



Sydney Opera House unveils *Badu Gili: Story Keepers* showcasing First Nations voices from the Kimberley and the Canadian Arctic

– Mesmerising new projection to light up the Sydney Opera House sails every night –

Sydney – 11 December 2025. Sydney – 11 December 2025. The Sydney Opera House today announced a new chapter of its free, nightly First Nations sails projection *Badu Gili: Story Keepers* will debut on 17 December, featuring the artworks of Goonyandi elder **Mervyn Street** and Inuk custodian **Ningiukulu Teevee**.

Curated by the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain's First Nations Curatorial Fellow **Bruce Johnson McLean**, the free six-minute animation will feature Street's colourful paintings followed by Teevee's bold drawings projected onto the Opera House's Eastern Bennelong sails. It is the third year of a partnership between the Opera House, **Biennale of Sydney** and the **Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain**.

Mervyn Street's distinctive artistic practice draws upon his lifetime as a stockman in the Kimberley and advocacy of cultural preservation through language and living on country. Kinngaitmiut Inuk artist Ningiukulu Teevee creates visual art rooted in Inuit myths and legends, keeping traditional stories alive while offering her unique perspective on Inuit culture. The work of both artists will be animated by Sydney-based creative agency **Vandal**.

The projection opens on Goonyandi Country in the Kimberley where dust, fire and wind lift ancestral voices from scorching heat to moonlight. The narrative then shifts to Teevee's homeland of Nunavut in the Arctic, where ice and snow cradle stories in stillness as Raven and Owl perform timeless tales of creation, kinship and transformation.

Mervyn Street said: *“My mum and Dad used to work. My Dad was just like a slave working over and over, every day. I’m going back through my history, I’m doing it for the people, doing it for everybody, not for myself. I’m passing on my knowledge. This was a big project. I didn’t know it was going to go this far. It’s been a long journey for my art and now I can’t believe I’m doing this with the Sydney Opera House. I’m giving my story to the people.”*

Ningiukulu Teevee said: *“I am honoured to be part of this animation project, which brings to life the legend of The Owl and the Raven — a story that has stayed with me since childhood. I first heard it in school from an Elder whose storytelling captured my imagination. The themes of curiosity, transformation, and the balance between patience and pride continue to inspire me. Through this animation, I explore how Raven’s restless spirit and Owl’s calm wisdom reflect human nature and the lessons found in our traditions. This work connects Inuit storytelling with contemporary art, celebrating the voices, memories, and teachings that guide my creative journey.”*

Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain First Nations Curatorial Fellow, Bruce Johnson McLean said: *“It’s been a real privilege to bring together two leading Indigenous artists from opposite sides of the world, from lands of heat and smoke, and lands of snow and ice. What unites these artists is their incredible commitment to holding and sharing the knowledge and histories of their communities. Story Keepers is a celebration of those members of our Indigenous communities who continue to share our stories and give voice to our memories.”*

The premiere of *Badu Gili: Story Keepers* will take place on Thursday 17 December with a special performance by **Loren Ryan** at sunset. Members of the public can find out more information [here](#).

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Mervyn Street

A proud Goonyandi man, an accomplished author, artist and activist whose work explores the experiences of First Nations stockmen, his ancestral Kimberley lands and Goonyandi culture. Street formerly served as Chairman of both Mangkaja and the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC). He maintains an active leadership role in promoting cultural preservation and advocating for the benefits of Indigenous communities continuing to live on Country.

Ningiukulu Teevee

An Inuk artist and storyteller from Kinngait, Canada (NU). Through her visual art and writing, Teevee offers her distinctive viewpoint on both historical and contemporary Inuit culture. Her work is driven by a commitment to keeping Inuit stories alive, particularly the myths and legends told by Elders that serve as the main source of inspiration for her art.

Bruce Johnson McLean

Bruce Johnson McLean is a member of the Wierdi people of Wribpid (Belyando River region, Central Queensland) and one of Australia's leading voices on First Nations art and culture. With over 25 years' experience, he has held senior curatorial roles at the National Gallery of Australia and QAGOMA, and is currently the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain First Nations Curatorial Fellow with the Biennale of Sydney. He has curated major exhibitions and programs across Australia and internationally, including projects for MASP in São Paulo, KODE in Bergen, the Asia Pacific Triennial, as well as significant public art and illumination projects such as Canberra's Enlighten Festival.

In March 2024, the Biennale of Sydney and the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain announced Johnson McLean as the new Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain First Nations Curatorial Fellow. In this capacity, Bruce supports both the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain and the Biennale of Sydney in shaping the curatorial vision for Badu Gili, contributing to the ongoing commissioning, presentation and amplification of First Nations arts and culture in Australia.

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. A global beacon for creativity, it is inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List and its social value has been estimated by Deloitte at \$11.4 billion.

Its broad and diverse programming attracts audiences in person and online, with more than 16 million people attending performances and tours over the past decade. In its ambition to be Everyone's House, the Opera House continues to evolve alongside the community it was built to serve.

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 over 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 2400 artists from more than 130 countries and territories. 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 space for artistic dialogue and experimentation that places the relationship between creation and exhibition at the heart of its institutional project, working in close collaboration with artists.

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Since its creation in 1984 by Alain Dominique Perrin, then-President of Maison Cartier, it has exhibited artists from all walks of life, breaking down barriers between practices and fields of thought. Built over the years through a groundbreaking international programme, the Fondation's collection reflects its multidisciplinary nature and the breadth of themes addressed in direct connection with contemporary issues.

The Fondation Cartier carries out its activities and commitments with the desire and ambition to make contemporary creation accessible to the widest possible audience. Through exhibitions projects and a programme of encounters and debates, live performances and talks, it creates bridges between cultural venues and fosters a genuine space for multicultural dialogue. With a new exhibition space, conceived by the renowned architect Jean Nouvel, on Place du Palais-Royal in Paris, the Fondation Cartier is reinventing itself in order to experiment and share with artists and audiences alike ever new ways of conceiving art.

Find out more here: www.fondationcartier.com