

# The Art of Suff-Rage

Celebrating the Centenary of Women's Suffrage in Victoria 1908-2008

Third Edition

April 2008

FREE

## Suffragists on the move



"Suffragists" Ursula and Fern alighting here and there from the Yarra Trams sponsored 'Votes for Women' City Circle Line

### The Art of Suff-Rage

The Age of Suff-Rage project is up and running at a cracking pace. To date its creators Gasworks ceramicist, Ursula Dutkiewicz and artist Fern Smith, have been seen at many events during the *Centenary of Victorian Women Vote*. The project a traveling art installation is a creative, fun, educational and informative event that promotes equality and inclusion.

The first aspect sees the artists dressing as suffragists and giving out their latest edition of The Age of Suff-Rage newspaper. This paper gives a running update on the projects activities, the adventures of the 'suffragists' and has pictorial documentations using creative graphic interpretations.

Since February this year the 'suffragists' have been spotted at the Regional launch of the Centenary of Suffrage grants, at the Castelmaine Art Gallery, and at the Gasworks Arts Park for the announcement of it's success in acquiring funding for the project. They were seen mingling with the masses for the Launch of the Centenary of Victorian Women Vote in Federation Square.

In celebration of International Women's Day they ventured on to the steps of Flinders

Street Station went to the Immigration Museum and wandered the streets of Melbourne. They were alighting here and there from the Yarra Trams sponsored 'Votes for Women' City Circle Line and then took to the steps of Parliament House to the amazement and delight of passers by. Later that night they attended a function at Trades Hall in recognition of its contribution in the struggle for gaining the vote for Victorian women. Smith attended the Women's Christian Temperance Union *Hats and History* event to report on the gathering. At the launch of Women's History Month for March at The Public Records Office of Victoria, they were delighted to be in the presence of the Women's Suffrage Petition of 1891, which has just received Victoria's highest heritage honour by being placed on the Victorian Heritage Register.

The next month sees the artist working on the art installation in which one hundred ceramic suffragists along with re-interpretative/commemorative campaign banners are being created to illustrate

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**Please note:** Editors of The Age of Suff-Rage have changed the name to The Art of Suff-Rage to clearly denote its purpose.



### Hats and History

At the Yarra Room, Melbourne Town Hall, Fern Smith dressed as a 'suffragist', joined in the *Hats and History* event organised by The Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Victoria which was founded in 1887. WCTU is one of the longest running organisations in the world.

Opening speaker Mrs De Kretser, who assists with promoting migrant, refugee issues, provision of educational development opportunities

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## CONVERSATION:LAUNCH

Opened by Honourable Christine Campbell MP the conversation:launch is a once in a life time event in Brunswick where students, activists and artists come together to speak of their civic engagement in women's equality.

Twelve women dedicated to women's equality will be presented a handcrafted book of their interview, conducted by RMIT University students in 2007. Kerry Lovering Convenor of Women's Electoral Lobby Victoria and President Liz Prideaux of the League of Women Voters Victoria will speak of their communication tools, history of women's suffrage and activism. Cathy Connor a well-known local composer will speak of her developing composition and the story of women composers in Australia. Ursula Dutkiewicz a long time member of the Women's Circus and ceramists will speak of her journey into the art of suffrage.

The *conversation* continues with two more events later in the year. On the 14th of October "conversation: Hanna get the banner" in the Foyer at Gasworks Arts Park, it will feature the time honoured traditions and history of activism on the streets through demonstration banners. On the 15th of November 2008 "conversation: suffrage day" will be at Northcote Town Hall, this event will feature Fanfare compositions by Cathy Connor and her new work will be premiered by a professional brass ensemble.

By the Editors

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the amazing time when women broke the chains that tied them to the house by becoming political and realizing their power. Stand by for latest updates and for more news of the 'suffragists' at the artist's websites

[www.fernartz.com](http://www.fernartz.com)

[www.ursuladutkiewicz.com](http://www.ursuladutkiewicz.com)

By Ursula Dutkiewicz



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for young people and wife of the Governor Of Victoria. Mrs De Kretser congratulated "...the WCTU for their commitment to women in Victoria over the past 121 years" "... inequality still exists in areas such as leadership in business, government, financial security in retirement and family responsibilities...We must continue wherever possible to work to ensure rights for women around the world..."

The Honourable Maxine Morand Minister for Women's Affairs, and Children & Early Childhood Development, took time out of her large portfolios, to introduce Mr. Graeme Rule, a Director of Drug Free Australia and Executive director of Coalition On Alcohol & Drug Education. Mr. Rule dressed in the attire of the day (early 1900's) presented a lively debate mimicking the ideas some men of the Victorian parliament held at the time. As Mrs De Kretser succinctly put it ... "believed [men] that it would be a desecration of the ideal of motherhood, destroy family life, be a blight on the fine character of Victorian women and could even introduce biological weakness and feminine attitudes into public life..."

The event turned into a riot of laughter and amusement when the chosen; some members of the audience were discreetly given a coloured tag; were asked to parade in front of the audience. The Hat and Slogan contest began in earnest and the audience voted for the belle of the hats and slogans.

Mrs Anna White-Atkins presented a complex speech on the history of the past one

### News Updates:

#### "Suffragists" for hire:

artists Fern and Ursula dressed in suffragist attire will attend your event newspaper in hand.

The Age of Suffrage installation available from May which includes: ceramic sculptures of suffragists and commemorative banners

#### Updates and inquiries

[www.ursuladutkiewicz.com](http://www.ursuladutkiewicz.com)

[www.fernartz.com](http://www.fernartz.com)

hundred years, the development of being "defined in male terms", the role of government to "help facilitate a healthy, functioning and equitable society" and the ambivalence "about motherhood" in our society. Mrs Anna White-Atkins posed many questions "what is it that women need from Government?" "What is our [women] focus and our role?" "How should we [women] exercise our vote?" The *Vision of Youth* presented by Madeleine Merritt and Stephanie Dowling two speeches on the past and continued action toward equality in the future. The Hats and Banner event was thoughtful and a great deal of fun. The WCTU organised a very welcoming event.

By Fern Smith

## Sponsors



*Knowing our past, transforming our future*



The Age of Suff-Rage would like to thank Gasworks Arts Park, Crusader Hillis, Ian Roberts (Harold Mitchell Foundation), Joan Kirner, Terry Bracks, Kris Coad, Women's Circus and the Office of Women's Policy Victoria, League of Women Voters Victoria, Women's Electoral Lobby Victoria.