

## **Statement of Commitment to Cultural Diversity and Cultural Safety**

Gertrude is committed to reflecting the social and cultural diversity of our local context within our internal operations, development opportunities and artistic program. This involves creating and embodying a culturally safe working environment for staff, contributing artists and volunteers regardless of cultural background, gender identity, sexuality, income, or disability.

Gertrude recognises that cultural safety is not a fixed experience defined by a singular set of behaviours or actions. Noting that this safety looks different for everybody, and for each project, we will work to support and develop protocols to protect the cultural safety needs of staff, artists and communities. Gertrude sets the expectation that all parties will promote a respectful and reciprocal environment of listening, learning and dialogue.

We encourage individuals to explore and make a personal commitment to embodying and enacting cultural safety guided by the following principles:

- Self-reflection on their own behaviours and practices
- Reduce power differentials through working collectively and with respect
- Initiate and sustain open reciprocal dialogue about cultural experience
- Recognise, comprehend and advance processes of productive decolonisation through acknowledging the role and history of global colonial practices, their impacts and their potential for change
- Ensure awareness of cultural diversities and individual differences.

## **Demonstrating a commitment to First Peoples cultural competency at Gertrude**

Gertrude acknowledges the Wurundjeri people as the traditional owners and custodians of the lands and waters on which we operate. We pay our respects to the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation and their ancestors and Elders – past, present and future.

Gertrude acknowledges the significant role that cultural competency across the organisation plays in the social, emotional, physical, and mental health and wellbeing of First Peoples and communities. Gertrude is committed to embedding culturally safe practices and the ongoing improvement of organisational, operational, and artistic imperatives to reflect this commitment.

First Peoples is used in this document to refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and First Nations artists and communities in the Australian arts and culture sector. Gertrude acknowledges that these broad terms do not necessarily reflect the diversity of identity within and between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups. The organisation understands there is complexity in the use of these words and that some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and groups may not be comfortable with this broad term.

Supported by duty of care protocols that inform, guide and govern the organisation's engagement with all people regardless of cultural background, gender identity, sexuality, income, or disability; Gertrude outlines in this commitment the steps embedded to support and empower First Peoples in leadership, employment or engagement with Gertrude.

In holding cultural safety at the forefront of the organisation's interactions and operations, Gertrude can improve and centre cultural awareness, cultural respect, sensitivity, and self-determination – through

consultation, decision-making and governance – to support meaningful and genuine relationships and partnerships at all levels of the organisation.

## **Gertrude Strategic Plan 2021 to 2024**

The Gertrude Strategic Plan 2021 to 2024 outlines the organisation's vision to be the leading contemporary art organisation in Australia supporting the creation and presentation of new work across its exhibition and studio programs. Ensuring that all artists remain at the very centre of our work, with Gertrude supporting creative career development and contemporary visual art practice as an important contributor in a global network of contemporary arts organisations. A key tenet of this plan is to respect and elevate First Peoples and multicultural perspectives within every aspect of the organisation, including its artistic programs and leadership. Gertrude's core values and mission reflect this approach and continue to be informed by the voices of First Peoples, peers, and the wider arts sector.

## **Artistic Commitment**

Implementing the following initiatives supports improved opportunity for all First Peoples to the programming and artistic development opportunities Gertrude enables and facilitates:

- Continue a commitment to including First Peoples artists in at least 25% of exhibition programming
- Establish fully subsidised space in the two-year Gertrude Studio Program for First Peoples artists. Ensuring that there are a minimum of two First Peoples artists in the program at any given time
- When appropriate, engage and seek cultural community advisement in the development and presentation of specific projects or works.

The cultural safety of audience members onsite and online is prioritised in the following ways:

- Signage indicating the presence of culturally sensitive material
- Acknowledgement or Welcome to Country at the beginning of all formal programming.

## **Operational Commitment**

Gertrude is committed to increasing opportunity for leadership and participation at all levels of the organisation and to taking steps to ensure that the organisation better reflects and represents the diversity of communities that Gertrude works with and in service of. The Directors and Board actively work to embed opportunities for First Peoples, and multicultural artists, to elevate these voices and practices within the organisation. This is a genuine commitment to evolution, recognising that systemic change requires ongoing attention, time and perseverance.

Gertrude is committed to increasing and embedding opportunities for First Peoples in its organisational structure including leadership and employment pathways:

- Embed First Peoples leadership of the organisation through representation on the Board of Directors

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- Promote First Peoples self-determination and cultural safety through a Cultural Competency Working Group consisting of First Peoples Board member(s), First Peoples Studio Artist(s) and an external First Peoples representative
- Support First Peoples-led activities in consultation with the Working Group
- Establish pathways and protocols for First Peoples employment in the organisation
- Undertake Cultural Safety Training for staff, board and studio artists.

## **Note**

Gertrude wishes to acknowledge that this is a living document. As protocols evolve and the organisation's competency matures this document will evolve to recognise these shifts.