

# RAT3 - BRIEF

## REGIONAL ARTS TRIENNIAL

### 2024-2026

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PLEASE NOTE THIS BRIEF MAKES REFERENCE TO  
FIRST NATIONS ARTISTS WHO ARE NOW IN THE DREAMING

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## Radical Futures

*Radical Futures* is the core theme for the third Regional Arts Triennial, which will comprise of a group of local exhibitions/performances developed and presented in what is now known as regional Western Australia during 2025. A subsequent selective showcase will be shown in John Curtin Gallery, Perth during 2026 bringing regional futures to metropolitan Western Australia.

Here, you can find the following information:

1. Timeline - projected dates
2. Map overview - visual explanation for regional curators
3. Introduction - theory behind core theme
4. Brief - curatorial brief
5. Reference List and Inspiration - for further context, understanding and research
6. Glossary - key terms explained
7. Key Contacts - project leaders and contacts

### Timeline



# Radical Futures

**Map Overview** Our journey begins in the centre of the circle.  
 In a collaborative effort, decide upon on a relevant local challenge.  
 Ruminant on what life would be like without that challenge.  
 Express that vision of the future through your chosen artform.



# Radical Futures

## Introduction

The third iteration of the Regional Arts Triennial, *Radical Futures*, explores the role of the arts as a catalyst for change in times of collapse. Focusing on collective imagination and drawing upon the concept of aesthetic force, *Radical Futures* reveals aspirations for tomorrow, across what is now known as regional Western Australia.

In order to envision a collective future, we must first engage with our understanding of the past and present. Building upon the legacy of the Triennials' past iterations—*The Alternative Archive*, which explored historical cultural capital, and *Open Borders*, which interrogated contemporary barriers—*Radical Futures* continues this trajectory, looking beyond the present to create aspirational visions for the future of the regions.

Free from claustrophobic high-rises, traffic jams and suburban sprawl, regional artists have the unique ability to finely attune to the world around them. With lived experience of nuanced challenges and a deep understanding of community aspirations, no one is better equipped to envision a local future that transcends current limitations. This attunement provides a solid foundation upon which to build imaginative infrastructure (Oldham, 2021).

Through the visionary works presented within *Radical Futures*, regional artists engage in collaboration and collective imagining of more equitable, sustainable futures. Their creations highlight the potential for transformation within ourselves and our communities, with each artform serving as an invitation to reflect deeply on the future—and perhaps *choose an alternative path forward* (Lewis, 2014).

In these unprecedented times that researcher Otto Scharmer describes as *extravagantly incongruent to sustainable futures*; the arts play a crucial role in both recognising ancient ways of being and inspiring necessary shifts of change for future survival. For those far removed from their ancestral wisdom, the future may seem as unprecedented as the present. For those who against all odds, maintain ancient practice as a way of being; an aspirational future may seem familiar and natural.

A returning.

In this poem by Kirli Saunders (2023), we are reminded of the cyclical, grounding nature of returning to ancestral wisdom—a practice that informs many of the works in *Radical Futures*, which engage directly with the past, present, and future in a continuous dialogue:

*Old Ways,  
Kin,  
Country,  
Community,  
and through them—  
back to me.*

# Radical Futures

## Brief

*Radical Futures* envisions the future of regional Western Australia through the lens of its regional artists. This iteration of the Regional Arts Triennial brings together aspirational visions rooted in collaboration, eco-system awareness, and culturally conscious practice. By implementing an architecture of connection (Scharmer, 2020), *Radical Futures* fosters co-creation across the vast and unique regions of Western Australia.

The philosophical foundation of *Radical Futures* is inspired by Cultural Historian Sarah Lewis, who argues that transformative change for the viewer of art, begins with profound internal transformation. This personal transformation—*aesthetic force*, as art critic Michael Brenson agrees—is *miraculous*. *Such an astonishing amount of psychological, social, and historical information can be interwoven into a single connective charge that a lifetime of thinking cannot disentangle the threads* (Brenson, 2004).

Aimed at inspiring this effect, regional artists are encouraged to allow their artform to transcend the limitations of the present and create from the realm of their dreams. In a conscious effort to destabilise hyper-individualism, *Radical Futures* advocates collaboration and collective creation. The Triennial celebrates shared storytelling and imagines collaboration as a new (or ancient) form of coexistence and collective responsibility.

As curators, it is essential to de-centre ourselves (Scharmer, 2020) and recognise that while the future may feel unprecedented for some artists, for others it may feel like a familiar return. The artists themselves—knowledge-holders, storytellers, and visionaries—are their own true north. Our role is to create a safe and conducive space, facilitating generative listening (Scharmer, 2020) that allows their perspectives to guide us.

