

**Ballarat
International
Foto
Biennale**

26 August

—

22 October
2023

ballaratfoto.org
[@ballaratfoto](https://www.instagram.com/ballarاتفoto)

Festival Report



The history of innovation and culture in Ballarat begins thousands of years ago and Ballarat Foto acknowledges the traditional custodians, the Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung peoples. We acknowledge the richness of Aboriginal cultures throughout Australia and their connection to country. Ballarat Foto is an organisation drawing proudly on Aboriginal culture, knowledge and heritage in partnership with First Nations people.



“From the moment I stepped out of the car, we were warmly welcomed to Ballarat. All the wonderful volunteers were so cheerful, helpful and engaging. I loved the opportunity to wander around Ballarat and popping in to different venues.”

SURVEY RESPONDENT

Serwah Attafuah & Jonathan Zawada, *Digital Anthropocene*, installation view, photo by Garth Oriander

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Event Overview

CELEBRATING BALLARAT FOTO'S 10TH EDITION

As we wrap up the milestone 10th edition of Ballarat International Foto Biennale, we reflect on its transformative journey. Originating as a regional exhibition, it has evolved into Australia's premier photographic festival, captivating global audiences. The 2023 theme, 'The Real Thing', prompted a profound exploration of reality in today's image saturated world.

FIRST NATIONS FIRST

The Fire Country Initiative was launched within the Core Program, prioritising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists' empowerment and self-determination. The title is inspired by Wadawurrung Elder and Ballarat International Foto Biennale Ambassador Tammy Gilson, who is a fire knowledge holder. Featuring four artists, the Fire Country Initiative begins in 2023 as a spark, one we plan to nurture and grow with community consultation as the National Centre for Photography opens, facilitating an Aboriginal-led gallery space and program.

A PLATFORM FOR CURATING AND INNOVATION

Ballarat Foto's hallmark lies in curating groundbreaking exhibitions and introducing premieres to Australia and beyond. Notably, the *Prompted Peculiar – International AI Prize*, the world's first competition of its kind, sparked global discourse on the intersection of 'promptography' and visual culture.

The cultural resonance of the world-first *People Power – Platon* and *Instant Warhol* exhibitions and the dynamic themes explored in the curated Core Program cultivated personal connections to a wide range of contemporary works and ideas, garnering powerful responses from visitors.

A Ballarat International Foto Biennale exhibition created in partnership with Platon Studio, *People Power – Platon* will tour internationally, commencing in California in 2024.

BALLARAT: A LIVING CANVAS

Ballarat's rich history and vibrant cityscape are the perfect backdrop to the festival. Exhibitions spilled into its streets, businesses, and historic spaces, transforming the city into a living gallery. The National Centre of Photography showcased a spectacular 9-metre *Golden Monkey* sculpture by Melbourne artist Lisa Roet. We were delighted to see so many visitors admiring her work and taking advantage of this playful photo opportunity.



“The diversity and scale of the works has grown substantially – and has impressively improved in its 10 year history. This year was no exception. The biennale in Ballarat is always a highlight – and must see experience. Thank you to all for making it so!”

SURVEY RESPONDENT

“Impressive.” “Awe-inspiring.” “We just don’t seem to get shows like Platon in Australia – at the intersection of creative and mainstream documentary realms – it was so refreshing. I came from Melbourne especially to see this festival and sent others back to see it too.”

SURVEY RESPONDENT

Event Overview continued...

LOCAL BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Local industry and trade partners played a pivotal role in enriching the Ballarat Foto experience and fostering community involvement. Teaming up with Lucky & James, a Ballarat-based chocolatier, led to an exclusive chocolate range featuring the works of Core Program artists. This collaboration celebrates homegrown talent and offered the chance to win enticing prizes from local businesses, adding to the lively atmosphere of the festival.

The RACV x Ballarat Foto partnership facilitated captivating community initiatives, including workshops and exhibitions, providing individuals from diverse backgrounds with immersive photography experiences against the scenic backdrop of the RACV Goldfields Resort in Creswick.

Over five hundred guests joined us at Regent Cinemas Ballarat for the thought-provoking presentation of *The Power of Unity: Rekindling The Spirit of Optimism*, in which Platon, a world-renowned gifted storyteller and master photographer, shared insights into capturing the humanity of world leaders.

As a locally-led initiative in regional Victoria, we greatly value working with our local partners to provide unique experiences and contribute to our community and economy. The 2023 Ballarat International Foto Biennale has generated a direct economic impact of \$9.7 million for Ballarat, with a flow on benefit to local economies of \$28.1 million accompanied by a robust media profile encompassing over 440 stories across various platforms, valued at \$64.86 million.

NURTURING PHOTOGRAPHERS AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Ballarat Foto supports professional and emerging photographers from diverse backgrounds in commercial, documentary, fine art, and traditional photographic processes. Showcasing their work alongside renowned international artists and blockbuster exhibitions boosts visibility and marketing potential.

The Open Program, featuring 82 exhibitions and 330 artists, celebrated talented local and international photographers. *A Wall of Women by Women* by Unexposed Collective marked a

milestone, showcasing the world's largest-ever exhibition of women and non-binary street photographers.

The Real Thing exhibition of fifteen Victorian regional photographers, curated by festival founder Jeff Moorfoot OAM, set a new direction for regional inclusion supported by the Australian Government's Regional Arts Fund. In September 2023, the exhibition tour to the 23rd Pingyao International Photography Festival, one of the largest and most prestigious photography events, showcased regional artists on an international stage.

Beyond being a showcase of art, Ballarat Foto is a nexus for artistic collaboration. Masterclasses, competitions, community programs, and interactive opportunities have broadened the conversation about photography, connecting local, national, and international photographers.

A highlight keynote presentation, *The Photographic Program of AI* by Katrina Sluis looked at recent advances in machine learning and how these would not be possible without the labour of millions of photographers. It was recorded by ABC Radio National for Big Ideas in October. In

August, sixteen artists and musicians joined hosts Gavin McGrath, Jane McNaughton and Vanessa Gerrans for ABC's broadcast of the festival live from the Art Gallery of Ballarat.

In 2023, we introduced the Ballarat Foto Kids' Hub, a dedicated space for people of all ages to learn about photography. 2,012 participants enjoyed workshops and activities alongside school holiday programs and resources like the Fire Country Initiative Education Kit.

THE IMPACT BEYOND

Our global reach expanded further, attracting renowned photographers and artists worldwide. The 2023 Ballarat International Foto Biennale drew 39,228 visitors, with 9,635 Festival Passes sold for the *People Power – Platon* exhibition. The 2023 curated Core Program showcased twenty-three exhibitions by Australian and international artists – many unveiled as a world premiere and never before seen in Australia. During the opening weekend, visitors had the opportunity to interact with renowned artists including Platon (USA), Yvonne Todd (NZL), Erik Johansson (SWE), Telly Tuita (TON/AUS/NZL), and Vineet Vohra (IND).

During the opening days of the Biennale, we welcomed festival directors MNZM (Auckland Festival of Photography/NZL), Moshe Rosenzweig OAM (Head On Photo Festival/AUS) and Dr Shahidul Alam (Chobi Mela International

Photography Festival/BGD) to Ballarat for the Asia Pacific Photoforum – a collaboration of festivals of photography from Asia, Oceania and the Pacific Rim.

GRATITUDE AND RECOGNITION

We extend heartfelt gratitude to our sponsors, partners, volunteers, and contributors for their unwavering support. Special thanks to the City of Ballarat, the Victorian Government and to our principal sponsors, RACV and Total Outdoor Media (TOM). Together, we have shaped a cultural legacy that will endure beyond the festival's duration. As we bid farewell to this chapter, let the conversations sparked and the images captured, continue to inspire and enrich our lives.

Vanessa Gerrans
CEO, Ballarat Foto



Michael Jalaru Torres, *Vessel*, installation view, photo by Garth Oriander

“Laid back yet organized... truly Ballarat way of showcasing arts and culture. Well done to all the crew who worked to pull off a massive star like Platon to Melbourne. You guys made my dream come true! Thank you!!”

SURVEY RESPONDENT

About Ballarat Foto

The Ballarat International Foto Biennale, a globally acclaimed event, occurs every two years, captivating audiences and drawing revered photographic artists from around the world. The festival serves as a catalyst, sparking inquiry, exploration, and transformation through the impactful medium of photographic art.

As a locally-led initiative in regional Victoria, Ballarat has proved the perfect backdrop for this festival, as its businesses, venues, laneways and historic venues become a living city exhibition, a trail for visitors to appreciate with something unique at every turn.

The Biennale proudly showcases work from domestic and international artists that is new or previously unseen in Australia and provides opportunities for new and emerging artists to exhibit their work. It has become a much-loved contributor to the cultural life of Ballarat city, with a program that has continually expanded in response to audience and creative demand.

In 2018, with the support of four Ballarat-based philanthropists, Ballarat Foto purchased the former Union Bank – a historic building within the arts precinct of central Ballarat – with the vision of establishing a national centre for photography and a permanent home for the Biennale.

Our friends and supporters share a collective enthusiasm and vision for the future direction of Australian photography. As registered members of the National Association for Visual Artists (NAVA) and the International Biennial Association (IBA), we ensure all our artists receive the support they deserve.



“Creative minds rarely stand still. Change is an opportunity for renewal. The National Centre for Photography will provide an important hub for active creativity for all those who have ever stood behind a camera. It will be an exciting addition to individual imagination and to all our artistic endeavours.”

HON STEVE BRACKS AC

National Centre For Photography

A world-class centre for the art of photography and visual culture.

*An exciting new journey.
For photography.
For Ballarat.
For Australia.
For creative endeavour.*

SHOWCASING THE VITAL ENERGY OF PHOTOGRAPHY

As our year-round public and education programs continue to build further on the Biennale and its cultural contribution to the city, the establishment of the National Centre for Photography is a logical and powerful step forward for all our creative energies.

Through this exciting new cultural asset, we will place a focus on First Nations artists, reconciliation and self-determination, and put innovation, learning, and creative excellence at the core of our work.

Our important new home will showcase the vital energy of photography at the heart of the community, promoting diversity, access and inclusion and working in an ethically minded, socially responsible and environmentally sustainable way.

The result: a dramatically expanded and reconceptualised program that touches and explores all aspects of the art form and reinforces the popular Biennale festival as Australia's flagship event for photography.

We are so excited to be able to deliver this for Ballarat.

YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO BE INVOLVED

Ballarat International Foto Biennale has grown from humble beginnings to a large-scale event only through the support of generous individuals, businesses, Council and Government that share in the vision of enriching regional cultural life, connecting beyond the region to an international dialogue about photography as an art form. The National Centre for Photography continues that growth.

Spearheaded by a significant \$6.7m contribution from the Victorian Government, this project beckons further engagement to allow us to fully deliver this important national cultural asset.

TARGET: \$1.7M

Allowing us to complete the interior design and fit-out ready for opening the National Centre for Photography to the public in 2026.

Your leadership and generosity will help elevate this project, ensuring that the National Centre for Photography attains a level of international excellence showcasing cultural achievement for generations to come.

Enabling ideas to grow, promoting discussion, disrupting how we live and think about the world.

You can make a difference.

If you care about innovation, creativity and life's memories, join us.

