

## SYDNEY CONTEMPORARY | MEDIA RELEASE 23 SEP 2018



Image: Zan Wimberley, 2018

**Sydney Contemporary 2018 secures AUD\$21million in sales over five days at Carriageworks; an increase of \$5million from 2017. The fourth edition of Australasia's largest and most established art fair, Sydney Contemporary, attracted 29,000 collectors and art enthusiasts, whilst securing AUD\$21million in artwork sales at multi-arts precinct Carriageworks from 12–16 September 2018.**

The fourth edition of Australasia's largest and most established art fair, Sydney Contemporary, attracted 29,000 collectors and art enthusiasts, whilst securing AUD\$21million in artwork sales at multi-arts precinct Carriageworks from 12–16 September 2018. Approximately AUD\$10million of the total 2018 sales will go to artists, demonstrating a powerful moment in the calendar year for artists to help ensure continuation of their practices, and a healthy boost for galleries to continue to support their artists. Sydney Contemporary broke its own record of AUD\$16 million of sales at the fair in 2017; the Fair represents the largest short-term concentration of art sales in Australia annually.

In 2018, Sydney Contemporary became an annual event and featured more than 80 galleries, presenting 300 leading and emerging local and international artists who installed museum quality artworks across the entire Carriageworks building, spanning seven large-scale exhibition spaces. Further sales are expected to be finalised in the coming days and weeks.

Tim Etchells, Founder and Owner of Sydney Contemporary, said: 'We were delighted to welcome over 29,000 visitors to this year's Fair which was its fourth edition, and the first on our new annual cycle. Springtime in Sydney, and the amazing setting of Carriageworks, makes Sydney Contemporary a truly unique fair amongst the busy program of International and regional art fairs. I feel very proud that we were able to help our galleries achieve over \$21million of sales, making it the most concentrated period of art sales in Australia this year.'

Artists at the fair hailed from 30 countries around the world including Australia, Argentina, China, Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, South Africa, South Korea, Switzerland, the UK and the USA. The galleries were supported by a robust program of ground breaking large-scale installations, dynamic live performances, engaging panel discussions, and experimental moving image art.

Carriageworks Director Lisa Havilah said: 'Carriageworks was thrilled to once again be the home of Sydney Contemporary – one of the most important annual contemporary art events in Australia. We congratulate the Sydney Contemporary team and the many incredible galleries that participated in the Fair and look forward to continuing our partnership in 2019.'

Participating galleries this year included leading international names: Pace Gallery (New York, Hong Kong, London, Beijing, Seoul, Palo Alto and Geneva), Flowers Gallery (London and New York), Auckland's Gow Langsford Gallery and STARKWHITE; Sundaram Tagore Gallery of Hong Kong, New York and Singapore; and Singapore's Yavuz Gallery. Returning domestic galleries included Sydney's Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, OLSEN and Sullivan+Strumpf; and Melbourne's ARC ONE Gallery, Blackartprojects, and MARS to name a few; Ben Quilty presented a major new body of work, paintings and an installation titled 'Bottom Feeders' with Melbourne's Tolarno Galleries, which was a near sell-out.

Barry Keldoulis, Fair Director and CEO of Sydney Contemporary, said: 'The enthusiastic response from visitors, galleries and artists is that 2018 has been the best iteration of the fair yet; the art, the presentation, the vibe, and the sales. We are delighted that it has been such a success, and all are looking forward to the next fair in September 2019!'

Director of Singapore-based Yavuz Gallery, Can Yavuz, commented on their experience this year: 'Sydney Contemporary is Australia's pre-eminent fair, and going annual was a natural progression that made perfect sense. The overwhelming success of this year's edition has proven that there is a vibrant and mature local market, that also attracts key collectors, enthusiasts and more from the art ecosystem of the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. Yavuz Gallery has participated in Sydney Contemporary since its first edition in 2013, and we were one of the first international galleries to put Southeast Asian art in focus at an Australian fair. We are thrilled to be part of its evolution and look forward to next year's edition in September.'

Gallerists who participated in Sydney Contemporary enthused about their experience at Australia's largest art Fair. Edwina Corlette, Director of Queensland based gallery Edwina Corlette Gallery said: 'Sydney Contemporary 2018 was a standout, and the calibre of visitors was outstanding. The VIP afternoon/evening on Wednesday drew a huge number of noted Australian collectors, curators, academics and visitors who were in the mood to invest in the best contemporary Australian art. Long may it last.'

Indigenous art shone at the fair this year with a new body of work titled Always by established artist Reko Rennie showing with Kronenberg Wright, also works at the fair from Tony Albert and galleries including Alcaston Gallery, Utopia Art Sydney, Cooe Art, D'Lan Davidson and Blackartprojects.

A bark painting by Indigenous artist John Mawurndjul made a new record for the artist, selling for \$140,000 at Sydney Contemporary. Ngalyod – The Rainbow Serpent, 1999, spent the last 10 years carefully stored under a bed before being sold by D’Lan Davidson to an international collector at the fair and breaking the previous record of \$120,000, set at the Laverty Collection auction in 2015. D’Lan Davidson comments about his experience at the fair: ‘We were very pleased with the response, achieving strong sales and having a large congregation around the booth for the majority of the time. In a clearly reinvigorated market for Australian Indigenous Art, and on the back of setting a new record for the acclaimed artist John Mawurndjul, the Sydney art market warmed to my presence and we will certainly be back, bigger and even stronger next year.’

