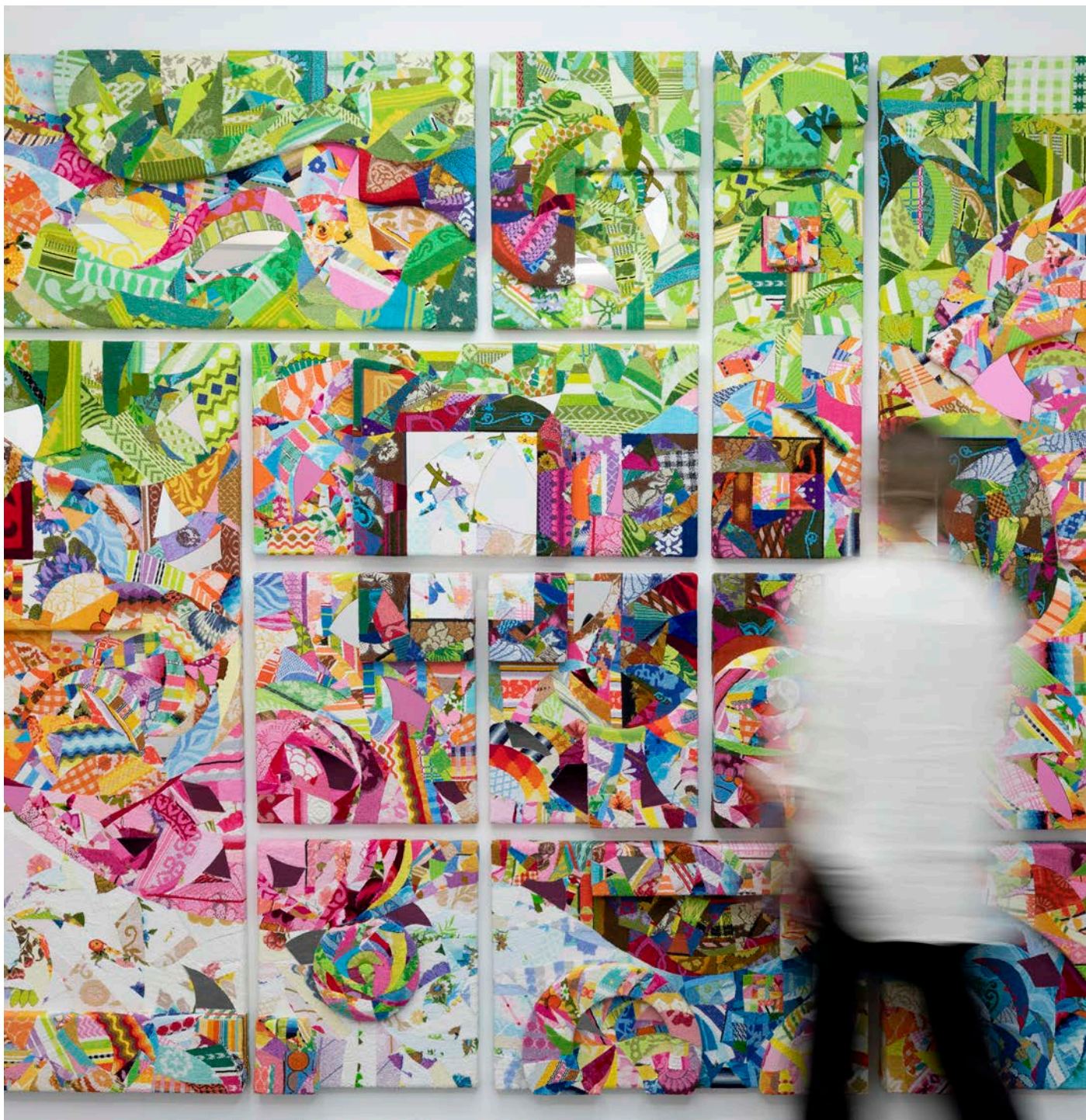


An art installation featuring two plants in white, crumpled-paper-like pots. A translucent, glowing blue tube is connected to the pots, looping between them. The background is dark, and the scene is lit with warm, focused light.

