

# Year in Review 2023/24

Kaurna Country  
North Terrace, Adelaide,  
South Australia 5000  
+61 8 8207 7000  
[agsa.sa.gov.au](http://agsa.sa.gov.au)



# AGSA



AGSA Kurna  
yartangka yuwanthi.  
AGSArlu Kurna  
miyurna parna yaitya  
mathanya Wama  
Tarntanyaku  
tampinthe. AGSArlu  
yaitya mathanya  
kumarta yartanangku  
Tidna Wirltunangku,  
warrunangku kuma  
tampinthe.

AGSA stands on  
Kurna land. AGSA  
recognises Kurna  
people as the  
owners of the  
Adelaide Plains.  
AGSA recognises  
the Indigenous  
custodians from  
other parts of  
Australia and  
from overseas.

image cover  
detail: Clarice Beckett,  
born Casterton,  
Victoria 21/03/1887,  
died Sandringham,  
Victoria 7/07/1935,  
*The bather*, 1930s,  
Melbourne, oil on  
canvas on cardboard,  
24.5 x 34.5 cm;  
Prudence Lee  
Bequest Fund,  
Lorraine Hossack Fund  
and Andrew Gwinnett,  
Diana Laidlaw AM,  
John Phillips, Ann  
Vanstone, Janet Worth  
through the Art Gallery  
of South Australia  
Foundation 2023,  
Art Gallery of South  
Australia, Adelaide

# Year in Review 2023/24

## In Summary, from Acting Director, Emma Fey

Throughout the 2023–24 year, the Art Gallery of South Australia (AGSA) delivered a dynamic artistic program, focused on engaging diverse audiences throughout Adelaide, regional South Australia, Australia and the world. AGSA's exhibition program consisted of ten exhibitions, including the immensely successful exhibition *Frida & Diego: Love & Revolution*.

AGSA acknowledges the extensive contribution of longstanding Art Gallery Foundation Council Chair, Andrew Gwinnett upon his retirement this year. From his election in November 2011, Andrew's tenure was characterised by considered stewardship, generous leadership and record support of AGSA through significant benefaction. We thank Andrew for his generous support and continued commitment to AGSA.

With the generosity of AGSA's 343 Foundation members, 108 works of art were acquired across all collecting areas, with a cumulative value of more than \$900,000. The Foundation's hallmark event, the annual Collectors Club Dinner, was held on 9 September 2023, resulting in the acquisition of Edvard Munch's *Attraction I* (1896) and a pair of hanging silk scrolls titled *Morning glories and bottle gourd* (*Asagao yūgao*) (c 1855) by Suzuki Kiitsu.

Over the course of the year, AGSA's collection was enhanced through the strategic acquisition of 285 works of art, valued at more than \$8,000,000. These acquisitions were made possible through philanthropy, gifts, bequests and fundraising. Notably, AGSA became the first public institution in Australia to acquire a painting by acclaimed British artist Chris Ofili, with his monumental work *The Swing* (2020–23), purchased through the James and Diana Ramsay Fund. Other key acquisitions include *solari* (2024) by Jessica Loughlin and Khai Liew, and Vincent Namatjira's *Albert Namatjira, Slim Dusty and Archie Roach on Country* (2022), which was displayed as part of the artist's first survey exhibition curated by AGSA, then toured to the National Gallery of Australia. South Australian artists continue to feature in AGSA's collection and acquisition strategy. Important acquisitions included significant works by Milton Moon, Jeffrey Harris and Kathleen Sauerbier as well as Ida Sophia's moving-image work *Witness* (2022), the recipient of the acquisitive 2023 Ramsay Art Prize.

In recognition of the generous individuals and families who have made a legacy gift through a bequest, AGSA acknowledges the significant impact such gifts to make in our efforts to grow and care for the collection, present ambitious experiences for audiences and to enhance our programs and initiatives for young people.

AGSA welcomed 595,469 visitors to exhibitions and events held on North Terrace, with a further 196,663 visitors experiencing AGSA's touring exhibitions. In partnership with Illuminate Festival 2023, AGSA presented Angela Tiati's mesmerising moving image work *The Pearl*, projected onto the AGSA façade for Illuminate's *City Lights* program,

which was seen by an estimated 1.1 million people. In total, AGSA's audience throughout 2023–24 reached more than 1.9 million people.

*Frida & Diego: Love & Revolution*, AGSA's major ticketed exhibition, concluded its highly successful season on 17 September 2023. Supported by the South Australian Tourism Commission and in collaboration with Grieve Gillett Architects, *Frida & Diego* was a resounding success, attracting over 83,000 visitors during its twelve-week season and contributing more than \$8.8 million to the South Australian economy.

AGSA reaffirmed its long-term commitment to championing living Australian artists by presenting its three free flagship contemporary exhibitions: the Ramsay Art Prize, Tarnanthi and the Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art. With more than 300 entries, and a record number of finalists, the *Ramsay Art Prize 2023*, supported by the James and Diana Ramsay Foundation, welcomed 57,990 visitors. The winner of the \$100,000 Ramsay Art Prize 2023 was Ida Sophia, whose winning work *Witness* (2022), was unanimously chosen by the judging panel. The winner of the People's Choice Prize, supported by LK, was Zaachariaha Fielding, for his work *Wonder Drug* (2023).

