

biennale of sydney

MEDIA RELEASE

Embargoed until 1pm Tuesday, 9 April 2019

Biennale of Sydney announces 2020 exhibition: **NIRIN**



Image: Barbara McGrady, Sister Girls stylin up, Mardi Gras, 2013

Sydney, Australia: The Biennale of Sydney announced today the first 33 artists, creatives and collectives who will participate in the 22nd Biennale of Sydney (2020), titled NIRIN.

The exhibition will be presented free to the public from Saturday, 14 March to Monday, 8 June 2020 at the Art Gallery of NSW, Artspace, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Cockatoo Island, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia and the National Art School in Sydney.

At the media announcement, Brook Andrew, Artistic Director of the 22nd Biennale of Sydney, shared **NIRIN** as the title of the exhibition. Reflecting on the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages, **NIRIN** is an important time to advocate for First Nation languages in the mainstream. Meaning edge, **NIRIN** is a word of Andrew's mother's Nation, the Wiradjuri people of western New South Wales.

Brook Andrew added: "**NIRIN** is not a periphery, it is our centre, and it expresses dynamic existing and ancient practices that speak loudly. **NIRIN** decentres, challenges and transforms dominant narratives, such as the 2020 Captain Cook anniversary in Australia and reorients Western mapping, shining a light on sites of being that are often ignored or rendered invisible. **NIRIN** is an inspirational journey driven by stories and grass-root practices, realised through twisting perceptions, moments of transition and a sense of being in the world that is interconnected."

Seven themes inspire **NIRIN**: DHAAGUN (*Earth: Sovereignty and Working Together*); BAGARAY-BANG (*Healing*); YIRAWY-DHURAY (*Yam-Connection: Food*); GURRAY (*Transformation*);

MURIGUWAL GILAND (*Different Stories*); NGAWAAL-GUYUNGAN (*Powerful-Ideas: The Power of Objects*); and BILA (*River: Environment*).

Jo-Anne Birnie-Danzker, Director and CEO of the Biennale of Sydney, spoke of the significance of the 22nd Biennale as an artist- and First Nation-led endeavour, and its spirit of collaboration.

A number of the artists, creatives and collectives announced today were in attendance at the National Art School: Australian First Nation artist **Tony Albert**; South African artist **Lhola Amira**, Australian First Nation custodians of the **Blacktown Native Institution**, Australian-Papua New Guinean artist **Eric Bridgeman**; Sāmoan-Persian-Australian artist **Léuli Eshrāghi**; artist and musician **Nicholas Galanin** from Sitka, Alaska; American cinematographer and artist **Arthur Jafa**; Australian chef and creative **Kylie Kwong**; Australian First Nation photographer **Barbara McGrady**; Austrian artist and curator **Katarina Matiasek**; Australian First Nation artist **S.J Norman**; Māori multimedia artist **Lisa Reihana**; and, USA-based Haitian artist-anthropologist-activist **Gina Athena Ulysse**.

The 33 participants announced today who will be in the 22nd Biennale of Sydney are:

