

*AROUND
THE
BLOCK*

9 Jul – 20 Aug
2026

Exhibition
Guide

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work live and create: the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people and Elders past and present of the Kulin Nation, Narm/ Melbourne



Next Wave,

Blak Dot Gallery and Next Wave's *Around the Block* programming is supported by Arts Merri-bek Flourish Arts Grants 2025–2026



Merri-bek
City Council



About the Program

Around the Block features works by 17 artists/collectives across seven outdoor locations, including Blak Dot Gallery, Counihan Gallery, Next Wave, and Michelle Guglielmo Park.

The program unfolds across projection sites and digital screens – transforming the heart of Bulleke-bek/Brunswick into an after-dark gallery. Spanning moving image, animation and digital media, the program brings together Indigenous, migrant, queer, disabled perspectives and lived experiences, engaging with themes of identity, place, playfulness, and temporality.

Blak Dot Gallery

Blak Dot Gallery, based in Naarm/Melbourne, is Australia's leading gallery for contemporary First Nations art. Founded in 2011 as a First Nations artist-run space, Blak Dot was created to champion the strength, innovation, and cultural knowledge of First Nations artists and to celebrate connections with world Indigenous cultures.

During *Around the Block*, Blak Dot Gallery is transforming their main glass entrance into a circular portal, and extending across the Balam Balam Place grounds with large-scale projections on the House façade

Counihan Gallery

The Counihan Gallery is Merri-bek City Council's public art gallery, presenting a free program of contemporary art exhibitions.

Named in honour of the Australian artist and activist Noel Counihan, the gallery reflects his legacy as a champion of social justice and free speech through its commitment to activism, sustainability, and creative expression.

Counihan Gallery joins *Around the Block* with their Winter Night Screen program – lighting up nightly across two windows at Brunswick Town Hall: one at the front facing Sydney Road, and the other at the rear in Saxon Street.

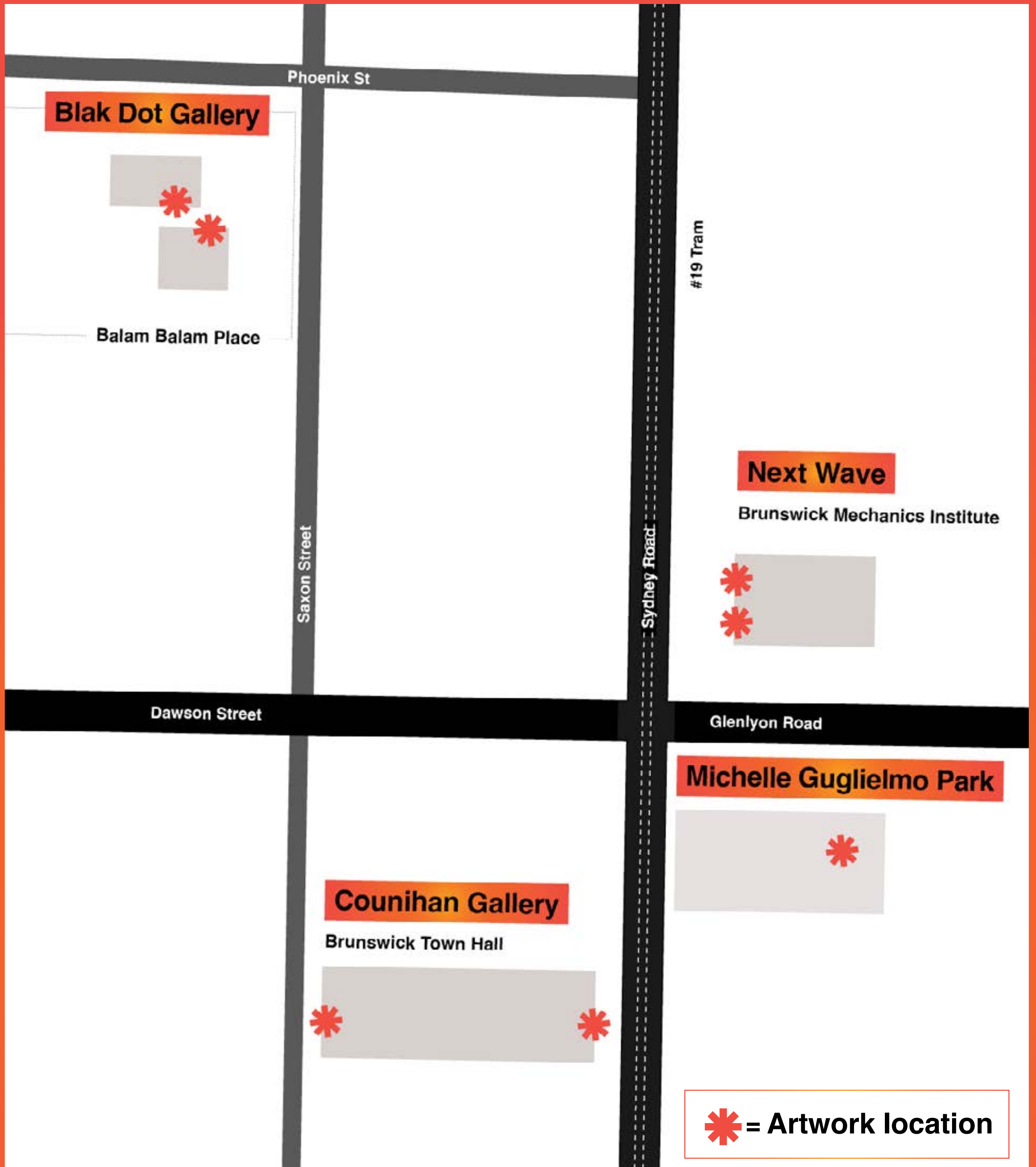
Next Wave

For more than 40 years, Next Wave has been Australia's leading organisation dedicated to supporting the next generation of artists.

Next Wave exist's to bridge the critical gap between study and sustainable professional practice, giving early-career artists the time, resources, relationships and real-world experience needed to build ambitious, enduring creative careers.

Next Wave is presenting works for *Around the Block* at their home at the Brunswick Mechanics Institute and taking over the large screen at the Michelle Guglielmo Park.

Exhibition Map



Blak Dot Gallery

33 Saxon Street

Counihan Gallery

233 Sydney Road + Saxon Street

Next Wave

270 Sydney Road

Michelle Guglielmo Park

Presented by Next Wave, 260 Sydney Road

Program Schedule

Artworks will change every fortnight, with each iteration marked by an exhibition tour.

Works are best experienced between 5pm and 10pm, nightly.

Opening event: Thursday 9 July

Celebrate the opening of *Around the Block* with artist talks, mulled wine, and a guided walking tour of all the artwork locations.

Blak Dot Gallery, from 6pm

9 – 23 July

Blaktasia Projection Collective

Blak Dot Gallery

Andrea Draper

Counihan Gallery

Astrid Mulder

Charlie Lee

Next Wave

Badra Aji

Michelle Guglielmo Park

Presented by Next Wave

Tour of new works:

Friday 24 July

Join us for a walking tour and artist/curator talks as we launch new works across all the artwork locations.

