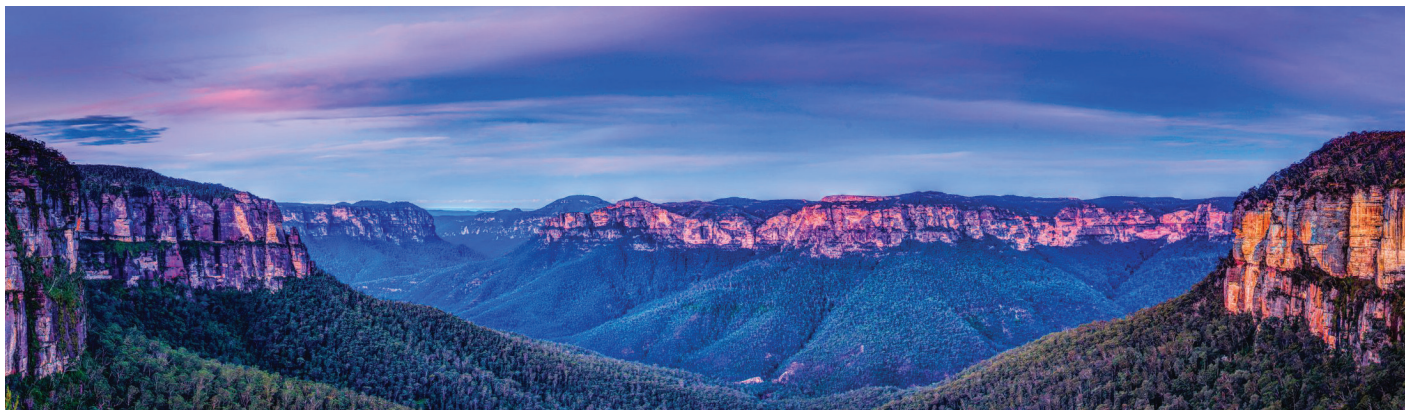




Summer, 2025


ARTSNATIONAL
Blue Mountains
Connect, Enrich, Inspire

Newsletter



Di Bentley, Chair

Welcome everyone to the 2025 ArtsNational year!

My name is Di Bentley, and I would like to introduce myself as the new Blue Mountains ArtsNational Committee chair.

The maximum term for the Committee chair is three years, and Margaret Lipscombe has just completed her three years in the role.

On behalf of us all, I would like to thank Margaret for her dedication and the excellent work she has done.

Fortunately, she has agreed to remain a committee member and continue coordinating hosting arrangements for our UK lecturers.

I also want to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of all the other committee members who bring their valuable experience to ensure ArtsNational's success in the Blue Mountains.

My involvement in ArtsNational has been relatively short but very stimulating and enjoyable.

I have always been involved in the arts, developing a particular interest in Asian and Islander art while spending nearly 13 years working in Papua New Guinea, Thailand, the Philippines, and Indonesia.

Living in those countries provided a great opportunity to learn about local cultures, religions, and everyday life and how traditions and values are expressed in the arts and daily life.

After moving to Blackheath from Gunnedah, in northwest NSW at the end of 2019 (just in time for the bushfires and the COVID shutdown), I was introduced to what was then known as ADFAS and have enjoyed the lectures ever since.

The topics are wide-ranging, and the speakers highly qualified and knowledgeable in their areas of expertise.

The 2025 program is again varied and fascinating, covering topics such as William Morris, Petra's culture and creativity, portraits' symbolism, Stradivari violins, and the glamour of the ocean liner.

The ArtsNational brochure provides details and dates for the talks and can be found in most libraries, some stores, online, and as advertised in the Blue Mountains Gazette.

Do come and join us one Friday afternoon a month at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts.

Lectures 2025

28 March, 2025

Sue Rollin

Petra and the Nabateans: The Arabs before Islam

The Nabateans established their capital city at Petra and carved tombs, dining halls, and a grand theatre from the desert sandstone. This lecture will examine the Nabateans' culture, religion, and architectural feats.

18 April 2025

Leigh Capel

Art and the Third Reich

Hitler deemed certain art 'degenerate' and attempted to influence artistic tastes and trends. This lecture will examine that as well as the impact and influence of the Holocaust on post-war art in Australia.

23 May 2025

Alice Foster

About Face: How to Read Portraits

This lecture will explore how portraits range from the symbolic through to character, personality, mood, and more, as well as the relationship between sitter and painter.

AGM and Christmas Party
05 December, 2025

ArtsNational Blue Mountains Executive Committee Members

Di Bentley, Chair - 0428 429 256
bentley.di@gmail.com

Helen Gillam, Vice Chair - 0416 035 549
hwmg15@outlook.com

Kay West, Secretary - 4757 3135
kathleenjunewest@bigpond.com

Denise Schoer, Treasurer - 0417 261 341
lucydjs@hotmail.com.au

The Forgotten Genius of Lee Miller

Lee Miller, photographer, writer and model, was born in Poughkeepsie, New York, in 1907.

Interested in the fine arts from a young age, she moved to Paris in 1925 to study lighting, costume, and design.

She became involved in the surrealist art movement and made many friends in the bohemian art scene of the time, including becoming the muse and model of artist and photographer Man Ray (it is said some works attributed to him are, in fact, hers).

She ultimately returned to New York, joined an experimental drama programme at Vassar College, and later studied life drawing and painting.

Despite her broad interest in the arts, she is most well-known for her photography.

A fluke encounter with Conde Nast, publisher of Vogue (when he saved her from being run over on a Manhattan Street), kicked off her modelling career and, more significantly, her photographic work with the magazine.

When the Second World War broke out, she was living in London. She could have returned to the US but chose instead to become the official war photographer for Vogue.

She teamed up with American photojournalist David E.

Scherman from Life magazine, and together they photographed the liberation of Paris, the Battle of Alsace, and the Buchenwald and Dachau concentration camps.

Scherman took the iconic photograph of Miller (above) sitting in the bathtub in Hitler's private apartment, in Munich.

What is not shown is Lee's muddy boots deliberately dirtying the bath mat, intentionally placed



Miller, Hitler's bath, 30 April, 1945



Miller (second from right) with other war correspondents in 1943.

there after a traumatic day spent photographing the atrocities of Buchenwald and Dachau. Co-incidentally, 30 April, 1945 was the day Hitler killed himself.

After the war, Miller continued with her work for a time but suffered from PTSD, post-natal depression, and alcoholism, eventually abandoning her photographic work altogether. Her son, Antony Penrose, famously discovered boxes of thousands of

negatives and war memorabilia in the family home's attic after her death.

Penrose is credited with keeping the memory of his extraordinary mother alive and collaborated with actor and film director Kate Winslet to make her iconic film, *Lee*, which is currently showing in cinemas and via various streaming services.

Antony Penrose will visit ArtsNational Blue Mountains in 2026. It will be a lecture to look out for.