2023 Festival Highlights

60
Days

437
Artists

39,000+
Attendees

80%
Attendees from outside Ballarat

68,000+
Views of Core Program Exhibitions Combined

23
Core program exhibitions

82
Open program exhibitions



Colleen Raven Strangways, *UV Songlines: Illuminating ancestral roots*, installation view, photo by Garth Oriander

125
Events & workshops

148
Exhibitions & events

107
Core Program Artists

330
Open Program Artists

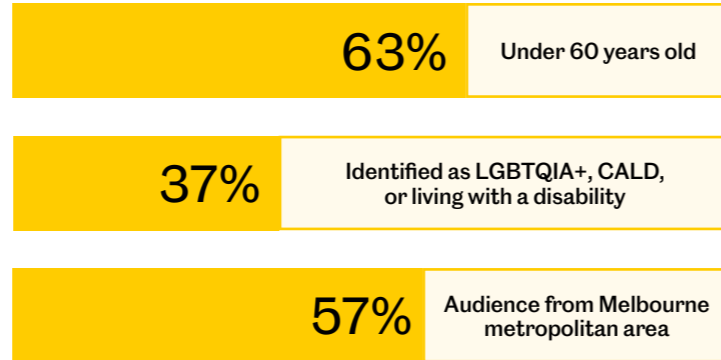
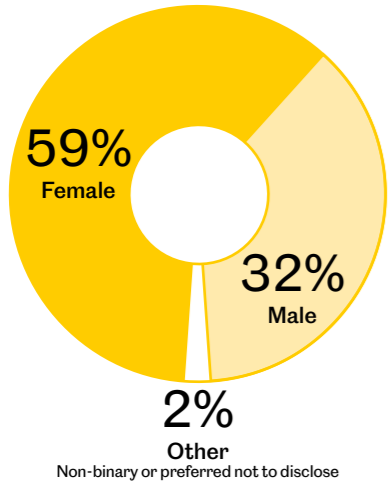
69
Open Program venues

7
Curators

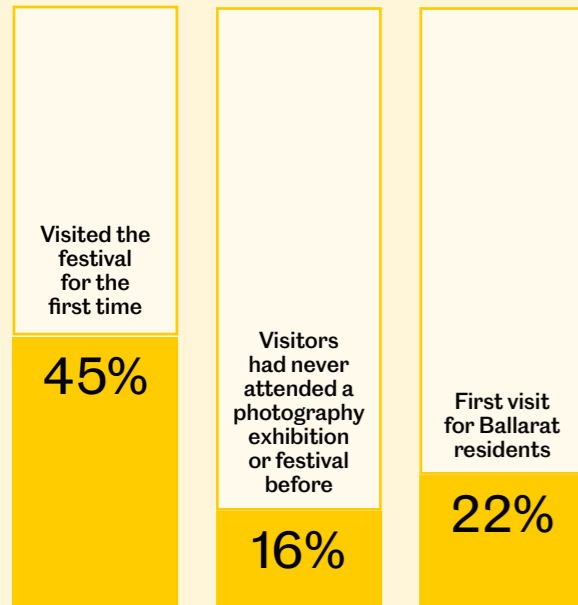
127
Volunteers
(volunteers contributed 4,309 hours)

Audience Profile

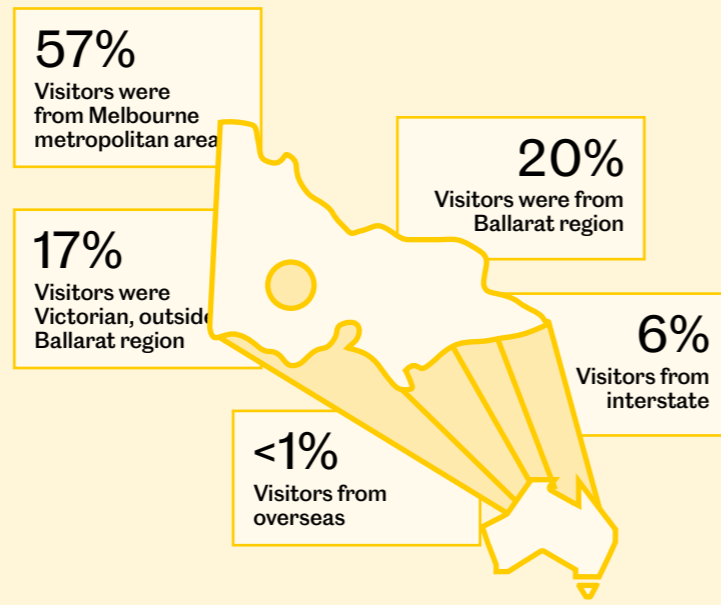
DEMOGRAPHICS



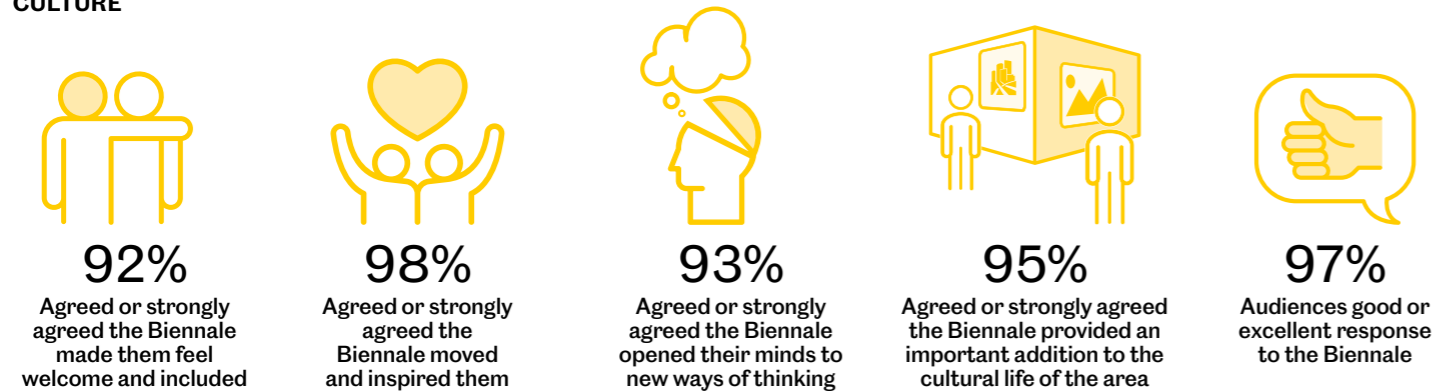
ATTENDANCE HISTORY



VENUE



CULTURE

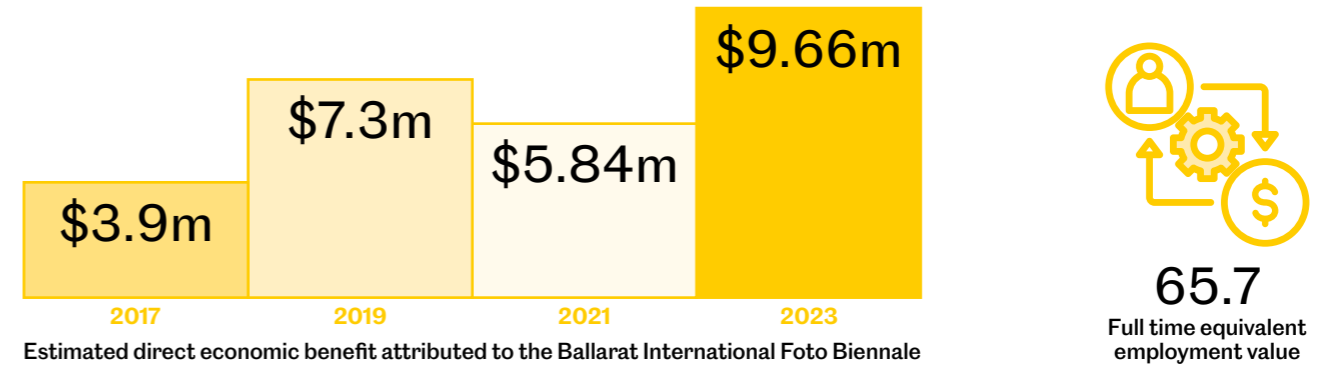


Economic Impact

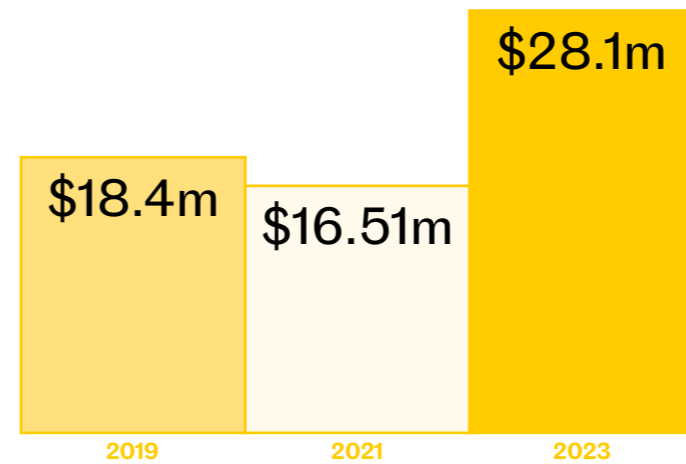
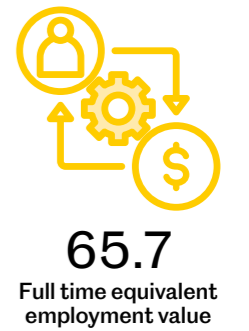
VISITATION



OUTCOMES



Estimated direct economic benefit attributed to the Ballarat International Foto Biennale



Estimated indirect economic benefit attributed to the Ballarat International Foto Biennale



How We Connect

PUBLIC RELATIONS



445
Pieces of coverage



1.76M
Estimated views



88
Print articles



162
Online articles



74
TV breaks



121
Radio breaks



3.17K
Facebook shares



\$64.86M
Estimated PR value

ADVERTISING



28
Print advertisements
(6 national and 4 Victorian publications)



1,810,044
Ad impressions
Google Display Network



4,758
Ad impressions
Google Search

OUTDOOR



1,050
Rock posters



2
Megasites



11
Billboards

DISTRIBUTION



30,000
Programs Ballarat, Melbourne, Geelong,
Bendigo, Castlemaine, Daylesford



10,000
Free tote bags



1,000
A3 cafe posters
Melbourne, Ballarat

SOCIAL MEDIA



514,144
Users reached



3.08M
Ad impressions



1,333
Purchase conversions



286%
Return on Ad Spend
Facebook/Instagram

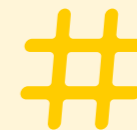
NEW SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS



11,753
Facebook
(7.4% increase from 2021)



13,119
Instagram
(18.5% increase from 2021)



5,000+
#ballaratfoto posts

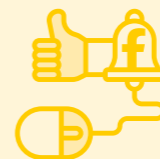


Top locations for
social media followers:
Melbourne / Ballarat / Sydney

SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT



Instagram
137 posts
291,276 reach



Facebook
170 Posts
412,227 Reach



Website
479,233 page views
72,274 unique visitors



Email
21,433 subscribers
(15% increase from 2021)

