JENNY CARRINGTON
"THE DAM", 1974,
TAPESTRY, 26 x 40 cm.
We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation as the traditional custodians of the land on which we work, and pay our respects to their Elders, past and present, and to all First Nations peoples across Australia.
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W.A.R. Committee and members at the 2020 Volunteers Week meet-up via Zoom.
Welcome to the Women’s Art Register 2020 Annual Report. There is no doubt it was a year of surprises that tested the arts community around Australia, and the Women’s Art Register was no exception. I say with enormous pride that while we faced challenges that put pressure on our projects and planning, we were able to keep moving.

This year has seen the leadership committee continue its strategic review of organisational documents and processes with a focus on providing clear guidelines for volunteers, transparent organisational policies and a strong focus on the ongoing refinement of our health and safety procedures that have been evolving alongside our COVID-19 response. This was underpinned by a commitment to support sustainable organisational growth and develop in ways that reflect best practice as a not-for-profit volunteer-run organisation.

Like many organisations in 2020, we moved our meetings online. This became a surprisingly inclusive way for us to gather as we found that we had members from across the country joining us, many for the first time. This is a valuable mode of communication that we will continue to use alongside our in-person meetings.
I am personally grateful to all committee members and our valuable team of volunteers. It goes without saying that we have had an enormous year of change and growth, including successfully refreshing our Women’s Art Register brand and launching Phase 1 of our *This Is W.A.R!* online map (led by Sahra Martin), the *Preserve Your Story* workshops and collection cataloguing project (led by Caroline Phillips) and the *It Comes In Waves* conversation series (led by Katie Ryan).

We sincerely thank our project partners City of Yarra and Creative Victoria for their invaluable support, as well as our community partners and our passionate membership community. As we continue to refine and improve our organisation—and with 50 years of operation on the horizon—we now work towards achieving charitable status and securing a sustainable future for the Register. We will continue to advocate for Australian women artists and to care for our unique archive. I feel confident that we will look back on this year as a defining moment that will cement the Women’s Art Register’s past, present and future in the discourse of Australia’s cultural life.
Our vision  Australian women artists and their work are studied, celebrated, valued and represented fully and equally.

Our mission  We are Australia’s peak body for advocacy, education, knowledge and support for women artists.

Our values  We care for the archive and for each other • We respect our volunteers and members • We are building a sustainable future for the Women’s Art Register • We strive to amplify the voices of Australian women artists through leading research and advocacy • We facilitate social equity and improve access to the collection through innovative community programming.
Despite the challenging circumstances of 2020 and the lack of face-to-face events that usually account for many of our new member sign-ups, we have continued to see our membership grow in the past year due to our pivot to online engagement. We recorded a year-on-year growth of 20% as the total number of members increased from 207 at the end of 2019 to 249 by December 2020.

We are deeply committed to supporting the wellbeing of our members and volunteers. Despite the prolonged COVID-19 lockdowns in metropolitan Melbourne, we continued to engage and connect with the wider Women’s Art Register community by conducting regular Zoom meet-up sessions, other informal online gatherings and bolstering our social media communities with rejuvenated activity and content in this space.

Despite physical collection management work at the archive being limited, we successfully transitioned to operating remotely to continue our administrative and project work. We are extremely grateful to our volunteers for donating a total of 1454 hours in the past year to the Women’s Art Register which included archiving prior to lockdown, administrative and project management work, contributing to projects and events such as our Bulletin special issue, This is W.A.R! mapping and research project, It Comes In Waves conversation series and Preserve Your Story workshops.

We continue to be part of the Yarra Volunteer Leaders’ Network and have attended three meetings in 2020. These meetings are aimed at facilitating the connection and exchange of information on volunteer management between organisations within the City of Yarra. We also provided feedback to the Volunteering Victoria State of Volunteering Report.

In 2020, to streamline our membership process, we began sending communications about renewals, reminders, thank yous and welcomes via Mailchimp. We were also thrilled to award two Life Memberships to Merren Ricketson and Liz McAloon, both of whom were instrumental to W.A.R’s governance and outstanding advocacy of women artists in the 1980s.

