

Annual Report 2021



Investing in a
Better Australia



Welcome

Neil Balnaves AO

Founder

In a year of unexpected challenges and tremendous learnings, one thing has been abundantly clear, there has never been a more important time for philanthropy.

The ongoing and elevated impact COVID-19 has had on many sectors has seen an increased demand for support, and I am proud that the Foundation has been able to continue supporting our partners during this time.

In a year that has seen Australia emerging from a national lockdown, navigating unprecedented restrictions on travel, reduced in-person interactions, and extended online learning, in addition to rolling lockdowns across the country, it has been truly wonderful to support our grantees as they explored new and innovative ways to continue delivering their projects in a tumultuous 12 months. It is through these established and strong relationships with our partners in the Arts, education and medicine that we can continue to help create a better Australia.

Beyond the trials of the past year, there have also been many reasons to celebrate, including the addition of our new grant with the Australian Museum, an exciting expansion on the Foundation's commitment to our First Nations and truth-telling. We were also delighted that Professor Megan Davis, *Balnaves Chair of Constitutional Law* at UNSW, was a recipient of the Sydney Peace Prize on behalf of the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*. Professor Davis' efforts on behalf of all First Nations people have seen significant developments over the past year, with the campaign to Australian politicians for a referendum for a constitutional Voice to Parliament, something we hope to see realised in the year ahead.

As we look forward, we will continue to promote and advocate for the Arts, a vital yet unacknowledged catalyst for connection and interaction throughout the pandemic. The Foundation is proud to foster and support emerging creative talent, and make arts and culture in all forms accessible to all Australians. It is our goal that through our collaborative partnerships we will achieve lasting change and long-term positive impact.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the exceptional work and dedication from all the team at the Foundation and thank the Trustees for their support during the past difficult year.



Hamish Balnaves (L) and Neil Balnaves (R). Image: John Appleyard/Newspix

Hamish Balnaves

Chief Executive Officer

What a year it has been! Just when we thought the worst was over, COVID-19 emerged as the great disrupter yet again.

Having seen the devastating impact COVID-19 had on the Arts in 2020, and the lack-lustre response from Government, I have been pleased that the Foundation has been able to continue supporting our grantees in 2021 as they adapt and evolve throughout this pandemic.

In a year of constant change and challenge, I was thrilled to see our partners rise to the occasion and find new and innovative ways to deliver their projects, building on their achievements from 2020. One of my personal favourites was Bangarra's regional tour of *Spirit: a retrospective*. Due to border closures, the Company was able to visit remote and rural areas with this inspiring production, bringing Bangarra's unique and powerful storytelling to new audiences.

Our newest grant with the Australian Museum is one I am personally delighted to see come to life. With a three-year commitment, The Balnaves Foundation will be supporting the Museum with Indigenous related exhibitions, starting with the trailblazing *Unsettled* which opened in mid-2021. Seeing a major museum consult directly and extensively with our First Nations people and embrace truth-telling in a bold and thought-provoking way has been a truly wonderful launch to our partnership.

This year we have also built on our commitment to The Guardian. After three successful years supporting Indigenous reporting, we were delighted to partner with the Guardian Civic Journalism Trust on our second project, *Australian arts in focus*. With the Arts being one of the hardest hit industries during the pandemic, it has been vital to provide the public with information on such an important sector of our economy and our community. Excitingly, this has led to Guardian arts reporter Kelly Burke winning a coveted Walkley Award for her ground-breaking journalism.

I am pleased to welcome our new Grants Manager, Amelia Hart to the Balnaves Team and I look forward to seeing where the year ahead takes us and working with all our grantees on their continuing success.

Acknowledgment of Country

The Balnaves Foundation is deeply committed to working with First Nations peoples, in the true spirit of reconciliation. We wish to acknowledge them as the traditional owners of the land across Australia. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to all First Nations peoples.

Highlights of 2021

Australian Museum

Learning from the past through truth-telling

Our new partnership with the Australian Museum launched in May 2021 with the opening of the exhibition *Unsettled*. Curated by Laura McBride, the first Indigenous curator at the museum and First Nations Assistant Curator Dr Mariko Smith, *Unsettled* presents a First Nations led exhibit that recognises Indigenous responses to the legacy of colonisation. Commended as “the most important show the museum has ever done” in its 194-year history by CEO Kim McKay, the extensive collection reveals the secret history that has previously been neglected from the accepted narrative. The exhibition traces the impacts of colonisation from Cook’s landing to the present day — documenting first contact, the frontier conflicts and the Stolen Generations through artworks, installations and more than 80 cultural objects. Under the curatorship of McBride and Smith, the exhibition has allowed Indigenous Australians a true platform to control the narrative of their history.

