

Speech by Mayor Logan K Howlett JP
21st Show Off Exhibition Opening Night –
20th March 2026
Memorial Hall, Hamilton Hill

Thank you to Famous Sharron.

Good evening ladies and gentlemen and welcome to the Show Off Exhibition Opening Night.

I thank Rueben Haydon-Nelson for his engaging and thought provoking Welcome to Country and for the sharing of Aboriginal culture and language as we continue our journey of reconciliation, or as one Elder said to me conciliation.

I acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we gather tonight the Whadjup people of the Nyungar nation and I pay my respects to their Elders past and present and I extend that respect to First Nation people with us tonight.

I acknowledge the presence of:

- My wife Patricia;
- Elected Members of the City;
- Daniel Arndt, Acting CEO and other members of the Executive and Staff;
- Participating Artists;
- Ladies and Gentlemen, girls and boys.

It is a genuine pleasure to welcome you to the opening of the 2026 Show Off Art Exhibition, the 21st exhibition and the largest in the event's history.

From modest beginnings in 2003, when just 19 artists took part, Show Off has grown into one of the most anticipated events on our City's cultural calendar.

Tonight, we celebrate a record 104 artists and more than 180 works on display.

That growth reflects the extraordinary depth of creative talent here in Cockburn.

One of the enduring strengths of Show Off is its balance.

We have five remarkable artists who have exhibited in every single exhibition: Sharyn Egan, George Haynes, Jane Martin, Larry Mitchell and Trevor Vickers.

Their commitment across two decades is something truly special.

At the same time, a quarter of this year's exhibitors are showing their work here for the first time.

That renewal keeps the exhibition dynamic, fresh and reflective of a growing arts community.

This year we also see exciting new voices such as Jasmine Skye, whose underwater portrait photography brings a striking and ethereal quality to the exhibition.

Her work is a powerful example of how artists continue to evolve, experiment and find new ways to express their creative vision.

Across 21 exhibitions, more than 1,000 artists have taken part, presenting works collectively valued at over \$3.2 million.

The City itself has acquired 88 artworks during that time – a tangible demonstration of our commitment to supporting artists.

Art and culture help shape who we are as a community.

They foster identity, belonging and connection.

Show Off embodies those values, bringing together families, friends, emerging artists and established names in one shared celebration.

I would like to sincerely thank our Arts and Culture team, particularly Cassandra Cooper, for once again curating such a diverse and cohesive exhibition.

Bringing together more than 100 distinct artistic voices into one engaging experience is no small achievement.

To our artists, thank you for your courage and generosity in sharing your work.

And to everyone here tonight, thank you for supporting local creativity and contributing to the vibrant culture of our City.

As we continue to enjoy the activities occurring in Harmony Week it now gives me great pleasure to officially declare the 2026 Show Off Art Exhibition open.

Please enjoy the evening.

Thank you.