



therewas an accident
around the cell
therewas a fall
compressive force
on his body
four ribs were broken
a huge blood loss
occurred

AGWA STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS
2020-2025
125 AND BEYOND

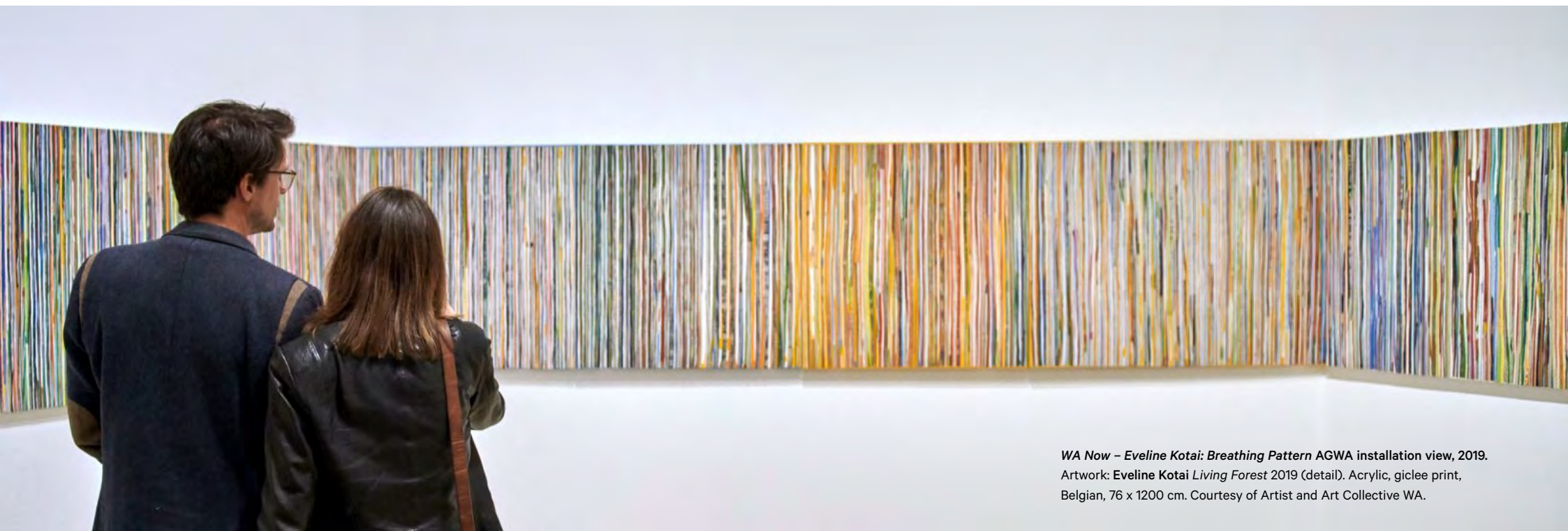
We acknowledge the deep contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and culture make to Australian cultural knowledge and our shared story; AGWA celebrates their cultural vibrancy and artistic expression as the First Peoples of Australia.

Kedela wer kalyakoorl ngalak Wadjak boodjak yaak.

Today and always, we stand on the traditional land of the Whadjuk Noongar people.

Contents

Page 4	Introduction
Page 5	Vision
Page 6	Goals
Page 8	Achieving and measuring the goals



WA Now – Eveline Kotai: Breathing Pattern AGWA installation view, 2019.
Artwork: **Eveline Kotai Living Forest 2019 (detail)**. Acrylic, giclee print, Belgian, 76 x 1200 cm. Courtesy of Artist and Art Collective WA.

Introduction

Inspired by the force and flow of the waterways of Whadjuk country the Gallery is built upon, AGWA will work to rethink our presence in this rich and complex place to become more artistically radical, more physically fluid and more open.

In the next five years, we will make a significant contribution to the debate about the role of the art museum in the twenty-first century, creating inspirational and ground-breaking artistic exhibitions and experiences that are fully expressive of the many dynamic and nuanced voices that comprise our world and communities. We will position contemporary Aboriginal art as one of the most important art movements of our time.

In meeting our obligations under the *Art Gallery Act 1959*, we will make responsible decisions that seek to minimise environmental harm, that challenge growth and consumption for their own sake or that are predominantly market rather than culturally driven.