The Real Thing



Photo by Garth Oriander



Photo by Ali Webb

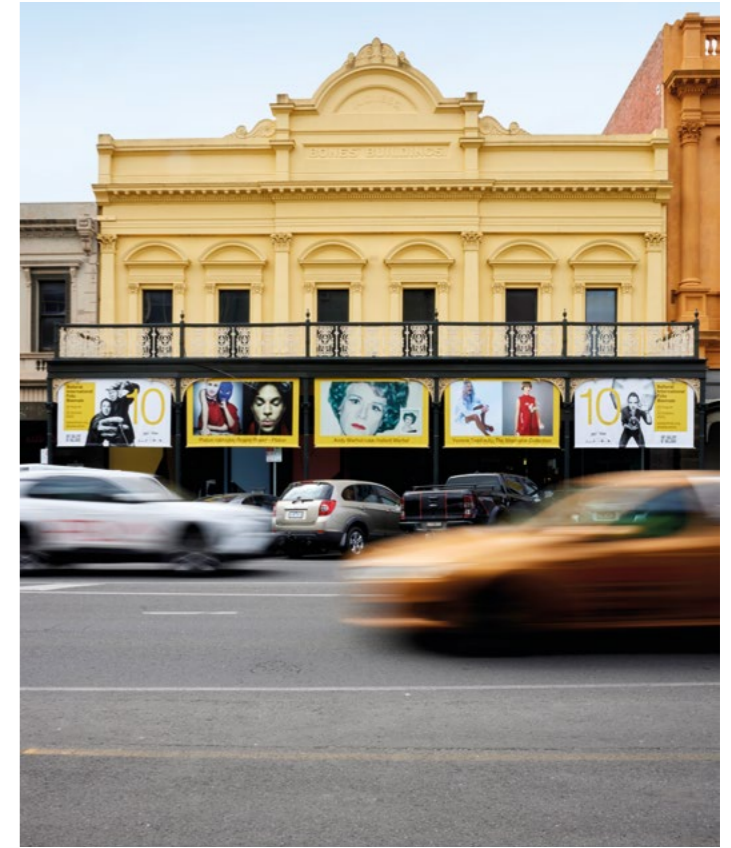


Photo by Garth Oriander

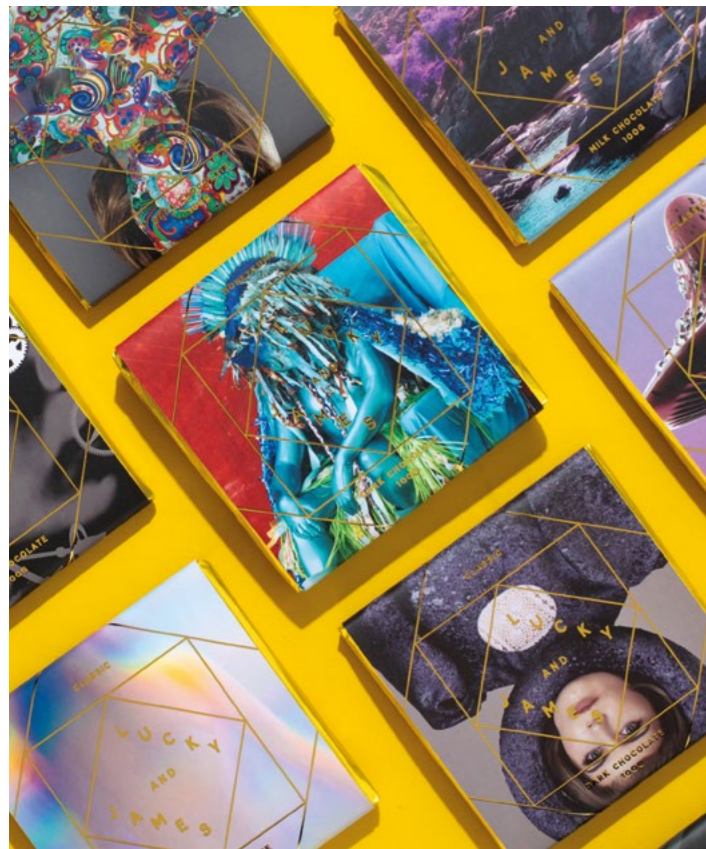


Photo by Carl Wilson



Photo by Ali Webb



Photo by Ali Webb

Core Program

PLATON (GBR/USA) PEOPLE POWER – PLATON WORLD PREMIERE

People Power – Platon is an exhibition of arresting portraits of some of the most significant people of our time. From the cool gaze of Putin to the contortion of Gaddafi, the art and expression of Vivienne Westwood, the influence of Yoko Ono, the dynamism of Prince, the courage of Michelle Obama, the power of Adele, the striking features of Cate Blanchett, the rebellion of Pussy Riot – Platon's work is powerful.

Platon's iconic work has been featured on the covers and pages of global magazines including *George*, *Vanity Fair*, *GQ*, *Vogue*, *The New York Times* and more. Platon has photographed more than 30 covers for *Time* magazine including Russian President Vladimir Putin in 2007. Since then, his portrait of Putin has become a symbol of resistance for those fighting for rights in Russia.

Platon makes us aware of both presence and absence with images that immerse us in a narrative that moves us to empathy, reminding us that despite our differences, we share the capacity to be human.

VENUE

Art Gallery of Ballarat

PLATON SPEAKS IN PERSON

The Power of Unity: Rekindling The Spirit of Optimism
Saturday 26 August, Regent Cinemas Ballarat

SCREENING

My Body is Not a Weapon
A debut film by Platon
2 September–21 October, every Saturday,
Regent Cinemas Ballarat

VISITORS: 9,147

A Ballarat International Foto Biennale exhibition created in partnership with Platon Studio.

Special thanks to Platon, Michele Murray and Michael Foley, Platon Studio; Ben Cox, Art Gallery of Ballarat.

ANDY WARHOL (USA) INSTANT WARHOL WORLD PREMIERE

Instant Warhol takes us straight to Andy Warhol's point of view, famous, fleeting, commercialised, constructed, in a series of his Polaroid photographs of people in the spotlight in the '70s and '80s. This amazing collection from The Brant Foundation in New York shows us Warhol's understanding of the superficial nature of celebrity in American society, his obsession with the people behind the personas, and the fleeting nature of fame. Many of the 59 images show the line and expression of famous faces including Mick Jagger, Liza Minelli, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Jane Fonda and Dolly Parton. Many of these would later be translated into Warhol's iconic screen prints.

VENUE

Art Gallery of Ballarat

CONVERSATION

Instant Warhol: glamour, fame and friendships
In conversation with Julie Robinson, Senior Curator of Prints, Drawings & Photographs, Art Gallery of South Australia
Thursday 28 September, Art Gallery of Ballarat

VISITORS: 4,303

A Ballarat International Foto Biennale exhibition, courtesy of The Brant Foundation, Greenwich, Connecticut, USA. Curated by Vanessa Gerrans, Ballarat Foto.

Special thanks to Allison and Peter Brant, The Brant Foundation; and Georgia Manifold, GMC Art Projects.



Platon, *People Power – Platon*, installation view, photo by Garth Oriander



Andy Warhol, *Instant Warhol*, installation view, photo by Garth Oriander

Core Program continued...

YVONNE TODD (NZL) *THE STEPHANIE COLLECTION* WORLD PREMIERE

Yvonne Todd's photographs can make you look twice. There is something not quite right – a discomfort, an awkward experience.

This New Zealand-based photographer is known for her unique and unconventional approach to portraiture. Her work challenges photographic clichés by manipulating traditional photographic styles to create unexpected and provocative relationships.

VENUE
Art Gallery of Ballarat

PANEL DISCUSSION
In conversation with
David Sequeira, Director, Fiona and Sidney Myer Gallery
Sunday 27 August, Art Gallery of Ballarat

VISITORS: 4,303

Presented in partnership with the Art Gallery of Ballarat.
Proudly sponsored by Thea and Peter Linley.
Special thanks to McLeavey Gallery, Wellington.



Yvonne Todd, *The Stephanie Collection*, installation view, photo by Garth Oriander

ERIK JOHANSSON (SWE) *HOW TO FLY* WORLD PREMIERE

How To Fly is a journey through the imaginary worlds of Swedish artist Erik Johansson. Johansson combines photographic elements to create believable images, but the logical inconsistencies make us question what we see. There are no computer-generated, illustrated or stock photos in Johansson's artworks, just seamless combinations of his own photographs. It is a long process, and he only creates around eight new images per year. With a keen eye for detail and mastery of production, his optical illusions present inner worlds that defy reality.

VENUE
The Mining Exchange

ARTIST TALK
The Art of Lunch with Erik Johansson, Aldona Kmieć and Selina Ou
Saturday 2 September, RACV Goldfields Resort

VISITORS: 9,013

A Ballarat International Foto Biennale exhibition created in partnership with Erik Johansson Studio.
Proudly sponsored by the Mitchell Family; RACV, Ballarat Foto 2023 Principal Partner; and Creative Framing, Ballarat Foto 2023 Lead Framing Sponsor.
Special thanks to Craig Mitchell and Sally McKay.
Exhibition design by Tina Peterkova.



Erik Johansson, *How To Fly*, installation view, photo by Garth Oriander



Kyle Archie Knight, from the series *Cruising for a Bruising* (detail), 2022

KYLE ARCHIE KNIGHT (AUS) *CRUISING FOR A BRUISING* WORLD PREMIERE

Kyle Archie Knight's *Cruising for a Bruising* is a camp love letter to the Australian suburbs. Growing up queer in outer-metropolitan Naarm (Melbourne), Knight found themselves drawn to explore the streets of their family neighbourhood. Their search for moments that capture the essence of suburbia results in a celebration of the surreal and the mundane, the humorous and the humdrum.

VENUE
The Mining Exchange

PANEL DISCUSSION
Fire Country Initiative artists with Nici Cumpston OAM
Saturday 26 August, Art Gallery of Ballarat

VISITORS: 2,240

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its arts funding and advisory body.
A Ballarat International Foto Biennale exhibition commissioned as part of the Fire Country Initiative, 2023.
The *Cruising for a Bruising* publication is published and distributed by Helen Frajman, Director of M.33, with assistance from Ballarat Foto.
Supported by Revolution Print.

“The exhibits were beautifully curated and presented, and it made me very proud to bring my friends to Ballarat so they could experience it. I felt privileged to witness some striking images and I will take a lot away from this experience. The staff and volunteers in all venues were friendly and welcoming.”

SURVEY RESPONDENT

Core Program continued...

CURATED BY JEFF MOORFOOT OAM (AUS) *THE REAL THING*

WORLD PREMIERE

Jeff Moorfoot OAM, founding father of the Ballarat International Foto Biennale (2005-2015), returns to curate *The Real Thing* – a milestone exhibition for the Biennale's 10th edition. Fifteen regional Victorian photographers responded to the festival theme *The Real Thing* and Russell Morris's 1969 song of the same name, which presented an incongruity to the complex production values and song length of more than double the length of most singles of the day. *The Real Thing* celebrates the expertise and thriving communities of practising photographers in regional Victoria.

ARTISTS

John Ansell (Traralgon)
Robert Ashton (Aireys Inlet)
Tim Burder (Daylesford)
Andrew Chapman OAM (Warragul)
Peter Dunphy (Beechworth)
Trevor Foon (Wonthaggi)
Jacqui Henshaw (Macedon)
Aldona Kmiec (Melbourne/Ballarat/Gippsland)
Julie Millowick OAM (Fryerstown)
Rachel Mounsey (Mallacoota)

Harry Nankin (Castlemaine)
Kim Percy (Hepburn Springs)
Michael Rayner (Castlemaine)
Sandy Scheltema (Trentham)
Ellie Young (Trentham East)

VENUE

41 Lydiard St North

ARTIST TALK

The Real Thing with Jeff Moorfoot
Sunday 10 September, 41 Lydiard St North

VISITORS: 6,752

This project was made possible by the Australian Government's Regional Arts Fund, which supports the arts in regional and remote Australia.

Special thanks to The George Hotel Ballarat.



The Real Thing, curated by Jeff Moorfoot OAM, Photo by Garth Oriander featuring John Ansell (left) and Jacqui Henshaw (right)

COLLEEN RAVEN STRANGWAYS (AUS) *UV SONGLINES: ILLUMINATING ANCESTRAL ROOTS*

WORLD PREMIERE

Colleen Raven Strangways, an Arabana, Mudbura, Gurindji, and Warlpiri woman, channels an unwavering spirit of activism and recognition through her photography, leaving an indelible impact.

