

Thursday 27 November 2025



South Australian artists in focus as AGSA announces 2026 exhibition program

Adelaide, Australia: The Art Gallery of South Australia has today announced its full program for 2026. South Australian artists are the focus of three exhibitions, alongside the exclusive international exhibition *Monet to Matisse: Defying Tradition*, the 2026 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: *Yield Strength* - the country's longest-running survey of contemporary Australian art – and a major new exhibition that showcases treasures from AGSA's Indonesian textiles collection.

Jason Smith, Director, AGSA, said, 'In 2026 the Art Gallery of South Australia offers an inspiring program that celebrates artistic excellence, creative innovation and our rich collection. Anchored by exhibitions that speak to the complexities of our time, AGSA's 2026 exhibition program champions the enduring power of artists to propose new ideas that transform our sense of self and the world we inhabit.'

Highlighting the breadth of artistic excellence in South Australia, AGSA's program will include a significant solo exhibition of Kaurna artist James Tylor, the work of Guildhouse Fellowship recipient Michelle Nikou, and the major new exhibition *Dressed Up*, which provides a rare opportunity to see works from AGSA's collection of historical South Australian dresses alongside early photography. We hope our exhibitions throughout 2026, alongside our flagship public programs First Fridays, Neo and Start at the Gallery, will inspire our visitors young and old.'

Opening on 27 February as part of the 2026 Adelaide Festival, the 2026 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: *Yield Strength*, will reveal how materials, selfhood and society are tested - and transformed - under pressure. Curated by Ellie Buttrose, *Yield Strength* will assemble intriguing, experimental new work from twenty-four boundary-pushing, Australian artists.

May will see the cross-cultural richness of textiles from Bali and Lombok celebrated in *Two Islands, One Thread*. The display features previously unseen textiles from the AGSA collection, as well as loans from the West Nusa Tenggara State Museum in Lombok, revealing the remarkable and unique story of the artistic exchanges that occurred between two very different Indonesian societies - Hindu Bali and Muslim Lombok - over the past millennium.

Enriching winter from 8 July will be an Australian-exclusive exhibition of masterworks from the acclaimed Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio, United States, in *Monet to Matisse: Defying Tradition*, the debut exhibition in AGSA's new Winter Art Series. *Monet to Matisse* traces a ground-breaking period in art history through 57 seminal paintings by the most influential European and American artists of the 19th and 20th centuries including Paul Cézanne, Edgar Degas, Helen Frankenthaler, Henri Matisse, Piet Mondrian, Claude Monet, Berthe Morisot, Pablo Picasso, Robert Rauschenberg, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Vincent van Gogh and James McNeill Whistler.

Presented in partnership with the South Australian Government through the South Australian Tourism Commission, AGSA's Winter Art Series is a new initiative that brings major international exhibitions exclusively to Adelaide during the winter seasons from 2026 to 2029, celebrating Adelaide's position as a vibrant cultural destination through exhibitions from world-renowned art collections.

South Australian artists will form the focus of three exhibitions opening in the last half of 2026. Launching in July and presented in partnership with UNSW Galleries, Sydney, *James Tylor: Turrangka...in the shadows* surveys over a decade of James Tylor's practice and brings together the most comprehensive selection of his unique daguerreotypes, expansive digital photographic series, hand-made Kaurna cultural objects, as well as furniture, made in collaboration with Rebecca Selleck. This powerful exhibition offers a glimpse into Tylor's broader practice of reclaiming Kaurna language and cultural practices.

Photography and fashion will converge in the major new exhibition *Dressed Up: Fashion & Photography 1850–1920* from 5 December 2026. *Dressed Up* presents a rare opportunity to view works from AGSA's rich collections of historical South Australian dress and photography. Drawing on recent research into the makers and wearers of the dresses, the exhibition brings the superb craftsmanship of the dressmakers into dialogue with photography of the period. Spanning from the 1850s through to the 1920s, the works offer a journey into a period of dramatic sartorial and social change.

Finally, the 2024 Guildhouse Fellow - South Australian sculptor Michelle Nikou - will present a display of new works in December 2026, drawing on surrealist techniques to transform everyday domestic objects into sculptures of humour, poignancy and marvel. Presented by Guildhouse, AGSA and the James & Diana Ramsay Foundation, the annual Guildhouse Fellowship offers a transformative opportunity for one mid-career South Australian visual artist, craftsperson or designer, awarding funding to support research and development, travel, the creation of new work and a presentation outcome at AGSA.

The Honourable Andrea Michaels MP, Minister for Arts says, 'In 2026, the Art Gallery of South Australia will champion the work of South Australian artists across its exhibition program while also bringing rare masterworks to Adelaide through the Winter Art Series delivered as part of our new \$80 million State Cultural Policy. The Malinauskas Government is proud to be a continued supporter of our state's vital cultural institutions and I'm looking forward to a year of innovative and brilliant exhibitions at AGSA in 2026.'

Extending beyond the footprint of AGSA's building are a number of co-presentations and touring exhibitions including *Dangerously Modern: Australian Women Artists in Europe 1890 –1940* at the Art Gallery of New South Wales following its successful season at AGSA, the regional touring exhibition AGSA Screen: *Wavelength*, and two major touring Tarnanthi exhibitions, *Tarnanthi on Tour: Saltbush Country* and *Too Deadly: Ten Years of Tarnanthi*.

For full program details, visit agsa.sa.gov.au.

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IMAGES <https://www.agsa.sa.gov.au/media/2026program>

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2026 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: *Yield Strength*

Principal Donor: The Balnaves Foundation

Presented in association with: Adelaide Festival, Samstag Museum of Art, Adelaide Botanic Garden, and with generous support received from the Art Gallery of South Australia Biennial Ambassadors Program.

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body and by the Visual Art, Craft and Design Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments.

Monet to Matisse: Defying Tradition

Organised by Toledo Museum of Art

Principal Partner: South Australian Tourism Commission

Presenting Partner: IAS Fine Art Logistics

Design Partner: Grieve Gillett Architects

James Tylor: Turrangka...in the shadows

A UNSW Galleries, Sydney, exhibition, presented in partnership with AGSA.

Presented during SALA Festival.

Michelle Nikou: Tell it slant

Supported by Guildhouse and the James & Diana Ramsay Foundation

AGSA Screen: Wavelength

Supported by Metal Manufactures Pty Ltd

Presented in partnership with Country Arts SA

Tarnanthi on Tour: Saltbush Country

Presented by Country Arts SA

The exhibition was first developed and presented as a partnership between Country Arts SA, Tarnanthi and the Art Gallery of South Australia, with support from Tarnanthi Principal Partner BHP

Too Deadly: Ten Years of Tarnanthi

Tarnanthi Principal Partner: BHP

Touring Partner: Visions of Australia

Dangerously Modern: Australian Women Artists in Europe 1890–1940

Presented by the Art Gallery of South Australia and the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

Image caption: James Tylor, Kurna people, South Australia/Te Arawa, New Zealand, born Latje Latje/Barkindji Country (Mildura), Victoria 1986, (*Vanished Scenes*) *From an Untouched Landscape* #10, 2018, inkjet print on hahnemuhle paper with hole removed to a black velvet void, 25.0 x 25.0cm; © the artist, courtesy of N. Smith Gallery.