

AMANDA BENNETTS

born 1986, Walyalup/Fremantle

lives and works on Kabi Kabi Country/Sunshine Coast

***Axis Mundi* 2026**

45RU data racks, steel, aluminium, data cable, stainless steel handrails and bench, network switches, cooling fans, raspberry Pi's, 8 screens with frosted acrylic, found footage, video and sound, single-cup headphones

Data rack tower: 550.0 x 80.0 x 100.0 cm

Data rack seat: 100.0 x 210.0 x 80.0 cm

Overall dimensions variable

Sound: Joseph Burgess (Unregistered Master Builder)

Supported by Sunshine Coast Council, through MadeSC and the Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF), and Noosa Council, through RADF – a partnership between the Queensland Government and local councils

Commissioned by the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, ACCA, Naarm/Melbourne
Courtesy the artist

Amanda Bennetts' looming sculptural installation *Axis Mundi* 2026 takes its title from a Latin term, which the Romanian historian and philosopher Mircea Eliade co-opted in the late-1950s for his mythological concept of a sacred centre – a channel linking heaven and earth. Wrought from data racks and cabling, Bennetts' tower stands as a contemporary altar to the pervasive powers of data centres, where we may reckon with the capacity for algorithms and AI to guide us through processes akin to divination.

Bennetts' practice is grounded in her lived experience of a body in flux, shaped by chronic illness and disability. She often incorporates video, sound, and everyday objects to explore how illness, health, and wellness are influenced by culture, technology, and infrastructure. *Axis Mundi* draws our attention to our growing faith in the algorithm's ability to foretell our bodily futures. The data rack tower is embedded with found footage showing images of descent at the top of the stack and ascent at its base. A single-cup headphones fastened to the data rack chair play Bennetts' digital double, an AI voice offering a sermon-like benediction. Through the collision of sacred cosmology, technological power and fascist monumentalism, *Axis Mundi* exposes the hidden systems behind our faith in data, questioning whether the algorithm can ever truly know the body it claims to read.



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EJ SON

born 1995, South Korea

lives and works on Gadigal Country, Warrane/Sydney

***Eggverse* 2026**

circular wooden display, bisque fired ceramics, found objects, CCTV cameras and monitors, lights, curtain on rack
dimensions variable

Commissioned by the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, ACCA, Naarm/Melbourne
Courtesy the artist

EJ Son's abundant assemblage *Eggverse* 2026 is at once obsessive, devotional, erotic, comic and mundane. Arranged in loose groupings and playful vignettes, found objects and vessels coax interpretation while remaining open to endless reconfiguration. Some scenes are staged between objects nestled together on a circular plinth, while others turn the gaze upward as forms cascade, float or drape. *Eggverse* suggests the tantalising promise of something yet to emerge, with anticipation and potential amplified by a dramatic curtain and CCTV cameras poised in wait.

The work brings together some recurring motifs in Son's practice, including found and mass-produced objects, curtains and stages, eggs, and unglazed ceramic vessels. The porous, unfinished surfaces of the vessels offer a symbol for identity formation; a self not yet fixed by the social conventions of gender, race, class and sexuality. Meanwhile, the repeated egg inevitably plays into tendencies to project meaning; suggesting fertility, reproduction, existential meaning, gender roles and genetic engineering, alongside more comic associations. Like the circular logic of the chicken-and-egg puzzle, *Eggverse* loops between a desire for liberation and an awareness of cultural conditioning. Son pushes at the boundaries of social norms and conventions in an effort to create space for the birth of something truly new.



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NAVEED FARRO

born 1993, Gimuy/Cairns

lives and works on Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country, Naarm/Melbourne

opposite, left:

***No More Kings* 2026**

from *The Palace* series 2025–2026

Naveed Farro (Director, Editor, Production Designer)

Dariusht Yusefzadeh (Cinematographer, Narrator)

Mitchell Pollard (Production Designer)

Ryan Granger (Sound Mastering)

Katayoun Javan (Farsi Translator)

single channel film, black and white, sound

10:44 mins

Special thanks to Daryoosh Karimi, Farhad Bandesh and Marcus Chong

Commissioned by the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, ACCA, Naarm/Melbourne

Courtesy the artist

No More Kings 2026 is a new film by Naveed Farro, and the most recent development in his iterative work *The Palace* 2025–2026. Farro is a second generation Iranian-Australian who has not yet been able to return to his ancestral homeland, and his practice is driven by an interest in how heritage, memory and cultural belonging can be mediated through immersive sculptural installations.

The film continues Farro's collaboration with archaeologist and photographer Dariusht Yusefzadeh, who is based between Tehran and Naarm/Melbourne. Through their long-distance dialogue, Farro has remotely accessed artefacts near Persepolis in Iran, where the documentary was filmed. *No More Kings* delves into the complex history of French archaeologist and explorer Jane Dieulafoy (1851–1916), including her notorious destruction of a stone-carved bull at Susa, built concurrently with Persepolis. The film considers the implications of this history within current experiences of navigating collecting institutions, displacement and cultural memory. Farro's installation for *NEW26* incorporates film, photography, 3D-printed facsimiles and reconstructed friezes based on Iranian artefacts.



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NAVEED FARRO

born 1993, Gimuy/Cairns

lives and works on Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country, Naarm/Melbourne

opposite:

***Apadana Palace Rubble* 2025**

from *The Palace* series 2025–2026

based on 3D model by Roozbeh Saadati

plaster, plastic, acrylic paint, mirror, MDF

330.0 x 330.0 cm

Special thanks from the artist to Sam Rowe as the design assistant, Mitchell Ransome and Mitchell Pollard for fabrication support, and Ed Turner and Vito from the MADA DFAB team.

opposite, right:

***Persepolis Wall - Buffed* 2025**

from *The Palace* series 2025–2026

plaster, XPS foam, acrylic paint

320.0 x 20.0 cm

The Palace 2025–2026 is supported by Creative Victoria and Creative Australia
All works courtesy the artist

DARIUSH YUSEFZADEH

born 1979, Tehran, Iran
lives and works in lives and works in Tehran, Iran and
on Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country, Naarm/Melbourne

left to right:

***Annual Life Renewal* 2025**

from *The Palace* series 2025–2026
Naqsh-e Rostam archaeological dig site - 29.9890° N, 52.8745° E
Archival Pigment Print
103.0 cm x 83.0 cm (framed)

***Bull Column fragments from the Apadana Palace* 2025**

from *The Palace* series 2025–2026
Naqsh-e Rostam archaeological dig site - 29.9890° N, 52.8745° E
Archival Pigment Print
103.0 cm x 83.0 cm (framed)

***Investiture of Ardashir I, Before Dawn* 2025**

from *The Palace* series 2025–2026
Naqsh-e Rostam archaeological dig site - 29.9890° N, 52.8745° E
Archival Pigment Print
103.0 cm x 83.0 cm (framed)

The Palace 2025–2026 is supported by Creative Victoria and Creative Australia
All works courtesy the artist

NICHOLAS CURRIE

born 2001, Naarm/Melbourne

lives and works on Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country, Naarm/Melbourne

opposite, left to right:

I wonder if it's all gammin. 2026

oil on canvas

250.0 x 150.0 cm

witchway 2026

oil on canvas

250.0 x 150.0 cm

(P)oxymoron 2026

oil on canvas with applied objects

250.0 x 150.0 cm

big X 2026

oil on canvas with applied objects

250.0 x 150.0 cm

self again 2026

oil on canvas

250.0 x 150.0 cm

All works commissioned by the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, ACCA, Naarm/Melbourne

All works courtesy the artist and Daine Singer Gallery, Naarm/Melbourne

A member of the Mununjali clan of the Yugambah language group, with connections to Kuku Yalanji, Nicholas Currie's new series of large-scale paintings bring together Blak humour, personal anecdotes and art historical references in his distinctive loose and intuitive style. His works draw on a recurring vocabulary of personal motifs: intersecting arrows lifted from his father's doodles, as well as suggestive of Indigenous understandings of time as non-linear; inflatable crocodiles referencing his family totem; and a cartoon ghost evoking a nation haunted by colonial violence.

