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STA works with our members, makers & creative communities, energising, connecting and supporting the living culture of our region through a program of activities and events. We support, create, educate and advocate for the arts in the region.

Our seven contributing councils are Goulburn Mulwaree, Hilltops, Queanbeyan Palerang, Upper Lachlan Shire, Wingecarribee Shire, Wollondilly Shire and Yass Valley. STA is part of the state wide Regional Arts Network supported by Create NSW and a member of Regional Arts NSW. We acknowledge Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of Country where we create, live & work.



## STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

- Maintaining a vigilant awareness of the global environmental emergency to bring into every day practice ways to build environmental sustainability into every executive decision, every interaction with stakeholders, communities & creatives.
- Building capacity among cultural sector practitioners and organisations for professional and volunteer-led arts organisations towards their own sustainability, the delivery of quality artistic programming, audience development & financial sustainability.
- Maintaining emphasis on supporting key projects and partnerships between community stakeholders in the delivery of strategic programs.
- Reviewing and implementing robust governance practices based on continuous improvement.
- Emphasis on activities that provide greater opportunities to generate revenue.

Cover image: Dashanti Carr & Susan Brindle at Highland FM in Wingecarribee. Dashanti created a PAINT THE TOWN mural in Studio 1 at the radio station. *Wiinnagadhaag Dhuluwi*, which in Wiradjuri means *Song Lines*, is a gateway to the interconnected web of stories & traditions that shape our collective history.

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

With strategic focus on the development of First Nations art, culture, preservation of language, and on the practitioners and artists, STA is learning, and with increasing access to elders, developing greater understanding and seeking opportunities for First Nations arts and culture to shine in our region.

STA is proud to have all 7 regional Councils contributing financially each year and participating twice a year in the STA Regional Advisory Panel. This forum allows for the sharing of information, building connections and developing an understanding of their unique and shared issues. I am delighted to see that each of our contributing Councils increasingly recognise the contribution of arts and culture to the wellbeing of their communities and the liveability of their urban centres.

The STA team of Erin Olafson, Daniela Diaz and Kate Mackay, under Rose Marin's leadership continue to be nimble and innovative. The Mobile Office initiative has proven to be the most significant change; an unexpected benefit of closing the Goulburn office during the pandemic. There is an arts industry saying that 'if we build/make/present it the people will come'; STA Mobile Offices, held monthly in each LGA, have full appointment schedules and have resulted in STA developing a real sense of each place and what makes it unique. As a result, programs, grant applications and projects have happened in each area and STA operates within the wider creative industries in all its regions. STA took its office to its region and the people certainly continue coming.

I express my deep and sincere thanks to the current and past Board members for their time, sharing their knowledge, their passion and energy. They are volunteers who give freely of their time and skills.

It has been an amazing and educative experience to lead STA for the last 7 years. I have experienced the very best of the visual arts, outstanding performances, rich heritage and personal learning about First Nations country and people. My personal objective was to attend as many events, galleries, exhibitions and performances and to visit heritage centres and museums across 7 LGAs in an effort to inform myself about the region STA serves. It has been enriching and often humbling, to see, hear and immerse in the work of talented and skilled practitioners. Arts and culture in the STA region are strong, vibrant and powerful.

Susan Brindle  
President 2017-2024

## VALEDICTORY STA PRESIDENT'S REPORT Susan Brindle

On behalf of the Board it gives me pleasure to present the Annual Report and financial statements for the year 2023.

Looking back over the last 7 years I recognise it as a period of real change for STA. And it is evident in many areas.

The last Create NSW Review of Regional Arts Development Organisations resulted in STA moving to a 4-year funding cycle, different reporting, increased funding, all lowered our stress through funding certainty and increased status to the government. NSW Government recognition of the now 15 RADOs as a network has brought remarkable change leading to collaboration, sharing resources and building partnerships, adding to the strength and cohesion of the entire group. The NSW Government through Create NSW has utilised the RADO Network to run the popular, annual CASP grants and to roll out arts funding grants in times of disaster. The Network has responded with professionalism and speed resulting in grant money reaching recipients more quickly than ever before.

