



Digital Portraits to Capture the Heart of Paraburdoo

Residents of the town of Paraburdoo are invited to participate in an exciting new digital arts project, taking place during April 2014.

The project – part of the larger FIVE Paraburdoo initiative – will see nationally recognised digital artist Craig Walsh work with the local community to capture a series of filmed portraits, from 14 to 28 May 2014.

The portraits are an opportunity for Paraburdoo residents to share individual stories that will, collectively, be woven into a significant digital artwork for, and about, the town. The project is open to everyone in the community and there is no cost to participate.

Craig will set up camera and sound equipment at several locations around town – including Karingal, the Youth Centre, the Men's Shed and SEOC. In a very informal and friendly setting, people can drop in to share a story, an experience or an idea around the project's broad theme – 'belonging'. Stories can be about work, family, the land, or anything else of interest to residents of Paraburdoo. They can be longer stories, or a simple sentence or two. Community members can participate alone, or with family or friends. The idea is to share an experience, and be part of an extraordinary project for the town.

Craig will also work with sculptor Alex Mickle during his residency to capture some of the early work that has happened with the mine site and the community on the large-scale sculpture project.

A public screening on 7 June will bring all portraits to life. Craig is known for his large-scale and engaging projections of his digital works onto rocks, trees and buildings. This will be the case for Paraburdoo, when the collective digital work – featuring all portraits – will be woven together and publically screened.

The Paraburdoo digital work will, eventually, be part of other FIVE digital projects from Busselton, Geraldton and Derby, that will collectively tell a story about ways of 'belonging' and of the importance of community in regional Western Australia – particularly in towns that have mining operations or a resident or fly-in-fly-out workforce.

FIVE Paraburdoo is part of a statewide initiative taking place in five regional Western Australian communities: Paraburdoo, Geraldton, Busselton, Derby and Esperance. Named after the number of communities participating, FIVE is a partnership between DADAA and Rio Tinto, and aims to build social connection and community wellbeing.

DADAA Executive Director David Doyle said that bringing Craig Walsh to isolated communities such as Paraburdoo provides a unique opportunity for communities to tell their stories about what living in Paraburdoo means to them, and to share this narrative both with local communities and with broader audiences.

“We know that for many regional communities in Western Australia, social isolation or connection can play a key role in individual and community wellbeing,” said Mr Doyle. “Craig’s project, through participatory cultural practice, provides a platform for people to connect and create their own voice for the town of Paraburdoo. Importantly, this is a whole-of-community initiative.”

“We have welcomed the idea of an artist working with the community to capture their stories about what it means to ‘belong’ to the Paraburdoo community,” said Scott Wilkinson, General Manager, Paraburdoo Region. “The artistic focus provides a relaxed environment where people can tell their stories in a fun way while being part of a shared outcome that will leave a legacy for the town.”



RioTinto

“The FIVE project, along with other initiatives on site, provides knowledge about mental health to participants and employees, helping them with discussions about wellbeing in the workplace and at home.”

Craig will also mentor three or four young adults interested in careers in film and digital production, with the mentorship part of the goals of FIVE to transfer skills to young local artists.

For additional information on the project and on Paraburdoo concept workshops, visit www.five.org.au, email paraburdoo@five.org.au or call (08) 9430 6616.

Additional Information on FIVE

The initiative supports the Mental Health Commission’s Mental Health 2020 strategy, one component of which is to build peer-to-peer connection as a means of facilitating dialogue around mental health. FIVE addresses findings from recent research noting lack of communication and social isolation as contributing factors to poor mental health – particularly amongst the State’s regional communities.

A significant evaluation of FIVE will be conducted throughout the two-year pilot period. DADAA will work in partnership with researchers from Murdoch University to develop a framework for evaluation and then measure the impacts of the CACD models used on participants, organisations and communities.

About DADAA

DADAA is a not-for-profit community arts and cultural development (CACD) organisation, focusing on creating significant positive social change and opportunities for people with a disability or a mental illness. Based in Fremantle, DADAA offers targeted arts and cultural programs that include a broad range of traditional and new media projects in almost 50 Western Australian communities.

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