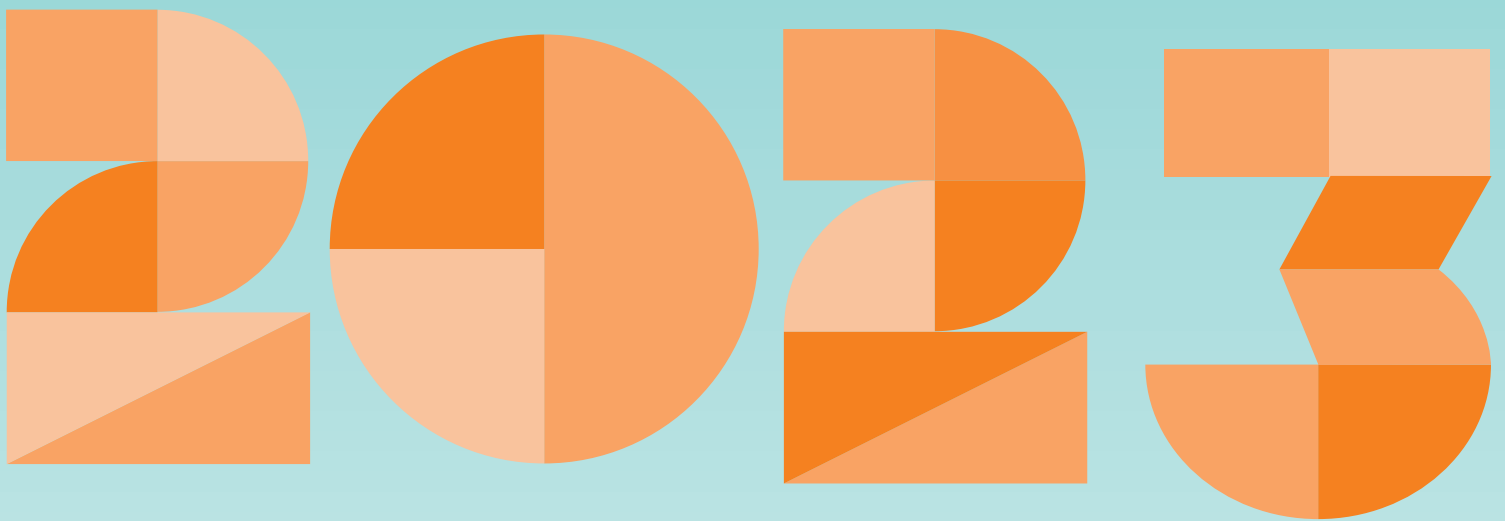


CONTEMPORARY ARTS FESTIVAL
BERRY, NSW



FESTIVAL REPORT

OpenField acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we live, work and create; the Dharawal and Dhurga speaking people. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

Tamara Dean, 'Dysrhythmia', 2021 (projection) with live music by Damien Lane



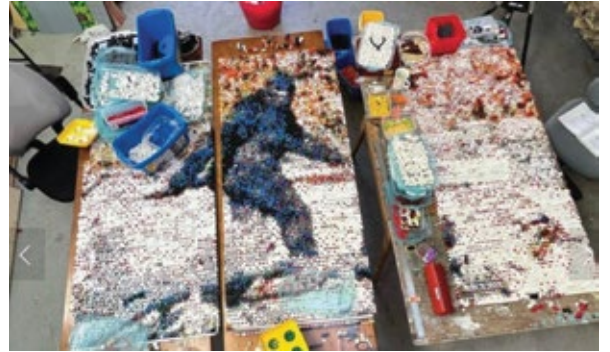
OPENFIELD

A festival coming to life

The inaugural OpenField Arts Festival was held over four days in June 2023 in the picturesque town of Berry on the South Coast of New South Wales. It was a weekend filled with contemporary art, immersive experiences, and engaging events, which attracted thousands of visitors and artists to the small town.

Despite Berry possessing a strong artistic and culturally engaged community, there are no permanent venues for contemporary art, live music, theatre or cinema within the town itself. OpenField sought to bring the streets of Berry to life through audience participation, establishing lasting arts infrastructure for future events and programs, and engaging local and visiting artists to highlight the history and beauty of the region.

The festival brought high calibre artists to the town, who exhibited a diverse range of pieces that engaged the community in different ways. A total of 130 artists, performers and public program participants showcased their work in displays using the town's historic spaces, such as the local Court House, the Country Women's Association hall and the local museum.



Claire Healy and Sean Cordeiro, 'Patty 352', 2023



Wade Marynowsky, 'Future Relics', 2023



Pilgrim's Labyrinth (installation view)

⇒ 4 days

⇒ 11 venues

⇒ 3 panels

⇒ 130 artists & participants

⇒ 4,000+ visits

ARTWORKS

23+ WORKS | 16 COMMISSIONS | 19 WORKS SOLD

Of the 23 works displayed in the main exhibition program, 16 were commissioned specifically for the festival with nine being existing works loaned from galleries and artists. 50 works were exhibited in the Locals' Salon and 19 were sold over the weekend, proving that attendance at the festival comprised serious art lovers, as well as the local community, including families with children who thoroughly enjoyed getting their hands dirty and participating in many artworks and performances.

A progressive outdoor mural was designed and painted by local First Nations artists Warwick Keen, Uncle Noel Wellington and Glenn Duffield. The mural, entitled 'NGURUDJA BINGALIN' which in the local Dharawal language means 'Country Owns Us', is a legacy artwork which will remain in the town on the wall of the local Uniting Church.

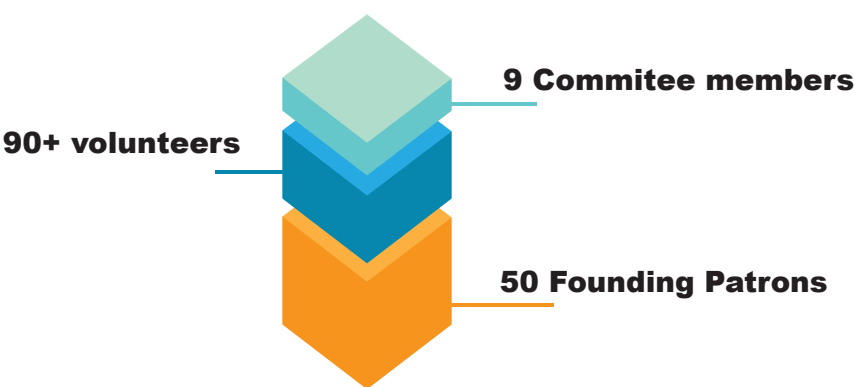


Top Row L-R: Emma Saunders and WE ARE HERE Company 'ENCOUNTER Berry' 2023; Tamara Dean, 'Dysrhythmia', 2021 (projection) with live music by Damien Lane; Michael Purdy, 'Seat of Learning', 2022; Bonnie Porter Greene, 'Palimpsest', 2023.

Bottom Row L-R: Natalie Miller and Amanda Cole, 'Tones and Textures in Wool and Sound', 2023; Michele Morcos, 'Nocturne 528 : ONE', 2023; Glenn Barkley, 'Garden', 2023.



TEAM



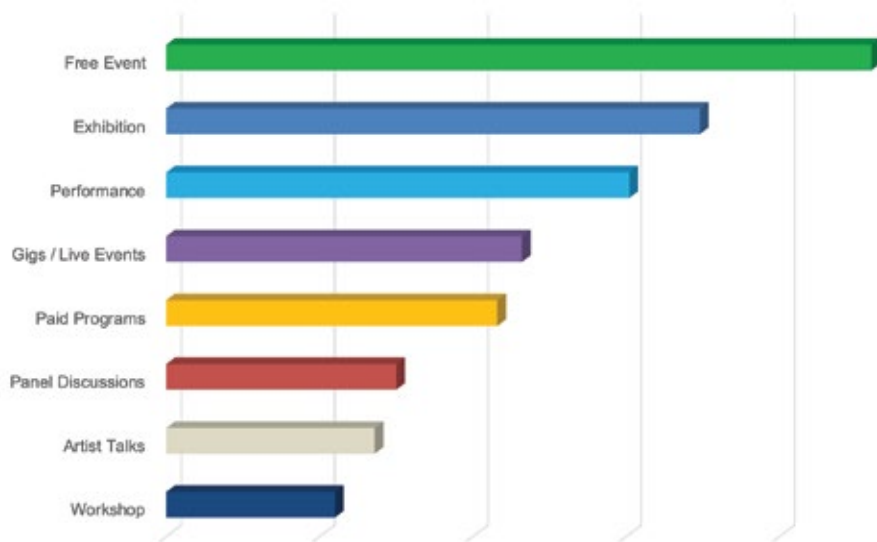
The festival was carefully curated by a group of passionate and driven professionals from across the arts sector. Lenka Kripac and Amelia Ramsden, the co-founders of OpenField, acted as initial curators, creating the broad vision for the festival. They were later joined by James Gulliver Hancock, Emma Saunders and Warwick Keen, who helped bring their artistic vision to life and liaised closely with artists, producers, installers.

