

VALERIE KEENAN PhD



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ARTIST | AUTHOR | PROJECT MANAGER | CURATOR | ARTS ADMINISTRATOR

OBJECTIVE

To challenge myself both creatively and professionally, to create narratives, make a difference and inspire others.

EDUCATION

2022-3	Digital Transformations for the Creative Industries Certificate	UTS Open (Online)
2003-9	PhD – Visual Arts	University of Southern Qld (recipient USQ Scholarship)
2000/1	Bachelor of Visual Arts (Honors)	University of Southern Qld
1998	Bachelor of Visual Arts	Queensland University of Technology

EXPERIENCE

Personal Projects: Artist/historian

I am an arts practitioner with a focus on visual art, authorship, culture and Queensland history.

- My current project **One Voice – Two Lives** takes another look at my 2008 *Responsible Heritage* thesis, this time focusing on local history, culture, creativity and heritage with a view producing a historical/biographical publication and creating new artworks based on the letters of William Henry (1876-1907).
- 2019-2023: **Drawing YOU In – Carl Lumholtz in the Herbert** was developed in 2019 and included research at the Natural History Museum and the Museum of Cultural History in Norway, oral history gathering with Traditional Owners, commissioning of hunting tools and my own creativity. This resulted in a solo exhibition and 92pp hard cover publication launched at Tyto Regional Gallery in Ingham, June 2023. The exhibition will travel to Norway in mid 2025. The research component of the project was supported through the QAG|GOMA Foundation Vida Lahey Memorial Travel Scholarship and the project through Arts Qld QASP Program and RAF Quick Response Grants.
- 2009: **Marks in the Scrub** arts and cultural camp with Jirrbal Elder Ernie Grant. Funded by Arts Qld.
- 2003-8: **Responsible Heritage: Writing Back to Willie** (Phd Thesis and solo exhibition). This study drew on a collection of letters (1895-1906) written by William Henry “Bellenden Plains” and focussed on visual interpretation of narratives drawing on social history, museum studies and visual arts methodologies (USQ scholarship).
- 2008: **Cardwell Historical Kirrama Range Oral History Project**: I initiated and coordinated a project for the Cardwell & District Historical Society to facilitate, undertake and transcribe oral histories in and around the Kirrama Range area and deliver an oral history workshop for members.
- 2008: **Original Women**: Coordination and curation of an exhibition of artwork produced by women who painted in the Tully in the 1950s and 1960s. Funded by RADF Cardwell Shire Council.

Paid employment: Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre, Cardwell | Art Centre Manager | 2008 to 2019

My role included the establishment and delivery of the annual arts program, liaison between staff and artists, workshop coordination, administration, media and promotion, grant writing and acquittals, the development, implementation and reviews of a business plan and in liaison with artists facilitation of professional development opportunities, exhibitions, public art and other projects, cultural retention, licensing and other opportunities for Aboriginal Traditional Owners in the Girringun area of representation. I grew the program to include two new full-time positions and facilitated three traineeships for Traditional Owners. I variously developed, facilitated and travelled with artists to numerous exhibitions including Monaco, Paris, Poland, London, Fremantle, Perth, Melbourne, Shepparton, Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane, Townsville, Darwin, Cairns and an Australia wide touring exhibition “Manggan – gather, gathers, gathering”. I facilitated artists’ representation in a number of major collections including the British Museum, National Gallery of Australia, National Museum of Australia, Parliament House Art Collection, ArtBank Sydney, National Maritime Museum Sydney, Lady Cilento Mater Children’s Hospital Collection, State Library of Queensland, University of Qld Art Museum, Gallery of Modern Art Brisbane, ACIKE Collection Darwin, National Gallery of Victoria and numerous private collections. A number of artists won awards or were finalists in major competitions: Alison Murray (CIAF Emerging Artist Award 2017 and finalist ICAA Shepparton 2016); Philip Denham (IACA Emerging Artist Award 2017), Abe Muriata (finalist WA Indigenous Art Awards and finalist Telstra Art Awards twice); Emily Murray (finalist Telstra Art Award); Bagu on the Strand, (outdoor sculptural installation) Strand Ephemera (Girringun Artists - Excellence Award 2013), Townsville. We successfully completed numerous projects including:

- Manggan – gather, gathers, gathering, national touring exhibition with M&G Qld (2017-2021)
- Bagu at the Cairns Performing Arts Centre (permanent sculptural installation 2018)
- Bagu at Monaco (Taba Naba, Oceanographic Museum Monaco) 2016
- Bagu with Jiman Documentary (Debra Murray) 2016
- QR Tilt Train Art+Place Project (2012) imagery for one side of Qld Rail Tilt Train,
- Chainsaw Gunduy (Leonard Andy) 2014 (men’s project and large sculpture)

Dr Valerie Keenan, 2023

www.valeriekeenan.com.au (coming soon)

- Bagu on the Foreshore in Cardwell 2013 (permanent sculptural installation)
- Strand Ephemera Sculptural Project (Excellence Award) 2013 (sculptural installation Townsville Strand)
- Gijjalordi - Tully Multi-purpose Centre (Sculptural installation)

