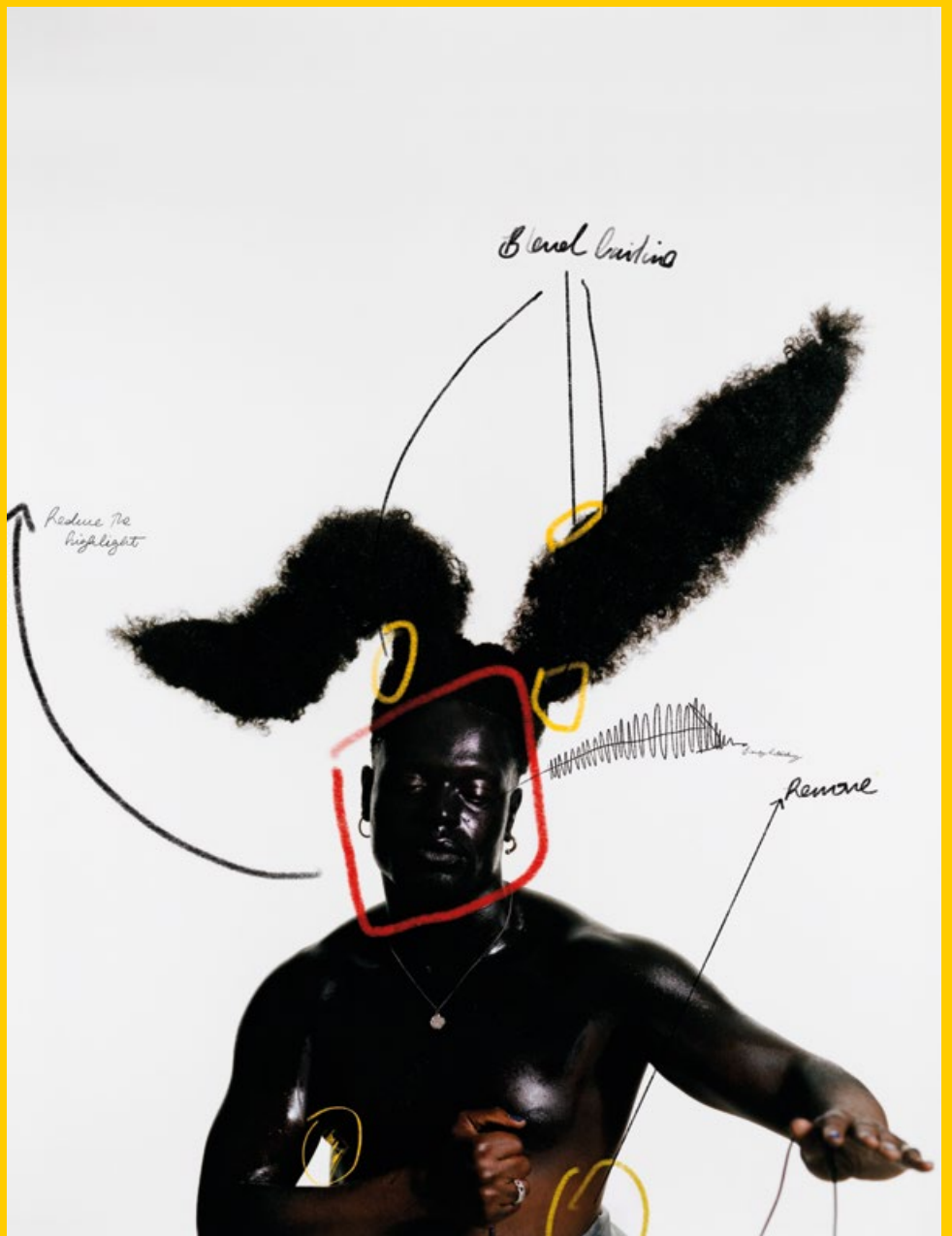


Ballarat International Foto Bien



We acknowledge the Wadawurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live, work and create. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and honour the deep traditions of storytelling, culture and connection held by First Nations peoples across Australia.

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Cover image:
Campbell Addy, *Twelve*, 2023, 50" x 61", archival pigment print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag Baryta, edition of 7.
Courtesy of the artist and New School Represents.



Dave Jones with Dr Deanne Gilson, *Mumu Mirri*, installation view, National Centre for Photography.
Photo: Einwick.

Celebrating Our 11th Edition

Welcome to the 11th Ballarat International Foto Biennale, presented by Intrepid Travel. Building on our evolution from a regional exhibition to Australia's premier photographic festival, the 2025 theme *Lifeforce* explored how energy becomes manifest in photography, digital media and promptography – the force that distinguishes the living from the non-living and, in the artistic realm, the spark that compels artists to leap beyond barriers to express, interpret and capture it in unique ways. This life force moves through artists and their subjects. It invites us to immerse ourselves in iconic forms, to pause and question, and to feel empathy, delight and inspiration. This 11th edition attracted global attention through exclusive exhibitions, major commissions and an expansive creative footprint across the city, presenting exceptional work from leading Australian and international artists.

The Biennale is sustained by the life force of its artists, supporters, community and partners. We acknowledge our 2025 Presenting Partner: Intrepid Travel; Principal Partners: RACV, Sigma, Ilford and Civic Outdoor; along with the significant support of City of Ballarat, the Victorian Government, Australian Government, local businesses, volunteers, and philanthropic contributors. Their collective commitment ensures the festival's ongoing cultural, social, and economic impact for Ballarat and regional Victoria.

Vanessa Gerrans
CEO, Ballarat International Foto Biennale

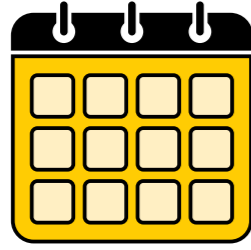


"I've attended the Biennale twice in a row and love the range of work and the opportunity to see interesting spaces in around Ballarat whilst viewing work that is both beautiful and thought provoking."

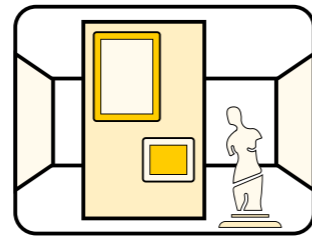
SURVEY RESPONDENT

2025 Snapshot

Program



60
days



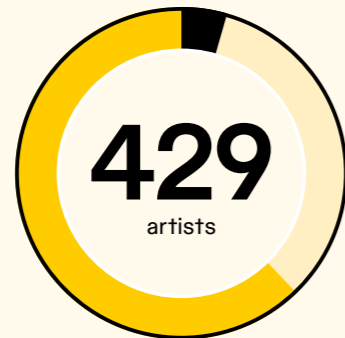
87%
of exhibitions and events were free



22
Core Program

103
Open Program

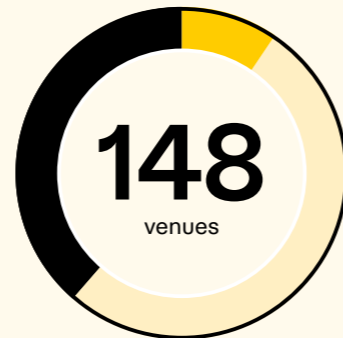
23
events



17
International Core Program artists

121
Australian Core Program artists

226
Open Program artists

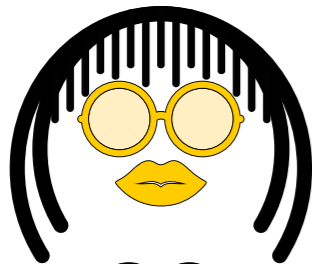


17
Core Program exhibitions

93
Open Program exhibitions

69
events and workshops

Delivered by



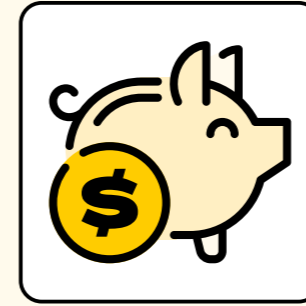
22
curators
(5 international / 17 Australian)

235
volunteers / 3,543 hours contributed

98
sponsors & partners

12
employees (5.4 FTE)

Impact



\$45.6m
total economic impact
(direct and indirect benefit)

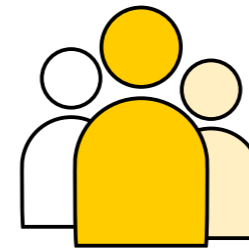


7,728
overnight stays



85.2
full-time equivalent
employment generated

Audience



66,471
attendees
(16.6% ticketed and 83.5% free)

78%
attendees from
outside Ballarat

76%
over 50 years old

27%
identify as an
amateur photographer

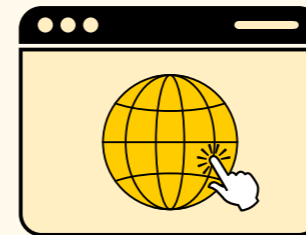
10%
LGBTQIA+

22%
culturally and
linguistically diverse

5%
living with a disability

91%
good or excellent
overall experience

Reach



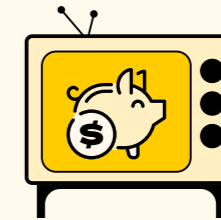
76,339
unique website visitors to ballaratfoto.org
(1 Jan–11 Nov 2025)

552,032
page views

25,978
email subscribers

126,797
user sessions

Publicity



\$43.9m
earned media value



183
media stories

Magical Moments Of 2025

In 2025, the Ballarat International Foto Biennale demonstrated that international excellence belongs in regional Victoria. Through *Lifeforce*, Ballarat became a site of world premieres, global dialogue and regional transformation at the centre of contemporary photographic discourse.

I ♥ Campbell

A defining moment was the major premiere of *I ♥ Campbell*. Featuring new photographs alongside a newly commissioned sculpture titled *Embrace*, this 'exhibition of vulnerabilities' invited audiences directly into Campbell Addy's creative process. As a globally celebrated practitioner, Addy's presence in Ballarat, with exhibition designer, Ibbly Njoya, offered rare access to international creative leadership via the festival launch and a keynote at the Palace Regent Theatre. The exchange was highly sought after and disarmingly generous, offering audiences and emerging practitioners moments of connection that were as meaningful as they were memorable.

One-Way Ticket to Vietnam

The world premiere of *One-Way Ticket to Vietnam 1966–1968* honoured pioneering French photojournalist Catherine Leroy, featuring previously unseen works and a bilingual publication produced by **Atelier EXB**, edited by Robert Pledge and Dominique Deschavanne. The publication was launched at Ballarat Town Hall by the Consul General of France, Mrs Paule Ignatio. This project was supported by the **Dotation Catherine Leroy**, the **City of Ballarat**, the **French Embassy** and **ILFORD**, and positioned Ballarat as a site of scholarship and global historical reflection, preserving Leroy's photographic legacy. In 1966, aged 21, Leroy arrived in Saigon with one camera and \$100 USD, soon becoming a groundbreaking combat photographer.

Mumu Mirri

Mumu Mirri was a glittering highlight of the 2025 program, drawing cultural tourists to Ballarat with its striking day and night installation of an illuminated Bogong moth on the facade of the National Centre for Photography. This collaboration between **John Truscott Prizes** recipient Dave Jones and Wadawurrung artist Dr Deanne Gilson presented an exploration of sustenance, survival and the interconnectedness of all living things. *Mumu Mirri* offered visitors a compelling and memorable festival experience. Presented in partnership with **The John Truscott Design Foundation** and **Festivals Australia**.

Lifeforce

Beyond the galleries, *Lifeforce* turned Ballarat into a national hub for photography. Many of the fifty artists featured in *Long Exposure* travelled to participate, while interstate artists and cohorts hosted their own launch events in the Open Program. Career-development initiatives, including the **Refocus Retreat** delivered in partnership with **Nikon Australia**, created valuable pathways for women photographers. In a standout moment, Campbell Addy modelled for a live editorial shoot, giving **Refocus Retreat** participants a rare opportunity to observe professional practice in real time. These experiences enriched the festival program and contributed to extended stays, increased local spending, and the growth of lasting professional networks.

"This year and the previous Biennales in Ballarat have been particularly joyous and inspiring. The artworks were varied and impactful in beautiful locations. It feels like a sneak peak into hidden venues."

