

*Everyone's journey is different,
A red carpet is rolled out for some,
Whilst others tread under the floorboards,
Away from the light and the sun. . .*



UNDER the floorboards

2013 Artist Catalogue

This project is proudly supported by:



Media Partner:



Art Gallery of Ballarat – supporting local artists



*Everyone's journey is different,
A red carpet is rolled out for some,
Whilst others tread under the floorboards,
Away from the light and the sun....*



The Exhibition

Wednesday 2 to Sunday 20 October
Art Gallery of Ballarat, McCain Hall
10am – 5pm Daily
FREE Entry

The Play

'The House at the End of the Line'
Wednesday 16 to Sunday 20 October
Ballarat Mining Exchange
Bookings: www.herماج.com or 5333 5888



UNDER the floorboards

Black Tie Dinner & Auction

Saturday 16 November
Ballarat Lodge & Convention Centre
Bookings: www.unitingcareballarat.com.au or 5337 2770
Special Guests: Ms Sigrid Thornton & Mr Derek Guille

*A year in the making – 12 artists have worked on the
edges of society with UnitingCare Ballarat staff,
volunteers and clients to create great art.*

This project is proudly supported by:



Media Partner:



Art Gallery of Ballarat – supporting local artists

www.artgalleryofballarat.com.au



A Message from the Executive Director

Eighteen months ago UnitingCare Ballarat invited artists to share our world.

The concept was simple: To facilitate 'Artist in Residence' opportunities for art practioners within our many community service programs with a view to producing tangible works of art that reflected what they had discovered during their agency experience.

Many artists applied and with the help of staff within the Arts & Culture Unit at the City of Ballarat, twelve artists were selected on the basis of the artistic merit of their initial concepts and ideas.

Our vision for the project was not confined to any specific genre and we were fortunate to select practioners from a variety of artistic mediums including; ceramics, theatre, painting, sculpture, story telling, film making, mixed media and photography.

Each artist spent one month immersed in a different program area of UnitingCare Ballarat. Some worked across the agency, whilst others worked in our kindergartens, aged care programs, retail shops, Karrung - our Youth Foyer for homeless young people, Tabor - our youth drug withdrawal facility, BreezeWay - our meals program for homeless people, one of our rooming houses, Reid's Guest House, or with the Sudanese Community group that has been established by the Ballarat Central Uniting Church congregation.

The entire journey has been documented by our media partner ABC Ballarat, who have interviewed each artist before and after their placement within our agency.

Now, some sixteen months after the first artist commenced, the artworks are finally finished and we are extremely proud to present them to the community in which they were created.

I welcome you to the inaugural UnitingCare Ballarat 'Under the Floorboards' Art Project and hope that you find inspiration and a greater understanding of our world from these diverse interpretations.



Cliff Barclay – Executive Director
UnitingCare Ballarat

UnitingCare Ballarat

The Project

The 'Under the Floorboards' Art Project has created valuable ways in which UnitingCare Ballarat can:

Promote the issues that confront us – We hope that the 'Under the Floorboards' Art Project will shed a light on areas too easily misunderstood and that social change is dependent upon honest discourse. Many of our clients are victims of destructive narratives that disempower them. They are not always able to speak for themselves.

We believe that art has the power to challenge these narratives and that the project provides opportunities for shared conversations in our community.

Promote the work that we do - UnitingCare Ballarat is proud of our achievements and the valuable contribution we make to our local community and beyond.

The format of this project offers us the opportunity to establish a series of regular stories throughout the year and the presentation of exhibitions, performances and fundraising events promote our work and assist us in maintaining the regular community support we need to operate our program areas.

Raise money – When so much of our work is supported by donations and volunteer commitment, we continue to establish ways to adequately fund our operations. Many of our program areas rely heavily on philanthropic support, bequests or financial gifts and the sale of art works, as the culmination of this project, will continue to assist us to deliver a comprehensive range of support agency programs.

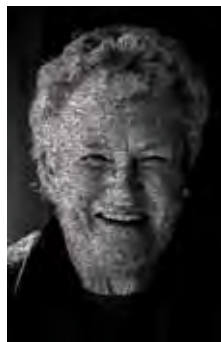
Foster the creation of great art - We hope that the experience that the artists gain whilst working with us will enrich their art practices, not only for this event but for the rest of their lives.

We feel that we have something to contribute and if through the creation of this project we can assist in fostering a greater understanding of social justice issues facing our community, then that alone is a worthwhile end in itself.

The mission statement of UnitingCare is:

*To share in the mission of God,
confronting poverty and injustice,
that all people may be empowered
to live life with dignity.*

Given the power and potential of art, it is impossible to imagine that UnitingCare can achieve its mission without the use of art and what it can do for the human soul.



Aldona Kmiec

Aldona is a Polish born photographic artist and a Multicultural Ambassador of the City of Ballarat. She has lived in Ballarat for the last 3 years and recently became an Australian citizen. Her work is based mainly on fine art portraiture and community based public art projects.

Awards include: Winner *Jumpstart your Business* contest New York USA, *International Black & White Spider Awards* - Winner Honourable Mention (Fine Art) UK, Finalist *My Migration Writing Contest AU*, Finalist *AOP OPEN Awards* UK, and winner of *Ballarat Arts Foundation Photo Grant* and the Eureka Prize.

Residency: Agency Wide

1. What surprised you about the Project?

It was great to see the project going ahead. Brave, bold, unseen before on such a large-scale and it was great to see twelve artists mainly from the Ballarat region undertaking it. What also surprised me was how difficult it was at times to face your own feelings, sadness and empathy always striving to deliver the best. This project only deserves the best.

2. How has this experience affected your art?

"Everyone's journey is different; A red carpet is rolled out for some. Whilst others tread under the floorboards, Away from the lights and the sun..."

Reading these words for the first time it was clear on what I'm on about. I only wanted to deliver the best. And I've struggled with the outcome for some time as I thought it wasn't good enough for what I embarked on. I had to 'feel me in it' and now I can say I did.

I supported the project in conversations with other people, who were mortified by the idea of spending time with disadvantaged people. "There are better things to do" or "it is too dangerous". People too often lock themselves in their thinking unable to experience others in their pain, believing more of what is said on TV.

3. What truth is revealed in the art you have created?

Truth that we all are fragmented. Some more than others and they're the ones who need help. That there are thousands of pieces to one's story and so we should not be judgmental. What you see is what you get but if you look deeper you'll see more.

4. Is there a commonality between you the artist and the mission of a community service agency?

I strongly believe so. In my work I strive for the best and my work is also based around the community.

I was moved by the experience of working with the great people at UnitingCare Ballarat and I felt really humbled by how inviting they were and what they were doing for others. The understanding, compassion, heart, strength and HOPE they have shown in their everyday work was outstanding.

I would also really like to thank everybody for accepting me into their working lives, accepting a different culture, my European accent and me as a curious invader of their space.



Grace Bailey

Grace is an artist, teacher and property investor based in Ballarat whose work explores the concepts of power, beauty and empathy and their relationship with one another, underpinned by a range of portrait treatments and purposes. Grace's awards include: *Flanagan Art Prize* Finalist 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and *Brunswick Street Gallery* Prize Finalist 2011.

Residency: Ballarat Central Uniting Church

1. What surprised you about the Project?

This project proved to be much more challenging than I expected. Meeting the four expectations of the project

1. to create saleable works,
2. to highlight the work of UnitingCare Ballarat,
3. to promote UnitingCare Ballarat and
4. to create worthwhile art in the process proved to be a major hurdle. I got stuck on the need to create saleable works whilst dealing with heavy issues and real people.

2. How has this experience affected your art?

My emotional response to some of the difficulties the African people face here in Australia affected me deeply. I went into the project with high optimism but hit a wall a few months in and couldn't paint for some time. After a couple of months, I did start to paint again but I retreated to realism for a time. I have great respect for those people who work with UnitingCare Ballarat to provide the empathy and services that they do.

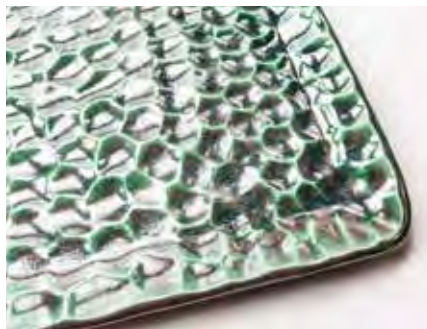
3. What truth is revealed in the art you have created?

