

Lisa Waup

born 1971, lives and works Naarm (Melbourne)

holding Country, 2024

Jute/hessian sandbags, screen printed, ink, reflective ink.
Assorted Handles: hand spun nettle string, turmeric hand spun hemp string, 2 ply hand spun hemp string, braided jute, cotton rope, cotton thread, jute string, coconut string, sea grass, linen rope, vintage light cord (c.1940 Bakelite, copper, rubber, cotton), reclaimed wire, barbed wire Studio: Spacecraft, Stewart Russell, feathers (tawny frog mouth, emu, galah, cockatoo, parrot), coconut sinnet, antique rope, rubber

The University of Melbourne Art Collection,
purchased 2024

holding Country honours our natural environment, acknowledging both the spiritual existence of the land and the transformative power of water. Created in response to a major flood experienced with her family, the work contemplates the long and arduous processes of recovery and regeneration following such an extreme weather event. Highlighting the ongoing environmental degradation resulting from the colonisation of our waterways, Lisa Waup has re-contextualised the utilitarian nature of the sandbag. Typically associated with crisis, the sandbag is reimagined as a vessel for memory, tradition, and shared experience. Waup's innovative use of commercial-grade reflective ink adds a further layer of meaning, inviting the viewer to see themselves mirrored in the work, and thus implicated in the survival of Country. The intricately patterned and textured prints on each of the bags serve as complex sites of storytelling; lines of Country, family, water and community are printed and repeated, inviting us to explore the nuanced narratives they contain.

Glenda Nicholls

born 1956, lives and works Wood Wood, Victoria

The Reflection Net, 2024

Jute, feathers, cotton

The University of Melbourne Art Collection,
purchased 2024

Glenda Nicholls hand weaves elaborate nets utilising the knots of her ancestors. Her practice celebrates the cultural legacy of women and fishing, creating a body of work that is aesthetically beautiful and culturally empowering. An intricate example of her skill, *The Reflection Net*, is the physical embodiment of the dreamlike effect created when the sky is reflected in the flowing waters of the river below. Adorned with handmade feather flowers that simultaneously evoke clouds, birds and ancestral spirits, the net embodies the interconnectedness of all living things. From the plants and animals to the air we breathe, the work is a powerful evocation of the all-encompassing nature of Country.

Hannah Gartside

born 1987, lives and works Naarm (Melbourne)

Sarah, 2020

found black silk satin mourning skirt with taffeta ribbon c.1890, found black silk satin dress c.1990s, found black silk mourning dress with beading c.1920 and satin-backed silk crêpe fabric c.1930 (gifts of Helen), silk tassels from found Liberty piano shawl c.1900s (gift of Judy), wool felt, thread, fusing, steel cable, oxidised silver-plated jewellery fixtures, aluminium, stainless steel, electromechanical components, microcontroller, acrylic Metal fabrication, mechanical design and fabrication: Laundromat MFG Programming: Dan Parkinson, Assistance: Meagan Streader

Sarah is a kinetic sculpture that honours the spirit of French actress Sarah Bernhardt. Constructed from a steel armature wrapped in vintage silks, satins, and taffetas, and adorned with hundreds of silk tassels, the work conjures a sense of performance and the theatrical presence of Bernhardt's stagecraft, as it spins. Simultaneously delicate and commanding, *Sarah* becomes a spectral figure suspended between past and present, presence and absence, an embodied tribute to feminine power, resilience, and theatricality. *Sarah* sits within a broader series of kinetic textile sculptures created by Gartside to feature female achievement, while also highlighting the erasure of women from the canon of art history, and ongoing gender equality more broadly.

Hannah Gartside

born 1987, lives and works Naarm (Melbourne)

Wire fence at night, 2024

polyester fabric (found sequin dresses and tops c.2010–2020),
deadstock cotton fabric, deadstock wool fabric, thread, black
oxidised brass eyelets

Hannah Gartside

born 1987, lives and works Naarm (Melbourne)

Open-bodice moth in the starlight, 2024

polyester fabric (found sequin dresses and tops c.2010–2020),
deadstock cotton fabric, deadstock wool fabric, thread, black
oxidised brass eyelets

Hannah Gartside

born 1987, lives and works Naarm (Melbourne)

Holding space, 2024

polyester fabric (found sequin jumpsuit and dress c.2010–2020), deadstock cotton fabric, thread, black oxidised brass eyelets

These delicate textile collages are from an early series by Hannah Gartside titled *This body is experiencing pleasure*, informed by the short story written by the artist titled *Frances, the moth*. The story follows Frances, a young woman, who is navigating the aching loneliness of contemporary life. One night, on her way home from the train station, she passes an eclipse of moths clustered around a streetlight, a simple moment that sets in motion a quiet transformation. Guided by a pair of scissors inherited from her grandmother, Frances crafts a magical cloak, which encases her body before falling away to reveal a shimmering moth. Frances then escapes the confines of the apartment, flying out the window to join her coven of moths. This tale of metamorphosis and shapeshifting speaks to the human need for connection and community, and the transformative nature of clothing. Observing the intimacy and camaraderie she perceived between the moths, inspired bravery in Frances, who leapt into another world seeking her own pleasure and belonging.

