

MEDIA RELEASE: Wednesday 25 October 2023

## RISING SUN BREAKS THE NIGHT'S STILL DARKNESS

### Visual Arts at Perth Festival Multiple venue locations across Perth



*Linda Tegg, Adjacent Field, Milan, 2019, installation view, Courtesy of the artist*

Ideas of light and perception punctuate this year's **Visual Arts** program for **Perth Festival 2024** reflecting on the 2024 Festival's sun-inspired theme of Ngaangk.

Across galleries and site-specific projects, artists ask audiences to consider sustainability, growth and nourishment, and the tension between heat's creative and destructive power.

From an empty shopping arcade transformed into an otherworldly realm to intimate glass works illuminating a catastrophic global narrative, artists look outwards and deep within to bring challenging human stories into the direct light of day and acknowledge Ngaangk's effect on the natural environment.

Two major site-specific Festival commissions at **Carillon City** foreground these concerns. Collaborating directly with the sun, **Rebecca Baumann's Light Event** bathes audiences in iridescent light via the building's iconic central lightwell. While **Linda Tegg**, working with Noongar elder **Vivienne Hansen**, uses a living plant installation to turn Carillon's basement food court into an expansive wetland.

The entire program is free and accessible to all, spanning galleries across Perth and extending several weeks beyond the main Festival season with a range of free exhibitions, commissions, performances and other events.

**Sun Signals**, the first Australian exhibition of the work of iconic American video and performance artist **Joan Jonas**, features a selection of single-channel films and videos from 1968 to 1976 that

focus on the artist's early productions and explorations of time, space and self-representation. Polish artist and filmmaker **Agnieszka Polska**'s animated video ***The New Sun*** features the character of the Sun, a child-faced star with a beautiful voice, who presents to its human lover a vision of a collapsing world.

Eclipses are the inspiration for two works – American artist **A.K. Burns' *Untitled (eclipse)*** is a subtle and atmospheric silent 16mm film of a total solar eclipse in Nebraska and **Andrew Nicholls' *Portent***, which plays with the idea of eclipses as bad omens in diverse cultures throughout history.

***Jintulu (People of the Sun)*** is an exhibition by Martu artist **Curtis Taylor** in collaboration with Persian South African artist **Natalie Scholtz** and Walmajarri artist **Terry Murray** that presents a powerful exploration of colonialism, race relations and Indigenous storytelling in both Australia and South Africa.

First Nations perspectives and knowledge is a focus of the group exhibition ***Polarity: Fire & Ice*** at **Fremantle Arts Centre**. Through the immersive film and photographic works of artists living in Australia, Canada and the Arctic, the exhibition considers the climate catastrophe and possible solutions founded in care for land and waters.

Two exhibitions at **John Curtin Gallery**, ***Kinara pulka irnyani palyanu. Tjintungku kampara utinu. The big moon shone brightly and made. The sun burnt through and brought it out*** by **Robert Fielding** and **Susan Flavell's *The Horn of the Moon, 13 Goddesses and their consorts (there are no museums at the end of the world)***, explore the artists' deep connection to place and the need to protect our environment. Their practice of taking discarded material to make hybrid creations reminds us that we disregard country, nature and spirit at our own peril.

Connection to place is also important in **Yhonnie Scarce's** exhibition ***The Light of Day*** at the ART Gallery of WA. Through her stunning glass works the artists tells of her personal connection to the impact of nuclear testing in Woomera, and more broadly the impacts of indentured labour and scientific experimentation on First Nations people in Australia and around the globe. **Amy Perejuan-Capone's *Defendo*** also draws on very personal history, with the artist here paying tribute to her late grandfather's legacy and exploring a chance discovery about his hidden heritage.

In Noongar culture Ngaangk is not only sun but also mother. **Helen Johnson** draws on this theme in her exhibition ***Follow, Leader*** a series of figurative paintings shaped by the artist's experiences of motherhood.

In 2024, DADAA joins with three Japanese arts and disability organisations to reframe our understanding of disability arts and culture with ***A Rising in the East. Tom Blake's thoughts are metallic they melt in saltwater*** approaches the gallery space at **Goolugatup Heathcote** as if it were a flowing coastal stream, exploring ideas of time, disintegration and reflection. Influential Thai artist **Rirkrit Tiravanija** brings art into the streets with ***do we dream under the same sky***, a series of poetic observations that will appear across public spaces throughout the Festival.

**Perth Festival Visual Arts Curator Annika Kristensen** says:

‘Giver of life and light, Ngaangk is the ultimate creator – rising, surely, each morning at dawn to break the still darkness of night.

Ideas of light and perception, so critical to the experience of the visual arts, punctuate the 2024 program, across a series of exhibitions and projects that encourage consideration of related themes of sustainability, growth and nourishment, and the tension between heat as both a creative and destructive force.

