



**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting  
Of Craft ACT: Craft and Design Centre  
Held on 31 March 2020 at 6.00pm  
Conducted via video conference**

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Present: Meagan Jones, Madisyn Zabel, Kate Nixon, Sari Sutton, Ian Hodgson, Abbey Jamieson, Valerie Kirk, Andrea Ho, Agnieszka Berger, Stephen Cassidy, Rebecca Coronel, Julie Ryder, Emeirely Nucifora-Ryan, Rob Henry, Avi Amesbury, Ruth Hingston, Sharon Peoples, Fran Romano, Sam Bryant, Rachael Coghlan, Hiroshi Yamaguchi, Ann McMahon, Annie Trevillian, Jennie Cameron, Melanie Olde, Bic Tieu, Richilde Flavell, Laura Crick, Jo Townsend, Bev Hogg, Leonie Andrews, Sue Hewat, Kirstie Rea, Jan Hogan, Tanja Taglietti, Robyn Campbell, Jenny Edwards, Chelsea Lemon, Rozlyn de Bussey, Mark Elliott, Graham Humphries, Daniel Venables, Melanie Olde, Sonia van de Haar.

Apologies: Rose-Mary Faulkner, Tania Vrancic, Monique van Nieuwland, Graham Reynolds, Meredith Hinchliffe, Barbara Rogers, Wendy Teakel, Catherine Drinan.

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**1. Welcome and apologies**

The interim Craft ACT President, Rebecca Coronel, and the CEO and Artistic Director of Craft ACT, Dr Rachael Coghlan, welcomed members to the Annual General Meeting.

The interim President confirmed that this year's AGM was being conducted online using video conferencing technology due to the need to observe Government direction on limiting the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) through implementing physical distancing measures. She thanked members for their understanding and support in this challenging period.

She confirmed that as the number of members present (registered participants in the video conference) exceeded quorum requirements (minimum of 10% of members), the AGM would proceed as planned. She noted the apologies received (listed above).

**2. Acceptance of Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 26 March 2019**

The Minutes of the previous Craft ACT AGM, held on Tuesday 26 March 2019, were accepted without revisions and confirmed as a true and correct record of the meeting.

Moved: Andrea Ho  
Seconded: Sam Bryant  
Accepted and carried

### 3. President's Report 2019

Interim President, Rebecca Coronel, noted that her full report on the progress of the past year was published and made available on the Craft ACT website to members prior to the AGM. She highlighted some elements of this report, reiterating the importance of Craft ACT's members, and acknowledged the hard work and achievements of the team under CEO Rachael Coghlan.

The full report is included below:

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

### **For the Craft ACT Board of Management, 2019 was a time of transition, growth and planning.**

Graham Humphries, the dedicated and effective President of Craft ACT for six years, completed his final term on the board. To ensure a smooth transition, Graham announced his departure at the 2019 AGM which allowed us time throughout the year to learn from his experience and tap into the expertise of recent board appointments. Graham leaves Craft ACT in excellent shape and playing a leadership role in our region's arts ecology, our sector's growth and now with a growing international reach. I would like to thank Graham for his outstanding contribution to Craft ACT. His legacy will be enjoyed for years to come as we continue to seek recognition of Canberra as a UNESCO City of Design and plan for our move to the Kingston Arts Precinct.

Graham stepped down as president after the December 2019 meeting and the board elected me as interim president. I would like to thank my fellow continuing board members who have contributed significantly to Craft ACT over the past year: Sari Sutton (Secretary and Public Officer), Rob Henry, and member representatives Gilbert Riedelbauch and Julie Ryder. Thank you to Jennie Cameron for accepting the position of interim board member late in 2019. I would like to especially note the dedicated contribution of Treasurer Sam Bryant, a certified practicing accountant who regularly supports the organisation with risk management, workplace health and safety, and financial approvals and reporting. I thank retiring board members Stephen Cassidy (2014) for his experienced and enthusiastic contribution to Craft ACT and DESIGN Canberra over many years, and Andrea Ho (2017) who has provided valued leadership in HR, diversity and communications.

My thanks also to the Craft ACT staff members, Meagan Jones, Selena Kang, Kate Nixon, Matilda Skerritt and Madisyn Zabel whose commitment in 2019 has contributed to the outstanding success of the many programs, exhibitions and functions now enjoyed by Craft ACT audiences. The board acknowledges the enthusiasm and expertise of our CEO, Dr Rachael Coghlan, who has provided leadership to the team and whose dedication to the success of the organisation has been demonstrated through a growth in membership, a strong exhibition program and the delivery of another outstanding, profile raising DESIGN Canberra festival.

