

CREATING A NEW ENTRANCE TO ARTS AND CULTURE

Part of the Burrinja Cultural Centre Redevelopment

We can view culture simply as the way we live our lives. Art provides us ways of seeing culture. Artists act, write and speak, often using finely-honed skills to realize their art. This way of seeing culture, art and artists is broad and thus does not rule out anyone being a creative artist. We engage in a creative practice when we talk about a film or painting. In doing so, we become collaborators and appropriators extending the influence of the creator's work.

Burrinja is a place the community has created to both showcase and develop new art and cultural making. However cultural spaces like Burrinja create the perception of a 'divide' – there is an inside where certain kinds of art are made and an outside where people's lives are lived. Of course, lives are lived inside and art is made outside but buildings can create a gap – real or perceived – between what is inside and outside.

For the inside, art making can be cut off from broader cultural and art making influences. On the other hand, the community can have problems accessing and benefiting from the art making in the very place they created for that purpose – the community cultural centre.

The ways in which we approach and access the building then provides an important means for addressing this threshold. It links the inside to the outside. The building entrance can work as both a metaphorical and actual gateway for art and the community, removing any perceived boundaries or barriers to mutual participation and influence in shared cultural practice.

The entrance itself is not the place to experience art or community. Rather, it is a brief journey between inside and outside. Its role should be to make that transition open and transparent, providing clear and enticing signs of what we will experience over the threshold – on the 'inside'.

Burrinja's building is undergoing a makeover that aims to make the creativity happening inside easier to access and clearer to navigate – be that the artist studios, performances, exhibitions or the collection. The newly designed entrance is the portal which suggests both artists 'reaching out' to their community and a 'welcoming in' of our community to experience diverse ways of seeing, making and interpreting culture.

Mosaic Entrance:

Due to the way in which the current entrance mosaic work was applied directly to the brickwork sadly we are not able to retain the mosaic artwork 'intact'. We will, however, look to retain some elements of the work for re-use in a later public art project referencing this piece. The lead artists of the mosaic work, Joy Serwylo and Jenny Rowe, have been asked about this process. As they note, this much-loved mosaic, created some 17 years ago: *"was an important part of making Burrinja an art place at the time, and we have delighted in seeing it over the years. However, times change, things move on and make way for others"....* [More information online.](#)

You can view an animation of the architect's impression of the new Burrinja entrance on the Gallery Redevelopment Page at www.burrinja.org.au

Burrinja Board & Redevelopment Project Review Group

