

Yarra News

Summer 2021 Vol. 32 No. 1

Chair's report for first newsletter of 2021

Welcome back to ADFAS Yarra for 2021. Christmas is over and we now look forward to a whole new, and I hope, better year for the arts generally and for ADFAS Yarra. As you will have noted from your membership renewal letter we have engaged a number of excellent Australian lecturers for the first half of the year.

Our planning for the second half of the year is well underway. We had hoped that some international lecturers would be able to come to Australia in the latter part of the year, but this has proven to be overly optimistic. As a result, we are now exploring a range of options for continuing with our wonderful Australian lecturers. All lecturers are carefully vetted by a national panel thereby ensuring a high standard for both international and Australian based speakers. The committee is working hard to finalise contracts and will send out a program to all members for the second half of the year in April 2021.

The committee is of course monitoring the Covid safe regulations carefully but at time of writing it looks likely that we will have to implement some changes to our catering offerings. We will revert to our traditional excellent morning and afternoon teas as soon as we are able and hope that you will understand our need to be cognisant of government regulations in relation to the serving of food and beverages.

Similarly, in order to maintain social distancing, we have scheduled all our lectures this year to take place in the Glen Eira Town Hall auditorium. This venue, while a bit cavernous, does allow us to have many more people appropriately distanced than the small theatrette would allow. Nevertheless, it is the intention to return to the theatrette as soon as we can.

We have rescheduled the excursion that was planned for Ballarat and Buninyong gardens in 2020 for April 8th this year. Bookings for this will be through Trybooking and will open in early March so do keep an eye out for this one. We will also have two special interest afternoons and one other excursion in the second half of the year and will let you know about these in April. The first half of the year has been kept relatively free of 'extras' in order to allow more time for certainty.

Two new committee members have joined us this year, Suzanne Katz and Anne Seares, and I know they will be welcomed by you all. This is also our first newsletter under our new editor, Jan Bennellick. I am sure you will agree that she has done a great job with this her first issue and we look forward to her continuing high standard of interesting arts articles and news in the year ahead.

Each member of the committee is available to answer questions and we welcome any feedback that you can provide about the lectures or anything that you believe would support your experience of ADFAS Yarra.

I look forward to enjoying our lecture series with you all in 2021.

Carol Johnston,
ADFAS Yarra Chair.

Young Arts Awards 2020

Each year ADFAS Yarra provides grants to young and emerging artists. These grants are made possible by your support of Special Interest sessions and excursions and by the generous donations from members to the Young Arts program.

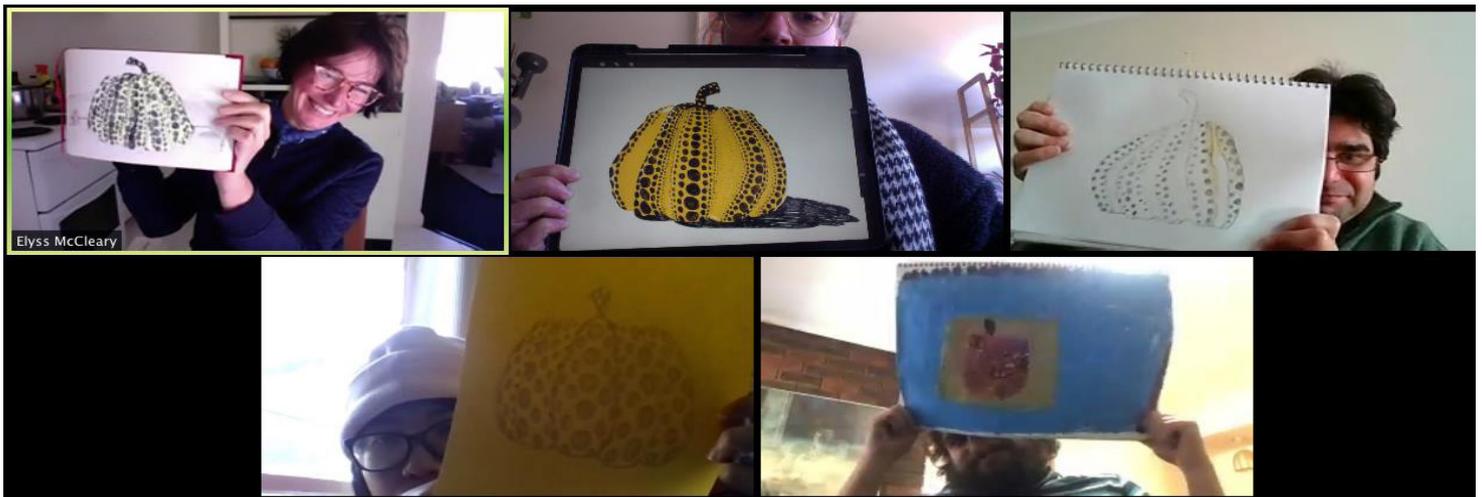
Our aim in making these awards is to include both individuals and small groups and to cover a wide range of art practices including art production and technical support. We recognise that even small amounts can make the difference to individuals and programmes and that this strategy spreads the word about ADFAS Yarra more broadly. The 2020 awards covered dance, music, artists with a disability and a museum exhibition. The total amount awarded was \$8,800.

