

Gerwyn Davies

During his undergraduate study, Gerwyn Davies' practice of costume-making and photography merged into the imaging of surreal characters. His mature practice sees Davies construct a *mis en scene* which becomes the backdrop for a single elaborate, exaggerated, over-the-top character, such as a human-sized lobster, with Davies' own tattooed legs and Doc Martens footwear visible below the costume, looking at the Big Prawn (in his series *Subtropics*). The person in the costume is always Davies himself, and these garments, made from utilitarian products, brightly coloured, are piled on his body like uncomfortable, claustrophobic "clothes". His body is the platform for the characters with whom he is intrinsically involved.

The scenarios depicted may be nightmarish, as in *A Million Bucks* where our character lies on a sun lounge, swathed in a checked tube with head covered in white fur and large bunny ears, while (plastic) sea gulls descend on chips covered in tomato sauce beside the lounge. As images they draw a laugh, particularly when Davies' legs emerge from the carapace of yet another garish and extravagant costume, but at the same time they present situations we would want to close down – fast. "I am really drawn to the low brow", he admits.

In 2023 Davies won both the Olive Cotton Award and the Clayton Utz Art Award. He has been a regular finalist in other significant national art prizes including the National Photographic Portrait Prize (2023), the Brisbane Portrait Prize (2023), The Bowness Photography Prize (2023, 2019, 2017) and the Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photography Prize (2024, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014).

Recent career highlights include major solo exhibitions 'Glisten' (2024) at South East Centre for Contemporary Art (SECCA), 'Iridescent' (2022) at the Museum of Sydney, and 'Plush' (2021) at UNSW Galleries, Sydney. In 2018, he held a solo exhibition at Sydney's Australian Centre for Photography and he was selected for the inaugural Biennale of Australian Art at the Art Gallery of Ballarat. Davies is currently an academic staff member (Photography) at the University of NSW (formerly COFA) and the National Art School, Sydney. His work is held in public collections including the Museum of Brisbane, the Museum of Sydney, the City of Sydney, Gold Coast City Gallery/HOTA, Redland Art Gallery, Tweed Regional Gallery, Ipswich Art Gallery, Queensland Centre for Photography and Artbank.

Gerwyn Davies

BIOGRAPHY	1985	Born in Ipswich QLD
EDUCATION	2017	PhD, University of New South Wales Art and Design, Sydney
	2012	Bachelor of Photography (1 st Class Honours), Queensland College of Art, Griffith University, Brisbane
SOLO EXHIBITIONS	2025	<i>Shimmer</i> , Museum of Brisbane, Brisbane <i>Calypso</i> , Michael Reid Gallery, Sydney
	2024	<i>Mirage</i> , Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane <i>Glisten</i> , South East Centre for Contemporary Art (SECCA), Bega NSW
	2023	<i>Mustang</i> , Michael Reid Art Bar, Sydney
	2022	<i>Pleasure</i> (offsite exhibition at The Calile Hotel), Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane <i>Strange Magic</i> , Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane
	2021 - 2022	<i>Iridescent</i> , Museum of Sydney, Sydney
	2021	<i>Gerwyn Davies: Plush</i> , UNSW Galleries, Sydney <i>Utopia</i> , Michael Reid Gallery, Berlin Germany <i>Alien</i> , Perth Centre for Photography, Perth
	2020	<i>Utopia</i> , Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane <i>Fur</i> , Michael Reid Gallery, Berlin Germany
	2019	<i>Heatwave</i> , Bundaberg Regional Gallery, Bundaberg QLD <i>Gerwyn Davies</i> (online exhibition), Michael Reid Gallery, Sydney
	2018	<i>Idols</i> (online exhibition), Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane <i>Fur</i> , Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney
	2017	<i>Heatwave</i> , Gould Galleries, Melbourne
	2016	<i>Subtropics</i> , Spiro Grace Art Rooms, Brisbane
	2015	<i>Paradise</i> , Spiro Grace Art Rooms, Brisbane
	2014	<i>Creature</i> , Brisbane Powerhouse, Brisbane
	2013	<i>A Million Bucks</i> , Ipswich Art Gallery, Ipswich QLD <i>Beast</i> , Spiro Grace Art Rooms, Brisbane
	2012	<i>50ft McQueenie</i> , Metro Arts, Brisbane <i>Steel Town Disciples</i> , Queensland Centre for Photography, Brisbane

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 *Summer*, Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane
Brisbane Portrait Prize, State Library of Queensland, Brisbane
Sunshine Coast Art Prize, Caloundra Regional Gallery, Caloundra QLD
Sydney Contemporary Art Fair, Michael Reid Gallery, Sydney
National Photographic Portrait Prize 2025, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra
Bowness Photography Prize 2025, Museum of Australian Photography, Melbourne
HOTA Collects, HOTA Gallery, Gold Coast QLD
Souter's Bondi, Bondi Pavilion Gallery, Sydney
De-centre re-centre, Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery/ Perth Centre for Photography, Perth
Performing Presence, Redland Art Gallery, Cleveland QLD
Common Ground, Bondi Pavilion Gallery, Sydney
- 2024 *HOTA Collects*, HOTA Gallery, Gold Coast QLD
Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photography Prize, HOTA Gallery, Gold Coast QLD
Brisbane Portrait Prize, State Library of Queensland, Brisbane
The Autumn Edit, Michael Reid Gallery, Berlin
Newcastle, Michael Reid Gallery, Newcastle
Synergy: identity, portraiture and the moving body, Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre, Tweed NSW
- 2023 *Olive Cotton Award for Photographic Portraiture*, Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre, Tweed NSW
Halfway, Yarrila Arts and Museum, Coffs Harbour NSW
- 2022 *Sunshine Coast Art Prize*, Caloundra Regional Gallery, Caloundra QLD
Transcending Likeness: contemporary portraits from the collection, Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Centre, Tweed NSW
- 2021 *City in the sun*, Museum of Brisbane, Brisbane
Olive Cotton Award for Photographic Portraiture, Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre, Tweed NSW
Sunshine Coast Art Prize, Caloundra Regional Gallery, Caloundra QLD
- 2020 *Sydney Contemporary Art Fair* (online), Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane
The Alice Prize, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs NT
New Collectors, Hugo Michell Gallery, Adelaide
Razzle Dazzle, Brisbane Outdoor Gallery - Museum of Brisbane, Brisbane
- 2019 *Pleasure*, RMIT Gallery, Melbourne
Figure and Ground, Hugo Michell Gallery, Adelaide
Olive Cotton Award for Photographic Portraiture, Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre, Tweed NSW

GROUP EXHIBITIONS (CONT)	2019	<i>Sunshine Coast Art Prize</i> , Caloundra Regional Gallery, Caloundra QLD <i>Widgets and Doohickies from a Camp Toolbox</i> curated by Dr Alison Bennett and Dr Ray Cook, RMIT, Melbourne
	2018	<i>Dress Code</i> , Museum of Brisbane, Brisbane <i>Class Act</i> curated by Liam Bryan-Brown, Outer Space, Brisbane <i>In Other Image</i> , When Words Fail: SIPF International Portfolio Showcase, Singapore International Photography Festival, Singapore <i>Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photography Prize</i> , Gallery at HOTA, Gold Coast QLD <i>Sunshine Coast Art Prize</i> , Caloundra Regional Gallery, Caloundra QLD <i>Spring 1883</i> , Jan Murphy Gallery, Melbourne <i>Biennale of Australian Art</i> , Art Gallery of Ballarat, Ballarat VIC <i>We the people that live for the beautiful</i> , Bondi Pavillion, Sydney <i>The Alice Prize</i> , Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs NT
	2017	<i>The William and Winifred Bowness Photography Prize</i> , Monash Gallery of Art, Melbourne <i>Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photography Prize</i> , Gold Coast City Gallery, Gold Coast QLD <i>Sunshine Coast Art Prize</i> , Caloundra Regional Gallery, Caloundra QLD <i>Fisher's Ghost Art Prize</i> , Campbelltown Arts Centre, Sydney NSW
	2016	<i>Clayton Utz Art Award</i> , Riparian Plaza, Brisbane <i>Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photography Prize</i> , Gold Coast City Gallery, Gold Coast QLD
	2015	<i>Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photography Prize</i> , Gold Coast City Gallery, Gold Coast QLD
	2014	<i>Churchie National Emerging Art Prize</i> , Griffith University Art Gallery, Brisbane <i>Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photography Prize</i> , Gold Coast City Gallery, Gold Coast QLD
	2013	<i>Polarized: Political Photomedia in Queensland</i> , Colour Factory, Melbourne <i>Uncanny</i> , Judith Wright Centre of Contemporary Arts, Brisbane
	2012	<i>Photo L.A.</i> , Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, California USA <i>Synchronicity: Queensland Contemporary Photography</i> , Grafton Regional Gallery, Grafton NSW <i>North by Northeast: Head on Photo Festival</i> , Depot Gallery, Sydney <i>Flipside: Contemporary Australian Photography</i> , Bergamot Station, California USA <i>No Longer So Linear</i> , Queensland Centre for Photography, Brisbane <i>Reveal: Midsumma</i> , 1000 Pound Bend, Melbourne <i>FutureGen</i> , John Curtin Gallery, Perth
	2011	<i>Photo L.A.</i> , Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, California USA

