

SUNSHINE COAST
NATIONAL
ARTPRIZE
2025

Exhibition Catalogue

Sunshine Coast Council acknowledges the Sunshine Coast Country,
home of the Kabi Kabi peoples and the Jinibara peoples, the
Traditional Custodians, whose lands and waters we all now share.

We recognise that these have always been places of cultural,
spiritual, social and economic significance. The Traditional
Custodians' unique values, and ancient and enduring cultures,
deepen and enrich the life of our community.

We wish to pay respect to their Elders – past, present and
emerging, and acknowledge the important role First Nations People
continue to play within the Sunshine Coast community.

**SUNSHINE COAST
NATIONAL
ARTPRIZE
2025**

Exhibition Catalogue

Caloundra Regional Gallery

gallery.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au | gallery@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au | 07 5420 8299 | 22 Omrah Ave, Caloundra QLD 4551

Opening hours Tuesday to Friday 10am-4pm, Saturday to Sunday 10am-2pm. Closed public holidays.



Welcome to the Sunshine Coast National Art Prize 2025 – a dynamic celebration of contemporary Australian art and a powerful reflection of the creative pulse of our times.

This prestigious prize continues to champion artistic innovation and thought-provoking perspectives in 2D and new media. Forty exceptional finalists have been selected, each bringing their unique voice and vision to this year's exhibition.

These works explore personal, political, environmental, and cultural narratives, offering a compelling window into contemporary life.

The winning work, selected by our esteemed judge, will be acquired into the **Sunshine Coast Art Collection** as a lasting legacy of this vibrant and evolving cultural landscape.

Whether you are moved by a single brushstroke, a digital gesture, or the power of an idea, I also encourage you to cast your vote in the People's Choice Award.

This vibrant collection can be enjoyed online or in person during the eight-week exhibition at Caloundra Regional Gallery.

Thank you for joining us in celebrating the artists, their creativity, and the ideas they bring to light. We hope this exhibition inspires, challenges, and connects you – just as great art should.

The art prize is made possible thanks to Council's continued investment and the generous support from local sponsors, philanthropists and partners. Thank you all.

I know you'll enjoy this wonderful exhibition.

Mayor Rosanna Natoli

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rosanna Natoli".



Robert Heather is an experienced arts leader who has worked in art galleries, museums, libraries and educational institutions in Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales on exhibitions, collections and programs. He was Executive Director of the Regional Galleries Association of Queensland (RGAQ), the inaugural Director of Artspace Mackay, managed exhibitions, publications and fellowships at the State Library of Victoria for ten years and has also been Director of the New England Regional Art Museum (NERAM) in Armidale and Executive Director of the Art Gallery Society of NSW.

We are delighted to present the Sunshine Coast National Art Prize 2025, celebrating some of the best Australian contemporary arts practice in two-dimensional and moving image.

Running since 2006, the Sunshine Coast National Art Prize is our region's flagship art award. The 40 finalist artworks offer an artist's interpretation of our world today, with a diverse portrayal of subjects in a range of styles, from traditional oils and acrylics to new media and digital compositions.

With over 465 entries from every state and territory in the country, the Sunshine Coast National Art Prize is anchored as a major national prize. A big thank you to all the artists who entered. As always, this prize is one of the team's greatest joys as we view works from so many of the extraordinary artmakers in our country.

Whether finalists use digital or physical media, the essence of the art prize remains – works that celebrate, confront, enlighten and engage. With entries encompassing 290 paintings, 124 works on paper including drawings, etchings, collage and digital prints, 33 mixed media works, 10 textile artworks and 13 moving image works, artists pushed the mediums to the limit, sharing their storytelling, memories and thoughts on current topics sitting at the forefront of national dialogues.

Once again it was extremely hard to choose the forty finalists but I have no doubt our visitors to the show will be engaged, entertained, enlightened and delighted with this year's Sunshine Coast National Art Prize 2025 exhibition.

As always, we are grateful to our sponsors and supporters for recognising the significance and importance of the arts. Thanks to our generous major prize funding partner Argon Law, Sunshine Coast and longstanding sponsors and supporters, the De Deyne family, as well as the Caloundra Chamber of Commerce, Montville Country Cabins, Coastline BMW, International Art Services (IAS) and Friends of the Regional Gallery, Caloundra.

This year we are privileged to have esteemed guest judge, Robert Heather, who brings a wealth of knowledge and skills to the extremely hard task of selecting the winning artworks.

Jo Duke

Director, Caloundra Regional Gallery



Peter Alwast | *Soap Bubbles*

Katy Bain | *Curated by the Algorithm*

The BOOreaucrats | *Signs of Agreement*

Lina Buck | *The figure, the object and the space in which they reside 2*

Ray Coffey | *A Lost Boy*

Erin Conron | *Parallax Series - Prism #2*

Karee Dahl | *Peg*

Gerwyn Davies | *Bait*

Raimond de Weerd | *25 Fibro Houses*

George Fetting | *Aqueous #1*

Mim Fluhrer | *Sun Portals (Let Us Dance)*

Mark Forbes | *Crumbling*

Tamika Grant-Iramu | *Fragments of Torino: an observation*

Amala Groom | *The Lodge*

James Hale | *Bad and Australian*

Jodie Handley | *Patient 46, Adult Female, Age 38*

Sam Harrison | *Born Here, From There*

Andy Harwood | *Mesmerism*

Naomi Hobson | *Rare*

Petalia Humphreys | *Inversion #5*

Atipalku Intjalki | *Tjukurpa Mulayangu*

ISOyoh | *She the Fettered*

Freddy Ken | *Kulata Tjuta – Many Spears*

Jason Murphy | *Bunya Drop Zone*

Philip James Mylecharane | *Multifacet figure with augments*

Emily Portmann | *Self Soother, Action Two*

Laurent Pouzet | *Top of the Food Chain*

Huseyin Sami | *Untitled (SPB)*

Si Yi Shen | *Embrace*

Wade Taylor | *Obelisk*

Carlene Thompson | *Tjulpu Kulunypa – Baby Birds*

Thomas Thorby-Lister | *Bladensburg National Park (Mapping 04)*

Emma Thorp | *Home*

Walala Tjapaltjarri and Michael Eather | *Turbo Tokyo Tingari*

Seabastion Toast | *The River House*

Nicole Voevodin-Cash | *ALLsorts LOSS + POTENTIAL*

David Wells | *Dream house with galah*

Simon Welsh | *Bed Head*

Sally West | *Bin Night*

Amanda Western | *Held by time*

Exhibition Dates

Friday 15 August to Sunday 12 October 2025

Major Prize \$25,000

Sponsored by Argon Law and
Sunshine Coast Council

argon law



Highly Commended Award \$5000

Sponsored by the De Deyne Family

De Deyne
F A M I L Y

People's Choice Award \$2500

Sponsored by Caloundra Chamber of Commerce



Artist residency accommodation

Supported by Montville Country Cabins



Artist residency vehicle

Supported by Coastline BMW



Artwork transportation and logistics

Supported by International Art Services (IAS)



