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Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art
27 February – 8 June 2026

Biennial Ambassadors Vernissage Weekend
26 February – 1 March 2026

On Kurna Yarta
Free Entry

2026 BIENNIAL AMBASSADORS

Principal Donor

The Balnaves Foundation

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		N. Smith	

WELCOME

Welcome to the *2026 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: Yield Strength*, curated by Ellie Buttrose.

Since its founding in 1990, the Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art has been the nation's longest-running survey of contemporary art practice and has consistently championed the ambitions of artists and independent curators. This 2026 edition affirms the Biennial's role in supporting research and experiment, and it is with great pleasure that I introduce the artists of the 2026 Biennial to you. Their existential visions are polemical, propositional, insistent, captivating, and call on all of us to remain open and responsive – even under the compounding effects of so many pressuring realities – to the modalities and materialities shaping contemporary practices; to the continuing ramifications of colonialism; to ecological collapse; to social inequity; to digital overload; to intensifying political extremisms and irrationalities.

I thank and pay respect to Robert Andrew, Nathan Beard, Lauren Burrow, Francis Carmody, Mark Maurangi Carrol, Milminyina Dhamarrandji, Matthew Teapot Djipurrtjun, George Egerton-Warburton, Prudence Flint, Brian Fuata, d harding, Matthew Harris, Helen Johnson, Kirtika Kain, Jennifer Mathews, Archie Moore, Josina Pumani, Julie Nangala Robertson, Erika Scott, Joel Sherwood Spring, Charlie Sofu, John Spiteri, Isadora Vaughan and Emmaline Zanelli.

I warmly acknowledge Daniela Valmorbidia, Chair, Biennial Ambassador Committee and her tireless Committee members: Vicki Niehus, Deputy Chair, Zoë Elvish, Bernice Ong and Louise Rigoni. I thank them for their leadership and fabulous creative visions in designing and delivering this Vernissage program. Bravo!

This year you, our 121 Biennial Ambassadors, are collectively the largest and most truly national cohort in the history of the Biennial. This is a testament not only to the determined work of our Biennial Ambassadors Committee, but the esteem in which our friend and curatorial colleague Ellie Buttrose and AGSA are held. Your commitment to and belief in the Adelaide Biennial and in contemporary Australian art is deeply appreciated. Your generous support has enabled artists in *Yield Strength* to extend their practices into new contexts.

Welcome to and please enjoy all that your Vernissage program encompasses and offers!

JASON SMITH,
Director, Art Gallery of South Australia

WELCOME

Welcome to *Yield Strength* – the 19th iteration of the Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art.

Along with the Adelaide Biennial Committee, it is my great privilege to welcome you to the Ambassadors Vernissage Program, taking place from Thursday 26 February to Sunday 1 March 2026.

Presented by the Art Gallery of South Australia, *Yield Strength* introduces a compelling new body of work curated by Ellie Buttrose, one of the most exciting figures in Australian Contemporary Art and a leading voice in the contemporary art world. In Ellie's words, the exhibition reflects the diversity of artistic practice across the continent, encompassing photorealist painting, sculpture constructed from found objects, delicately crafted ceramics, captivating video works, and finely rendered paintings on bark. Together, these works showcase outstanding emerging and leading artists from every corner of Australia, revealing the breadth, depth, and vitality of contemporary Australian art.

Thanks to your generous support, the 2026 Ambassadors Program is championing 24 contemporary Australian artists, directly enabling them to take risks, expand their practices, and realise ambitious visions at Australia's most significant contemporary art platform, the Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art.

I encourage you to immerse yourself in all that the Vernissage Program has to offer – engaging with the artists, the Art Gallery of South Australia, your fellow Ambassadors, and with me – as we come together to celebrate the present and future of contemporary Australian art.

DANIELA VALMORBIDA,
Chair, 2026 Adelaide Biennial Ambassadors Committee

ITINERARY

Jason Smith, Art Gallery of South Australia Director, and Ellie Buttrose, Biennial Curator, invite Ambassadors to enjoy an exclusive program of events across the opening weekend of the *2026 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: Yield Strength*.

NATIONAL PHARMACIES AMBASSADOR AND ARTIST HUB

Art Gallery of South Australia
Radford Auditorium

From Thu 26 to Sat 28 Feb, Ambassadors are invited to take advantage of the National Pharmacies Ambassador and Artist Hub. This space offers Ambassadors a place to meet, rest, and recharge.

