

# Accessible Arts

Equity and excellence in arts, culture and disability



## 2023

# Annual Report

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We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we work across NSW and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.



We acknowledge the support of our principal funding body, the NSW Government, through Create NSW.





## Chairperson's Message

I am so proud of the achievements of Accessible Arts over this past year.

The small but dedicated and passionate Accessible Arts Team, led by our extraordinary CEO, Liz Martin, live the values we are committed to through their planning, facilitation and delivery of experiences, programs and opportunities for artists with disability or who are d/Deaf.

You will see within this Annual Report details of the brilliant programs delivered throughout 2023 educating the broader community whilst empowering and supporting artists with disability to pursue their aspirations.

You will see in the following pages the outcomes of creative and supportive partnerships providing breadth of opportunity for development and, importantly, education and training for hundreds of participants which is essential to creating more accessible and inclusive opportunities and communities for all Accessible Arts Stakeholders.

In an environment of stretched resources and often competing priorities, under Liz's guidance, Accessible Arts has continued to build and grow upon a strong foundation established by the previous leadership, staff, volunteers and program participants.

We couldn't deliver what we do without the generous support of our partners and donors. We are grateful for their continued engagement, encouragement

and funding. In particular, we recognise the commitment and support of Create NSW.

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to current and past Directors who continue to dedicate significant time and experience to guiding and supporting the work of Accessible Arts. We are most fortunate to have a diverse Board with expertise across a range of areas of the Arts, Disability and Corporate Sectors.

In closing, I'd like to reiterate my appreciation to our team, my fellow Directors, our partners, our participants and our broader community for making Accessible Arts the extraordinary disability-led organisation that it is.

Thank you for your continued interest in the work of Accessible Arts and your encouragement and support for our work. We look forward to delivering and sharing many more programs and successes with you over the coming year.

**Jaci Armstrong**  
Chairperson



## CEO's Message

2023 was a positive year for Accessible Arts as we worked collaboratively with so many individuals and organisations across arts, culture and screen. Through these strong partnerships and the support of our much-valued donors, supporters, partners and allies, we continued to accelerate and celebrate the diverse professional, cultural and social impacts of arts and disability in NSW.

We introduced our new Access Ideas and Insights series, supported by the City of Sydney and Create NSW, and presented in partnership with the Sydney Opera House, Museum of Contemporary Art, Art Gallery of NSW and Bell Shakespeare. This series was also livestreamed so as many people as possible could have equitable access conversations exploring The Future of Art, Accessible Tech, Reimagining Performing Arts and Disability and ways to Build Your Audience. We were delighted that 1045 people from across the country registered for this engaging and insightful series.

Our consultancy services included comprehensive Disability Inclusion Action Plans for Australian Film Television and Radio School, Australian National Maritime Museum, National Film and Sound Archive, Newcastle Writers Festival and Edward River Council. We also supported Achieve Australia through the development and rollout of the Artful Art Prize and icare Shine Writers Prize.

Our training delivery continued to expand in response to sector demand. This included two exciting new offerings, a Screen Access Masterclass Program and Creating Inclusive Workplaces workshop.

In 2023, we delivered 8 valuable RIPPLE internships, 2 engaging ArtScreen mentorships, 6 Next Level Creative Mentorships and upskilled 12 arts practitioners through our successful women's leadership program. These much-needed programs play a vital role in upskilling, encouraging and connecting arts practitioners with disability.

I'd like to thank our valued partners who supported these programs: Diversity Arts Australia, Museum of Contemporary Art, Merrigong Theatre Company, Penrith Performing and Visual Arts, Musica Viva, Northern Rivers Performing Arts, Sydney Dance Company, Sydney Opera House, UTP, 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, Brand X, Lismore Regional Gallery, APRA AMCOS, National Portrait Gallery and Albany Lane Consulting.

I'd also like to thank the core Accessible Arts team, our expert trainers, consultants and advisors and our board. Through your passion, commitment and enthusiasm, we're seeing change in the sector and increasing the voices of artists, audiences and arts workers with disability.

**Liz Martin**  
CEO



# About Us

Accessible Arts is NSW's peak organisation for arts, culture and disability.

## Our Mission

We advance the rights of, and opportunities for, people with disability and/or who are Deaf to develop and sustain professional careers in the arts and have equitable access to arts and culture across NSW.

## Our Vision

Equity and excellence in arts, culture and disability.

