

Wagga Wagga Art Gallery Young Creative Collective

ADFAS Support

Young adults are one of the most difficult audience demographics for Art Galleries to reach. In recognising this problem Wagga Wagga Art Gallery has. in recent years developed a range of strategies to appeal to young adult audiences, including the provision of a range of age appropriate cultural experiences and providing employment and volunteer opportunities in the cultural sector.

Perhaps the most successful of these strategies has been the Young Creative Collective (YCC) project. In November 2020 Wagga Wagga Art Gallery initiated a committee of young people to advise and lead the Gallery in its programming for young adults. Assisted by ADFAS Youth Project funds, the Gallery contributed key resources to this project, including providing project seed funding, venue support and staff hours to assist in mentoring and skilling YCC participants to plan and produce cultural events across Summer / Autumn 2021.

A vibrant program which involved direct interaction between artists, performers and young adult audiences ensued including: art, music and performance. The events were promoted as: The Big Draw, Drums and Draw, Night time at the Gallery, Jazz' n Hoops and Flicks under the stars x 2. These individual events drew hundreds of young people to the Gallery across the critical demographic of 16-28 year olds.

Reconvening after a Winter recess, in late 2021 the YCC planned a series of Summer events to take place in February 2022.

With the support of ADFAS seed funding (\$2,400) and a grant from the Dept of Regional NSW, the YCC was able to deliver the recent *Summer Mix* program at the Gallery (Friday nights on the outside lawns and within the Main exhibition gallery and weekend musicians inside both Main Gallery and Glass Gallery). *Summer Mix* involved committee members developing new skills in event management, publicity and promotion through social media and print collateral. Funds supported the employment of regional artists, musicians, performers and a local lighting business. All were under the age of 29. This provided a huge boost to the local creative economy. Again, we saw very healthy numbers of young adult audiences attending the multiple events. Many of these audiences were new to the Gallery and hence were introduced to our wider programs. Importantly it was recognised that YCC events were providing a valid alternative for young adults to the pubs and clubs scene.

The YCC is currently planning a Winter Film Festival 'FREEZE' which will involve both a festival of regional filmmakers and workshops in film making with smart phones and related edit suite technology. The smart phone films will be shown inside Wagga Wagga Gallery with prize money supported by ADFAS.

Wagga Wagga Art Gallery thanks ADFAS for its ongoing support of the YCC program. Such support is vital to the health of community, youthful leadership and building the cultural life of the Riverina.