



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Through paintings, installation, and ritual, *The Crossing* transforms Collective Haunt Gallery into a space where thresholds become portals to other worlds.

Exhibition Dates: Thursday, 23 Oct 2025 – Saturday, 22 Nov 2025	Opening Night: Friday, 31 October 2025 5:30pm – 7:30pm	Venue: Collective Haunt Inc Level 1, 68 The Parade, Norwood. SA	Admission is free and all are welcome. Accessibility notes: the exhibition is held in the main gallery, accessed via a flight of stairs
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[Collective Haunt](#) presents *The Crossing*, a collaborative exhibition by artists **Nicola Semmens** and **Michelle Lee**. This immersive exhibition brings together evocative paintings, an installation, and a participatory element to explore the transitional spaces where one phase gives way to another.

Paintings depicting the light of dusk and pre-dawn act as portals into other worlds, while a passageway-like installation invites visitors to step slowly across a symbolic threshold and connect with the unseen, with loved ones who have passed, and with each other.

Through these works, *The Crossing* invites audiences to slow down and enter a contemplative space. It is a gentle invitation to dwell in the liminal, to sense what lies beyond the surface of the everyday, and to connect with the mystery that binds us to each other and the world.

Presented at Collective Haunt Gallery, the exhibition opens Thursday 23 October with a special celebration on Halloween, aligning with its exploration of thresholds and otherworldly connections. Visitors are encouraged to experience *The Crossing* in their own way, whether by reflecting with the works, engaging with the installation, or taking home a memento of remembrance.

ARTIST STATEMENT: MICHELLE LEE

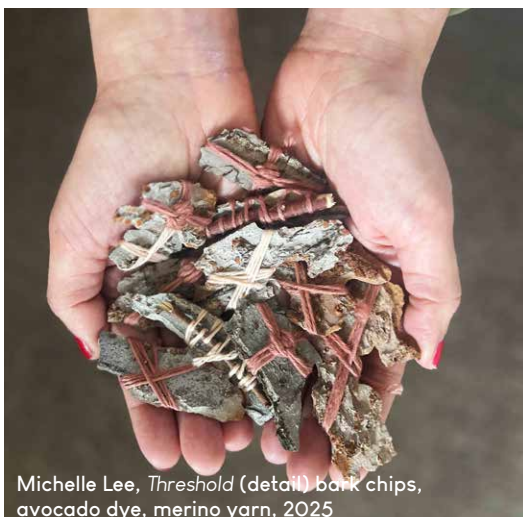
I love to explore the mystical, the magical, and the sacredness in all things. For this exhibition, I have created a series of small oracle card-like paintings that are not literal depictions of celestial bodies but expressions of their potential influence on our lives. They reflect humanity's enduring fascination with the stars and the way we have looked to the heavens for meaning, guidance, and connection for thousands of years.

Alongside the paintings, the exhibition includes an immersive installation made from wood, bark, muslin, and natural hand-dyed merino yarn. It forms a threshold that visitors are invited to step through slowly, softening the edges of ordinary experience as they enter an in-between space and approach a shrine. The muslin carries its own history, used to swaddle newborns, to dress wounds, and to shroud the departed. It holds a nurturing and healing essence that is central to this work. Hundreds of lacebark chips are carefully bound as a metaphor for the way we offer ourselves to our loved ones again and again, sometimes clumsily and imperfectly, knowing that one day we will part. We choose to love and care anyway, trusting that what endures are the memories and experiences of love itself.

The shrine holds earth, the place where all life begins, is sustained, and eventually returns; rosemary for remembrance; and stones as guardians, creating a space for reflection and connection with those no longer physically with us.

Participants are invited to wrap a piece of barkchip with yarn while holding a loved one in their thoughts. These small, intentional actions transform the gallery into a place of shared memory and living ritual. Rituals have always shaped the rhythm of human experience, helping us find meaning, bringing order to chaos, and making sense of what it means to live and love.

A video component complements the work, showing both the process of its making and the small, quiet moments of care that sustain our relationships. It reminds us that just as the physical form is temporary, our bonds with those we love transcend what can be held. Together, the paintings and installation invite visitors to pause, linger in threshold spaces, and enter a space where the ordinary and the otherworldly meet.



Michelle Lee, *Threshold (detail)* bark chips, avocado dye, merino yarn, 2025



Michelle Lee, *Threshold (detail)* stone, merino yarn, 2025



Michelle Lee, *Venus*, mixed media, 2025

ARTIST STATEMENT: NICOLA SEMMENS

Nicola presents two body of works in this exhibition:

Between the Realms

This body of work explores the quiet threshold between day and the night. These suburban landscapes painted at dusk are suspended in a twilight zone, where the world seems to hover between the realms. The light is softened dissolving the sharpness of form and the familiar becomes both intimate and mysterious.

I am drawn to the transient beauty of ordinary places – streets, houses, cars, trees and back yards that are transformed by the shifting atmosphere of evening. At this hour, boundaries between the seen and the unseen blur, and the everyday reveals a deeper poetry.

The Moss People

In these paintings the Moss Lady's mask, made of forest elements, is both a personal and environmental statement about the disconnection between humans and the natural world. By embodying nature, we may find renewed empathy and a deeper recognition that we are not separate from it—we are nature."

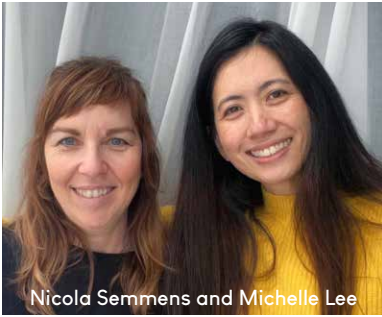
The Moss Lady wears a mask woven from the forest floor—she is at once concealed and revealed, fragile yet enduring. Her presence reminds us that nature, like ourselves, holds both mystery and truth in its layered veils."



Nicola Semmens, *Moss Lady*, oil on canvas, 2025



Nicola Semmens, *Night Wash*, oil on canvas, 2025



ARTIST BIOS

MICHELLE LEE is a Hong Kong-born artist based on Kurna land whose work explores spirituality, healing, and inter-connectedness. Across painting, mixed media, and installation, she creates intuitive, immersive works that invite reflection, ritual, and participation. Participatory art is a recent expansion of her practice, opening spaces where viewers become collaborators and co-creators. Michelle is a studio artist at Collective Haunt and is completing a Masters in Therapeutic Arts Practice, which continues to inform her exploration of creativity, presence, and the ways we find experiential meaning in our lives.

NICOLA SEMMENS is an Adelaide-based artist, lyengar yoga teacher and cook, working from the artist-run studio Collective Haunt. Nicola's practice explores realism with a contemporary edge, using subtle surrealist distortions to shift perception and spark a sense of wonder. Inspired by the ancient Greek traditions of trompe-l'oeil, her paintings act as portals, inviting viewers to take a visual and imagined adventure. She has exhibited widely in Adelaide, including at Tin Cat Café, Art Images Gallery and Hahndorf Academy, and has been a finalist in the Emma Hack Art Prize and the Adelaide Hills Art Prize.

For more images, interviews or more information, please contact:

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For high resolution images: download [here](#)

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Short Artist Bios (for quick reference)

Michelle Lee is a Hong Kong-born artist based on Kurna land whose work explores spirituality, healing, and inter-connectedness. Her practice spans painting, mixed media and installation, inviting audiences to engage both visually and experientially.

Nicola Semmens is an Adelaide-based artist and lyengar yoga teacher whose realist paintings blend subtle surrealism with trompe-l'oeil techniques, inviting viewers into a world of visual wonder.