Exhibition catalogue

Sponsored by Friends, Regional Gallery, Caloundra





Peter ALWAST
ACT

Soap Bubbles, 2023
Oil and oil stick on linen
122 x 122cm
Image courtesy of the artist
Photo by David Patterson

Soap Bubbles captures the uncanny stillness of an acrid beach scene, where hazy light, tainted by plumes of smoke, filters through a sky scorched yellow. The muted greens, blues, and silvers of the seashore reflect ghostly figures, scattered debris, and a solitary umbrella, evoking an eerie quietude – a moment of temporal suspension, as if time holds its breath before an impending collapse. In the distance, plumes of smoke, a by-product of technological modernity, choke the air. Drawing from Jean Siméon Chardin's *Soap Bubbles* (c. 1734), I echo his meditation on fragile, momentary beauty through soft, iridescent light, where a soap bubble floats in delicate equipoise, its fleeting existence a prelude to inevitable rupture.



Katy BAIN
QLD

Curated by the Algorithm, 2025
Ink and marker on canvas
75 x 90cm
Image courtesy of the artist

This work explores the tension between visibility and vulnerability. To be looked at is not the same as being known. In a world that demands performance and capture, hiding becomes a quiet act of resistance. Our sense of self is shaped not only by reflection but by feedback – likes, shares, fleeting validations. Algorithms, unseen and indifferent, curate our worth in fragments, teaching us what to reveal, what to conceal, and what to erase.

The figure inhabits a liminal zone – not fully here, not fully gone – where the self, fragments and reforms, in response to the gaze. Through layers of ink and marker, the image is allowed to break, blur, and mend. What remains is a psychological residue: a ghost shaped as much by absence as by form. The portrait doesn't offer answers, only a trace of someone deciding how much of themselves to give away.



The BOOreaucrats VIC

Signs of Agreement, 2024

Digital video

2:47mins

Image (video still) courtesy of the artists

Videography by Darren James

The BOOreaucrats are two middle-aged administrators locked in a loop of signing, stamping, and shuffling documents.

Performing these rituals while literally stepping on each other's toes, they explore the awkward dance of shared authority and institutional routine. What does it mean to cooperate when every gesture creates friction?

Through humour, repetition, and low-stakes ceremony, *Signs of Agreement* reflects on the habits of bureaucracy, the theatre of collaboration, and the paper-thin layers of meaning we assign to official acts. The BOOreaucrats balance the ridiculous and the sincere in an ongoing search for something resembling agreement.



Lina BUCK
VIC

The figure, the object and the space in which they reside 2, 2023
Archival inkjet print and frame, ed. 1/8
77 x 62.4 x 3cm
Image courtesy of the artist

The figure, the object and the space in which they reside 2 exists in a constant relationship that is being negotiated and renegotiated. The work highlights the fluidity of shapes and forms in the construction of space and negative space – an ever-shifting terrain that we are, have been, and continue to be located within. This work considers how bodies and objects shape, and are shaped by, their surroundings, exploring the tensions and harmonies that emerge in the process.

Utilising recorded action, the work maps the figure's movement within heterotopic space, tracing ephemeral gestures that mark the presence and absence of the body. It engages with concepts of impermanence, transformation, and relational experience – how we navigate space and time, and how those spaces in turn navigate us. By embedding methods of spatial measurement and bodily experience, the work examines the fluid boundaries between presence and absence, structure and movement, actuality and potential.



Ray COFFEY

QLD

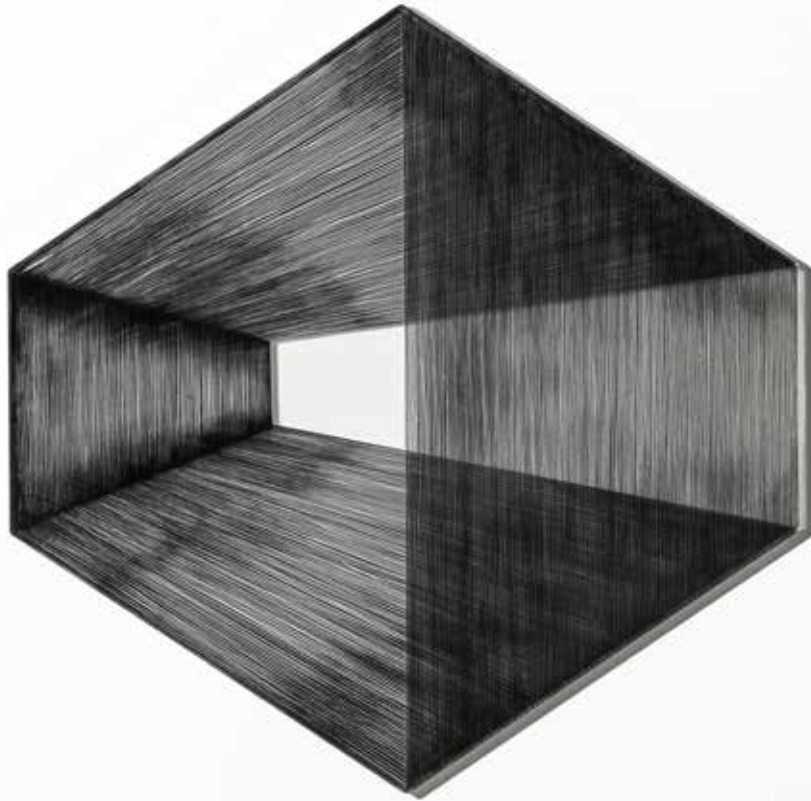
A Lost Boy, 2025

Oil on panel

122 x 61cm

Image courtesy of the artist

This piece explores the growing mental health crisis affecting boys and young men. Increasingly, many are choosing to disengage from society – stepping away from education, employment, and social connections. At the heart of this withdrawal is a deepening sense of worthlessness, often intensified and perpetuated by social media.



