

Melissa Cameron



Melissa Cameron, 2023.
Image courtesy of the artist.

About the artist

Melissa Cameron is an Australian artist with Anglo-Celtic ancestry. She currently works on Whadjuk Nyoongar land in Perth, Australia. Previously she has lived and worked in Naarm/Melbourne and on Duwamish lands in Seattle.

Cameron's aesthetic sensibility is influenced by her early studies and first career in computer science, a BFA earned in interior architecture (Curtin University, 2001), and a jewellery/metalsmithing MFA (Monash University, 2009).

Her practice alternates between meticulously researched socially aware/protest art, and technology and materials-based investigations to expand her capabilities and capacity. Both arenas centre the human body - politically or physically.

Cameron's works are held in the public collections of the National Gallery of Australia, the University of Iowa Museum of Art, and Cheongju City Collection in South Korea, amongst others, and she has exhibited in the prestigious Schmuck exhibition in Munich.

Cameron has received grants and prizes, presented at conferences, attended residencies, and published writings on jewellery and architecture globally.



Rockingham Arts Centre
11 Kent Street,
Rockingham

Gallery opening times:

Wednesday – Sunday
10am – 4pm

Contact:

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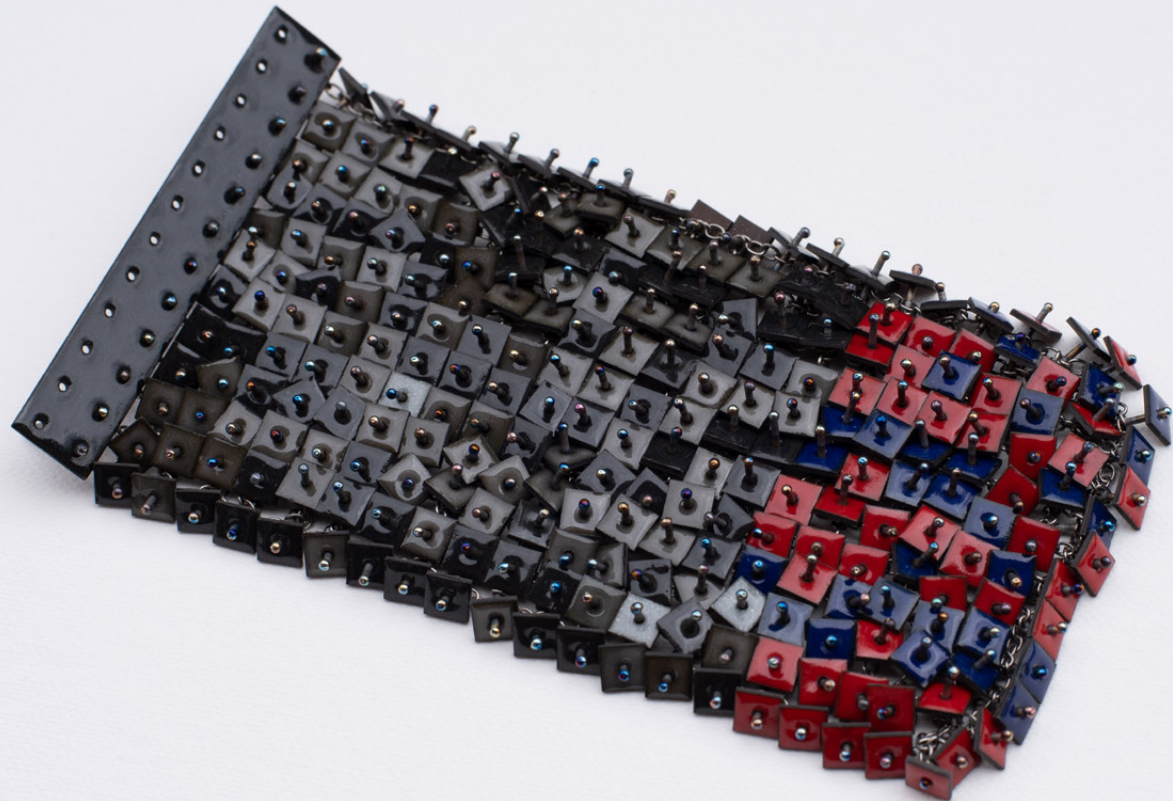
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Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Rockingham acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land, the Binjareb and Whadjuk Nyoongar peoples and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of Aboriginal communities and their cultures, and to Elders past and present.

Melissa Cameron, *covertlyprotestingthegovernment*,
stainless steel, vitreous enamel, titanium, 12 x 6.5 x 1cm.
Image courtesy of the artist.



Banner and Badge

Melissa Cameron
30 April – 18 May 2025



Melissa Cameron, *rapidlyclosingwindow... #1*, found steel street sweeper blades, steel and plastic recycled lids, 260 x 320 x 5cm. Image courtesy of the artist.

Exhibition information

The banner and the badge are traditional forms of protest signage and adornment. They are the natural ancestors of these works, the first of which was created soon after I relocated to Seattle in 2012.

Invited to an exhibition inspired by badges, or the American term, buttons, I made the *BanStopSaveFightSolve* works. Combining the calls to action of common protest badges, like 'save the whale', or 'ban the bomb', they were an observation about the nuance lost when feelings of empathy, support and solidarity are boiled down to abrupt word-symbols.

With hindsight, this focus on language is emblematic of my early days in the USA. I was through the looking glass and on the Seattle side, meanings had flipped, leaving me to decode messages not from language, but context cues. Used to the influence of American culture in Australia, I was surprised to find myself feeling culture shock.

My works of this time on display – parts of the *Escalation*, *body/politic* and *resist* series – show that rather than assimilate the terms, and perhaps even the values of my hosts, I was guided by my gaps in understanding. Where I saw a zig, but would have myself made a zag, was to me an area ripe for the picking, or rather, unpicking.

In my research I burrowed many tunnels, and in them unearthed stories I could tell. For each I sourced the material and motifs, and invented forms, colours and mnemonic devices to best convey these learnings to a viewer, always tailoring works to the body to amplify the connection between my narratives, and their real-life outcomes.

The rapid and unrelenting march of the climate crisis has occupied my works in recent years. Since 2023 I have repeated the same message: "...*rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all.*" IPCC 2023, taken from the most recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). I have encoded part or all the '*rapidly*' text in ten works and counting.

Throughout my career I have leveraged the form and histories of recycled materials to buttress and sometimes become the message of my pieces. Since 2023 I have worked to recreate earlier forms exclusively from post-consumer waste and road debris, to further affirm the message of the '*rapidly*' series.

Melissa Cameron, *HEAT II - Strike*, stainless steel, vitreous enamel, 56.5 x 56.5cm. Image courtesy of the artist.

