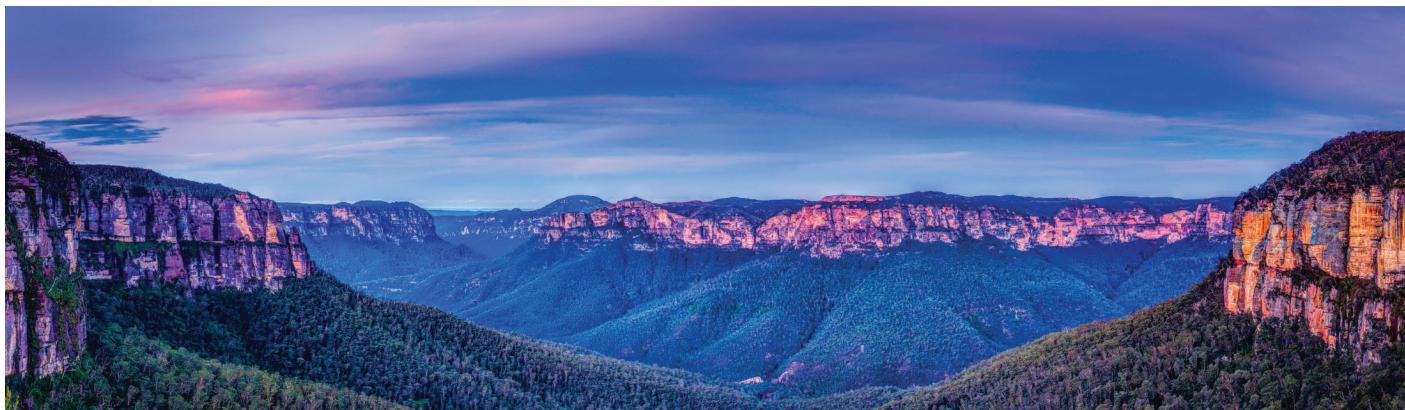




Newsletter

Spring, 2025

Lectures 2025



Di Bentley, Chair

We have had six wonderful talks this year and have more to look forward to in 2025.

The talks to date have taken us on a fascinating trip around the world exploring great painting, architecture and design.

We visited Siena to discover its great Renaissance paintings and Europe, more generally, to learn about art lost because it was deemed degenerate by Hitler; we also learned something of how to read portraits – sometimes the real subject is not in the picture.

In the UK, we explored the multiple talents of William Morris; in Jordan, we discovered the architectural and engineering expertise of the Nabateans in Petra, and finally, we visited Uzbekistan to see its amazing craft and architecture.

Our talks for the rest of the year promise more variety, with subjects ranging from the legendary beauty and tone of Stradivari violins to the celebration of London's National Gallery's 200th birthday. Finally, we will learn about the social and design history of ocean liners and experience their glamour from the 1920s until today.

You are very welcome to join us at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts on August 22, September 19 and October 31 for the scheduled lectures followed by afternoon tea. The Committee would also be interested to hear about any ideas you may have for Blue Mountains ArtsNational in the future.

Di Bentley
Chair

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22 August 2025

Tony Faber

The Genius of Stradivari

Every violin maker strives to match Stradivari, but none have succeeded. Come to this lecture to find out why.

19 September, 2025

Lydia Bauman

Celebrating 200 years at the National Gallery

This lecture will examine 200 years of Britain's National Gallery. As well as being the home to one of the most significant collections of European art, it is also famous for its controversial conservations, thefts, film appearances, acts of vandalism and much more.

31 October 2025

Georgiana Bexon

The Elegance of the Ocean Liner

This lecture will explore the glamour of the ocean liner, from its 1920s heyday to today, whilst also examining the social and design history of these floating palaces.

AGM and Christmas Party
12 December, 2025

A highly skilled artist, Dennis West is admired for his kindness and generosity

Dennis West has been many things: trained as a silversmith, he had his own business in that field for many years, but before that, he did his national service with the RAF, was a bus driver, and an artistic consultant working in restoration work.

He has done work for royalty (crafting Lady Diana's engagement gift for Prince Charles, a handmade vanity set), belonged to the Guild of Aviation Artists (UK) and was the Vice President of the Society of Mountain Artists for many years.

Since moving to Australia with his wife (Committee Member Kay West) in 2002 to be closer to family, Dennis has also, for the past decade, painted and then donated a work to the Young Arts Raffle.

A highly skilled artist, Dennis reviews the ArtsNational programme at the beginning of each year and decides which one appeals to him as a prompt to create a painting and sets to work. Sometimes he even does two.

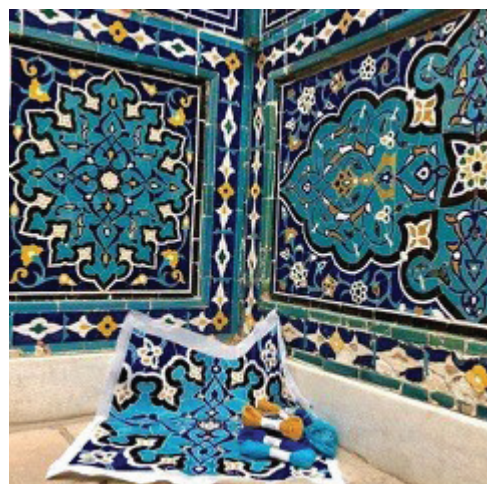
Although he has never received formal training as an artist, 'I've always been a person who can work with my hands,' he explains. He recalls how, as a young boy, he was allowed to sit in his grandfather's studio watching him work, 'As long as I was quiet and sat still.'

Dennis's grandfather (a man who would be called a graphic designer today) mainly worked in watercolour, and it was from him that Dennis first became aware of his interest in painting, something he has nurtured and developed over his lifetime.

Alongside his artistic achievements, Dennis can often be found at the door of the Wentworth Falls School of Arts before each lecture, counting the attendees with his characteristic diligence and good humour. ArtsNational sincerely appreciates his kindness, skill and generosity.



Dennis, pictured with raffle winner Margaret Lipscombe holding his artwork 'Street Scene in Sienna,' at the June lecture *(Siena, City of the Virgin: Art in a 14th-Century Tuscan hill town by Louise Marshall)*



This photo used in our brochure for Chris Aslan's talk on 25 July 2025 was taken by Natalie Fisher.