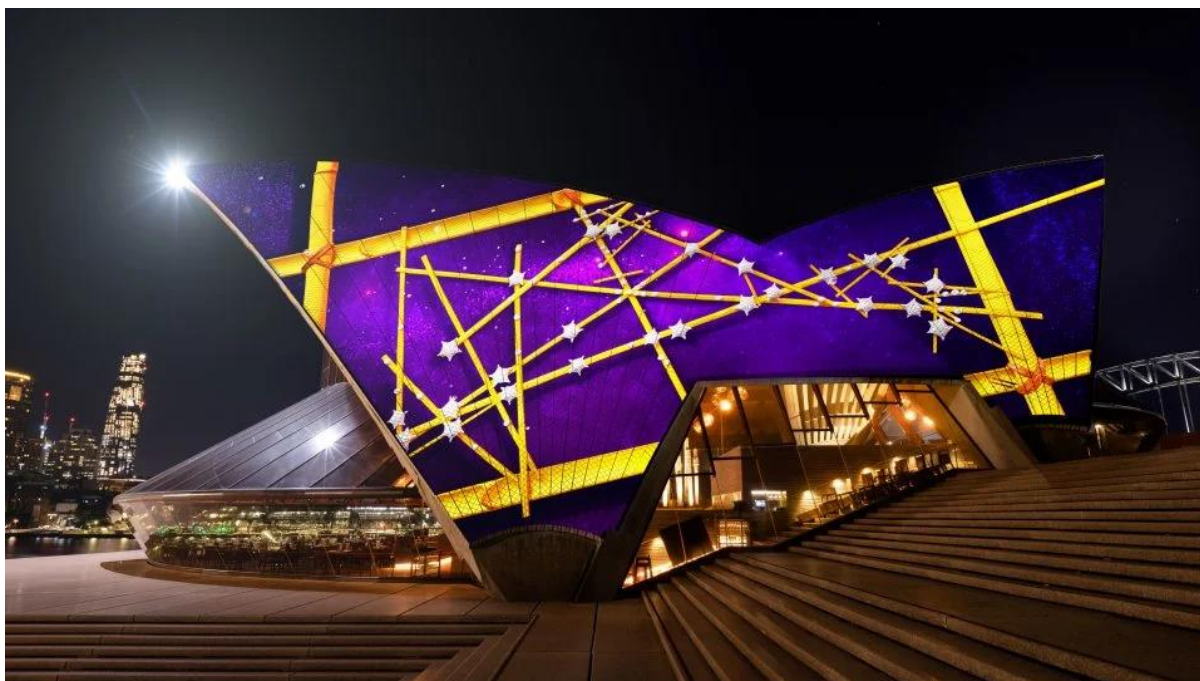




Opera House launches new Badu Gili sails projection exploring themes of celestial navigation



Rendar of Gail Mabo's work as part of Badu Gili.

– Spectacular new projection to light up the Opera House's eastern Banelong sails from December 15 –

– First major creative collaboration between the Opera House, Biennale of Sydney, and the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain –

Sydney – Thursday, 23 November 2023. The Sydney Opera House today announced it will launch a new chapter of **Badu Gili**, its free, nightly First Nations sails lighting on December 15, with a dynamic projection displaying the works of two celebrated First Nations artists, **Gail Mabo**, and **Nikau Hindin**. **Badu Gili: Celestial** will appear on the Opera House's Eastern Banelong sails each night at sunset, 9pm, 9:30pm, 10pm and 10:30pm.

This vibrant new projection of powerful First Nations storytelling has been created by the Opera House, in partnership with the **Biennale of Sydney** and the **Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain**, with animation by **Yarnology**, and soundscape by **Nigel Westlake**, **Te Kahureremoa Taumata** and **Te Kuru o te Marama Dewes**. The new six-minute projection will feature the work of Meriam artist, Gail Mabo from Mer Island in the Torres Strait, and international First Nations artist Nikau Hindin, a Te Rarawa and Ngāpuhi woman from Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Using Mabo's star maps constructed out of bamboo and cotton, and Hindin's Māori aute (bark cloth), the digital animation explores the ancient practices of celestial navigation across two cultures, with vibrant symbols and sounds bringing to life the stories of our skies and waterways.

Gail Mabo (Mer Island) said: *"The sky is for everybody, the stories which connect people are different everywhere, but the stars remain. At a time when people forget to look up I hope my work brings the sky and the best of the world closer for us to see."*

Nikau Hindin (Te Rarawa, Ngāpuhi) said: *"It is an immense privilege as a manuhiri (guest) to this land, to adorn this space with Māori patterns that emerge from our creation stories and enduring textile practices of tukutuku and tāniko. As a bark cloth maker with a revivalists agenda and obligation to continue the genealogy of toi Māori (Māori art forms), I hope my tūpuna would be proud of this new*



way of experiencing our patterns, sounds and worldview. Toi Māori is the materialisation of our ways of thinking and it is potent in the maintenance of our knowledge systems. These ways of knowing and being are essential to the healing of our land and seas and we are in solidarity with our older First Nation brothers and sisters here."

