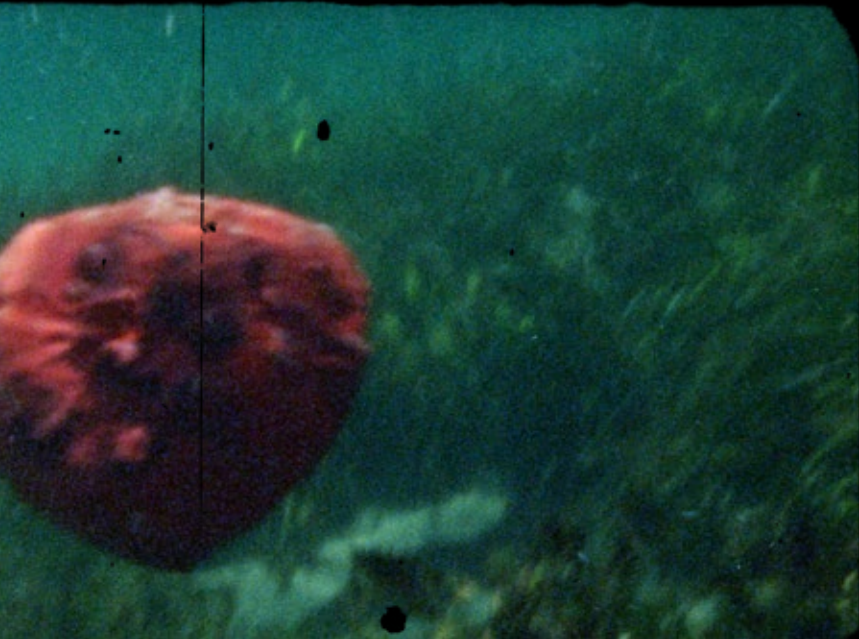




Strategic Plan 2026 – 2028

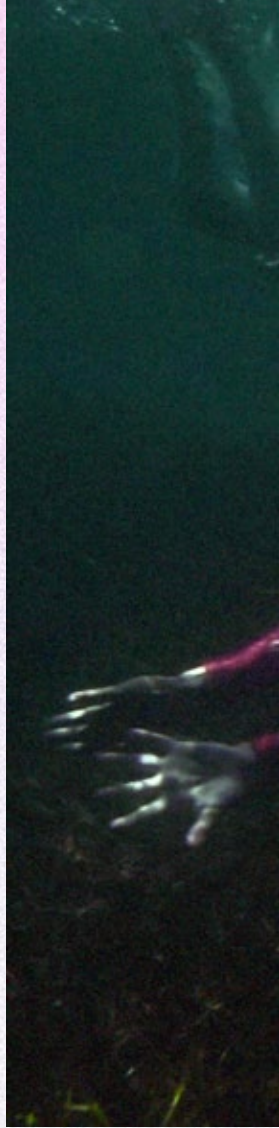


Acknowledgement of Country

At Country Arts SA, we live and create on the unceded lands of the First Peoples of South Australia.

We respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, artists, communities, and recognise their continuing connection and spiritual relationship to these lands, waters and skies.

We put 'First Nations first' and are committed to listening, helping care for Country, and safeguarding, sharing and celebrating living cultures.





A note on language: we use 'First Nations' and 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' interchangeably at different times.

We respect the way Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people choose to identify and we use their regional or language groups wherever possible.

We acknowledge that alternative place and group names and different spellings exist, and that our knowledge of them will continue to change as part of ongoing language reclamation and truth telling.



Amphibolis C Nymphs

Chris De Rosa

Amphibolis C Nymphs was created on unceded Ramindjeri/Ngarrindjeri ruwe. I acknowledge and respect the enduring care of these waterways, oceans and lands by the Traditional Custodians.

Inspired by Rachel Carson's invitation to imagine the underwater world beyond human perceptions of time and place, this work reflects my ongoing concern for benthic ecology and our relationship with the natural world. It is a tribute to the ocean, its delicate ecosystems and the entanglements between human and non-human life.

The film follows three cross-generational women who inhabit the intertidal zone, tending to and protecting seagrass meadows and marine life. Constantly transforming into interspecies beings, they embody care, reciprocity and symbiosis with the coastal environment. The ocean becomes a metaphor for fluidity, resilience and hope amid ecological uncertainty and climate crisis.

Created through swimming, conversation and collaboration, the project brought together six members of the Southern Coastal community, including artists Micky Mason, Bon Engel, Honor Freeman, Greta Freeman and Chantell Murphy, with an original soundscape by my son, Darcy Wedd. Drawing on mythology, ecology and the legacy of early shoreline collectors such as Jessica Hussey, *Amphibolis C Nymphs* offers a hopeful vision of remaining connected, engaged and afloat in challenging times.