COMMISSIONS	2021 - 2022	Hermès window display collaboration, Brisbane & Sydney
	2015	Artbank/QPAC Playhouse Photo Commission, Brisbane
AWARDS & RESIDENCIES	2025	Artist Residency, Museum of Brisbane & Brisbane Powerhouse - Melt Festival, Brisbane
		Finalist, Brisbane Portrait Prize, State Library of Queensland, Brisbane
		Finalist, Sunshine Coast Art Prize, Caloundra Regional Gallery, Caloundra QLD
		Finalist, National Photographic Portrait Prize 2025, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra
	2024	Finalist, Bowness Photography Prize 2025, Museum of Australian Photography, Melbourne
		Finalist, Brisbane Portrait Prize, State Library of Queensland, Brisbane
	2023	Finalist, Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photography Prize, HOTA Gallery, Gold Coast QLD
		Finalist, Olive Cotton Award for Photographic Portraiture, Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre, Tweed NSW
	2022	Finalist, Clayton Utz Prize, Riparian Plaza, Brisbane
		Winner (Artist Residency), Sunshine Coast Art Prize, Caloundra Regional Gallery, Caloundra QLD
	2021	Winner (Director's Choice Award), Olive Cotton Award for Photographic Portraiture, Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre, Tweed NSW
		Finalist, Sunshine Coast Art Prize, Caloundra Regional Gallery, Caloundra QLD
	2020	Highly Commended, The Alice Prize, Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs NT
		Highly Commended, Clayton Utz Prize, Riparian Plaza, Brisbane
2019	Finalist, Sunshine Coast Art Prize, Caloundra Regional Gallery, Caloundra QLD	
	Finalist, Olive Cotton Award for Photographic Portraiture, Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre, Tweed NSW	
	Finalist, Clayton Utz Prize, Riparian Plaza, Brisbane	
2018	Artist Residency, Museum of Brisbane, Brisbane	
	Australia Council Kyoto Art Centre Exchange, Kyoto Japan	
	Finalist, Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photography Prize, Gallery at HOTA, Gold Coast QLD	
	Finalist, Sunshine Coast Art Prize, Caloundra Regional Gallery, Caloundra QLD	
2017	Finalist, The Alice Prize, Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs NT	
	Finalist, William and Winifred Bowness Photography Prize, Monash Gallery of Art, Melbourne	
		Finalist, Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photography Prize, Gold Coast City Gallery, Gold Coast QLD

AWARDS & RESIDENCIES
(CONT)

- 2017 Finalist, Sunshine Coast Art Prize, Caloundra Regional Gallery, Caloundra QLD
Finalist, Fisher's Ghost Art Prize, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Sydney
- 2016 Finalist, Clayton Utz Art Award, Riparian Plaza, Brisbane
Finalist, Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photography Prize, Gold Coast City Gallery, Gold Coast QLD
- 2015 Finalist, Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photography Prize, Gold Coast City Gallery, Gold Coast QLD
- 2014 Finalist, Churchie National Emerging Art Prize, Griffith University Art Gallery, Brisbane
Finalist, Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photography Prize, Gold Coast City Gallery, Gold Coast QLD
- 2013 Winner, Pedestrian.tv Photo of the Year Award
- 2012 Winner, Australian Commercial and Media Photographers (ACMP)
Australian Student Photographer of the Year Award
Winner, Capture Magazine Top Emerging Fashion/Editorial Photographer Award
- 2011 Winner, ACMP Australian Student Fashion Photographer of the Year Award

PUBLICATIONS

- 2026 Barnaby Smith, *In preview - Brisbane - Gerwyn Davies: Shimmer*, Artguide, Issue 160, Mar/Apr
- 2025 Amber Creswell-Bell, *Exposure*, Thames & Hudson Australia
Rebecca Blake, *Hiding in plain sight*, Portrait - Magazine of the National Portrait Gallery, issue 73
Ross Bilton, *Heart of the Nation: Newcastle 2300*, The Weekend Australian Magazine, 22 February
- 2022 *Friday Fabulous Five – See*, Belle Magazine (online), 2 September
Gerwyn Davies (Artefacts), Vault Magazine, Issue 38, May – July
Philippa Coates, *Check out these hotel guests*, Australian Financial Review, 29 July
Benjamin Judd, *Master of Illusion*, Wish Magazine, The Australian, 3 – 4 June
'Strange Magic' by Gerwyn Davies seduces with its surreal costume play, Stir Pad (online), 4 March
Lisa Davidson, *Gerwyn Davies – Strange Magic*, We Heart (online), 9 March
Shortcuts to the weekend - Art, Courier Mail, 12 – 13 March
- 2021 Steve Dow, *Iridescent: Gerwyn Davies' colourful, camp costume sculptures*, The Guardian Australia (online), December 2021
Alexandra English, *Carried Away*, Harper's Bazaar Australia/New Zealand, November 2021
Jane Albert, *'He's quite shy and retiring': the artist behind Australia's most outlandish selfies*, Good Weekend Magazine, Sydney Morning Herald, September
Dr Joseph Brennan, *Gerwyn Davies: Plush*, Art Almanac, March

PUBLICATIONS (CONT)

- 2021 Rose of Sharon Leake, *Under your skin – Gerwyn Davies*, Art Edit Magazine, Issue 26
- 2020 Joseph Brennan, *Exhibitions: Pleasure (review)*, Art Almanac, Jan/Feb
- 2018 Phil Brown, *Top 10 Emerging Queensland Artists*, The Courier Mail, 8 September
- Tracy Clement, *Gerwyn Davies: Fur*, Art Guide Australia, June
- Con Gerakaris, *Fursona Grata*, Runway, 13 March
- 2017 Peter Speetjens, *The Tacky and Grotesque of Life Down Under*, Plastik Magazine, