

Support Material-Emma Buswell Artist Statement and CV

Emma Buswell is an artist, curator and writer fascinated with systems of government, economies and culture, particularly in relation to constructs of place, identity and community. Her current work takes its inspiration from the matrilineal hand craft and knitting techniques passed down from her grandmother and mother, as well as a contemplative investigation into the nature of kitsch, ephemera, labour, national identities and class politics.

Interested in storytelling, local mythologies as well as grand narratives, Buswell often draws upon oral histories and ancient stories in collaboration with local touchpoints as an attempt to contextualize and understand the present. Found images and references are collaged and often overlaid with text, and then reinterpreted through stitch. Predominantly using intricate craft techniques such as knitting, beading and crochet, her work collapses the space between kitsch and cultural expression, drawing on current day political climates as well as art history to talk to personal and collective identities. The meticulous nature of these labour-intensive processes is a deliberate act, underscoring the often overlooked gendered nature to cultural production.

Born on unceded Whadjuk Noongar land in Perth, Western Australia, Emma has an expansive practice working in object making, writing, and arts working. Her most recent work *The Pool* was featured in the exhibition *Codes in Parallel* for the Indian Ocean Craft Triennial at John Curtin Gallery in 2024. In 2023 she was a finalist in the prestigious Ramsay Art Prize at the Art Gallery of South Australia and in that same year was featured as part of the 2023 Australian Fashion Week in a showcase of Australian designers showing at Carriageworks. In 2022 she was selected for the Churchie Art Prize at the IMA in Brisbane where she was awarded the Highly Commended Award and was the winner of the 2022 Joondalup Art Prize. That same year she was selected as the TILT artist at Goolugatup, Heathcote, a program which supports a local artist to respond to Goolugatup's historic collection of objects which remain from the buildings previous function as an asylum. In 2021 she was also commissioned to develop a new major work responding to local histories in Perth for *Love in Bright Landscapes* curated by Annika Kristensen at PICA later that year. In 2020, her work was the focus of a solo exhibition at the Art Gallery of Western Australia where her work was shown in relation to work from the collection.

Selected Solo & Duo Exhibitions

2025 Liz + Emma, Sydenham International with Elizabeth Pulie, Marickville NSW
2023 Fuzzy Logic, AVA, Perth WA
2022 Suburban Turrets, TILT, Goolugatup Heathcote, Melville WA
2020 Emma Buswell: Selected Knitted Works, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth WA 2015 Under Development, MOANA Project Space, Perth WA
2015 How Can You Tell You're Really There, Ex-Pat, Melbourne VIC
2015 MATHESON, Applecross Artspace WA
2013 The View From Up Here, MAXART Gallery, Perth WA

Selected Group Exhibitions

2025 Rest Time, Bundoora Homestead, VIC, curated by Laura Couthie
2025 Ramsay Art Prize 2025, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide SA
2025 Rest Time, Bundoora Homestead Art Centre, Bundoora VIC
2025 Everyday, Myths and Legends at John Curtin Gallery, WA, 2025
2024 Witness, Collector, Archivist, Narrator, Canberra Art Biennial, Canberra ACT
2024 IOTA24: Codes In Parallel, John Curtin Gallery, Bentley WA
2024 Gut Feeling, AVA, Perth WA
2022 Churchie Emerging Art Prize, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane QLD
2021 Love In Bright Landscapes, Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts, Perth WA
2021 Fair Isle, DADAA Fremantle for the Perth Festival, Fremantle WA
2020 Sheep Show, Mundaring Arts Centre, Mundaring WA
2019 Mid-west Art Prize, Geraldton Regional Art Gallery, Geraldton, WA
2017/18 Light as a Feather... presented by Moana Project Space for Hobiennale, Hobart, TAS
2017 The Sometimes Colourful Fate of Contemporary Nuggets, POLIZIA, Fremantle WA
2017 The Sometimes Colourful Fate of Contemporary Nuggets, Firstdraft Gallery, Sydney NSW 2016 Illuminations, The Blue Room Theatre, Perth WA
2015 Excessive Lighting, Freerange Gallery, Perth WA
2014 Foodchain Light Locker Art Space, Perth WA
2014 Stay/Keep, Paper Mountain Gallery, Perth WA
2014 Run Artist Run, Paper Mountain Gallery, Perth WA
2013 Misc., MAXART Gallery, Perth WA
2013 Hypotheticals Part II, Freerange Gallery, Perth WA
2011 Corso Aperto I, II, III, Fondazione Antonio Ratti, Como, Italy

