

Investing in a
Better Australia
—
Annual Report
2023



Welcome

Hamish Balnaves

CEO



On behalf of the Trustees and the Foundation team I am delighted to share with you The Balnaves Foundation's Annual Report for 2022-2023.

This past year has been a time of reflection and renewed focus for the Foundation. In the last 12 months we have supported 26 organisations with 30 grants totalling over \$2.9 million across our core areas of the Arts, Education and Medicine, with a continued focus on Young People, Indigenous Australia, and Disadvantage. With the exciting launch of the Foundation's new strategy for our medical granting, the expansion in our scholarship programs and supporting the referendum on the Voice to Parliament, 2023 was a big year.

The Foundation has long been a financial supporter of the Uluru Dialogue and the Uluru Statement from the Heart, so it was with a sense of optimism and hope that we welcomed the Prime Minister's announcement of a referendum to enshrine an Indigenous Voice to Parliament.

Since 2020, Professor Megan Davis has held the position of *The Balnaves Chair in Constitutional Law* at the University of NSW. The position of *Balnaves Chair* has supported Professor Davis to continue engaging with Government, First Nations communities and the rest of Australia to take the Uluru Statement forward, culminating in the referendum in October 2023.

This year the Foundation increased our support for the Uluru Dialogue with an additional grant towards the *You're the Voice* campaign, featuring the iconic John Farnham song. This powerfully emotive advertisement highlighted some of the incredible accomplishments this country has achieved, with the hope that we would once again come together and make history.

Sadly, whilst it was not the outcome we had hoped for, the Foundation is still committed to upholding the vision of the Uluru Statement from the Heart: voice, treaty, truth-telling, and constitutional recognition. We will continue to support First Nations people on their path to self-determination and justice.

Acknowledgment of Country

The Balnaves Foundation acknowledges all First Peoples of this land and celebrate their enduring connections to Country, knowledge and stories. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all First Peoples.

For the Foundation, our scholarship programs are a key component of this support. In the past year we have added a new scholarship with James Cook University for Indigenous medical students, expanding on the successful scholarship program we have been supporting at UNSW since 2009.

At NIDA the second Indigenous scholarship recipient has started their degree and in addition, we have commenced a new partnership with Yalari, supporting two scholarship students from the Northern Slopes region in NSW to attend boarding school for their entire secondary school education. You can read more about these in the following pages.

Before Neil's passing in February 2022, he had expressed a desire for the Foundation to reform our strategy for our medical granting. It was his wish that the Foundation have more clarity and focus to help create a greater impact in this space.

In early 2023 we launched our new medical strategy; supporting projects that deliver significantly improved health outcomes for young Australians through the prevention and early intervention of chronic health conditions. I look forward to sharing with you how the Foundation is working towards this in the years ahead.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the Trustees and Foundation team for their dedication and drive in helping to create a better Australia and thank them for their continuing support of myself and the Balnaves Family.

Amelia Hart

GRANTS MANAGER



It has been another momentous and inspiring year for the Foundation, with many remarkable projects as well as the addition of our newest team member, Kelly-Maree Michael. Kelly has joined in the role of Foundation Support Officer and has proven to be an invaluable addition to the Foundation.

Excitingly, in the past year the Foundation has expanded our geographical reach including new grants with James Cook University in Queensland and the West Australian Symphony Orchestra (WASO). Our first foray into Western Australia is supporting the innovative WASO program *Crescendo*, providing primary school children with access to high quality, regular music education. The need for structured, consistent music education in schools is evidenced by extensive research. This program has shown increased engagement for the students but also the wider community and improvements in both schools' NAPLAN results.

Taldumande Youth Services play a vital role in supporting and empowering vulnerable young people and their families through their *Family Restoration and Preservation Program*. Already well established in Sydney's northern suburbs, we were pleased to be able to support

the expansion of this program into Western Sydney. Whilst a key outcome for this project is to re-establish and help preserve family relationships, importantly this project also works to support the young person's mental health and engage them in education or employment.

Moving image artwork is a dynamic and exhilarating form of visual art, and one that has seen significant public recognition through the growth and accessibility of public light festivals in Australia and around the world. The Adelaide Film Festival seeks to support and develop the next generation of moving image artists, through their new initiative *EXPAND Lab*, which the Foundation supported in its inaugural year. This ground-breaking program catalyses major moving image works at the vanguard of art and technology, fostering collaboration by connecting visual artists, film makers and other diverse practitioners to conceptualise cutting edge, large scale moving image and video art works.

It has been a pleasure to work with all our grantees over the past year and I look forward to furthering our vision to create a better Australia.



NEO Upside Down, Art Gallery of South Australia; Photo Nat Rogers.

Current Grants In Focus

Access to a quality education is the right of all young people and is unequivocally life changing. However, young people from low-income areas, regional and remote Australia, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders face additional socioeconomic and geographical barriers to education. Education is one of the key Closing the Gap targets for First Nations people. As of the 2022 Closing the Gap report, 68% of Indigenous people aged 20–24 had completed Year 12 or equivalent, compared to 79% of the general population. This statistic declines to 42% for First Nations people who live in very remote areas. The Balnaves Foundation has long been committed to removing barriers to education, including through the provision of scholarships which provide pathways to learning and employment. Scholarships speak to the heart of the Foundation's aim to create a better Australia, and encompass our core areas of granting; Education, Medicine and Arts as well as our focus on Young People, First Nations and Disadvantage. To date, the Foundation has supported 6 scholarship recipients through to graduation, with a further 11 current scholars across high school and tertiary education with the aim to help provide quality education and pathways to support the development of these young people and their wider community.

