

## **YHONNIE SCARCE AWARDED \$60,000 YALINGWA FELLOWSHIP**



Minister for Creative Industries Martin Foley MP, Yalongwa Fellowship recipient Yhonnie Scarce and TarraWarra Museum of Art Director, Victoria Lynn at the announcement of the 2020 Yalongwa Fellowship at TarraWarra Museum of Art, 11 February 2020. Photo: Tiffany Garvie.

**Kokatha and Nukunu woman Yhonnie Scarce, a renowned contemporary artist, has been awarded the Yalongwa Fellowship, a \$60,000 award for First Nations artists currently living and working in Victoria who have made an outstanding contribution to creative practice in the First Peoples arts community and are at a critical moment in their career.**

The Fellowship forms part of Yalongwa, a multi-faceted initiative designed to support the development of outstanding contemporary Indigenous art and curatorial practice with a primary focus on South East Australian First Nations artists. It represents a significant partnership between Creative Victoria, the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) and TarraWarra Museum of Art.

Following an open call for submissions, Scarce was awarded the Fellowship by the Yalongwa Advisory Group, which includes members of the Indigenous arts and wider community as well as representatives from Creative Victoria, ACCA and TarraWarra Museum of Art.

The Advisory Group noted the breadth of the artist's contributions to Australian art.

“Yhonnie Scarce has made a critical contribution to the development of contemporary art practice locally, nationally and internationally through major public installations, exhibitions and her mentorship of other Indigenous artists. Her work encompasses architecturally-scaled public art projects to intimate

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assemblages, replete with personal and cultural histories, in ways which are at once autobiographical and ancestral.

The Yalingwa Advisory Group recognises Yhonnie's enormous contribution to the First Nations arts community as an artist, mentor and teacher, and her unique approach to the use of glass blowing in her practice. The panel highlighted Yhonnie's courageous, politically driven yet deeply personal story telling as highly significant, particularly the innovative ways in which she addresses some of the turbulent and rarely discussed sides of our history," said the Yalingwa Advisory Group.

Scarce's practice explores the political nature and aesthetic qualities of glass, using her body and breath to create anthropomorphic objects imbued with Aboriginal culture and history. Her work often references the ongoing effects of colonisation on Aboriginal people; in particular, her research has explored the impact of the removal and relocation of Aboriginal people from their homelands and the forcible removal of Aboriginal children from their families. Family history is central to Scarce's work and, drawing on the strength of her ancestors, she offers herself as a conduit, sharing their significant stories from the past.

Minister for Creative Industries, Martin Foley, said, "This Fellowship recognises Yhonnie's incredible works and career so far and her ongoing leadership in upskilling the next generation of First Nations artists."

"The Victorian Government is proud to support Yalingwa as part of our ongoing commitment to putting First Nations' art and creativity at the heart of our creative state."

Victoria Lynn, Director, TarraWarra Museum of Art, said Yhonnie is an incredibly deserving recipient of this prestigious award.

"The Yalingwa Fellowship will allow Yhonnie to enter into a new phase of research and will provide the support to develop and expand her immense creative vision.

TarraWarra Museum of Art is delighted to work with Creative Victoria and ACCA to showcase the incredible First Nations art community of Victoria through the Yalingwa initiative, which will also see a major exhibition of First Peoples art open at the Museum in 2021, curated by Stacie Piper," Ms Lynn said.

**-ENDS-**

**Yalingwa** 

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## **NOTES TO THE EDITOR**

### **Yalingwa Visual Arts Initiative**

The Yalingwa Visual Arts Initiative 2017–2022 is a significant partnership between Creative Victoria, the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) and TarraWarra Museum of Art that aims to support the development of outstanding contemporary Indigenous art and curatorial practice, with a primary focus on South East Australian First Nations artists within a national context.

### **Yalingwa encompasses three discrete program elements:**

#### **Artist fellowships**

Three one-year artist Yalingwa Fellowships supporting significant career development will be offered, with the first Fellowship awarded to Destiny Deacon in 2018. Each of the three Fellowships encompasses an untied cash award of AUD \$60,000 to be awarded to a mid-career or senior artist based in Victoria to support the development and consolidation of their practice. The recipients are selected through an open call expression-of-interest process and assessed by the Yalingwa Advisory Group in consultation with Creative Victoria, ACCA and TarraWarra Museum of Art.

Successful recipients are recognised for the contribution they have made to the development of contemporary art practice locally, nationally or internationally, their contribution to Indigenous cultural expression, and the potential to continue to develop and expand art and cultural practice.

#### **Curatorial positions**

Three two-year curatorial positions are available for Indigenous curators to work with the respective host organisations in the research and development of major exhibitions of new commissions by First Nations artists. The curators join ACCA's and/or TarraWarra Museum of Art's professional staff, based at the organisation presenting the next exhibition in the series.

