

15 August 2017

## 2017 MELBOURNE ART TRAMS ARTISTS ANNOUNCED

**Eight new artists were today announced for the 2017 Melbourne Art Trams:** Bushra Hasan, Emma Anna, Josh Muir, Justine McAllister, Matthew Clarke, Oliver Hutchinson, Robert Owen and St Albans Heights Primary School and Community Hub, ahead of these mobile art works hitting the tracks in October as part of Melbourne Festival's visual arts program.

Streets are theatres of life ... the place where individuals and communities come together to celebrate, create, protest, and imagine new histories. Melbourne's Art trams carry us through those streets, and in 2017, artists were invited to propose a work that specific to these trams as a site for collective engagement throughout the city.

Now in its fifth year, this incredibly successful public art project is a revival of the *Transporting Art* project that ran between 1987 and 1993. Melbourne Art Trams is made possible through a creative partnership between Melbourne Festival, Creative Victoria and Public Transport Victoria in collaboration with Yarra Trams.

**Bushra Hasan** – An artist and graphic designer whose art is inspired by popular Indian street and tribal art. The inspiration for her tram design *Tramjatra* comes from her love for Melbourne's trams and the unique friendship between the tram-loving communities of Kolkata (India) and Melbourne, and partnership with Melbourne trammie, Roberto D'Andrea.

**Emma Anna** - A visual artist and creative producer whose work draws upon a diverse range of professional and personal experience. She uses tools of language, popular culture, humour, universal symbolism and everyday technologies to help define

both place and community. *The Language of Fracture* is made from the repeated mirroring of an image drawn from an ongoing series of street art paintings.

**Josh Muir** – An Indigenous artist who is a two-time winner of the National Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander Awards: People's Choice Award as well as the Hutchinson Scholarship: 12-month artist residency, Victorian College of the Arts. His tram design narrates the story of William Buckley, the 'wild white man': an escaped English convict who lived with the Wathaurong people for many years.

**Justine McAllister** - an illustrator, artist and muralist. Specialising in large-scale murals and digital illustration, her pieces are bold, playful and almost always centred around a sense of a character. Her design explores the idea of the diverse Melbourne tram traveller along with her own travel history – she visited the ten tram stops that have played a significant part in her life in Melbourne, and photographed ten travellers that frequently use the same stops.

**Matthew Clarke** – an artist from South West Victoria, inspired by the environment and people around him. His design, *Lost in Melbourne* is about Melbourne's size, colours, proportions, life and the streetscapes that - for him as an artist from the country, with a mild intellectual disability and mental illness - can be both exciting and overwhelming. The major figure in the design is his friend and mentor, artist Glenn Morgan who often accompanies Warrnambool artists to inner Melbourne to experience art, culture and night life.

**Oliver Hutchinson** – An emerging artist whose design is intended to allow those on the street outside a tram to share the momentary experiences and connections of those inside. A spectrographic encoding is created using a generative algorithm which translates a video capture of the side view of the entire journey along the tram route into an abstract colour field.

**Robert Owen** - A renowned Australian artist who studied sculpture at the National Art School, Sydney. *Beautiful Stranger* is a continuation of Robert Owen's celebrated series 'Music for the Eyes', inspired by jazz, movement and light. It plays homage to the

## MEDIA CONTACT

TATIA SLOLEY M 0403 305 395  
tattia@tspublicity.com.au

MARY THOMPSON M 0415 745 910  
mary@tspublicity.com.au

history of jazz in Melbourne, and extends Owen's exploration of art's capacity to translate mood and emotion through colour. The title comes from Melbourne's proudly diverse multicultural population that travel and blend on the trams every day, with chance encounters between strangers.

**St Albans Heights Primary School and Community Hub** - Parents from St Albans Heights Primary School in the north-west of Melbourne collectively developed the design for this artwork. In a workshop parents saw similarities in their school community to the wider Melbourne community that they wanted to capture—the parents come from 38 different backgrounds and most of speak a language other than English. Coloured squares were inspired by Andy Warhol's pop art which captures playfulness, diversity and inspires imagination—just like the school.

Victorian's Minister for Creative Industries, Martin Foley said: *"The Melbourne Art Trams project shows that art is a part of everyday life here in Victoria by transforming our iconic trams into mobile contemporary artworks. This year's crop of artists represents the diversity of our creative sector and includes artists from regional towns well beyond the tram lines and some very talented primary school students. We are proud to be part of Melbourne Art Trams, yet another example of why we are the creative state."*

Melbourne Festival Artistic Director, Jonathan Holloway said: *"This year's submissions were truly inspiring and the project is the backbone of Melbourne Festival's free visual arts program: surprising and delighting millions of Melburnians and visitors to the city each year."*

Jeroen Weimar, CEO Public Transport Victoria said: *"With trams holding a special place in the hearts of Melburnians they are the perfect moving canvas to display works of art that inspire and brighten the days of people across the city. Please keep your eye out for these incredible artworks as they roll out on our network starting in October."*

Nicolas Gindt, CEO Yarra Trams said: *"Melbourne Art Trams represent the very essence of Melbourne – bringing together culture, arts, community, and our iconic tram network in an open and ongoing exhibition for all to enjoy. Yarra Trams is proud to support Melbourne Festival and Melbourne Art Trams 2017."*

The first tram will hit the tracks on Thursday 5 October with the other seven soon to follow and will remain on our streets until April 2018.

A People's Choice award will be announced following the release of the trams, with the public able to vote for their favourite tram and be in the running for great prizes at: [festival.melbourne/arttrams](http://festival.melbourne/arttrams)

Voting opens in late October