

**DERWENT VALLEY ARTS
OFFICIAL OPENING AND LAUNCH OF
THE BRIDGE ART PRIZE 2025 AND 9B STUDIOS GALLERY SPACE
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
NEW NORFOLK, FRIDAY 4 APRIL 2025**

Good evening, everyone. I am delighted to be here to officially open The Bridge Art Prize exhibition and to launch Derwent Valley Arts' new gallery space at 9B Studios.

May I begin by acknowledging the Linawina people upon whose land we gather. I acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as the ongoing custodians of Country. I recognise their enduring culture and deep connection to land, sea, sky, and waters.

I am pleased to be with you to celebrate our talented Tasmanian artists featured in The Bridge Art Prize exhibition.

This new prize celebrates the construction of the New Bridgewater Bridge, a significant infrastructure project for our State. In the works we can see, artists have explored what "the bridge" means to them, through a variety of different media.

The creators of The Bridge Art Prize have described the bridge construction as a testament to the relationship between science and art.¹ Just as the Bridgewater Bridge unites communities on both sides of the River Derwent, this initiative unites art with construction.

May I commend Derwent Valley Arts and McConnell Dowell on working together on this significant community collaboration.

As Governor, one of my priorities in my community engagement role is to support Tasmanian arts and culture. That is why I am so pleased to see initiatives such as this that celebrate Tasmanian artists and encourage youth engagement in the arts.

¹ The Bridge Art Prize media release, 20 September 2024

May I also take this opportunity to congratulate Derwent Valley Arts on your work in promoting the Derwent Valley as a centre for the arts in this region. This work is supported by your dedicated volunteers, who contribute more than 900 hours every year, connecting local residents with arts experiences.²

You are fortunate to have a wonderful location here at 9B Studios, for your community and visitors to explore their creativity and to deliver an exciting programme of arts events and activities for everyone to enjoy.

You have already had great success in presenting a wide range of popular exhibitions in New Norfolk.³ This beautiful permanent gallery space will allow you to build on your achievements.

May I acknowledge Nathan Males and Lucinda Bresnehan for providing this gallery space to the community and for their encouragement of the arts in the Derwent Valley.

Finally, may I acknowledge and applaud all the artists who entered The Bridge Art Prize for 2025. I congratulate all the finalists and prize winners. I look forward to viewing your work.

I am delighted now to declare The Bridge Art Prize exhibition, and the 9B Studios gallery space, officially open.

Thank you.

² Information provided by The Bridge Art Prize to ADC, 14 March 2025

³ Ibid.