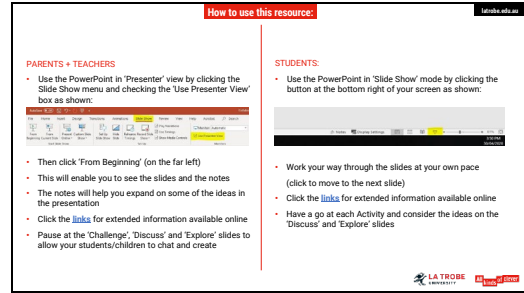


Slide 1



Slide 2

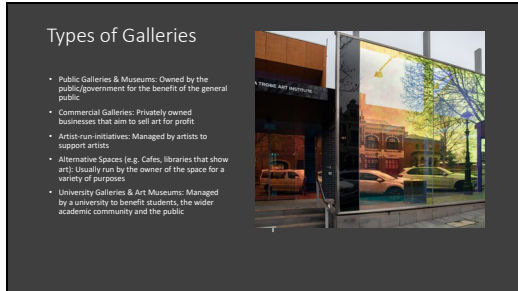


Slide 3



Across the Australian Art Industry there are many different kinds of galleries, each of which has a role to play in supporting and promoting artists, furthering the industry and increasing public interest in and understanding of the arts and our cultural life.

Slide 4



Public Galleries are run by or on behalf of the public. They are professionally run, legally constituted organisations, funded mostly by government (that is us the tax-payer). They are not-for profit organisations which means that any profit they make must go back into their own running costs. Because they are paid for by the taxpayer, they must broadly benefit the general public. These benefits might include protecting precious items of historic and/or cultural value,

providing education and increasing our understanding or critical thinking ability, or providing social activities and entertainment. They usually show artwork by artists that have broad cultural and perhaps historic significance.

Commercial or Private Galleries are privately owned businesses that sell art for profit. They can be physical spaces or online. They usually show artists that are fairly established and have commercial appeal (that is, their work sells). They might sell work to collectors, investors, or the general public who might want to decorate their home. Because of this, the artwork they show tends to be attractive rather than experimental or controversial.

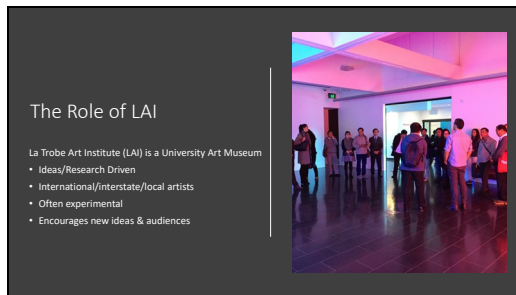
An **Artist Run Initiative** is a space run by a group or committee of artists to support artists. These groups usually find it necessary to become legally constituted as not-for-profit organisations, committees or co-operatives so that they can do things like rent a space or apply for funding. ARI's often make most of their money from charging fees to the artists who rent space to work and/or exhibit there, and this money goes back into running costs. ARI's tend to show and sell work by emerging artists. They also may give artists a space to work and provide a supportive community.

Alternative Spaces can be anywhere that has an appropriate space with public access and someone to manage it. A café owner, for example, might offer the walls of their business to artists to exhibit, to brighten up their café and bring people in.

LAI is a University Gallery, part of the University Art Museums Australian ([UAMA](#)) network. University galleries began as "teaching museums or galleries" run by universities for the purpose of providing students with places to experience objects and artefacts first-hand, rather than studying them in textbooks or online. They held collections and exhibitions in order to push conversations in art-history courses, and across disciplines and departments. While this is still true, they now play a unique and important role in supporting innovation and pushing the boundaries of contemporary art through promoting

experimentation and research because they are not as bound by the imperatives of making a profit or achieving broad public appeal. This platform for experimentation and innovation plays an important role in supporting and promoting the evolution of new ideas, forms and contemporary art practices and audiences.

Slide 5



La Trobe Art Institute supports new ideas, contemporary art and artists from across Australia and overseas.

