



onespace

Paula Savage

The Grass Tides

6 March – 11 April 2026

The Grass Tides

6 March – 11 April 2026

Exhibition Dates: 6 March – 11 April 2026

Opening Event: Saturday 7 March, 5 – 7pm
Artist Talk, 4 – 5pm with Freja Carmichael

Gallery Hours: Tuesday to Friday, 10am – 5pm, Saturday 12pm – 5pm

Onespace proudly presents *The Grass Tides*, an exhibition by Paula Savage in the Main Gallery. This exhibition, featuring several woven pieces and works on paper is Savage's second exhibition with Onespace gallery. Growing up on Moa Island working the lugger boats with her father and brothers, and with little time to sit around with the old Akas (Aunties), she learned the 'one twist' weaving method herself, through careful observation rather than direct instruction. It remains a constant in her life today. These are the main threads in the weave of Savage's creative output. The prints and weavings presented are a selection of works that mark her development as a senior artist at Moa Arts and a creative force at the top of her game.

For Paula, "The titles of the prints are my interpretation of what I see, put on paper for others to see it too. I imagine putting weaving into a print, using the strokes and wiggles. It's exciting to do these works so that others can see where I'm at. It's another story."



Paula Savage, *TANDOO EM V*, 2026. Monotype screen print on BFK Rives paper, 57 x 38cm. Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.

ARTIST BIO



Photo: Paula Savage. Courtesy of the artist and MOA Arts.

Born in 1982, Paula Savage is a Kala Lagaw Ya-speaking artist from Kubin Community on Moa Island in the near western cluster of the Torres Strait. She is a member of the Serganilgal clan group from the village of Dabu on Moa Island, and the Kaurareg Nation of Muralag and Kiriri.

Paula's career highlights include:

- 2029 - her Nautilus work is also featured at the new Albert Street station as part of Brisbane's Cross River Rail Project – to be launched in 2029
- 2024 and 2026 - included in the William Mora Indigenous Art Centre Program (for Moa Arts) at Melbourne Art Fair
- 2023 - awarded the prestigious Melbourne Design Week Award at the Melbourne Art Fair
- 2020 - recipient of the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair Innovation Award
- 2018 - recipient of the CICA Lucilla Osborne Memorial Fellowship – Emerging Artist Award

Paula has been curated into and exhibited in a number of important exhibitions including:

- 2023 - Cairns Malu Bardthar Dapar (2023) Northside, Cairns, Qld
- 2022 - Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair, Darwin Convention Centre, Darwin, NT
- 2022 - Cairns Indigenous Art Fair, Cairns Convention Centre, Cairns, Qld
- 2022 - WOW Cairns Women's Show, NorthSite Contemporary Arts, Cairns, Qld
- 2022 - Minalar, Onespace, Brisbane, Qld
- 2021 - Tarnanthi Art Fair, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, SA
- 2021 - 150ZK Coming of the Light, Gab Titui Cultural Centre, Thursday Island, Qld
- 2021 - WARWAR: The Art of the Torres Strait, Newcastle Art Gallery, Newcastle, NSW

Paula developed an early interest in art, studying visual and commercial arts during high school. In 2017, she became a member of Ngalmun Lagau Minalar Art Centre (Moa Arts). Her multidisciplinary practice spans weaving, lino printing, tie-dyeing, fabric printing, drawing, carving and jewellery-making. Grounded in her cultural heritage and connection to Country, Savage's practice draws upon traditional knowledge, stories and techniques, whilst reflecting the lived realities that continue to shape everyday life in the Torres Strait Islands.

