

THE ADVANCEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE

NEWSLETTER

June/July 2023

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A Message from the President

Dear Members,

Dr Don Garden was appointed as the Honorary Secretary at the Mid-Winter Dinner last week. Don and still-new Honorary Treasurer, **Dr Sonia Shimeld**, have been settling into their positions. If you have the chance, please welcome them.

After a long dormant spell, the **RST Bursaries program** has begun to show signs of life. This month, we received five

applications from secondary school students to attend the ANZAAS Youth Science Forum in Melbourne this year. Thanks to a tip from RST member Dr Derris Wood, the bursaries are being advertised in an online bulletin that goes to all Tasmanian secondary schools. If you have connections with Tasmanian secondary school teachers and students, please mention the RST Bursaries program. Details on how to apply can be found on our website.

The **RST Art Collection** continues to be a major focus of Council business. I am pleased to report the Loan Agreement between the RST and TMAG has been settled and signed. The 900+ artworks in the RST Art Collection are stored in TMAG's Print Room where conditions and security are both optimum. The agreement sets out the terms under which the RST loans the Art Collection to TMAG and serves as an important link between the two organisations. A second Art Collection matter concerning ownership of watercolour illustrations by Louisa Anne Meredith has not yet been resolved.

We have a variety of events on offer in Hobart and Launceston over the next couple of months, including two lectures addressing issues in the forthcoming Voice Referendum. A great way for members to show their interest in and support for the Society is to attend these events.

Congratulations to RST member **Dr Keith Corbett**! Keith has been awarded an OAM for his contributions to conservation and the environment (see p. 16).

Finally, welcome to the four **new RST members** who have recently joined: Dr Don Garden, Dr Paul Hanson, Dr Valeriya Komyakova and Ms Narelle Wickham. I hope you make the most of RST events and programs.

Best regards,

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Prof Jocelyn McPhie, President

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The Voice Referendum 2023 - RST Lectures

Later this year, Australians will vote "yes" or "no" in a referendum about whether to change the Constitution to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.

The Voice would be an independent and permanent advisory body, giving advice to the Australian Parliament and Government on matters that affect the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Two RST lectures addressing the issues will help members make an informed choice. Admission to both lectures is free and everyone is welcome to attend.

Empowering Aborigines: Voices inside parliament or advisers outside? Voting 'No' to the referendum is a vote of support for Aboriginal self-determination by Michael Mansell

The Royal Society of Tasmania invites you to a lecture by Tasmanian Aboriginal leader, lawyer, author and activist, Michael Mansell at 3 pm on Sunday 2 July 2023 from 3:00 to 4:30 pm.

The lecture will be held at the Stanley Burbury Lecture Theatre, University of Tasmania, Churchill Ave, Sandy Bay, Hobart.

To attend in person, please register using this Eventbrite link. Eventbrite registrations close at 3 pm on Saturday 1 July.

To view the livestream, please register using this Zoom link.

Abstract: The presentation will focus on the debate about Aboriginal self-determination, giving Aboriginal people direct decision-making as opposed to Aboriginal subordination (advising others to make decisions about us).

Biography: Michael Mansell is a Tasmanian Aboriginal leader who, as an activist and lawyer, has worked for social, political and legal changes to improve the lives and social standing of Tasmanian Aboriginal people.



Lecture by Kerry Sculthorpe 3 pm, Sunday 30 July 2023

Tasmanian Aboriginal leader, Kerry Sculthorpe will present the case for voting "Yes" in the forthcoming Voice Referendum.

Venue and registration details will be advised shortly. For more information, please check the RST website.

RST Peter Smith Medal Lectures 3 pm Sunday 6 August

Cardiovascular Health in Early Life by Dr Rachel Climie Transforming 3D Printing from Rapid Prototyping to Advanced Manufacturing by Dr Vipul Gupta

The Royal Society of Tasmania invites you to our biannual Peter Smith lectures by Dr Rachel Climie and Dr Vipul Gupta at 3:00 pm on Sunday 6 August 2023.

The lecture will be held at the Geology Lecture Theatre (Geo 211.LT), Earth Sciences - Geography, Planning and Special Sciences Building, University of Tasmania, Sandy Bay (entrance off Earl Street, Hobart).

Please register using this Eventbrite link.

Eventbrite registrations close at 3:00 pm on Saturday 5 August. The lecture will be recorded but not live-streamed.

Admission is free for members of The Royal Society of Tasmania. Non-members are welcome, and donations are appreciated through our website rst.org.au or at the door. Suggested donation is \$6; \$4 for students and friends of TMAG and QVMAG.

Above: Dr Rachel Climie. (Photo examiner.com.au)

Cardiovascular Health in Early Life by Dr Rachel Climie

Abstract:

Despite major improvements in risk factor control and clinical care over the last decades, cardiovascular disease (CVD) remains the leading cause of death worldwide. Although overt CVD may not appear until later in life, the risk factors for CVD begin to develop in childhood and are associated with adverse outcomes in adulthood.

Importantly, these risk factors are increasing in prevalence in Australian children, particularly in those who come from areas of social disadvantage.

Rachel's work aims to identify the determinants of cardiovascular health in childhood and their association with future health; to establish tools to detect early CVD risk in young people; and to develop effective and acceptable strategies to improve CVH of children who come from social disadvantage, with a particular focus on regions of Tasmania.

Right: Image by amomed.com

Biography:

Dr Rachel Climie is Research Fellow at the UTAS Menzies

Institute for Medical Research, an Exercise Physiologist and advocate for public health. After completing her PhD at UTAS in 2016, Rachel was awarded two internationally competitive fellowships for postdoctoral training in France. Rachel was then awarded a Heart Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellowship to return to Australia and the Heart Foundation's Paul Korner Award for most innovative postdoctoral fellowship application.

In 2022, Rachel was awarded an NHMRC Emerging Leader Fellowship (<10% success rate) and Heart Foundation Future Leader Fellowship (<15% success rate). Rachel has received over \$3.9M (\$1.8M CIA) in competitive national and international grant funding. She has published >70 peer-reviewed (39 first/senior author) papers.



Rachel has received seven international and six national awards in recognition for her work including the Victorian Young Tall Poppy Award for excellence in research and science communication; and High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia Young Investigator Award for the best scientific presentation by a young researcher.

