

10/09/2025

## **Ipswich Art Gallery 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.

**Ipswich Art Gallery** was announced as a **Finalist** in the category of **Projects: Organisations with 7+ FTE Paid Staff** for its powerful exhibition, ***Arriving Slowly: Exploring the Abstract***.

Curated in response to works by Mark Rothko and Agnes Martin, two greats of the American Abstract Art movement, on loan from the National Gallery of Australia through the *Sharing the National Collection* program, this ambitious project invited audiences to engage deeply with abstraction—a genre which can be seen as challenging.

To their credit, the Gallery cleverly curated a dialogue between 20 contemporary Australian artists and the iconic works of Mark Rothko and Agnes Martin.

The exhibition featured 22 works, including commissions and pieces from the Gallery's own collection, and was supported by innovative programming such as weekly Slow Looking tours and a sound performance. These initiatives encouraged visitors to slow down, reflect, and form personal connections with the displayed artworks.

*Arriving Slowly* marked a strategic shift in the Gallery's traditionally family-focused summer programming by targeting adult audiences. The result was a resounding success, with nearly 14,000 visitors attending — 45% from outside the Ipswich LGA. The exhibition reversed the usual demographic ratio, proving a strong appetite for adult-oriented cultural experiences.

The project also upskilled staff and embedded new audience engagement practices, with Slow Looking tours now a regular feature. *Arriving Slowly* demonstrated the Gallery's curatorial excellence, community impact, and leadership in accessible, meaningful art experiences.

The judges applauded Ipswich Art Gallery's bold leadership, planning and resource management in delivering a powerful initiative that has redefined visitor expectations and behaviours.

**Museums & Galleries Queensland (M&G QLD) Executive Director, Rebekah Butler**, said "A landmark show for the region, we congratulate Ipswich Art Gallery for their efforts in presenting an exhibition that not only marked a successful strategic shift for the organisation but also altered the way visitors interact with the Gallery and artworks on display."

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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