

The National 4 Australian Art Now

The National announces curators as the exhibition expands to Campbelltown Arts Centre



Curators of The National 4: Australian Art Now (left to right) Beatrice Gralton (Art Gallery of NSW), Jane Devery (MCA Australia), Freja Carmichael and Aarna Fitzgerald Hanley (Carriageworks) and Emily Rolfe (Campbelltown Arts Centre). Photo: Renee Nowytarger

[Sydney, 27 June 2022] An all-female curatorial team will curate [The National 4: Australian Art Now](#) as the biennial survey of Australian contemporary art expands to Greater Sydney.

Four of Sydney's leading cultural institutions – the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Carriageworks and the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia – will present the next three editions (2023, 2025, 2027) of *The National*.

The National 4: Australian Art Now curators are: **Beatrice Gralton** at the Art Gallery of NSW; **Emily Rolfe** at Campbelltown Arts Centre; **Freja Carmichael** and **Aarna Fitzgerald Hanley** at Carriageworks; and **Jane Devery** at the MCA Australia.

Since the inaugural edition in 2017, the partnering institutions have concurrently presented this biennial exhibition showcasing the latest ideas and forms of contemporary Australian art. As with previous iterations this next edition of *The National* will showcase new work being made across the country by artists of different generations and cultural backgrounds.

The first three editions of *The National* attracted close to 1 million visitors and presented the work of 158 contemporary artists, collectives and collaboratives across the partnering institutions.

In 2023, the exhibition will also expand to include Campbelltown Arts Centre, bringing *The National* to an even broader public across Greater Sydney. Director of Campbelltown Arts Centre, **Michael Dagostino** expressed his excitement to be joining the Art Gallery of NSW, Carriageworks and the MCA Australia.

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'*The National* is a rare opportunity to discover new ways of working with major cultural organisations to create ambitious artistic projects. We thrive on working in partnership, it allows us to create a platform for an open exchange of ideas and perspectives. Working collaboratively, we will reach different audiences and engage our communities in new ways,' said Dagostino.

In a joint directors' statement, **Michael Brand** (Art Gallery of NSW), **Blair French** (Carriageworks) and **Suzanne Cotter** (MCA Australia) said: 'We are pleased to announce that *The National*, a successful showcase for contemporary Australian art practices, is extending for another three editions. We are particularly delighted to welcome Campbelltown Arts Centre as a new partner in this endeavour. Since 2017 *The National* has created career-defining opportunities for hundreds of Australian artists. We greatly look forward to expanding this reach and impact even further over the coming editions.'

The exhibition dates for *The National 4: Australian Art Now* are:

- Art Gallery of New South Wales: Saturday 18 March – Sunday 25 June 2023
- Campbelltown Arts Centre: Thursday 30 March – Sunday 25 June 2023
- Carriageworks: Thursday 30 March – Sunday 25 June 2023
- Museum of Contemporary Art Australia: Friday 31 March – Sunday 25 June 2023

The full artist list will be revealed later this year. For updates visit *The National* [website](#).

Curator bios

Freja Carmichael is Ngugi belonging to the Quandamooka People of Moreton Bay. Over the past decade she has worked alongside First Nations artists and communities as an independent curator on exhibitions, programming, collection research and writing. Freja's work is focused on promoting and documenting First Peoples fibre practices and creating sites of sharing and cross-cultural exchange between Indigenous curators, artists and communities in collaborative curatorial approaches. Recent curatorial projects have included national touring exhibition *long water: fibre stories* (2020-2022), Institute of Modern Art, *Weaving the Way* (2019), The University of Queensland Art Museum and co-curator of *The Commute*, 2018, the Institute of Modern Art. Freja has contributed writing to Artlink, National Gallery of Australia, IMA, Tarnathi and Cairns Regional Gallery among others. Freja was an inaugural participant of the National Gallery of Australia's Wesfarmers Indigenous Arts Leadership Program and is a board member of the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection Advisory Council. Freja is currently undertaking a PhD with the University of Queensland and continues to work collaboratively with her family on Quandamooka weaving practices.

Jane Devery is the MCA Senior Curator, Exhibitions. She plays a lead curatorial role in the development and presentation of the museum's exhibition program. A curator with over 20 years' professional experience and expertise in Australian and international contemporary art, Jane is widely recognised for her substantial record of exhibitions and publications. In her previous role as Curator of Contemporary Art at the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) (2013 – 2021) and more recently as Project Curator at Heide Museum of Modern Art (2021), Jane has worked extensively with leading contemporary artists and curated more than thirty exhibitions including large-scale surveys of contemporary art, thematic exhibitions, artist-led projects and major solo exhibitions with artists including Camille Henrot, Rosslynd Piggott, Robert Hunter, Emily Floyd, Brent Harris and Mari Funaki. At the NGV

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Jane was responsible for developing the collection of Australian and international art from 1980 to the present including commissioning new works. Jane has published widely on contemporary art. She has edited and authored numerous exhibition catalogues, contributed to books and magazines and was a commissioning editor of *Art Journal*, the NGV's scholarly research publication. A graduate of the University of Melbourne, Jane holds a master's degree in art curatorship and a Bachelor of Arts with honours in art history and cinema studies.

Beatrice Gralton is the Senior Curator of the Brett Whiteley Studio at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. Working for over two decades in Australian and international art museums she has extensive collection management, exhibition production and commissioning experience. In her role as Curator, Visual Art (2012 – 2017) and then Head Curator, Visual Art (2017 – 2020) at Carriageworks, Beatrice was responsible for projects and exhibitions working extensively on major projects with artists including El Anatsui, Rebecca Baumann, Christian Boltanski, Nick Cave, Song Dong, Katharina Grosse, Zhang Huan, Kate Mitchell, Mike Parr, Reko Rennie, Ken Thaiday Snr., and Michel Tuffery, among others. She has held curatorial roles at the Corcoran Gallery of Art and School of Art and Design in Washington D.C. and the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra and has published widely on Australian and international art. Beatrice has a degree in Art History and Curatorship (Hons) from the Australian National University in Canberra and master's in arts administration from the University of New South Wales, Sydney.

Aarna Fitzgerald Hanley is Curator of Programs at Carriageworks. Working on curatorial projects over the past decade, Aarna has specialised in commissioning site-specific works. Joining Carriageworks in 2018, her recent projects include *Mel O'Callaghan: All is Life* (2022), *Karla Dickens: Return to Sender* (2022), *No Show* (2021) and *Kate Mitchell: All Auras Touch* (2020), which she co-curated. Previously, Aarna worked with Barbara Flynn to realise largescale commissions in Sydney's public domain. These included works by Tadashi Kawamata, Pipilotti Rist, Lara Schnitger and Justine Varga. Writing regularly on contemporary art, she also has experience with editorial projects, having been an editorial coordinator on the monograph *Sydney Ball: The Stain Paintings 1971- 80* (2013) and undertaken a publishing internship at Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York. Aarna is a former board member of the digital publication *Runway Journal*. A graduate of the University of Sydney, she holds degrees in art history, publishing and law.

Emily Rolfe is Curator, Contemporary Visual Arts at Campbelltown Arts Centre (C-A-C). Advocating for collaborative, artist-led curatorial models and projects, Emily has extensive experience delivering new commissions and curating exhibitions with Australian and international artists. Recent projects include Co-Curator of Luke Sciberras's survey exhibition in partnership with Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, *Luke Sciberras: Side of the Sky* (2022), Curatorial Manager of *Space YZ* and the accompanying large-scale website (2021), Co-Curator of *In Conversation: FX Harsono x Ida Lawrence* (2019) and Assistant Curator of *Lisa Reihana: Cinemania* (2018). Emily was Assistant Curator at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation, Sydney (2014–17). She has managed and edited several in-depth publications including *Luke Sciberras: Side of the Sky* (2022), *Lisa Reihana: Cinemania* (2018) and *Jompet Kuswidananto: After Voices* (2016). She holds a Bachelor of Media (Screen and Sound) from the University of New South Wales.

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