

John Brookes CV

Freelance Artist, Head of Canberry Communications, a non-profit venture.

John has over 25 years in arts marketing in the public, government and charity disability sectors across the UK, Fiji and Australia. As a marketer and photographer, he has worked for the London Metropolitan Police, Royal National Institute of the Blind, the London Assembly and the Royal National Institute of the Blind, as well as exhibiting locally since emigrating 10 years ago. He has managed events at the Tate Modern Turbine Hall and Royal Festival Hall, both in London.

He has been awarded a Police Commendation for his use of art for therapy and worked with the Spinal Injuries Association of Fiji after Hurricane Winston, documenting relief efforts and managing therapy through art for the Fiji Psychiatric Survivors' Association. Now returned to Australia, John is active in the local Canberra arts scene and has exhibited widely, most recently 'Pictures of You' exhibition at Belconnen Arts centre and is writer, designer and curator for the 2023 'Professor Hyatt's Tarot' exhibition at Smith's Alternative gallery. He has two upcoming exhibitions in 2023/24 – "Dark Snow" at Belconnen Community Gallery, exploring the human impacts of climate change on the natural landscape and "DISCRIMINATE" at Belco Arts Centre in December, this is a satirical take on media portrayal of those with disabilities using the style of 1940s propaganda posters.

In 2019 John set up Canberry Communications, a Canberra-based non-profit that supports and advocates for disenfranchised communities such as those with lived experience of mental and/or physical disability, those experiencing homelessness, those experiencing addiction issues, refugees and asylum seekers and ex-offenders. It also deals with key issues such as climate change, media bias, etc.

They do this through developing arts projects in a range of media for small charities who may not otherwise have the resources to implement them. John believes strongly in giving a voice to the individual, to people telling their own stories in unique and thought-provoking ways - looking beyond the 'issue' to the whole person.

Canberry Communications rely on grant funding, John's personal funding and donations of resources such as expertise, venues, print and media etc. This allows them to offer their services to charities and communities groups for little or no cost.

In 2019 John was awarded the Chief Minister's Inclusion Award for Excellence.

Exhibitions and events:

- 1999 "Police Volunteers Recognition Event", Tate Modern, Turbine Gallery, UK
- 2000 "Police Volunteers Recognition Event", Royal Festival Hall, UK
- 2007 "Winner of MENSA UK Photographer of the Year
- 2016 "Creative Expressions", NCDP Complex, Suva, Fiji (Curator / contributor)

- 2018 “Don’t Stop, Keep Going”, mixed media photography, poetry and ceramics for Wellways Reception area (solo show)
- 2018 – 2020 “Traces III, IV, V” - Belconnen Arts Gallery (group shows)
- 2018 “Pigment of the Imagination” (Belconnen Community Gallery (group show)
- 2019 “Resilience”, Belconnen Arts Centre (group show)
- 2019 “Piece of Mind”, Gungaharra Homestead (group show)
- 2020 “Face Unframed”, Belconnen Arts Gallery (group show)
- 2021 “Journeys”, Canberra Airport Public Display (solo show)
- 2021 “Place Unframed”, Belconnen Arts Gallery (group show)
- 2021 “Naidoc in the North”, Gunghalin Arts, EPIC Showground (group show)
- 2022 -2023 “(In)Visible”, Belconnen Arts Gallery (group show)
- 2022-2023 “Pictures of You”, Belconnen Arts Gallery (solo show)
- 2022-2023 “Pictures of You”, Westfield Centre, Belconnen (solo show)
- 2023 “Earth Unframed”, Belconnen Arts Gallery (group show)
- 2023 “Reversing the Light”, University of Canberra Conference Centre (solo show)
- 2023 “Professor Hyatt’s Tarot”, Smith’s Alternative Gallery (in partnership)
- 2023 “Dark Snow”, Belconnen Community Gallery
- 2023 “For the Record”, Canberra Contemporary Art Space Lakeside (members show)
- 2023 “DISCRIMINATE”, Belconnen Arts Centre, Window Gallery (solo) (opening in December until February 2024)

Experience to present:

- MA in Mass Communications (with Distinction), Leicester University 1998.
- Certificate in PRINCE 2 Project Management Methodology 1998.
- Royal Mail 1997, set up first ever intranet system at Royal Mail.
- Graphic design manager for ViaCode Ltd, an eCommerce wing of Royal Mail set up in 1999 – managed their brand, one of only 4 brands under Royal Mail since 1516.
- Brand launch and marketing for the Metropolitan Police Service’ new Met Volunteer Scheme, allowing great community engagement. Designed brand and launched at a fully catered event for Met Volunteers at the Tate Modern Turbine Hall 2003. Followed up next year with lead on management of event at the Royal Festival Hall, London with an audience of 2,500.
- Awarded Police Commendation for Outstanding Performance and Dedication 2007.
- UK Cabinet Office representative at European Year of Volunteering 2011, Brussels.
- Previous Head of Marketing for Institute of the Blind, Winston Churchill Trust, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, Pedal Power ACT and ACT Mental Health Consumer Network; as well as freelance work.
- ACTMHCN David Perrin Achievement Award 2017
- Winner of 2019 Chief Ministers’ Inclusion Award (Excellence in Volunteer Support)
- 2020 Volunteering ACT, Volunteer Leadership Award
- 2021 Chief Ministers’ Inclusion Award (Lifetime Achievement Award)
- 2022 Volunteering ACT, Certificate of Recognition, Outstanding Service in the Canberra Region
- Finalist; 2022 Chief Ministers’ Inclusion Award (Excellence in Volunteer Support)
- 2022 Belco Arts Inclusion Award