

HERENOW|24: **Mummy's Agony**

HERENOW|24: **Mummy's Agony** showcases the creative works of **Marina Psaila**

Marina's artworks "reflect her dreams of white witches and the prodigal son". This exhibition focuses on the first aspect. The artworks are an expression of how she sees herself when she looks in the mirror "I look cool, hot, Marina's on a spiritual journey". Having a room with her wallpapers and her artwork symbolize "freedom" of self-expression and shows the world who she thinks she is.

Curator | **Shelley ELKINS**
Curatorial mentor | **Julie BARRATT**

Officially opened by **Julie BARRATT** at 6:15pm

Gallery**25**

Opening: Thursday 1 February 2024 5pm–7pm
Exhibition dates: 2 February to 6 March 2024
Floor talk: Wednesday 14 February 12:30pm–1:30pm
Gallery opening hours: Tuesday to Friday 10am–4pm
Building 10, 2 Bradford St, Mount Lawley

ECU Galleries acknowledges the traditional custodians, the Whadjuk Noongar people, and elders past and present. We pay our respects for the great privilege of living, making and researching on these unceded lands.



ECU Galleries



Director's Statement

A big welcome to ECU Galleries 2024 program and what a way to start with the HERENOW curatorial mentoring exhibition for the Fringe World Festival. Professor Ted Snell AM CitWA moved the HERE&NOW exhibition series, established in 2012 at the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, to ECU Galleries in 2021. Renamed HERENOW, the series is a mentoring project for aspiring curators, which can be daunting, so to provide that experience and enable an emerging curator to capture the vibrancy across current practice within an area of focus within the visual arts is essential. This is one of the few mentoring programs of its kind in WA. We lost Ted on 23 September 2023. Ted's knowledge of art in general and art in WA in particular cannot be replaced.

For the inaugural exhibition Ted wrote:

HERENOW is a snapshot of current visual arts practice in Perth, right here and right now! Its focus is provided by a young curator keen to develop the complex skills, insights, and sensibilities required to curate an exhibition in a public gallery. Bringing those skills into play and delivering an exhibition that showcases a group of artists whose work they admire and wish to promote is not an easy task. And, it is one that is best achieved by doing, in tandem with professional colleagues. Learning the ropes by taking the strain, setting a course, and tackling the challenges that inevitably arise requires courage, commitment, and guidance. Its multiple facets of operation must be coordinated with intricate care.

ECU Galleries continues Ted's legacy with curatorial mentor Julie Barratt, Director of Art Strategy for DADAA, the largest Arts and Disability organisation in Southeast Asia. She is nationally and globally connected as an artist, curator and disability worker. For both exhibition Julie is mentoring DADAA arts worker Shelley Elkins through the process of curating 13 DADAA artists—*Mummy's Agony* featuring Marina Psaila in Gallery25 and *Artist in Wonderland* featuring Alex Cammack, Kelly Grant, Emma Harradine, Christopher Hummel, Aidan Leahy, Timothy Maley, Esa Nykanen, Brittany Plummer, Brent Stanley, Oliver Max Taylor and Declan White in Spectrum Project Space.

ECU Galleries is guided by our understanding that Art Galleries are significant educative bodies (Clover & Sanford, 2019), they provide "plays of force...[that] influence the public" (Steeds, 2014, p. 29). Exhibitions "actively construct, shape and mobilize our understandings of the world through carefully choreographed" (Clover & Sanford, 2019, p. 65) works of art that shape our collective and individual identities and "draw attention to public memory, the ideological nature of display, the epistemological influence of historical forces, embodied and affective forms of learning beyond language, and historical sites of public discourse" (O'Malley et al., 2020, p. 5).

Associate Professor Lyndall ADAMS
ECU Galleries Director
January, 2024

References

- Clover, D. E., & Sanford, K. (2019, June 1-4). The disobedient women exhibition as feminist public pedagogy. Art as Lived, Art for Life. 38th Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education (CASAE/ACÉÉA) Annual Conference, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.
- O'Malley, M. P., Sandlin, J. A., & Burdick, J. (2020). Public Pedagogy Theories, Methodologies, and Ethics. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*.

Julie BARRATT

Foreward

To have the opportunity to mentor one of DADAA's most passionate Arts Coordinators as a Curatorial Mentee on HERENOW|24 has been a hugely rewarding experience for myself and mentee Shelley Elkins, and a privilege to do so within the two beautiful ECU Galleries.

In HERENOW|24 we highlight the remarkable talents within DADAA and take great pleasure in presenting the diverse and eclectic works of some of our Midland based artists, who have been supported by an incredible team of Arts workers. DADAA is one of the largest employers of arts workers in Western Australia. This skilled and dedicated team, work with DADAA participants to develop their artistic interests and skills, and to further their goals.

DADAA acknowledge our fantastic art worker's contribution to this showcase exhibition in their support and mentoring of the participating artists including Kristen Martin for his exceptional support of Marina Psaila in her first solo exhibition *Mummy's Agony*.

Julie BARRATT
Director of Art Strategy, DADAA
January, 2024

Shelley ELKINS

Curatorial Statement

HERENOW | 24: *Mummy's Agony* is the inaugural solo exhibition by emerging Perth artist Marina Psaila. Psaila, an eccentric and vibrant personality, explores themes of profound meaning to her such as dreams, childbirth, nature, identity and religion. Psaila also traverses themes of seemingly trivial subjects such as butterflies, birds, goldfish and everything else. This exhibition offers viewers a glimpse into Psaila's chaotic world of whimsy, colour, confusion, love, trauma, happiness, fixation and creativity, weaving a never-ending story of who Marina Psaila is. The answer to this question is subject to daily transformation.

