

the churchie  
emerging art prize  
2021

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands where the IMA now stands. We pay our respect to Elders past, present, and emerging.

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# foreword

This year the Institute of Modern Art and the Anglican Church Grammar School (Churchie) again partner to present the churchie emerging art prize. This year marks the third year of this important and creative collaboration, and the 34th edition of the career defining award.

The 2021 churchie is an energetic and prescient exhibition: one that builds upon the success of last year's prize yet finds its own unique voice through the work of emerging curator Grace Herbert and all 14 finalists. Across Country, materiality, and form, on display is the best of contemporary art in Australia.

As with 2020, this year's exhibition has been a triumph in the face of adversity, as we continue to navigate the uncharted waters stirred by COVID-19. And while the road ahead remains as uncertain as ever, each artist selected for this year's prize inspires hope for the future. Collectively their work offers a vision of how our world can be: just, connected, and grounded to our planet.

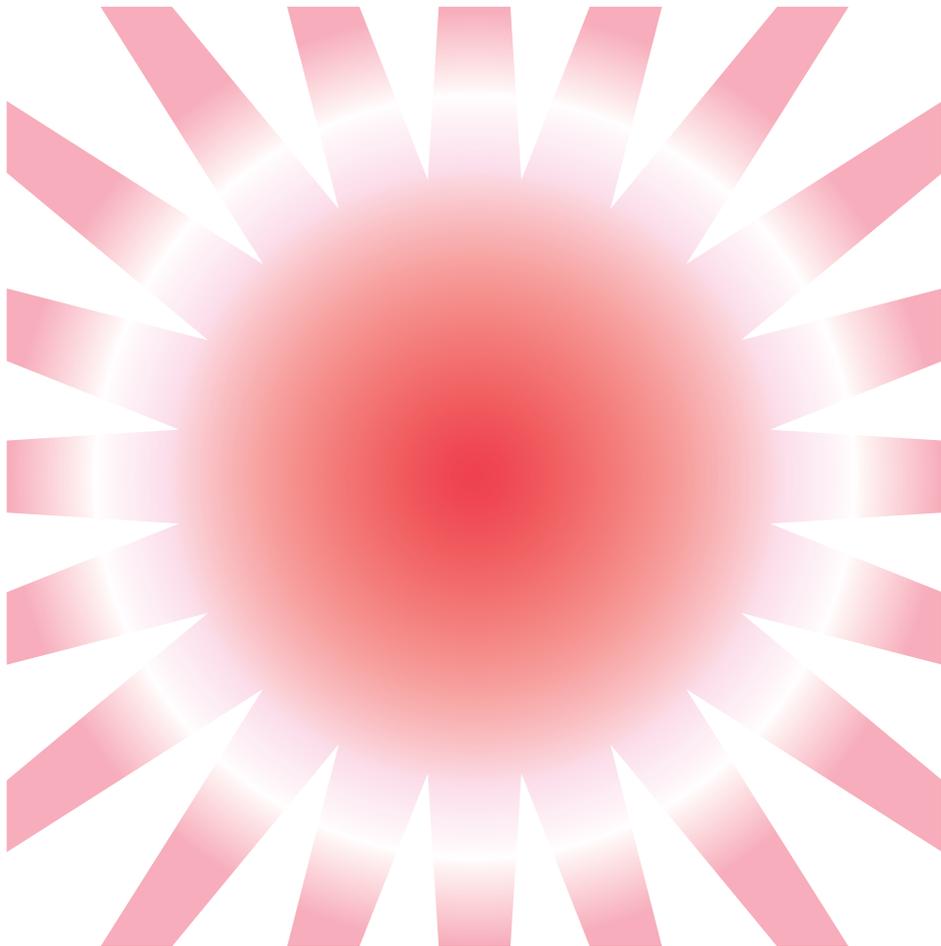
The IMA and 'the churchie' committee, offer our congratulations to all 14 finalists and exhibition curator Grace Herbert, whose role has been generously supported by Armitstead ART Consulting. The exhibition's longevity is thanks to the dedicated support of all our sponsors and in particular we acknowledge the ongoing support of BSPN Architecture, who offer the winning artist a lifechanging opportunity through their sponsorship of the \$15,000 major prize.

A Special Commendation Prize of \$5,000 donated by Fardoulys Constructions and two Commendation Prizes of \$1,000 by Maddison Cleaning Services provide three additional prizes for finalists. A People's Choice Award of \$3,000, also sponsored by Madison Cleaning Services, will be awarded at the closing of the exhibition.

The pre-selection committee—guest curator Grace Herbert, prominent visual artist Tony Albert, Churchie Visual Art and Film and Television Teacher Ben Hugheston-Roberts, and 'the churchie' Coordinator Sarah Thomson—worked almost 500 entries to select the 14 finalists for this exhibition.

This year's judge, Rhana Devenport ONZM, Director of the Art Gallery of South Australia gives the finalists exposure to one of the most important leaders in contemporary art in the Asia Pacific region and we thank her in advance for her thoughtful consideration of the winner and commendations of 'the churchie' 2021.