SURVEY RESPONDENT



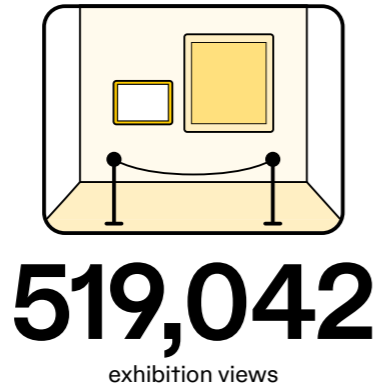
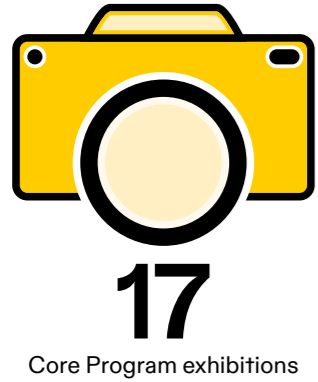
Lifeforce Gala.
Photo: Astrid Mulder.

Fostering Talent, Expanding Horizons

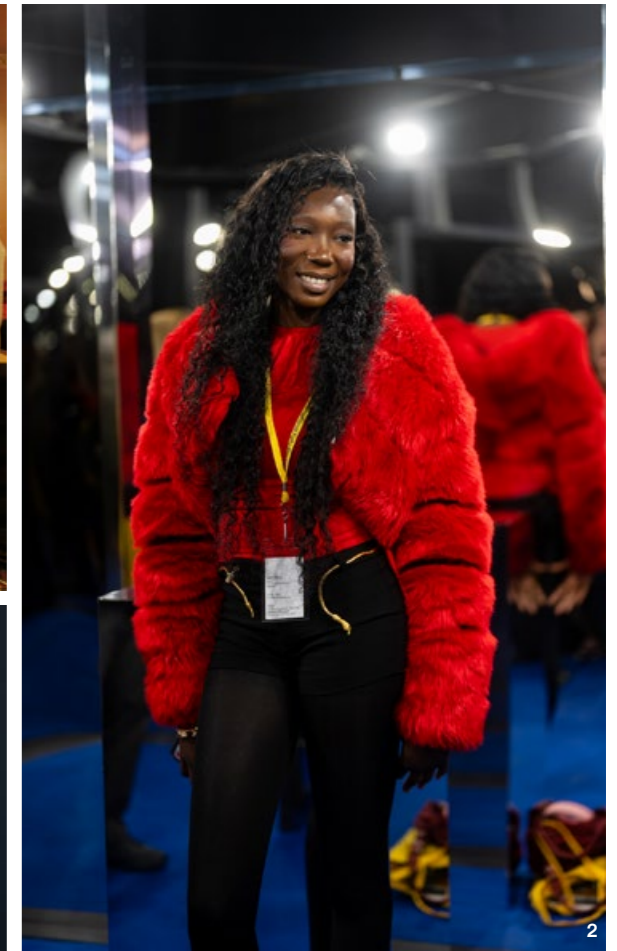
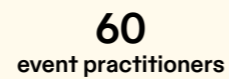
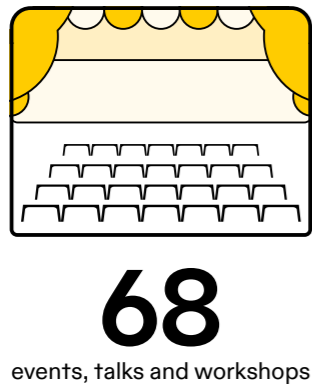
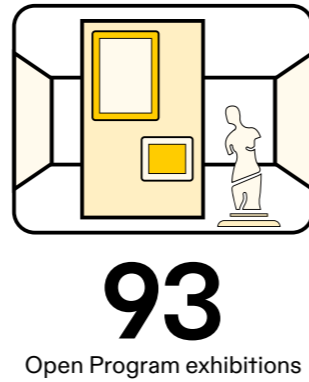
The Biennale is a platform for all photographers working across diverse practices, from fashion and portraiture to documentary, fine art and promptography.

World-exclusive exhibitions by Addy, Leroy and Robert Mapplethorpe situate the Biennale within a global context, enabling Australian artists to see their work presented alongside internationally significant practices. This curatorial positioning elevates the profile of Australian photography while strengthening international cultural exchange.

Artist talks, masterclasses and panel discussions spanned contemporary practice, from emerging voices such as Lê Nguyễn Phương (VNM/AUS) to internationally celebrated photographers including Todd Hido (USA) and Hiromi Tango (JPN/AUS). By connecting artists with audiences, institutions and peers, the Biennale strengthened professional networks, fostered experimentation, and created meaningful pathways for career development.



"Full of enlightenment and joy."
SURVEY RESPONDENT



Photos: 1. Leon Rice-Whetton. 2. Astrid Mulder. 3. Ballarat International Foto Biennale. 4. Courtesy Kathy Muhlhan. 5. Craig Mitchell.

Partnership With Purpose

The Principal Partnership with RACV extends across programming, marketing, hospitality and strategic audience development. In 2025, a suite of exhibitions, artist talks, curated dining events and member-exclusive experiences at RACV Goldfields Resort introduced new audiences to the Biennale and the resort, encouraging visitors to extend their stay and explore the broader region. This collaboration demonstrates the value of thoughtful, place-based partnerships where programming, destination experience and audience growth align to deliver measurable regional and brand impact.

“RACV was proud to support the 2025 Ballarat International Foto Biennale – bringing world-class photography, engaging experiences, and meaningful cultural connection to regional Victoria.”

MARDI NOWAK, HEAD OF VISUAL ARTS, RACV



Artist Hiromi Tango at the member-exclusive *Art of Lunch* event, held at RACV Goldfields Resort. Image courtesy RACV. Photo: Matto Lucas.

Core Program

Niijournal

World Premiere

Presented in partnership with RACV, Principal Partner ArtHouse, RACV Goldfields Resort, 1500 Midland Hwy, Creswick

Launched in 2016 by Campbell Addy, *Niijournal* emerged with a clear and powerful mission: ‘here to educate, not irritate.’ Since its inception, the journal has amplified the work of Black creatives across photography, fashion, poetry and political commentary. This exhibition brought together highlights from across *Niijournal*’s issues. More than a publication, *Niijournal* is a collective voice and cultural artefact.

Special thanks to Madeline Griggs and Sam Ross, New School Represents; Mardi Nowak and Ellen Wignell, RACV.



Niijournal, installation view. Image courtesy RACV. Photo: Matto Lucas.

Maria Fernanda Cardoso (COL)

Leila Jeffreys (AUS)

Nature~ista

World Premiere

Curated by Adam Harding, Visual Art Curator, RACV. Presented by RACV, Principal Partner RACV Goldfields Resort, 1500 Midland Hwy, Creswick.

Nature~ista celebrated the flamboyant flair of the animal kingdom through the lens of contemporary artists, Leila Jeffreys and Maria Fernanda Cardoso. Jeffreys’ intimate bird portraits reveal the soft elegance of doves and pigeons, while Cardoso’s magnified images of spiders showcase their dazzling, armour – like patterns. Together, their works transformed the outdoor gallery into a catwalk of nature’s most extraordinary designs.



Maria Fernanda Cardoso, Leila Jeffreys, *Nature~ista*, installation view. Image courtesy RACV. Photo: Terry Hope.

Hiromi Tango (JAP/AUS)

Full Flower Moon

World Premiere

Curated by Ellen Wignell, Visual Arts Curator, RACV. Presented by RACV, Principal Partner

RACV Goldfields Resort, 1500 Midland Hwy, Creswick

Inspired by classical Japanese theatre, *Noh* 能, as well as *Hanakatoba* 花言葉, (the Japanese language of flowers), the *Full Flower Moon* series explored the artist’s Japanese-Australian cultural identity. This series of six images retell the famous *Noh* play, *Hagoromo* 羽衣 (The Feather Mantle). *Full Flower Moon* was created as a ritual to mark the anniversary of a friend’s husband’s death, with long-term photographer, Greg Piper.



Hiromi Tango, *Full Flower Moon*, installation view. Image courtesy RACV. Photo: Matto Lucas.

Campbell Addy (GHA/GBR) *I ♥ Campbell*

Campbell Addy is a London-based, British-Ghanaian artist born and raised in Croydon whose work is defined by unique narrative and emotional authenticity. His powerful artistic vision challenges and redefines contemporary ideas of beauty, identity and representation. Since graduating from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design in 2016, Addy has worked with leading international publications including *i-D*, *Vogue*, *Financial Times*, *Dazed*, *TIME*, *Wall Street Journal Magazine*, *Rolling Stone* and *Garage Magazine*. His practice extends beyond image-making into publishing and talent development through *Nii Journal* and Nii Agency, initiatives dedicated to diversity and cultural storytelling.

Addy's accolades include British Fashion Awards New Wave Creative (2018 and 2019), the Isabella Blow Award for Fashion Creator (2023), and the Royal Photographic Society Award for Fashion Photography (2024).

Consisting of 34 original works across photography, film, painting and sculpture, this new exhibition joined audience and artist in a journey of connection and creation. Spatial design was curated by renowned set designer Ibby Njoya, and the show welcomed participation, inviting the audience to step inside, feel, make and find their own spark for creative curiosity.

**"I don't want people to just come and see the work.
I want people to realise that they are part of that practice.
I want people to participate in and reflect upon the love,
intimacy and bonds that I experienced when I explored each
of these artworks. For what is an artwork without its audience?"**

CAMPBELL ADDY

Campbell Addy, *I ♥ Campbell*, installation view.
Photo: Garth Oriander.



Australian Exclusive

Presented by Campbell Addy
in association with the Ballarat
International Foto Biennale.

Ballarat Mining Exchange,
12 Lydiard Street North, Ballarat.

Proudly supported by
The Linley Mitchell Family.

Presented in partnership with
New School Represents.

Licence courtesy of
180 Studios and National Geographic.

Exhibition Design by
Ibby Njoya (CMR/GBR).

Architect & Designer
Lauren Garner, G-AP.

Special thanks to
Madeline Griggs and Sam Ross,
New School Represents;
Decently Exposed;
Mike Whitehead.

Accommodation Partners
Hotel Vera;
Battista Ballarat;
Sofitel Melbourne;
Sofitel Sydney Wentworth.

Paint Partner
Haymes Paint, Ballarat.

Robert Mapplethorpe (USA) *Enniful x Mapplethorpe*

Robert Mapplethorpe (1946–1989) was a master photographer whose work created a pressure between light and dark, celebrity and underground, sacred and profane, ripple and form. Yet, at the same time, his work shows a deep reverence for photography in the way he balanced colour, composed his images and looked for a kind of classicism in the character and beauty in his subjects.

For this exhibition, Ghanaian-born British editor Edward Enniful OBE, in cooperation with the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation, presented his singular vision of the photographer's work. Enniful's selection of forty-six original prints in pairs forged new dialogues between them and invited visitors to see some of Mapplethorpe's best known photographs anew.

**"...while Robert Mapplethorpe exhibitions have been
presented in Sydney and Perth, we are particularly excited
for his works to be presented at this important festival,
showing the talent not only of the artist, but also the curator."**

MICHAEL WARD STOUT, PRESIDENT, ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE FOUNDATION

Australian Exclusive

Curated by Edward Enniful OBE.

Post Office Gallery,
Federation University,
Cnr Sturt Street & Lydiard Street
North, Ballarat.

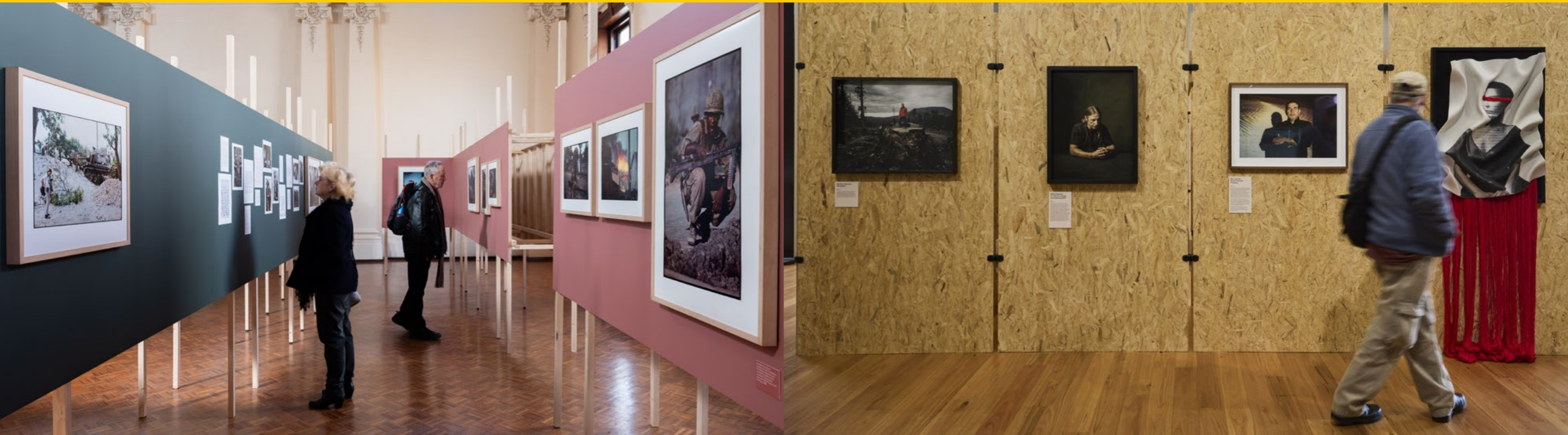
Courtesy of the
Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation
and Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, Paris.

Proudly supported by
Federation University.

Special thanks to
Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation;
Edward Enniful OBE &
Akua Enniful, EE72;
Scott Fredericks, Eucabuild;
Abe Hutchinson; and
Tamela McMahon.

Robert Mapplethorpe, *Enniful x Mapplethorpe*, installation view.
Photo: Garth Oriander.





Catherine Leroy ^(FRA) *One-Way Ticket to Vietnam 1966–1968*

In February 1966, Catherine Leroy was twenty-one, an age she could travel across the world without parental permission. She bought a one-way ticket to Saigon, today Ho Chi Minh City, with a single camera and \$100 USD in her pocket. She had never been a photographer, yet would rapidly become acclaimed in combat still-imagery, the first female of her generation in the field. Leroy's work showed the emotion and humanity of both the troops and the Vietnamese people alike. She won many awards and was the first woman to win the prestigious George Polk Award news photography category, which honours intrepid journalism, for her 1967 images of the Battle of Hill 881.

"My parents and my friends don't understand the reasons that push me to leave," she once wrote. "As far as I am concerned, it's quite simple: I want to become a photojournalist and the biggest story at the moment is the Vietnam War."

In response to this exhibition, the Ballarat International Foto Biennale commissioned an ekphrastic poem by award-winning author Nam Le (VNM/AUS), presented as a video reading by the poet.

"The Embassy of France to Australia is proud to support this great exhibition as we mark this year the bicentenary of the invention of photography by the French pioneer Nicéphore Niépce. Catherine Leroy's life and work embody the pioneering spirit of photography that began with its very invention, and I am truly delighted that the public can discover the legacy of this exceptional figure in photographic modern history."

HIS EXCELLENCY MR PIERRE-ANDRÉ IMBERT, AMBASSADOR OF FRANCE TO AUSTRALIA

Catherine Leroy, *One-Way Ticket to Vietnam 1966–1968*, installation view.
Photo: Garth Oriander.

World Premiere

Curated by Robert Pledge with Dominique Deschavanne and Vanessa Gerrans

A-Hall, Ballarat Town Hall, 225 Sturt Street, Ballarat.

Presented in partnership with Dotation Catherine Leroy.

Exhibition graphics © Atelier EXB / Elisabeth Welter.

Proudly supported by The City of Ballarat; the Embassy of France in Australia; and ILFORD.

Special thanks to RMIT University; Atelier EXB / Éditions Xavier Barral, Paris; Robert Pledge & Dominique Deschavanne; Scott Fredericks, Eucabuild; Abe Hutchinson; Tamela McMahon; and Pollyanna Sutton.

Martin Kantor Portrait Prize

The Martin Kantor Portrait Prize is a cornerstone of the Ballarat International Foto Biennale and an exceptional opportunity for photo media artists to present new work at one of Australia's most prestigious photographic events. The Prize is acquisitive, with \$15,000 awarded to the most outstanding portrait. The winning work enters the Biennale's collection, and the winner and finalists are exhibited as part of the 2025 Ballarat International Foto Biennale.

Established in honour of the late Martin Kantor, photographer, philanthropist and founder of St Kilda's Brightspace Gallery, the Prize reflects Kantor's enduring commitment to bold image-making, community and advocacy. Known for his arresting portraits of musicians and artists, including Iggy Pop, Grace Jones, Paul Kelly, Adam Cullen, Howard Arkley and Dale Frank, Kantor's work shaped the visual language of Australian cultural life. His iconic image of Mark Seymour, as an album cover artwork by Hunter & Collectors, remains emblematic of Australian rock history. Kantor was also a passionate supporter of environmental causes and First Nations self-determination.

Award Winner – Bronwyn Kidd
Polly Borland No. 1, 2025

Bronwyn Kidd's portrait of Polly Borland is both homage and exchange, shaped by a friendship spanning three decades. Costumed in a sweeping cape, Borland appears super-heroic, radiant, mythic, wholly herself. Originally shot on negative, scanned, retouched with tape marks retained, then hand-printed, the work honours analogue process and shared history.

People's Choice Winner – Suzanne Phoenix
John Gollings, 2024

Suzanne Phoenix's portrait of John Gollings was commended by the judges for its exceptional use of exquisite lighting and velvety depths, which gives the image a powerful, meditative presence. This portrait comes full circle after Suzanne Phoenix first met John when they were both Martin Kantor Portrait Prize finalists in the 2021 Biennale.

World Premiere

Catobeen Room, Ballarat GovHub, 101 Armstrong Street south, Ballarat.

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

Finalists
T W Baker, Dane Beesley, Simon Dow, Adam Ferguson, Naomi Herzog, Petrina Hicks, Ian Kemp, Bronwyn Kidd, Joy Mei En Lai, Kellie Leczinska, Bec Lorrimer, Thérèse Maher, Mia Mala McDonald, Rod McNicol, Alan Mitchell, Matthew Newton, Tazette O'Halloran, Suzanne Phoenix, David Rosetzky, Forough Yavari.

Judges
Natasha Bullock, Senior Curator, National Gallery of Victoria; Stephen Payne, Creative Activation Producer, Ballarat International Foto Biennale; Alexander Robinson, Director, Photoaccess.

Martin Kantor Portrait Prize, installation view.
Photo: Garth Oriander.

Prompted Peculiar – International AI Prize

Prompted Peculiar is a global competition exploring the intersection of creativity and technology, inviting artists to use Artificial Intelligence as a tool for image-making through the act of prompting. In its second edition, the prize awarded \$2,000 to the overall winner and \$1,000 to the People's Choice recipient. A curated shortlist of twelve finalist works was presented as framed works onsite and through an online exhibition gallery.

Award Winner – Hannah Silver (AUS)

I'm the Only One in Here, 2024
Midjourney

Hannah Silver's winning work offers a portrait of a future that feels both strange and eerily familiar. A reflective helmet containing an entire world, a pensive gaze, and the tension between blossoms and industrial codes create an image alive with contradiction – technology and nature, isolation and connection. Quiet yet powerful, the work meditates on what it means to be human in an increasingly constructed world.

People's Choice Winner – Peter Sparkman (AUS)

Black Hill Tip Rats Abduct Resident's Babies, 2024
Midjourney

"Sparkman's work deepens the longer you look. What begins as a child's face behind a lattice of hands unfolds into a meditation on innocence, fragility and protection. Drawing on folktale and the contemporary uncanny, the layered composition asks more than it answers: what world are we born into, and who protects us?"

– Judges comments

Prompted Peculiar, installation view.
Photo: Garth Oriander.

World Premiere

The Miners Tavern,
120 Lydiard Street North, Ballarat.

Finalists

Ali Choudhry, Adrian Elton, Mike Gray, Mark Kimber, Nic Kocher, Brent Leideritz, Heidi Margocsy, Mel McVeigh, Peter Miller, Johanna Ng, Hanna Silver, Peter Sparkman.

Judges

Vanessa Gerrans, CEO Ballarat International Foto Biennale;
Annika Nordenskiöld, Visual Artist & Promptographer.

Dave Jones (AUS) with Dr Deanne Gilson (AUS) *Mumu Mirri*

Mumu Mirri, meaning moth in Wadawurrung language, was a striking illuminated public artwork by Dave Jones, created in collaboration with acclaimed Wadawurrung artist and knowledge holder Dr Deanne Gilson and commissioned by the Ballarat International Foto Biennale. Premiered on the façade of the National Centre for Photography, the work celebrated the Bogong Moth as an enduring symbol of sustenance, survival and the interconnectedness of all living things. Through the John Truscott Prizes awarded to animator and designer Jones, the installation highlighted excellence in the creation of memorable public spaces and events.

World Premiere

National Centre for Photography,
4 Bath Lane, Ballarat.

Presented as part of the Ballarat International Foto Biennale's *Photo Opportunities* series.

Proudly supported by Festivals Australia; The John Truscott Design Foundation; and Northrop Engineers.

Special thanks to Sophie Jones; Simon Madden; Geordie Webb; Ontoit; Searle Bros.; Michael Taylor Heritage Architects; Shannen Mennen; and Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation.

"The vibe in the town was lively and engaged while we were there on the opening weekend – a sense of excitement that something was going on all over the place."

SURVEY RESPONDENT

Dave Jones with Dr Deanne Gilson, *Mumu Mirri*, installation view, National Centre for Photography.
Photo: Photolifescapes.





Lê Nguyễn Phương (VNM/AUS)
Thành Phẩm

Historically, global perceptions of the American War in Viet Nam have been shaped by what writer Viet Thanh Nguyen calls the American ‘industry of memory’ – a structure in which the Vietnam War is remembered and framed primarily by Western media.

Thành Phẩm contextualised Vietnamese artist Lê Nguyễn Phương’s attempt to offer a counter-archive to the hegemonic American perspective of this war. Through photographs made with his family in Vietnam and Cambodia, Lê re-examined the emotional impact of the war and its aftermath on his loved ones, and the secrets buried within. This exhibition was a direct outcome of Lê being awarded the *GradFoto 2024 Prize*, presented annually by the Ballarat International Foto Biennale to an outstanding graduating artist.

Thành Phẩm, installation view.
Photo: Ballarat International Foto Biennale.

World Premiere

Ballarat Library,
178 Doveton Street North, Ballarat.

Proudly supported by
the City of Ballarat.

Special thanks to
Ballarat Library.

This exhibition is part of Lê’s
multi-venue solo exhibition which
spans Ballarat Library and First Site
Gallery, RMIT University.



Monika Makour (AUS)
Harry Merriman (AUS)
Jesse Pretorius (AUS)
Emily Raffaele (AUS)
GradFoto

GradFoto captured and presented a new generation of artists working in contemporary photography. This exhibition presents the People’s Choice, Monika Makour and highly commended winners, Harry Merriman, Jesse Pretorius, Emily Raffaele, of the *2024 GradFoto Award*.

GradFoto is a prestigious annual prize recognising the work of graduating photo-media artists from institutions across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.

World Premiere

Curated by Dr Christine McFetridge.
301 Mair Street, Ballarat.

Courtesy of the artists and
participating institutions across
Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.

Special thanks to Alejandro Acin;
participating schools; and the
emerging artists shaping the future of
photographic practice.

GradFoto, installation view.
Photo: Ballarat International Foto Biennale.

Long Exposure: The Legacy of Prahran College

This exhibition demonstrated what a life-force photography can be. The exhibitors, all photography students at Prahran CAE from the late 1960s to its closure in 1991, continue to photograph after diverse careers. There was no 'house style' at Prahran in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, beyond its inspiration to make pictures.

Artists

Colin Abbott, Robert Ashton, Chris Beck, Peter Bowes, Andrew Chapman, Lyn Cheong, Nigel Clements, Kim Corbel, Mimmo Cozzolino, Christina de Water, Robert Earp, Duncan Frost, Robert Gale, Jill Gocher, Sebastian Gollings, Luzio Grossi, Naomi Herzog, Graham Howe, Clive Hutchison, Peter Johnson, Ashley Jones-Evans, Linda Jullyan, Peter Kelly, Paul Lambeth, Peter Leiss, Carolyn Lewens, Steven Lojewski, Ian Macrae, James McArdle, Bill McCann, Jim McFarlane, Julie Millowick, Peter Milne, Richard Muggleton, Greg Neville, Glen O'Malley, Anne Palamountain, Courtney Pedersen, Kim Percy, Viki Petherbridge, Phillip Quirk, Leonie Reisberg, Ilana Rose, Robert Rosen, Stella Sallman, Greg Scullin, Miles Standish, Maria Stratford, Geoff Strong, Lisa Walker, Lynette Zeeng.