The inaugural Yalingwa curator was **Hannah Presley**, who was based at ACCA for a period of two years and curated the first Yalingwa exhibition in July 2018. The second Yalingwa curator is **Stacie Piper** who is based at TarraWarra Museum of Art and working on a major First Nations exhibition to open in 2021.

#### **Major exhibitions focusing on artists' commissions**

Three major exhibitions form part of the initiative, with a focus on new commissions by contemporary Indigenous artists. The exhibitions alternate between ACCA and TarraWarra Museum of Art, with the first, *A Lightness of Spirit is the Measure of Happiness* held at ACCA in 2018, the next at TarraWarra Museum of Art in 2021 and a final exhibition at ACCA in 2022.

### **The Yalingwa Advisory Group**

The Advisory Group act as advisors, ambassadors and mentors for the initiative, and to encourage First Nations community engagement with the program. Members of the committee include:

**Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin AO**, Senior Wurundjeri Elder, Professor  
**Kylie Belling**, Senior Manager, First Peoples, Arts Investment, Creative Victoria  
**Max Delany**, Artistic Director & CEO, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art  
**Victoria Lynn**, Director, TarraWarra Museum of Art  
**Hetti Perkins**, curator, writer and broadcaster  
**Stacie Piper**, Yalingwa First Nations Curator, TarraWarra Museum of Art  
**Hannah Presley**, Curator, Indigenous Art, National Gallery of Victoria

## **TarraWarra Museum of Art**

TarraWarra Museum of Art brings together the appreciation of both art and place. Situated in the spectacular Yarra Valley, on the cusp of outer Melbourne and inner regional Victoria, the Museum is uniquely positioned to deliver the important history of Australian modernism and new developments in contemporary art to a large cross section of the Victorian public. At the heart of the Museum is a collection of over 650 modern and contemporary Australian art works donated by patrons Eva Besen AO and Marc Besen AC.

TarraWarra is a Woiwurrung word that translates approximately as 'slow moving water' and is the name of the area in which the Museum is located. As the name TarraWarra suggests, its non-urban environment creates an immersive atmosphere and provides for a different pace and rhythm: a retreat for the imagination.

Following the arrival of Director Victoria Lynn in 2012, Indigenous art has featured every year at the Museum, with significant projects including: *Future Memorials: Jonathan Jones, Tom Nicholson and Aunty Joy Wandin Murphy*, 2013; *Danie Mellor: Exotic Lies Sacred Tales*, curated by Maudie Palmer, 2014; *TarraWarra Biennial: Whisper in My Mask*; curated by Djon Mundine and Natalie King 2014; *John Mawurndjul and Gulumbu Yunupingu: Earth and Sky*, curated by Hetti Perkins, 2015; *Judy Watson: the scarifer*, 2016; and *Yhonnie Scarce*, 2017 both curated by Director, Victoria Lynn.

## **Biography: Yhonnie Scarce**

born 1973, Woomera, SA. Lives and works in Melbourne, Victoria  
Language/community: Kokatha and Nukunu

A master contemporary glass blower, Yhonnie Scarce's practice explores the political nature and aesthetic qualities of glass.

Scarce was awarded the prestigious National Gallery of Victoria Architecture Commission 2019 which was unveiled in November 2019. In 2018 Scarce was the recipient of the Kate Challis RAKA award, for her contribution to the visual arts in Australia, as well as the Indigenous Ceramic Award from the Shepparton Art Museum.

Upcoming international exhibitions include at Pavilion of Contemporary Art, Milan, Italy and the Museum of London, Ontario, Canada. Previous international shows include the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, India, 2018, 55th Venice Biennale collateral exhibition Personal Structures 2013, Venice, Galway Art Centre, Ireland 2016, Harvard Art Museum, Massachusetts 2016, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Museum, Virginia, USA 2012.

In 2018 Scarce was curated into major shows and public commissions throughout Australia, including the Biennale of Australian Art, Ballarat; Installation Contemporary, Sydney, the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne and the Newcastle Art Gallery. Previous shows include The National, Art Gallery of NSW 2017, The 3<sup>rd</sup> National Indigenous Art Triennial 2017, 19<sup>th</sup> Biennale of Sydney, 2014 and a site-specific installation at the Art Gallery of South Australia as part of Tarnanthi Festival of Contemporary and Torres Strait Islander Art, 2016.

In 2012 Scarce held a residency and exhibited at the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Museum, University of Virginia, USA and participated in Aboriginal art symposiums at Seattle Art Museum and the Hood Museum, New Hampshire.

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Scarce's work is seen in the collections of the National Gallery of Victoria, The Art Gallery of South Australia, National Gallery Australia, Flinders University Art Museum, the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, and the University of South Australia.



**acca**



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**Opening Hours: Tuesday – Sunday, 11am to 5pm. Open all public holidays except Christmas Day.**