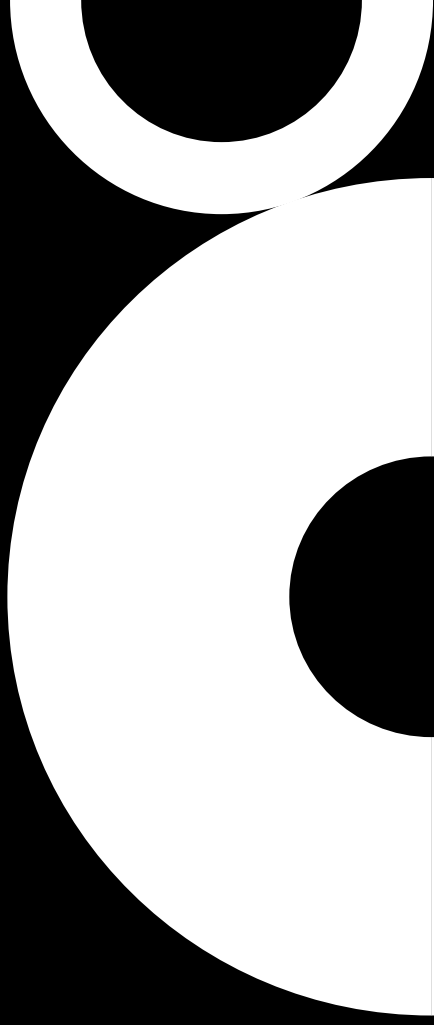


# ANNUAL REPORT 2020





**Hawthorn berries at Gorman.** Photograph by Rebecca Worth.

Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres (A+G)  
stand on Ngunnawal Country.

Arts Capital acknowledges the Ngunnawal  
and Ngambri people and their Elders  
past and present, whose rich history and  
culture have contributed to and continue  
to enrich the life of our region.

Sovereignty was never ceded.





Jake Silvestro's show 'December'. Photograph by Martin Ollman.

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Violin maker at Gorman. Photograph by Rebecca Worth

# About Us

**Arts Capital is a not-for-profit company and registered charity that mobilises cultural, human and financial resources in the service of a better future. Building on a decades-long history of ethical engagement with local creative communities, we challenge artists and audiences to do more than decorate the status quo. Working with dedicated partners, we invest in people, places and projects in ways that enable bold creative encounters to happen.**

Centred in the nation's capital, we are committed to the fine-grained potential of a "great and beautiful city" fit for robust democracy. Through the cultural precincts we manage and the urban sites we activate, we are alive to the needs of our immediate community while connected to a global network of creative cities.

Formed in March 2020, Arts Capital inherits and expands on the work of its predecessor organisation, Gorman House Arts Centre Incorporated.

# About Our Arts Centres

**Ainslie and Gorman are twin arts centres located in heritage buildings in the heart of Canberra. Together they offer the national capital's professional artists and arts companies a vibrant home in which creative development, collaboration, debate, education and performance can thrive.**

Ainslie Arts Centre is devoted to music. Five key music organisations - Canberra International Music Festival, Luminescence Chamber Singers, Music for Canberra, Musica Viva and Australian National Eisteddfod – make it their base. These acclaimed companies are an indispensable part of the ACT's music landscape, helping shape its present and future. Ainslie also offers the opportunity for music-lovers to meet music-makers through public performances, rehearsals and education.

Gorman Arts Centre is where artists from a wide variety of disciplines and practices can meet in an inspiring, stimulating and inclusive environment. Gorman is home to more than 40 studios for resident artists, five major arts organisations and a co-working space. It also provides spaces that can be hired for development residencies, exhibitions and performances.

Gorman Arts Centre opened in 1981 in the repurposed Gorman House, constructed in 1924 to provide housing for young public servants. Ainslie Arts Centre, which joined Gorman in 2009, inhabits the former Ainslie Public School, which dates from 1927.

We are intensely proud of our guardianship of these important Canberra buildings, which now have a new history to sit alongside the old. Gorman Arts Centre ushered in a 40-year history of supporting the arts in Canberra; Ainslie this year celebrates its 20th anniversary as an arts centre. Together we are tireless advocates for our artists and remain dedicated to fostering a dynamic creative community that responds to our place in the 21st century and enriches the lives of all Canberrans.





Wisteria in the Gorman Courtyards. Photograph by Rebecca Worth.



# Purpose

We cultivate inspiring places that enable creative encounters to happen

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## **GOAL 1**

### CREATIVE PLACES:

To sustain vibrant arts centres as supportive and stimulating places for artists and arts organisations committed to excellence.

## **GOAL 2**

### SHARED CULTURAL EXPERIENCES:

To involve more people in shared cultural experiences.

## **GOAL 3**

### ART FOR OUR TIME:

To facilitate critical dialogue between audiences, and across disciplines.

## **GOAL 4**

### RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP:

To manage our facilities and resources efficiently and responsibly.

## **GOAL 5**

### PROMOTION AND ADVOCACY:

To promote our residents and to advocate on their behalf

## **GOAL 6**

### CIVIC ENGAGEMENT:

To contribute to the cultural life of the region through innovative partnerships.

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# + Vision

To sustain vibrant arts centres as  
supportive and stimulating places for  
artists and arts organisations committed  
to excellence.

Performance of 'December'. Supplied by Jake Silvestro.



## Chair's Letter

**The last twelve months have challenged everyone and brought into acute focus what we have and what we have to lose. The arts have been forced to fight for its existence like never before and few organisations and individuals have escaped unscathed. With the overwhelming support of our community, Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres have endured, with an unwavering focus on ensuring our local arts sector continues to have a vibrant and supportive home in the centre of the national capital.**

In 2020 our organisation delivered significant changes and achievements that we believe will not only see the two important arts centres we manage thrive into the future, but also extend the reach and impact of our work. The Board has completed the successful governance transition from our previous association to a new company limited by guarantee, Arts Capital. We established new resident advisory groups, and we recruited four new Board Members with a diverse range of skills that will strengthen our ability to advocate for our residents and the wider arts sector.

We also moved an important step closer to our goal of achieving centenary renovations, with architects appointed to develop plans for both Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres, and \$8 million pledged during the Territory election towards capital works at Gorman Arts Centre by 2024. Future capital

works investments will ensure that our historically significant buildings receive a much-needed refurbishment to provide a safer, better functioning environment for our community and realise their full potential as hubs for artistic excellence and community participation.

The Board would like to express our thanks to Arts Capital's many residents, program partners, hirers and supporters for their trust and support during a difficult year, in which we advocated strenuously for the benefit of the arts sector and quickly adapted our programs and services. I would also like to thank the ACT Government, and the staff at artsACT, for providing new financial support in the form of rent relief and a COVID subsidy to offset a sharp and sudden decline in earned income.

I would also like to convey the Board's gratitude and ongoing support for the team at Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres and acknowledge their extraordinary effort over the last year to keep going in a time of great uncertainty. Every member of staff under the leadership of Joseph Falsone displayed their dedication to the organisation and to the broader arts community.

The future is bright, and the Board is dedicated to working with staff, residents and the ACT Government in the COVID recovery period and beyond, to ensure we leave these arts centres in great shape for generations to come.

Mark Van Veen  
Chair Arts Capital





The Ralph Wilson Theatre. Photograph by Andrew Sikorski.



## CEO's Letter

**Writing an annual report from a place of relative safety and privilege in early 2021, it would be easy to overinflate the drama of Arts Capital's pandemic year to impress on the reader how, heroically, our arts centres rose to the occasion in dire circumstances. To do so would be to ignore the immense suffering and disruption that COVID-19 has caused, and continues to cause, in the world. It would also overlook the real distress of neighbours and colleagues, including artists, whose livelihoods remain uncertain. As a not-for-profit company that employs people and creates opportunities for so many, Arts Capital's first annual report tells the story of our own modest role in adapting to the local crisis and helping others. But the first word in our 2020 narrative must be one of gratitude.**

We operate by good fortune in a community that values the arts enough, and can afford the resources, to sustain arts and cultural organisations through financial crisis, and that has so far largely avoided a major health crisis. Our facilities and services would not have survived the year without large government subsidies, and without the efforts of the dedicated staff, volunteers, residents, partners, and supporters who advocated on our behalf and sustained our work in 2020.

In our sphere of work, Arts Capital was active in crisis, responding swiftly to the emerging pandemic, and prioritising the safety of staff, residents and visitors at Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres. In February, we re-convened a crisis management team that had only just stood down from the summer bushfire smoke response and began timely, clear, and regular communication with our residents and community. By year's end we had produced or reviewed as many as 160 COVID-19 event safety plans and significantly altered our operations through additional equipment, supplies and services.

We adapted our artist development programs (Artists Toolkit and Live Art Lab) to meet the distinct needs of artists during COVID-19, and to be more inclusive and diverse. Through tailored individual support as well as wide sharing of resources through online forums, we responded to the practical and financial needs of artists as well as providing guidance and support. New programs such as POST: ART responded to the lockdown moment, and we supported staff through new, flexible working from home arrangements that have continued in hybrid form.

We advocated strongly on behalf of Ainslie and Gorman residents, immediately pledging three months' rent relief while advocating strenuously and successfully for nine months' full relief from the ACT Government for all resident

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**“...the first word in our 2020 narrative must be one of gratitude.”**

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artists and organisations. This effort was assisted by more than 50 letters of the support from users of the centres appealing directly to the ACT Government. Rent relief proved to be a vital form of support for residents, making the difference between continuing to operate or not. Our programs team also assisted in coordinating the Canberra Artists Action Group, which has served as an important source of information and guidance for local artists. Working beyond the moment, we made significant progress in 2020 on our long-term goals. Our governance reform project culminated in the registration of Arts Capital as a company limited by guarantee and charity. Four new board members joined the team, and our first resident advisory group meetings were held under our new constitution. 2020 also moved us an important step closer to comprehensive renovations anticipated to coincide with the centenaries of our heritage-listed Ainslie and Gorman buildings. Philip Leeson Architects was appointed by artsACT in September 2020 to work towards final sketch plans for both centres, and a welcome commitment of \$8 million was secured from ACT Labor during the October 2020 Territory election campaign to support Gorman Arts Centre’s renovation by 2024. Our team also took the first step towards the comprehensive strategic planning that will take place in 2021, by participating in a creative program visioning project led by Melbourne-based artist, producer and facilitator Dan Koop.

Our financial story for 2020 is one of crisis averted. Despite a 37% decline in income compared to 2019, a combination of ACT Government and Australian Government COVID-19 subsidies left us in a strong position at 31 December 2020, with historically high reserves. With the expiry of all direct COVID-19 support in 2021, and earned incomes slow to return to pre-COVID levels, our reserves are expected to erode rapidly in 2021 and we will need to renegotiate core funding ahead of the expiry of our Key Arts Organisation Deed of Grant at the end of the year.

One of the most discerning statements made about the pandemic in 2020 was, to my mind, the observation of Atlantic journalist Ed Yong: “We long to return to normal, but normal led to this.” As we reinvent the role of Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres in close conversation with our community, ahead of the centenaries in 2024 and 2027, we will seek to use our privileged role as custodians of arts and cultural resources to do what the arts do best — to connect with what matters most deeply in life, and creatively interrogate the way we live now in the service of a better future. On an organisational level, as we return to the “normal” of longstanding funding and infrastructure arrangements, we will continue to advocate for reform and work cooperatively with the ACT Government to develop and achieve a shared vision for a flourishing ACT arts sector.



**Joseph Falsone**  
CEO Arts Capital

# Creating Value

— 2016  
2020 2020

Key Arts Organisation funding received:	\$1,461,968	\$298,264
Other income generated (excluding COVID-19 subsidies)	\$4,987,559	\$711,050
Value of employment created for artsworkers	\$3,871,943	\$942,586
New ongoing full or part-time arts jobs created	12	0
New casual arts jobs created	22	0
Value of A+G rental subsidies for artists + arts orgs (based on estimated market rent)*	\$1,803,687	\$574,017
Cash income generated for artists	\$555,265	\$71,022
In-kind program support given to artists	\$342,709	\$28,613
In-kind support given to resident programs	\$110,788	\$14,871
Number of artists engaged in programs	3,813	162
Performances and events	485	50
Arts and cultural program visitors	422,483	46,833
Ainslie Arts Centre visitors (door count)	346,833	54,551
New works supported	248	12
Visiting artist residencies (staying on-site)	55	1
Combined social media following of A+G and residents	240,179	251, 102+

\* 2020 figure includes ACT Government rent relief



## We leverage core funding

In 2019 (pre-COVID), for each \$1 of additional Key Arts Organisation funding provided by the ACT Government (compared to a baseline of 2016), Arts Capital generated an additional **\$24.50 in other income**.

## We grow creative industries

Between 2016 and 2020, for every \$1 of Key Arts Organisation funding provided to us, we delivered:

**\$2.65 in employment**  
for arts and cultural workers

**\$1.23 in rental subsidies**  
for creative industries

**38 cents in cash income**  
for artists

**23 cents of in-kind program support** for  
artists

**8 cents in programming support**  
for our residents

## We create jobs

In five years, we have created:

**12**  
new ongoing full- or part-time  
jobs for arts workers

**22**  
new casual technical or  
front-of-house jobs

## Since 2016, our programs have supported—

**422,483**  
event and venue  
hire visitors

**3,813**  
artists

**485**  
public events

**248**  
new works

**56**  
visiting interstate  
/international artists

In 2020, we supported 49 resident  
artists and organisations.



Virtual session of Artists Toolkit program. Photograph by Rebecca Worth.

# Highlights in a Covid Year

## CONNECTING IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

Lockdown restrictions designed to slow the spread of COVID-19 in Australia began in mid-March 2020. Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres closed their doors on 23 March. We moved from onsite offices to working from home and made it our priority to connect with artists and the public virtually. There was a staggered re-opening, with both centres fully operational again by 12 October.

We responded to the challenges presented by COVID-19 by quickly moving to online delivery of Artists Toolkit workshops and services to respond to the dire funding needs of the devastated arts community.

Our studio residents and arts organisations also shifted to providing online classes and one-on-one tutorials for their individual communities.

We continued to convene our Ainslie and Gorman resident advisory group meetings via online conferencing, working together to ensure our centres remained safe and serving our community in a unique crisis with open and clear communication.

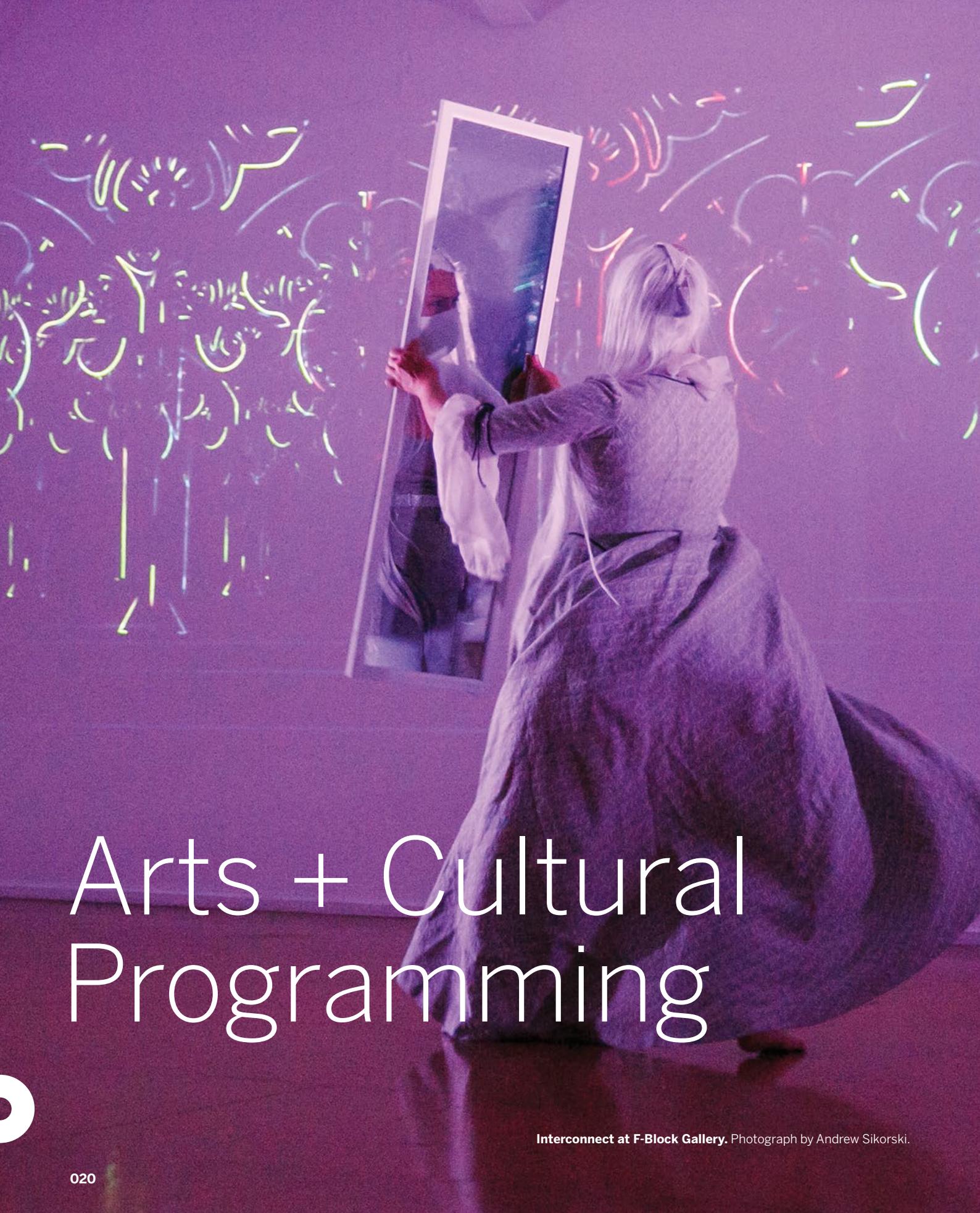
The resident and staff community continued to connect by congregating virtually and in increasing numbers at our weekly online yoga sessions despite the cancellation of the rest of the arts centres' community calendar.

Our online connection with artists and the public expanded in size and geographical reach during 2020 with more than 14,000 users accessing our website and a 9% increase in audiences across all social media platforms. The numbers were driven by our expanded online programming, the most important being Artists Toolkit, which equips practitioners with information and resources to help them develop sustainable careers.

## ADAPTING TO DISTANCE

The expansion of our digital programming began with the need to deliver accessible resourcing programs to the creative community. Programs such as Artists Toolkit provided continuity and timely assistance to artists and creatives who were experiencing economic hardship, while our Live Art Lab artists were provided with flexible working arrangements to allow all participants to feel safe. Our team created livestream and video conferencing resources that were directly relevant to creatives and prioritised accessibility for all users.





# Arts + Cultural Programming

Interconnect at F-Block Gallery. Photograph by Andrew Sikorski.



Despite the challenges presented by COVID-19, in 2020 Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres continued our mandate to cultivate supportive places for the arts by offering additional opportunities. Our ongoing Artists Toolkit program, founded in 2018 as a capacity-building initiative funded by artsACT, was joined by new development residencies Kids x Art and Live Art Lab, which were launched in the second half of 2020.

### LIVE ART LAB

A creative development residency for experimental artists, Live Art Lab fosters creative exchange and practice development, facilitates professional network pathways and enables well-chosen mentorships. Canberra-based or Canberra-connected artists Zev Aviv, Hanna Cormick, Mills DC and Sophia Dacy-Cole were the program's first participants. The works undertaken included trans body and queer experience; investigating physical vocabularies for wheelchair-enabled bodies; and curating a culinary experience that encourages community-building and space for hard conversations. Alongside in-kind venue and producer support, the program welcomed mentors Lara Thoms (Artistic Director of Aphids), Jen Rae (Director of Fair Share Fare), Kate Sulan (Artistic Director of Rawcus Theatre), Marc Brew (Artistic Director of Marc Brew Company), Angus McGrath (independent artist) and M'ck McKeague (independent artist).

Live Art Lab financially supported artists as they explored new ways of working. Total artist fees paid by the project came to \$8,000. Mentor fees were an additional \$3,000.

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**“The opportunity to work with a mentor, especially an interstate artist who is further along in their practice than I am, is, on its own, rare in the ACT. To have that mentor be someone who also has insight into who I am as a queer artist is invaluable. To be given access to new ideas and have my own questioned by an external eye is an invaluable opportunity for me in the development of a new cohesive practice.”**

— Zev Aviv

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### KIDS X ART

Kids x Art is a program devoted to the development of art for young people. In September 2020 Pablo Latona became our inaugural 2020 Kids x Art resident. A funsmith and performer with a background in circus, Pablo took up residence in a studio at Gorman Arts Centre to develop art programs for the “in-betweeners” age group straddling childhood and adolescence. Dedicated to developing arts engagement with children and young people, Kids x Art provides studio space, stipend and connection with professional mentors. Pablo was given access to mentors Sue Giles AM (Artistic Director/Co-CEO of Polyglot) and theatre-maker, director, and teaching artist Samara Hersch.

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**“The regular check-ins with producers have been invaluable – helping me to design and tweak my processes, helping to clarify my ideas and thoughts, and always asking excellent questions. [They] also worked hard to find me two excellent mentors... industry leaders whose expertise I wouldn't have had access to without this residency. They've helped me to create more sustainable and sustaining working practices; they've offered useful tools from their years of experience; and they've given me more confidence in designing creative experiences for kids.”**

— Pablo Latona

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### SPOTLIGHT: ARTISTS TOOLKIT

The Artists Toolkit program supported artists to develop meaningful and sustainable careers. Funded by artsACT as a capacity building initiative for the arts, Artists Toolkit offered workshops, individual consultations (Toolkit Chats), and industry resources to ACT-based or ACT-connected artists from a variety of disciplines and career stages.

**In its third year, the Artists Toolkit program swiftly moved to virtual delivery of a revised program in response to COVID-19. Between February and October the program reached thousands of artists. There were nine workshops and Q+A sessions, 57 one-to-one Toolkit Chats dedicated to providing personalised feedback to artists from every region of the ACT, and we developed a series of online resources prioritising accessibility. Toolkit Chats consultations helped artists navigate the impact of COVID-19 on their practice and to identify ways in which they could continue to engage in their practice during the pandemic. The program targeted diverse audiences, with 30% identifying from a culturally diverse background, 20% LGBTQI+ and 15% identifying as having a disability.**

The 2020 workshop program started with our first guest-facilitated session, Visual Thinking, led by Sarah Firth. When lockdown started in March, the workshops quickly responded with sessions focusing on how to access immediate government support. Particularly popular was our partnership with Sophie Trevitt from Canberra Community Law, a livestream Centrelink for Artists session that reached more than 12,000 viewers. Centrelink for

Artists was notable for reaching our major peer arts organisations nationwide and provided the local and national artistic community with clarity on how to access JobKeeper and JobSeeker programs within an arts income context.

The workshop program also included:

- Arts Futuring with Clare Cooper;
- Accounting for Artists by Peter Bayliss;
- and five targeted grant writing workshops including sessions for LGBTIQ+ artists and artists of colour.

Grant writing workshops became the key to engaging with audiences in an inclusive way. We partnered with Meridian (formally AIDS Action Council) and First Nations facilitator Art Oracle (Erica McCalman) to run workshops for LGBTIQ+ artists and artists of colour respectively. Delivered in a culturally safe space, these workshops provided valuable opportunities for participants to form networks with other similarly identifying artists.

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**“The session was so affirming and encouraging and has led to enormously practical outcomes.”**

— Toolkit Chats participant

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**Right: Artists Toolkit.** Supplied by Sarah Firth.





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## NEW OPPORTUNITIES

New arts programs created by the ACT Government allowed Arts Capital to engage our Ainslie and Gorman residents in novel projects. They included the POST: ART project, developed as part of the Events ACT-funded Where You Are Festival. A+G secured funding for a collaborative art project that invited the community to respond to the theme of lost and found. POST: ART engaged four resident artists - Genevieve Swifte (visual artist), Lucy Alexander (writer), Paul Summerfield (digital artist) and Lil Paterson (filmmaker) - to create new works in response to submissions received by post from the community. It also provided income support through artist fees and project support from our creative producers. The project also engaged another resident artist, photographer Andrew Sikorski, to document and share more than 70 community submissions and the completed artworks via a custom virtual gallery built by our marketing and communications team. Artists involved in the POST: ART project received a total of \$10,000 in income.

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**“I lived and breathed the project for a couple of weeks... I liked the ‘privacy’ of being in a group of collective thoughts. I like the idea of artists interpreting and adapting the contribution in your respective genre.”-**

— POST: ART community participant

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Arts Capital also joined with Canberra Artists Action Group, ABC Canberra, Belconnen Arts Centre and Tuggeranong Arts Centre to form Create Curious, a shared virtual creative program that provided paid opportunities for local creatives to share their projects or run workshops online or through local ABC radio programs. From our network of Ainslie and Gorman resident creatives, we engaged dancer and choreographer Liz Lea, and Alison Plevy of Australian Dance Party, to present innovative works via ABC radio.

## OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT

Our planned 2020 public programming was disrupted by the temporary closure of our centres, COVID-19 restrictions, and our commitment to keeping our community safe. We adapted our venue hire policies and enabled external and resident hirers to cancel or postpone activities and events without charge. The cost of absorbing these cancellations was just over \$170,000 across a total of 116 bookings. The majority of our regular hirers had begun to return by the end of 2020 as restrictions eased and our centres re-opened.

## OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP

Late 2020 saw Programs and Marketing teams undertake a series of strategic visioning workshops and activities with Melbourne-based producer, artist and facilitator Dan Koop, beginning with thorough reflections on our place, purpose and community responsibility. This enabled articulation of new priorities and imagining new possibilities for our future a preliminary step towards the major strategic planning and centenary renewal planning exercise slated for 2021.



# Partnerships + Events





Through our cross-sector programming, Arts Capital has continued to connect and support specialised programs for audiences locally and nationally. Activating urban green space, fostering young writers and playwrights, creative arts festivals, and creating contemplative spaces for one-on-one musical performances were just some of the outcomes of our 10 major creative partnerships in 2020.

### CITY RENEWAL AUTHORITY

After Arts Capital's success in 2019 as the creative program partner conceiving Haig Park Experiments for the City Renewal Authority in a project partnership with the University of Canberra, Tait Consulting and Dionysus, we extended our program and producing services to the City Renewal Authority for a series of 2020 events that welcomed the community back into public spaces post-lockdown. Movement Month brought activities as diverse as yoga and Bollywood sound and movement to the forested areas of the inner city, while the Pop Inn Wine Bar was an early player in bringing live music back to the capital. Paw Parties brought dog-lovers together and Fairy Garden building workshops blossomed in the leafy surrounds of Haig Park.

### MERIDIAN AND ALL THE QUEEN'S MEN

Stemming from our 2019 Ahead of the Game residency project, the 2020 Ainslie and Gorman program saw the continuation of our partnership with Meridian (formally Aids Action Council of the ACT), a key LGBTIQ+ health service and advocacy organisation, and award-winning Melbourne-based All the Queens Men. The LGBTIQ+ Elders Dance Club program conceived by All the Queens Men put down roots at A+G, staging Canberra's first monthly dance event for the LGBTIQ+ elders' community in a COVID-safe, inclusive space. This series will continue in 2021.

### UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA, CBRIN AND PWC

In November, our F-block gallery played host to the Festival of Creativity: Creative Disruption. This was staged in collaboration with the Arts and Design Faculty of University of Canberra, the Canberra Innovation Network, and Lightbulb in a PwC-led initiative. Designed to explore how creativity is relevant and necessary to the business world, A+G's session led by Dr Kate Murphy (aka Ellis Hutch) articulated how the language of art helps us see, think and interact in more creative and generative ways. The sessions attracted in-house audiences from business and creative industries and were live streamed nationwide.


### ANU SCHOOL OF ART AND DESIGN

November also saw MoneyLab #X Economythologies take over F-block Futures gallery with a symposium on the radical reimagination of money and economic systems. The experimental two-day program of presentations, talks, conversations and performances was accompanied by exhibitions of bold works from students from the ANU School of Art and Design, and broadcast from Gorman Arts Centre.

### EXPRESS MEDIA

Arts Capital jumped at the chance to work again with Express Media to present Making Tracks: Canberra, a travelling pop-up workshop series and zine publication aimed at developing the work of young writers in Australia. Ainslie Arts Centre hosted three of the four weekend workshops that were facilitated by local writer Lauretta Flack with special guest and author Zoya Patel. The final session took place virtually as our centres temporarily closed their doors.

**Right: Forest of Light at Haig Park.** Photograph by Sarah Hope.



### **CANBERRA YOUTH THEATRE**

In 2020 we worked even more closely with Gorman Arts Centre resident Canberra Youth Theatre to provide significant in-kind venue support for its Emerging Artists Program activities and producer support for its ongoing Resident Artists Program. This 12-month residency supports three emerging theatre-makers to develop their theatre practice through workshops, creative developments and mentorships, and creating professional pathways and learning opportunities.

### **UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA**

Continuing a partnership that has borne fruit in numerous projects since 2017, we undertook another exciting collaboration with the University of Canberra in 2020. Interior design students from the university's design faculty were asked to reimagine the vast, vaulted F-block gallery space in innovative ways. Drawing from the centre's heritage past through to the present, the students envisioned many possible futures for the space and, with Centenary Renovation planning in sight, a world of tangible change.





# Supported Work

Interconnect at F-Block Gallery. Photograph by Andrew Sikorski.

Arts Capital provides significant in-kind venue and producer support to the arts and cultural sector. In 2020, we supported the development of new works including:

#### DECEMBER BY JAKE SILVESTRO

Acrobat, tumbler and visual artist Jake Silvestro spent two weeks at Gorman developing his latest show, December. Combining the artist's visual arts practice with physical theatre and circus, December responds to the catastrophic 2019-2020 bushfire season. The project received seed funding from artsACT while Arts Capital provided in-kind venue support, artist income and technical support for an industry showing ahead of work-in-progress performances at the Melbourne Fringe Festival in November.

#### INTERCONNECT BY BINDU PROJECT

The Bindu Project brought dance, design and devotion to F Block with their show Interconnect as part of the Design Canberra Festival. A series of multicultural dance performances took place in immersive sets of light and sound and explored spiritual and design connections between Hindu mythology and Canberra's concentric design.

#### RHINOCEROS DEVELOPMENT BY SAMMY MOYNIHAN

A project by Sammy Moynihan based on Ionesco's Rhinoceros took place in the Ralph Wilson Theatre, supported by artsACT. Involving a group of artists living with a disability, the project deconstructed Ionesco's play, refracting it through the lens of non-normative bodies and improvisations. A+G provided venue support for the project's development and established mentor connections with Bruce Gladwin, Artistic Director of internationally acclaimed Back-to-Back Theatre.

#### 1:1 CONCERTS

At Gorman, a series of concerts put one musician and one listener together for a remarkable private concert. Established in Germany in response to the arts' economic downturn during COVID-19, the concept has blossomed worldwide through a collaboration of musicians and venue partners. Alongside Old Parliament House and other major institutions, Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres hosted a series of concerts which have raised a combined total of \$20,000 income for artists undergoing economic hardship.

# 2020 Residents

2020 saw the coming and going of residents across both centres, including the arrival of national music organisation Musica Viva to Ainslie Arts Centre and the addition of new independent studio artist Cam Smith to Gorman.

In February, we farewelled decades-long Gorman resident Canberra Contemporary Art Space, working closely with the CCAS board and staff to support their relocation to new premises in the parliamentary triangle ahead of a final move to the planned Kingston Arts Precinct.

We also farewelled glass artist and former board member Carole Griffiths, whose commitment to our community and years of voluntary service to our organisation are greatly appreciated. Music ACT vacated Ainslie Arts Centre in February, and studio residents Mary Kingsford and Genevieve Swifte also left their studios in 2020.



## Gorman Arts Centre

**ACT Writers Centre**

**Art Atelier**

**Australian Dance Party**

**Ausdance ACT**

**Baha Agency**

**Bryn Evans**

**Cam Smith**

**Canberra Contemporary  
Art Space\***

**Canberra Youth Theatre**

**Carole Griffiths\***

**CAPO**

**Cathy Mauk**

**Cherylynn Holmes**

**Franki Sparke**

**Genevieve Swifte**

**Greg Cassagne**

**Halstead Press**

**Ham Darroch**

**James Judge**

**Jon Sommariva**

**Kimmo Vennonen**

**Kirsten Biven**

**Lucy Alexander**

**Mark Cranfield**

**Michael Desmond**

**Michelle Dickerson**

**Musicale**

**Nancy Sever Gallery\***

**Nicci Haynes**

**Mary Kingsford\***

**Pat Campbell**

**Paul Summerfield**

**Penelope Leishman\***

**Penny Hardy**

**Phoebe Porter**

**QL2**

**Rebus Theatre**

**Sage & Mint**

**Stephen Hicks**

**Stuart McMillen**

**Mark Searle**

**Weft Productions**

## Ainslie Arts Centre

**Australian National  
Eisteddfod**

**Canberra International  
Music Festival**

**Luminescence**

**Music ACT\***

**Music for Canberra**

**Musica Viva**

**Ruth O'Brien**

\*Vacated in 2020



**Nicci Haynes' artwork installation.** Photograph by Andrew Sikorski.

A photograph of a theater stage. In the foreground, rows of red seats are visible, facing the stage. The stage floor is illuminated with a strong red light. In the background, the stage is lit with blue light, and two bright blue spotlights are visible on the stage. Above the stage, several stage lights are hanging from the ceiling, some of which are illuminated with blue light. The overall atmosphere is dramatic and theatrical.

# Place

## CENTENARY RENOVATIONS

In the long-term, the most significant event of 2020 for Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres may prove to be the appointment in September 2020 of Philip Leeson Architects to prepare costed, staged final sketch plans in 2021 for comprehensive renovations to both arts centres, fulfilling a 2019-20 ACT Government budget allocation. This momentum was backed by a welcome additional commitment from ACT Labor in the October Legislative Assembly election to prioritise renovations at Gorman Arts Centre by 2024 to the tune of \$8 million. Centenary renewal planning will be a key focus of our work in 2021.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health and safety were brought into strong focus in 2020. Our arts centres continued to prove extremely unaffordable to insure, with Public Liability Insurance costs in excess of \$70,000. Inflated premiums are the result of a long-term underinvestment in preventive maintenance and in 2020, we saw the first tangible outcomes of a 2019 Territory Budget commitment to address site safety at our centres. At the same time, a sharper focus on work, health and safety (WHS) saw the establishment of a new WHS working group and a new due diligence framework led by the Board.



## CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND COVID-19

Managing COVID safety proved an immense challenge at centres typically visited by more than 200,000 people per year. We convened a Crisis Management Team, rapidly implemented our COVID-19 Response Plan and led a staged COVID-safe reopening of our Centres that saw us return to being fully operational by October 2020.

The Crisis Management Team (CMT) was first established during the bushfire season that shrouded Canberra in smoke for nearly a month. As a result, the Centres remained closed for an additional five days beyond our normal holiday shut-down period as the facilities team worked to air-seal the buildings, provide air purifiers for offices and ensure a safe working environment. Our Centres reopened on Monday 13 January.

In February, following the rising number of cases of COVID-19 in Australia, the CMT began drafting an initial response plan that aligned with the public health advice from the ACT Health Directorate. The COVID Response Plan was implemented on 16 March. By 20 March there were four confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the ACT. We immediately

prioritised the health and safety of our residents, staff and arts centres' community, and on 23 March 2020, Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres closed to the public. All programs, events, classes and hires were suspended.

As of 30 March, the Australian Federal Government issued public health advice encouraging people to stay at home and only make essential trips. While Gorman studio artists were still permitted to work in their individual studios, there was a notably sharp decline in onsite attendance. By the start of April an estimated 90% of residents and staff had moved to working-from-home arrangements. Ainslie Arts Centre office residents who wished to continue working onsite were offered COVID-safe working spaces in spare offices at Gorman Arts Centre. Our primary Ainslie Arts Centre hirer and office resident Music for Canberra relocated its office and began their running its first music lessons at Gorman.

A dedicated facilities team remained as a skeleton staff in the Gorman office. Front-of-house staff and casual event staff were re-deployed to our facilities team to take on regular cleaning. As our Centres began to transition back to full capacity, we introduced daily sanitising of our venues.



**Violin maker's studio.** Photograph by Rebecca Worth.

## RETURNING TO OUR CENTRES

Emerging from the ACT's lockdown measures at the end of April, the Ainslie and Gorman COVID-safe plan was revised to detail our staged return, which took place in line with the ACT Health Directorate's guidelines.

By 1 June, Gorman Arts Centre began re-opening to the public for venue hires, the return of music lessons and small rehearsals by resident organisations. Ainslie Arts Centre re-opened in stages from July and was completely operational by 12 October. That heralded the repatriation to Ainslie of organisations that had taken up temporary residence at Gorman and an increase of venue hires at both centres.

Throughout the year, more than 160 COVID safety plans were prepared or reviewed for events and hires by our team.

## CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION

There was a silver lining to temporary closure of the centres. Our heritage facilities benefited from maintenance projects carried out in close consultation with artsACT, that included the partial renovation of the main toilet block at Gorman Arts Centre, comprehensive cleaning across both centres, decluttering of studios, and paint remediation work in our E-block studios at Gorman that brightened the walls and windows. Our centres became more secure with the replacement of locks and implementation of pin code access to shared amenities at Gorman Arts Centre.

We conducted a suite of electrical safety audits and implemented changes that included:

- Conducted electrical board thermal scans;
- Carried out residual current device (RCD) testing and tagging;
- Replaced outdated Eaton circuit breakers throughout both centres.

Work health and safety operational improvements included fully digitising our maintenance calendars, case management and reporting with the next stage of implementation of our MYBOS facilities management software. We also expanded our after-hours support by initiating a roster of staff to manage the Ainslie and Gorman after-hours response line.

## SITE SAFETY FUNDING

Arts Capital welcomed the much-anticipated commencement of site safety work for urgent repairs which began in July 2020. In consultation with artsACT, Arts Capital, AMA and ACT Property Group, high priority works were identified, and minor works were carried out including replacing bitumen paths at Gorman Arts Centre to improve safety and accessibility and making courtyard modifications to lessen the risk of slips, trips and falls.

## KEEPING US GREEN

Two nearly century-old Hawthorn trees stand at the heart of the Gorman Arts Centre courtyards. One required dedicated care from arborists after a series of wild weather events lashed the capital in 2020, causing far-reaching structural damage. Work to save the tree and safely reopen the West Courtyard, funded by artsACT, continued into 2021.

The beautiful heritage gardens continued to thrive during the long period of closure and beyond, tended to by our experienced staff.

Mowing and hedge-trimming responsibilities were taken back in-house, resulting in a dramatic improvement in the presentation of the outdoor heritage spaces. The installation of new Ecowise irrigation minimised our water usage, providing continued garden care with less environmental impact.







# Financial Reports



Plants by Jason. Photograph by Rebecca Worth.

## Financial Summary 2016 - 2020

Income	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Core grant	\$281,400	\$285,628	\$291,701	\$298,264	\$304,975
Sub-license fees	\$284,120	\$299,840	\$363,457	\$354,158	\$115,186
Coworking fees	\$45,000	\$47,973	\$62,141	\$68,803	\$35,962
Project grants	\$66,407	\$65,015	\$78,111	\$110,923	\$107,763
Venue hire	\$205,716	\$253,865	\$249,270	\$271,540	\$181,189
Programs	\$148,720	\$227,457	\$203,050	\$171,595	\$59,638
Ainslie car park	\$80,253	\$94,900	\$103,336	\$111,542	\$95,891
Fundraising	-	-	\$60,000	\$20,000	\$547
Cost recovery	\$32,794	\$36,905	\$61,329	\$150,361	\$76,744
Admin services	\$21,397	\$26,624	\$25,557	\$39,356	\$29,805
Other	\$2,692	\$1,812	\$2,211	\$1,934	\$1,434
	<b>\$1,168,499</b>	<b>\$1,340,019</b>	<b>\$1,500,163</b>	<b>\$1,598,475</b>	<b>\$1,009,134</b>

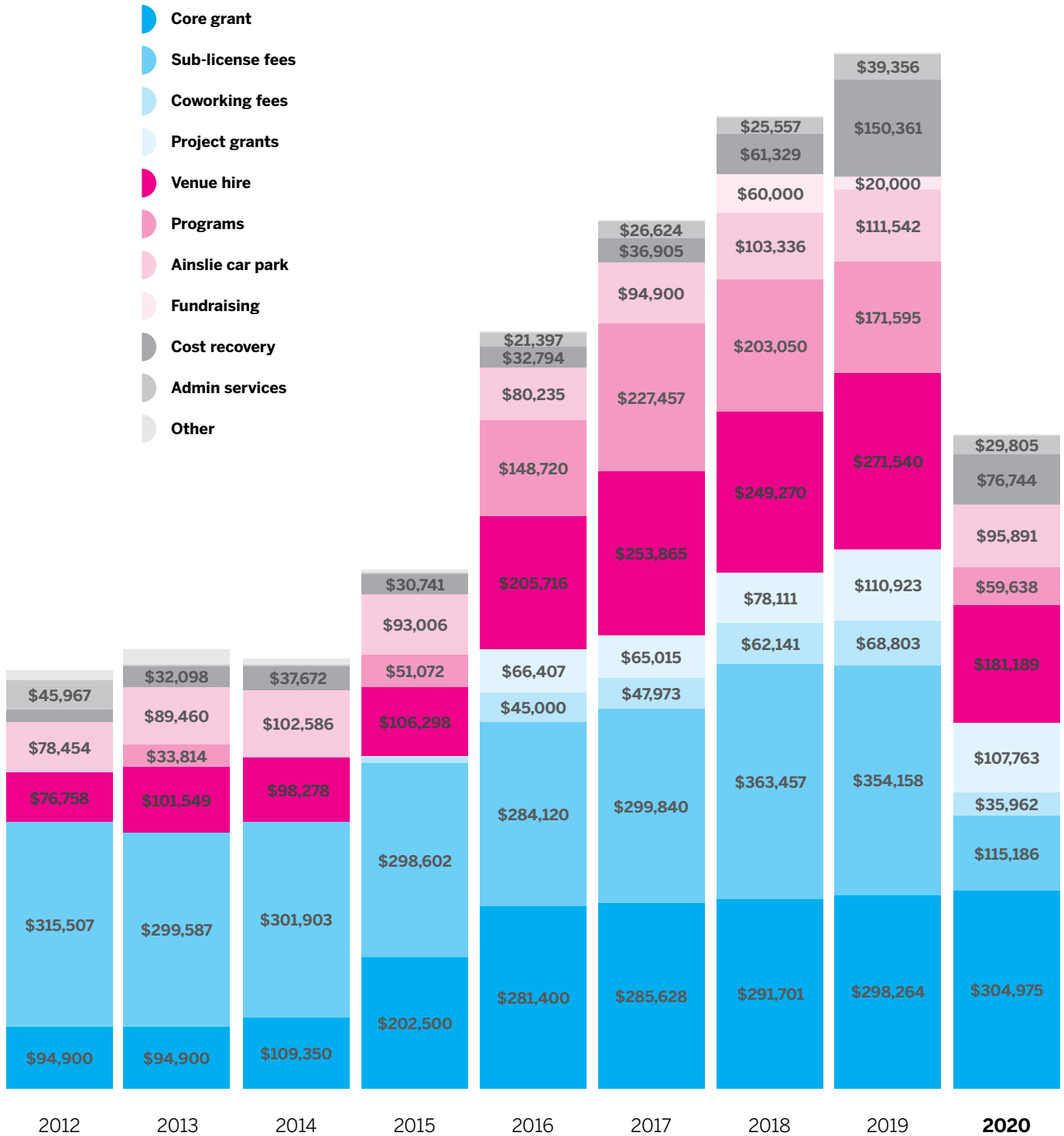
Expense	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Employment	\$586,989	\$720,336	\$738,503	\$883,529	\$942,586
Building services	\$105,602	\$136,201	\$160,069	\$223,901	\$138,251
Utilities	\$114,430	\$142,498	\$157,696	\$142,963	\$105,309
Administration	\$116,104	\$97,714	\$121,736	\$177,397	\$188,198
Programs	\$190,383	\$233,393	\$189,296	\$73,249	\$53,757
Other grant expenses	-	-	\$21,804	\$1,402	\$30,949
Sponsored projects & Fundraisers	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation	\$35,478	\$33,145	\$38,204	\$34,889	\$35,731
Marketing	-	\$36,294	\$15,374	\$28,522	\$38,471
Equipment	\$4,153	\$9,654	\$5,590	\$13,263	\$10,856
	<b>\$1,153,139</b>	<b>\$1,409,235</b>	<b>\$1,448,271</b>	<b>\$1,579,115</b>	<b>\$1,544,108</b>
	\$15,360	-\$69,216	\$51,892	\$19,360	-\$534,974

COVID-19 Subsidies					
Australian Tax Office					\$464,500
ACT Government rent relief					\$358,094
ACT Government crisis support					\$187,777
					<b>\$1,010,371</b>
<b>Net surplus</b>					<b>\$475,397</b>

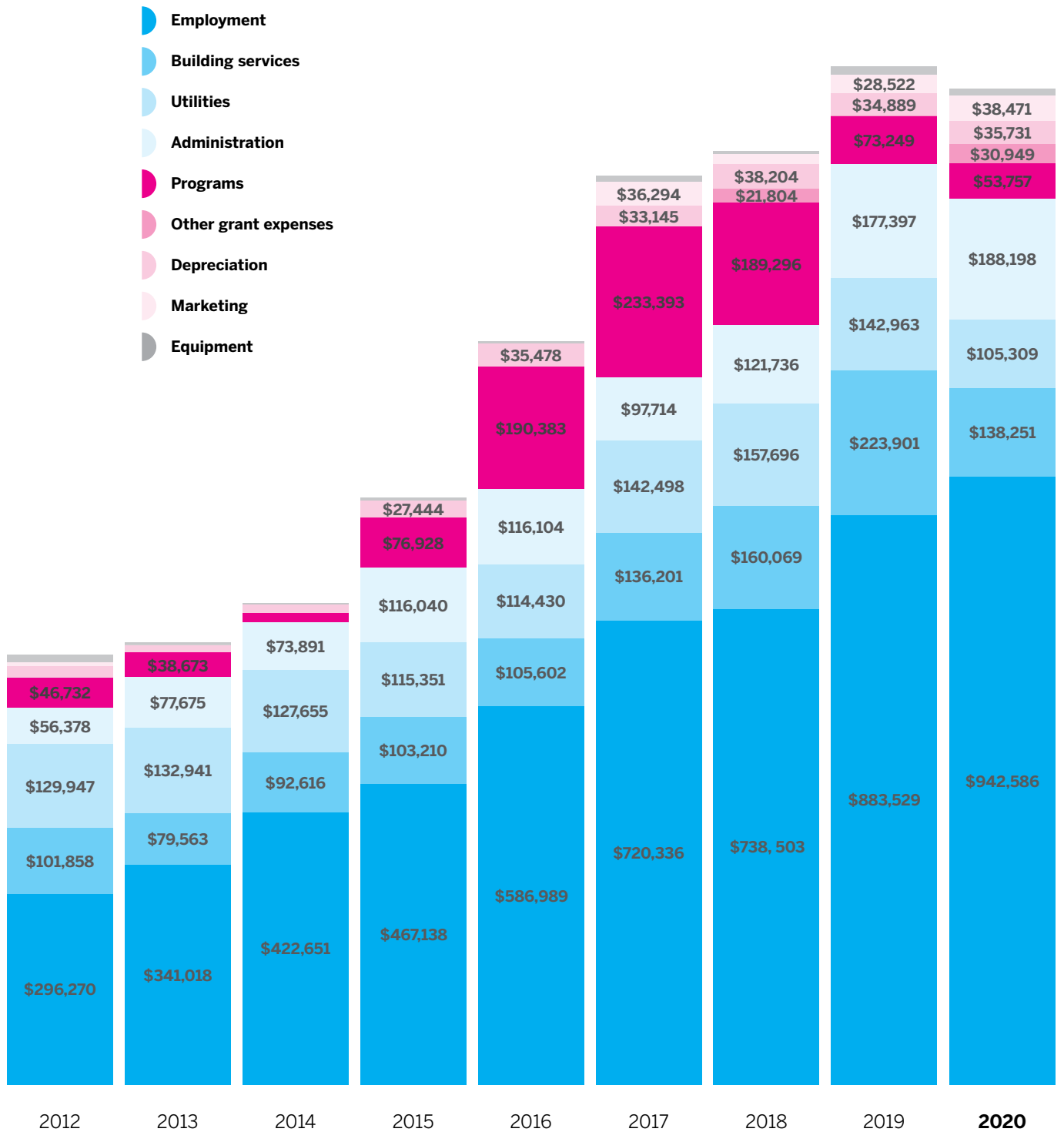


Total income by area  
2012-2020  
(excluding COVID-19 subsidies)

Financial Reports



## Total expenses by area 2012-2020



A woman in a white, flowing dress is shown in profile, reaching out towards a large, glowing, abstract line drawing on a wall. The drawing consists of numerous overlapping, swirling white lines that form a complex, organic shape. The woman's hands are positioned as if she is about to touch or manipulate the drawing. The background is a solid, deep red color, and the floor is dark and reflective. The overall lighting is warm and dramatic, with a strong red hue.

# Summary of Trends

The onset of COVID-19 left Arts Capital uniquely exposed to financial risk among ACT key arts organisations given our comparatively low level of core funding (only 19% of total revenue in 2019), and the scale and complexity of our facility management responsibilities, with 50 residents in nine buildings, and an estimated 200,000+ visitors annually.



**In previous years, our success in growing and diversifying earned income had proved our resilience while waiting for arts funding reform and had also demonstrated intense community demand for our venues and services. This strength became a vulnerability overnight when in April 2020 we saw our largest ever one-month decline in income of 84%. At the same time, COVID safety necessitated an immediate increase in expenditure. Our cashflow projections for 2020 forecast potentially catastrophic losses within months, and we immediately reached out to the ACT Government to discuss potential support.**

The impact on resident artists and organisations was foremost in our minds. To forestall the possibility of vacancies due to hardship, we lobbied successfully for nine months' full rent relief for our residents to be underwritten by the ACT Government. We were also successful in applying for ACT Government crisis support of \$93,899 per arts centre. This effectively increased our key arts organisation grant to \$246,000 per arts centre in 2020 – still, in the midst of a pandemic, only a small fraction of the normal key arts organisation funding provided to comparable arts facilities in the ACT. Our charity status, and exposure to losses in earned income, however, also rendered us eligible for Commonwealth Government COVID subsidies through the JobKeeper and ATO Cashflow boost programs, which together accounted for 98% of the net surplus we eventually recorded in 2020.

Total 2020 income, before COVID-19 support, was \$1,009,134. This represented a decline of \$589,341, or 37% on the previous year's total income. Income declines were seen in all areas of the business (except for our key arts organisation grant, which increased 2% in line with the provisions of the deed of grant). Predictably, given the impact of lockdowns and restrictions, the hardest hit areas were our programs, down 65% on the previous year; sub-licence and coworking fees, down 64% on the previous year; and venue hire and functions, which declined by 33%.

Total 2020 expenditure declined by 2% on the previous year. Employment costs increased by 7%, inflated by JobKeeper wage top-ups and additional facilities staff costs to meet COVID safety requirements. Overall, an additional \$34,377 was spent directly on COVID-19 compliance, including increased cleaning and hygiene control measures. Utilities expenses declined by 26%, or \$37,654, due to the prolonged winter shutdown at Ainslie Arts Centre, when gas usage traditionally costs most.

COVID-19 subsidies totalled \$1,010,371 and came in four forms: ACT Government relief for residents of \$358,094; ACT Government crisis support of \$187,777; Australian Government JobKeeper payments of \$364,500; and ATO Cash Flow Boost payments of \$100,000.

Prior to receiving government COVID subsidies, our operating deficit was -\$534,974. With COVID-19 subsidies received, our net surplus for the year was \$475,397. While ACT Government support lifted our position to break-even territory, 98% of the surplus can be accounted for by Australian Government COVID-19 subsidies of \$464,500.

Total equity of \$736,149 at 31 December 2020 was consequently much higher than the \$260,752 recorded at the end of 2019. Without government support, it would clearly have been impossible to survive the year. While this is a reassuring result at the end of an extremely difficult and unpredictable year, our prospects for 2021 remain uncertain, as revenue from programs and sub-licence fees in particular have not returned to pre-COVID levels, even with the easing of restrictions and without further lockdowns. The expiry of all forms of COVID-19 support will see our reserves again put into serious question in 2021. In particular, the simultaneous expiry on 31 December 2020 of both rent relief and our head licences (which at the time of writing are continuing on a month-to-month holding-over basis) has contributed to a loss of sub-licensees that will significantly impact our income for the next financial year.

# Board + Staff

In March 2020 we launched Arts Capital Limited, a new not-for-profit company limited by guarantee and registered charity that now manages Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres. Previously Gorman House Arts Centre Incorporated, the new company is the result of a long and complex governance reform project that culminated in a successful special general meeting of the previous association's members in December 2019.

Four board vacancies were created by the transition to the new company. A national recruitment process was held in 2020. Arts Capital's constitution demands structural independence of board members and includes a new focus on diversity in board recruitment. We received an overwhelmingly positive response to our call-out for new members. Dr Jodie-Lee Trembath, Morwenna Collett, Elizabeth Harris and Sheridan Burnett were appointed as company directors and board members in December 2020.

#### ARTS CAPITAL'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS IN 2020:



##### **Mark van Veen**

Chair

- Arts and business management
- Curatorship and public programs
- Arts policy
- Artist (visual)



##### **Suzie Campbell**

Deputy Chair

- Formerly Director of Marketing, Development & Publications at the National Gallery of Australia, and the National Portrait Gallery
- Marketing & brand development
- Strategic planning in cultural institutions



##### **John MacCulloch**

Company Secretary

- Chartered Accountant
- Small business management
- Succession planning
- Business planning and restructuring



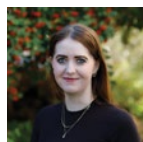
##### **Sheridan Burnett**

- Governance
- Exhibitions
- Grants and donations
- Insurance and risk management



##### **Morwenna Collett**

- Arts Policy
- Disability & Inclusion
- Strategic planning
- Arts programming



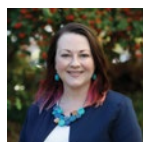
##### **Elizabeth Harris**

- Lawyer (practicing)
- Contracts and negotiation
- Digital arts advocate with Agora



##### **Eric Martin OAM**

- Architecture
- Heritage
- Building conservation
- Access & universal design



##### **Dr Jodie-Lee Trembath**

- Arts Policy & Research, currently Research project manager at ANA Think Tank
- Strategic planning
- Risk management

##### **Tim Langford**

- Marketing manager, national cultural institutions
- Arts marketing
- Event management
- Sponsorship and fundraising



## 2020 CORE STAFF

(at 31 Dec)

### **Director:**

Joseph Falsone

### **Business Manager:**

Adelin Chin

### **Program Manager:**

Adelaide Rief

### **Marketing Manager:**

Kristi Monfries

### **Facilities Manager:**

Mauro Aviles

### **Production Manager:**

Rebecca Poulter

### **Finance and Administration Officer:**

Dolly Prajapati

### **Strategic Planning Officer:**

Lachlan Johnson

### **Administration &**

### **Front of House Officers:**

Lara Kissin

Isabelle Sheppard

Ena Guo\*

### **Creative Producer:**

Rochelle Whyte

### **Associate Producer:**

Ketura Budd

### **Events and Venue Hire Coordinator:**

Elizabeth Curry

### **Venue Development Officer:**

Sia Ahmad

### **Weddings & Events Officer:**

Jenni Curry

### **Marketing Coordinator:**

Rebecca Worth

### **Maintenance Officer:**

Jason Burgess

\*Resigned in 2020

## 2020 CASUAL EVENT STAFF

Kelsey Bagust

Ketura Budd

Lea Collins

Clare Coman

Anni Doyle-Wawrzynczak

Minna Featherstone

Samantha Fox

Tegan Garnett

Charlotte Head

Brigette Honeyman

Jayne Hoschke

Christian Huff-Johnston

Talisha Jackson

Jesse Maxwell

Nick McCorriston

Tim Penkethman-Boxshall

Sarah Pritchard

Kyle Sheedy

Camille Struzina

Madeleine Warner

Liam Wong

Natsuko Yonezawa

**Right: Nicci Haynes' studio installation.** Photograph by Andrew Sikorski.



## THANK YOU

We have been fortunate to have worked with an exceptionally capable team during a significantly turbulent and uncertain year of change, without whom these centres would cease to function. We also gratefully acknowledge the timely financial support that we have received from artsACT that enabled us to continue our work.

Special thanks to our A+G community, whose feedback and words of support continue to encourage and enable our centres to fulfil our purpose, to cultivate supportive places for the arts.

The 2020 Annual Report was produced by the Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres Marketing Team.

### **Editorial:**

Rebecca Worth & Deborah Jones

### **Copy editing:**

Kristi Monfries

### **Photographs:**

Martin Ollman

Art Atelier | Andrew Sikorski

Rebecca Worth

Sarah Hope

### **Graphic Design:**

Novel Studio

### **Printing:**

Bytes and Colours



# The Haven for lost things: A Song

# 1

A lost thing is only a missed  
thing waiting to be found.

A lost thing is only lost once  
it is missed and cannot be  
found.

A missed thing is not always  
lost. (Check your pocket  
for your keys.)

To be found a thing may first  
be lost.

A missed lost thing can be  
found.

A missed lost thing can be  
found and then lost  
and then found once again.

A missed thing can be found  
but still be lost.

Lost things can stay lost.

Missed things stay missed.

Found things must be held tightly  
to remain found.

**ARTS  
CAPITAL**

**A+G**

Ainslie + Gorman  
Arts Centres

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Supported by



**ACT**  
Government

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