

Michelle Tear – CV & Bio

(B. 1984 Australia)



Michelle Tear was awarded a Bachelor Fine Arts from the University of New South Wales in 2005. She is represented by [Straitjacket](#), with her sixth solo show in May 2026.

Michelle's intuitive mark-making presents visions of worlds that embrace her inner emotional landscapes as an entry to awareness beyond the dissociative states of navigating inequitable social structures. As a queer disabled woman, her remote landscape paintings represent freedom from marginalising frameworks, creating neutral spaces to anchor

perspective. There is a calmness in calligraphic transparent brushstrokes that lead a slow journey through the landscape. She grinds earth pigments, mixed with egg, to create the timeless, translucent medium of egg tempera.

Michelle has been a finalist in prizes including the Evelyn Chapman Award, Mosman, Paddington, Fisher's Ghost, and MAC Yapang, and has completed numerous residencies including Mornington and Bundanon. A disability rights advocate, she lives and works on Awabakal Country, Lake Macquarie, Australia.

Representing Gallery Straitjacket, Hunter Region NSW

Selected Education UNSW - Bachelor of Fine Arts 2005

Solo Exhibitions

- 2026 – ‘Expansion’ – Straitjacket, Newcastle NSW
- 2024 – ‘Cathedral, Straitjacket, Newcastle NSW
- 2023 – ‘Looking for mesas in channel country’ – MAC: Museum of Art and Culture Lake Macquarie NSW
- 2022 – ‘Renewal’, Straitjacket, Newcastle NSW
- 2020 – ‘Those Hills: The Pilbara’, Gallery 139, Newcastle
- 2019 – ‘Michelle Teear’, 33 Scott St Galleries, Newcastle

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2025 – ‘Collect’, The Lock Up, Newcastle
- 2025 – ‘NAS 40 Years’, Newcastle Art Space
- 2025 – March Forward IWD, The Creator Incubator, Newcastle
- 2024 – ‘Future in Focus: Contemporary Alumnae Artists’, UNSW
- 2024 – ‘Alternating the cube’, Museum of Art Culture (MAC) Yapang
- 2024 – ‘Collect’, The Lock Up, Newcastle
- 2024 – ‘Counteractions’ – IWD, Creator Incubator, Newcastle
- 2022 – ‘Limitless’, Sydney Fringe Festival, 107 Project, Redfern
- 2021 – ‘GartherED’, Watt Space Gallery, Newcastle University
- 2020 – ‘Locus Focus, Newcastle Art Space, Newcastle
- 2020 - ‘Reconnected’, Museum of Art & Culture (MAC) Yapang
- 2020 – ‘Water’ Museum of Art & Culture (MAC) Yapang
- 2020 – ‘Fab Feb 20’, The Owens Collective, Newcastle

- 2019 – ‘The Balcony’, 33 Scott St Galleries, Newcastle
- 2019 – ‘Expansion’, Gallery 139 at The Owens Collective, Newcastle
- 2019 – ‘Lake Mac Open Studios’ – Lake Macquarie
- 2019 – ‘From the Land – Revisited’, Newcastle Art Space, Newcastle
- 2019 – ‘From The Land’, Sheffer Gallery, Redfern
- 2018 – ‘Directors Choice’, Gallery 139, Newcastle
- 2018 - ‘The Land’, Project Gallery 90, Paddington
- 2018 – ‘Wanderings’, Sheffer Gallery, Redfern
- 2018 – ‘Great Outdoors, Gallery 139, Newcastle

Awards, Grants & Prizes

- 2025 – Finalist: Fishers Ghost Art Prize
- 2025 – Finalist: MAC Yapang Art Prize
- 2024 – Finalist: Paddington Art Prize
- 2024 – Finalist: Mosman Art Prize
- 2024 – Finalist: Gosford Art Prize
- 2023 - Semi-finalist, Newcastle Club Foundation Prize, NAS
- 2023 – Finalist, Harden Art Prize, Harden
- 2022 - Semi-finalist, Newcastle Club Foundation Prize, NAS
- 2020 - Finalist, Evelyn Chapman Award, S H Ervin Gallery
- 2019 - Packers Prize: Newcastle Emerging Art Prize, NAS

Residencies and Projects

- 2026 – Mentor for Newcastle Art Space Program
- 2025 – Broken Hill Artist Residency, BHAE
- 2024 – Mornington Peninsula Artist Residency, MPRG
- 2023 – Barrington Hideaway Artist Residency, Gloucester NSW

2022 – Augmented Reality Project, Group Contributor, MAP Mima
2021 – Museum of Art and Culture, En Plein Air Day Artist In Residence,
Lake Macquarie Regional Gallery
2020 – Bundanon Trust, NSW, Supported by Accessible Arts

Professional Development

2023 – Front and Centre: Leadership Program, Accessible Arts
2020 – Twelve month mentorship with Virginia Cuppidge (senior
Australian abstract artist), Newcastle Art Space Mentorship program

Advisor/Peer Assessor

2025-27 - Creative Australia Peer Assessor
2024 – Bundanon Peer Assessor
2024 – 2025 – Museums & Galleries NSW – Peer Advisor
2022/2024 - Shine Art Prize Peer Assessor
2022 – Accessible Arts & Bundanon Trust Residency – Peer Assessor

Arts Worker & Advocacy

2025-present - Hunter Creative Alliance – Committee Member, Newcastle
2023-present - Training Manager, Accessible Arts (NSW)
2023-present – Arts Specialist Access & Inclusion Consultant
2006-08 – Children’s Festival Director, Peats Ridge Festival (NSW)

Workshop Partners

2025 – Art Gallery of NSW (Sydney), Art after hours
2025 – Hudson St Hum (Newcastle), Egg tempera workshop
2024 – University of NSW, Egg tempera workshop

2020-24 – Museum of Art Culture (MAC) Yapang (NSW), Painting
2022-25 – Hive & Gobbler (Dungog, NSW), Natural dyeing

Bibliography

The Landscapes of Michelle Tear, Amber Creswell Bell, Art Almanac, May
2026.

[ABC Newcastle Breakfast Radio with Dan Cox](#), interview 2024

Nas Campanella, [“Artists living with disability retreat to the Australian
bush to find inspiration post COVID-19”](#), ABC News, 23 October 2020

[“Preview to the Inaugural Lake Macquarie Open Artists Studio Tour”](#),
Lakes Mail, 23 October 2019

Collections

NSW Parliament
University of NSW (UNSW)
Private Australian collections