

Infinite Gesture

Ames Yavuz

Opening reception: 3 July, 6–8 pm

On view: 3 July – 8 August 2026

Location: Ames Yavuz Sydney, 114 Commonwealth Street Surry Hills NSW

Ames Yavuz with curator Mikala Tai is delighted to announce a mentorship programme, allowing emerging arts workers to expand their curatorial practice. Our inaugural project in this programme sees Mikala Tai mentor Yuna Lee, an emerging curator, producer and writer based on Gadigal and Wangal land: currently working at Arts & Cultural Exchange.

Ames Yavuz is pleased to present *Infinite Gesture*, curated by Mikala Tai and Yuna Lee, with works by Tarik Ahlip, Skye Bakhos, Ali Kazim, Marcos Kueh, Altynai Osmo, Jenny Jia Li van Ratingen.

Infinite Gesture brings together six artists, each continuing distinct and storied artistic, material or philosophical tradition. For some, the act of making is a direct continuation of family lineage: they have watched and learned from elders who worked with the same materials and gestures they employ today. For others, their practice has been shaped through apprenticeship under recognised masters, inheriting artistic forms that have been refined across generations.

Across the works, tradition is not a static archive but a living process. Oral histories, material knowledge and embodied gestures become ways of seeing and inhabiting the world anew. At the same time, these artists reveal history and tradition as mutable and subject to negotiation, loss and reinterpretation. In a world saturated by algorithmic excess, this return to the gesture of the hand rejects our insatiable appetite for novelty in favour of the verifiable real.

Jenny Jia Li van Ratingen's practice sits within the intersection of cultural inheritance and the everyday. This new series expands on her ongoing exploration of the porous and precarious nature of cultural memory, intergenerational exchange and translation. Interrogating the figure of female foo dogs, van Ratingen plays with the ambiguity of these mythical symbols. The female is often represented with an outstretched paw holding the upturned cub in place. This gesture can be read as simultaneously caring and overbearing. Together the works oscillate between states of nurture and control, comfort and burden, longing and distance. These tensions are present within the jelutong wood itself, a key material in van Ratingen's practice. Its malleable timber becomes the ostensibly solid medium through which the mundane, familiar and intimate unravel to convey the complexities of migrant family relationships.

This strategy of ambiguity is central to Tarik Ahlip's practice. Extending his ongoing series of sculptural reliefs composed of plaster, pigment and sand, these works draw on historical reproductions to examine the cultural, aesthetic, and linguistic traces of mercantile exchanges between Australia and West Asia. The diptych might evoke the hinged devotional panels used for private worship during the Middle Ages and Renaissance, or appear as unearthed fragments of a larger historical relic. This

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abstraction opens space where spirituality, migration, faith and ethics are brought under constant revision and rediscovery.

Untitled (2025) forms a part of Ali Kazim's distinguished portraiture practice rooted in the traditional art of Mughal musaviri (miniature) painting. Foregrounding lone figures against monochromatic backgrounds, these portraits create a collective population. Time is inscribed in these works: from Kazim's formal draftsmanship to tiny squirrel-hair brush and watercolour pigment bathing building texture and form through laborious acts of repetition. The resulting soft, diffused quality adds to the enigma of his subjects, who, like Ahlip's sculptures, are suspended in time and perhaps unknowable, allowing viewers to project their own narratives.

If the meticulous layering of pencil and pigment records Kazim's accumulated gestures, each thread marks the duration of making and the persistence of Borneo's craft traditions in Marcos Kueh's textile practice. Traditional Bornean weaving functioned as forms of storytelling, memorialising and myth-making. In *Madonna #1, Madonna #2* and *Madonna #3* (2024), Kueh draws on this tradition to interrogate the visual politics of Southeast Asia by reimagining the figure of the Virgin Mary and the role of religion as a tool of colonial expansion across Southeast Asia. Trained as a graphic designer, the aesthetics of commercial advertising are fused with Sarawakian motifs while incorporating hand-woven techniques into 'modern' industrial textile production. In these "woven billboards", the sacred, commercial and handcrafted are combined to reveal how cultural narratives and displaced identities are constructed, obscured and rewoven.

Translating Kyrgyzstan's nomadic cosmology into contemporary contexts is significant to Altynai Osmo's practice. The *Kyrk Kyz* series (2025) represents the Kyrk Kyz ("Forty Girls" or "Forty Maidens"), a group of forty warrior women considered legendary heroines in Central Asian folklore. They feature in the Epic of Manas, a UNESCO-recognised oral epic dating back to the 18th century detailing the history and mythology of the Kyrgyzstan region through the central warrior-figure Manas. Osmo engages material processes rooted in traditional Kyrgyz nomadic culture such as felting, metal casting and bread-making to provide a counter narrative to the male-dominated accounts of Kyrgyzstan's history. Each mask is meticulously adorned, fused, heat pressed, stamped, embroidered. With each action, Osmo speculates and embeds the foundational role of Kyrgyz feminine strength, courage and independence.

Skye Bakhos draws on Arab folkloric teachings around fish and the mysticism of the sea in *My Friend Angie Told Me of Her Family's Encounters With a Mermaid* (2026). These oral anecdotes, passed between generations, are alchemised as truths and reveal the enduring legacy of such rituals as a means of building values and discipline that might help reshape one's relationship to land and place. Using Arab cultural signifiers such as sunflower seed shells and rosewater, Bakhos returns to ritual and faith as speculative tools for worldbuilding. Like Osmo, folklore is not a relic of the past but a guiding framework through which relationships to the self, place and memory are continually renewed. For Bakhos, becoming involves a constant attunement to what is beyond you.

The artists of *Infinite Gesture* share a deep reverence for life that has been shaped by inherited knowledge, philosophies and traditions. The act of making can be read as a form of monumentalising our material and immaterial relations to land, people and place. Together, the works in the exhibition evoke the infinite gestures that precede and exceed us, tracing the seen and unseen lineages through which identities, histories and worlds are brought into being.

Selected Works



Altynai Osmo, *Aichurek*, 2025, Cupronickel nickel on burnt felt, zircon, handmade Japanese Kyoseishi crinkle paper, organza silk, silver foil, shyryk stitching and chekit burnt bread stamps, raw silk lining, 86 x 80 cm

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Marcos Kueh, *Three Madonnas (#2)*, 2024, Industrial weaving, recycled PET, 8 yarns



Skye Bakhos, *My Friend Angie Told Me of Her Family's Encounters With a Mermaid*, 2026, Sunflower seed seed shells, rose water and pigment on linen, 120 x 210 cm

About the artists

Tarik Ahlip

Tarik Ahlip is an Australian multidisciplinary artist whose practice spans sculpture, film, installation, sound and text. Drawing on a background in architecture, Ahlip creates works that investigate spirituality, ritual, migration and ethics through poetic and cinematic forms. His practice considers how belief systems, religious traditions and philosophical thought shape contemporary understandings of identity, memory and place.

Working across diverse media, Ahlip's works often merge material experimentation with narrative, inviting viewers into contemplative spaces where personal histories intersect with broader cultural and political questions. His recent projects include the acclaimed short film *Paradise*, commissioned by West Space, and solo exhibitions including *Phosphorus* at Verge Gallery, Sydney, and *Kara Toprak* at Schmick Contemporary. Ahlip is currently a Studio Artist at Gertrude Contemporary (2024-2026). In 2026 he was awarded the Blake Art Prize for *On Her Return* (Facial Burns and a Garland of Flowers), recognising his significant contribution to contemporary Australian art.

Skye Bakhos

Skye Bakhos is an artist and researcher living and working on the unceded Gadigal land of the Eora Nation. Her practice explores the playful yet dual-natured essence of Arab folklore, drawing on narratives shaped by the interplay of opposites and the ongoing pursuit of balance. Working across painting, sculpture, and installation, her practice resists fixed form. Instead, it unfolds through processes of world-building, where balance is continually shifting and rebuilding itself through repetition and transformation.

Ali Kazim

Ali Kazim (b.1979, Pattoki. Lives and works in Lahore) creates layered, textured watercolours and ink drawings, primarily of desolate landscapes and figures in isolation. His meticulous brushwork draws upon miniature painting techniques, capturing the finest details, for instance individual strands of hair. Kazim treats landscapes with the same forensic finesse and considers the ancient civilisations that once flourished in Pakistan. Deploying an archaeological approach, he documents ruins and uses clay to create objects seemingly excavated from long-buried cities.

Kazim received his BFA from the National College of Arts, Lahore in 2002 and a MFA from the Slade School of Fine Art, London in 2011. He is Assistant Professor at the National College of Arts, Lahore. His work has been exhibited widely in solo and group shows internationally, including: MK Gallery, Milton Keynes (2023); Al Mureijah Art Spaces, Sharjah (2023); Ishara Art Foundation, Dubai (2023); Deichtorhallen, Hamburg (2022); The Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane (2022); Hinterland, Vienna (2022); Art Sonje Center, Seoul (2022); The Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Oxford (2022); Lahore Biennale 02, Lahore (2020); COMO Museum of Art, Lahore (2019); Karachi Biennale, Karachi (2019); 9th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Brisbane (2018); Lahore Biennale 01, Lahore (2018); Karachi Biennale, Karachi (2017); Office of Contemporary Art Norway, Oslo (2016); Hinterland Galerie, Vienna (2016); Dhaka Art Summit, Dhaka (2023, 2016); Seoul Arts Centre, Hangaram Arts Museum, Seoul (2016/2015); Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw (2015).

