

AGSA

AGSA Screen: *Wavelength* launches regional tour in Port Pirie, South Australia



Audiences in Port Pirie will be the first to have the rare opportunity to experience the works and worldviews of moving image artists in **AGSA Screen: *Wavelength*** in Port Pirie Regional Art Gallery from 20 April – 31 July. An exhibition of works of art from Art Gallery of South Australia's time-based media collection.

AGSA Screen is a new initiative of Art Gallery of South Australia and Country Arts SA presented by MML dedicated to showcasing moving images from the significant collection of works by Australian and International artists illustrating this medium's dynamism and the diverse nature of acquisitions within AGSA's collection.

Wavelength draws on past and contemporary approaches to time-based media art that share stories from across the world that are connected through the theme of water.

Minister for Arts Andrea Michaels MP says, 'Great collections like AGSA's are to be shared and enjoyed over generations. The partnership of AGSA and Country Arts SA to tour *Wavelength* regionally will ensure art lovers all over South Australia can be inspired in their home towns.'

AGSA Director Rhana Devenport ONZM says, 'For over a century the human fascination to explore and understand ourselves and each other through various lenses, has seen time-based media develop into one of the most influential and exciting mediums in visual art in the 21st century. *Wavelength* is a wonderful showcase of AGSA's moving image works in the collection that can now be enjoyed by audiences regionally across several venues in regional South Australia in 2024'.

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Country Arts SA Chief Executive/Executive Director Anthony Peluso says, 'Country Arts SA and AGSA are committed to providing access to visual arts across the state, together with AGSA, Country Arts SA's regional touring program is a celebration of collaboration, providing an incredible artistic and cultural experience ensuring access for everyone regardless of their postcode and no matter where you live there's a place for every story.'

The theme of Water in *Wavelength* ties back to the importance of water in regional communities, as a crucial resource essential for survival and necessary for agriculture, industry, and daily life. Regional communities rely on water for their livelihoods, playing a vital role in local economy. Water is often a central feature of the natural landscape and is deeply connected to the cultural and spiritual identity of many First Nations communities.

AGSA Screen *Wavelength* highlights include:

Gerry Wedd's **WAVE**, a genre-defying work of art that unites digital imagery, ceramics and sound. In *WAVE*, Wedd's vision is brought to life in an immersive 180-degree installation experienced on a seven-metre-long free-standing screen, accompanied by an evocative soundscape by Gabriella Smart and directed by Wedd, Smart and filmmaker Mark Patterson with digital production by Jumpgate. Comprised of three acts, *WAVE* invites visitors on an epic journey from sea to sky inspired by a major new ceramic urn created by Wedd – following the tradition of 'narrative pottery' which was used as a form of storytelling in antiquity. The work commences with Wedd's urn spinning like a globe, inviting viewers into a landscape before European invasion, and abundant with life. The second act sees the 'arrival' of a strange new reality, whereby vast urbanisation gives way to bushfires that rage, coastlines that collapse, and waterways that choke. In the final act, a great wave redeems all and renewal begins.

WAVE originally premiered as part of the 2022 Adelaide Film Festival.

Artist Gerry Wedd said, 'I have lived and surfed on the Fleurieu Peninsula for more than fifty years. For much of my life I have hung around the edge where the water meets the land, and human-made detritus is ever more visible. My concept for *WAVE* was to subvert the familiar and benign medium of blue and white porcelain to tease out a narrative of climate destruction, plunging viewers into a wondrous world that retains the lustrous look of glaze and the malleable tension of clay. As someone who normally works in 2D and 3D, *WAVE* opens up new visual and narrative possibilities for my practice. It is certainly the most collaborative project I have been involved with where each moment is a liaison between myself, composer Gabriella Smart, producer Mark Patterson and Carlo and Anton Andreacchio from Jumpgate.'