Collections

Art Gallery of Western Australia
Art Gallery of South Australia
University of Western Australia Collection Curtin University
Artbank Collection
Various private collections

Support Material- Media Samples from previous works

TELEVISION

Sunrise Channel 7, Monday 10 October 2022



Australia's highest-rating morning TV show.
Audience: 263,000, ASR: About \$25,000-\$30,000 (conservative)

ABC News Australia interview with Emma Buswell, Monday 10 October 2022



Audience: 21,000, ASR value: \$8,640

PRINT

Article in the West Australian, Monday 10 October, p10 print

Artist cooks up poultry \$25K prize

A handbag resembling a Coles cooked chicken has won an artist \$25,000.

Emma Buswell's work "the sometimes luxury handbag and other suburban fables" has been announced as the winner of the City of Joondalup's 2022 Invitation Art Prize.

The artwork has all the bells and whistles of the classic cooked chook, including the Australian flag and RSPCA sticker.

Running for its 24th year, the Invitation Art Prize is a popular and significant event in the City's cultural calendar and a celebration of WA's talented professional visual arts community.

For those wanting to see the egg-ceptional art piece, the exhibition is open for viewing at Westfield Whitford City, located on level 1 near the food court,

until October 23.



Readership: 125,000, ASR value: \$8,861 [Perth Now online v1:](#)

PRINT/ONLINE Perth Now



Emma Buswell's work 'the sometimes luxury handbag and other suburban fables' has been announced as the winner of the City of Joondalup's 2022 Invitation Art Prize. Credit: Facebook, City of Joondalup, Coles, Justin Bianchini

Perth artist Emma Buswell shares inspiration behind award-winning roast chicken handbag art piece

Readership: 120,000, ASR value: \$7,840

Article:

Art Collector #115 (January – March 2026) “Cool Hunter 1: Emma Buswell”

50 THINGS | Cool Hunter

COOL HUNTER

We're keeping an eye on these artists in the year ahead.

1

EMMA BUSWELL

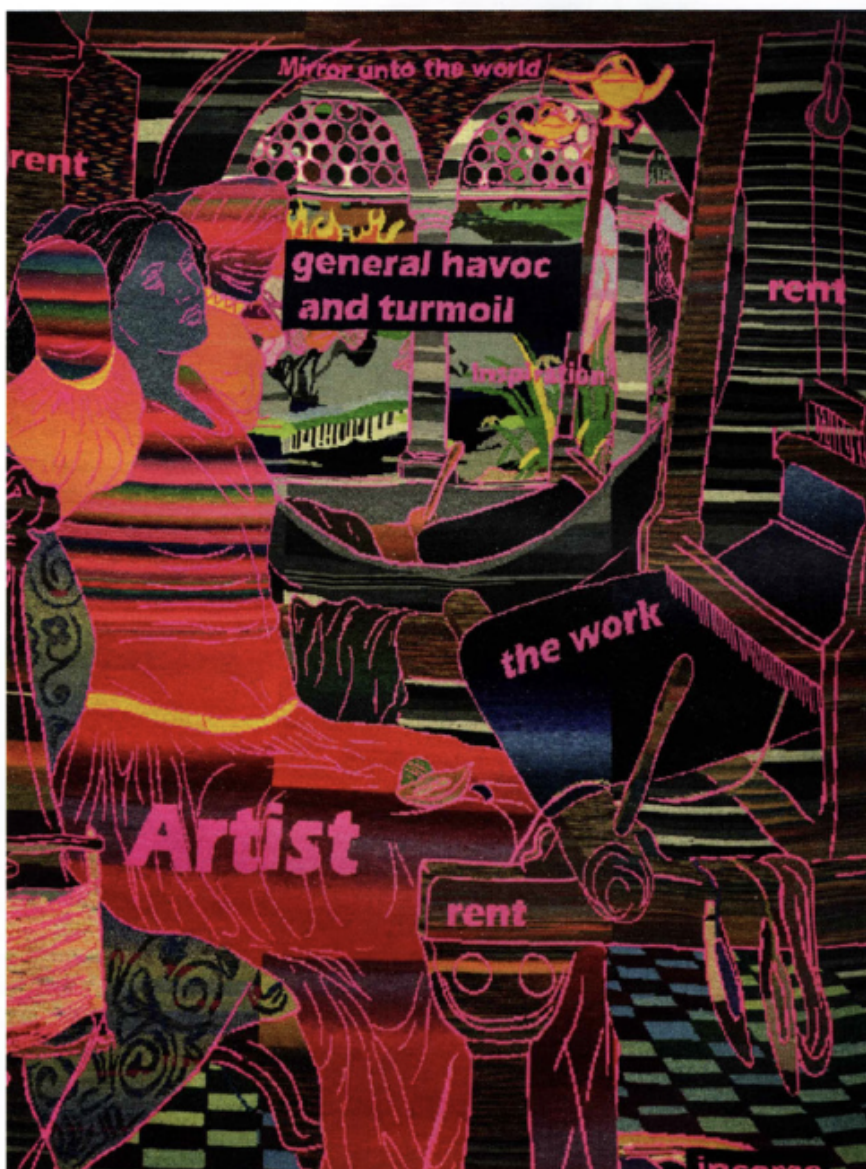
Emma Buswell transforms kitsch cultural moments like the Coles roast chicken bachelor's handbags into labour-intensive textile works that probe power, mythology, and the absurdities of contemporary Australian life.