Drawing from Arlie Alizzi's critique of settler colonial utopias, *Radical Futures* challenges Indigenous erasure and highlights the agency, sovereignty, and perspectives of First Nations communities. Non-Indigenous artists are encouraged to engage in deep, critical reflection within their moral imagination, seeking to envision futures that extend beyond their own worldviews (Arlizzi, 2023).

Local curators are encouraged to draw upon optimistic visions of their region, asking pivotal questions:

- What does an aspirational future look like in this region?
- What would a regenerative-over-extractive society look like?
- How do we nurture ourselves, our community, and the environment?
- What is the hardest part of reality now? What does life look, smell, taste like *without* that?

*Aesthetic force is not merely a reflection of a feeling, luxury or respite from life. The vision we conjure from the experience can serve as an indispensable way out from intractable paths* (Lewis, 2014).

## Reference List and Inspiration

### Read

Alizzi, Arlie. (2023). Utopianism, eco-criticism and colonial fantasy: Germaine Greer's White Beech as a case study in settler futurity. *The Routledge Handbook of Australian Indigenous Peoples and Futures*. London: Routledge 210-226.

Brenson, Michael. (2004). Art Criticism and the Aesthetic Response. *Acts of Engagement: Writings on Art, Criticism, and Institutions, 1993-2002*. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield. 66.

Lewis, Sarah E. (2014). *The Rise: Creativity, the Gift of Failure, and the Search for Mastery*. New York: Simon & Schuster. 132-156.

Oldham, Olivia. (2021, March 15). *Imagination infrastructure*. Medium.  
<https://oliviaoldham.medium.com/imagination-infrastructure-abd96262fff6> [Accessed 24 December 2024]

Robinson, Cassie. (2021, June 10). *Collective Imagination: A Playbook*. (2021). Retrieved from [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1sU\\_7eYLCV6CnLRFYckjHbzV87AFB6R72TA4GsQmkA0g/edit?tab=t.0#heading=h.c5jkk0vlnkym](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1sU_7eYLCV6CnLRFYckjHbzV87AFB6R72TA4GsQmkA0g/edit?tab=t.0#heading=h.c5jkk0vlnkym) [Accessed 12 December 2024].

Saunders, Kirli R. (2023). *Returning*. Broome, Western Australia: Magabala. ix.

Segal, Lynne. (2023). *Lean on Me: A Politics of Radical Care*. London: Verso Books.

### Listen

Brown, Brene (Host). (2021, January 25). *Creativity, Surrender, and Aesthetic Force* [Audio podcast episode]. In *Dare to Lead*. <https://brenebrown.com/podcast/brene-with-dr-sarah-lewis-on-creativity-surrender-and-aesthetic-force/> [Accessed 30 December 2024]

### Look

Nora Wompi, Bugai Whyoulter and Nora Nyangapa Nungabar Collaboration |

<https://collection.artgallery.wa.gov.au/objects/21059/martumili-ngurra>

Reclaim The Void | <https://www.reclaimthevoid.com.au/>

Joshua Cocking | <https://www.lintonandkay.com.au/artists/josh-cocking/>

Hannah Brontë | <https://www.the-national.com.au/artists/hannah-bronte/heala/>

Angela Tiara | <https://www.sullivanstrumpf.com/artists/angela-tiata>

MCA/Martumili | <https://www.mca.com.au/exhibitions/martu-art-from-the-far-western-desert/>

Intelligent Mischief | <https://www.instagram.com/intelligentmischief/>

de-centre re-centre | [perthfestival.com.au/program/season-2025/de-centre-re-centre](https://perthfestival.com.au/program/season-2025/de-centre-re-centre)

### Watch

Scharmer, Otto. (2020, October 15). *Leading from the emerging future*. [<https://youtu.be/rOXge-30Z30?si=sQGgd8JbHGKfJI6J>]. YouTube.

Caust, Margie. (2021, October 12). *Imagination Infrastructure and Collective Imagining* [<https://youtu.be/zaxGVYZjacw?si=PxNukLh45UxCys6T&t=426>]. YouTube

### Interact

*Swampland City Workshop* by J.D. Penangke <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/15g6JE8wKo/>

