

## MONASH UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF ART LAUNCHES 2025 PROGRAM MARKING 50 YEARS OF GROUNDBREAKING ART AND IDEAS



**Naarm/Melbourne, Australia** – Monash University Museum of Art | MUMA, Australia’s leading contemporary university art museum, proudly launches its 2025 program, marking fifty years of presenting groundbreaking art, ideas and curatorial innovation within a university context. This landmark season features four major exhibitions featuring works by emerging and internationally acclaimed Asia-Pacific artists, including **Jenna Lee, Ashley Perry, Nusra Latif Qureshi, Stolon Press, Victoria Todorov** and **Dhopiya Yunupingu**. Through themes of identity, history, place and memory, the program engages audiences across public events and educational outreach, inviting critical conversations on topics from AI and self-representation to language politics and pre-colonial maritime histories.

Marking MUMA’s fiftieth anniversary year, the 2025 program begins with *Image Economies*, launching on Saturday 8 February at MUMA, with a free community party from 3 to 5 pm. The festivities include a workshop with exhibiting artist **Sione Tuivailala Monū**, a live performance by exhibiting artist **Scotty So**, music by DJ **Lucreccia Quintanilla**, drinks by **T.I.N.A.**, food by **Flavours of Syria**, and a specially commissioned fiftieth birthday cake by a guest artist.

**Dr Rebecca Coates, MUMA Director** says, “As we celebrate our 50th year, MUMA’s timely 2025 artistic program reflects our commitment to cultural exploration and artistic inquiry in a unique educational context. Each exhibition, event and encounter invites our audiences to re-examine connections between people and narratives that speak to our time and place - both in the past and looking to the future. This milestone year reaffirms our role as a vital space for bringing people together to exchange ideas about contemporary art informed by a deeply researched, university context.”

### **Exhibition 1: *Image Economies***

8 February – 12 April 2025

Opening MUMA’s milestone year is *Image Economies*, an exhibition exploring the profound impact of digital technologies on image-making, self-representation and media consumption. Featuring new commissions and works by artists from Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, as well as artworks from the Monash University Collection, the exhibition examines themes of materiality, identity, data sovereignty, authenticity and the circulation of digital assets.

Through painting, sculpture and video, artists including **Juliet Carpenter, Ana Iti, Machine Learning, Ashley Perry, Scotty So, Sorawit Songsataya, Victoria Todorov**, will address how digital processes reshape narrative structures, knowledge accessibility and cultural legacy, questioning how much human agency we have in an increasingly automated world.

## Exhibition 2: *Stolon Press: Flat earth*

8 May – 5 July 2025

Curators: Stolon Press, with Dr Rebecca Coates and Stephanie Berlangieri

Flat earth is a collaborative exhibition and publication project led by Sydney-based art and publishing collective **Stolon Press**, featuring contributions from Lebanese-Australian artist **Khaled Sabsabi** and Paraguayan-Canadian writer and anthropologist **Elisa Taber**. The exhibition investigates the relationship between curatorial and editorial practices, establishing a visual and linguistic cohabitation within a shared space.

Themes of neighbourliness, embeddedness in place, and the post-global emerge as viewers are invited to consider how an exhibition can become a book—and vice versa—building a rich conversation across language, text and artistic forms. Founded in 2019 by **Tom Melick** and **Simryn Gill**, Stolon Press publishes works that might otherwise remain undiscovered, echoing its biological namesake by thriving in untended places and fostering relationships across borders.

## Exhibition 3: *Nusra Latif Qureshi*

22 July – 20 September 2025

In collaboration with the Art Gallery of New South Wales

This major solo exhibition celebrates the work of Melbourne-based artist **Nusra Latif Qureshi**, known for her meticulously crafted contemporary miniature paintings. Born in Pakistan and trained in the Persian-influenced miniature tradition at Lahore's National College of Arts, Qureshi's practice spans painting, collage and sculpture, blending historical and contemporary references.

This survey traces her journey from early experimental pieces in Lahore to recent explorations into three-dimensional forms. Highlights include the powerful suite of paintings that earned her the Bulgari Art Prize, addressing themes of colonialism, migration and cultural identity. Qureshi's vignettes, where isolated female figures appear suspended in fields of colour, evoke a complex narrative of trauma, resilience and hope.

## Exhibition 4: *Awakening Histories*

4 October – 6 December 2025

Travelling to Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts (PICA) in 2026

Concluding the 2025 program, *Awakening Histories* reawakens ancient maritime connections between Australia and Southeast Asia, focusing on exchanges between First Nations peoples and Makassan traders centuries before European settlement. Through art, the exhibition recasts history by celebrating shared narratives of interconnection, lore and kinship.

Featuring significant artworks from Australian collections and new commissions by Australian, First Nations and Indonesian artists, including **Zaenal Beta**, **Abdi Karya**, **Jenna Lee**, **Bulthirriri Wunungmurra** and **Dhopiya Yunupingu**, *Awakening Histories* challenges Eurocentric perspectives on 'discovery' and privileges First Peoples' enduring connections to land, sea and sky. Developed by a curatorium of researchers and curators based in Australia and Indonesia, and in collaboration with Monash University's ARC Laureate project *Global Encounters & First Nations Peoples: 1000 Years of Australian History*, this exhibition invites viewers to explore trade routes, cultural exchanges and the indelible presence of the sea as a connector of histories and communities.

## ENDS

### Notes to Editors:

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### About MUMA

Monash University Museum of Art | MUMA is one of Australia's most respected and influential contemporary art museums. MUMA has a dynamic artistic program of commissioning, exhibitions and publishing, and is committed to connecting art, audiences and ideas. MUMA presents major new exhibitions annually and the artistic program is recognised for its attention to new work by Australian and international artists and its focused curatorial research projects. MUMA's extensive touring program forms strong partnerships with significant Australian and international institutions to ensure wide audience access.

MUMA is also a leader in delivering artist-led education to early learners, school and tertiary students and educators and welcomes over 4,000 students to the Museum annually. MUMA invites leading contemporary artists to work directly with diverse student groups to develop critically important skills of creative thinking, problem-solving and visual and cultural literacy.

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Images: 1. Scotty So, *Face swapping with the photo of Kris Jenner by Jim Jordan* 2024. 2. Nusra Latif Qureshi, *DID YOU COME HERE TO FIND HISTORY?* 2009 (detail). 3. Jenna Lee, *gwoyarr-ma* 2023

We acknowledge and pay respect to the Traditional Owners and Elders—past, present and emerging—of the lands on which Monash University operates. We acknowledge Aboriginal connection to material and creative practice on these lands for more than 60,000 years.