Free for all, and occupying city streets, an empty shopping arcade and several much-loved gallery spaces across Perth, this year’s program offers audiences many rich opportunities to engage with these illuminating ideas and to discover the diverse, inspiring and surprising practices of local, nation and international artists.’

**Wesfarmers Arts Manager Helen Carroll** says: ‘As Ngaangk the sun generates life and paints dazzling vistas and evocative shadows across the world, our artists stimulate our own imaginations with the radiant force of their vision.

Wesfarmers Arts is proud to support another exciting Visual Arts program for Perth Festival 2024. We are delighted to be involved with artists who activate our inner lives in the most exciting ways and help us better connect with and reflect upon our outer world and all those we share it with.’

Also connecting Western Australians in new and exciting ways will be our **Festival Connect** program of arts sector support, creative learning and community engagement opportunities through the **Visual Arts Program** and other Festival activities. Visit our [website](#) to get involved in visual arts experiences through our partner venues.

**VISUAL ARTS PROGRAM**

**REBECCA BAUMANN: LIGHT EVENT**

Carillon City  
Fri 9 Feb – Sun 3 Mar

**LINDA TEGG WITH VIVIENNE HANSEN: WETLAND**

Carillon City  
Fri 9 Feb – Sun 3 Mar

**YHONNIE SCARCE: THE LIGHT OF DAY**

Art Gallery of Western Australia  
Fri 9 Feb – Sun 19 May

**JOAN JONAS: SUN SIGNALS**

Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts  
Fri 9 Feb – Sun 31 Mar



**HELEN JOHNSON: FOLLOWER, LEADER**

Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts  
Fri 9 Feb – Sun 31 Mar

**A.K. BURNS: UNTITLED (ECLIPSE)**

Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts  
Fri 9 Feb – Sun 31 Mar

**ROBERT FIELDING: KINARA MUNU TJINTU (MOON AND SUN)**

John Curtin Gallery  
Fri 9 Feb – Sun 14 Apr

**SUSAN FLAVELL: THE HORN OF THE MOON**

John Curtin Gallery  
Fri 9 Feb – Sun 14 Apr

**TIM GEORGESON, MAUREEN GRUBEN, DR CASS LYNCH, MEI SWAN LIM, ADAM SÉBIRE,  
INDIGENOUS DESERT ALLIANCE: POLARITY: FIRE & ICE**

Fremantle Arts Centre  
Sat 10 Feb – Sun 28 Apr

**CURTIS TAYLOR WITH TERRY MURRAY & NATALIE SCHOLTZ: JINTULU (PEOPLE OF THE SUN)**

Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery  
Sat 17 Feb – Sat 27 Apr

**A RISING IN THE EAST**

DADAA  
Sat 10 Feb – Mon 22 Apr

**AMY PEREJUAN CAPONE: DEFENDO**

Atrium Gallery, Old Customs House  
Sun 11 Feb – Sun 10 Mar

**TOM BLAKE: THOUGHTS ARE METALLIC THEY MELT IN SALTWATER**

Goolugatup Heathcote  
Sat 17 Feb – Sun 7 Apr

**AGNIESZKA POLSKA: THE NEW SUN**

Lawson Gallery  
Sat 10 Feb – Sat 9 Mar

**RIRKRIT TIRAVANIJA**

Various locations

Fri 9 Feb – Sun 3 Mar

**ANDREW NICHOLLS WITH AD LIB COLLECTIVE**

Holmes à Court Gallery

Sat 10 Feb – Sat 16 Mar

Supported by Visual Arts Program Partner



**Wesfarmers Arts**

FESTIVAL INFO: [perthfestival.com.au](https://perthfestival.com.au)

Click [HERE](#) for media kits and images.

For further information, interviews or images please contact:

**Stephen Bevis**

+61 448 927 281

[sbevis@perthfestival.com.au](mailto:sbevis@perthfestival.com.au)

**Verena Mornhinweg**

+61 484 743 233

[vmornhinweg@perthfestival.com.au](mailto:vmornhinweg@perthfestival.com.au)

*Perth Festival acknowledges the Noongar people who continue to practise their values, language, beliefs, and knowledge on their kwobidak boodjar.*

*They remain the spiritual and cultural birdiyangara of this place and we honour and respect their caretakers and custodians and the vital role Noongar people play for our community and our Festival to flourish.*

**Perth Festival**

*Founded in 1953 by The University of Western Australia, Perth Festival is the longest running international arts festival in Australia and Western Australia's premier cultural event. The Festival has developed a worldwide reputation for excellence in its international program, the presentation of new works and the highest quality artistic experiences for its audience. For 70 years, the Festival has welcomed to Perth some of the world's greatest living artists and now connects with hundreds of thousands of people each year.*

*Iain Grandage is the Artistic Director 2020 – 24.*