

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Celebrating the recipients of the 2021 National Arts and Disability Awards

Wednesday 24 November 2021

Georgia Scott, Timothy Cook and Eliza Hull are the recipients of this year's National Arts and Disability Awards, delivered by the Australia Council for the Arts and Arts Access Australia.

The national awards recognise artists and arts workers who have made an outstanding contribution to the artistic and cultural life of the nation.

Sydney-based composer Georgia Scott, who receives the award for a young emerging artist, has already achieved considerable success within Australia and internationally. She is a strong advocate for gender equity and challenging disability discrimination.

The award for an established artist is awarded to First Nations NT-based artist Timothy Cook, one of the Tiwi Islands most decorated living artists, who has exhibited his work nationally and internationally and is inspiring a new generation of artists.

Singer-songwriter Eliza Hull receives the Arts Access Australian National Leadership Award. Eliza is a contemporary musician, audio producer and disability activist based in regional Victoria.

Australia Council CEO Adrian Collette AM said:

“We are delighted to recognise these three wonderful artists – who each in their own way demonstrate the power of the arts to connect us and to change lives. The awards are part of our ongoing commitment to ensuring all Australians can access and benefit from participation in arts and culture.”

“We are also pleased to confirm our continued investment of almost \$1 million over the next three years to support sustainable careers and celebrate the achievements of artists with disability through the National Arts and Disability Awards, Mentoring Initiatives, as well as a new fellowship for d/Deaf and Disabled artists, and to continue our partnership with Arts Access Australia.”

Arts Access Australia CEO Matthew Hall said:

“The National Arts and Disability Awards recognise and celebrate the talents of Australian d/Deaf and disabled artists, and the vibrant and critically important contribution we make to Australian culture.

Again in 2021, Arts Access Australia is delighted to present (with generous support of the Feilman Foundation) this year's National Leadership Award.

If we are to see more opportunities for artists with disability, we need more people with disability in positions of leadership. The Award is a key part of our work in creating the opportunities for this to happen. It provides \$10,000 and other support to the recipient to develop leadership skills to realise their leadership ambitions”.

This is the third year the awards have been held. Past recipients of awards include Gaelle Mellis (2020), Emily Crockford (2020), Abbie Madden (2020), Janice Florence (2019), Dion Beasley (2019) and Madeline Little (2019).

### Recipients:

#### **Georgia Scott (NSW)**

Australia Council's National Arts and Disability Award (Young Artist) (\$20,000).

#### **Timothy Cook (NT)**

Australia Council's National Arts and Disability Award (Established Artist) (\$50,000).

#### **Eliza Hull (VIC)**

Arts Access Australia's National Leadership Award (\$10,000).

The awards will be presented during an accessible online event from 2pm AEDT today (Wednesday November 24) which is being held in the lead up to the International Day of People with Disability on December 3.

The event will be Auslan interpreted, captioned and audio described.

More information is available on our [website](#).

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## More information

### GEORGIA SCOTT (NSW)

Georgia Scott is one of the outstanding composers of her generation as attested to by numerous high-profile commissions and performances here and internationally. She is part of the new leadership in Australian art music advocating for gender equity in a field notoriously inhospitable to women and she extends that advocacy to speak up about discrimination around ableism. Georgia, who lives with cerebral palsy, has used her work and artistic practice as a platform to critique ableist norms and offer innovative expressive worlds from more diverse perspectives. She uses music as a tool to lead a broad range of audiences into discussion around the representation and roles for people with disabilities both in the arts and more broadly.

Her opera, 'Her Dark Marauder', finalist in the 2021 APRA AMC Art Music Awards for Dramatic Work of the Year, uses the aesthetic of the poetry of Sylvia Plath as a lens through which to explore the representation and stigmatisation of women with psychosocial disabilities both onstage and in society. Composed for the Sydney Chamber Opera, each section of this work critiques a different trope commonly employed by writers when devising characters with disabilities for the stage.

Georgia has also used music to engage international audiences in discussions around disability. She has presented her work to students and faculty at both Harvard and Columbia Universities and 'My3LiNAti0nS', written for solo flute and performed in New York City in 2019, highlights the notion of disability as a societal construct and celebrates the unique perspective that comes from lived disability.