— Chris De Rosa





Chris De Rosa

Chris De Rosa lives in Kantjinwald/ Port Elliot on unceded Ngarrindjeri/ Ramindjeri Country. Her multidisciplinary practice spans printmaking, installation, film and sculpture, exploring our complex relationship with the natural world through historical archives, museum collections and field-based research. She photographs, preserves and documents terrestrial and aquatic organisms, creating works that reveal the beauty and significance of often overlooked ecosystems.

Chris has undertaken research at leading institutions including the Natural History Museum in London, Stazione Zoologica Anton Dohrn in Naples, South Australian Museum, State Records of South Australia, and the Victorian and South Australian Herbariums. She studied printmaking at the North Adelaide School of Art before completing a Bachelor of Visual Arts and Design in 2016.

Her work has been exhibited nationally, including at the Art Gallery of South Australia, Samstag Museum, Museum of Australian Democracy, Adelaide Botanic Gardens and Flinders Art Museum. Career highlights include the 2016 Country Arts SA Breaking Ground Award, residencies with the Australian Print Workshop, and commissions for Country Arts SA.

De Rosa's work is held in major public collections, including National Gallery of Australia, Art Gallery of South Australia, State Library of Victoria, Print Council of Australia, and numerous regional galleries and private collections.



Chris De Rosa, *Amphibolis C Nymphs*, 2026, single channel video work 07:18

Why we do what we do

Our vision

Our vision is for the artists and communities of regional South Australia to thrive through engagement with art, culture and creativity, and for their stories and cultural practices to be celebrated and recognised as vital contributors to the nation's identity and voice.

Opportunities to experience, participate in and benefit from art, culture and creativity should be available to all South Australians. They shape our identity and economy; contribute to education, employment and tourism; and support good health, wellbeing and community life.



What we do

Our purpose

Country Arts SA connects and empowers artists, cultural practitioners, communities and audiences to create and present work with and for people of all ages and interests across regional South Australia.

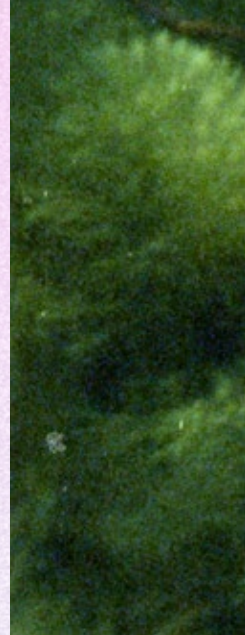
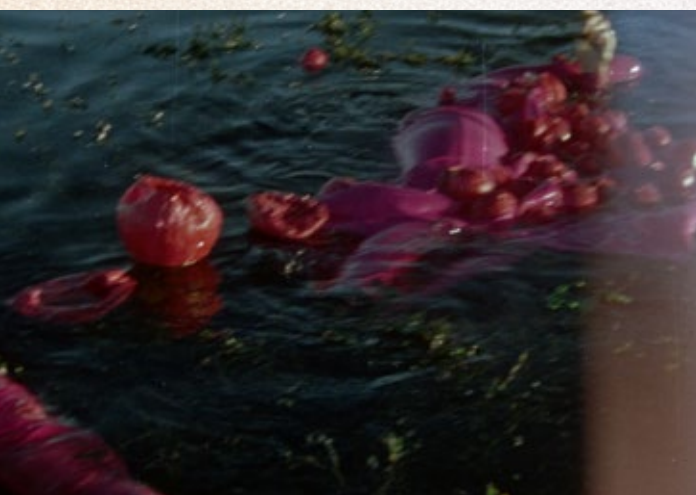
Over more than three decades, Country Arts SA's statewide, multi-artform remit has put us in a singular position to share stories and cultural practices that can't be made anywhere else in the world.

We increase access to and participation in art, culture and creativity.

We listen, connect, collaborate and build community capacity.

We support regional artists and communities to grow skills and tell stories that inform and inspire.

We create and present grassroots and professional arts experiences in response to what communities need.





How we work

Our four principles inform our decisions and approach

Regional communities and art at our heart

We are led by regional South Australian communities and artists. We ask, listen and respond.

Making connections

We bring people together for conversations and collaborations.

Celebration and education

We make and present work that celebrates South Australian stories, places, artists and communities, and/or that raises awareness of their experiences.

On the ground and sticking around

We know trust takes showing up and time spent. Our team is based all over South Australia. We build deep, long-term relationships. Our work takes as long as it takes.



Our priorities

We measure everything we do against four priority areas.

First Nations first

We listen to, support and celebrate regional Aboriginal Elders, artists, communities and cultural practices. This work is informed by our Reconciliation Action Plan.