AGSA's statewide Tarnanthi Festival, celebrating contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and culture, supported by Principal Partner BHP, held between 20 October 2023 and 21 January 2024, attracted 360,371 visitors and participants to a broad spectrum of exhibitions and events. This included *Vincent Namatjira: Australia in colour*, the first survey exhibition of acclaimed Western Aranda artist Vincent Namatjira. Tarnanthi generated \$11.3 million in economic expenditure including \$1.5 million through the Tarnanthi Art Fair which was held online and in-person at the Adelaide Entertainment Centre. As part of Tarnanthi's national and international touring projects, *Naomi Hobson: Adolescent Wonderland* toured to Morocco from May 2024 for a seven-week exhibition at the Musée National de la Photographie, Rabat, with support from the Australian embassy in Morocco and in collaboration with Morocco's Fondation Nationale des Musées.

Curated by guest curator José Da Silva, the 18th *Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: Inner Sanctum*, presented the work of twenty-four leading Australian artists to critical and audience acclaim. As Australia's longest-running survey of contemporary Australian art, the Adelaide Biennial was once again Adelaide Festival's flagship visual art program. *Inner Sanctum* was made possible by the

support and generosity of the Balnaves Foundation, LK, Creative Australia, and significant private benefaction through the Biennial Ambassadors program. *Inner Sanctum* attracted more than 138,500 visitors to the exhibition and a diverse range of public programs and, live performances.

The 2023–24 artistic program was complemented by a vibrant array of public programs and education offerings, which are vital in the activation of exhibitions, and engaging broad and diverse audiences of all ages. In total, AGSA delivered more than seventy events and programs for the public. In 2023–24, 33,297 students and their supporting teachers visited AGSA or participated in in-person, online and outreach workshops and programs. A total of 865 teachers attended AGSA Education's online and in-person professional development for educators. AGSA's education-related publication releases included an expanded second edition of the award-winning, sell-out publication *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art in the Classroom*.

The Gallery's family programming, including *Start at the Gallery* and *The Studio*, both made possible with support from the James and Diana Ramsay Foundation, continue to grow the next generation of audiences. During the year, *The Studio*, attracted 30,355 visitors, with *Start*, designed for three-to twelve-year-olds, attracting a total attendance of 21,317 visitors. With continued support from the Balnaves Foundation, AGSA presented its flagship youth program, *Neo*, engaging 2,873 13–17 year olds across a series of six events to experience exhibitions, live music and artist-led creative workshops – all led by a teen programming team.

The impact of individual generosity on AGSA's artistic ambitions is truly extraordinary. In November 2023, AGSA's Contemporary Collectors active benefaction group celebrated their twentieth anniversary and marked the milestone with a special dinner and the acquisition of Jeppe Hein's *Medium Red and Ruby Mirror Balloon* (2023), which can be found on display in Gallery 16 of the Melrose Wing, as a feature of the *Metamorphosis* exhibition. Celebrating the legacy of this pivotal group of philanthropists was a highlight of the year, noting the Contemporary Collectors efforts have enabled the propulsion of contemporary art at AGSA, including the acquisition of defining works of art and landmark exhibitions, amongst other initiatives. Throughout the year, 26 works of art were acquired through Contemporary Collectors, with a total value of over \$1 million. Acquisitions included Liam Fleming's *Transitory form #9* (2023) and Kunmanara (Tiger) Yaltangki's *Highway to Tiger* (2023).

The Biennial Ambassadors program continues to grow exceptional support for the Adelaide

Biennial of Australian Art, with a record 107 Ambassadors in 2024. In addition to supporting the vision of José Da Silva's *Inner Sanctum*, the Biennial Ambassadors enabled the purchase of 5 works with a total value of \$125,000. We acknowledge the extraordinary work of the Biennial Ambassador Committee and recognise Chair Brigitte Lane, and Committee members Stephanie Grose, Andrew Henderson, Julia Dowling and Thelma Taliangis.

AGSA continues its commitment to sharing and promoting its remarkable collection through digitisation and bespoke publications. With the continued support of Metal Manufactures Pty Ltd, by the end of June 2024, more than 52% of AGSA's extensive collection was available to view online through a web-based collection database, available at [agsa.sa.gov.au](https://agsa.sa.gov.au).

Bespoke publications included exhibition catalogues for *Brent Harris: Surrender and Catch* and *Tarnanthi 2023*. The collection's strength and diversity are celebrated through the landmark publication *AGSA 500*, highlighting 500 significant works of art across AGSA's collection. Launched in February 2024, *AGSA 500* is itself a work of generosity, realised through the support of the late Max Carter AO, a benefactor to AGSA for over 70 years.

AGSA acknowledges and thanks the invaluable support and contributions of its some 200 volunteers, whose support enables the delivery of many of AGSA's public and artistic programs and other aspects of operations. AGSA's volunteers generously give their time and expertise to enhance the experience of visitors and assist the work of staff, in such areas as Front of House, Public Programs, Gallery Guides, Image Services, Library, Curatorial and Registration.

AGSA is served by a dedicated Board led by Chair Sandy Verschoor. Mark Roderick, Michaela Webster, Miriam Silva AM and Dr Ali Gumillya Baker were appointed to the Art Gallery Board during the year, and the Board extended its gratitude and warm farewells to Alison Page, member since 2021, and Susan Armitage, member since 2016.

AGSA recognises the dedication and leadership of outgoing Director Rhana Devenport ONZM and the extraordinary accomplishments the Gallery achieved under her direction. AGSA would also like to thank Dr Lisa Slade, outgoing Assistant Director, Artistic Programs, for her catalytic vision and direction of AGSA's curatorial and public programs.

AGSA celebrates a remarkable year, and the artists, art, and individuals who have defined it. Your generosity and commitment to AGSA's strong future is deeply appreciated.