

# MEDIA RELEASE

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PUBLIC GALLERIES ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

## CASTLEMAINE ART MUSEUM CLOSURE

The Board and Members of the Public Galleries Association of Victoria (PGAV) were shocked and disappointed to learn late last week of the Castlemaine Art Museum (CAM) Board's decision to temporarily close the gallery and end the contracts of its 5 staff, effective Friday 11 August 2017.

Under the leadership of CAM Director, Jennifer Kalionis, the gallery has delivered a number of firsts: – its first exhibition of Aboriginal art with *Ginger Riley: The Boss of Colour* and its first-ever participation in the Castlemaine State Festival, both in 2015.

PGAV President, Sue Roff, states "Ms Kalionis has presented an outstanding exhibition program including *Ben Quilty: After Afghanistan* and *Bill Henson: Landscapes* which have generated the highest attendances in the gallery's 86 years of operation."

Jennifer Kalionis has overseen the transformation and modernisation of CAM during her three year tenure, including the appointment of curator Emma Busowsky Cox to manage CAM's significant collection and contribute to the gallery's exhibition program.

CAM has become a success story in engaging the local community and attracting audiences from across Victoria. This success has been achieved through the professionalism, expertise, tenacity and unfailing commitment of its Director Jennifer Kalionis and her dedicated team. It is regrettable that these achievements will come to a halt with the closure of the gallery.

The impact of the the iconic tourism attraction's closure will be felt deeply by the Castlemaine community, particularly by the Members of CAM and the many visitors and those that have generously donated artworks to the collection. It will also impact the local economy with Castlemaine's food and hospitality businesses all having benefited from the large audiences CAM has attracted to the region.

PGAV President, Sue Roff, "Welcomes the news that Creative Victoria are working closely with the CAM Board to address the complex challenges which have led to the temporary closure of the gallery. The PGAV Board has extended its support to the CAM Board to hasten the reopening of the gallery. Our members have significant experience in regional gallery operations, strategic planning, governance, fundraising and philanthropy, income diversification, in addition to collection management and community engagement activities."

While we understand this must have been a very difficult decision for the CAM Board to make, this closure will resonate deeply within the vibrant public gallery sector in Victoria and beyond. It is in the best interests of the Castlemaine community that the gallery reopens its doors promptly.

### **For further information, please contact:**

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