Curatorial Committee

Colin Abbott, Mimmo Cozzolino, Merle Hathaway, Ilana Rose, James McArdle, Phillip Quirk.

Catalogue design

Mimmo Cozzolino.

Long Exposure: The Legacy of Prahran College, installation view.
Photo: Astrid Mulder.



World Premiere

Curated by Merle Hathaway.

The Miners Tavern,
120 Lydiard Street North, Ballarat

Jody Haines (AUS) Debasish Mukherjee (IND) Memory Matrix

Memory Matrix brought the work of Palawa artist Jody Haines and New Dehli-based artist Debasish Mukherjee into dialogue to examine the shifting terrain of memory and identity. Together, their practices considered how personal recollection is shaped – distorted, sharpened, reassembled – by place: its scent, tempo, light and atmosphere.

Memory is never fixed. When stirred by the environment, it reorders chronology and emotional weight, generating a fluid personal timeline through which identity is continually formed. In this exhibition, individual histories intersected with communal pasts, presents and imagined futures, revealing identity as layered, relational and evolving.

Designed for outdoor presentation, the works were realised as large-scale public art installations across Bridge Mall and The Goods Shed. Printed on Perspex, wood, vinyl and trilobal fabric, the images responded physically to the elements. Wind, rain and shifting light became collaborators in the work, activating surfaces and reinforcing the exhibition's central proposition: that memory, like identity, is porous, contingent and in constant motion.

World Premiere

Curated by Anindita Banerjee.

Bridge Mall & The Goods Shed,
Ballarat.

Presented by Creative Ballarat.

Special thanks to
Justin Weyers, Form Imagination.

Memory Matrix, installation view, The Goods Shed.
Photo: Garth Oriander.





The city doesn't know your name, installation view.
Photo: Garth Oriander.

Sam Bloor (AUS)
Jesse Marlow (AUS)
The city doesn't know your name

Police Lane, Ballarat

Presented as a single paste-up poster at scale, Marlow's photograph combined with Bloor's short-form text work read as an aphorism or fragment of overheard thoughts. During the height of the COVID19 lockdowns, West Australian visual artist Sam Bloor and Melbourne-based photographer Jesse Marlow found creative connection across closed borders and began with a simple exchange: Marlow's photographs sent across the country; Bloor's words written in response.

Leicolhn McKellar (AUS)
Guma

World Premiere

Presented in partnership with the Art Gallery of Ballarat
Art Screen, Alfred Deakin Place, Ballarat

Leicolhn McKellar is a Budjiti woman from South West Queensland, living on Larrakia Country. *Guma* means blood in the Budjiti language, and is the title of McKellar's photo series and video exploration of contemporary pan-Aboriginal identity. Set in urban Darwin, *Guma* captured the everyday lives of First Nations families, celebrating their strength, connection and presence in spaces often excluded from mainstream representations. *Guma* reclaimed the visual narrative, presenting First Nations peoples as they are: multifaceted, contemporary and unbound by stereotype.

Special thanks to Michael Jalaru Torres, BlakLens.

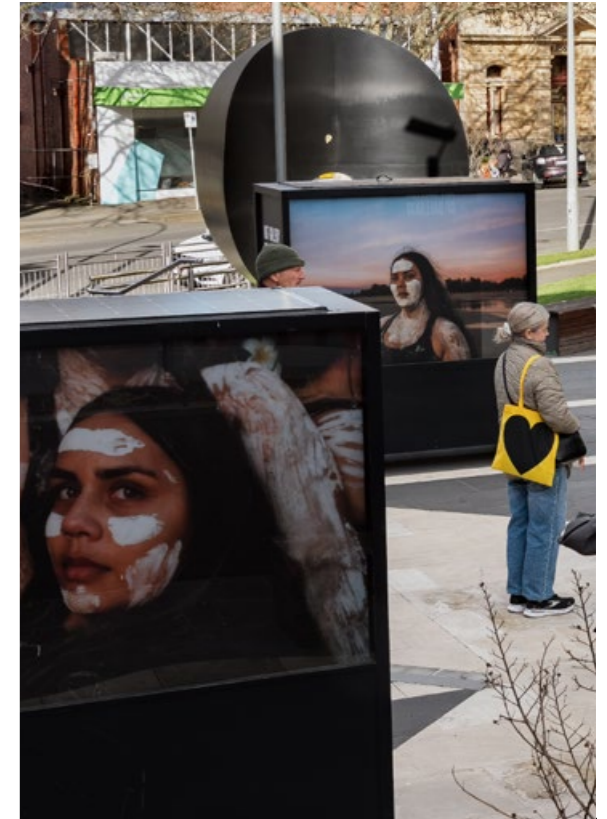


Photo: Astrid Mulder.



Multipurpose, installation view.
Photo: Astrid Mulder.

Brian O'Dwyer (AUS)
Multipurpose

World Premiere

Presented by the Art Gallery of Ballarat
Backspace Gallery, 43 Mair Street, Ballarat

Brian O'Dwyer is a Ballarat-based photographer, musician and artist. *Multipurpose* was a photography project capturing the early-morning attendees at the Ballarat Aquatic Centre. The series of works focused on individuals who use the multipurpose pool, designed for injury rehabilitation, between 6 am and 7:30 am, forming a close-knit community and developing friendships.

Annelise Seréna Belladonna (AUS)
Max Deutscher (AUS)

Jett Leduc (AUS)

High Exposure

World Premiere

Curated by Dr Christine McFetridge and Philippa Griffin.

Presented by Creative Ballarat

Police Lane, 301 Mair Street, 401 Sturt Street, 27 Doveton Street North, 217 Sturt Street, 4 Armstrong Street North & 20 Main Road

Exhibited as outdoor paste-up posters, visitors were invited to step beyond the gallery and into the streets. Featuring photographic artworks produced by emerging Ballarat-based artists in response to the festival theme, *Lifeforce*, this curated outdoor exhibition spanned city's laneways and heritage walls.



Jett Leduc, *Attached*, as part of *High Exposure*, installation view.
Photo: Garth Oriander.

Championing Photographers. Advancing Photography.

The 2025 Open Program, supported by **Nevetts Lawyers**, invited photographers from around the globe to exhibit their work in unique venues across Ballarat. Participants ranged from secondary school students, recent graduates and emerging practitioners through to established artists of national standing. This breadth reinforces the Biennale's role as both a professional platform and an accessible entry point into the sector.

A defining strength of the Open Program is its integration into Ballarat's civic and commercial life. Bars, cafés, restaurants, retail spaces and community venues become cultural hosts, embedding photography within everyday environments and driving foot traffic and economic activation across the CBD and surrounding areas.

In 2025, regional expansion through the new Pyrenees Photo Trail extended this impact across eight additional sites, including wineries and community venues. The initiative supported local businesses and increased length of stay by encouraging visitors to explore beyond the urban centre.

For **Nevetts Lawyers**, the partnership reflects a strong alignment with their values of accessibility, creativity and community leadership. Through their support of the Open Program, they championed excellence in contemporary photography, with winners of the associated Award Program selected by respected industry experts, providing recognition and professional exposure for participating artists. Guided by a philosophy of 'people first', **Nevetts Lawyers** extends its commitment beyond the walls of its practice and into the broader community, investing in initiatives that strengthen cultural vitality and regional impact.

"I just wanted to say thank you again for organising such an important celebration of photography – it was a great experience being part of the Open Program. I received a lot of feedback and have had a few people connect with questions, both about the work and doing assignments for others."

SURVEY RESPONDENT

2025 Open Program Awards

Judges

Dr Anindita Banerjee, interdisciplinary artist, curator and researcher
Garrie Maguire, Melbourne-based photographer, curator and collector, and founder of XYZ Photo Gallery

Announcement

Saturday 30 August 2025, Craig's Royal Hotel

Winner in memory of Dr Stephen Hennessy

Elli Bardas – *Wild Things*
Ballarat Mining Exchange, Federation University Campus, Lydiard Street North, Ballarat

Honourable Mention

Brian Hodges – *From Scraps to Goals: Uganda's Handmade Soccer Balls*
Beechworth Bakery, Grenville Street South, Ballarat

Ballarat Arts Alive Award

Ian Kemp – *1 in 4*
Mr Jones Dining, Main Road, Ballarat

Hygge Property Award

Setareh Hosseini – *Emigrabilia*
Roy Hammond, Armstrong Street North, Ballarat

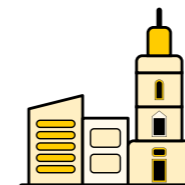
People's Choice Award

Dee Kelly – *Luminaria*
Grainery Lane, Armstrong Street North, Ballarat



226 artists

from emerging photographers to internationally recognised practitioners



City-wide activation

engaging local businesses and embedding art across everyday civic and commercial spaces

93 exhibitions

the highest number in Open Program history

103 venues

bars, cafés, restaurants, retail spaces, community sites, and regional locations



Professional platform

direct engagement with audiences, industry recognition, and opportunities for commissions

Pyrenees Photo Trail

8 regional sites

3 prizes

Dr Stephen Hennessy Memorial Award, Ballarat Arts Alive Award and Hygge Property Award



Stephen McAllister, *Rural Dreamscape*, The Forge Pizzeria, installation view.
Photo: Alastair Firkin.

Open Program

Artist	Title	Venue
Marg Alexander	Bundy In The Pocket	Acorn & Oak
Jo Armstrong	Echoes of Fear: The Mind's Dark Place	The Crypt
Arthur Creative	Up Close and ...	Unicorn Lane
Australian Association of Street Photographers Inc.	Exposed	Kathmandu
T W Baker	I Heard a River Coming Down the Cliff	Creative Framing Gallery
Kate j Baker & Phoebe Rose Lines	Breathing Stories The Tower	The Green House
Elli Bardas	Wild Things	Federation University Courtyard
Gaye Beal	A Symphony of Hues	Il Piccolo Gelato
Anita Beaney	New Light	L'espresso
Cat Black	Come sit with me	Aunty Jacks
Madeline Bowser & Ben Metherell	Handmade urban environments	Sovereign Hill
Lesley Bretherton	Botanica Obscura	Craig's Royal Hotel
Paul Briggs	Too Dry for the Long Haul	The North Star Hotel
John Callahan	Life is a Blur	Bibo Café & Restaurant
Centre for Multicultural Youth Ballarat	Mosaic of Voices	Ballarat Library
Andrew Chalk	Chasing the Light – Polar Night and Arctic Dawn	Webster's Market and Cafe
Des Crossley	Marks of Absence	Eureka Centre
Michael Danischewski	Trouble Rides A Fast horse	The Mallow Hotel
Kristin Diemer	Markets	Ross Creek Gallery
Paul Dodd	The Chair	Cornerstone Café
Ralph Domino	Metropolis	The Provincial Hotel Ballarat
Fed Uni – Arts Academy	Alive	Federation University
Alastair Firkin & Helen Myall	Where Reds are the New Black	101 Lydiard
Jane Fitzgerald	An Italian Summer	McKenzie St
Gordon Flynn	Connections	Everybody Knows Books
Lainey Foster	The Extraordinarily Ordinary	Renard
Kristen K Fox	Women in Trees	Campana's Stockade Cellars
Linda Franklin	The Times We Live In	Gallery 10
Louise Gay	Mirror Mirror	Dalwhinnie Wine
Lucinda Goodwin	I'm On The Guest List	Kank Wolverang Records
Jac Hartje	Algorithmic Landscapes	Palace Regent Cinema
Brian Hodges	From Scraps to Goals: Uganda's Handmade Soccer Balls	Beechworth Bakery Ballarat
Setareh Hosseini	Emigrabilia	Roy Hammond
Brian G. Jefferies	Different Worlds	The North Star Hotel
David Jones	THE HIDDEN	Bigbilla Wines
Joyce Evans Circle	Tribute to Joyce Evans	McKenzie St
Dee Kelly	Luminaria	Grainery Lane
Ian Kemp	1 in 4	Mr Jones Dining
Paul Lambeth	Within Sight	Eureka Centre
Peter Laqua	Resilience Within	Racers Bar & Café
Dotti Li	To Cherish the Perishable	Homeground Café
Vincent Liew	Visualizing Tengger – god, land and people	Avoca Information Centre
Adele Locke	False Landscapes	Talbot Arts & Historical Museum
Jackson Low	Outernet	Hop Temple
Adam Luckhurst	Monoliths	Morton+Co Architects
Georgina Matherson	All things must pass	The George Hotel

