

FOI

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Thursday, 13 February 2025 3:46 PM
To: TODD, Alison
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: URGENT: Venice Biennale TPs [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: Sky News - The Bolt Report - 12022025.pdf; Arts council takes creative approach to racism.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

OFFICIAL

Hi Ali

Draft TPs based on info from brief and the media release by CA for your consideration:

- As the Australian Government's principal arts investment body, Creative Australia's decisions are made at arm's length from the Government, guided by peer and industry assessment.
- The *Creative Australia Act 2023* prevents the Minister of the day from directing Creative Australia in relation to particular grants to artists and arts organisations.
- Creative Australia is the commissioner of the Australia Pavilion and the producer of the Australia at the Venice Biennale project, which incorporates the exhibition within the Pavilion, a suite of professional development programs for Australian creative and cultural workers, and a co-investment program that garners support and advocacy for the project.
- Creative Australia opened an expression of interest for applications for artistic teams to present at Venice Biennale on 27 August 2024 which closed on 8 October 2024.
- The 2026 artistic team was selected based on the advice of a panel of five independent industry advisors including national and international visual arts experts.
- The industry advisors were Mariko Smith (Yuin and Japanese curator), Elaine Chia (arts professional), Wassan Al-Khudhairi (curator of Hawai'i Triennale), Dunja Rmandić (Director Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery) and Anthony Gardner (independent curator and academic).
- A total of six artistic teams were shortlisted in the two-stage open call process
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 - Hayley Millar Baker (artist) with Erin Vink
 - James Nguyen (artist) with Anna Davis
 - Jenna Mayilema Lee (artist) with Tina Baum
 - Mel O'Callaghan (artist) with Tamsin Hong
 - Khaled Sabsabi (artist) with Michael Dagostino

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- On 7 February 2025, Creative Australia announced Khaled Sabsabi as the 43rd artist to present in the Australia Pavilion in the category of National Participation at Venice Biennale 2026. Michael Dagostino has been appointed as the curator for the artistic team.
- Mr Sabsabi is an acclaimed multidisciplinary artist with over 35 years of experience working across art mediums, geographical borders and with communities both in Australia and internationally. His work explores themes of human collectiveness, questions identity politics, and ideology, and sparks thought and dialogue through compelling artistic expression.
- Creative Australia announcement can be found at [Announcing Australia's artist and curator for the 2026 Venice Biennale - Creative Australia](#)

From: Media <media@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Thursday, 13 February 2025 3:00 PM

To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)> [arts.gov.au](mailto:s22(1)(a)(ii)@arts.gov.au); s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)> [arts.gov.au](mailto:s22(1)(a)(ii)@arts.gov.au)

Cc: Media <media@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: FW: RE Venice Biennale [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii)

The MO has started to receive media enquiries about Australia's artistic team for Venice Biennale.

They are seeking any TPs and info we have about the selection process ASAP ideally in the next hour.

Anything pre-cleared would be great in the first instance!

Many thanks,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Media Manager • Media Services • Communication Branch

s22(1)(a)(ii) [infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au)

P +612 s22(1)(a)(ii) • M +61 s22(1)(a)(ii)

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

CONNECTING AUSTRALIANS • ENRICHING COMMUNITIES • EMPOWERING REGIONS

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)> [homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:s22(1)(a)(ii)@homeaffairs.gov.au)

Sent: Thursday, 13 February 2025 2:53 PM

To: Media <media@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)> [infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au)

Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)> [HOMEAFFAIRS.GOV.AU](mailto:s22(1)(a)(ii)@HOMEAFFAIRS.GOV.AU); s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)> [HOMEAFFAIRS.GOV.AU](mailto:s22(1)(a)(ii)@HOMEAFFAIRS.GOV.AU); s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)> [mo.arts.gov.au](mailto:s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.arts.gov.au)

Subject: RE Venice Biennale [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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As discussed s22(1)(a)(ii) please see the attached articles.

And we've had inquiries from the Daily Tele and s47F .

Thanks

s22(1)(a)(ii) (s22(1)(a)(ii))
Media Adviser | she/her
s22(1)(a)(ii) | s22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au

Office of Tony Burke MP

Member for Watson | Minister for Home Affairs | Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs
Minister for Cyber Security | Minister for the Arts | Leader of the House of Representatives

I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters where I live and work.