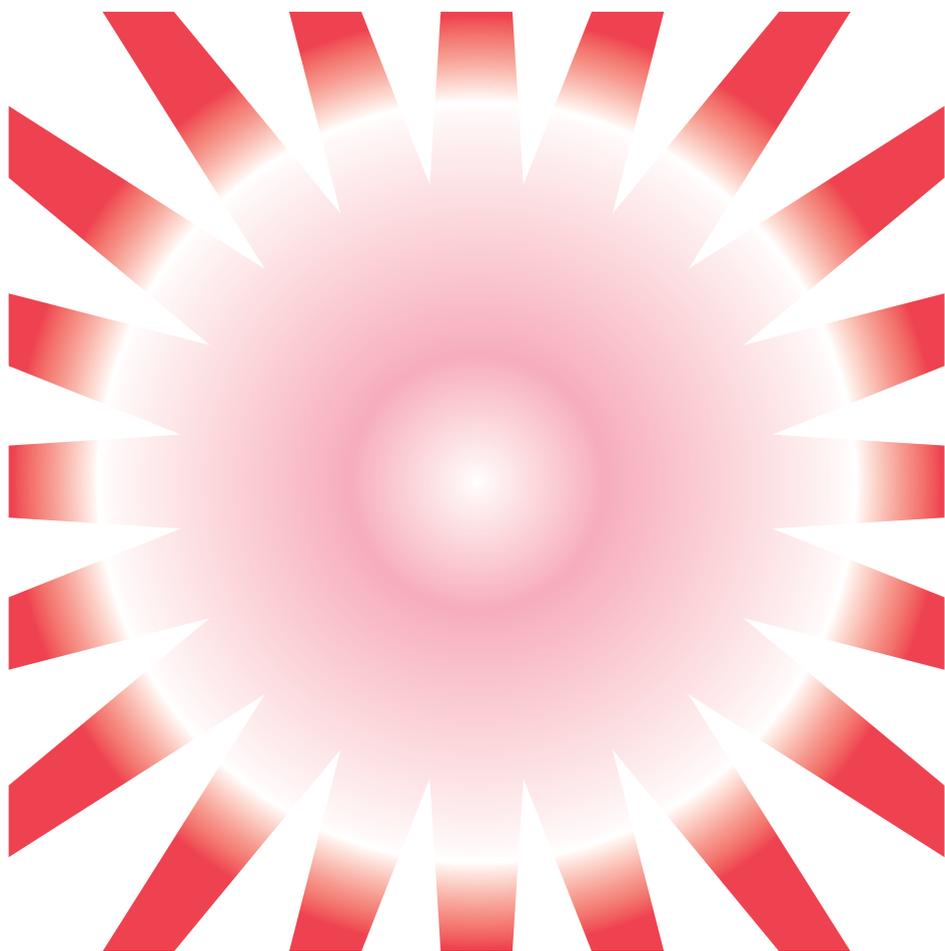
Liz Nowell, Executive Director, Institute of Modern Art  
On behalf of the IMA and 'the churchie' Committee



# A coming together...

## By Grace Herbert

As I started writing this essay at the beginning of September I spent the evening with a friend who had just attended their grandfather's funeral on Zoom.



We ordered honey chicken in his honour. A glass of sherry and a piece of the too-sweet batter sat on the dining table as an offering to him as we discussed the service they had just witnessed on their computer screen. I had spent the day prior in a Zoom memorial for a wonderfully talented musician friend, listening to beautiful covers from artists around the country, fractured and delayed by patchy internet and unwieldy call sound settings. So many of us have experienced significant life events in unusual ways over the past eighteen months and, whether we have endured extended lockdowns or not, our usual ways of being together and connecting have been challenged.

In addition to the shifts in our lives caused by the pandemic, major humanitarian crises and climate disasters have continued to unfold at an alarming rate. Whilst the phrase 'new normal' has become ubiquitous in recent times, so many of the issues we are currently grappling with have always been around—issues such as rampant inequality, systemic racism, and an economic system that causes environmental destruction on a mass scale. Despite these challenges and the precarity of the current moment, artists and arts communities are finding ways to persevere. They are finding ways of coming together—often without physically coming together—to grieve collectively, fight against injustice, and to take action in difficult circumstances.

Many of the artists in this year's exhibition depict moments of connection and coming together, be it literal or symbolic. Laid out like a feast on a round dining table-like plinth, **TIYAN BAKER'S** work *dihan bitugung da pasar* is inspired by durian, a fruit with a distinctive smell of which is embedded in the installation. The artist's work draws on a whatsapp message from the artist's aunt in Malaysia: "Gati kinde neg miri kita rarak nalo maan dihan

bitugung da pasar / Everyone come here and together we can eat the durian piled up in the market.” Playing off connection and disconnection **AKIL AHAMAT’S** surreal video work depicts the artist in conversation with a snail. The intimate, absurd scene uses ASMR sound design to present a dialogue which teeters at the edge of conflict. Ahamat’s work questions the process of storytelling and feelings of emotional immediacy in the face of shortening attention spans in the post-truth era.

Like Baker and Ahamat, **JAYANTO TAN’S** work suggests a coming together or moment of connection, generously offering a colourful banquet of ceramic ‘soul foods’. The work, made during the first lockdown of 2020 in conversation with friends and family, is intended to symbolise life and hope whilst also paying homage to victims of the May 1998 riot of Indonesia. **JOANNE WHEELER’S** paintings—titled *Olden Times, Ntaria* and *These Times, Ntaria*—depict her family together on Country before colonisation and the community in the present day coming together for sports day. Wheeler’s paintings make starkly evident the changes that have taken place on this land, yet celebrates the connectedness of community, Country, and culture. She says, ‘This is my Country. Good Country, sandhill country, green country, lots of grass, sandhill, mountain.’

The lockdowns and increased precarity of work have caused a shift in how many view their own labour, productivity, and place in the world. In a culture that promotes individualism, valuing moments of pause and more collectivist approaches can be viewed as an act of resistance. Many artists have taken this moment to acknowledge the importance of home and belonging through their work by exploring personal stories and familial histories. **CHRISTOPHER BASSI’S** paintings reflect on his family’s connection to Far North Queensland and the Torres Strait, presenting intimately framed vignettes that consider ‘home’ as a something both an emotional state and physical location. Tiwi Islands-based artist **LEON RUSSELL (CAMERON) BLACK’S** paintings also centre on notions of home, considering his Country and familial history of dreaming and artistry. His striking individual painting style reflects what he describes as painting ‘the tiwi way, in my way, my own way’.

**ALEXA MALIZON’S** video *Dalawa* explores the artists experience of growing up in Australia with Filipino heritage through karaoke, dance, and hybridised landscapes, citing performing to cultural expectations as a point of tension between ideas of the ‘self’ and ‘other’. The work expresses Malizon’s feelings of duality or in-betweenness in an intentionally humorous and relatable manner.

A number of First Nations artists in ‘the churchie’ examine everyday racism that First Nations people endure in contemporary life, pointedly addressing colonial mindsets that imbue personal interactions and popular culture. **IVY MINNIECON’S** work is part of an iterative series of prints on fabric that document racial stereotyping overheard by members of the Indigenous arts community. An ongoing archival process, *White Washing* includes self-portraits and stories from students and staff associated with Bachelor of Contemporary Australian Indigenous Art at Griffith University. Taking on the kitsch, stereotypical imagery of colonial and Aboriginal-themed tea towels from the 70s and 80s **KAIT JAMES** uses punch needling techniques to embroider her own messages of resistance, similarly pushing against harmful generalisations about Indigenous culture. In utilising these found items in her work, James reclaims ownership of the harmful narrative and stereotypes these items cultivate.

Political commentary and critique is a recurring interest of artists in this year’s prize. A number of artists use historical archives, objects, and language to challenge damaging political and social constructs. Through research of colonial archives and by talking with community on Country, **KYRA MANCKTELOW’S** work reimagines historic garments that Indigenous people were forced to wear to conform to British standards of ‘dressing’. A process of truth-telling, Mancktelow’s detailed prints and sculptural objects highlight the way colonial misconceptions of being ‘dressed’ and ‘nakedness’ were (and still are) used to devalue First Nations people. Also drawing on potent historical references, **NINA SANADZE** presents an assemblage of soviet era sculptures by prominent USSR artist Valentin Topuridze, whose sculptures were torn down after the fall of the Soviet Union, highlighting an erased history and the ever-changing nature of politics and ideology.

# 2021 finalists

**RIANA HEAD-TOUSSAINT'S** video work *First Language* considers the inherent choreography at play in wheelchair use against the dominant history and language of the western dance canon. The work challenges what is considered legitimate and illegitimate movement in the practice of choreography, highlighting the erasure of self and cultural expression in the field.

Whilst Mancktelow, Sanadze, and Head-Toussaint use historical references and Western canon to frame their work, **VISAYA HOFFIE** and **OHNI BLU** use fiction, speculative futures, and imagination as a means to suggest alternative modes of creating art and of being in the world. Visaya HOFFIE's work combines 'high-art' references with naïve and pop-art motifs. The body of work, which developed from time spent in New York during the escalating COVID-19 crisis in early 2020, aims to bridge divides separating 'fine art' from kitsch, design, street culture. HOFFIE's work is suggestive of new possibilities for merging traditionally separated modes of making and showing work. Ohni Blu's immersive video shows the artist's body moving through a spectacular aquatic landscape. The work considers the social model of disability, foregrounding Ohni's strength as a swimmer and speculating whether they would define themselves as physically disabled if the world was shaped differently.

Collectively, 'the churchie' 2021 finalists represent and reflect the current concerns of visual artists in this country. These concerns are vast, ranging from racism and inequality, to ableism and the experience of cultural diasporas. Each work addresses challenging and layered topics in poetic, intelligent, and thoughtful way, demonstrating artists' unique ability to communicate, advocate, and connect with viewers. Despite the challenges of planning an exhibition largely online—from the online pre-selection, to Zoom studio visits, text conversations, and virtually designing the exhibition—the outcome is a testament to artists' ability to persevere and to continue generously sharing and coming together.

Grace Herbert  
'the churchie' 2021 Curator

# Akil Ahamat

Akil Ahamat's *Dawn of a day too dark to call tomorrow* (2021) is part of an ongoing series centered on a relationship between the artist and a snail that is defined by separation and longing.

In this iteration, we find Ahamat and the snail in physical proximity but at the precipice of a conflict. They perform and reperform a shifting script, highlighting the purpose and effects of storytelling. Using intimate ASMR sound design and intricately detailed cinematography, the work sensorially reproduces the main question posed in the script; what do we do when we can't trust what we see? Ultimately, *Dawn of a day too dark to call tomorrow* advocates for affect and emotional immediacy in the collapse of the information age and the post-truth era.



AKIL AHAMAT'S work—spanning video, sound, performance, and installation—considers the physical and social isolation of online experience and its effects in configuring contemporary subjectivity. Across his practice, he uses the vocal techniques used in ASMR roleplay videos online. These videos have a deeply calming sensuousness that creates an intimacy between audience and performer across the physical dislocation of the internet. Despite the often-banal subject matter of these videos, the 'tingly', relaxing affects of the aural components creates an attentive relation between audience and performer. Within the public context of the gallery, this displaced virtual intimacy becomes a gently disarming platform for the artist to discuss the formation of his own subjectivity refracted through film, literature, and fashion.

Ahamat has most recently produced online works for *Bleed: Biennial Live Event in the Everyday Digital*, Arts House and Campbelltown Arts Centre (2020) and *Collective Trace*, PACT, Erskineville (2020), and has exhibited physically at Monash University Museum of Art, Parramatta Artists' Studios, Verge Gallery and UTS ART. Ahamat was shortlisted for the 2020 NSW Visual Arts Emerging Fellowship and was the winner of the 2018 John Fries Award, UNSW Galleries, Sydney.

Akil Ahamat, *Dawn of a day too dark to call tomorrow*, 2021, digital video with stereo sound, 00:03:58.

# Tiyan Baker

*dihan bitugung da pasar* (2021) is part of Baker's ongoing investigations into durian as an artistic medium.

Durian is a divisive fruit that elicits strong feelings of pleasure in some people and feelings of disgust in others. In Sarawak, Baker's family grow wild durian on their ancestral lands. For the artist's family, and Bidayühs at large, durian brings wealth, continuity, and togetherness. Countless words, activities, and rituals surround durian, and it is commonly enjoyed at gatherings of family and friends. But it is also associated with danger and bodily harm. Even among Bidayühs, it is believed that if durian is consumed incorrectly it may cause sickness or death.

This work was inspired by an affectionate and longing message Baker's aunt sent to relatives in a family Whatsapp chat:

"Gati kinde neg miri kita rarak nalo maan dihan bitugung da pasar / Everyone come here and together we can eat the durian piled up in the market."



Tiyan Baker, *Juruh (the thorn in durian)*, 2020. Installation view: 2020 NSW Visual Arts Emerging Fellowship, Artspace, Sydney. Photo: Document.

**TIYAN BAKER** is an early career Malaysian Bidayüh–settler Australian artist who makes video and installation art. Baker's practice engages with sites of contemporary cultural crises. Her work often uses field research, documentary techniques and found artefacts to question established discourses and reveal bias, frailty, and failure. Recently Baker's practice also explores her Bidayüh heritage, piecing together Bidayüh language, story, and knowledge to create new, hybridised cosmologies that help her navigate contemporary conditions. Originally from the Larrakia lands known as Darwin, Baker currently lives and works on the Gadigal and Wangal lands known as Sydney.

# Christopher Bassi

Christopher Bassi's *The Garden and The Sea* (2021) is a series of paintings that draw on the artist's familiar histories and connection to the landscape of the Far North Queensland and the Torres Strait.

Moving between themes of personal histories, family, and reflections of the self, Bassi's work depicts these themes through a series of individual motifs, that when viewed collectively represent the idea of "home" as both an emotional and physical place. Simultaneously intimate and universal, the works speak to the fragmented nature of both love and belonging.



Christopher Bassi, *The Garden and The Sea*, 2021, oil on canvas, series of 6, each 45.7 x 40.6cm

**CHRISTOPHER BASSI** is an Australian artist of Meriam, Yupungathi, and British descent. Working with archetypal models of representational painting, his work addresses concepts of cultural identity, alternative genealogies, counter narratives, and speculative worlding within the art historical language of painting. Approaching painting as a means of storytelling, with narrative intent akin to literature or poetry, his work sets the stage for history and heritage to become the foundation of a personal cosmology that explores concepts of place, belonging, and the entangling of racial and cultural identities. All the while researching the image as socially coded and embedded within historical legacies of western art history.

# Leon Russell (Cameron) Black



Leon Russell (Cameron) Black's works are representative of Tiwi Islands painting, while demonstrating a unique and striking individual style.

The artist says of his work:

"My paintings are about my country and my culture. My dreaming is Narringarri. From my father side my country is Jurrupi. From my mother side my country is Yapalika. My Mother Lydwina Puruntameri is a well-known artist, she has been taught by my grandfather Romuald Puruntameri—he was a great artist, cultural leader, and song man. My uncle Tracy is a really good carver. I have seen them all paint since I was a little boy. I learnt from them, looking at them painting and carving. I only paint with natural ochres. In my paintings I can tell everything about my life in Pirlangimpi, paint all these things in the Tiwi way, in my way, my own way."

Leon Russell (Cameron) Black, *Pupuni Jilamara*, 2019, natural ochres with acrylic binders on canvas, 181 x 120cm. Photo: Munupi Arts.

**LEON RUSSELL (CAMERON) BLACK** started to paint in 2017 at the Munupi Art Centre and follows a strong lineage of artists from the Tiwi Islands. He exhibited in 2018 and 2019 with his art centre peers and had his first solo exhibition during the 2019 Adelaide Tarnanthi Festival. Black was a finalist in the 2021 Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Awards.

# Ohni Blu

*Water Doesn't Tell Me To Lose Weight* (2019) was filmed in a remote area of the Yarrunga creek on the traditional lands of the Yuin People.

Surrounded by a sunken forest of burnt Eucalyptus trees, Blu's naked body swims slowly through the dark water. This otherworldly and surreal landscape communicates ideas about the social model of disability and offers an emotional insight into the artist's relationship to their changing body. This narrative contemplates the idea that as a strong swimmer, if Blu lived in a world of water, they might not define themselves as physically disabled. Using techniques drawn from speculative fiction, the artist challenges harmful ideologies and dreams instead of a more diverse and accessible future.



Ohni Blu, *Water Doesn't Tell me to Lose Weight*, 2019, video, 00:06:25.

**OHNI BLU** was born in Central West Queensland on the traditional lands of Koa People and now resides on the traditional lands of the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation. They are an emerging interdisciplinary artist, curator, and events producer with a love of collaboration. Their work negotiates personal narratives across LGBTIQ+ identity, chronic health, and disability, and their practice explores themes of community care, radical healing, and vulnerability. Blu holds a Bachelor of Visual Arts (Hons) from Sydney College of the Arts and is currently undertaking a Master of Social Work at Western Sydney University. They have exhibited both nationally and internationally and recent exhibitions include PICA, Casula Powerhouse, c3 Contemporary, The Powerhouse Museum, and Verge Gallery.

# Riana Head-Toussaint

*First Language* (2020) is a meditation on movement; considering the inherent choreography at play in wheelchair use.

The video captures and archives the body, the movement, the muscle-memory: the persistence of culture through intimacy and visibility.

Riana Head-Toussaint considers,

“What happens to movement that is not recognised in this way? As a wheelchair-user, I have a movement language that is intricate and precise. It is a part of my bodily memory and has taken a lifetime to hone. However, there is no recognised lexicon to communicate and legitimise my wheelchair movement. If I want to share my practice with others, there is no validated language available for us to utilise.

*First Language* is a response to that: a concentration on the visible language in silent revolt against the erasure and non-recognition of legitimate forms of cultural expression.”

Every second loop of the video is accompanied by audio description of the action appearing on screen, facilitating another form of witnessing movement derived from disability culture. This alternate use of language distils the previously unseen into the seen and heard.



**RIANA HEAD-TOUSSAINT** is an interdisciplinary disabled artist, who uses a manual wheelchair for mobility. Her work often crosses traditional artform boundaries, existing in online and offline spaces. She employs choreography, performance, video, sound design, immersive installation, and audience activation to interrogate entrenched systems, structures, and ways of thinking and to advocate for social change. Her work is deeply informed by her experiences as a disabled woman of Afro-Caribbean descent, and her training as a legal practitioner.

Head-Toussaint's works have been supported by a range of organisations and institutions, including Human Rights Watch, the Australia Council for the Arts, Create NSW, the British Council (Aus/UK), Performance Space, the Keir Foundation, Carriageworks, Dancehouse, Firstdraft, Pari, PACT Centre for Emerging and Experimental Art, Urban Theatre Projects, Ausdance NSW and Proximity Festival. She is also a curator/space-maker, disability activist and the founder of Headquarters; a dedicated, disability-led digital space.

# Visaya Hoffie



Visaya Hoffie's installation *Rich in cryptocurrency* (2021) blurs the traditional boundaries that define what art is, challenging the hierarchies and implied authority that defines fine art as more tasteful and aesthetically superior to pop culture or craft which is largely considered more functional and less valuable.

Hoffie brings together re-worked replica designer furniture, a ceramic table lamp, an oversized inflatable companion, a one-off designed tufted rug, and a painting featuring an angry colon to mimic an ersatz gallery environment, placing the viewer's physical presence at the centre of their experience of the work.

Visaya Hoffie, *Rich in Cryptocurrency*, board, acrylic, oil paint, nail polish, eyeshadow, 109 x 81 x 6cm.

**VISAYA HOFFIE'S** practice spans painting, sculpture, printmaking, ceramics, design, animation, leatherwork, haberdashery, and a range of craft media. She often brings these together in immersive installation. The artist's love for a broad range of historical and cultural influences informs her slightly wry, amusing, and often revealing responses to contemporary culture. Hoffie's most recent solo exhibition, *Hot'n'Heinous* with Innerspace Contemporary Art, included site-specific installations for BAD Festival 2021.

# Kait James

As a proud Wadawurrung woman, Kait James's work poses questions relating to identity, perception, and our knowledge of Australia's Indigenous communities.

Using crafting techniques including punch needling, she embroiders kitsch found materials. Her current work focuses on colonial and Aboriginal calendar tea towels from the 1970s and 80s that generalise and stereotype her culture, subverting them with familiar pop-culture references, Indigenous issues relevant to that year, as well as pressing concerns of the present day to reflect her contemporary perspective. Through the use of humour and vivid colours, James addresses the way colonial culture has dominated Australia's history, how Australia and the world perceives our First Nations' People, and her personal reflections on her Indigenous heritage.



Kait James, *Bloody Shift* (detail), 2021, acrylic yarn and cotton on printed cotton, 73 x 46cm.  
Photo: Christian Capurro.

**KAIT JAMES** is an award-winning contemporary artist based in Melbourne. She obtained a Bachelor of Media Arts/Photography from RMIT University in 2001 but only returned to making art in 2018 through her love of textiles and colour. By re-appropriating colonial images using crafting techniques she encourages responsiveness, unity, and optimism within and beyond Indigenous communities.

# Alexa Malizon

Majestic Filipino-Australian hybrid landscapes, cheesy visual transitions, lip-synching, back-flexing dances, and awkward stares all contribute to the disconnect between the expectations of what a 'Filipina' encompasses and the personal shame when these expectations are not fulfilled.

Alexa Malizon's *Dalawa* (2021) is a three-channel video work that explores the performative contradictions and complexities of growing up in Australia with Filipino heritage. On two of the three screens, Malizon dances in time to a reverberative version of the popular Filipino song "Otso Otso". She seems both happy and alarmed to be carrying out this choreography. In the centre video, she attempts to sing the Filipino karaoke classic "Bituing Walang Ningning" while in the background a fictional landscape morphs Mount Mayon in the Philippines into high plane grasslands of Ngunnawal and Ngambri country, Canberra. Both of these sequences evoke an intimate, humorous, yet unsettling friction between the 'self' and the 'other' in light of performing to cultural expectations.



Alexa Malizon, *Dalawa*, 2021, three-channel video, colour, and sound, 00:06:09.

Canberra-based artist **ALEXA MALIZON** explores the lived cultural experience of existing within a diaspora. Born in Australia to Filipino immigrants, her identity has been influenced by her upbringing between two different worlds. She explores this intersectionality through a range of photographic media to reconnect with her cultural roots and to engage with themes such as identity, miscommunication, cultural shame, and the representation of the sexualised ethnographic body.

Malizon completed a Bachelor of Visual Arts (Honours) at the ANU School of Art and Design in 2020. She was the recipient of the ANU School of Art & Design Emerging Artist Support Scheme: Tuggeranong Arts Centre Exhibition Award, culminating in her first solo institutional exhibition in 2021. She also recently exhibited in Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts (PICA)'s *Hatched: National Graduate Exhibition* in 2021.

# Kyra Mancktelow



Kyra Mancktelow's work uses unique printmaking techniques and archival research to create detailed prints, sculptures, and installations that challenge the colonial views which frame and degrade First Nations people.

“Our Old People were unclothed but never naked.  
Our Old People dressed in their identity  
In body scars and pigments marking ceremonies  
The same way the white man wears a uniform.

Our Old People trimmed their hair with bones,  
feathers, fibres and shells.  
The same way a King wears his crown.

Our Old People wore adornments around their necks and on  
their bodies.  
The same way the wealth flash their jewels.  
Our Old People carried their dillies against their skin.  
The same way a Queen holds her purse.  
Our Old People were named savages by the nakedness of  
their bodies by newcomers who colonise us, stigmatise us  
and fetishise us.”

— Kyra Mancktelow

Kyra Mancktelow, *Blue Jacket - Black skin*, 2021,  
ink impression on Hahnemühle paper, 145 x  
92cm. Courtesy of the artist and N.Smith Gallery,  
Gadigal Country / Sydney.

**KYRA MANCKTELOW'S** multidisciplinary practice investigates legacies of colonialism, posing important questions about how we remember and acknowledge Indigenous histories. She is an emerging Quandamooka artist with links to the Mardigan people of Cunnamulla and is a recent graduate of the Contemporary Australian Indigenous Art program at the Queensland College of Art.

Through sculpture, ceramics, and printmaking, Mancktelow shares her rich heritage, stories, and traditions, to educate audiences and strengthen her connection to Country. Her printmaking practice explores intergenerational trauma as a result of forced integration on colonial missions, while her sculptural work focuses on local materials, including clay, emu features, and Talwalpin (cotton tree).

# Ivy Minniecon

*White Washing* (2021) is an ongoing series of prints on fabric that document racial stereotyping experienced by the Indigenous arts community.

This work includes images and stories of a broad cross section of the art community from students, academics, and contemporary artists associated with the Bachelor of Contemporary Australian Indigenous Art at the Queensland College of Art. The prints feature comments overheard by each collaborator, forming a tapestry of systematic racial abuse and vilification, and echoing how casual racism is engrained in our society. The bleached calico prints reference the domestic processes associated with the stolen generations, mission life, and slavery.



Ivy Minniecon, *White Washing*, 2021, prints on calico, string, dimensions variable.

**IVY MINNIECON** is a descendant of the Kuku Yalanji, Kabi Kabi, Gureng Gureng, and South Sea Islander Nations. She uses printmaking, mixed-media, sculpture, photography, and video in her art practice, which is grounded in belonging. She has been a practicing artist in the community for the past decade and has recently commenced a Bachelor of Contemporary Australian Indigenous Art at the Queensland College of Arts, Griffith University.

# Nina Sanadze

Nina Sanadze's *Apotheosis* (2021) is inspired by 19th century painting *The Apotheosis of War* by Russian artist Vasily Vereshchagin.

It is constructed from the surviving studio archive of a prominent Soviet monumental sculptor, Valentin Topuridze (1907–1980), whose public sculptures were torn down in 1989 with the fall of the Soviet regime.

Displaced, disembodied, de-contextualised, and piled together like corpses, the sculptural archive forms a different kind of monument: a memorial. The interactions between individual sculptures create random, evocative, and dramatic compositions. Once monumental and victorious, these sculptures now appear fragile and insignificant, alluding to the impermanence of political eras and ideologies. *Apotheosis* resurrects an erased visual history, its unorthodox and seemingly violent arrangement prompting us to consider its ongoing sociological value. The work is an iteration of *100 Years After and 30 Years On*, an installation originally presented at the 3rd Tbilisi Triennial in Georgia.



Nina Sanadze, *Apotheosis*, 2021, original studio archive of a prominent soviet sculptor Valentin Topuridze, plaster models, moulds and fragments, 160 x 310 x 200cm. Photo: Grant Hancock.

**NINA SANADZE** is a Melbourne-based artist with a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) from the Victorian College of the Arts. She was born in Georgia (former USSR) in 1976 and immigrated to Australia in 1996. Presenting appropriated original artefacts, replicas, or documentary films as witnesses and evidence, Sanadze seeks to re-examine grand political narratives. Humour and beauty allow her to address often disturbing concerns, reflecting the complex paradigm of our existence, which is simultaneously sublime and horrific.

Sanadze has exhibited at Daine Singer Gallery, Bus Projects, Melbourne's Living Museum of the West, Second Space Projects, and with the City of Port Phillip. Sanadze was the winner of the 2018 Incinerator Art Award: Art for Social Change, the 2019 Bus Projects Award, and the 2020 Victorian College of the Arts Graduate Show Fiona Myer Award.

# Jayanto Tan



Jayanto Tan's ceramics 'soul foods' were created during COVID-19 lockdowns, resulting from conversations between the artist and his family and friends about making art in isolation.

The work is inspired by the myth and tradition of Pai Ti Kong (translated as 'Praying [to] The Heaven God') of his mother's Hokkien ancestry. In this story Hokkien people escaped a violent invasion of their village by hiding in a sugarcane field and praying for their safety. When they survived the attack they emerged and honoured the Heaven God for keeping them safe through presenting offerings.

As an immigrant artist, who fled poverty and political oppression in search of a better life in Sydney, Tan created these objects as homage of the victims of the Riot of May 1998 throughout Indonesia. The riot largely targeted Chinese-Indonesians and thousands of people were violently attacked and massacred. Despite the tragedy remaining unresolved politically, this ceramic work is intended to symbolise life and hope.

Jayanto Tan, *Potluck Party, Pai Ti Kong (A Praying The Heaven God)*, 2021, ceramics, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist and Art Atrium.

**JAYANTO TAN** was born and raised in a small town in North Sumatra, Indonesia. As a Chinese-Sumatran living in Sydney, his practice blends Eastern and Western mythologies with the reality of current events. His work has been shown at Verge Gallery, Firstdraft, 4A Centre for Contemporary Asia Art, the Australia-China Institute, the 66th Blake Prize, Incinerator Art Award, and the Fisher's Ghost Art Award. He won the 11th Small Sculpture Greenway Art Prize. Tan holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Fine Arts from National Art School, Sydney.

# Joanne Wheeler

Joanne Wheeler's painting *Olden Times, Ntaria* (2021) depicts her family on Country before colonisation and the establishment of the Hermannsburg Mission. Shown alongside, *These Times, Ntaria* (2021) illustrates the community coming together for a sports day in the present.

Joanne Wheeler describes her works:

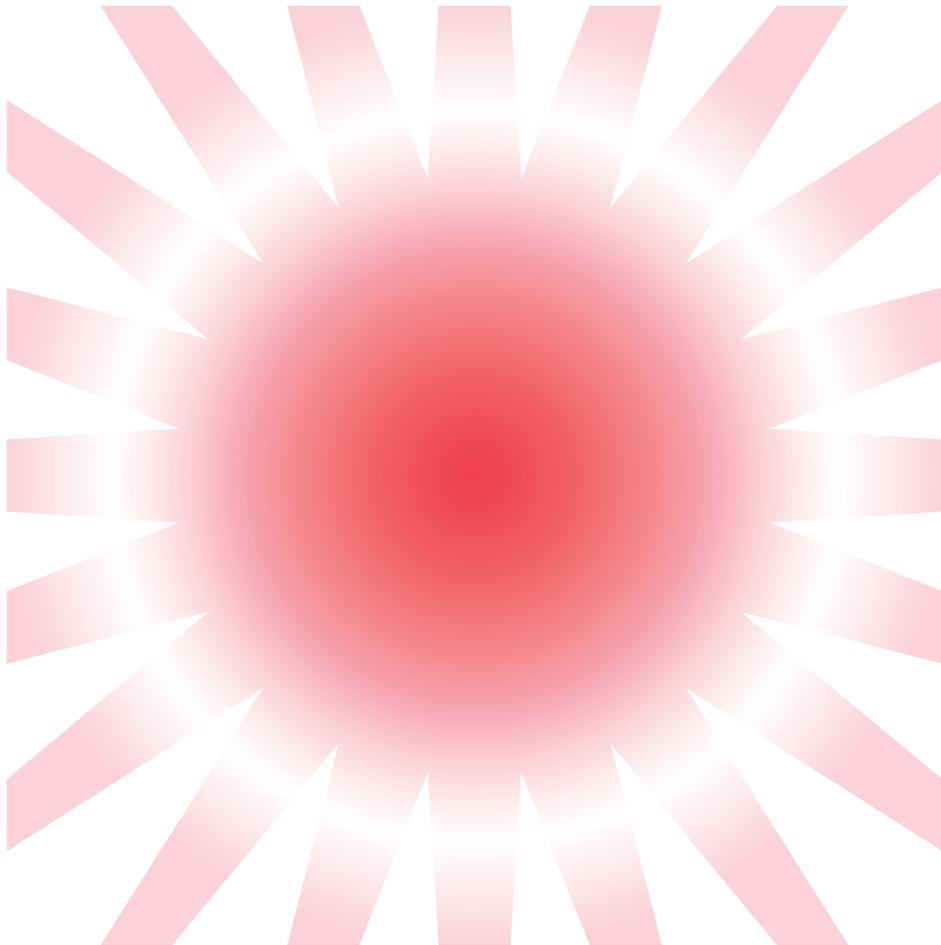
"Family used to be walking round all along Finke River, find all them emu. Looking. Looking. Real hungry one. This is my Country. Good Country, sandhill Country, green Country, lots of grass, sandhill, mountain. This is my family on Country before Hermannsburg Mission Times. Long ago those people, long ago. That's how things were. And here I am. Lots of people, family, from different community coming to Hermannsburg for sports day. Staying in the house, mix up. Basketball, softball, football. People walking down the street, mothers pushing baby in the prams to the oval. And they going to the shop to get some takeaway, fuel station, filling up with fuel."



Joanne Wheeler, *Olden Times, Ntaria*, acrylic on linen, 92 x 151 cm.

**JOANNE NAPANGARDI WHEELER** was born in 1969 in Ntaria (Hermannsburg) and is the great granddaughter of renowned watercolourist Albert Namatjira. Wheeler is a Western Aranda speaking woman, who identifies with the West MacDonnell Range country of her mother's family, and Kaltukatjara, her father's country. She also retains strong links to Anmatyerr and Luritja Country through her extended family, travelling regularly (pre-COVID) to fulfill cultural and family obligations. Wheeler's work focuses on her country of Ntaria, Palm Valley, Hermannsburg Community, Hermannsburg Mountain, and the Finke River, over different times. Her painting is notable for its confident mark making and dynamic composition. She combines Tjukurrpa and personal history narratives, contemporary figurative and traditional mark making, and stories from the past and the present.

# artwork details



## AKIL AHAMAT

*Dawn of a day too dark to call tomorrow*, 2021, digital video with stereo sound, 00:03:58.

## TIYAN BAKER

*dihan bitugung da pasar*, 2021, embalmed durian shells and seeds, hydrocal plaster, fractionated coconut oil, durian, resin, fruit flies  
Resin moulding and casting by Claire Tennant. Lifecast moulded, cast, and altered by Clare Nicholson.

## CHRISTOPHER BASSI

*The Garden and The Sea*, 2021, oil on canvas, series of 6, each 45.7 x 40.6cm

## LEON RUSSELL (CAMERON) BLACK

*Pupuni Jilamara*, 2019, natural ochres with acrylic binders on canvas, 181 x 120cm.

*Pupuni Jilamara*, 2019, natural ochres with acrylic binders on canvas, 181 x 120cm.

## OHNI BLU

*Water Doesn't Tell me to Lose Weight*, 2019, video, 00:06:25.

## RIANA HEAD-TOUSSAINT

*First Language*, 2020, single-channel video, 00:10:00.

## VISAYA HOFFIE

*Rich in cryptocurrency*, 2021, clay, wool, oil, acrylic, airbrush, nail enamel, glue, eyeshadow, nylon, dimensions variable.

## KAIT JAMES

*Life is pretty shitty without a Treaty*, 2020, acrylic yarn and cotton on printed cotton, 73 x 46cm.

*Lucky Country*, 2021, acrylic yarn, cotton and felt on printed cotton, 73 x 46cm.

*Captain Fu\*\*er*, 2021, acrylic yarn, cotton and felt on printed linen, 73 x 46cm.

*Bloody Shit*, 2021, acrylic yarn and cotton on printed cotton, 73 x 46cm.

*Invaders, game over*, 2019, acrylic yarn, cotton and acrylic paint on printed cotton, 73 x 46cm.

## ALEXA MALIZON

*Dalawa*, 2021, three-channel video, colour and sound, 00:06:09.

## KYRA MANCKTELOW

*Blue jacket – Blak skin*, 2021, ink impression on Hahnemühle paper, 145 x 92cm.

*No Perception – Neck Adornment*, 2021, Phragmites Australia reeds, Kangaroo tail sinew, sterling silver, 19 x 19cm.

*No Perception – Head Adornment*, 2021, Native Australian feathers, kangaroo bone, sterling silver, 26 x 17cm.

*No Perception – Nose Adornment*, 2021, Kangaroo bone, gold leaf, 19 x 19cm.

*No Perception – Dilly*, 2021, Ink impression on Hahnemühle paper, 120 x 40cm (x 2). Courtesy of the artist and N.Smith Gallery, Gadigal Country / Sydney.

## IVY MINNIECON

*White Washing*, 2021, prints on calico, string, dimensions variable.

## NINA SANADZE

*Apotheosis*, 2021, original studio archive of a prominent soviet sculptor Valentin Topuridze (1907-1980), plaster models, moulds and fragments, 160 x 310 x 200cm. Photo: Grant Hancock.

## JAYANTO TAN

*Potluck Party Pai Ti Kong (A Praying The Heaven God)*, 2021, ceramics, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist and Art Atrium.

## JOANNE WHEELER

*Olden Times, Ntaria*, 2021, acrylic on linen, 92 x 151cm

*These Times, Ntaria*, 2021, acrylic on linen, 92 x 151cm

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