## Glossary

Aesthetic Force	The role of the arts to create an internal and life-changing shift. It describes the ability of artistic expressions to evoke strong internal responses, provoke thought, and inspire change. Drives people to reflect on deeper issues, consider new perspectives and/or take action.
Architecture of Connection	A concept developed by Otto Scharmer, referring to the structures, systems, and processes that facilitate meaningful and collaborative connections among individuals and communities. This framework encourages collective creation and deep engagement, creating pathways for transformative change across regions and cultures
Aspirational	Strong desire to achieve something high or great. It often involves aiming for a goal that is ambitious and inspiring. In the context of "aspirational futures", a tomorrow that is hopeful, ambitious, and achieves significant positive change.
Co-creation	The process of collaboratively creating new ideas, projects, or futures. In the context of <i>Radical Futures</i> , co-creation emphasizes collective action and shared responsibility, focusing on how communities and artists can work together to envision a sustainable and equitable future.
Colonial Utopia	A critical term to describe imagined or constructed futures based on settler colonial ideals. These utopian visions often erase Indigenous knowledge, histories, and cultures. <i>Radical Futures</i> upholds these critiques, emphasizing the sovereignty and perspectives of First Nations communities.
Eco-system Awareness	Recognition of interconnectedness within ecological systems. It emphasizes the importance of sustainability, and the relationships between humans, communities, and the ecosystems they inhabit. Highlights how art and culture can engage with the environment to foster better, more sustainable futures.
Generative Listening	Otto Scharmer's listening practice that goes beyond passive hearing to actively engage with and understand the perspectives of others. In the context of <i>Radical Futures</i> , generative listening involves creating a space where artists and communities share their stories, knowledge, and visions for the future in a way that fosters mutual respect and collaborative engagement.
Hyper-Individualism	The belief or practice of prioritising individual needs, desires, and rights over collective or community care or community-based approaches.
Imaginative Infrastructure	The frameworks and resources designed to foster and support collective imagination. Creation of environments—both physical and metaphysical—that encourage communities to envision and work towards new possibilities and futures. Building the capacity of people to imagine beyond the current reality and create transformative changes.

## Glossary cont.

Moral Imagination	The capacity to imagine and think critically about ethical dilemmas, injustices, and societal issues. It encourages individuals, especially non-Indigenous artists, to expand their worldview and engage deeply with issues of sovereignty, decolonization, and social justice in their creative practices.
Radical	From a Latin word meaning "root". Originally understood as fundamental or essential. Reverting to the original tradition or core values. Specifically in the context of Indigenous sovereignty, meaning can be drawn as <i>original futures</i> or <i>futures of origin</i> .
Radical Futures	The central theme of the Triennial, representing a visionary exploration of aspirational futures encompassing fundamental change for regional Western Australia. It encourages artists to reflect on their relationship to the fundamental transformation, either linear or cyclical. These futures are equitable, sustainable, and rooted in Indigenous sovereignty and knowledge.
Regenerative Society	A society focused on sustainability, healing, and revitalisation, as opposed to an extractive society that depletes resources and exploits ecosystems. Seeks to nurture and restore both the environment and social structures, emphasizing long-term health and balance rather than short-term gain.
Sovereignty	The authority or control that Indigenous peoples maintain over their land, cultures, and communities. In the context of <i>Radical Futures</i> , sovereignty also refers to the power of First Nations communities to shape their futures and narratives, and to reclaim and strengthen their knowledge systems and cultural practices.
Visionary Works	Artworks that are forward-thinking and aspirational, often transcending current realities to propose new possibilities, futures, or ways of being. In <i>Radical Futures</i> , visionary works induce aesthetic force and internal reflection on current systems, values, and structures.



# *Radical Futures*

## **Key Contacts**

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### *Curatorial Advisory Group*

Anna Louise Richardson, Annette Davis, Lia McKnight and Tania Spencer

### *Aboriginal Curatorium*

Amanda Bell, Michelle Broun, Ron Bradfield, Sylvia Watson and Zali Morgan

### *Regional Partners*

Kimberley  
Goonoonoorrang - Waringarri Aboriginal Arts, Kununurra  
Rubibi - Kimberley Arts Network, Broome  
Pilbara  
Kariyarra - Junction Co and Spinifex Arts, Port Hedland  
Ngarluma - Cheeditha Arts and FORM, Roebourne  
Gascoyne  
Guthaaguda - Shire of Denham, Shark Bay  
Midwest  
Jambinu - North Midlands Project, Geraldton  
Goldfields  
Karlkurla - Artgold, Kalgoorlie  
Kepa Kurl - Cannery Arts Centre, Esperance  
Great Southern  
Kinjarling - MIX Artists, Albany  
South West  
Wooditjup - Arts Margaret River, Margaret River  
Undalup - City of Busselton, Busselton  
Peel  
Mandjoogoordap - Alcoa Mandurah Art Gallery, Mandurah  
Wheatbelt  
Kartannup - Shire of Katanning, Arts Narrogin, Shire of Kojonup, Katanning