

## **The Australian Ceramics Association (TACA) Annual General Meeting 2023 Minutes**

**Chair, Kate Jones, TACA President.**

*KATE: Welcome to the 2023 Annual General Meeting of The Australian Ceramics Association. I would like to pay respect to the past, present and future traditional custodians of the land and acknowledge that I am on the unceded lands of the Kulin Nation. Welcome everybody to the 2023 AGM of the Australian Ceramics Association.*

### **1. Present:**

*KATE: please leave your name as a comment in our chat line, noting your state or territory.*

*ATTENDEES: Ben Richardson, Diamando Koutsellis, Kate Jones, Mike Hall, Dee Taylor-Graham, Sandra Bowkett, Vicki Grima, Janice Keen, Reanne Brewin, Barbara Campbell-Allen, Nicola Coady, Jann Kesby, Richard Newton, Hannah Kothe, Georgie Avis, Donna McDonald, Anne Allaway, Ursula Burgoyne, Jenni C, Uli Hasel, Debbie Pryor, Montessa Maack, Bridie Moran, Ruby Yeh, Karen Wells, Alfred Lowe, Jackie Gasson, Mirjana Dobson, Robyn Phelan, Vicki Beavan, Susannah Spittle.*

*KATE: there being more than 7 members present, I declare a quorum and declare the meeting open at 7:03p*

### **2. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting 7 October 2022 (tabled).**

*KATE: The Minutes of the 2022 AGM are available to TACA members online.*

*We are going to use the POLL function on zoom so when a motion is put, a POLL window will pop up. You will then be able to vote for or against the motion. We will share the poll results after each vote.*

*Would someone who was present at the AGM meeting on Zoom last year, and has read the minutes and accepts them as an accurate record of that meeting, please pass a motion that the minutes be adopted. The proposer, seconder and those voting must have been in attendance at last year's AGM.*

***Motion: that the Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting 7 October 2022 be accepted as an accurate record of that meeting, and that they be adopted.***

*Proposed: Jackie Gasson; Seconded: Diamando Koutsellis*

*POLL undertaken, with 100% motion accepted*

***KATE announced the motion has been passed.***

### **3. Business arising from previous AGM 2022 minutes**

*KATE: Is there any business arising? None*

### **4. Financial Statements (tabled)**

To receive, consider and adopt the audited financial statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2023.

*Tabled: TACA's Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2023.*

*KATE: The Financial Statements have been available to TACA members online for the last 2 weeks, as part of the 2023 Annual Report.*

***Motion: that the financial statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2023 be accepted.***

*Proposed: Nicola Coady; Seconded: Hannah Kothe*

*POLL undertaken, with 100% motion accepted*

*Vicki Grima question: have the corrections been made?*

*Kate Jones: yes*

***KATE announced the motion has been passed.***

## **5. Annual Reports (tabled)**

5.1 President: Kate Jones

### **Kate read report**

Dear Members and Supporters of The Australian Ceramics Association,

I would like to begin by acknowledging the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nations, on whose unceded lands I live and work. I pay my respects to their elders, past and present. Sovereignty was never ceded.

The past twelve months have been a period of significant change and growth for TACA. With the conclusion of the Australian Ceramics Triennale at Mparntwe (Alice Springs) in July 2022, Vicki Grima announced her intention to retire as Executive Director and Editor of the Journal of Australian Ceramics (JAC) after 17 years of leadership. Vicki's unwavering dedication and contribution to our organisation are immeasurable. We extend our heartfelt gratitude and wish Vicki the very best for the future.

Vicki's retirement led the board to reflect on TACA's strategic direction. We saw the transition to new leadership as an opportunity to decentralise our operations to serve our community better nationally. With our sights set on future growth and development, we decided to separate the roles of leading the association and editing the JAC, as well as reviewing other aspects of our employment practices.

With that in mind, we embarked on a search for a CEO. Debbie Pryor, then acting CEO at Guildhouse in South Australia and a TACA director, expressed an interest in the position. She resigned from the board, and we assessed her experience and qualities alongside four other short-listed candidates. In the opinion of the five selectors, Debbie emerged as the strongest candidate. She assumed her position in February. Former president and Life Member Patsy Hely joined the interview panel to assist the board, for which we were most grateful.

