

East Street Link Art Activations

In 2023, Rockhampton Museum of Art commissioned new temporary murals and art installations for East Street Link, which connects RMOA to East Street and the CBD. Artists Niloufar Lovegrove, Brandon Butler of Gaba Art, and the Capricorn Potters Group, have all left their own creative marks alongside the 2022 mural featuring a baby crocodile by Martin Schlick of Masher Designs.

The artworks are viewable 24/7 in the public laneway between Rockhampton Museum of Art's Quay Lane entrance and East Street. The following information about these temporary artwork activations is valid from August 2023.



Murals by Brandon Butler of Gaba Art (right) and Niloufar Lovegrove (left).

Image: RMOA.

Niloufar Lovegrove

Niloufar Lovegrove is an Iranian-Australian artist based on Darumbal Country. Her practice, predominantly in lino printing, incorporates intricate Persian motifs and stories and has been showcased in numerous exhibitions, most recently in a significant solo exhibition at Artspace Mackay.

Lovegrove's large-scale murals, including the popular flying cows under the Fitzroy Bridge, have become a significant part of the region's artistic landscape. Her work *Glorious Peace* recently won the prestigious 2023 Burnie Print Prize, an initiative of the Burnie Regional Art Gallery which presents the best works from established, emerging and cross-disciplinary artists working in the field of printmaking. Currently Lovegrove is working on two new projects including a set of illustrations on the beloved story, *The Lady of Shalott*.



Describing her design choices in the East St Link mural, Lovegrove says:

I wanted to work with the blue seen in the other murals, and also looked to cockatoos. The shape of the bird is also like a pigeon as seen in Persian pottery. The birds have the olive leaf of peace so instead of the dove I translated it to the cockatoo for something more 'Rockhampton'.

The circle in the middle is the universe and the earth, with the cockatoos being of peace; I have put them in a harmony around the circle. Creating symmetry, I added in the clouds above, and below the flowers, 'Shah Abbasi', a flower design that is used in Persian paintings and carpets. The corners are what my son calls 'shark bites'; you see them framing old Persian books and it adds to the symmetry.

Niloufar Lovegrove. Image: RMOA.

Brandon Butler

Butler is a proud Aboriginal and South Sea Islander man based on Darumbal Country. His cultural background includes Gooreng Gooreng, Gurang, Gunggarri, Gangalu, Iman, First Nation Australian and South Sea Islander (Tanna Island, Vanuatu), with a strong cultural connection to the land and a passion for sharing this through his art. A local, national and international artist, Butler enjoys both visual and performing Indigenous arts and also enjoys passing his knowledge down to the younger generation through the facilitation of art workshops.

Butler describes his artistic style as being predominantly traditional with a focus on linework, crosshatching and dots, using a variety of Aboriginal symbols to communicate the stories behind his artwork. All artwork is done freehand to ensure precise, intricate patterns to produce a one-of-a-kind piece of original art.



Brandon Butler. Image courtesy the artist.



Brandon Butler. Image: RMOA.

Reflecting on the symbols included in his mural, Butler says:

I was approached by RMOA to do this piece, working alongside different artists to create a piece that is significant to the area. Through this commissioned piece, connecting with Darumbal people is an honour and being able to share their animals, their area, and their significance is a great honour.

The main element of the mural is Tunuba (Fitzroy River) in the background shown with the blue dots. Using the water symbol and the blue dots, I'm hoping everyone in the community - both Indigenous and non-Indigenous - can relate to the piece.

The other animals include the Barramundi, the Freshwater Long-necked Turtle, and I've used the artwork to explain my interpretation of the Barramundi dreaming, going from freshwater to saltwater. I've also incorporated the water lily, the Darumbal Totem with the four lily pads, which I've used to acknowledge the four clans of the Darumbal people, and also the four U-shapes also acknowledge the four clans of the Darumbal people.

