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CITY OF MORETON BAY GALLERIES HIGHLY COMMENDED RECIPIENT 2026 GALLERY AND MUSEUM ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Museums & Galleries Queensland (M&G QLD) was delighted to announce **City of Moreton Bay Galleries** as a Highly Commended recipient in the **Projects: Organisations With 7+ FTE Paid Staff** category, for its **Fresh Eyes 2025** initiative at the **2026 Gallery and Museum Achievement Awards (GAMAA)**, proudly hosted by **Ipswich Art Gallery** on Thursday 8 October.

Now in their twenty-second year, the GAMAA are Queensland's premier awards program for the museum and gallery sector, recognising excellence, innovation and leadership across the State. Special guest, **Ipswich City Council Mayor Teresa Harding**, congratulated this year's recipients and presented winners with individually crafted trophies by acclaimed Queensland glass artist **Jarred Wright**.

City of Moreton Bay Galleries has been recognised as a Highly Commended recipient for *Fresh Eyes 2025*, an innovative initiative that reimaged the City's biennial exhibition model by combining a major contemporary art exhibition with a seven-month professional development program for emerging and mid-career artists.

The project supported Moreton Bay artists Rachel Bywaters, Zartisha Davis, Amanda Ivy Gardner and Emily McGuire through a structured program of workshops, mentoring and curatorial guidance delivered by respected industry professionals, including Judy Watson, Kellie O'Dempsey and Joe Furlonger. Through this process, the artists developed ambitious new works exploring connections to place, landscape and local histories, creating a compelling reflection of one of Queensland's fastest-growing regions.

The resulting exhibition provided a powerful cultural record of the changing Moreton Bay region, including important First Nations perspectives. Demonstrating strong sector leadership, *Fresh Eyes 2025* strengthened artistic practice, expanded professional opportunities for participating artists and delivered lasting benefits for both local communities and audiences.

Museums & Galleries Queensland Executive Director, Rebekah Butler, said "*Fresh Eyes 2025* is an outstanding example of how investment in artists can create meaningful cultural outcomes for communities. By combining exhibition-making with professional development, mentoring and curatorial support, City of Moreton Bay Galleries has developed a model that not

only showcases artistic excellence but also strengthens creative careers and builds capacity within the sector. We congratulate the City of Moreton Bay and the participating artists on this well-deserved recognition.”

This year's awards attracted nominations from across the state, recognising excellence in exhibitions, public programs, collections management, First Nations and community engagement, leadership, innovation and volunteer contributions.

M&G QLD congratulates each of this year's winners, highly commended recipients and finalists. Their achievements exemplify the passion, creativity and commitment that continue to enrich Queensland's cultural landscape and inspire excellence across the sector.

ABOUT MUSEUMS & GALLERIES QUEENSLAND

Museums & Galleries Queensland (M&G QLD) is the peak professional industry body for the public museum and gallery sector in Queensland.

Our purpose is to inspire and support excellence in Queensland museums, galleries and keeping places, fostering innovation, connection and cultural leadership.

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2026 GAMAA SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS

The 2026 GAMAA are proudly supported by the **Ipswich Art Gallery** and sponsored by **Public Galleries Queensland** and **Australian Museums and Galleries Association Queensland**.

The 2026 GAMAA trophies are generously supported by **Brian Tucker**.

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