Transitioning to a remote working model carries challenges and opportunities for TACA, and we are still finding our way. However, we are confident that establishing a framework that doesn't depend on a physical office will strengthen our community nationally.

Earlier this year, we put out a call for new board directors. We received an enthusiastic response and were delighted to welcome Alfred Lowe and Hannah Kothe. During this transition, the board have undertaken additional responsibilities and invested time in planning. I sincerely appreciate my fellow board members, including Hannah and Alfred, Jackie Gasson, Diamando Koutsellis, and especially treasurer Mike Hall, for their unwavering commitment, wisdom, and good humour during this period.

The Board's primary responsibility is to drive strategic planning while maintaining fiscal responsibility and good governance. We are currently working on the new strategic plan for 2024-2028, laying the groundwork for TACA's continued growth and impact, and we eagerly anticipate sharing this vision with our members.

We are immensely proud of the accomplishments of our members over the past year:

Lone White was awarded an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) in the General Division for service to the creative arts as a ceramicist.

John Dermer was also awarded an OAM, and Hiroe Swen an AM.

Prue Venables was a Loewe Craft Prize finalist.

Yasmin Smith was shortlisted to represent Australia at the Venice Biennale as well as being a Ramsay Art Prize finalist.

Kaz Davis won in the Ceramics category at the National Emerging Art Prize.

The Clunes Ceramic Award awarded Mahala Hill (first place), Robert Barron and Garry Bish (both Highly Commended) and Pauline Mead (People's Choice). Awards of excellence were presented to Kate Dorrrough, Holly Macdonald and Simon Reece.

Anne Nginyangka Thompson won the Major Acquisitive Prize at Shepparton Art Museum's Indigenous Ceramic Award. Sean Miller was awarded South-East Australian Aboriginal Artist Prize.

Jan Kesby was awarded the Pān Award 2022 'Potter of the Year'.

The life and career of Milton Moon AM (1926-2019), one of the most important Australian potters of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, was explored in Milton Moon: Crafting Modernism, a significant retrospective held at the Art Gallery of South Australia.

Recipients of prizes rewarded by TACA: Ed Trost, Winner Wheel Thrown Pottery, Shorncliffe Pottery Club Members Exhibition Joe Collings-Hall, People's Choice Award, Tasmanian Ceramics Association Members Exhibition Kaz Davis, Winner Ceramics, National Emerging Art Prize Anne Cawsey, Merit Award, Canberra Potters Members' Exhibition Michael Sterling, Emerging Artist Award, Canberra Potters Members' Exhibition Allison Coe, Graduate Achievement Award, TAFE Gynea Ceramic Design Studio Amanda Wise, Graduate Achievement Award, TAFE Gynea Ceramic Design Studio Lize Myburgh, BFA 1st year, RMIT Mol Stamatellis, BFA 2nd year, RMIT Adelle Gociev, The Australian Ceramics Association Prize Scott Elk, The Australian Ceramics Association Prize Angela Gerrard, Bachelor of Visual Arts, Federation University Australia Mollie Bosworth, Cairns Potters Club Melting Pot Exhibition 2022.

These achievements underscore our TACA community's remarkable talent and dedication at all levels, and we are thrilled to celebrate our members' successes.

As we reflect on the past year, we also remember and honour the members of our community who have left us. These individuals made significant contributions to the world of ceramics in Australia, and their presence will be deeply missed:

Graham Oldroyd: Graham Oldroyd taught at both East Sydney Technical College and TAFE NSW in senior positions before setting up a partnership with Phillip Lakeman under the name Lakeman Oldroyd Architectural Ceramics in 1988. By 1994 they moved themselves and the business to Bali, Indonesia, setting up the Pesamuan Ceramic Studio.

Les Blakebrough AM: A renowned Australian ceramic artist with a career spanning six decades, Les's work ranged from functional ceramics to delicate creations with Southern Ice Porcelain. He was a mentor, teacher, and advocate and left a lasting legacy in the ceramics community. His pieces are held in major public collections worldwide. Les was awarded a Life Membership of TACA in 2022.

Greg Sugden: Greg and his partner Merrie Hamilton were known for their creative and collaborative contributions to ceramics. They were based in Canberra during the '80s and later in Braidwood before retiring to Surf Beach near Batemans Bay.

Noel Flood: An accomplished ceramic artist known for his functional and sculptural works. Noel also served as the President of the Victorian Ceramic Group (VCG) in 1973, leaving a lasting impact on the ceramic arts community. Bronwyn Clarke: A dedicated and skilled potter based in Deep Bay, known for her open studio practice, involvement in the Huon Art Exhibitions Group, and contributions to the planning of the 2019 Australian Ceramics Triennale in Hobart. She leaves behind a significant legacy in the ceramics community in Southern Tasmania.

Alistair Whyte: An artist who left a remarkable legacy through his artwork and knowledge sharing. Alistair was known for passing on unique skills, such as tool-making and Japanese porcelain techniques, not widely taught in Australia.

Hedley Potts: A respected artist and educator who worked at Monash Gippsland and served as the convenor of Moorleigh Ceramics Cooperative. Hedley was known for sharing his passion and knowledge of ceramics through his teaching and had a significant presence in various educational institutions. The loss of these individuals is deeply felt by their loved ones, colleagues, students, and the ceramics community. Our condolences go out to all who mourn their passing.

Finally, on behalf of the board and members, I want to thank our CEO, TACA's staff, contractors, partners and suppliers for helping us achieve our collective vision. We thank you for your continued support and partnership.

## 5.2 Treasurer: Mike Hall

### **Mike read report**

*We recorded a loss of \$42,969 in 2022-23. This was because revenue (excluding interest income) remained little changed while expenses escalated. Revenue overall increased by less than 3%, while direct costs rose almost 15% and operating expenses 27%.*

*The deficit is only the second in the past ten years. During that time, members' equity — or the financial surplus we've generated as an association — grew to \$305,000 in the 2021- 22 financial year from \$62,500 in 2014. Members equity in 2022-23 fell 14% to \$257,503.*

*Two major reasons account for the deficit this year:*

- *The unexpected cancellation of our group insurance policy, and*
- *Significant staffing transitions affecting the Association and Journal*

### **INSURANCE**

*Sourcing and negotiating a replacement insurance policy meant that we lost revenue from this stream of income for several months. Some of our members understandably joined other organisations offering insurance. As a result, membership fees dropped by almost \$18,000 or more than 13%. Our new coverage gives TACA a significantly lower margin as well as reducing our overall income from providing this insurance.*

### **EMPLOYMENT COSTS**

*The retirement of our former EO, Vicki Grima, in February necessitated some one-off expenses. The board reassessed the staffing needs of the association to set us up for future growth. That included hiring a*

*full-time CEO with two co-editors focusing on the Journal and a review of employment arrangements to bring rates and practices more in line with industry standards.*

*THE JOURNAL The Journal continues to perform well and make a significant financial contribution to the association. This year it contributed net income of \$48,000 to TACA (without including indirect costs such as rent), which is heartening for a niche arts publication in print. Advertising increased 13% and subscriptions by 5%.*

## **OUTLOOK**

*The Board has focused its attention on ways to increase and diversify the association's revenue while ensuring expenses are held in check as far as possible. The Board's Finance and Governance Working Group meets monthly with our CEO to monitor progress. More generally, with higher interest rates eroding disposable income for many, significant revenue growth may prove challenging in the short-term.*

*I'd like to thank TACA's staff, Nikki Gibson of Silver Cloud Bookkeeping and Greg Bartels and his team at Halo Accounting for their diligence in ensuring our financial processes are sound, frequently updated and accurately maintained.*

### **5.3 Executive Officer: Debbie Pryor**

#### **Debbie read report summary**

I would like to acknowledge traditional owners of country around Australia and pay my respects to first nation peoples meaningful ongoing connection with land, sea and community. I acknowledge that I'm on stolen land, on Kurna Country – I'm speaking to you from Ngaparingka land in South Australia.

