



Curtin University

JOHN CURTIN GALLERY

# ANNUAL REVIEW 2021





# THE YEAR IN REVIEW

While 2020 was a challenging year for the arts industry, 2021 was a more positive and fruitful year with the realisation of long planned projects and a great exhibition program featuring two ambitious group shows and a survey by one of Perth's most outstanding contemporary artists.

The Gallery opened its 2021 exhibition program with a stunning survey of work by Perth artist Abdul-Rahman Abdullah. The exhibition reflected the Perth Festival's theme of Bilya, the Nyungar word for river, which also had the double meaning of holding the body in place and connecting the past and future. *Everything Is True* filled the entire John Curtin Gallery and the 29 works featured presented an emotionally charged journey through the memories, dreamscapes, and spiritual imagination of one of Australia's most compelling contemporary artists.

During the Djeran season, we were able to finally bring to fruition *The Alternative Archive*, a project we embarked on three years ago with co-curator Anna Richardson. The exhibition showcased work by 40 contemporary artists living in communities throughout WA and followed a series of regional exhibitions in 2019, all bearing the *Alternative Archive* name. It aimed to increase understanding of the arts ecology, the practices and conditions of regional art making in Western Australia by urban audiences. As such it was the focal point of a series of meaningful opportunities for professional development, mentoring, peer exchange and other regionally-led initiatives.

We were also thrilled to finally realise the highly ambitious *Indian Ocean Craft Triennial*, IOTA21, the inaugural survey of contemporary art practice by artists from around the Indian Ocean Rim. Celebrating the traditions of making for the everyday, the exhibition explored the role of craft and craft skills in our current era and highlighted the principle of craft as a social practice capable of enhancing community innovation and economic improvement. IOTA21 was anchored by the John Curtin Gallery and the Fremantle Arts Centre and featured more than 30 artists from seven countries, with more than 40 additional exhibition venues around the state.

The Gallery also reached a significant milestone on its way to establishing the Carrolup Centre for Truth-telling with an interim exhibition, *Carrolup Coolingah Wirn: The Spirit of Carrolup Children*, opening in November and featuring a selection of artworks from *The Herbert Mayer Collection of Carrolup Artworks*. Its aim is to create opportunities for the wider community to visit the works and learn about the children's stories in a culturally safe space. *Carrolup Coolingah Wirn*, is the first exhibition curated by Curtin's Curator of Australian First Nations Art, Michelle Broun, who was appointed at the beginning of 2021. The exhibition opening also coincided with the appointment of Kathleen Toomath as Carrolup Manager. Kathleen is the daughter of the late Alma Toomath, the last known surviving Carrolup artist who passed away earlier this year and will continue her mother's legacy to safeguard the treasured collection of artworks created by Nyungar children who were part of Australia's Stolen Generations.

Rounding out the Gallery's exhibition program for 2021, the John Stringer Prize once again exhibited new work by six of WA's most outstanding artists. This year The Collectors Club selected Merrick Belyea, Theo Costantino, Daniel Kristjansson, Clare McFarlane, Ross Potter and Lea Taylor. Merrick Belyea was awarded the 2021 John Stringer Prize, as voted by members of The Collectors Club, for his five-panel painting, *Brigadoon*.

Alongside the Prize, the Gallery presented work by two neurodiverse artists, Perth-based landscape photographer Simon Phillips and Singapore-based performance and sound artist Dawn-joy Leong, in a series of sensory stories celebrating the beauty of the natural and human world. It also formed part of a new collaboration between researchers from Curtin's Centre for Culture and Technology and the Curtin Autism Research Group and the John Curtin Gallery in a celebration of neurodiverse creativity. The exhibition was widely accessible and inclusive, featuring audio descriptions, large letter signage, the capacity for support dogs to enter the Gallery and a Calm Space area set aside.

Despite a continuation of COVID-19 challenges this past year, the ongoing support and dedication of Gallery staff enabled us to achieve success in all our endeavours, and to present an artistic program that reflects our desire for a more just and equitable world. We also acknowledge and thank our program partners Australian Baroque, the Victoria Park Centre for the Arts and the Museum of Freedom and Tolerance who have enhanced our exhibition program in so many ways.

Chris Malcolm  
Director, John Curtin Gallery  
December 2021



# ABOUT

## OUR VISION

is to be one of Australia's leading public art galleries, making tomorrow better through the power of art.