WORDS | CHRISTINA CHAU

PHOTOGRAPHY | BIANCA WOOLHOUSE

120





Emma Buswell is a West Australian-based artist, writer, and curator well known for her large-scale tapestries and knitted works that explore power, culture, and mythology through kitsch and art historical visual tropes. Her work is a humorous endeavour in blending the visual hierarchy between grand narratives and everyday visual culture, while experimenting with scale, form and production.

Buswell's career has steadily gained traction in the last 15 years leading up to her 2025 Ramsay Art Prize People's Choice award. She was a resident at Fondazione Antonio Ratti (2011), part of the Australia Council for the Arts Venice Biennale professional development program (2015), was a featured artist in the Indian Ocean Craft Triennial at John Curtin Gallery (2024), has had solo exhibitions across Western Australia and Victoria, and is collected in the State Collection of Western Australia, Artbank, the City of Joondalup and a number of private collections.

PREVIOUS: Emma Buswell in her studio.
PHOTO BIANCA WOOLHOUSE.
LEFT: Emma Buswell, *The Pool*, 2024. Wool, cotton and yarn. People's Choice Award in the 2025 Ramsay Art Prize at the Art Gallery of South Australia. COURTESY: AVA GALLERY, BOORLOO/PERTH.

Emma Buswell

Walyalup/East Fremantle, Western Australia, Australia
b. 1991

Knitting

Sculpture

Text

Painting

Beading

Garment construction

Emma Buswell's work reads like a love letter to both nostalgia and rebellion. Drawing on the kitschy language of slogan sweaters and the retro aesthetics of 1980s and 1990s suburban fashions, her pieces simultaneously celebrate and critique the world we live in. They are rich in social and political commentary, speaking directly to millennial anxieties about the state of the planet, the failures of government, and the pressures of surviving in performative, late-stage capitalism.

For Buswell, her sweaters are more than just crafted objects, they are a way of thinking and communicating, and like textiles more broadly, exist as profound and universal markers of human experience. Her storytelling through textiles often begins with found images and cultural references, which she collages and reinterprets through handcrafted techniques, predominantly knitting and crochet. She describes her process as 'a big soup'. Associations between current events, historical moments and personal experiences inspire her work. This associative thinking allows her to connect the small (the stitch of a sweater) to the monumental (systems of power and inequality).

She credits craft techniques passed down from her grandmother and mother as the foundation of her fascination with materiality. Early in her career, Buswell began experimenting with knitting, first making scarves and soft toys, then designing jumpers as a way to merge fashion with art. One of her early works was a hand-knitted sweater that replaced iconic Australian imagery, such as the Sydney Opera House, with local touchpoints like her local shopping mall. This playful subversion of cultural symbols has become a hallmark of her practice.

