

Museum of
Contemporary
Art Australia



MCA Program 2023

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Adam Linder, *Choreographic Service No. 5: Dare to Keep Kids Off Naturalism*, Kunsthalle Basel, 2017

The Museum of Contemporary Art Australia announces 2023 program highlights.

[Sydney, 13 October 2022], The Museum of Contemporary Art Australia announced today highlights of its 2023 exhibition program, under the vision of MCA Director, Suzanne Cotter.

The MCA's 2023 exhibition program delivers a dynamic year of contemporary art to Sydney, with international firsts, performances and new approaches to exhibition making.

In this new artistic program aligned with the seasons, performance will take centre stage along with a revitalised focus given to the MCA Collection through new displays. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and culture remain embedded in the program, along with increased opportunities for Australian artists to realise new work.

The MCA's recently renamed Macgregor Gallery on Level 1 North, will be the Museum's site for significant contemporary art works and projects.

A renewed public program will commence to connect contemporary art and ideas with an ever-growing and diverse public, expanding beyond the gallery experience with MCA Talk, MCA Live, MCA Screen, and MCA Late.

MCA Director, Suzanne Cotter said, "We are excited to bring to Sydney an exceptional program of exhibitions, commissions and special projects by artists from Australia and around the world. The program marks the beginning of a new decade for the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia (MCA) reflecting the dynamism, diversity and expansive nature of contemporary art in Australia and beyond.

The 2023 program will activate both museum and site to generate new conversations, between artists, artworks and the public and reflects our commitment to position Australian art as part of world conversations."

The new program opens in Autumn 2023 with the fourth iteration of **The National** curated by **Jane Devery**, the MCA's new senior curator of exhibitions. A major installation as part **The National 4: Australian Art Now** will be the first of a **series of new projects** to be shown in Macgregor Gallery.

In Winter 2023, Australian-born choreographer **Adam Linder** presents his first major work for a museum in Australia conceived for the space of the Macgregor Gallery. Adam Linder is well known for making work for both stage and gallery spaces, responding to the histories and social codes that underpin these different contexts. This choreography as exhibition raises the MCA's commitment to engaging with experimental art forms. Linder's new work for the MCA will focus on the museum as a space in which visitors increasingly perform for the camera, using art as a backdrop for their own image making.

During Spring 2023, Lebanese artist and composer **Tarek Atoui** presents his first solo exhibition in Australia, **Water's Witness**, a major new sonic installation. Atoui is known for his collaborative performances and multisensory sculptural environments that challenge conventional ways of perceiving sound. The exhibition emerges from Atoui's ongoing *I/E (Infinite Ears)* project, a series of works featuring custom-built musical instruments and sounds recorded in port cities around the world, from Porto and Athens to Beirut, Abu Dhabi, Singapore, Istanbul and now for this exhibition, several locations in Sydney. The work draws on research made in collaboration with sounds engineers and musicians Chris Watson and Eric La Casa capturing the sounds and vibrations of coastal cities and their underwater ecologies.

Exhibitions

AUTUMN SEASON

The National 4: Australian Art Now
Level 3; AGNSW, Carriageworks, and
Campbelltown Arts Centre
Level 1 North
MCA Senior Curator of Exhibitions,
Jane Devery

MCA Collection: Eight Artists
Level 1 South
MCA Curator, Manya Sellers

WINTER SEASON

Zoe Leonard: Al río / To the River
Level 3
Curator, Suzanne Cotter | Associate
MCA Curator, Megan Robson

Adam Linder
Level 1 North
MCA Curator Anneke Jaspers | Public
Engagement Manager, Susan Sheddan

MCA Collection New Displays
MCA Curatorial Collaboration: Anna
Davis, Pedro de Almeida, Jane Devery,
Anneke Jaspers, Megan Robson,
Manya Sellers, Lara Strongman

SPRING SEASON

Tarek Atoui: Waters' Witness
Level 1 North
MCA Curator, Anna Davis

Primavera 2023: Young Australian Artists
Level 1 South
Guest Curator, Talia Smith

SUMMER SEASON

Sydney International Art Series 2023/2024
Level 3

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Tarek Atoui, performing in *Mars Returns* at Mykolas Žilinskas Art Kaunas, image courtesy the artist, © the artist, photograph: Brigita Kazlauskaitė.