Erin CONRON
QLD

Parallax Series – Prism #2, 2024
Kiln-fired glass with applied enamel
45 x 45cm

Image courtesy of the artist
Photo by Dave Gleeson

This work explores the optical illusion of depth and form through the interplay of surface, transparency, and light. Created by painting layers of fine, linear marks on both the front and rear faces of glass, the rectangular prism appears to project beyond its flat plane, shifting with the viewer's perspective.

Part of the broader *Parallax* series, this piece continues my investigation into how perception can be manipulated through layered surface design. The lines, hand-applied in enamel through multiple kiln-firings, build visual tension between flatness and dimensionality, echoing principles of moiré and spatial distortion. While grounded in glassmaking traditions, this work intentionally blurs the boundaries between object and image, inviting stillness and slow viewing. *Prism #2* speaks to my ongoing interest in the subtleties of perception and the ways repetition, transparency, and line can shape what we believe we see.



Karee DAHL
QLD

Peg, 2025
Polyester thread, wash'n wear fabric
glue, pins
110 x 110cm
Image courtesy of the artist

A peg, a practical, productive innovation. Historically, English farmers would grub out grey willow to prevent travellers from camping on their properties. The travellers would make pegs with this bush/tree, supplying a very good income, particularly for the women. From tent pegs, JPEG's, to being pegged to the US dollar, this simple yet diverse, useful object is mind boggling. Particularly when they are a common sight scattering our backyards, only picked up when it's time to mow the lawn. A useful metaphor on so many levels, that art icon of note, "the reclining female nude" comes to mind - yes!



Gerwyn DAVIES NSW

Bait, 2025
Archival pigment print, ed. 5/5
125 x 105cm (framed)
Image courtesy of the artist, Jan
Murphy Gallery, Brisbane and
Michael Reid Galleries, Sydney/Berlin

Where the camera is conventionally claimed to possess a unique capacity for revealing something of a subject to its viewer, in my own practice, I instead perform acts of queer photographic dis/appearance.

My figure is buried beneath elaborate, sculptural costumes that mutually entice yet resist the viewer's examination while the image itself is polished and manicured, obtaining a slick and synthetic glow.

This double bind of a figure both conspicuously stood before the lens while nowhere to be seen – hiding in plain sight – reflects my ongoing interest in the potentials of queer representational in/visibility through which subjects are empowered to pass before the camera un/seen.

In this work *Bait*, I use costume and camera to conjure a world of Australian tropical kitsch – one not too far removed from the parochial torpor of Porpoise Spit, albeit queered and reimagined with warm nostalgia and knowing camp.



Raimond DE WEERDT NSW

25 Fibro Houses, 2025
Photographic pigment print, ed. 1/5
60 x 90cm
Image courtesy of the artist

This composite photograph of 25 fibro houses explores the Australian dream of home ownership through a dreamlike, almost surreal lens. By layering these nearly identical structures, the work reflects on the housing crisis while drawing parallels to the post-war era, when fibro (fibrocement) homes provided an affordable, mass-produced solution to a severe shortage.

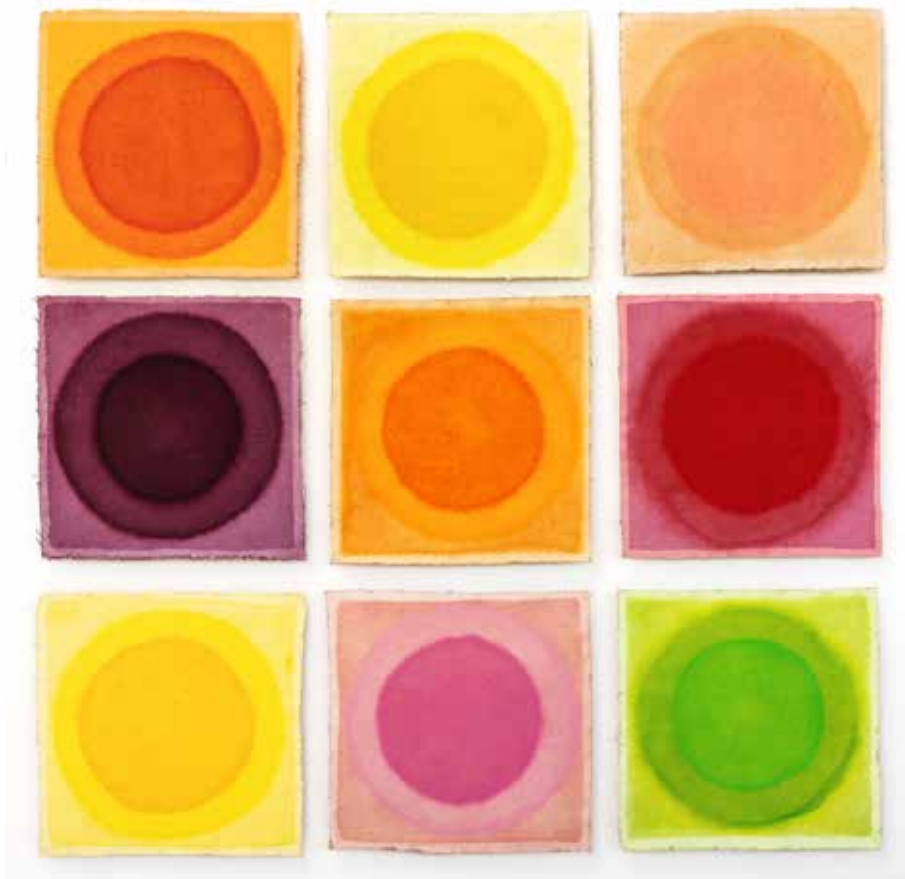
In the 1950s, these simple, efficient houses offered stability for working-class families. Today, as affordability reaches crisis levels; this work reimagines the fibro house as a symbol of both past resilience and present urgency. The repetition creates a hypnotic quality, blurring the line between aspiration and reality – questioning why sustainable, low-cost housing remains scarce in policy discussions. Through this visual study, I examine themes of necessity, cyclical struggle, and the fading promise of home ownership. By revisiting a once-effective solution, the photograph invites reflection on how history might inspire future action – and whether the dream of a home is still within reach.



George FETTING
NSW

Aqueous #1, 2025
Archival inkjet pigment print
105 x 140cm
Image courtesy of the artist

Aqueous #1 serves as a testament to the fragile beauty and resilience of our oceans. It celebrates the profound bond between humanity and the vast expanse of water that cradles our planet. Humans are drawn to water with an animal magnetism that transcends culture, geography, and time – a primal connection forged over millennia of evolution. The simple but fundamental recognition of water as the source of life itself.