It's a pleasure to be providing a Report as CEO of Australian Ceramics, and I would like to start with gratitude, and thank the staff, Board and community for your welcome and comradery over the past 7 months. I thank Vicki for steering a solid ship and sharing information with me and I thank Jessie Bancroft, Georgie Avis, Mirjana Dobson, Montessa Maack and Bridie Moran for embracing change including new technologies, new processes and new ways of communicating – a lot of newness. As have Bookeeper Nikki Gibson, graphic designer Astrid Wehling, website builder Ian Hobbs, Journal Advertising Carol Fraczek, Journal Proofreader Jen Currie and accountant Greg Bartels. As outlined in the CEO Report both office systems and office culture undertook a substantial change in early 2023 and each individual in the TACA and Journal team have contributed greatly and positively to this transition.

I would also like to thank the Board Kate Jones, Diamando Koutsellis, Mike Hall, Jackie Gasson, Hannah Kothe and Alfred Lowe – who's dedication, support and expertise this year have been incredibly important to me personally and professionally.

Decentralising the associations staffing with Mirjana and I located in South Australia reflects the national membership landscape of the association and I believe that this decentralisation will expand our reach and connectivity with ceramicists and members nationwide.

Looking back at the year 2022/23 and Membership and insurance: More thanks – this time to our members! Our greatest promotion of the association, our membership and our insurance comes from current members, so thank you for your support by being members and encouraging others to join. 60% of TACA members protect their practice by nominating the insurance option - 75% join to connect with the ceramics community -with our insurance package also being a motivation for membership. As you know our insurance carrier discontinued our policy last year and for a few months our membership decreased, after securing AON our membership is getting back on track.

We offer a range of member benefits designed to engage and educate our community, from the Touch Clay Weekly newsletter to Tools for Practice, Artist Directory, Journal subscription and eligibility to take part in

members exhibitions such as TABLED and HELD with Manly Art Gallery & Museum, and discounted rates in the national Open Studios event – this year we discounted the rates for members and opened up registration to non-members to broaden and extend the events reach even further. Last year we had the highest rate at that time of Open Studios participants with over 200 registrations.

Thanks to participant surveys we know that T4P is a great opportunity for ceramicists to sell work, meet buyers and prospective students and to meet other makers. NSW holds the biggest percentage of open studios at 40% with not far behind at 35% the remaining percentage spread across the nation. It was a wonderful (relatively) post-covid event and it was great to see so many members take part.

Tools for Practice was presented in October/November with a focus on professional practice – investigating how to create and sustain income, studio sustainability, writing about your work: with 25 ceramicists speaking about their lived experiences and providing peer advice. Thanks so much to everyone who spoke at Tools for Practice and also to those who attended and participated with questions and sharing their own stories, the opportunity for everyone to participate in these sessions in an important one.

As you're probably aware, Instagram and Facebook are great vehicles for connecting with inter/national ceramicists and gives us the opportunity to highlight members practice and events – we really appreciate it when you tag us so we can see you and share your content. Collectively across Instagram, Facebook and Facebook Forum we have over 90k followers.

Another key point of connectivity with our members is our newly formed members portal, we have big plans for what we can provide with this platform, and like with anything tech we're taking time to iron out the kinks. So far the portal is primarily used for accessing TCW and the extensive opportunities section that Georgie collates and for viewing Tools for Practice.

In the CEO Report I also discuss the Office Systems & Staffing, as I've mentioned tonight, this year has been a big transition for the team – digitising processes and communicating remotely through a screen is new for the association. Most of us experienced some remote working during covid, one of the unexpected positives of that time we remote connection, and we've built on those learnings to build a national team culture – and again I thank Georgie, Mirjana and Montessa in particular for the day-to-day running of membership, the journal and the org – I really value the input and abilities of each individual in the team.

