



MEDIA RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA

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Mel O'Callaghan: Ensemble

NGV Australia at Federation Square | 17 November 2017 – 12 March 2018 | Free entry



The human body is pushed to its limits in Australian artist Mel O'Callaghan's powerful seven-minute video work *Ensemble*. Exploring the idea of resilience in the face of violence, *Ensemble* features one man pitted against the visceral force of a jet of water.

Born in Sydney and currently residing in Paris, O'Callaghan's diverse and dynamic practice spans painting, film, installation and performance. Prior to its Australian premiere at NGV Australia, this large-scale, silent video installation was shown at the Centre Pompidou, in both Paris and Malaga in 2016, and at the Institut d'Art Contemporain Villeurbanne/Rhône-Alpes in Lyon, France in 2016.

Recently acquired by the NGV, the work is an expansive two channel video and is projected over a 10-metre-wide space. Using two frames, O'Callaghan isolates her subject in one and his opponents in the another. As her subject begins to walk towards the uniformed men holding the fire hose, O'Callaghan suggests that he will cross this physical and symbolic break between the frames. Through this act of struggle, triumph and then retreat, O'Callaghan encourages her audience to consider how they too may overcome their own obstacles.

Tony Ellwood, Director, NGV said, '*Ensemble* is a representation of strength, adversity and persistence. It encourages a personal contemplation of social and political contexts through imagery that will stay with visitors long after they've left the Gallery.'

Mel O'Callaghan: Ensemble is one of five solo exhibitions by leading Australian artists for NGV Australia's 2017-18 summer program. *Ensemble* will be on display at the Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia at Federation Square, Melbourne from 17 November 2017 – 12 March 2018. Entry is free. Further information is available at NGV.MELBOURNE.

MAJOR PARTNER



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PROGRAMS

ARTIST TALK

Saturday 18 November, 1.30pm – 2.00pm

Paris-based, Australian contemporary artist Mel O'Callaghan introduces her major video installation *Ensemble*, premiering in Australia at the NGV. Mel will share insights into her work on display in conversation with exhibition curator Jane Devery.

Speakers: Mel O'Callaghan and Jane Devery, Curator, Contemporary Art, NGV

Cost: Free

Venue: Exhibition space, Level 3, NGV Australia

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Image caption:

Mel O'Callaghan, still from *Ensemble* 2013, 2 channel colour HD video, silent, 7 min 15 sec, National Gallery of Victoria, purchased, Victorian Foundation for Living Australian Artists, 2017.