Artist	Title	Venue
Stephen McAllister	Rural Dreamscapes	The Forge Pizzeria
Noeleen McKeag	The Journey – Surreal Steampunk Portraits	Market Hotel
Melbourne Camera Club Conceptual Photography Group		Hop Temple
Maya Melrose	Lost lands found	The Green House
Margaret Metcalfe	For the Love of	Schnitz Ballarat
Mark Mistic	Scene & Seen	Kilderkin Distillery
Craig Mitchell	In Theatre	St John of God Ballarat Hospital
Gordon Monro	Asymmetries of Ballarat	The Foundry
Mount Clear College Photography	The starting point	Faull's Shoes
Patriot Mukmin	Obnubilation	101 Lydiard
Kathy Muhlhan	A Dahliance	RACV Goldfields Resort
Neurodivergent Image Collective	Co-occurrence	Roy Hammond
Anastasia Nixon	Chromatic Silence	321 Cafe Learmonth
Desmond Kok Hui Ong	Attention: The landscape of Japan	Multiple sites
Nick Orloff	Ghosts of Bulgaria's Past	Ellington's Wine Bar
Diana Paez	Trace	Her Majesty's Theatre
Vera Paulin	Voyage Through Vietnam – A Traveller's First Impressions	Saigon Allee
Perridak Arts	Through a Cultural Lens	Perridak Arts
Ashley Perry	Greece, late summer topographics	Blue Pyrenees Estate
Louis Petruccelli	CAPSULE Life Frozen and Fragile	BAaD Gallery
Photographic Imagery Collective	Collective Visions	Ballarat Performing Arts Community
Samantha Poling	Feel It Quietly	Meigas
RMIT Diploma Photography & Digital Imaging	Alumni Showcase	Gallerie Marion
Daniela Rodriguez	Echoes of Elsewhere	The George Hotel, Laneway
David Rosendale	The trees endure, the land has memory	Eastern Peake Cellar Door
Safety4U Ballarat	Safety4U	Federation University
Leon Sammartino	Faceless	Kinfolk
Racheal Samuels	Liminal Vestiges	Accent Framing
Nicole Sanders	My friend the river	Cubby Haus Brewing
Amber Schmidt	Laneway Files	Pat's Sandwiches
Grace Seow	In Blooms We Trust, Encore	Xin Jin Shan Chinese Library
Catherine Seymour	Existence in Small Print	Collins Booksellers on Lydiard
Anne Shellard, Kaye Linsdell & Sally Paterson	Stillness and Soul	Tin Roof Ballarat
Peter Sparkman	Homines Fabulosi Wadawurrung de Terra	7b Bridge Mall
Renée Sterling	The Walk to the Beach	Craig's Royal Hotel
Kylie Supski	FLORIOGRAPHY	Ballarat Arts Incubator
Anton Surov	Keep Out	Obscura Cameras
Jesse Thompson	Trugo: The Working Class Sport Unique to Melbourne	Golden City Hotel
Mimmalisa Trifilò & Werner Hammerstingl	Exchanges 2020-2025	Taltarni Vineyard
Lisa Walker	Slow Curtain	101 Lydiard
Kathleen Walsh	Going up or coming down?	Lydiard General Café & Diner
Rudiger Wasser	Junkspace	Pancho
Phil Watt	Hindsight	Tokyo Grill House
Jon Webb	W INK	Michael Unwin Wines
I Dewa Gde Gandiva Wisanjaka	Sekala Niskala (Seen & Unseen)	The Known World Bookshop
Ruth Woodrow	Melbourne Collaged	Drive Café

A Perfect Pairing: Photography & Pyrenees Wine

Major Wine Partner **Dalwhinnie Wine** and **Taltarni Vineyard** brought the Pyrenees into the heart of the festival, generously supplying *2023 Mesa Chardonnay*, *2021 Mesa Shiraz* and the celebratory *2019 Blanc de Blanc* across the *Lifeforce Gala*, official launch, exhibition openings and VIP occasions.

As part of the Open Program, the *Pyrenees Wine Trail* spanned eight venues, extending the festival experience beyond Ballarat and into the region. Visitors were invited to stay longer and uncover the richness of regional Victoria by moving through cellar doors, vineyards and surrounding landscapes.

We gratefully acknowledge this partnership for the sense of occasion and atmosphere that resonated across every gathering. Alongside our audiences, we look forward to raising a glass to the launch of the National Centre for Photography with more of the Pyrenees' finest.



Taltarni Vineyard.
Photo: Courtesy Taltarni Vineyard.



David Rosendale, *The trees endure, the land has memory*, installation view.
Photo: Courtesy Eastern Peake Cellar Door.



Nurturing Creative Pathways

Launched in 2025, the Education Program partnership with **Krause Bricks** invested in strong foundations for learning, creativity and regional growth. Engaging students from primary to tertiary level, the program embedded authentic exhibition outcomes within the Biennale, ensuring young people experienced professional cultural contexts beyond the classroom.

Through student exhibitions, tailored tours, free curriculum-aligned resources and in-school workshops addressing transport barriers, accessibility was strengthened. National pathways including *GradFoto* and *High Exposure* extended professional opportunities, while accessibility initiatives such as Visual Descriptions expanded inclusion for blind and low-vision audiences.

Impact at a Glance

- F-10 engagement across five Ballarat schools
- Tailored tours across two Core Program exhibitions
- Free curriculum-aligned education kits
- Pilot in-school cyanotype incursion responding to transport barriers
- Public exhibition outcomes at 101 Lydiard and Ballarat Library
- *GradFoto* national graduate pathway (Australia & Aotearoa New Zealand)
- Emerging artist commissions through *High Exposure*
- 1,599 audio tour views and 515 active users via Visual Descriptions

Schools & In-School Delivery

In response to transport cost barriers, a pilot in-school delivery model was introduced, including a cyanotype incursion at Pleasant Street Primary School and the *I ♥ Foto* classroom program for F-10 students. Both culminated in public exhibition outcomes during the Biennale, ensuring students experienced professional presentation contexts.

Five schools participated in *I ♥ Foto*, with student works exhibited at 101 Lydiard during the festival.

Graduate & Emerging Artist Pathways

GradFoto continued as a national platform for graduating photo-media artists across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, presenting the People's Choice Award winner and highly commended finalists. 2024 winner Lê Nguyễn Phương returned with a multi-venue solo exhibition in 2025.

High Exposure commissioned new work by emerging Ballarat artists responding to *Lifeorce*, presented as a large-scale outdoor exhibition that embedded contemporary practice within the civic landscape and elevated local creative talent.



I ♥ Foto, installation view. Photo: Astrid Mulder.

“Being part of the Ballarat International Foto Biennale was such a rewarding experience... I loved watching students explore new skills and take pride in sharing their work with a wider audience.”

TONIA BURRIDGE, SIENA CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL LUCAS

Accessibility & Inclusion

The Visual Descriptions Pilot Program expanded access to the headline exhibition *I ♥ Campbell*. Supported by an **are-able Foundation Community Grant**, it delivered an audio-described tour, specialist capacity-building workshops, and a best-practice framework for visual descriptions, with recruitment prioritising disabled writers.

Beyond improving access for blind and low-vision audiences, the program created meaningful professional opportunities for disabled practitioners, strengthening inclusive cultural participation across the region.

- An audio descriptive tour (1,599 views; 515 active users)
- Two specialist capacity-building workshops
- A best-practice framework for visual description writing
- Recruitment prioritising disabled writers
- Recognition in the 2025 City of Ballarat International Day of People with Disability Awards

Program participants pictured, left to right: Heidi Biggin and Freya, Christine McFetridge, Lynden Nicholls, Sim Lüttin, Kim Percy, Pam Swanborough, Theodora Pantelich and Kade Beau Anderson.



Photo: Ballarat International Foto Biennale.

“This initiative doesn’t just remove barriers, it empowers artists, writers and audiences to connect in new ways.”

KADE BEAU ANDERSON, VISUAL DESCRIPTIONS PARTICIPANT



Campbell Addy, *I ♥ Campbell*, installation view. Photo: Ballarat International Foto Biennale.

Ballarat In Full Glow

Each festival, the opening weekend transforms Ballarat into an epicentre of creativity, community and cultural exchange. From lively radio broadcasts to late-night activations in the heart of the city, the Biennale's launch set the tone for a 60-day celebration that resonated across the region.

The opening weekend featured world premieres and offered an exceptional opportunity to engage directly with leading practitioners including Campbell Addy (GHA/GBR), Ibby Njoya (GBR/CAM), Hiromi Tango (JPN/AUS), Leicolhn McKellar (AUS), Dr Deanne Gilson (AUS), Dave Jones (AUS), Paul Lambeth (AUS), Brownyn Kidd (AUS), Sam Bloor (AUS) and many more. These immersive experiences extended beyond the festival as Campbell Addy's visits to Australia led to his feature on the cover of Vogue Australia's November 2025 issue.

Friday 22 August

- Welcome to Country by Dr Deanne Gilson
- Media preview
- VIP early access exhibition previews
- Official festival launch
- Trivia night

Saturday 23 & Sunday 24 August

- Portfolio reviews
- Live broadcasts
- Podcast recording
- Artist talk – *Campbell Addy and Ibby Njoya in person*
- Celebration – *Lifeforce Gala*
- Prize announcements – *Martin Kantor Portrait Prize and Open Program Awards*
- Panel discussions and workshops
- Dining experience – *The Art of Lunch*
- Film premiere – *Time is Not a Line*

The atmosphere was electric: in venues and cafés, visitors lingered over conversations about the work they'd seen. Film screenings and artist talks drew crowds into shared experiences. Workshops, artist talks and participatory events welcomed people of all ages and backgrounds, fostering accessibility and inclusion. These shared cultural moments strengthened community bonds and promoted a sense of pride in Ballarat's identity as a vibrant regional city of ideas and creativity.

A Boost for Local Business

The influx of Biennale visitors over the opening weekend generates notable economic activity across the Ballarat region – high occupancy rates and steady foot traffic throughout the day and into the evening.

Cultural tourism – amplified by the Biennale – contributed to local spending on dining, shopping, tours and transport. For hospitality partners and precinct spaces, the weekend delivered opportunities for financial upswing and longer-term customer engagement as 70% of visitors return to Ballarat for the festival every two years.

Hospitality Partners

- Dalwhinnie Wine
- Heirloom Catering Co.
- Kilderkin Distillery
- The Mallow Hotel
- Nature's Cargo
- Red Duck Beer
- Taltarni Vineyard

Accommodation Partners

- Battista
- Craig's Royal Hotel
- Flair BnB
- Hotel Provincial
- Hotel Vera
- Quest Ballarat
- RACV Goldfields Resort
- Sofitel Hotels & Resorts – Melbourne and Sydney

"We have attended many BIFB's and believe that the overall quality and variety (especially in the open section) was the best we have seen. We enjoyed the balance of the core section and would have loved to have done more of the educational events. Time!"

SURVEY RESPONDENT



Campbell Addy, *I ♥ Campbell*, installation view. Photo: Astrid Mulder.

Curious & Engaged

The 2025 Ballarat International Foto Biennale attracted a diverse, curious, and highly engaged audience, strengthening its reputation as Australia's leading festival of photography and a major cultural drawcard for regional Victoria. This year's visitors demonstrated deeper engagement, broader representation and a growing appetite for both traditional and emerging forms of photographic art.

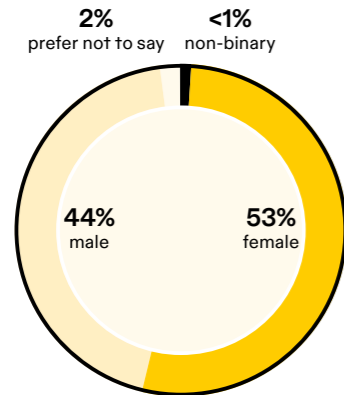
Across the festival period, audiences travelled from across metropolitan Melbourne, regional Victoria, interstate and overseas, with many making a dedicated trip to Ballarat.

"...I was only able to attend for two days. Next time I will stay in the area and visit everything! The volunteers at the door were friendly and helpful. Enjoyed the experience of sitting having a coffee, ice cream and meals in the cafés, wine bars and pubs when viewing the photos. Such a range of creative photos."