Left: Image by pensions.org

RST Peter Smith Medal Lectures (cont'd)

Transforming 3D Printing from Rapid Prototyping to Advanced Manufacturing by Dr Vipul Gupta

Abstract:

Manufacturing advancements in every sector, from health, energy, and aerospace to defence, demand modern additive manufacturing techniques like 3D printing. However, these methods have been predominantly limited to rapid prototyping because they are mostly restricted to plastic manufacturing, offer a low resolution, and fail to produce multi-material structures. Hence, our research is focused on developing new 3D printing materials and methods to overcome these three limitations.

Vipul's recent work has focused on developing new materials and methods to 3D print one of the most attractive and hard-to-manufacture classes of materials, glass and ceramics, while offering nanometre scale feature resolution and multi-material print capabilities. The developed inks and printers have been the subject of six patent applications in the last two years and are now realising holy grail products, such as wearable universal sensors, high-efficiency hydrogen fuel cells, comprehensive air and water filters, and environmental pollution remediation systems, to effect socio-economic progress.



Above: Dr Vipul Gupta.

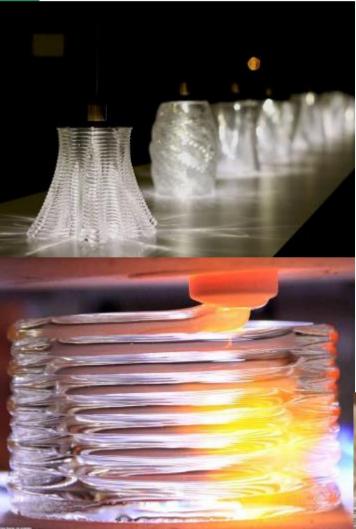
Left: 3D glass printing. Image by 3dprintingindustry.com

Biography:

Dr Vipul Gupta graduated from the UTAS School of Natural Sciences (Chemistry Discipline) in September 2018. During his PhD, he has represented Tasmania at different national and international platforms, such as Lindau Noble Laureate Meeting and Australian Socio-Economic discussion forums.

Since graduating, Vipul has contributed towards securing research funding of c. \$6.5 million through different ARC grants, including a highly prestigious ARC Discovery Early Career Research Award (DECRA) Fellowship.

Vipul is co-author of 30 peer-reviewed publications from his graduate and four years of post-graduate research. The impact and significance of his research have earned him 18 awards and honours including an invitation to the Science at the Shine Dome, and a Science and Industry Endowment Fund – Australian Academy of Science (SIEF-AAS) Fellowship to the Lindau Nobel Laureates Meeting.



Above: 3D glass printing. Image by 3dprint.com **Right:** 3D ceramic printing. Image by blogspot.com





RST Northern Branch invites you to a public lecture by Dr David Harris

Hydrogen as a Renewable Energy Carrier

Where: Meeting Room, QVMAG at Inveresk.

When: 1:30 pm Sunday 25 June 2023.

Admission: Free for members of RST; \$6 general admission; \$4 students, QVMAG or

TMAG Friends and members of Launceston Historical Society.

Full COVID-19 vaccination and the wearing of face masks are highly desirable.

Abstract:

The presentation will explore opportunities and technologies to facilitate decarbonisation of industrial systems through integration of renewable energy supply, storage and utilisation in practical commercial and industrial value chains.



supporting demonstration and deployment of practical energy technologies that enable large scale renewable energy production, storage, transport, and utilisation.

Generously supported by



Right: Hydrogen is the chemical element with the symbol H and atomic number 1. Hydrogen is the lightest element and is colourless, odourless and tasteless.

Made of the simplest of all atoms, it is amazing that hydrogen has powered the engines of space rockets and is used in the iron and steel sector, the ammonia-based fertiliser revolution, and in electronics manufacturing. (Image: Cambridge University Press)



Biography:

Dr David Harris is a Chief Research Consultant with CSIRO Energy, based in Brisbane, and led CSIRO's national low emissions and hydrogen-based energy research programs for more than 25 years.

He now leads the development of major industrial-scale programs and projects across multi-sector energy value and supply chains, focusing on





RST Northern Branch invites you to a public lecture by

Jon Addison

The Australasian League Flag

Where: Meeting Room, QVMAG at Inveresk, Launceston.

When: 1:30 pm Sunday 23 July 2023.

THE ADVANCEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE Full COVID-19 vaccination and the wearing of face masks are highly desirable.

Admission: Free for members of RST; \$6 general admission; \$4 for students, QVMAG or TMAG Friends and members of Launceston Historical Society.

Abstract:

Launceston's Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery holds in its collection one of **the most important flags in Australian flag history**: The Australasian League flag of 1851.

Although this flag represents one short period of political agitation, Mr Addison will show how it can be considered the design origin of Australia's current national flag, chosen by a competition in 1901.

Biography:

Jon Addison is the Senior Curator of Public History at QVMAG, Launceston. Before taking up his current post in 2008, he worked at several museums in Australia and the UK, including the Western Australian Maritime Museum, the London Transport Museum and the Scottish Maritime

Above image by Australian Broadcasting Commission

Museum. His current role allows him to explore many diverse collections and interests.

Generously supported by





Above: The Australasian League flag of 1851 held in QVMAG, Launceston.

Introducing RST Honorary Secretary Dr Don Garden and RST Honorary Treasurer Dr Sonia Shimeld

RST Honorary Secretary Dr Don Garden and Honorary Treasurer Dr Sonia Shimeld are both new to the RST as well as being new to their respective positions on the RST Executive. Don and Sonia offer a great deal of experience and knowledge that are sure to be of benefit to the Society.



Above: Dr Don Garden, RST Honorary Secretary.

Dr Don Garden, OAM FFAHS, FRHSV (pictured left)

Dr Don Garden is the Immediate Past President of the Federation of Australian Historical Societies, former Co-Chair of GLAM Peak, Immediate Past President of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria and a former member of the Australian Heritage Council. He is an Adjunct Professor at James Cook University, a Committee member of the Old Treasury Building Management Committee (Melbourne), a committee member of the Sandringham & District Historical Society, a Life Member of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) and of the Albany Historical Society, and a member of a number of other community history and heritage groups.

For many years, Don taught History and Environmental History at the University of Melbourne. He has written seventeen books, a mixture of local and regional histories, biography, company history, an environmental history of Australia and the Pacific, and a history of El Nino events in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific.