University of NSW

The *Balnaves Indigenous Medical Scholarships* have been in place at the University of NSW (UNSW) since 2009, offering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students the opportunity to study at one of the world's top 50 medical faculties. The scholarship of \$30,000 for every year of their six-year degree was established to create a pathway to a career in medicine for Indigenous young people who may otherwise

have faced social, financial, geographical and cultural barriers to higher education. UNSW's commitment and support for the University's First Nations cohort is fostered through *Nura Gili: Centre for Indigenous Programs*, which was also funded by the Foundation during construction. *Nura Gili* is a hub on campus and a place for student-facing services, programs, study spaces and meeting places for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and researchers.

This support structure extends throughout the Faculty of Medicine and Health for Indigenous students within the medical cohort, including a dedicated Indigenous Academic Support Officer who oversees wellbeing and student life initiatives as well as providing individualised student support.

James Cook University

Modelled on the success of the *UNSW Indigenous Medical Scholarship*, this year the Foundation commenced a new partnership with James Cook University (JCU) in Queensland.

JCU is uniquely situated to foster the study of medicine on-Country for students from communities in Far North Queensland, with their Bachelor of Medicine / Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS), the only six-year

undergraduate medical course offered in Northern Australia.

JCU has an exceptional support structure in place for Indigenous students, and a reputation for holistic education. Its Indigenous Education and Research Centre (IERC), directed by Professor Martin Nakata, is a leader in providing Indigenous education, research and engagement through successful and sustainable programs and services.

In 2023 JCU expanded their medical degree to its Nguma-bada Smithfield campus, allowing students to undertake the full six-year course in Cairns, where historically students would need to relocate to the Townsville campus for the first three years of study.

The inaugural *Balnaves Scholar* at JCU began their study at the Nguma-bada campus in February and will receive \$30,000 per year for the six years of their degree to support their education, living expenses and travel home as needed.

In Queensland, JCU graduates account for more than 40% of the health workforce in outer regional, remote and very remote locations. Nationally, one in five health professional respondents in outer regional, rural and remote locations are JCU graduates and 78% of JCU students from remote locations stayed in outer regional or remote areas upon entering the workforce.

National Institute of Dramatic Art

In September 2021, the Foundation became the Principal Patron of the *First Nations Program* at the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA). This grant supports an annual scholarship for a First Nations student studying a Bachelor of Fine Art (BFA) at NIDA. The first two recipients commenced their studies in 2022 and 2023 respectively. Recipients receive \$30,000 each year of their degree, support to travel home as required, an on-Country experience and will be matched with a First Nations industry mentor. At the conclusion of their study at NIDA, each scholar will receive a paid 6-month industry internship in their chosen field.

In addition to the scholarships, as part of our overall contribution to the entire First Nations cohort, an Indigenous *Uncle-in-Residence* role was created to offer wellbeing support and mentorship.

This extensive and dynamic collaboration with NIDA for the *First Nations Program* originates from our passion for supporting First Nations people, providing the next generation of artists the opportunity to grow and develop their voice within the arts and creative industries. This essential backing of First Nations students at the beginning of their training and support for them as they continue to navigate the arts and creative industries provides the opportunity for more representation in a vastly under-represented industry.

Yalari

Yalari is a First Nations-founded and led not-for-profit organisation that has been providing life changing scholarships for Indigenous children from regional and remote communities since 2005.

Scholarships cover full boarding and tuition costs to attend one of Australia's leading boarding schools from Year 7 through to Year 12. In addition to gaining a



The Balnaves Foundation with Yalari Scholars at the Yalari Sydney Gala Dinner.

high-quality academic education, Yalari scholars are also exposed to extracurricular sporting, vocational and life experiences that they might otherwise never encounter.

2023 was the first year of this new partnership, with the Foundation supporting two students from the Northern Slopes

region in NSW. This funding also contributes towards the associated support program that includes a locally based Student Support Officer, working directly with the students at their school, plus the scholar's attendance at the annual Yalari camp that brings the entire grade's cohort together.



Harrison Plasto, the inaugural Balnaves Indigenous Medical Scholar at James Cook University, Cairns Campus.



NIDA Balnaves Scholars Danny Howard and Nyasha Ogden with Uncle-in-Residence Matthew Doyle.

Current Grants

Adelaide Festival

Since the Foundation's support for Adelaide Festival's *Open House* program commenced in 2020, it has gone from strength to strength with ticket sales under the program increasing each year. At the 2023 Festival over 2,800 tickets were sold through *Open House*, with tickets selling out two weeks prior to the opening night, highlighting a true demand for this program.

Open House is an access program which offers subsidised tickets for people who might not otherwise be able to experience a world-class arts festival such as Adelaide Festival. It has two key components; *Tix for Next to Nix* which offers a selection of Festival events for \$5 each for those with a current Pension or Health Care Card; and *Pay What You Can*; where Health Care Card, Pension Card or full-time Student Card holders can access tickets to a selection of shows one hour prior to performances for a price they choose.

