

10/09/2025

Griffith University Art Museum Finalist at State Awards

The Winners, Highly Commended and Finalists of the **2025 Gallery and Museum Achievement Awards** (GAMAA) were proudly announced by Museums & Galleries Queensland (M&G QLD) on Tuesday 9 September, at a special awards presentation hosted by Museum of Brisbane. Special guest, **Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP, Minister for Education and the Arts**, congratulated this year's recipients and presented the winners with individually crafted trophies by artists Vanessa Cannon, Laurence Gibson, Gregory Salt, and Lorna Shuan, from the Yalanji Arts Collective, Kuku Yalanji Country, Mossman Gorge, Far North Queensland.

Griffith University Art Museum was recognised as a **Finalist** in the category of **Projects: Organisations with 1-6 FTE Paid Staff** for its exhibition ***Yuriyal Bridgeman: yubilong(mi)bilongyu***

Griffith University Art Museum is recognised for its outstanding exhibition *Yuriyal Bridgeman: yubilong(mi)bilongyu*. Showcasing the exceptional works of Queensland College of Art alum, Yuriyal Bridgeman, this project marked the artist's first solo exhibition, presented alongside an extensive survey of his artistic practice, including painting, photography, video, sculpture, and installation.

A striking mural, created in collaboration with Queensland College of Art and Design students, welcomed visitors, setting the stage for Bridgeman's poignant exploration of ethnographic representation, queer identity, masculinity and community through his photographic and video works. His ongoing series of 'Shield Paintings,' inspired by the traditions of the Yuri Alaiku men's practices in the Simbu Province, further connected with audiences through personal stories of friends, family and cultural heritage.

Public programming enriched the exhibition, with artist talks, workshops, and community events, aimed at engaging Brisbane's Papua New Guinean population, including members of Griffith University's Papua New Guinean Student Society.

Co-curated by GUAM Director Angela Goddard and Bouganville Elder Aunty Sana Balai, the exhibition fostered cross-cultural learning, with bilingual signage and translated texts enhancing accessibility.

Strategically timed to coincide with the Asia Pacific Triennial at QAGOMA, the exhibition also introduced Bridgeman's work to new audiences.

Despite budget constraints, the exhibition surpassed expectations for visitor engagement and provided valuable professional development and training opportunities for the Museum's staff, student interns and volunteers. Following its success, plans are underway for the exhibition to tour to venues in Townsville, New Zealand, Jakarta, and Singapore, expanding Bridgeman's influence across the Asia-Pacific region.

In recognising Griffith University Art Museum as a Finalist in this category, the 2025 GAMAA judging panel praised the Museum's initiative, leadership and commitment to delivering this large-scale, complex, yet incredibly impactful and rewarding project. The panel further commended the Museum's role in fostering cross-cultural collaboration and learning, highlighting intercultural dialogue and respectful reinterpretation.

Museums & Galleries Queensland (M&G QLD) Executive Director, Rebekah Butler, said, "Griffith University Art Museum's recognition as a Finalist reflects the incredible dedication of its team and their unwavering commitment to showcasing powerful, thought-provoking art. This exhibition not only celebrated the talent of Yuriyal Bridgeman, but also brought together diverse communities, fostering meaningful dialogue and connection. We extend our congratulations to everyone involved in delivering such a significant and inspiring project."

Ms Butler continued, "This year, we undertook a comprehensive review of the award categories and introduced several new ones, which led to an unexpectedly high number of nominations. This response is a testament to the remarkable work being done by museums and galleries of all sizes throughout Queensland. It is a privilege to shine a spotlight on the achievements of so many deserving individuals and organisations."

Minister for the Arts, John-Paul Langbroek, said, "Queensland has more than 400 museums and galleries, all of which play an important role in sharing our stories, activating and connecting communities and attracting visitors to our regions."

"Congratulations to everyone who has taken part in this year's Gallery and Museum Achievement Awards, which celebrate individuals and organisations who support community and visitor engagement with arts and cultural experiences."

"The Crisafulli Government is proud to invest in Museums & Galleries Queensland through the Organisations Fund 2026-29, which supports delivery of our 10-year arts and culture strategy, *Queensland's Time to Shine* and its vision for a thriving creative sector supporting a statewide vibrant arts scene."

Now in its twenty-first year, the GAMAA were established by Museums & Galleries Queensland (M&G QLD) to honour the achievements of our State's individuals and organisations in striving towards excellence.

The 2025 GAMAA are proudly supported by the **Museum of Brisbane** and sponsored by **Public Galleries Queensland** and **Australian Museums and Galleries Association Queensland**.

The 2025 GAMAA trophies are generously supported by **Brian Tucker**.

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**For media enquiries and images, please contact:
Rebekah Butler, Executive Director, M&G QLD**



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Museums & Galleries Queensland

Phone: **07 3059 9740** Freecall: **1800 866 101** Mobile: **0422 579 180**

Email: **rebekah.butler@magsq.com.au** Website: **www.magsq.com.au**

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