The OpenField Management Committee comprised nine individuals who brought diverse skill sets from legal, finance, communications, media and stakeholder management backgrounds, which proved key to overseeing effective governance of OpenField in compliance with its ACNC obligations.



EVENTS

Events Attended



Across the four-day festival, a range of free and ticketed events and public programs were delivered, including panels, workshops, live performances, education programs, artist talks, all concluding with a film night. A curated music program of ten local and visiting music acts and DJs performed across two nights in the Berry School of Arts, which filled the space with party goers. Sunday night was the OpenField film night, which closed the festival and was predominantly attended by locals. A First Nations short film entitled 'Healing Truth', and a feature – 'Terra Nullius' by respected art filmmaking sisters, SODA JERK, provoked discussion around Australia's historical narrative, a topic close to Berry's own recollection of its colonial history.



Photographer: Andrea Christie-David



Free education programs were attended by four local school and preschool groups, with 40 high school, 35 primary and 25 preschool students visiting the festival. Students were guided by an OpenField education facilitator and had access to two sets of education resources, presenting an opportunity for educators to access free, high quality, contemporary arts experiences for their students within the local area.



Three panels were presented across the festival: 'Art Outside the City' was a lively discussion convened by local creative and entrepreneur, Kate Dezarnaulds, involving Rachel Kent, CEO of Bundanon, Marla Guppy, Chair of South Coast Arts, Michael Sharp, Gallery Manager of Michael Reid Southern Highlands, and Lisa Havilah, CEO of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS). Esteemed local broadcaster and artist, Richard Morecroft, convened our Artist Panel, with exhibiting artists Glenn Barkley, Tamara Dean, Sophie Cape and Claire Healy and Sean Cordeiro.



The last afternoon of the festival saw the First Nations Voices program come to life with a sold out event, including a panel convened by Curator and Artist, Amanda Reynolds, who yarned with artists, Kirli Saunders OAM, Jaz Corr and Uncle Noel Wellington and closed with local First Nations choir, Mudjingaal Yangamba sharing songs in Language.



COMMUNITY

The festival would not have been possible without the support of the local community. Volunteers generously donated their time to make the festival a success, including the OpenField Management Committee who used their diverse skills, knowledge and expertise to raise funds, manage the governance of the organisation.

We could not have launched OpenField without our visionary supporters - including donors, patrons, sponsors, and funding bodies, including all three levels of Government. These generous contributions from supporters who backed us right from the start meant the festival achieved all it set out to and more. The financial investment in the festival meant attendees could enjoy free entry to the exhibition, and to many other events, which created an inclusive and accessible festival for a wide demographic of the community, removing financial barriers enabling active engagement in the arts.

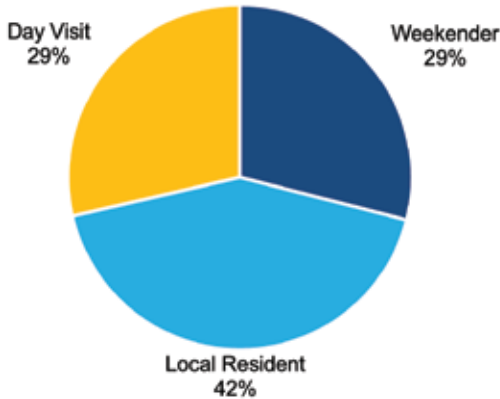


Artists Glenn Duffield and Warwick Keen and community members in front of the 'NGURUDJA BINGALIN' mural



