

FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

by Fiona Johnson, ArtsNational Perth Chair

It feels like Groundhog Day being ArtsNational Perth chair again, a role I am familiar with and enjoy. Firstly, I want to thank all outgoing committee members, especially former chair Kay Campbell, for their hard work and stewardship. Their ideas, connections and follow through with event management and philanthropy have really elevated and enriched the ArtsNational Perth offering.

I would like to welcome incoming committee members Nancy Hourani, Tammy Powell, and Debbie Thorton. Our committee has lots of diverse skill sets and these contribute to our wonderful community organisation. However, we are still seeking members with marketing and social media experience so, please get in touch if you possess these skills (or would like to learn them) via perth@artsnational.au.

Behind the White Walls

Last year, at our fifth anniversary celebration in October, Janet Holmes à Court invited ArtsNational Perth members to *Behind the White Walls* to view the Holmes à Court collection with curator, Louise Dickermann. We now have date which is Thursday, 14 August 2025 at 2pm – tickets available online in TryBooking [here](#).

Curator Connie Petrillo will also be on hand to discuss the visiting exhibition *TAFE to FAME: 125 Years of Art and Design in Perth* which is a retrospective of the creative hub and impact of TAFE education in WA.

This is a very exciting opportunity and a strictly members-only event. At this stage, we are only offering one event with a limited capacity of 20 people. We recommend you act swiftly as we expect this event to sell-out. If demand proves strong, we may consider a second event.

Lectures

Thank you for bearing with us as we have had to replace the lecturer twice for the 12 July lecture. I think you will be delighted by Sue Geddes-Page's lecture on *Landscapes* focusing on Australian artists such as Lloyd Rees and Fred Williams. Please remember this lecture is at the University of Western Australia's social sciences lecture theatre.

To my immense pleasure, it was so nice to see patrons leave the recent *Beatles* lecture with such huge smiles. Everyone had a Beatles story to tell, or the Beatles' music reminded them of a time, place or person. Such is the joy of the arts!



L-R: Karen Farr, Peter Farr, Jamie Hayes, Fiona Johnson and Jean Hayes.



Janie O from Studio J

Youth Arts Award

As highlighted at our 2025 AGM, philanthropy is an evolving area albeit within the constraints of the committee's capacity. We are exploring new creative partnerships where our funds can have the greatest impact while also providing benefits for our membership. One such partnership is the collaboration with Edith Cowan University (ECU) to document their move from the Mt Lawley campus to their new city base. For more details, see the Youth Arts Award story below.

If you have any questions, suggestions or would like to offer your time as a volunteer, please contact me at perth@artsnational.au.

Now for that hot cuppa...

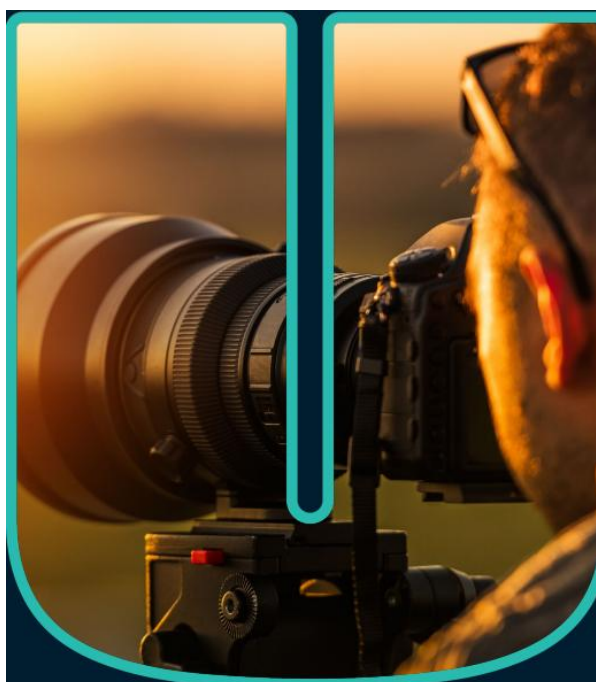


YOUTH ARTS AWARD AND ECU: Future Talent Award

Edith Cowan University (ECU) is farewelling its Mount Lawley Campus as they move to the new City Campus in 2026. ECU photo media students and alumni have been invited to capture the essence and stories of Mount Lawley Campus through artful photography which the School of Arts and Humanities will showcase in an exhibition: *Through the Lens*. The exhibition will be an opportunity to honour and celebrate the campus's illustrious history and contributions to education and the arts since 1970.

This year, ArtsNational Perth is collaborating with ECU to present the Future Talent Award at the *Through the Lens* photo exhibition. Entry criteria for the award is that entrants need to be a current ECU photography student or young alumni (aged 25 and under). ArtsNational Perth is proud to be contributing a total of \$5,000:

- \$4,000 to be awarded to the best student photographer; and
- \$1,000 to assist the winner with printing and framing.