Metro Arts

2025

ANNUAL REPORT



Metro Arts pays its respect to the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work and create.

We honour the story-telling and art-making at the heart of First Nations' cultures, and the enrichment it gives to the lives of all. Metro Arts recognises the importance of story and expression in the process of truth-telling, and we commit to support First Nations Peoples on this journey.

Always was. Always will be.

- 9** EXHIBITIONS
- 4** PRODUCTIONS
- 21** COMMUNITY EVENTS
- 2** WORKS IN DEVELOPMENT
- 3** VISUAL ARTS RESIDENCIES
- 3** PUBLIC ART INSTALLATIONS
- 1** REGIONAL TOUR

**OUR 2025 PROGRAM
SUPPORTED THE
CREATION, DEVELOPMENT,
EXPERIMENTATION AND
PRESENTATION OF
EXCITING AND BRAVE
CONTEMPORARY WORK.**



147
ARTISTS



40,675
PATRONS



3,370
BAR PATRONS



84,450
APPROX VIEWERSHIP OF
ART IN PUBLIC SPACES



15,300
FOLLOWERS



13,900
FOLLOWERS



8,300
SUBSCRIBERS





A man that didn't have betrayal in his heart by Anastasia Booth, 2025. Image courtesy of the Artist

CHAIR REPORT

TARA HASTINGS

As Chair of Metro Arts, on behalf of the Board it is my pleasure to present our 2025 Annual Report.

2025 was a year of purposeful transition, focused on strengthening the foundations of Metro Arts and positioning the organisation for long-term success. While audiences see the artists, exhibitions and performances that bring Metro Arts to life, much of our work in 2025 focused on strengthening the organisation itself; ensuring that we remain a resilient, sustainable and ambitious home for artists well into the future.

Metro Arts holds a unique place in Queensland's cultural landscape. We exist to support artists at every stage of the creative journey. Artist development is not simply one of our programs, it is the foundation of everything we do, informing every residency, exhibition, performance, partnership and investment we make.

That commitment was strong in 2025. We continued our partnership with the Churchie Emerging Art Prize, providing a platform for outstanding emerging visual artists and helping strengthen pathways between recognition and professional practice. Our partnership with Brisbane Portrait Prize has likewise continued to grow, with Metro Arts proudly presenting the Experimental Portrait Prize and welcoming the winning artist into our subsequent artistic program. These collaborations demonstrate our belief that supporting artists is most powerful when organisations work together to create meaningful opportunities that extend beyond a single project.

The same philosophy underpins our partnerships across the performing arts. Our collaborations with BEMAC and QPAC have enabled artists to develop ambitious new performance works, bringing together complementary expertise, networks and resources of each organisation to support bold contemporary practice. These relationships reflect an important truth about Metro Arts: we do our best work alongside others. By working collaboratively across the sector, we strengthen not only our own organisation but the broader creative ecology that Queensland artists rely upon.

Metro Arts is proud to play an important role within Queensland's creative ecosystem. That role carries both opportunity and responsibility in a challenging operating environment. The Board exercised disciplined financial stewardship throughout the year, carefully managing drawdowns from the Metro Arts Future Fund within approved budget settings. Rather than relying

more heavily on the Fund, we made the deliberate decision to align our programming with the funding available. While this meant presenting a more modest program, it reflected our commitment to safeguarding the organisation's long-term sustainability. Strong financial management is not separate from our artistic purpose; it is what enables us to continue investing in artists for generations to come.

Against that backdrop, one of the Board's most significant priorities in 2025 was the recruitment of a Chief Executive Officer. Following a comprehensive recruitment process, Kieran Swann commenced in the role in August. Kieran returned to Metro Arts from the UK, bringing extensive sector experience, thoughtful leadership and a clear commitment to the Metro Arts mission. Since his appointment, Kieran has worked closely with the Board and Metro Arts team to continue strengthening sector relationships, secure valuable grant funding and further the organisation's strategic priorities. The Board has greatly valued the positive impact Kieran has made in a short period of time, particularly the clarity, energy and collaborative approach he has brought to the role.

