

## **Mountain Women's bentART Vision goes national**

This June long weekend the Blue Mountains is set to host the country's biggest LGBT art event - bentART. The brainchild of three mountain lesbian women in 2005, the exhibition quickly went state-wide, and now invites LGBT artists from across the nation to submit work eligible for an array of prizes.

But bentART is also an opportunity for art lovers to purchase inspiring work at affordable prices, making the 90 minute journey from Sydney CBD well worth it. It's also become one of the mountains' most well-attended winter attractions, with crowds of local LGBT and LGBT-friendly denizens enjoying the annual Queen's Birthday long weekend events.

Both established and emerging artists regularly exhibit, and with the popular People's Choice award every visitor has an opportunity to pick their favourite over four days from June 11th -14th.

With local food and wines, and the ambience of Wentworth Falls School of Arts, the bentART opening on Friday evening June 11th provides a great opportunity to connect with the hottest emerging arts scene. The venue (an inter-war theatre on the Great Western Highway) is worth seeing for its own sake.

"June is a pink time in the Blue Mountains," bentART inc. President Julie Martin says. "As well as bentART we have the dance at Blackheath, the Three Sisters Ball, and a new umbrella festival PinkFest incorporating all kinds of LGBT events."

The bentART project has always maintained a strong and creative lesbian energy, ensuring the original vision remains a conduit for LGBT self-expression in a variety of genres. "When you do something you should burn yourself out completely, leaving no trace of yourself," 2009 award winner (and regular bentART entrant) Pamela Hourani says of her own guiding creative principles.

"bentART is a platform for lesbian artists to move towards solo exhibitions" Julie Martin outlines. "This year we've added short video, indigenous and youth categories. The vision of bentART is constantly evolving and endlessly inspiring."\*

*bentART June 11th-14th Wentworth Falls School of Arts [www.bentart.com.au](http://www.bentart.com.au)*

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*(author: Michael Burge)*

*(contact for any clarification: [mikndik@mymotiv.com.au](mailto:mikndik@mymotiv.com.au) 4782 6336)*