ArtsNational members will be invited to attend the presentation of the Future Talent Award at ECU on 3 September 2025. Save the date and watch out for more details in the coming months.

In 2024 ArtsNational Perth donated \$5,000 to the Western Australia Youth Orchestra (WAYO) to help maintain instruments, mentor students and contribute to concert costs. It was lovely to see so many ArtsNational Perth members supporting WAYO in June at the WAYO in the City concert. For details about WAYO and its upcoming concert programme, [click here](#).

The ArtsNational Youth Arts Award is funded by the generosity of our members via raffle ticket sales at each lecture. If you would like to provide prizes for the raffles or, if you have any suggestions for organisations or individuals who may benefit from the Youth Arts Award please email Nancy Hourani at perth@artsnational.au.

COMING SOON!

Sue Geddes-Page

2-3:30pm

Saturday 12 July

Social Science Lecture Hall UWA

12 Jul

AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPES

A scientific interest in the topography of exotic lands led to the production of landscape imagery for Colonial consumption. In Australia, Naturalism continued to inform landscapes in the 19th Century, sometimes overlaid with notions of the Sublime and the Picturesque. Early Modernists were captivated equally by industrial landscapes, and more nostalgic pastoral concepts *en plein air*. Contemporary landscape art in Australia has become an 'expanded field' that applies technologies and traditions to make resonant interpretations of our environment. Sue Geddes-Page will trace imported and local influences on the history of landscape painting in Australia from the late 18th century to the present.

More info or to register/buy tickets, click [here](#)



Sophie Oosterwijk

2-3:30pm

Saturday 2 Aug

State Library of WA theatrette

2 Aug

LOVE, MARRIAGE AND FIDELITY IN WESTERN ART

Love and marriage have always been a source of inspiration to authors and artists alike. One of the most famous portraits in the National Gallery is Van Eyck's enigmatic Arnolfini Portrait, but marital depictions have a much longer history: in Ancient Egypt people chose to have themselves immortalised as loving couples. Double or pendant portraits were also commissioned in large numbers from artists such as Rembrandt, Hals and Gainsborough. Yet others show a more ironic or even cynical attitude, for love and marriage are not always a bed of roses!

More info or to register/buy tickets, click [here](#)



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This is a very exciting opportunity, and a strictly members only event. At this stage we are offering only one event, for 20 persons, with details on [Trybooking](#). If demands proves strong we are happy to run a second event with details to follow. Cost is \$25 per member with light refreshments.

Act swiftly as this is likely to be a sold-out event.



Chris Aslan
Saturday 30 August
State Library of WA theatrette

30 Aug

1-2:30pm:

A CARPET RIDE TO KHIVA: A Personal Story of Reviving Ancient Silk Carpet Designs

The story of working with UNESCO to establish a silk carpet workshop in the desert oasis of Khiva, Uzbekistan – the most homogenous example of Islamic architecture in the world. Aslan's work took him to the bazaars of Afghanistan to buy natural dyes, and to the great libraries and museums of Europe to track down 15th century manuscripts to revive carpet designs from their illuminations. He also saw the lives of women transformed and became the largest female employer in Khiva.

More info or to register/buy tickets, click [here](#)

3-4pm:

THE GOLDEN ROAD TO SAMARKAND: The Architecture, Art and Textiles of Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan boasts glittering mosques, madrassahs and minarets in the Silk Road cities of Samarkand, Bukhara and Khiva. These contrast wonderfully with the brutalist Soviet buildings of Tashkent, Urgench, and Nukus. We explore the Savitsky Museum in Nukus, with the second largest collection of Russian Avante Garde Art, collected at a time when these artistic styles were banned by the state. We explore the revival of Islamic miniature painting and the resurgence of handicrafts all over the country that ceased during the 1930s and the Soviet drive to make everything factory based.

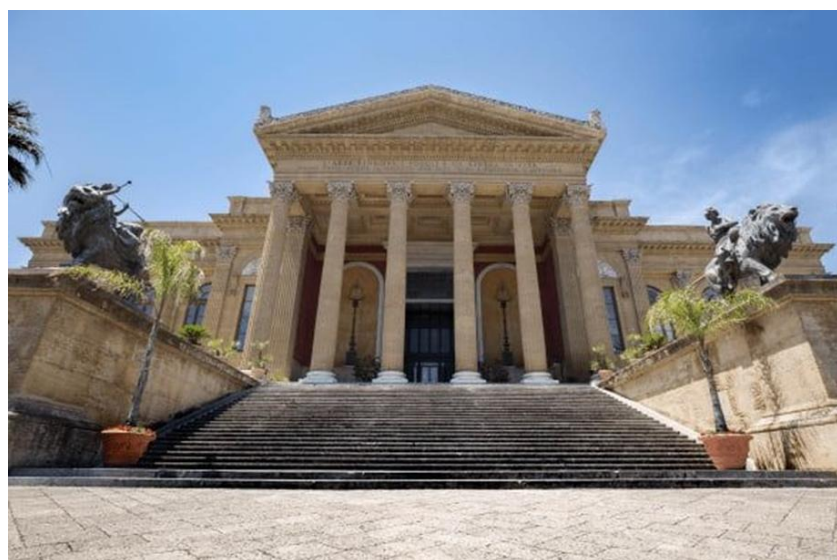
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TRAVEL TALES

