

Yarra News

From the Chair

Summer 2023 Vol. 34 No. 1

A warm welcome to new and returning ADFAS Yarra members. The great news is that for the first time since 2019 our lecture programme for 2023 includes lecturers from the UK. This means that we are now back to our usual format of 6 UK and 3 Australian lecturers. I think you will agree that we have a terrific line-up this year and I'm sure that you will all enjoy our first lecture by Claudia Chan Shaw who may be familiar to you as a co-host and presenter on ABC TV's long running Collectors program.

We are pleased to say that 335 members have renewed for this year and we welcome 24 new members many of whom were able to meet the Committee earlier this week at our morning tea for new members.

You will have received your 2023 badge labels in December so please remember to wear these to lectures, special interest afternoons and excursions. Existing members will know that member badges with a star indicate a new member. Many of us will remember being new members and perhaps not knowing anyone in the society so please do introduce yourselves to new members and make them welcome.

Guests are welcome to attend lectures other than the first lecture for the year which is for members only. Guests may attend up to 3 lectures each year at a cost of \$25 per lecture. If you wish to invite a guest, please contact Heather Marmur on 0493 433 817 or email adfasyarra@gmail.com no later than the day before the lecture. Payment can be made, preferably by credit card, on the day of the lecture.

Sadly, our October 2022 excursion to Mount Macedon had to be cancelled due to bad weather. However, we will endeavour to offer this excursion again in 2024. Our first excursion this year is to the Mornington Peninsula on April 27th with visits to the McClelland Gallery and Sculpture Park at Langwarrin and the Royal Botanic Gardens Australian Garden at Cranbourne. Bookings open on Trybooking on the March 20th.

This year we welcome 3 new members to the Committee - Wendy Coxhead, Deborah Blakeley and Esther Lewin. Wendy is our new Newsletter editor and has done a wonderful job on this her first newsletter. I think that you will enjoy reading about the Young Arts recipients for 2022 and I want to thank you all for your generous support of our Young Arts Program. Many thanks also go to Suzanne Katz who continues to do a wonderful job as Young Arts Co-ordinator.

There are currently 9 committee members and meetings are held monthly. While the committee members work hard, especially on lecture days, we also get a great deal of enjoyment from working together. If you are interested in joining the committee, please let me know. Committee members, recognisable by their white badges, are ready to answer questions or raise suggestions at the next committee meeting on your behalf so please do not hesitate to approach us.

I hope that you all enjoy the 2023 lectures and look forward to seeing you there.

Jan Bennellick
ADFAS Yarra Chair

YOUNG AND EMERGING ARTS 2022

Each year ADFAS Yarra provides a variety of grants to young and emerging artists, made possible by the support of Special Interest sessions, excursions and generous member donations. Awards go to both individuals and small groups covering a range of art practices, including production and technical support. Grants also spread the word about ADFAS Yarra more broadly in the community. The 2022 awards covered music, artists with a disability, ethnic weavers, painters, living support for a university art student and art conservation. The total amount awarded was just shy of **\$10,000**.

1. Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM) Grant: \$1,000

ANAM is a national classical music performance training facility, with students from across Australia and New Zealand and the only professional performance-training institute of its kind in Australia, and one of few in the world.

The ADFAS Yarra prize for the "Outstanding Program in an ANAM Recital" was awarded to French horn musician Nicola Robinson. Earlier in the year, the members of the ADFAS Yarra Committee enjoyed an ANAM concert at the beautiful St Kilda Town Hall.



Above Left: ANAM Nicola Robinson, winner of the ADFAS Yarra award.

Above right: ANAM musicians present: 'Across mountains & Valleys', conducted by world-renowned virtuoso, Lawrence Power.



Above: Mark Smith and one of his works, 'providing a space for beauty and ugliness to coalesce'.

2. Arts Project Australia.(APA) Grant: \$1,500

Arts Project Australia supports artists with intellectual disabilities, promotes their work and advocates for their inclusion in contemporary art practice. Arts Project artists are included in both public and private collections. The APA studio in Northcote is attended weekly by more than 140 artists with an intellectual disability, who are able to develop their own practice, while supported by professional staff artists. The grant went to 'Ugly/Beautiful', a solo exhibition of photographic work by mixed-media artist Mark Smith. His work was programmed in PHOTO2022, the 2nd International Festival of Photography, hosted by Photo Australia (29 April - 22 May 2022).

3. Australian Tapestry Workshop(ATW) Grant: \$1,490

The 'Karen Tapestry Weaving Workshop' provided weaving demonstrations and talks at the ATW with the Karen weavers, in conjunction with the ATW exhibition 'Full Circle: Karen Tapestry Weavers'. The exhibition show-cased brightly coloured geometric tapestries by the weavers, who are refugees from an ethnic minority group from Myanmar. The workshop aimed to increase public engagement with their work, as well as providing them with a platform to share their cultural heritage through weaving.