## Our Values

Equity



Excellence



Diversity



Creativity



Partnership





## Our Stakeholders



### People

- Arts practitioners with disability
- Audiences with disability
- Families and friends of people with disability



### Arts & Culture

- Arts companies
- Cultural organisations and venues
- Festival and event producers
- Screen Industry



### Disability

- Disability organisations
- Carers and support workers



### Government

- NSW Government
- Local Governments
- Government agencies and policymakers



### Education

- Universities
- Vocational and training organisations
- Researchers

## Our Programs & Services



### Career Advancement

- Development and Production Initiatives
- Internships/Mentorships
- Artist Residencies
- Professional Development Workshops
- Leadership Development Programs
- Industry Advocacy
- Online and In-Person Networking Events
- Advisory services



### Audience Development

- Industry Engagement
- Industry Education
- Industry Advocacy
- Training Workshops
- Consulting Services
- Stakeholder Sector Engagement
- Sector Program Evaluation
- Sector Program Innovation



### Community Engagement

- Arts Activated Conference
- Artist Q&As
- Community Education
- Community Liaison
- Community representation (In Cross Government Forums)
- Stakeholder Consultation
- Online and In-Person Networking Events
- Media and Comms

# Our Team

## Management

Liz Martin	Chief Executive Officer
Marika Perrow	Arts Development Manager (Jan - Feb)
Mariam Ella Arcilla	Arts Development Manager (Mar - Apr)
Amy Claire Mills	Arts Development Manager (May - Dec)
Rachel Musgrove	Marketing & Communications Manager
Daniel Jaramillo	Office Administrator
Dale Hollingsworth	Financial Consultant
Michelle Teear	Training & Project Coordinator
Robyn Reynolds	Project Manager ArtScreen, Front and Centre and Hybrid Events (Feb - June)
Eugenie Lee	Project Manager - RIPPLE Program
Liv Hutley	Project Coordinator - Front and Centre Program

## Board

Jaci Armstrong	Chairperson
Kate Lidbetter	Deputy Chairperson
Hasan Godhrawala	Treasurer
Alex Jones	Director
David Kay	Director
Emily Dash	Director
Fiona Winning	Director

## Trainers

Morwenna Collett, Bec Hogan, Eugenie Lee, Bedelia Lowrenčev, Carly Marchment Supple, Bridie McKim, Fiona McMurphy, Amy Claire Mills, Rhiannon Pegler, Kerri Shying, Madeliene Stewart, Michelle Teear, Nat Thomas and Anthea Williams.

## Advisors

Antoinette Barbouttis, Faye Chamberlain, Marion Conrow, Alex Craig, Emily Dash, Dan Graham, Athena Goard, Gum Guo, Maree Jenner, Christine Johnson, Jessica Kejun Xu, Madeleine Stewart, Sigrid MacDonald, Kate Matairavula, Rebecca McCormack, Cobie Moore, Laura Osweiler, Marisa Pasicznik Ross, Karen Peacock, Michelle Peat, Allison Reynolds, Keith Rutherford, Natalia Stawyskyi, Stephanie Sullivan, Casey Grey, Randa Magdi, M (Sunny) Sunflower, Danielle Maas, Aaron Matheson, Rebecca Scrioli, Robert Duffield, Marianthe Loucataris, Narelle Whitham, Kyle Goldfinch, Al Azmi, Shawnah Cady, Shelley Clarke, Ben Harris, Casey Heffernan, Lindy Hou, Liz Lea, Gillian Pollack, Aleya Silva, Shona Thomas, Fi Peel and Phoebe Lupton.

## Key Statistics 2023

**206**

individual arts practitioners  
with disability employed,  
supported or mentored



**2268**

event participants



**25**

events produced  
or supported



**23**

arts organisations  
provided with consulting  
services



**43.8K**

website visitors



**84**

training sessions  
delivered



**18K**

social media followers



**2133**

training participants



**220K**

social media reach



**3.8**

Accessible Arts Core Staff  
(Full-time equivalent)





# Career Advancement

## **Artist Residencies**

We partnered with Bundanon Trust to support 5 visual artists, writers and musicians with valuable week-long residencies. The Bundanon Artist-in-Residence program is the largest of its kind in Australia, making it highly sought after by artists nationally.

## **Front and Centre Women's Leadership Program**

This 10-month professional development and career coaching program for women with disability working in the arts was extended to support women and non-binary people from New South Wales, ACT, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania. Fourteen talented participants were provided specialised industry training and valuable networking opportunities. This program has been designed to address the lack of representation for women and non-binary people with disability in arts leadership roles.