Care for Country

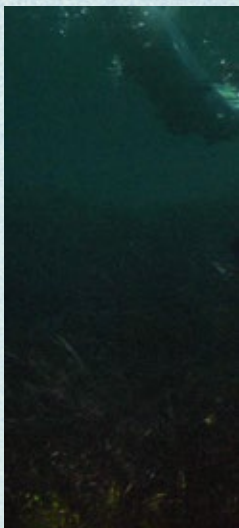
We respect the places where we work and create, including how we ask, listen and respond (community consultation), and what we bring, take or leave (environmental footprint).

Equity

We remove barriers, increase participation and celebrate our diverse community. This work is informed by our Equity Action Plan.

Legacy and impact

We consider what we build and what we leave behind, including for next generations of art makers and audiences.





Our values

We build a culture of trust and connectedness through embodying five core organisational values.

Respect

Respect means treating others with dignity, consideration and empathy, and valuing what makes each person unique. It's about being considerate and recognising that everyone has talents, ideas and skills to contribute.

Integrity

Integrity involves honesty, transparency, accountability, aligning our words with our actions and doing the right thing, even if no one is watching.

Courage

Courage enables us to persist in the face of fear, discomfort or difficulty, and stand up for our beliefs. Because we all have different fears and weaknesses, courage looks different in everyone.

Passion

Passion encompasses enthusiasm, dedication, creativity and motivation. Passionate people have a strong sense of purpose, invest fully and inspire others.

Care

Care means prioritising the wellbeing of oneself and others, and demonstrating empathy, compassion and concern in both personal and professional settings.







Our goals

From 2026-2028, our work will focus on four goals.

1. Creative workforce
2. Inspiration, impact and learning
3. Creative spaces
4. Stability and integrity

Goal 1

Creative workforce

We will continue to improve the working conditions and wellbeing of regional artists, cultural workers, practitioners and Country Arts SA staff across South Australia.

Key strategies:

- Consult and collaborate with SA's creative workforce to ensure our work is informed, inspired and led by the needs and ambitions of regional artists, arts workers and communities.
- Support creative career pathways through mentoring, business development and partnerships.
- Continually review and improve our open, positive and productive creative workplace that centres wellbeing and models best practice.

Actions:

- Model best practice by ensuring regional artists and arts workers are meaningfully consulted and actively engaged through evaluation, reflection and review of our programs, activities and opportunities.
- Coordinate digital and in-person sector connections, fostering relationship-building and the exchange of tools, information, resources and research through active engagement and networking.
- Empower regional artists and arts workers to build meaningful and sustainable careers by providing employment, professional development, access to grants, and profile-raising outcomes.
- Create talent pipeline by working with government agencies, tertiary organisations and cultural sector partners to focus industry training and skills development programs for regional artists, arts workers and Country Arts SA staff.
- Provide skill attainment opportunities in technical and production roles and create career opportunities for the next generation while meeting industry demand for skilled professionals across regional South Australia.
- Commit and deliver a physically and psychologically safe and inclusive work environment for all employees.
- Work in collaboration with industry partners and stakeholders to ensure diversity across our teams, artists and arts workers employed by Country Arts SA.

Goal 2

Inspiration, impact and learning

We will transform and increase access to our Arts Centres and support regional communities to activate more arts, cultural and creative spaces and places.

Key strategies:

- Ensure our Art Centres are welcoming and accessible community hubs that provide appropriate professional resources.
- Collaborate with communities and partners to activate other regional South Australian spaces and places.

Actions:

- Ensure our spaces and places are welcoming to First Nations people by acknowledging Traditional Owners and other language groups through respectful engagement and representation.
- Secure investment for Art Centre upgrades in line with the Art Centre Master Plans.
- Advocate for upgrades and new arts and culture spaces across the state to ensure that more regional communities have access to quality local spaces for arts experiences.
- Implement place-based creative programs in alternative spaces, that strengthen community ties and support the cultural expression of under-represented individuals, groups, children and youth.

Goal 3

Creative spaces

We will extend the reach and impact of our programs, commissions and collaborations for artists, partners, participants and audiences.

Key strategies:

- Deepen experiences for participants and audiences through outreach and learning initiatives.
- Improve systems and data collection to support consultation and evidence-based decision-making.
- Celebrate regional artists, stories and communities, and share those experiences with local, national, international and online audiences.

Actions:

- Collaborate with First Nations Elders, artists and communities to co-design, produce and present work that honours their living cultures and stories.
- Collaborate with regional artists and communities to co-design, produce and present work that tells their unique stories.
- Embed skills development and knowledge transfer as we create new work.
- Evaluate the reach and inclusivity of our programs to identify trends and refine marketing strategies to better target and connect with diverse communities to inspire greater participation in the arts.
- Deliver learning opportunities for young regional people and their communities to engage with our programming.
- Ensure major projects are thoroughly evaluated to provide evidence-based research with both qualitative and quantitative data to inform what we do and how we do it.
- Actively promote and celebrate the achievements of South Australia's regional arts and cultural sector through targeted communication strategies statewide and nationally.

