

## Ida Sophia wins \$100,000 Ramsay Art Prize 2023

**Adelaide, Australia:** Ida Sophia has been named the winner of the Art Gallery of South Australia's \$100,000 Ramsay Art Prize, the nation's most generous prize for Australian artists under forty. The winning performance-based video work, *Witness* will be premiered in the *Ramsay Art Prize 2023* exhibition.

AGSA Director Rhana Devenport ONZM said, 'The Ramsay Art Prize sets out to elevate and accelerate careers for contemporary Australian artists. Ida Sophia is clearly at a pivotal point in her career – her winning work *Witness* is technically and conceptually resolved, capturing the breadth of her practice to this point.'

Informed by the South Australian artist's early childhood experience of observing her father's baptism, *Witness* was shot in a single take at The Pool of Siloam in Wirralnangrang/Beachport in regional South Australia. The single-channel video work depicts the artist in performance, undergoing a repetitive and intense series of submergences that take a single baptism to the level of relentless obsession.

A former student of The Marina Abramovic Institute in Greece, Ida Sophia is a performance artist with a hybrid media, sculpture and installation practice that draws on the body to render performative works. Beginning with personal narratives, Ida Sophia's work is characterised by conceptual examinations of universal, uncomfortable human experiences such as hope, regret, familial tension and grief.

The 2023 judging panel comprised of Aaron Seeto, Director of the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art Nusantara, Jakarta; Perth-based visual artist and creative producer Erin Coates; and Nici Cumpston OAM, AGSA's Artistic Director of Tarnanthi and Curator of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art.

The judges were unanimous in their decision. '*Witness*, Ida Sophia's winning work, impressed us with its sophisticated concept, personal symbolism, and emotional connection to the site of performance. We were particularly struck by the integration of durational performance and its translation into video, which created a visceral experience for the viewer,' commented Aaron Seeto.

Established in the name of South Australia's leading cultural philanthropists James Ramsay AO and Diana Ramsay AO, the Ramsay Art Prize is an acquisitive art prize for contemporary Australian artists. Presented by the Art Gallery of South Australia and supported in perpetuity by the James & Diana Ramsay Foundation, the Ramsay Art Prize is held every two years with the winning work being acquired into AGSA's collection.

Chair of the James & Diana Ramsay Foundation, Nicholas Ross, says, 'The Ramsay Art Prize embodies the values and vision of James and Diana's legacy. It is a privilege to provide young artists with the opportunity to radically change their trajectory, and we look forward to seeing Ida Sophia's career flourish.'

South Australian Minister for the Arts, The Hon. Andrea Michaels MP says, 'Congratulations to Ida Sophia on winning this prestigious art prize. It is thanks to the vision of leading South Australian philanthropists James and Diana Ramsay that our state is home to this extraordinary Australian art prize of national significance.'

The *Ramsay Art Prize 2023* exhibition runs from 27 May until 27 August 2023 at the Art Gallery of South Australia. Admission is free. The Ramsay Art Prize 2023 also includes a People's Choice Prize, supported by sponsor LK. The People's Choice Prize is a non-acquisitive cash prize of \$15,000 chosen by public vote and announced on Friday 11 August.

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## BACKGROUND

The Ramsay Art Prize, a \$100,000 acquisitive visual arts prize, invites submissions of new work by Australian artists under the age of forty years working in any medium, including sculpture, painting, drawing, photography, installation and the moving image.

Presented by the Art Gallery of South Australia and supported in perpetuity by the James & Diana Ramsay Foundation, the Ramsay Art Prize aims to support and encourage contemporary Australian artists to make their best work at a pivotal moment in their career.

The Ramsay Art Prize is held every two years at AGSA. The finalists and winner are selected by an esteemed national and international judging panel.

## KEY DATES

People's Choice Prize announced	Friday 11 August 2023
Exhibition Season	27 May – 27 August 2023

**IMAGES** [agsa.sa.gov.au/media/ramsay2023announcement/](https://www.agsa.sa.gov.au/media/ramsay2023announcement/)

**2023 FINALIST BIOGRAPHIES** <https://www.agsa.sa.gov.au/whats-on/exhibitions/ramsay-art-prize-2023/>

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