## **ArtScreen 2023**

This innovative video art project enabled two artists to develop accessible new works exploring the idea of embedded creative access. The works were screened at the Museum of Contemporary Art in celebration of International Day of People with Disability. ArtScreen broadens engagement with the distinctive insights and skills of artists with disability through compelling works which make an important contribution diverse cultural expression.

## **Next Level Creative Mentorships**

Six talented artists received valuable one-to-one support with leading arts organisations to help take their project ideas to the Next Level. We partnered with Penrith Performing and Visual Arts, Merrigong Theatre Company, Musica Viva Australia, Sydney Dance Company, Northern Rivers Performing Arts and the Sydney Opera House to deliver this unique program.

## **RIPPLE: Disability and Culturally Diverse Internship Program**

Eight people with disability who also identify as culturally and linguistically diverse completed internships at leading arts organisations across NSW and the ACT. We partnered with Diversity Arts Australia and the Art Gallery of New South Wales, UTP, Brand X, Lismore Regional Gallery, 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, APRA AMCOS and the National Portrait Gallery to deliver this much-needed program.

## **Createability**

We partnered with Create NSW to support Createability, an internship program designed to upskill screen practitioners with disability and provide support to develop strong career pathways.

## **National Songwriting Program**

We supported an exciting new initiative for six musicians with disability or who are d/Deaf to design a National Songwriting and Music Industry Program, run in partnership with Arts Access Victoria and APRA AMCOS.

# Audience Development

In 2023, we delivered a series of engaging live events while supporting equitable online access, championing best-practise digital accessibility. We remain acutely aware of the need to facilitate continued connection with audiences who cannot attend in person, including those in remote areas across NSW. We also continued to facilitate both in-person and online training in response to audience feedback and market demand.

## Access Ideas and Insights - Quarterly Panel Discussions

- Re-Imagining Performing Arts and Disability (Sydney Opera House)  
Leading artists with disability discussed how the pandemic has shifted how we create and experience performance-based art.
- Accessible Tech (Museum of Contemporary Art, Australia)  
We showcased how leading Sydney venues ensure digital access for online and in-person audiences and visitors.
- The Future of Art (Art Gallery of NSW)  
Artists explored the many ways we create and engage with art, and discussed how artists and organisations are innovating access and inclusion with new technology.
- Build Your Audience (Bell Shakespeare)  
Arts organisations discussed prioritising access and accelerating representation.

## Accessible Comedy Event

'Are You Pulling My Leg?' toured to the Undercover Artist Festival and Laycock Theatre. Showcasing comedians with disability, this unique comedy show provides a safe space to laugh, educate and advocate for access in a creative and entertaining way.



## ArtScreen Artist Q&A

We presented a Q&A at the MCA with artists Sofya Gollan and Guy Morgan, enabling the artists to extend their creative impact and engage directly with diverse audiences.

## Method in Madness

We partnered with Bell Shakespeare and Director Dan Graham on the Creative Development of a new Australia theatre work. This was imaginatively and respectfully crafted from diverse stories and experiences of neurodivergent artists which were gathered from extensive surveys and national interviews.



# Community Engagement

Providing opportunities to share information and ideas that will help advance arts and disability in NSW remained a key focus for Accessible Arts in 2023. Our commitment to supporting the creativity and careers of arts practitioners with disability comprised both online and in-person events. Highlights included:

## Artists Rights Workshop

Together with Arts Law, we explored artists' rights and explained how artists can protect their work, discussing where and how artists can seek help with regards to their rights.

## Access Rider Workshops

This online workshop provided a practical overview of what an Access Rider is, how to write one, what to ask for and the kind of language to use. The session covered the models of disability, the rights of people with disability or who are d/Deaf, self-advocacy and reasonable adjustments. It proved so popular, we scheduled 3 additional workshops due to high demand, upskilling a total of 142 artists with disability throughout 2023.

## Bundanon Residency Information Session

This online information session provided details about the residency program and the application process, outlining how to prepare a strong application and what people can expect from this opportunity.

## In Conversation: Army of One

In conjunction with International Women's Day, we presented a panel with professional women with disability working in the arts - Natalia Stawyskyj, Judith Bowtell and Gayle Kennedy - focusing on the importance of developing and maintaining support networks.

## In-Conversation: Live Futures

As part of Liveworks Festival, we presented a panel with experimental artists Eugenie Lee, Wart (aka Jen Waterhouse) and Debra Keenahan exploring the rich contribution of artists with disability to experimental practices.