Throughout 2025, Metro Arts has been strengthened by the generosity, expertise and commitment of many people who believe in our purpose. I am especially grateful to my fellow Directors for their unwavering stewardship, sound judgement, strategic guidance, and for the many hours they dedicate to ensuring Metro Arts continues to thrive. My thanks also extend to Shani Gould, our Company Secretary, whose diligence and professionalism continues to enhance our governance practices. Finally, I acknowledge the entire Metro Arts team for embracing change with optimism and determination. Their creativity, professionalism and resilience have not only delivered an exceptional year of artistic and organisational achievement but have also laid the foundations for the continued success of Metro Arts.

To our artists, audiences, partners, donors and funding bodies, thank you for your trust and your support. Your belief in Metro Arts enables us to remain a place where artists can experiment, challenge conventions and develop their practice. With strong foundations, an exceptional team and a steadfast commitment to artists, Metro Arts is well placed to continue championing bold artistic practice and enriching Queensland's cultural life for many years to come.

CEO REPORT

KIERAN SWANN

I'm deeply honoured to write my first CEO report for Metro Arts. My relationship with the organisation stretches back more than thirty years; from childhood visits and after-school workshops, through my early career as an artist and artsworker, and now - gratefully - into organisational leadership.

This long relationship has given me the privilege of witnessing generations of leaders before me. Gen Trace, Jo Thomas, Jess Murphy, Katrina Torenbeek, Liz Burcham, Sue Benner - all who I have been fortunate enough to know and learn from - and before them, Colin James, Bruce Dickson, Heather Ross and Joseph O'Connor, whose legacies echo through the organisation today. Just as importantly, I want to acknowledge the generations of Queensland artists and artsworkers who have come through Metro Arts. All of them have played a role in shaping an organisation where risk, curiosity and ambition can flourish.

2025 was Metro Arts' 45th year and like for so much of the sector, it required us to have resilience, flexibility, and make decisions carefully regarding how we prioritise. With that in mind, I particularly want to thank the Metro Arts Board. They went above and beyond to steward the organisation through a period of interim leadership and have continued to support me as I've settled into the role. I'm grateful for their guidance, expertise and trust, and particularly so to our Chair, Tara Hastings, whose thoughtful leadership, close collaboration and unwavering support have been instrumental as we've worked together to strengthen the organisation.

I also want to thank the Metro Arts team. In a period that demanded flexibility, patience and no small amount of optimism, they continued to show up for artists, for each other and for the organisation with generosity and determination. Every achievement in these pages was delivered through their efforts.

Among the year's highlights:

- Joshua Taliani's *Unveiling Shadows*: The culmination of a three-year residency and development journey, presented through Brisbane Festival in collaboration with director Wanida Serce.
- The return of our Visual Artist in Residence program: Supporting Bianca Tainsh, Micah Rustichelli and Anastasia Booth to develop new technical skills,

ambitious new bodies of work and exhibitions that became the centrepiece of our visual arts program.

- Powerful artistic partnerships: Including our collaboration with BEMAC on Tsoof Baras' developing performance work *Chameleon*, and our ongoing exchange with firstdraft, which brought exhibitions by Danish Quapoor and Jamie-Lee Garner to Brisbane.
- The continuing journey of *Every Brilliant Thing*: THAT Production Company's acclaimed production touring regionally across Queensland, demonstrating how artist development can create impact long after a premiere season has ended.

Alongside these artistic achievements, 2025 marked the beginning of a broader period of listening, learning and renewal. Through the year we engaged deeply with artists, staff, partners and stakeholders to consider how Metro Arts can best serve our sector. Those conversations have already started to shape new approaches to programming, support structures and organisational sustainability that will continue to unfold through 2026 and beyond. Metro Arts' greatest strength has always been the community of artists around us that share our belief that contemporary art and performance help us to not only better understand ourselves and the world around us; but help us to imagine new possible futures for us all.

Finally, as an encouraging start to that immediate future, we were delighted to end the year with confirmation of Creative Australia funding for our 2026 activities. We're grateful to have their support and endorsement of the reshaping underway, the art that we've started and that still to come, and the future we are building towards together.