I pay my respects to their culture, and their Elders past and present.

OFFICIAL

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FOI

From: TODD, Alison
Sent: Thursday, 13 February 2025 4:17 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: ARNOTT, Stephen
Subject: FW: URGENT: Venice Biennale TPs [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: Sky News - The Bolt Report - 12022025.pdf; Arts council takes creative approach to racism.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

OFFICIAL

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii)

I've edited so there are TPs and then background. Ok to send.

Thanks

Ali

- Creative Australia is the commissioner of the Australia Pavilion and the producer of the Australia at the Venice Biennale project.
- Creative Australia's decisions are made at arm's length from the Government, guided by peer and industry assessment.
- Consistent with the requirements of the *Creative Australia Act 2023*, the Minister of the day is prevented from directing Creative Australia in relation to particular grants to artists and arts organisation.
- I respect that decisions about artistic merit should be made by those most qualified to do so.

If required:

- Consistent with the requirements of the *Creative Australia Act 2023*, I was not involved with the selection of the artist.
- I am advised the artist was selected following an open expression of interest process, and the advice of a panel of five independent industry advisors including national and international visual arts experts.

Background

- The *Creative Australia Act 2023* prevents the Minister of the day from directing Creative Australia in relation to particular grants to artists and arts organisations.
- Creative Australia is the commissioner of the Australia Pavilion and the producer of the Australia at the Venice Biennale project, which incorporates the exhibition within the Pavilion, a suite of professional development programs for Australian creative and cultural workers, and a co-investment program that garners support and advocacy for the project.

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From: Media <media@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Thursday, 13 February 2025 3:00 PM

To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)> arts.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)> arts.gov.au

Cc: Media <media@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: FW: RE Venice Biennale [SEC=OFFICIAL]

s22(1)(a)(ii)- duplicate email chain

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FOI

From: Media
Sent: Thursday, 13 February 2025 4:30 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) Media
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii) ; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: RE Venice Biennale [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii)

Here are some suggested points and background, please let us know if you need anything further.

Suggested MO TPs

- Creative Australia is the commissioner of the Australia Pavilion and the producer of the Australia at the Venice Biennale project.
- Creative Australia's decisions are made at arm's length from Government, guided by peer and industry assessment.
- The *Creative Australia Act 2023* prevents the Minister of the day from directing Creative Australia in relation to particular grants to artists and arts organisations.
- Decisions about artistic merit should be made by those most qualified to do so.
- Consistent with the requirements of the *Creative Australia Act 2023*, the Minister was not involved with the selection of the artist.
- The artist was selected following an open expression of interest process, and the advice of a panel of five independent industry advisors including national and international visual arts experts.

Background

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 - Creative Australia announcement can be found at [Announcing Australia's artist and curator for the 2026 Venice Biennale - Creative Australia](#)

ENDS

Cheers,

s22(1)
(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Media Manager • Media Services • Communication Branch

s22(1)(a)(ii) infrastructure.gov.au

P +612 s22(1)(a)(ii) • M +61 s22(1)(a)(ii)

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
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OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@homeaffairs.gov.au>

Sent: Thursday, 13 February 2025 2:53 PM

To: Media <media@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>

Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@HOMEAFFAIRS.GOV.AU>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@HOMEAFFAIRS.GOV.AU>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.arts.gov.au>

Subject: RE Venice Biennale [SEC=OFFICIAL]

s22(1)(a)(ii)- duplicate email chain

s22(1)
(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii)

Released under the Freedom of Information Act 1982 by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

FOI

From: Media
Sent: Thursday, 13 February 2025 4:37 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) Media; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii); TODD, Alison
Subject: RE: URGENT: Venice Biennale TPs [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

OFFICIAL

Sure thing, here's what went to MO:

Suggested MO TPs

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ENDS

s22(1)
(a)(ii)

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@arts.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 13 February 2025 4:36 PM
To: Media <media@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@arts.gov.au>
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@arts.gov.au>; TODD, Alison <Alison.TODD@arts.gov.au>
Subject: RE: URGENT: Venice Biennale TPs [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

HI s22(1)
(a)(ii)

Can we please have the final version to run past Ali Todd, our AS?

Thanks

s22(1)(a)(ii)
M +61 s22(1)(a)(ii)

OFFICIAL

From: Media <media@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 13 February 2025 3:34 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@arts.gov.au>; Media <media@infrastructure.gov.au>
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@arts.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@arts.gov.au>
Subject: RE: URGENT: Venice Biennale TPs [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Excellent thanks s22(1)
(a)(ii) have passed those on to the MO with a couple of minor style tweaks.

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Cheers

s22(1)
(a)(iii)

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@arts.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 13 February 2025 4:23 PM
To: Media <media@infrastructure.gov.au>
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@arts.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@arts.gov.au>
Subject: FW: URGENT: Venice Biennale TPs [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s22(1)
(a)(ii)

Cleared points below

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Sent: Thursday, 13 February 2025 3:00 PM

To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)> arts.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)> arts.gov.au

Cc: Media <media@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: FW: RE Venice Biennale [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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s22(1)(a)(ii)- duplicate email chain

s22(1)
(a)(ii)

s22(1)
(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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FOI

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@creative.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 14 February 2025 10:25 AM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii); s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: TODD, Alison; s22(1)(a)(ii); Adrian Collette
Subject: Statement to media by Khaled Sabsabi
Attachments: Khaled Sabsabi_ Creative Australia drops artist as Venice Biennale entrant.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii) and s22(1)(a)(ii)

Sharing with you for information a statement that the artist has made to the SMH.

Best,
 s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Head of Public Affairs

Office of the CEO

T: +61 02 s22(1)(a)(ii) **M:** +61 s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii) creative.gov.au

Creative Australia

Level 5, 60 Union Street, Pyrmont, NSW
 2009

[contact us](#) | [follow us](#)

creativepartnerships.gov.au

creative.gov.au

We acknowledge the many Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and honour their Elders past and present. We respect their deep enduring connection to their lands, waterways, and surrounding clan groups since time immemorial. We cherish the richness of First Nations Peoples' artistic and cultural expressions

FOI

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Friday, 14 February 2025 5:02 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: IVAIS: Voicemail
Attachments: Voice Message Attached from +s47F - name unavailable; Voice Message Attached from name unavailable +s47F

Wallawani s22(1)(a)(ii)

This voicemail came through to IVAIS at 3:08.

My EL1's have asked that I send it on to yourself for s22(1)(a)(ii)

It is from s47F expressing her disappointment in Tony Burke approach regarding Khaled Sabsabi and Michael Dagostino being pulled from Venice Biennale.

Please let me know if there is somewhere else you would me to send this and any others we may get.

Thanks,
 s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Senior Program Officer • Visual Arts and Design • Creative Industries Branch
 Office for the Arts
 s22(1)(a)(ii) arts.gov.au
 P +61 2 s22(1)(a)
 GPO Box 594 Canberra, ACT 2601



Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
CONNECTING AUSTRALIANS • ENRICHING COMMUNITIES • EMPOWERING REGIONS



Artwork by Mahalia Mabo entitled Connections

*I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet, work and live.
 I recognise and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and communities.
 I pay my respects to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.
 I am a Yuin (Djuwin) person and I pay my respects to my Elders.*

FOI

From: webex_comm@webex.com <postmaster@vmail01-au.bclld.webex.com>
Sent: Friday, 14 February 2025 3:08 PM
To: Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support Program
Subject: Voice Message Attached from +§47F - name unavailable
Attachments: +§47F_20250214_150802.wav

Time: 14 Feb. 2025, 3:07:59 pm

[Click attachment to listen to Voice Message](#)

Please do not reply to this email, as it is sent from an unmonitored address and responses will not be read.

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Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

FOI

From: webex_comm@webex.com <postmaster@vmail01-au.bclld.webex.com>
Sent: Friday, 14 February 2025 3:08 PM
To: Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support Program
Subject: Voice Message Attached from name unavailable + s47F
Attachments: + s47F _20250214_150802.wav



You have a new voicemail

Time: Friday, February 14, 2025 03:07 pm Australian Eastern Daylight Time
From: name unavailable + s47F
To: Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support 8025
Duration: 00:46

To listen to this message, open the attachment.

The Webex Team

Please do not reply to this email, as it is sent from an unmonitored address and responses will not be read.

Need help? [Go to Help center](#)

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