TEATRO MASSIMO: A PALERMO HIGHLIGHT

by ArtsNational Perth volunteer and member, Kevin Jackson



Sicily at the heel of Italy is a trending travel destination of late. If you are a Netflix fan; you might associate the city with *The Leopard* a dazzling series journeying back to 19th-Century Sicily of Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa's classic novel.

Before my recent travels I had not associated Palermo with opera although its connection with the artist, Caravaggio is well known. As a bustling city it is dirty with rubbish, has cracked pavements and is covered in graffiti. Among this detritus of modern living stands the grand, gracious and most impressive, Palermo Opera House (referred to as the *Teatro Massimo*) with

its two huge stone lions guarding the imposing staircase leading to the lobby. The building is of neo-classical architecture with a hint of the Renaissance. The inside features red velvet chairs, art nouveau trimmings and a beautiful (flat) ceiling featuring the heavens. The *Teatro Massimo* claims to be the biggest opera house in Italy (hello, La Scala) and third largest in Europe.

We attended the opening night of *Salome* with music by Richard Strauss and librettist, Hedwig Lachmann after Oscar Wilde. On arrival, the lobby was packed with the Palermo's high society, some of whom were causing a sensation.

The curtain went up revealing what looked like an amphitheatre with a rectangular reflecting pool about 6 x 3 metres full of water. On the top row of the amphitheatre stood eight people dressed in white overalls, helmets, boots, goggles, and carrying what looked like rifles.

We looked at our tickets and questioned – are we in the right place? The opera commenced and Herod, Herodias (Herod's wife and mother of Salome), and Narraboth (head of the guards and besotted with Salome) entered the stage wearing modern clothes.



After a while, the beautiful Salome appeared with long blonde hair and wearing a yellow satin dress setting the scene for Herod to offer her anything to dance for him. Despite her mother's warning, Salome danced for Herod tantalising him by wading in the pool and removing her clothes to down to a white petticoat.



As the opera progressed, Salome appeared quite mad having received John the Baptist's head on a silver platter. John the Baptist's death amused her mother, humiliated Herod, and caused Narraboth to commit suicide.

With madness Salome put her head into the pool and then flung it backwards and forwards, with water dripping from her blonde tresses. She then started kissing John the Baptist's severed head

and telling him if he had accepted her advances in prison, he would still be alive.

As with great opera tragedy, Herodian was stoned to death, Herod had a heart attack and Salome, by now completely crazy, collapsed. The curtain came down. The audience were ecstatic and rightly so as the *Salome* opera was a triumph, a wonderful night of entertainment and a credit to all concerned.

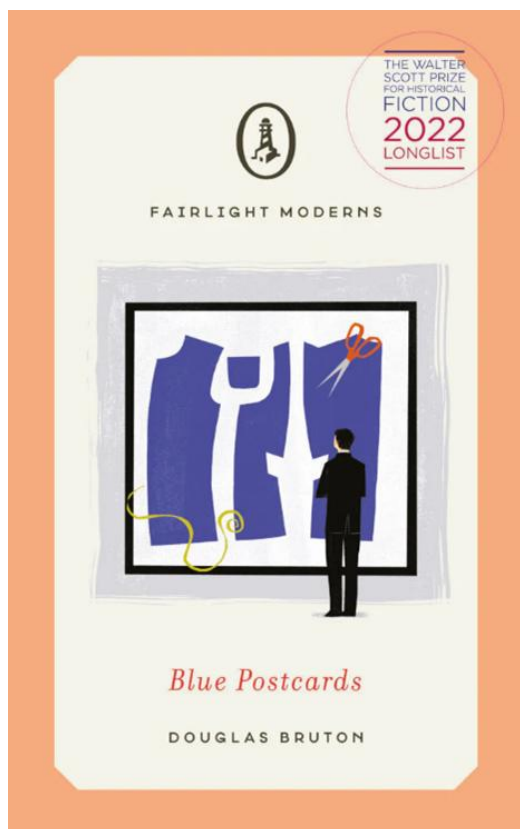
Palermo, like the *Teatro Massimo*, shot up in our estimations. Highly recommended for the curious and opera loving traveller.



by Sam Taylor, The Lane Bookshop

BLUE POSTCARDS by Douglas Bruton

Longlisted for The Walter Scott Prize for Historical Fiction 2022



A few years ago, I can't remember exactly when, I picked up a small book from one of many trestle tables at a trade fair in the UK. It went into my bag, onto my shelves and sat there, unread, until March this year. I can't remember why I picked this book up, nor why I decided to read it so long after acquiring it.

