

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Friday 14 August 2015

Art joins science to bridge the landscape

Artists from the University of Tasmania's Tasmanian College of the Arts (TCotA) have joined forces with scientists in a major restoration collaboration.

University artists will create site-specific habitat artworks to support the reconnection of natural biodiversity around Ross, and help create a new focus for community and tourism in the region.

This will build on Greening Australia's extensive landscape project which will plant habitat 'corridors' to reconnect animal populations East-West across the Tasmanian Midlands.

The project is part of a collaborative initiative developed by the *Science Art Lab* based at TCotA.

The project team will hold a community presentation evening (Friday 21 August) at Ross and share the first round of artists' responses to the project. Greening Australia will present an overview of the larger Midlands Restoration Program, and University ecologist Professor Peter Davies will also speak.

Professor Kit Wise, Head of Tasmanian College of the Arts, said "this is a unique opportunity to creatively contribute to restoring degraded landscapes in a changing climate context."

Artist and academic Mr John Vella said "we are looking forward to working with a highly successful scientific team, and with the Ross community."

Lucy Bleach, TCotA academic and practising artist said, "we hope this is the beginning of an ongoing exploration of art in the landscape and its contribution to assisting with real science issues."

The University Library Special and Rare Collections has also provided University-related historical input for the artists and scientists. The project, part of the University's 125th year celebrations, will use its 2015 Community Engagement Grant program funds for project artwork prototypes and installations.

The first public Science-Art in the Midlands Community Evening will be held on Friday 21 August, 5.30pm- 7.30pm, at the Ross Town Hall.

For further information, please contact Professor Kit Wise, Head, TCotA:
Kit.Wise@utas.edu.au

About the Midlands Restoration Program: Greening Australia is the lead organisation in the \$6 million Midlands Restoration Program, involving most of the key natural resource management organisations working in the Midlands. It includes \$1million investment in current research (ARC Linkage funds) involving 10 researchers, 10 PhD candidates and Honours students from the University of Tasmania, together with in-kind support from farmers in the form of foregone production on land that has been restored to native vegetation.

Information released by:

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