

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Eight outstanding artists to receive Australia Council Fellowships

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The Australia Council has announced this year's recipients of its prestigious Fellowships, valued at \$80,000 over two years. Open to established artists, the Fellowships support creative activity and professional development.

Among the eight recipients, Ethio-pop and reggae star Natnael Yimer aka Nhatty Man will collaborate with prominent Australian musicians including Dan Sultan, Paul Kelly, Sampa The Great, and Kutcha Edwards to compose and produce an album and stage show.

Acclaimed First Nations singer songwriter Emma Donovan, will use her First Nations Fellowship to produce a new solo album, featuring songs for children in traditional language.

Other recipients include Prue Lang, who will dedicate her Fellowship to pursuing new ways of reaching audiences through dance.

"This fellowship will enable me to deepen and expand my practice through these new and diverse activities with exceptional dance artists living and working in Australia," she said.

Yu Ouyang receives the Fellowship for Literature following a prolific writing career. He has published 138 books in English and Chinese, and said the Fellowship would allow him to dedicate himself to writing full-time over the next two years focused on a new documentary novel.

Recipient of the visual arts Fellowship, Kate Just, said the Fellowship would sustain and motivate her over the next two years.

"I am deeply grateful for this incredible recognition of my years of practice. As an artist who believes in the power of art to imagine new futures, I will treat this Fellowship as an opportunity to make work that generates hope and change," she said.

Australia Council Executive Director for Arts Investment Alice Nash said:

"Congratulations to the eight recipients of Australia Council Fellowships, who each submitted proposals that are relevant, timely, and will have a significant impact on their next decade of practice and its impact for and with communities. The Fellowships demonstrate the importance of investing in artists at key moments in their careers. We can't wait to see what grows from these Fellowships."

## 2022 Fellowship recipients:

- First Nations: Emma Donovan
- Community Arts and Cultural Development: Sarah Ward
- Dance: Prue Lang
- Emerging and Experimental Arts: Latai Taumoepeau
- Literature: Yu Ouyang
- Music: Natnael Yimer
- Theatre: Nat Randall
- Visual Arts: Kate Just

More information can be found on the Australia Council's [website](#).

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## More information:

### About the Fellowship Recipients:

#### **Natnael Yimer – Music**

Natnael Yimer (Nhatty Man) is an Ethio-pop and reggae star. Working in the music industry for 18 years, he has released 3 albums and performed extensively around the world. He has collaborated and performed with acclaimed musicians. Nhatty pursues a career in music because of the impact it has on his community in Ethiopia and throughout the Diaspora.

Nhatty will use this Fellowship to collaborate with prominent Australian musicians, and to compose and produce an album and stage show. He plans to incorporate new musical styles into his compositions through collaborating with artists Paul Kelly, Sampa the Great, Dan Sultan, Dub FX, Kutcha Edwards, All Day, Memphis LK, Thando and Felix Riebl. Nhatty intends to create an album that will contribute to the creation of an Australian sound, representative of our multicultural identity.

#### **Emma Donovan - First Nations**

Emma Donovan is an acclaimed Indigenous Australian singer and songwriter best known for her work with soul bands, The Putbacks and The Black Arm Band project. She has also toured and recorded with Archie Roach and Ruby Hunter, Spinifex Gum, Christine Anu, Yothu Yindi, Jimmy Little and Paul Kelly among others. On her mother's side, Emma is part of the famed Donovan family of singers of the Gumbaynggirr people, of what is now known as Northern New South Wales. On her Father's side, Emma is of the Yamatji people, of what is now known as Western Australia.

Emma Donovan is set to release a new solo album. Influenced by her upbringing of singing church songs and touring country music with her family band, The Donovans, Emma's new music - which will also include special songs for children in traditional language - will be toured across the small halls of Australia. With over 30 years of writing, recording, and performing, Emma Donovan is set to start her own journey and share the songs of her childhood right through to stories of becoming a mum and losing her own mother. An archival history of Emma Donovan's family will be published, capturing this moment filled with songs, stories, imagery in a beautiful time capsule of this Country's musical past.

#### **Prue Lang - Dance**

After graduating from VCA in Melbourne, Prue joined Meryl Tankard's Australian Dance Theatre touring nationally and internationally. In 1996 Prue moved to France to work with the Choreographic National Centre in Angers (Bouvier/Obadia) and Compagnie Cre-Ange in Paris, as well as creating and facilitating her own independent projects and improvisation events in Paris.