Capricornia Potters Group

The Capricornia Potters Group formed in early 1973 as a way for local potters and ceramists to come together for exhibitions and workshops, and to share techniques and access communal equipment. A diverse collective of creatives, Capricornia Potters Group are based on the top floor of the Walter Reid Centre and are committed to sharing craft through education and professionalism.

The Capricornia Potters Group has a thriving membership ranging from beginners to experienced instructors in techniques including hand-building, wheel throwing, moulding, underglaze decorating, texture decorating and dip/pour glazing. Members participate in regular clay working meetings, play days for experimenting with new equipment or techniques, and social outdoor firing events.

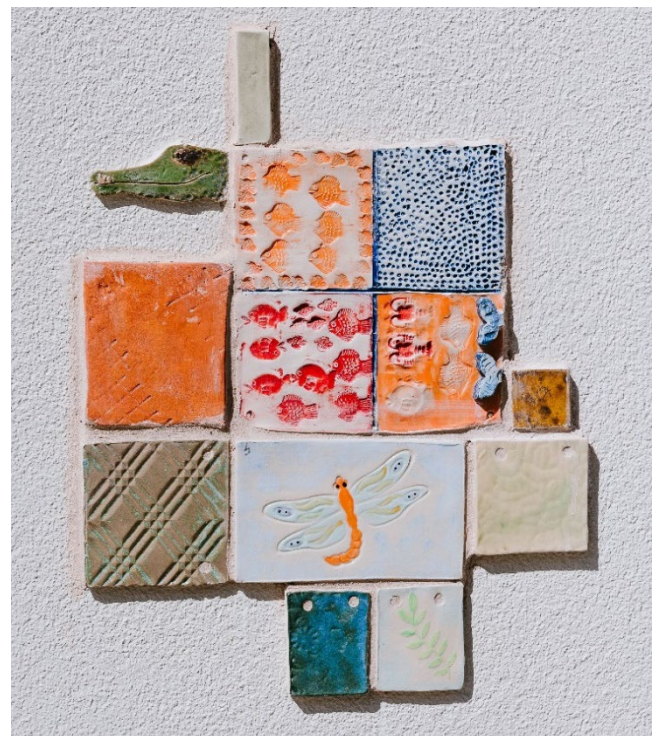
The Capricornia Potters Group have worked collaboratively to create an engaging, quirky and fun installation of ceramic tiles on the wall of East Street Link. This installation of colourful, patterned and textured ceramic tiles is filled with animals, plants, symbols and imagery that will be familiar for anyone who lives on Darumbal Country, surprising and delighting visitors as they move between Rockhampton Museum of Art and East Street.



Image: Capricornia Potters Group with their collaborative ceramic installation in East Street Link. Image: RMOA.



Image: installation detail, Capricornia Potters Group. Image: RMOA.



Other Artworks - Masher Designs

East Street Link is also home to a work by Masher Designs, commissioned by Rockhampton Regional Council for the 2022 River Festival.

Originally from Germany, Masher Designs (Martin Schlick) now calls Darumbal Country home. Specialising in large murals, Masher Designs is inspired by coastal and underwater elements.

Masher Designs shares the following insight into his mural, titled *The Rocky Baby Saltwater Crocodile*:

Nestled between East Street and Quay Lane next to Rockhampton Museum of Art, this mural reminds me of wattle flowers, bright like a string of festoon lights, celebrating life in and around the river, Tunuba, the mighty Fitzroy River.

Crocodiles are protected under the Nature Conservation Act. They have a very significant role in the environment: maintaining a well-balanced and functioning ecosystem.

The reference photo for this mural was taken by talented local Capricorn Coast photographer, John McGrath. The croc was still in its egg and had just popped its head out; for me, a symbol of new life – not just for the croc, but the whole ecosystem.



Image: *The Rocky Baby Saltwater Crocodile*, Masher Designs (Martin Schlick). Image: RMOA.



Murals by Niloufar Lovegrove (left), Brandon Butler of Gaba Art (centre), and Martin Schlick of Masher Designs (right). Image: RMOA.



Rockhampton
Museum of Art