Our exhibition program reflects our research into current artists, their ideas and practices, as well as current issues and La Trobe University's Research Focus Areas. We interact with academics from across the University and create ways to collaborate, share ideas and explore how working cross-discipline can lead to new innovations.

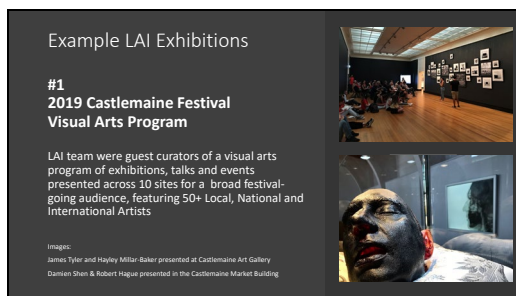
As custodian of the LTU Cultural Collections, LAI investigates traditional and innovative means of providing access to objects for exhibition, display, research, and learning. Learn more about the [Collections](#).

LAI offers public and education programs that foster cross-disciplinary and creative thinking, encourage new audiences for contemporary art and engage schools and the wider community in our exhibitions and other activities. Learn more about our [Exhibitions](#) and our [Public events](#) and [Educative](#) programs and resources on our website.

The LAI has a prominent exhibition and education facility in the Arts precinct of central Bendigo; a regional hub that engages communities throughout the central-north arts corridor of Victoria.

Learn more about our [facilities](#).

Slide 6



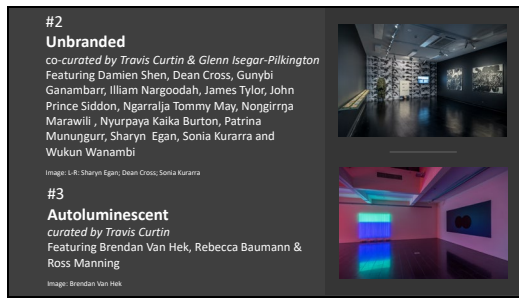
La Trobe Art Institute (LAI) presents exhibitions and projects that explore arts practice and engage with contemporary cultural ideas and discussion. To this end, the Institute engages with art, artists and ideas across three levels: international, national and local.

The exhibition program is driven by the research of the curatorial staff, who select work that is excellent in its

execution and conceptual rigour. LAI also strives for equity and diversity in its selection through including gender representation, variety of media, and experience among artists. Exhibitions are not by application. However, the LAI welcomes submissions from artists who believe the LAI venues may be appropriate sites for the exhibition of their work. LAI also creates opportunities to exhibit and otherwise convey to the public various aspects of La Trobe's Public Art Collections.

An example of LAI's approach is our involvement with the 2019 Castlemaine State Festival. The team curated a huge visual art program which included local and international artists, exhibiting in a wide variety of venues, such as the Castlemaine Botanical Gardens, the Old Hospital, Lot 19 and the Market Building. The use of non-traditional spaces required the curatorial team to experiment with ways of displaying the work while the public programs team explored different ways to attract new audiences and engage the public in conversations about the work and ideas presented.

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Here are two more examples of our contemporary art exhibitions from 2019.

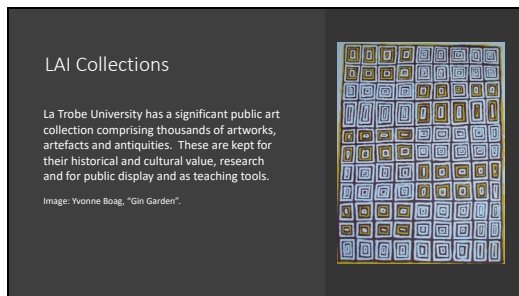
Both are themed group shows resulting from research by LAI curator Travis Curtin.

Co-curated with Glenn Iseger Pilkington, *unbranded* presented work by 13 Indigenous contemporary artists whose practices challenge common perceptions of

Indigenous art as almost a 'brand' or 'aesthetic'. Their work unpicks preconceptions of what Indigenous creative practice *is* or, *should be*, rejecting simple classifications like 'traditional/non-traditional', or 'urban/remote' practices and other often arbitrary categorisations. *unbranded* questioned these ways of representing and interpreting contemporary Indigenous art, while affirming the diversity of contemporary Indigenous experience, both live and inherited.