Mim FLUHRER NSW

Sun Portals (Let Us Dance), 2025
Acrylic compound and acrylic
on hessian
132 x 132cm
Image courtesy of the artist

Mim Fluhner lives and paints on the mid-north coast of Australia. Her paintings are expressions of her own unique experiences of being a mother, a woman, an artist and living in an off-grid community surrounded by nature. Her story comes together with brush and paint, form and material, and with a joy to share it.

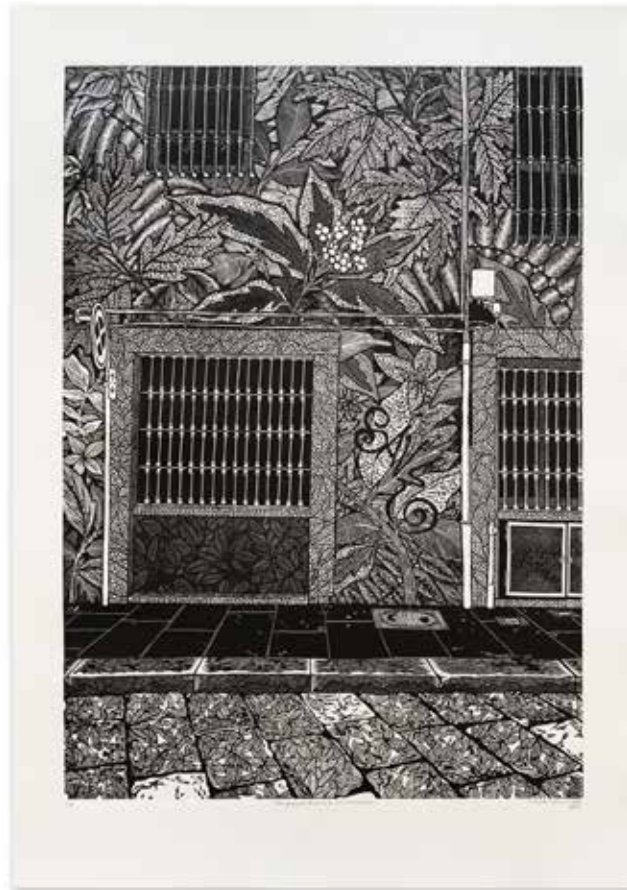


Mark FORBES
VIC

Crumbling, 2023
Giclée print, ed. 1/10
76 x 76cm
Image courtesy of the artist

I am an image collector. The vast majority of my photos occur organically, very much by happenstance, usually on the way to a different destination. People often comment that my photography gives them a sense of déjà vu and longing, even when they know they've never been to the places photographed. However, there is something very familiar, something intangible that can be related to. It is this deeper connection with the viewer that I strive to achieve through my photography.

The scenes that I choose to document are clearly ordinary life, commonplace and mundane. However, it is the approach to these scenes – the human presence despite an abject lack of a person, the personality of objects within, the tangible details and the importance of documenting scenes that tend to disappear over time – that for me combine to create the images that are essential to share.



Tamika GRANT-IRAMU
(Torres Strait Islander)
QLD

Fragments of Torino: an observation,
2025

Linocut print on paper, ed. AP1

91.5 x 69.5 (framed)

Image courtesy of the artist and

Onespace, Brisbane

Photo by Louis Lim

Fragments of Torino: an observation draws on my impressions and experiences during a residency program in Torino (Italy) in late 2023. Using printmaking as a tool to capture my visceral impressions of place, I found myself responding to the organic forms that interact with the built environment of the city. While exploring Torino, I gravitated towards intimate observations of the old Italian architecture. The delicate engraved details that characterise these buildings are being worn away over time while also being layered with new and unexpected details. As I observed these buildings I was fascinated by the textures and movement of both nature and graffiti and how it redefines the way the architecture is experienced. There is a continuity within the evolving environment of this building as people and nature add to its story.



Amala GROOM
(Wiradyuri)
QLD

The Lodge, 2025

Single-channel video, 6K UHD video,
colour, sound dimensions variable

11:11 mins

Image (video still) courtesy of the artist
Cinematography by Ryan Andrew Lee

The Lodge is a ceremonial moving image work by Wiradyuri artist Amala Groom that reclaims Canberra's Parliamentary Triangle – a colonial site on Ngunnawal Country – as sacred ground. Through performance, ritual, and sacred geometry, Groom activates the landscape as a site of spiritual sovereignty. The work maps a path through geometric forms – triangle, circle, vesica piscis, and more – drawing on their ancient metaphysical meanings to transform the built environment into a living mandala. Influenced by the Theosophical ideals embedded in the city's design by Walter and Marion Griffin, Groom repositions these esoteric frameworks through a First Nations lens, critiquing their colonial entanglements while honouring their latent energetic potential. Referencing the duality of the White and Black Lodges from *Twin Peaks*, she locates the Parliamentary Triangle as a vortex of colonial power – and reclaims it through embodied resistance. *The Lodge* invites audiences into a ceremony of deep seeing, revealing the spiritual architecture of Country beneath imposed order. This project was supported by Arts ACT, Creative Australia and the Australian National University Bandalang Studio Residency, College of Systems and Society.

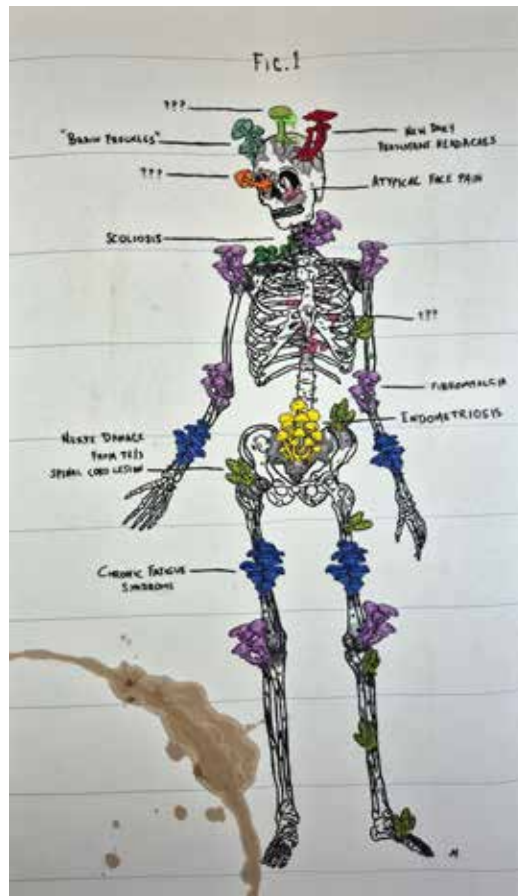


James HALE
VIC

Bad and Australian, 2024
Acrylic spray paint on linen
100 x 100cm
Image courtesy of the artist

Cultural cringe gets free rein in this painting, which was inspired by a Facebook fight between two elderly drag queens that I observed but was too terrified to participate in.

