

Media Release

The Hon Colin Brooks MP

Minister for Industry and Advanced Manufacturing

Minister for Creative Industries



Friday, 21 February 2025

CELEBRATING FIRST NATIONS ARTISTS AT MELBOURNE ART FAIR

A major new exhibition has opened – backed by the Allan Labor Government – showcasing Victorian First Nations artists from across the state.

Minister for Creative Industries Colin Brooks attended the 2025 Melbourne Art Fair to see the Victorian First Peoples Art and Design Fair Showcase Exhibition, which celebrates the rich cultural and creative diversity of Victorian First Nations artists.

Co-curated by Creative Victoria's Janina Harding (Meriam Mir) and Dr Jessica Clark (palawa/pallawah), the exhibition features work from 37 artists across more than 20 language groups – highlighting the breadth of the creative and cultural practice of our First Nations artists.

Presented at the prestigious Melbourne Art Fair, which attracts contemporary art buyers, collectors and galleries from across the country and around the world, the Victorian First Peoples Art and Design Fair Showcase Exhibition is an important commercial platform for the artists, with all works available for purchase then and there.

A public program of daily tours, artist talks, weaving workshops and panel discussions is being presented alongside the exhibition, giving art lovers the opportunity to hear directly from artists on a whole range of topics.

A key focus of the Labor Government's *Creative State 2025* strategy, the Victorian First Peoples Art and Design Fair is being driven by the First Peoples Directions Circle – a group of esteemed First Peoples creative leaders.

Access to the Victorian First Peoples Art and Design Fair Showcase Exhibition and public program is included in tickets to the Melbourne Art Fair. To learn more about the artists on show, visit melbourneartfair.com.au.

Quote attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Colin Brooks

"We're proud to back this exhibition and support the careers of talented and diverse First Nations artists – this exhibition is helping grow the market for their work in Victoria, across the country and overseas."

Quote attributable to Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Natalie Hutchins

"This exhibition is an incredible showcase of the work dozens of First nations artists and is an important event to value First Peoples culture and experiences"

Quote attributable to Chair of the First Peoples Directions Circle Dr Vicki Couzens

"The 2025 Victorian First Peoples Art and Design Fair celebrates First Peoples artists and designers from across the state – and it's the first time we've had a showcase survey of artworks in the one space. We're excited to see this important initiative make its debut at Melbourne Art Fair, and for it to grow in years to come."

Quote attributable to Victorian First Peoples Art and Design Fair leads Janina Harding and Dr Jessica Clark

"We worked closely with twenty incredibly talented independent First Peoples artists and four arts centres whose artwork is culturally distinctive to Victoria and we're so excited to deliver for the first time ever a dedicated First Peoples showcase exhibition at the Melbourne Art Fair."

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