As the premier arts festival in Australia, Adelaide Festival's annual line-up includes a stunning array of events and performances, which *Open House* patrons were able to enjoy throughout the Festival.

Adelaide Film Festival

In October 2022, The Balnaves Foundation was proud to support the coordination and delivery of the inaugural Adelaide Film Festival (AFF) *EXPAND Lab*, a new initiative created by AFF to connect mid-career practitioners from diverse creative practices, bringing together their combined expertise and skills to generate new ideas for moving image artworks.

The aim of *EXPAND Lab* is to enable participants to work in teams to develop concepts for bold new moving image projects for local audiences and beyond.

30 artists from across multidisciplinary practices including visual arts, media arts, film, writing, XR and VR were brought together to learn and work with a team of



NEO Upside Down, Art Gallery of South Australia; Photo Sam Roberts.

renowned mentors to explore ideas and collaborative processes.

The *Lab* culminated in the opportunity for teams to pitch for a major commission of \$60,000 to further develop a piece for presentation at Samstag Museum of Art during the 2024 Adelaide Film Festival. The 2024 AFF/Samstag *EXPAND Moving Image Commission* was awarded to the three-person team of Susan Norrie (NSW), Matthew Thorne (SA) and Emmaline Zanelli (SA) for their project 'FIFO', which will explore the transitory experience of 'fly-in, fly-out' mining work and its context in the broader mining culture and in forming part of the Australian national identity.

Two further projects were selected for mentoring by Illuminate Adelaide and the Art Gallery of South Australia.

Art Gallery of NSW

In 2023, the *Edmund Capon Fellowship* recommenced after being paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 10 years after its synthesis in 2013.

Neil Balnaves AO proposed the *Edmund Capon Fellowship* to honour the 33-year leadership of the Art Gallery of NSW (AGNSW) by Edmund Capon AM OBE. The *Fellowship* allows for an exchange of ideas, practices, individual works of art and temporary exhibitions

between the Gallery and other galleries in the Asia Pacific through a strategic staff exchange program. Edmund was the first art gallery Director in Australia to cultivate engagement with Asia, promoting Asian art and culture through scholarship, collection, and exhibitions. The *Fellowship* honours Edmund's legacy by furthering the relationships he cultivated with art institutions across the Asia Pacific. The *Fellowship* has developed in recent years and in addition to the staff exchange between AGNSW and institutions in Asia Pacific, it now provides curatorial opportunities for *Fellowship* recipients internationally, beyond Asian art.

Art Gallery of South Australia

The Art Gallery of South Australia's (AGSA) *Neo* program has now welcomed over 11,000 young people to its events since inception in 2016.

Neo events are safe and inclusive for young people, empowering them to engage with art in a space that is uniquely theirs. Held 6 times throughout the year, *Neo* is programmed by the *Neo* Ambassadors Committee which is made up of young people aged 13-17. The events, which take place after hours at the Gallery, are often inspired by and designed in response to current major exhibitions at AGSA.

This past year has seen *Neo* celebrate a century of the Archibald prize with the 'Archie 100' exhibition, taking attendees on a journey through portraiture; explore the boldness of Mexican art and counterculture, where maximalist stylings mirrored the blockbuster impact of AGSA's 'Frida & Diego: Love & Revolution' exhibition and enjoy programming led by guest curator, Arabana and Kokatha artist Mali Isabel during 'Tarnathi', AGSA's acclaimed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art festival.

Australian Museum

The second major exhibition in the Foundation's multi-year commitment to First Nations programming at the Australian Museum, *Barka: The Forgotten River*, opened in April 2023.

Barka: The Forgotten River was developed by Uncle Badger Bates and artist Justine Mueller in consultation with the Barkandji community whose Country lines the shores of the Barka (Darling River). A touring exhibition which first showed at the Broken Hill Regional Gallery, *Barka* was expanded in scope and materials in its presentation at the Australian Museum, growing to include new works by Uncle Badger commissioned for the

exhibition, as well as archival items from the Museum's collection.

To the Barkandji people, the Barka represents the lifeblood of the community, a living ancestor whose waters flows through their veins. In recent years, the Barka has been under threat from poor environmental management practices, causing some of the worst fish kills in recent memory, leaving the ecosystem devastated.

Continuing the truth-telling journey that the Australian Museum's First Nations team has embarked on, *Barka: The Forgotten River* drew attention to the environmental crisis impacting the Barka while celebrating the Barkandji people's connection to its waters and shores.

Bangarra Dance Theatre

The Foundation has supported Bangarra's *Community Nights* program since 2017. Bangarra is dedicated to sharing First Nations stories through powerful dance pieces which draw upon 65,000 years of culture. Through *Community Nights*, members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community can access Bangarra's performances through subsidised tickets and dedicated community performances, sharing in the stories that celebrate

their heritage and community.

This past year the Foundation's partnership with Bangarra grew to include community ticketing for the *Regional Touring* program and their school program, *Wilay*. While originally planned for 2020 and 2021 but delayed due to COVID, the regional tour of 'SandSong: Stories from the Great Sandy Desert' commenced in late 2022, with performances in remote and regional New South Wales, Western Australia and the Northern Territory. The tour continued to Queensland, Thursday Island and other parts of NSW in 2023.