Tully Times Newspaper | 2007-8 | Journalist (photographic and editorial)

Queensland Community Arts Network Inc., Brisbane | 1999-2004 | Office Manager

AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS (MOST RECENT)

- 2024 (May) Artist in Residence - Tully Nursing Home
- 2023 Winner Works on Paper – Hinchinbrook Birdlife Awards
- 2023 Champion exhibit visual arts, Tully Show
- 2022-3 Arts Peer Assessor, AQ Infrastructure Grants Program
- 2019-2022 Vida Lahey Memorial Travel Fellowship, Qld Art Gallery/GOMA
- 2019 Achievement Award for Individuals - Museums & Galleries Qld State-Wide Awards
- 2019 Cairns Indigenous Art Fair Innovation Award for Art Centres 2019 (Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre)
- 2018 Cairns Indigenous Art Fair Art Centre Award 2018 (Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre)
- 2017 Cairns Indigenous Art Fair Artist Excellence Award (Alison Murray - Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre)
- 2013 Gordon Darling Foundation Travel Bursary – V Keenan to travel to art centres in NT & WA
- 2006 Museums Australia “Exploring Dynamics” National Conference (bursary)
- 1997 Flying Arts Shell Award Southern Region; Maleny
- 1996 Professional Development Bursary RGAQ Workshops (bursary)
- 1998 Zetta Florence Collection Grant & QUT Student Guild Women’s Creative Arts Grant

Solo Exhibitions

- 2023 Drawing YOU in – Carl Lumholtz in the Herbert (solo exhibition and publication), Tyto Regional Gallery, Ingham
- 2007 a CURIOUS Cabinet - Sugarama Gallery, Mourilyan, The Gallery, USQ, Toowoomba, Tyto Art Gallery, Ingham
- 2001 Bellenden Women - Wesley Hospital, Brisbane and The Gallery, USQ, Toowoomba
- 1999 Law Society Exhibition Space, Brisbane
- 1998 Doggett Street Gallery, Brisbane
- 1996 The Last Artpost/The Verandah Gallery, Gordonvale, North Qld

COLLECTIONS:

My creative works are held in public and private collections including: James Hardie Collection; State Library of Qld; Wesley Hospital Collection, Brisbane; Cairns Port Authority, Cardwell Shire Council and Mareeba Shire Council.

Memberships (current) Tully Arts & Cultural Precinct (Secretary and co-founder), National Association Visual Arts (NAVA) | Arts Law Australia | Australian History Association (AHA) | Queensland Writers

Media (selected)

- ‘2019: Valerie Keenan – Vida Lahey Memorial Travelling Scholarship’ in Qld Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art Foundation Year in Review 2022-23. p.33
- *Drawing YOU In – Carl Lumholtz in the Herbert* at Tyto Gallery, Ingham. <https://www.hinchinbrook.qld.gov.au/media-release-drawing-you-in-carl-lumholtz-in-the-herbert-by-artist-and-author-dr-valerie-keenan/>
- ‘Art for a New Understanding’: An Interview with Valerie Keenan, Manager of Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre by Sally Butler, Arts, Volume 8, Issue 3, July 2019. <https://www.mdpi.com/2076-0752/8/3/91>
- 2019 GAMA Winner: Dr Valerie Keenan; Museums & Galleries Queensland, <http://www.magsq.com.au/cms/page.asp?ID=10581>
- *Manggan – gather, gathers, gathering*, a Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre Touring exhibition, 2019, <https://museums victoria.com.au/media-releases/manggan-gather-gathers-gathering-exhibition-brings-stunning-contemporary-works-from-girringun-aboriginal-arts-centre-to-melbourne-museum/>
- ‘*Manggan – gather, gathers, gathering*: Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre’, by Katrina Chapman, *EYELINE*, No. 90, 2018.
- Clay Stories, Sabbia Gallery & RCCN Touring Exhibition 2017-2019, <https://www.claystories.com.au/sponsorship-and-thanks.html>
- *Bagu – Spirit and matter in rainforest country* in *La Defense des Oceans* Editions Arts d’Australie, Stephane Jacob, Paris. Publications and also at <http://www.artsdaustralie.com/monaco-bagu.html> 2016.
- *Manggan – gather, gathers, gathering*, Project Manager & co-curator for exhibition catalogue and touring exhibition 2017-2021. Also at <http://www.magsq.com.au/cms/page.asp?ID=9264>
- *From Flame to Fame: Transformation of firesticks to art in North Queensland*; Dr R Henry, 2016, *Transactions and Transformations: artefacts of the wet tropics*, NQ, Memoirs of Queensland Museum, Culture, Volume 10, 2016
- ‘Girringun Aboriginal Art Centre: reinvigorating rainforest traditions’, Katrina Chapman, *Art Monthly; Australia*, No. 247, March 2012, pp. 14-16.
- *A Journey Towards a PhD*; Art Gaze Magazine, Issue 3, 2008, Townsville
- *Writing Back to Willie: A Curiosity of Collecting*, Thesis for PhD, University of Southern Queensland