

OUT OF THE ASHES

Presented by *Out On a Limb*



Press Release

Out of the Ashes Exhibition: "The final Chapter Parts 1 & 2"

Part 1: Photographic Exhibition (the final chapter)

Port Arthur Historic Site: 23rd December 2014 – 22nd January 2015 (Asylum)
10am - 4pm Daily.

Part 2: Art Exhibition (the final Chapter)

William McHenry & Sons Distillery: 4 – 26th January, 2015 (10 am – 4 pm Mon – Sat)

On January 4th, 2013 a catastrophic bushfire raged through the communities of the South East of Tasmania indiscriminately razing and devouring almost everything in its path and when at last it finally ran out of puff, it left communities devastated, changing their internal and external landscapes forever ... but that was then!

From day one after the bushfire the recovery process began and the *Out of the Ashes Exhibition* charts this momentous journey, *bearing witness* not only to the formidable courage, strength and resilience of a community but also the irrepressible need for and power of creative expression in the healing process.

This beautiful and powerful exhibition began as a small creative health initiative but has grown exponentially since its humble beginnings, morphing and flourishing into a stunning collection of more than one hundred works that include photographic images, paintings, drawings (including drawings by children evacuated at Port Arthur Historic Site), sculptural and glass works, jewellery, storyboards, an audio montage of interviews especially created for the exhibition by Sea Fm and a hauntingly beautiful book by nationally renowned and award-winning artist Gay Hawkes called "Time and Chance – A Story of the Fires".

In December 2014, after a highly successful statewide tour the exhibition is winding its way home for one final showing over the second anniversary of the bushfires before being disbanded.

The exhibition opened at Port Arthur Historic Site in November 2013 and was showcased at Dunalley Waterfront Café and Gallery over the first anniversary of the Bushfires in January 2013. The exhibition tour of the state began in March 2014 and has exhibited at the following venues: Rosny School House Gallery, Kingston Arts Beach Hub Gallery, Milton Vineyard, Burnie Makers Workshop, Cradle Mountain Wilderness Gallery, TRAK Working Art Space and Deloraine Creative Studios.

Throughout the tour the exhibition has continued to expand, incorporating new works throughout the tour that has kept the exhibition dynamic and fresh.

Due to the significant size of the exhibition the exhibition will be presented in two parts. Part One will contain the Photographic Images and Part Two the Art works, drawings, sculpture, jewellery, audio and book. The final exhibition will also contain a number of exciting new art works by new and existing artists.

The Exhibition features the works of a number of nationally renowned and award winning artists including William Yaxley, Gay Hawkes, Jill Harris, Kris Schaffer, Noami Howard, Eve Howard, Pamela Jones, Ann Kearon, Sheila Vince, Cate Foley Burke, Julia Knight, Christine Gulline and jewellery designers Angela Lowe and Sally Ferrar. A number of artists either lost their homes, art studios, possessions, and/or businesses in the bushfire!

The Exhibition also contains a number of beautiful and evocative images created by professional photographers Duncan Giblin, Chris Crerar and Philip Hallam, as well as images by amateur photographers and members of the community who simply wanted to share their stories.

Although the Out of the Ashes Exhibition contains a number of stunning works by professional artists, at its heart it is a community exhibition. It is about the stories. The Exhibition using both symbolic and literal representation depicts a community's collective journey via a shared experience but also takes the observer on a unique and deeply personal journey as seen through the eyes of the artist.

The state tour was funded by The Salvation Army Bushfire Recovery Appeal and the Department of Premier and Cabinet (under Lara Giddings Leadership). Exhibition sponsors include: Tasmanian Regional Arts, Port Arthur Historic Site, Bendigo Bank, Tasman Council, Focal Printing and The Friends School without whose support the exhibition would not have been possible.

The exhibition tour would also not have been possible without the support, generosity and assistance of fellow Regional Arts Groups and hosting council's and venues including in particular: Port Arthur Historic Site, Tasman Council, Dunalley Waterfront Café and Gallery, Clarence Council, Rosny School House Gallery, Kingborough Council, Kingston Arts Beach Hub Gallery, Milton Vineyard, the Great Oyster Bay Arts Group, Glamorgan Spring Bay Council, Burnie Makers Workshop, Burnie Arts Council, Cradle Mountain Wilderness Gallery, Kentish Council, TRAK Working Arts Space, Arts Deloraine, Deloraine Creative Studios and Out on a Limb (my colleagues), Paul Sutton & William McHenry & Sons Distillery that will host the final Arts Exhibition.

