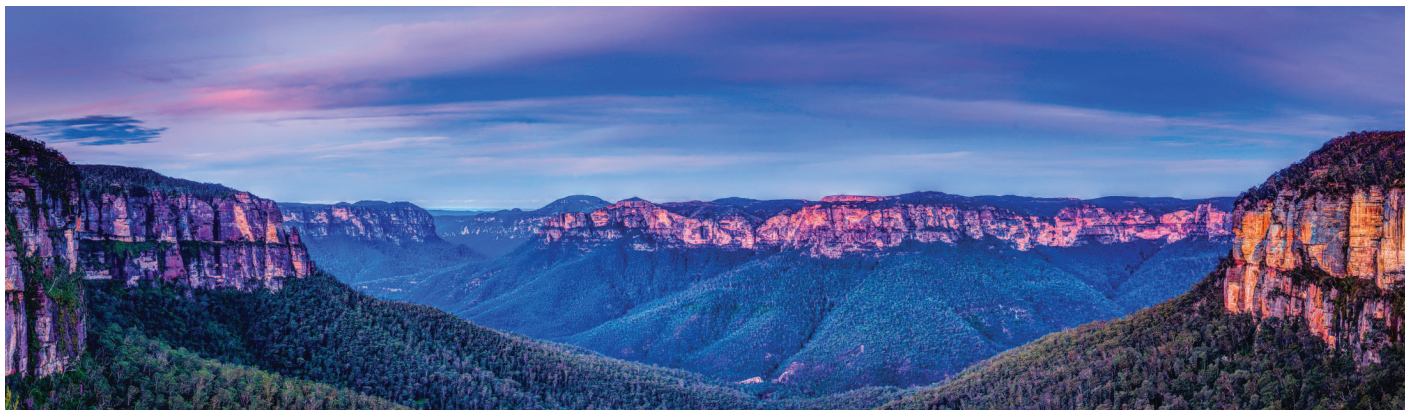




Winter, 2025


ARTSNATIONAL
Blue Mountains
Connect, Enrich, Inspire

Newsletter



Di Bentley, Chair

ArtsNational Blue Mountains contributes annually to local youth arts activities under the Young Arts program.

We are thrilled to announce that we were the winners of the 2024 Young Arts Innovation Award for our grant to the Katoomba Public School.

The Young Arts Grants funding is raised by our members and visitors, who generously support raffles at our lectures.

The program's purpose is to 'support local arts activities that inspire young people with a lasting enthusiasm for the arts and encourage them to expand their horizons and opportunities.'

The school used their grant to fund three workshops with Jo Clancy from Wagana Dancers for Koori Club children and additional keen dancers (kindergarten to Yr 6).

They worked together to choreograph a special King Parrot (Guma) dance. These children will be the "keepers of the dance" and will teach it to the whole school. When they leave they will hand the dance on to younger children. Jo also taught culture and created music that the school can continue to use.

The enthusiastic leadership provided by school staff members also contributed to this project's success.

The award was announced at the recent Annual General Meeting of the Association of ADFAS, the umbrella organisation for all of the ArtsNational Societies across Australia. Its main responsibilities include funds management, selecting UK lecturers and organising their itineraries, marketing and centralised record keeping.

A two-day meeting of the ArtsNational Council, which includes the Chairs of all of the ArtsNational Societies across Australia, was held in conjunction with the AGM.

Currently, 35 Societies are established across Australia, from Rockhampton to Hobart and Sydney to Perth. However, four have folded in the past year – Central Victoria, Dubbo, Riverina and Camden.

The main reason for this was falling membership and its negative impact on financial viability. We are very pleased that ArtsNational Blue Mountains membership has risen this year.

Still, we are always looking for new and effective ways to increase our membership, viability and the vitality of our Society. If anyone has some good ideas, please talk to us about them.

Di Bentley
Chair

Lectures 2025

27 June 2025

Louise Marshall

Siena, City of the Virgin: Art in a 14th Tuscan hill town

Although less well known than Florence, Siena is famous for Renaissance art. The art particularly celebrates the Virgin Mary, who has long been considered Siena's special protector.

25 July 2025

Chris Aslan

The Golden Road to Samarkand

This lecture will explore the glittering mosques, madrassahs and minarets of Samarkand, Bukhara and Khiva in Uzbekistan, contrasting them with the Soviet buildings in Tashkent, Urgench and Nukus.

22 August 2025

Tony Faber

The Genius of Stradivari

This lecture will explore the famous Stradivari violin, focussing on its tone and beauty, examining how every violin maker has tried unsuccessfully to match it, but none have succeeded.

AGM and Christmas Party
12 December, 2025

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Yeoman's Bridge banner

Publicity Pays Off

As members will be aware, since ArtsNational has transitioned from its earlier incarnation of ADFAS, we have witnessed a concomitant rise in memberships, which at 116 places us in a comfortably sustainable position for the future. While we know that much of our success is due to word of mouth from members, our extensive publicity programme also plays an important role.

Members may not know that we approach this in several ways. First, before every film at Mt Vic Flicks, the initial advertisement is for ArtsNational. Second, we erect a banner at Yeoman's Bridge in Katoomba twice yearly to advertise the society. Additionally, at the beginning of the year, we run a quarter-page advertisement in the Gazette outlining the first half-year's program as well as regular mentions in the newspaper's 'Along the Highway' column. We also have professionally produced 'tiles' featuring an image of the lecturer and their upcoming lecture, which we post monthly on various social media sites, as well as an updated PowerPoint display for an hour before each lecture.

Finally, our brochure, available in both paper format and sent electronically each year to members, sets out the coming year's programme and includes a membership application for the year ahead. Committee members distribute these at many locations from the lower to the upper mountains.

Right now, we are creating a new 'bow banner' to be displayed outside the School of Arts before each lecture. As you go about your life, keep an eye out for ArtsNational material, and many thanks to publicity officer Gill Green for pulling this all together.