Guiding this approach is a model of responsiveness and inclusivity; a conversational model, based on respectful dialogue at all levels of what we do. As our visitors encounter our unique take on the arts – in real life or online – they, and all of our stakeholders will find themselves welcomed as part of the AGWA family.

We will align these ambitions to achieve outcomes that match and extend Government's objectives for AGWA and test our success through commissioning a full public value assessment of our performance on the full impact of our activities.

Our key performance measure will be the Western Australian community's desire to maintain the existence of AGWA and see it maximising its reach and visibility for this and future generations.

This document is released during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the impacts of COVID-19 into the future are unknown and unknowable, AGWA is agile and prepared to adapt to circumstances as they evolve. Our commitments outlined throughout the document to open ourselves to new cultural conversations and to extend our societal engagement form the basis of this agility and we look to a post COVID-19 world with optimism.



Our Vision

To be a place for great art.

Goals

These are the Goals we want to achieve over the life of the next five years. They are an integrated whole, equal in priority. As we open ourselves to new conversations and evolve as an institution, these Goals may be refined or change over time.

1. To support and drive artistic ambition through the creation of bold and adventurous exhibitions, experiences and programs, produced in collaboration with artists, artistic communities and audiences.
2. To build audiences through engaging, welcoming and involving the broadest possible extent of our Western Australian community and visitors in our programs.
3. To develop, exhibit, maintain and care for the State Art Collection to ensure that it remains the pre-eminent public art collection in Western Australia. To deepen holdings of Western Australian art and to more fully represent the community of artists and arts of our region.
4. To become a laboratory for arts learning, academic inquiry, experimentation and creative research in partnership with the education sector, academic institutions, Aboriginal cultural authorities, and multi-generational audiences.
5. Through acknowledging and working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia, enhance our exploration of historical and contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and cultures.
6. To engage our neighbours in Asia and across the Indian Ocean Rim in mutually beneficial creative projects.
7. To improve our economic and environmental sustainability.
8. To ensure artist-led lifelong learning, creative and social programs have maximum impact in socio-economic areas where they will benefit most.
9. To increase our expertise and improve our working environment.
10. To improve our capital infrastructure and site plan in order to become a major attraction for visitors in the Perth Cultural Centre (PCC) and the State.



Achieving and measuring our goals

spaced3: north by southeast AGWA installation view, 2018.

1. To support and drive artistic ambition through the creation of bold and adventurous exhibitions, experiences and programs, produced in collaboration with artists, artistic communities and audiences.

Our curatorial approach will situate Western Australian art in dialogue with the rest of the world. Through our exhibitions, programs and collection displays, we will present open and accessible stories with multiple entry points that allow the public to explore and engage with the complex issues of our time as experienced in and from this place.

Our partnerships with artists will be at the heart of our vision; their vision and successes will determine ours. Working in partnership with artists across all generations and from all backgrounds, our curators, educators and designers will foreground new and dynamic approaches to making,

presenting and framing visual culture, often in dialogue with other art forms, across institutions and with the public. Fed by a spirit of creative aspiration and risk-taking, our program will provide holistic, exciting, high-quality and approachable encounters for, with and by, the whole community.

To achieve this, we will focus on quality over quantity and deliver an ambitious program that extends our work with under-represented artists and cognisant of our proximity to Asia and the Indian Ocean Rim.

What we'll do

Deliver a commissioning strategy with a diverse group of contemporary artists to animate our spaces and showcase new voices.

Establish guest curator, international cultural exchange and artist interventions.

Develop collaborative interpretation programs.

Establish bi-monthly artist meetings with curators and educators to discuss issues impacting public museums, the sector and cultural practice.

Establish an Exhibition Research and Development Fund.

Expand AGWA Learning and its curatorial output.

Develop a comprehensive retrospective catalogued program of West Australian artists.

How we'll know if we're on the right track

Audience and artist peer perception of the quality of artistic program.

Visitor satisfaction, improved dwell time and improved repeat visitation.

2. To build audiences through engaging, welcoming and involving the broadest possible extent of our Western Australian community and visitors in our programs.

We will work to remove physical and psychological barriers to our spaces, content, activities and information, making AGWA easily accessible through multiple pathways. We will have clear and relevant entry points for all physical and virtual visitors. This will symbolise our openness to engage with local communities, especially those most traditionally excluded in the metropolitan area and in the State's regions, where we will provide greater access to the State's Art Collection.

We will extend our reach, relevance and visitation by broadening the types and cultural range of stories we tell and the arts practice we engage with. With a focus on innovation, the transnational, deep and meaningful arts experiences, AGWA and our audience-partners will re-think and re-map Western Australian culture within wide and various historical, social and geographical contexts.



What we'll do

Improve digital access to State Art Collection works to improve engagement, exhibition experiences and idea generation.

Use best practice market research to understand our audiences, reduce barriers to visitation, experience and increase non-pressured participation.

Adopt a whole-of-community approach to interpretation and information delivery.

Fully realise the Gallery's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

Diversify the demographic of staff, guides and volunteers.

Deliver regional touring exhibitions of the State Art Collection through the Regional Exhibition Touring Boost and provide a leadership role to regional galleries in the delivery of visual arts experiences.

Establish relationships with new partner organisations to deliver our vision.

Commission best-in-market CRM and market research solutions.

Dunja Rmandić, AGWA Associate Curator of 21st Century Arts, *spaced3: north by southeast* Foundation Preview, AGWA 2018.

How we'll know if we're on the right track

Breadth of community representation and engagement in all AGWA programs.

Improvement in accessibility for groups with disability.

Increase in percentage and diversity of the local population, young people and families visiting the Gallery.



3. To develop, exhibit, maintain and care for the State Art Collection to ensure that it remains the pre-eminent public art collection in Western Australia. To deepen holdings of Western Australian art and to more fully represent the community of artists and arts of our region.

Established in 1895 and comprising nearly 18,000 works of art, the State Art Collection is a public asset that reflects artists view of society, demonstrating changing ideas about art, the function of collections and the various ways Western Australia has been geopolitically located.

With a strong focus on Western Australian art and a 3000-work representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art, the State Art Collection is a major touchstone in our understanding of ourselves and our place in the world.

What we'll do

Research and produce a new five-year Acquisition Policy, with immediate and projected financial allocations reflecting our strategic objective.

Deliver an off-site storage facility for the State Art Collection.

Take a balanced approach between conservation and access.

Promote Western Australian art.

Develop a comprehensive retrospective program of West Australian artists represented in the State Art Collection.

Our exhibition and collection-building work will start from this foundation by more fully representing the visions of Western Australia's artists in all mediums, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practice and by significantly expanding our representation of works by artists from Asia and across the Indian Ocean Rim.

Our collection care work will be focused on urgently finding solutions to improve inadequate storage and related conditions of restricted physical access to our holdings, whilst maintaining best practice security and environmental conditions.

Make the State Art Collection fully accessible and searchable online.

Establish a new conservation laboratory.

Ensure *Inside Australia* is maintained to the highest standards.

How we'll know if we're on the right track

Progress of acquisitions against new policy.

Improved access to the State Art Collection and complete storage facility.

Maintain best practice in collection management.

That Seventies Feeling...the Late Modern AGWA installation view, 2019.
Artwork: Virginia Cuppaidge *Shandica* 1972. Synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 197.5 x 304.5 cm (irregular). State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia. Gift of the artist, 2017.



4. To become a laboratory for arts learning, academic inquiry, experimentation and creative research in partnership with the education sector, academic institutions, Aboriginal cultural authorities and multi-generational audiences.

We will take a leading role in providing a resource to access the history of the visual art of Western Australia, establishing ongoing working relationships with our universities, Aboriginal cultural leaders, and support local scholarship to provide an environment of research excellence.

Our creative learning programs will engage all levels of arts experience and provide meaningful arts learning opportunities with artists at the core of conception and delivery.

We will ensure that learning and engagement programs feature visibly and prominently in the Gallery spaces, are accessible to diverse audiences and meet the complex requirements of 21st Century arts learning.

With creativity, emotional intelligence and critical thinking becoming increasingly required skills, we will engage in ongoing research, consultation and development of new pedagogies that prioritise critical inquiry, imagination and reflection.