Presented as part of Open House Melbourne's 2026 program.

Next Wave, From 6pm

24 July – 5 August

Tony Aitorea

Vicente Barriga

Blak Dot Gallery

beingbaker

Counihan Gallery

Kimberly Summer

Wenmiao Xin

Next Wave

Camille Perry

Michelle Guglielmo Park

Presented by Next Wave

Tour of new works: Thursday 6 August

Join us for a walking tour and artist/curator talks as we launch new works across all the artwork locations.

Next Wave, From 6pm

6 – 20 August

Lesley Wengembo
Pierra Van Sparkes

Blak Dot Gallery

Lily Houbert

Counihan Gallery

Aarushi Chowdhury
ARTStop

Next Wave

Jack Hodges

Michelle Guglielmo Park

Presented by Next Wave

Artists and works

Jump to

[Aarushi Chowdhury](#)

Strange Land, 2025

[Andrea Draper](#)

We Connect, 2026

[ARTStop](#)

Human shapes and things, 2026

[Astrid Mulder](#)

Here There, 2026

[Badra Aji](#)

*Tiap Selasa Sore
(Every Tuesday Afternoon), 2026*

[beingbaker](#)

The Sea Cure, 2025

[Blaktasia Projection Collective](#)

Blaktasia through the Blak Lens, 2026

Blaktasia Universe Montage, 2026

[Camille Perry](#)

Looking Through You, 2026

[Charlie Lee](#)

It's almost, 2026

[Jack Hodges](#)

Under the Influence, 2026

Kimberly Summer

A Time for Ghosts, 2026

Lesley Wengembo

Seven Faces of Mother Earth, 2026

Lily Houbert

Dressed In Excess, 2025

Pierra Van Sparkes

baal ga, 2026

Tony Aitorea

Hotomai, 2026

Vicente Barriga

Hotomai, 2026

Wenmiao Xin

The Woman in My Dreams, 2023



Blaktasia Projection Collective

Blaktasia® video game and the Blaktasia Universe are created and led by a team of First Nations artists, musicians, designers and creative technologists working at GUCK.

In Blaktasia®, players restore the bush, encounter animals, unlock minigames and take on the corrupting force of the Murk within a First Nations fantasy world informed by Country.

The Blaktasia Projection Collective is a group of artists from the Blaktasia team at GUCK who specialise in projection & installation work.

The collective consists of: Elijah McDonald (Noongar, Yamatji, Pitta Pitta), Charlotte Allingham (Wiradjuri, Ngiyampaa Pilaarrkiyalu), Rosie Kalina (Wemba Wemba, Gunditjmara), Sasipim Srisunakhrua, and Kati Elizabeth.

blaktasia.com



Blaktasia through the Blak Lens, 2026

Peer through the Blak lens and into the magical world of Blaktasia. Step into the Blaktasia Universe, an exciting new world imagined through our eyes and inspired by Country.



Blaktasia Universe Montage, 2026

Work-in-progress, behind-the-scenes videos and the latest videos and artworks from the Blaktasia Universe. Meet the deadly crew of Land Defenders protecting Country, alongside cute animals, native plants and colourful cartoon worlds that show Country through a contemporary Blak lens.

Back to top of list ↑



Andrea Draper

I dream in RGB, aka Andrea Draper (she/her), has an established practice in still and video collage, often projecting works outdoors at night to change how audiences experience the environment. Her mixed-media approach combines found and self-made elements, patterning, and typography, informed by a rich understanding of digital and traditional systems, coupled with chance. Her cultural identity – including her Burmese heritage and a London childhood that transitioned to Melbourne’s suburbia – emerges in visual explorations of lived experience, pop culture, and playfulness.

idreaminrgb.com



We Connect, 2026

City life is relentless. Crowded spaces, constant digital stimulation, and the pressure of daily routines make genuine connection with nature feel increasingly rare, yet more necessary than ever. Whether it's a walk through the park, a weekend away, or a longer escape, these moments of contact with the natural world are rejuvenating. They restore clarity, replenish energy, and remind us that there is a world beyond the routine. These environmental tensions are at the centre of *We Connect...* The artist invites the viewer into immersive, unexpected settings woven into the urban landscape; spaces that feel like exits and entry points at the same time. In doing so, *We Connect...* holds two ideas in conversation: the way nature renews us, and the way digital connectivity now defines us. Both are forms of being connected to something larger than ourselves.

[Back to top of list](#) ↑



Astrid Mulder

Astrid Mulder is a multidisciplinary artist working primarily across photography and video. She creates digital collages of her performing body in dialogue with colour and form. Through processes of fragmentation, duplication, and reassembly, choreographed gestures are reconfigured into playful compositions that invite viewers to construct their own associations and meanings.

Using the body as a tool for translation, Mulder examines contemporary experiences of navigation and communication. Arms and legs become key protagonists through which she explores how she makes sense of and communicates with the world she inhabits.

Mulder completed a Master of Contemporary Art at the Victorian College of the Arts in 2022, where she was awarded the Fiona Myer Award for Excellence. She also holds a Bachelor of Design (Creative Direction), which continues to

inform her approach to visual communication and image-making. Her work has been exhibited across galleries, public spaces, and projection-based contexts throughout Victoria.

astridvmulder.com



Here There, 2026

Within the *Here There*, arms and legs appear and disappear through window-like frames. A playful dialogue unfolds as fragmented body parts interact and connect across panels. Gestures range from tentative and inquisitive to direct and communicative – pointing, reaching, balancing, and cycling through repeated movements that guide the viewer's attention.

Here There continues Astrid Mulder's exploration of collage as both a material process and conceptual framework. Through

acts of fragmentation and reassembly, Mulder explores how parts form a whole, and how meaning can emerge, shift, and deepen through fragmentation. Ideas of direction, balance, and connection are expressed through both their presence and absence within the work. Limbs align across panels to suggest a complete body, yet never fully resolve. The compositions move between logic and play, suggesting coherence, while resisting fixed interpretation, allowing space for multiple readings to emerge.

Gestural cues extend beyond the screen space, directing attention back into the surrounding environment and activating the site as part of the composition itself.



Charlie Lee

Charlie Lee is an artist and performance designer from Aotearoa working across dance and performance, text, costume and research. Working through queer/trans* and ecological methodologies, Charlie is interested how temporal and spatial dynamics (dis)orient what feels familiar or strange; in particular, moments of collapse and anticipation, and the many ways they're charged with feeling – negative, romantic, melancholic, frightening, pleasurable.