Sydney Dance Company

The first live performances after lockdown

In December 2020 Sydney Dance Company, Carriageworks and the Foundation presented the seventh season of *New Breed*. SDC were the first major company to return to the stage after the challenges of 2020, with the Foundation offering additional grant support to extend the season for an additional five shows. Each year an incredibly talented group of choreographers create brand new works for Sydney Dance Company. In 2020 the choreographers were forced to begin their creative development over Zoom and as a result, *New Breed* was developed while socially distanced; a truly creative response to the pandemic, with artistic expression realised with no touch.

“After the year that was, supporting emerging talent is arguably more important than ever. That’s why Sydney Dance Company’s *New Breed* program is such a creative lifeline for the city, and for a fresh wave of choreographic talent to rise up under the supportive wing of one of the world’s most exciting companies, in collaboration with Carriageworks and The Balnaves Foundation.” – *Time Out*

The Guardian

Celebrates another Walkley Award

The second Balnaves Foundation partnership with the Guardian Civic Journalism Trust celebrated a momentous achievement in June 2021 with *Australian arts in focus* reporter Kelly Burke taking home a coveted Walkley Award for her incredible exposé revealing alleged racism on the set of long-running Australian soap, *Neighbours*. This included an exclusive interview with First Nations actor Shareena Clanton, who went public with allegations of racism and misogyny on the show’s set. This is a proud achievement for Burke, The Guardian Australia and the Foundation for being able to unearth and reveal such an important story and provide the platform it deserves.

Sydney Peace Prize

Recognition for our First Nations people

Earlier this year the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* was awarded the prestigious 2021 Sydney Peace Prize. Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous and The Balnaves Chair in Constitutional Law at UNSW, Professor Megan Davis along with other First Nations’ leaders Pat Anderson and Noel Pearson accepted the award on behalf of all First Nations people that worked on the Statement. The judging panel said the *Uluru Statement* was a “powerful and historic offering of peace” that was crucial to the “healing within our nation”, but had not yet been acted upon.

The Foundation is proud to support Professor Megan Davis and the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* and walk alongside our First Nations people as we call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution. This award highlights the growing awareness for the need for Voice and truth-telling.



Keeper of the Law, Keeper of the Song, Keeper of the Dance and Clubs installation in **Unsettled**. Image: Anna Kučera 2021

Bangarra Community Nights

Taking Indigenous performance to new regional communities

Due to the devastating impact of COVID-19, Bangarra Dance Theatre were unable to deliver a significant portion of their 2020 mainstage activities including the Company's National Tour. This directly impacted Bangarra's Community Ticket program supported by the Foundation. However, this provided an exciting new opportunity to offer their production *Spirit: a retrospective* at no cost to local presenters in the regional NSW towns of Griffith, Orange, Tamworth and Wyong. The inclusion of this Regional Tour in early 2021, allowed Bangarra to provide important engagement touchpoints with new communities and audiences who would not usually be able to accommodate Bangarra due to a lack of scheduling availability and prohibitive costs.

"In February 2021, Australia's leading Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performing arts company, Bangarra Dance Theatre, will tour *Spirit: a retrospective* 2021 to regional locations across New South Wales... This regional tour is a rare opportunity to see some of Bangarra's much-loved repertoire as a must-see dance experience."
- *Dance Informa Magazine*



Bangarra Dance Theatre's dancers in the 2021 production of **SandSong: Stories from the Great Sandy Desert**. Image: Daniel Boud

Our new Grants Manager joins the Foundation

Amelia Hart

Just as Sydney was brought into lockdown, we welcomed our new Grants Manager, Amelia Hart to The Balnaves Foundation team. She has brought with her a passion for working and supporting various non-profit organisations, most recently working with Batyr, a preventative youth mental health organisation as the Head of Partnerships Fundraising and at Redkite, a childhood cancer organisation, as National Partnerships Manager. Her passion for giving back was sparked by her work in the corporate sector at Fossil Group and work with the Fossil Foundation which inspired her move to the not-for-profit sector. Amelia is a welcome addition and has shown herself to be a vital and passionate member of the Balnaves Foundation Team.