Thank you to all the following volunteers for 2020 who worked on various projects: Leia Alex, Patsy Brown, Kati Javan, Sara Lindsay, Harriet Maher, Sahra Martin, Danielle McCarthy, Regina McDonald, Juliette Peers, Caroline Phillips, Merren Ricketson, Katie Ryan, Katie Sfetkidis, Ruby Tolmer, Jacquelin Tsui, Christina Turner and Azza Zein.
The Women’s Art Register Preservation Project (WARPP) continued in 2020, although severely curtailed by the extended closure of the archive. Supported by the Public Record Office Victoria, this mammoth task will see all our 4000+ artist and subject files re-housed in archival standard materials, with the addition of keyword search terms for increased catalogue functionality. Planned for completion in July 2021, this extensive project will now continue until late 2022.

In 2020 we were thrilled to connect with filmmakers Ugo Mantelli and Peter Lawrence, who made a documentary on Erica McGilchrist (artist and W.A.R. co-founder) in 1988. Over seven hours of footage has languished for many years on Umatic Lowband video cassettes but has now been digitised in 2020. We sincerely thank Yvonne Kidd (who worked on the project at the time) for her extremely generous donation enabling the digitisation of this valuable footage, and the filmmakers for donating a copy to our archive.

We were most grateful to receive a number of generous donations of materials for our archive, including a suite of books and magazines from the family of South Australian artist Pru La Motte who passed away this year. We also sincerely thank the National Gallery of Victoria, Heide MoMA and Natalie King for further donations of valuable books for our specialist library.

Carole Wilson of Jillposters and Another Planet Posters has also donated a large collection of poster images to add to our digital archive.

Member submissions to the archive were increased, as many of us spent the lockdown time productively sorting through our personal archives. These will be archived in 2021.

This year we also completed an audit of our audiovisual holdings, and contributed the findings to the ARC Linkage Project Archiving Australian Media Arts: Towards a method and national collection.

Research visits and enquiries were significantly less than usual in 2020 due to the restrictions and upheavals of the lockdown, however we continued to service these requests remotely.

And finally, although delayed due to the multiple lockdowns, two Preserve Your Story workshops were held in October (paper and photography) and November (digital files and slides). The workshops were moved online, led by our new partners Care Of Studios, who delivered exceptional training and will deliver more workshops into 2021. The second part of the Preserve Your Story project, an upgrade to the W.A.R. catalogue, will also continue into 2021. This project is generously supported by the City of Yarra Annual Grants Program and the Richmond Library.

As one of the most popular websites in the world, and the first point of call for many young people, it is important to make sure women artists are represented on Wikipedia. This was our fifth Wikithon, continuing our goals to build a strong community of editors, enhance our archive and share the knowledge of the Women’s Art Register. As part of the collaborative program with the National Gallery of Australia’s #knowmyname campaign, there were seven edit-a-thons around Australia. Supported by the National Gallery of Victoria, our event topped the national list of editors, words added and new articles created.

Our group of 33 editors, including artists, librarians, academics, curators, designers, architects and W.A.R. members, generated substantial results: 25 articles created, 138 articles edited, 462 total edits, 44K words added, 364 references added.
Despite not being able to work from our physical space for most of the year, we have continued to deepen community engagement, grow our networks and further our advocacy efforts for women artists across the sector.

We have worked closely with our communities on multiple projects and joined forces with allied organisations, adding our voice to advocacy initiatives, exchanges and campaigns.

The Women's Art Register supported the Creative industry letter to the Prime Minister, ministers and lord mayors on COVID-19 action, initiated by the National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA). The letter called on our government to publicly acknowledge the vital role of Australia's creative arts industries in getting our country through the pandemic and subsequent economic crisis, and to urgently deliver a targeted support program for now and into the future.

Our Secretary Caroline Phillips joined NAVA's 2020 Arts Day on the Hill team on two group panel discussions with MPs, speaking with Maria Vamvakinou, the Federal Member for Calwell (ALP) and Trent Zimmerman from the Federal seat of North Sydney (LNP). Caroline discussed the effects of COVID-19 on women artists, and how they might be supported via direct community linkages—in partnership with not-for-profits such as W.A.R.—rather than the already overstretched Jobseeker program.