SURVEY RESPONDENT

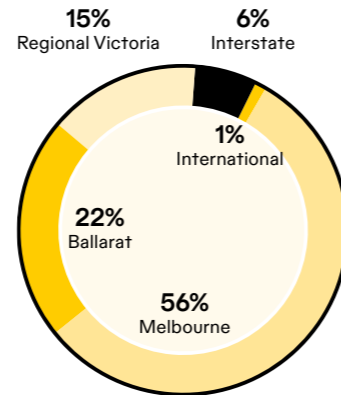
Audience Snapshot

Gender

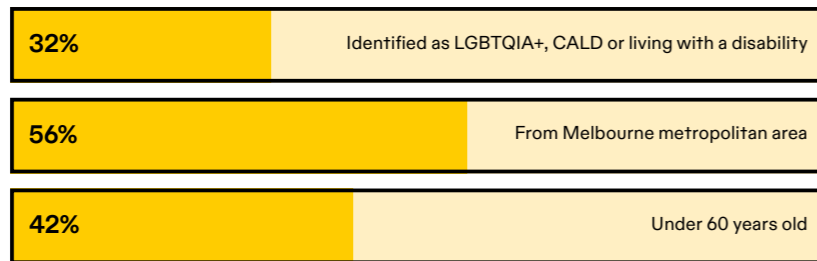


Culture Counts 2025; n = 345

Geographic spread



Culture Counts 2025; n = 392



Extending The Festival Experience

On opening weekend, a local café owner paused mid-service to point out a group of visitors studying photographs that had been installed. "They wouldn't normally be here," she said, "but now they're staying for lunch." Across town, a secondary school student emerged from Campbell Addy's artist talk, describing the experience as "the first time I've seen work that feels like it speaks to me."

Independent Culture Counts evaluation confirms what these moments suggest. Public responses were overwhelmingly positive, with every measured dimension achieving a total agreement of 77% or higher. The festival's emotional power was clear. 92% agreed or strongly agreed that the event was well produced and presented (Presentation) and 91% indicated that it moved and inspired them (Meaning). In practice, this translated into full venues, animated post-event discussions and social media reflections that extended engagement well beyond the gallery experience.

As one visitor reflected: "Campbell's exhibition in particular was so deeply moving, which was thanks to his artistry AND enormously due to the curatorial choices, so thank you for such an impactful experience. Can't wait to see what you do next time!!"

The dimension of Connection (77% agreement) highlights the Biennale's potential to deepen community interaction even further. Notably, informal activation spaces and Open Program venues often became spontaneous gathering points. Events such as *Trivia Night* presented by **Nikon Australia** and *Thank God it's Foto Friday* meet-ups created relaxed environments where conversations were sparked by the artworks surrounding them and new relationships formed.

The region stands behind the festival to help it succeed. Partnerships with **Garden State Insurance Brokers**, **Hygge Property**, **Jellis Craig** and other local collaborators reflected the depth of community belief in the Biennale and its purpose. Local partners offered their spaces, networks and advocacy in support of a shared cultural vision contributing time, resources and visibility to ensure the Biennale delivered outcomes for the community.



Photo: Garth Oriander.



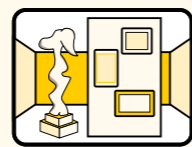
66,471
total attendees



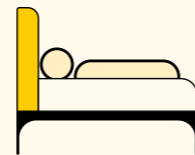
70%
repeat visitors



7%
interstate / international
visitors



5.5
average exhibitions
attended



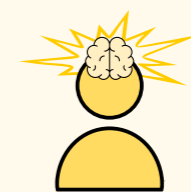
2.2
average nights
stayed



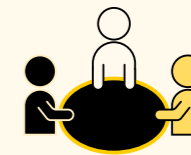
88%
agreed or strongly
agreed the Biennale
made them feel
welcome and included



91%
agreed or strongly
agreed the Biennale
moved and
inspired them



87%
agreed or strongly
agreed the Biennale
opened their minds to
new ways of thinking



96%
agreed or strongly
agreed the Biennale
provided an addition to
the area's cultural life



91%
good or excellent
response to the Biennale

Engagement

The 2025 public program delivered a dynamic schedule of in-person and online events including talks, panels, workshops, screenings and sector forums. Designed to engage with critical discourses shaping contemporary photography and photo-media practice, the program created opportunities for artists, educators and audiences to connect, learn and exchange ideas. These events positioned the Biennale as a forum for critical dialogue at the forefront of photography and contemporary image-making.

Refocus Retreat

Ahead of opening weekend, the Biennale partnered with **Refocus Retreat** and **Nikon Australia** to host a series of talks and workshops at **101 Lydiard**. The retreat brought together women photographers from across Australia for an intensive career-development program. As part of the partnership, headline artist Campbell Addy modelled for a live photo shoot with editorial photographer Stef King (AUS), offering participants the opportunity to observe professional practice in action. Participants also heard in person from Core Program artists Jody Haines (*Memory Matrix*) and Christina de Water (*Long Exposure: The Legacy of Prahran College*).

Artist Talks and Panels

- Campbell Addy and Ibby Njoya in conversation following a screening of *Campbell Addy: Feeling Seen* (2024)
- A live recording of the *When Harri Met Sally* podcast
- Todd Hido (presented with **Leica Australia**) in conversation with Professor Daniel Palmer
- Nam Le in dialogue with Miranda Burton, discussing his commissioned ekphrastic poem *Cathy* responding to *One-Way Ticket to Vietnam 1966–1968*
- *Women Shaping Photojournalism* panel discussion, presented by **Nikon Australia**
- *The Photographic Terrain*, exploring place-based practice; Nina Berman and Raphaela Rosella, chaired by Fiona Morris and Gemma Turnbull
- Core Program artist and 2024 *GradFoto Award* winner Lê Nguyễn Phương in conversation with Phuong Ngo
- *Long Exposure: The Legacy of Prahran College* artist talks, featuring photographers Rob Gale, Paul Lambeth, Peter Milne and Christina de Water; chaired by James McArdle
- *Memory Matrix* artists Jody Haines and Debasish Mukherjee in discussion with curator Dr Anindita Banerjee

**“The group were motivated and excited...
The space and facilities were perfect for the event.”**

ISABELLA CAPEZIO, WORKSHOP FACILITATOR



Women Shaping Photojournalism panel discussion. (L-R) Christina Simons, Penny Stephens and Carla Gottgens. Photo: Sunflower Imaging Photo Studio. Panel presented by Nikon Australia.

Masterclasses and Workshops

Professional development remains a cornerstone of the Biennale's adult education program. The 2025 masterclass series offers photographers at all levels opportunities to refine technical skills and deepen conceptual practice.

Workshops included:

- *Accessible Art Writing Practices* (online seminar)
- *Hard Light, Real Life: Flash Techniques for Street Photographers* with Mark Davidson
- *Narrative Editorial Portrait Photography Masterclass* Kristoffer Paulsen
- *Negotiating the Nude* exploring consent in intimate image-making with photographer Ali Choudhry and Artmodel Richard
- *Photojournalism 101* with Walkley Award-winner Chris Hopkins (presented by **Nikon Australia**)
- *Reframing Landscape Photography* facilitated by Isabella Capezio

Two popular *Foto Walks* – *Walls Speak: Heritage Architecture* and *Mindful Meandering* – encouraged participants to engage directly with Ballarat's built and natural environments.

Film Screenings and Performances

- *Campbell Addy: Feeling Seen* (2024)
- The sold-out premiere of *Time is Not a Line* (2025), a documentary following the late artist and 2023 Open Program winner Dr Stephen Hennessy as he completed his practice-led doctoral studies
- *Cathy at War* (2016), presented by **Alliance Française Melbourne**
- A performance installation of *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1928), featuring a live score performed by Richard Chew with Vox Chamber Choir and guest musicians

Photobook Day

Photobook Day returned as a festival highlight, featuring a vibrant *Photobook Fair* connecting artists, publishers and collectors. Publications launched included *Catherine Leroy: One-Way Ticket to Vietnam 1966–1968* and *Fill the Frame* by Andrew Chapman.

**“I'm still buzzing from the excitement of presenting and modelling at the
Negotiating The Nude workshop... I hope the Biennale puts on similar workshops in the future.”**

ARTMODEL RICHARD (RICHARD MUSUMECI)



The Narrative Editorial Portrait photography masterclass with Kristoffer Paulsen. Photo: Sunflower Imaging Photo Studio.

Creative Investment, Community Return



66,471
attendees



78%
visitors from outside Ballarat

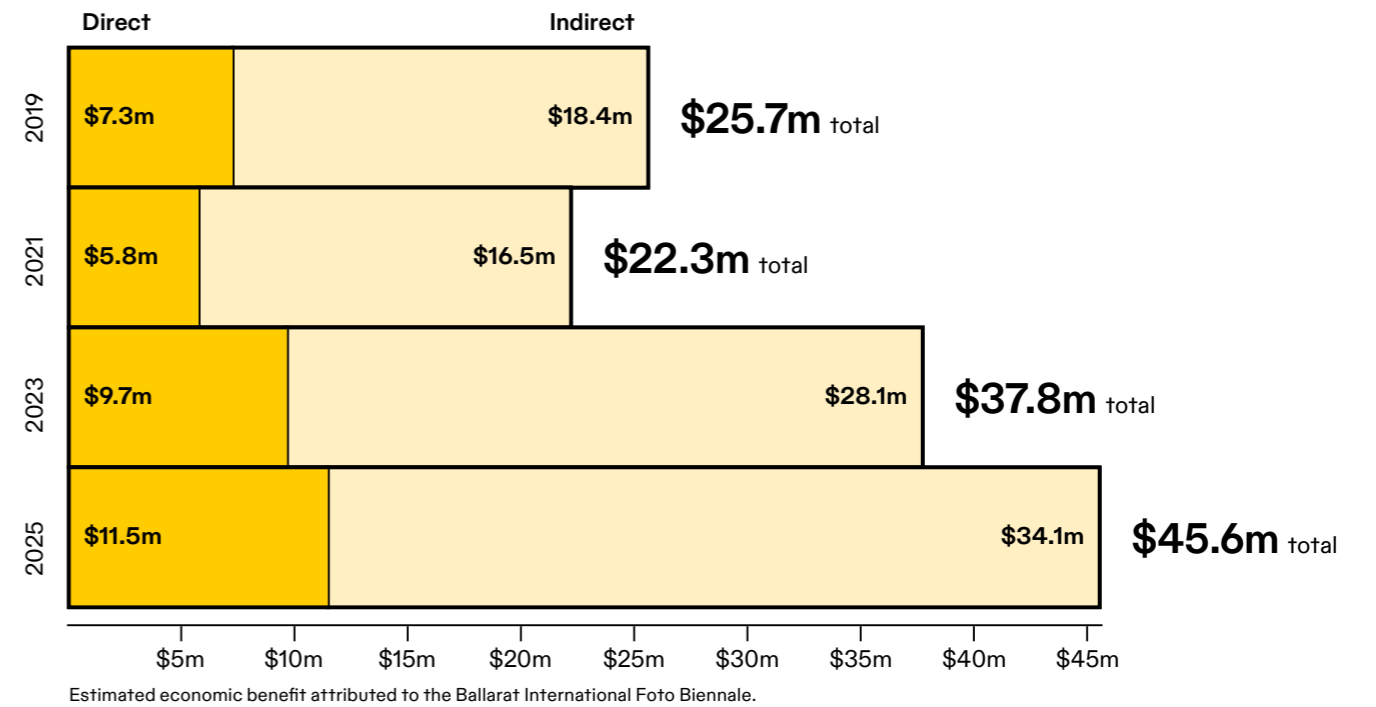


\$11.5m
direct economic impact

Economic impact



\$45.6m
total economic impact



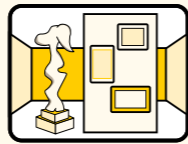
70%
visitors had attended the Biennale before



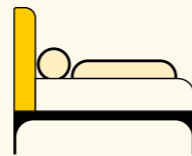
2.2
average nights stayed (10% increase)



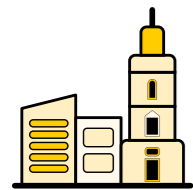
7,728
overnight stays generated (22% increase)



\$267
Average accommodation spend per visitor



\$3.3m
accommodation and trip spend (63% increase)



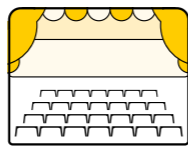
88%
agreed the Biennale was their main reason for visiting Ballarat



28%
visitors traveled to Ballarat by train



148
venues



68
events



5.5
average venues visited per person



5.4
full time equivalent direct employment by Biennale for the festival



85.2
full time equivalent employment value

People That Powered 2025

The 2025 Biennale was powered by a community of people who gave their time, resources and advocacy to bring the festival to life. Volunteers formed the backbone of the event, welcoming visitors, supporting artists and helping create the warm, inclusive atmosphere that defines the Biennale experience. Alongside them, generous donors and philanthropic partners provided essential financial and strategic support, enabling ambitious programming and community engagement initiatives.