In weaving and prints, Paula Savage expresses her experience of island life, surrounded and influenced by the sea. Her art is infused with Kala Lagaw Ya traditional knowledge, extended into contemporary art and design. As she says, 'I like to express my art based on our everyday lifestyle, our cultural laws and customs.'¹

Savage was born on Moa Island in 1982 and studied art at high school. However, it was later, in 2017, that she found her way to the Ngalmun Lagau Minaral Art Centre (Moa Arts). In nine years, she has developed a significant following, having been included in the 2024 and 2026 William Mora Indigenous Art Centre Program (for Moa Arts) at Melbourne Art Fair, and receiving an award at Melbourne Design Week in 2023. Her *Nautilus* work is also featured at the new Albert Street station as part of Brisbane's Cross River Rail project.

In *The Grass Tides*, the central place that weaving holds in the broader spectrum of her work is evident. Weaving is an important cultural tradition throughout the Torres Strait, with woven mats integral to major milestones – births, marriages, deaths – and as a constant signifier of culture.

It is not a practice that Savage learnt from others. She taught herself the traditional one twist (or twist weave) technique through observation, and currently mentors other artists at Moa Arts, at times hosting workshops, 'encouraging other mob to come with me. It's very hard to get to my mob, to make them understand what I see. My works are all based on my heritage, the cultural laws and customs we still practise today.'

At Moa Arts, materials are brought in from elsewhere to make baskets due to the environmental and cultural rules that govern access to sites and areas. Savage says, 'I can't touch any materials from the land.' This is a result of differing cultural and social protocols practised by each village on the island – Kubin and St Pauls. Savage's father is from Kubin and her mother is from St Pauls. The protocols Savage follows are drawn from both villages and family lines. Yet a childhood spent on the lugger ships and assisting her father, who was a pearl diver, inform her deep knowledge of the sea and its creatures: 'My baskets and works in other media are mostly inspired by the sea.'

The centre point of this exhibition is Savage's *Anchor*, the largest woven sculptural work she has made to date. Its genesis is in the reef baskets (for which she was awarded the 2023 Melbourne Design Week award). These were inspired by three reefs off the coast at Lag Mua that are crucial for her community. In *Anchor*, she acknowledges the incursion of shipping infrastructure (like anchors) and its potential damage to these reefs (which sustain the crayfish, fish, dugong, turtles and clams that provide food for the islanders). In its conception and spectacular scale, and the woven organic and bulging components that colourfully delineate its structure, she elevates the importance of protection for this fragile reef environment in a way that engages the senses.

These are vibrantly coloured, including decorative shells, with baskets heavily fringed and evocative of the trailing tentacles of these sea creatures. Their strong colours are echoed in the prints, with her colour choice across both media reflecting 'what I see in my head'.

For Savage, 'The titles of the prints are my interpretation of what I see, put on paper for others to see it too. I imagine putting weaving into a print, using the strokes and wiggles. It's exciting to do these works so that others can see where I'm at. It's another story.'

Tightly constructed into seemingly abstract patterns, the prints are colourful evidence of her interest in thinking in three dimensions. *Sideways* and *Sideways II* feature rectangular blocks of colour that move in undulating lines across the picture plane. *Tandoo em* uses layers in different hues to evoke the circular motion also used in the weave. *Mixing* describes her interest in experimenting with colour combinations, while *Dry Time* records the intensity of the seasonal dry period, and its gradual fade as the vegetation adapts to water stresses.

Women have a special role in the Torres Strait in preserving and conveying culture. Moa Art Centre manager James Muller observed that, 'Paula's work embodies a very personal expression of her lived experience that is intentionally complex and whimsical at the same time.'

For Savage, art-making is integral to building her own knowledge and preserving tradition for the future. In the colour and vibrancy of this work her experience of nature and culture and the proximity of the sea are powerfully expressed.

Louise Martin-Chew



Paula Savage, *Cone Shell Basket*, 2026. Woven basket, raffia, seagrass chord, painted seed pods, 23 x 11cm. Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace

¹ Paula Savage, phone interview with the author, Monday 16 February 2026.

WOVEN BASKETS



Photo: Courtesy of the artist and MOA Arts.



Photo: Courtesy of the artist and MOA Arts.

Paula Savage , *Anchor*, 2026

Sea grass, raffia, cotton, shell, hand dyed raffia with commercial, colour fast dyes, 220 x 160cm

\$9,500

Statement:

‘Anchor has a lot of meaning to me. It reminds me of when my father use to talk about back in them days, he always help Pearling TAIO company moving giant anchors and rafts near Horn Island that story inspire me to do one anchor with beautiful colours.’



Paula Savage

Thicky Shell Jellyfish VII, 2026

Woven basket, raffia, seagrass chord, 90 x 50cm

\$1,500

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage

Migi Jellyfish Baskets, 2026

Woven basket, raffia, seagrass chord, 90 x 50cm

\$1,500

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
Basket 1, 2026

Woven basket, raffia, seagrass chord, shells
27 x 45cm

\$1,350

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
Basket 2, 2026

Woven basket, raffia, seagrass chord, shells
27 x 45cm

\$1,350

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage

Basket 3, 2026

Woven basket, raffia, seagrass chord, shells, 26 x 38cm

\$1,250

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
Basket 4, 2026

Woven basket, raffia, seagrass chord, painted
seed pods, 30 x 22cm

\$900

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
Silel Basket, 2026

Woven basket, raffia, seagrass chord, painted
seed pods, 22 x 16cm

\$450

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
Migi Basket 1, 2026

Woven basket, raffia, seagrass chord, 20 x 12cm

\$450

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
Migi Basket 2, 2026

Woven basket, raffia, seagrass chord, 20 x 12cm

\$450

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
Kabar Shell Basket, 2026
Woven basket, raffia, seagrass chord, painted
seed pods, 15 x 12cm

\$400

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
Cone Shell Basket, 2026
Woven basket, raffia, seagrass chord, painted
seed pods, 23 x 11cm

\$400

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.

PRINTS



Paula Savage
MIXING 1, 2026

Monotype screen print on BFK Rives paper.
Image: 40 x 60cm | Paper: 76 x 57cm

\$950

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
MIXING 2, 2026

Monotype screen print on BFK Rives paper.
Image: 40 x 60cm | Paper: 76 x 57cm

\$950

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
DRY TIME 1, 2026

Monotype screen print on BFK Rives paper.
Image: 42 x 30cm | Paper: 76 x 57cm

\$750

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
ORANGE 1, 2026

Monotype screen print on BFK Rives paper.
Image: 42 x 30cm | Paper: 76 x 57cm

\$750

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
ORANGE 2, 2026

Monotype screen print on BFK Rives paper.
Image: 42 x 30cm | Paper: 76 x 57cm

\$750

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
ORANGE 3, 2026

Monotype screen print on BFK Rives paper.
Image: 42 x 30cm | Paper: 76 x 57cm

\$750

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
YARNS 1, 2026

Monotype screen print on BFK Rives paper.
Image: 42 x 30cm | Paper: 76 x 57cm

\$750

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
PURPLE 1, 2026

Monotype screen print on BFK Rives paper.
Image: 42 x 30cm | Paper: 76 x 57cm

\$750

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
SIDE WARDS, 2026

Monotype screen print on BFK Rives paper.
Image: 42 x 30cm | Paper: 76 x 57cm

\$750

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
SIDE WARDS 2, 2026

Monotype screen print on BFK Rives paper.
Image: 42 x 30cm | Paper: 76 x 57cm

\$750

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.

Paula Savage

The Grass Tides

6 March – 11 April 2026



Paula Savage
TANDOO EM II, 2026

Monotype screen print on BFK Rives paper.
Image: 30 x 21cm | Paper: 57 x 38cm

\$500

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
TANDOO EM III, 2026

Monotype screen print on BFK Rives paper.
Image: 30 x 21cm | Paper: 57 x 38cm

\$500

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
TANDOO EM V, 2026

Monotype screen print on BFK Rives paper.
Image: 30 x 21cm | Paper: 57 x 38cm

\$500

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Paula Savage
TANDOO EM VI, 2026

Monotype screen print on BFK Rives paper.
Image: 30 x 21cm | Paper: 57 x 38cm

\$500

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.

Onespace is a Brisbane-based gallery that presents and sells contemporary art, including work by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.

We curate an exhibition program exploring diverse themes and media, showcasing emerging, mid-career and established artists whose works inform, stimulate and challenge. Onespace welcomes you to engage with the artists and artworks we exhibit.

Onespace is uniquely located adjacent to Maiwar (Brisbane river) beneath the Spice Apartments near the Go Between Bridge in South Brisbane. We are proudly surrounded by the dynamic buzz of the Queensland cultural precinct that is significant to this area of Brisbane.

Director, John Stafford: john@onespace.com.au

Director, Jodie Cox: jodie@onespace.com.au

Gallery Manager, Demi Conrad: demi@onespace.com.au

Gallery Assistant, Poppy Saines: poppy@onespace.com.au

Gallery Assistant, Mae Stanton: mae@onespace.com.au

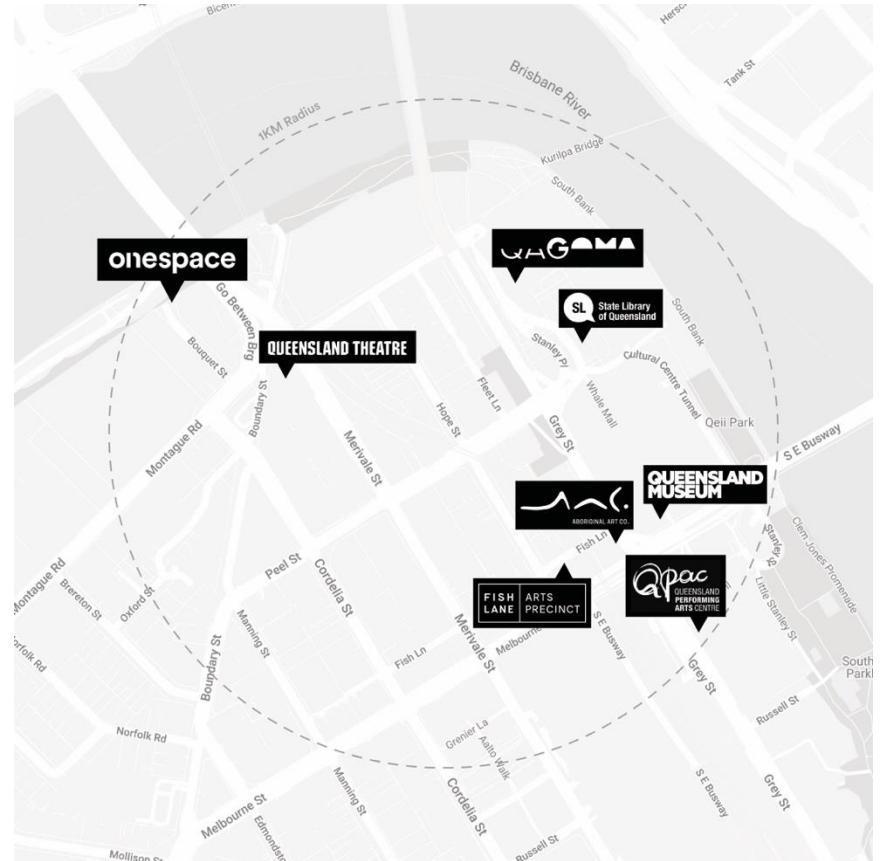
onespace.com.au

[@onespace.au](https://www.instagram.com/onespace.au)

Onespace Gallery Hours:

Tuesday to Friday 10am – 5pm, Saturday 12pm – 5pm

25A Bouquet Street, South Brisbane Q 4101 Australia



Onespace acknowledges the traditional custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to the land, waters, culture and community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.