We started the 2022/2023 financial year with a bang, the Australian Ceramics Triennale was an incredible event with over 600 attendees – many of whom visiting Alice Springs Mparntwe for the first time. It was an immersive experience of Arrernte culture where First Nations people led the conversation about place, people and language. The thematic of Archtype, Alchemy and Anarchy flowed through each day in speaker panels, keynotes, workshops, presentations and exhibitions. Bron and the team and Central Craft did an amazing job looking after us all and presenting a rivoting Triennale. We also announced the 2025 Triennale will take place in WA with the CAAWA (ceramics arts association of Western Australia) led by Bernard Kerr.

Our partner project SIXTY continues its tour of Australia, accompanied by artist talks and workshops. The catalogue was launched in Adelaide at JamFactory and is available for sale in exhibition venues, as well as the ADC online store, and our online store.

Member exhibitions at Manly Art Gallery & Museum TABLED and HELD were open for submissions, (technically just TABLED in this reporting period HELD applications close on Monday 2 October so please put in your application!)

TABLED artists were announced in February with Kris Coad, Kirsty Collins, Paul Davis, Janet DeBoos, Claire Ellis, Malcolm Greenwood, Georgina Yen Qin Lee, Vanessa Lucas & Emma Jimson, Jeremy Simons (Slip Ceramics), Leia Sherblom (GRIT Ceramics), Timna Taylor and Clare Unger are all included– you can read about the chef, cook and baker collaborators on the website. The exhibition will take place in April next year, with the catalogue as part of the Journal. I thank Katherine Roberts and MAG&M for their partnership in both opportunities.

Like the organisation itself, The Journal of Australian Ceramics also underwent considerable transition this year and I thank again Vicki Grima for her stewardship of the Journal for 17 years and for the handover period to Co-Editors Montessa Maack and Bridie Moran. And with that I congratulate Montessa and Bridie on their first two editions and launch events together.

The Journal continues to be a vestibule for new ideas and conversations, while also revisiting and honouring age old topics with contemporary voices. It's a place for highlighting achievements, experiments, collaborations and connectivity and I thank the editors and contributors past and present for the lens and experience they bring. In particular I thank Montessa and Bridie for their robust conversations around the what, why, how of connecting with and presenting our community through the Journal.

As they've noted in the report and I'll mention again our unsolicited submissions have increased significantly this year, which is a very exciting development and we welcome the community voice – keep the ideas coming!

We also formed the Editorial Advisory Committee who meet every quarter to provide feedback on the previous journal from themselves and their peers, as well as suggestions/observations for future editions. Thanks to Dan Elbourne, Dee Taylor-Graham and Mel Robson as well as members of the Board and the Co-Editors for contributing.

Thank you all - Kate, I hand over to you.

## **6. Election of Directors**

### **6.1 Transfer of Chair to Secretary Debbie Pryor for Election of Directors**

*KATE: I will now transfer the Chair to Debbie Pryor, TACA CEO and Board Secretary for the Election of Directors*

#### **DEBBIE:**

*In accordance with the Constitution, 1/3 of TACA Directors (we currently have 6), have to stand down every year. This year we have 3 of 6 standing down as 2 have been invited onto the Board and are to be appointed by nomination.*

*Mike Hall is standing down after 3 years on the Board, and is not re-nominating and we thank Mike for his service to the Board and ceramics community. Thanks Mike.*

*Diamando Koutsellis, is standing down after 3 years on the Board, and is re-nominating*

*Hannah Kothe and Alfred Lowe must both step down after being invited onto the Board in 2023, both have re-nominated.*

*We therefore have 2 Directors remaining on TACA Board for the 2022/2023 year:  
Kate Jones, Jackie Gasson. Thank you!*

*There were 5 nominations for Directors received by the due date 13 September:  
Diamando Koutsellis (NSW): nominated by Mike Hall; seconded by Jackie Gasson  
Hannah Kothe (NT): nominated by Janet Deboos; seconded by Mel Robson  
Alfred Lowe (SA): nominated by Sam Gold; seconded by Honor Freeman  
Robyn Phelan (VIC): nominated by Shane Kent; seconded by Kate Jones  
Janice Keen (VIC); nominated by Brigid Sundborn; seconded by Danielle Segal*