Curator Janice Sutton has coordinated this exhibition and tour on a voluntary basis for Out on a Limb, Tasman Regional Arts and the incredible community in which she lives and without whose bravery and generosity of spirit this incredible exhibition would not exist. Out on a Limb is a not for profit organisation and branch of Tasmanian Regional Arts.

One Powerful Exhibition, Two Incredible Venues!
Share the Inspirational Journey ...

MEDIA

Follow the Tour at www.facebook.com/OutonLimbArts

Contact: Janice Sutton on 0457722772 OOTA's Curator & Coordinator (Out on a Limb)

Some potentially useful quotes/Extracts:

Extracts from Gay Hawke's Book: Time and Chance – A Story of the Fires

"...The hot winds lifted the dust – no longer any shade. On still, sunny days the shadows of the trees once dappled the carpet of needles, woven over aeons of time. The she-oaks souged their song, seabirds called their mournful cry, the resident grey crane sat awaiting on the shore as I swam, cormorants dove for fish, sometimes vast clouds of mutton birds swirled over the bay like musical notes on blue manuscript (log trucks thundered past). Now the only thing of beauty was the sea, still turquoise, potent, oblivious though her rocks along the shore lay split and blackened. "My front garden", I called it".

An extract from nationally renowned and award-winning furniture maker and artist Gay Hawke's account of the January 2013 Bushfires in her recently published hauntingly beautiful book 'Time and Chance – A Story of the Fires'.

In the book Gay explains: *"my account is specific because I left just before my place was burnt. I did not experience the horror of the fire as it swept through the town. I did not see the fireball pass over Blackman Bay to Bangor, nor had to hide submerged in the sea for hours, surviving the fearful heat and the toxic air. I did not stay to fight the fire and try to save my place, like many other valiant people did. I left knowing she said, that alone and without resources, I might perish: Those others can tell their stories, but because it was an experience so profound and still is, and always will be, I want to write it down as I saw it".*

"And some of 'those others' did choose to share their stories – in an equally powerful and poignant way in the "Out of the Ashes Exhibition" (of which Gay's book is a part) that is returning home after a highly successful state wide tour to exhibit for one final show over the second anniversary of the bushfire" (Janice Sutton).

Coordinator Quotes (Janice Sutton from Out on a Limb, Tasman Regional Arts):

"When Out on a Limb, Tasman Regional Arts was first approached by Bert Dorgelo from Tasman Health and Community Service to help organise a small photographic exhibition in July 2013 following the bushfires, we could never have anticipated or imagined how expansive or successful this exhibition and project would become"

"The exhibition process has been organic. Out of the Ashes has grown exponentially since it first opened in 2013 and has absorbed many new works throughout the tour that has kept the exhibition dynamic and fresh. I am very excited to be introducing more new works into the exhibition for the final showing – it will be the best exhibition yet!"

"Being part of this incredible community exhibition has been a truly humbling experience that has enriched my life beyond measure".

"This exhibition and tour would not have been possible without the generosity of the Salvation Army's Bush Fire Appeal and a small grant from the Department of Premier and Cabinet under Lara Giddings Premiership in addition to the exhibition's other valued sponsors, including Port Arthur Historic Site, Tasmanian Regional Arts, Bendigo Bank, The Friends' School, Focal Printing and Tasman Council. I also could not have coordinated the tour without the generous support of the hosting venues, regional arts groups, respective local councils, colleagues and my husband Paul (unwitting helper!) without whose assistance the tour would have undoubtedly floundered. The hosting venues have been supremely generous and supportive and I will never be able to thank them enough".

"The positive feedback and response throughout the tour has been humbling and rewarding. It is a powerful exhibition: thought provoking, moving, inspiring, life-affirming and challenging (on occasion reducing burly men to tears)! But it has also brought communities together, helped create new bonds and friendships and reconnect families and friends. It has touched peoples' hearts and lives in a myriad of ways that we might never fully appreciate or understand. It has allowed those in other bushfire-affected areas to reconnect with and talk about their own experiences and offered a privileged insight into the awe-inspiring strength and resilience of a community recovering from a devastating event. The tour has also provided an opportunity for participating artists and community members not only to create and to share their stories with others, but also showcase their works in wonderful galleries and venues throughout the state. The exhibition has and will I hope also help to create new opportunities for some of the participating artists going into the future, a few of whom lost everything during the 2013 bushfire".

"Out on a Limb feels extremely honoured and privileged to have coordinated this important community exhibition and the participating artists and community should be immensely proud of what it has achieved".

"I hope people will take time to visit the exhibition venues and share the inspirational journey. It really is a very powerful and inspiring exhibition. The community is embarking on a new exciting chapter in 2015 with the advent of the new Dunalley Hall and there won't be another opportunity to see this stunning exhibition again".

