

Brian Robinson

Cairns Cairns Indigenous Art Fair
Brisbane As Above, So Below
Sydney Sydney Contemporary

9 - 12 July 2026
10 July – 22 August 2026
3 - 6 September 2026

onespace

Artist Statement

In the beginning, the sky was not distant. It leaned close to the sea, where stars moved as ancestral presences, guiding life through pattern, rhythm, and story. The heavens and the ocean mirrored one another—constellations were reflected in coral, and tides echoed the breath of the cosmos.

As Above, So Below brings this ancestral knowing into dialogue with contemporary visual language. The cosmology of Zenadth Kes (Torres Strait) is woven with the pixelated logic of *Space Invaders*, where descending digital forms hover between play, memory, and disruption. These invaders shift meaning—becoming spirits of a coded sky, or echoes of arrival, intrusion, and transformation.

Patterns repeat across worlds: woven designs, reef systems, and digital grids collapse into one another. The rigid geometry of the arcade softens into the fluid mapping of songlines; pixels dissolve into tides. Above and below are no longer separate, but part of a continuous exchange.

Within this space, the viewer is both a witness and participant—held between constellation and current, screen and story.

The body of work suggests that nothing is truly external. The sky lives within the body. The invader becomes part of the pattern. Here, all things—ancestral, digital, earthly, cosmic—are entangled in an unfolding, shared system of reflection.

Caims Indigenous Art Fair

Fair Dates: 9 – 12 July 2026
Opening Event: Thursday 9 July, 4 – 10pm
Artist Talks:

Onespace Gallery, Brisbane Queensland | *As Above, So Below*

Exhibition: 10 July – 22 August 2026
Opening Event: Saturday 18 July, 5 – 7pm | Artist Talk, 4 – 5pm
Gallery Hours: Tuesday to Friday, 10am – 5pm, Saturday 12pm – 5pm

Sydney Contemporary

Fair Dates: 3 – 6 September 2026
VIP Event: Wednesday 2 September, 2pm – 8pm
Art Night: Thursday 3 September, 5:30pm – 9pm

Brian Robinson

Cairns Indigenous Art Fair

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Sydney Contemporary

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Photo: Courtesy of the artist and the Art Gallery of South Australia.

Brian Robinson grew up on Waiben, Thursday Island, a place where horizons are fluid and the boundaries between sea, sky, and spirit dissolve. It is here, in this meeting place of currents and cultures, that his story begins—layered, expansive, and deeply interconnected. His lineage unfolds like a living map: he is a Maluyigal man of the Western Torres Strait, a Wuthathi man of the shimmering silica sands of Shelburne Bay, a descendant of the Dayak peoples of Sarawak and the Villaflor family of the Philippines and carrying also the ancestral echoes of Scotland and England. Within him, these diverse inheritances do not rest quietly—they move, converge, and resonate, forming a dynamic cultural constellation that informs every aspect of his creative life.

Robinson's work inhabits a space where memory, mythology and lived experience converge. The sea, its creatures and the rhythms of Island life provide a rich visual language through which he explores identity, place and cultural continuity. Ancestral beings, marine life and celestial references move fluidly through his compositions, creating works that are at once deeply personal and universally resonant. Through intricate patterning, bold forms and inventive storytelling, he transforms cultural knowledge into dynamic contemporary expressions.

A significant contributor to the cultural landscape of the continent, Robinson is perhaps best known for his major public artworks, including the monumental stainless-steel Woven fish (2003) and Reef guardian (2017) installed along the Cairns Esplanade. These landmark works have become enduring symbols of the region, reflecting both innovation and connection to Country.

Over a career spanning more than three decades, Robinson has exhibited extensively throughout Australia and internationally, including exhibitions in Berlin, Nouméa, Washington DC and New York. His work is held in numerous prestigious collections, including the National Gallery of Australia, National Gallery of Victoria, National Museum of Australia, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Tjibaou Cultural Centre (New Caledonia), Australian National Maritime Museum, and the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection at the University of Virginia, USA.

Robinson's public art commissions are represented exclusively by Onespace.

Brian Robinson, *Floriade 2026*





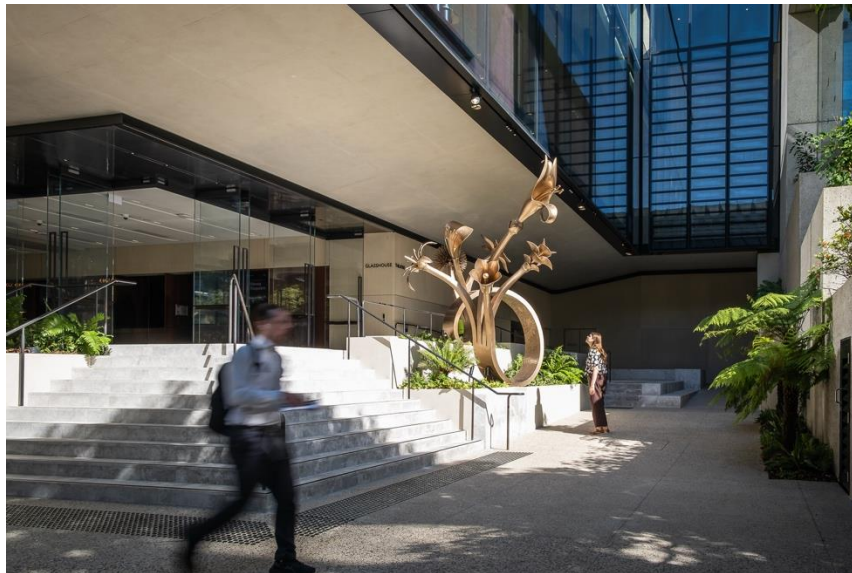
In responding to the materials that comprise the Glasshouse Theatre—taking inspiration from the unique environments of Queensland—Robinson’s stunning ‘Floriata’ piece emulates Queensland’s natural flora of the Seven Watersheds, celebrating its intrinsic connection to First Nations people across the State.