The sentiment in my painting is a bit more sincere than the source material, but not by much. Genuine affection is there, even if it's combined with open hostility. Coincidentally, this mixture is very, very Australian.



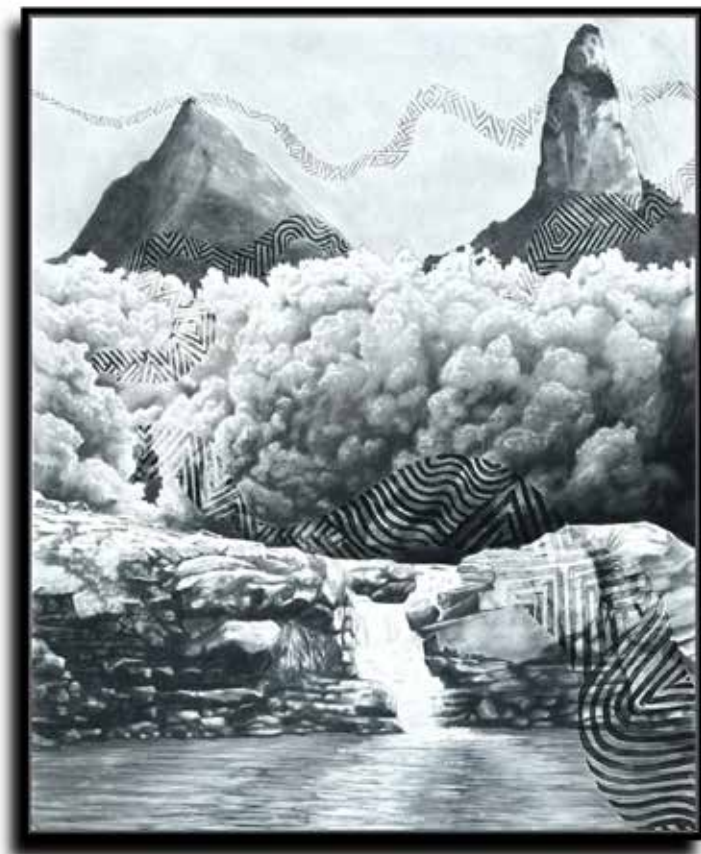
Jodie HANDLEY QLD

Patient 46, Adult Female, Age 38, 2025
Hand embroidery on cotton drill
103 x 64cm
Image courtesy of the artist (detail)

Patient 46, Adult Female, Age 38 is life lived with multiple chronic illnesses and conditions. They are parasitic, feeding on your energy and ability to function, causing you pain and slowly taking over. Where there is one, there is almost always another - you eventually become invisible where your illnesses are not.

The skeleton was sized at half the height of the artist, as chronic illnesses and conditions often make you feel diminished and less of a person. The bold linework of the skeleton and text have been made to look almost unrefined and 'hand drawn', like careless pen strokes in a medical practitioner's grimy, forgotten notebook. Each mushroom has been coloured in a limited colour palette to add to the illustrative nature of the piece. Occasionally, parts of a mushroom will appear at unexpected angles, in odd positions, or even be missing, representing the unpredictable nature of these illnesses.

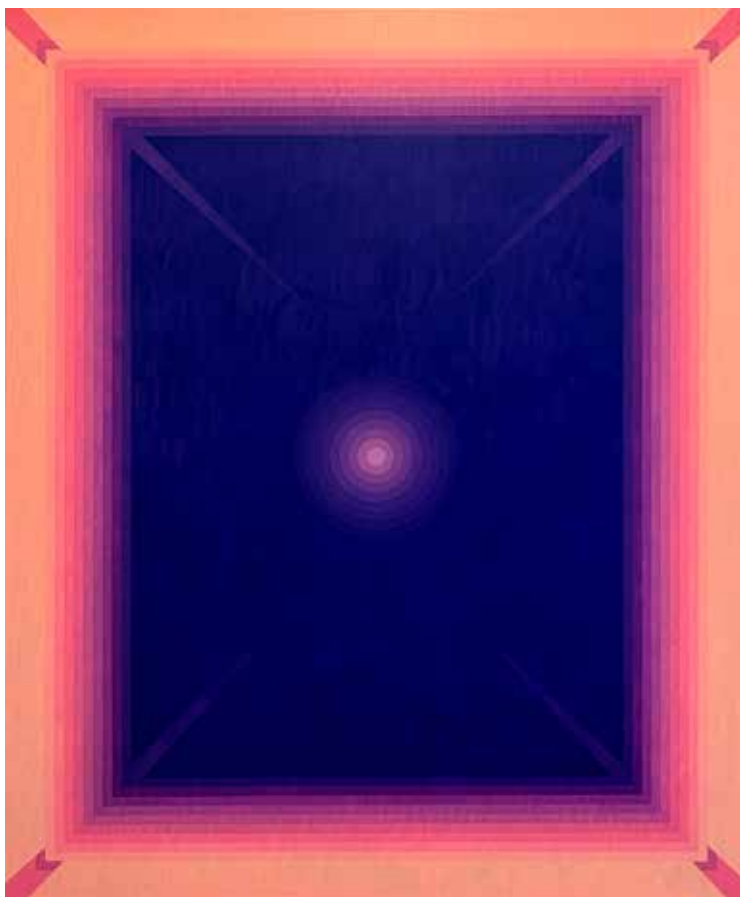
This piece represents over 340 hours of hand embroidery.



Sam HARRISON
(Wiradjuri/Kamilaroi)
QLD

Born Here, From There, 2025
Charcoal on canvas
152 x 121cm
Image courtesy of the artist

Born Here, From There is a depiction of the metaphysical connections that create belonging. Travelling through the landscape is a pattern connecting the artist's place of birth with their ancestral home. The work explores the sense of being known by the land and being grounded by the memory it holds.