Dr Sonia Shimeld (pictured right)

Dr Sonia Shimeld is an accountant (FCPA) with a PhD in governance in not-for-profit organisations (perfect for the RST!). Although starting her university life in science, lifestyle choices led to an academic career in accounting.

Sonia retired after 21 years in academia, lecturing in accounting and corporate governance while also being Course Coordinator for the Masters in Professional Accounting and Research Higher Degree Coordinator.

For the past 18 years Sonia has been Treasurer for a diverse range of not-for-profit boards of dancing groups, community legal centres, festival groups, wooden boats and the peak body for volunteering.



This year is the hundredth anniversary of the erection of a monument in 1923 by the RST. The monument commemorates the landing of the Abel Tasman Expedition in Tasmania on 3 December 1642. The monument is on "Bangor" private land near Cape Paul Lamanon, Forestier Peninsula. Access is via the property and involves negotiating a rough track. The Tasmanian Historical Research Association (THRA) is organising an excursion to the monument and has offered a limited number of places to RST members. **Date: Sunday 3 December 2023. Plan:** Participants to make their way to "Bangor" independently, then by a bus for part of the journey, and finally a

15-minute walk to the monument. Four-wheel drive transport might be available for participants with mobility restrictions.

Cost: To be advised; the main cost will be the hire of the bus.

If you are interested joining this excursion, please send a short message **before 1 August** to admin@rst.org.au with the subject line "Tasman Monument Excursion". Final details

will be given in the next Newsletter.

Right: Monument inscription: At this spot the Expedition under Abel Jansz Tasman being the first white people to set foot on Tasmanian soil planted the Dutch flag on December 3rd 1642 as a memorial to posterity and to the inhabitants of this country.

This stone was erected by the Royal Society of Tasmania 1923





Shasta began by discussing the human negativity bias

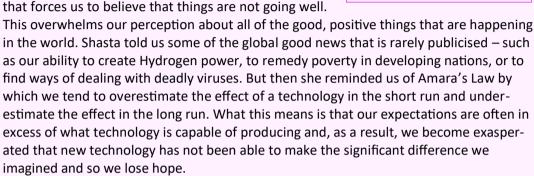
RST 2023 Midwinter Dinner Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania 8 June 2023

Dr Shasta Henry received her PhD from the University of Tasmania, investigating the impact of fire on invertebrate communities in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. Shasta is an entomologist, an adventurer,

an educator, and an inspiring science communicator.

Right: Invertebrate ecologist

Dr Shasta Henry.





However, Shasta explained a new concept - the Adaptability Quotient - which is described as the ability to determine what is relevant, to forget obsolete knowledge, overcome challenges, and adjust to change in real time. This new open mindedness might just be the way in which we save ourselves on this planet.

Shasta is one member of the vibrant group, Future Crunch, a group of scientists, artists, technologists and entrepreneurs who think there are new and better ways of doing things in the 21st century. Their mission is "to foster intelligent, optimistic thinking about the future, and to empower people to contribute to it." They are passionate about science and technology and enthusiastic about the promise and potential they offer. She told us, for example, of citizen groups who act as forest guardians across the Amazon: they are finding increasing success in protecting their lands from deforestation and mining, using drones, camera traps, georeferencing and solar panels. This and other wonderful, good news stories are available on the Future Crunch website.

Science has shown us that "we deserve to anticipate a future where things get better". At the end of Dr Henry's lecture, we were indeed more enthused about the future and felt more hopeful than when we had arrived. We also noted with some relief, that with this next generation of scientists, educators and leaders, we are in good hands.

John Williamson

Below left: At the RST Midwinter Dinner, RST President Jocelyn McPhie (standing) welcomed the new Honorary Treasurer, Dr Sonia Shimeld and her husband, Peter Shimeld. **Below right**: Jill Muller and Marie Murray, both of South Hobart.







Upcoming Exhibition

Dear Kate: The Vision of the Mitchell Women, by Jane Giblin

A young woman, Catherine Augusta Keast (1812–1899), came out from England in 1839 to marry John Mitchell (1812–1880), the Superintendent of the Boys' Penal Station at Port Arthur. The family left Port Arthur in 1849 to establish a farm on the east coast of Tasmania and eventually settled on a property at Lisdillon, near Little Swanport. Catherine Augusta began drawing to record her surroundings and these drawings are of significant historical importance as they show the workings of an early Tasmanian farm, the lives of the workers and her own social world – all of this with great accuracy. Often, too, she annotated her drawings with a rich commentary.

Many of these sketches are in the Allport Library and The Royal Society of Tasmania has a selection of sketches and paintings on paper by Catherine's daughter, Sarah Mitchell (1853–1946) who also diligently recorded, in art and writing, the colonial coastal life she lived. Sarah was close to her sister, also named Catherine after their mother, and Sarah always referred to her sister as "Dear Kate". Kate died of hydatids when she was only 25. During the final years of her life, Sarah gifted her sketchbook, scrapbooks and diaries to The Royal Society of Tasmania, and these are held in the University of Tasmania Library as part of the RST Library Collections.

Above: Jane Giblin. Photo blacktownarts.com.au

The intriguing story of the Mitchell family has been taken up enthusiastically by Jane Giblin, a Hobart-based educator and artist whose vast array of group and solo exhibitions and many prizes place her as one of Tasmania's most innovative creatives. She is currently a PhD candidate at the School of Art, University of Tasmania. Giblin commenced work in 2021 for this exhibition *Dear Kate*, and soon realised the lack of recognition for the work of the Mitchell women in Australian art history.

Consequently, she produced a series of hand-coloured lithographs and watercolours responding to details in Kate's own works that she (Giblin) found intriguing. These and the primary source material of diaries and annotations on sketches comprise the basis for the exhibition. But in addition, Giblin is producing, throughout the tour of the exhibition, a 'new' scrapbook augmented by artworks created in community workshops, facilitated by her, as contributors respond to Kate and Sarah's sketches and diary entries. These 'augmentations' will be drawn and/or written in traditional and contemporary methods, securing new archival material, which, at the closing ceremony of the tour, will be donated to The Royal Society of Tasmania.