Impact Summary

The Balnaves Foundation supports eligible organisations across Australia that aim to create a better Australia through education, medicine and the arts with a focus on young people, the disadvantaged and Indigenous Australia. Many of our grants support multiple areas of focus and have led to a range of exciting outcomes as highlighted throughout this report. Below is a snapshot of the areas each grant impacts in line with the Foundation’s mission.

27 Grants	Arts	Indigenous	Education	Young People	Medical	Disadvantaged
Adelaide Festival 2021	●					●
Art Gallery of NSW	●					
Art Gallery of South Australia	●			●		
Australian Museum	●	●	●			
Bangarra Dance Theatre	●	●				●
Belvoir St Theatre - Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander Fellowship	●	●	●			
Belvoir St Theatre - Indigenous Production Partner	●	●				
Biennale of Sydney 2020	●	●				
Black Dog Institute				●	●	
Ensemble Theatre	●					
Garvan Institute of Medical Research					●	
Kaldor Public Arts Projects	●					
Menzies School of Health Research		●		●	●	●
Museum of Contemporary Art	●		●	●		
National Gallery of Australia	●					
Red Line Productions	●					
St Vincent’s Hospital - Peanut Allergy Treatment Study					●	
St Vincent’s Hospital - Sydney Paediatric and Adult Allergy Network					●	
Story Factory	●		●	●		●
Sydney Dance Company	●					
TarraWarra Museum of Art	●					
The Guardian - Australian arts in focus	●					
The Guardian - Indigenous Investigations		●				
UNSW - The Balnaves Chair in Constitutional Law		●	●			
UNSW - Indigenous Scholarships		●	●	●	●	
UNSW - Uluru Dialogue		●	●			
Western Sydney Local Health District				●	●	

Financial Summary

Net Assets as at June 30, 2021

\$56M

Grant distribution FY 2021

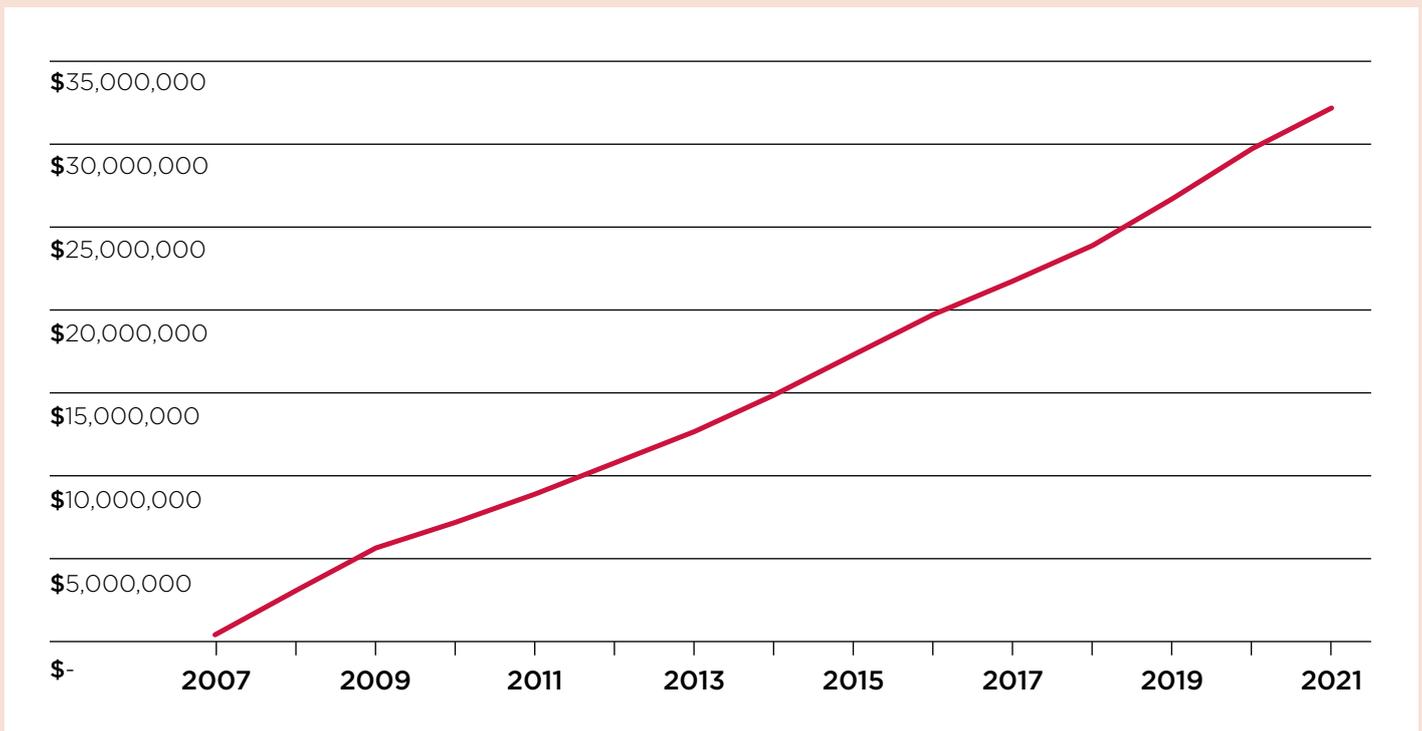
\$2.7M

Operating expenses FY 2021

1.18%

The corpus of The Balnaves Foundation is invested in a diverse portfolio, predominantly in Australian equities and property. The portfolio is managed by an investment sub-committee which is overseen by Trustees of the Foundation.

Cumulative grant distribution by year



As of June 30, 2021 the Balnaves Foundation has donated over \$32 million to help create a better Australia. We are delighted that our ongoing commitment to our current multi-year grant partners will equate to an additional \$8 million to support these important organisations in the years to come.

Current Grants in Focus

National Gallery of Australia

Multi-year commitment

Since 2018, the Foundation has supported the National Gallery of Australia through *The Balnaves Contemporary Series*, enabling the commissioning of new works for the Department of Contemporary Art Practice. *The Series* involves contemporary artists disrupting and transforming spaces throughout the Gallery, presenting daring, large-scale experiences of contemporary art.

After the successful launch of Patricia Piccinini's *Skywhale* in 2013, it quickly became a beloved Canberran (and Australian) icon. The third instalment of *The Balnaves Contemporary Series*, Piccinini's companion piece *Skywhalepapa* garnered further acclaim when it launched in the skies of the ACT in early February 2021. After three test flights in the Nation's capital, the *Skywhale* family began a tour that will see them float across various Australian skies throughout 2021 and 2022 as a part of the National Gallery Touring Event.

The tour curated by Jaklyn Babington revolves around the story of the *Skywhale* family, centred on the two balloons. With Patricia Piccinini's new children's book *Every Heart Sings* and an accompanying online learning resource for primary students to look at concepts of love, care and responsibility in relation to ourselves, families, and other living beings.



Hamish and his son at the **Skywhale and Skywhalepapa** launch in Canberra, February 2021. Image provided by: Hamish Balnaves



The **Skywhale** family in flight at their first joint launch, February 2021. Image: Patricia Piccinini

Current Grants in Focus

Focus on Mental Health

In Australia, suicide is the leading cause of death for people aged 15 - 44. Approximately 75% of mental ill-health forms before the age of 25 and up to 50% of all mental illnesses first emerge during high school years. The Balnaves Foundation is proud to be supporting two grants that focus on the use of emerging technology to support the mental health of young Australians and ultimately help create positive change for the future.

The ever-growing importance of supporting mental wellbeing in young people is the fundamental reason for the Foundation's support for both these projects. Young people are faced with difficult challenges in life, both in their education and personal lives, and being able to ensure they have the support they need during some of their most challenging years is vital.

Black Dog Institute

Multi-year commitment

In 2019 The Black Dog Institute was selected as our inaugural Staff Grant, a three-year commitment to support Black Dog's project *BEAM: Building Educator's Skills in Adolescent Mental Health*. Chosen by the Balnaves team, this grant has been a catalyst for the team to feel directly connected to the mission of the Foundation. This grant is reflective of the team's passion for supporting the mental health of young people, with the team selecting a project that had propensity to make a real change in the future of this area.

In Australia, over half a million young people have a mental illness and up to 50% of all mental illnesses first emerge during the high school years. As such, schools are integral for protecting and maintaining youth mental health. Year Advisors and Co-ordinators play a vital role in this as they are responsible for the wellbeing of a particular year group, with many Year Advisors finding themselves having to manage and respond to students' mental health problems, but without training, skills, or confidence to do this effectively and respectfully.

This project will deliver a new online training program to Australian Year Advisors to improve the care they provide to their students. The Black Dog Institute has developed the *BEAM* program in partnership with teachers to upskill Year Advisors in identifying, responding to, and managing students' mental health problems.

With the emerging difficulties for everyone, especially young people, in the past two years, *BEAM* has never been so important in protecting the wellbeing of students and teachers in order to cope with the everchanging nature of our world.