Andy HARWOOD
QLD

Mesmerism, 2025
Synthetic polymer on canvas
122 x 102cm
Image courtesy of the artist and
Studio Gallery Group, Melbourne/
Sydney/Brisbane

Mesmerism is an exploration into the mind's ability to subconsciously adopt an idea. Originating from one's mind, the repetitive idea becomes a self-induced proposal, which subsequently influences one's own feelings and behaviour. Akin to hypnosis, mesmerism has the power to manipulate one's own bodily state. The work engages the viewer's own emotional response through the interruption of foreground and background. This creates the illusion of receding and advancing planes and shifts the central focus between inner and outer space, challenging perception and establishing their own subconscious reaction. The central focal point initially magnetises the viewer's attention whilst harmonising the work. The composition utilises the numerology of 9, which suggests the interconnectedness of all things.



Naomi HOBSON
(Southern Kaantju)
QLD

Rare, 2025

Pigment print on archival cotton rag
paper

83 x 83cm

Image courtesy of the artist and
Rebecca Hossack Art Gallery

The Coen River is where I live. It is the traditional home of the Southern Kaantju people. We share this place with all the birds, fruit bats, reptiles, insects, mammals and fish that live here and call the river home. A rare resident from the river is the Rufous Owl. We call this 'Ngurku'. He visits us most nights during the dry season and keeps a perch on an old sandpaper fig in my yard where he hunts and prowls in the evening for his prey. What adds to his mystique is his open friendship he shares with us.

Endemic *only* to the Northern parts of Australia.



Petalia HUMPHREYS
QLD

Inversion #5, 2025

Video

1:30mins

Image (video still) courtesy of the artist

Mesmerising and otherworldly, *Inversion #5* challenges our perception of a beach landscape. The work inverts our view of a familiar scene and allows a reconsideration of time and space. I am interested in collapsing and expanding plane and perspective. My practice explores non-linear perception through spatial enquiry – remapping the spaces I inhabit and move through in my daily routine. *Inversion #5* presents a meditative and embodied experience of location. The rhythmic movement of the ocean is bordered by stillness in blushing and disruptive colour.



Atipalku INTJALKI
(Pitjantjatjara/Anangu)
NT

Tjukurpa Mulayangu, 2024

Acrylic on linen

100 x 150cm

Image courtesy of the artist and
Ernabella Arts, Pukatja

Tjukurpa Mulayangu is a men's law place. They made this place and campsite. Mulayangu made this place. Over in the west is the other side of Amata which is my father's Country. This is a sacred place called Tankalanya. This is all I can say.



ISOyoh

VIC

She the Fettered, 2025

Pigment inkjet print, ed. 1/5

120 x 80cm

Image courtesy of the artist

Defiance and nostalgia seep from the masked woman's hands. Never mind that her feet – and freedom – have been sacrificed for f(fashion)'s sake. Women grant plausible deniability to designers, complicit in a cycle of glamour and glory, punishment and pain. Cue vision of teetering, tottering fashionistas – infantilised and abased – wobbling down catwalks.

Women are held hostage in anticipation of the next season's collection, before fast fashion rip-offs appear in chain stores. Fashion is a frivolous and wasteful form of retail capitalism. From corsets to codpieces and poke bonnets to periwigs, fashion is absurd – just like her expensive, gilded, sabre-tipped and dangerously-impractical shoes.

Salvatore Ferragamo invented steel supports to lift a woman's heel 10 cm higher than the balls of her feet – thus carrying her entire weight with only straps, chains and buckles over her toes and fetlocks for support.

Stockholm Syndrome? Just stop it.



Freddy KEN
(Pitjantjatjara/Anangu)
NT

Kulata Tjuta – Many Spears, 2023

Acrylic on canvas

100 x 80cm

Image courtesy of the artist and
Ernabella Arts, Pukatja

Freddy is painting his grandfather's Country in Far West South Australia. He depicts *kulata tjuta* (many spears) travelling through the sky to catch *wati wanampi* (snake man). Those *wati wanampi* are moving fast through the sky. There was one woman waiting there with a baby and she said there was a *wati* who was nearby hiding in a bush, ready to duck down and go and then throw those spears.



Jason MURPHY
(Jinibara/Dungidau)
QLD

Bunya Drop Zone, 2025

Ink on paper, ed. 1/12

60 x 60cm

Image courtesy of the artist

Photo by Teddy Horton,

Light Industry

The *Bunya Drop Zone* poster is an homage to the staple food source that has sustained our people over many generations. Once plentiful from the Sunshine Coast to the Bunya Mountains, the gathering for the bumper crop was an opportunity to trade, sort disputes, form marriages and share stories through dance and song.

Jason Murphy is a Dungidau descendent of the Jinibara, based in Woodford. He draws, prints, wood burns and makes video artworks. His artworks comprise of printed geometric interlocking images and digital videos that are influenced by the land and nature. Murphy produces colourful and playful works, challenging the way the viewer looks at the world. Nature-inspired works, mimicking a natural experience, capturing the natural landscapes of everyday life and experiences. He has exhibited in group exhibitions in Southeast Queensland, Far North Queensland and Victoria, with a solo exhibition at Queensland College of Art and Design.



Philip James
MYLECHARANE
TAS

Multifacet figure with augments, 2025

Oil on board

35 x 28cm

Image courtesy of the artist

In this portrait, I am aiming for a contingent depiction of human form that escapes cliché and facsimile. The paint registers a reality of the human image, yet each element is singular and simultaneously complimentary. This accumulation of mark and form aims to separate this work from representational depiction or abstract lyricism, whilst alluding to both.

In situating a painting between forms of visual language, there is a withholding of closure and finality. This perhaps invokes tension and ambiguity, however I also believe it invites a sense of poignancy. The change, contrast and accident present in the work embody the feelings and indeterminations we may find in ourselves and each other. Rather than emulate, painting can invent a way to understand and comprehend reality.



Emily PORTMANN
NSW

Self Soother, Action Two, 2024
Archival pigment print
100 x 100cm
Image courtesy of the artist

Self Soother, Action Two is part of an ongoing photographic series which plays with bodily actions that respond to immaterial spaces, centring on how psychological sites can be given physical presence and the relationships in such actions. As a neurodivergent artist, Portmann examines these shifting psychological landscapes through the use of self-portraiture and notions of self-soothing behaviours, such as the cradling of a doppelgänger's second head in her arms. The tenderness with which the head is held lends to a surreal quality as the figure tries to sooth the internal discomforts of shifting perceptions and outsider experiences.