Early Days in Palm Valley by Kumantjayi (Joanne) Napangardi Wheeler is an animation incorporating poignant moments from within her paintings, alongside her voice narrating the story. 'I'm following the steps of my aunties and uncles, my mother and father', she says in the short film, in an affirmation that highlights the role of art in continuing culture and history through family lines. In this film, she looks at the past and how life would have been prior to colonisation around Ntaria (Hermannsburg), particularly in the time before the Mission. Through her paintings, she depicts lively scenes of people camping, swimming and fishing surrounded by the iconic views of Tjoritja. *This film premiered as part of Tarnanthi 2021*

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After Rain by Betty Nungarrayi Conway (Pitjantjatjara/Luritja/Yankunytjatjara people, Northern Territory) sees her paintings transform into a vibrant animation. As the creeks fill with water, the artist personally narrates a joyous celebration of her family heading out to their homeland of Tempe Downs station, for a swim and a picnic. As Conway recalls, 'We always go out, sometimes camping out for two days ... with family we all go out and stay there, the kids play around in the water'. Conway works from Tangentyere Artists based in Mparntwe (Alice Springs).
This film premiered as part of Tarnanthi 2020.

Untitled (Killing me softly) version 3, Australian artist Tim Silver explores notions of transformation and entropy. Silver's enquiry is restructured in relation to the natural landscape in this moving image work in which a sculpted body washed up on a beach dissolves in real-time with the ebb and flow of the ocean.

I give you a mountain by Australian artist Joan Ross references a watercolour painted in 1786 by British natural history painter Sarah Stone. The work articulates the voracious culture of collecting that underpins colonialism and persists to this day in the form of capitalist consumption and environmental chaos.

Witness by 2023 Ramsay Art Prize winner and Australian artist Ida Sophia was 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 Wirralngrand/Beachport in 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.

Think Evolution #1: Kiku-ishi (Ammonite), by Japanese artist Aki Inomata encompasses inter-species collaboration an artistic collaboration between the artist and a living creature. The work depicts an octopus's encounter with a 3D-printed resin replica of an ammonite shell. Through these collaborations Japanese artist Aki Inomata questions the realities and relationships of life on earth.

The Regional Touring pilot program is made possible through presenting partner MML whose founder Dr Carol Colburn Grigor is committed to giving back to the community and believes art should be for everyone.

In addition to regional touring those across the state can access AGSA's extensive collection online. AGSA is also committed to education outside the classroom knowing that art can inspire, spark curiosity, engage critical thought and reveal different perspectives on the world around us.

Country Arts SA has an extensive history of supporting arts in regional areas of South Australia. As part of its suite of programs, Country Arts SA works with 19 regional art galleries through its touring program, supporting and facilitating access to visual arts experiences in regional South Australia.

AGSA has an outstanding educational program accessible online that is maintained throughout the year to assist teachers across the country, incorporating learning tours, workshops, programs and study resources that encourage experimentation, enable discovery and enhance knowledge and skills for students at all levels. They apply to diverse learning areas, from art and design to science, maths, history, languages and more enabling students to experience both in and beyond the classroom.

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AGSA Screen Wavelength

Port Pirie Regional Art Gallery

3 Mary Elie St, Port Pirie SA 5540

20 April – 31 July, 2024

Mon – Fri 9am–5pm, Sat – Sun & public holidays 10am–2pm

Ends

Image caption: Image still: Joan Ross, born Glasgow, Scotland, *I give you a mountain*, 2018, Sydney, HD video animation; 6:30 min; Gift of Dr Pei-Yin Hsu, Pam McKee & Jennifer Hallett through the Art Gallery of South, Australia Foundation Collectors Club 2022, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, © Joan Ross

MEDIA CONTACTS

Cheree McEwin | M +61 416 181 679 | E mcewin.cheree@artgallery.sa.gov.au

Oliver Marshall | P +61 8 7085 1619 | E marshall.oliver@artgallery.sa.gov.au

IMAGES

<http://agsa.sa.gov.au/media/Wavelengthimages>

SOCIAL MEDIA

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