales closed at 9pm on Sunday 14 June, the raffle was drawn at 11am on Monday 15 June and winners notified on 16 June 2020 via the Arts Margaret River and Margaret River Readers & Writers Festival Facebook pages and eNews.

## IN CONVERSATION WITH CRAIG SILVEY

**Wednesday 14 October 7.30pm – The River Hotel**

Tickets: 91

Paid Audience: \$10

Performance Fee: n/a

Craig Silvey will speak in conversation with his talented friend and author Brooke Davis for this special out of season event.

Honeybee is a heartbreaking, life-affirming novel that throws us headlong into a world of petty thefts, extortion plots, botched bank robberies, daring dog rescues and one spectacular drag show – from the bestselling author of Jasper Jones.



A Margaret River Readers & Writers Festival Fundraiser presented by Arts Margaret River.

## VISUAL ARTS

### TOM DE SOUZA:

3 February – 28 February 2020  
Margaret River HEART

Searching for Simple Pleasures is the photo-story of local resident, Tom de Souza's journey to rediscovering joy after drug addiction. Tom appeared at the 2019 Readers & Writers Festival.



Tom's photographs were hung in the bar area of the HEART foyer and he did not have an opening event.

### LINDA EVERY

23 January to 28 February 2020  
Margaret River HEART

Linda's Textile Art is a triumph of surprise as she experiments with natural dyes, designing and hand stitching the art onto hemp to achieve a stunning rustic effect. Linda's assemblage work is the result of looking around following a bush fire, where she noticed the varied and rich colours of the charred leaves, branches and seeds which she gathered. She preserves the relationship of the plants found in a small area by stitching them onto canvas.

The Exhibition Opening was held on Friday 31 January 5pm – 7pm and was very well attended with a large number of pieces sold.



### JENNY BARR

6th - 30th March 2020  
Margaret River HEART

Gracetown artist, Jenny Barr's exhibition – "This Hopeful Shack" – explores a year of living in a seaside shack through drawing, using only an Ipad with Adobe draw and an Apple pencil and large scale printing. The drawings were accompanied by a poem from Miriam Wei Wei Lo and timelapse projections of the drawings. Official Opening: Friday March 6th 6-8pm



**As Arts Margaret River staff were not in attendance at the HEART during daytime opening hours, all works for these exhibitions featured a unique QR code for online sales via our ticketing system.**

## CINEMATIC ARTS

### JANUARY SCHOOL HOLIDAY KIDS MOVIES

#### January school holidays, 10.30am & 1.30pm

Little Chapel -Margaret River Community Centre

Tickets: \$5ea

Paid Audience: 196

As the Margaret River HEART were not screening any movies during the holiday, we decided to present a selection of kids movies in the Little Chapel that children and their parents could attend for a low ticket cost.

The Little Chapel was transformed for cinema with a large portable screen, quality sound system, block out curtaining covering all windows and carpets and chairs set out. Children were welcome to bring their beanbags or cushions for the floor with chairs provided for the adults. A Kiosk was set up outside the Arts Margaret River office.



**The movies were well attended and appreciated but required a large amount of set up and packdown each week as the venue was used by other groups when the movies were not screened.**

### OCEAN FILM FESTIVAL WORLD TOUR

#### Tuesday 25th February 7.30pm

Tickets: \$30adult, \$23 youth

Paid Audience: 270—SOLD OUT

Cape Mentelle Outdoor Cinema - Global premiere of the 2020 program! This was the 4th year that Arts Margaret River screened this festival. The festival is screened for a fee which is paid to Arts MR, with all ticket sales remitted back to the film presenter. The screening was moved to Cape Mentelle as the HEART wanted too high a fee to screen it there. Fortunately the weather was fine and the screening at Cape Mentelle was a success.



### IYENGAR YOGA MOVIE FUNDRAISER

#### Sunday 8 March 2.30 pm & 5.30pm

UNITING CHURCH – 60 Tingle Ave, Margaret River

Tickets: \$20 including afternoon tea

Paid Audience: 45

Iyengar: The man, yoga, and the student's journey





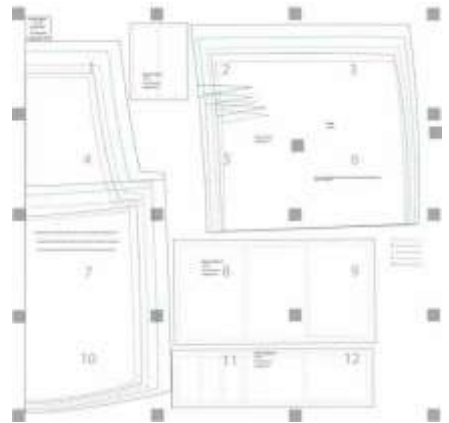
## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### THE APRON PROJECT

The idea was for a domestic easily accessible item to be the basis of an artwork / personal social commentary that could be easily created at home during this time of social isolating.

A Facebook group was created in March and the concept shared to community members. All aprons had to be submitted to the Arts Margaret River Office by the 23 October to be included in an exhibition at the Margaret River Hotel.

12 diverse aprons were created and displayed.



### MARGARET RIVER COMMUNITY STORY QUILT

**Community members were invited to create a panel that would be incorporated into a large quilt.**

Each panel had to be 15cm x 15cm, on a fabric backing and respond to the question: 'What makes our community and region special'?

Only one entry per person and the completed panels had to be delivered to the Arts Margaret River Office by 31 August 2020.

Panels could be sewn, painted, knitted/crocheted, embroidered, appliqued, screen printed etc. Local quilter Jo Jennings kindly volunteered to put the quilt together. 11 panels were received and the final quilt was included in the exhibition at the Margaret River Hotel in November.



## BYSTANDER EXHIBITION

### A celebration of our community and residents.

26 October – 7 November (10am – 5pm daily)

Margaret River Hotel

The exhibition was held in the Hotel (ex restaurant room) and featured:

–Bystander Stories and Photographs of 10 locals from Augusta, Cowaramup and Margaret River:

- Jan & Merv Smith \* Paul Sofilas \* Naomi Godden \* Dave Seegar \* Helen Collis \* Graham Noakes \* Wendy Roediger \* Ziggy & Starzy Bullock \* Michael Earl \* Kenzie Manson

Following on from the live performances, this exhibition comprised recorded audio and a large framed portrait of each of the local 'storytellers'.

–Community Story Quilt which featured 11 original quilt panels created by local artisans and school children.

–Apron Project which featured aprons created by local residents from a variety of materials.



## WORKSHOP WEEKEND

### Saturday 31 October & Sunday 1 November Fair Harvest

**Tickets:** \$50 ea incl morning or afternoon tea

**Paid Audience:** 74

**Performance Fee:** \$200 per artist + materials



### EXPLORE YOUR CREATIVE SIDE WITH AN ARRAY OF DIVERSE WORKSHOPS (SIX WORKSHOPS)

Learn new skills in a relaxed and enjoyable three hour class and take home a wonderful piece at the end of it.

Workshops: Build a Bee Hotel, Indigo Shibori Dyeing, Find you own Artistic Style, Make a Living Succulent Dreamcatcher, wildflower Painting, & Naturally Printed workshops.

The workshops were well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by all. Fair Harvest offered a lunch option for an additional cost.