## OUR PURPOSE

is to inspire audiences and the broader community to reflect on contemporary issues through the visual arts, to create a more just and equitable world.

## OUR MISSION

is to deliver exhibitions and programs and build our Collection to reflect the needs of our community, making art accessible for all.



Figure 1

# OUR GOALS



## Research and Innovation

Objective	Initiative	Outcomes 2021
Build Research Relationships	Leverage the Carrolup Collection to facilitate relationship building between Curtin researchers and specific Indigenous communities and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Substantially progressed the Carrolup Centre for Truth Telling taking over new space adjacent to existing Gallery to create temporary exhibition and activation space and appointing Manager, Carrolup Centre;</li> <li>Launch of first exhibition <i>Carrolup coolingah wirn</i></li> </ul>
	Greater internal engagement through research exhibitions and collections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborative research initiative with MCASI resulted in <i>Sense and Sensitivity</i> exhibition.</li> <li>Collaborative research initiative with Faculty of Health Sciences/CARG on <i>Digital Arts for Life</i> project;</li> <li>Faculty of Health Sciences collaboration <i>The Photo Voice Project</i></li> <li>Collaboration with School of Design and Built Environment on IOTA21 and accompanying conference.</li> <li>Continued major collaboration with Fine Arts Discipline area involving students at all levels participating in Gallery-based activities.</li> <li>Cross-faculty call-out for proposals to present research as part of weekly Speaker Series.</li> <li>Ongoing collaboration with Curtin writers responding to exhibitions.</li> </ul>



## Engagement and Impact

Objective	Initiative	Outcomes 2021
Manage the Carrolup Collection	Maintain and promote the Carrolup collection, building new internal and external partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carrolup embedded as a major enabler of the new Elevate RAP</li> <li>Exhibition: <i>Carrolup coolingah wirn</i></li> </ul>
Reinvigorate Exhibition Program	The exhibition programs provide strong positive publicity for the University and high-level exposure to Curtin students and staff and in the broader community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perth Festival Exhibition: <i>Everything is True</i></li> <li><i>AstroFest Astro Photography 2021</i></li> <li><i>The PhotoVoice Project</i></li> <li><i>The Alternative Archive</i></li> <li><i>Indian Ocean Craft Triennial</i></li> <li><i>Moving Pictures</i></li> <li><i>John Stringer Prize 2021</i></li> <li><i>Sense and Sensitivity</i></li> <li><i>Carrolup coolingah wirn</i></li> <li># Exhibitions: 9</li> <li># Total Visitors: 33,291</li> <li># Publications: 4</li> <li># Public Program events: 56 (2020 - 29)</li> </ul>
Establish John Curtin Sculpture Park	Commission commemorative John Curtin sculpture as part of 50th anniversary celebrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project completed. <i>Other Views</i> launched March 2020</li> <li>Three major works commissioned for The Exchange</li> </ul>
Improved State, National &	Ensure ongoing promotions of JCG activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Member of AMAGA, CACWA, AoTM, NAVA, UAMA, CiMAM</li> </ul>

International Reputation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># feature articles in media: 32</li> <li># radio interviews: 15</li> <li># E-Newsletters: 17</li> <li># E-Newsletter subscribers: 2,522 (2020: 2,503)</li> <li># Facebook followers: 3,730 (2020: 3,362)</li> <li># Instagram followers: 3,586 (2020: 2,524)</li> </ul>
	Improve online engagement via new website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued to add new content to website including virtual tours.</li> <li>Established JCG@home as a collection of blogs, videos, podcasts.</li> </ul>
Strengthen Collaborative Relationships	JCG will strengthen existing relationships/partnerships and pursue new ones for future collaborations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Astrofest:</b> Astrophotography exhibition.</li> <li><b>Sheila Foundation</b> inaugural networking event held</li> <li><b>Australian Baroque</b> <i>The Brush and The Bow</i></li> <li><b>The Museum of Freedom and Tolerance</b>, <i>Conversations</i></li> <li><b>The Victoria Park Centre for the Arts</b> and the Town of Victoria Park: <i>The Alternative Art School</i></li> <li><b>The Town of Victoria Park</b> Arts Season</li> <li><b>Art Gallery of WA</b> and <b>DADAA</b>, <i>Digital Arts for Life Project</i></li> </ul>



## Global Positioning

Objective	Initiative	Outcomes 2021
The Gallery engages across all sites and allows opportunities for exchanges	Develop an international strategy for offshore campuses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explored opportunities with Curtin's Malaysia campus/IOTA</li> <li>Ongoing conversations re Curtin St Georges Tce</li> </ul>



## People and Culture

Objective	Initiative	Outcomes 2021
Highly Engaged and Satisfied Staff	<p>Ensure there is adequate support for future JCG programs and events</p> <p>Review contracting and employment terms to encourage more flexibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing in conjunction with Advancement team.</li> <li>New staff appointed in 2021: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curator First Nations Art Collection</li> <li>Manager Carrolup</li> <li>Additional FOH and install team members</li> </ul> </li> <li>2 staff moved from casual to permanent part-time</li> <li>5 student internships provided</li> <li>2 Curtin Extra Volunteers</li> </ul>
Engage and utilise the expertise of the Advisory Board		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 Advisory Board meetings plus one Planning Day held.</li> </ul>



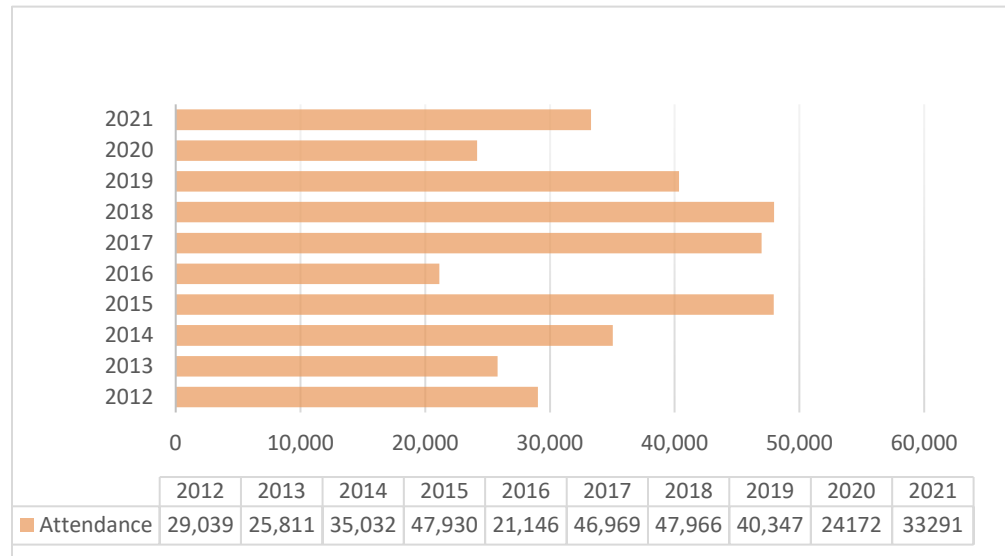
## Sustainable Future

Objective	Initiative	Outcomes 2021
Enhance the Collection	Re-establish sustainable Acquisition Program for the Curtin University Art Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning for ongoing acquisitions continues.</li> </ul>
Raise the Gallery's Profile as Anchor Arts and Culture Institution	The JCG is known as a Perth gallery rather than a University gallery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>
	Improve exterior, access and prominence on-campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>
Informed Decision-Making	Ensure that clear and articulate plans are in place to guide decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly reporting to the Advisory Board</li> <li>Exhibition Planning Committee meets regularly and programs at least three years ahead.</li> </ul>

# HIGHLIGHTS 2021

## ATTENDANCE

Attendance figures recovered in 2021, but we did lose several weeks due to lockdowns early in the year, and for most of 2021 we were subject to strict capacity limits.



9 exhibitions



56 Public Program Events



33,291 visitors



100 artists exhibited

## EXHIBITIONS

<p><b>Season 1</b> Bunaru</p>	<p>Abdul-Rahman Abdullah, <i>Everything is True</i> AstroFest 2021 <i>The Photo Voice Project</i></p>	<p>4 Feb – 23 April 24 Feb - -14 March 17March – 23 April</p>
<p><b>Season 2</b> Makuru</p>	<p><i>The Alternative Archive</i></p>	<p>14 May – 30 July</p>
<p><b>Season 3</b> Djilba</p>	<p><i>The Indian Ocean Craft Triennial</i> <i>Moving Pictures</i></p>	<p>5 Sept – 31 Oct 29 Sept – 31 Oct</p>
<p><b>Season 4</b> Kambarang</p>	<p><i>Carrolup coolingah wirn</i> <i>Sense and Sensitivity</i> <i>John Stringer Prize</i></p>	<p>5 November - 16 November - 18 November – 15 December</p>



# COLLECTION



3,220 total works in  
Collection



\$22.6M value of  
Collection



44 acquisitions

## ACQUISITION HIGHLIGHTS

### CULTURAL GIFTS PROGRAM

Abdul-Rahman Abdullah, *Everything is True*, 2012 (sculpt). Gift of the Artist.

Brent Harris, *Drift I-X*, 1998, Print suite. Gift of Alan Dodge

Pippin Drysdale, *Bungle Bungle (Kimberley & Tanami Mapping Series)*, Gift of artist.

Joan Ross, *Touching other people's butterflies*, print. Gift of artist

Joan Ross, *The Dinner Guest*, print, Gift of the artist

### DEED OF GIFT:

Carla Adams, *The Three Graces*, 2017, Textile. Gift of the Artist.

Pantjiti Mary McLean & Nalda Searles, *Minyma Wati Pirntalpa*, 2001, Work on paper  
Gift of Patti Belletty & Chris Malcolm Est \$4,000

### PURCHASES:

Fiona Gavino, *Earth & Fire*, 2020, Installation, (Acquired from JSP exhibition)

Joan Ross, *We have sung the same song 1 and 2*, two prints

Ngalpingka Simms, Tracey Simms, Ivy Laidlaw, Kanta Donnegan & Myrtle Pennington,  
Spinifex Women's collaborative painting

### STUDENT WORKS PURCHASED:

From 2020 Grad show:

Phoebe D'Souza, 2020, 5 paintings

Chantal Magor, *Kitty's Gorge*, 2020, Painting

Chantal Magor, *River Rock*, 2020, Painting

## PUBLIC ART COMMISSIONS

- B105 refurbishment (T.L Robertson Library). Completed awaiting progress on building refurbishment before installation in 2022.
- B418 *Cliff* by artist Janet Laurence: Completed and awaiting final installation in early 2022.
- Exchange Precinct with Warren Langley: Completed and partially installed.
- B418 – *Winin Katidjin Bilya* public realm artwork project for the new School of Design and Built Environment – Completed.
- Gallery Entrance Soffit: *Together we can light up the sky*, a meditation on optimism and makes direct reference to artworks in the Curtin University Art Collection (CUAC) with a focus on contemporary Western Australian women artists. Installed late 2021.



# CARROLUP

## *Staffing and management*

Early in 2021, Michelle Broun was welcomed as the Curator First Nations Aboriginal Art and in October Kathleen Toomath was appointed as Carrolup Manager. They will take forward the Gallery's work to safeguard the precious artistic legacy of the Carrolup child artists and extend the story of the Stolen Generations through programs of education and engagement. Two casual researchers were also engaged to assist in various aspects of the project.

## *Programming*

The *Carrolup coolingah wirn: The spirit of Carrolup children* exhibition, opened exclusively to the Nyungar community on 5 November and then to the public on 15 November 2021. Visitors have found the experience moving, informative and beautiful. As well as the artworks, the exhibition displays some of the touching letters written by the Carrolup children which offer an insight into their youthful individuality and life at the Settlement.

Several floor talks and multiple tour groups for Curtin's Ways of Working program have engaged staff, students and the public with the Carrolup story over 2021.

Preparation continues for the UK Carrolup Artwork Recovery Tour scheduled for late 2022. The tour will be based on the *Carrolup coolingah wirn* exhibition and be presented at several venues across the UK, including The Hunterian Gallery in Glasgow and The Portico Library in Manchester, with the objective of discovering other surviving Carrolup artworks that were sent to Florence Rutter and sold in 1950.

## *Fundraising and partnerships*

Funding from our 3-year BHP agreement continues to provide the bulk of resources for Carrolup. Additional funding secured from Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the British Council for the UK tour as part of the UK Discovery Season.

Fundraising continues for the permanent home for the Carrolup Centre for Truth-telling as well as securing corporate partnerships to support art, healing, education and engagement programs. This includes the ongoing stewardship and engagement with over 600 donors and supporters who have already supported the establishment of the Centre.

Strategic partnerships are developing with public agencies which hold collections of Carrolup artworks such as State Library of WA, Berndt Museum of Anthropology at UWA, Shire of Katanning, Fremantle Prison and The University of Western Australia.



# ENGAGEMENT

## AWARDS

The John Curtin Gallery and University Advancement teams as well as Chris Malcolm won the Curtin University Vice Chancellor’s Excellence Award for Excellence in Reconciliation for their work establishing the Carrolup Centre for Truth-telling in the team and individual categories respectively.

## ONLINE ENGAGEMENT



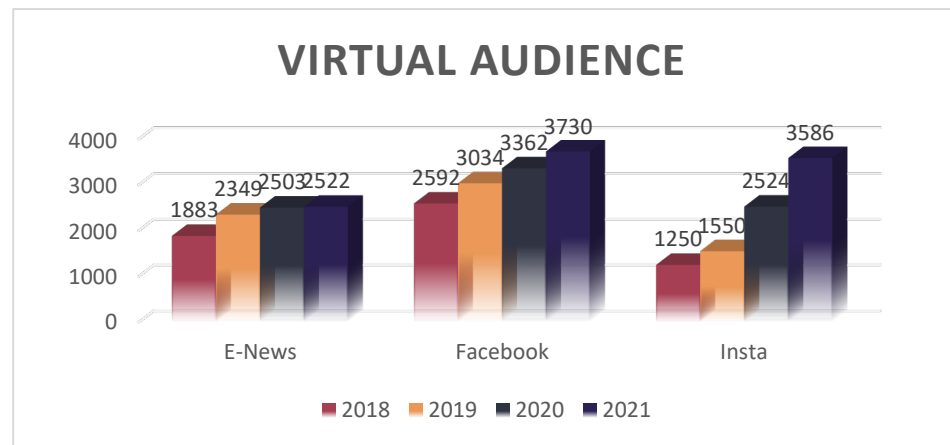
3,730  
followers



3,586  
followers



153  
followers



## FACULTY COLLABORATIONS

**Curtin Autism Research Group** – our relationship with CARG culminated in 2 important collaborative projects that both work towards creating Autism friendly experiences at the gallery.

- Digital Arts For Life: a collaboration with DADAA and Art Gallery of WA, funded by WA Education Department, delivering art workshops to teenagers with Autism.
- Sense and Sensitivity exhibition, in collaboration with CARG and MCASI funded by Research Office at Curtin.

### MCASI (School of Media, Creative Arts & Social Inquiry)

#### Discipline of Fine Art

This major collaboration continued to deliver a comprehensive program across all undergraduate years:

- 1st Year students – Guided gallery visits
- 2nd Year students – Guided exhibition visits.
- 3rd Year students – Artist talks focusing on professional practice.

### Internship Programs

The Gallery continues to host student practicums and professional placements throughout the year. The program allows students to be immersed in a wide range of gallery activities including campus display, condition-reporting, front of house, marketing and communications, managing the collection database, research, invigilation and public programs. In 2021 we supervised 5 internships.

The John Curtin Gallery Volunteers is a program linked to the Curtin Extra Program. It allows students to volunteer at the Gallery for at least 20 hours per semester undertaking a range of tasks similar to the internship program. Students can participate from any faculty and from any year of their studies.

### Curtin Academics – Speaker Series:

31 March: *Intersections of Spiritual, Supernatural and memory*, Dr Marilyn Metta

21 April: *Why Carve Animals?* Dr Matthew Chrulew

6 October: *Creole Cultures of the Indian Ocean*, Professor Mike Kent

20 October: *Industrialism over Craft*, Dr Qassim Saad

27 October *Bohemians, Craftsmen and the New Woman*, Dr John Martin

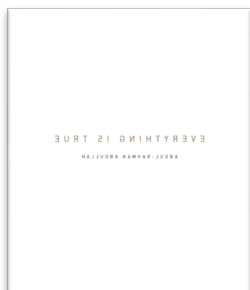
### Curtin Writers Respond:

Commencing in 2021 a group of Curtin writers led by Associate Professor Rachel Robertson created new work in response to our major exhibition program.

### Research Rumble April 2021

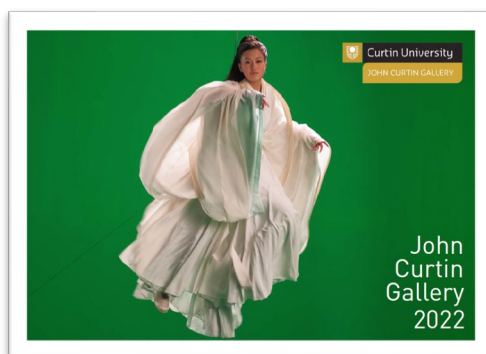
*The Botanist History Forgot*, Professor Anna Haebich

*Virtual representation of Aboriginal Country*, Professor Reena Tiwari



## PUBLICATIONS

Three comprehensive exhibition catalogues and the 2022 Program booklet were produced in 2021





# PHILANTHROPY

## DONOR CIRCLE

2021 marked the final year of the initial three-year Donor Circle initiative. Plans to renew and reinvigorate the program into 2022 and beyond are well underway for launch in early 2022.

## SPONSORS

### BHP

BHP is the major supporter for our Carrolup Program. 2021 was Year 1 of a three-year agreement.

**Perth Festival:** The Perth Festival again supported our 2021 exhibition, as well as inclusion in the Festival Program and associated marketing and promotion.

### Navitas Ltd

This important Principal Presentation Partnership recommenced in early 2021 with the postponed *The Alternative Archive* and continuing with *The Indian Ocean Triennial*. The current partnership agreement ends mid-2022.

### Lendlease Ltd

Lendlease continued as Presenting partner supporting the John Stringer Prize 2021.

## GRANTS

### Successful:

DFAT/British Council

Costs assoc with touring

Carrolup to UK in 2022

DLGSC Creative Development

Artists Travel costs Alternative Archive

Town of Victoria Park

The Alternative Art School

### Unsuccessful

Australia Council Arts:

Digital Strategist in Residence Program

DLGSC Residency Program

Australian Baroque performances



# OUR PEOPLE

## JOHN CURTIN GALLERY ADVISORY BOARD

Mr John Barrington (Chair from January 2021) (First meeting 2/2019 – May 2019)

Mr Marcus Canning (First meeting 3/2019 – Aug 2019)

Ms Delwyn Everard, (First meeting 1/2019 – Feb 2019)

Dr Amanda Healy, (First meeting 3/2019 – Aug 2019)

Mr Wayne Zekulich, (First meeting 2/2018 – May 2018; Final meeting November 2021)

Mr Chris Malcolm (Director, John Curtin Gallery) (First meeting August 2009)

Ms Val Raubenheimer, Vice-President, Corporate Relations & Development (First meeting August 2009)

Mr Tim McInnes, Chief Advancement Officer (First Meeting February 2019 )

Ms Natasha Allchurch, Director Advancement (First meeting May 2018, final meeting March 2021)

Mr Tim Urquhart, Director, Properties, Facilities and Development (First meeting Feb 2018)

Executive Officer: Ms Jane King, Gallery Manager, John Curtin Gallery (from November 2017)

## CARROLUP ELDERS REFERENCE GROUP

Mr Tony Hansen, Chair

Mr Ezzard Flowers

Ms Carmen Roberts (retired December 2021)

Ms Diana Coyne (retired December 2021)

Mr Garry Ryder

Curtin members:

Jayde Conway, Office of Elder in Residence

Mr Chris Malcolm, Director, John Curtin Gallery

Emeritus Professor Steve Mickler, MCASI

Ms Kathleen Toomath, Carrolup Manager, JCG (from December 2021)

Executive Officer: Ms Patti Belletty, Gallery Administrative Coordinator







## STAFF

Gallery Director  
 Gallery Manager  
 Collection Managers

Chris Malcolm  
 Jane King  
 Lia McKnight  
 Barbara Cotter  
 Patti Belletty  
 Samantha Smith  
 Brad Coleman  
 Sue-Lyn Moyle  
 Jacqui Monks

Administration Coordinator  
 Comms Coordinator  
 Visual Comms Coordinator  
 Digital Comms Officer  
 Exhibitions Registrar  
 Collection Officer – Campus  
 Display  
 Collection Assistant  
 Gallery Assistant  
 Gallery Attendants

Matthew McAlpine  
 Olivia Jones  
 Tarryn Gill  
 Leah Robbie  
 Rae Walter  
 Bridie Wheeler

Production Coordinator  
 Install Team Leader:  
 Install Technicians

Jann Thompson  
 Dave Reid  
 Graham Burge  
 Matt McAlpine  
 Sebastian Befumo  
 Mir Ng

Matt Dickman  
 Sean Mitchell  
 Ako Roberts

Gallery Interns:

Gemma Gale  
 Intan Gargita  
 Carlie Gems

Rebecca O’Neil  
 Jade Van Herwaarde

Curtin Extra volunteers:

Carman Chau