

# DIVIDED WORLDS

ADELAIDE  
BIENNIAL  
OF  
AUSTRALIAN  
ART

2018



## 2018 Adelaide Biennial breaks record attendances

- Attendances up 10% on 2016 Adelaide Biennial
- Works of art by Lisa Adams, Tamara Dean, the Ken Family & Lindy Lee acquired into Art Gallery's collection
- Leigh Robb appointed as curator of 2020 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art

The 2018 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: *Divided Worlds* curated by Erica Green has achieved record attendances with more than 240,000 people visiting the exhibition during its 93-day season, up 10% on the 2016 Biennial. 2018 Adelaide Biennial venue the Museum of Economic Botany in the Adelaide Botanic Garden has also recorded its highest attendances on record with the display of works of art by artist Tamara Dean.

Art Gallery of South Australia, Co-Acting Director, Lisa Slade attributes the strong attendance to the exhibition's accessibility and visibility across the city, as well as the Biennial's now well-established reputation, as an important platform for Australian contemporary artists to realise works of significant scale and ambition.

'As an across-city experience the Adelaide Biennial clearly resonated with a broad audience. We are thrilled that our partners can work with us to grow audiences for art and that the North Terrace boulevard can be a platform for presenting the best in Australian art,' said Slade.

To date six works of art from the 2018 Adelaide Biennial, collectively valued at over \$690,000, have been acquired into the Art Gallery's collection. Lindy Lee's 7-meter-high sculpture, *The Life of Stars*, which has been illuminating North Terrace since February, has been acquired to honour the achievements of former Art Gallery of South Australia Director, Nick Mitzevich. A mirrored beacon, this monumental public sculpture is the culmination of decades of experimentation and represents a breakthrough moment in Lee's artistic practice.

Thanks to the continued generosity of BHP through TARNANTHI: Festival of Contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art, The Ken Family's *Kangkura- KangkuraKu Tjukurpa - A Sister's Story* has also been acquired into the Gallery's collection. This triptych is the first collaborative painting by the Ken Family to enter the Gallery's collection and represents a rare coming together of all five sisters and their mother, prompted by the occasion of the 2018 Adelaide Biennial.

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Presented in partnership with the Anne & Gordon Samstag Museum of Art, UniSA, in association with the Adelaide Festival, and with generous support received from the Art Gallery of South Australia Biennial Ambassadors Program and Principal Donor The Balnaves Foundation.

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body and by the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments.

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In addition to *Kangkura- KangkuraKu Tjukurpa - A Sister's Story*, Lisa Adams' hyper-real figurative painting *Inquisition* has been acquired. Drawing on the historical paintings of early anatomical dissections the work depicts, in the artist words, 'three surgeons performing investigative surgery (on an angel) in an attempt to discover what purity might look like, in order to improve the behaviour of humanity'.

Photography is also well represented in this year's acquisitions with Tamara Dean's *Elephant ear (Alocasia odora)*, *Sacred lotus (nelumbo nucifera)* and *Passage, willow forest (Salix)* all taking their place in the permanent collection. These three photographs are from the series *In our nature*, a site-specific project commissioned for the 2018 Adelaide Biennial and photographed in the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Botanic Gardens.

As the lead visual arts event for the Adelaide Festival, the Adelaide Biennial is looking forward to 2020 when it will celebrate 30 years. Plans are well underway and include the appointment of Leigh Robb, Curator, Contemporary Art at the Art Gallery of South Australia, as the curator of the *2020 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art*.

'Appointed the Art Gallery's inaugural Curator of Contemporary Art in 2016, Leigh has extensive knowledge of both Australian and international contemporary art. With a host of major exhibitions, contemporary commissions and publications to her name, Robb's approach will be characterised by both energy and ambition' said Lisa Slade, Co-acting Director, Art Gallery of South Australia.

Further information on the *2020 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art* including the curatorial approach and participating artists will be released in 2019.

## ENDS

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**IMAGES** available for download from <http://adelaidebiennial.com.au/2018/media/media-gallery/>

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