**9 November 2022**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***Pictures of You*: an exhibition with a difference - empowering and representing people with disabilities through art**

*Pictures of You* is a new collaborative exhibition led by John Brookes opening at Belconnen Arts Centre at 6pm on Friday 2 December 2022 ahead of International Day of People with Disability. The exhibition links people with lived experience of physical and mental disabilities with an empathic, experienced professional photographer (Hilary Wardhaugh). Working in equal collaboration to produce an honest portrait, the final works aim to reflect the whole person and not just the ‘consumer with a disability’.

Project Manager John Brookes of Canberry Communications explains*: “The goal is one of equal balance in working with the artist to vocalise their experiences and feelings, collaborating to produce a visual and accessible perspective for reference by the subject and the wider community.*

*“The end result is combination of a meaningful and balanced exploration of issues and a source of pride in the subject; coupled with the artist’s natural creative ability to empathise with and interpret their subject in new ways by working WITH the subject.”*

Eleanor Waight, portrait subject, adds “*I really didn't want to be portrayed as a sad figure.  I wanted people to see me as I am and I really liked the end result.  I think there is a tendency for people to see the white cane before they really see the person, which is a shame. . I like the way it shows me looking forward with a certain sense of anticipation.”*

**Exhibition opening: 6pm Friday 2 December 2022**

**Exhibition runs: 2 December 2022 – 5 February 2023**

**Learn more:** [**www.belcoarts.com.au/pictures**](http://www.belcoarts.com.au/pictures)

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