Primavera

2023 sees the return of the MCA's annual exhibition **Primavera** dedicated to the work of artists in Australia under the age of 35. This year's edition will be guest curated by New-Zealand born, Sydney-based curator and artist **Talia Smith**.

Major Exhibitions

The **MCA's Special Exhibition Galleries on Level 3** will host across the year a series of large-scale exhibitions dedicated to artists working in Australia and around the world.

The National 4: Australian Art Now will be the first major exhibition for 2023 and features works by an intergenerational and culturally diverse group of Australian artists and artist collectives, based in Australia and abroad. The selection of works in the MCA exhibition respond to our time of unprecedented change, imagining new ways of seeing and being in the world. Partner venues for **The National 4: Australian Art Now** are Carriageworks, Art Gallery of New South Wales, and in 2023 for the first time, Campbelltown Arts Centre in Western Sydney.

In Winter 2023, acclaimed American artist **Zoe Leonard** presents her epic photographic work **Al Rio/ To the River** in her debut Australian exhibition, organised in collaboration with the Musee d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, Luxembourg and the Musee d'Art Moderne de la Ville, Paris. Through more than 500 black and white, analogue images, Leonard's nuanced and complex portrait of the river reflects its broader role as a site of agriculture, commerce, culture, policing, and surveillance.

The much-anticipated **Summer 2023/2024 Sydney International Art Series** exhibition, which brings to Australia a major exhibition by a renowned international artist, will be announced in the new year.

Commissions and Special Projects

In 2023, the MCA are working with Melbourne-based artist and Kamilaroi man, **Reko Rennie** to commission a new work for the Loti Smorgon Sculpture Terrace on Level 4.

Vincent Namatjira's powerful Circular Quay foyer wall commission, **P.P.F. (Past-Present-Future), 2021** will remain on display in 2023, to enable more people to view this important work. New commissions will be on display throughout the building including **Daniel Boyd's Untitled, 2014** now installed in the waterside corridor. The Bella Room commission and a new program of artist-led special projects for the MCA Foundation Hall will be announced early in the new year.

MCA Collection

The MCA will present a new display opening in Winter curated collaboratively by the MCA curatorial team – **Anna Davis, Pedro de Almeida, Jane Devery, Anneke Jaspers, Keith Munro, Megan Robson, Manya Sellers, and Lara Strongman**. The new display will feature a series of artists rooms showcasing artists whose work the Museum has collected in depth and has been rarely seen. The rooms will also feature recent acquisitions exhibited for the first time. Artists include **Joan Brassil, Tracey Moffat**, and major works from the **Arnott's Barks collection**.

Exhibitions

AUTUMN SEASON

The National 4: Australian Art Now

Level 3; AGNSW, Carriageworks, and Campbelltown Arts Centre
Level 1 North
MCA Senior Curator of Exhibitions, Jane Devery

MCA Collection: Eight Artists

Level 1 South
MCA Curator, Manya Sellers

WINTER SEASON

Zoe Leonard: Al río / To the River

Level 3
Curator, Suzanne Cotter | Associate MCA Curator, Megan Robson

Adam Linder

Level 1 North
MCA Curator Anneke Jaspers | Public Engagement Manager, Susan Sheddan

MCA Collection New Displays

MCA Curatorial Collaboration: Anna Davis, Pedro de Almeida, Jane Devery, Anneke Jaspers, Megan Robson, Manya Sellers, Lara Strongman

SPRING SEASON

Tarek Atoui: Waters' Witness

Level 1 North
MCA Curator, Anna Davis

Primavera 2023: Young Australian Artists

Level 1 South
Guest Curator, Talia Smith

SUMMER SEASON

Sydney International Art Series 2023/2024

Level 3

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Vincent Namatjira, *The Royal Tour 1*, 2020, acrylic on found book pages, Museum of Contemporary Art, purchased with funds provided by the MCA Foundation, 2020, image courtesy and © the artist

MCA Collection: Eight Artists, focuses on work that respond to notions of seriality, repetition and return in the collection. It will feature singular pieces by **Sally Gabori, Raelene Kerinauia Amputate, Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Naminapu Maymuru-White, Esme Timbery, Judith Wright and Gulumbu Yunupingu**, alongside a **new commission by Sandra Selig**. The works draws upon depictions of cultural stories and practices, kinship relations, matrilineal lineages and compelling relationships to the body.