Georgia also uses her music to call into question the origins of disability, particularly the notion that physical disability is a manifestation of an evil soul, still reinforced in the depiction of so many of the villains of children's literature. Her orchestral work, 'The Monstrous Birth of the Woman Machine' written for the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, aims to positively reclaim the title of 'Monster', exploring the intersection between human and machine and striving to overturn the 19th-century notions of the origins of disability that still colour societal views to this day.

Georgia has composed for many of Australia's foremost ensembles and companies and is committed to extending these opportunities to more diverse practitioners through her increasing profile and activism in the art music world. In the last five years, she has worked with Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Chamber Opera, Sydney Symphony Orchestra Fellows, The Australian Ballet, Moorambilla Voices, The Australian World Orchestra, Gondwana Junior and West Australian Youth Orchestra as the recipient of the 2020 Carol Day award. In 2022 she will be working with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra Fellows as part of their 50 Fanfares Program, acclaimed Australian cellist Christopher Pidcock, and the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra as part of their

Australian Composers' School. Internationally, Georgia has worked with flautist Claire Chase and the Janáček Philharmonic Orchestra.

## TIMOTHY COOK (NT)

*“Japarra is the moon – it also means Moonman. He is important to the Tiwi people, they know. Japalinga means stars.”*

*“I like painting for culture way – Kulama – that means painting culture. We teach culture. Kulama also mean yam – they eat that one, they get it from the ground and eat it. Kulama is ceremony where they yoi [dance].”*

*“I paint Japarra, Kulama and Japalinga.”*

*“I will take a painting to heaven so my mother will recognise me.” – Timothy Cook*

Timothy Cook is one of the Tiwi Islands most decorated living artists. His contributions to art making on the islands is reaffirmed by his national and international successes as a painter and spokesperson for the Tiwi people. Coming up through the *Ngawa Mantawi* (Our Friends) disability support program established at Jilamara Arts and Crafts in the 1990s, Timothy has fulfilled the ambitions of the original program in establishing a significant contemporary art career through working at the centre. He continues to redefine the limitless possibilities of working as a professional artist with support needs, carving a pathway for future generations of young Tiwi and first nations people with and without special needs.

In addition to a prolific exhibition history around Australia, New Zealand, North America and Europe, he has also been curated in many major national outcomes. These include the 7th Asia Pacific Triennale at QAGoMA in Queensland, the 12th Adelaide Biennale of Art at the South Australian Art Gallery (SAAG), *TIWI*: a major retrospective of Tiwi Art at the National Gallery of Victoria, *Being Tiwi*: a nationally touring exhibition debuted at the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, *The World is not a Foreign Land* at Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne and an upcoming project with the Seoul Museum of Art (SeMA).

He has been shortlisted for the Blake Prize, the Wynne Prize, Hadley’s Art Prize, the King and Wood Malleson Contemporary Indigenous Art Prize, the West Australian Premiers Indigenous Art Award and Hazelhurst Works on Paper. In 2020 he received a special commendation and acquisition for the National Works on Paper Award at Mornington Regional Gallery and was the recipient of the 29th Telstra NATSIA Award in 2012.

Timothy’s work is held in many major public and private collections around the world, these include Fondation Opale in Switzerland, Aboriginal Art Museum in the Netherlands, Musee du Quai Branly in France, the National Gallery of Australia and Victoria, the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Queensland Art Gallery, Western Australian Art Gallery, the Wesfarmers Collection, Artbank and many more.

Alongside many exhibition catalogues and periodical essays, Timothy is also the subject of major publications including *Timothy Cook: Dancing with the Moon* by Seva Frangos in 2015 and Jennifer Isaacs *TIWI: Art, History, Culture* in 2012.

In addition to all these career successes, Timothy has become an example – in the remote community of Milikapiti and the Tiwis more broadly – of what can be achieved by a person with diverse support needs. He is celebrated locally for his success around the world and has inspired a new generation of artists working at Jilamara Arts and Crafts who identify as having a disability. These include emerging artists such as Johnathon World Peace Bush and Dino Wilson, as well as more established artists such as Conrad Tipungwuti and Brian Farmer. As an artist, he is completely adaptable and sets an amazing example for these other artists. Alongside painting he has made many edition prints, textile designs for designer fashion garments and collaborated in major film and photographic projects here at the art centre – including YOYI (dance) 2019 an artist-led four-channel projection artwork depicting artists performing their Tiwi totem on Country.