Ali Kazim's work forms part of many public collections, including Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Oxford; British Museum, London; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane; Sharjah Art Foundation; Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Marcos Kueh

Marcos Kueh (b. 1995, Sarawak) is a textile artist who has a background in graphic design and advertising, currently living and working in the Netherlands. His practice centres on textiles as a medium for storytelling - drawing from Borneo's ancestral weaving traditions to explore themes of identity, labour, and globalisation.

Growing up in a post-colonial developing country, Kueh has long been engaged with questions of identity and how Malaysia is perceived — whether through colonial depictions in museums or stylised narratives in tourism advertising. The practise of seeking reconciliation on these representations versus his lived experience growing up in Borneo, forms the fundamentals in how he participates and navigates the pressures of modernity and globalisation. He uses weaving to encode contemporary myths from everyday life, just as the ancestors of Borneo did with their dreams and legends before the arrival of written alphabets and writing tools from the West.

Altynai Osmo

Altynai Osmo is a multidisciplinary artist and designer based in Kyrgyzstan and Spain, whose practice examines the intersection of material memory, feminine power, and nomadic cosmology through the lens of Central Asian cultural heritage. Working across painting, sculpture, installation, textile, performance, photography and moving image, Osmo engages traditional materials such as felt, metal, bread, and silver not as craft, but as carriers of encoded histories. These materials—deeply embedded in the social, spiritual, and domestic life of nomadic cultures—become sites through which she interrogates systems of belief, gendered labor, and inherited identity.

Her work draws on mythological and ancestral figures, including Umai, the goddess of fertility, and the Kyrk Kyz, a legendary collective of warrior women, to reframe narratives of femininity beyond patriarchal constructs. Through these figures, Osmo constructs a symbolic language that bridges the cosmic and the intimate, positioning women as central agents in both the spiritual and material continuities of life. Central to her practice is the transformation of traditional techniques into contemporary forms of resistance and reflection. Processes such as felting, metal casting, and bread-making are recontextualized—at times violent, at times ritualistic—to reveal how cultural values are inscribed onto the body and passed across generations. In this way, her works function simultaneously as artifacts, monuments, and living propositions. Oscillating between vulnerability and defiance, Osmo's practice challenges the boundaries between art, craft, and activism. It proposes a reimagining of heritage not as static tradition, but as an evolving, contested space—one that holds the potential for both preservation and transformation. Her work ultimately asks: how do we carry history within us, and how might we reshape it?

Having engaged in numerous international exhibitions, Altynai has been the recipient of prestigious awards, including recognitions like Vogue Young Talents (Italy, 2014), International Contemporary Crafts Biennale (China, 2014), Saga Furs (Netherlands, 2013, 2015), Creative Spark (UK, 2020, 2021), Felt, Fat and Fictions / Joseph Beuys at Goethe Institute Tokyo (Japan, 2021), Soros Foundation Stipend in Art (Kyrgyzstan, 2020, 2023), Arte Laguna Prize Finalist (Italy, 2023), Berlin x Bishkek Art Weeks (Germany, 2023), Larking Dawn fellow at Art Omi (USA, 2023), ArtsLink Fellowship (USA, 2025), and multiple UNESCO Award of Excellence Certificates. Altynai Osmoeva is a member of the World Crafts Council, ArtCity e.V. and the Artists Union of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Her works are in the collections of the Brown University, Art Omi, Francis Greenberger Foundation, Alkanov Foundation and Center of Contemporary Arts and Heritage Felt.

Jenny van Ratingen

Jenny van Ratingen (b. 2001) is a multimedia artist, primarily working with painting and sculpture. Her practice delves into themes from the Everyday, the complexities of intergenerational conflicts and the laborious dynamics found within the home. Drawing from her own Everyday interactions and Chinese-Australian culture, Jenny attempts to explore the ways familial dynamics are inherited and found in domestic life.

Ultimately, through the exploration of artistic labour, imagery and text, Jenny expresses the intersection between shared and personal experience; offering moments of intimacy to the audience within our seemingly mundane, everyday interactions.

About the gallery

Ames Yavuz embraces its diverse cultural background through a strong international focus and perspective. The gallery's vision is underpinned by robust curatorial practices that form the core of our program and foster intercultural discourse on a global scale.

Representing a wide range of multidisciplinary artists across continents, Ames Yavuz aims to challenge, inspire, and reclaim through art. The gallery provides a platform for transformative and compelling artistic voices who bring care and attention to the most urgent conversations of our time, and celebrates storytelling with authenticity, innovation and wit.

For further information on the artists and the works, please contact:
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