In June 2021 *BEAM* completed a large-scale evaluation of their teacher training program in mental health among NSW secondary school teachers. Beginning in December 2020, 295 teachers took part in the training program which revealed exciting findings from the trial, with almost all teachers reporting that the program was beneficial to their role and effectively improved the teachers' confidence, mental health knowledge, and perceived mental health awareness in just ten weeks. The next step for the project will focus on the analysis of the data, publication of the results, and securing an implementation plan for *BEAM* that will enable it to be disseminated across NSW and Australia.

Western Sydney Local Health District

Multi-year commitment

The Balnaves Foundation supports the *unWIRED Mental Health Project*, a multi-year initiative testing the use of wearable e-health devices to improve outcomes in young people with severe mental illness. Severe mental illness is a significant burden to the community and devastating for an individual. Relapse and readmission set off by stress creates a pattern which results in lost opportunity and significant disability. The availability of personal e-health devices that can continuously monitor users and communicate physiological data such as stress and sleep quality both to the individual and also their mental health care team, creates the opportunity to proactively intervene early in the process of relapse and help develop an awareness of stress for the individual.

Current Grants in Focus

Australian Museum

Multi-year commitment

The Australian Museum's newest exhibition *Unsettled*, which opened in May 2021, presents a First Nations led exhibition that recognizes Indigenous responses to the legacy of colonisation. With the Foundation as Major Supporter, the exhibition has been able to delve into and reveal first-hand accounts of devastation, survival and the fight for recognition through historical documents, large-scale artworks, immersive experiences and never-before-seen objects from the Australian Museum collections and beyond.

Our 3-year commitment with the Australian Museum has a focus on supporting Indigenous related exhibitions and activities beginning with *Unsettled*. This partnership stems from the Foundation's belief in truth-telling and educating the general public on true Australian history, no matter how raw and confronting that may be.

Unsettled is informed by extensive community consultation through Director First Nations, Laura McBride's past role in *The 2020 Project*, which aimed to understand what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders wanted to highlight in response to the 250th anniversary of Captain Cook's surveying of Australia's east coast. This exhibition is revolutionary due to the level of consultation involved, with more than 800 formal responses, of which, over 50% wanted emphasis placed on colonisation and its effects, Australia's origin and foundation, and addressing the falsely constructed history shared by our society. It aims to address the fact that we often live in a legacy of the past and without full truth-telling, Indigenous relationships, people and history remain '*Unsettled*'.

Due to the lockdown in Sydney from June 2021, the Museum brought *Unsettled* online with a 360-degree interactive tour featuring embedded audio guides and multimedia content, providing an immersive virtual reality enabled experience.



The Balnaves Foundation Trustees exploring *Blood Money* in the **Unsettled** exhibition at the Australian Museum.
Image: Anna Kučera

Current Grants

Adelaide Festival

Multi-year commitment

The Foundation is delighted to continue its partnership with Adelaide Festival in delivering live theatre of the highest quality to Australian audiences. In previous years our support extended to the Open House Program including the Pay What You Can program, providing access to the transformative power of art to the underprivileged in South Australian communities.

Through our grant in 2021, a record 1,500 tickets were made available through both the Pay What You Can and Tix For Next To Nix programs which gives those at an economic disadvantage, including students at low SEIFA schools, the opportunity to attend Adelaide Festival flagship productions. We are committed to ensuring as many people as possible have access to the great performances the Festival presents. This partnership allows us to fill an extremely important gap for those who would otherwise be unable to access such innovative and experiential performances.



A Midsummer Nights Dream at the 2021 Adelaide Festival. Image: Tony Lewis

Art Gallery NSW

Multi-year commitment

In 2013, the Foundation founded the Edmund Capon Fellowship in honour of the late Art Gallery of NSW Director and Asian art expert Edmund Capon. The Fellowship has been a significant Australian initiative for a strategic staff exchange program between Asian museums and art centres and the Art Gallery of New South Wales. Initially enabling one AGNSW staff member, chosen from curators, conservators, educators and exhibition managers, to travel to a museum in Asia each year, with another museum professional brought to Sydney in return. The Fellowship has since grown with support from likeminded individuals and has expanded to a third fellowship to other parts of the world.

Due to the international border closures throughout 2020 and into 2021, the Fellowship has been on pause for the past 18 months with the funds remaining in endowment until such time as the Gallery can welcome visitors to our shores.

