

# MEDIA RELEASE



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## Mosman Art Gallery to present first NSW showing of Tracey Moffatt's 2017 Venice Biennale work

Mosman Art Gallery (MAG) is proud to present a solo exhibition by the Brisbane-born, internationally acclaimed artist Tracey Moffatt from **15 June – 25 August 2019**. **Tracey Moffatt: *Body Remembers*** is the first NSW showing of Moffatt's photographic series, *Body Remembers* (2017) and video work, *Vigil* (2017), from her popularly and critically acclaimed 57<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale exhibition.

Curated by Natalie King for the *My Horizon* exhibition, these works were commissioned by Naomi Milgrom AO for the Australia Council for the Arts, Australian Pavilion at the 2017 Venice Biennale. Moffatt was supported in the development of these works by MAG through its 2016-2017 residency program.

With its title inspired by a 19th century poem by Greek poet C.P. Cavafy, *Body Remembers* is part of the artist's ongoing poetic investigations of self and identity. Through a series of ten sepia toned photographs, the series recalls a history that is at once personal and universal—referring to Moffatt's own matrilineal history of domestic servitude and the broader experience of colonisation. These minimalist and highly evocative photographs portray the artist herself as the primary protagonist – a maid from a bygone era – who is seemingly trapped or stranded, on an isolated colonial property. The vast, deserted landscape that surrounds her evoking a dreamlike state and a sense of ambiguity, the landscape itself is both nowhere and unknowable. The images speak to senses of loss, longing, sorrow and gravity in a vexed emotional terrain.

A two-minute video, *Vigil* is the most recent work in Moffatt's ongoing series of riffs on cinematic imagery. It is inspired by the profound shock the artist felt at seeing television news coverage of the December 2010 drowning of dozens of asylum seekers, whose boat ran aground off the coast of Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean. The video juxtaposes two different kinds of imagery: news footage of dilapidated boats that overflow with refugees, and movie close-ups of Hollywood actors who are shown staring through windows. Moffatt has used montage to develop a sense of suspense, absurdity and chaos.

### About the artist

Tracey Moffatt (b. 1960, Brisbane, Australia) studied visual communications at the Queensland College of Art. Since her first solo exhibition at the Australian Centre for Photography in Sydney in 1989, Moffatt has exhibited extensively in museums all over the world. She first gained significant critical acclaim when her short film *Night Cries: A Rural Tragedy* was selected for official competition at the 1990 Cannes Film Festival. Her first feature film, *beDevil*, was also selected for Cannes in 1993. In 1997, she was invited to exhibit in the Aperto section of the Venice Biennale. A major exhibition of Moffatt's work – *Tracey Moffatt: Free-Falling* – was later held at the Dia Center for the Arts in New York in 1997–98, consolidating her international reputation.

Moffatt is the recipient of numerous honours and awards, and her work is held in major international collections across the Asia Pacific, North America, Europe and Scandinavia. Major survey exhibitions of Moffatt's work have been held at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (2003–4), the Hasselblad Centre in Göteborg, Sweden (2004), the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide (2011), the Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane (2014) and the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (2016). In 2006, she had her first retrospective exhibition *Tracey Moffatt: Between Dreams and Reality* in Italy, at Spazio Oberdan, Milan. A solo survey exhibition featuring all seven video montage works at the Museum of Modern Art, New York opened in May 2012. Moffatt has been selected for the Biennales of Gwangju, Prague, São Paulo, Sharjah, Singapore and Sydney.

*Body Remembers* and *Vigil* are drawn from the collection of Neil Balnaves AO. Moffatt is represented by Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney.

*Tracey Moffatt: Body Remembers* will be opened by curator, writer and artist Djon Mundine OAM on Friday 14 June at 6.30pm, and will be accompanied by a series of public programs including tours and a panel discussion.

**Tracey Moffatt: *Body Remembers***

**Where:** MOSMAN ART GALLERY, 1 Art Gallery Way, Mosman 2088  
**On View:** Saturday 15 June – Sunday 25 August 2019  
**Opening Night:** Friday 14 June, 6.30pm  
**Gallery Hours:** Open 7 days, 10am – 5pm (Wednesdays: 10am-8pm). Closed public holidays.  
**Admission:** Free  
[www.mosmangallery.org.au](http://www.mosmangallery.org.au)



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