Within this apparent casualness is a sophisticated engagement with the histories of painting. Currie deftly reworks conventions associated with canonised Western painters – Phillip Guston's treatment of feet appears in *self again* 2026, and Mark Rothko's luminous colour fields can be seen in *(P)oxymoron* 2026. Perhaps the most profound citations are from formative Aboriginal artistic predecessors, notably Gordon Bennett, Gordon Hookey and Destiny Deacon. In *big X* 2026, for example, a linear perspective diagram emerges beneath the gestural surface. A signature motif of Bennett's practice, it becomes a reminder of how Western systems of knowledge have historically confined Indigenous experience. Currie takes cues from these formidable progenitors – conflating high and low cultural materials, co-opting borrowed motifs from a wide field and recasting them to create a new language that can speak of contemporary Aboriginal subjectivity.



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NICHOLAS CURRIE

born 2001, Naarm/Melbourne

lives and works on Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country, Naarm/Melbourne

time and patience. 2026

bitumen on canvas

205.0 x 502.0 cm

Commissioned by the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, ACCA, Naarm/Melbourne
Courtesy the artist and Daine Singer Gallery, Naarm/Melbourne

time and patience. 2026 is a supersized spiderweb rendered in bitumen, capturing the myriad of knowledge systems, experiences, symbols and conventions that converge within the artists’ personal and cultural identity. Drawing on the discernment of artists before him, Nicholas Currie brings together ‘high’ and ‘low’ artistic references, borrowed motifs, and personal symbols to create a visual language for his experience as an Aboriginal man navigating city life.

At once suggestive of connection and entrapment, the web’s intersecting lines evoke First Nations understandings of time as multidirectional and ongoing, as well as alluding to the sprawling network of bitumen roads that has encroached upon Country since settler arrival. The bitumen holds personal meaning for Currie, as a number of his Indigenous forefathers were forced to undertake gruelling work on the construction of roads in far-north Queensland.



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AMANDA BELL

born 1965, Whadjuk Country, Boorloo/Perth
lives and works between Wardandi Country, Goomburrup/Bunbury and
Wadandi Noongar Boodja Country, Undalup/Busselton

***Feel it all. Then let it go.* 2026**

single channel video with sound

10:55 mins

Videography and Editing: Ben Yew

Special thanks to Lee Kinsella Bev Thomson and Ben Yew for their supply of footage

Commissioned by the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, ACCA, Naarm/Melbourne
Courtesy the artist

Badimia Yamatji and Yued Noongar woman Amanda Bell poetically foregrounds cultural rupture and displacement in her major moving image installation, *Feel it all. Then let it go.* 2026. Bell asks how it might be possible to create something new beyond an inherited colonial framework that continues to shape dominant languages, histories and systems of value. Her response is to work through embodied and poetic vocabularies.

Grounded in Country and the histories it holds, the work moves through footage filmed on Wardandi Boodja Country, in the area now known as Tuart Forest, alongside family slides, archival imagery and sound bites, including a speech by Australian painter and cultural ambassador Elizabeth Durack (1915–2000). Jerky pacing and abrupt transitions evoke the cognitive and emotional dissonance of living in a country that represses its histories of violent dispossession. The Tuart Forest, for example, is promoted as a site for leisure, while holding deep spiritual significance for Noongar/Nyoongar peoples, and the history of massacres during the Frontier Wars.

Moving from saturation to a small point of light, *Feel it all. Then let it go.* registers overwhelming grief and the fraught work of reclaiming lost language and culture, while opening a space from which something new might emerge.



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I saw a yoowintj, a white owl. It flew in front of me. I saw this white owl and followed it as it tried to fly, skimming the ground, desperate to gain the momentum to go higher. I saw this white owl and it was being chased by a mob of wardong. They left it on the lower branches of a small peppermint tree. It was sitting on that tree, scared.

But then I don't know if it really was frightened.

The girl finds herself at the entrance.

An old woman standing at the base of the oldest Tuart, waves her forward.

Skin stretched, all the layers and folds tightened over each other.

Bones, begging to be broken,

Mouth, pulled

And plucked at by bony fingers intruding into the open space. Those cold dark fingers.

Long limbs pulled tight to almost-fracture.

Extended, to the limit - An oval oooooooooo

A quiet violence.

Pushing the boundaries, in this forested space.

Cells shifting.

A coming together.

A sound shaped silence

And then,

nothing,

Feel it all. Then let it go.