The sculpture is significantly positioned at the entrance of the Glasshouse Theatre. This state-of-the-art venue represents an historical investment in Queensland’s cultural sector, now making QPAC the largest performing arts centre in Australia. QPAC Chief Executive, Rachel Healy, said Brian Robinson is now part of “one of Australia’s biggest and busiest cultural precincts as we move towards the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.”

Interwoven with flowering plants that flourish throughout Queensland, the four-metre-high bronze sculpture takes on a curvilinear form that suggest the key river systems that connect to South Brisbane through the South East, Wallum, Central, Wet Tropics, Murray-Darling, Lake Eyre and Bulloo, and Western Cape and Gulf. Robinson has intricately carved native flora that has sustained First Nations People with vital resources for tens of thousands of years. Such designs are accompanied by Robinson’s recognisable patterning of ancestral mythologies, customs, and the marine ecosystems of the Torres Straits.

This latest major public sculpture for the Queensland Cultural Centre collection was commissioned by Brisbane-based global arts powerhouse, Urban Art Projects (UAP), and outstanding First Nations design agency, Blaklash, who collaborated in curating and fabricating ‘Floriata’ alongside Robinson. This commissioning team ensured that the final sculpture expresses its connection to Country and was fabricated to the highest international standards.

As art consultants on this project, Natasha Smith, the Director of Curatorial at UAP, states that “We were excited to work with Brian again to deliver Floriata, an extraordinary public artwork that embodies the rich heritage of Queensland’s First Nations peoples that will be enjoyed by many audiences for years to come.”



Images: Photos by Rachel See, courtesy of Brian Robinson and UAP | Urban Art Projects.

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Brian Robinson

Abundance of Country Series, 2025-2026

7 works in total, mounted to board.
Installation dimensions: 136 x 512cm

2AP + Edition of 5 (7 prints) | \$20,000

Abundance of Country

Abundance of Country, a series of seven vinylcut prints, unfolds as a living constellation, with each anchored by a flowering presence that carries the voice of its place. The blooms of Kurrajong, Milk Maid, Batwing Coral, Spotted Emu Bush, Sally Wattle, Lemon Aspen, and Cape York Lily rise as markers of time, place, and ancestral continuity. Each plant is not simply depicted but invoked—held within a lineage of knowledge that binds land, water, and sky into a single, breathing system.

Across Queensland's seven culturally significant river systems, these floriate forms drift and gather, mapping a quiet choreography of movement. Like the rivers themselves, they weave across Country, carrying memory in their petals and meaning in their seasonal return.

At the heart of the work, the flower radiates outward—symmetrical, luminous, almost celestial—with its form echoing both botanical life and a cosmic diagram. It becomes a meeting point: a mandala of Country, where knowledge is encoded through pattern, repetition, and rhythm. Surrounding it, fields of stars scatter across a dark expanse, while constellations trace ancestral pathways through the sky. Interwoven among them are forms reminiscent of spacecraft. These references to contemporary mythologies remind us that the act of looking upward, of navigating by stars, continues across time—from ancestral voyaging to imagined futures.

Below and beside this celestial field, shells, seeds, and flowing linework evoke the shoreline and the currents of Sea Country. These elements ground the work, reminding us that the cosmos is not distant; it is reflected in the tide, in the curve of a shell, in the spiral of growth. The terrestrial and the celestial fold into one another.

These flowering plants are also sources of sustenance—quiet providers woven into daily life. Their nectars, seeds, fruits, and roots have long nourished local Aboriginal communities, offering seasonal cues for harvesting and gathering. In their blossoming, they signal not only beauty but also abundance: a time to collect, to share, to sustain. Food, in this sense, is inseparable from story. In this ongoing dialogue with Country, knowledge of when and how to gather is as vital as the nourishment itself.

They hold within them an ancient pharmacopeia as well. Sap, bark, leaves, and roots become vessels of care through practices of ashing, burning, heating, and drying: transformations guided by intimate ecological knowledge.

Yet, the blooms also gesture toward the unseen. They are thresholds—places where spirits pause, where journeys between worlds briefly settle within colour and form. Suspended between the patterned ground and the star-filled sky, the central flower becomes both portal and resting place—a point where spirit, sustenance, and story converge.

Rendered through the tactile precision of vinylcut, *Abundance of Country* is both map and memory—a layered cosmology where flora, constellations, and contemporary symbols coexist. It is an offering that honours the quiet, persistent flourishing of life, where every petal carries a story, every star holds direction, and every flowering marks the enduring presence of Country.

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Abundance of Country: Batwing Coral, 2025-2026

Vinyl-cut printed in black ink from 7 blocks with hand colouring, 60 x 98, 2AP + Edition of 15

\$3,000 (unframed)

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Brian Robinson

Abundance of Country: Milk Maid, 2025-2026

Vinyl-cut printed in black ink from 7 blocks with hand colouring, 98 x 60cm, 2AP + Edition of 15

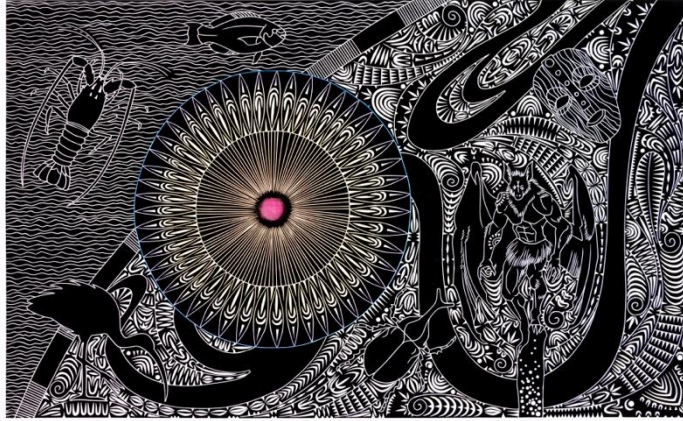
\$3,000 (unframed)

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.

