

EVERYWHEN ART

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Melanie Koolmatrie



Born: 1986

Language Groups: Ngarrindjeri, Peramangk, Ramindjeri

Melanie Koolmatrie is a proud Ngarrindjeri, Ramindjeri, Boandik, and Peramungk woman based in Adelaide, South Australia. Deeply connected to her cultural heritage and community, Melanie's creative practice is grounded in storytelling, movement, and the continuation of First Nations knowledge systems. Her multidisciplinary approach reflects both tradition and contemporary expression, weaving together ancestral narratives with personal experience.

A dynamic and multidimensional artist, Melanie works across painting, sculpture, ceramics, jewellery, and weaving. Her practice is driven by a strong material sensibility, often exploring texture, form, and symbolism to communicate themes of identity, Country, kinship, and resilience. Through natural fibres, clay, and mixed media, she honours traditional techniques while reinterpreting them through a contemporary lens. Each piece she creates carries layers of meaning—honouring her Elders, celebrating cultural continuity, and inviting audiences into deeper reflection and connection.

Melanie is currently completing a degree in Visual Art at Flinders University, where she continues to refine her conceptual and technical skills. Her academic journey complements her cultural practice, providing a space to experiment, research, and expand the dialogue between Indigenous knowledge and contemporary art frameworks.

Her artistic expression is also deeply informed by movement. Melanie previously trained at NAISDA Dance College, Australia's leading Indigenous training college for dance. This experience strengthened her understanding of storytelling through the body and reinforced her commitment to cultural expression through performance. She is also a member of Tjarutja Dance Company, a contemporary Indigenous dance collective that celebrates culture, connection, and community through performance. Through dance, Melanie continues to embody and share stories that resonate across generations.

Melanie's practice sits at the intersection of visual art and performance, tradition and innovation. Whether working with clay, fibre, paint, or movement, she approaches her work with intention and respect, creating pieces that honour her ancestors while contributing to the evolving landscape of contemporary Aboriginal art. Her work stands as both a celebration of cultural strength and a powerful expression of identity in motion.

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GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2026, Listening to Country, Gallery M, Adelaide, SA

2026 Water Stories, Yitpi Yartapuultiku, Adelaide, SA

2025 Water Stories, The Gallery at City of Norwood, Payneham and St Peters, SA

2025 Water People 2025 - Water on Country, Coral St ArtsSpace, Victor Harbor, SA