Art Gallery of South Australia

Multi-year commitment

The Foundation has continued its support of *Neo*, a program for teenagers that welcomes them to the gallery, so they feel comfortable to explore and connect with art in an environment that supports ongoing interest and engagement. As it was with the rest of the world, AGSA felt the impacts of COVID-19 with the Gallery reopening in late June 2020 with restricted capacity. Their mid-year event *Neo: Ultraviolet* in August was able to return to in person with a successful and COVID-safe event. The limited-capacity tickets have sold out prior to each event since, with an average of 300 young people from over 50 schools in attendance. This partnership has provided South Australian teens a safe space to explore art and the Gallery, while interacting with other young people, at an event curated specifically for them.



Art Gallery of South Australia's *Neo: Colourverse*, February 2021. Image: Sia Duff



Bangarra Dance Theatre's Rika Hamaguchi and Baden Hitchcock in *SandSong: Stories from the Great Sandy Desert*. Image: Daniel Boud

Bangarra Dance Theatre

Multi-year commitment

Each year, The Foundation supports Bangarra's Community Nights across the country, a series of special performances for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members to access Bangarra's shows at a reduced price. As with most in the arts industry, Bangarra was forced to cancel the majority of their performances and tours due to COVID-19. Thanks to the easing of restrictions in NSW at the beginning of 2021, new locations in regional NSW were added to their Regional Tour and the company was able to offer Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members accessibly priced tickets to Bangarra's performances of *Spirit: a retrospective*.

Prior to the second Sydney lockdown in June 2021, Bangarra was able to preview and open their new production *SandSong: Stories from the Great Sandy Desert*. *SandSong* is a journey into ancient story systems framed against the backdrop of ever-changing government policy and of the survival of people determined to hold strong to their culture. The Sydney Community Night was a great success, bringing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community members, and those who work in Indigenous organisations, together to share the rich culture and history of this ground-breaking new work.

Belvoir St Theatre

Multi-year commitment

In 2020 we saw a full circle of our support for Belvoir with the announcement that *Cursed!* written by 2018's Balnaves Fellow Kodie Bedford, would be the part of the Indigenous Theatre program at Belvoir, a production supported by the Foundation. *Cursed!* was the second production to be staged at Belvoir during the global pandemic, running from October to November. Prior to the pandemic, 25 performances of *Cursed!* were scheduled however an extra 15 were added to accommodate all audiences with the new COVID-safe protocols.

The Balnaves Foundation Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Fellowship offers artists the opportunity to work across production, programming and development as a resident artist, over a year-long period to create new work. Past recipients include Nathan Maynard, Leah Purcell, Nakkiah Lui, Jada Alberts, Megan Wilding, Katie Beckett and Ursula Yovich.

Biennale of Sydney

Following the tradition of the Great Debate, *To cook Cook or Not* at the 2021 Sydney Festival, in partnership with the Biennale of Sydney, presented diverse voices that exemplified Blak Excellence. On January 26th, First Nations artists came together inside Sydney Town Hall to thrash out a series of fundamental questions about our past. *To cook Cook or Not* was designed to challenge the significance of Captain Cook's voyage to Australia 250 years ago and stimulate discussion about the narratives that define the story of Australia. Part discourse and part comedy, *To cook Cook or Not*, proposed a line in the sand where we – Australians – define ourselves in a way that is inclusive of the experiences of all Australians and beyond a national identity that is tethered to this voyage.

Ensemble Theatre

Multi-year commitment

Since 2016 The Balnaves Foundation has supported capacity building to promote the Ensemble Theatre's vision to create diverse, accessible live theatre of the highest quality. By supporting various departments including marketing, PR, communications, and advertising, we have seen significant growth in brand awareness and audience numbers.

In 2021 the funding has enabled Ensemble to establish a dedicated Philanthropy department, with Stephen Attfield appointed as Ensemble's Philanthropy and Partnerships Manager. With the redefining of our partnership with Ensemble to have a focus on philanthropy, Ensemble has been able to create a development strategy, incorporating philanthropy, fundraising priorities and corporate sponsorship intersecting and complementing the overall Ensemble strategy already in play. These exciting developments will see Ensemble continue to grow awareness and support for local theatre.



*The cast of Belvoir's 2020 production of **Cursed!** Image: Luke Currie Richardson*

Garvan Institute

Multi-year commitment

Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in women in Australia and the second leading cause of cancer related death. The Foundation is supporting a comprehensive approach to identifying and evaluating new therapies for patients with treatment-resistant breast cancer. The aims of this project are to partner with patients, to identify biological mechanisms underlying resistance to endocrine therapies in breast cancer and establish a clinical trial platform to evaluate potential new treatments.

