



Penrith Performing Arts & Visual Arts Ltd

PENRITH PERFORMING & VISUAL ARTS LTD

PENRITH REGIONAL GALLERY & THE LEWERS BEQUEST

EDUCATION POLICY

Penrith Regional Gallery & The Lewers Bequest

Education Policy

Education Policy Statement

The Gallery's education program seeks to engage a wide range of audiences, both within and outside of educational institutions. The programs provide a broad range of access points to the Gallery's Collection of Australian Abstraction 1930s - 1970s and the contemporary exhibition program which includes a focus on issues relating to western Sydney. The education program also encompasses the Gallery site as a unique example of an artist's home with in-situ artworks, colonial, modernist and contemporary architecture and an artist designed heritage garden.

Aims and Objectives

The Gallery's education program utilises the Gallery site, Collection and exhibition program to offer visitors the chance to engage directly with original art objects, social history documentation, design objects, architecture and in-situ artworks. Specifically:

- The education program includes tours, workshops and interactive initiatives for diverse audiences including Indigenous audiences, audiences from diverse cultural backgrounds, audience from diverse socio economic backgrounds, and audiences with a disability
- The education program develops initiatives that maximise the audience and educative potential of the Gallery's exhibition program
- The Gallery delivers pedagogical professional development opportunities in contemporary discourse that reinforces and extends best classroom practice in the creative arts. e.g. through exposure to artists, curators, art critics, cultural commentators and syllabus specific experts
- The Gallery supports professional development placements for students through the tertiary internship program and high school work experience program
- The education programs provide a range of inclusive educational and recreational activities for a diverse audience
- The Gallery fosters partnerships with other cultural/community service providers to use the Gallery site as a location for cultural initiatives.

Audiences

The education program has the following six key audience areas:

- Early childhood and family audiences
- Infants and primary school audiences (years K – 6)
- High school audiences (years 7 – 12)
- Youth audiences
- Tertiary audiences
- General public audiences - including visitors with a disability, special interest groups and seniors groups.

Early Childhood and Family Education Program

The early childhood and family education program seeks to:

- offer interactive opportunities for young audiences to engage with the exhibition program
- provide opportunities for carers and young audiences to engage in art making activities together
- introduce young audiences to art objects of quality through tutor led, child centred interactive looking and talking games and 'in Gallery' art making activities
- provide child centred activity sheets for visitors with young children.

Infants and Primary School Education Program (Years K – 6)

The infants and primary school education programs seek to:

- provide students with a safe, respectful and inclusive environment to explore diverse subjects matters, using art objects as the catalyst for creating, discussing and considering a broad range of subject matter
- develop in students an awareness of art as a cultural product
- introduce and develop subject specific vocabulary
- offer opportunities for students to engage in independent and/or group research stimulated by art objects
- generate discussion about art objects that encourages analytical and critical thinking
- introduce the unique position that artists and artworks play in the development of culture
- explore the role that artists and artworks play in the development of our individual and collective identities
- provide students with the opportunity to participate in practical art making activities by encouraging them to manipulate and experiment with art materials
- encourage students to explore the potential of the process of making art to communicate a point of view, a representation of the world and /or an expressive investigation of their emotional world.

High School Education Program (Years 7 – 12)

The high school education program seeks to:

- encourage students to develop an understating of the potential and the importance of the role of art to communicate diverse and discursive points of view
- provide a forum to explore points of view, ask questions, challenge orthodoxies and experience the importance of context on the process of interpretation, exchange and understanding
- develop an awareness of art as a cultural product
- foster and refine visual discernment
- develop and extend use of specialist art vocabulary
- engage students in independent and group research and/or discussion stimulated by art objects
- to develop and extend analytical and critical thinking
- introduce and investigate the unique position that artists and artworks play in the development of culture
- explore, debate and challenge students' understanding of the role that artists and artworks play in the development of our individual and collective identities
- develop students' understanding of the importance of process and conceptual intent in the development of art objects.
- provide opportunities to participate in art making workshops with specialist tutors and contemporary artists
- encourage students to manipulate and experiment with art materials.
- engage students in the process of making art as an expressive investigation of their emotional world
- offer a safe, studio environment in which to make art that engages conceptually with contemporary life and with the history of art practice
- foster the development of practical skills that will assist students to extend and refine their own art making practice.

Youth Education Program

The Gallery's Youth Education Program seeks to:

- provide youth, outside of a formal educational institution opportunities to engage with the Gallery site, collection and exhibition program as an accessible, relevant, regional cultural resource
- offer one exhibition per year open only to teenagers
- offer youth at risk the opportunity to participate in art making workshops with contemporary artists or specialist tutors
- provide a virtual engagement with the Gallery's exhibition program through a virtual exhibition on the Galley web site
- provide a forum for youth to actively engage with current issues and critical discourse through the examination of contemporary art practise.

Tertiary Education Program

The Gallery's Tertiary Education program offers students from a range of tertiary learning institutions the opportunity to:

- use the Gallery grounds, Collection and exhibition programs as the stimulus for units of study
- use the exhibition program, Collection and site as the focus of independent research
- use the Gallery's Collection of Australian Abstraction 1930s – 1970s, and archival library to further extend academic research on Australian Abstraction, including the work of Gerald and Margo Lewers
- participate in professional development opportunities through tertiary internship programs
- Participate in the life of the Gallery through independent volunteer programs that may include exhibition research, curatorial assistance and education and public program assistance.

General public audiences - including visitors with a disability, special interest groups and seniors groups

The Gallery education programs for general public audiences - including visitors with a disability, special interest groups and seniors groups seeks to:

- provide gallery tours tailored to the needs and interest of the target audience, these can include; heritage tours of the site and the Collection, exhibition tours and garden tours
- provide gallery tours to a range of special needs groups including; sensory tours for visitors with an intellectual disability, audio description for visitors with a vision impairment and interactive tours using a range of interpretive strategies for visitors with special needs
- provide access to the purpose built studio spaces for regional disabilities groups to deliver self tutored (facilitated by the staff of the disabilities service) art making workshops
- offer access to art making workshops, delivered by specialist tutors in a range of art making media
- facilitate a yearly event/workshop for International Day for People with a Disability, that celebrates diversity whilst offering authentic cultural experiences tailored for visitors with a disability.

Education Program Approval

The education programs are developed by the Manager, Education and Public Programs and approved by the Gallery Director. The development of education programs will at times involve consultation with artists, tutors, representatives from the education sector and project specific curatorial staff.

The Manager, Education and Public Programs shall submit a bi-monthly board report documenting education program activities and present a twice yearly report to the Visual Arts Sub Committee. All education programs adhere to the Gallery's policy of Equal Opportunity and Occupational, Health & Safety.

Ethics

The Gallery will:

- seek to provide culturally sensitive, inclusive, accessible education programs
- consider the Bequest, Collection, Gallery site and exhibition program as the stimulus for education initiatives
- participate in an on going process of consultation with representatives from the six identified audience areas.

Gallery education programs will respect the custodial responsibilities of the Gallery, including the Bequest, the exhibition program and the dissemination of information in both oral and written forms.

Education Program Evaluation

As part of the Education Program the Gallery will undertake evaluation of all education programs including:

- Number and type of audience attracted.
- Level of visitor satisfaction with the education program.
- Quantity and quality of feedback concerning the education programs.
- Quality of experiences for participants in education programs.
- Quality and consistency of information provided to education audiences.
- Budget management of education programs.
- Staff resources committed to the education program.

Adopted April 2009