

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT TESTIMONIALS

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### LGBTIQ+ ELDERS DANCE CLUB

*'The Elders Dance Club events were received wonderfully well by all who attended, particularly after emerging from covid lockdowns. Older LGBTIQ+ people are some of our most vulnerable community members. Already experiencing isolation and a disconnect from friends and loved ones, Dance Club provided a much-needed energy boost and a chance to meet new people, reconnect with friends and to access information from Meridian around how to link in with services and supports thanks to our Aged Care Coordinators, Kyla Harvey and Sharon Alles. Physical activity is also an important part of Dance Club and while participants are encouraged to participate at their own pace, many simply watched and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. We saw participants challenge themselves and move out of their comfort zone through simple dance steps to great music, led by warm and welcoming dance instructors. The simple act of participation brought joy and laughter to all participants. We look forward to supporting this valuable event in the future and hope Elders Dance Club makes a welcome comeback soon.'* – **Lee Caldwell (he/him), Meridian - Manager, Community Development**

*'Partnering with A+G has been instrumental in achieving outcomes to actions within the Australian Government, Department of Health- Actions to Support Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Gender Diverse and Intersex elders, and in building connections to vulnerable LGBTIQ+ folk. The elder's dance has improved social connections with community members and strengthened partnerships and collaborations with other inclusive services, such as the Lesbian dance club and Queer Zumba.'*

*According to the National LGBTIQ+ Health Australia, LGBTIQ+ individuals in Australia are twice as likely to be diagnosed and treated for mental health disorders compared to the general population. The Elders dance supports living well within our community, such as combating social isolation, providing intergenerational opportunities, reducing cultural safety risks for LGBTIQ elders and older Allies from other vulnerable sub-groups, such as culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.*

*It is beneficial and imperative for the wellbeing of vulnerable community members that this event continues in partnership with Meridian.'* – **Kyla Harvey (she/her), Meridian Aged Care Coordinator**

*'Dance Club is so fun and a great physical activity, a nice way to relax and interact with others. It's not intense physical exercise and I can choose when to get involved. I kept coming back because the environment was a really safe space for me to be myself, it's respectful and also Covid safe, and a good venue and good parking which is important to me. It's very accessible, which helped when my partner came because he has mobility issues. I love the catering, the good music, a great selection of dances, I like the intergenerational aspect of it, and I really enjoyed it when ATQM were there. There's always a variety of dances, lots of laughter, lots of fun. It gets me out of the house and helps me to meet new friends.'* – **Luka Musicki, a regular attendee throughout 2021**

*'I like to dance, it's great exercise and you don't have to have a partner to go along, and the dance leaders are great. I live with a mild cognitive impairment and coming along to Dance Club has helped my health improve. It's important to get people moving and socialising with each other, especially as they get older. I'm always spruiking it to my networks and encouraging people to come along with me. I just love it.'* – **Robyn Soxsmith, regular attendee throughout 2021**

## CREATIVE RESILIENCE AND RECOVERY PROGRAM

*'The residency provided me with an amazing opportunity to open myself to my work in a way that I had not done before. I was finally immersed in something that I loved, painting is healing for me and what I found throughout the residency is that it became a vessel for which I would explore ideas and concepts that have been locked away in my thoughts for a long time. I have never been able to spend the time to truly immerse myself in painting and the residency allowed me to do just that.'* - Jackson Taylor-Grant, Program Artist

## LIVE ART LAB

*'A+G was where the collaborative relationship started, and A+G has been providing producer support for this project (among many other projects of mine). The collaborative relationship of Cathy, Zhi and I came from the Live Art Lab 2021 where we were able to come together and share our practice with the group. Before that I didn't know Cathy. I think it is valuable to show the whole picture that A+G has supported the development of my practice hugely, and the seed of this project was planted in this process. The mentorship and producer advice and the creative conversations we have had, are the kinds of support emerging art professionals like myself need. For example, just for this Eros project, the A+G producers had three meetings and many emails with me to discuss the idea and provide feedback for the application. It is also valuable to capture the outcomes of the support A+G has offered, which can often slip through the busy schedule. I also sincerely want to say that it is actually very unique of A+G to provide so much support for artists who are having less opportunities or early in their career. I am not aware of this kind of program in other arts centres in Canberra, and if there is any opportunity to demonstrate that in the new funding model that would be awesome.'* – Zora Pang, Live Art Lab Resident

## SENSORY ART LAB

*'Just wanted to say we took our 4 1/2 year old to the Sensory Art Lab on Friday. We loved it! We loved all of it - the interactiveness of it, the use of all senses, the fun for all ages! We'd love to see more of these events and more widely advertised. I work at a specialist school and would love to take students to similar events in the future. Loved it all!! Looking forward to similar events in the future.'* Sensory Art Lab parent attendee

## COMMUNITY ARTIST

*'My name is Vaidehi Subramanyan and I am a Canberra-based Bharatanatyam (South Indian classical) dancer. While I dedicatedly practise my art form, I had very little experience seeking opportunities to perform and putting together productions (and all the administration that goes along with that!) before reaching out to Ainslie + Gorman Arts Centre. As I do not come from a dance school in Canberra, I am a solo artist with only few contacts in the arts community. A+G were incredibly warm, friendly and supportive during my initial conversations with them, and quickly developed an understanding of my dance practice. Accordingly, they provided insights and ideas to me as to how I can transform my artistic practice into a profession, and offered administrative and financial support for me when possible and particularly helpful for me to realise those ideas. Currently, I am putting together a solo production with A+G's support, and it has been a pleasure working with them to do this.'* – Vaidehi Subramanyan, independent community artist

## AINSLIE SALON CONCERT SERIES

*'It was amazing!!! Such a brilliant performance and so great in the arts Centre which has a unique vibe. I hadn't listened to Liars much before, but it was the best act I've seen for a long time. I wish more people knew or whatever. At the end, many people were obviously impressed as there were so many poorly buying lps and merch. The sound was great too. This is the kind of thing I wish that larger community events did as well for example Enlighten in recent years has been crap for music or art performance. Liars was just so brilliant... worthy of a large audience and absolutely in fitting and a great initiative of our local community arts centre!'* Ainslie Salon Attendee

*'My name is Angus Andrew and I've been a practicing artist/musician and performer since the inception of my project 'Liars' in the year 2000. Despite having performed all over the world in cities as far flung as Sao Paulo and Beijing, my project Liars had never once been asked to perform in Canberra. The opportunity presented to us was incredibly special and the experience we had earlier this year performing at Ainslie and Gorman was something I'll treasure for the rest of my career. Most importantly, I know that the families young and old in attendance had their minds blown! Please do all you can to support the team there at A+G.'* – **Angus Andrew, musician and lead singer of LIARS**

*'Another night of amazing music at Ainslie Arts Centre. Electro art rock Liars - thuggish and propulsive drums, deranged electronic squiggles, and pulsating bass formed sonic bedrock for commanding chants, croons, and vocals from Angus Andrews (lineage: David McComb and Nick Cave). Support act Bree van Reyk on xylophone and Pheno on guitar magicked up soothing ambient atmospherics before whipping up a tempestuous maelstrom that, for me, marked the sweet spot of oblivion. I hope that there will be plenty more live gigs presented by A+G. The neglect and lack of support shown towards the arts by the previous federal government during the Covid period was simply appalling. It's great to see A+G supporting these artists at this point in time and also providing a much needed live venue for musicians who wouldn't be able to sell out The Street Theatre or the Canberra Theatre. It's been a real pleasure to see these artists in action, to chat with them at the merch table, and to buy their vinyl (though, sadly, Liars ran out of vinyl to sell; the person in front of me bought the last copy!'* – **Stephen, Ainslie Salon Attendee**

*'I'm writing to endorse the Ainslie Salon at Ainslie + Gorman. My experience with the A+G team on June 25th this year as part of my Australian Tour, was nothing short of extremely professional and super friendly. While I was planning/booking this tour (I am based in the UK) all email correspondence was thorough and very reassuring. There was no need for me to worry about whether my requirements would be met - from ground transportation, accommodation, backline, tech rider etc. Everything was looked after brilliantly. Also, the promotion for the show (online and radio) allowed for the audience to be introduced to my music which was fantastic. I felt that Ainslie Salon was a perfect introduction for me performing in Canberra for the first time.'* – **Penelope Trappes, Sound Artist**