

pittwater artists trail

the charter

august 2015

The primary purpose of the Pittwater Artists Trail is to provide an ongoing and consistent structure for artists in Pittwater to be accessible to visitors, both local and out of area. The Trail seeks to foster a relationship between our community and our artistic community at a grass roots level in order to inspire a sense of connection, shared stories, and sales of work. The studio visitors can learn about the artists' process and how the Pittwater environment has shaped the artists and their original work.

The artist, in turn, is able to directly experience the appreciation and interest of the visitor and to derive some consistent exposure and income.

The Trail seeks broader exposure for artists than a gallery system can offer. To the public it offers a more personal experience. Rather than being a one off event the Trail is a resource, and offers an ongoing and regular attraction to visitors and locals.

The Trail seeks an art based audience - those who have an inclination and curiosity about the arts - who will engage in the process at a level where a richer exchange can take place.

The Trail offers the opportunity for visitors to purchase or commission original artwork directly from the artist, and provides accessibility for follow-up. Those artists who teach have the opportunity to promote their classes, and interested visitors have direct access to the teaching artist and class environment.

It is the aim of the Pittwater Artists Trail to invite a relationship between the Pittwater community and its artists, in which a personal exchange of mutual inspiration and value can take place, including "ownership" by our local community of the Artists Trail.

structure

The Pittwater Artists Trail is for artists who work from their home studio or dedicated studio space within Pittwater. Artists can share their studio space for open weekends with other Trail artists. This provides opportunities for those whose studios are not easily accessible to be part of the Trail, foster stronger relationships within the Trail and make a more fulfilling day for visitors.

The Pittwater Artists Trail hosts seasonal open weekends throughout the year, on the first full weekends of March, September and December where all studios open concurrently. The Winter weekend in June comprises a group exhibition and runs if enough members wish to be involved. All Trail artists commit to opening their studios on all open weekends. Each artist may also offer individual open hours, weekly or monthly or offer to be open by appointment.

The Trail is an annually curated event. Membership on the Trail is for one year. New people can apply by phone or email and existing members will receive an email inviting them to re-apply. Applications close on the 31st August.

Each artist pays \$500 to join for the year. The fees fund the printing of brochures and posters, and general advertising.

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The labour involved with running the Trail; including attending meetings, writing press releases and making follow-up phone calls, organising exhibitions, market stalls, brochure distribution, booking advertisers for the brochure, arranging social gatherings within the Trail, and roles which involve the administrative and promotional development of the Trail, are shared among members.

Each participant in the Trail has an important role in addition to their own artistic productivity. Each participant agrees to accept responsibility for some of the many tasks required for the functioning, maintenance and promotion of the Trail.

The Trail asks for a sense of co-ownership from participants. This creates a cohesive entity whose success depends on each of us. In turn, any positive story, personal success, or sale of work enjoyed by any member feeds back into and celebrates the Trail. The Trail is comprised of participants who enjoy, understand and are nourished by this level of participation and co-ownership.

The Pittwater Artists Trail forms an identity for the Peninsula as a cultural resource.

what members need to do to

- read and agree to the Pittwater Artists trail charter
- pay membership fee of \$500 for 12 months
- join Pittwater Community Arts. This entails a separate nominal membership fee.
- attend Trail meetings throughout the year
- inform the committee beforehand if you can't make a meeting and follow up on getting the information you missed
- accept responsibilities and actively participate within the ongoing functioning of the Trail and therefore be an integral part of its success and wellbeing.
- make sure you respond promptly to all phone and email communication with committee and other members
- be responsible for liaising with at least one cafe or business and keeping it stocked with brochures
- ensure that access to your studio or work area is safe and not difficult, slippery or hazardous
- have a message on all your numbers listed in the brochure so you are accessible to potential visitors and their enquiries
- regularly update the Trail publicist/s with your fresh, high resolution images for inclusion in advertising, website and social media
- each member of the Trail is responsible for their own public liability insurance.

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open weekends

The open weekends are seasonal; the dates will be the first full weekend of March (Autumn), September (Spring) and December (Summer). The June (Winter) group exhibition is optional. All studios are open on the three annual open weekends. Joining the Trail means you are committed to these dates.

However it is understood that unavoidable circumstances occasionally arise. Please inform the committee well beforehand if you will be unable to open and there are no friends or family who can cover for you. You must also amend your details on the Pittwater Artists Trail website to prevent visitors coming to your unattended studio.

Two Bali flags and logo display sign to be displayed at your home frontage for open weekends and open hours. Each Trail member will be supplied with a laminated Pittwater Artists Trail sign for this purpose as well as directional signs to help guide visitors to your studio. More signs are available at cost.

The Pittwater Artists Trail logo is displayed on any banner or ad to do with the Trail, i.e. a sandwich board displaying an "OPEN" sign for your studio. This gives us consistency and a recognisable brand.

A Trail visitors' book where people can leave their email address and comments is invaluable, please encourage those who sign to tick a side margin if they would also like to receive information and updates from the Pittwater Artists Trail. And remember to send it to the mailing list co-ordinator after each open weekend.

Your work is the only work to be for sale in your studio - no other artists or students work to be sold. The exception here is if you are sharing your space with another Pittwater Artists Trail member.

other open times/individual open hours

If you would like to be accessible to visitors on a weekly or monthly basis you can list these times in the brochure and on the website.