Guardian Civic Journalism Trust

Multi-year commitment

Since 2018 the Foundation has made a commitment to Indigenous affairs reporting at The Guardian that produces deep, investigative projects with national significance. In recent months the *Indigenous Investigation Series* has brought awareness and urgency to hard-hitting issues including; the destruction of sacred Indigenous sites by mining companies, deaths in custody and the devastating impact of COVID-19 on Indigenous communities.

In July 2020, the Foundation expanded our commitment to the Guardian Australia and investigative journalism by enabling it to launch a much-needed investigative project, looking into the issues affecting the arts industry. *Australian arts in focus* delves into Australian arts stories in order to allow them the recognition and support the Art's needs, which is vital in the wake of the challenges of 2020. This grant is a collaboration between the Guardian Australia, the University of Melbourne's Centre for Advancing Journalism and The Balnaves Foundation.

Kaldor Public Art Projects

Multi-year commitment

Since 1969, Kaldor Public Art Projects have brought ground breaking contemporary international artists to Australia to create unique and often site-specific works. The Balnaves Foundation continues its support of Kaldor Public Art Projects' core operations, ensuring the future of these exciting projects becomes a reality and remains free to the public.

In 2021, Kaldor created *Future Curators*; an innovative new online learning program, giving senior secondary students across NSW the opportunity to interact with practising curators and reimagine the Kaldor Public Art Projects Digital Archive, live from the classroom. Designed as a flexible and engaging introduction to the curatorial process, the program featured live Zoom sessions with curators, video tutorials, collaborative exercises and scaffolded research tasks. Students worked collaboratively to explore the archive and create their own online exhibitions, aimed at unearthing new stories from Kaldor Public Art Projects' 51-year history, with valuable guidance and feedback from their assigned curator.

Story Factory

Multi-year commitment

Art Write Light represents Story Factory's collaborative creative writing project. From 2019 - 2021 the project brings together three emerging artists, three video design artists, and over 600 disadvantaged young people from across Western Sydney in a vibrant collision of creative writing and contemporary art mediums. Young people, artists and storytellers will each teach, grow, and learn from, and alongside, one another, as they collaborate to create truly spectacular original works.

In 2020, *Art Write Light* partnered with Sydney-based multi-award-winning contemporary artist Ernest Aaron who completed two commissions for *Art Write Light*, titled *Unconsciousness Stream* in February and *Interpretations* in October, which drew inspiration from the writing completed by students throughout the year. The works formed a crucial component of their final exhibition at Story Factory Parramatta in November. Although faced with school closures and disruptions to face-to-face delivery, *Art Write Light 2020* continued online, reimagined for interactive Zoom sessions or pre-recorded videos with class groups, for delivery remotely, including a live Zoom session with Ernest, who spoke with students about his creative practice, his approach and inspiration for the creation of *Unconsciousness Stream*, and about the artists who have influenced him.



Art Write Light 2020 video and light installation at Story Factory, Parramatta Centre

Sydney Dance Company

Multi-year commitment

The support of The Balnaves Foundation has enabled Sydney Dance Company to commission an array of talented young, upcoming choreographers for the *New Breed* program. Showcasing a rich diversity of choreographic ideas, brand new works are created and performed by the dancers of Sydney Dance Company.

In a year heavily disrupted by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the seventh instalment of *New Breed* was one of the only performances from a major dance company in NSW to return to the stage. SDC were forced to cancel the main-stage March season a week out from opening night, with an uncertainty of any performance being able to return at all in 2020.

In light of the challenges all of the Australian Arts sector faced, especially SDC, the Foundation offered an additional grant of support for both Sydney Dance Company and the *New Breed* project to allow an extension of the season, should it be able to proceed. This additional investment allowed *New Breed 2020* to run for a record 15 performances rather than the usual 10, and was the first and only time the dancers of Sydney Dance Company performed live in 2020.

St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney

Multi-year commitment

Since 2004, we have supported ongoing research under the direction of Professor Andrew Carr, a clinical immunologist with over 25 years' experience in clinical research. Almost 20% of Australians have a confirmed allergic disease and this prevalence is increasing, with hospital admissions for anaphylaxis increasing 5-fold in the last 20 years. This grant aims to prevent deaths from allergic diseases and maximise quality of life, investigate and identify treatments (including cures) and minimise the cost of allergic disease to the community.