We recognise the businesses and residents of Ballarat who embrace the Biennale year-round by contributing to fundraising efforts, quietly forging new connections, advocating for our creative program and welcoming visitors with warmth.

Foundation partners such as **are-able Foundation**, **John Truscott Foundation**, **Hugh D.T. Williamson Foundation** and **Tanarra Social Purpose** played an important role in strengthening the Biennale's social impact, enhancing accessibility, nurturing artistic excellence and extending the festival's reach across communities. We also acknowledge the generous support of the **Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation** and **Dotation Catherine Leroy**, whose partnership enabled the presentation of internationally significant exhibitions.

Friends of the Biennale members receive discounts on all exhibition registrations, prize registrations and event tickets whilst being an integral part of the Biennale as their membership directly supports the hardworking team to produce the festival.

We enthusiastically acknowledge the generous donors whose personal contributions helped us to deliver the 2025 Biennale program. Their philanthropy reflects a belief in the power of photography and the importance of regional cultural experiences. Through their support, the Biennale was able to realise ambitious exhibitions, expand public access initiatives and create opportunities for artists and audiences alike.

Donors

Principal

Julie Kantor AO
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Sarah & Nick Orloff
Anna & Mark Yates

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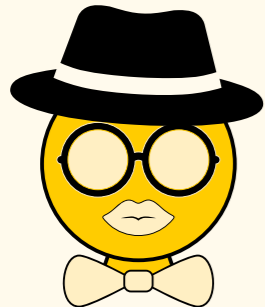
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139

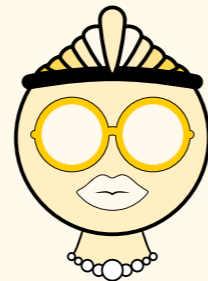
members

(Friends of the Biennale)



98

sponsors & partners



176

private donors

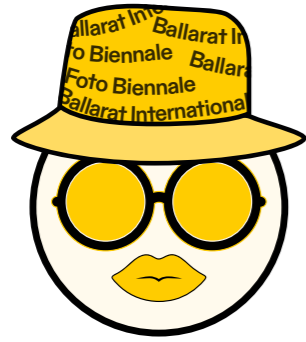


Lifeorce Gala.
Photo: Astrid Mulder.

Volunteers & Community Impact

The 2025 Ballarat International Foto Biennale was proudly supported by 235 volunteers, who collectively contributed 3,543 hours in the lead-up and across the 60-day festival. Their dedication ensured that all six core exhibitions remained open daily, creating a welcoming, accessible and professionally presented experience for every visitor.

The Biennale attracted a broad and intergenerational volunteer community, ranging in age from 20 to 92 years. Beyond operational support, volunteers played a critical role in visitor engagement – providing insight into artists' practices, exhibition themes and the architectural and historical context of venues. Their presence significantly enhanced the depth and quality of the visitor experience.

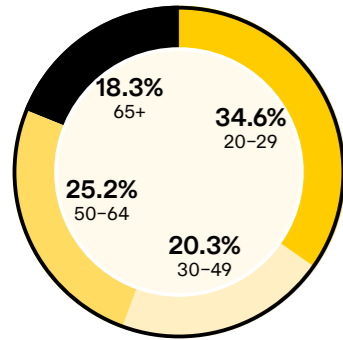


235 volunteers
 30% identify as CALD
 64% returning
 3,543 hours contributed

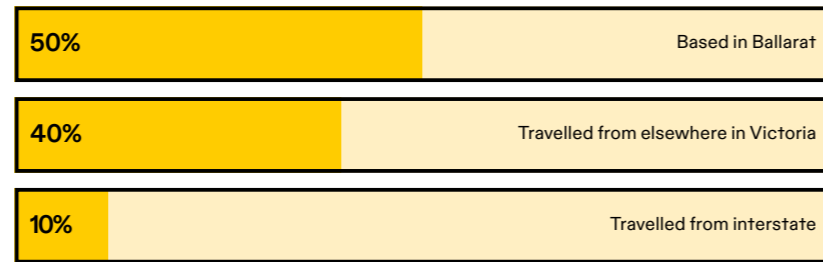
100%

100% agreed that
 the experience helped them gain new insight or knowledge, it opened their mind to new possibilities, they felt welcome and included, and agreed they felt part of the team.

Volunteer age breakdown



Volunteer locations



Internships & Workforce Development

The Biennale continues to serve as an important platform for professional development and regional workforce growth.

2025 internships:

Coventry University, UK

- Sofia Arago, Emma Lewis, Poppy Rowley and Tara Unwin

Federation University Australia

- Peter Laqua, Liam Rogers and Michael Watson

These placements supported training in curatorial practice, education and arts administration, strengthening international exchange and building regional arts workforce capacity. Interns contributed directly to creative program delivery, visitor services and public programming, gaining invaluable hands-on experience and real-world learning outcomes aligned with their academic studies.

The Ballarat International Foto Biennale extends its sincere thanks to every volunteer and intern whose time, skill and enthusiasm were essential to the success and vitality of the 2025 festival.



Intern Emma Lewis, Coventry University, UK
 Photo: Ballarat International Foto Biennale.



“Meeting and conversing with a diverse range of people about the background, composition, printing and presentation of the artwork, the life of the artist, and the history and architecture of the gallery has been a life-affirming experience.”

CLAYTON KEEFE, 2025 FESTIVAL VOLUNTEER



Photos: 1-2, 5. Philippa Griffin. 3. Meda Design. 4. Erin McCluskey.

Our Lifeforce

Thank you to our 2025 Partners

The Ballarat International Foto Biennale is made possible by the life force of our artists, audiences, partners and the lively city of Ballarat. We are grateful to be supported by 90+ corporate, foundation, funding and venue partners, each playing a vital role in the festival's success. Through collaboration, we activated tailored partnerships that enriched audience experiences and highlighted the tourism appeal and cultural vibrancy of Ballarat and Victoria.

Presenting Partner

Thanks to Presenting Partner, **Intrepid Travel**, all ticket holders had the opportunity to win a **Golden Ticket: an Intrepid adventure worth up to \$15,000**. A Ballarat resident, Liza Raynes, won the randomly drawn prize. As a leader in sustainable, small-group travel, Intrepid Travel helped position the Biennale as a destination event for audiences seeking meaningful cultural experiences.

Principal Partners

RACV continues its valued Principal Partnership, supporting exhibitions and events presented across Ballarat and at the **RACV Goldfields Resort**. Members and festival visitors enjoyed exclusive offers, including accommodation packages and discounted festival passes, encouraging extended stays and richer engagement with the festival. A suite of experiences, from special events like *The Art of Lunch* to creative workshops, enhanced the program.

In its first year with the Biennale, **SIGMA** played an important role in elevating the festival's commitment to photographic excellence. Their support celebrated the creativity and technical mastery showcased by artists across the program.

"Supporting the 2025 Biennale allowed SIGMA to celebrate creativity and high-calibre photographic practice on a national stage. We were honoured to contribute to such an outstanding festival."

MARC PAYET, GENERAL MANAGER CONSUMER, CR KENNEDY & COMPANY PTY LTD

"Partnering with the Biennale showcased the power of large-scale public promotion to capture attention and drive engagement. We were proud to help place the festival front and centre in the everyday lives of Victorians."

LEAH WHITFORD, MARKETING DIRECTOR, CIVIC OUTDOOR

Also new in 2025, **Civic Outdoor** delivered a highly visible promotional campaign that amplified the Biennale across Victoria. Their extensive network of outdoor advertising sites ensured the festival reached millions – boosting awareness, driving visitation and transforming transport corridors, town centres and key travel routes into a state-wide promotional platform.

"It was a privilege to support the 2025 Biennale and to see audiences engage so deeply with the timeless craft of photography. The festival offered a powerful tribute to the artists – past and present – who bring their images to life through ILFORD papers."

MARC PAYET, GENERAL MANAGER, ILFORD IMAGING EUROPE GMBH

ILFORD's Principal Partnership enriched the Biennale, bringing renewed focus to analogue photographic traditions and supporting a major exhibition celebrating the powerful legacy of Catherine Leroy. Their contribution deepened public appreciation for the craft, materiality and history of photographic printing.

Government Partners

The Biennale gratefully acknowledges the vital support of government partners – the City of Ballarat, Creative Victoria, Visit Victoria and Festivals Australia. Their investment recognises the Biennale's significant cultural, social and economic contribution to the region. By driving cultural tourism and overnight visitation, creating employment and professional development opportunities, and delivering accessible arts and education programs, the Biennale directly supports government objectives in regional development, creative industry growth and community wellbeing.



Photos: 1-2, 4. Astrid Mulder. 3. Sunflower Images. 5. Ballarat international Foto Biennale.



Keeping It Local For International Impact

Business and industry partnerships are central to the Ballarat International Foto Biennale's success. In 2025, the Biennale was supported by a diverse ecosystem of Festival Partners – from global brands to locally owned enterprises – including mobile phone wayfinding app **Art Flaneur**, legal experts **Maddocks** and **Forty Four Degrees Legal**, architectural designers **Cera Stribley**, professional services organisation **EY**, accounting firm **RSM**, and many local contributors including **Audi Centre Ballarat**, **Northrop Consulting Engineers** and **Steel Chief**, alongside more than 90 partners and collaborators.

Together, these partnerships enabled large-scale public activations, exhibitions, workshops and curated visitor experiences across Ballarat and the wider region. Importantly, the range of partners, spanning tourism, automotive, finance, engineering, media, hospitality and retail, reflects the Biennale's role as a cross-sector platform, embedding culture within everyday civic and commercial life.

The Open Program, presented by **Nevetts Lawyers**, activated commercial and community spaces, showcasing 218 artists across 92 exhibitions in 103 venues, the highest participation in the Program's history. The introduction of the Pyrenees Photo Trail, spanning five wineries, a café, a museum and a visitor information centre, extended the festival footprint beyond Ballarat's urban centre and encouraged regional dispersal of visitors and spending.

Rather than operating as a single sponsorship tier, the Biennale's partnership model demonstrates how culture can unite business, tourism, education and industry around a shared vision.

"Loved it. Specifically travelled to see Lainey Foster. Absolutely loved the work at The Grainery. Best I saw!!"

SURVEY RESPONDENT



Photos: 1. Astrid Mulder. 2-4. Ballarat International Foto Biennale.

Open Program People's Choice Award winner Dee Kelly, *Luminaria*, installation view, Grainery Lane. Photo: Dr Nicola Kelly

Sponsors

Presenting Partner



Principal Partners



SIGMA

ILFORD



Venue Partners



BbAaDd Ballarat Art and Design
Gallery and Events



The Miners
Tavern



POST OFFICE GALLERY | Federation
UNIVERSITY AUSTRALIA

Government Partners



Learning Partners



Federation
UNIVERSITY AUSTRALIA



Lead Media Partner



Major Festival Partners



Nevetts
Lawyers

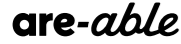
Contributing Partners



MAHER
DESIGN



Trusts & Foundations



Dotation Catherine Leroy
Catherine Leroy Fund



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KILDERKIN
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Exhibition Partners



ATELIER EXB



Linley Mitchell
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new school.

Thaddaeus Ropac
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Accommodation Partners



RACV Goldfields
Resort

SOFITEL
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Cultural Partners



Camera Partners



Nikon

Community Partners



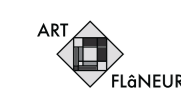
Commerce Ballarat
Your partner in business

Industry Partners



INTERNATIONAL
BIENNALE
ASSOCIATION

Festival Partners



Audi
Centre Ballarat

CERA
STRIBLEY



Media Partners



Half
Eaten
Donut

hygge
property

JellisCraig

Maddocks



The Courier

forte

gawk



toBe

VAULT



How We Connect

Audience Personas

The Cultural Adventurer

A retired professional who looks for cultural enrichment and relaxation. They plan their trips around exhibitions, cafés, and unique experiences. They are drawn to high-quality curation, immersive installations, and events that feel sophisticated and accessible. They often visit with friends or a partner and are likely to extend their stay with dining and winery experiences.