Blue Postcards, by Scottish author Douglas Bruton begins with a similar scenario: a man browsing a trestle table, although in this case one situated below the Eiffel Tower. And, like me, he finds a hidden gem, "It was a blue postcard. Completely blue on one side, a blank and eternal blue...it had been franked and dated 14 May 1957. I do not think the girl serving at the stall knew what she had. It was priced at one euro". From here three interconnecting stories unfurl in a series of 500 postcard-length paragraphs, each one referencing the colour blue.

These postcards are jumbled, as collections of postcards generally are, and so our stories intertwine in a seemingly haphazard way. We read of Henri, the last tailor on a street where once there were many, who "writes all these measurements down in a leather-bound ledger that is kept locked in a safe as though it is a book of secrets". We learn of Yves Klein, the artist, provocateur and publicist who invented a specific hue of blue and subverted conventional notions of art. And we follow our narrator and his elliptical relationship with the girl who sold him the postcard.

For the first few pages I struggled to make the connections between the paragraphs, let alone the stories. But slowly, like a painting taking form, the three tales took shape and the shared themes of love, loss, art and the "blue mists of memory" came into view. The blue mists of melancholy also linger throughout. Henri is upholding his family's tradition long after long after the events of Kristallnacht, the Night of Broken Glass, the 1938 pogrom carried out by the Nazis which destroyed Jewish businesses, synagogues and prayer rooms throughout Germany, Austria and the Sudetenland, and which destroyed Henri's family as well. Yves Klein's creation of the blue that will take his name will also take his health. And our unreliable narrator's affection for the stallholder is questionable, possibly imaginary. As he himself asks, "And this thing with Michelle, who cannot yet be thirty, and a man who by his own admission was born on 14 May 1957, what is this thing? Is it a device, like a 'love interest' for this novel?"

While the unusual form of *Blue Postcards* might be difficult to navigate, I would urge you to persist. The writing is as sparse, elegant and clever as Yves Klein's artwork. The stories are as empathetic and touching as the postcards we find tucked in photo albums and old shoe boxes. Serendipity weaves its magic in moments like this. In the brief paragraphs of this book, it changes three lives that would otherwise have nothing in common. And, in drawing my hand to this book on that trestle table, it changed my life, in a small, beautiful, vividly blue way.

Pre-order copies [here](#).

Official ANP raffle prize provider



NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER NURTURING YOUTH ARTS

By Nancy Hourani

It is my pleasure to be on the ArtsNational Perth Committee overseeing the Youth Arts Award. I am very passionate about the encouragement of the arts in our youth. I have three children who have been nurtured from a very young age in all aspects of art and culture. Consequently, this has shaped who they are today: Zak aged 28, while studying at Notre Dame in Fremantle contributed to the Performing Arts Association of Notre Dame; Yusef aged 26 spent three years studying in Florence, Italy at the Florence Academy of Art and is now completing his Master of Arts at the Kings Foundation School of Traditional Art in London; and Sofia, aged 21, has moved to Melbourne to pursue her musical career as a member of The Stamps - the three girls from Fremantle write and sing their own songs with great harmonies.

This is all a great contrast from my background where I graduated as an accountant and pursued further studies moving into IT Projects. This included implementing ERP Systems and IT solutions, managing the training and change aspects of the projects.

My husband and I like to travel, mainly to Italy, where we explore a different region each time for a few months immersing ourselves in the food, history and culture.

I am keen to hear about any ideas you may have on how we can encourage the arts in our youth: info@artsnationalperth.com.



ARTSNATIONAL PERTH contacts and info links

Catch up on past event images [here](#).

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ARTSNATIONAL PERTH INFORMATION

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Contact us:

Post: ArtsNational Perth, PO Box 7072, Shenton Park 6008

Email: perth@artsnational.au

Website: www.artsnational.au/societies/perth/

ABOUT US

ArtsNational Perth Committee members are:

Chair:	Kay Campbell
Vice Chair:	Fiona Johnson
Treasurer:	Aislyn Shepherd
Secretary:	Tammy Powell
Youth Arts Award:	Nancy Hourani
Membership secretary:	Di Ingelse
Responsible for volunteers:	Bridget Parker
Committee member:	Debbie Thornton

New members (and sponsors) are *always* welcome, for details email us [here](#).

ArtsNational Perth is a wholly volunteer-run organisation. If you would like to help, please [get in touch](#) as many hands make light work!



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