

15/10/2024

## **The Condensery**

### **Winner at State Awards**

The Winners, Highly Commended and Finalists of the **2024 Gallery and Museum Achievement Awards** (GAMAA) were proudly announced by Museums & Galleries Queensland (M&G QLD) on Tuesday 8 October, at a special awards presentation hosted by the Queensland Museum Cobb+Co, Toowoomba.

M&G QLD is delighted to announce that **The Condensery | Somerset Regional Gallery** was honoured with **Winning** a prestigious Gallery and Museum Achievement Award **in the category of Engagement: Organisations with Paid Staff** for its outstanding **Healing Garden** community arts project.

Developed in collaboration with internationally renowned Japanese-Australian artist Hiromi Tango, local artist-educators Jane Nicholson and Makiko Ramsay, and members of the Somerset community, the *Healing Garden* created an immersive, sensory garden installation that engaged, transformed, and supported the mental health and wellbeing of all participants.

The *Healing Garden* was a vibrant, playful initiative. The project, which comprised 23 community workshops, encouraged participants of all ages to co-create individual artworks inspired by local flora. These artworks combined to form a wondrous and immersive textile garden, showcasing the healing properties of native Australian plants endemic to the local region.

By working with Traditional Custodians, and prioritising community connectedness and resilience, the *Healing Garden* reached new audiences in towns across the Somerset region. The overwhelmingly positive response from local community members, who contributed over 700 handmade fabric flowers to the project, demonstrated the project's widespread impact and relevance.

The judges commended The Condensery for its commitment to inclusion and accessibility, as well as the Gallery's emphasis on promoting good mental health and wellness outcomes. Through the delivery of free workshops directly into schools, community groups, and aged care facilities, the Gallery has expanded its reach and solidified its position as a catalyst for positive change in the Somerset region.

**Museums & Galleries Queensland (M&G QLD) Executive Director, Rebekah Butler** said, "The Condensery | Somerset Regional Gallery is a worthy winner in this competitive category. The Gallery and its collaborators are congratulated for using art to inspire, heal, and connect people in their region following consecutive years of extreme weather events and hardship. The *Healing*

*Garden* project has left a lasting legacy, promoting resilience, mental health, and wellbeing, and has set a benchmark for meaningful art-driven community engagement.”

Ms Butler continued, “The 2024 Winners and Finalists were selected from a strong field of nominations received from organisations, large and small, across Queensland. It is an honour to be shining a spotlight on the outstanding work of so many worthy individuals and organisations.”

Now in its twentieth year, the GAMAA were established by Museums & Galleries Queensland (M&G QLD) to honour the achievements of our State’s individuals and organisations in striving towards excellence.

The 2024 Winners received an exquisite trophy by emerging Queensland artist, **Monique Burkhead**. Monique is of Polynesian, Maori and Australian heritage and lives and works in Cairns. She is passionate about conserving the environment, and through her art hopes to raise an awareness of the fragile nature of our natural environment and the impacts of climate change.

The 2024 GAMAA trophies are generously supported by Brian Tucker.

The 2024 GAMAA are proudly supported by the **Queensland Museum**, and sponsored by **Public Galleries Queensland** and **Australian Museums and Galleries Association Queensland**.

**For media enquiries please contact:**

**Rebekah Butler, Executive Director, M&G QLD**

**Museums & Galleries Queensland**

Phone: **07 3059 9740** Freecall: **1800 866 101** Mobile: **0422 579 180**

Email: **rebekah.butler@magsq.com.au** Website: **www.magsq.com.au**

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