Nurtured by the unwavering strength of resilient First Nations women and her pioneering father, her work emanates from an intrinsic longing to encapsulate the very essence of Aboriginal culture, while magnifying the uplifting narratives of resilience and magnificence within her community.

VENUE

52 Lydiard St North

PANEL DISCUSSION

Fire Country Initiative artists with Nici Cumpston OAM
Saturday 26 August, Art Gallery of Ballarat

VISITORS: 3,443

A Ballarat International Foto Biennale exhibition commissioned in partnership with Tarnanthi: Festival of Contemporary Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art, Art Gallery of South Australia.

Proudly supported by the Art Gallery of Ballarat Foundation. Special thanks to Su Yung.

This project is part of the Fire Country Initiative, 2023.

Colleen Raven Strangways is part of Blak Lens Australian Photographers & Videographers Collective.



Colleen Raven Strangways, *UV Songlines: Illuminating ancestral roots*, installation view, photo by Garth Oriander

Core Program continued...

MICHAEL JALARU TORRES (AUS) *VESSEL*

WORLD PREMIERE

As a Djugun and Yawuru Man with tribal connections to the Jabirr Jabirr and Gooniyandi people, Michael Jalaru Torres draws inspiration from the unique landscapes and people of the Kimberley region. His photography poems illuminate Australia's dark history and modern-day issues that shape communities, both remote and urban.

VENUE

41 Lydiard St North

PANEL DISCUSSION

Fire Country Initiative artists with Nici Cumpston OAM
Saturday 26 August, Art Gallery of Ballarat

VISITORS: 3,325

Proudly supported by The George Hotel Ballarat.

A Ballarat International Foto Biennale exhibition commissioned as part of the Fire Country Initiative, 2023.

Michael Jalaru Torres is the Founder of Blak Lens Australian Photographers & Videographers Collective.



Michael Jalaru Torres, from the series *Vessel*, 2023

STEPHEN DUPONT (AUS) *FUCKED UP FOTOS*

WORLD PREMIERE

Stephen Dupont's photographic mishaps celebrate change and imperfection in *Fucked Up Fotos*. The series spans thirty years, five continents and more than a dozen countries, including Afghanistan, Papua New Guinea, China and Romania. It is a catalogue of everything that can go wrong in photography, featuring double exposures, light leaks, X-ray clouding, and corrupted computer files. Dupont finds spectacular beauty within the frame despite unintended damage to his images.

VENUE

Post Office Gallery

ARTIST TALK

Stephen Dupont in conversation with Andrew Quilty – War: The Real Thing
Sunday 27 August, Art Gallery of Ballarat

VISITORS: 6,110

A Ballarat International Foto Biennale exhibition.

Proudly supported by Federation University.



Stephen Dupont, *Fucked up Fotos*, installation view, photo by Garth Oriander

KARENNE ANN (AUS) & HEATHER HORROCKS (AUS) *EFFACEMENT*

WORLD PREMIERE

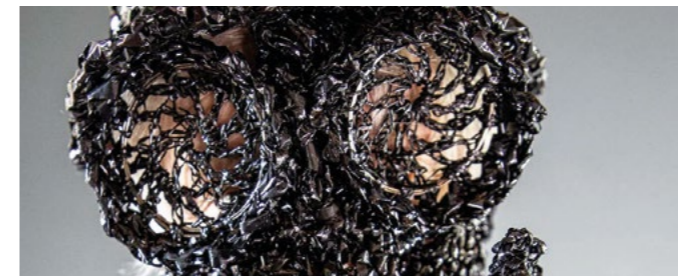
Photographer Karenne Ann and mask maker Heather Horrocks explore identity and how masks can change the way you are seen. In this exhibition Karenne Ann's portraits of Heather wearing her masks loom large and distort her image in a post-pandemic collaboration called ISOyoh.

VENUE

Art Gallery of Ballarat

VISITORS: 4,303

Presented by the Art Gallery of Ballarat



ISOyoh collaboration (Karenne Ann & Heather Horrocks), *She the Effaced* (detail), 2022

IAN KEMP (AUS) *NEVERLASTING*

WORLD PREMIERE

For Ballarat-based photographer Ian Kemp, images of the natural world are a metaphor for the transience of human life – its permanence and impermanence. Kemp uses the tonal and textural properties of etching and other traditional printing processes to imbue these works with otherworldliness.

VENUE

Art Gallery of Ballarat

VISITORS: 4,303

Presented by the Art Gallery of Ballarat



Ian Kemp, *Cono de Arita*, 2023

RAMAK BAMZAR (AUS/IRN) *PRO FEMINA*

WORLD PREMIERE

Iranian-born visual artist and photographer Bamzar explores how cultural and religious norms can shape women's beliefs, values, and behaviours and can influence their sense of self-worth and agency. In these striking works, Bamzar examines the gap between viewing street protests from a distance through a video or photograph and being on the streets facing the bullets and batons of the revolutionary guard of the repressive Iranian regime.

VENUE

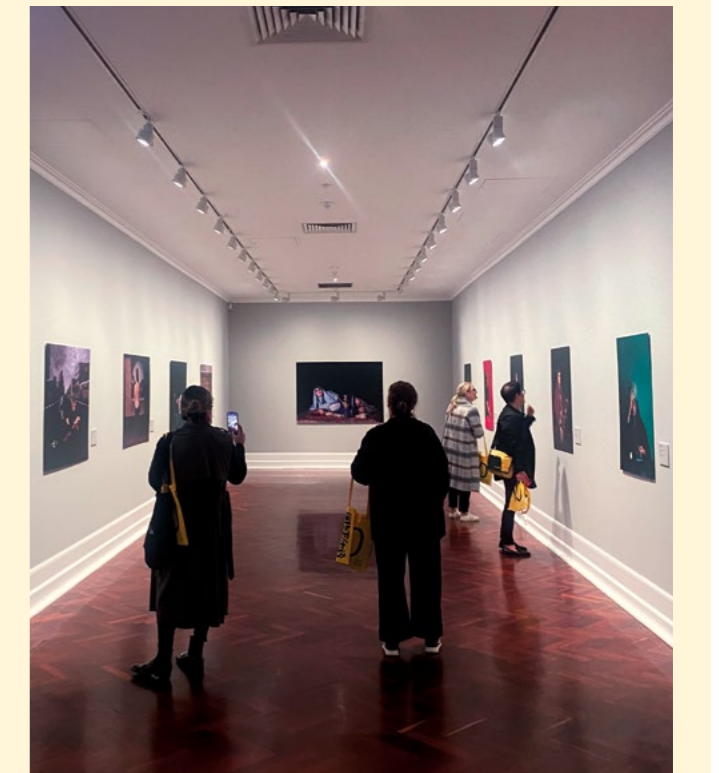
Art Gallery of Ballarat, curated by Julie McLaren

ARTIST TALK

Ramak Bamzar in conversation with Julie McLaren
Saturday 26 August, Art Gallery of Ballarat

VISITORS: 3,325

Presented by the Art Gallery of Ballarat



Ramak Bamzar, *Pro Femina*, installation view, photo by Vanessa Gerrans

Core Program continued...

MARTIN KANTOR PORTRAIT PRIZE

AUSTRALIAN EXCLUSIVE
BALLARAT TOWN HALL

The Ballarat International Foto Biennale *Martin Kantor Portrait Prize* is an opportunity for photo media artists to showcase their talent and have their work viewed at one of the most prestigious photographic events in Australia. The prize is acquisitive, with the first prize of \$15,000 awarded to the most exceptional portrait. The winner and finalists are showcased in an exhibition during the 10th edition Ballarat International Foto Biennale 2023.

AWARD FINALISTS

Riste Andrievski
Catherine Black
Simon Dow
Stephen Dupont
Tom Goldner
Paul Gosney
Tony Kearney
Mia Mala McDonald
Mark Munro
Matthew Newton
Eva Otsing
Kristoffer Paulsen
Mike Reed
Allison Rose
Anna Shimshak
Marcus Struzina
Matthew Thorne
Tobias Titz
Rudiger Wasser
Louisa West

JUDGES

Helen Ennis, Curator and Author
Magda Keaney, Curator, National Portrait Gallery
Russell Storer, The National Gallery of Australia

AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT

Saturday 14 October
Ballarat Town Hall

WINNER

Matthew Thorne, *Warren Ellis in his garden in Paris*, 2022

PEOPLE'S CHOICE WINNER

Tobias Titz, *Mary Dhapalany*, 2016

VISITORS: 4,435

Julie Kantor and Michael Kantor have graciously sponsored this award in memory of their brother, Martin Kantor.

Proudly supported by Ballarat City Council.

PROMPTED PECULIAR – INTERNATIONAL AI PRIZE

WORLD PREMIERE
BAaD GALLERY & EVENTS

The inaugural *Prompted Peculiar – International AI Prize* brings us squarely into the world of images generated by prompting Artificial Intelligence to create art. This is a global competition offering a \$2,000 prize to the overall winner and \$1,000 to the People's Choice Award.

As new technology impacts visual culture, this prize is an invitation to debate where this new art of 'promptography' belongs. The jury shortlist of AI images are exhibited during the festival and visitors are invited to cast their vote for the People's Choice award. The term 'promptography' was popularised in 2023 when photographer Boris Eldagsen turned down first prize in the creative open category of the Sony World Photography Awards because his image *The Electrician* was generated by AI, and in his words was 'not photography'.

AWARD FINALISTS

Kate Ballis
Tom Blachford
Jasneet Dhingra
Stacy Elson
Adrian Elton
Jonathon Harris
Breeanna Hill
Ashadi Hopper
Nic Kocher
Pavel Kohout
Derek Kreckler
Morganna Magee
Carolyn McKay
Annika Nordenskiöld
Kate Robertson
Marcus Rose
Jane Shadbolt
Hanna Silver
Keren Sohezki
David von Bassewitz

JUDGES

Boris Eldagsen, AI Artist
Una Rey, Editor, Artlink Magazine
Vanessa Gerrans, CEO, Ballarat Foto

AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT

Sunday 8 October
BAaD Gallery & Events

WINNER

Annika Nordenskiöld, *Twin Sisters in Love*, 2023

PEOPLE'S CHOICE WINNER

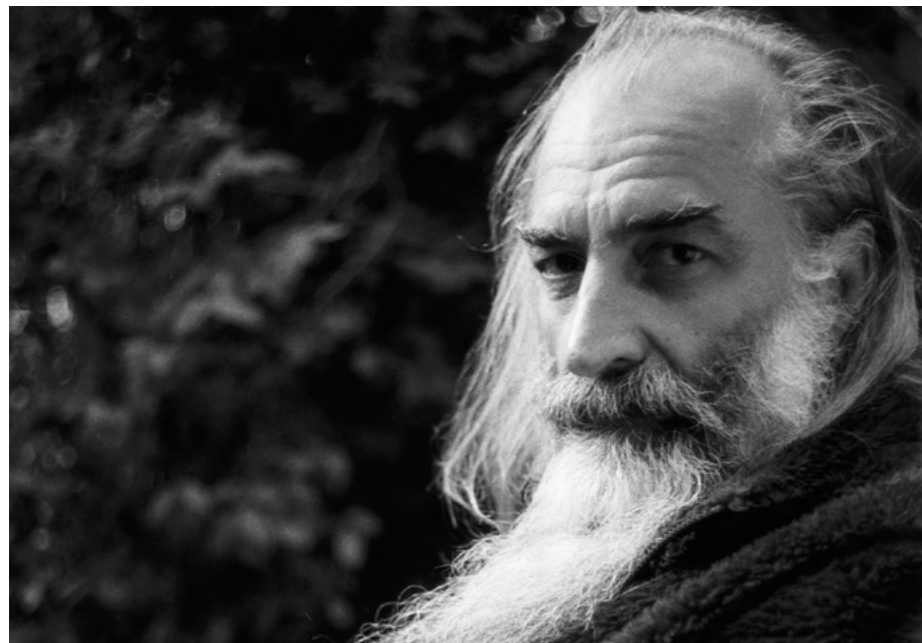
Hanna Silver, *Robot Inter-marriage, Melbourne 1895*, 2023

VISITORS: 588

Presented by the Ballarat International Foto Biennale.