Above: South Melbourne's Australian Tapestry Workshop and an array of brightly coloured samples of the Karen weavers' work

4. 2022 FLOAT Inc. Grant: \$2,000

Following our initial 2021 FLOAT Inc. grant, artist Otto Macpherson will live and work on FLOAT (on Lake Tyers/Bung Yarnda) for 3 weeks, with an option to return for another week later, and to present his final work at Iceworks Studio, Lakes Entrance.

He will work and kayak from his base on FLOAT, to develop his current techniques in charcoal, while observing the world around him on Lake Tyers.

The FLOAT environment is conducive to total immersion in the artist's work and the subsequent 'Artist's Dinner', will offer an appreciative and supportive audience, building the young artist's confidence.

FLOAT is committed to supporting young and emerging artists who are changing the creative landscape for East Gippsland.



"Anglesea Heath in Red", lino cut on wood block relief print, 30 x 30 cm.



Above: A lino cut on woodblock print and charcoal drawings by Otto

5. Melbourne Conservatorium of Music(MCM), University of Melbourne, Concerto-Aria Competition.

Grant: \$1800

Under the auspices of the Faculty of Fine Arts and Music, the Concerto-Aria Competition is open to all currently enrolled MCM students. Each area nominates one, two or three candidates. New University requirements regarding the threshold prize amount, now precludes ADFAS Yarra from being able to present a prize in our name. In the past, students have had to provide for their own accompanists. This year, the grant covers the cost of an accompanist for each competitor. The Committee feels this change now benefits all the competitors and is in the spirit of our encouragement of young artists.

6. Patricia Robertson Fund. Grant:\$1000

Each year ADFAS Yarra donates to this fund, named in honour of a long serving chair of ADFAS, who recognized that financial support would make a meaningful difference to the vital art of conservation. The money donated is used for the conservation of Australian cultural materials and the training of young conservators.



Above: MCM winner Justinn Lu on Saxophone, and Runners up Georgia White on Clarinet and Timothy Kan on Piano

7. Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT). Grant:\$1000

ADFAS Yarra awards will be presented to two graduating students who have developed the most outstanding painting/drawing practice during their Master of Fine Art course. All the students are emerging artists, and the award acknowledges excellence, while supporting them to develop new artworks. Each award is valued at \$500. The winner were Alex Kynaston and Okhee Choi.

8. University College, University of Melbourne. Grant: \$1,500



Above: Ruby Dawson with Young Arts Coordinator Suzanne Katz

Ruby Dawson, who is in 2nd year of a Bachelor Fine Arts (Visual) at the Victorian College of the Arts. Ruby comes from a farming background and has shown leadership qualities in initiating a design competition within her student group. She has already produced a book for children and hopes to continue writing as a career. She also enjoys weaving.

9. CRAFT Vic: Also due to Covid lockdowns, the CRAFT Vic 2021 ADFAS Yarra Encouragement award, was presented in April to Aunty Beverley Meldrum, an Indigenous artist who was born in South Australia and moved to the Mornington Peninsula thirty years ago. Beverley is an emerging artist who enjoys working with a wide variety of mediums including ceramics, timber, stone and kelp. Her winning piece of jewellery highlights the unique forms of dried kelp.

After the devastating floods in Lismore, \$200 was sent to the Lismore Art Gallery Restoration Fund.

Suzanne Katz
Young and Emerging Arts Coordinator



Above: The dried kelp necklace and handmade chain that won the award

In January 2020, just before the word 'Cruise' took on a sinister connotation, a trip to New Zealand on the Queen Elizabeth, gave the opportunity for a visit to 'Olveston House' in Dunedin, which has been open to the public as a House Museum since 1967.



Olveston Historic Home in Dunedin and below, The Great Hall

Olveston has only ever been in one family and presents a marvelously eclectic collection, showcasing the 20th century and the gracious living it represented. It was designed by English architect Sir Ernest George, and is the only house in the Southern Hemisphere

to be designed by him. George drew on the tradition of Tudor architecture, through to the end of the Stuart era. By the time he designed 'Olveston', he was beginning to adopt the features of the Jacobean tradition.

The owner of Olveston, David Edward Theomin, was a well-travelled and cultured Jewish businessman, born in Bristol England in 1852, and immigrating to Melbourne in 1874. He married his wife Marie in 1879 and soon moved to Dunedin, where he established a general importing business, which became the Dresden Piano Company. Sensing antagonism towards German sounding business names, due to WW1, it was changed to the Bristol Piano Company.

Theomin and his wife had a son, Edward and a daughter Dorothy. Edward married, but was badly affected by his war experiences and died childless, aged only 44. Dorothy, like her parents, pursued interests in art, music, public duty as well as alpine climbing, golf and horse riding. She never married and on her death, gifted the house and it's contents to the people of Dunedin.

