

A spotlight on creators this Christmas



Keeping it in the family: Sisters Alesha Carter and Narelle Smith (right) have become familiar faces at markets around Warrnambool with their [2Birds Design](#) jewellery and craft.

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[/dropcap]iven it is almost Christmas, we thought we would highlight some of the wonderful creators around South-West Victoria who have featured so far in *Bluestone Magazine* and who will be appearing at either a market or a gallery over Summer.

Bluestone Magazine is a strong believer in art and creativity as a vital ingredient in any community and we have really enjoyed bringing you the stories behind some of the region's best known artists who exhibit widely, but also the stories of those who are just starting out and, in some cases, working from a tiny studio or their kitchen table.



A sample of the necklaces created by 2birds Design.

This includes people like **Alesha Carter** and **Narelle Smith**, sisters from Warrnambool, who this year started [2bird Designs](#). They create affordable jewellery using largely scrapbooking materials and carefully selected fabrics and have been delighted by the response to their work.

"We only started in March, but the markets have been going really well. I think it's because we aim for everyone between 16 and 80," Alesha said, laughing.

Rather than spend your hard-earned dollars on a mass produced product for Christmas, please think about purchasing a piece of locally made art or craft: there is nothing quite like it. For inspiration, see some of our creators below.

[box type="bio"] Some of the artists and creators featured below will be at **The Artery** Christmas Market, **this Sunday December 15**, 224 Timor St, Warrnambool.[/box]



Rachel Peters is a well-established artist in South-West Victoria, with her most recent exhibition at [Scope Galleries](#) featuring works inspired by a 'Healing Walk' along the Fiery Creek. (You can catch up on that story [here](#)). Rachel, however, also creates cards and jewellery inspired by the landscape, that are for sale through The Artery markets.



Merran Koren creates large-scale sculptures from Mt Gambier stone that she bends to her will with the help of some fairly industrial-strength tools. One of her most significant works, Nurture, is displayed at the entrance to Lyndoch Residential Care, Hopkins Rd, Warrnambool. She also has a studio space at The Artery. Read our full story on Merran [here](#).



Helen Bunyon has been a part of the South-West Victorian arts scene for more than 20 years, since relocating from Melbourne. Apart from running the Customs House Gallery in Hawkesdale (formerly in Warrnambool) with her husband Des, and being heavily involved in The Artery, Helen also creates her own jewellery from recycled watches and found objects known as the [Time Flies series](#).



Surrealist photographer **Berit Hampel** is part of an artists' collective who exhibit and sell their work through the [Whale Bone Gallery, Bank St, Port Fairy](#). Her work is evocative, yet often playful, and it is her manipulation of the images that creates their engrossing stories. You can catch up on Berit's full story [here](#).



Jon Hayes is a [heavy metal man](#). The Timboon sculptor takes rusty old farm tools or discarded hunks of metal and transforms them into one-off garden ornaments or industrial-size braziers. You'll find Jon, who works under the name Tomrtoe Designs, at local markets most weekends including Port Fairy, Trentham, Daylesford, Birregurra, and Port Campbell. Visit his Facebook page [here](#) or website [here](#).



Yambuk artist **Sarah Gubby** recently held her first solo exhibition at Blarney Books & Art that featured photography, textiles and intricate baskets. (You can catch up on that story [here](#)). Sarah, who has a studio space at The Artery, also sells her photographic works at The Artery markets.



Meg Finnegan is a Port Fairy sculptor who works with ceramics,

copper and limestone to create works from the very large to the intricate. Meg also runs the beautiful Limestone Gallery in Port Fairy, that is open to visitors. You can read our story on Meg [here](#) and visit the gallery Facebook [here](#).



Rosebrook artist **Clare Fennessy** [creates ceramics under the name Claybody](#) and her unique way of combining the rustic and the delicate make her work instantly recognisable. You can usually find Clare at the local art markets, but her work is also available to view [online](#).



Ella Webb is becoming something of a phenomenon around South-West Victoria with her intricate drawings of the natural world. Since picking up a pencil several years ago, she has not looked back and now sells her work through gift shops, markets and online. Read our story [here](#) and find her on the web [here](#).



Johanna Glennen is part of a major shift in how young mothers balance parenthood with making a living from their craft, and that is to sell online. Johanna creates infant and children wear under the joeyjellybean label and incorporates many of her own designs that are screenprinted onto the fabrics. You can often find her at local markets, including The Artery, and via her [Facebook page](#). You can find our full story on Johanna [here](#).

[box] * Next week we will feature a wrap up of **local food producers** that we have profiled this year in Bluestone Magazine.[/box]