Laurent POUZET
QLD

Top of the Food Chain, 2024
Charcoal on 100% cotton paper
69.5 x 57cm
Image courtesy of the artist

This is my brother-in-law, Lachie. I never grew up with a brother; I was blessed with two amazing sisters. However, Lachie has filled that little-brother-gap in my life with ease. In this image, I have captured him in this year's Halloween outfit – some kind of gangster-Teletubby type deal. He is a dangerous and excellent combination of humble, hilariously sharp-witted, incredibly kind, and deeply contemplative. I wanted to capture all these traits in this portrait. This work is a tribute to him and all the other brothers who make their siblings' world a better place.



Huseyin SAMI
NSW

Untitled (SPB), 2025
Polymer paint on polyester
100 x 100cm
Image courtesy of the artist and
Sophie Gannon Gallery, Melbourne

Huseyin Sami taps into the senses through an intimate and physical engagement with his chosen medium of painting. House paint – plastic in liquid form – is poured; as it sets, the artist pushes and pulls the plastic skins. A gesture remains of tension from his unguessable, innovative and experimental processes. At once a final piece and a documentation of performance, the artworks are slick and glossy, painting reduced to an abstracted form.

The processes Sami employs to produce his paintings conceal evidence of the laborious brush work that goes into making the works. Hidden in the resulting skins are the gestural marks for layers of thickness and thinness, texture and movement. Sami's connection with the medium is intimate, one entirely material-based, tapping into the visceral space for a conscious relationship of physicality. With multiple skins combined, his compositions are liquid and slippery.



Si Yi SHEN
QLD

Embrace, 2025
Digital collage inkjet print, ed. 1/5
100 x 100cm
Image courtesy of the artist
Collage co-created with the
artist's mother, Jenny Duan, using
photographs exchanged via SMS

Embrace is a visual mapping of our conversations, steaming with care and longing, built from these countless exchanges. As an artist working with digital assemblage, I am intrigued by how the arrangement of our photos pieced together creates a lively composition that reflects an ongoing dialogue and a physically distant yet caring relationship.

This work is more than a record of our exchanges; it is a meditation on how the smallest gesture of digital intimacy, such as a flower sent across a screen or a fruit shared in a message, becomes an act of care and continuity. In an increasingly digital world, *Embrace* is a reflection of how love takes shape in ephemeral yet enduring ways.



Wade TAYLOR
WA

Obelisk, 2024

Oil on wood

54 x 79cm

Image courtesy of the artist and
Stala Contemporary, Perth

Suburbs and industry expand toward three horizons. Seeking out, stretching through, infilling this coastal plain. Indistinct concrete structures appear as if overnight in freshly levelled zones once bush and dune. An ode to industry and obsession, this anonymous and monolithic architecture has a sombre religiosity. *Obelisk* questions how we move through our landscape, how we inhabit and transform space. It speaks to our needs and desires, of a strange and relentless form of worship and of a tentative future.



Carlene THOMPSON
(Pitjantjatjara/Anangu)
NT

Tjulpu Kulunypa – Baby Birds, 2025

Acrylic on canvas

92 x 152 cm

Image courtesy of the artist and
Ernabella Arts, Pukatja

This is an artwork about birds and their chicks. Carlene often paints birds, as *tjulpu tjukurpa* (bird dreaming) is related to her family's Country which is near Kanypi in the Western APY Lands. As a mother of several children, family themes are common in Carlene's work. People call her Tjulpu Thompson, and she says, "like I did with my children, I now raise chicks every day on canvas and in clay in my work".



Thomas THORBY-LISTER NSW

*Bladensburg National Park
(Mapping 04), 2025*
Acrylic on linen
92 x 76cm
Image courtesy of the artist

Exploring a segment of Bladensburg National Park, this artwork draws upon historical aerial photography databases, satellite imagery, and generative mapping as references for its composition. The aerial landscape painting adopts a collage-like approach, incorporating layers of drawing, brushwork, and gridding reminiscent of cartography. Through this amalgamation of techniques, the painting delves into the concept of 'place', questioning the notion that maps or GPS coordinates provide a complete and accurate understanding of one's location in the world.

Thomas Thorby-Lister's conceptually-driven practice spans across painting, site-action, drawing and digital media. Through abstraction, fieldwork, and site-specific projects, he examines the limitations of traditional representations of information. Thorby-Lister uses alternative methods to record and describe physical environments, both digital and analogue. Recent projects explore the concept of agency, the complexities of geography and cartography, and sites of environmental disasters.



Emma THORP QLD

Home, 2025
Acrylic and pencil on shaped plywood
110 x 110cm
Image courtesy of the artist

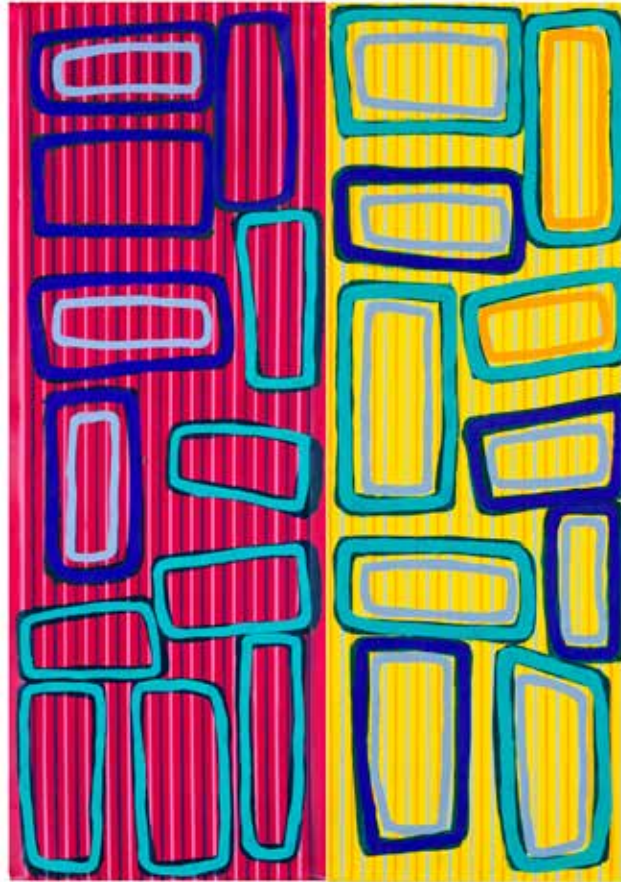
I live in an explosion of green, framed and protected by tall trees.

