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Ben Quilty smashes attendance record (in just 3 days)

- / A national first exhibition held in Bordertown's Walkway Gallery
- / Attendance records broken in just 3 days
- / Extended opening hours and special group tours for final **TWO** weeks of exhibition

The Walkway Gallery's current exhibition ***Ben Quilty: from the collection of the Art Gallery of South Australia*** has smashed all attendance records since opening on 23 October, 2016. In just 3 days, the exhibition became the highest attended exhibition in the Gallery's short history with over 2,500 visitors recorded.

On loan from the Art Gallery of South Australia, the exhibition features the collection *Inhabit* and the stunning 7 metre long 8 panel painting "*Evening Shadows after Johnstone*". *Inhabit* has not left the collection since it was acquired by the Gallery in 2011 and the two collections have never been exhibited together, making the Bordertown exhibition a national first.

This show is the largest and first major exhibition undertaken by the Walkway Gallery and marks a renewed commitment from the gallery to present work that reflects contemporary Australian culture. As visitor numbers continue to grow, Naomi Fallon, Director of the Walkway Gallery said the exhibition's popularity has even surpassed her expectations.

"This was always going to be a great opportunity for Limestone Coast residents to be immersed in and engage with contemporary art. Even though the work is by Ben Quilty, who is highly recognisable and arguably one of our country's leading contemporary artists, it presented a huge risk." she said.

"I think all of our visitors, particularly locals' sense that they're taking part in something unique and slightly risky – we're pushing forward and breaking new ground. It's so rare to see an internationally recognised artists work hanging in a regional gallery. People who are walking through the door have often never heard of Ben, and have certainly never seen anything like his distinctive style and the massive and impressive scale of *Evening Shadows*. But, despite that there is a definite buzz in town"

"This might be someone's first foray into a contemporary art, and actually maybe even a gallery. It's so important for people to know that they don't have to like it, but you should be curious, you should be open and ask questions if you want. We have, for the first time in 5 years, people stepping through the door for the very first time"

"It's exciting to see people travelling from Melbourne, Adelaide, Robe, Penola, Horsham, Bendigo....to Bordertown specifically for this exhibition. I've never seen so many blokes in the gallery before. No other exhibition has had this impact before."

Ms Fallon says the Gallery has worked hard to cater for the exhibition's popularity.

“We have extended the hours to accommodate those people who can’t get here during weekdays, by opening weekends, and we have also offered group and school tours to those that are interested” she said.

“We have another 2 weeks to go, and we are hoping to end on some big days. Who knows when we will see this work again?”

Ben Quilty: from the collection of the Art Gallery of South Australia is on show until **Sunday, November 27**. Opening hours are **Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm, Saturday 10am – 4pm and Sunday 11am – 4pm**. **Free admission.**

Media Enquiries //

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Connect with Walkway Gallery #walkwaygallery



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For more information on Ben Quilty // <http://www.walkwaygallery.com/benquilty>



The Walkway Gallery is principally funded by Tatiara District Council and supported by Country Arts SA through the Creative Communities Program.

Ben Quilty is currently exhibiting alongside 20 other contemporary artists in the Art Gallery of South Australia exhibition “*Sappers and Shrapnel: Contemporary art and the art of the trenches*”. Open until January 29.