*There is no need for a ballot, and we meet the requirements to have from 2 to 8 Directors on the Board, so could we have a motion put?*

**Motion: that the 5 nominated Directors Diamando Koutsellis, Alfred Lowe, Hannah Kothe, Robyn Phelan and Janice Keen are elected to the TACA Board.**

*Proposed: Jackie Gasson; Seconded: Nicola Coady.*

*POLL undertaken, with 100% motion accepted*

**KATE announced the motion has been passed.**

*Congratulations Diamando, Alfred and Hannah on your return to the Board. And welcome Janice and Robyn. Debbie passes Chair back to Kate*

## **6.2 Appointment of Secretary**

*KATE: We need to also appoint a Board secretary.*

**The motion is that CEO Debbie Pryor be appointed as Secretary.**

*Proposed: Reanne Brewin ; seconded: Mike Hall*

*POLL undertaken, with 100% motion accepted*

**KATE announced the motion has been passed.**

## **7. General Business**

### **7.1 Life Membership: proposals from TACA Board to be considered.**

Kate introduces Board Director *Diamando Koutsellis*

*Diamando Koutsellis: TACA board awards Life Memberships to formally recognise and draw attention to the work or careers of ceramicists who have made a significant contribution in the field. This year the board agreed to propose one life member, who must receive the vote of at least two-thirds of members present and voting to be accepted.*

The Life Membership 2023 nomination is for Vicki Grima.

I will read a brief summary for this proposed life member, and then ask everyone to indicate whether they accept the board's recommendation by voting in the poll.

We will then share the poll to ascertain that we have met the 2/3rds majority requirement.

Vicki Grima is an artist, curator and teacher. She started her career teaching visual arts initially to secondary students and then to teachers with whom she could share her passion for integrating visual arts through the whole curriculum. During this time, Vicki developed her own art practice, focusing on ceramics. In 2005, Vicki joined The Australian Ceramics Association as Executive Officer and Editor of The Journal of Australian Ceramics, in 2018 Vicki received a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for her service to the visual arts, particularly ceramics.

For 17 years, Vicki Grima AM served as the Executive Officer and Editor of The Journal of Australian Ceramics for The Australian Ceramics Association. Throughout her tenure, Vicki dedicated herself to leading and shaping the organisation, bringing her passion for ceramics and keen attention to detail to all aspects of the Association. Under Vicki's leadership, TACA thrived and she tirelessly worked to promote and celebrate the art of ceramics, expanding its reach to a wider audience and fostering a sense of community among ceramicists across the country. Vicki's contributions to the Australian ceramics community have been significant, and the Association owes her a debt of gratitude. Thanks to her dedication, the broader ceramics community is stronger than ever.

**The Motion is that Vicki Grima be accepted as a Life Member.**

*Can I have a proposer: Robyn Phelan; Seconder: Sandra Bowkett*

*POLL undertaken, with 100% motion accepted*

**KATE announced the motion has been passed.**



**Kate: following on with General Business**

**KATE: Is there any other business?**

*Vicki Grima statement: gives thanks to the Board and staff from the previous year of which she was Executive Officer for part, and key community members from her 17 year history with the association.*

**Vicki Grima question: Can you tell us about the plans for the Sydney office?**

*Debbie: Plans are in research mode, to find the best solution for staff and community. We aim to continue the decentralisation of the organisation, including our rented Sydney office space in Alexandria.*

*Conversations with staff and external partners are underway to see what this might look like and when it might start. Plans for the Sydney office will create greater connection with the community, alleviate funds and decentralise the association.*

Kate: From the Board's point of view. as our work becomes more virtual this is an opportunity to enable more connections in more places. The focus on community will allow us to connect with regional and national artists, we hope to run more events and programs in other cities, galleries hosting artist talks for members etc This move will give members more access to us as a national organisation.

**7.2 2023/34 Events**

Open Studios Nov 11 & 12 2023

TABLED/ HELD at MAG&M April 2024

There is no change to the above.

**7.3. Membership fees**

There is no change to Membership fees.

**Kate declared the meeting closed at 7:42pm AEST**