

Regional Arts And Social Impact
<https://research.qut.edu.au/raasi/>

PROJECT UPDATE

September 2020

The ARC Linkage 'The Role of the Creative Arts in Regional Australia: A Social Impact Model' addresses the challenge to effectively target regional arts funding to programs and activities that build capacity and have lasting impact for communities. It delivers a framework for evaluating the arts, to argue for the arts to be included in a broader understanding of national wellbeing and success.

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At a glance - project activities July-September:

- Digital community engagement process tested and revised
- Late 2020 - early 2021 travel to communities planned
- Research blog, and article submitted to Cultural Trends

Digital community engagement:

Throughout July we asked people to show and tell us about their experiences of creativity via a series of online digital engagement activities. We received 80 unique submissions, words and images across 4 community engagement activities which provided insights into the types of arts and cultural experiences that are important to people around Australia. Descriptions of 'everyday' craft and creative activities such as gardening, cooking, home renovating, knitting and making gifts dominated: respondents described experiences of creating and making together, connecting with others in their community, and finding a sense of personal purpose through creativity. [View the submissions](#).

In addition to gathering data, this phase of the research has enabled us to develop an online model of community consultation and test digital tools, and in so doing meet one of the explicit goals of the RAASI project. Our next step is to refine and retest some of the activities in preparation for more targeted data gathering in the two research sites in 2021, to augment face to face fieldwork and community consultation. Once again, an enormous thank you to all our project partners for supporting widespread communication about the digital community engagement activities.

Travel plans:

We are travelling to Longreach and Blackall in December 2020 to deliver a community workshop, conduct interviews for the [Dress the West](#) project impact assessment, and hopefully catch up with Louise at Red Ridge and David at RAPAD. We are planning travel to Burnie for March 2021, to coincide with the 10 Days on the Island Festival, and to consult with communities as part of the impact assessment of [Paper on Skin](#). *Image: footage of research team in Tasmania.*



Research outputs:

On our [project blog](#), RAASI PhD student, artist and curator Kevin Wilson explores the ways participatory arts practices facilitate sense of place. Kevin has worked extensively in rural and regional Australia – including Tambo and Burnie – and his research investigates how people living in regional communities are representing their own sense of place and love of the landscape through art.

In August the research team submitted an article based on the partner interviews to [Cultural Trends](#). The article explores the ways the intangible and tangible values of arts and cultural engagement are articulated within the two project sites. It argues that meaningful arts and cultural experiences are community-generated and community-led, and that measuring and articulating value requires sensitivity to local contexts.

News from our partners

Throughout July, [Burnie Regional Art Gallery](#) exhibited the entries to the Paper on Skin Wearable Paper Art Competition. Paper on Skin is an initiative of the Burnie Arts Council, supported by Burnie City Council and Regional Art Gallery, and is a case study within the RAASI project. This year Paper on Skin collaborated with Council, Big hART's Project O, local businesses and service providers to produce a film showcasing the exceptional works of paper art. Congratulations to all involved in this wonderful community project. [View the film here](#). Image:

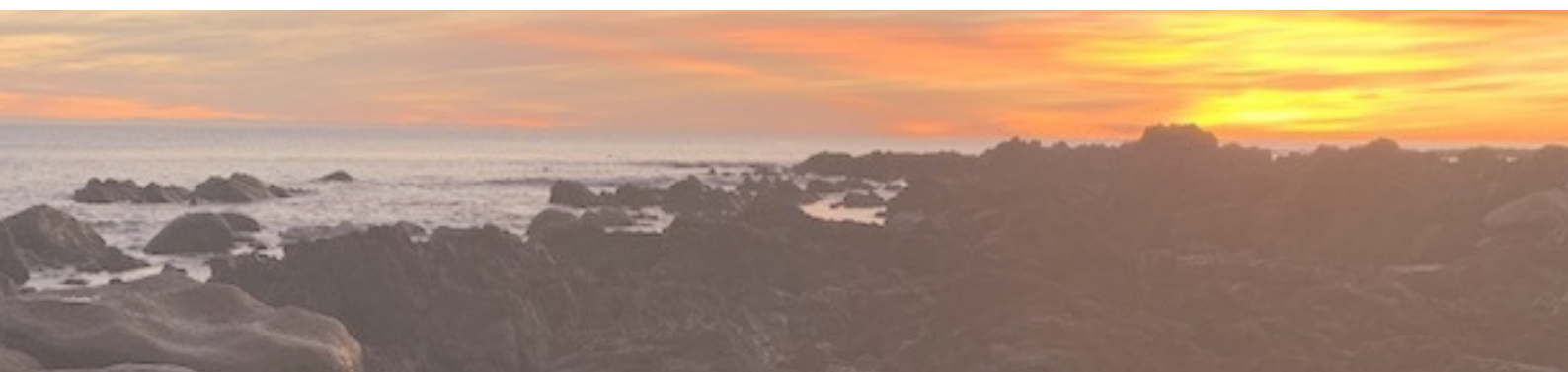


[Red Ridge](#) has launched a new label and fashion line featuring the designs of Wangkanguru and Yarluyandi women Aulpunda 'Jean' Barr-Crombie and Anpanuwa 'Joyce' Crombie from Birdsville, Queensland. The Diamantina Collection showcases the incredible culture and expression of central western Queensland's local Aboriginal community. As Joyce describes, the label is an "opportunity for people to see where we come from". Excitingly, the label will be featured in [Brisbane Fashion Week at West Village](#) on October 17th. Congratulations Louise and team, Jean and Joyce! [See the film of the collection](#) and [shop the range](#). RAPAD's employment services program [RESQ](#) will partner with Red Ridge to support and continue Red Ridge The Label.

[The Australian Performing Arts Exchange and Conference \(APAX\)](#) was delivered as a series of online gatherings through July, August and September. The primary focus of APAX 2020 has been on initiating conversations, providing updates, and bringing the sector together to exchange ideas about new ways of delivering touring work and adapted approaches to programming. [A Professional Development component](#) posed critical questions and provocations for organisations and practitioners operating in this uncertain new environment. Congratulations to Katherine and the PAC Australia team on the delivery of PAXA online, the exceptional line up of speakers and facilitation of an array of important conversations.



[The Regional Australia Institute](#) is hosting a webinar on creative industries in regional Australia, as part of its Regions Rising webinar series. The webinar will be held on Wednesday 21st October and panel members will be invited to speak on the contribution of creative industries to regional communities as well as ways the industry has adapted to COVID-19. All are welcome to join this free event. There will be time for a Q&A session, and you may submit concise questions in advance when you register. Speakers will be announced in the coming weeks on RAI's social media platforms and the [Regions Rising website](#).



On June 25th the Australian Government announced the COVID-19 Creative Economy Support Package totalling \$250 million, and comprising several grants and programs: [the RISE Fund](#) offers competitive grant funding to support production and event businesses; Show Starter Loans will complement the RISE Fund assisting creative businesses to fund new productions and events that stimulate economic activity (details to come); and the [Temporary Interruption Fund](#) administered by Screen Australia will support local film and television producers to secure finance and start filming again. See the [Office for the Arts website](#) for more information, support and opportunities.

[Regional Arts Australia's](#) Artlands Conversation Series began on September 2nd with 'Navigating the Pandemic', a fascinating discussion on the residual effects of enforced social distancing on live performance. [Watch the video](#). The series continues on October 14th with '[Transformative Experiences](#)' – a conversation on the ways art and creativity can create pathways to recovery. The Conversation Series heralds a new, long-term approach to the delivery of Artlands to carry a trajectory between conferences and across conversations, and reflect and respond to emerging trends in regional practice. The Series picks up themes from Artlands Victoria (2018), and will lead into the national gathering in 2021 on Palawa Country, Tasmania. [Find more details and register for the Conversations](#).



On the RAA Blog, Ros Abercrombie discusses the core ambitions of Regional Arts Australia and the critical need to position the arts and creative industries across multiple policy platforms: ***"The time is right for the arts and creative industries to take a lead role in regional development, for the arts to be understood as essential in the make-up of future liveable regions"***. [Read more](#).

