



***2020 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: Monster Theatres* closes its third act**

- 95,000 engaged with the *2020 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: Monster Theatres* online. 270,689 experienced *Monster Theatres* in the Gallery and at Adelaide Botanic Garden
- Sebastian Goldspink announced as curator of the 2022 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art

Adelaide, Australia: The *2020 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: Monster Theatres* curated by Leigh Robb closed on Sunday 2 August, after presenting the exhibition across all platforms since Friday 28 February.

Due to COVID-19, *Monster Theatres* was staged in three acts. In the pre-COVID environment, the opening weekend of *Monster Theatres* saw over 10,000 attendances. Following its COVID-led temporary closure, AGSA pivoted to offer experiences, digital events, virtual tours and artist talks via its website and social media channels, reaching an audience of 95,000 online. AGSA was thrilled to reopen on Friday 5 June and to extend the Adelaide Biennial until Sunday 2 August with capacity and social distancing limits in place.

Art Gallery of South Australia Director Rhana Devenport ONZM says, 'The essential role of the artist has come acutely into focus during the presentation of the *2020 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: Monster Theatres*. 2020 celebrated 30 years of the nation's longest running survey of contemporary art and Adelaide as the home for this ambitious and outward looking national survey. The role of the Adelaide Biennial in championing emergent art projects and

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connecting people through contemporary visual art has become hugely relevant as we collectively negotiate new challenges wrought by the pandemic.'

Monster Theatres curator Leigh Robb says, 'This Adelaide Biennial shows how astute these artists are and how important contemporary art is as a way to find and make meaning in a quickly shifting reality.'

The artists' prescient works speak to the remarkable ability of artists to tap into anxieties, fears and hopes, to not only heed the warnings but sound them louder. These are threshold works that demarcate the boundaries of a new reality; just as the present pandemic is a watershed moment in world history separating the past from an unclear present.'

'Whatever awaits, artists will be at the forefront of envisioning our shifting reality,' Robb says.

AGSA today announces Sebastian Goldspink as the curator for the 2022 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art. A proud descendant of the Burramattagal people of Western Sydney, Sebastian Goldspink is an independent curator and creative producer at the National Art School, and founder of ALASKA Projects which has showcased 500 artists across 150 exhibitions.

Goldspink says, 'The appointment is equal parts humbling and exciting. I relish the platform to bring stories to people and to share artists' vision and work. The opportunity to be able to work with the AGSA team on a platform of this scale, scope and history of the Adelaide Biennial is a privilege.'

The Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art is presented in association with the Adelaide Festival, and with generous support received from AGSA Biennial Ambassadors Program and Principal Donor, The Balnaves Foundation. This project is assisted by the Australia Council's Visual Arts and Craft Strategy.

Karla Dickens, Wiradjuri people, New South Wales, born 1967, Sydney, *A Dickensian Circus: Palm Reading*, 2019, Lismore, New South Wales, mixed media; Gift through the Adelaide Biennial Ambassadors Program 2020, Art Gallery of South Australia, photo: Mick Richards.

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'Monster Theatres' is irresistible. - The Sydney Morning Herald

Leigh Robb's absorbing curation, 'Monster Theatres', is both artistically and politically coherent. - The Monthly

This biennial brings a refreshing psychological depth, reflective gaze and energy to our fears. - The Conversation

This is a brave exhibition on many levels. It feels a bit like a slow dance between veiled narratives and the raw and revealed. - ArtsHub

About Sebastian Goldspink | Sebastian Goldspink is a Sydney-based independent curator. In 2011, he created the artist run space, ALASKA projects as a platform for exhibiting contemporary art in unused or disused spaces. Since its inception, ALASKA has showcased over 500 artists across 150 exhibitions. A proud descendant of the Burrumattagal people of Western Sydney, Goldspink has curated exhibitions nationally throughout Australia and internationally in London, Los Angeles, New Orleans and Christchurch.

Goldspink has held professional appointments at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Art Month Sydney and Dlux Media Arts. He has consulted and collaborated with institutions including Museum of Old and New Art, Performance Space, Sydney Symphony, HOTA Gold Coast, Art Bank and Kaldor Public Art Projects. In 2013/14 he was appointed Guest Curator of the John Fries Memorial Prize, an annual non-acquisitive award recognising emerging and early career visual artist. He also writes regularly for publications including Art Collector, Art Monthly and Artist Profile.

A former Lecturer at the University of New South Wales (CoFA), Goldspink is currently creative producer at the National Art School.

ABOUT THE ADELAIDE BIENNIAL OF AUSTRALIAN ART | Known for its risk taking and expansive vision, the Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art has demonstrated a significant and sustained practice for more than a quarter of a century. Inaugurated in 1990, it is the country's longest running survey of contemporary Australian art and an important platform for Australian artists to realise new works and projects of a scale that require an institutional context for their conception, realisation and presentation. The Adelaide Biennial has had a lasting impact on Australian art, on the careers of artists and arts professionals, and on the state of South Australia as a wellspring for contemporary art. The Adelaide Biennial nationwide Ambassadors Program plays an important role in supporting the Adelaide Biennial's artistic ambition and championing the practice of Australian artists.

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