

*Salamanca Arts Centre
ABN 54 028 113 402
ACN 136 670 196*

*77 Salamanca Place Hobart
Tasmania 7004 Australia
T +61 3 6234 8414
E ceo@sac.org.au
<http://www.salarts.org.au>*



For release
21st June 2019
Media Release:

When creativity within historical buildings holds the key to a lively future arts and cultural precinct.

Salamanca Arts Centre & Derwent Valley Arts joint proposal to develop a Community Arts Centre at Willow Court Endorsed by Derwent Valley Council

At its meeting on Thursday 20th June Derwent Valley Council endorsed a joint proposal from Salamanca Arts Centre (SAC) and Derwent Valley Arts (DVA) to manage, develop and operate The Barracks and Frescati House as a Community Arts Centre, as part of a larger Willow Court site development.

SAC and DVA, who have signed an MoU will now continue to work together with Derwent Valley Council and other local, interested and qualified individuals and agencies to begin the initial stages of planning the ambitious transformation of the Barracks and Frescati House as part of a Community Arts Centre for the New Norfolk community and visitors to the area.

Derwent Valley Mayor Ben Shaw:

I am extremely excited that the DVC has decided to partner with SAC and the DVA to take on this significant project not only for our community but for the whole state. To have the collaboration we are talking about and to finally see the site moving forward after 20 years of being locked away is just a relief.

Our community are so happy just to see Council finally make a decision around this site.

We have some amazing artistic people in the region so let's celebrate this and bring them all together.

I believe with the Agrarian Kitchen, the New Norfolk Distillery and now this arts hub that we have created a brilliantly vibrant space that will just explode the Derwent Valley on to the must visit list.

“Contemporary Arts Practice Enriching Community”

SAC CEO Joe Bugden:

“When I look at Willow Court I am reminded of the vision, courage and determination that artists and community leaders demonstrated more than forty years ago when they took what was then an almost derelict set of sandstone warehouses on Salamanca Place, and with very little resources available to them, worked to transform those buildings into what has now become Salamanca Arts Centre. Now, forty years later, this rare of opportunity is being mirrored on the site of Willow Court, and, with proper consideration and investment, we can easily imagine what these buildings will come to mean for the people of New Norfolk.”

“It’s very important that, as we think hard about how now to begin the processes necessary to develop the Barracks, we respect the fact that many people have very strong feelings about those buildings at Willow Court, and those feelings include painful memories and other significant connections and experiences, either directly or via someone close to them.

With that in mind I remain confident that, together, we will be able to imagine and transform those buildings into such a wonderful place that the young people of New Norfolk, who have a right to engage with Willow Court in a new way, and who need not be overly burdened with those dark aspects of its history, will grow up having many positive and bright experiences over the decades to come. This is an opportunity to, not deny the past nor try to diminish the effects of that history, but to accord these buildings a new purpose, a new relevance, a new life.”

“I am confident that the management and staff of Salamanca Arts Centre have the necessary relevant expertise in managing buildings and facilities of national heritage significance as a dynamic and vibrant arts centre, and we look forward to contributing, in some meaningful way, to the proposals, plans and realisation of a new community arts centre at Willow Court.”

Nathan Males, Derwent Valley Arts:

“Our vision and hope is that a community arts centre will give us spaces to start to make new things happen that make living here a richer experience. We’d love to run a cinema here a few evenings a week, we’d love to have art exhibitions, we’d love to have regular theatre and music going on, and there are hundreds of people here who agree. Since starting DVA we’ve had over 500 local people join our list, keen to come to regular arts events.

In addition there are young artists who, making a transition from art schools in Hobart and elsewhere find it hard to afford studios in the established arts centres in the capitals. We’re only half an hour’s drive away from Hobart, we would love to have more young artists here, helping to inspire our local young people and show that there are possibilities of interesting career paths into the arts.

We think an arts centre will contribute to tourism too. After a lunch at the Agrarian Kitchen, what better post prandial activity than to visit a gallery and the studios of local artists, sculptors and potters. We would like there to be working studios, which the public can visit and buy art directly from local artists.

“Contemporary Arts Practice Enriching Community”

We’d also like to see opportunities for young people to grow in confidence and to try new things, we’d like to organise dance classes, drama clubs and art classes for our local young people.

A community arts centre could give this community a cultural hub, a place for entertainment, a place for young people to learn and grow, a place for artists to work and a place to tell the many amazing, complex and sometimes challenging stories of the Derwent Valley’s history and culture.”

Contact:

Tash Newman, Marketing and Communications Coordinator, Salamanca Arts Centre
0400 285 579 / communications@sac.org.au

Salamanca Arts Centre wishes to acknowledge that the Centre stands on the country of the Muwinina people. In recognition and reflection of the deep history and culture of this island, we also wish to acknowledge the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, who are the traditional owners and continued custodians of the land and waters of lutruwita (Tasmania).