Autoluminescent presented artwork by three Australian contemporary artists; Brendan Van Hek, Rebecca Baumann and Ross Manning, who work across a variety of media. Autoluminescence refers to 'the luminescence of a substance due to energy originating within itself' and as such, the exhibition presented a range of luminescent works that generate light or draw on available ambient light, transforming it through processes of reflection, refraction and absorption, harnessing the power of light to produce ephemeral sensory works of art to be experienced in-place.

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La Trobe University has a significant public art collection comprising thousands of artworks, artefacts and antiquities. These are kept for their historical and cultural value, research and for public display and as teaching tools.

The **Ethnographic Collection** comprises over three hundred objects including stone tools and carvings, Aboriginal barks, war shields and ceremonial dress, masks and headwear, gifts from donors of artefacts and paintings collected from Papua New Guinea and Australia, plus items collected on field trips by academics.

The **La Trobe University Art Collection** began in 1966 by the University's Master Architect, Dr Roy Simpson, AO, who incorporated the display of artworks into his overall vision for La Trobe. The Collection is considered a major public art collection, comprising over 2,000 post-war and contemporary Australian artworks, covering most media and periods of Australian art.

The **FM Courtis Collection** was established by Fred Courtis, former Head of Art Education at the Bendigo Teachers' College in 1958. Intended as a teaching resource, the collection includes over 350 Australian works of art including pieces by Sir Arthur Streeton, Tom Roberts, Sir William Dargie, and Leonard French.

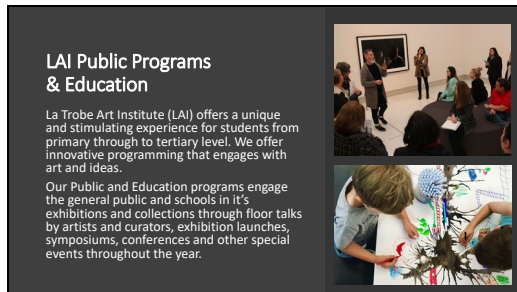
The **Trendall Collection of Antiquities** was collected by Professor AD Trendall, one of the greatest historians of Greek art of the twentieth century. Along with fine examples of complete vessels, fragments and objects, the collection includes Trendall's vast archive of over 40,000 photographs of South Italian red-figure vases and his library of books and journals on Classical civilisation.

The **Larundel Collection** features over 1400 artworks by patients of the Larundel Psychiatric Hospital from 1987-1997. The Hospital was located in the parklands that became part of La Trobe's Bundoora Campus. It's Art Access Studio was unique because it employed artists to deliver programs rather than clinicians or therapists, and the works were created as individual artistic expression, not tools for therapeutic and/or diagnostic methodologies.

Dr Geoff Raby's Collection of Chinese Art was acquired over the course of three decades, from his first posting in Beijing as First Secretary, Head of the Economics Division at the Australian Embassy in 1986 to his term as Australian Ambassador to 2011 and beyond. The collection represents contemporary art practice in China since the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976, and features many noted artists across 174 works.

The **Stewart E. Fraser Poster Collection** is one of the largest of its kind. It contains close to 1,000 posters, predominately from China, as well as examples from Russia and Vietnam, reflecting his interest in public health issues.

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La Trobe Art Institute's Public and education programs engage the general public in its exhibitions through offering floor talks by artists and LAI curators, exhibition launches, symposiums, conferences and other special events throughout the year.

The Education program engages with students and teachers from primary to tertiary level by offering artist and curator talks, school holiday and other activities, and linking with La Trobe's Academics to provide tertiary subjects, workshops and symposia.

LAI education programs are designed to link with the Australian Curriculum Foundation to 10 and the Victorian Certificate of Education in a variety of disciplines.