DIEGO RAMÍREZ

born 1989, Guadalajara, Mexico

lives and works on Wurundjeri Country, Naarm/Melbourne

***Bureausis* 2026**

Bureausis novel with installation: plywood reception desk, office chairs, coffee table, sound dimensions variable

Commissioned by the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, ACCA, Naarm/Melbourne
Courtesy of artist and MARS Gallery, Naarm/Melbourne

Diego Ramírez's practice examines the conditions of contemporary artistic life, looking beyond specific mediums to the systems that shape how art is produced, supported and experienced. At the centre of his *NEW26* project is *Bureausis* 2026, a Kafkaesque novel that began as a 'failed handbook' for contemporary art under total bureaucracy. With dry humour and compassion, the novel charts the absurdities of a cultural system increasingly ensnarled in administration, with endless grant applications, governance protocols, risk assessments, HR language and institutional frameworks designed to support artists, which can instead become systems of regulation.

Ramírez extends the novel into a gallery installation: a miscellaneous waiting room furnished with designer office chairs and piles of the publication. A section of ACCA's wall has been removed to expose its internal structure, while emanating light and sound suggest the world beyond the gallery. The waiting room becomes a space of perpetual anticipation, evoking the experience of artists and arts workers waiting for funding, recognition and opportunity.

Ramírez's installation also reflects on NEW's own history of absence and return, referencing works presented in previous iterations of the series. References include Emily Floyd in *NEW03*, and Stuart Ringholt in *NEW05* who each engaged with text and novels, as well as Natasha Johns-Messenger in *NEW09*, Fiona Connor in *NEW10*, and Ash Kilmartin in *NEW15* who staged on site-specific interventions. Alongside these institutional histories, tarot cards introduce another form of guidance, placing systems of divination against bureaucracies that govern contemporary art.



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DIEGO RAMÍREZ

born 1989, Guadalajara, Mexico

lives and works on Wurundjeri Country, Naarm/Melbourne

far left to right:

The end is the beginning 2026

from *Bureausis* installation 2026

thermoplastic sculpture, packing blanket, plywood shelf

47.5 x 34.0 cm

A healing fiction 2026

from *Bureausis* installation 2026

perforation on the wall, plywood frame, hanging board

94.0 x 50.0 cm (each)

All works commissioned by the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, ACCA,
Naarm/Melbourne

All works courtesy of artist and MARS Gallery, Naarm/Melbourne

CAESAR FLORENCE-HOWARD

born 1994, Naarm/Melbourne

lives and works on Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country, Naarm/Melbourne

left to right:

untitled 2026

glue, acrylic, sand, dirt, collage, fabric dye, latex on canvas

200.0 x 300.0 cm

untitled 2026

acrylic, glue, enamel, colour pencil, hair spray, air dry clay on canvas

diptych: 250.0 x 200.0, 250.0 x 100.0 cm

untitled 2026

acrylic, glue, colour pencil, oil pastel, fabric dye and latex on canvas.

diptych: 250.0 x 200.0, 250.0 x 200.0 cm

All works commissioned by the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, ACCA, Naarm/Melbourne

All works courtesy of the artist

Caesar Florence-Howard’s practice is tightly focused on the universe of painting itself. His work follows a long history of abstraction, from its early European precursors through to post-war American Action painting and contemporary artists committed to the internal logic of painting. Florence-Howard’s paintings operate as palimpsests, revealing the imprint of their own making, with action and time embedded across their surfaces.

In this new series of works, the accumulation of materials can be traced through scraping, rubbing, peeling and tearing, as acrylics, pastels and chalks encounter glues, latex and sand. Working across multiple canvases simultaneously, at times carrying across detritus from one surface to another, the paintings resist external visual references, while remaining attentive to the conventions and internal structures of painting. Canvas stretchers act as architectural anchors, offering a counterpoint to a process that otherwise destabilises fixed understandings of time, boundaries and finality. Scale, shape, colour, texture and material become the conditions through which the artist continues to test what a painting can be.



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CAESAR FLORENCE-HOWARD

born 1994, Naarm/Melbourne

lives and works on Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country, Naarm/Melbourne

far left to right:

untitled 2026

dirt, paper, sand, glue, acrylic, oil, pencil, oil pastel, fabric dye on canvas

62.0 x 46.5 cm

untitled 2026

acrylic, glue, coloured pencil, ink-based marker, wood on canvas

153.0 x 122.0 cm

untitled 2026

glue, acrylic, and coloured pencil on fabric

300.0 x 130.0 cm

Commissioned by the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, ACCA, Naarm/
Melbourne

All works courtesy the artist