National Pharmacies Ambassador and Artist Hub opening hours
Thu 26 Feb – 1pm–5pm
Fri 27 Feb – 10am–5pm
Sat 28 Feb – 10am–5pm

2026 AMBASSADOR WELCOME PACKS

Ambassador Welcome Packs are available for collection from the National Pharmacies Ambassador and Artist Hub from 1pm Thu 26 to 5pm Sat 28 Feb.

Your pack includes: the Vernissage Weekend program; information about the public program; your complimentary exhibition publication, and your Ambassador lanyard. Wear your lanyard to access Ambassador events across the Ambassador Vernissage Program.

THURSDAY

26 FEBRUARY

Ambassador Welcome and National Pharmacies Ambassador and Artist Hub Launch

2-3.45pm

Art Gallery of South Australia
Radford Auditorium

Attend the launch of the reimagined 2026 Ambassador and Artist Hub, thanks to support from National Pharmacies.

Ambassador Curator's Tour

3.45-5pm

Art Gallery of South Australia
Meet at the National Pharmacies
Ambassador and Artist Hub

Ambassadors are invited to join Ellie Buttrose as she guides you through an exclusive preview of selected works in the *2026 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: Yield Strength*.

Official Opening*

6pm

Art Gallery of South Australia
Forecourt

Ambassadors are invited to take in speeches, music and performance at the Official Opening of the *2026 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: Yield Strength* on the forecourt of the Art Gallery of South Australia.

Artist Party

8-11pm

The Cloisters

Kick off your heels and celebrate with artists and friends at the official artist party.

Installation view:
George Egerton-
Warburton, *tiger
snake*, durational;
Guzzler, Melbourne
2021.

*open to the general public



FRI DAY

27 FEBRUARY

Ambassador Brunch

9.30–11.30am
Jolleys Boathouse

Join fellow Ambassadors for an informal brunch and enjoy the views of this stunning riverside venue.

The Critic Lecture: Professor Daniel Browning*

11am
Samstag Museum of Art

Tune into a lecture on the state of contemporary art and criticism in Australia with Professor Daniel Browning and Tristen Harwood.

Ambassador Curator's Tour

12.30pm
Samstag Museum of Art

Join Ellie Buttrose for a tour of the Samstag Museum of Art's *Yield Strength* exhibition display.

Artist Talk with Milminyina Dhamarrandji and Isadora Vaughan*

2pm
Samstag Museum of Art

Hear from *Yield Strength* artists as they discuss their works in the exhibition.

Panel discussion: Why biennials need critics*

2.30pm
Samstag Museum of Art

Hear from Susie Anderson (Blue), Sam Beard (Dispatch), Paris Lettau (Memo) and Robert Leonard (Town Hall) as they reflect on the vital role of criticism in developing artistic practices that are presented in biennials.

