



MEDIA RELEASE

FOUNTAIN COURT EXHIBITIONS AT PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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IMAGES AVAILABLE FOR USE:

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2 May 2023

Three new exhibitions to see this month as exhibition program kicks off at NSW Parliament House

NSW Parliament House is the oldest-surviving public building in Sydney's CBD and where Australia's first and oldest Parliament continues to sit – so you may be surprised to learn it's also home to a modern exhibition space, where visitors can take in the latest in art and photography while surrounded by the bustle of state politics.

This May, the 2023 program for the unique Fountain Court exhibition space kicks off, with three diverse showcases for visitors to explore. Entry is free, with the Parliament open to the public on weekdays between 9am and 5pm.

First up, visitors are invited to consider the connection between art and medicine with ***Unconditional Stories***, an artistic collaboration between Ballina District Hospital and TAFE NSW Lismore.

"*Unconditional Stories* draws you into a visual exploration of illness and recovery, including the patient/carer experience," says Tracey Beck, a diversional therapist from Ballina District Hospital who helped coordinate the exhibition. "With storytelling at their centre, each artwork has been created by a student from the TAFE's Creative Design and Ideation Faculty in collaboration with a recent inpatient and carer from the hospital's General Medicine and Rehabilitation Medicine wards. The result is a highly personal insight into health tribulations and healing."

Unconditional Stories is being hosted at the Parliament by the Hon Ben Franklin, member of the Legislative Council.

Also on display throughout May are works from Gamilaroi Ularoi artist Lakkari Pitt's ***Wabu*** series, taking pride of place along the Fountain Court's Reconciliation Wall – a space dedicated to sharing the works of Aboriginal artists from across New South Wales.

"*Wabu* is a series of original artworks inspired by the stories that my Baagii (Nan) and her side of the family have passed down to my Guni (Mum), about living on the Namoi river in Walgett," Lakkari says. "My Baagii often told stories of how much she enjoyed growing up on Namoi with her family. The colour palette and imagery in the artworks have been directly inspired by the gums, foliage and patterns of gali (water), and also how being by the river makes us feel."

Lakkari's exhibition is being hosted at the Parliament by the Legislative Council's Emma Hurst.

Together with *Wabu* and *Unconditional Stories*, this month the Fountain Court plays host to 100 powerful portraits from award-winning photojournalist Jacklyn Wagner. Her exhibition ***Through the Heart... A Flood of Fears and Tears*** captures both the stark reality and resilient spirit of Lismore residents affected by 2022's flooding, and is being hosted at Parliament by Member for Lismore Janelle Saffin.

"These images are a testament to the strength of Lismore," Jacklyn says. "The photographs were taken shortly after the flood – capturing a moment in time for people who had lost everything or who had managed to save something, all now needing to start reclaiming their homes and lives."

All three exhibitions are open at NSW Parliament House (6 Macquarie Street, Sydney) until Thursday 25 May 2023. For those unable to visit in person, virtual galleries can be seen on the Parliament's website, via www.bit.ly/events-and-exhibitions.

With new exhibitions appearing in the Fountain Court each month, visit the above link for details of upcoming activities as they become available.

A note about accessing Parliament House:

The Parliament is currently undergoing restoration works, but remains open to the public. Access is to the left of the building, via the security gatehouse. Visitors can follow the signage into the building and take either the stairs or lift to the Fountain Court.

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Interviews with the exhibitors are available. Contact Lauren Monaghan, Director of Communications and Engagement: lauren.monaghan@parliament.nsw.gov.au, 02 9230 2103.