Director of Blackartprojects, Andrea Candiani commented on their experience this year: ‘No doubt this Sydney Contemporary edition was the best so far, both in terms of sales and “looks”. Introducing more contemporary installations certainly was a step away from a strict trade show and made Carriageworks the sexiest place to be in town. We couldn’t have asked for more.’

Bryan Hooper of Utopia Art Sydney enthused about the fair: ‘Congratulations on such a fantastic Sydney Contemporary...there was a great buzz over the whole five days.’

Emerging artists excelled with artists including Honey Long and Prue Stent (ARC ONE Gallery), Kai Wasikowski (Isabel Rouch Projects), Jackson Farley (Stanley Street), Zico Albaiquni (Yavuz Gallery), Abdul Abdullah (Yavuz Gallery), Clara Adolphs (Chalk Horse Gallery) and India Mark (The Egg & Dart) all selling out at the Fair. The National Art School (NAS) showed for the first time with curated exhibitions of their alumni and students on rotation and sold double they anticipated, selling out with over a quarter of the 14 artists presented selling out, including works by artists Mechelle Bournpraseuth and Kirtika Kain.

Established artists also had strong sales, including Christian Thompson (Michael Reid), Gemma Smith and Huseyin Sami, (Sarah Cottier Gallery), Imants Tillers (ARC ONE Gallery), Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori (Alcaston Gallery), Rebecca Baumann (STARKWHITE), Tony Cragg (Gow Langsford) and Reko Rennie (Kronenberg Wright).

Presenting partner Deutsche Bank’s Jill Valentine commented: ‘As a global bank operating in Australia, it’s important for us to have a positive impact in our local community. Our partnership with Sydney Contemporary is a perfect opportunity to do this as we play an important role in making contemporary art accessible to a broad audience. We’re delighted that over 29,000 people, including our clients and staff, visited this year’s fair and were able to experience and enjoy all that was on offer.’

Sydney Contemporary 2018 included a dynamic, five-day public program of talks and tours by industry leaders, including specially curated areas of the Fair: Installation Contemporary, Performance Contemporary, Talk Contemporary and Video Contemporary. This year, Kid Contemporary was a dynamic creative space for children to meditate, play and create hosted by artist and cat-enthusiast Hossein Ghaemi whose work Jumbuck Pishi explored the imagined psyche of cats and was popular with children and families visiting the fair.

Highlights of the Fair included the Opening Night Party (Thursday 13th September), which was buzzing with collectors and art enthusiasts, the night featured three performance works as part of Performance Contemporary: Emily Parsons-Lord’s new pyrotechnic performance, Lauren Brincat’s Brava, Bravi, Brave featuring a rhythmic duet between drummers, and a collaborative and ritualistic performance by Mel O’Callaghan and the Sydney Dance Company, where dancers went through a breathing ritual accompanied by a musical score that guided the performers. The VIP Preview (Wednesday 12th September), an exclusive preview event for experienced collectors and public institutions proved to be highly successful for sales, accommodating a more intimate environment for buyers to meet artists and gallerists.

Sydney Contemporary also boasted five days of VIP events attracting influential art collectors and taste-makers. The program included a range of events including artist studio visits, exhibition openings, private and corporate collection viewings, privately hosted parties and dinners, lively panel discussions and behind the scenes access to the city’s leading institutions.

Installation Contemporary returned as one of the highlights of the Fair, presenting Australian and international artists, whose site-specific installations ranged from the handcrafted to the digital. In 2018, independent curator Nina Miall curated Installation Contemporary to present over 20 works by artists including Jean Dubuffet’s four metre high L’Incivil, 1973/2014, Abdul Abdullah’s new installation Call me by my name that featured several new tapestries, a large-scale installation of stacked barriers with marble and goldleaf The Golden Calf, 2018, from Alex Seton, Penelope Davis with Sea Change, 2017, an installation suspended from the ceiling like a swarm of jellyfish; Robert Jahnke Kaokao, 2017-18, a light installation of a tukutuku chevron pattern found in Maori tribal houses, and 50 ceramic Bagu figures created exclusively for the Fair by 10 artists from the Girrigun Art Centre.

Globally-renowned artist Patricia Piccinini reimagined The Field, recently seen at her immersive survey show Curious Affection at QAGOMA, for Sydney Contemporary with a vast site-specific installation of 3,000 sculpted flowers and The Bond as its centrepiece within Carriageworks’ Elston Room.

Sydney Contemporary continued until the 20th of September with Sydney Contemporary at Barangaroo; the Fair have partnered with Barangaroo Delivery Authority to commission three internationally established artists that have created large-scale, site-specific installation works that respond to the precinct. Callum Morton’s Monument # 32: Helter Shelter, 2018, a Trump-like figure protruding from the pavement, Mel O’Callaghan’s performance piece Breath repertoire and Cameron Robbins’ Remote Sensor sit throughout Barangaroo’s financial, retail and dining precinct, installed in the lead-up to, and during the fair.

Presented in partnership with Deutsche Bank, Sydney Contemporary returned for its fourth edition and is now an annual event in line with major international art fairs around the world. Sydney Contemporary will return next year from 11-15 September 2019 with Carriageworks as the Presenting Partner.