

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **DATE**

Tuesday 8 October 2024

## **Portland's Art Scene Comes Alive with 'I'm So Shellfish' Exploring Art Through Animation, VR, and Dance**

The vibrant local art community is set to come together through a unique initiative titled *I'm So Shellfish*, led by acclaimed Portland-raised, Melbourne-based artist and animator Isobel Knowles.

This exciting project, funded by the Abandoned event, provides a creative platform for local youth to explore art and technology through workshops, culminating in a series of public exhibitions and experiences.

The initiative focuses on the theme of Shellfish, aligning with the Upwelling Festival.

Workshops were held recently, engaging up to eight participants of all ages. Through these workshops, attendees created artwork that will form part of an innovative animation and Virtual Reality (VR) dance party.

Known for her unique style and award-winning projects, Isobel Knowles led the sessions with support from Portland-based artist Rory Carter, who also contributed his expertise in sculpture and painting.

*I'm So Shellfish* will feature a range of multi-sensory installations at Groke in Bentinck Street, where the community can view the participants' creations through VR headsets, sculptures and digital projections. The exhibition will be complemented by original music composed by local musician Jack Caithness, providing the soundtrack for the VR dance party.

Leading up to the event, a series of playful 'breadcrumbs' will be scattered throughout the community. These bi-weekly releases will feature snippets of animations directly inspired by the artwork produced during the workshops, inviting the public to engage with the project and discover hidden gems across Portland.

"We're thrilled to bring the creativity of our young people to life through this project," said Project Curator Megan Jarrett.

"It's an excellent way to combine traditional art forms with new media, showcasing the next generation of Portland's artistic talent."

The success of the Abandoned 2 event, held in November 2022, has provided the critical funding needed to bring the *I'm So Shellfish* initiative to life.

This one-night-only event transformed an undisclosed abandoned building into a dynamic space featuring upcycled art installations, an op shop runway parade, and a range of performances.

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Funds raised from Abandoned 2 have gone directly towards supporting local artists and empowering young people to explore new forms of artistic expression through workshops, animation, and virtual reality experiences.

"The collaboration between *I'm So Shellfish* and Abandoned is a testament to the strength and resilience of our local arts scene," Ms Jarrett added.

"By shining a spotlight on young people and emerging artists, we're creating opportunities for artistic expression and community connection."

*I'm So Shellfish* exhibition will be open for viewing at Groke in Bentinck Street starting on Saturday 2 November 2024 10 AM – 2 PM, with details of the 'breadcrumb' locations and virtual installations to be announced on the Abandoned events Portland FB page.

[End of Media Release]

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