Dancers of Sydney Dance Company's 2020 New Breed.
Image: Wendell Teodoro

Menzies School of Health Research

Multi-year commitment

The Foundation continues our commitment to The Hearing for Learning Initiative. Indigenous ear health remains at a crisis point in remote Australia. With the heaviest burden in the Northern Territory, the initiative allows for continued support of Indigenous health.

The program is a ground-breaking, 5-year partnership combining public and private funding to solve this serious health and education problem and aims to train local Indigenous people as ear health facilitators and integrate them into existing services to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with ear and hearing problems. The goal is to work with communities to establish reliable, sustainable, culturally appropriate services that ensure every ear of every child is healthy and hearing every day

Museum of Contemporary Art

Multi-year commitment

The Museum of Contemporary Art offers creative opportunities for families to discover contemporary art and playful learning experiences together, working with their amazing Artist Educators. Since 2005, the Foundation has supported the MCA to develop and grow programs that introduce the younger generation to the world of contemporary art. In 2020, we made a five-year commitment to support the *Kids and Families Programs*.

The *Kids and Families Programs* include *ARTplay*, specifically designed for children under 5 and run during school term. *Contemporary Kids* takes place every school holidays and involves both an exploration of the gallery and a hands-on studio component. Due to the restrictions the MCA were unable to run these important programs for the majority of the past year, turning instead to creating new online content and the famous *Art Parcel* program, delivering exciting and creative art making activities to homes around NSW.

UNSW The Balnaves Chair in Constitutional Law

Multi-year commitment

Since Professor Megan Davis, Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous and Professor of Law at UNSW Sydney, was named *The Balnaves Chair in Constitutional Law* in 2020 there has been significant advancements in the first objective of the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*; the call for a First Nations Voice to Parliament. Professor Davis' aims to provide the academic rigour needed to inform development of proposals for constitutional amendment and institutional design of a Voice to Parliament, as well as the foundations of a future Makarrata Commission as set down in the *Uluru Statement*.

In 2021, a powerful and compelling campaign launched calling for all Australians to contact their local MP to call for a referendum to enshrine a First Nations Voice to Parliament in the Constitution. The Voice to Parliament will empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to have a say on the laws and policies that impact them. It will be a permanent institution that will provide advice to the Parliament and Government on important issues.

The Balnaves Chair in Constitutional Law is a gift in honour of Alexandra Balnaves and her dedication to supporting our First Nations people.

TarraWarra Museum of Art

Multi-year commitment

The Foundation supports the major summer exhibition at TarraWarra, a visual arts museum located in the Yarra Valley, Victoria. This retrospective exhibition shines a light on modern and contemporary Australian artists. In 2020-21 TarraWarra presented *Looking Glass* as their summer retrospective exhibition, which brought together two of Australia's most acclaimed contemporary artists Waanyi artist, Judy Watson and Kokatha and Nukunu artist, Yhonnie Scarce. Together these artists offered a broad portrait of Country where the creation and experience of art recalls the lived, remembered and inherited history of Aboriginal people, presenting their own works in a timelessness often referred to as the Dreaming, an extraordinary perception of the connection of Country, community and culture.



Cloud Chamber 2020 by Yhonnie Scarce, part of the **Looking Glass** exhibition at the TarraWarra Museum of Art, January 2021. Image: Andrew Curtis

University of NSW

Multi-year commitment

The Balnaves Indigenous Medical Scholarships Program at UNSW was established to create a meaningful and sustainable program providing an essential pathway into a career in Medicine for Indigenous doctors. There is a real and constant need for doctors in regional and remote areas, and a significant disparity for First Nations students. This grant aims to be a catalyst for enabling young Indigenous students the opportunity to study medicine at UNSW, and one day return to Country and support their community. Early graduates from the program have gone on to have successful careers in a variety of fields, and our 2021 graduate, Ben Jones, has been awarded the NSW Rhodes Scholar for 2021 and will be undertaking a Master of Science in International Health and Tropical Medicine and a Master of Science in Global Health and Epidemiology at Oxford.

The Team

Hamish Balnaves
Chief Executive Officer

Kirsty de la Motte
Executive Assistant to CEO

Helen Wood
Executive Assistant to
Neil Balnaves AO

Jeanmaree Furtado
Finance Manager

Amelia Hart
Grants Manager

Holly Gibbons
Team Assistant



The Balnaves Foundation Team (L-R); Jeanmaree Furtado, Hamish Balnaves, Kirsty de la Motte, Holly Gibbons, Amelia Hart (not pictured; Helen Wood)

The Trustees

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Grantee Logos