Normally hidden from the world in deep shade, here my home is exposed and laid bare by bending back the trees from an aerial view.

Small, repetitive pencil marks serve to illustrate the almost pulsing energy that I absorb from the nature that surrounds me.

It is quite dark under our canopy of trees. The layers of ply serve to illustrate the layers of trees that surround my home. The contrast between that darkness and the light of the sky can be quite striking and can create stunning silhouettes.

This piece is my celebration of Home.



Walala TJAPALTJARRI
and Michael EATHER
NT (PINTUPI), QLD

Turbo Tokyo Tingari, 2024
Acrylic on canvas diptych
150 x 100cm
Image courtesy of the artists and
FireWorks Gallery, Brisbane

Walala Tjapaltjarri and Michael Eather have been working together for 25 years, often producing collaborative paintings and sculpture. Recently, with a suitcase full of his own vibrant and striped canvases, Eather travelled to Alice Springs. There, Tjapaltjarri reacted to these backgrounds, painting his *Tingari* forms, which are distinct interpretations of Pintupi ceremonial men's designs. For over 30 years, Tjapaltjarri has been developing his own unique take on classic *Tingari* designs. He chooses his own colours, constructing spontaneous arrangements of *Tingari* that contrast Eather's linear backgrounds. Sometimes they clash. Sometimes they harmonise. The resulting forms are minimalist and bold; metaphysical landscapes that bring ancient symbols to the here and now. Tjapaltjarri and Eather's collaborative process reflects a dynamic relationship between artists and friends.



Sebastian TOAST NSW

The River House, 2024
Oil on canvas
120 x 150cm
Image courtesy of the artist and
Anthea Polson Fine Art, Gold Coast

This painting reflects my ongoing interest in how images can hold multiple realities at once – intimacy and structure, abstraction and story, the ordinary and the sacred.

Depicting artist Karlee Rawkins and her family, the work considers how motherhood – especially raising a child with a disability – shapes both daily life and creative practice. Rawkins describes her work as collaborative, influenced by her son, partner, and other children. I mirrored this dynamic by composing the family from a bird's-eye view, nestled within richly patterned fabrics reminiscent of Renaissance frescoes.

By flattening the space and giving equal visual weight to figure and textile, the work questions traditional hierarchies – foreground/background, subject/support, individual/collective.

The painting invites a perceptual shift, asking us to consider the quiet significance of shared life and the structures of care that hold it. In doing so, it positions the domestic as a potent site of complexity, rhythm, and meaning.



Nicole VOEVODIN-CASH
QLD

ALLsorts LOSS + POTENTIAL, 2025
Hand hooked recycled wool on hessian
80 x 150cm each (diptych)
Image courtesy of the artist

This work evolves from using the vernacular of furniture – old mattresses, seating, and domestic forms – into quieter, tactile objects that hold meaning through use. These hand-hooked rugs, made with a Donella needle and up-cycled wool, transforms familiar materials into visually tactile works that suggest touch through their crafted surface and embedded language. Words like “loss”, “done”, “happens” and “potential” are looped into bright, soft surfaces that reference confectionery but carry deeper emotional weight. These are not just décor; they resist comfort’s gloss, confronting the unspoken narratives of aging, grief, and resilience. It’s a shift from casting physical form to embedding language – phrases we walk on, absorb, overlook, or carry with us. Each piece challenges domestic sentimentality, rejecting hollow affirmations like “life’s a beach” in favour of asking: what does it mean to wipe your feet on potential? To rest on loss? They offer felt encounters – subtle but insistent – calling us to question what comfort hides.



David WELLS QLD

Dream house with galah, 2025
Acrylic on canvas
50 x 100cm
Image courtesy of the artist

This painting is a reflection on the housing crisis, set against the backdrop of an abandoned luxury home. Once a symbol of success and exclusivity, the house now stands empty – its swimming pool unused, its walls and windows marked by graffiti, signs of both neglect and resistance.

Faceless statues stand as silent guardians, evoking the dehumanising forces – bureaucracy, greed, policy failure – that gatekeep access to housing for many.

Perched on one statue, a lone galah is part clown and part witness, a small act of absurdity and resilience amidst decay.

Bright orange stripes – suggestive of security laser beams – represent fractures in the system including broken promises, social disparity, and structural failure.

This work invites viewers to consider who is excluded, what is protected, and why homes are treated as commodities instead of rights.



Simon WELSH NSW

Bed Head (detail), 2025
Mixed media collage, paper and
thread on linen board
50 x 40cm (framed)
Image courtesy of the artist

Bed Head is from a series of works I created that delves into queer hookup culture and its prevalence within some queer spaces, including my own. This series is a personal documentation of meetups that I have experienced where anonymity, discretion and vulnerability are often navigated and mediated to form a connection. Queer men often have to navigate the culture of hookups and anonymous sex to forge connections within queer spaces.

The work appears nameless, faceless and is delicately sewn together – to match the experience some may feel within the world of quick sexual exchanges. The body in *Bed Head* sits vulnerable but defiant, strong in one's sexuality and congress but delicately held together. I wanted to capture that, under all the bravado and machismo, sit delicate queer bodies wanting love and affection and to be seen.



Sally WEST
NSW

Bin Night, 2024

Oil on canvas

120 x 150cm

Image courtesy of the artist

I have been painting for over 30 years and am interested in exploring the relationship between humans and our environment. I am particularly drawn to the ocean and the lifestyle that surrounds that.



Amanda WESTERN VIC

Held by Time, 2025

Linocut print on paper and antique
linen

103 x 140cm

Image courtesy of the artist

Held by Time is a hand-carved and hand-pressed linocut, printed on handmade textured paper and lightly bonded to antique handwoven linen. It depicts the Ellerslie Bridge, Victoria's oldest surviving timber girder bridge, built in 1867. Its image now rests on cloth woven only a decade later. Both the bridge and the linen were shaped by human hands within the same generation, their pairing a quiet reunion honouring what has withstood both time and change.

Once spanning the thunderous Hopkins River, the bridge now crosses a diminished, drought-affected stream. Its intact timber spans, cast-iron panels and refined stonework remind us that even amid environmental and structural decline, quiet beauty endures and calls for our recognition and care.




Carved over 130 hours, the work's slow, deliberate process mirrors this spirit of endurance. Grounded in material history, *Held by Time* reflects on what we inherit and what we choose to preserve.

Sunshine Coast Council gratefully acknowledges the sponsors and supporters of the Sunshine Coast National Art Prize 2025.





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