Giblin's aims in doing this are to re-activate the Mitchell archive, bringing its contents to new audiences, engaging them with the archives of a Tasmania family and community and documenting the traditional creative interests of women – especially the social and community role of scrapbooking by women. This latter aim closely relates to Sarah Mitchell's own creative purpose. Another hope, Giblin suggests, is over time to have the work of these women, and their traditional practices, recognised beyond the realm of the slightly pejorative term 'amateur' artist: such work, women's work, must be included in our historical canon. The first iteration of the touring show, *Dear Kate*, will be held in the Allport Library. It is then travelling to Swansea, Tasmania, Bright in Victoria, and returning to Launceston in 2025. Dr Anita Hansen, the honorary curator for the RST, will open the exhibition at the Allport Library.

Selected references

Davies, L 2023 'Life's Journal', Forty South Tasmania, 28 February, history888/lifes-journal

Giblin, J 2023 Email to Anita Hansen, 8 June
Kerr, J & Glover, M 2011 'Catherine Mitchell', Design & Art
Australia Online, https://www.daao.org.au/bio/catherine-mitchell/biography/

John Williamson

Right: Sarah Mitchell scrapbook: *Nov 1874 Two Misses Boultbee, Dear Kate and George Pennefather at Avoca.*





Hobart National Reconciliation Week Breakfast, Thursday 1 June 2023

On a cold blustery morning, I joined over 750 people seated by 7:00 am at MyState Bank Arena, Glenorchy for the National Reconciliation Week Hobart Breakfast. Reconciliation Tasmania's Mr Mark Redmond welcomed guests at the packed stadium and outlined the order of proceedings, noting its special significance this year with the coming referendum to enshrine a First Nation's Voice to Parliament.

The 'Welcome to Country' delivered by palawa woman Alison Overeem respectfully acknowledged the nine nations of lutruwita and paid tribute to her own proud south-eastern Aboriginal lineage through the Smith family. Guests included a range of dignitaries, such as Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC, Governor of Tasmania and husband Emeritus Professor Don Chalmers AO, the Premier Jeremy Rockliff, leaders of all political parties, representatives from state and local government, emergency services, education, religious and sporting groups, Aboriginal groups, and many others.



Guests shared a menu of seasonal fruits and a selection of hot fritters, muffins and grilled cheese platters with endless tea and coffee served by busy waiters. Big screens ensured everyone could see and hear the proceedings, and short breaks allowed us time to mingle.

The program was directed by Aboriginal man, Mr Duncan Robinson who introduced the first speaker, Ms Tyenna Hogan, a palawa and bundjalung UTAS Law and Sociology student (see right). Tyenna delivered an eloquent, powerful address on the meaning of 'reconciliation' with truth-telling as its cornerstone. To make peace after an argument, you must have truth-telling and truth-listening and only then can both parties come together as friends. Tyenna reflected on the desperate journey of the palawa people from the unfulfilled promises made by George Augustus Robinson to Mannalargenna to a current Tasmanian Government that refuses to ask or listen to the palawa people. While there is an overwhelming desire to move forward, controversies remain and even now it is White Australia who will choose whether Aboriginal people get a voice or not.

The second speaker was renowned journalist, five-time gold Logie award winner, kamilaroi man and reconciliation champion Ray Martin AM (see right). Ray reflected on his early years in Tasmania where he attended school in Launceston but only learned of his NSW Aboriginal connection

later in life when he featured on the SBS ancestry program *Who Do You Think You Are?* Like so many of his generation, Ray was nurtured by the 'white' literature of Australian greats like Henry Lawson and Banjo Patterson

which totally excluded Aboriginal history, but as he got older and, to his horror, Ray witnessed the extreme racism and apartheid wielded against our Aboriginal people. Concluding, Ray made a passionate plea to vote 'Yes' in the coming referendum, not only as a symbol we care but saying, "we have nothing to lose but everything to gain".

This important event finished with both speakers on stage, flanked by the Uluru Statement from the Heart, fielding a range of questions from the audience. Perhaps the most profound was the last asked by a young student, "When you've got a voice in parliament, do you think anyone will listen?"

Dr Sally Bryant AM

RST Aboriginal Engagement Committee



Launceston National Reconciliation Week Breakfast Wednesday 31 May 2023

A crowded main-room audience at Launceston's Tailrace Conference Centre greeted the guest speakers, Mr Ged Watts from George Town and Dr Ray Martin AM from Richmond in NSW. The breakfast was one of the events organised by Reconciliation Tasmania to observe National Reconciliation Week. The audience was made up of a cross section of organisational representatives, community members and senior school students and their teachers from various Launceston schools.



#NRW2023

NRW.RECONCILIATION.ORG.AU



David Morris represented The Royal Society of Tasmania and was one of the representatives from Scotch Oakburn College. At the time of this event, the referendum Bill to change the federal constitution to allow the establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to the Commonwealth Parliament and executive government had just passed the House of Representatives and was on its way to the Senate.

The organisers of this event had asked the speakers to speak on the theme 'Be a Voice for Generations'. The two guest speakers were, accordingly, aged 19 and 78. The theme was designed to encourage all Australians to be a voice for reconciliation in tangible ways in our everyday lives – where we live, work and socialise. For the work of generations past, and the benefit of generations future, the message was: Act today for a more just, equitable and reconciled country for all.

Ged Watts was born in Katherine, and his family moved to Tasmania when he was three years old, where he grew up immersed in cultural activities on-country. He is currently studying Cyber Security from Victoria University in Melbourne by distance education. He spoke eloquently and with powerful yet constrained passion about his trials growing up as an Aboriginal Australian amidst racial prejudice. His commentary on the referendum Bill provided the audience with a nuanced view of surrounding issues, notably the dismal state of levels of incarceration and suicide and neonatal deaths of First Nations people compared with the non-indigenous population, and that efforts to substantially ameliorate this state of affairs had hitherto come to nought. His message was one of hope in the future, and of asserting the dignity of all Australians as a single nation. His considered and well-researched approach addressing various opinions brought his audience along with him, and cleverly side-stepped the antagonism of those impatient for change. Ged was an impressive ambassador who spoke with distinction.