Arts Project Australia \$2,000

Arts Project Australia supports artists with intellectual disabilities, promotes their work and advocates for their inclusion in contemporary art practice. Arts Project artists are included in exhibitions all over the world and are represented in both public and private collections.

The Arts Project Australia studio in Northcote is attended weekly by more than 140 artists with an intellectual disability. These artists are able to develop their own practice while supported by staff artists, all of whom are themselves professional artists. The creative direction of each artist is fostered and nurtured to elicit works of personal meaning and style, whether in painting, drawing, ceramics, printmaking, 3D sculpture or digital media. In 2019 Arts Project curated and facilitated artist participation in 56 national & international exhibitions and exhibited 1800+ artworks.

During 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions artists were unable to attend workshops. The ADFAS Yarra award was used to purchase Zoom licences and artist materials which were used to enable artists to continue their art practice remotely and to receive online support from staff artists.



Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM), \$1,000

ANAM is a classical music performance training facility. It is a national organisation with students from across Australia and New Zealand and is the only professional performance training institute of its kind in Australia, and one of few in the world.

The ADFAS Yarra prize for an outstanding solo recital was awarded to a pianist, Hannah Pike. By the age of four Hannah had decided that being a pianist was what she wanted to be when she grew up. Her notable performances include at Melbourne Recital Centre, Beleura House and Garden, and in the Utzon Room of the Sydney Opera House. Hannah enjoys working and performing as a percussionist. She has performed with the Queensland Youth Symphony, Queensland Wind Orchestra, Sunshine Coast Symphony Orchestra, and Noosa Orchestra, as well as a performance on-field for the 2015 NRL Grand Final series.

Dance Scholarship, University College, University of Melbourne \$1,500

University College (previously University Women's College) was founded in 1937 and was the first residential College for women affiliated with the University of Melbourne. The ADFAS Dance Scholarship is the first scholarship dedicated to dance students in the College's 83 year history.

The scholarship recipient, Katherine Whitaker, is a second year student whose dream is to dance with the Batsheva Dance Company in Israel. During 2020 dance students had to study online which, while acknowledging the difficulties, Katherine says has given her "a new way of looking at the way we approach movement and the process for making new works. I am very grateful for this [scholarship] as it will help me to continue to develop my skills and enable me to create exciting works in the future".

Concerto-Aria Competition, Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, University of Melbourne, \$2000

The Melbourne Conservatorium of Music (MCM) is the music school at the University of Melbourne and part of the Faculty of Fine Arts and Music.

The Concerto-Aria Competition is open to all currently enrolled MCM students. Each area nominates between one and three candidates. This competition is the ideal motivation for students to work hard on their concerto repertoire and the winner of first prize is guaranteed a concerto performance with the Symphony Orchestra in 2021.

In October our Chair, Dr. Carol Johnston and Young Arts Co-ordinator, Dr. Norma Sullivan attended the prize giving event via Zoom where our ADFAS Yarra Award of \$2000 was distributed between three performers: \$800 each to the two equal 1st prize winners, Jackie Wong, Violin and Caleb Wong Violoncello and \$400 to the 3rd prize winner Samantha Hargreaves, Soprano.