I hope that I have shown the strength, the determination and some of the pain of the African people who I met through the residency.

4. Is there a commonality between you the artist and the mission of a community service agency?

I found it very difficult to distance myself emotionally from the experiences of some of the people I met in order to paint them. I felt some of their concerns for their families and their futures here in Australia. I especially felt their loss of family/community structure.





Kate Vivian

Kate is a locally based artist whose medium is ceramic production, specialising in slip caste multiple installations. She has recently exhibited in South Korea (*Gangjin Celadon Festival*), *Golden Plains Arts Trial*, *Lorne Sculpturescape* and *Murray Darling Palimpsest*. In 2009, Kate was short-listed for the *Australian Academy of Design Emerging Sculptor Award*.

Residency: Breezway - Meals for Homeless People program

1. What surprised you about the Project?

The level of need in the community for the services provided by UnitingCare Ballarat, at the BreezeWay Café.

2. How has this experience affected your art?

It has broadened my interpretation and exploration of an area in ceramics, which is often deemed, merely functional.

3. What truth is revealed in the art you have created?

Just as the utensils we use on a daily basis, are often taken for granted and dismissed, so is the food we are so fortunate to consume from them.

Many have more 'on their plate' than dinner.

Many have no dinner on their plate.

A bowl can contain more than soup.

Created by hand, by many hands, held gently, containing hopes and dreams.

4. Is there a commonality between you the artist and the mission of a community service agency?

Creating connections.

Artists reflect the world around them and reinterpret their experiences in ways that can engage and stimulate a wider audience, creating connections in unexpected places and sustaining the spirit.

We all struggle to do our best.





Tracy Bourne

Tracy is a performer, theatre maker, singing teacher and researcher based in Ballarat. With extensive performance experience throughout Victoria, Tracy's previous works include: Director for 'Grit', Writer/Performer for 'Finale' and Writer/ Composer/ Performer/ Director for 'Illuminated by Fire' in 2010 and 2011.

Her production 'The House at the End of the Line' is a play based on the lives of the residents of Reid's Guest House.

Residency: Reid's Guest House

1. What surprised you about the Project?

I have learnt a lot through this project – about the scale of homelessness in Ballarat, about the lives of people who feel 'invisible', about the corrosive impact of isolation and loneliness, and about the supportive community of Reid's Guest House. I have enjoyed the self-deprecating humour of the residents I met.

2. How has this experience affected your art?

I wanted to accurately capture the lives of residents – as I saw it. At the same time, I wanted a strong narrative thread through the work so that audiences would engage with the characters as people. I wanted the audience to care, and to move beyond seeing residents as 'other'.

3. What truth is revealed in the art you have created?

There but for the grace of God go I.

4. Is there a commonality between you the artist and the mission of a community service agency?

I am a Quaker, and this has led me to focus my work on the principles of equality, and truth, among other things. I am interested in stories that connect disparate communities with each other – that show us that we are not so different from each other.

SHOWS

Preview: **16th October, 8pm**

Season: **17th October - 19th October, 8pm**

+ Matinee **Saturday 19th at 2pm**

Sunday 20th at 6pm

School Performance: **Friday 18th at 11am**

Bookings www.hermaj.com





Linda Franklin

Completing a Bachelor in Fine Arts in 1997 and Post Graduate Diploma in Art Therapy in 2005, Linda is currently the proprietor of South Street Art Studio, where she paints and tutors art classes. As an Art Therapist, Linda custom designs and facilitates workshops for community service providers in Ballarat.

Residency: Karrung Youth Foyer

1. What surprised you about the Project?

Based at Karrung Youth Residential Services in Wendouree, although I didn't experience any surprises as I'm familiar with this client profile. None-the-less, what was absolutely delightful was being present to shy teenagers exploring art materials, watching them paint, write, express, open up and share beautifully deep realisations about their lives.

2. How has this experience affected your art?

Being with these shy girls in Wendouree, their wide eyes like vulnerable baby birds in a safe nest set the theme of birds of Lake Wendouree in all my 2013 work. I've had two exhibitions earlier this year that were the preparatory research for the themes within this large painting.



