



genU studio artists—RISE

A Geelong Gallery collaborative exhibition
Saturday 21 October 2023 to Monday 11 March 2024



genU studio artists 2023
mixed media
Courtesy genU



genU studio artists and staff, James Street
Gallery 2023

Geelong Gallery will proudly open *genU studio artists—RISE* this Saturday 21 October. This exhibition is a collaborative project between Geelong Gallery and genU, produced by the artists who attend genU's James Street Gallery, Eastern Hub and Cox Road studios.

The strength and support that community can offer an individual is what the RISE exhibition demonstrates. When one is held safely within the whole, the opportunity for growth is made possible: individuals thrive through belonging. The colourful, boxy pillars in RISE—both sturdy and vulnerable—represent this idea.

The separate components demonstrate the unique practice and true vision of each maker. When placed collectively, a bold, vibrant, and powerful statement is made.

An accompanying soundtrack, generously supported by GH Commercial and created by sound artist Stephen Oakes, records the vibrancy of the studios: the discussions amongst the artists provide insights to their creative processes.

Geelong Gallery Director & CEO Jason Smith says 'We are proud to present *RISE* with our colleagues at genU. This literally constructive project celebrates individual agency and creativity, and the transforming power of community and diversity.'

James Street Gallery Coordinator, Teresa Lawrence says, 'Working towards this exhibition has been a huge and exciting undertaking for the artists from all of genU's Geelong studios. The exhibition's design has allowed each individual artistic freedom while the construction holds the works in harmony with each other.'

James Street Gallery participant, Nicholas Richardson, says of his inclusion in this exhibition, that he is looking forward to attending the opening of *RISE* and that participating in it is a 'once in a lifetime opportunity.'

Geelong Gallery looks forward to welcoming visitors to this important and joyful exhibition over Summer.

-ENDS-



Media Release

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genU artist, Rita Halabarec, James Street Gallery 2023

About James Street Gallery, Eastern Hub and Cox Road studios:

Opening in 1997, James Street Gallery has provided artists living with disability access to a professional working studio which offers a range of mediums. All the genU art studios are staffed by professional artists and the integrity of each of the participants' practice is always at the forefront of all artistic collaborations. Over the years, the studio artists have participated in over 140 exhibitions both in the gallery at James Street and beyond.

genU's contemporary Eastern Hub was once a repurposed school where, in 1952, a group of Geelong families united to establish Karingal. Karingal became an organisation providing much needed support for children living with disability. Art programs grew from this small beginning. Within the last decade Karingal has become genU (Karingal St Laurence), with sites across Australia offering numerous art programs.

When Karingal merged with St Laurence in 2017, to become genU, the Cox Road site became a new area for clients to participate in day programs. Following the merger, the St Laurence artists who formerly worked at the Old Geelong Gaol studios, relocated to the Cox Road art space. Many of these participants are drawn to the medium of papier mache, which meant this project fitted perfectly with their studio practice.

Exhibition partners



The creation of new work has been generously supported by Godfrey Hirst



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