Jackie Wong began playing the violin at the age of five. In 2019, she was a prize winner in the Melbourne Youth Orchestra Virtuosity Concerto Competition and a national finalist in the Australian Youth Classical Music Competition and Melbourne Recital Centre Bach Competition. As a soloist, she has performed with the Melbourne Musicians Chamber Orchestra for their 40th anniversary season and presented a solo recital as a Young Performer at the Music in the Round festival. A passionate chamber musician, Jackie has participated as a Young Emerging Artist in the Mimir Chamber Music Festival in Melbourne and Texas. She also works professionally as a casual member of the Melbourne Chamber Orchestra. Jackie also holds Associate and Licentiate Diplomas in Pianoforte.

Caleb Wong began studying the cello at the age of six. In 2019 he finished studying at ANAM and is currently completing a Bachelor of Music at the MCM. He is the recipient of numerous awards and scholarships. In his commencing year at ANAM, he was the co-recipient of the Most Outstanding Performance in a Solo Recital award. In 2020 he performed as a soloist in Beethoven's Triple Concerto with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra. Caleb is regular member of the Australian Youth Orchestra touring with them as principle cello in 2019. He has been broadcast on ABC Classic FM, Fine Music 102.5 and many others.

Samantha Hargreaves holds a Bachelor of Music with First Class Honours from the MCM. In 2020 she continued her post-graduate studies, undertaking a Masters of Music (Opera Performance). She performed her first operatic role at sixteen as Dido in her school's production of Dido and Aeneas. In 2020 Samantha played the role of Pamina in the Masters production of Die Zauberflöte which was presented as a filmed performance due to COVID-19 limitations.

Music Visuals Production Award, Mannix College, Monash University \$1,300

Mannix College was founded in 1969 and largely represents students who have moved from rural and regional Victoria to study at Monash University, as well as honours and postgraduate students and visiting academic staff from all over Australia and around the world.

Oliver Chappel is a first year Engineering student from Central Victoria who wants to enhance his skills in circuitry and electronics to support the music scene. Oliver wants to offer young, regional musicians who struggle to gain exposure free, custom-made videos which match up to the feeling or theme of their musical tracks. He is pioneering a new way of modifying antiquated analogue VHS recorders and pre-digital TV's to produce video effects for online musical performances and for projecting over live performances. The technique - analogue video synthesis - is relatively unexplored in Australia. Funds from ADFAS Yarra were used to purchase a video synthesiser and a modified video enhancer for Oliver to use in making the modifications required to produce these visuals.



Oliver's response when he heard that his application to ADFAS Yarra to fund the equipment he required had been successful was "I am over the moon! I didn't think this would happen! It means a lot to me."

Tea Heaven: a Multi-Sensory Chinese Tea Experience, Museum of Chinese Australian History, \$1,000

The Museum of Chinese Australian History was established in 1985 with a charter to present the history of Australians of Chinese ancestry.

The Tea Heaven exhibition's aim was to promote awareness and appreciation of Chinese tea culture and traditions. Chinese tea has influenced and contributed to the culinary cultures of the various countries to which it has migrated. The exhibition was multi-sensory allowing visitors to experience tea through the 5 senses. The focus of the exhibition was the history of Chinese tea culture, Chinese tea migration: adoption and adaptation, Chinese tea in Australia, tea traditions (including art forms stemming from and related to tea culture) and tea wares.



ADFAS Yarra was the primary sponsor of the children's section of the exhibition which contained information panels, child-sized chairs and tables with tea sets to explore, materials and worksheets and display cabinet of tea pots and tea wares. Originally planned for May-June 2020, the exhibition runs from 8 February- 14 March 2021.

Patricia Robertson Fund, \$500

Each year ADFAS Yarra donates to this fund named in honour of a long serving chair of ADFAS who recognised that conservation is a significantly under-funded area of the arts and suggested that ADFAS could make a meaningful difference to this vital work. The money donated is used for the conservation of Australian cultural materials and for the training of young conservators.