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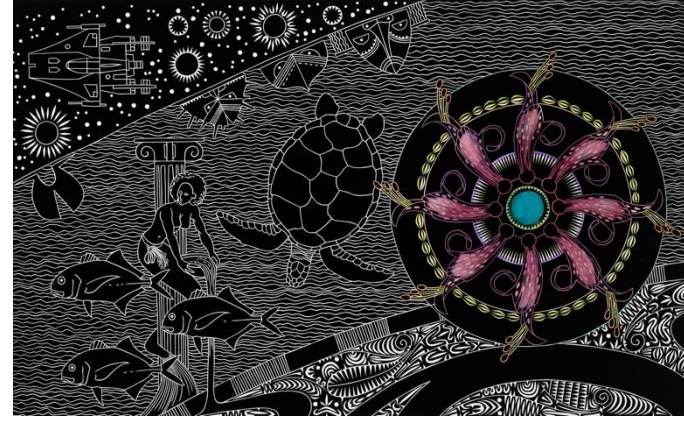
Brian Robinson

Abundance of country: Sally Wattle, 2025-2026

Vinyl-cut printed in black ink from 7 blocks with hand colouring, 60 x 98cm, 2AP + Edition of 15

\$3,000 (unframed)

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Brian Robinson

Abundance of Country: Spotted Emu, 2025-2026

Vinyl-cut printed in black ink from 7 blocks with hand colouring, 60 x 98cm, 2AP + Edition of 15

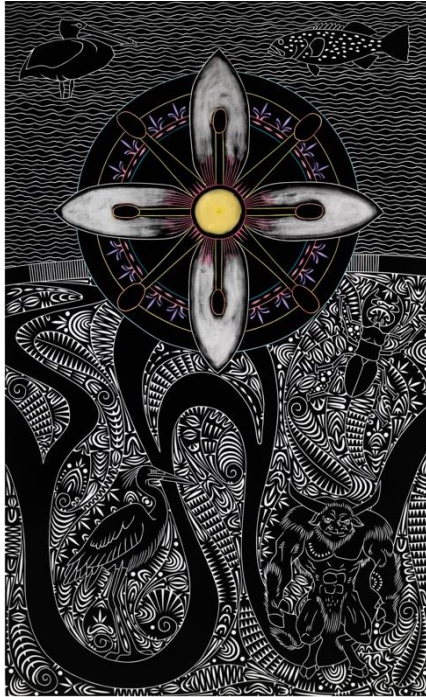
\$3,000 (unframed)

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.

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Abundance of country: Lemon Aspen, 2025-2026

Vinyl-cut printed in black ink from 7 blocks with hand colouring, 98 x 60cm, 2AP + Edition of 15

\$3,000 (unframed)

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Brian Robinson

Abundance of Country: Cape York Lily, 2025-2026

Vinyl-cut printed in black ink from 7 blocks with hand colouring, 60 x 98cm, 2AP + Edition of 15

\$3,000 (unframed)

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.

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Abundance of country: Kurrajong, 2025-2026

Vinyl-cut printed in black ink from 7 blocks with hand colouring, 98 x 60cm, 2AP + Edition of 15

\$3,000 (unframed)

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.

Odyssey: Colonial Encounters in Zenadth Kes

Long before the arrival of European ships on the horizon, the inhabitants of Zenadth Kes (Torres Strait) were master navigators of the sea—the Vikings of the Torres Strait. Guided by the stars, tides, winds and currents, they travelled vast distances across a complex maritime world created by the Zugubal spirits and deities. Between Zey Dagam Dhawdhay (Australia) to the south and Naygay Dagam Dhawdhay (Papua New Guinea) to the north lies a labyrinth of reefs, shoals, and islands where the Coral and Arafura Seas converge. It is one of the most intricate waterways on Earth.

The ancestral beings Sida, Gelam, and Walet shaped this seascape and bestowed upon each island its unique character: the fertility of Mer, the freshwater springs of Erub, and the rugged stone shores of Moa. Their presence remains embedded within the landscape, the sea, and the stories that continue to guide life in Zenadth Kes.

The first recorded European passage through these waters occurred in 1606, when the Spanish navigator Luis Vaes de Torres sailed through the strait that now bears his name. More than 150 years later, Lieutenant James Cook arrived aboard the Endeavour and, in 1770, claimed possession of the eastern coast of Australia for the British Crown. This declaration marked the beginning of profound cultural disruption and the imposition of terra nullius—the false notion that the land belonged to no one.

Odyssey: Colonial Encounters in Zenadth Kes reimagines this turbulent history through a sculptural language that merges Islander cosmology, maritime exploration, and contemporary popular culture.

Rising from a fragmented, pixel-like landscape, the work resembles both a navigational chart and an ancient gateway, with its geometric forms echoing digital maps, coral reefs, and shifting island shorelines. Suspended within the upper structure, a silhouetted European sailing vessel drifts across a field of patterning, symbolising the arrival of foreign powers into an already occupied and interconnected world. Below, a crescent-shaped outrigger canoe emerges from a fractured constellation of black-and-white forms, suggesting the collision of Indigenous and European knowledge systems, navigation traditions, and worldviews.

