

## Sam Cranstoun's *Impossible Conversations* to open at Museum of Brisbane kicking off QPAC International Series 2018 Program

One of Brisbane's most exciting emerging artists, Sam Cranstoun's solo exhibition at Museum of Brisbane, *Impossible Conversations* (10 October 2018 – 31 March 2019), explores cultural identity across centuries and continents in 41 stunning new watercolours.

Leading into the 2018 Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC) International Series Australian premiere season of Italy's famed Teatro alla Scala Ballet Company in November, QPAC and Museum of Brisbane have created a series of *Impossible Conversations*, connecting real people and celebrated figures from Italian history. *Impossible Conversations* is inspired by *Vanity Fair's* biting satirical 1930s series 'Impossible Interviews'.

The *Impossible Conversations* watercolour series emerged from Sam's discussions with nine Brisbane residents about conversations they imagine having with a chosen figure from Italian history. Sam's paintings hover in the space between question and answer, offering glimpses of the conversations through imagery and text, and inviting us to weave our own narratives.

Museum of Brisbane Director Renai Grace said the Museum, in partnership with QPAC, had commissioned Sam to create the exhibition, bringing to life a city-wide celebration of Italian arts and culture as part of Teatro alla Scala Ballet Company's exclusive season in Brisbane at QPAC from 7 – 18 November 2018.

"Earlier this year we asked Brisbane residents to share with us the figure from Italian history that most intrigued them and the questions they would like to ask to better understand this historical figure's life, philosophy and actions," Ms Grace said.

"We were stunned by the response. The individuals who came forward, the characters that interested them and the topics of conversation were extraordinary. We couldn't have scripted more interesting figures or conversations.

"For the *Impossible Conversations* project, the nine Brisbane residents we selected to take part sat down with Sam, writer Mary-Rose MacColl and photographer Jacqueline Bawtree to capture in art, text and image these remarkable individuals and their equally remarkable conversations. The results are both beautiful and deeply moving."

QPAC Chief Executive John Kotzas said *Impossible Conversations* and the broader program of 2018 QPAC International Series events plays a critical role in welcoming Teatro alla Scala to Brisbane as well as attracting visitors to the city to celebrate Italian arts and culture on and off the stage.

"Italian culture has had a profound and lasting legacy internationally, and this is particularly felt in Australia where so many of us share Italian heritage or grew up in communities heavily influenced by Italian immigration after World War II," he said.

"These *Impossible Conversations* are sometimes personal such as Canio Muscillo's talk with his Nonno Michele Romano, sometimes academic such as Sara Capacci's discussion with astronomer Galileo Galilei, but always insightful. In fact, the stories are so compelling we will be featuring the nine 'conversations' in the QPAC Pedestrian Tunnel and in the Official Program as part of the 2018 QPAC International Series city-wide celebrations."

# MUSEUM OF BRISBANE

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## Sam Cranstoun

Recently named one of Queensland's most exciting emerging artists by *Insight* magazine, Sam experiments with incomplete, unusual and ambiguous ways of viewing and participating in history. He has been a finalist for the Archibald Prize twice and was recently announced as one of the 65 artists exhibiting in *The National 2019: New Australian Art* at the Art Gallery of New South Wales (AGNSW), Carriageworks and the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia (MCA) next year.

## The participants and their chosen historical figures

Marie Kathleen Fitzgibbon with film and stage actress Giuletta Masina

Sara Capacci with astronomer and scientist Galileo Galilei

Liana Cantarutti with adventurer and author Giacomo Casanova

Massimo Ficca with poet Dante Alighieri

Kira Boardman with painter and architect Giorgio Vasari

Dominique Rizzo with Saint Agatha, the saint of Sicily

Mihai Romanciuc with politician, journalist and activist Marco Pannella

Jacqueline Bawtree with Baroque painter Artemisia Gentileschi

Canio Muscillo with his Nonno Michele Romano

## Media Contacts

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## Interview, photography and filming opportunities

Museum of Brisbane Director Renai Grace, artist Sam Cranstoun and *Impossible Conversations* project participants are available for interviews, filming and photographs.

High resolution images of Sam Cranstoun's *Impossible Conversations* watercolour series are available on request.

## About the QPAC International Series

Since its inception in 2009, the QPAC International Series has brought some of the world's finest performing arts companies, including Paris Opera Ballet, Bolshoi Ballet, American Ballet Theatre and The Royal Ballet, to perform exclusively in Queensland. The Series is supported by the Queensland Government with funding from Tourism and Events Queensland and has become a highlight on the It's Live! In Queensland major events calendar.

## About Museum of Brisbane

Museum of Brisbane brings our city's vibrant art, culture and history to life through our exhibitions, workshops, tours, talks and children's activities.

Located in City Hall, the Museum is part of the living history of the city, examining how Brisbane and its people change over time and how our individual and collective stories reveal our character and create our identity. We are also the keeper of City Hall's rich heritage, and visitors can experience a bird's eye view of Brisbane from the top of the iconic Clock Tower on one of our popular tours, as well as learn the stories behind City Hall during an insider's tour of the 90-year-old building.

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## MEDIA RELEASE

Museum of Brisbane is an avid supporter of the city's artists, designers and artisans. We are dedicated to transforming their artistic vision into a stunning reality through our exhibitions and artist-in-residence programs. The work of Brisbane's artists, designers and chefs can also be found at MoB Shop which stocks a bespoke range of jewellery, accessories, homewares, design objects, books, artworks and gourmet food.

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