

MEDIA RELEASE
19 APRIL 2018

THE BALNAVES FOUNDATION SUPPORTS NEW CONTEMPORARY ART SERIES AT THE NGA

The National Gallery of Australia has partnered with The Balnaves Foundation to commission an annual series of intervention art by Australian contemporary artists. Launching with *Maze* on 4 May, the series presents large-scale disruptive artworks by Sarah Contos, as well as virtual reality by Jess Johnson and Simon Ward.

‘By installing work in unexpected spaces as Contos does, or reconceiving of space itself as malleable and full of ‘portals’ as Johnson and Ward have, these artists are creating works that will alter the atmosphere of the NGA, and the way our audiences explore its iconic architectural interiors,’ said Jaklyn Babington, Senior Curator of Contemporary Art.

A huge suspension work by Contos will dominate the NGA Foyer from 4 May with 1980s nostalgic flavour and 1920s flair, while Jess Johnson and Simon Ward create the first virtual reality (VR) interactive world for the national collection.

‘It’s the most ambitious work we’ve ever undertaken,’ said artist Jess Johnson. ‘Never before have we had the space or resources to create this sort of guided, sequential journey with multiple VR experiences.’

‘We are thrilled to partner with the NGA as this partnership captures our commitment to fostering exciting talent and championing the future of the arts in Australia,’ said Hamish Balnaves, General Manager, The Balnaves Foundation.

Balnaves Contemporary Intervention Series: Sarah Contos runs from 4 May to 24 September, NGA Foyer.

Balnaves Contemporary Intervention Series: Jess Johnson and Simon Ward runs from 4 May to 26 August, Contemporary Galleries.

Maze

4 May at 8.00pm

Free. Bookings Essential: <https://bit.ly/2IDNwce>

Food and drinks available

Featuring: Artists Sarah Contos, and Jess Johnson & Simon Ward

Performance by Club Ate

DJs: Corin and Christopher Port (Future Classic /Pieater).

Join us in the shadows for an after-dark, choose-your-own-adventure event with live performances and immersive experiences as this free multi-level party experience transforms NGA spaces into pop-up bars, performance places and spatial experiments.

Maze Party sees cult collective Club Ate exploring queer, spiritual and cultural identities with a flamboyant theatrical bent.

Relax underneath Sarah Contos' cinematic universe, gazing up at unexpected structures of sparkling textile mobiles dripping from the NGA foyer ceiling.

Head to the Contemporary Galleries, strap on a VR headset, and embark on the quest that is Jess Johnson and Simon Ward's immersive 'world within a world', *Terminus*.

Featuring DJ sets from Corin and Christopher Port (Future Classic /Pieater).

SOCIAL MEDIA:

Facebook: @NationalGalleryof Australia

Instagram: @NationalGalleryAus

Twitter: @NatGalleryAus

Hashtag: #BalnavesNGA

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Ashley Zmijewski

Head of Marketing and Communications

National Gallery of Australia

E: ashley.zmijewski@nga.gov.au

T: 02 6240 6641 M: 0413 528 360