Well-known retired journalist, five-time gold Logie Award winner, kamilaroi man and reconciliation champion Ray Martin then addressed the breakfast audience. He opened autobiographically telling his story of discovering his Aboriginal descent in his late 40s and his experiences unfolding from that. His professional life had involved him in a great deal of historical research, and he brought that to bear in his address presenting a suite of anecdotes illustrating the racial prejudice he had encountered, and how his own parents had kept the Aboriginal line of his heritage from him in younger days. His link to Launceston was that he was educated at Launceston High School (now Launceston College) before moving back to the mainland to study at the University of Sydney. He also gave his carefully constructed views on the expected referendum, positing that this was not about politics and power but rather was about social justice and equity for the disadvantaged First Nations. The two speakers' material necessarily overlapped.

Both speakers spoke in favour of the expected referendum, and provided the audience with much food for thought on what it means to seek after a reconciled society.

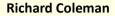
David Morris

Right: image from reconciliation.org.au



The Royal Society of Tasmania Medals on Offer in 2023

The RST will offer two medals in 2023, the MR Banks Medal and the RM Johnston Memorial Medal. The Call for Medal Nominations is now open and will be posted on the RST homepage, and advertised via the RST Facebook and Twitter pages. **Nominations for these two medals close on 31 August 2023.**



BANKS

Chair, RST Honours and Awards Committee

The **Dr Maxwell R Banks Medal** is awarded to an outstanding mid -career scholar in any field within the Society's purview, being between 8 and a maximum of 15 years or 15 equivalent full-time years post PhD graduation.

<u>Click for more details and</u> <u>nomination guidelines</u> about this medal. The **RM Johnston Memorial Medal** is awarded to a scholar of great distinction in any field within the Society's purview.

<u>Click for nomination guidelines</u> for this medal.





RST Celebrates Science Week 2023

Once again, we are delighted to celebrate National Science Week, Australia's annual celebration of science and technology. Running each year in August, the week features more than 1000 events around Australia, including The Royal Society of Tasmania's collaboration with the Beer Aquatic team.

Beer Aquatic provides an opportunity for the community to engage in marine science at the pub, every last Thursday of the month at the Hobart Brewing Company, on the Hobart waterfront at 16 Evans Street, Hobart.

If you haven't been before, and we urge you to do so, rug up warmly, and head for the Waterfront Brewery to hear what is guaranteed to be a first-class talk pitched at a community engagement level. Enjoy a warm dinner meal or snack and drinks of your choice.

This year our sponsored speaker will be Dr Peter Puskic, from UTAS, who will be exploring the effects of plastic ingestion in seabirds. We will provide a more detailed outline of the talk, along with a formal invitation to attend via email closer to the event.

For the moment, note in your diary 6:00 pm on Thursday 24 August 2023: Beer Aquatic.



Save the Date!

Thursday 28 September 2023, Government House, Hobart, from 6 – 7:30 pm

You are invited to 'An Evening with Louisa' in honour of noted artist, author and naturalist Louisa Anne Meredith, who was the first woman granted honorary Life Membership of The Royal Society of Tasmania (1881).

Guests will be treated to special themed entertainment in the ballroom, followed by drinks and fingerfood served in the elegant rooms of Government House.

The evening will be hosted by RST Patron, Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC, Governor of Tasmania, and Emeritus Professor Don Chalmers AO. The ticket price of \$85 represents a donation to the RST Art Fund, to support the conservation and exhibition of the Society's extensive Art Collection.

The RST Art Collection contains the largest and most significant group of works by Meredith, who was Australia's leading 19th century professional female artist.

Please put this date in your diary, and you are most welcome to invite non-RST members to attend.



Above: Catherine Augusta Mitchell (1812 – 99), table cover, c. 1870, textile (cotton, wool) 166 x 169 cm, presented by Edmund Smith in memory of Zoe Smith, 2008, P2008.15. Photo with kind permission of TMAG.

Our Colonial Gardens Brought to Life

The Royal Society of Tasmania was delighted to partner with the Friends of TMAG for a later afternoon talk at the Central Gallery of TMAG on Thursday 25 May.

The occasion was an opportunity to hear author Ann Cripps in conversation with Kate Warner about the research Ann undertook for her recent book, *Gardeners, Plant Collectors, Friends: Hobart Town and Beyond*.

Ann Cripps is a garden lover and historian who has lectured and written for many years on all aspects of Tasmanian garden history. Kate Warner AC, Professor Emerita, former Governor of Tasmania and RST member is well known to us all. It was Kate who provided Ann with the initial impetus to research and write the book, and who provided the foreword to the book.

In the course of her research spanning some 20 years, Ann visited libraries and other institutions in the United Kingdom as well as in Australia, uncovering a truly fascinating network of gardeners, plant collectors, their families and acquaintances, and some of the most important botanical collections in the world. Amongst her sources was The Royal Society of Tasmania's collection of books and documents held in the Historical Collections Room at the University of Tasmania.

As a garden lover, Ann's research took her to many of Tasmania's restored colonial gardens, as well as those further afield in Australia and the United Kingdom. Following Ann's research journey, we both saw and heard the stories of these gardens, and the botanists, horticulturists and nurserymen and women who were instrumental in creating our beloved environment and countryside. There were insights given into the lives of the early colonists who created these gardens and collected and sent endemic Tasmanian plants to collectors overseas.

The large audience was treated to profiles and the interwoven stories of the men and women of note who contributed to the horticultural history of Van Diemen's Land, all garnered from extensive research into the early books, letters, diaries and other rare manuscripts. From the influential settlers of the day, to lesser-known historical gardeners, doctors, convicts, both women and men of the colony contributed to the gardening inventions, fashions and fads of their era. In all, it was a fascinating conversation between two keen and knowledgeable researchers and keen gardeners.

Also on view was an exquisite table cover (see above left) embroidered with Tasmanian plants created by an early settler, Catherine Mitchell. Catherine was just one of the many creative women whose works are featured in Ann's book. Thanks to Peter Hughes, TMAG's Senior Curator of Decorative Arts, those present were provided with a rare opportunity to see this beautiful and fragile work.

<u>Listen to Ann Cripps' talk</u>. Shared with the kind permission of the Friends of TMAG.

Julie Rimes



Above: *Mother, 1867.* Sketch of Catherine Mitchell stitching by lamplight by her daughter, Catherine Penwarne Mitchell.

The Mitchell Cloth

Two years ago, I was most privileged to be shown a table or bed cover attributed to Catherine Augusta Mitchell (1812–1899) and thought to have been embroidered circa 1870 on Tasmania's East Coast (TMAG accession number P2008.15).