Craft ACT Members are of course the backbone of the organisation. The growing membership numbers attest to the success of the many programs and benefits offered by Craft ACT and confirm our relevance to the community we serve. Membership was not the only area that grew in 2019: attendances, visibility, sponsorship, digital engagement, recognition and artist income enjoyed significant and welcome increases.

The board, staff, membership and community invested considerable resources in Craft ACT's application to the Australia Council for four-year funding (2021–24). In addition to a comprehensive two-stage application process, Craft ACT developed a new strategic plan to support our application. Bringing together perspectives and ideas from members, stakeholders and thought leaders has resulted in an inspiring road map for the future of Craft ACT. The funding environment for arts organisations is increasingly competitive, and the majority of first-round applications were unsuccessful. Nevertheless, we are hopeful that the undoubted value of Craft ACT will be recognised. We welcome, also, the positive insights into our organisations that have arisen from the careful planning process involved in preparing the application which will support us in growing and thriving into the future.

I thank the ACT Government, the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy (an initiative of the Australian, state and territory governments), and the Australia Council for the Arts (the Australian Government's arts funding and advisory body) for their ongoing support of Craft ACT. The organisation has also been privileged to receive significant financial support from its growing number of sponsors, without which many of our programs, particularly in the DESIGN Canberra festival, would not be possible. It is heartening to see the corporate community supporting and promoting good design in all its manifestations.

Rebecca Coronel  
President (interim)  
Craft ACT Board of Management (since February 2020)

Members were invited to accept the President's report for 2019.

Moved: Rob Henry  
Seconded: Graham Humphries  
Accepted and carried

#### **4. CEO/ Artistic Director's Report 2019**

The CEO and Artistic Director, Dr Rachael Coghlan, shared highlights from 2019, noting that it was an excellent year for Craft ACT. She highlighted in particular the development and publication of a new 2020-24 Strategic Plan. She highlighted deepened engagement with Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander communities, the acclaimed Artist-in-Residence program, welcome and historic increases in artist income, and the acquisition of member work by the National Museum of Australia, as well as other achievements, including the success of Design Canberra.

The CEO praised the high performing Craft ACT team, and the board, particularly thanking Graham Humphries, who had been an excellent champion of Craft ACT as President over many years, noting he had agreed to stay on the board in a non-voting capacity as immediate past president.

She noted that Craft ACT would be turning 50 next year, and that thanks to the support of staff, members and generous donors and supporters, the organisation was exceptionally well placed to succeed in the next 50 years, notwithstanding the current challenging times.

The full CEO's report, published and made available to members prior to the AGM on the Craft ACT website, is included below:

## CEO/ARTISTIC DIRECTOR REPORT

### 2019: The Year in Review

The Craft ACT story continues to be written: our rich past, vibrant present and optimistic future. You are a part of our story: whether you're a designer, a maker, a collector, a colleague, an educator, a customer or visitor. Craft ACT has touched the lives and built the careers of thousands of people since we were established in 1971.

Craft ACT is one of the longest continuously running visual arts membership organisations in Australia. Our members, staff, collaborators and board have together played a vital role in sustaining Australia's high-quality studio practice and supporting craftspeople, designers and audiences. This is why it is so important that the work we do together now, secures a sustainable future for Craft ACT not only in our golden anniversary year in 2021, but for many decades to come.

As part of the collaborative process to develop a new strategic plan for Craft ACT, we brought together some of the many people who shape Craft ACT's past and present, to imagine a strong and creative future for the organisation. At workshops with ThinkPlace, we gained new insights and affirmed some existing understanding: craft is dynamic, enduring, entrepreneurial and respectful of tradition, uniting time-honoured techniques with contemporary interpretations built for the future. Craft ACT supports the contemporary craft practitioner, whose work occupies a unique position between tradition and innovation, thinking and doing, the local and global. What craft is and what it means has evolved: although studies demonstrate most practitioners prefer to define themselves as artists or designer-makers, craft is central to the experience of our growing membership.

The 2021–24 strategic plan for Craft ACT is part of the first chapter of the story of our next 50 years. **Craft ACT's vision is to embed contemporary craft, making and design at the centre of everyday life in Australia's capital, a global city of design.** We will connect the Canberra region's high-quality studio practice to the world, by fostering innovation, building collaboration and championing a secure future for a valued, creative and essential community of contemporary craftspeople, designers and audiences.

In addition to the strategic planning process, 2019 was a bumper year for Craft ACT and our membership across our four strategic priorities. At the heart of Craft ACT is its commitment to **artistic excellence**, supporting new work and exhibitions, and promoting member artists nationally and internationally. One of the distinctive dimensions of Craft ACT's artistic program is the respected peer review process in which acclaimed accredited professional members (APM) across craft mediums assess exhibition and residency applications. This ensures a national and global experience shapes our high-quality exhibition program. Respect for Craft ACT's artistic program continues to grow: the 2019 Canberra Critics Circle awards recognised outstanding exhibitions by Craft ACT accredited professional members: Keiko Amenomori-Schmeisser (*Folding indigo*, 2018), Julie Ryder (*The hidden sex*), and Gilbert Riedelbauch (*Form follows fold*). A Craft ACT exhibition curated for DESIGN Canberra, *Glass utopia*, has been invited to Milan Design Week in 2020. We initiated a dedicated program of essays and speeches to engage critical discourse in craft and design and showcased new trends and research with two academic journals dedicated to Craft ACT programs (*Axon* and *Fusion*).

Craft ACT is committed to **embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander craft and design practice into Australian arts and culture**. We promoted a record number of Indigenous artists in the gallery, shop, professional development, public programs, and DESIGN Canberra festival. Accredited Professional Member Jennifer Kemarre Martiniello was selected to feature in the *Glass utopia* exhibition. Wayne Simon and Krystal Hurst were selected for the DESIGN Canberra auction and signature exhibition *HOME:MADE*. The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) has committed to collecting the complete works from Craft ACT's inaugural Indigenous Craft + Design Residency and Workshops, featured in the *Emerging contemporaries 2019* exhibition. Indigenous architect, advocate and lecturer Jefa Greenaway was a keynote speaker at Craft ACT's national design conference, *Object Subject*. Collaboration is central to all our work and I acknowledge Jennifer's mentorship, the dedication of the participating artists and designers, and the ANU School of Art & Design for hosting workshops.

**Connecting contemporary craft and design to new and engaged audiences** is a priority at Craft ACT and 2019 brought the work of our organisation to the attention of record audience numbers: from international and diplomatic engagement, to building local, regional and national audiences and artist participation, to media coverage, and scholarly engagement. Our acclaimed artist-in-residence program in Namadgi National Park, supported by ACT Parks and Conservation for well over a decade, continues to invite artists to be cultural interpreters of our landscape. DESIGN Canberra allows us to achieve more for our members across some measures than we do across the whole year: \$190,570 of income was generated for artists and designers during the festival, 5,361 people attended our members' open studios (28 per cent increase), we gained national media coverage for members and featured members in signature events. Significant acquisitions of outstanding work by Craft ACT members took place throughout the year, with the highlight being the National Museum of Australia's acquisition of Julie Ryder's beautiful glass slides and cyanotypes.

Dynamic and **sustainable growth** continued in 2019, ensuring Craft ACT can support our members, staff and community into the future. Given the challenges facing not-for-profit arts organisations, the increased and diversified funding from government, sponsorship and self-generated sources in 2019 is warmly received but should never be taken for granted. Once again a significant amount of time by staff, board representatives and members was invested in applying for and acquitting grants, including the highly competitive Australia Council's four-year funding (2021–24). Our careful financial management and efforts to attract new sources of funding have transformed Craft ACT, which has in turn helped us to remunerate staff appropriately, upgrade infrastructure, promote artists, initiate new professional development opportunities and create new platforms to showcase craft and design to diverse audiences. We introduced new cash prizes for Craft ACT members at the annual Capital Arts Patrons' Organisation (CAPO) awards, increased artist commissions and member professional development, and facilitated a partnership between home.byholly and Girl Nomad Ceramics.

The 2019 annual report shines a light on Craft ACT's vital role in our region's arts ecology and our sector's growth. As always, there is much to celebrate and cherish about Craft ACT and its promotion of Canberra's deep roots in craft and design. I thank everyone who has contributed in the past year, and would like to note a few extraordinary people. The small but mighty Craft ACT team brings so much joy, creativity, passion, cups of tea and expertise to our work every day and it is an honour to work beside them. Every member of the Craft ACT Board of Management is dedicated and encouraging and a privilege to learn from. Outgoing President Graham Humphries has been an inspiration, a friend and educator and although I know he will remain connected to Craft ACT, I will miss his regular support and guidance. I'd like to thank the ministers and the dedicated staff at the Australia Council and artsACT who support Craft ACT not only through relevant Federal and ACT Government funding but in a multitude of ways, as well as the many generous sponsors who connect us with likeminded people.

Finally, I thank each and every member of Craft ACT for their support and note in particular the members who participated in our 2019 program of exhibitions, residencies, committees and public programs for their time and goodwill.

As you read the following pages celebrating Craft ACT's 2019 achievements, I encourage you to reflect on the many people and many hands that made this possible, not only in the past year but in the past half a century.

Dr Rachael Coghlan  
CEO and Artistic Director  
Craft ACT: Craft + Design Centre

Members were invited to accept the CEO's report.

Moved: Rebecca Coronel  
Seconded: Kate Nixon  
Accepted and carried

**5. Financial Reports 2019**

The interim President invited the Treasurer, Sam Bryant, to comment on the financial status of Craft ACT, for the year up to 31 December 2019. He presented his report below, which is also available on the Craft ACT website.

**TREASURER REPORT**

I am very pleased to present the 2019 financial report for Craft ACT: Craft and Design Centre. Our auditor, Vincents, has issued an unqualified audit opinion and this report represents a true and fair view of the financial position of Craft ACT. In the Board of Management's opinion there are reasonable grounds to believe that Craft ACT: Craft and Design Centre will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

Craft ACT has had another successful year in securing grants, sponsorship, ticket sales, donations and commissions. In addition, our membership base has risen again to record highs in response to the increased benefits to membership holders.

In 2019, Craft ACT: Craft and Design Centre finished the year with a \$74,659, surplus, which was a direct result of increases to revenue for the year including membership revenue. It is imperative to acknowledge and thank our members, sponsors, supporters and donors for their important ongoing contributions.

There was an increase to Grants funding with the Community Outreach Arts Funding Grant. Sponsorship for Design Canberra was increased significantly this year along with corresponding ticketing sales.

During 2019 changes were made to the chart of accounts, enabling more timely and efficient reporting by program, as well as more efficient reporting for acquittal processes.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our CEO Rachael Coghlan and the Craft ACT staff who have produced an amazing year of results both financial and non financial.

Sam Bryant, Treasurer

The interim President invited Mr Atif Rafique to comment further on the 2019 Audit. He confirmed the unqualified audit result, noted a 12.5% increase in revenue, and observed that overall this represented a very good result for Craft ACT.

The interim President invited members to accept the 2019 Treasurer's report.

Moved: Rebecca Coronel  
Seconded: Julie Ryder  
Accepted and carried

**6. Election of 2020 Management Committee**

The interim President noted that the election of the Craft ACT Management Committee was conducted annually at the AGM.

Nominations for the 2020 Management Committee positions were received from:

Rebecca Coronel (for the position of President)  
Sam Bryant (for the position of Treasurer)  
Laura Crick (for the position of Secretary and Public Officer)  
Gilbert Riedelbauch  
Julie Ryder  
Jennie Cameron  
Jenny Edwards

As the number of nominations received did not exceed the number of positions available, the President moved that all nominations be automatically accepted, in accordance with the Craft ACT Constitution.

Moved: Rebecca Coronel  
Seconded: Graham Humphries  
Accepted and carried

**7. Other Business**

Expression of appreciation for service of outgoing board members

The President and CEO thanked outgoing Management Committee members for their service to Craft ACT:

Graham Humphries  
Andrea Ho  
Stephen Cassidy  
Sari Sutton  
Rob Henry

50/50 'Plus 1' Fundraising: status update

Julie Ryder sought an update on the status of the 'Plus 1' fundraising effort. The CEO acknowledged that fundraising was going very well, but noted that efforts had been impacted by the bushfires, which was understandable. She noted that Creative Partnerships Australia had been very supportive, and had provided an extension to the matched fundraising deadline, which was very welcome. She noted that efforts would intensify to identify new avenues of funding, especially foundations, as the matched funding extension would allow Craft ACT to seek grants with application deadlines beyond 31 May 2020.

The CEO thanked all those who had already made generous personal donations to Craft ACT to support the 50/50 matched funding effort, and encouraged continued



focus and promotion of this unique opportunity, including through social media avenues.

Australia Council funding bid: status update

Stephen Cassidy requested an update on the status of the four-year Australia Council grant bid submitted by Craft ACT. The CEO responded by noting that this had been delayed in light of COVID-19, and that an answer had not yet been received. She confirmed that advice would be provided as soon as an outcome was known.

There being no further business raised, the meeting was closed at 6.29pm.