Proudly supported by BAaD Gallery & Events.

Special thanks to Mick Moloney; Warren Armstrong, Alana Kushnir.



Matthew Thorne, *Warren Ellis in his garden in Paris* (detail), 2022



Annika Nordenskiöld, *Twin Sisters in Love* (detail), 2023

Foto at RACV

Proudly supported by RACV Principal Partner, Ballarat Foto 2023



“I really love the fact that RACV has supported the Biennale. I think this sends a very positive message to your members. I really loved the Johansson ArtHouse exhibition. It was well worth seeing.”

RACV SURVEY RESPONDENT

Naomi Hobson, *Within the Landscape: Naomi Hobson, Selina Ou & Lisa Sorgini*, installation view, photo courtesy of RACV

The Art of Lunch at RACV Goldfields Resort was a delightful fusion of fine art and culinary excellence. Guests savoured exceptional cuisine while artists Erik Johansson, Aldona Kmieć and Selina Ou shared the intricacies of their Ballarat Foto projects. School holiday programs for children, Light Painting with Peter Solness, and Food Photography 101 with Shellie Froidevaux and Ewen Bell created an enriching experience for all attendees.

NAOMI HOBSON (AUS), SELINA OU (AUS) & LISA SORGINI (AUS) **WITHIN THE LANDSCAPE: NAOMI HOBSON, SELINA OU & LISA SORGINI**

WORLD PREMIERE

Hidden outside, around the RACV Goldfields Resort, *Within the Landscape* examined recent Australian photography that focuses on children and adolescents within three distinct regions of Australia. Naomi Hobson shares with us her home in Remote Far North Queensland; Selina Ou, suburban Melbourne; and Lisa Sorgini the Northern Rivers of New South Wales.

Curated by Adam Harding, Visual Arts Curator RACV



Erik Johansson, *Behind the Image: Erik Johansson*, installation view, photo courtesy of RACV

ERIK JOHANSSON (SWE) **BEHIND THE IMAGE: ERIK JOHANSSON** **WORLD PREMIERE**

Step behind the curtain, or in this case the image, and into the world of Swedish artist Erik Johansson at the ArtHouse, RACV Goldfields Resort. Using original drawings and short documentaries, learn how Erik's photography is brought to life with digital effects to create his world-renowned images.



Aldona Kmieć, *Winterbloom*, installation view, photo courtesy of RACV

ALDONA KMIĘĆ (POL/AUS) **WINTERBLOOM** **WORLD PREMIERE**

Aldona Kmieć invites us to explore the boundaries of our own imaginations and to embrace the power of creativity in her new series. *Winterbloom* was displayed at RACV Goldfields Resort, Goldfields Gallery. Kmieć is a Polish-born photographer, living in Australia since 2009. Her fluid and bright photographs were made in the depths of winter during COVID-19 as an act of creative rebellion.

Curated by Ellen Wignell, Visual Arts Curator RACV



Official launch at the Mining Exchange featuring Erik Johansson, *How to Fly*, installation view, photo by Tim Levy

Core Program Outdoor

The 2023 Outdoor Program immersed the city in a world of photographic art, transforming the streets, laneways, shopfronts and landmark buildings into exhibition spaces. The Outdoor Program invigorated the city, allowing 24/7 access for audiences to engage in photographic art at every turn, revealing new and exciting parts of Ballarat along the way.

Outdoor exhibitions by Australian and international artists could be experienced by the whole of Ballarat's community and visitors as they adventured through the CBD, activating often unused spaces and connecting the Core Program exhibitions and Open Program venues.

KATE BALLIS (AUS) *PORTALS TO ATLANTIS*

WORLD PREMIERE

Kate Ballis uncovers the unseen and the otherworldly through her signature use of infrared photography. In this site-responsive project, Ballis transforms the Ballarat Railway Station into a three-dimensional experience, integrating her photographs into the heritage station architecture, windows and staircases, and guiding commuters through a portal to mythical worlds.

VENUE

Ballarat Railway Station, Platforms 1 & 2
Lydiard St North

Proudly supported by V/Line.

Proudly supported by Southern Impact, Ballarat Foto 2023 Festival Partner.

Special thanks to Gallerysmith, Melbourne; Arthouse Gallery, Sydney.



Kate Ballis, *Portals to Atlantis*, installation view, photo by Garth Oriander

“As an artist with a disability, I found being able to partake in this festival particularly accessible. I could drive between venues when I couldn’t walk and inevitably saw more art incidentally along the way. Each bit revealed around the streets a wonderful surprise addition between venues.”

SURVEY RESPONDENT

VINEET VOHRA (IND) *HERE, THERE, EVERYWHERE*

WORLD PREMIERE

A celebrated international street photographer, Vohra is self-taught with a talent for capturing the extraordinary in the ordinary moments of life. Based in New Delhi, he believes that photography has the power to transform our perspectives and encourages everyone to take up the camera and start exploring the world around them.

VENUE

Multiple locations:
Police Lane; 41 Lydiard St North;
Nevetts Lawyers Ballarat carpark

ARTIST TALK

Vineet Vohra in person
Sunday 27 August, Art Gallery of Ballarat

MASTERCLASS

Street Photography and Serendipity with Vineet Vohra
Three-day Masterclass 25–27 August; and 29–31 August
Art Gallery of Ballarat

Proudly sponsored by Nevetts Lawyers Ballarat.

Proudly supported by Southern Impact, Ballarat Foto 2023 Festival Partner.



Vineet Vohra, *Here, There, Everywhere*, installation view, photo by Garth Oriander



David Cossini, *Business in the Front, Party in the Back!*, installation view, photo by Garth Oriander

DAVID COSSINI (AUS) *BUSINESS IN THE FRONT, PARTY IN THE BACK!*

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

David Cossini is a documentary photographer and storyteller based in Newcastle, Australia, and specialising in immersive, long-form projects and portraiture. His images are evocative, featuring subjects that are extreme, raw and at times unapologetically brutal. Instinctively drawn to the outliers, he chooses to document those on the fringes of society.

VENUE

Regent Cinemas Ballarat and The Sporting Globe

SCREENING

Grande Bruto
Saturday 26 August, Regent Cinemas Ballarat

Proudly supported by Regent Cinemas Ballarat and The Sporting Globe.

Special thanks to Steve Anderson; and Richard & Anne Alexander.

Core Program

Outdoor continued...



Telly Tuita, *Tongpop Pantheon*, installation view, photo by Garth Oriander

TELLY TUITA (TON/AUS/NZL) *TONGPOP PANTHEON*

Telly Tuita delves into his complex relationship with his ancestral home through vibrant hues, traditional Tongan ngatu patterns, and religious iconography, he coined as 'Tongpop.' Tuita challenges idealised notions of the Pacific Islands and cultural identity. His work is a collision of Indigenous and pop sensibilities, where traditional grounded oral cultures dance with global mass media.

VENUE

Multiple locations: Cnr Sturt & Lydiard Sts; The Goods Shed

PANEL DISCUSSION

In conversation with David Sequeira, Director, Fiona and Sidney Myer Gallery

Sunday 27 August, Art Gallery of Ballarat

KIDS WORKSHOP

Tongpop Fiasco with Telly Tuita

Sunday 27 August, Ages 8+

Proudly sponsored by The Goods Shed Ballarat, 200 Lydiard St North.

Proudly supported by Southern Impact, Ballarat Foto 2023 Festival Partner.

Special thanks to Bergman Gallery.



Michael Cook, *Salt Lake* (detail), 2023

MICHAEL COOK (AUS) *FAKE*

As a Bidjara photographic artist, Cook's work is a reflection of his personal experiences as a mixed-heritage Aboriginal man. He often invites viewers to question what makes an authentic life and explores the legacy of colonisation. His 2023 series, *Fake*, tells the story of an Indigenous couple and their adopted child on a road trip through the Australian outback. As they journey through remote locations, the family discovers a deeper connection to their culture and the land.

VENUE

TOM digital screen, 101 Sturt St

PANEL DISCUSSION

Fire Country Initiative artists with Nici Cumpston OAM

Saturday 26 August, Art Gallery of Ballarat

Proudly sponsored by Total Outdoor Media (TOM), Ballarat Foto 2023 Principal Partner.

Special thanks to Jan Murphy Gallery.

KYLIE RUSZCZYNSKI (AUS/FRA) *SOLAR TETES*

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

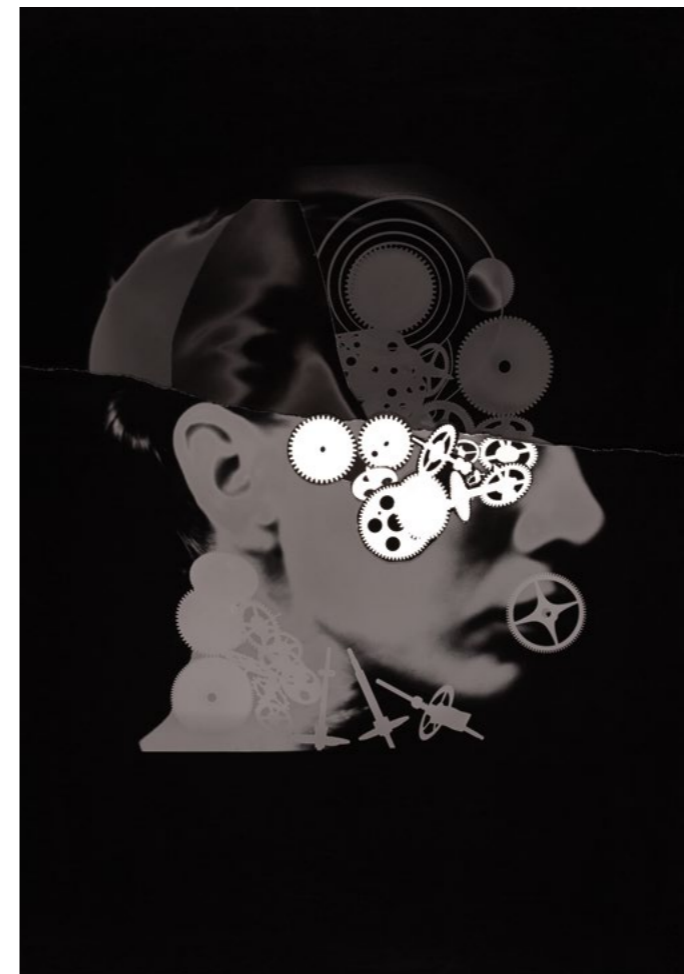
An Australian artist based in Normandy, Ruszczyński has been capturing the beauty of everyday life through photography for over three decades. Her series of self-portraits *Solar Têtes* have gradually taken on mechanical attributes over time.

These solarised photograms are intended as a warning that we are living in a 'technocracy,' a technological age where identities are becoming digitised and homogenised. Ruszczyński notes that nature has been neglected at best, and decimated at worst, but is not too late for reconnection and rehabilitation.

VENUE

Various locations around Ballarat

Special thanks to Caine Property.