Hannah Gartside

born 1987, lives and works Naarm (Melbourne)

Returning, 2025

found sequin dresses c.2010s, deadstock polyester tulle fabric, powder coated steel, cotton lace dress c.1930s, ostrich feather trim, thread, glass beads, press studs, rayon velvet fabric

Created for *the veil*, this intricately assembled sculptural work invites us to pause beneath its sheltered embrace for a moment of reprieve. *Returning* continues the Hannah Gartside's story of *Frances, the moth*, a tale of metamorphosis and personal transformation. Referencing the architectural form of street awnings, the work was conceived to be interactive, encouraging us to momentarily stand under the work in the hopes of holding onto an elusive thought or sensation before it slips away. Across its surface, delicate crystal beads shimmer like drops of rain, or the falling tears of Frances as she navigates her return to human form. The ornately beaded designs echo the faux eyes on a moth's wing, a defence to intimidate predators, enhancing the protective qualities of the work marking a shift in Gartside's practice.

Hannah Gartside

born 1987, lives and works Naarm (Melbourne)

Floating Prism, 2016 (re-worked 2025)

found lace fabric, tulle, thread

This delicate and precisely crafted work was constructed with a swathe of tulle and vintage white cotton lace from the 1950s and 60s, remnants of a wedding dress gifted to Hannah Gartside by a family friend. The artist describes this work as an exploration of the intangible, attempting to demarcate a physical area that suggests an energetic or emotional space. Through an intuitive handling of materials and refined technical precision, Gartside has created a deceptively simple work that tricks the eye. Suspended gently above the ground, the lace 'box' floats in space, evoking an ethereal presence while suggesting a threshold between the visible and the unseen.

Lena Yarinkura
born 1961, lives and works Maningrida and
Ankabarrbirri, Arnhem Land

Ngalmudj and Two Sisters, 2025

boxwood (*Planchonella arnhemica*), pandanus (*Pandanus spiralis*), bush cane (*Flagellaria indica*), stringybark (*Eucalyptus tetradonta*)\yellow-flowering acacia (*Acacia difficilis*), ochre pigment and PVA fixative, spear grass (*Sorghum intrans*), white cockatoo feathers

Ngalmudj and Two Sisters, 2025

boxwood (*Planchonella arnhemica*), pandanus (*Pandanus spiralis*), bush cane (*Flagellaria indica*), stringybark (*Eucalyptus tetradonta*)\yellow-flowering acacia (*Acacia difficilis*), ochre pigment and PVA fixative, spear grass (*Sorghum intrans*), white cockatoo feathers

The University of Melbourne Art Collection

“Good afternoon, I’m Lena from Ankabadbirri,
The story I would like to tell is a story from a
long time ago... Two yawkyawk (young girls) they went hunting.
They said to their mother and father “...we are going hunting
because we are so starving. We don’t eat nothing, no anything”.
They took one durruk (dog) and two digging stick, two kun-
madj (dilly bags) and they went hunting. They killed goanna,
bandicoot, blue tongue and then they found brolga eggs—that’s
really important. “Hey, sister! I found Brolga egg.” “Mah, we’ll
have to find those brolga eggs.”

And they went to that place near Bolkdjam. (But
I can’t say that name, I’m not allowed.) And they made fire, and
they cooked brolga egg. Danger. They saw the black and white
durruk. “Hey yabok ngarduk, sister, that’s mine!” “No, I’ll take this
little durruk!”. It went around and around, and disappeared..
it was gone. That was Ngalmudj.

Rain came. From the beginning, people used to
go hunting, that brolga egg is important. If they should boil them,
that’s a good way, but no, they put it on the ashes, that’s too
bad. It burst. And their mum and dad, they were waiting, waiting
—“hey, where they gone?”—those two girls that went hunting,
nothing. And they were looking for them, and instead they saw
a billabong. Because they drowned. Ngalmudj drowned them.

Ngalmudj made a billabong, he drowned them
with the durruk, everything. It was because it burst, they burned
the brolga eggs — dabuno, brolga egg.”