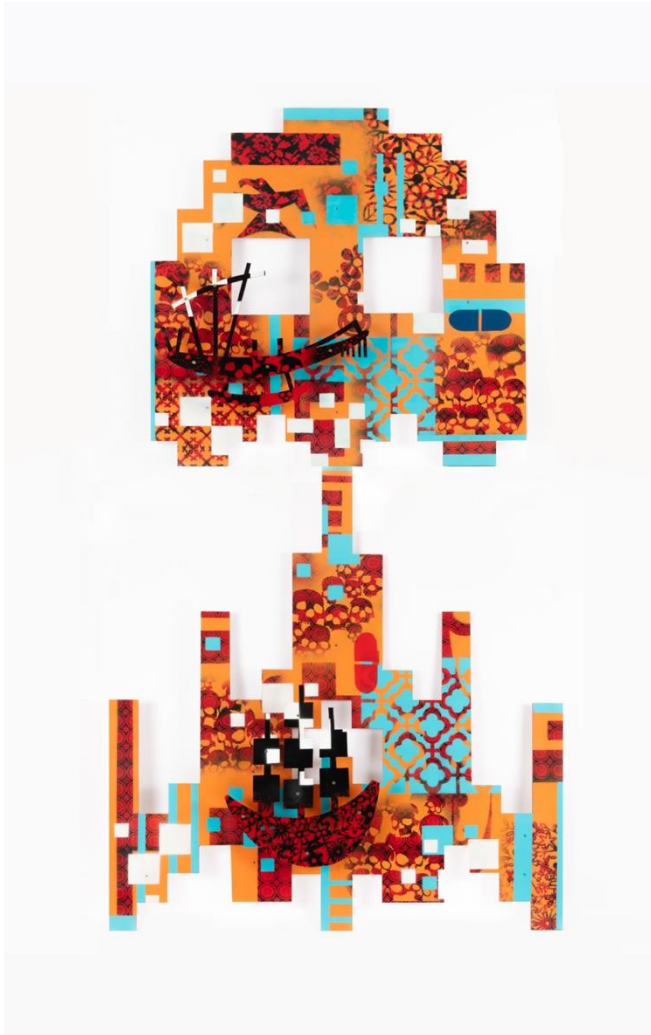
The sculpture unfolds like a visual palimpsest, where history is layered, broken apart, and reconstructed. Its fragmented architecture evokes the incomplete nature of colonial records while simultaneously affirming enduring Islander presence. Bright fields of orange, red, and turquoise pulse like celestial charts and sea currents, connecting the work to the rhythms of Zenadth Kes and the journeys of those who traversed its waters long before colonial maps were drawn.

Part history, part mythology, and part adventure tale, *Odyssey* conjures swashbuckling voyages, pirate legends, and the romance of maritime exploration. Yet, beneath these familiar narratives lies a deeper story—one of resilience, sovereignty, and survival. The work invites viewers to navigate between worlds, tracing a course through contested histories while acknowledging the ancient seafaring traditions that have shaped Zenadth Kes for millennia.

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Odyssey: Colonial encounters in Zenadth Kes, 2025

PVC plastic, enamel spray paint, 238 x 220 x 15cm.

\$12,000

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Mossenson Galleries.

Gliding Across the Cosmos

In *Gliding Across the Cosmos*, the ocean becomes sky and the sky returns to water—an unbroken continuum where ancestral knowledge and imagined futures drift in quiet alignment. Here, stingrays move not only as creatures of Sea Country, but also as celestial voyagers, with their bodies inscribed with minaral— intricate patterns that carry memory, lineage, and the rhythm of generations. These markings are not ornamental; they are language. They speak of tides, of journeys, of the unseen forces that bind spirit to place.

Suspended within this flowing expanse, a familiar form emerges—the silhouette of a snow speeder—echoing the futuristic iconography of Star Wars. Its presence is both unexpected and deliberate, collapsing the distance between Indigenous cosmology and global pop culture. The machine, built for icy terrains in distant galaxies, is reimagined here as a vessel of traversal across cultural space—navigating not snowfields, but currents of time, story, and imagination.

The composition unfolds as a layered cartograph. Lines ripple like currents, or perhaps like constellations stretched across a darkened firmament. The stingrays glide in unison, their forms elongated and fluid, embodying both grace and resilience. They are guardians, messengers, and ancestors—beings that travel thresholds between worlds. Beneath and within them, the minaral patterns pulse with symbolic intensity, encoding ecological knowledge and spiritual resonance, anchoring the work firmly within Zenadth Kes (Torres Strait) ways of seeing and knowing.

The stark contrast of black and white evokes both the night sky and the deep sea—both spaces of mystery, depth, and infinite possibility. Pixel-like edges frame the composition, hinting at digital landscapes and contemporary modes of vision, where ancient knowledge systems intersect with modern technologies. This interplay suggests that cosmology is not static; it evolves, adapts, and reasserts itself across time.

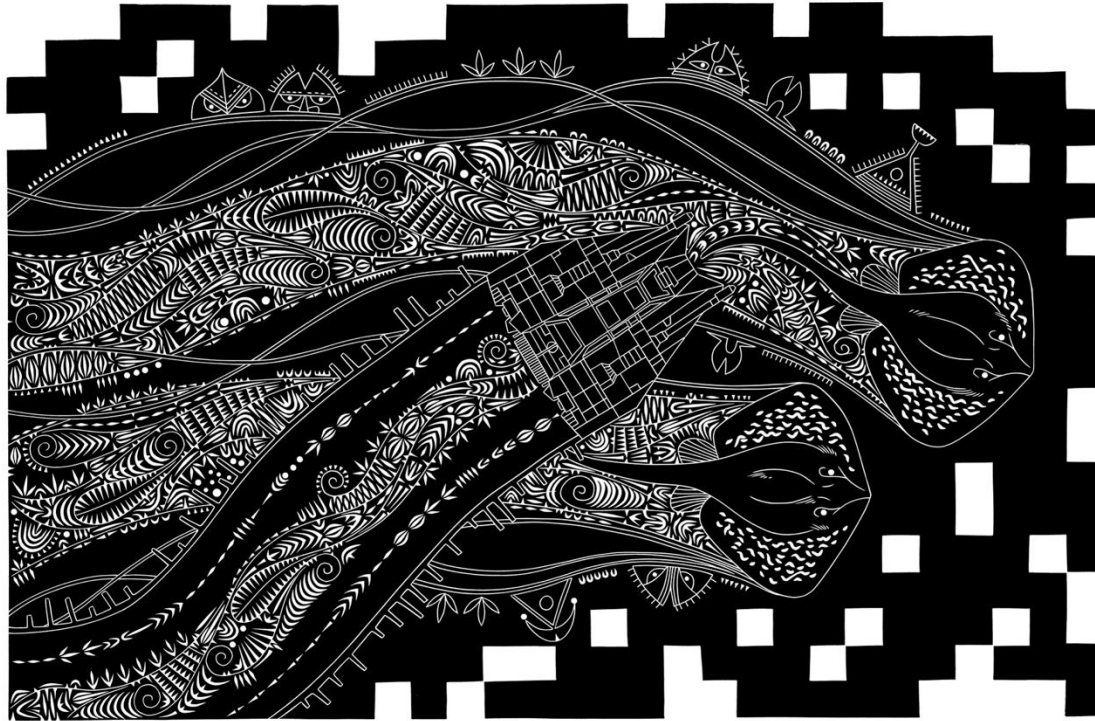
Gliding Across the Cosmos invites viewers into a liminal space—where the terrestrial dissolves into the celestial, where tradition meets speculation, and where the past and future are held in delicate balance. It proposes that navigation is not merely physical, but cultural and spiritual; that to move across the cosmos is also to move through memory.

In this work, the universe is not distant. It is intimate, patterned, and alive—carried within the bodies of stingrays, etched into design, and propelled forward through imagination.

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Brian Robinson

Gliding Across the Cosmos, 2025

Vinylcut printed in black ink from one block, 72 x 110.5cm, 2AP + Edition of 15

\$3,800

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Mossenson Galleries.

Stargate 1 - 3

Ever wonder about the stars above—the circling satellites, the fleeting shadows that slip across the vast black body of space? In the Stargate series, the sky is not distant; it is a threshold, an opening, a passage between realms of knowing. It is both memory and map, a living archive inscribed with the movements of ancestors and the rhythms of Sea Country.

Beneath a canopy of trembling light, across countless cycles of the moon, the people of Zenadth Kes (Torres Strait Islands) endure a presence that is ancient, continuous, and ever-renewing. The Milky Way unfurls not as abstraction but as story; meteors become messages; the phases of the moon mark the pulse of existence. Here, astronomy is not separate from life—it is life, encoded in the heavens and echoed upon the earth and sea below.

For the islanders of Zenadth Kes, the night sky is a guide and a guardian. It charts journeys across shifting tides, reads the breath of the winds, and foretells the turning of seasons. Stars align with currents; constellations mirror the movement of marine life; celestial patterns ripple through ecological cycles. This knowledge, refined over millennia, is not written in books but is carried in bodies—sung, danced, carved, and remembered.

Stargate 1–3 position these cosmologies as both portal and continuum: a way of entering ancestral time while remaining anchored in the present. The works invite the viewer to stand at the threshold where sky meets sea, where reflection becomes revelation. In this space, the ground may transform into the cosmos, and the cosmos into a reflective plane of return—an inversion that echoes the interconnectedness of all things.

The Stargate series draws upon this vast system of collective memory. Symbol and pattern—iconographies of stars, currents, and spirit beings—become vessels of transmission, carrying forward the knowledge of those who understood the universe not as something to conquer, but as something to belong to. These motifs are not merely decorative; they are mnemonic, activating stories of creation, navigation, and transformation.

In *Stargate 1–3*, the celestial is not remote. It is intimate. It is embodied. It is a living doorway through which ancestral knowledge continues to pass—guiding, shaping, and illuminating pathways across time.

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Brian Robinson
Stargate 1, 2025-2026

Screenprint over digital print, 85 x 127.5cm,
2AP + Edition of 5

\$5,500

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Mossenson Galleries.



Brian Robinson
Stargate 2, 2025-2026

Screenprint over digital print, 85 x 153cm,
2AP + Edition of 5

\$6,500

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Mossenson Galleries.

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Brian Robinson

Stargate 3, 2025-2026

Screenprint over digital print, 85 x 212.5cm, 2AP + Edition of 5

\$8,500

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Mossenson Galleries.

Brian Robinson

R&F Aliens in the Arcade

In *R&F: Aliens in the Arcade*, memory glows like a screen in the dim interior of a small island store—R&F Seekee [EF1.1] on Waiben (Thursday Island)—where the hum of everyday life first met the flicker of another universe. This sculptured painting recalls that moment of encounter, when a generation [EF2.1] first stood before the pulsing cabinet of Space Invaders, watching pixelated forms descend like constellations rearranging themselves in real time.

Across the surface of the work, block-like geometric forms—echoing the language of early arcade graphics—hover and cluster in shifting formations. These fragments recall the alien figures of the game, yet here they are transformed. No longer invaders, they become celestial presences, drifting through a field of stars that feels both digital and ancient. They move across the composition like coded constellations, suggesting that even in the earliest gaming technologies, there existed an unconscious echo of cosmological mapping.