The Institute supports educators to embed creative and critical thinking strategies across the curriculum, embracing transdisciplinary approaches and assisting teachers to find inspiration from creative arts practice in their pedagogical approach. LAI values this connection to teachers and students of all ages and disciplines and sees all learners as potential La Trobe University students.

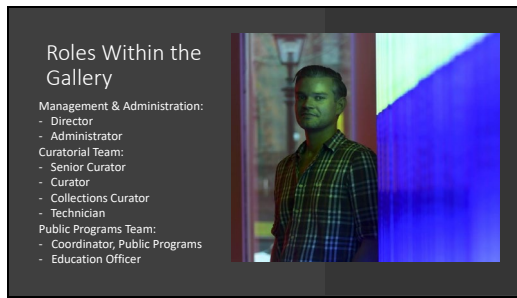
La Trobe Art Institute (LAI) offers a unique and stimulating experience for students from primary through to tertiary level. We offer innovative research-led programming that engages with art and ideas.

All LAI programs are led by arts practice and cultural discourse, rather than curatorial proscription. Our programming celebrates the intrinsic value of art and artefacts, whilst also understanding that art has the capacity to speak to all disciplines. By leading collaborations with our academic peers, we encourage visual learners from a broad field of interests to discover new approaches to a variety of disciplines.

Our education programs are designed to *link* with subjects across the Australian Curriculum, Foundation to 10 and the Victorian Certificate of Education, though they are not bound by the curriculum. The Institute supports educators to embed creative and critical thinking strategies across the curriculum, embracing transdisciplinary approaches and assisting teachers to find inspiration from creative arts practice in their pedagogical approach.

The LAI team values its connection with teachers and students of all ages and disciplines. We encourage repeat visitation in order to foster an ongoing interest in the arts that is integral to growing creative communities. Driven out of our Bendigo Gallery, LAI's education program has strong uptake from regional schools in Central and Northern Victoria. We also work with the University College Outreach teams and the Schools Partnership Program on all Campuses to design programs for schools in these communities.

The LAI Education Program model is an integral part of the LAI exhibition program. Like most public galleries, the LAI accepts bookings from schools (Primary to Tertiary) for exhibition viewings. The LAI difference is in our cross-disciplinary and experimental responsiveness to contemporary art. Prior to the appointment of dedicated public and educative staff school visits were much like programs at other large cultural institutions; homogenous and teacher-led. The LAI is now able to deliver programs with substantially high levels of engagement and adaptive to the needs of each group. By consulting closely with curators and artists we design programs that adopt the character of the artwork and the artist's methodologies. Our art-led approach is enhanced by embedding La Trobe-led discussions or activities in every school visit.



The La Trobe Art Institute currently has 6 full-time and 2 part-time staff, plus a number of casual staff that assist with events and weekend or after hours activities.

The **Director** provides vision and leadership for the organisation in accordance with the University Strategic Plan, and University Senior Leadership. They oversee all LAI activities, supervise staff and the budget. They are also responsible for cultivating relationships with donors and organisations to support LAI's development.

The **Administrator** manages the day-to-day running of the organisation, including booking and coordinating events, supporting management of the collections, maintenance of the facility, "Front of House" duties and other activities.

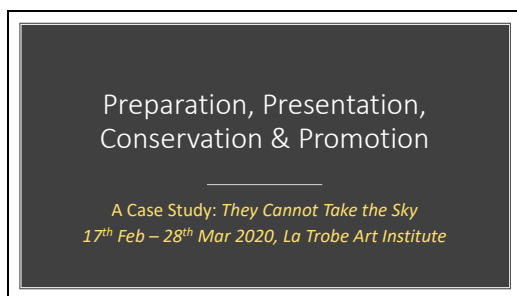
The **Curators** research, conceptualise, plan, manage and present exhibitions. They conduct extensive research by visiting artists and exhibitions, exploring libraries and online, to identify new ways to interpret artworks or develop interesting connections between art, ideas, history and culture. Exhibitions must be designed to fit the architecture of the gallery and connect with and challenge our audiences. Artworks for exhibitions are sourced directly from artists or public and private collections. Our curators also help manage La Trobe's collections, write interpretive texts for exhibitions, such as labels, wall texts and essays and deliver floor talks and occasional lectures. They also work with the Public Programs staff to promote and communicate the exhibitions through networking, producing materials and advertising.

