



**MEDIA RELEASE  
MAY 25 2011**

**AN ARTISTIC BENT IN THE MOUNTAINS**

The Blue Mountains have long been known as a refuge for artists of all persuasions where they can escape the pressures of the city to enjoy the freedom to express their creativity. However, living away from the metropolis does have some drawbacks.

Just over 7 years ago, three art loving women living in the Blue Mountains were frustrated that in such a renowned creative community, the opportunities for artist to exhibit work were limited, especially for emerging artists in general and for gay and lesbian artists in particular. In a stroke of inspiration, the women turned their frustration into action and the bentART annual exhibition was created.

“The formation of bentART was a wonderful example of women creating something positive and empowering and providing an opportunity for lesbian and gay artists to show their artwork” says Julie Martin, the current president of bentART. She notes that “At the same time as providing an outlet for artistic expression, bentART also increases the visibility of queer art in the wider community.”

Bent ART is now the largest Lesbian & Gay art exhibition in Australia. Last year more than 1000 visited the Exhibition over its four day period.

Indeed bentART has been so successful in increasing awareness, the exhibition, now in it’s 7<sup>th</sup> year, is now open to GLBT artists all around Australia, with this year’s prize pool being a record \$5,900. We’re honoured to have a wonderfully talented judging panel this year, composed of Dr Anthony Bond (Director of Curatorial Services at The Art Gallery of New South Wales), Robyn Nolan (artist and joint owner of the Nolan on Lovel Gallery in Katoomba) and Ingrid Haydon (academic & artist).

BentART is curated by Sophie Seeger and Jane Canfield both established and successful artists resident in the Blue Mountains (full CV for judges and curators are included with this media release).

Past bentART exhibitions have allowed emerging artists to exhibit their work in a welcoming and inviting forum with artist.

bentART exhibition is being held at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts (Great Western Highway) and opens Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June, (6.30-9pm) running until Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June. Art submissions are open until Weds, May 25<sup>th</sup>. For more information see [www.bentart.com.au](http://www.bentart.com.au)

The Blue Mountains is host to a number of GLBT events during the long weekend as part of a pinkFEST including the very popular Three Sisters Costume Ball.

### **About Our Sponsors**

bentART could be described as a meeting of art and business.

BentART has been encouraged and supported by local and regional business. The Alex Hotel in Leura has supported bentART for more than 2 years . Global Values XChange (GVX) an independent, Aboriginal owned and operated training company, is the other major sponsor. Rolling Wines (from Cumulus Wines of the Orange region) is the hospitality sponsor for 2011 and will provide the wines for bentART's Opening Night. Nolan on Lovel (NOL) Gallery in Katoomba, Klipt Kanine, Wentworth Falls Animal Hospital, RA Lawrence Real Estate, Westpac Leura, Choice Home Loans, Harmony at Home, Getaway Houses, Jenolan Caves, Robert Tinsey Solicitors, Blue Mountains Limousines and the Conservation Hut are all silver sponsors and the bentARTISTS and their supporters thank them for their generosity.



For more details, visit [www.bentart.com.au](http://www.bentart.com.au)  
or contact Mark Higginson on 041 727 4898 or Julie Martin on 02 47572274 or 041 047 5744