Kylie Ruszczyński, *Solar Tete*, 2005

WILLIAM YANG (AUS) *CLAIMING HERITAGE*

Discover the visual stories of William Yang, one of Australia's most celebrated storytellers. Yang's prolific photography work and monologues with slide projections depict his journey of accepting his identity as a gay Chinese Australian. Through his lens, Yang presents a rich visual record of his experiences, from the emergence of Sydney's gay community to his personal Chinese heritage and family relationships.

VENUE

Xin Jin Shan Chinese Library, Cnr Sturt & Lydiard Sts North

Proudly sponsored by the Chinese Australian Cultural Society Ballarat Inc.; and Southern Impact Media, Ballarat Foto 2023 Festival Partner.

Special thanks to Professor Haoliang Sun.



William Yang, *Claiming Heritage*, installation view, photo by Garth Oriander

Core Program

Outdoor continued...

SERWAH ATTAFUAH (AUS) & JONATHAN ZAWADA (AUS) *DIGITAL ANTHROPOCENE*

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

Search beyond the algorithm and witness new cyber landscapes. The first exhibition on the new Art Screen at Alfred Deakin Place features two leading Australian digital artists, Serwah Attafuah and Jonathan Zawada – merging the worlds of science and art at the virtual forefront.

Attafuah is a multidisciplinary artist and musician based on Dharug land/West Sydney. Her surreal digital dreamscapes and futuristic humanoids challenge traditional narratives and perspectives. She is one of the first Australian artists to work with NFTs (non-fungible tokens) and has developed great fluency in the Metaverse.

Zawada is a visual artist working across design, digital rendering, video and more. He creates virtual artefacts that are both natural and artificial, exploring ideas of digital culture, nature, and data. Zawada also works as a commercial creative producer and has won awards for his work with musicians and DJs including Flume.

VENUE

Art Screen, Alfred Deakin Place

Presented in partnership with the Art Gallery of Ballarat.
Special thanks to Georgia Manifold (GMC Art Projects).



Serwah Attafuah & Jonathan Zawada, *Digital Anthropocene*, installation view, photo by Garth Oriander

CURATED BY MEG HEWITT (AUS) *OCULI COLLECTIVE*

WORLD PREMIERE

Oculi is a collective of award-winning photographers offering a visual narrative of contemporary life in Australia and beyond. The collective has set the tone for reportage and documentary photography in Australia for more than twenty years and is the premier destination for commissioning and licensing editorial work. Oculi Collective has taken over Ballarat's laneways with a curated selection of work by past and present members.

ARTISTS

Matt Abbott
Conor Ashleigh
Narelle Autio
James Brickwood
James Bugg
Judith Crispin
Meg Hewitt
Tajette O'Halloran
Trent Parke
Jeremy Piper
Andrew Quilty
Jesse Marlow
Dean Sewell
David Maurice Smith
Abigail Varney
Tamara Voininski

VENUE

Multiple locations around Ballarat

PORTFOLIO REVIEWS

Speed Dating with Oculi Collective
Friday 25 August, The George Hotel

Narelle Autio and Trent Parke thank Hugo Michell Gallery, Adelaide, and Michael Reid Gallery Sydney.

Meg Hewitt thanks Galerie Anne Clergue, France.

Proudly supported by Southern Impact, Ballarat Foto 2023 Festival Partner.



Oculi Collective, installation view featuring James Brickwood, photo by Caroline Fredericks

Open Program

The Open Program made a resounding impact by showcasing the works of over 300 artists across 82 exhibitions spread across 69 diverse venues. These exhibitions introduced the realm of photographic art to unexpected corners of Ballarat. Throughout the festival period and beyond, the Open Program transformed Ballarat's cafés, bars, businesses, hotels, and laneways into captivating pop-up gallery spaces.

For the artists involved, the Open Program provided an opportunity to be an integral part of a vibrant photographic landscape enveloping the city. This program passionately supported emerging talents and established artists, ensuring their artworks were easily accessible and prominently visible to festival audiences.

A Wall of Women by Women by Unexposed Collective showcased the world's largest-ever exhibition of women and non-binary street photographers.

The activation of the Open Program had a ripple effect on the city, driving increased foot traffic and visitation to host venues and provided a significant opportunity for local businesses to actively engage with a major cultural event.

ARTISTS

Australian Association of Street Photographers Inc. (AASP)
Martha Ackroyd Curtis
Gary Albert
Ballarat & Wimmera Youth Photographers
Chloe Bartram
Elaine Batton
Gaye Beal
Anita Beaney
Tina Bennett
Peter Berzanskis
Tom Blachford
Marc Bongers
Deb Bonney
Madeline Bowser and Ben Metherell
Laurie Brackley
Greg Branson
Lesley Bretherton
Stuart Brightwell
Kagetsu Buic
Emma Burnham
Camberwell Camera Club
John Callahan
Ainsley Cameron and Donna Crebbin
Janet Copland
Arthur Creative
Rebecca Croft
Lauren Crooke
Des Crossley
Mark Davidson
Shelagh Douglas
Jonathan Dredge
Natalie Edge
Alastair Firkin and Helen Myall
Jane Fitzgerald
Lainey Foster
Andree Gersbeck
Finn Goldstraw
Carolyn Guirguis
Max Harris
Stephen Hennessy
Tim Henshall
Sara Hinchey
Gabrielle Hingston
Rebecca Hoskin
Hula Girl Project
Angelo Jojo

David Gerard-Jones
Ian Kemp
Bronwyn Kidd
Paul Lambeth
Thomas K. Lee
Kaye Linsdell
Georgina Matherson
Erin M. McCuskey
Noeleen McKeag
Craig Mitchell
Tara C. Moore
Christopher Mulia
Charles Murdock
Anne O'Connor
Stuart Orford
Oxygen College Group Show
Vladimir Petrovic
Naomi Rahim
Nikole Ramsay
Dun Rilloraza
David Rosendale
Andrew Rowan
Rob Senior
Jon Setter
Tamara Sharp
Peter Sparkman
Renee Sterling
Sam Tench
Michelle Thompson
John Umina
Unexposed Collective
Katie Vajda
Heidi Victoria
Xiaolan Yao
Henry Yates
Lucius Yin

JUDGES

Dr Shahidul Alam
(Chobi Mela International Photography Festival/BGD)
Julia Durkin MNZM
(Auckland Festival of Photography/NZL)
Adam Harding
(RACV)
Moshe Rosenzweig OAM
(Head On Photo Festival/AUS)

AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT

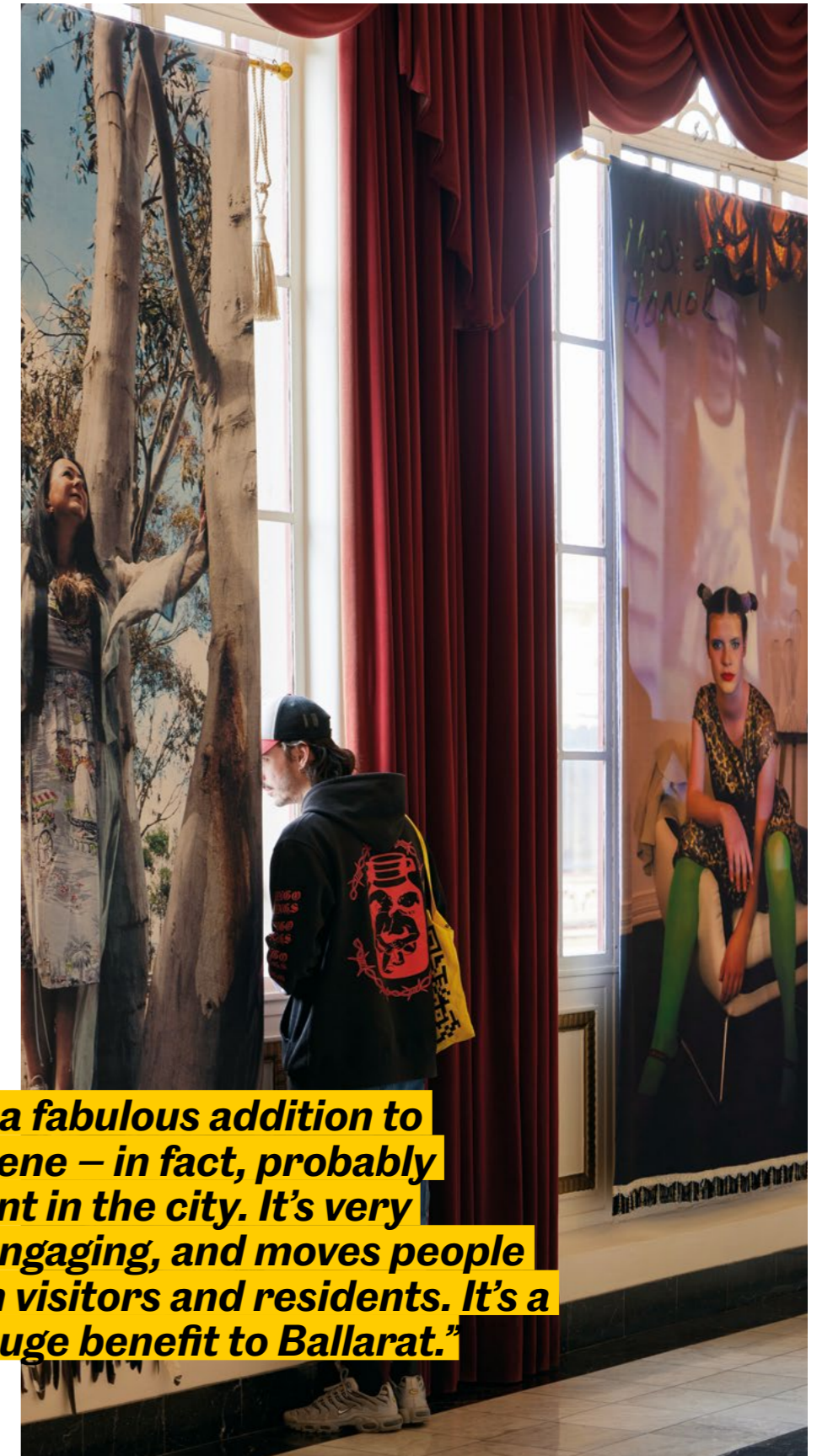
Saturday 21 October,
The Mining Exchange

WINNER

Stephen Hennessy, *Retroactive Documents – Time is not a Line, 2021-2024*
Hydrant Food Hall, 3 McKenzie St

PEOPLE'S CHOICE WINNER

Xiaolan Yao, *Memories of Childhood*
Mr Jones, Upstairs, 42-44 Main Rd



“The Ballarat Foto is a fabulous addition to Ballarat’s cultural scene – in fact, probably the best cultural event in the city. It’s very professionally run, engaging, and moves people around the city, both visitors and residents. It’s a wonderful event of huge benefit to Ballarat.”

SURVEY RESPONDENT

Erin M. McCuskey, *(a)musing*, Open Program, installation view, photo by Garth Oriander

Education

The Ballarat International Foto Biennale's commitment to education and public engagement underscores its recognition of photography as an art form and a powerful tool for learning and collaboration. The Ballarat Foto Education Program is designed to cater to students of all levels, from primary to tertiary and adult education. Acknowledging the significance of visual literacy in today's education landscape, the program aligns with the Victorian Government Department for Education and Training's emphasis on multimodal literacy.

By fostering partnerships between schools and professional arts and cultural sectors, Ballarat Foto creates avenues for innovative collaboration, enriching students' educational experiences and deepening their engagement with photography. In today's 'post-truth' era, where visual literacy holds immense significance, photography-based learning emerges as an essential component of education. Recognising this, Ballarat Foto leveraged its platform, echoed by the 2023 festival theme 'The Real Thing', to promote visual literacy and facilitate broader cultural connections.