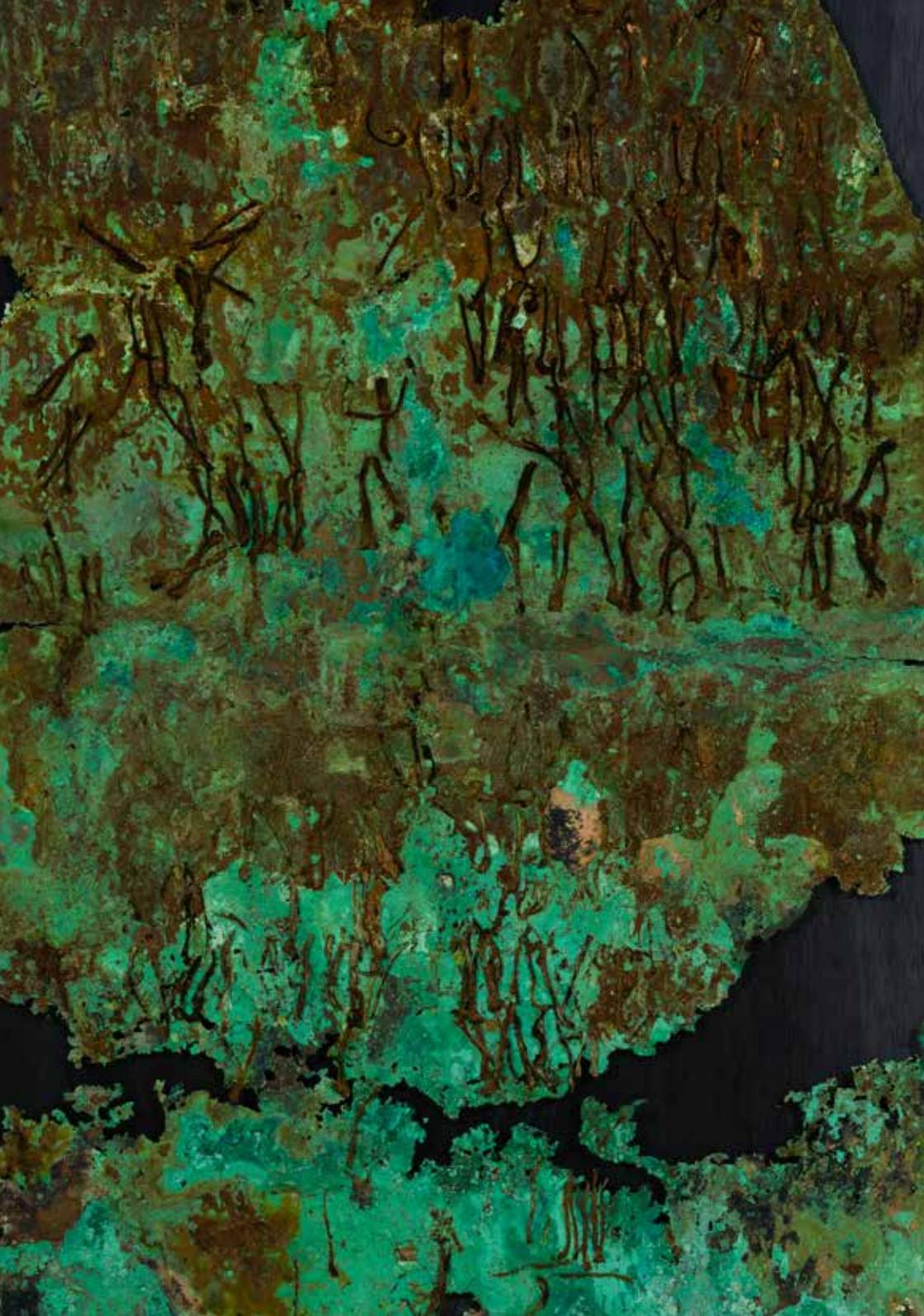
Performance by Brian Fuata*

3.30pm
Art Gallery of South Australia
In the Exhibition

Witness experimental performance artist Brian Fuata as he responds to physical, social and relational features of the given site and people around him.

Installation view:
Joel Sherwood
Spring: Diggermode
2: Cloud Ceding,
until 21 December
2025, curated by
Ellie Buttrose and
Robert Leonard,
Institute of Modern
Art, photo: Joe
Ruckli.

*open to the general public



SATURDAY

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28 FEBRUARY

Artist Talk with Archie Moore and Robert Andrew*

11am
Adelaide Botanic Garden

Hear from *Yield Strength* artists as they discuss their works in the exhibition with Ellie Buttrose.

Ambassador Picnic Lunch

12–2pm
Art Gallery of South Australia
Radford Auditorium

Collect a light lunch from the National Pharmacies Ambassador and Artist Hub and enjoy it on the AGSA lawns or the riverside.

Artist Talk with Kirtika Kain and Francis Carmody*

2pm
Art Gallery of South Australia
Courtyard

Hear from *Yield Strength* artists as they discuss their works in the exhibition.

Panel Discussion: Why curators need biennials*

2.30pm
Art Gallery of South Australia
Courtyard

Join José Da Silva, Bruce Johnson McLean, Mikala Tai and Kyle Weise as they reflect on the changing role of the biennial curator.

Performance by Brian Fuata*

3.30pm
Art Gallery of South Australia
In the Exhibition

Witness experimental performance artist Brian Fuata as he responds to physical, social and relational features of the given site and people around him.

Ambassador Gala Pre-Dinner Drinks

6.30–7.15pm
Art Gallery of South Australia
Forecourt

Enjoy pre-dinner drinks and canapes at the front of the Art Gallery on Adelaide's cultural boulevard.

Ambassador Gala Dinner

7.30–11pm
Venue announced at
Pre-Dinner Drinks

Join AGSA Director Jason Smith and curator Ellie Buttrose to celebrate the generosity of the 2026 Ambassadors and the work of the 2026 Biennial artists in a spectacular setting.