Olveston was built in 1904-6 on the site of the family's first house, where they had lived for 20 years. By this time, they were wealthy and the house was beautifully decorated, with no expense spared. While it was being built, they toured the world for years, buying beautiful items for the new house.



The oak staircase and gallery were designed and prepared in Britain and assembled in the house, without the need for any nails. The beautiful stained glass and upholstery fabrics came from London, and the rich wallpaper in the Dining room was ordered from New York. Even the ornate brass lock plates, door hinges, taps and light switches were especially chosen by the architect in London, and shipped out along with many other supplies.

Very modern appliances and features were installed, such as central heating, an intercom system, a guest powder room near the front door, and the integration of external waste pipes and ventilators in the overall architecture. Out in the garage is the original 1921 Fiat 510 happily discovered on a farming property in a deteriorated state, and painstakingly restored to its now pristine condition.

Unlike many house museums, the house is a static arrangement, as if the family was still in residence! The impression of grandeur is created with displays of Japanese weaponry in the vestibule, but balanced immediately by the comfortable proportions and warm, inviting atmosphere of the Great Hall, with its solid staircase linking into the Drawing room and Library. Attention to detail is obvious, with wonderfully decorative door hinges, light switches and fittings, and examples of the English Arts and Crafts movement.

If ever you find yourself in beautiful Dunedin, this fascinating house is certainly worth a visit!

*Send contributions, including interesting art and design articles, travel articles, jokes, life's helpful hints, art exhibitions to: **Editor:** Wendy Coxhead to adfasyarra@gmail.com
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Upcoming Events

Lecture 1

Thursday 23 February 2023

10.00 am & 1.30 pm

Art Deco New York

Claudia Chan Shaw

At the end of the First World War New York emerged as one of the world's great cities. This was the Machine Age. Manhattan found its expression in skyscrapers, apartment buildings and movie palaces. From the late 1920s, the glories of the past inspired the fantasies of the future, in the explosion of exotic modern styles we now call Art Deco. This lecture explores not only the city's celebrated Art Deco skyscrapers, but the decorative arts and influences behind this global movement.

Claudia Chan Shaw has a diverse career spanning art and design, photography, curating, television and radio presenting, arts commentary, public speaking, and collecting.

Lecture 2

Thursday 23 March 2023

10.00 am & 1.30 pm

Sadler's Wells - The Theatrical Mothership

Nigel Bates

For more than three centuries Sadler's Wells has been a place of entertainment and a part of London's theatrical history with a reputation known across the world. Surviving many highs, lows and rebuildings, the theatre has hosted and nurtured an impressive array of performing companies over the years. This lecture will take us through the unique story of The Wells which includes pony racing, naval warfare, Shakespeare with Sir John Gielgud as well as the strongest connections with the worlds of opera and dance and the roots of today's Royal Ballet companies.

Nigel Bates is the former Music Administrator of The Royal Ballet and has been a performer for nearly forty years in and out of the Royal Opera House including seventeen years as Principal Percussionist with the orchestra.

Lecture 3

Thursday 25 May 2023

10.00 am & 1.30 pm

Dead Sharks and Oligarchs: Inside the Art Market of the 21st Century

Dr. Tom Flynn

After a painting purporting to be a work by Leonardo da Vinci sold for the staggering sum of \$450.3 million dollars at an auction in New York, the world looked aghast at the art market and wondered whether it was out of control. The international art market now frequently sees breathtaking prices paid for works of art by the world's most important painters and sculptors: \$200 million for a Jackson Pollock 'drip' painting, and even \$120,000 for a banana duct-taped to a gallery wall. This lecture explores the dizzying prices paid for 'blue-chip' works of art and throws light on the secretive mechanisms and confidential 'behind-the-scenes' deals that help bring them about.

Dr. Tom Flynn is a UK-based art historian, writer, and art consultant. He holds a BA Honours degree (First Class) in Art History from the University of Sussex, a Masters in Design History from the Royal College of Art, and a doctorate from the University of Sussex. His interests include the historical development and professional practice of the European art markets.

Guests are most welcome to attend lectures. Prior booking for guests is essential and a \$25 fee applies. Please call Heather Marmur on 0493 433 817 for further details.

Excursion

Gardens of the Mornington Peninsula

Thursday 27 April 2023

Cost: \$120

Our first trip for the year will be to the Mornington Peninsula. The changing colours of the deciduous trees will be a backdrop for our visit to the **McClelland Gallery and Sculpture Park in Langwarrin** and the **Royal Botanic Gardens Australian Garden at Cranbourne**.

It should prove to be a very exciting day out of Melbourne.



Just one fine example of the large scale works to be seen at the McClelland Sculpture Park. "Tree of Life" by Phil Price NZ Artist. Large and full of kinetic energy!

Bookings open on Trybooking from 10am Monday 20 March or call Jan Bennelick on 0400 261 044 for further details.