Lena Yarinkura
Ankabadbirri, May 2025

Lena Yarinkura
born 1961, lives and works Maningrida and
Ankabarrbirri, Arnhem Land

Karrh (Spider), 2025

cocky apple (*Planchonia careya*), pandanus (*Pandanus spiralis*), bush cane (*Flagellaria indica*), white cockatoo feathers

Karrh (Spider), 2025

cocky apple (*Planchonia careya*), pandanus (*Pandanus spiralis*), bush cane (*Flagellaria indica*), white cockatoo feathers

Karrh (Spider), 2025

cocky apple (*Planchonia careya*), pandanus (*Pandanus spiralis*), bush cane (*Flagellaria indica*), white cockatoo feathers

Karrh (Spider), 2025

cocky apple (*Planchonia careya*), pandanus (*Pandanus spiralis*), bush cane (*Flagellaria indica*), white cockatoo feathers

The University of Melbourne Art Collection.
Purchased through the Margaret Cooper
Bequest Fund, 2025

Lena Yarinkura's *Karrh (Spider)* draws on a lifetime of fibre innovation, cosmological knowledge, and embodied storytelling. In Kune belief systems, the spider is a Yirridjdja moiety ancestor, a harbinger of sickness, and a sacred presence encoded across land, memory, ceremony and form. Yarinkura recounts a profound personal encounter with karrh, being spun into a web and falling ill. This encounter linking bodily illness, ancestral visitation, and an experience that revealed the spider's role as mediator between physical and spiritual realms. Woven from Kurrajong fibre, ochres and ngarradj (white Cockatoo feathers), her web becomes a portal between worlds, an old knowledge made new. As a daluk (woman) who has long taught others, she threads together memory, place, and moral law in sculptural forms that resist categorisation yet speak universally.

Aneta Grzeszykowska

born 1974, lives and works Warsaw, Poland

Mama, #2, #3, #13, #25, #29, #31, #32, #34, #36, #43,
#44, #45, #47, #50, 2018

Giclée print on Canson Rag Photographique

Mama is a haunting photographic series that unfolds like film stills, capturing intimate exchanges between the artist's own daughter, Franciszka, and a hyperreal silicone bust modelled after herself. The daughter grooms and bathes her mother-doll in melancholy scenes that are interspersed with gentle moments of play and rest. The genuine chemistry between the two subjects heightens the uncanny impact of the work. In considering the artist is present with her camera during these encounters, there is an unseen element of transformative play between mother (artist) and daughter (subject). The works challenge and subvert maternal roles and notions of care, drawing us into a psychologically charged consideration of grief, absence, and embodiment.

Hayley Millar Baker

born 1990, lives and works Bunurong Country

Nyctinasty, 2021

07.54 mins single channel video

Featuring Hayley Millar Baker

Nyctinasty is a term describing the circadian rhythm-based activity of flowers and leaves in response to the onset of darkness. These intuitive movements are reflected in Hayley Millar Baker's first filmic work, which invites us into a deeply personal narrative informed by her relationship with the spirit world. We are introduced to the protagonist as she winds down for the day, fulfilling the menial tasks of her evening routine. We follow as she tends the fire, collecting fragments of charcoal for her pestle and mortar, she then settles in on the couch. Millar Baker borrows from the horror genre to build anticipation, as her simple gestures and lingering moments speak to an unseen presence surrounding the young woman. The work is a complex performance, asserting the Aboriginal female body as a vessel for magic and ceremony, bringing ancestral spiritual practices into the present day.

Hayley Millar Baker
born 1990, lives and works Bunurong Country

Eternity the Butterfly, 2025

12.03 mins single channel video
Featuring Georgia Mokak

Michael Buxton Collection, University of
Melbourne Art Collection. Purchased with funds
raised through the Buxton Circle, 2025

Eternity the Butterfly reflects the transcendence narratives of Aboriginal peoples, grounded in their deep spiritual connections to ancestors and the colonial horrors they continue to endure. Eternity, the butterfly, embodies the cyclical view of life, death, and rebirth central to Aboriginal philosophies. Her relationship with the monuments—serving both as ancestral guides and symbols of colonial oppression—captures a potent duality. Through ritual calls to the ancestors, empowered by her profound connection to the land, Eternity constructs the monuments as vessels, offering momentary housing for the spirits, allowing them to manifest and offer their guidance.

Through intricate metaphors, the work celebrates the strength, agency, and enduring wisdom of Aboriginal peoples while confronting the fragility of colonial systems. The monuments, built as temporary vessels for ancestral spirits, are inherently fragile, crafted by human hands and vulnerable to dismantling. Their impermanence echoes the transient nature of colonial statues, highlighting the shared vulnerability of colonial dominance when compared to the enduring essence of Eternity and the persistence of her existence.

The film resonates with the ongoing resurgence of Aboriginal peoples in the face of colonial violence, aligning with contemporary movements for recognition, land sovereignty, and justice. *Eternity the Butterfly* critiques the systems that seek to suppress Aboriginal knowledge, revealing their fundamental fragility through the dual symbolism of the monuments.

Subtle yet profound in its political commentary, Eternity's soul-shattering call to the ancestors reverberates through the natural world. Through her meditation, breath, and deliberate movements, she embodies physical, spiritual, and cultural continuity—rooted in resistance and transformation. Viewers are invited to reflect on the unseen labour of cultural endurance, the ongoing impacts of colonialism, and the transformative power of the Aboriginal voice.

Hayley Millar Baker