We submitted to the Parliamentary Enquiry into Australia’s creative and cultural industries and institutions, outlining research and data about the range of issues that affect women artists, and put forward a number of recommendations.

W.A.R. Committee member Leia Alex participated in an interview with RMIT Research Fellow Indigo Holcombe-James to discuss how organisations like the Women’s Art Register experience digital inclusion (or exclusion) within the Australian cultural sector, which contributed to the study’s preliminary research findings.

We began participating in Arts on TV, an informal group that is meeting occasionally to develop strategies for enhanced public perception of arts and culture, and to influence public discourses in the media. Anne Robertson (PGAV), Anna Glynn (W.A.R. member), Jeremy Blank (Victoria Park Centre for the Arts, WA) and Caroline Phillips are preparing a discussion paper for circulation to the broader arts community in the near future.

We were also invited to write two blog posts for ARI Remix blog (QLD), an online activist archive. The first entry, posted in March 2020, was written by W.A.R. Volunteer Taya Shania. The second entry will be written in 2021 about our online mapping project, This Is W.A.R!
It Comes In Waves is an intergenerational conversation series developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The series was initiated by W.A.R. Committee member Katie Ryan with the support of a $4,000 City of Yarra Creative Community COVID-19 Grant. The series engages women and non-binary artists and arts professionals to address themes including trauma, care community and identity. Drawing on the combined knowledge of elder and emerging members of the arts community, the series proposes speculative modes for sustaining creative communities.

The series is comprised of six conversations curated and hosted by Katie Ryan, with conversation partners paired based on shared areas of interest. Participants were Manisha Anjali and Meredith Rogers, Alex Cuffe and Merren Ricketson, Georgia Banks and Juliette Peers, Lara Chamas and Natalie Thomas, Alice McIntosh and Bonita Ely and Tamsen Hopkinson and Maree Clarke. The conversations are available as audio files on our website and are accompanied by a transcript and relevant links. Episode 1 and 2 were launched in 2020, with 115 plays so far, and the remaining episodes will launch in early 2021.
This year we gave the Women’s Art Register brand a refresh. We had identified a number of needs, including requiring a bolder presence in the increasingly crowded gender representation space and a more strategic approach to digital communications and engagement. These ideas were already percolating pre-COVID but were made urgent by the pandemic, forcing us to adapt quickly in order to remain visible and connected to our community. The new identity reflects these changes and will go some way towards future-proofing our organisation.

The rebrand launched in early August 2020 with our digital *This Is W.A.R!* campaign, accompanied by a suite of updated member communications and rejuvenated social media content. From August to December we recorded the strongest growth we had seen in recent years in our social media communities. This growth translated directly into new membership sign-ups.

Our project *This Is W.A.R!* maps women’s art practice in and around Melbourne/Naarm, with a focus on historical sites (in use prior to 2000). The ongoing project seeks to enhance the visibility of women’s art practice and connect artists past and present through community participation and shared stories and resources. Supported by Creative Victoria’s Innovation in Marketing Fund, the first iteration of the online map is set to launch in 2021 alongside a new website for W.A.R.

The 2020 marketing campaign component of *This Is W.A.R!* was designed to support our rebrand. The call-out campaign, #thisisWARmelb, invited our community to contribute sites and stories to the map. The campaign ran for six weeks, on Instagram, Facebook and via EDMs, and we received over 50 submissions. Concurrently, we ran the #thisisWARnow campaign, encouraging stories to be shared on Instagram of where women artists are working right now, showcasing contemporary places of making and works in progress. We received very positive feedback from our community during these campaigns, with the general view that audiences felt more digitally engaged with W.A.R. than they had in the past, fostering increased connection during an otherwise isolating time.

In 2020 we published our digital-first issue of the *Bulletin* (#66) which included a call-out campaign for submissions on social media. The call-out saw us receive 46 submissions. Our conversation series, *It Comes In Waves*, was also launched in 2020 with a social media campaign for the first two episodes in October and December. Both campaigns were shared widely and increased our following on Facebook and Instagram.
CALLING ALL ARTISTS & WRITERS
BULLETIN 66
SUBMISSIONS NOW OPEN

SUBMIT BY
17.05.20

COVID-19
ARTICLES
POETRY
REPORTS
ARTS
REFERENCES
ESSAYS
PHOTOGRAPHY
STORIES
SKETCHES

PRESTON
#thisisWARmelb

We’re on a mission to cast a floodlight onto Australian women’s art practice—and we need your help.

These unique documents... are in danger of being lost forever unless some concerted effort is soon made to gather, cohere and make them available.

Anna Sande + Bonita Ely

Annual Report

Selected 2020 social media campaigns: Bulletin #66, This Is W.A.R! and It Comes In Waves.
Published in the midst of the COVID-19 lockdowns, *Bulletin #66* saw us pause our usual programs and offer the space to our community to showcase some of the art that has helped us process and reflect on our shared experiences of the pandemic. For the first time in the *Bulletin*’s history, we opened submissions up to a call-out and published a digital-first issue that was distributed on open access.

We were overwhelmed with the response to the call-out, with participation from all over Australia and NZ. We featured the work of 46 women and non-binary creatives.

*Bulletin #67*, published in December 2020, saw us press onward with our programming to preview our *This Is W.A.R!* project that transitions our archive into the global digital space.

The four articles, by Dianne Friend, Judith Brooks, Merren Ricketson and Caroline Phillips, highlighted some of the project’s sites and stories. *Bulletin #67* also gave us the opportunity to align the publication with our new brand identity and featured a refreshed masthead and new layout.
IN THIS ISSUE: Editorial: Mapping our creative herstories
Leia Alex and Caroline Phillips
Taking up space: A visual essay
Caroline Phillips
Recollections of Carringbush Regional Library including the Women’s Art Register 1977–1982
Dianne Friend
Judith Brooks
Flesh after Fifty: Ponch Hawkes, Maree Clarke and Megan Evans
Merren Ricketson
In 2020 the Register had a successful year financially, as our membership renewals exceeded our budget forecast by over a thousand dollars. Our total income for the year was $6,103.75 and our operational expenses were $4,120.55.

We should all be proud of maintaining and improving our membership numbers through a very difficult year. In addition, we have maintained our $5,000 cash buffer and have sufficient funds to cover our expenses for 2021.

Currently we are managing six grants, and much of this funding remains unspent due to the multiple lockdowns in Melbourne that placed our programming on hold. The status of these grants can be found on page 24.

We anticipate that our application for ARBN status will be completed by early 2021 and enable us to move forward with an application for Charity and Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status later in the year.
Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012
Sections 94(2)(b), 97(2)(b) and 100(2)(b)

Annual Statements that give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Incorporated Association

We (Christina Turner and Caroline Phillips) being members of the Committee of Women’s Art Register Inc. certify that:

The statements attached to this certificate give a true and fair view of the financial position of Women’s Art Register Inc. during and at the end of the financial year of the association ending on 31 December 2020.

Signed:       Date: 22 March 21

Signed:       Date: 22 March 21
## Operating Budget 2020
1 January to 31 December

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**OVERALL TOTAL**

$1,983.20
Grants Summary 2020
1 January to 31 December

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<td><strong>$10,517.32</strong></td>
<td><strong>$28,142.68</strong></td>
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*Note: some grants/expenses received in previous financial years*
Committee of Management
2020

Convenor
Danielle McCarthy

Treasurer
Christina Turner

Secretary
Caroline Phillips

General Members
Leia Alex
Sahra Martin
Juliette Peers
Katie Ryan
Jacquelin Tsui

Thank you to outgoing General Member Harriet Maher (March 2018 to March 2020) for her vital contribution to our Archiving and Volunteer programs.
Thank You to Our Donors

Deborah Eddy
Jennifer Goodman
Yvonne Ridd
Tracey Lamb
Moira Playne

2020 Partners & Supporters
The Women’s Art Register is Australia’s living archive of women’s art practice (cis, non-binary and trans inclusive) and an artist-run community and resource.

Since 1975 W.A.R. has provided a platform for research, education, advocacy and support to enhance the status of women artists and address issues of professional practice, equity and cultural heritage.