In 2023, Ballarat Foto prioritised access to art and photography education across diverse age groups, culminating in free or low-cost programs and resources, such as the Ballarat Foto Kids' Hub, education kits, tours and the creation of an Education & Public Engagement Coordinator role. Through this dedicated role, Ballarat Foto will continue to spark inquisitive minds in future festivals and beyond with the forthcoming establishment of the National Centre for Photography.

Ballarat Foto identified opportunities to enhance educational engagement through initiatives like the Art Making & Exhibiting VCE unit. This program, building upon previous offerings, provided curator-led tours, panel discussions, and participation in the Photobook Fair. Feedback from educators highlighted the value students derived from such experiences, which not only exposed them to traditional and alternative exhibition spaces but also facilitated interactions with practising artists and curators, enriching their understanding of the artistic process.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

2,012
Students

21
Schools education programs tours

1
Ballarat Foto Kids' Hub

1
Forum (How to Produce an Exhibition)

16
Resources created



Ballarat Foto Kids' Hub, photo by Garth Oriander

"[Our students were] thrilled to take part in Ballarat Foto's Photobook Fair. Not only did they display their photo/artist books but met and connected with many professionals on the day."

JIMMY PASAKOS, FEDERATION UNIVERSITY

BALLARAT FOTO KIDS' HUB

A dedicated space for young people to learn about photography. It included a quiet, soft space; an activity/workshop space with printed copies of five activity sheets (Camera Obscura Box, Imagined Worlds, Pet Portraits, Portraiture and Identity, and Serendipitous Encounters); a studio space to encourage play; and designated early learning and pre-school sessions, where groups could visit for free, engage with the activity sheets, and see the Erik Johansson exhibition *How to Fly*.

1,425 VISITORS

5 ACTIVITY SHEETS CREATED

EDUCATION FOR SCHOOL GROUPS

Designed to enhance students' festival experience inside and outside of the classroom, our curriculum-led education program focused on three core themes: contemporary **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island photography**: a series of solo exhibitions by Australian First Nations artists Michael Cook, Kyle Archie Knight, Colleen Raven Strangways and Michael Jalaru Torres. The 2023 Ballarat Foto Fire Country Initiative provided insight into contemporary photographic practice through the lens of emerging and established Australian artists: **Portraiture** brought together photographers who work with portraiture in different ways, Platon, Yvonne Todd, Telly Tuita and Andy Warhol; **Art and Technology** introduced students to emerging issues and the ethics of using AI-generated imagery and how to create their own AI artwork.

367 STUDENTS

**21 SCHOOLS (6 BALLARAT AND SURROUNDS;
3 REGIONAL VICTORIA; 3 MELBOURNE)**

**4 RESOURCES CREATED (2 X TAILORED
EDUCATION TOURS; 2 X EDUCATION KITS)**

“Loved the diversity and welcoming of family/children.”

SURVEY RESPONDENT

“We all enjoyed the tour very much and it was interesting to see the technique and lighting etc Platon used in his photography. Some simple techniques but it goes to show it is all in ‘the look’ that you can capture to tell a story!”

NICKY DONALD, MACEDON RANGE PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

“Three generations connecting with photography, connecting with each other, in awe and feeling inspired but also starting conversations and asking questions... This is, I think, what photography is all about.”

LAINY FOSTER, PHOTOGRAPHER

EDUCATION KITS

Whether used for ideas to incorporate photography contexts in the classroom, great teaching resources, or information for a school project, Ballarat Foto's free education kits provided the tools for an enhanced festival visit.

SCHOOL HOLIDAY PHOTOGRAPHY PROGRAM

Covering several core photographic principles and techniques, students worked in intimate groups with photographer and educator Kate Golding workshops including, Cyanotypes, Painting on Photographs and Pinhole Projectors. Oculi photographer Meg Hewitt showed students *How to Shoot Film*.

22 STUDENTS

“This is the best workshop I've ever done!”

“I absolutely loved all the photographs and how interesting it was, the whole family enjoyed this experience!!!”

“Fantastic event, excellent content, fantastic support staff and a great day out for me and my camera/photography obsessed son!”

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FROM THE PINHOLE PROJECTOR WORKSHOP

HOW TO PRODUCE AN EXHIBITION FORUM

Covering topics related to producing an exhibition, this free professional development event provided attendees with insights by gallery curators and arts professionals including Julie McLaren, Curator, Art Gallery of Ballarat and Malcolm Sanders, Regional Arts Victoria in conversation along with Ballarat Foto Team Christine McFetridge, (Education and Public Engagement Coordinator), Meg Hewitt, (Event Producer) and Madeleine Sherburn (Festival Assistant Curator). Alongside, portfolio reviews with Sally Brownbill, Managing Director of The Brownbill Effect provided professional portfolio reviews, and Chris Bowes led a workshop translating the magic of an artwork or exhibition into documentation. Designed for VCE Art Making & Exhibiting students, graduating tertiary students with end-of-year exhibitions and emerging artists.

58 PARTICIPANTS



Photo by Garth Oriander

Events

A diverse array of in-person events, workshops, symposia, and industry talks, offered opportunities for photographers and artists to explore and expand their practice. Across the event period, Ballarat Foto hosted a total of 125 events with 146 participants and drew in a crowd of 5,016 attendees.

125 EVENTS

146 PARTICIPANTS

5,016 ATTENDEES

ARTIST TALKS AND PERFORMANCES

Ballarat Foto presented eight artist talks featuring national and international artists like Platon speaking about the *Power of Unity* to a crowd of 533 people at Regent Cinema Ballarat, Erik Johansson, Yvonne Todd, Telly Tuita, and Vineet Vohra, alongside Victorian talents Ramak Bamzar and Jeff Moorfoot OAM, Robert Ashton, Tim Burder, Andrew Chapman OAM, Trevor Foon, Jacqui Henshaw, Aldona Kmiec, Kim Percy, Sandy Scheltema, Ellie Young.

Dr Christian Thompson AO presented a rare live performance re-imagining of his traditional language, Bidjara, now categorised as extinct. Martyn Jolly with Crank Williams & Patsy Decline captivated with a Magic Lantern performance.

Ballarat Foto CEO Vanessa Gerrans was joined in conversation about the glamour, fame and friendships of Andy Warhol with Julie Robinson,

Senior Curator of Prints, Drawings & Photographs, Art Gallery of South Australia. Telly Tuita, Yvonne Todd gave insights into their work in conversation in conversation with David Sequeira, Director, Fiona and Sidney Myer Gallery. Fire Country Initiative artists Michael Cook, Kyle Archie Knight, Colleen Raven Strangways and Michael Jalaru Torres shared a special panel discussion led by Nici Cumpston OAM, Barkandji photographic artist, Artistic Director of Tarnanthi and Curator of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art at the Art Gallery of South Australia. Stephen Dupont and Andrew Quilty discussed their experiences in documentary photography in *War: The Real Thing* to a packed crowd.

TOTAL: 1,338 ATTENDEES

MASTERCLASSES

Ballarat Foto presented limited masterclasses for those wishing to observe leading industry professionals in practice while advancing their skills, allowing for an intimate and practical learning experience. One of the most influential street photographers of his generation, Vineet Vohra visiting led a three-day masterclass on *Street Photography and Serendipity*. Canadian-born chemistry teacher and photographer, Knox Bertie introduced participants to *Poetry in the Everyday* through studies of light and dark in black & white in a two-day masterclass. Presented by Federation University, Jimmy Pasakos showed participants how to transform digital images into traditional intaglio prints over a one-day masterclass and participants interpreted the landscape at RACV Goldfields Resort before 'painting with light' with Sydney-based Peter Solness.

TOTAL: 35 ATTENDEES

WORKSHOPS

Ranging from street photography to AI ethics, diverse workshops offered participants an opportunity to learn from prominent photographers and educators. 'Iron Chef' Shellie Froidevaux and Ewen Bell introduced image-makers to Food Photography 101 at RACV Goldfields Resort; digital media artist Warren Armstrong shared the ins and outs of AI ethics and prompt engineering. Presented by Oxygen College, Travis Trewin introduced product photography for e-commerce; and participants took to the streets of Ballarat with Jesse Marlow; among other workshops.

TOTAL: 78 ATTENDEES

PHOTOBOOK WEEKEND

The third instalment of Photobook Weekend included the Ballarat Foto Photobook Fair, providing insight into the art of photobooks and featured workshops and panel discussions with industry experts. Attendees could make their own zine with artist and educator Victoria Cooper, listen along with a panel discussion *Presenting Photobooks to an International Audience* with photobook maker and blogger Doug Spowart and photobook makers Ying Ang, Tom Golder and Meg Hewitt.

TOTAL: 1,017 ATTENDEES

BOOK LAUNCHES

Humpty Doom by Liss Fenwick and *Village: Hearing the Grass Grow* by Michael Coyne both launched during Photobook Weekend. Wiradjuri, queer, multidisciplinary photographic artist, Kyle Archie Knight successfully gained assistance from the Australian Government through Creative Australia to develop their work *Cruising for a Bruising* into a Core Program exhibition and a photobook which launched during the festival. Knight's photobook was thoughtfully assisted and published by Helen Frajman at M.33.

TOTAL: 46 ATTENDEES

AWARD PRESENTATIONS

Notable awards including the *Prompted Peculiar International AI Prize*, the *Martin Kantor Portrait Prize*, and the *Open Program Award* were presented during the event, recognising outstanding contributions to the field.

"I was very lucky to share a warm afternoon in Warren's backyard with him in Paris. I remember feeling quite nervous but Warren was gregarious, kind, and warm. I was very lucky to have this time with him, and grateful for his openness in welcoming me into that private space. I took the photo because I felt I was sitting not just with Warren but with all individuals who have dedicated their life to something. Thank you to Julie and Michael Kantor who honour their late brother, the photographer Martin Kantor through this important prize. Thanks to the Jury and to the festival for recognising the photo, and thank you Warren."

MATTHEW THORNE, MARTIN KANTOR PORTRAIT PRIZE WINNER



Erik Johansson, artist floor talk, photo by Ellen Eustice

"The Platon talk plus meet and greet with him was inspiring and exciting. It was fantastic that I could actually ask him questions in person. Thank you for organising him to come to Ballarat!"

SURVEY RESPONDENT

Photo Opportunities

Photo Opportunities emerged as a thrilling addition to the festival, offering visitors captivating backdrops to capture selfies and showcase their photographic prowess. This initiative encouraged exploration of the city's diverse locales, inviting participants to embark on new adventures.

Lisa Roet's magnificent Golden Monkey sculpture captured the spotlight. This radiant installation depicted the critically endangered Myanmar snub-nosed monkey, serving as a poignant reminder of the urgent need for environmental conservation. Roet's artwork, accompanied by non-fungible digital imagery, sparked contemplation on the realities of species extinction.

Lauren Crooke's Renaissance-inspired nude group photo shoot celebrated the strength, diversity, and resilience of women and non-binary individuals. Participants had the opportunity to join this empowering photo session, set against the enchanting backdrop of Ballarat at dusk.

Telly Tuita's Tongpop Fiasco Interactive Studio immersed visitors in the vibrant colours of Tonga, Tuita's ancestral homeland.

Photo Opportunities enriched the Ballarat Foto experience and encouraged meaningful engagement with art, culture, and the natural world. As visitors roamed the cityscape, each snapshot captured a moment of creativity and connection, adding to the vibrant tapestry of the 2023 festival.



Lisa Roet, *Golden Monkey*, 2023, photo by Craig Mitchell

The Real Thing Public Forum

The Real Thing public forum marked an exhilarating exploration into the future of photography. Under the festival theme *The Real Thing*, this forum sparked dynamic conversations, thought-provoking insights, and a vision for the future. The Real Thing public forum left attendees inspired and eager to shape the evolving landscape of photography.