The **Technician** assists the curators with the installation and de-installation of exhibitions, preparation of the spaces –cleaning, painting etc., handling of artworks, creating solutions for displaying artwork, such as building customised gallery furniture or lighting. Our technician also assists with Gallery events and Front of House duties.

The **Collections Curator** (part-time) is working on a number of projects involving La Trobe's collections, including managing storage, conservation and handling of the collection, coordinating records and documentation, administering new acquisitions and loans and liaising with the curatorial team to display the collection.

The **Coordinator, Public Programs** conceives of, organises and delivers programs aimed at engaging the general public, the University community and Schools in our exhibitions, collections and other activities. Duties include developing exhibition tours, artist talks, guest lectures, forums and other events

The **Education Officer** (part-time) works with the Coordinator, Public Programs to engage students and teachers from Primary to Tertiary level in our exhibitions and programs. Duties include developing materials and presentations that help students access, interpret and learn from our exhibitions and collections, coordinating school bookings, speakers, and other activities.



INTRODUCTION:

They Cannot Take the Sky: Stories from Detention is a touring exhibition of personal stories from people who have sought asylum in Australia and have been detained by the Australian government under its mandatory detention policy. It was exhibited at LAI from 17th Feb – 28th March 2020.

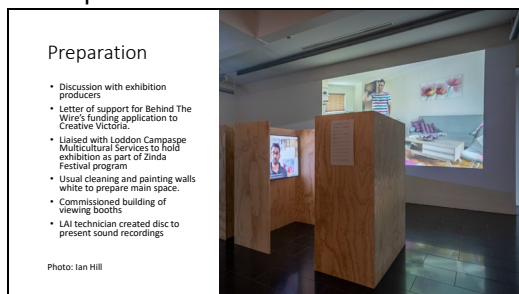
The exhibition title came from a statement by Behrouz Boochani, a Kurdish-Iranian journalist, human rights defender, writer and film producer, born in western Iran who was held in the Australian-run Manus Island detention centre in Papua New Guinea from 2013 until its closure in 2017, who said “Around you, everything is metal fences. But the sky – they cannot take the sky.”

Through personal perspectives, the exhibition explored one of the most complex issues of our time, the plight of people forced to leave their homes and become refugees and/or seek asylum seekers. The exhibition sought to convey the personal stories of people from a range of cultural backgrounds who have been through Australia’s immigration detention system, from their escape through to, in some cases, finding a new life after detention.

The exhibition was originally created by Behind the Wire and Road to Refuge, two organisations that advocate for refugees, asylum seekers and immigration detainees. To find out more, visit behindthewire.org.au and roadtorefuge.com/

LAI saw great value in presenting an exhibition that deals with important cultural issues at this time, with the intention of stimulating discussion and raising awareness around issues of migration, detention, integration and social cohesion. Given shifting public sentiment in this area LAI wished to create the chance to look both retrospectively upon national policy and contemporarily upon its ongoing consequences.

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PREPARATION:

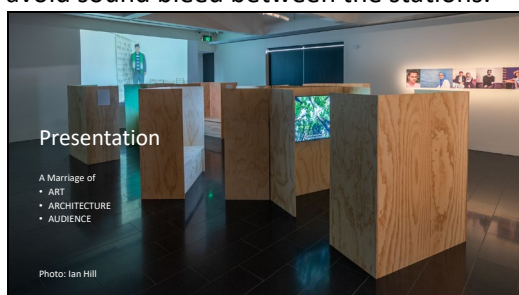
Because this was an independently curated travelling exhibition the preparation required was different to LAI's usual exhibitions. Rather than liaising with artists, collectors and other galleries to gather artwork for the exhibition, LAI's curators worked with Andre Dao, co-founder of Behind The Wire, the organisation that produced the exhibition about how best to display and promote the material through LAI.