VISITORS

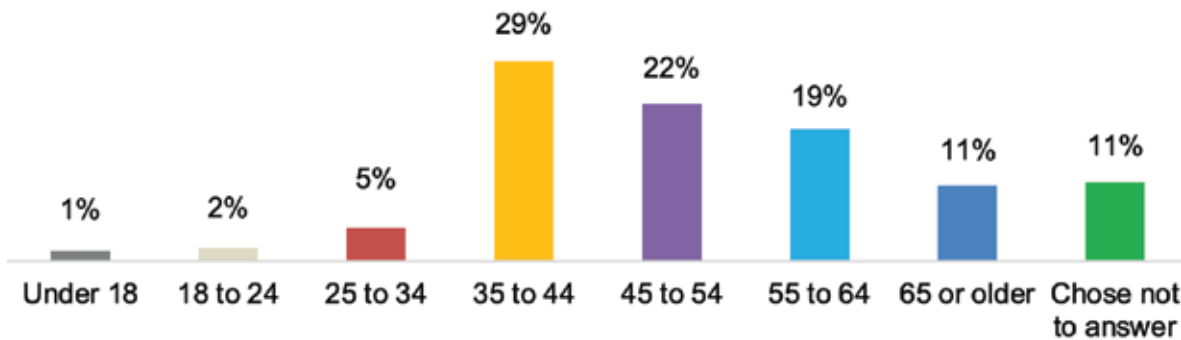
Visitors and Locals



OpenField attracted a younger profile of attendees than is traditional for Berry cultural events. Most visitors and all educators who attended with school groups valued free access to the exhibits as well as being able to enjoy outdoor events. The local community were engaged through the town's immersion in the festival, with opportunities for residents to interact with art in many forms; to volunteer, participate and collaborate.

Feedback from the post-festival survey was overwhelmingly positive with the average enjoyment rating of the festival being 4.7 out of 5 stars. The festival was perceived by many respondents as "highly enjoyable and well organised, with an impressive and diverse program that provided a wonderful, interactive experience of artists and their art within a unique regional environment".

Ages of Attendees



REASONS FOR COMING



MARKETING & PR

During its inaugural festival, OpenField Arts Festival garnered significant media attention across various platforms. The festival received coverage from local, arts, metro, and national media outlets. Local media included South Coast Register, Coal Coast, Illawarra Flame, Region Illawarra, Kangaroo Valley Voice, Kiama Bugle, Berry Town Crier and Illawarra Mercury. South Coast Register attended in person to interview artists and First Nations collaborators at the new mural.

OpenField also established a strong social media presence on Facebook and Instagram.

Additionally, the festival engaged in various promotional activities, such as a postcard campaign, poster distribution, and Facebook advertising. These efforts collectively contributed to the festival being well publicised and achieving high engagement in its first year.



Newsletter: 5 mentions



Radio: 8 mentions



Online: 23 mentions



Podcasts: 1 mention



Total Media Mentions: 72 mentions



Facebook Reach: 59,579



Instagram Reach: 24,589



Total Published Posts: 126



Facebook Audience: 637



Instagram Audience: 2,405



SPONSORSHIP & FUNDING

Securing sponsorship was an important aspect for the OpenField Arts Festival as it helped fund artist installations and offer free programs and access for the public. The sponsorship money also allowed us to meet our overall vision for the festival without diluting the importance of the arts.

We appreciate the ongoing support of all our sponsors, not just their financial contribution, but also their community spirit and moral support for putting on the first art festival of this kind in Berry.

Going forward we will continue to seek the support of local businesses and expand our packages to gain more funding for larger installations and projects in future festivals.

FUNDING PARTNERS



Supported by the



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MAJOR PARTNERS



Shoalhaven
City Council

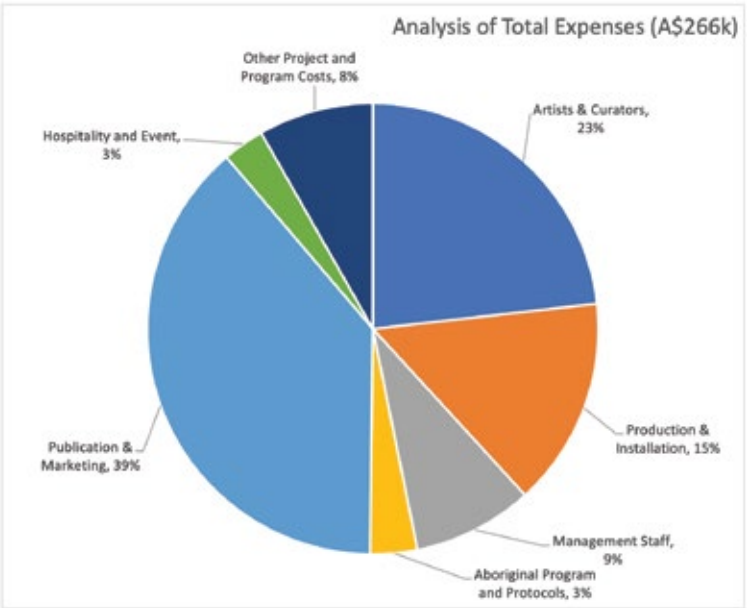
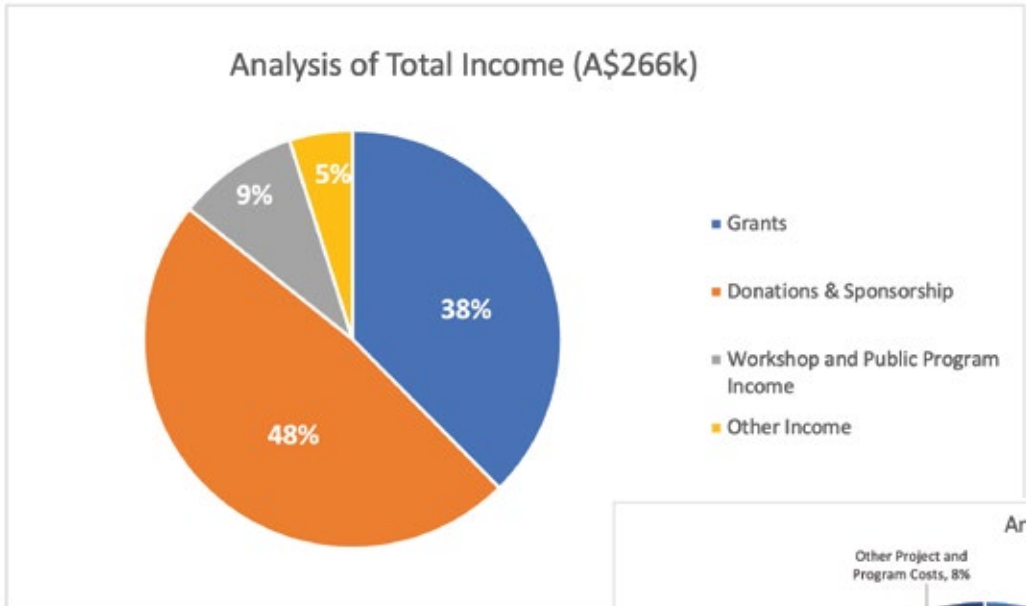
SUPPORTING PARTNERS



