

# Healing Arts

## ↪ South Australia 3-9 May 2026

### PRESS RELEASE

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## South Australians invited to take part in the southern hemisphere's first Healing Arts Week

**Government of South Australia and CreateSA partner with Jameel Arts & Health Lab in collaboration with the World Health Organization for landmark cultural event.**

South Australians are invited to help shape Healing Arts South Australia 2027, with a new website launching today to help artists, health professionals, community organisations and the public get involved. Healing Arts South Australia will celebrate the vital role of arts, culture and creativity in improving health, wellbeing and social connection.

Healing Arts South Australia will be held from 3–9 May 2027 and will be the first initiative of its kind in Australia and the Southern Hemisphere. The event will bring together the arts, cultural and health sectors to promote collaboration, conversation and creativity.

Healing Arts South Australia is presented by the Jameel Arts and Health Lab in collaboration with the World Health Organization, the Government of South Australia and CreateSA, with additional support from The Hospital Research Foundation Group as the event's official charity partner.

The new website invites early events registrations, information about opportunities to participate, including early event registrations, an upcoming small grants program and the launch of the Healing Arts South Australia Art Award.

Artists at all stages of their career – including young and emerging artists – are encouraged to enter the Art Award, with the winning piece to become the hero artwork for Healing Arts South Australia 2027. The winner will also receive a \$5,000 prize and have their work exhibited as part of the program.

Official Charity Partner:



The Hospital Research  
Foundation Group

Healing Arts Global Producers:



Community  
Jameel

Healing Arts South Australia builds on South Australia's longstanding leadership in arts and health and will create opportunities for people from all backgrounds to experience the benefits of creativity and cultural participation.

Healing Arts South Australia will feature:

- public workshops, exhibitions, performances and community activities.
- opportunities to share diverse cultural perspectives and practices that support health and wellbeing.
- research symposia and knowledge exchanges exploring the impact of creative practice on health outcomes.
- local and international examples of innovation and best practice in arts and health.

The initiative is part of Healing Arts, the global outreach campaign of the Jameel Arts & Health Lab in collaboration with the World Health Organization and produced internationally by Culturrunners and Community Jameel. Healing Arts South Australia joins a growing cohort of Healing Arts Weeks around the world including in Scotland, Barcelona, New York and Singapore.

Healing Arts raises awareness and catalyses policy change, helping embed the arts in public health systems. In 2024, the Jameel Arts & Health Lab launched Healing Arts Scotland, the world's first national Healing Arts programme, bringing together 376 events and more than 11,000 participants. The campaign reached over 3 million people and helped integrate arts-in-health practices into Scotland's public health programmes.

In Atlanta, the Lab's Healing Arts campaign brought together partners across arts, healthcare, public health, academia, philanthropy and policy, contributing to Georgia House Resolution 1007. Passed in March 2026, it made Georgia the first US state to formally recognise the arts as a resource for mental health and public health.

The initiative is underpinned by the Jameel Arts and Health Lab and World Health Organization's growing research on the major role art can play in improving health and wellbeing.

Recent research has found:

- creative play reduces anxiety in children
- drama activities promote healthy eating attitudes and positive body image
- calming music reduces anxiety, fear, blood pressure and stress hormones, and may help regulate blood glucose levels
- dance reduces pain and improves quality of life, depression and physical functioning
- visual arts, movement and music support treatment and recovery following stroke
- cultural engagement helps overcome language barriers, improves health communication and strengthens belonging.

Official Charity Partner:



Healing Arts Global Producers:



For more information, to register an event, or to enter the Healing Arts South Australia Art Award, visit [healingartssouthaustralia.com](http://healingartssouthaustralia.com)

### **Quote attributable to Kyam Maher, Deputy Premier, Minister for Arts**

*"We are proud to host the first Healing Arts in the southern hemisphere, bringing communities, artists, researchers and health professionals together through a shared commitment to health and wellbeing. The arts offer a powerful complement to traditional medical care, supporting the whole person and strengthening the communities around them.*

*This initiative is backed by the vision of our landmark 10-year state cultural policy, A Place to Create, which is driving innovation and expanding access and participation in the arts for all South Australians with the Malinauskas Government having invested more than \$200 million in new money in the arts since coming to government.*

### **Quotes attributable to artist and health service user Maiko Sentina**

*During my admission, the Southern Adelaide Local Health Network's Arts in Health team wheeled a cart of materials into my ward and sat with me for hours drawing and painting.*

*Some of the works in my exhibition Resilience/Resistance were developed in these sessions. Those moments didn't appear in my discharge notes, but they were so integral to my wellbeing.*

*They gave structure to long days, softened fear and uncertainty, and created space for creative, tactile play - allowing me to shift from just being observed and tested to becoming the observer of my own experience.*

### **Quote attributable to Christopher Bailey, Global Policy Lead and Co-Director, Jameel Arts & Health Lab; Founder, Arts & Health Programme, WHO**

*The evidence is clear: the arts have an integral role to play in health and wellbeing, building resiliency and supporting recovery in communities who may have faced hardship.*

*Expanding this critical work to South Australia provides a meaningful opportunity to engage under-served and vulnerable communities. The arts practices in First Nations communities in particular may deepen our collective understanding of how creative expression gives all of us support in our individual and collective journeys towards creating purpose, understanding and belonging.*

### **Quotes attributable to Nader Diab, Head of Programme, Community Jameel**

*Through pioneering research and evidence-based programming, the Jameel Arts & Health Lab is working to measurably improve health and wellbeing through the arts.*

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*By bringing this proven Healing Arts model to the Southern Hemisphere for the first time, South Australia have cemented themselves as a global leader in this promising and pivotal field.*

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## **Notes to Editors**

### **About CreateSA:**

CreateSA leads South Australia's strategic agenda across the arts, cultural and creative sectors. It works to ensure a future for South Australia as a place where creativity thrives and lies at the heart of our daily lives and cultural identity.

### **About the Jameel Arts & Health Lab:**

With a focus on overlooked and underserved communities, the Jameel Arts & Health Lab leverages scientific evidence, a global 'Healing Arts' campaign, and capacity building, to drive the integration of the arts into mainstream medicine and public health policy across 193 UN member states. The Lab is the first major initiative of its kind to be supported by the World Health Organization.  
Jameelartshealthlab.org

### **About Healing Arts:**

Healing Arts is the Jameel Arts & Health Lab's global outreach campaign in collaboration with the World Health Organization. Produced internationally by CULTURUNNERS in collaboration with local partners, Healing Arts prioritises silo breaking between academic, cultural and policy communities to drive cross-sector innovation, investment and policy uptake in the field.

## **Press Contacts**

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