Discussions also took place between LAI, Mr Dao and the Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services to coordinate the timing of the exhibition to coincide with the 2020 Zinda Festival, (an annual festival that celebrates multicultural communities in Bendigo), as it was felt that this would add to the festival's program while enhancing the reach of the exhibition during a time when Bendigo was focussed on important multicultural issues.

To help cover the costs associated with producing and touring the exhibition, producers *Behind the Wire* and partner organisation Road To Refuge applied for grant funding from Creative Victoria. LAI provided a letter of support to be included in the application outlining its readiness to host the exhibition and confirming the public programming, educational engagements and financial and other support it would provide to enable the presentation of the exhibition.

LAI's curators and technician also worked with *Behind the Wire* to design suitable ways to present the exhibition material which included sound recordings, videos of personal stories and portrait photographs. They decided to commission the construction of nine specially designed booths from a local building company that would enable one or two people to sit and view the videos, with headphones to avoid sound bleed between the stations.

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PRESENTATION:

The exhibition was housed in LAI's larger gallery space and small outdoor courtyard. (A second separate exhibition called "Rivers of Gold" was held concurrently in the smaller gallery space).

"They Cannot Take the Sky" exhibition was comprised of the following:

- A video projection of a number of individuals from different cultural backgrounds who have experienced immigration detention in Australia, each standing in their homes, having been released from detention, waving in a friendly way to the camera, (visible in the background of this image).
- Videos of people who have experienced immigration detention in Australia telling their stories. These were presented in nine purpose-built wooden booths which each housed small flat screen TV's and its own sets of headphones to avoid sound bleed between the booths. Each booth allowed two adults to sit and view the videos.

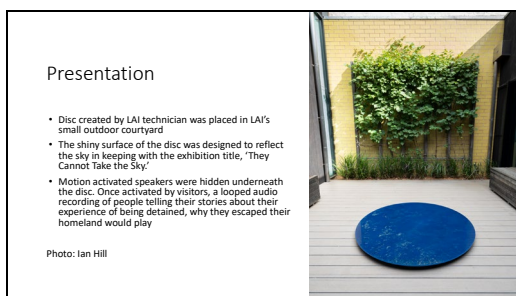
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A series of portraits of people from different cultural backgrounds who have experienced immigration detention in Australia displayed at eye level, along two walls.

The space was darkened by blacking out windows to enhance viewing of the video projection, however focussed spots illuminated the strip of portraits.

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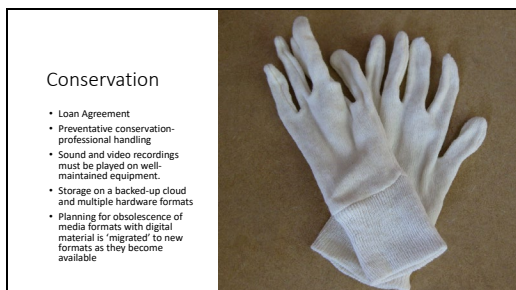


LAI's small courtyard was utilized as a second exhibition space where visitors could listen to a looped audio recording of people who have experienced immigration detention in Australia, telling stories about their experiences of why they escaped their homeland, life in detention and life after their release and hopes for the future.

The blue disc you can see here was created by LAI technician, Robbie Dixon and placed in LAI's small outdoor courtyard. The shiny surface of the disc was designed to reflect the sky in keeping with the exhibition title, 'They Cannot Take the Sky.' Motion activated speakers were hidden underneath the disc, which activated the recordings when gallery visitors entered the space. Seating was placed at the sides.

List of the stories and narrators was on the door – while listeners couldn't align the captions with the sound, the titles gave a sense of the volume and breadth of the audio content. The setting created a quiet, contemplative space to hear personal, sometimes difficult stories.

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CONSERVATION:

The exhibits comprised sound recordings, video recordings and photographs, each of which require special care.