Not bad for forty-five. Metro Arts remains strong; I'm honoured to be part of it, excited to work with the Board, team and sector to shape its next chapter, and proud that Metro Arts continues to be the place where we can confidently say - **Art Starts Here.**

“This experience has meant so much to me — not just in sharing the piece, but in growing my voice, my confidence and my sense of place as an emerging independent artist. It truly feels like the beginning of my creative journey and I’m so excited to carry everything I’ve learned into what comes next. This program has planted seeds that I know will continue to grow for years to come.”

BUDDY MALBASIAS, PERFORMANCE ARTIST, BAHALA/O | 2025



THE PROGRAM

Exhibitions

7 DECEMBER 2024 - 22 FEBRUARY 2025

Contact Zone
Victoria Wareham
Metro Arts Galleries

1 FEBRUARY - 15 MARCH

un/conscious
Jamie-Lee Garner | Firstdraft
Gallery Two

29 MARCH - 10 MAY

tightly wound
Danish Quapoor | Firstdraft
Gallery Two

22 MAY - 14 JUNE

Chromaline
James Randall | Brisbane Portrait Prize
Gallery Two

22 MAY - 12 JULY

That I Should Pray For Angels
Micah Rustichelli
Gallery One + Window Gallery

26 JULY - 9 AUGUST

the churchie emerging art prize
Various Artists
Metro Arts Galleries + New Benner Theatre

4 SEPTEMBER - 15 NOVEMBER

Terra Culture
Bianca Tainsh
Gallery One

4 SEPTEMBER - 15 NOVEMBER

A man that didn't have betrayal in his heart
Anastasia Booth
Gallery Two

27 - 30 NOVEMBER

Southeastern
Jaydon Martin | Brisbane International Film Festival
Gallery Two

Offsite Installations

Presented through Metro Arts Public Art Initiative 2025.

23 MAY - 4 JULY

Tagai
Gail Mabo
15 Charlotte Street | JLL Midtown Centre

4 JULY - 11 AUGUST

The Coolamon Project
Jody Rallah
66 Eagle Street | CBRE

8 SEPTEMBER - 31 OCTOBER

Novel Havens (Queen Street)
Chris Hagen
300 Queen Street | CBRE

Regional Tour

6 SEPTEMBER - 31 OCTOBER

Every Brilliant Thing
THAT Production Company
Kingston Butter Factory (Logan), Redland Performing Arts Centre, Barcaldine Shire Hall, Hughenden Parish Hall, Blackall Cultural Centre, Tambo Shire Hall, Charleville Town Hall, Augathella Town Hall, Basset Park Showgrounds (Roma), Yeppoon Town Hall.



That I Should Pray For Angels by Micah Rustichelli, 2025. Photo by Joel Devereux

“Metro Arts is a vital career threshold for emerging artists to pass through, without it Brisbane would stand to lose an entire generation of potential Queensland artists.”