# Testimonials

The events, internships, mentorships, residencies, training and consultation services that Accessible Arts delivered throughout 2023 has been extremely well received.

## **Event feedback includes:**

"Thank you for a brilliant panel discussion, I got a lot out of it."

"The hybrid format is wonderful as it affords access to all."

"Appreciated the enthusiasm, experience and realism of the process of creating inclusion in the arts for all participants."

"A highly qualified and articulate panel."

"These panels are great - and crucial - to making change happen."

"The intelligence and talent of the women on the panel was incredible."

## **Hybrid Event Audience Statistics:**

97.7% of audiences improved knowledge about access and inclusion

95.3% of audiences rated event accessibility as excellent or very good

## **Training feedback:**

"Bridie (trainer) was an incredible facilitator and helped me feel welcomed and created a non-judgemental atmosphere."

"(A highlight of training was) hearing the different experiences and understanding how to put in place change."

## **Next Level Creative Mentorship Feedback:**

"I couldn't have imagined a better experience."

"Got new ideas ... Found new ways to tell my own story ... Challenged to perform in new new ways ... Pushed to do my best."

## **Bundanon Residencies:**

"Thank you for this extraordinary opportunity."

"Thank you so very much for this fabulous opportunity. It was a lovely surprise to recognise Bermagui Headland as I lived on Yuin Country for 12 years (Bermagui; Eden; Narooma; Tilba Tilba)"

## **Method in Madness Creative Development:**

"This kind of education will save lives. I will remember this time as an example of people doing things right by artists and arts workers."

"This was the first time in my artistic career that I didn't feel alone. That is enough to spark new creative energy for future projects."

"To be surrounded by such incredible creatives, who respected each other and understood how their brains were different and were given the space to be themselves was incredible."



## **Image descriptions and credits:**

Cover: Image 1: Artist Daniel McDonald facilitating Welcome to Country. Photo © Art Gallery of NSW, Mim Stirling. Image 2: Artists David Molloy, Kath Harding, Madeleine Stewart and Catherine Rogers at the Bundanon Artist Residencies. Photo supplied by David Molloy. Image 3: Artist Louise Zhang (supplied by the artist).

Page 2: RIPPLE Internship Graduation featuring Eugenie Lee, Lena Nahlous, Thuy Diem Mây Trần, Monique Moate, Phoebe Lupton, Fi Peel, Faye Chamberlain, M. Sunflower and Liz Martin. Photo by Patrick Boland.

Page 3: Headshot of Accessible Arts Chairperson, Jaci Armstrong.

Page 4: Headshot of Accessible Arts CEO, Liz Martin.

Page 5: RIPPLE Intern Thuy Diem Mây Trần (supplied by the artist); Hybrid event panellists Jamal Abdul, Debra Keenahan and Anthea Williams with MC Liz Martin. Photo by Dieter Knierim; In Conversation speaker Natalia Stawyskyj (supplied by the artist), RIPPLE Graduation speaker Angie Goto. Photo by Patrick Boland; Bundanon resident artists David Molloy and Kath Harding (supplied by the artists); 2023 Createability intern Kristi Archer. Photo by Create NSW; Next Level Creative Mentorship participant Zac Misfud (supplied by the artist); ArtScreen artist Sofya Gollan alongside an Auslan interpreter. Photo by David Wimble.

Page 8: Staged reading of Method in Madness. Photo supplied by Amy Claire Mills.

Page 10: Method in Madness team: Dylan Crawford, Joanna Erskine, Pollyanna Nowicki, Amy Claire Mills, Dan Graham, Vitas Varnas, Marissa Saroca, Tiffany Wong, Ryan Enniss and Liz Martin; Are You Pulling My Leg tours to Undercover Artist Festival featuring Sam Kissajukian, Madeleine Stewart, Alexandra Hudson, Christopher Widdows (Steady Eddy) and Jamal Abdul. Photo by Jade Ellis Photography; Hybrid event MC James Evans with panellists Olivia Ansell, James Winter and Janelle Ryan alongside an Auslan interpreter. Photo by Dieter Knierim

Page 11: Audience photo from hybrid event The Future of Art. Photo © Art Gallery of NSW, Mim Stirling. 2023 Front and Centre Graduation ceremony featuring Program Leader Judith Bowtell and graduates Michelle Teear, Liv Hutley, Katie Cooper-Wares, Laura Osweiler, Jordyn Fulcher, Amber Wilcox, R. R. Pascoe, Brahmi Kumarasamy, Bernadette Smith and CEO Liz Martin. Photo by Patrick Boland.

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