In 1999 she moved to Germany to begin an important and transformative collaboration with William Forsythe as a leading soloist and choreographic collaborator of the Frankfurt Ballet

and The Forsythe Company. In 2005 she began working as an independent choreographer presenting her work in international festivals, theatres and museums throughout the world until 2021.

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, planning for live performances and touring is now uncertain, making this a crucial moment to conceive new and relevant ways to explore dance and reach audiences. She is committed to rethinking what dance can be and how she can enrich, innovate and ensure the future sustainability of Dance within the greater arts ecology.

### **Sarah Ward – Community Arts & Cultural Development**

Sarah Ward is a cabaret artist, actor, teacher, and creative producer. Her passion is in the creation of subversive, radical, political work and her practise is collaborative, focusing on process that creates connection and engages community. She works with themes around mental health, queer visibility, body positivity and disrupting gender stereotypes. Sarah was co-creator of cult hip-hop act Sista She; her best-known work is through her feminist cabaret character Yana Alana.

This Fellowship will allow time for Sarah to focus on the touring of existing work and the creation of new work, whilst creating a work model that positively involves LGBTIQ+ people. The project will address young people, intellectually and neurodiverse people, and Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing communities, building a practise of meaningful exchange and connection. The project will also investigate and implement a strategy for making all performances relaxed in response to rising cases of mental illness in our community.

### **Latai Taumoepeau – Emerging & Experimental Arts**

Latai Taumoepeau is a multi disciplinary body centered faiva artist, whose powerful artistic practice tells the stories of her homelands, the Island Kingdom of Tonga, and her birthplace in the Eora Nation, Sydney. Working in durational performance and documenting it through photographs, she addresses issues of race, class and the female body. In her recent practice, Taumoepeau explores the effects of climate change in the Pacific, probing existing power structures and the looming possibility of dispossession that many island communities face.

After a decade of raising awareness about climate change, Latai imagined a future of urgent adaptation in practice for sustainability. She will slowly prepare for her survey show in 2024 by cataloguing and documenting files and materials related to her works in archives and public collections. In two years, Latai will do a self-led multi-disciplinary training program consisting of somatic practice, community service, horticulture, and deep-sea navigation with her mentor Captain Havea. The Fellowship will experiment with the emergence of new knowledge from old Indigenous knowledge using the logic of faivā - the Tongan body-centered art of organising and performing social duties related to place, the body and environment.

### **Yu Ouyang – Literature**

Yu Ouyang has published 138 books of poetry, fiction, non-fiction, literary translation, and literary criticism in English and Chinese. As a practising poet writing on a daily basis, Yu is an experimentalist, merging genres and languages into new transformations. He has received acclaim in Australia and China.

Yu will use the Fellowship to write a new documentary novel, telling his family story of sixteen grandfathers covering four continents of Asia, Europe, North America, and Australia. The novel will be about how and why Yu came to Australia. He will spend two years writing full-time and researching for the novel.

### **Kate Just – Visual Arts**

Kate Just is a visual artist best known for her inventive and political use of knitting. She also works collaboratively within communities to create large-scale, public art projects that tackle significant social issues including sexual harassment and violence against women. Kate has exhibited extensively in Australia and internationally.

Kate will develop three new exhibitions: a series of knitted pictorial artworks exploring protest signs in the public domain; a participatory artwork exploring the relationship between craft circles, feminism and community building; and an ongoing meditative knitting performance about time, nature, and presence in uncertain times. Kate will also undertake two residencies, produce a book, and develop regional and national touring opportunities.

### **Nat Randall – Theatre**

Nat has extensive experience with contemporary theatre and durational models of performance. Nat's theatre practice, in collaboration with Breckon, is now recognised globally across Europe, Asia and North America. Their practice brings together theatre, performance art and film. Their works focus on the sexual, class and gender politics of emotion, creating forms that express theme through feeling. They create works that are highly conceptual, embodied and accessible.

Nat will use this Fellowship to advance their career as a leading contemporary theatre practitioner and performer. Nat will create 'playbooks' of existing works and a new durational performance. They will also undertake professional and skills development activities, and restructure current presentations of their work in a COVID-19 context.