Once more, I have seen the cloth at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery as an adjunct to a presentation in May 2023, but more of that later.

How did this happen?

A friend, Ann Cripps, during research she was undertaking, was previously shown the cloth which is stored at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery Collections and Research Facility at Rosny. She thought I could be of assistance in identifying stitches and techniques. Our facilitator was Peter Hughes, Senior Curator, Decorative Arts, who kindly arranged for the cloth to be displayed under Museum conditions, having spread it out on a large table under good lighting for us to see.

To describe it as "breathtaking" would be a great understatement.

Historically, it is believed that it was stitched at "Lisdillon", a property near Swansea, Tasmania, most likely by Catherine Augusta Mitchell.

Louisa Anne Meredith (1812–1895), famous as a botanical illustrator and natural historian, may well have inspired many women in the area to express their love of botany in reproducing plants through embroidery and sketching. This scientific pursuit provided an outlet for their acute observation of plants at a time when women's domesticity was not expected to include such detailed and specialised work.

This cloth was displayed for many years under glass in the small museum in Lisdillon Church until 2008, when it was given to TMAG by Mr Edmund Smith in memory of his wife, Mrs Zoe Smith. Mr Smith had been given the cloth around 1980 by Mrs Lucy Nicholas, a descendant of Catherine Mitchell.

On black cotton twill fabric, with a cotton backing, and needing some conservation and repair around the edges, this cloth is a thing of extraordinary beauty and has been described by Mr Hughes as one of the best and most significant pieces in TMAG's collection. The nearest thing to it that I have seen is a lambrequin or mantel cover on a mantel-piece at Narryna Heritage Museum in Battery Point, Hobart, in a similar style but of much smaller dimensions.

The theme chosen by Catherine Mitchell was the reproduction in embroidery of flowers and trees of the East Coast heathland: all natives, and superbly accurate in their depiction in stitching as photographs will show. I am no botanist, but I could see banksias, she-oak, *Kennedia*, heath or *Epacris*, grevilleas and wattles amongst the twenty or so varieties of plants depicted in stitches, so clearly portrayed that one could almost feel the prickles of the spiky wattle leaves.

For me, the special specimen is the she-oak sprig in one corner (see right) which caught my attention for its shown accuracy yet its obvious simplicity in stitching. Lengths of yarn are laid down in the reproduction of the piece, and small couching stitches are seen at intervals holding down the yarn, just as the specimen displays its junctions in real life.

The cloth measures 166 cm x 169 cm and is embroidered with a different type of plant in each corner, with linking embroidered specimens along the sides. The centre is filled with a beautiful circular wreath of bush flowers. Despite the cloth's age, the colours are not badly faded or dull, and somehow still have the restrained "bush" look, set off in contrast by the black background.

Wool yarn has been used in suitably accurate shades for the specimens depicted. I could see some chenille yarn used for wattle leaves – some of the chenille ("caterpillar" in French, and very apt for the purpose) had worn away, leaving just the centre construction visible. For wattle and melaleuca flowers,

it seemed that tiny swatches of sheep's wool had been applied, giving a very lifelike appearance despite the flattening of the fleece through age. The extraordinary likeness to the actual specimens is stunning and indeed could be used as an encyclopaedia of plants of the area, so good is the stitched reproduction.



As I wielded a magnifying glass, the stitches I could see were chain, straight, buttonhole, couching, French knots, satin, stem, fly, and more. A raised area of stumpwork in the banksia specimen was visible – threads crossing in diagonals to cover the centre of the spent banksia flower and then further embellished with seed stitches.

The stitches in themselves were simple, as one could see, but the ways in which they were used, and the colour combinations employed, gave a most accurate picture of the plant, and readily helped identification. I imagine that the wool yarn had been hand dyed, as the colours were very subdued and different from the rather gaudy Berlin Work colours used in items I have seen from around this era. I also pondered the length of time spent stitching this large piece on a black background – maybe outdoors, so the shades could be stitched correctly, or maybe by lamplight in the evenings.

I felt very privileged to have seen such a thing of beauty and accuracy and thanked Peter and Ann for the opportunity to do so and for the chance to photograph it and to read the history and provenance.

More recently, however, the Mitchell Cloth was on display at a presentation at TMAG where Ann Cripps was in conversation with Emeritus Professor and former Governor of Tasmania, Kate Warner AC. Their topic was the book for which Ann was doing her research at the time. She has now published her beautiful book entitled *Plant Collectors, Gardeners, Friends – Hobart Town and Beyond*, on which she was working over the past several years. In it she featured photographs of the cloth, and they show in detail the techniques and stitches I have described above.

The great interest shown in the cloth on display by those who attended the function is testament to its uniqueness and importance in the early history of Tasmania.

I do hope that one day it will be on display in the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery so that everyone can enjoy this work of art, for indeed that is what it certainly is.

Sheena Sims

The Hobart Embroiderers' Guild Inc.

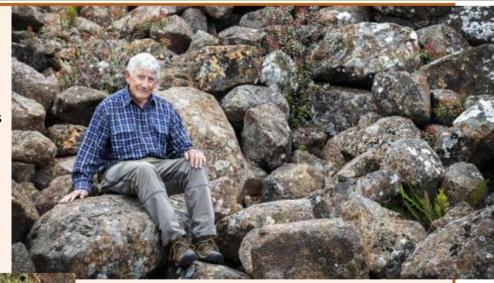
© 2023

List of identified specimens: Banksia marginata, Platylobium, Dillwynia, Callitris (Oyster Bay Pine), Indigofera, Rubus, Clematis, Leucopogon, Allocasuarina, Veronica formosa, Epacris, Melaleuca, Kennedia prostrata (Running Postman), Bursaria spinosa (Prickly Box), Comesperma volubile (Love Creeper), Hibbertia, Acacia (Wattle).

Dr Keith Corbett OAM

Congratulations to RST member, Dr Keith Corbett on being awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the King's Birthday Honours announced on 12 June 2023.

Keith's passion for geology, conservation and wild Tasmanian places has lasted a lifetime, during which he has contributed relentlessly to promoting and caring for Tasmania's natural environment.



Above: Dr Keith Corbett OAM enjoying Tasmanian

dolerite. Picture: Chris Kidd.

Left: Keith immersed in the pristine beauties of Tasmanian

wilderness. Photo: abc.net.au

Keith's wife, Elizabeth Bothwell Corbett, was also awarded an OAM for service to conservation and the environment.

RST Art Collection

The RST Art Collection is housed at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart. Any queries please contact the Honorary Curator, Dr Anita Hansen: anita.hansen@utas.edu.au

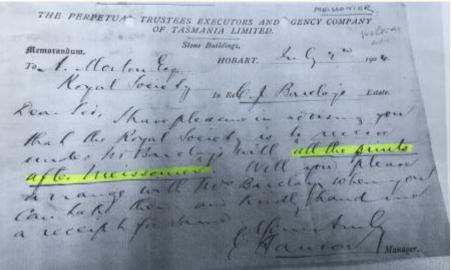
The Meissonier Etchings

I thought that I would write about something quite different for this month's Newsletter. That is, artworks that are not by a Tasmanian artist or of a Tasmanian scene or person.

There has been some debate as to whether artworks not related to Tasmania should be in the RST Art Collection.

The Bequest

In The Royal Society of Tasmania Art Collection there are presently fifteen etchings after Jean Louis Meissonier. I say presently, because there were eighteen etchings in the bequest, however, three are now missing.



The works were bequeathed to the Society by Charles Barclay in July 1904. Mr Barclay was a long-time member and Council Member of The Royal Society of Tasmania, joining the Society in 1873.

Left: Dear Sir,

I have pleasure in advising you the Royal Society is to receive under Mr Barclay's will all the prints after Meissonier. ...

This was a very important gift. The Mercury reported at the time (see below): It is the finest collection of the kind in the southern hemisphere. ...

Right: The Mercury, July 1904.

Charles Barclay

Charles James Barclay (1841–1904), bank director, was born on 27 January 1841 at Glenorchy, near Hobart Town, son of David Barclay, a watch and instrument maker who arrived at Hobart in the Resource in 1830, and his wife Margaret, née Strachan.

Australian Dictionary of Biography states:

Barclay had many interests. He was a Justice of the Peace from 22 April 1870 until his death. On 10 June 1873, he was elected a Fellow of The Royal Society of Tasmania and in June 1899, he became a member of its Council and bequeathed to

it his collection of prints and engravings copied from the paintings of the artist Jean-Louis-Ernest Meissonier (1815–1891).

In 1880, Barclay became a member of the General Committee of the Hobart Savings Bank, founded in 1845 by George Washington Walker; and from 1894–1904 served zealously as its president. In 1887, when an Act of Parliament established the Perpetual Trustees, Executors and Agency Co. of Tasmania, Barclay became its first chairman, an office he retained until 1904.

In 1871, he was vice-president of the Tasmanian Club and from 1901–04 its president. On 24 March 1903, the Hobart City Council appointed him a trustee of the Tasmanian Public Library and four months later, he was elected chairman of trustees. The Art Society of Tasmania, of which he was sometime vice-patron, found in him a good friend, ever ready to assist in its endeavours to promote interest in the skills it fostered. By his quiet unostentatious ways and thoughtful kindness, he won gratitude and much respect. He died at his home, the Bank House in Macquarie Street, on 14 June 1904 and was buried at Cornelian Bay. He left no family. On 18 August 1885, he had



(Australian Dictionary of Biography (anu.edu.au), viewed 5/05/2023.)

The Etchings

All but one of the etchings were mounted in elaborate golden frames (see right) and, when seen as a group, are truly breathtaking.

They are quite large images, each approximately 37 x 55.5 cm, and of course, much larger when mounted and framed.

The Society's prints are engraving proofs from the mid-late 1800s. Interestingly, they are printed on faux vellum.

Faux or Imitation Vellum

A thick, ivory-coloured paper originally treated and embossed to simulate the appearance and texture of animal vellum. First made in the late 19th century, vegetable vellum is a tough, translucent paper made from chemical wood pulp and/or cotton fibres. The fibre sheet is coated or impregnated to produce a semitransparent paper with low gloss.



What does 'after Meissonier' mean?

The Society's artworks are identified as 'after Meissonier'. An 'after' print, refers to a print that is made by an artist based on an original painting or a work by a different artist. For example, an etcher could make an etching based on a painting by Meissonier and the resultant print would be 'after Meissonier'.

In the case of the Meissonier etchings, a number of etchers were involved. The most famous was Jules Jacquet; however, his brother, Achille Jacquet, as well as L. Monzies and A. Lamotte, are also featured in the Society's collection.

Jean-Louis-Ernest Meissonier (1815–1891)

Meissonier was a recognised power in the art world. He had served on Salon and Universal Exposition juries, was elected to the Académie des Beaux-Arts in 1861, served as president of the Institut de France and later of the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts, and received an elaborate academicians' funeral at the Madeleine in Paris.

At an early age, Meissonier moved from Lyons (where he was born in 1815) to Paris. With his father's support, he chose a career in the arts. As well as painting, Meissonier studied engraving and aquatint. By the mid-1830s, he earned a good livelihood as a book illustrator with Tony Johannot.

Influenced by seventeenth-century Northern genre and contemporary historical genre painting, he began painting small-scale scenes of typical life set in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Meissonier was determined to become the modern van der Meulen (Adam Frans van der Meulen, the prestigious military painter to Louis XIV) and shifted from historical genre to images of modern warfare and military life as both 'high' history painting and genre. His passion for military affairs culminated in 1859, in an imperial commission for an illustrated book on the current Solferino campaign, with a text by Edmond Texier of Le Siècle. His representation of contemporary military subjects expanded to include earlier Napoleonic subjects.

Meissonier's career prospered despite the fall of his imperial patron in 1870. He pursued the Napoleonic imagery in part to remind his compatriots of France's proven military glory. Such works were nonetheless in great demand abroad as well. By the time of his death in 1891, Meissonier's paintings and prints could be found throughout Europe, the United States and even as far away as Tasmania.

Some of Meissonier's best works were towards the end of his life and were quite epic in their proportions and detail.

https://www.wokinghampaper.co.uk/every-picture-tells-a-story-a-special-french-engraving/viewed 15/06/2020



Above left: The original Meissonier oil painting. *Campaign of France*, 1814, oil on wood by Ernest Meissonier, 1864; in the Orsay Museum, Paris. **Above right**: The Jules Jacquet etching, 1863, *The Lost Game*, The Royal Society of Tasmania Art Collection.