In addition, the Network, with significant Create NSW funding, delivered a state-wide, innovative 2-year long arts program, Regional Futures, culminating in a conference and extraordinary exhibition at the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre in 2023. STA was immensely proud of its 2 participating artists, sculptor Tracy Luff and First Nations artist Jodie Munday.

I applaud both Federal and NSW Governments for their Cultural Plans and increasing understanding that the arts make a difference to people impacted by disaster, disproportionately occurring in regional NSW. The immensely successful STA Paint The Town project, funded largely by the Australian Government Black Summer Bush Fires Grants program, is one example of beautiful local murals resulting from sensitive community engagement informing talented artists in their decisions about their work in this program.

Far reaching results are already evident in the trail of murals throughout what will be the 7 STA LGAs, painted by some of Australia's leading mural artists and providing opportunities for local artists and local First Nations artists to further their practice alongside muralists of national and international acclaim. When completed this extraordinary achievement will be leveraged into a series of tourist trails through the Creative South website and beyond. Artist Joe Quilter and Executive Director Rose Marin have designed this ambitious and challenging project and are bringing it to each LGA in turn with huge success



southern tablelands arts  
**ANNUAL REPORT 2023**



This printed component of the 2023 STA Annual Report works in conjunction with expanded online content at the STA website.

Copies of the 2023 Audited Financial Report are available on request.

## Staff

Rose Marin, Executive Director (QPRC)  
 Erin Olafson, Project & Communications Officer (Goulburn Mulwaree)  
 Kiri Morcombe Special Projects Officer (Yass Valley) - resigned September  
 Daniela Diaz Administration & Communications Officer (Wollondilly)

## Board of Directors 2023-24

Susan Brindle, President (Wingecarribee)  
 Rob Moran, Vice President (Wollondilly)  
 Joanne McCauley, Treasurer (Goulburn Mulwaree)  
 Louise Wakefield, Secretary & Public Officer (Goulburn Mulwaree)  
 Cath Brennan, Director (Wingecarribee)  
 Cecilia McKenzie, Director (Goulburn Mulwaree)  
 Desmond Freeman, Director (Wingecarribee) - resigned September  
 Mark Bradbury, Director (Goulburn Mulwaree)  
 Michelle Storey, Director (Yass Valley)



## 2023 Programs & Projects

STA delivered more than 150 programs with 70+ organisations. Check out some of our favourites below with much more at our website.

### PAINT THE TOWN Street Art Festival

Our multi-mural festival guided by Creative Director Joe Quilter kicked off in Wingecarribee in Autumn & Upper – Lachlan in Spring, with events, workshops & a total of 22 murals created by nationally established artists & local talent in 2023. Murals were co-designed through workshops held with fire effected community members to reflect our recovery journey since the 2019 fires. PAINT THE TOWN continues to grow with more murals & events planned.

### FOCUS

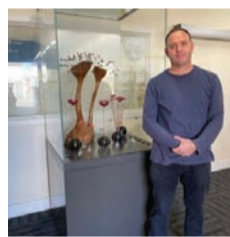
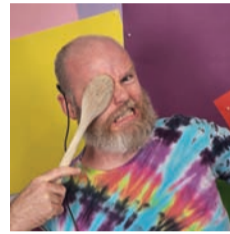
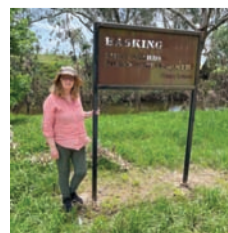
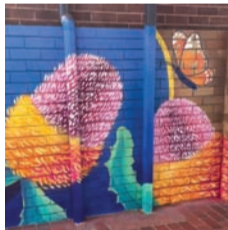
A region wide photographic professional development project for STA Members to receive professional quality images of their work and a portrait. Seven local professional photographers delivered photography sessions with creatives across the 7 local government areas.