Photo: Astrid Mulder.

The Photography Enthusiast

One who is deeply passionate about the technical aspects of photography. They attend the Biennale to see world-class photographic practice and learn from diverse styles and techniques. They enjoy artist talks and learning opportunities that will improve their own photography practice. They often research exhibitions in advance and shares insights with their photography community.



Photo: Garth Oriander.

The Local Art Lover

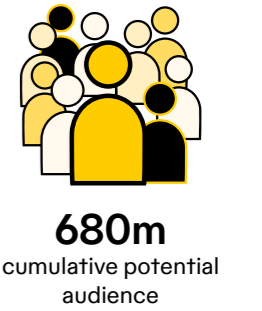
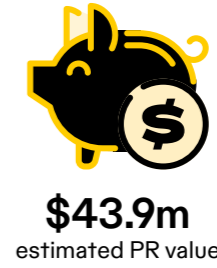
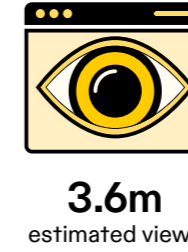
A proud local who actively supports the regional arts community. They attend multiple events across the festival program and enjoy discovering both emerging and established artists. They value community connection, social atmosphere, and opportunities to meet artists and other local art supporters. They often recommend exhibitions to friends and act as a festival advocate within the community.



Photo: Astrid Mulder.

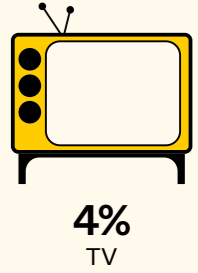
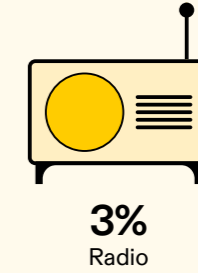
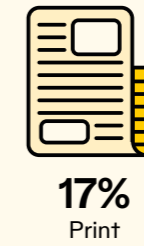
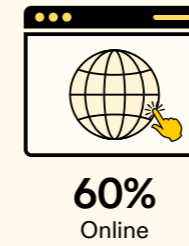
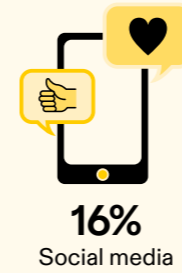
Marketing

Publicity and media coverage



Channels

292K engagement – likes, mentions, shares of media articles



Social media



12,135
Facebook followers
+3.13% from 2023

571,293
Facebook reach
304,414 organic + 266,879 paid



14,889
Instagram followers
+14.07% from 2023

155,012
Instagram reach
100,008 organic + 55,004 paid

Social media advertising



321,883
users reached (paid)

1,395,312
ad impressions

2,074
Purchase conversions

738%
return on ad spend
(Meta)

Email



24,567
subscribers

404,392
total sends

Website



552,032
page views

76,339
unique visitors

2025 Brand Identity

The Biennale's bold yellow and black identity remains a much-loved and instantly recognisable hallmark. In 2025, the visual language was refreshed in collaboration with **Boruk Gradman** and **The Company You Keep**, with production support from **Inspired Print**. The campaign reached broad audiences through **Civic Outdoor's** digital billboard network across Melbourne and strong print and digital placements with **The Guardian**. Supported by valued Media Partners across multiple platforms, the Biennale achieved a consistent, high-impact presence at every public touchpoint, amplifying artists and reinforcing Ballarat's national cultural profile.

Principal Partner

- Civic Outdoor

Lead Media Partner

- The Guardian

Media Partners

- 3BA
- ABC Radio
- ArtsHub
- Art Guide
- Ballarat Living
- Beat
- Best of Ballarat
- The Courier
- Forte
- Gawk
- The Local
- Plakkit
- Power FM
- To Be
- Vault
- Video by Andy C



Photo: Garth Oriander.



Photos: 1, 3. Ballarat International Foto Biennale, 2. Courtesy Civic Outdoor, 3. Ballarat International Foto Biennale, 4-6. Garth Oriander.

Ballarat International Foto Biennale

21.8–17.10.2027

Join us for an unforgettable experience of art, culture
and connection in Australia's heartland of photography.

Championing Photographers.
Advancing Photography.

Donate Now.

ballaratfoto.org

About Ballarat International Foto Biennale

The Ballarat International Foto Biennale is a world-class arts organisation delivering an internationally significant festival of photography and lens-based art. Every two years, it transforms Ballarat into a city-wide celebration of images, ideas and visual storytelling.

From August to October, the Biennale presents:

- A platform for curatorial leadership and innovation, showcasing Australian and international artists of distinction;
- A commitment to nurturing photographers and the art of photography, across diverse practices and generations;
- An Open Program that discovers and elevates new and emerging voices;
- Education initiatives that support and inspire the next generation of image-makers;
- Workshops, public programs and artist residencies that deepen engagement, participation and access.

Ballarat becomes a meeting place for artists, audiences and global conversations in contemporary photography.

***"I love the Ballarat Foto Biennale. It merits more than
one visit and makes Ballarat so vibrant and alive!"***

SURVEY RESPONDENT

Ambassadors

The Hon. Stephen Bracks AC
Nici Cumpston OAM
Warren Ellis
Mayor Cr Tracey Hargreaves
Her Honour Judge Sara Hinchey
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Julie Kantor AO
Natalie King OAM
The Hon. Robert Knowles AO
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Kate Torney OAM
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Chris Whitefield

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Georgia Manifold
Sally McKay

**National Centre for
Photography Subcommittee**
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Leila Chalk
Joseph van Dyk
Craig Fletcher
Vanessa Gerrans
Paul Minifie
Chris Whitefield

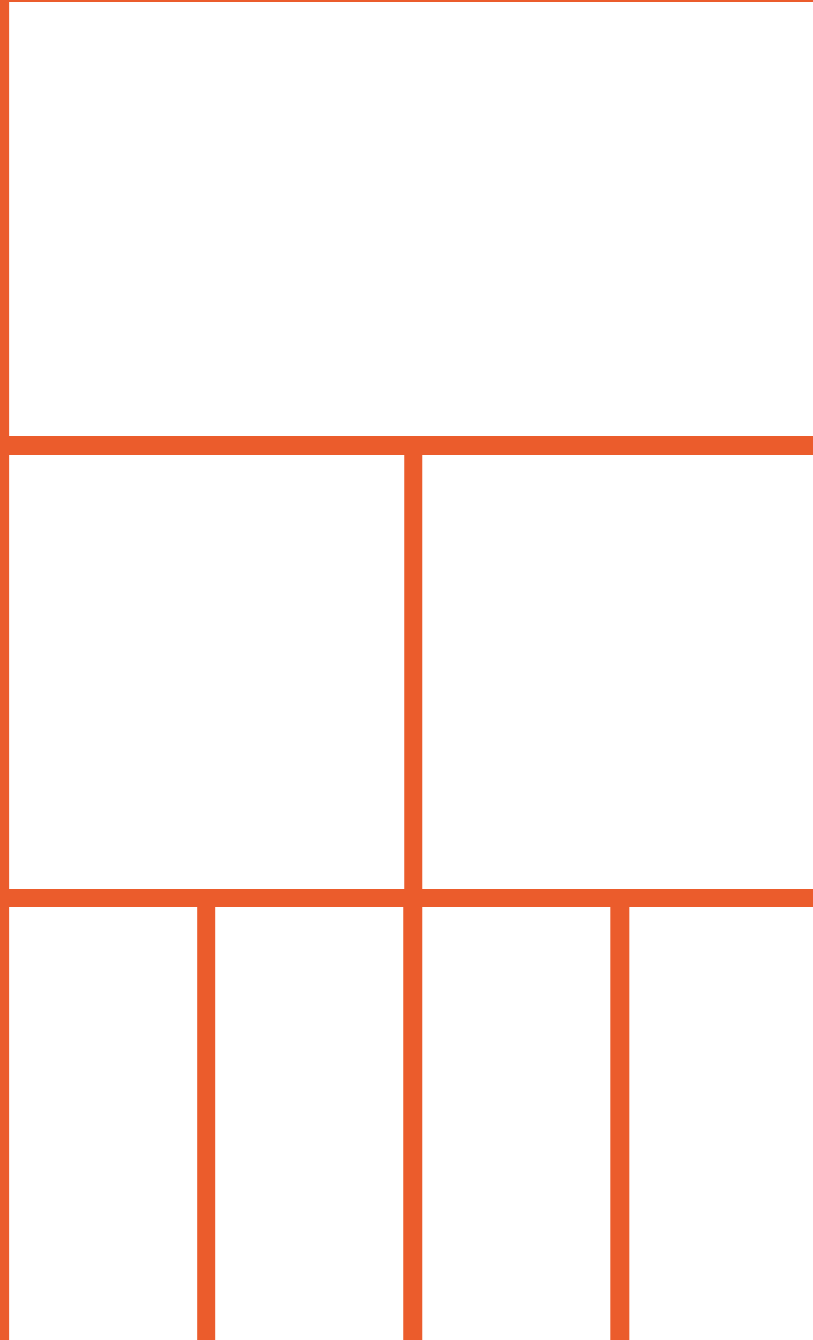
Fundraising Campaign Committee
Francesca Carter
Joseph van Dyk (co-Chair)
Vanessa Gerrans
Alicia Linley
Georgia Manifold (co-Chair)
Serena Mitchell
James Remington

All donations \$2 and over are tax-deductible.

Ballarat International Foto Biennale (ABN 70 496 228 247) is a Not-For-Profit Association
and is endorsed with Charity Tax Concession and Deductible Gift Recipient status.

Help build a cultural landmark for photography.
Now welcoming public donations.

nationalcentreforphotography.org



National Centre for Photography

The National Centre for Photography is a vibrant space where photography is celebrated as an art form and a powerful medium for storytelling, innovation, and connection. We showcase leading Australian and international practitioners, nurturing emerging visions, and amplifying the voices of First Nations and diverse communities.

Through exhibitions, residencies, education, and cross-disciplinary collaborations, the National Centre for Photography expands opportunities for artists and audiences alike. It is a place where experimentation meets dialogue, and where new ideas are sparked through photography in all its forms.

Stage 1 delivers heritage restoration, the Bath Lane entry, gallery spaces, and ground-level amenities. Stage 2 will complete the Union Bank restoration with an Australian First Nations Gallery, Digital Gallery, Media Lab, and more – expanding exhibitions, public programs, and education.

The National Centre for Photography Stage 1 is backed by \$6.7 million investment from the Victorian Government's Tourism Infrastructure Program.

National Centre For Photography Donors

Gold

Helen Myall & Alastair Firkin

Eureka

Kathy Hancock
in memory of Al Ebenreuter

Sovereign

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General Manager
Kate O'Hehir

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Stephen Payne

Education & Engagement Coordinator
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Festival Producer
Emil Freund

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Michael Watson

Coventry University UK Interns
Tara Unwin, Sofia Aragao, Emma Lewis,
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Framing
Creative Framing

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Bookkeeping
RSM Ballarat

Visual Descriptions
Kade Beau Anderson, Lynden Nicholls,
Theodora Pantelich, Kim Percy,
Pam Swanborough, Lucy Whitelaw

We also thank the following individuals most warmly for their advice and support:

Juliana Addison MP
Warren Armstrong
Heidi Biggin
Natasha Bullock
Christopher Clear
David Cook-Doulton
Julia Durkin MNZM
Holly Edward
Guille Guzzoni Klapper Films
Andrew Gaynor
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Annika Nordenskiöld
Grace Parkinson
Darryl Powell
Alexander Robinson
Moshe Rosenzweig OAM
Martin Shew
Timothy Stevens
Pollyanna Sutton
Evelyn Tadros & Zvi Belling
Nicole Wagenecht
Justin Weyers
Nathan Weyers
Mike Whitehead

"It was a great festival, with so many exhibits within walking distance from the hub. Very well presented and the staff were the friendliest group I've seen in a long time."

SURVEY RESPONDENT



Photo: Garth Oriander.

Ballarat International Foto Biennale

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PO Box 41 Ballarat Central 3353 Australia

info@ballaratfoto.org

03 5331 4833

ballaratfoto.org