

THURSDAY 22 DECEMBER, 2022

## A STRANGE GARDEN GROWS AT RACV GOLDFIELDS RESORT

From December 17 to February 26, ArtHouse at RACV Goldfields Resort will host an exhibition and series of school holiday workshops by Castlemaine based artist Eliza-Jane Gilchrist.

*Strange Garden* is an exhibition of cardboard sculptures that will create abstract 'gardens', drawing attention to the repetitive patterns that build life and complexity in the natural world.

During the life of the exhibition, visitors are invited to respond by producing their own drawings of the animals or imaginary creatures that live within this garden wonderland.

From January 16 to 24, Eliza-Jane will also facilitate school holiday workshops inspired by the exhibition.

During the free workshops, children aged 7 to 13 will make a 3-D cardboard plant to start their own *Strange Garden* at home. Accompanying adults are also welcome to try their hand at creating their own cardboard plant.

RACV Goldfields Resort Manager, Bowen Kress, believes the resort's natural beauty will inspire the *Strange Garden* workshops.

"ArtHouse is a multipurpose building for exhibitions, workshops, and artist residencies. It supports artists, local communities and guests to have exceptional art experiences and promotes tourism in regional Victoria," Mr Kress said.

"Eliza-Jane's exhibition and school holiday workshops will draw inspiration from the natural environment surrounding the resort and the wildlife that calls it home."

Artist Eliza-Jane Gilchrist has designed the school holiday workshops to teach young artists about sustainability and their relationship with nature.

"I work with cardboard to investigate our relationship with nature and to question what we value," Ms Gilchrist said.

"I build these sculptures in cardboard because it is manufactured, it is ubiquitous, not inherently beautiful and is considered 'rubbish'. Cardboard is what we turn trees into; it is dead organic matter.

“I draw onto the surface to transform the cardboard further, lavishing detail onto the bland, flat brown. These sculptures are memorials to plants that once were.”

To book a place at the *Strange Garden* workshops visit <https://bit.ly/strangegardens> Places are limited, so book early to avoid disappointment. Children are welcome to attend with or without an accompanying adult.

**-ENDS-**

## Further information

[Eliza-Jane Gilchrist](#) is a visual and performance artist based in Castlemaine. In Eliza-Jane's sculpture practice her materials are often the discarded – clothes, found objects, and cardboard. Ugly, worthless things, which she rehabilitates using hand-made alterations, embroidery or drawing. Through these transformational processes ugly things become beautiful, challenging perceptions of significance and value we place on objects within our lives.

Eliza-Jane has had solo exhibitions regionally, in Kyneton's Stockroom, 2012, Art Gallery of Ballarat, 2018, Central Goldfields Art Gallery, Maryborough, 2019, and Benalla Art Gallery (2019) and in Melbourne, in ARI Blindside (2013) and Cube 37 gallery, Frankston Art Centre (2018). She has a BA (Hons) in Fine Art (Sculpture) and immigrated to Australia in 2009.

Eliza-Jane began working with cardboard through her participatory sculpture installation project *Strange Garden*. *Strange Garden* promotes sustainability by exploring shapes and patterns in the natural world and involves Eliza-Jane working with communities to build large, beautiful, abstract 'gardens' out of cardboard. This project has enabled her to work with communities including ArtPlay, Bayside City Council, Brimbank Council in Melbourne, and Bendigo City Council and festivals such as City of Wodonga's Children's Fair (2015), Perth's Merge Festival (2017), Warrnambool's Fun4Kids (2016), and touring as part of Regional Art Victoria's Education and Families Programme (2015, 2016, 2017). In 2019 she undertook a Creative Learning Partnership with Winters Flat Primary School, Castlemaine.

Eliza-Jane is Co- Director with Mark Penzak of *Such As They Are*, an installation/puppet company who construct and perform shows in purpose-built spaces. Their shows have appeared in festivals including Castlemaine State Festival, Melbourne Puppet Festival (Nightmare nominated for Green Room Award, 2016), Melbourne Fringe Festival (Transplant nominated for Green Room award 2016), and Moomba. Their latest show, *Once And For All* was performed in Bendigo Cemetery's mortuary chapel (2018) and Nati Frinj festival, Natimuk 2019. The Cultural Pharmacy, commissioned for Artlands Victoria in Bendigo (2018) was nominated for a VicHealth Award in 2019.

**High-res images** are available for use, please email the RACV media team.

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