The *Wilay* ticketing program allows Indigenous school students to attend a dedicated matinee performance at a discounted price, where they also participate in an 'In Conversation' session with dancers and creatives following the performance.

In June 2023, Bangarra premiered 'Yuldea', Frances Ring's first work as Artistic Director, telling the story of the Anangu people of the Great Victorian Desert. 'Yuldea's' first stop was Sydney, including sold-out *Community Night* and *Wilay* performances at the Sydney Opera House.

Belvoir St Theatre

2021 *Balnaves Fellow*, Thomas Weatherall's play, *Blue*, opened to critical and audience acclaim at Belvoir in January 2023, the first of two *Indigenous Theatre* productions supported by the Foundation each year. The one-man show, which was also performed by Weatherall and directed by Deborah Brown, is a tender coming-of-age story which touched on themes of family, solitude and the delicate vulnerability of a young life at its beginning.

The *Balnaves Fellowship* program at Belvoir has produced thought-provoking and stirring theatre like *Blue* since 2012, creating a space for First Nations writers and directors to hone their craft and give voice to new works portraying unique Indigenous stories that have historically been under-represented.



Trustees from The Balnaves Foundation with Uncle Badger Bates at the opening night of *Barka: The Forgotten River* at the Australian Museum; Photo Marley Morgan.

Current Grants

Initially a 12-month fellowship, in 2022 this was extended to an 18-month residency, allowing for crossover, collaboration and mentorship between contemporary *Balnaves Fellows*.

Gumbaynggirr/Wiradjuri actor and creator Dalara Williams was awarded the 2022 *Balnaves Fellowship*, which commenced in 2023. Dalara is a graduate of the National Institute of Dramatic Art, and her acting credits include the feature film 'Top End Wedding' as well as stage roles in 'Winyanboga Yurringa' (Belvoir Street Theatre), 'Black Ties' (Ilbjerri Theatre Company) and 'Blackie Blackie Brown' (Sydney Theatre Company, Malthouse Theatre).

For the second *Indigenous Theatre* production, *At What Cost?*, 2019 *Balnaves Fellow* Nathan Maynard's provocative piece about Tasmania's Indigenous population, returned to the Belvoir stage for a limited second season in May 2023 before embarking on a national tour, the last performance of which took place on-Country at Hobart's Theatre Royal during NAIDOC week.

Ensemble Theatre

Ensemble Theatre is the longest continuously running professional theatre in Australia. Since 2016, the Foundation has supported Ensemble's vision to create thought-provoking, accessible live theatre of the highest quality through the funding of key capacity roles. This support enables the Philanthropy and Partnerships Manager to continue implementing Ensemble's fundraising strategy and further develop the Theatre's longstanding relationships with its sponsors and patrons. The grant also supports the engagement of Sydney-based media relations company KABUKU PR to enhance the Theatre's media and advertising and increase its audience.

A key focus for Ensemble is its youth audience, whose attendance has been augmented by the Education and Outreach program established in 2016, including two dedicated live performances



Blue by Thomas Weatherall at Belvoir St Theatre; Photo Joseph Mayers.

for young audiences each year as well as digital streaming and curated workshop opportunities. The Foundation has expanded our support to include funding for a new Education Coordinator role to grow the program and enhance Ensemble's vision to provide transformative educational experiences for young people throughout the country.

The Guardian Civic Journalism Trust

2023 is the 5th year of the Foundation's partnership with Guardian Australia. This year, the *Indigenous Investigations* desk has not only published powerful, important investigations that have national significance, but expanded its coverage to include vital information on the Indigenous Voice to Parliament referendum at a time when media clarity and truth-telling was critical.

Issues covered by the *Indigenous Investigations* team also included the inquest into the alleged murder of Kumanjayi Walker, the collapse of ACBF-Youpla, the return of grog bans in Alice Springs, the repatriation of Yukun to his resting place at

Uluru 90 years after his death, and the enduring impact of Keating's Redfern speech 30 years on.

The *Australian Arts in Focus* project, established in 2020 with support from the Foundation, continues to report on issues concerning Australia's arts industry and celebrate the achievements of our arts professionals. In the past year, the Guardian has examined the industry in a time of crisis. *Arts in Focus* has brought to light ongoing issues, from gender parity and the gender pay gap in Australian arts, the desperation of the beleaguered festival sector, and the underfunding of Australia's national collecting institutions. As the industry recovers slowly from the pandemic, there is hope; with positive stories celebrating the success of Australian conductor Simone Young, First Nations artist Archie Moore, dissident theatre defying the odds in Adelaide, an Australian cinematographer breaking new ground in Hollywood.

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

The Foundation has supported Kaldor Public Art Projects for 15 years, aiding the continued delivery of the iconic, large-scale artworks which have become synonymous with Kaldor. Since 1969, Kaldor Public Art Projects have brought groundbreaking contemporary international artists to Australia to create unique and site-specific works.