### The Country Arts Support Program (CASP)

In 2023 eight projects were funded; *Find Your Folk – Emerging artists program* in Wingecarribee, *SILCO SOUNDS Inc. Youth Classical Music Mentoring Program* in Hilltops, *Discover Possum cloaks though Aunt Matilda's workshop and story-telling* at the Hive in Queanbeyan-Palerang, *Under the Influence* in QPRC, *Connecting Community Through Clay* in Goulburn Mulwaree, *Workroom Lockers* in Wingecarribee, & *Goulburn District Art Society – Tutored Workshop Program* in Goulburn Mulwaree.

### Creative South

Is fast becoming a popular place to find arts & cultural events & destinations across the STA Region and beyond. The website now boasts ??? listings of arts and cultural experiences making it the most exhaustive offering of museums, galleries, public art, festivals and hidden cultural gems across 10 regions. Don't go anywhere before you visit [creativesouth.com.au](http://creativesouth.com.au).



## TREASURER'S REPORT Joanne McCauley

Southern Tablelands Arts continued to thrive in 2023. With so many projects on the go, Rose and her team were incredibly busy. While the aim is not to make a profit, we do need to ensure that we are financially viable. This year funds were managed well, and I am pleased to report a small profit of \$80,529 for the financial year....  
*read the full report at the STA Website*

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT Rose Marin

STA hit a number of significant milestones in 2023. It was a year of great achievement, busy and productive. Across the year we worked productively with our seven contributing Councils one iteration of established events and program as well as some exciting new offering for our communities. PAINT THE TOWN was a major feature across the year, it was developed into a region wide street art tour over 50 (and still growing) mural with an investment of over a 500k into our local creative economy....  
*read the full report at the STA Website*

### Stories from the Studio

A weekly online program featuring a different artist or group every Friday evening. Stories from the Studio now has over 200 stories from artists across the region! The feature has grown to boast a large regular following and continues to build an online record of the creative sector in our region.

### Mobile Office

STA Mobile Offices were held monthly at partner venues in each of our seven local government areas throughout 2023. The Mobile Office program offers creatives and organisations regular face to face appointments with STA staff.

### Creative Directory

The Creative Directory is a major feature of the STA website. The STA Creative Directory currently has 273 listings in a searchable database of creative practitioners across our seven local government regions.

### STA BOX Gallery

In 2023 STA installed another BOX Gallery in the foyer of the Q Performing Arts Centre Theatre, Queanbeyan. There are currently four STA Box Galleries in operation hosting a rotating program of micro exhibitions at partner venues.

### Connect@GunningStation, Arts and Cultural hub.

Across the year STA hosted public events and program at the station culminating in the official opening celebration in October. Visitor can visit Connect@GunningStation for regular exhibitions, workshops & events.

### Wollondilly Waste to Art Prize

Annual program of workshops & exhibition with a deep commitment to reducing the waste going to landfill by inviting Artists to make art from waste materials.

### Hilltops Off The Beaten Track

Completing a second successful year in 2023 HOBTrack is building a reputation as a major destination festival for arts and cultural in the Hilltops area. STA work in partnership organisations & creatives from across Hilltops to realise this fabulous festival.

### QPRC Diwali Mela Lantern Festival

STA worked with QPRC and the Queanbeyan Multicultural Centre to offer multiple lantern making workshops with the community to create lantern for the inaugural Queanbeyan Diwali festival.. Lanterns featured in the lantern parade of over 300 community members.

### Goulburn Hospital Palliative Care Unit Art Project

STA in partnership with Goulburn Base Hospital, and the Goulburn Palliative Care and Oncology Support Group commissioned eight paintings for the new Palliative Care Rooms located in the Goulburn Base Hospital.

### Dance for Wellbeing

Had a renaissance in Yass in 2023 with classes created and facilitated by STA Special Projects Officer, Kiri Morcombe. The program commenced in Seniors week & was well attended for two terms.