Bangalay
SHOALHAVEN HEADS



FINANCIALS



OpenField Arts Festival was founded in June 2021 by a Committee, became an Incorporated Association mid-June 2021, and was registered as a not for profit with the ACNC in September 2021.

Our fundraising for the festival was spread across grants, donations and cash sponsorship, with additional costs being alleviated with in-kind support from a range of organisations and individuals.

Above is a breakdown of OpenField's Income by source and Expenditure by category. For the 2025 festival, we will be hosting a Patron and Sponsor event in early April, and will continue to seek donations from Patrons, Sponsors and Supporters, as well as applying for grants.



FEEDBACK

We have undertaken a breadth of communication, debrief sessions and feedback sessions with our key stakeholders since the event's conclusion. Some ideas resulting from these feedback sessions, that we intend to implement for our 2025 include:

- Our local audience includes families with small children and teens who want to engage with the arts but are lacking local opportunities. Our child-focussed events sold out quickly with demand for more in the future.
- We initially reached out to all local businesses to be involved in OpenField via the Berry Chamber of Commerce, and intend to do this again, as well as directly approaching several individual businesses and organisations, as we received feedback that more would like to be involved in the next festival.

"It was all wonderful. So well done."

"Was a fantastic event! Organisers did such a great job and I especially loved the different locations and great atmosphere in town over the weekend."

"We loved it! Enjoyed how many things were interactive for children."

"I loved everything!"

"I loved that the festival opened up buildings around Berry that I had never been into."

"Featuring so many First Nations artists made for an outstanding festival."

"Awesome event. I was so impressed. The quality of artists and artworks was superb."

"Truly great experience"

"An inspiring and positive weekend."

"What inspired me about this festival was the connections and networks created between internationally renowned artists and musicians and local talent. It felt like creative people were coming out of their hiding places in the surrounds of Berry. A real sense of place and community was created thanks to the hard work of all involved in making this happen."

THE FUTURE

Plans for the 2025 event are well underway with the Committee already engaging with Artists, involving other community organisations and groups in collaborative projects, and receiving generous early commitment from a local family to host an Artist in Residence to enable artist/s to fully immerse themselves in the local environment and community and create work that is truly site-specific. We look forward to seeing you in 2025!





L-R: Anna Glynn, 'DWELLING' 2023; James Gulliver Hancock with 'Built on Wood', 2023; Greer Taylor, 'inversion', 2013-23; the SocialLife bar; Kirli Saunders OAM, 'We dont cry. We dont miss', 2023; Sophie Cape live painting; Jaz Corr, 'Two Truths', 2023; Sarah Enright, 'What lies buried?', 2023; OpenField Co-Directors Lenka Kripac and Amelia Ramsden in front of Donna Marcus' work 'Gathered', 2022 outside the CWA Hall