3. What truth is revealed in the art you have created?

'To everything there is a season'.

The seasons of nature, the seasons of consciousness throughout all our lives.

After each winter-of-the-soul, comes a spring that cannot be suppressed.

These youth have found a safe nest to grow, and eventually they will fly ... to face many more seasons of experience.

4. Is there a commonality between you the artist and the mission of a community service agency?

Most of my adult life has been in association with (and making art for) a contemplative community, thus principles of awareness, perception, spiritual /social commentary and meaning making of the inner and outer worlds underpins all my work.

The rich interconnectivity between the arts and community services is historically vast.



Rebecca McLean

Rebecca is a freelance film maker, teacher and producer based in Melbourne who has worked in the film and television industry for over 25 years. Television credit includes *Einstein Factor* and *7pm Project*. Film experience includes *The Making of Wog Boy 2* and *The Making of the Eye of the Storm*.

Residency: Agency Wide

Artist Statement

When I first heard about the 'Under the Floorboards' project I knew very little about UnitingCare Ballarat but was intrigued by this innovative arts project.

I jumped on the train to Ballarat from West Melbourne where I live and attended the information day. I was immediately struck by the passion and intelligence of Cliff Barclay the CEO of UnitingCare Ballarat and his team. There was a real sense of purpose and a desire to change perceptions through art which I thought was courageous for a traditionally conservative institution such as the Church.

I headed back to Melbourne on the train and pondered my application. As a filmmaker how could I approach this challenge, to make a short film which brings to light the importance of UnitingCare in the community of Ballarat?

I decided upon 'A day in The Life of UnitingCare'. With over ten different services this was not going to be easy and in order to reach an audience I needed to show the truth.

But first I had to meet the people who use the services as well as those people who work with them every day to understand the whole story. Cliff drove me around Ballarat to meet everyone and over the month I returned to each service provider and interviewed the workers and their clients.

Every day was a new adventure and I had the privilege of meeting with some incredibly resilient people. People who have faced major struggles in their lives and yet with the help and support of the community via UnitingCare managed to get back on track.

Not everyone wanted to be filmed of course but those that did were honest and upfront about their experiences and gave of themselves in order to help others. I think this is one of the keys to my experience, learning that people who are given a chance will give that chance to others and after that they don't judge.

I hope that what I learnt about UnitingCare and their clients is relayed to the broader community and that this somehow inspires more empathy for those living within their community but sometimes under the floorboards.





Cath Johnston

Cath is an artist, sculptor and teacher based in central Victoria with Bachelor Degrees in Psychology and Fine Art. She has exhibited throughout Victoria, Queensland and the UK, recently exhibiting at the Art Gallery of Ballarat. Cath was a finalist in the *Toyota Indoor Outdoor Sculpture* competition and *Linden Postcard Exhibition*.

Residency: Victoria House



1. What surprised you about the Project?

I began this project with an idea of the essence of place and people and how through interaction an individual is permanently changed by and changes others. What I discovered through working with an eclectic group of individuals thrown together and now a 'family' is the compassion, patience and lack of judgement they have for each other. If the wider community showed half this understanding of each other the world would not be in it's current state of affairs.

2. How has this experience affected your art?

Through the moulding of hands and objects, and through a truer understanding of what 'family' is and does. I have now embarked on a new project which investigates family through a large scale installation of a forest of family trees, each bearing fruit of the many different families that inhabit our world. The need to belong and be part of a family is a basic human need and where none exists, one is created and nurtured.

3. What truth is revealed in the art you have created?

There but the grace of God go I.

This work asks the viewer to reflect on themselves and their paths. To reach out more to others and reach into their hearts, and to move forward with a touch of compassion.

4. Is there a commonality between you the artist and the mission of a community service agency?

My artistic practise examines notions of the 'grey' in our world. I believe in the accessibility of art for all who encounter it, regardless of education or art exposure. I want my work to reach people and be understood on a deeply personal level... and ultimately make a difference. My pieces comment on the contemporary human condition in a personal and sometimes confronting way.



