

Bloody good South Australians working to end period poverty

May 5, 2023

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Co-curators Jade Harland and Tiff Rysdale have pulled together an exhibition of multimedia artworks they hope will break the stigma around menstruation.



Above L—R: Jade Harland and Tiff Rysdale, next to the artwork 'Fire and Water' by Jade Harland

Co-curated by artists Jade Harland and Tiff Rysdale, *PERIOD the Exhibition* is an effort by the duo to destigmatise menstruation in South Australia and bring attention to period poverty.

Opening on Friday, 5 May, at Floating Goose Studios, the exhibition consists of works from many South Australian artists, each sharing a depiction of menstruation through their preferred art form.

PERIOD was inspired by the harsh realities highlighted in the 2021 report [Menstruation Matters](#), from the South Australian commissioner for young people, Helen Connolly.

“It was sad reading that report [to see] just how many school kids are still affected by period poverty and [a lack of] access to period products,” Jade says.

“Kids are... trying to hide when you have to go and take a pad to the toilet or just [not] having access to bins in toilets.”



Sparkly tampons in 'Tampon Era' by Caitlin Berzins.

This provoked in Jade and Tiff a desire for change, which led them to the idea of taking action through art. They did an open callout, from which they sourced work from 17 local artists in a range of mediums.

“We’ve got some video, we’ve got some ceramics, installation, AI... few different types of textiles,” Tiff says.

Part of the exhibition, ‘Period Stool’, by Deidre But-Husaim, is a subtle representation of every woman’s biggest fear — leaking blood through your clothes.

“She had this stool in her studio and she had made this crochet... seat cover and I think we all kind of joked, ‘Oh, it’s a period stool!’” Jade says.

“We like that sort of abstract thinking, that it’s not in your face,” Tiff elaborates.

Taboo Period Products is a supporter of *PERIOD the Exhibition*, and the company’s co-founder and managing director Eloise Hall encourages the idea of using art to stimulate conversation about social issues.

“A lot of people don’t feel comfortable asking for period products or really that comfortable about their own biology, so an art exhibition like this is a really amazing way for people to express their own experiences and create a safe space where people can come and share their own stories,” Eloise says.

“I think this exhibition is a beautiful, brilliant example of how we can really generate significant change and influence through art, because it’s such a powerful medium. It speaks beyond just logic and common sense.”



‘Week By Week’ by Emma Neill.

Taboo is a South Australian, sustainable period-product business, which directs its net profits towards ending period poverty and making period products accessible to every Australian who needs them.

“Our rule of thumb is that wherever there is toilet paper, there should also be period products, and whoever’s responsibility it is to buy that toilet paper, it’s also their responsibility to buy period products,” Eloise says.

Eloise began Taboo with her then business partner Isobel Marshall in the summer holidays of 2016/17, before their final year of high school.

The pair had always been interested in [running Taboo as a social enterprise](#), and this is now the backbone of the business.

“The social enterprise model just makes so much sense to me, and also the fact that everyone deserves basic access to period products just makes so much sense to me,” Eloise says.

“So, you know, these two kinds of missions and visions we have are just so aligned with what I want to see come to fruition.”

Eloise says Taboo’s goal is to end period poverty in Australia by 2030. They’re pursuing this aim through their ‘Pad it Forward’ model, where people can purchase period products via Taboo on behalf of those who can’t access them.

“We have partnerships with communities, charities, schools around the country. We have about 15 partnerships at the moment, and we re-distribute that product to those people at risk around the country,” she says.

Eloise also hopes to break down the stigma around menstruation, which she says is an initiative all South Australians can contribute to through everyday conversations.

“Just champion for greater access to period products [and] everyone’s life will be better, but it will also help break the stigma,” she says.

“Advocate for your schools to buy product, advocate for your university to supply product.

“People in decision-making positions want to hear your feedback, so if you think that your workplace should be having a supply of period products on hand — ask them. Speak to your boss. We’ve got some resources that can help you with that as well.”

Taboo Period Products are available for purchase at chosen retailers, or through their [website](#).

PERIOD the Exhibition will run from 5—26 May at Floating Goose Studios, located at 271 Morphett Street, Adelaide.

Connect with [Jade](#) and [Tiff](#), and [Taboo](#) on Instagram.