In 2025 Lee presented *Camopansies*, their first choreographic work at Dancehouse, supported by a studio residency at WXYZ Studios/Lucy Guerin Inc. They've also been co-facilitating Trans Ecology Club since 2024, a reading and project group, and presented work with Blindside, The Emerging Writers Festival and Going Down Swinging, while currently completing their BFA (Honours) in Visual Art at VCA, Charlie's background is in theatre and

performance design. They regularly collaborate with other artists as a set/costume designer and equally enjoy writing around performance, the way that words fail to capture feeling, and in doing so take on a performative quality of their own. Recent design projects include *Requiem* (Lucy Eidelson), *Mis O' the Mountain* (Jessie Monk), *Diagrammatica* (Jason Maling), *Time Under Tension* with Luke George and Sam Carson's film *Emile is Missing*.

charlee.cargo.site



***FEELING
TIME***

***[NERVOUS
ANTICIPAT-
ITON]***

It's almost, 2026

It's almost is located before 'the event', before the video starts, if it hasn't already...

'The event' being many things at the same time – the video work itself, a movie beginning, the stalls of a theatre, a waiting room, a standstill, a strike, before a kiss, before an action, before

something happens. The object of anticipation never appears. The 'something' is always on the horizon.

Cycling through fragments of text across two screens, each phrase endlessly finds itself in relation to a different one as the channels loop out of sync. Meaning is produced through chance encounters between each screen, potential relationships coalescing then fragmenting as text falls in and out of time.

Waiting can be as understood as a means of temporal and spatial disciplining or disorientation, where power structures shape access to healthcare, citizenship, food, and resources. Attending to poetics and multiplicities of waiting, perhaps it can take a different form that envisions another way of living beyond the velocity of progress and development, even if only for a second.

[Back to top of list](#) ↑



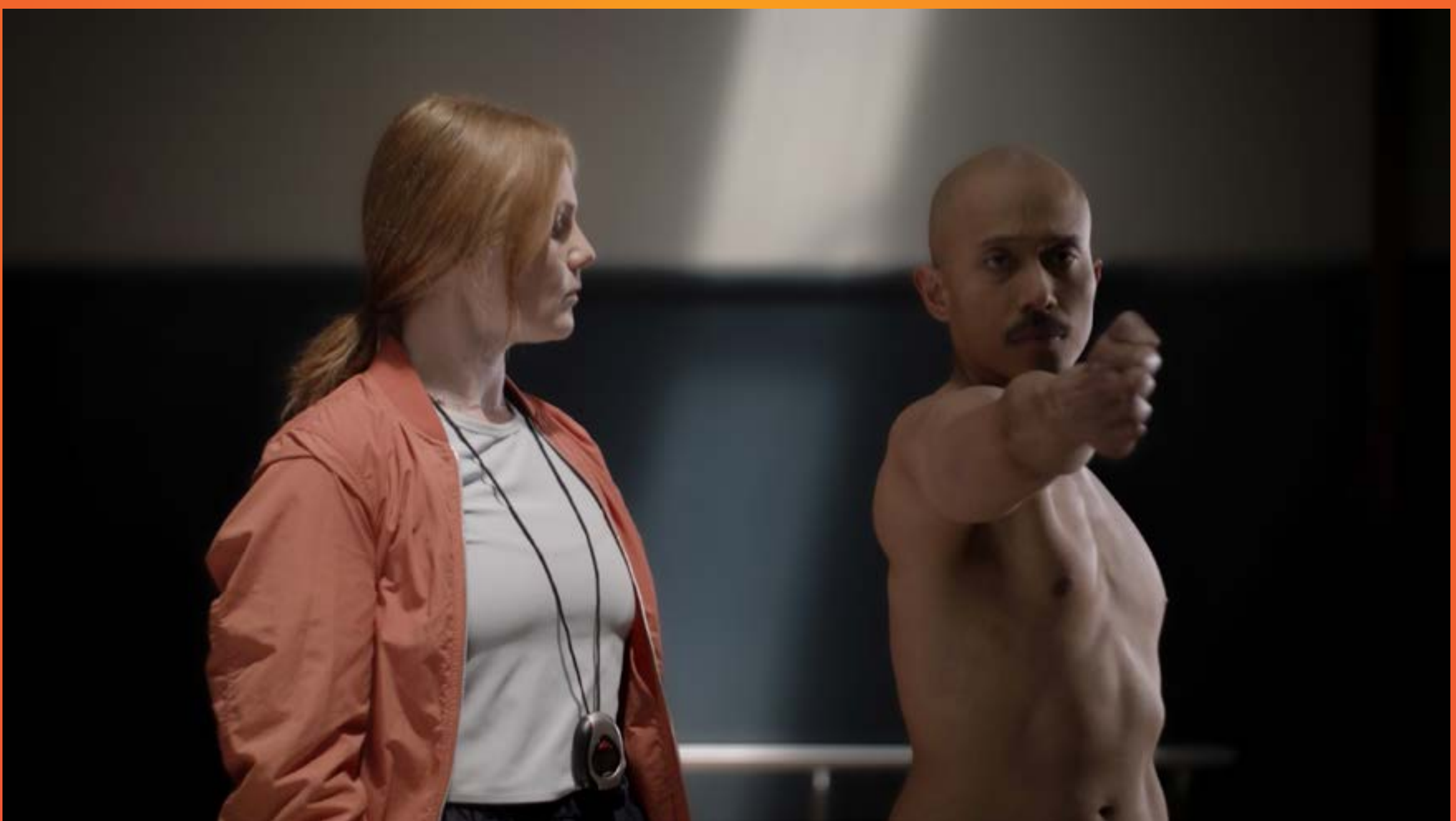
Badra Aji

Badra Aji's practice functions as a site of visual poetry where personal history and collective memory intersect. Working across drawing, painting, writing, and video, he constructs poetic semi-narratives that explore the instability between autobiography and fiction. In his work, the act of processing memory and internal experience becomes the primary artistic process, resulting in compositions that navigate the blurred boundaries between the intimate and the political.

By recontextualising archives and speculative imagery, Aji explores the complexities of lived experience against shifting cultural and political landscapes. He is particularly interested in the productive tension between image and language, focusing on the gaps where meaning is not fixed. These spaces allow for new interpretations to emerge, inviting the viewer to actively negotiate the narrative fragments while positioning them as both witness and outsider.

Aji has exhibited extensively across Melbourne, Sydney, and Paris, including a solo exhibition project at the Heide Museum of Modern Art. He was the recipient of the Majlis Travelling Scholarship from the Victorian College of the Arts in 2016, and his work has been recognized in major prizes, including as a finalist in the Paul Guest Drawing Prize (2018), the Dobell Drawing Prize (2019, 2025), the Ramsay Art Prize (2023) and the Churchie Emerging Art Prize (2026).

badraaji.net



Tiap Selasa Sore (Every Tuesday Afternoon), 2026

In *Tiap Selasa Sore*, the artist appears to “swim” mid-air within a basketball court.

This site traditionally evokes deep-seated anxiety around school sports for many young queer people, but here it is transformed

into a poetic environment where memory, vulnerability, and longing circulate.