- **Tony Albert** Born Australia. Based in Sydney, Australia.
- **Maria Thereza Alves** Born Brazil. Based in Berlin, Germany.
- **Lhola Amira** Born South Africa. Based in Cape Town, South Africa.
- **Sammy Baloji** Born Democratic Republic of Congo. Based in Brussels, Belgium.
- **Huma Bhabha** Born Pakistan. Based in Poughkeepsie, USA.
- **Blacktown Native Institution** Dharug Nation, Australia.
- **Anna Boghiguan** Born Egypt. Based in Cairo, Egypt, India and Europe.
- **Eric Bridgeman** Born Australia. Based in Brisbane, Australia and Wahgi Valley and Jiwaka Province, Papua New Guinea.
- **Victoria Santa Cruz** Born Peru (1922-2014).
- **Léuli Eshrāghi** Born Australia. Based in Melbourne, Australia.
- **Jes Fan** Born Canada. Based in New York, USA and Hong Kong, China.
- **Nicholas Galanin** Born USA. Based in Sitka, USA.
- **Fátima Rodrigo Gonzales** Born Peru. Based in Lima, Peru.
- **Lawrence Abu Hamdan** Born Jordan. Based in Beirut, Lebanon.
- **Arthur Jafa** Born USA. Based in Los Angeles, USA.
- **Hannah Catherine Jones** Born United Kingdom. Based in London, United Kingdom.
- **Bronwyn Katz** Born South Africa. Based in Johannesburg, South Africa.
- **Mayunkiki** Born Japan. Based in Hokkaido, Japan.
- **Kylie Kwong** Born Australia. Based in Sydney, Australia.
- **Barbara McGrady** Born Australia. Based in Sydney, Australia.
- **Ibrahim Mahama** Born Ghana. Based in Tamale, Ghana.
- **Teresa Margolles** Born Mexico. Based in Mexico City, Mexico and Madrid, Spain.
- **Misheck Masamvu** Born Zimbabwe. Based in Harare, Zimbabwe.
- **Katarina Matiasek** Born Austria. Based in Vienna, Austria.
- **Jota Mombaça** Born Brazil. Based in Berlin, Germany, Madrid, Spain and Sao Paolo, Brazil.
- **Prof Sir Zanele Mhohli** Born South Africa. Based in Johannesburg, South Africa.
- **The Mulka Project** Yirrkala, Australia.
- **S.J Norman** Born Australia. Based in Berlin, Germany, London, United Kingdom, and Melbourne, Australia.
- **Taqralik Partridge** Born Quebec, Canada. Based in Kautokeino, Norway.
- **Laure Prouvost** Born France. Based in London, England and Antwerp, Belgium.
- **Lisa Reihana** Born New Zealand. Based in Auckland, New Zealand.
- **Latai Taumoepeau** Born Australia. Based in Sydney and Melbourne, Australia.
- **Gina Athena Ulysse** Born Haiti. Based in Connecticut, USA.

For further information on the Biennale of Sydney, please visit biennaleofsydney.art.

The Biennale of Sydney is supported by

MAJOR GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



PRINCIPAL PATRON



Ends

MEDIA CONTACTS: For further information and to request interviews and images relating to the 22nd Biennale of Sydney, please contact:

Claire Martin, claire@articulatepr.com.au +61 414 437 588

Julia Barnes, julia@articulatepr.com.au +61 402 678 589

Sasha Haughan, sasha@articulatepr.com.au +61 405 006 035

Kym Elphinstone, kym@articulatepr.com.au +61 421 106 139

About the Biennale of Sydney: The Biennale of Sydney is a renowned exhibition of international contemporary art, the third oldest biennial in the world after Venice and São Paulo and the largest exhibition of its kind in Australia. Situated across multiple sites in Sydney and beyond, over nearly half a century, the Biennale of Sydney has commissioned and presented exceptional works of art by more than 1,800 national and international artists from more than 100 countries.

The Biennale of Sydney is committed to free access for all and serves people of all ages and cultures. In 2018, the 21st Biennale of Sydney attracted visitation of over 850,000, the highest level in its 45-year history. Independent research showed that 23% of visitors were international, 52% identified as culturally diverse, 20% speak a language other than English at home and 46% were aged under 35 years. This reflects the important place that the Biennale of Sydney holds in the life of Australia and in its engagement with the world.

About Brook Andrew: Brook Andrew is an interdisciplinary artist who examines dominant narratives, often relating to colonialism and modernist histories. Through museum and archival interventions and curatorial projects, he aims to make forgotten stories visible and offer alternative pathways for interpreting history in the world today. Drawing inspiration from vernacular objects and the archive he travels internationally to work with communities and various private and public collections.

His recent research includes an ambitious international comparative Australian Research Council project *Representation, Remembrance and the Memorial*, responding to the repeated high-level calls for an Australian national memorial to Aboriginal loss and the frontier wars. In 2017, Brook Andrew was the recipient of the prestigious Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship (SARF) and in 2016 was appointed Photography Residencies Laureate at the Musée du quai Branly, Paris. In 2014 Brook worked closely with the collections of the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Museo de América and Museo Nacional de Antropología for the exhibition 'Really Useful Knowledge' curated by WHW at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia.

He curated *TABOO* in 2012/13 at the MCA Sydney. This was presented alongside a demanding public debate program called *Blakatak that included esteemed First Nation and other creatives and* was devised in conversation with John von Sturmer, a social anthropologist with a distinguished career in Aboriginal studies.

Brook is Associate Professor at MADA, Monash University; Honorary Senior Fellow within the Indigenous Studies Unit and the School of Population and Global Health, University of Melbourne; and Associate Researcher, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford. He is currently a Charlie Perkins scholar undertaking a DPhil at the Ruskin School of Art, The University of Oxford. Brook Andrew is represented by [Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne](#), [Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney](#) and [Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris and Brussels](#).