From August 2022 until February 2023, Sol LeWitt's 'Wall drawing # 955: Loopy Doopy (red and purple)' enveloped the entire southern wall of the John Kaldor Family Hall for *Project 37 Sol LeWitt: Affinities and Resonances*. Visitors to the Art Gallery of NSW were greeted by the striking impact of tangled bands of vibrant red and purple. LeWitt was a pivotal figure in late 20th century American art, known as the father of conceptual art. Many of his artworks were conceived as sets of instructions that could be executed by others as is the case with 'Wall drawing # 955: Loopy Doopy (red and purple)'.

Project 37 Sol LeWitt: Affinities and Resonances explored the affinities between LeWitt's work and Anmatyerr artists Emily Kame Kngwarreye and Gloria Tamerre Petyarre with large-scale works by Kngwarreye and Petyarre, along with gouaches by LeWitt,

displayed on the northern wall of the John Kaldor Family Hall. In addition, *Project 37* premiered three exciting new musical commissions at the Gallery in response to 'Wall drawing # 955: Loopy Doopy (red and purple)', each developed collaboratively by an American musician and an Aboriginal musician.

Mosman Art Gallery

In 2012, Neil Balnaves AO and his wife Diane, donated a selection of art from their personal collection to the Mosman Art Gallery and municipality. *The Balnaves Gift* is a collection of 16 primarily Australian Impressionist and early 20th century artworks all significant to Mosman, showing different historical views of Mosman, its bay, and surrounds.

In 2022, The Balnaves Foundation commenced support for an educational project, *Art Mosman: Balnaves Education*, aimed at fostering engagement between the Mosman Art Gallery and its community, particularly young people who live locally. To increase youth participation with the Gallery, this grant also supports the activation of live youth events through the *Mosman Youth Art Prize and Youth Week*.

Art Mosman: Balnaves Education will also include a suite of educational materials which will align with the



Youth Art Prize Event, Mosman Art Gallery; Photo Jacquie Manning.

art curriculum for primary and high school students, as well as a permanent public program *The Mosman Art Trail*, which will consist of QR code signage along Mosman foreshore walking trails linking back to pieces in *The Balnaves Gift*.

Museum of Contemporary Art

The Foundation's support of the Museum of Contemporary Art's (MCA) programs for children and young people extends back to 2005, with the launch of *GENEXT*, an annual parent-and teacher-free event for young people programmed by the MCA's Youth Committee.

Since 2020, the Foundation has been the Major Partner of the *Family Program* at the MCA, which is centred on art programs for younger generations, including *ARTPlay* workshops for children under 5, and the *School Holiday* program. Providing the opportunity to experience art at an early age is a core aim of the *Family Program*, fostering a creative space for young people to grow and be inspired.

In the past year more than 4,000 children and their families participated in the *Family Program*. Themes for *ARTPlay* and *School Holiday* programs were created in response to major and permanent exhibitions at the Museum, including 'The National 4: Australian Art Now', where families could take home Australian native seedlings to plant in their own garden; and 'Mai, Garuga, Guri', which allowed participants to create their own collage reflecting Vincent Namatjira's wall mural 'P.P.F (Past-Present-Future)'.

Sorrento Writers Festival

The Balnaves Foundation was proud to be the Founding Partner of the inaugural Sorrento Writers Festival, which took place in the Mornington Peninsula in April 2023.

The Festival, which saw more than more than 90 events across a range of local venues, was backed by a groundswell of community support and the town teemed with local and interstate visitors. Many

Current Grants

of the events were sold out, with patrons enjoying panel discussions, presentations and interviews from writers, creatives, and political figures from Australia and overseas.

The Sorrento Writers Festival is a not-for-profit cultural and community organisation, which created the now-annual literary event to increase tourism and interest in

Sorrento and surrounds, as well as invest in the Mornington Peninsula's creative landscape. The Festival hopes to provide funding for youth literacy initiatives in the region, such as Story Dogs, the Mornington Peninsula Foundation, the Sorrento Primary School, and St Joseph's Primary School libraries, and to establish a library in Sorrento.



Airplay at Adelaide Festival, 2023; Photo Florence Montmare.

Story Factory

The Foundation's partnership with Story Factory has continued with an exciting new literacy project for disadvantaged young people, *Memory River*.

Story Factory's visionary and considered projects are underwritten by their belief that all young people, no matter their background, should be given opportunities to develop the communication skills and flexibility of thinking that will allow them to live their lives to their full potential and flourish in a rapidly changing world.

Memory River is a two-year multi-artform program which combines Indigenous history, stories and art with the voices of young people from under-resourced communities in Western Sydney.

In the first stage, *Voices of the River*, students participated in an excursion to the Parramatta Female Factory, a location with a long and complex history as an orphanage, prison, asylum and school on Burramattagal land. There, they explored the Indigenous and recent history of the area with Darug Elder Aunty Julie Jones; former Parramatta Girls Home resident, Bonney Djuric and Southern Arrernte, Kaytetye and Anmatyerre artist Carmen Glynn-Braun. This was followed by workshops in which students created printmaking artworks featuring objects representing these histories and authored stories personifying the river.

Students later returned to the Female Factory to place pieces of their writing to imbue positivity to the site and to record audio of their stories. The artworks, recordings and writing pieces that students had contributed were displayed at the Female Factory alongside a commissioned piece by Carmen Glynn-Braun, creating a collaborative and immersive exhibition which reflected on the history of the site and demonstrated students' deepened understanding of its context within local and Australian history.