Captioned for the viewers, the narrative explores the intersections of queer identity and the atmosphere of increasing religiosity in Indonesia. Badra Aji addresses a possible half-sibling, sharing memories of their father whom he now only encounters in “always pink-skyed dreams.” These visitations carry a heavy dual meaning. While they are a welcome connection to a lost parent, they are shadowed by his mother’s traditional belief that dreaming of the dead is an omen of misfortune. This tension reflects the looming anxiety of a queer person navigating a space of growing religious devotion, evidenced by his mother’s mastery of the Quran and her pre-dawn prayers.

By exploring the realisation of identity alongside the weight of family karma, the work blurs the lines between spiritual belief and intergenerational trauma, presenting a complex window into the queer Southeast Asian Muslim experience.

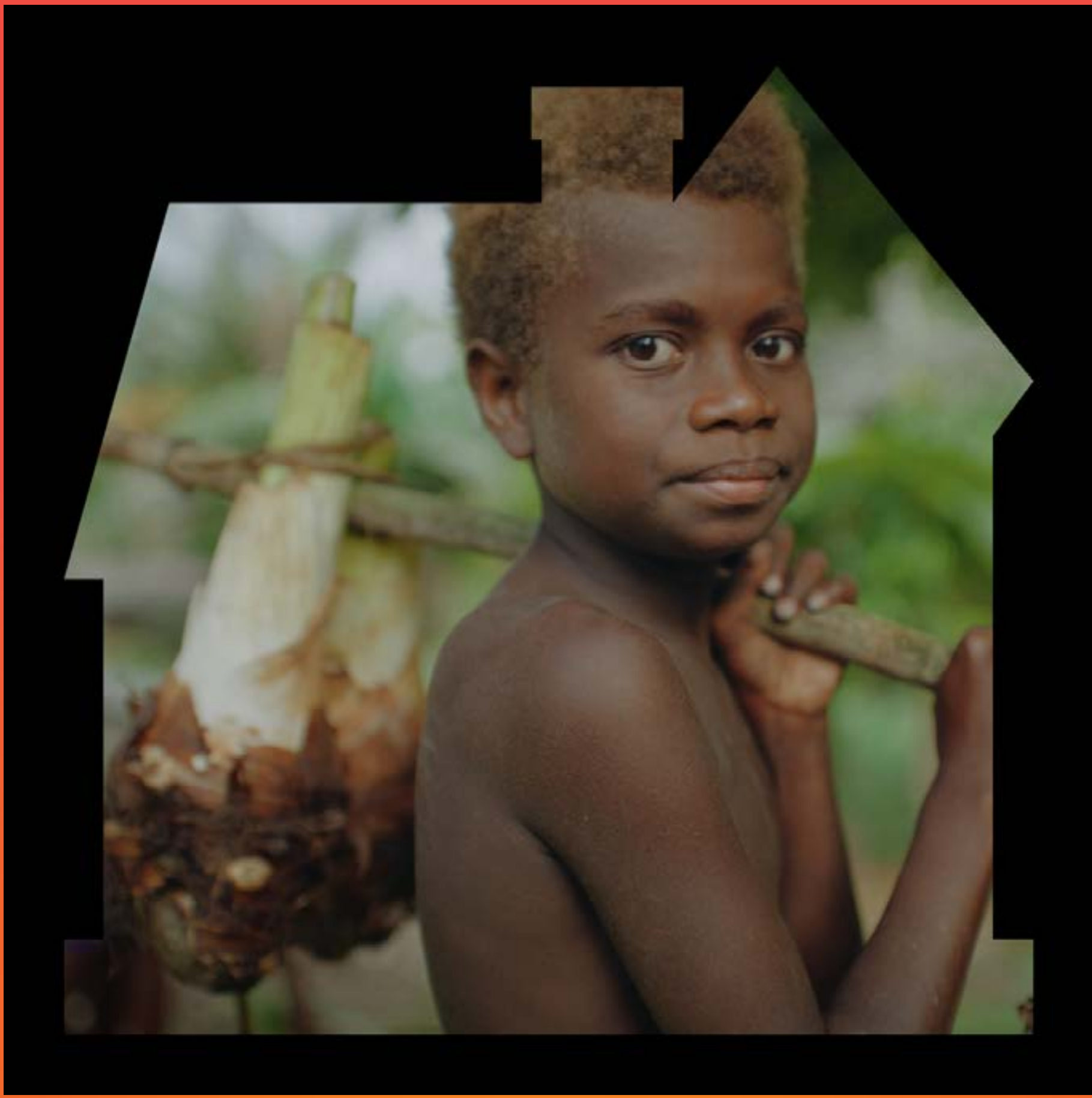
[Back to top of list](#) ↑



Tony Aitorea

Tony Aitorea is a videographer from the Solomon Islands. Over the past three years, he has worked in the NGO space, using videography to amplify local voices across rural Papua New Guinea. My work advocates for nation-building through youth, capturing stories that highlight resilience, creativity, and the importance of community. Through my lens, I strive to connect people, inspire dialogue, and empower the next generation to see themselves as leaders and changemakers in their own right.

@aitovisuals

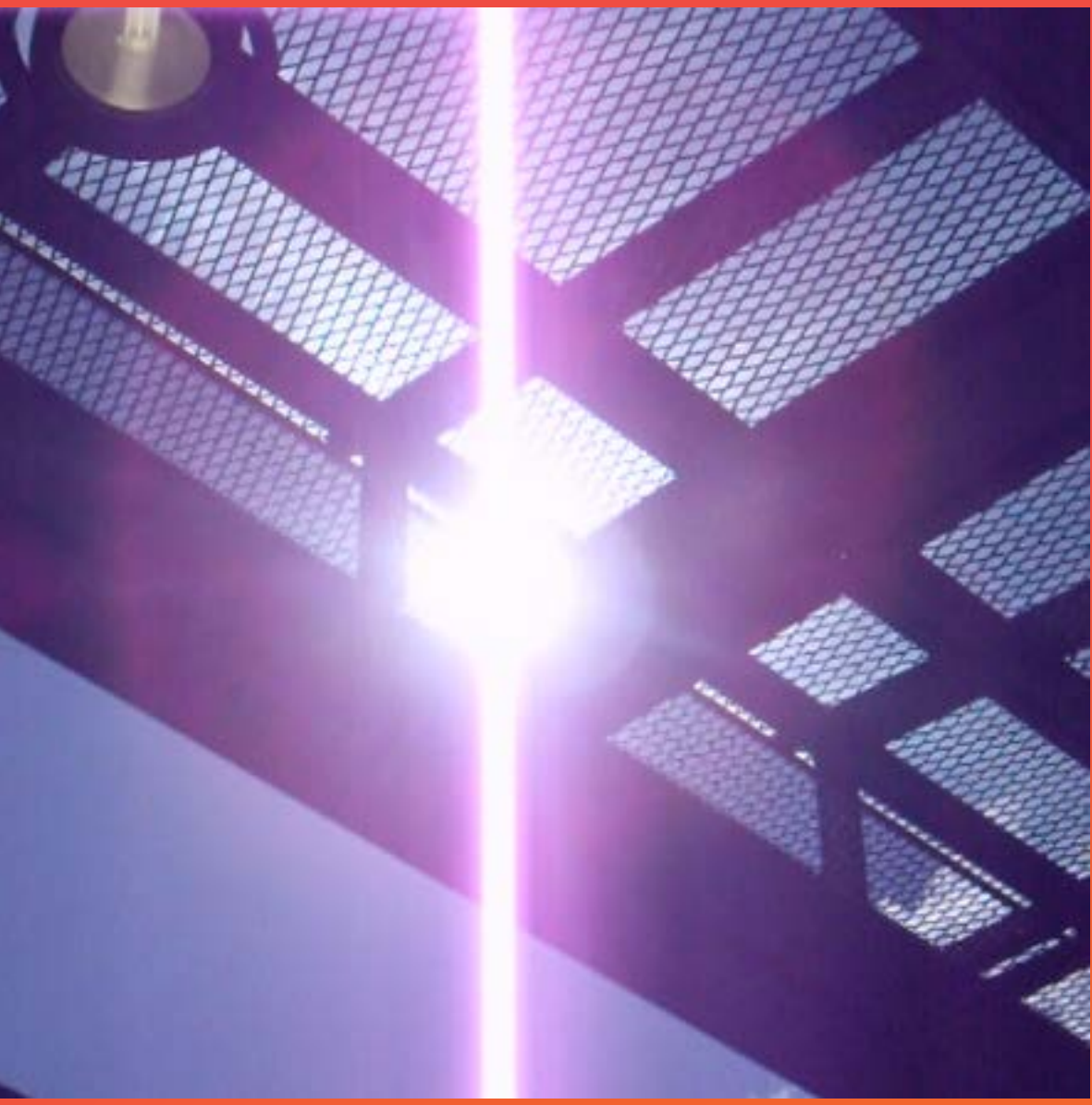


Hotomai, 2026

Hotomai showcases the initiative of the Hotomai Cultural Village in Honiara, Solomon Islands, which envisions preserving and sharing the traditional ways of living of the Birao people of Guadalcanal Province. *Hotomai* reflects an ongoing effort to keep traditions alive for future generations while inviting audiences to engage with the richness and resilience of Solomon Islands culture.

Special thanks to Hotomai Cultural Village, with contributions from Jessie Koli (Coordinator), Jacinta Koli (Hotomai Founder & Manager), Donald (Carrier and Tour Guide) and Roy Wasi Junior (Technical Support).

[Back to top of list](#) ↑



Vicente Barriga

Vicente Barriga (b. 1997, Chile) is a curator, poet, cultural anthropologist, and multidisciplinary artist, and co-director of Videoclub, an independent platform for experimental video art from the Global South and its diasporas. His artistic practice revolves around territory, spirituality, sound, and moving image — primarily through video collage.

As a curator, he has organized screenings in Berlin, New York, Zürich, Cape Town, and Tokyo, with a focus on sonic materiality, critical intangible cultural heritage, and moving image practices from elsewhere — including the internet as a decentered site of memory. He is currently pursuing a master's degree in World Heritage Studies, Cultural Heritage, and Museum Studies. In 2015, he received the Premio Roberto Bolaño — Chile's leading literary prize for young writers.

[@videoclubworld](#)



i tried to meditate but it was hard,
2026

i tried to meditate but it was hard follows the artist on a one-way journey that rewrites the story of Odysseus. No return, only departure. Beginning in a small coastal village in the Cordillera de la Costa, South America, the piece drifts through Berlin, the Baltic Sea, Venice, and finally the forests of Victoria, Australia, 11,000 kilometers from where it started.

Shot on a digicam, the footage collapses these landscapes into a collage of light, clouds, and water. Drawing loosely on Spinoza, the work sits with a question it refuses to resolve: why are images of light and sky so readily mapped onto the idea of God?

Running beneath it all is the voice of Teresita Muñoz, a potter from the artist's hometown whose ceramic practice had pre-Hispanic origins. Recovered from an old interview, her voice follows the artist across the journey, connecting him to his ancestors. A meditation on immanence, belonging, and what a body can hold.

Edited by Lautaro Barriga. Music and sound design by Javier Vargas.

[Back to top of list](#) ↑



beingbaker

beingbaker (they/them) is a disabled anti-interdisciplinary artist. They were born in Ireland, where they lived for the first 13 years of their life, before moving to Whadjuk Noongar Boodjar (Western Australia).

beingbaker's practice is shaped by their intersectional identity and informs both how they make work and what they create, exploring themes of disability, immigration, queerness, belonging, and the in-between. The mediums they use are limitless and adaptive to their capacity at the time of making, spanning sculpture, performance, video, illustration, and more.

@beingbaker



The Sea Cure, 2025

The Sea Cure is a video performance that captures the relentless pursuit of wellness from the perspective of a chronically ill person. It explores themes of isolation, desperation, hope, failure, and the ritualistic nature of perseverance. Using the beach as a stage, the artist draws on historical medical advice once prescribed for ailments of unknown origin. In the 1700s, being sent to the seaside to harness the healing powers of salt air and the ocean was considered a cure-all. Why beingbaker continues their quest for wellness is complex. Is it fuelled by hope? By the need to have their existence validated by the expectations capitalism places on us all? Why is it that, no matter the cost, existing as they are has been shown not to be enough? Why must you always try to be more?

Back to top of list ↑



Kimberly Summer

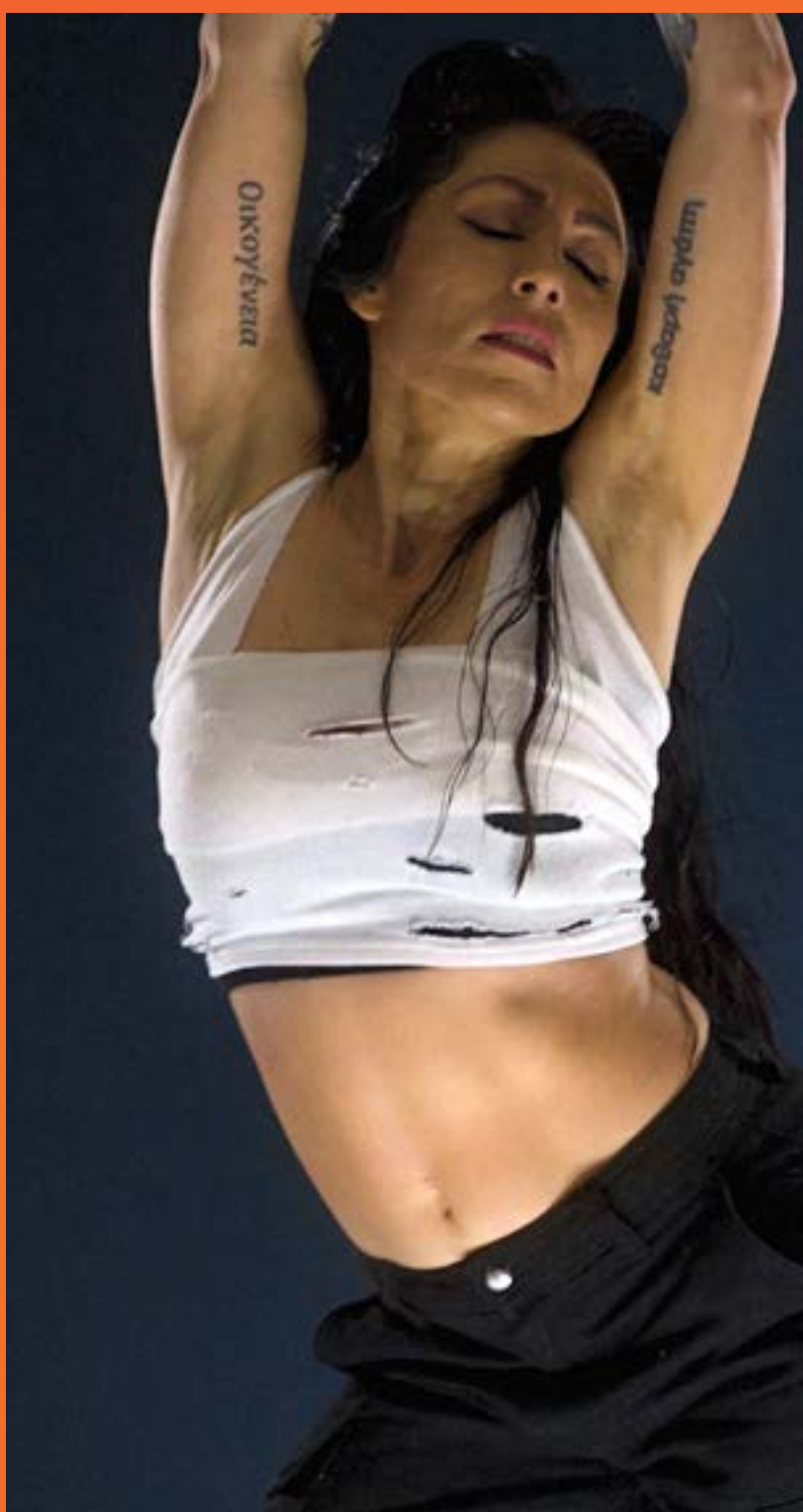
Kimberly is a female BIPOC director and political dance researcher based in Naarm (Melbourne), working with artists and organisations across Australia. Her commercial work is recognisable for its raw approach to movement and a collaborative methodology that favours lateral processes over traditional hierarchies.

She works primarily with CALD communities, particularly the Naarm street dance community, queer arts groups and First Nations communities. Kimberly also applies her processes to commercial opportunities, prioritising diverse representation in traditionally gatekept spaces to challenge public stereotypes.

Kimberly is a co-founder of Assemble Project, a global first artist-led initiative that pioneers 'political dance theory', the argument that dance is an accessible tool for oppressed people globally in their fight for liberation,

resistance and cultural continuity. The initiative brings together dance, politics, history and activism in one space. Her creative work has screened at international film festivals in Europe and Canada, as well as being featured at COP2022.

www.kimberlysummer.com



A Time for Ghosts, 2026

How do we contain the chaos inside in a chaotic world? *A Time for Ghosts* holds that question in fragile suspension: a meditation on bearing witness while floating through everyday life.

On each screen, originally shot footage loops at random. Nature in violent flux juxtaposes with krump and afro-style dancers' bodies heaving and convulsing to the same visual beat. The two screens switch between

dancers and nature's wrath, creating randomised comparisons that never repeat.

The work draws directly from how dance can hold and release rage. Krump, born from survival in 1990s Los Angeles, traps chaos inside the body and releases it as form. Afro styles pulse with the rhythms of the natural world. Slow motion shots catch micro-movements no live audience could see: the ripple of a shoulder before a strike, the tremor in a clenched fist. Nature's chaos is indifferent. The dancer's chaos is chosen.

The work features diverse dance artists from across Naarm specialising in street style forms.

[Back to top of list](#) ↑



Wenmiao Xin

Wenmiao Xin is a Chinese visual artist and photographer based in Naarm/Melbourne, Australia. Her practice spans photography and moving images, drawing from her upbringing in the East and lived experiences within Western cultures. She blends these influences through vibrant colour, personal expression, and constructed visual narratives. She explores intimacy, identity, gender, and sexuality, creating work that reflects lived experience and the fluid interplay of cultural perspectives.

Influenced by her identity as a lesbian, feminist, and woman of colour, she challenges fixed notions of identity and embraces its evolving, intersecting nature. Drawing inspiration from writer and scholar Sara Ahmed's words, "I am not a lesbian one moment and a person of colour the next and a feminist at another. I am all these at every moment," her work reflects this simultaneity. Each image and moving image become an affirmation of pride, complexity, and belonging, celebrating how

cultural heritage, sexuality, and feminist values are deeply intertwined.

Recent exhibitions include her solo photographic exhibition I'm a Lesbian, a Feminist, a Woman of Colour at Trocadero Projects, presented as part of the Midsumma Festival 2026, as well as a public lightbox project developed with Maribyrnong City Council and exhibited at the InFocus Festival.

[@wenmiao_xin](#)



The Woman in My Dreams, 2023

The Woman in My Dreams explores sexuality, self-discovery, and the fluid process of recognising oneself as a lesbian. Rather than following a linear narrative or documentary structure, *The Woman in My Dreams* is constructed through a collage-based visual approach using green screen footage, animation elements, and digital compositing.

The Woman in My Dreams brings together fragmented imagery, layered textures, and shifting visual environments to reflect the disjointed and nonlinear experience of identity formation. At its core, the work is about the moment of realisation—falling in love with another woman and beginning to understand and name one's own sexuality. This process is not presented as a fixed or resolved story, but as something evolving, uncertain, and visually unstable.

By combining chroma key aesthetics with animated interventions, the work deliberately embraces artificiality and digital construction. Figures and elements are cut, reassembled, and recontextualised within abstract visual spaces, allowing meaning to emerge through association rather than narrative continuity. Presented in a public art context, the work invites viewers to encounter queer identity not as a singular or didactic story, but as a fragmented and open-ended visual experience. It reflects the complexity of self-definition in a contemporary digital environment, where identity can be both constructed and discovered through mediated images.

[*Back to top of list*](#) ↑



Camille Perry

Camille (Cam) Perry is a queer lens-based artist who considers the industrialisation of memory reproduction and the alchemical nature of the image. Her work engages with the complexities of identity, and encounters with places that prompt research-driven inquiries. Informed by her experience of working in a film developing laboratory, Perry is fascinated with the complexity of deciphering what it means to take photos in a world exhausted by images. Her most recent work, 'Mistake Me For Anybody' Premiered as part of ACMI's 'Art + Film' Program (2026) and Her Debut Film 'The Silver Curtain' Premiered at BUFF (2026).

[@camille.perry.photo](#)



Looking Through You, 2026

Looking Through You is about trying to understand the difference between seeing and being seen. This video work is an intimate self-portrait taken using multiple mirrors, where the only thing between the artist and their reflection is this camera.

“My awareness to the version of myself that is looking and the version of myself that is being looked at slip in and out of each other. Sometimes it feels like I’m looking at the audience while other times I can see my hands moving cautiously, like I’m being watched.

The way I see myself is often mediated by technologies and my feelings around how I record myself shifts rapidly and can be polarising. Looking Through You was made out of a desire to see these slips between control and vulnerability.”

Back to top of list ↑



Lesley Wengembo

Lesley Wengembo is a 29 year old artist originally from the Kumiri tribe of Pangia in Papua New Guinea. He completed a Bachelor of Fine Art at the National Art School in Sydney and is currently undertaking a Master of Fine Art at RMIT University. In recent years, his practice has focused on hyper-realistic portraiture, primarily depicting Indigenous people in traditional attire.

“As a contemporary Indigenous artist, I try to capture an essence of what is still alive today, expressed through their faces, before it disappears.”

@lwengemboart



Seven Faces of Mother Earth, 2026

Seven Faces of Mother Earth is a poetic reflection on an Indigenous artist's return to his village after feeling overwhelmed by his experiences in the city. In seeking to rediscover himself, he encounters Mother Earth, who reminds him of where he comes from. Drawing from personal experience, the work imagines Mother Earth as a living presence, speaking to us about what we seem to have forgotten.

Credits: Nikka Tua (Model/Mother Earth), Brandy Maku (Make up artist)

[Back to top of list](#) ↑

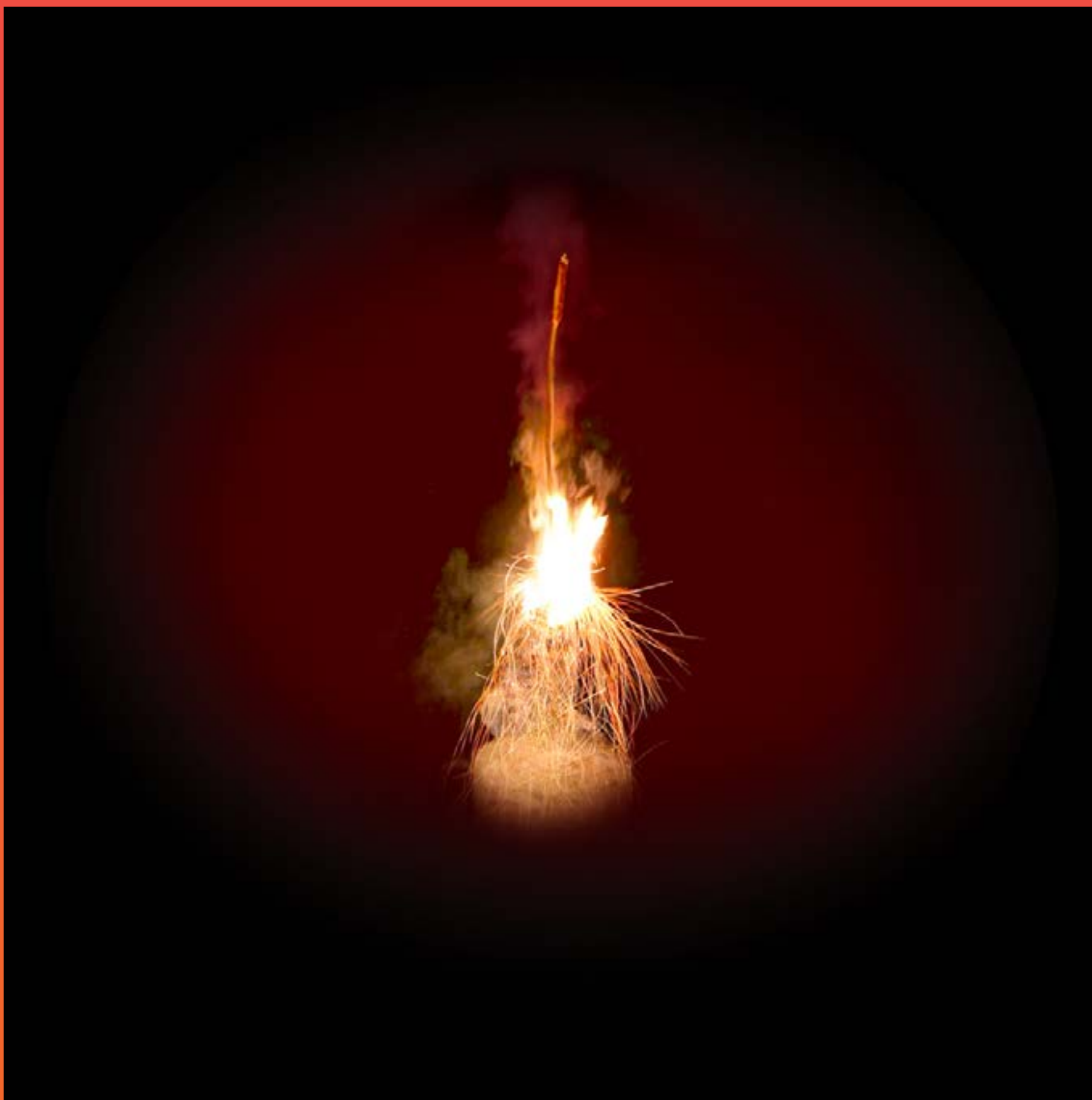


Pierra Van Sparkes

Pierra Van Sparkes (they/them/baal) is a Kulin Country based, queer Pibbulman Noongar artist. Swaying between whispered invitations into their internal world (shhhh, that dog in em is resting) and full-throated Blak humour for mob in the back row, their work is inspired by cultural and material bricolage we engage to assemble individual and collective worlds.

Creating with photography, video and digital media, their work unspools bigger yarns shared with friends and family about place, belonging, surviving the settler colony and dreaming of worlds beyond.

pvansparkes.wixsite.com



baal ga, 2026

balga is the grass tree to my Noongar family.

balga was unearthed from boodja to the east.

baal is she and he and it all at once; the sound that calls for me.

A gift from mooditj moort; roots singing for release.

balga will burn before they will grow.

baal ga's light touches all that I know.

—

baal ga, 2026, was commissioned by Koorie Heritage Trust and Fed Square for the Big Screen program.

[Back to top of list](#) ↑



Lily Houbert

Lily Houbert is a Melbourne/Naarm-based emerging artist and final year Bachelor of Design student at RMIT University, specialising in Digital Media. Working primarily with animation, her practice explores contemporary issues through accessible and visually engaging storytelling.



Dressed In Excess, 2025

The world today is deeply shaped by overconsumption, especially in fashion. A clear example is our habit of buying cheap clothes, wearing them only a few times, then discarding them. This cycle creates enormous waste, filling landfills worldwide. To explore this, I created a stop-motion animation showing an individual's wardrobe and the volume it creates. It follows a girl trying on different outfits; with each change, her disappointment grows as piles of clothing build around her. Although each outfit is perfectly acceptable, her dissatisfaction reveals the absurdity of always wanting more.

[Back to top of list](#) ↑



Aarushi Chowdhury

Aarushi Chowdhury is a writer/director fascinated by chaos in the mundane, and even more by the people who create it. Born in India and partly raised in a household of sixty family members under one roof, she naturally gravitates toward unique characters and the moral systems they build and break. Her work largely explores family, memory, class tension and moral ambiguity through a character-driven lens. Her funded debut short *Clown* premiered at MIFF and SXSW Sydney, receiving recognition at the Cannes Indie Shorts Awards and the Australian Women in Film Festival, where she was awarded the 'One To Watch' prize.

Having spent her early years of life as an only child, Aarushi has a strong yearning for collaboration and shared experiences. As such, Aarushi has developed work through Screen Australia, ABC, AFTRS and Creative Victoria supported programs, including her

latest short Phorid, executive produced by Iain B. MacDonald. Alongside filmmaking, Aarushi programs for Melbourne Women in Film Festival and directs commercial work with a narrative edge.

Aarushi often gravitates toward a darkly comedic tone, knowing that a bitter pill is easier to swallow with a spoonful of sugar.

[@aarushi_chowdhury](#)



Strange Land, 2025

Strange Land is an 16mm moving-image work documenting a recent journey through India. Artist Aarushi Chowdhury was born in India and raised there for the first years of her life before migrating to Australia. Her return to India alone as an adult felt emotionally disorienting – it was deeply familiar yet strangely distant. Chowdhury found herself

moving through her own home country as a tourist, attempting to reconnect with memories that no longer felt fully accessible.

While there, Chowdhury discovered that all the videos and photographs of her childhood had been lost, like she had been erased from the very place that birthed her. It was one of the first times Chowdhury truly understood the fragility of the moving image in her life. This absence became formative and is perhaps why Chowdhury compulsively documents moments she wants to preserve and is afraid to forget.

Strange Land is a meditation on that fear: on memory – its construction, its erosion, its disappearance, and its constant reconstruction. The work explores India through a subjective and intimate lens: fragmented memories, familial gestures, fleeting landscapes, overheard conversations, and the textures of everyday life. Rather than presenting India through spectacle or exoticism as it usually is in the West, the project is interested in emotional memory – how places become mythologised over time, how migration alters our relationship to home, and how family archives are continually rewritten

Chowdhury dedicates this work to those who migrated at a young age. For them, life can remain suspended in a state of liminality. They never fully belong to the past or the future, never quite fit into one culture or the other, and never quite arrive ... because home is no longer a fixed place but an ever-evolving idea. Even return does not resolve this distance; instead, it reveals how deeply familiarity and estrangement can coexist within the same place.

[Back to top of list](#) ↑



ARTS ACCESS VICTORIA

Artstop

Artstop is an Arts Access Victoria inclusive multi arts studio for Deaf and Disabled artists that supports creative expression and experimentation, artistic development and public engagement. Artstop gathers weekly in Brunswick to create, explore and discuss individual practices and collaborative works. The studio has been running for over 15 years and currently has 14 members working across a diverse range of mediums and ideas.

Human shapes and things, Artstop's work being shown in *Around the Block*, was created by Alicia Peterson, Caroline Alcalde, Danny Do, Eddie, Lisa Pownall, Margaret Bold, Melissa, Roslyn, Stefano Conti, Teague Leigh, Theo Psathas and Kelly Wright.

artsaccess.com.au/studios/artstop



Human shapes and things, 2026

Human shapes and things explores how different bodies navigate, interpret, and shape a shared urban environment, specifically the often-traversed local streets of Brunswick where the artists live and work. The work begins from an understanding that each person already holds their own version of 'the block', individual pathways formed over time through habit, access, confidence, and lived experience.

In the videos, a group of artists move through these familiar routes, using chalk to draw a continuous line tracing their movement through the neighbourhood. Where needed, tools are adapted, such as attaching chalk to walking aids, embedding accessibility within the creative process itself. A second group then later follows their route, responding to these lines by adding to them,

smudging, interrupting, or erasing them. The project spans multiple weeks where group roles shift over time, creating a cyclical system of making and unmaking. Throughout this time, the work reveals how public space is not neutral; rather, it is continuously shaped by those who move through it in different ways.

Filmed in real time, the edited video captures and presents overlapping traces, gestures, and interactions with the local urban environment. The ephemeral nature of the chalk line reflects the fragile and often overlooked presence of artistic and disabled bodies in public space. Its continual reappearance asserts persistence and collective agency; the invisible labour of navigation becomes visible.

These navigations are an act of deliberate pathfinding as much as they are observational and creative wanderings. As contemporary flâneurs, the artists punctuate their urban environments, reclaiming individual and collective access to public space.

[Back to top of list](#) ↑



Jack Hodges

Jack Hodges' practice encompasses painting, sculpture, video, and public engagement. His work seeks and attempts to isolate the quiet forces of power at play with reference to everyday aesthetics, local culture, irony, and imperfection. He aims to challenge assumptions and explores how coercion, convention, coexistence, and status shape human behaviour and decision-making. He likes to use public interaction to generate content for his work, embracing spontaneity and uncertainty as part of the process.

Hodges was a finalist in the STILL: National Still Life Award 2023 and received both a Special Commendation and the People's Choice Award in the Churchie National Emerging Art Prize 2025.

dowatfeelsgood.com



Under the Influence, 2026

Under the Influence continues Jack Hodges' exploration of how beliefs are shaped, shifting here from a coastal/urban context into a rural setting, framed by silos, hay bales, colourbond, barbed wire, and Akubra hats.

Filmed largely off the cuff, the work centres on encounters with strangers who have only just met Gary the Dolphin along his journey from Nambucca Heads, NSW to McLaren Vale, SA through rural NSW/ VIC. Many participants were contacted through Facebook community noticeboards, alongside spontaneous vox-pop encounters. These conversations unfold as a kind of informal confessional: a space where people speak openly, often revealing personal reflections, contradictions, and deeply held views. The camera operates less as an interrogator and more as a silent witness: present, attentive, but non-judgemental.

Across these interactions, influence emerges not as something imposed, but as something embedded and determined by language, upbringing, environment, and the subtle desire to align or belong. Participants navigate questions in real time, sometimes reconsidering their positions, other times reinforcing them, exposing the fluid nature of belief.

Under the Influence is underpinned by a strong sense of trust. Contributors have been generous and candid, allowing for moments of vulnerability and attentiveness. Rather than offering fixed conclusions, the video invites viewers into a shared space considering how beliefs are formed and held, in relation to Gary's conceptualisation of truth.

[Back to top of list](#) ↑

Thanks for
visiting



Next Wave,