



UPSURGE

**ART
EMERGE**

ABOUT UPSURGE

Presented as part of Wollongong City Council's Cultural Development program, UPSURGE shines a bright light on local creative talent as it happens in our outdoor pavilion on Dharawal Country.

UPSURGE is a three-day arts feast in celebration of Wollongong's unique creative and cultural diversity, right here in our city's Arts Precinct.

Meet the artists and the makers through our free program that includes artist talks, Q&As, workshops, fashion and intriguing tunes by Nautilus Sound (scan the QR code for all the details).

GINA BARJEEL

Gina is a fashion designer and founder of Gina Barjeel fashion label, a brand that aims to be socially and environmentally responsible. Gina empowers migrant women from all backgrounds, with sewing skills and support to start their own businesses. A feature of her made-to-order garments is stunning hand embroidered textiles sourced from Palestine, offering a distinctive feature that speaks of Barjeel's heritage and authentic approach to her work.

ginabarjeel.com.au

IAN BROWN

With a passion for education that has informed an illustrious academic career, Ian Brown, the artist, lives out his creative inspirations through layers of expressive texture and form to build bold landscapes that are abstract, and deceptively complex. Ian unashamedly enjoys breaking the complexity of nature into simplistic forms and invites the viewer to become lost in the abstracted environment.

Instagram: [@ianbrownthirroul](https://www.instagram.com/ianbrownthirroul)

www.facebook.com/ian.brown.31149359



JOE DARLING

Joe Darling, a production potter in the seaside escarpment of Wombarra, gathers his inspiration from the rugged and beautiful landscapes for his work. Using extremely coarse clay imbued with rock and mineral he chooses glazed colours in soft blue pastels.

Since 2010, he has been a pottery teacher and is the founder of The Pottery Shed where new potters in Sydney and Wollongong learn from this master craftsman.

joedarlingpottery.com
thepotteryshed.com.au

KATJA HANDT

Katja is a theatre designer and has worked as an artist on a wide range of projects in the performing arts in Australia and overseas. In 2019 Katja opened Kattasche, an artisan studio that creates sustainable leather goods made with premium hand selected Australian leather. Many products are carefully hand dyed to recreate the rainforest green of the escarpment, the teal blue of the ocean or the many colours of sandstone found along the coastline.

Instagram: [@kattasche](https://www.instagram.com/kattasche)
www.katjahandt.com

GREER HARRIS

After graduating from Wollongong University with a Bachelor of Visual Art and a Masters of Teaching, Greer Harris has emerged as a multi-disciplinary artist, who's work investigates the relationship between humans and their surrounds. Greer's textiles are abstract, biomorphic and sometimes figurative as she uses dyes, found object, and stitches to flesh out a social context in her art.

greer183.wixsite.com/greerharris

EVENT DATES & OPENING HOURS

Friday 15, Saturday 16 & Sunday 17 July 2022
Pavilion opening hours: 11am - 4pm

Pavilion on the Lawn

The Arts Precinct, 32 Burelli St, Wollongong

Free entry. Tickets required to book entry, workshops and special opening

Ticketing: wollongong.nsw.gov.au/upsurge

“Wollongong’s local creative talent is well recognised across Australia, as the city continues to hum with the arts living, breathing, and emerging. UPSURGE is an event that shines a light on creative talent as it happens, showcasing award winning visual artists, gifted artisans, and emerging bright stars. Upsurge is an event that is set to inform and inspire. Artists will reveal their narratives and artisans will share the secrets about bespoke craftsmanship, offering an opportunity to experience hands-on creative process as it collides with artistic enquiry.”

Virginia Settre, Exhibition Curator

JOHN KENNEDY (AKA JEDIKA)

John Kennedy is an awarding winning artist, miniaturist, and art teacher from Wollongong. John’s work has been exhibited throughout the world from Australia, Turkey, England, France and Italy. His artworks examine the art of storytelling and the imagination through intricate miniature techniques and devices. *‘I am fascinated by the human mind and the nature of human curiosity. I often explore what we imagine in our minds and give them a physical existence outside the body’.*

www.jedika.com

BRITTA de LAAT

Whilst studying Fine Art in London Britta de Laat’s lifelong passion for salvaging old furniture began, as she shot photos and video to create narratives of memory and pre-gentrified life. Later, in Amsterdam, Britta learned the trade of upholstery and in this exhibition integrates her skills to explore the interconnection between materialistic creation, sustainability, earth, humanity and inevitable decay of materials.

www.dumpedandditched.com

Instagram: [@dumpedandditched](https://www.instagram.com/dumpedandditched)

WANITA LOWE

Wanita Lowe is an Urban Contemporary Indigenous Artist; a proud Dunghutti and Biripi woman with strong connections to Wiradjuri Country also. Wanita’s art practice is influenced by story of land and surrounds, as she works with painting, sculpture, ceramics, and traditional weaving. Wanita’s artworks explore death or ‘sorry business’ particularly relating to youth suicide; as well as the survival of the eradication and assimilation process generated by colonialism and genocide.

Facebook: [wanita.lowe.5](https://www.facebook.com/wanita.lowe.5)

Instagram: [@_wanita.lowe_](https://www.instagram.com/_wanita.lowe_)



Image: John Kennedy (aka Jedika), *I came to myself within a dark wood*, 2022, oil paint miniature

ERIN MISON

Erin Mison is a self-taught contemporary textile and fibre artist based in Wollongong. Erin’s work explores themes of identity curation, catharsis, and sexuality and is strongly influenced by her background in psychology. Her current work reflects a journey of outrospection and accidental introspection in a time where there is so much to make us anxious and nihilistic. Using a hand operated tufting gun, Erin works with both natural and synthetic yarn to create tufted rugs and tapestries.

Instagram: [@erinmisonart](https://www.instagram.com/erinmisonart)

Instagram: [@make_space__](https://www.instagram.com/make_space__)

www.erinmison.com

HAJI OH

Haji Oh is a *Zainichi* Korean artist born and raised in Japan who now lives in Wollongong.

She utilises the techniques of weaving, dyeing, tying, and stitching to shed light on the untold stories of people whose lives have touched hers. She explores the effects of post-memory, gives expression to silent memories of unnamed individuals, and narratives that are interwoven with history.

hajioh.com



Image: Wanita Lowe, *Black Gathering*, 2021, Clay, Lomandra grass, Emu feathers

ANDY OPHEE

Andy Ophee is a musician who started painting large fluoro banners to decorate gigs 15 years ago and over the past three years has emerged as one of Wollongong's most exciting visual artists. He is inspired by the great screen printers of the 70s and 80s and by First Nation and Tribal Art from home and around the world. These banners are a celebration of music and the coming together of community, particularly the musicians who struggled to work because of Covid-19.

Facebook: Blue Light Boogie

THERESE PETRE (PEACHY)

Therese Petre (Peachy) graduated from Wollongong University in 2000 with a degree in Design BCA (Bachelor of Creative Arts). Her hand-built ceramic artworks are inspired by nature and colour, with hand-mixed stoneware glazes that impart a contemporary take on nostalgic pastels. With both functional pieces, and contemporary art works, Therese likes to make strong statements about her life and the world we live in. Plastic fish and sushi take-out boxes, washed up on a beach, for example, provide the narratives for her artwork.

peacharoo.co

Instagram: @peacharoo

SAXON REYNOLDS

Saxon Reynolds is an illustrator, sculptor, and assemblage artist, working primarily with found objects. His works explore the texture and beauty of discarded objects in their raw form and imbues them with new life and function, connecting disparate components to create contemporary relics. After studying Creative Arts, majoring in Sculpture, at the University of Wollongong, he is now working as a Visual Arts Teacher at Wollongong High School of the Performing Arts.

Instagram: @saxoncreynolds

MEGAN SERES

Megan Seres is a multi-award-winning artist who, in 2004, completed a Fine Arts degree with 1st Class Honours at the National Art School, Sydney. Megan is fascinated by the human condition, our spiritual-nature-society relations, and the passage of time. These paintings explore concepts of the feminine as goddess/mother nature, climate change, mythologies and superstitions that underpin the shadowy 'other'. Megan's work is held in numerous private and public collections.

www.meganseres-art.gallery

LinkedIn: megan-seres-85204221

KATE STEHR

Kate Stehr is a sculptor based in the Illawarra. Her works are often influenced by a desire to celebrate the history and memory found in objects that would otherwise be discarded. Predominantly hand carved from timber in a naïve style, these works also feature found objects. Her most recent series have ideas of traditional narratives, playful scribing tools and absurdist architecture.

katestehr.com

Instagram: @katestehr

VIRGINIA SETTRE EXHIBITION CURATOR

My career has revolved around developing arts projects, exhibitions, and events, with a focus on fostering talents of emerging artists, or creatives from culturally and linguistically diverse communities. I broker partnerships with diverse stakeholders to enable meaningful creative dialogue and engagement with the wider community.

LinkedIn: virginia-settre-363b6019



Image: Kate Stehr, *Inclination*, 2021, Timber, 142 x 140 x 149cm

