



Media release

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Artists with a disability shine in new exhibition

More than 100 works of art developed by Melburnians with multiple disabilities went on show at Federation Square today as part of an exciting new exhibition.

Entitled 'Expressions of Me', the collection is a remarkable selection of paintings created by almost 50 artists – each with their own personal story to tell.

The artworks have been created as part of Able Australia's art therapy program, *ableart*, which assists people with a disability to express themselves through the power of visual art.

"For almost a decade, *ableart* has been supporting people with a disability to translate their unique creative ideas into meaningful expressions of themselves," said Able Australia CEO, Kaye Collard.

"Art therapy is a proven method of assisting people with a disability to express feelings that may be difficult to verbalise, develop healthy coping skills and even improve motor skills and physical co-ordination, which is why it is such an important part of our service offering."

"For the artists, having an opportunity to display their work in a very public place like Federation Square during the lead up to International Day of People with Disability (3 December) is one of the highlights of the year," she added.

Kaye said Expressions of Me presented a great opportunity for the wider community to see what can be achieved when people with a disability are supported and encouraged to pursue their individual life goals.

Able Australia runs *ableart* sessions through its major Melbourne locations, including Camberwell, Sydenham, Reservoir, Mitcham and Springvale. The ongoing success of the program, combined with some generous donor support, has paved the way for the program to expand into Geelong in 2016.

This FREE exhibition opens today at the Atrium in Federation Square and runs until Friday 27 November. All artworks are available for purchase, with proceeds going directly to the artists themselves. Expressions of Me is proudly supported by Herbert Smith Freehills.

About Able Australia: Able Australia is one of Australia's leading not-for-profit organisations, delivering high quality, person-centred services to people living with multiple disabilities, including deafblindness and those in need of community support. From its beginnings in 1967 as the Victorian Deaf Blind and Rubella Children's Association, Able Australia has grown into a diverse and dynamic organisation that supports more than 4000 people throughout the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania, Queensland and Victoria.

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