

Katina Davidson Awarded the second Residential Fellowship for First Nations Australian Curator 2024-25 at Kluge-Ruhe

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (June 26, 2024): A new curator will join the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection of the University of Virginia in August for a six-month curatorial residency that will take place over the 2024-25 academic year. Katina Davidson (Kullilli/Yuggera) is Curator of Indigenous Australian Art at [Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art](#) in Brisbane. She curated *mudunama kundana wandaraba jarribirri: Judy Watson*, a career survey of work by the acclaimed Brisbane-based Waanyi artist on view at Queensland Art Gallery through August 11, 2024. Other major exhibitions co-curated by Davidson include *Embodied Knowledge: Queensland Contemporary Art* in 2022-2023 and *Mavis Ngallametta: Show Me the Way to Go Home* in 2020. She previously worked at the State Library of Queensland's *kuril dhagun*, which is a dedicated space for First Nations peoples to gather, celebrate and exhibit culture as well as to access library services, resources, and collections. Davidson continues to work on independent curatorial and writing projects and is also a practicing artist. Her exhibition of small paintings on porcelain, *Inheritance*, is on view at Aboriginal Art Co. in Brisbane June 13 – July 27, 2024.

During her residency, Davidson will be fully integrated into the life of Kluge-Ruhe and the University of Virginia. She will curate an exhibition for the museum's main galleries that focuses on paintings by Spinifex People from Tjuntjuntjara, Western Australia, produced between 2010-2021. Spinifex People left their ancestral homelands when the British began nuclear testing in the Australian desert. They began painting with acrylic on canvas in 1997 as part of their Native Title claim involving the return of their homelands and are supported by [Spinifex Arts Project](#).

The exhibition will be drawn from a significant collection of more than 50 paintings given to Kluge-Ruhe by Gary Brown and Greg Castillo of the University of California at Berkeley, featuring prominent artists such as Lawrence Pennington, Tjaruwa Woods, Patju Presley and Timo Hogan. It will also include large collaborative paintings on loan from exhibition partner [Fondation Opale](#). Located in Lens, Switzerland, Fondation Opale will present an expanded version of the exhibition from December 2026 to April 2027.

As part of the project, Davidson will produce a catalog as well as plan and implement public programs associated with the exhibition.

Reflecting on her upcoming residency Davidson said, "I am very excited and humbled to be able to live and work on the lands of the Monacan Nation while developing an exhibition of artworks by the Tjuntjuntjara community. I truly look forward to this two-way learning opportunity where I have the privilege of being immersed in the Kluge-Ruhe collection, while advocating for an exchange of knowledge between our two continents, particularly our diverse First Nations communities."

She will also help to shape how the museum advances First Nations leadership in exhibitions and programs as a cornerstone of Kluge-Ruhe's [Strategic Plan 2021-2026](#). Director Margo Smith said, "This program is a true collaboration that benefits all. Kluge-Ruhe has much to learn from Katina Davidson's curatorial practice and she will gain insights into how international audiences engage with Indigenous Australian art."

Davidson's residency has been supported by the Australian Government through [Creative Australia](#), its principal arts investment and advisory body, in partnership with QAGOMA.

Creative Australia's Executive Director of First Nations Arts and Culture, Franchesca Cubillo, said "We are delighted to be partnering with the University of Virginia to support Katina Davidson as the second Curatorial Fellow at the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection. Under the First Nations First pillar of the Australian Government's National Cultural Policy, *Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place*, our priorities include investment in workforce development for First Nations Australian artists and creative workers, and the promotion of best practice cultural protocols, and self-determination across arts and cultural organizations. This fellowship delivers on both of these priorities, strengthens the international profile of First Nations Australian arts and culture, and enables the exchange of knowledge and practice between Indigenous communities in both countries."

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