Psaila invites viewers into her chaotic and compelling world and encourages contemplation of her work. Although not immediately evident Psaila's practice stems from a lifetime of pivotal and life altering events which changed the trajectory of her life, shaping her arts practice. Once an aspiring fashion designer Psaila has now found her place in contemporary art and proudly shares her innermost feelings for the world to see.

As the curator of this exhibition, I welcome viewers into this sacred space and invites viewers to look beyond the surface, open their minds and hearts to provide the context for experiencing this exhibition. Consider Psaila's journey while engaging with the profound layers of *Mummy's Agony*.

Shelley ELKINS
DADAA Arts Worker
January, 2024

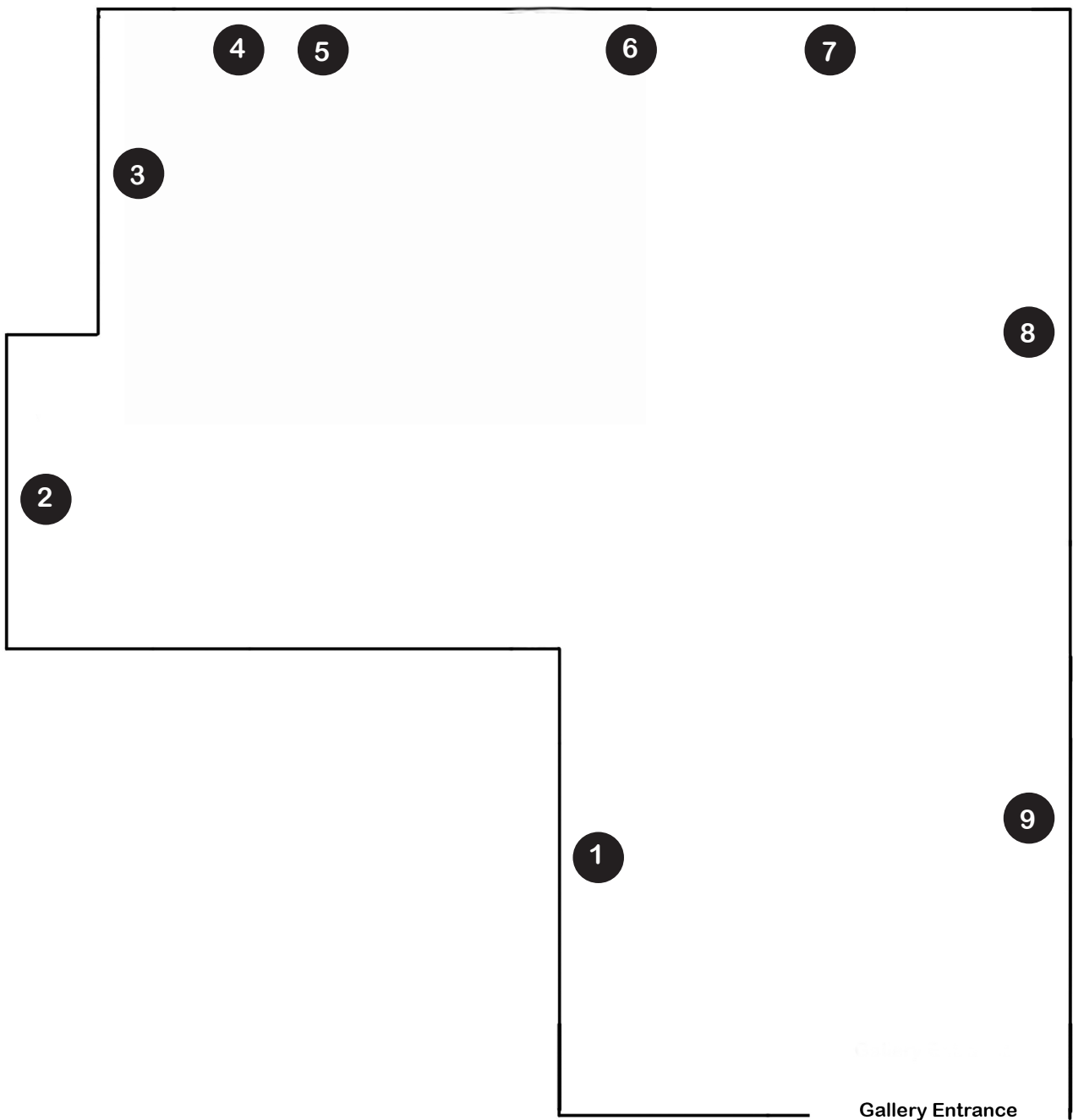


Please see catalogue for biographies and artwork images

Marina **PSAILA**

“I am an artist who uses mixed media to express my themes of dreams, childbirth, nature, identity and religion. I love to create using vibrant colour’s and gestural lines, which depict my world. My inspiration comes from journeys with friends.”

Gallery**25** floor plan



List of Works

- 1 Mothers Day, 2023**
Mixed media, 59.5 x 84cm
\$390.00 (framed)

- 2 Ladies in Waiting 2/2, 2023**
Markers, 84 x 59.5cm
\$390.00 (framed)

- 3 Mother, 2023**
Mixed media, 59.5 x 84cm
\$390.00 (framed)

- 4 Morning After, 2023**
Paint and crayon, 84 x 59.5cm
\$390.00 (framed)

- 5 Self-Portrait, 2022**
Mixed media, 84 x 59.5cm
\$390.00 (framed)

- 6 Agony on a Wednesday Night, 2023**
Mixed media, 84 x 59.5cm
\$390.00 (framed)

- 7 Bosom, 2023**
Mixed media, 84 x 59.5cm
\$390.00 (framed)

- 8 Charity at the Bird Sanctuary, 2022**
Mixed media, 84 x 59.5cm
\$390.00 (framed)

- 9 Photographs of artist in frames**
Not for sale