

# Media Release

**The Hon Danny Pearson MP**  
Assistant Treasurer  
Minister for Regulatory Reform  
Minister for Government Services  
Minister for Creative Industries



Tuesday, 24 May 2022

## ICONIC FIRST PEOPLES ART HITS THE TRACKS FOR RISING

The Andrews Labor Government is celebrating First Peoples artists by turning Melbourne trams into travelling canvases, providing inspiring and accessible art for all Victorians.

Backed by the Labor Government and presented by RISING festival – this year’s Melbourne Art Tram initiative will see the festival’s theme “Unapologetically Blak” come to life across six trams, with works from celebrated First Peoples artists past and present.

Minister for Creative Industries Danny Pearson, Minister for Transport Ben Carroll, participating artists and the RISING team visited the first stop for tram routes 48 and 75 in East Melbourne today to welcome the first tram to hit the tracks.

Featuring the work of trailblazing Yorta Yorta activist and artist, the late Lin Onus, the tram is a reimaging of Onus’s 1991 tram artwork. The RISING curatorial team has reinstalled the tram artwork under the guidance of the artist’s son, Tiriki Onus.

The tram is adorned with black and white cockatoos and First Peoples cultural markings referencing Country. Lin Onus, who sadly passed away in 1996, made a significant impact on First Peoples art and culture in Australia.

Curated by artist Jarra Karalinar Steel (Boonwurrung/Wemba Wemba), the artists in the 2022 program include Louise Moore (Wamba), Patricia Mckean (Gunditjmara/Kirrae Wurrong), Dr Paola Balla (Wemba-Wemba/Gunditjmara), Tegan Murdock (Burapa) and Darcy McConnell / Enoki (Yorta Yorta/Dja Dja Wurrung).

The art trams will ride Melbourne’s network for 12 months and travellers will be able to learn more about the works and artists on route via QR codes.

The RISING First Peoples Melbourne Art Trams are proudly supported by the Labor Government through Creative Victoria, Public Transport Victoria and Yarra Trams.

For more information on the artworks, artists and tram routes, visit [rising.melbourne](https://rising.melbourne).

### Quote attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Danny Pearson

*“Melbourne’s trams are an instantly recognisable global icon, making them a fitting canvas for the First Peoples artworks with stunning designs from contemporary artists for everyone to enjoy.”*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Transport Ben Carroll

*“I look forward to seeing these works of art travelling across the tram network, adding to our city’s vibrant culture while sharing the stories and expressions of First Peoples artists.”*

### Quote attributable to RISING Melbourne Art Trams curator Jarra Karalinar Steel

*“Showcasing First Peoples artists and creatives who challenge preconceptions of Aboriginal Art, is something I’m deeply passionate about. That’s why curating RISING’s First Peoples Melbourne Art Trams is such an honour.”*

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