

Brook Andrew

Symbolic Nature

Opening reception: 23 April 2026, 6-8pm

On view: 23 April - 30 May 2026

Location: Ames Yavuz, 31 Grosvenor Hill, London W1K 3QU

Ames Yavuz is pleased to present Symbolic Nature, an exhibition by Brook Andrew, marking his first presentation with the gallery in London.

Working across collage, sculpture and assemblage, Andrew explores how images, objects and cultural signs accumulate meaning over time and how those meanings shift, dissolve or are reactivated in the present.

Drawing on historical representations blended with his own drawings of Indigenous social and ceremonial life from artist's Wiradjuri Nation and neighbouring Nations, the works re-present and disrupt these inherited images within layered visual environments that question their authority and permanence.

Central to the exhibition is the idea of holding ceremony within both the artwork and the exhibition space. Objects are embedded or enclosed within layered surfaces, sometimes visible, sometimes concealed, introducing an ethics of visibility in which meaning is revealed gradually, in relation to context, care and time.

Throughout the exhibition, Andrew develops a symbolic language of floating eyes, listening ears and celestial forms, alongside references to spiritual iconography and surrealist imagery. These elements act as metaphors for perception and witnessing, while destabilising the historical image.

Andrew incorporates feathers from the Australian magpie, his Wiradjuri totem, as well as those of the wedge-tailed eagle and rosella, alongside echidna quills, ochre and other culturally significant materials. These elements carry familial, spiritual and communal meaning, extending the works beyond image into embodied connection.

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About the artist

Brook Andrew (b.1970, Wiradjuri and Ngunnawal/Australia) has an interdisciplinary practice that centres on Indigenous ways of knowing, cultural sovereignty and the enduring impact of colonial systems, often activating museum collections and public spaces to reframe dominant historical narratives. Drawing on his Wiradjuri mark-making traditions, language and cultural memory, Andrew connects ancestral knowledge with contemporary global conditions.

In 2017, Andrew's importance was recognised with a major solo exhibition, *Brook Andrew: The Right to Offend is Sacred*, at the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Since then, his works have been presented in many significant exhibitions across the world, including *The Stars We Do Not See: Australian Indigenous Art*, touring exhibition, National Gallery of Art, Washington, USA; Denver Art Museum, USA, et al (2025-2028); *I Still Dream of Lost Vocabularies*, Autograph, London, UK (2025); *ARTIST ACTIVIST ARCHIVIST: BERNHARD LÜTHI INVITES*, Foundation Opale, Lens, Switzerland (2024); Sharjah Biennial 15: *Thinking Historically in the Present*, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates (2023); *UN/LEARNING AUSTRALIA*, Seoul Museum of Art, South Korea (2022).

Since the mid-1990s, Andrew has developed a pioneering approach to museum intervention, beginning with *Dispersed Treasures* (1996) at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter. More recently, Andrew has created major projects in collaboration with significant international institutions including the Musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris (2020) and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (2015). These works critically engage archives and collections, foregrounding Indigenous presence and agency within institutional frameworks.

Through his artistic lens, Andrew is Adjunct Curator ngurambang-ayinya (First Nations), Guggenheim Abu Dhabi (2023-ongoing). In his role as Director of Reimagining Museums and Collections at the University of Melbourne (2022-ongoing), he founded BLAK C.O.R.E, a collective driven by First Nations methodologies, research and cultural practices. Andrew was the artistic director of the First Nations and artist-led *NIRIN: the 22nd Biennale of Sydney* (2020). Following this work, he was an international advisor for the Sámi Pavilion at the 59th Venice Biennale (2022).

His works can be found in the collections of: Art Jameel Collection, Dubai (UAE), Kadist Foundation, Paris and San Francisco (USA), National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul (South Korea), Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (Australia), Art Gallery of New South Wales (Australia), the National Gallery of Victoria (Australia), the National Portrait Gallery (Australia), National Gallery of Australia, Queensland Art Gallery (Australia), Art Gallery of South Australia, amongst others.

Andrew lives and works in Naarm (Melbourne), Australia and Medellin, Colombia.

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