Dress
Yield Strength – Creative Couture

detail Kirtika Kain,
copper large,
2025, etched
copper, cotton,
tar and wax,
120.0 × 90.0 cm;
Courtesy the
artist and Roslyn
Oxley9 Gallery,
Sydney; photo:
David Suyasa.

*open to the general public

SUN DAY

1 MARCH

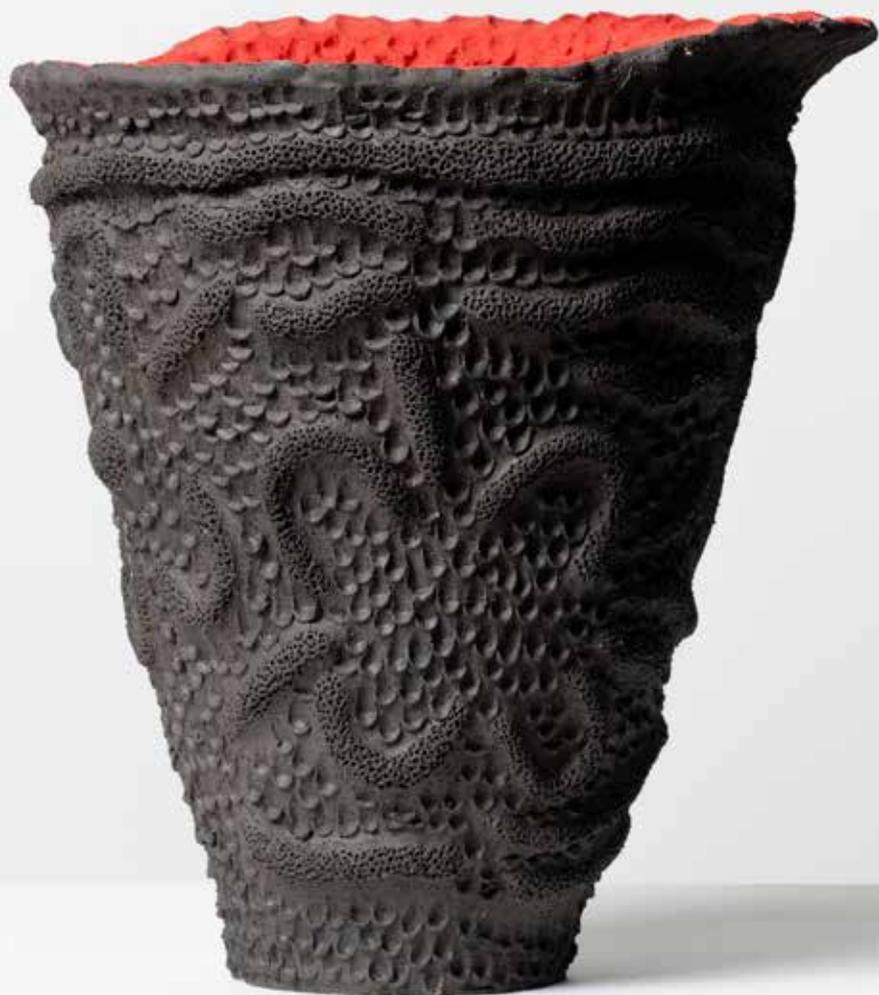
Ambassador Recovery

9.30-11am

Arrive at 9.30am for 10am start
Samstag Museum of Art

Ambassadors are invited to enjoy coffee and pastries and hear from Jason Smith in conversation with Adelaide Biennial Ambassador Terry Wu as they close out the Vernissage Program.

Josina Pumani,
Pitjantjatjara people,
South Australia,
Maralinga, 2024,
underglaze and
sgraffito on clay,
44.0 x 34.0 cm;
Courtesy of the
artist and APY Art
Centre, Collective;
photo: Andy Francis,
courtesy of the
APYACC.