Kim Anderson

Kim is a full-time professional artist based in Ballarat with a completed Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) and a Post Graduate Certificate in Art Conservation. Kim completed her Master of Fine Art in 2008 at the University of Dundee, Scotland. Most recently she has had exhibitions in Melbourne, Tasmania and NSW.

Residency: Aged & disAbility Services

Artist Statement

While hospitals and retirement homes feature more prominently in our social awareness, residential care units such as Kallara and Wynalla exist at the very fringes of society and are home to some of the most vulnerable people. Some of them have a mental illness, some also have physical disabilities. Some have been affected by alcohol and drugs, others may simply have nowhere else to go. These places are their refuge, where there is safety in routine and meds and regular mealtimes. They're just trying to get by like the rest of us, often with the odds stacked against them.

I was the outsider here, a stranger with a camera in their midst, causing mild curiosity amongst some, unnoticed or deliberately ignored by others. Slowly, as familiarity grew, they opened up to me. Learning their names and discovering their personalities made me acutely aware that they are just like anyone else: they have unique identities, stories and experiences that are no more or less significant than those of us on the 'outside'. The only difference perhaps is how incredibly vulnerable they are. I could not help but think that it could be me or any of my family members in their place – the knife-edge is so fine. What is it that makes some people able to survive, while others fall by the wayside?

The reality of it shook me.

It was truly a privilege to be able to undertake this project – I felt like I'd met some really genuine people who were, without realising it, teaching me what it is to be human. I hope I can do justice to them with my drawings, to tell each individual's story truthfully with my pen and paper. It's the least I can do.





Barry Wemyss

Barry is a professional artist based in Smythes Creek, Victoria with a completed Bachelor of Arts (Visual Arts). He has work collections in *Inagawa Town Hall* - Japan, Art Gallery of Ballarat and Port Augusta Cultural Centre. Barry has received the *Grindell's Hut Artist in Residency Award* and *Port Hacking Potters Group Award*.

Residency: Tabor House Youth Withdrawal Unit

1. What surprised you about the Project?

The freedom to produce a variety of art forms from the many UnitingCare Ballarat services. Although it was no surprise that little was revealed by the residents at Tabor House, I was excited by the opportunity to observe their aptitude and endeavour to learn and make individual books for either personal use or gifts to loved ones.

2. How has this experience affected your art?

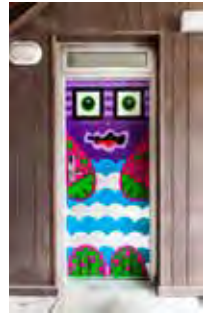
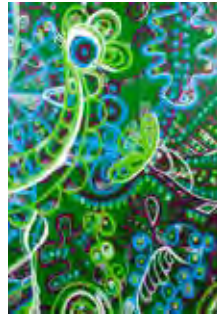
Art is ambiguous and takes on many forms. My perceived intentions were soon curtailed as I created books and wall pieces containing elements depicting gained knowledge of staff and clients I met and communicated with. Using elements of chance, obstacles and temptations and organic forms to resemble metaphors for barriers and challenges, my work evolved and took new directions.

3. What truth is revealed in the art you have created?

Time, chance and truth weigh heavily in this body of work; where life and underlying elements dictate fate; where external circumstances, intervention and destiny are elementary to the contrived work; where considered elements represent distractions and temptations in our everyday activities.

4. Is there a commonality between you the artist and the mission of a community service agency?

When thinking of 'Under the Floorboards' project, shared aims come to mind; where shared knowledge, assists, helps and inspires others to refurbish difference of identity; to instigate independence and assist with developing self-esteem in clientele, our shared aims and common threads develop cohesion and convergence for communal gain.



Kat Barrand

Kat has completed artwork around Ballarat including signal boxes and the Black Hill pool mural. She has received the *Myrtle Wright Award* and *Ballarat Arts Foundation People's Choice Award*. She is currently undertaking doctoral research into the collaborative art process, and has an exhibition this December at Wolveschildren Gallery in Ballarat.

Residency: Kurrung Youth Foyer

1. What surprised you about the Project?

One of the most wonderful surprises about this project has been the generosity of everyone involved. Whether it was the youth participants in the projects, or the staff at Kurrung and UnitingCare Ballarat headquarters, everybody was incredibly giving with their time and put in so much effort.

2. How has this experience affected your art?

Usually, I teach large groups of students, whereas this project has allowed me to explore teaching in a more intimate setting than the classroom. This was a project built on trust and fostering the students' creativity, which in turn gave me confidence as an educator, and as an artist.

3. What truth is revealed in the art you have created?

The artworks are about taking risks and amending mistakes. The truth revealed through this art, is about perseverance in the face of setbacks, as Van Gogh said *"Even the knowledge of my own fallibility cannot keep me from making mistakes. Only when I fall do I get up again."*

4. Is there a commonality between you the artist and the mission of a community service agency?

My goal is to create public art that the community can positively engage with, as well as sharing my method of creating art. I see a common goal reflected in these values, as both, a community service agency and I aim to enrich the lives of individuals and the community around us.





Anne Langdon

Anne is a professional artist based in Smythesdale, Victoria with a completed Bachelor of Education and Diploma of Fine Art. She has exhibited nationally and internationally, and been commissioned as an illustrator for various labels. Collections of her work can be seen at Bendigo Regional Art Gallery and Grafton Art Gallery.

Residency: The Light Lounge & Shepperd Street Op Shop

1. What surprised you about the Project?

I was surprised at how engaged I was and also so passionate about producing the work. I wanted to do a good job.

2. How has this experience affected your art?

I think it projected me into a different direction. I was more controlled in terms of what I was making and this was a move away from a more imaginative approach. It also gave me a licence to really contemplate my studio practice. I worked hard!



3. What truth is revealed in the art you have created?

The truth that everybody matters. I know I developed a great admiration for the people working in the opportunity shops and an awareness of the long hours and devotion people contribute free of charge. It is a huge investment that society needs and these people are filling a gap.

4. Is there a commonality between you the artist and the mission of a community service agency?

I feel that we are both involved in truth. It is difficult to explain. Obviously community service agencies believe they are serving the community and helping those in need. As an artist I believe I have had the opportunity to represent these workers in terms of the truth about their roles but also an opportunity to represent them and portray and celebrate their characters and roles.



Kirsty Hawkes

Kirsty is an interpretive consultant and writer based in Warrnambool. With degrees in Art History and Journalism, she has had several short stories published and a documentary on unicorns broadcast on BBC Radio 4 in the UK. She specialises in children's audio guides and has clients ranging from Parks Victoria to Maitland Gaol.

Residency: Yuillee Park Children's Centre

1. What surprised you about the Project?

I have never come across such ground-breaking innovation in a charitable organisation. What an unusual, sensitive and lyrical way to honour the work of the staff and the lives of the clients. I was also surprised by the large number, high calibre and wide diversity of artists selected.

2. How has this experience affected your art?

This is the first time I have taken a children's story from idea to publication. It is also a first for me to work so closely with children to create a piece of writing. I've learned lots, been bowled over by the kids and would love to do more.

3. What truth is revealed in the art you have created?

When children are young they can and will believe in anything, including themselves. Through their imaginations anything can become something else. Naturally curious, they delight in nature, but as they grow into adults this fresh, hopeful world of magic and metamorphosis becomes beyond their reach unless it is nurtured.

4. Is there a commonality between you the artist and the mission of a community service agency?

In my writing I aim to engage and inspire so that readers will not only start to care about the world around them, but feel a sense of place and purpose for themselves in it. Like UnitingCare Ballarat, I would like to help people to lead happy and fulfilling lives.





UnitingCare Ballarat gratefully acknowledges
the support and generosity of the following
individuals and organisations who have
contributed to the success of our inaugural
Under the Floorboards project:

ABC Ballarat, Dominic Brine
Accent Framing
Aldona Kmiec
Art Gallery of Ballarat
Centre for Theology and Ministry
City of Ballarat, Arts & Culture Unit
Gallery on Sturt
Her Majesty's Theatre, Ballarat
Hilton White Estate
Kirk Robinson Theology and Ministry
McKenzie Bond
Michaela Settle
Ms Sigrid Thornton
Regional Arts Victoria
St John of God Hospital, Ballarat
The Changesmiths
University of Ballarat



UNDER
the floorboards



unitingcareballarat.com.au

facebook.com/unitingcareballarat