Sucker by Jenni Large at Sydney Dance Company's New Breed 2022; Photo Pedro Greig.

St Vincent's Hospital

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. Commencing in 2018, and under the direction of clinical immunologist Dr Andrew Carr, the Foundation's grant with St Vincent's Hospital 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. With a current focus on the de-labelling of antibiotic allergy and peanut anaphylaxis desensitisation, the potential outcomes of Professor Carr's research are exciting and could have profound impact for the wider community.

Sydney Dance Company

Since 2014, *New Breed* has offered vital opportunities for emerging choreographers to explore their choreographic voice, within the supportive environment of Australia's leading contemporary dance company. The November 2022 season of *New Breed* was an exciting end to the first full year of performances as the Company emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Two of the selected choreographers, Charmaine Yap and Luke Hayward, were drawn from within Sydney Dance Company, alongside independent artists Sophia Ndaba and Jenni Large. Charmaine Yap's 'Drunk Tank Pink' was a vivid exploration of external and internal forces inspired by a 1970s psychological experiment. Hayward's piece, 'The Remnants of', was an homage to New York-style

postmodern dance. Jenni Large was heavily influenced by the evolution and fascination with vampire culture for her work 'Sucker', and Sophie Ndaba's 6-dancer piece, 'The Veil of Separation', wove in and around a giant hanging fabric by set designer Aleisa Jelbart.

Taldumande Youth Services

Youth homelessness is a growing epidemic in this country, with young people aged 16-24 making up 21% of people experiencing homelessness in Australia.

Taldumande, a not-for-profit organisation that supports vulnerable and homeless children and young people, operates a unique tailored program, the *Family Restoration and Preservation Program (FRAPP)*, which has been operating successfully in their established locations on the lower

Current Grants

North Shore and Northern Beaches. In early 2023, the Foundation began a new grant with Taldumande Youth Services, supporting the expansion of *FRAPP* into Western Sydney, where there is significant demand for their services. Taldumande commenced recruitment for two fulltime senior caseworkers to operate *FRAPP* in the region, and the team is currently working to establish its services within the community infrastructure. *The Family Restoration and Preservation Program* provides intensive, flexible and practical support with the intention of reducing family breakdown. In addition to rebuilding family, kin and cultural connections, the program also engages the young person in education and provides access to health, mental health and well-being services.

TarraWarra Museum of Art

The Foundation has supported the TarraWarra Museum of Art's *Summer Season exhibition program* since 2017. The *Summer program* at the Yarra Valley-based art museum highlights the work of

20th and 21st century artists held in the Museum's collection, by presenting well-researched and original perspectives on Australian artists with a focal spotlight.

This year, the featured artist was British-born painter Peter Booth, whose work delves into themes of the environment, industry and individual identity through perspectives of the urban and rural landscapes of his adopted home, Australia.

Curated by Anthony Fitzpatrick, the exhibition, *PETER BOOTH*, presented Booth's works thematically, and audiences resonated with the sometimes dark and confronting motifs that run throughout the artists' work, drawing links between his moody landscapes and contemporary social issues including climate change and the war in Ukraine.

University of NSW; Balnaves Chair of Constitutional Law

The Balnaves Chair in Constitutional Law is a gift in honour of Alexandra Balnaves and her dedication to supporting First Nations people. 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 have been significant developments for the first objective of the Uluru Statement from the Heart; culminating with the referendum to enshrine a First Nations Voice to Parliament in the constitution.

Professor Davis has tirelessly advocated for the Voice in her role as *Balnaves Chair*, as well as her position as co-chair of the Uluru Dialogue, one of the primary campaign groups for the Voice to Parliament.

As a member of the First Nations Referendum Working Group, Professor Davis also advised the Albanese government on the timing of the referendum, the wording of the constitutional amendment and question, and the design principles of the Voice.

This year, we awarded an additional grant towards the development of the *You're the Voice* campaign. Harnessing the clarion cry of John Farnham's classic song, this powerful campaign spoke directly to the hearts and minds of the Australian people and emphasised the importance of the Voice and all it stood for.

The Foundation's support commenced well before the referendum and we will continue to uphold the vision of the Uluru Statement from the Heart: voice, treaty, truth-telling, and constitutional recognition. We will continue to listen, and to be guided by First Nations peoples on the path towards reconciliation and self-determination.

West Australian Symphony Orchestra

The West Australian Symphony Orchestra's (WASO) *Crescendo* program is the only program of its kind in Western Australia, providing free music lessons to primary school children at two low socio-educational advantage (ICSEA) schools in the state. *Crescendo* provides every student from pre-primary to year 6 with a weekly 45-minute vocal-based music lesson from

Crescendo Teaching Artists. From year 4, each student learns a string instrument, receiving a 30-minute weekly group violin or cello lesson with string ensemble rehearsals held for year 5 and 6 students.

In 2023, the Foundation was pleased to become the Lead Partner for *Crescendo*, supporting this vital program which fills a gap in music education in WA where many of the students who graduate primary school do so without ever having access to music lessons.

Research shows that access to high-quality music education at an early age improves cognitive development and has a positive effect on reading, writing and understanding language; and enhances general learning outcomes. Learning music assists in self-regulation and social cohesion. It also leads to the enjoyment and appreciation of music and the arts generally.