What we'll do

Develop an AGWA journal of regional practice and research.

Deliver a schedule of monographs on Western Australian and regional artists in concert with a retrospective focus program.

Explore partnership opportunities to extend the national and international reach of these activities and our artists' visions.

With artists, historians, our art sector and education partners, we will develop and provide access to detailed Western Australian and regional artist information, including oral histories, via the AGWA website, a re-established AGWA library and other shared sites and platforms.

Establish new research and funding partners for our creative learning and social impact work.

Establish a visible, accessible, artist-designed creative learning space for children and families.

Increase employment of teaching artists delivering programming to schools, children, families, educators and public.

Establish an education advisory panel.

How we'll know if we're on the right track

Targets for publications established and met.

Establishment of an accessible library facility and online and physical artist archives and portals.

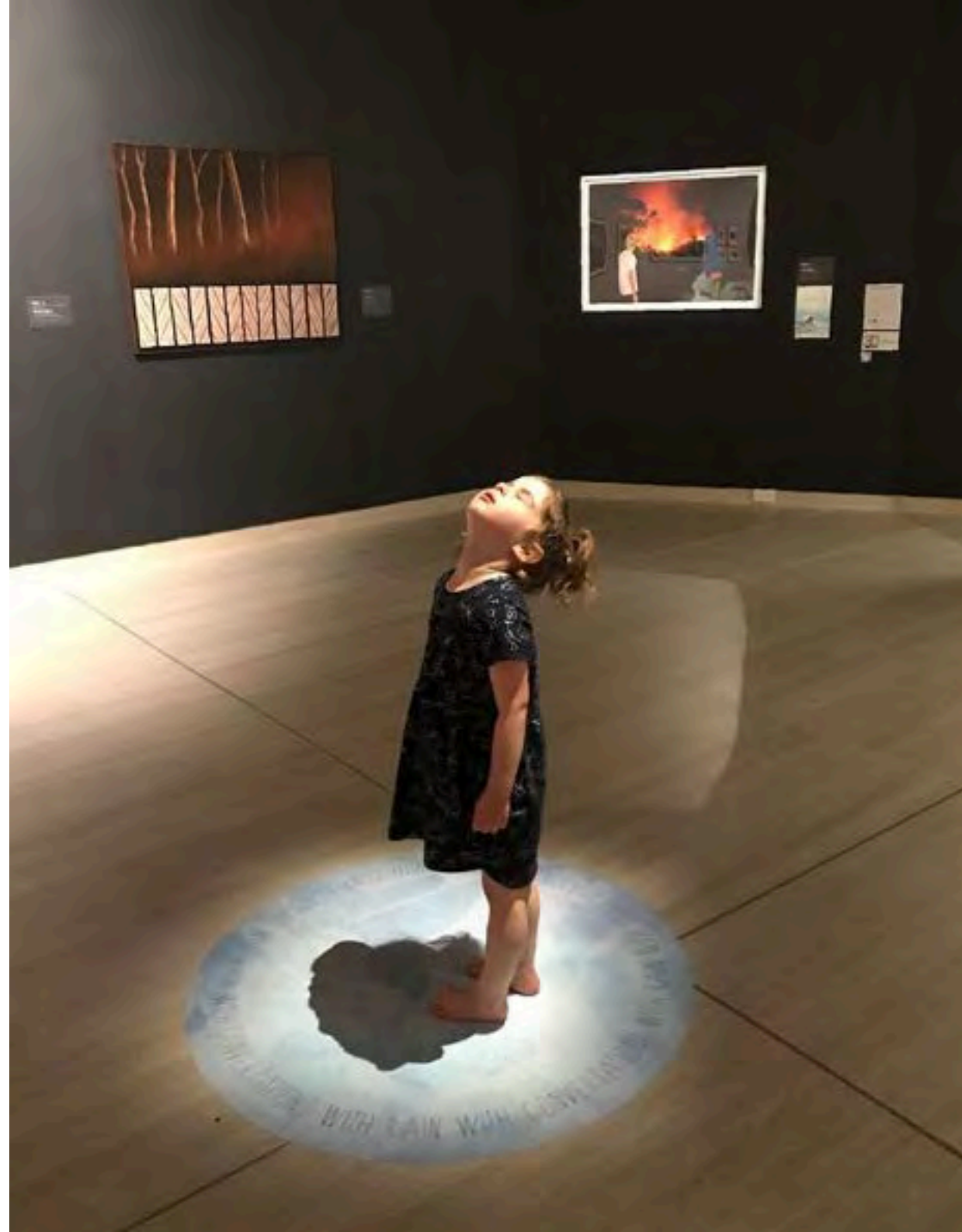
Number of people engaged in AGWA Learning programs.