Attendees were treated to a captivating keynote presentation titled *The Photographic Program of AI* by Katrina Sluis. Delving into recent strides in machine learning, Sluis illuminated how millions of photographers have contributed to these advancements. However, she also challenged us to consider a future where AI may redefine the very essence of photography, potentially sidelining traditional photographic practices. Recorded by ABC Radio National for its Big Ideas program, Katrina Sluis' keynote promises to resonate beyond the forum.

The Ballarat Foto x Artlink x AI panel featured Melbourne-based artist Amalia Lindo and Professor Daniel Palmer from RMIT University delving into the evolving landscape of photography in the age of AI.

Meanwhile, the Ballarat Foto x 3-minute AI vs Photography battle pitted artists and researchers against each other, offering insightful perspectives on the future of AI and photography. Featuring Tom Blachford, Chris Bowes, Isabella Capezio, Lisa Dethridge, Kim Percy, Emma Phillips (WINNER), J Rosenbaum, Hanna Silver and Laurence Watts.

Proudly supported by RMIT IF_LAB.

Special thanks to Dr Alison Bennett, Dr Martyn Jolly and Megan Rainey, Artlink CEO.

Proudly sponsored by David Bailey Photography & Training.



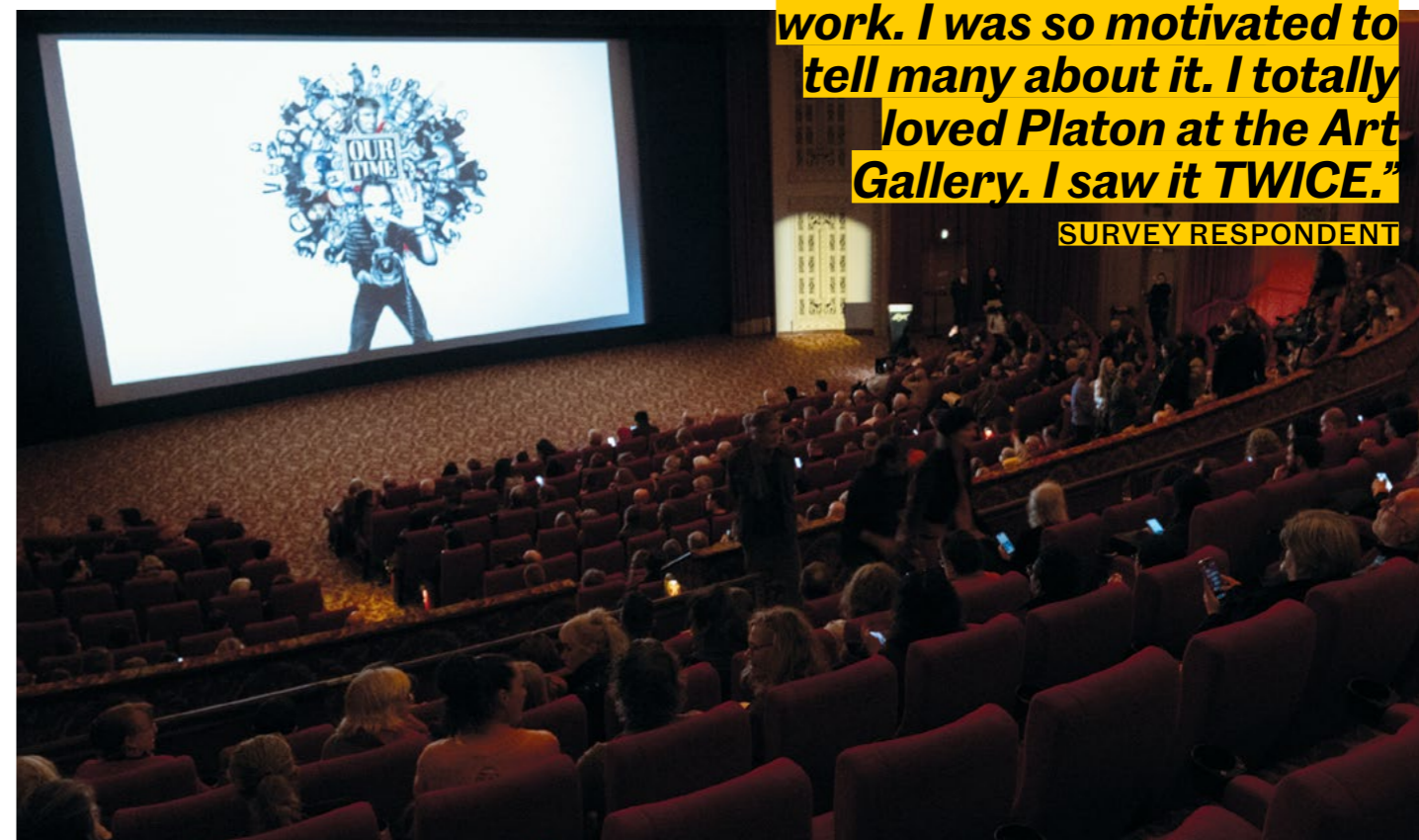
AI vs Photography L-R Emma Phillips, Chris Bowes, Laurence Watts, Isabella Capezio, Kim Percy, photo: Ballarat Foto 2023

The Golden Hours

During the festival, visitors immersed themselves in the richness of Ballarat's culture and creativity through curated dining experiences, artisanal delights, and exclusive film screenings. Collaborations like Lucky & James' exclusive chocolate range featuring Core Program artists celebrated local talent while adding to the lively atmosphere. At RACV Goldfields Resort, guests enjoyed 'The Art of Lunch' with renowned artists, and at Cobbs Coffee, they kicked off their Biennale visit with a Golden Turmeric Latte. Grainery Lane offered discounts on gin cocktails, while a choc/banana icecream at Il Piccolo Gelato celebrated Lisa Roet's nearby Golden Monkey sculpture. Chef Jigs Liwanag's Shades of Gold Degustation Dinner at Hotel Canberra provided a unique culinary experience. Mitchell Harris Wines hosted Biennale Banquets for like-minded photography enthusiasts throughout the event.

"I attended the Platon film My Body is Not a Weapon twice (with two others). All in agreement with this impactful film. Brilliant work. I was so motivated to tell many about it. I totally loved Platon at the Art Gallery. I saw it TWICE."

SURVEY RESPONDENT



Platon, *The Power of Unity*, Regent Cinemas Ballarat, photo by Yuniko Bonnor

Volunteers & Community

127 volunteers collectively dedicated 4,309 hours to various crucial tasks at the 2023 Biennale, including exhibition invigilation, ticketing, administrative support, event facilitation, photography services, and installation assistance. Many of these volunteers, staunch supporters of the event, returned eagerly during the festival. Their commitment not only demonstrated loyalty to the Biennale but also highlighted their deep ties to the Ballarat community, epitomising generosity in their robust support of this grand event.

Volunteers played a vital role in ensuring the success of the Biennale, notably in exhibition invigilation across multiple venues, where their dedication shone brightly. They came from diverse backgrounds:

- 72% were from Ballarat
- 14% from Melbourne
- 11% from other Victorian regions
- 3% volunteered from interstate

Additionally, our **four interns contributed 1,332 hours**, gaining valuable practical experience in curatorship, marketing, arts management, and administration.

Students Lily Fernandez and Jordan Hall joined us from Coventry University, UK to undertake professional development as part of their studies. Their involvement enriched their education and bolstered the Biennale's operations.

We express profound gratitude to our volunteers and interns for their time, dedication, and spirited contributions, essential to the success and vitality of the 2023 Ballarat International Foto Biennale.

127 VOLUNTEERS 4,309 HOURS

4 INTERNS 1,332 HOURS



Marc Bouten, photo by Kate O'Hehir

“My internship with Ballarat International Foto Biennale was truly eye-opening. I have learnt so much about the production, installation and promotional aspects of the festival, all of which will help me significantly moving forward with my career in the arts.”

JORDAN HALL, COVENTRY UNIVERSITY

2023 Artists

Karenne Ann
Serwah Attafuah
Kate Ballis
Ramak Bamzar
Michael Cook
David Cossini
Lauren Crooke
Stephen Dupont
Adam Epps
Heather Horrocks
Erik Johansson
Rob Johnston
Martyn Jolly
Ian Kemp
Kyle Archie Knight
Platon
Samantha Poling
Colleen Raven Strangways
Lisa Roet
Kylie Ruszczyński
Samara Sutton-Baker
Victoria Talaina
Christian Thompson AO
Yvonne Todd
Michael Jalaru Torres
Telly Tuita
Vineet Vohra
Andy Warhol
Crank Williams & Patsy Decline
William Yang
Jonathan Zawada

FOTO AT RACV

Naomi Hobson
Erik Johansson
Aldona Kmiec
Selina Ou
Lisa Sorgini

OCULI COLLECTIVE

Matt Abbott
Conor Ashleigh
Narelle Autio
James Brickwood
James Bugg
Judith Crispin
Meg Hewitt
Tajette O'Halloran
Trent Parke
Jeremy Piper
Andrew Quilty
Jesse Marlow
Dean Sewell
David Maurice Smith
Abigail Varney
Tamara Voininski

MARTIN KANTOR PORTRAIT PRIZE

Riste Andrievski
Catherine Black
Simon Dow
Stephen Dupont
Tom Goldner
Paul Gosney
Tony Kearney
Mia Mala McDonald
Mark Munro
Matthew Newton
Eva Otsing
Kristoffer Paulsen
Mike Reed
Allison Rose
Anna Shimshak
Marcus Struzina
Matthew Thorne
Tobias Titz
Rudiger Wasser
Louisa West

PROMPTED PECULIAR

Kate Ballis
Tom Blachford
Jasneet Dhingra
Stacy Elson
Adrian Elton
Jonathon Harris
Breeanna Hill
Ashadi Hopper
Nic Kocher
Pavel Kohout
Derek Kreckler
Morganna Magee
Carolyn McKay
Annika Nordenskiöld
Kate Robertson
Marcus Rose
Jane Shadbolt
Hanna Silver
Keren Sohezki
David von Bassewitz

THE REAL THING

John Ansell
Robert Ashton
Tim Burder
Andrew Chapman OAM
Peter Dunphy
Trevor Foon
Jacqui Henshaw
Aldona Kmiec
Julie Millowick OAM
Rachel Mounsey
Harry Nankin
Kim Percy
Michael Rayner
Sandy Scheltema
Ellie Young

Out & About



Photo by Ellen Eustice



Adam Harding, RACV and Dr Shahidul Alam with *Autumn from The 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, 2020 by Telly Tuita



Guests at the Golden Glamour Gala, photo by Ellen Eustice



Telly Tuita and William Yang, photo by Ellen Eustice



Platon, *The Power of Unity*, Regent Cinemas Ballarat, photo: Ballarat Foto 2023



Photo by Tenina Ryan

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We are grateful to our Ambassadors and Board for their gracious and ongoing support and our dedicated and hard working staff. We thank our many volunteers for their generous and enthusiastic involvement.

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Vineet Vohra, *Here, There, Everywhere*, Police Lane, photo by Gary Albert #photolifescapes

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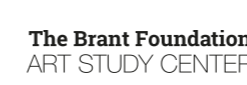
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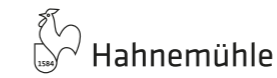
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GED HART, MANAGING DIRECTOR, TOM

“I didn’t think I would become so invested in a photography festival. Yet here I am, so very glad I made the trip and full of creative inspiration – thank you!”

SURVEY RESPONDENT

Geelong Landmark Billboard, courtesy of TOM – Total Outdoor Media, 2023

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