If you nominate regular open hours you are committing to being available for visitors during those times for the entire year. Or having someone open your studio if you are away.

brochure requirements

- supply description of your media and work
- supply name, business name, address, phone number/s, email and website
- opening times/appointments if you're offering them
- 300dpi photo of your work, this must be of high quality

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brochure

- the Trail's primary avenue of publicity is the brochure which is renewed yearly. The brochure contains each artist's contact details, description of art form and representative photo of their work. It also contains the dates for the open weekends and ongoing open times for individual artists.
- The brochures are distributed to local cafes and businesses who have agreed to stock them in exchange for being included in the "participating businesses" list on our website.

social media

- the development of our Pittwater Artists Trail facebook page and instagram account has enormous capacity to spread word-of-mouth knowledge of the Trail. Make sure you like both of these and regularly share posts from them, it is one of the easiest ways you can help promote the Trail.
- forwarding your events, images and stories to the e-media manager is another way you can participate in promoting the Trail.

website

Artists' details on the Pittwater Artists Trail website can be amended as needed.

The website is useful for our audience who haven't had access to the printed brochure, and so that visitors can check for updates regarding special events or any closed studios on open weekends.

ethics relating to sponsorship

The Trail interfaces with the Pittwater community and visitors from further afield. It will therefore be financially supported by community friendly businesses or organisations should it seek sponsorship or funding. Businesses whose ethos include a strong community alignment would be sought and considered.

artists trail publicity

In keeping with the ethos of the Artists Trail the committee asks that Trail members take the initiative, collectively and individually, of sourcing and creating publicity for the Trail.

Our volunteer publicist and additional team member/s (image collector and press release follow-up) will publicise the Trail via print media advertising and press releases sent to media, especially in the run-up to the three open weekends.

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They develop a media plan, write press releases, make a stockpile of fresh high resolution images and send these to major and regional papers and magazines.

With an aim of increasing awareness in an arts-based audience in particular, the publicist actively pursues new opportunities to publicise the Trail through new media, community organisations, councils, arts organisations, etc.

In addition to the more formal forms of publicity, the publicist will develop ideas to help Pittwater residents “own” the Trail and aim for a greater awareness of the Trail in the Pittwater community.

Regularly sending high resolution images of you, your studio and your work to the Trail publicist and to the e-media manager will keep the Trail profile current and vibrant to people looking for us online. It will also ensure that you as a member are well represented.

It is the individual efforts made which have the greatest impact for publicity. This includes emails to friends as well as your mailing list, letterbox dropping your studio’s flyers with Artists Trail reference, giving friends and customers the brochure and talking with your cafe proprietor about the Trail. As an individual you can make a difference to the number and quality of visitors to the Trail.

brochure distribution

Our brochure is fundamental to people knowing the Trail exists. Cafes are our most important point of contact between the Trail and the community. The brochures going into the cafes and staying well monitored is crucial for us.

The cafe culture of the Northern Beaches is highly conducive to the proliferation of our brochures. The cafe patron is a person likely to notice, pick up, be interested in and keep the Trail brochure for reference and participation in the open weekends.

The better relationship you have with your business the more likely they will be committed to keeping the brochures. When sourcing cafes it is more worthwhile to have one committed cafe that ten that aren’t. It is also the connection between the artists and their cafe/business that keeps the cafes aware that they have a connection with the Artists Trail.

Two members manage the distribution of brochures each year. They store them and Trail members can collect their brochures from them.

It’s important to keep your business stocked permanently and not just before the open weekends to support those with open hours, to keep the Trail continuously visible and to encourage the community to access us outside of open weekends.

When you bring your brochures into the cafe ask for the owner/manager, don’t just leave them with staff or without speaking to someone.

Some cafes offer to hang or display Trail artwork, please let the committee know if they do.

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If you find a new business that will stock the brochures you can get more holders and brochures from the distribution managers. If the business would like to be listed on the website please give their details to the people managing the cafe/business list.

Take brochures with you when you're in regional areas - shops, cafes, galleries, libraries - anywhere YOU like to go is likely to be a good place to leave them.

budget

The fee to join the Trail is largely spent on producing the brochure. There are also costs involved with advertising for the open weekends and exhibition.

Any surplus funds at the end of the year are transferred to the following year. The committee takes no income from these funds.

exhibitions

The Trail pursues opportunities to put on exhibitions and for involvement with community arts events.

markets

Our volunteer market coordinator/s organise and attend three or more Artists Trail market stalls at the weekly Warriewood Farmers Markets just before each of the three open weekends. This provides an opportunity for locals to chat with a Trail artist, to distribute more brochures and to raise awareness of the Trail immediately before the open weekends.

self-promotion

Experience from previous years has resulted in some ideas and suggestions to help support and add to your open weekends and accessibility to visitors.

- create a free website for your studio and art practice, there are many easy templates available on platforms like Weebly and Wix.
- Place your own ad in local publications when the Trail committee is placing ads for the open weekend. Advertising together as a block with other artists means you pay less and gain a larger presence for all. You are welcome to ask a committee member to supply you with the Trail logo to use with your own ad.
- Create an email database for your own personal art events to create a valuable resource for your own promotion.
- Letterbox drops; some Trail members distribute brochures with their own card attached throughout their local neighbourhood just before the open weekends.

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