Timothy embodies the visual knowledge of the *wulimawi*, or as the Tiwi refer to them in English “the old people”. His Kulama (coming of age yam ceremony) designs embody the visual language of the Tiwi and are part of a living culture that did not have written text prior to colonisation. One of the great successes of Timothy’s artwork is its ability to commensurate the old and new in a way that celebrates long-standing cultural designs and symbols as contemporary artwork.

### **Eliza Hull (VIC)**

Eliza Hull is a contemporary musician, audio producer and disability activist based in regional Victoria. Her music has been described as ‘stirring, captivating and heartfelt.’

Her compositions have been used in ABC KIDS TV episode ‘And Then Something Changed,’ ABC ‘The Heights’ and American TV shows ‘Awkward,’ ‘Teen Wolf’ and ‘Saving Hope.’ Her music has been played on radio nationally and internationally including on ABC, RN, BBC and triple j.

Eliza is a proud disabled woman, with a physical condition ‘Charcot Marie Tooth.’ She is a disability advocate within the contemporary music space, and has performed at ABILITY Fest, and spoken at the music conference CHANGES advocating for further accessibility for disabled musicians. She recently produced the Isolaid Festival ‘Accessible All Areas’ featuring disabled musicians from all around the world.

She is also an audio producer and produced ‘We’ve Got This’ about parenting with a disability for Radio National and ABC LIFE, this series is now being turned into a book. Eliza also recently wrote and produced ‘And Then Something Changed’ for ABC ME about being a child with a disability.

She was recently nominated for the Brenda Gabe Disability award and the National Disability Awards in 2019 for her involvement in the Arts and awarded the APRA mentorship for women in music. She is currently working on a new EP. Her most recent writing was published in 'Growing Up Disabled' an anthology published by Black Inc & she is writing 'We've Got This' about parenting with a disability, which will also be published through Black Inc and feature disabled parents from all around Australia.

## Background

### About the work of the Australia Council with the arts and disability sector

The Australia Council believes that art is for everyone, and that Australians living with disability have the right to enjoy, benefit from and contribute to the arts and cultural life of Australia. Disability in the arts offers excellence and artistry, unique perspectives and lived experiences, and transformative experiences for audiences and communities.

The Australia Council supports the arts and disability sector through all its activities, and for many years has also delivered strategic funding initiatives in this sector, designed to increase access to the Council's support, build sector capacity and sustainability, and celebrate artistic excellence. The Council also produces research which highlights the barriers and disparities which still exist for people with disability across arts practice, employment, education, training, engagement and participation.

### About Arts Access Australia

Arts Access Australia (AAA) is the national peak body for arts and disability in Australia. AAA works to increase national and international opportunities and access to the arts for people with disability as artists, arts-workers, participants and audiences.

Established in 1992, AAA is a disability-led company limited by guarantee. The CEO and at least 50% of its Board Members identify as a person with disability. AAA is a non-profit, member-supported organisation. Its members include state-based arts and disability organisations, individual artists, arts-workers and arts leaders with disability, and others within the wider arts and cultural sector. Website: [www.artsaccessaustralia.org](http://www.artsaccessaustralia.org)

### Definition of disability

People with disability are diverse and are not defined by their disability. There is no single definition or way of capturing such complex and multidimensional experiences.

The Australia Council embraces the social model of disability, which distinguishes between impairment of the person, and the barriers in society that are disabling. These can include attitudes, discrimination, or the physical environment. This definition includes mental health. However, not all people who experience a mental health condition identify with disability.

The term 'disability' can also include people who are d/Deaf or hard of hearing. However, members of the d/Deaf community may not always identify with disability and may identify as part of a cultural and linguistic group with their first language being Auslan (Australian Sign Language) or another sign language.

The Australia Council recognises the term *people with disability* is widely used in Australia, including by disability advocates and peak bodies. We also recognise that the term is contested and evolving, with increasing use of self-identifying terms such as *disabled*, including in advocacy for change. We recognise that some choose to identify with a specific community such as d/Deaf or Autistic and may prefer not to refer to themselves as disabled or as having disability. We will continue to recognise self-identification and engage in dialogue as the terminology evolves.