Beneath and around these forms, the luminous sweep of mineral patterning unfurls in vibrant pink, tracing a living continuum of Torres Strait Islander knowledge. These intricate designs—spirals, lines, and repeating motifs—evoke currents, winds, and ancestral pathways. They are the original maps, the first navigational systems, long before screens rendered movement in pixels. Set against a cosmic backdrop, these patterns remind us that the night sky has always been read, interpreted, and inhabited.

The layered structure of the work—its sculptural planes rising and receding—mirrors the act of gameplay itself: advancing levels, shifting perspectives, entering deeper into space. Panels of red, blue, and black intersect like portals or thresholds, with each suggesting entry points into different dimensions of experience. At the centre, a circular motif pulses like a portal core, a visual nexus where cultural memory and digital imagination converge.

This artwork proposes a powerful parallel: that the arcade, like the cosmos, is a site of navigation. For those on Zenadth Kes (Torres Strait Islands), the stars guide journeys across Sea Country, marking time, tide, and season. For the young player in the store, the arcade screen offered another kind of navigation: a journey through imagined galaxies, guided by instinct, rhythm, and repetition. Both systems rely on reading patterns, anticipating movement, and understanding one's place within a larger field.

In *R&F: Aliens in the Arcade*, these worlds are not separate. They collapse into one another. The pixel becomes the star. The invader becomes the ancestor. The game becomes ceremony.

What emerges is a reimagining of encounter—not as invasion, but as recognition. The so-called “aliens” are not strangers, but reflections of a long-held understanding: that we are never alone in the universe, and that the sky above Waiben has always been alive with presence, story, and connection.

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Brian Robinson

R&F: Aliens in the arcade 1, 2025

Spray paint on aluminum on board,
60 x 70 x 12cm

\$3,000

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Mossenson Galleries.



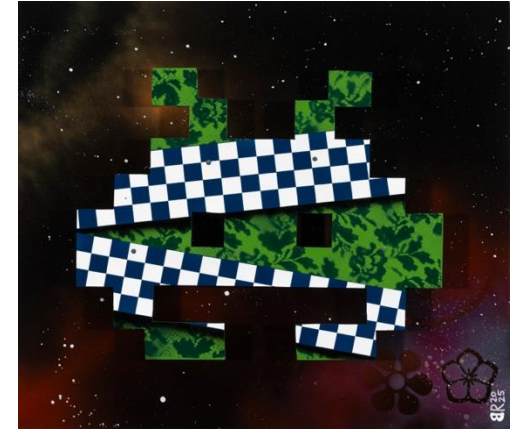
Brian Robinson

R&F: Aliens in the arcade 2, 2025

Spray paint on aluminum on board,
60 x 70 x 12cm

\$3,000

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Mossenson Galleries.



Brian Robinson

R&F: Aliens in the arcade 3, 2025

Spray paint on aluminum on board,
60 x 70 x 12cm

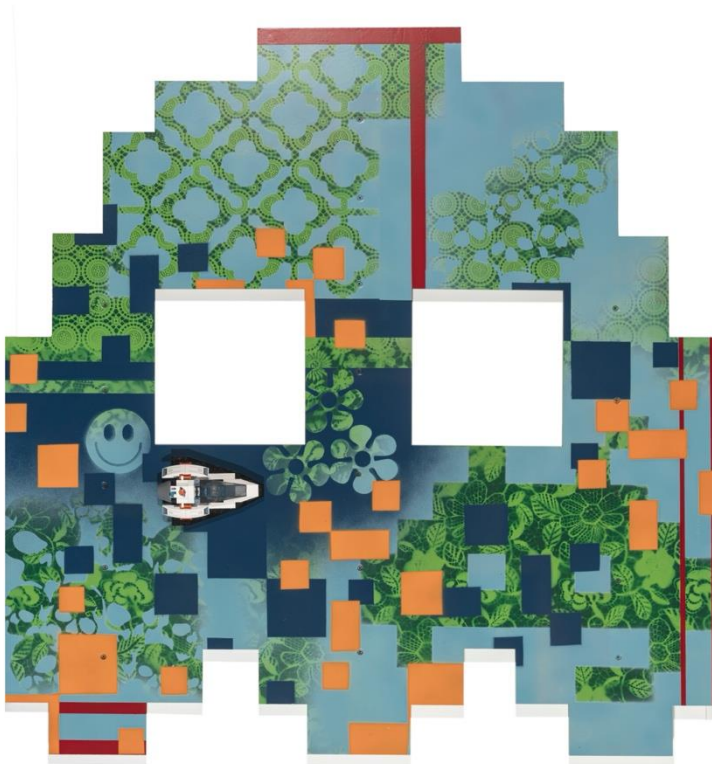
\$3,000

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and Mossenson Galleries.

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Ethereal, 2025

PVC plastic, enamel spray paint and
lego, 100 x 100 x 10cm

\$5,500

Photo: Michael Marzik. Courtesy of the artist and
moss.

Brian Robinson, Floriate (2026)

All sorts of puzzling dance forms and practices, origins, connections with other arts, and relations to religion and magic become clear as soon as one conceives the dance to be neither plastic art nor music, nor a presentation of a story, but a play of Powers made visible.

Brian Robinson's bronze sculpture Floriate (2026) tucks in under the cantilevered roof of the beautiful new Glasshouse Theatre. It is located to one side, visible from the busyness of the main entry, sensitively sited and scaled – protected under the eaves, with flowers on the lower level reaching out toward the sunlight. While the building attracts attention with its 'serpentine rhythm of the veil', Robinson's sculpture also draws people toward its over-sized, burnished golden floral forms. They evoke the colour and ambience of a trophy and echo the warm tones of the ironbark timbers used within the Glasshouse interiors.

Floriate's entwining of influences and incorporation of ideas from all over the world give visual form to the creative unity and acknowledgement of the cultures and longevity of First Nations' peoples that infuse this broader project. Embedded within the work are stories from Queensland's First Nations peoples alongside those from Western iconography and contemporary popular culture.

Water is integral to the conceptual underpinning of both the Glasshouse and Floriate, given its proximity to Maiwar (the Brisbane River). Seven flowers, enlarged replicas of identified blooms, extend from two sides of the sculpture, drawing attention to the Seven Watershed regions that have been defined across the state as riverine ecosystems that sustain discrete and confined environments. The identification of these regions as themes within the Glasshouse Theatre come with attendant custodial responsibilities for First Nations peoples, included in the earliest planning for this facility to

'acknowledge and communicate respect for distinctive spiritual, material and economic relationships with land, water and other resources and connection to traditional laws and customs'. Central to this concept too is the sense that this new performing arts venue for all Queenslanders both represents and extends its welcome to people across the regions.

QPAC Chief Executive Rachel Healy believes that Floriate is 'a powerful statement about the intent of the new theatre as a place for everyone – Queensland's theatre – a place of connection and culture.

Floriate articulates that sentiment visually, exploring the unwavering connection of First Nations culture to Queensland.

The seven blooms – Kurrajong (from the wet tropics), Spotted Emu Bush (Lake Eyre and Bulloo), Lemon Aspen (Central Queensland), Cape York Lily (Western Cape and the gulf), Bat's Wing Coral Tree (south-east Queensland), Sally Wattle (Murray-Darling) and the Milkmaids (Wallum) – were selected by Robinson from many options. 'I looked for flowers that were architecturally interesting from an aesthetic point of view. I looked at the connection with local Aboriginal mob in terms of proximity to each of those watersheds and the flowering plants and trees in those environments. The flora represents sources of food, medicine and timber for weaponry and domestic items. I decided on seven flowers, drawn from flora that connects with those different elements'.

Floriate flows from the ground plane to the higher entry level, with four blooms extending from just above audience eye level and another three that link, via a looped unifying ribbon (that signifies the meandering river systems that criss-cross the State) to the higher level. These varying viewing points allow an intimate connection to the significant detail in the work, as the blooms can be examined from perspectives high and low, close and distant. For Robinson, these flowers are used to 'not only indicate annual abundance but also bring messages and meanings [evoking] places where spirits pause before continuing their journeys to their final resting places'.

The floral forms are integrally bound to each other, connected by the ribbon. A pattern of carved motifs inscribed along its length traverse territory from the cosmos to the garden, tracing Robinson's cultural touchstones and influences from the historical to the imaginary.

At each end, cosmic motifs – the stars, sun and moon, infused with Robinson's understanding of celestial objects and their changing arrangements throughout the year – extend toward the middle section into more densely written motifs about the seasons and their impacts on community life, in his Torres Strait Islands' birthplace and on the mainland. Other images include butterflies, bugs and sea creatures, and then people in their gardens, growing food to sustain life and culture, now and always. Connections to water emerge, with a reference to the iconic Japanese woodblock print *The Great Wave off Kanagawa* by Katsushika Hokusai (1831). Then there are alien spacecraft, robots, rockets, Torres Strait Islander spirit figures, ionic columns (in Greek/Roman mythology, these were the pillars that separated the earth from the heavens), shells, the distinctive and mesmerising mineral pattern, sharks, rays, and the revolutionary Copernicus diagram from 1543 (showing the earth revolving around the sun) and the cosmos beyond. From the stars the 'stems' of the blooms emerge at either end, playing on their *Day of the Triffids*' scale.

For Robinson, *Floriata* expresses 'how I interact with the cosmos, with my sense of the other life forms and aliens who may occupy that space. In one way it searches for those answers beyond comprehension, the idea of the wonderful and the fantastical in our imagination.' Also acknowledged in this flowing pattern is the significant Indigenous knowledge of the heavens, the understanding and awareness of the sky that has informed both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Placement of circles marked 7547MN (Martin Nakata) and 7733SP (Segar Passi) are a reminder of two important, Torres Strait Island-born individuals whose knowledge was acknowledged through naming of asteroids for them.

Healy affirms that 'creating connection to Country and honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures has been a part of the journey of the Glasshouse from the very beginning. The land on which the Glasshouse Theatre sits has been a place of storytelling and meeting for Millenia, and QPAC considers it a privilege to continue sharing stories in this place of gathering.'

Born 1973 on Waiben (Thursday Island), with family connections to Malaysia, the Philippines, and throughout the Torres Strait, Robinson is one of Australia's most experienced and prolific public artists. After early experience as a curator from 1997 to 2010, he has worked as an artist full time, based in Cairns.

From the beginning of his career Robinson has been willing to tackle the many processes required to deliver permanent work of significance and scale. His work plays a part in the embrace of place and space, the conducting of stories both ancient and new into fresh visual opportunities. It is evident throughout Australia, with his public art oeuvre part of the groundswell toward a growing appreciation of Indigenous custodianship and the environmental understandings of this continent that travel alongside First Nations' cultures. He told Tina Baum (Senior Curator, Indigenous Art at Canberra's National Gallery of Australia) in 2017 that, 'My drive as an artist is the creation and conceptualisation of art, and as artists ... we see the world as how it should be and not as it is.'

Floriata may be seen as a continuation of Robinson's many artworks that feature floral blooms. First used in his printmaking to explore the fecundity of flowers in the tropics, Torres Strait seasonal garden cycles and symbolising renewal, regeneration and cultural continuity, since 2013, many of his public artworks and relief forms feature blooms. These may be large and colourful, with often fictional qualities part of their imaginative appeal. He acknowledges 'a firm tongue in my cheek: I find room to explore and play in my work.'