In addition to *Crescendo's* in-class high contact program,

students also have access to regular opportunities to perform and attend professional performances by the Orchestra, WA's premier performing arts organisation. The program also provides classroom teachers with free learning resources to support program delivery and a range of WASO incursions, workshops and performances by musicians and excursions to WASO events.

Since inception, WASO's *Crescendo* program has contributed to an improvement in NAPLAN results across both schools, resulting in better social and emotional well-being among students. The Foundation hopes that our support will see these results continue to improve as the program grows.

Western Sydney Local Health District

Since 2018, The Balnaves Foundation has supported the *UnWIRED Mental Health Project*, a multi-year research project aiming to improve

outcomes in young people with severe mental illnesses, with a focus on early intervention.

The project utilises revolutionary personal wearable e-health devices, similar to a Fitbit, to measure the activity of participants, such as their sleep cycle, in order to provide them valuable feedback on their level of stress.

With the young person's consent, the devices send data to the wearer and their treating clinician via a purpose-built app. This early warning gives the young person the opportunity to manage their stress and its impact on their illness.

This initiative aims to address the alarming mental health statistics for young people in Australia. 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 can result in lost opportunity and significant disability.



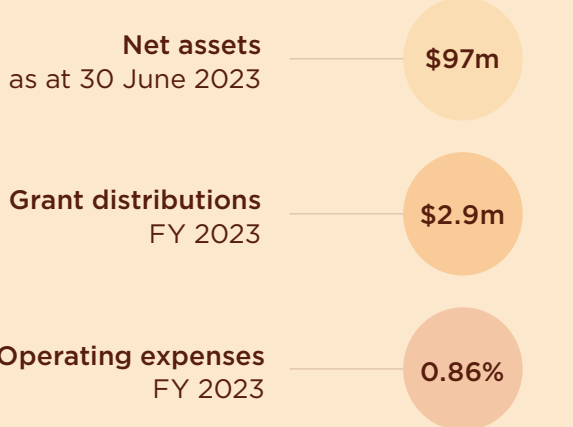
PETER BOOTH Exhibition, Tarrawarra Museum of Art; Photo Keelan O'Hehir.



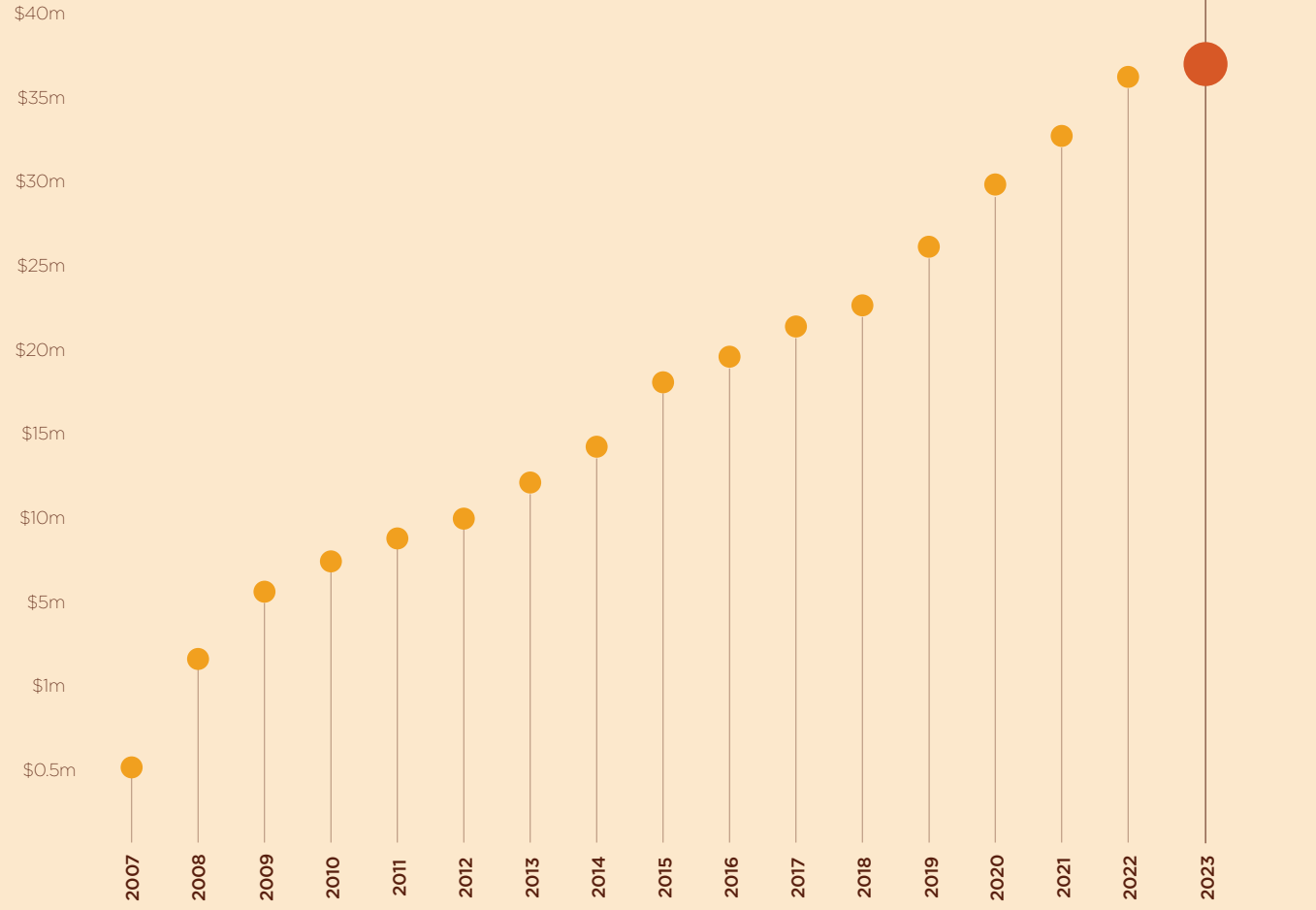
Crescendo String Ensemble, West Australian Symphony Orchestra

Financial Summary 2023

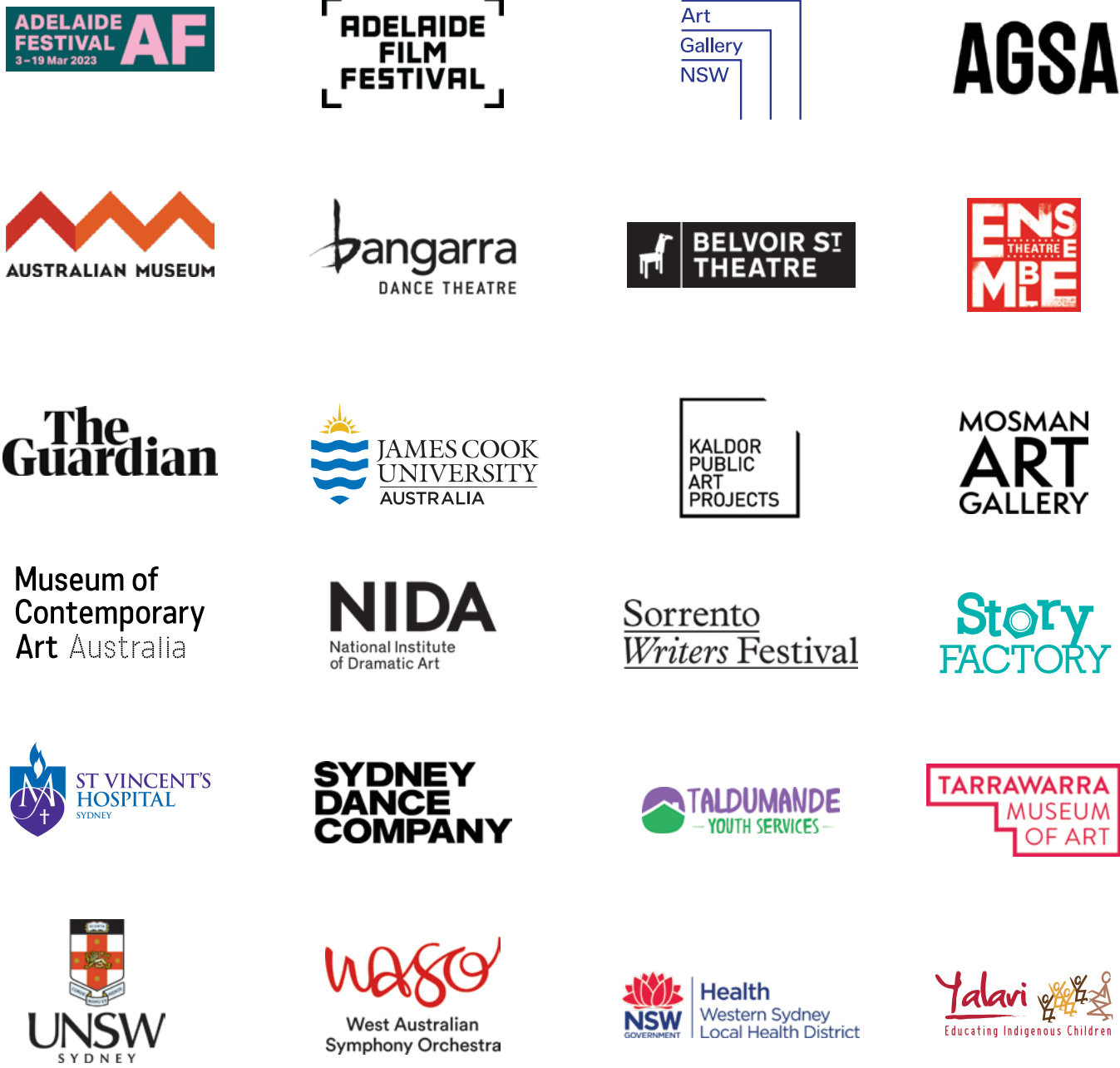
The corpus of The Balnaves Foundation is invested in a diverse portfolio, which is managed by an investment sub-committee that reports to the Trustees of the Foundation. As of June 30, 2023, the Foundation has donated over \$38 million to help create a better Australia.



Cumulative Grant Distribution by Year



Our Grantees



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Project 37 Sol Lewitt: Affinities and Resonances, Kaldor Public Art Projects;
Photo Michael Waite.