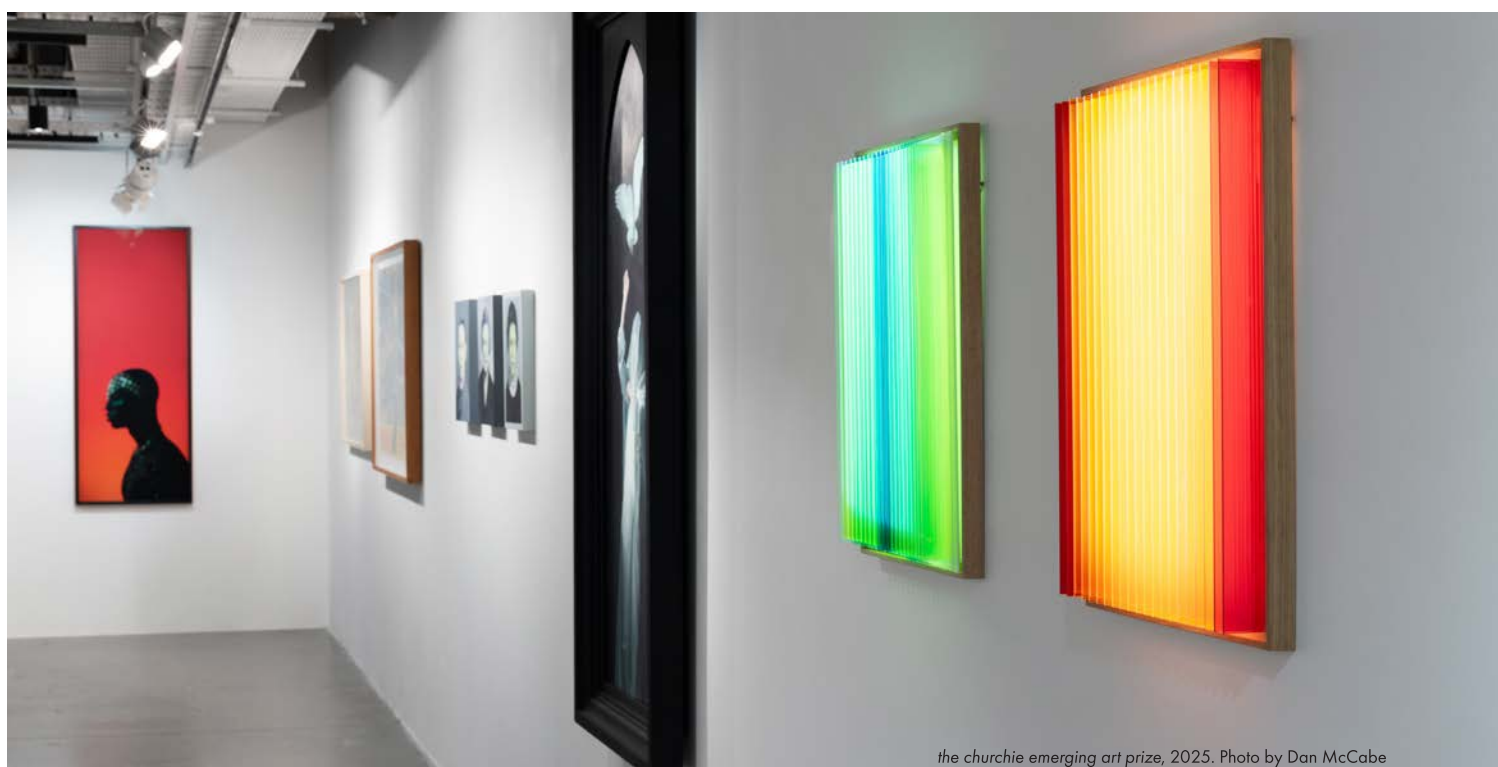
**MICAH RUSTICHELLI, VISUAL
ARTS RESIDENCY ARTIST |
2025**



That I Should Pray For Angels by Micah Rustichelli, 2025. Photo by Metro Arts



Novel Havens (Queen Street) by Chris Hagen, 300 Queen Street, 2025. Photo by Louis Lim



the churchie emerging art prize, 2025. Photo by Dan McCabe



Every Brilliant Thing, THAT Production Company, 2025. Photo by Blue Eagle

Performances

18 - 28 JUNE

DragSpeare
Jo Loth & Anne Pensalfini

20 - 30 AUGUST

Dance Nation by Clare Barron
THAT Production Company

10 - 13 SEPTEMBER

Unveiling Shadows
Joshua Taliani | Brisbane Festival

19 - 29 NOVEMBER

Bahala/o
Buddy Malbasias

Developments & Residencies

9-WEEK RESIDENCY @ MAVA

Micah Rustichelli
MAVA Studio & Fabrication Workshop

9-WEEK RESIDENCY @ MAVA

Anastasia Booth
MAVA Studio & Fabrication Workshop

20-WEEK RESIDENCY @ MAVA

Bianca Tainsh
MAVA Studio & Fabrication Workshop

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Unveiling Shadows
Joshua Taliani

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Chameleon
Tsoof Baras & Rani Luther | BEMAC

STORYTELLERS FIRST NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Mitch Currie, Roxanne McDonald, Phi Sandy,
Megan Sarmardin, Waverley Stanley, facilitated by
Nadine McDonald-Dowd and Lara Croydon | QPAC

Community Events

1 FEBRUARY

Artist Talk
Jamie-Lee Garner

29 MARCH

Artist Talk
Danish Quapoor

17 APRIL - 9 MAY

Remote Control
Metro Arts | Gallery Activation

APRIL - MAY

Camp Counterpilot
Counterpilot | Workshops

29 MAY

Artist Talk
Micah Rustichelli with Kiara Bulley & Kirralee Robinson

28 JUNE

Prepper Bag Workshop
Micah Rustichelli | Workshop

28 JUNE

Artist Talk
DragSpeare Ensemble

28 AUGUST

Artist Talk
THAT Production Company

26 SEPTEMBER

Access by Design
Brisbane Festival & Undercover Artist Festival | Workshops

18 OCTOBER

Escaping the Linear
Bianca Tainsh | Workshops

15 NOVEMBER

Terra Culture in Conversation
Bianca Tainsh | Artist Talk

27 NOVEMBER

'Chika Chika' Artist Talk
Buddy Malbasias | Artist Talk

18 DECEMBER

Merry Metro Mingle
Metro Arts | Community Event



Access by Design,
Brisbane Festival, 2025.
Photo by Jade Ellis



DragSpear by Jo Loth & Anne Pensalfini, 2025.
Photo by Frank Haki



Chameleon by Tsoof Baras & Rani Luther, 2025.
Photo by Ange Costes Photography



Unveiling Shadows by Joshua Taliani, 2025.
Photo by Georgia Haupt

IMPACTING INDUSTRY

“I had high ambitions for experimentation and the scope and quality of the final body of work. I was able to realise these ambitions and experience deep artistic enquiry and development. Arriving at the studio each day and getting straight into my work was a joyful process.”

BIANCA TAINSH,
VISUAL ARTS RESIDENCY ARTIST | 2025

“Programs like this supporting artists new to producing are incredibly important and allow the creation of new art that is relevant for audiences.”

TSOOF BARAS,
CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT ARTIST, CHAMELEON | 2025



*A man that didn't have betrayal in his heart, Anastasia Booth, 2025.
Photo by Louis Lim*

147

CREATIVES
SUPPORTED

\$600k+

IN-KIND SUPPORT
FOR PROGRAMMED
ARTISTS

107

EMERGING &
MID-CAREER
CREATIVES

100%

ARTISTS SAID BEING IN
METRO ARTS PROGRAM
HELPED THEIR CAREER
& PRACTICE



the churchie emerging art prize, 2025. Photo by Dan McCabe

IMPACTING AUDIENCES

96%

RATED OVERALL EXPERIENCE AS GOOD OR EXCELLENT

41%

OF AUDIENCE WERE NEW TO METRO ARTS



*Chameleon by Tsoof Baras & Rani Luther, 2025.
Photo by Ange Costes Photography*

“Thank you for sharing your experience of what it means to ‘belong’ in any new place and what/how that process can feel. What is personal is universal.”

Audience Member, *Chameleon*, 2025

“This was one of the best shows I’ve seen in years. Funny, dramatic and moving. Each performer was amazing and loved the songs and singing. It made me feel so connected to both the community arts and to the lesbian/queer culture. Thank you!”

Audience Member, *DragSpeare*, 2025

“It was so beautiful to see emerging artists celebrated on a curated stage. Buddy and Clare’s work is honest, joyous and true to what independent art in Brisbane has the potential to be.”

Audience Member, *Bahala/o*, 2025



“What a pleasure to be in the audience. Hilarious, emotional, deep, all the things that make art great. Chef’s kiss.”

**Audience Member,
Dance Nation, 2025**

*Dance Nation, THAT Production Company, 2025.
Photo by stageshots*

2025 STAFF & BOARD

METRO ARTS STAFF

GENEVIEVE TRACE

Executive Director (until March 2025)

KIERAN SWANN

CEO (from August 2025)

SHANI GOULD

Operations Manager

DANIEL CLIFFORD

Artistic Associate, Visual Arts (until November 2025)

BENJAMIN KNAPTON

Artistic Associate, Performance

MAISIE CROSDALE

Producer

ZOE JOINER

Emerging Producer (from August 2025)

ANNELIZE MULDER

Curator, Visual Arts Program (until February 2025)

BIANCA BALITY

Venue & Events Officer

JAMIE GROHMAN

Marketing & Communications Officer

MATTHEW ZAZA

Graphic Design / Digital Coordinator

NATHANIEL KNIGHT

Venue & Technical Coordinator (until April 2025)

KELSEY BOOTH

Associate Technical Coordinator (until February 2025)

RILEY CAMEJO

Technical Coordinator (from May 2025)

CHRIS HOWLETT

Workshop Manager

JEAN EDUARDO

Finance Officer

FRONT OF HOUSE

Aysha Swanson, Cameron Rixon, Claire Holland, Emily Marszalek, Henry Solomon, Jasmin Flynn, Jessica Johnson, Malika Savory, Maxine Mossman, Oliver Childs, Peta Kishawi, Sam Turnbull, Stella Humphreys, Vio Colarelli.

METRO ARTS BOARD

FIONA HAWTHORNE, CHAIR (UNTIL APRIL 2025)

TARA HASTINGS, CHAIR

PETER O'SULLIVAN (UNTIL JANUARY 2025)

PAUL BOWKER

NAOMI BLACKLOCK, ARTISTIC REPRESENTATIVE

NATANO FA'ANANA, ARTISTIC REPRESENTATIVE

FIRST NATIONS ADVISOR

TRENT WALLACE

BOARD SECRETARY

SHANI GOULD



Terra Culture by Bianca Tainsh, 2025. Photo by Louis Lim

2025 SUPPORTERS & PARTNERS

We are truly grateful for the support of all our partners in 2025 whose assistance enabled us to continue to back the development and presentation of ambitious contemporary art.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

Metro Arts is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland. The Metro Arts Creative Development and Artist Residency Programs are proudly supported by Brisbane City Council. Metro Arts Visual Arts (MAVA) Substation is assisted by Brisbane City Council



Queensland
Government



Dedicated to a better Brisbane

PROGRAMMING PARTNERS

BRISBANE
FESTIVAL

the
churchie
emerging art prize



BEMAC

BLAK DANCE

firstdraft



WEST VILLAGE
BRISBANE



STRATEGIC PARTNERS



DENY
CINEMAS



HARE & FORBES
MACHINERYHOUSE

PRINT PARTNER

Printing
& More
West End



MEDIA PARTNER

BAMBRICK

CORPORATE DONOR

HALL CHADWICK
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS & BUSINESS ADVISORS | QLD

PARTNERS

**AETHER
BREWING**

BONES
ACCOUNTING


OATLEY
FINE WINE MERCHANTS

K&L GATES

METRO ARTS FUTURE FUND

We acknowledge Mr Tim Fairfax AC and Mrs Gina Fairfax AC for their generosity as founding donors of the Metro Arts Future Fund.

DONORS

Metro Arts gratefully acknowledges the generosity of all our donors:

INNER CIRCLE DONOR

Mr Tim Fairfax AC

MAJOR DONOR

Hamish Clift

ARTREPRENEUR

Daryl Clifford & Margaret
Ridley, Michael Cottier,
Anonymous (1)

ART STARTERS

Anonymous (1), Leanne & Tim de Souza, Jo Eager,
Danielle Kellie & Jason Organ, Tara Hastings, Fiona
Hawthorne, Benjamin Knapton, Susan Learmonth &
Bernard Curran, Peter O'Sullivan, Lynn Rainbow-Reid,
John Smithwick, Richard Swann, Jo Thomas

ANNUAL GIVING

Thank you to all our donors who supported Metro Arts
throughout the year with one-off gifts, ticket and bar
purchase round-up donations.



tightly wound by Danish Quapoor, 2025. Photo by Louis Lim



Unveiling Shadows by Joshua Taliani, 2025. Photo by Georgia Haupt

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Metro Arts
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