Sydney Opera House Chief Customer Officer, Jade McKellar said: *"We're thrilled to be launching a new chapter of our nightly celebration of First Nations culture, Badu Gili, in collaboration with the Biennale of Sydney and the Fondation Cartier. Since its launch in 2017, Badu Gili has been an essential Sydney cultural experience for both visitors and Sydneysiders, with over 600,000 people having enjoyed the projection on-site, and almost 2 million views online. We are honoured to be highlighting the work of two artists who come from different parts of the world, but whose bodies of work reveal intimate understandings of place that has been passed through the generations."*

CEO of Biennale of Sydney, Barbara Moore said: *"Representing generations of First Nations storytellers, knowledge holders, and artists, Gail Mabo and Nikau Hindin have invited us to learn from and be inspired by traditional technologies and histories. Their seamless interweaving of invaluable cultural stories with contemporary practices creates a powerful connection between worlds. The Biennale of Sydney is thrilled to be part of this collaboration with the artists, the Sydney Opera House and the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain. Badu Gili: Celestial stands as a testament to the enduring power of art to connect, educate, and celebrate."*

Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain First Nations Curatorial Fellow, Tony Albert said: *Through the support of the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain and the Biennale of Sydney, this year's Badu Gili presented by the Sydney Opera House engages deeply within both national and international Indigenous Art. Gail Mabo (Piadram, Mer (Murray Island), Torres Strait, and Nikau Hindin (Te Rarawa, Ngāpuhi) share the rich history of Australian and Pacific navigation through generations of ancestral knowledge. Both cultures have a long history of sea bearing people who used the night sky and the stars as a navigation tool. These pathways interweave in cross cultural navigation and knowledge to reflect on tradition Indigenous technologies. Both these important artists look at the past to understand and connect with the future.*

Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain Artistic Managing Director Hervé Chandès said: *"This partnership with the Sydney Opera House and the Biennale of Sydney reflects our belief in empowering First Nations communities to share their truths and underscores the crucial role of listening to their voices as we navigate the challenges of our planet. First Nations artists bring their rich cultural heritage and unique artistic traditions to the contemporary art scene. Their innovative approaches, and storytelling techniques can enrich the artistic landscape and challenge conventional norms in the art world. For forty years, through art and creativity, we aim to promote public awareness of, and foster a deep appreciation for, contemporary art from all over the world."*

NSW Minister for the Arts, Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, the Hon. John Graham MLC said: *"The Sydney Opera House stands on the land of Tubowgule, an important gathering place for storytelling, ceremony, and culture. Over the past six years, Badu Gili has provided an important opportunity to share storytelling and culture with hundreds of thousands of visitors. This year's collaboration of two of Australia's and New Zealand's leading artists, Gail Mabo and Nikau Hindin, is a special next iteration of the series."*

The premiere of *Badu Gili: Celestial* will take place on Friday 15 December at sunset. Members of the public can find out more information [here](#).

-ends-

Media enquiries

Izzy Murison, Communications Manager, Sydney Opera House
imurison@sydneyoperahouse.com / 0452 481 557

Sydney Opera House

The Sydney Opera House is the symbol of modern Australia. It is one of the world's busiest performing arts centres, the nation's premier tourism destination and an architectural masterpiece of the 20th century. The Opera



House's broad and diverse programming attracts audiences in person and online, with more than 15 million people attending performances and tours over the past decade. A global beacon for creativity, it is inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List and its social asset value has been estimated by Deloitte at \$11.4 billion. In 2023, the Opera House celebrates its 50th anniversary and the completion of its Decade of Renewal, a transformation that sets the stage for future generations of artists, audiences, and visitors.

Biennale of Sydney

The Biennale of Sydney is a leading international contemporary art event. It plays an indispensable role in Australia's engagement with the world, and a meaningful role in the life of the nation. For 50 years, the Biennale has been a unifying force in the Australian arts sector, embedding boldly creative art exhibitions and experiences in the everyday life of Sydney and putting the artistic excellence of Australia front and centre on the world stage. The Biennale of Sydney has commissioned and presented exceptional works of art by more than 1900 artists from more than 130 countries. The Biennale of Sydney is committed to free access for all.

Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain

The Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain is a private cultural institution whose mission is to promote all fields of contemporary artistic creation to the international public through a program of temporary exhibitions, live performances, and conversations. Created in 1984 by the Maison Cartier, the institution is exhibiting in Paris in a building designed by the architect Jean Nouvel.

The Fondation Cartier's singular artistic program explores a wide array of creative fields from visual and performing arts to architecture, design, fashion, philosophy, and the sciences. For nearly four decades, the Fondation Cartier has been instrumental in revealing the talent of some of the greatest contemporary artists and has established its museum spaces as a platform where artists and scientists can meet and create projects to address major issues of today's world. Its collection consists of nearly 2,000 works from a rich and multidisciplinary program. It is a testament to the relationships forged with more than 500 artists originating from all over the globe.

As part of its ongoing observation of the relationship between human beings and nature, the Fondation Cartier has produced collective projects (exhibitions, individual works of art, publications, performances, and public talks) approaching contemporary environmental issues, such as climate change, biodiversity and deforestation. The Fondation Cartier also built a long-term relationship with contemporary artists from Indigenous communities living in Brazil, Paraguay, Venezuela or Australia (as demonstrated by the exhibition of Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori's paintings it presented in Paris and Milan in 2022), and bear witness to the multiplicity of Indigenous languages and cultures. The Fondation Cartier travels the world, partnering with major art institutions and engaging new audiences to discover the works of contemporary artists, and be challenged by their perspectives.

Find out more here: www.fondationcartier.com/