Goal 4

Stability and integrity

We will continue to improve our systems, resources and working practices to support a strong, fit-for-purpose and values-led organisation.

Key strategies:

- Embed our priorities and principles into what we do, how we do it, and how we measure our progress (including minimising and reducing our environmental impact).
- Maintain a positive financial environment, including adopting and implementing cost efficiency measures and by growing and diversifying income.
- Review and evolve our internal systems and processes (both on and off-line) to improve how we connect and communicate with each other, streamline our workloads, and transform our delivery, access and reach.
- Communicate the value of South Australian regional arts practice and participation.

Actions:

- Recognise First Nations sovereignty and progress our ongoing commitment to our Reconciliation Action Plan.
- Work with industry leaders to advise and support the creation of our inaugural Care for Country Action Plan to build knowledge and capacity.
- Finalise and deliver on our ongoing commitment to our Equity Plan.
- Co-create an action plan with staff in support of a thriving organisational culture to ensure that all staff feel valued and heard.
- Develop and nurture strong relationships with all levels of governments and with arts and non-arts partners to maximise resources and outcomes.
- Strengthen financial stability by expanding income sources beyond government funding, through philanthropy, corporate sponsorships and fee-for-service models.
- Develop an Artificial Intelligence (AI) strategy and culture for safely integrating AI into our organisation to achieve goals, improve efficiency and drive innovation.
- Actively promote and celebrate the achievements of South Australia's regional arts and cultural sector through targeted communications and storytelling strategies that enhance public recognition, build sector pride, and reinforce the organisation's role as a trusted advocate and leader.

Our communities

When we say 'regional SA', we mean all of the communities of regional and remote South Australia, including Adelaide Plains, Adelaide Hills and Mount Lofty Ranges, APY Lands, Barossa Valley, Clare Valley, Eyre Peninsula, Far North, Far West, Fleurieu Peninsula, Flinders Ranges, Kangaroo Island, Limestone Coast, Mallee, Mid North, Murraylands, Riverland and Yorke Peninsula.

We work with First Nations Elders, artist and communities on unceded lands across the many Nations that make up South Australia including Adnyamathanha, Antikirinya, Arabana (Arabunna), Barngarla, Bodaruwitj, Bunganditj (Boandik), Danggali, Dhirari, Dieri, Karangura, Kurna, Kokatha, Kulpantjatjara, Kuyani, Lower Arrernte, Maintangk, Malyangapa, Mirning, Nakako, Narangga, Nauo/Nhawu, Ngadjuri, Ngaiwang, Ngalea, Ngamini, Ngangaruku, Ngarkat, Ngarrindjeri, Ngawadj, Nukunu, Peramangk, Pirlatapa, Pitjantjatjara, Ramindjeri, Southern Pitjantjatjara, Tanganekald/Tangane, Wadigali, Wangkangurru, Wilyakali, Wirangu, Yarliawara, Yandruwantha, Yankunytjatjara, Yaraldi, Yarluyandi, Yawarawarka and Yirawirung.

When we say 'creative workforce', we mean anyone doing or making any form of art or anyone employed, leading or volunteering in any kind of arts group or organisation at any level, from artists to arts workers, volunteers to board members, makers or creative practitioners at any level (from hobbyists to professionals).

Our people

The combined strength of the Country Arts SA team, board, partners and collaborators gives us our reputation as a national leader in regional arts practice.

Our Board inspires the leadership of the organisation, builds relationships, and oversees our governance and long-term sustainability.

Our First Nations Advisory Committee guides our work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, artists and communities, and the implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Our Leadership Team provides stewardship and strategy to lead the organisation, enhance resilience and sustainability, and build a positive organisational culture.

Our Experiences Team produces and presents a diverse program of arts experiences; builds relationships with artists, arts organisations and communities; and creates dynamic art spaces.

Our Relationships Team builds partnerships, develops support for our activities, and shares the impact of our work.

Our Sustainability Team supports our staff, streamlines our processes, and manages our resources.



Our history and context

We have been working with regional and remote South Australians since 1993.

As a Statutory Authority of the Government of South Australia, we operate under the provisions of the South Australian Country Arts Trust Act (1992).

More than 30 years since Country Arts SA was established, South Australian artists and arts organisations are celebrated all over the world, and our communities have been strengthened through their engagement with arts, culture and creativity.

However, local and global crises like the pandemic, economic downturn, cost of living and the climate emergency continue to impact regional artist and communities, including cross-sector wellbeing, sustainability and staffing issues, and increased reliance on cheaper digital delivery. The outcome of the 2023 Voice to Parliament Referendum is also a cause of grief for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities across the state (and beyond).

From 2026-2028, our work will use engagement in arts, culture and creativity as a tool for reconnection, celebration and recovery.