Photographs:

"All photographs, both old and new, require special care. Many photographs, including modern colour photographs,

are unstable, and will fade rapidly if they are not processed properly in the first place, if we display them for long periods and if we do not store them appropriately. In some cases, this can result in the complete loss of the photograph. Compromise is nearly always necessary when trying to find a balance between using and preserving collections. However, there is much that can be done to preserve the photographs in your care, through careful and thoughtful handling, storage and display.”

Common types of damage to photographs include tears, creases, dog-eared corners, insect attack, scratching or denting, and the emulsion peeling away from its base, fading or staining, caused by poor handling, storage or display methods.

Photographs should be handled as little as possible, usually with cotton gloves or clean, close fitting surgical gloves can be a better alternative as they can make it easier to pick up the photograph.

(pp 69-72, *reCollections* resource, Heritage Collections Council of Australia, See https://aiccm.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/1_caring_for_cultural_material_1.pdf for more details.

Sound and video recordings:

As opposed to ‘conservation’ per se, the management of media for exhibition use and archival and future access (i.e. playback in video and audio formats) is very important. Files are easily corrupted and ‘obsolescence’ (i.e. media formats and equipment becoming obsolete or outdated and no longer used), threatens the long term viability to access files and recorded material in the future. Making sure digital material is ‘migrated’ to new formats as they become available can help protect against obsolescence, however this can be a significant burden on collectors and collecting organisations due to the cost and labour this requires.

Sound and video recordings must be played on well-maintained equipment.

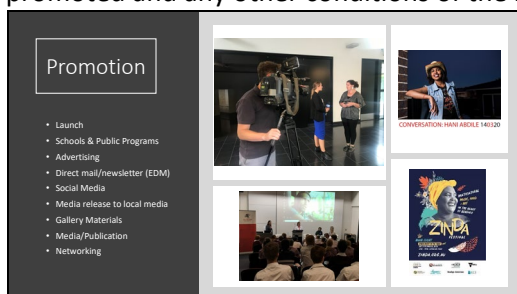
Storage usually takes place on a backed-up cloud and multiple hardware formats (CD, USB, Hard drive), but even file formats (.mp3, .mov etc) are prone to becoming obsolete if software that can access the data in these formats becomes obsolete.

(See p133-36, *reCollections* resource, Heritage Collections Council of Australia, See https://aiccm.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/1_caring_for_cultural_material_1.pdf for more details.)

The work was insured, and professionally transported and handled by the LAI curatorial team.

The curators created a written loan agreement with the Behind The Wire and Road To Refuge that set out the conditions of loaning the work, when and how it was delivered, how it would be displayed and promoted and any other conditions of the loan.

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PROMOTION:

As it does for all exhibitions, La Trobe Art Institute used a range of media and marketing tools to promote the exhibition, including a public launch, advertising, direct mail, social media, gallery materials.

The exhibition was also promoted through Behind The Wire and Road To Refuge’s large networks, demonstrating the value partnerships can have in increasing and broadening gallery networks.

A media release was sent to all relevant media which prompted WINTV to do an interview with LAI's public Programs Coordinator about the exhibition.

LAI arranged for poet Hani Abdile, (whose story is included in the exhibition), to speak at an event during the Zinda Festival, a popular Bendigo multicultural festival coordinated by the Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services.

The exhibition was promoted to schools and attracted significant school group numbers, particularly from those studying social justice issues. The Public Programs and Education Officer coordinated with Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services to arrange for a young speaker from a refugee background to speak to students to directly, to deepen and personalise students' understanding of the exhibition.

Although quite different to LAI's usual program, the exhibition was very successful in terms of visitor numbers and is an interesting example of how the content of an exhibition can greatly influence visitor numbers and attract a different type of visitor.

Unfortunately, the exhibition closed early to the public early due to COVID-19, however due to the unique media-based form of this exhibition, the producers were able to move to an entirely digital format relatively easily (See: <https://storiesfromdetention.org.au/>). The whole show is now online and further travel of the exhibition has been cancelled. LAI was able to continue to communicate the message of the exhibition through our social media channels for the intended duration of the exhibition.

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So that is La Trobe Art Institute. We represent the 'new shoots' of our art industry eco-system.

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