Number of school children and students accessing AGWA learning programs.

Establishment of a visible, accessible and artist-designed creative learning space for children and families.

Breadth of academic and education sector partnerships.

Child listening to *Conversations with Rain* in *The Botanical: Beauty and Peril* AGWA installation view, 2019. Artwork: (L) Lin Onus *Bushfire* 1987. Synthetic polymer on cotton duck, 91 x 111.5 cm. On loan from the Janet Holmes à Court Collection. © Lin Onus/ Estate/Copyright Agency. (R) Conor O'Brien *Bushfire* 2004. Digital print, 66.3 x 96.8 cm (image). State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia. Purchased through the Art Gallery of Western Australia Foundation: TomorrowFund, 2009.





5. Through acknowledging and working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia, enhance our exploration of historical and contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and cultures.

Reflecting our physical location on Whadjuk Noongar land and our responsibilities as a State institution, we will better represent our relationship to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of WA and Australia.

We will prioritise a physical manifestation of the status of Aboriginal people as the First Peoples of this land and engage Aboriginal communities in our decision-making and employment practices.

What we'll do

Establish an Indigenous advisory group/board representation.

Establish a permanent, prominent Gallery location for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art acknowledging contemporary Aboriginal art as one of the greatest art movements of our time.

Acknowledge and curate the diversity of art, subjects and material created by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.

Appreciate the broader empowering and educative role that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art plays in Australia.

Engage with the Noongar community to assist in creating Noongar interpretative information materials.

We will offer a thoroughly contemporary expression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art, cultures and lived experience. Parallel to this we will work to respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's right to self-determination.

We will also work to improve our interpretative strategies and institutional languages to ensure Indigenous ways of knowing and doing are among the knowledge we apply to our work. The Gallery will be a place for Indigenous people not just their art.

Increase Indigenous employment in the Gallery.

Establish a Noongar Associate Curator position.

Create a physical entry statement of Aboriginal connection to the land the Gallery inhabits.

Deliver a major touring exhibition of Aboriginal art.

Promote and curate the diversity of art, sculptures and material created by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.

How we'll know if we're on the right track

Number of Aboriginal visitors to the Gallery.

Awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art among visitors.

Number of working relationships with the State's Aboriginal Art Centres.

Increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff numbers, visitors and participants in AGWA programs.

Desert River Sea: Portraits of the Kimberley media preview, AGWA 2019.
Ngarralja Tommy May with his *Desert River Sea* commission *Untitled* 2018.
Synthetic polymer and paint pen on sheep hide, 122 x 158.5 cm. Courtesy Mangkaja Arts
Resource Agency. Photo by Rebecca Mansell. © Tommy May 2018 / Licensed by the
Copyright Agency Ltd.



6. To engage our neighbours in Asia and across the Indian Ocean Rim in mutually beneficial creative projects.

The future of the State lies in a deeper engagement with Asia and the Indian Ocean Rim. As one of the State's leading cultural ambassadors, AGWA will prioritise relationships with cultural and government institutions and artists in our immediate geographic region.

We will offer a safe space for artists to explore contemporary themes and issues that affect all of us in the region and contextualise these for the Western Australian community.

What we'll do

Establish critical frameworks for our regional engagements in dialogue with local and international policy and culture experts.

Establish an exhibition and exchange program of established regional artists and curators in collaboration with international partner galleries/institutions.

Provide cultural exchange opportunities for young and emerging artists and curators from across the region.

Establish a curator travel program.

Ensure existing collection items and newly acquired works by regional artists are prominently featured in our collection displays, online and in other published materials.

Align our work with Government's ambitions for its Asian Engagement Strategy.

Our acquisitions policy will reflect our geographic relationships that currently sit outside the mainstream of collecting practice, but which signal our future partnerships in the world.

How we'll know if we're on the right track

Increase in representation and visibility of Collection holdings from the region.

Number of artist and curatorial exchanges from the region.

Establishment of at least two collaborative exhibitions over the next five years.

Nalini Malani *The sacred and the profane* 1998. Synthetic polymer paint on Mylar, steel, nylon cord, electric motors, lights and hardware, 300 x 500 x 1100 cm (overall installation). State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia. Purchased 2001. Purchased 2013.



7. To improve our economic and environmental sustainability.

Our economic and environmental sustainability are inseparable. We will improve our financial sustainability through investing our capital funds more effectively, prioritising our relationship with our Foundation members and pursuing greater endowments and planned giving.

We will expand the range of opportunities for donors to support, driving membership of Next Collective and developing better targeted fundraising strategies. We will broaden opportunities for individuals and companies to engage with us and explain fully what we do with the community's investment in us.

What we'll do

Establish a direct dialogue with Foundation stakeholders about the Gallery's new Acquisition Policy with a view to developing the State Art Collection.

Create a report for funders on how we have invested their contributions.

Provide access to artists, curators, educators as a key part of all events.

Develop a new fundraising and commercial strategy to align new opportunities with the Gallery's rooftop and improved exhibition space.

Establish retail partnerships with Aboriginal Art Centres.

We will focus our commercial operations on a better retail experience with more accessible price points with broader representation of Western Australian and Aboriginal art product and fewer but deeper event experiences.

These economic goals will not come at the expense of our environmental impact. In fact, the more environmentally sustainable we are, the more relevant we will become to the community and the greater the scope of new partnerships that will emerge. But first we need to better understand our environmental impact. We will research methodologies to benchmark our environmental impact and develop strategies to reduce it across all areas of operations and seek innovative partnerships to help reduce our energy consumption in conserving the State Art Collection.

Develop own-brand product range and tie-ins to the State Art Collection.

Develop a new investment portfolio to maximise capital holdings.

Create a methodology and working model to monitor and reduce our impact on the environment.

How we'll know if we're on the right track

Level of net unrestricted income raised and earned.

Amount of capital earned on investments and notified bequests obtained.

Improvement in the Gallery's energy consumption.



8. To ensure artist-led lifelong learning, creative and social programs have maximum impact in socio-economic areas where they will benefit most.

The expansion of AGWA Learning will enable the creation of long-term, impactful creative experiences for the most excluded members of our community. We will emphasise creative learning through the expertise of artists and arts educators and offer an open environment in the Gallery for learning opportunities.

We will find partners to offer artist residency opportunities in lower socio-economic communities. We will emphasise opportunities for people with special or different needs and take our work out into the community where it can help most.

What we'll do

- Establish MOUs with organisations who work with excluded communities.
- Deliver on our partnership with Healthway.
- Establish permanent spaces in the Gallery for deep learning experiences.
- Create research programs to evaluate the impact of our work and shape future initiatives.
- Explore options for use of new technologies to promote learning experiences.
- Establish a Youth Advisory Panel.
- Produce accessible multi-platform creative learning resources.
- Establish a program for all primary school children to access AGWA.

We will provide a formal opportunity for young people to co-create their learning experiences and seek partners that share our belief in the power of art to provide life-long opportunities for engagement.

The Gallery will work with university partners to contribute to best practice research on engagement and learning strategies in order to extend our impact.

How we'll know if we're on the right track

Number of low socioeconomic status young people accessing opportunities provided by AGWA.

Number of research projects to which AGWA contributes.

Impact of AGWA's programs.

Number of people with disability accessing learning opportunities.

Expanded demographic of visitors.

9. To increase our expertise and improve our working environment.

To deliver the full extent of our vision we will need new working practices and additional support in key areas. Together AGWA staff, guides and volunteers will create a working culture that is collaborative, inclusive and ambitious.

Our culture will see us operating with a shared purpose to deliver the best possible artistic experiences for our visitors. We will expand our diversity by employing from the broadest range of community members.

We will look to use technology where possible to improve our operations and put the development of our staff at the centre of our workplace. We will take the best ideas from wherever they emerge in the organisation and plan in a whole-of-gallery context.

What we'll do

Ensure a fit-for-purpose structure.

Develop an Employee Wellness Program.

Establish a transparent workforce planning structure.

Allocate a dedicated professional development budget for all staff.

We will offer more opportunities for internships and apprenticeships to support emerging talent in the field and ensure future relevance and growth.

We will create a safe working environment for all. As a mentally healthy organisation, we will operate with confidence, fairness, openness and within a one-team culture. We will ensure detailed and transparent strategic and operational planning processes backed by sound, future-focused financial planning to provide certainty of expectations and future employment prospects.

How we'll know if we're on the right track

Improved outcomes of staff satisfaction surveys.

Diversity of workforce and volunteers.

Take-up of professional development opportunities.

Awareness of decision-making processes and outcomes and status of work against strategic and operational targets.

10. To improve our capital infrastructure and site plan in order to become a major attraction for visitors in the Perth Cultural Centre (PCC) and the State.

AGWA comprises three significant heritage buildings, each with a unique history and various stages of repurposing. Despite their proximity, the Gallery complex – as an articulate and conjoined entity both fit-for-purpose and publicly accessible – has not been completed, resulting in an inward facing set of spaces detached from the PCC.

Whilst delivering Government’s commitment for a new rooftop experience, the Gallery will work through the Perth Cultural Centre Taskforce and with the State and Federal Government to fully complete its Gallery complex and integrate with the PCC.

We will activate work on the complex following completion of the Elevate rooftop development. This will include modifying the ground floor to improve legibility of the site, its relationship to the PCC and Beaufort Street and to provide new access points to the Gallery buildings. Through these processes we will respect both the heritage value of the buildings and the architect’s original intention that the main Gallery building offer a series of points of connection and encounters with the outside world.

AGWA will collaborate with its partners in the PCC to offer consistent opening hours, engaging experiences in the PCC to drive tourism, marketing collaborations and a whole of PCC education program for all primary school children.

We will be an active member of the PCC Taskforce and offer collaborative approaches to ensure the site is a must-see visitor experience in Perth.

Art Gallery of Western Australia wetlands external view.



Our infrastructure focus will be on upgrades and will include seeking support to fully environmentally seal and secure the Centenary Galleries, resolve storage issues, develop a new on-site space for the conservation team, scope the potential of a state-of-the-art conservation and research laboratory and establish a technologically-advanced children's contemporary art and research centre within the Gallery.

What we'll do

Complete the Elevate rooftop development and ground floor entry improvements onto the PCC.

Develop a whole-of-PCC school access and excursion incursion program.

Develop interconnecting short, medium and long-term capital plans for the Gallery complex.

Contribute to the master-planning process for the PCC.

Align opening hours with cultural institutions to maximise potential for visitation and visitor expenditure.

Create co-marketing opportunities with Perth Theatre Trust and tourism bodies to raise profile of PCC as a destination.

Extend opening hours.

AGWA will actively seek opportunities to expand its operations onto other sites to maximise access to the State Art Collection.

We will adopt the most environmentally friendly approach as we maintain and monitor best practice environmental and pest management protocols for the care and safety of our State Art Collection.

How we'll know if we're on the right track

Delivery of rooftop election commitment.

Creation of Gallery complex masterplan inclusive of conservation, a children's contemporary arts and research centre and education spaces.

Delivery of storage solution.

Environmental efficiency targets met.

Increased dwell time and repeat visitation in Gallery and PCC.

Increase conversion rate of PCC visitors to Gallery visitors.



COVER: *Six Seasons – Outside: Matters of the heart in Indigenous art*, AGWA installation view, 2019.
Artworks: (L) Vernon Ah Kee *born in this skin* 2008. Crayon, charcoal and synthetic polymer on canvas, 179.5 x 239.5 cm each, three panels. State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia. Purchased through the Friends of the Art Gallery, 2008. © Vernon Ah Kee. Courtesy Milani Gallery, Brisbane.
(R) Vernon Ah Kee *therewasafall* 2015 (detail). Synthetic polymer paint on Belgian linen, 180 x 240 cm. State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia. Purchased 2016. © Vernon Ah Kee, 2015.