Beyond the Museum walls

The MCA's long-standing **C3West** program will continue its groundbreaking artist-led social impact work in Western Sydney with three new projects to be announced in 2023. C3West will collaborate with multiple partner organisations to engage diverse communities across Western Sydney that will see contemporary art and artists bring value to a range of community needs such as improving health literacy among culturally and linguistically diverse women and promoting the importance of kinship to the wellbeing of Pasifika communities.

Expanded Public Engagement program

The MCA launches a new public program in 2023, delivered in strands: **MCA Talk, MCA Live, MCA Screen, and MCA Late**. The program will connect contemporary art and ideas that extend beyond the gallery experience and partner across the year with key cultural institutions including Sydney Festival, Sydney Mardi Gras World Pride, FAMBO, the French Embassy's Night of Big Ideas, NAIDOC Week and Vivid Sydney.

The MCA's National Centre for Creative Learning (NCCL) will continue its focus on inclusive creative learning programs adding even more resources for students and schools. **A dedicated MCA Family space** will be a new addition to the NCCL to cater for free drop-in creative intergenerational workshops that will accompany four of the 2023 exhibitions. More self-guided resources will be available for schools in the second half of 2023.

Exhibitions

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SUMMER SEASON

**Sydney International Art Series
2023/2024**
Level 3

2023 MCA Program Highlights

Museum of Contemporary Art Australia

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MCA AUTUMN SEASON



The National 4: Australian Art Now

Friday 31 March – Sunday 18 June 2023
Level 3 and Level 1, Macgregor Gallery

The National 4: Australian Art Now is a major biennial survey exhibition of contemporary Australian art. Presenting the latest ideas and forms in contemporary Australian art across four of Sydney's premier cultural institutions: the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Carriageworks, the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia and Campbelltown Arts Centre, the exhibition represents a mix of emerging, mid-career and established Australian artists living here and beyond. New and commissioned works encompass a diverse range of mediums including painting, video, sculpture, installation, drawing and performance. *The National 4: Australian Art* is the only large-scale recurring exhibition in the city focused solely on contemporary Australian art.

MCA Senior Curator of Exhibitions, Jane Devery

MCA Collection: Eight Artists

Level 1 South

MCA Collection brings together works by eight Australian artists drawn primarily from the MCA Collection, which respond to notions of seriality, repetition and return. Featuring singular pieces by **Sally Gabori, Raelene Kerinaua Lampuwatu, Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Naminapu Maymuru-White, Esme Timbery Judith Wright and Gulumbu Yunupingu**, alongside a new commission by Sandra Selig. They include dynamic depictions of significant cultural stories and practices, deeply personal kinship relations, matrilineal lineages as well as compelling relationships to the body.

MCA Curator, Manya Sellers

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MCA WINTER SEASON



MCA Collection New Displays

Level 2

The MCA is Australia's only public museum dedicated to collecting contemporary art. Since its inception in 1989, the Museum has acquired new and recent works by living artists across all media, shaping a distinctive history of art as it unfolds. This new display drawn from the permanent collection reveals the history, trajectories and highlights of its art archive. Jointly devised by the Museum's team of curators, the exhibition unfolds as a series of discrete rooms exploring different artists and ideas. Together they show how collections not only narrate the past, but also animate our relation to the present.

Curators: Anna Davis, Pedro de Almeida, Jane Devery, Anneke Jaspers, Keith Munro, Megan Robson, Manya Sellers, Lara Strongman

Adam Linder

Level 1, Macgregor Gallery

Australian-born Adam Linder is a compelling and acclaimed choreographer. Based between Los Angeles and Europe, he makes work for both the stage and the gallery – often taking their social, material and historical contexts as a starting point. Linder's new commission for the MCA will see multiple dancers perform all day, every day, for one month in the Museum. The work will focus on the museum as a space in which visitors increasingly perform for the camera, using art as a backdrop for their own image making. By bringing the fleeting nature of dance into dialogue with the duration of an exhibition, the work pushes the MCA's long history of presenting live art.

MCA Curator, Anneke Jaspers, MCA Public Engagement Manager, Susan Sheddan

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MCA WINTER SEASON



Zoe Leonard: *Al río / To the River*

Level 3

The first exhibition in Australia of the acclaimed American artist, Zoe Leonard's *Al río / To the River* is a large-scale photographic project depicting the Río Bravo/Rio Grande, a natural and political border between Mexico and the United States. Since 2016, Leonard has photographed the river's 2,000-kilometre journey through the border cities of Ciudad Juárez, Mexico and El Paso, Texas, and onto the Gulf of Mexico. Working across multiple photographic styles such as abstraction, documentary and surveillance imagery, Leonard frequently reveals the built infrastructure that control the movement of goods, people, and water. Comprising of over 500 images, Leonard's nuanced and complex portrait of the river reflects its broader role as a site of agriculture, commerce, culture, policing, and surveillance.

Curator Suzanne Cotter, Associate Curator Megan Robson

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MCA SPRING SEASON



Tarek Atoui: Waters' Witness

Level 1, Macgregor Gallery

Waters' Witness is the first solo exhibition in Australia of the Beirut-born, Paris based artist Tarek Atoui. Incorporating a major new installation, performances, and participatory works, the exhibition is based on the *I/E (Infinite Ears)* project, which the artist began in 2015. This growing archive of recordings from port cities around the world, including Athens, Abu Dhabi, Singapore, Beirut, Porto, Istanbul and Sydney, is reimagined for each presentation. Drawing on research made in collaboration with audio engineers and musicians Eric La Casa and Chris Watson, it documents the resonances and vibrations, underwater ecologies, and human activities of coastal cities with histories deeply intertwined with their harbours.

Curator, Anna Davis

Primavera 2023: Young Australian Artists

Level 1 South

Primavera is the MCA's annual exhibition of emerging artists living and working in Australia, aged 35 years and under. In its 32nd edition, *Primavera 2023: Young Australian Artists* will be curated by Sydney-based artist and curator Talia Smith. Currently the Gallery Curator at Granville Centre Art Gallery, Smith has worked across Australia and New Zealand, curating for Artspace Ideas Platform, Cement Fondu, the 2021 Ballarat Foto Biennale, and the 2022 Singapore International Photography Festival

Guest Curator, Talia Smith

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MCA SUMMER SEASON

Sydney International Art Series 2023/24

Level 3

Every summer, the Sydney International Art Series brings the world's most outstanding exhibitions to Sydney, Australia. Through this program, MCA has presented the work of major international artists including Doug Aitken, Cornelia Parker, Pipilotti Rist, Anish Kapoor, Yoko Ono, Grayson Perry, Tatsuo Miyajima and David Goldblatt.

The Sydney International Art Series is made possible by the collaboration of Destination NSW – the NSW Government's tourism and major events agency. Details of the 2023-2024 exhibition will be announced in 2023.

Details for C3West to be announced soon.

About the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia (MCA)

The Museum of Contemporary Art Australia (MCA) is Australia's leading contemporary art museum dedicated to exhibiting, collecting, and interpreting the work of living artists. The MCA is located on one of the world's most spectacular sites on the edge of Sydney Harbour at Tallawoladah, on the traditional lands of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation. The MCA's mission is to make contemporary art and ideas accessible to people of all ages and backgrounds through its Exhibitions, Collection and Audience Engagement programs. The Museum aims to reflect the diversity and evolving nature of contemporary art in Australia and in the world.