*Send contributions by email to: **Editor:** Jan Bennelick, jangeo@bigpond.net.au
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Forthcoming Lectures

Lecture 1

Thursday 25 February 2021

10.00am & 1.30pm

Geoffrey Edwards

Bells and Pomegranates

Geoffrey Edwards is a former Director of the Geelong art gallery, a position that he held for 15 years before retiring in 2016. Prior to that, he was Senior Curator of Sculpture at the National Gallery of Victoria. In 2015 he received a Museums Australia (Victoria) Lifetime Achievement Award honouring his contribution to the Australian gallery and museum sector.

Since leaving the Geelong Gallery, Geoffrey has been in demand as a freelance curator, lecturer and consultant to private, corporate and government bodies. In recent years he has worked on an outdoor exhibition of sculpture, Sculpture at Barangaroo on Sydney Harbour, and for the Gandel family's Point Leo Estate Sculpture Park on the Mornington Peninsula.

The poetry of Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Alfred, Lord Tennyson, literary giants of the Victorian Age, is notable for its romantic imagination. As such, their work reflects a keen interest in the visual arts: in painters, paintings and photography. In this lecture Geoffrey considers that proposition together with an account of the Brownings as art collectors.

Lecture 2

Thursday 18 March 2021

10.00am & 1.30pm

Gabriella Coslovich

Whiteley on Trial

Gabriella Coslovich is an arts journalist and author with more than 20 years' experience, including 15 at The Age newspaper, where she was a senior arts writer. Her book, *Whiteley on Trial*, on Australia's most audacious case of alleged art fraud, won both a Walkley Award for Arts Journalism and the Davitt Award for nonfiction in 2018.

Can we successfully prosecute art fraud in Australia? In this lecture Gabriella tackles this thorny question using her first-hand experience of an extraordinary art fraud trial centring on three suspect paintings in the style of the celebrated and flawed Australian artist Brett Whiteley. Her answer may not reassure you.

Lecture 3

Thursday 6 May 2021

10.00am & 1.30pm

Cresside Collette

Fabricating the World - Tapestries from France and Flanders

Cresside is a tapestry artist and founding weaver of the Australian Tapestry Workshop. She taught tapestry weaving and drawing in the Studio Textiles course at RMIT for 11 years. Since 2011 she has run an annual tour *Mastering the Fine Art of Tapestry* to France and the United Kingdom to engage with the historical context and contemporary practice of this rich, tactile art form.

In this lecture Cresside will explore the history of tapestry weaving in these European centres over the centuries, and discuss the major suites of tapestries such as the 15th century *Lady* and the *Unicorn* that exists to this day.

Excursion:

Buninyong Gardens and Begonias Thursday April 8, 2021

On a beautiful autumn day what could be better than a visit to the Ballarat Botanical Gardens and two spectacular private gardens near Buninyong?

Our day will start at the Ballarat Botanical Gardens where there will be time to enjoy the magnificent old trees, grand vistas, begonias and sculptures of past Prime Ministers. We will then move on to the first private garden, Mount Boninyong. Mount Boninyong is believed to be one of the oldest surviving domestic gardens in the state. Our hostess and guide, Celia Burnham is a direct descendent of the original Scottish settlers who arrived in the area in 1838 and began their garden in the 1840's. A gardening notebook from 1845 lists the plants selected for this garden, many of which remain today. A background picture of the domestic and social life of early Victorian pastoralists emerges as you stroll around the property. The magnificent homestead, in which the family continue to live today, was built in 1884 and the garden surrounding it is dotted with National Trust registered significant trees.



Our next visit will provide a stunning and surprising contrast. Located at the foot of Mount Boninyong, Back Lake consists of a contemporary house and garden with a driveway bordered by impeccably maintained drystone walls. Our hosts, Anne and Berry King, are retired farmers and architects. They bought the property in 2006 and designed the rammed earth house and surrounding landscaping as one project so as to produce a cohesive whole. Their sources of inspiration and ideas included the Royal Botanic Gardens at Cranbourne and some early discussions with sculptor/landscaper Mel Ogden. The house was completed in 2010 and both house and garden blend as one and reflect their time and place in the Australian environment. There will be time to enjoy a stroll around the wonderful garden and to admire some of the over 90 species of birds recorded on the property.



Information regarding cost, departure details and morning tea and lunch arrangements will be provided closer to the excursion date.