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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 **First Nations: Open** category for its **Blak Creatives Exchange 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 is recognised as a Highly Commended recipient for *Blak Creatives Exchange*, an innovative professional development initiative that places First Nations leadership at the centre of exhibition development and storytelling.

Created through a partnership between Munimba-ja's Blak Creatives Program and City of Moreton Bay Galleries, the program moved beyond consultation to a model of shared vision and leadership. Five emerging First Nations artists were empowered to curate, design and deliver an exhibition using works from the City of Moreton Bay Art Collection, gaining hands-on experience across the full exhibition lifecycle while building professional skills, confidence and industry networks.

The resulting exhibition, *Living Archive: Blak Resistance and Joy*, showcased the strength of culturally responsive, First Nations-led collaboration, creating meaningful outcomes for participating artists while influencing how stories are told within cultural organisations. The project demonstrated the lasting value of investing in First Nations leadership, knowledge and creative practice.

Museums & Galleries Queensland Executive Director, Rebekah Butler, congratulated Munimba-ja's Blak Creatives Program and City of Moreton Bay Galleries, saying, "The *Blak Creatives Exchange* demonstrates the value of placing First Nations voices, knowledge and decision-making at the centre of cultural practice. Through a genuine commitment to collaboration and shared leadership, this program is enriching cultural organisations,

strengthening creative practice and influencing how collections and stories are interpreted and shared. This recognition celebrates an initiative that is creating meaningful and lasting impact.”

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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