

media release

Tuesday 27 November 2007

Web-site launch begins countdown to art at the heart in Alice Springs in October 2008

The countdown to the next Regional Arts Australia national conference has begun with the launch in Alice Springs today of the official web-site www.artattheheart.com.au

The web-site was launched by the president of Regional Arts Australia, Suzie Haslehurst, who said the conference, to be held in Alice Springs next October, would draw delegates from around the country and the world.

“This conference has become a once every two year meeting ground where new ideas and new approaches are vigorously discussed amidst three days of extraordinary performances, exhibitions, discussion and debate,” Ms Haslehurst said.

“It is a particularly vital forum for the hundreds of artists, workers and volunteers who come from remote and regional destinations.

“For them, it is a chance to step away from their computers and their studios and meet face-to-face those who also live with the daily challenge of working in isolation,” said Ms Haslehurst.

Conference coordinator Kieren Sanderson said the web-site was a crucial first step in getting the conference underway. It would be the central conference portal for the distribution of updates and as a registration site for delegates. She urged potential delegates to log-on to receive regular updates during the conference lead up.

Ms Haslehurst thanked the Northern Territory Government for its generosity in hosting the conference and the Alice Springs Town Council and community for embracing the conference with such enthusiasm.

“Alice Springs is regarded as the spiritual and geographic heart of Australia. I invite anyone interested in attending to register at www.artattheheart.com.au where they will find not just conference information, but also a guide to exploring this remarkable part of Australia,” Ms Haslehurst said.



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A DVD involving 90 artists from Alice Springs made by local filmmakers Craig Mathewson and David Nixon was screened at the launch and can be seen on the web-site. The DVD was first shown at the closing ceremony of Regional Arts Australia's last conference in Mackay in 2006.

Ms Haslehurst said the next step in the conference lead up would be a call for expressions of interest for creative concepts, ideas and presentations for the conference program.

art at the heart embraces the theme – **part conference, part festival – all art** and will be held in Alice Springs from 3 to 5 October 2008. It is the sixth biennial national conference presented by Regional Arts Australia.

Regional Arts Australia promotes the development of the arts for the one-in-three Australians that live in regional, rural and remote parts of the country.

Further information: Vivienne Skinner 0411 206 224

The Australian Government supports Regional Arts Australia's national conferences through the Regional Arts Fund. The Australia Council for the Arts supports the artistic program for the conference. The Northern Territory Government is hosting the conference through Arts NT with the support of the Alice Springs Town Council.

