



As Cassandra Cooper said earlier, Noel is not only a highly valued Noongar Elder in our community he is one of five indigenous artists exhibiting at Show Off 8 this year.

Patricia and I have previously purchased one of Noel's paintings and it is proudly displayed in our home.

Thank you Noel, it's always pleasing to see you at these exhibitions and to see your latest work.

'I acknowledge the Noongar people who are the Traditional Custodians of the Land on which we are meeting tonight.'

'I respect to the Elders both past and present of the Noongar Nation and extend that respect to other Indigenous Australians who may be present'.

I would now like to formally welcome:

The Hon. Lynn McLaren MLC, Member South Metropolitan Region;

- Mr Hrvoje Petrusic and Mrs Romana Petrusic, Croatian Consulate;
- Mr Bill Wallington, President Cockburn Community & Cultural Council and his wife Maxine;
- Members of the Cockburn Community & Cultural Council and other arts & cultural groups;
- Councillor Val Oliver;
- Councillor Carol Reeve – Fowkes;
- Ms Louise Towler, Marketing Manager, Melville Cockburn Chamber of Commerce
- My wife, Patricia;
- Ms Cassandra Cooper, Cultural Development Officer, City of Cockburn;
- Contributing Artists to Show – Off 8;
- Distinguished guests, girls and boys, one and all.

The City of Cockburn staged the first Show Off exhibition in 2003 with the sole intention of 'showing off' to the broader community that Cockburn is the place artists are choosing to live in increasing numbers.

Since then, the exhibition has captured the heart of local artists, both established and new and continues to grow in terms of the number of artists, the number and variety of exhibits, and importantly, its stature in the Cockburn and wider community.

The exhibition has become the place for artists to share their dreams and creations with the community.

This is the fifth year the City has held 'Show Off' at the Memorial Hall.

As many of us will know this facility was refurbished in 2006 and it has become the City's art and cultural centre with the ability to host exhibitions, performances and all manner of art and cultural activities.

Artists are important members of a community because of their ability to see and capture moments, to start with a blank canvas and create an image that allows others to see and relate to these images.

Tonight we will see this richness reflected in the works on show.

Exhibitions such as this are also the result of a committed group of people that work very hard throughout the year behind the scenes.

Their passion backed up by hard work and persistence allows the community a window of opportunity to share in a very special moment.

Tonight I acknowledge Mr Bill Wallington, President of the Cockburn Community & Cultural Council and its members for their continuing work in their chosen field of endeavour.

I would also like to acknowledge Cassandra Cooper, the City's Cultural Development Coordinator who has worked diligently behind the scenes and in her own way created an event that in itself stamps her name indelibly on this exhibition and so many others held in our City.

To Bill Wallington, his committee, supporters and friends and Cassandra, thank you once again for your significant contribution to cultural development in our City.

Please join with me in thanking them.

Show Off 8 sees the creative work of 50 artists on display, some for the first time, while others have exhibited at all the previous exhibitions. I am pleased that we have five indigenous artist exhibiting their works.

All of these artists are at varying stages within their professional development and have travelled incredible journeys and explored amazing fields in their quest to capture visually the world in which we live.

Thank you to all the artists for choosing to exhibit their works here and for bringing your wealth of talent into our community for all to see and share.

Again, I acknowledge the presence of Mr and Mrs Petrusic, Consul, Croatian Consulate.

They are very strong advocates of the Arts and I again thank them for their attendance tonight and for their significant contribution to strengthening the cultural ties between the City of Cockburn and Croatia.

The City of Cockburn enjoys a very healthy sister city relationship with the City of Split in Croatia. Indeed many Croatians have chosen to call Cockburn their home and have raised their families here and contributed to the very rich and diverse culture evident in our community today.

Tonight I am honoured to officially declare open **Show Off 8**.

Please enjoy the exhibition and think about the opportunity to purchase a piece of art for your home or office, or both.



