



Emma Buswell wins \$15,000 Ramsay Art Prize People's Choice

Adelaide, Australia: The Art Gallery of South Australia announced today that West Australian artist Emma Buswell has been awarded the People's Choice for the 2025 Ramsay Art Prize exhibition with her work *The Pool*, comprised of two large-scale knitted textiles that remix mythology and art history with contemporary social commentary.

Buswell's textile works are meticulously constructed over many months on a 1960s hand-operated knitting machine using mill-end and luxury sock yarn. Her work takes its inspiration from the matrilineal craft and knitting techniques passed down from her mother and grandmother. Full of wit and satire and embracing a kitsch aesthetic, Buswell's colourful work also investigates the nature of labour and identity through a distinctly Australian lens.

The Pool is a set of two textile works, one exploring the myth of Narcissus and Echo from Ovid's millennia-old text *Metamorphoses*. In the work, Buswell has knitted together different representations of this fable from historical paintings, using a visual language derived from internet memes to make parallels with current political frictions and social tensions. The second work is an homage to a 1915 painting by Pre-Raphaelite artist John William Waterhouse, *I Am Half-Sick of Shadows, Said the Lady of Shalott*, in which Buswell draws attention to the value and role that artists and craftspeople play within society.

Emma Buswell says, 'Winning the People's Choice means a lot to me, knowing that my work and the thoughts behind it have resonated with so many different groups of people. Overall, my work is an attempt

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to chronicle and document the present, using art as a tool and form of labour to question what our future might look like and who might be allowed to participate in it. I think a lot of people have had experiences of loved ones knitting them things and understand the care that goes into each stitch. In my work I try to make art that is of my own lived experience, intuiting art history and current day events through the lens of labour and repetitive work. I hope that when people see these works, they might feel a sense of solidarity, or of being stuck in the mess and chaos all together, and maybe for a brief moment not feel alone in their thoughts and concerns about the future.'

Based in Fremantle, Buswell is an artist, curator and designer fascinated with systems of government, economies and culture, particularly in relation to constructs of place, identity and community. Buswell has founded and led artist-run spaces across Perth and Fremantle and exhibited and curated exhibitions across Australia.

AGSA Director, Jason Smith says, 'The Ramsay Art Prize People's Choice is a meaningful honour that reflects the powerful connection between an artist and the audience. Emma Buswell's work cleverly intertwines art history and mythology with contemporary issues through the medium of textile, creating an immersive field of pattern and texture for the viewer. We warmly congratulate Emma on this outstanding achievement.'

Supported by specialist legal practice LK, the People's Choice is a \$15,000 prize with one winner selected by public vote from the Ramsay Art Prize finalists.

LK Principal Scott Foreman says, 'Congratulations to Emma Buswell for winning the 2025 LK People's Choice with her work *The Pool*. We thoroughly appreciate the unbridled energy that the Ramsay Art Prize ignites and enjoy predicting which artist will be recognised as the People's Choice each time. Thank you to the artists for their thoughtful, evocative and skilled displays and the James & Diana Ramsay Foundation and AGSA for making this experience possible.'

The Ramsay Art Prize 2025 exhibition runs until 31 August 2025 at the Art Gallery of South Australia. Admission is free.

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ABOUT THE RAMSAY ART PRIZE

The Ramsay Art Prize, a \$100,000 acquisitive visual arts prize, invites submissions of new work by Australian artists under the age of forty years working in any medium, including sculpture, painting, drawing, photography, installation and the moving image.

Presented by the Art Gallery of South Australia and supported in perpetuity by the James & Diana Ramsay Foundation, the Ramsay Art Prize aims to support and encourage contemporary Australian artists to make their best work at a pivotal point in their career.

The Ramsay Art Prize is held every two years at AGSA. The finalists and winner are selected by an eminent panel of judges. The winning work is judged from the exhibition and is acquired into the Gallery's

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Finalists' travel supported by AGSA's Contemporary Collectors

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collection, with the winning artist receiving \$100,000. The exhibition also includes a People's Choice Prize worth \$15,000, supported by sponsor LK, and decided by public vote.

IMAGES agsa.sa.gov.au/media/ramsay2025peopleschoice

FINALIST BIOGRAPHIES agsa.sa.gov.au/whats-on/exhibitions/ramsay-art-prize-2025/

SOCIAL MEDIA @agsa.adelaide #agsaadelaide #ramsayartprize

MEDIA Lindsay Ferris | M +61 405 046 116 | E ferris.lindsay@artgallery.sa.gov.au

CONTACTS Elisabeth Alexander | M +61 404 934 779 | E alexander.elisabeth@artgallery.sa.gov.au

Image caption: Emma Buswell with *The Pool* in Ramsay Art Prize 2025, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide; photo: Saul Steed.