The celestial landscapes he creates don't hesitate to take his audiences into alternate and imagined realms. Guardian figures, mythological creatures and animals, figures from art history, characters from pop culture, astronauts, animals and classical architecture occupy the same ground. This democratic embrace of animals, plants, imagination, religion and global culture reminds me of Chief Seattle's (c.1786–1866) ethic that, 'all things share the same breath – the beast, the tree, the man'.

Robinson's work and its context speak to new understandings – environmental and cultural – through relatable imagery in unexpected places. In Floriate, the power of its placement on this important site offers large audiences at this cultural meeting place significant potential. As Kate Raworth asserts, 'Across cultures and time, it is clear that people have long understood the power of imagery, and its ability to overturn deeply held beliefs. Pictures stick in the mind's eye and wordlessly reshape our view of the world.' Floriate offers a poetic rhythmic unity that opens to all under the cosmos, with its combined elements and resolved aesthetic offering a clear sense of the 'play of Powers made visible'.

Louise Martin-Chew

Suzanne K. Langer, 'Virtual Powers', in Copeland and Cohen (eds), *What is Dance? Readings in Theory and Criticism*, cited in Tammi Gissell, 'A Powerful Pride: Personal Reflections on Dance and Performance of the Torres Strait Islands', in *The Torres Strait Islands*, Queensland Art Gallery of Modern Art/State Library of Queensland/Queensland Museum/Queensland Performing Arts Centre, 2011: 287.

Onespace, *FIRST NATIONS – first place*, QPAC New Performing Arts Venue, Art Strategy, Consultation Draft, 29 March 2021: 27.

Onespace, *FIRST NATIONS – first place*, QPAC New Performing Arts Venue, Art Strategy, Consultation Draft, 29 March 2021: 27.
QPAC Chief Executive Rachel Healy, from speaking notes (QPAC), 24 March 2026.

Brian Robinson, in conversation with the author, 12 March 2026.
Brian Robinson, quoted in *Floriate*, 2026 brass plaque located adjacent to the sculpture, The Glasshouse exterior.

Mineral is a language word used in the western islands of the Torres Strait that means designs or patterns. It comes from traditional Melanesian mark-making originally used in wood and turtle shell carvings and is reinvented in the context of artworks by Torres Strait Islander artists, overlaid on their cultural knowledge and individually interpreted.

The Day of the Triffids is a post-apocalyptic novel by John Wyndham (1951) which has been widely adapted (1963 film, 1981 BBC miniseries and 2009 miniseries). The triffids are oversized 'monster' plants that are intelligent, mobile – and man-eating.

Rachel Healy, Speaking notes, supplied by QPAC, 24 March 2026.
"Brian Robinson", in Baum, Tina, *Defying Empire: 3rd National Indigenous Art Triennial*, National Gallery of Australia, 2017: 109.
Brian Robinson, in conversation with the author, 12 March 2026.

Attributed to Chief Seattle's speech (1854), from a version adapted in 1972 by Ted Perry.

Kate Raworth, *Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st-Century Economist*, Penguin, 2022: 14.

Suzanne K. Langer, 'Virtual Powers', in Copeland and Cohen (eds), *What is Dance? Readings in Theory and Criticism*, cited in Tammi Gissell, 'A Powerful Pride: Personal Reflections on Dance and Performance of the Torres Strait Islands', in *The Torres Strait Islands*, Queensland Art Gallery of Modern Art/State Library of Queensland/Queensland Museum/Queensland Performing Arts Centre, 2011: 287.

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.

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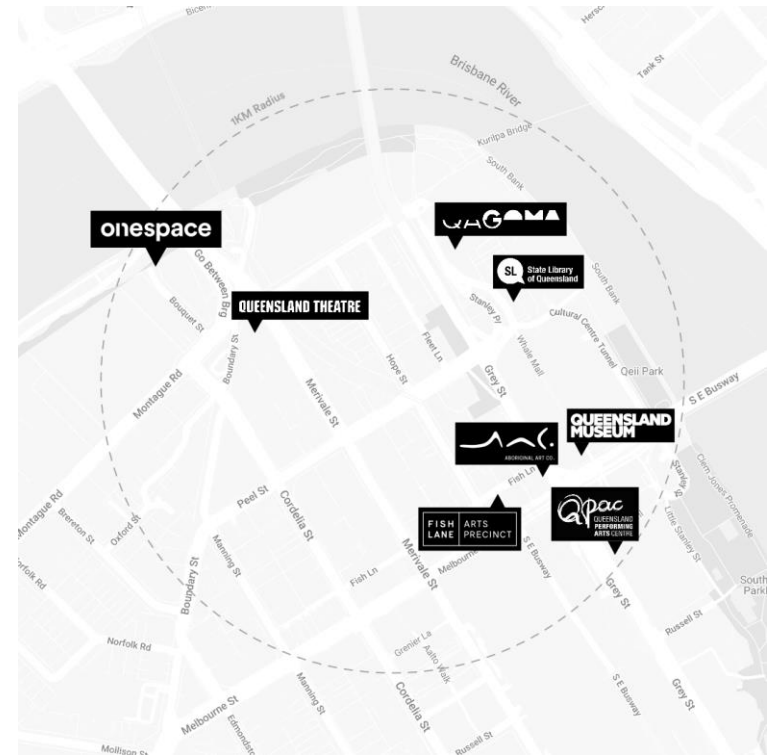
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Onespace Gallery Hours:

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.

Onespace acknowledges Mossenson Galleries as Brian Robinson's representative gallery, excluding public art projects which are managed by Onespace.