VERNISSAGE WEEKEND AT A GLANCE

Thursday 26 February

2pm	Ambassador Welcome & National Pharmacies Ambassador & Artist Hub Launch	AGSA, Radford Auditorium
3.45pm	Ambassador Curator's Tour	AGSA, Atrium
6pm	Official Opening*	AGSA, Forecourt
8-11pm	Artist Party	The Cloisters, Adelaide University

Friday 27 February

9.30-11.30am	Ambassador Brunch	Jolleys Boathouse
From 11am	Lecture, Artist Talk and Panel Discussion, and performance*	Samstag Museum of Art
12.30pm	Ambassador Curator's Tour	Samstag Museum of Art

Saturday 28 February

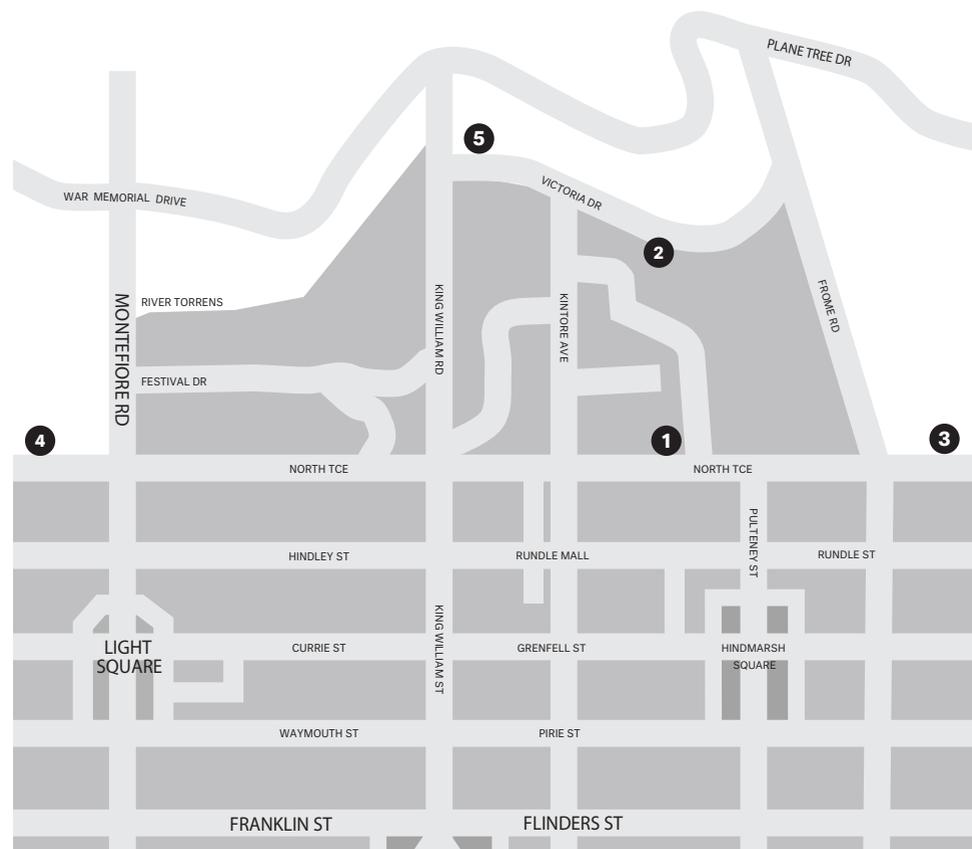
From 11am	Artist Talks, Panel Discussion, Performance*	The Adelaide Botanic Garden
12-2pm	Ambassador Lunch	AGSA, Radford Auditorium
6.30-7.15pm	Ambassadors Pre-Dinner Drinks	AGSA, Forecourt
7.30-11pm	Ambassador Dinner	To be revealed...

Sunday 1 March

9.30-11am	Ambassador Recovery	Samstag Museum of Art
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*open to the general public

NORTH TERRACE PRECINCT MAP



- 1 Art Gallery of South Australia, North Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000
- 2 The Cloisters, Adelaide University, Gate 10, Victoria Dr, Adelaide SA 5000
- 3 Adelaide Botanic Garden, North Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000
- 4 Samstag Museum of Art, 55 North Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000
- 5 Jolleys Boathouse, 1 Jolleys Lane, Adelaide SA 5000

Philanthropy

Art Gallery of South Australia

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E biennialambassadors@artgallery.sa.gov.au

The Art Gallery of South Australia stands on Kurna land and recognises the Kurna people as the custodians of the Adelaide Plains.

The Art Gallery of South Australia Kurna yartangka yuwanthi. AGSArlu Kurna miyurna parna yaitya mathanya Wama Tarntanyaku tampinhi

Principal Donor



In Association with



ADELAIDE FESTIVAL AF

Exhibition Partner



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CULTURAL FUND

Biennial Ambassadors Partners



Presented in association with the Adelaide Festival, and with generous support received from the Art Gallery of South Australia Biennial Ambassadors Program and Principal Donor The Balnaves Foundation. 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 Framework, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments.