

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**16 July 2020**

**Performance Poets get a boost across Southern Tablelands and Eastern Riverina regions with opportunities for you to get involved.**

Southern Tablelands Arts are thrilled to announce that the ***Virtual to Actual Performance Poetry*** project is one of 11 projects state-wide that have successfully received funding through the Regenerate Regional Event Initiative through Create NSW. ***Virtual to Actual Performance Poetry*** is possible through a partnership between Southern Tablelands Art, Eastern Riverina Arts, Jugiong Writers Festival and Southern Highlands Writers Festival. The project connects performance poets and young people through online workshops and performance opportunities.

Andrew Galan, who enjoys a national profile for his performance poetry and writing has signed up to lead the project by mentoring two emerging poets and creating new work for each of the writer's festivals. Andrew has been at the forefront of establishing spoken word as an art form and has been described as a voice of the surreal and satirical.

Jacki Okot is an emerging poet from Wagga Wagga who joins the project from the Eastern Riverina Arts area. Jacki with support from Andrew through a program of regular mentoring sessions will lead a poetry group for young people. The youth poetry group will meet regularly online, creating connections and creative outlets during this incredibly difficult time. Jacki will join Andrew for performance at the Jugiong Writers Festival.

Moving East the project will run a parallel program around the Wingecarribee area. Southern Tablelands Arts are keen to hear from interested emerging performance poets who would like to join the project, be mentored by Andrew and lead a youth poetry online workshop series. This role includes performance at the Southern Highlands Writers festival in Bowral and is a professional opportunity for the successful emerging poet.

Perhaps most importantly ***Virtual to Actual*** is looking for young people to join one of the two youth poetry groups. One centred around Wagga Wagga and the other in the Wingecarribee district, although with workshops being offered online the project is open to all interested young people (13-18 years of age) across the Southern Tablelands Arts and Eastern Riverina Arts territories.

***Virtual to Actual Performance Poetry*** will achieve a lasting legacy of new work, performance, professional development and youth opportunity. Thanks to the funding through Create NSW the project provides professional opportunities for poets to continue to work at their craft during a time when nearly all paid gigs and opportunities have ceased due to social isolation restrictions.

If you are an emerging performance poet who like to be part of the project please visit the Southern tablelands website [southerntablelandsarts.com.au](http://southerntablelandsarts.com.au) (details and expression of interest under the project tab) or email [ao@southerntablelandsarts.com.au](mailto:ao@southerntablelandsarts.com.au)



*Andrew Galan, nationally recognised performance poet in action and leader of the Virtual to Actual Performance Poetry project. Photo Adam Thomas*

**End**

**Available for further comment:**

Andrew Galan Performance Poet on 0422 459 617

Rose Marin Executive Director of Southern Tablelands Arts on 0456 606 666

Tim Kurylowicz Executive Director Eastern Riverina Arts on 0403 878 442

Freda Nicholls from the Jugiong Writers festival on 0428 448 225

Michaela Bolzan from the Southern Highlands Writers Festival on 0417 668 595

The Regenerate Regional Event Initiative through Create NSW is a part of the \$6.34 million support for arts and cultural organisations impacted by COVID-19 and in addition to the NSW Government's \$50 million Rescue and Restart package. For more information on these funding programs, visit [www.create.nsw.gov.au](http://www.create.nsw.gov.au).

Southern Tablelands Arts is the peak arts and cultural agency for the Southern Tablelands region through its investment in and development of meaningful arts and cultural development programs and services.

[www.southerntablelandsarts.com.au](http://www.southerntablelandsarts.com.au)

Southern Tablelands Arts acknowledges Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of the lands we work on; we recognise the strength, resilience and capacity of Aboriginal people and respect the Aboriginal Elders past and present. Southern Tablelands Arts is assisted by the NSW Government through Create NSW and the partnership of [Goulburn Mulwaree Council](#), [Hilltops Council](#), [Upper Lachlan Shire](#), [Wingecarribee Shire](#), [Wollondilly Shire](#) and [Yass Valley Council](#), our six local government authorities across the Southern Tablelands region.



**EASTERN  
RIVERINA  
ARTS**

