

10/09/2025

Abbey Museum of Art & Archaeology Winner 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.

The **Abbey Museum of Art & Archaeology** was announced as the **Winner** in the category of **Sustainable Practices (Open)** for their transformative **Abbey Museum Art Gallery & Café Extension Project**.

This project saw the Abbey Museum complete its building extension, comprising a new Art Gallery, Reception Area, Café and Shop, delivering much-needed exhibition space, inclusive access and enhanced amenities for visitors.

Standing at the entrance of the building is *Acknowledgement to Kabi Kabi Country* by Kabi Kabi traditional custodian and artist, Lyndon Davis. This specially commissioned sculpture was unveiled on 28 February 2025, honouring First Nations heritage and the traditional lands upon which the Museum stands. Over 1,800 school students have started their museum visit at the *Acknowledgement to Kabi Kabi Country* sculpture, increasing awareness and respect for First Nations culture and custodianship of Country.

The inaugural exhibition, *Inspired Images: The Art of Faiths*, opened by Hon Andrew Powell MP, showcases the Museum's internationally significant collection. Here, Renaissance and Baroque art are thoughtfully displayed alongside Aboriginal spirit figures and other sacred works from diverse cultures and faiths, curated to foster intercultural understanding. Audiovisuals and interactives are integrated in the exhibition to deepen audience engagement.

The accompanying catalogue, launched by Philip Bacon AO, and supported by the Gordon Darling Foundation, features scholarly essays by Michael Strong and Julia Jackson, contextualising the 61 artworks displayed across the exhibition's eight themes.

The Abbey Museum's outstanding achievements were made possible through the vision and determination of their Board's Art Gallery Sub Committee, effective strategic planning, collaboration with industry experts—many of whom contributed their time pro bono—and successful funding acquisition, including \$1.7M from the State Government and support from the

Federal Government, Creative Australia, Copland Foundation, Moreton Bay Regional Council and others.

The 2025 GAMAA judging panel applauded the Abbey Museum for its outstanding achievement, commending the Abbey Museum's efforts in delivering on the organisation's ambitious 2021-2024 Strategic Plan key priorities.

Museums & Galleries Queensland (M&G QLD) Executive Director, Rebekah Butler, said, "Several years in the making, this inspiring project exemplifies innovation, inclusivity, and cultural stewardship, and it is a credit to the Abbey Museum of Art & Archaeology's staff, volunteers and supporters."

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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