Over the years, Buswell has embraced machine knitting as a way to scale her ideas, likening the

technique to digital art. She thinks of stitches as pixels – each one functions as a micro-unit of meaning – and points to the 18th-century Jacquard loom as the earliest form of mechanised textile production. This loom used a punch card system to code pattern information, which became the precursor of modern computing, and, more recently, digital weaving and knitting technologies. Buswell connects this centuries-old textile tradition to contemporary technologies, finding a through line in the distillation of visual ideas into binary code.

As Buswell has developed her material and technical abilities, she has become increasingly fascinated with the tactile nature of knitted fabrics that contain the content of an artist's intentionality within their construction. Images delivered as both content and structure. She has adopted intarsia – a pictorial knitting technique popularised by the 'bad Christmas jumper' of the 1980s and Jenny Kee's koala sweaters – as a way to replicate her illustrations and communicate her ideas. Many of her first works were jumpers for friends and families, and while primarily worn as wardrobe staples, these familiar garments also broadcast her art into the same suburban environments they critiqued.

Buswell's recent pieces materially explore randomness and disruption, achieved through the use of variegated sock yarns. She enjoys the 'controlled risk' that comes from including fibres with indiscriminate mark-making. These materials create patterns that mimic digital glitches, transforming the handcrafted into something that feels algorithmic and unpredictable.

Buswell's studio practice is a balance of research, planning and labour-intensive making. Each project begins with a rigorous period of gathering materials, collaging references and

I'm In Sheer Awe At This Deeply Iconic Beaded Bachelor's Handbag That's Won A Perth Art Competition



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CROI/Metro/Inner East & West*

By Isabella Corbett
Published October 10, 2022

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Perth artist **Emma Buswell** has taken out the top prize in an art competition for her beautifully Auscore beaded handbag designed to look like a Coles roast chook. Obsessed doesn't even begin to cut it.

Readership: 120,000, ASR value: \$7840

The Global Herald

THE GLOBAL HERALD

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Coles roast chicken beaded handbag by Perth designer wins art competition | ABC News

October 10, 2022 by News Desk

NEWS INTERVIEW

'UNIQUELY AUSTRALIAN' ROAST CHOOK BAG

Circulation: 19,000, ASR value: unknown

SOCIAL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

Coles Now, 1.3 million followers

coles Coles Supermarkets @Coles · 7s

Whether it's at the dinner table on a weeknight, or hanging in a gallery, we know a piece of art when we see one @City_Joondalup

City of Joondalup @City_Joondalup · Oct 8

Congratulations to Emma Buswell (pictured with Deputy Mayor Christine Hamilton-Prime) who has just been announced as the winner of the City's 2022 Invitation Art Prize for her work, 'The sometimes luxury handbag and other suburban fables.'



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ABC News, 4.2 million followers

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'Uniquely Australian': Designer Emma Buswell has taken out a Perth art competition for her beaded 'bachelor's handbag' resembling a Coles roast chicken.

She talks about why she was inspired by the famous Coles chook and how it took over 100 hours to bead the artwork.



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embuzza1



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The artist Emma Buswell really ate, devoured and left no crumbs.



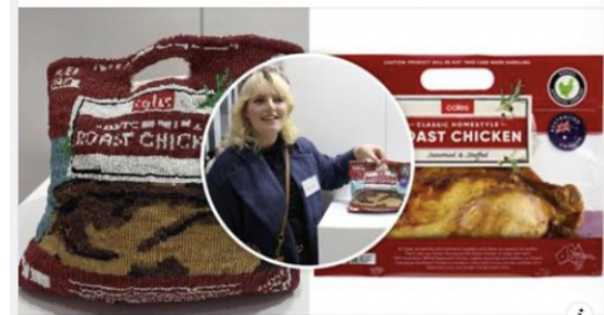
PEDESTRIAN.TV

I'm In Sheer Awe At This Deeply Iconic Beaded Bachelor's Handbag That's Won A Perth Art Competition

Perth Now, 515,000 followers

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The secret behind Emma Buswell's headline-grabbing roast chook bag lies in a happy memory from the artist's childhood.



PERTHNOW.COM.AU

'ICONIC': WA artist shares meaning behind roast chook bag

The secret behind Emma Buswell's headline-grabbing roast chook bag lies in a happy memory...

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Liked by tg_ and 3,520 others

belltowertimes @mark_mcgowan_mp has been immortalised in a knitted jumper by @embuzza1

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30 April 2020