In comparing the two images above, one can't help but be astonished by the masterful etching skills demonstrated by Jacquet.

Jules Jacquet

Jules Jacquet was born in Paris in 1841. He was a keen artist from a very early age and was encouraged along with his brother, Achille, to practise their art at every opportunity. His parents sent him off to study under Henriquel-Dupont, a fine artist and engraver himself who was recognised in France as one of the best tutors of engraving.

Both Jules and Achille became renowned engravers with Jules surpassing his brother's skills. At the age of only 25, in 1866, Jules won the Prix de Rome, which brought him enough notoriety to be able to concentrate on his art for the rest of his life. He formed a liking for Meissonier's work, most of which depicted the wars and battles of Napoleon, his armies and his soldiers keeping themselves amused in between battles.

[This is the artist's biography published in the NGA Systematic Catalogue]

Napoleonic Etchings

I can't show you all the etchings in this article – there are, after all, fifteen of them. For this article, I will concentrate on the etchings depicting scenes of Napoleon and his battles. Unfortunately, we don't have high resolution digital copies of these etchings.

I have included the titles that have been given to these etchings in the past. I have done some research on these and found that there are several different titles given to the same artwork on various sites. It will take a bit of unravelling to sort this out.

An example of this is the etching titled *The Lost Game* in our records, however, when I found the original oil painting by Meissonier, it was titled *Campaign of France*, 1814.



Left: Napoleon, 1814, sculpt unknown.

Right: Napoleon and his Staff, 1863, sculpt A Lamotte.







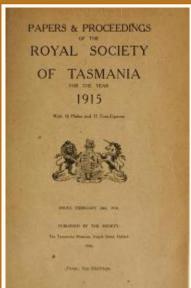


Above left: *Le Maréchal de Saxe*, 1866, sculpt Jules Jacquet. **Above right**: *1805 (Battle of Austerlite)*, sculpt Jules Jacquet.



Left: Cavaliers at the Entrance to a Wood, date unknown, sculpt Jules Jacquet.

Anita Hansen



Papers and Proceedings of The Royal Society of Tasmania - Free copies of selected issues

The family of Dick and Joan Green, former members of the RST, (https://www.greenfamilyaward.org/dick-joan-green) would like to offer their parents' collection of the *Papers and Proceedings of The Royal Society of Tasmania* to any RST members who would like to supplement their own collections.

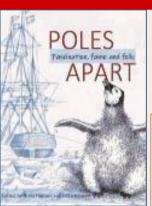
The issues on offer are:

Year: 1896; 1903–05; 1914; 1915; 1916; 1917; 1918; 1919; 1920; 1921; 1929; 1943. Volume: 86–109; 120; 133-138; 140; 142; 144–145; 150; 152.

If members are interested in one or many, please email RSTLibrary.Collections@utas.edu.au to arrange collection.

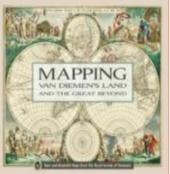
This offer is available only for the months of April and May 2023.

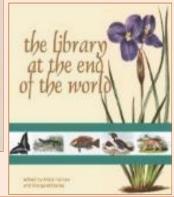
Katrina Ross, Historical Collections Coordinator, University of Tasmania

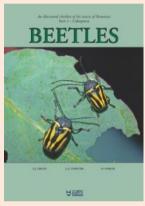


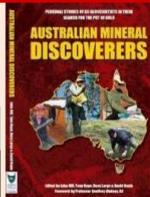
Fabulous RST Publications

There are RST publications to suit everyone's reading shelf or as a gift. As well, there are **10% discount prices for RST members** for many of the publications. Visit the RST Shop now to view all publications and discounts.









The Society's Library



Special & Rare Collections (5th floor, Morris Miller Library at UTAS Sandy Bay campus) including the RST Library asks that all visitors and researchers comply with the following:

- Please note the email address for making appointments to visit the library and for email queries about The Royal Society of Tasmania's Library Collection has been changed to RSTLibrary.Collections@utas.edu.au
- Opening hours are 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday to Wednesday;
 closed for lunch 12:30 1:30 pm.
- Maximum occupancy of two visitors at any one time and must be adhered to.
- You are required to maintain the recommended 1.5m physical distance.

Library staff will continue answering all email enquiries and can scan and email requests as needed, so if you don't wish to visit the Library in person, there is no need. We will also be quarantining material handled by researchers and other visitors for 72 hours, in line with UTAS Libraries' COVID-safe practice.

Any appointments or queries, please contact **RSTLibrary.Collections@utas.edu.a**

Janette Burke, University Librarian, Collections, Library Services | Academic Division, University of Tasmania

Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery

Open Tuesday to Sunday, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm



Tours

Free tours for small groups are available on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, and run for approximately 40 minutes.

Tour times are subject to change and availability and can be checked by phoning (03) 6165 7000. For guided tours for clubs, tourist groups or other organisations please click here.

TMAG Highlights Tour: 1:30 pm Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays

Join the TMAG guides for a highlights tour of the treasures of the Central and Henry Hunter galleries, and the historic Commissariat Complex and Bond Store exhibitions.

Twist Exhibition Tour: 11:00 am Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays for the duration of the exhibition, commencing on

Friday 9 June. Join an art guide for a tour of twists and turns, exploring the array of contemporary and quirky art works that reflect Dickensian themes in TMAG's new exhibition, Twist.

15-17 June: The Salon: An exclusive, limited-ticket offer to an intimate after-hours event at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. Nightly audio artists in *The Salon* or get lost in the nine-gallery contemporary art exhibition, Twist. Drinks by Punch and Ladle. Cover charge: \$24.50. This licensed event is 18+ Book now.



Twist Public Program: Public Talks Enjoy a series of free public talks led by Twist artists and TMAG curators. Bookings

not required. Details: Friday 9 to Monday 12 June from 12:00–1:00 pm in the Central Gallery, TMAG.

Contemporary Performance Program

Enjoy a program of free performances and talks by three contemporary performance artists, developed in response to Twist. Bookings not required. Public Panel Session – Saturday 17 June from 12:00–1:30 pm, Central Gallery. Twist: Contemporary Performance – Tuesday 20 and Thursday 22 June from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm, TMAG City Site. Click to see full program.

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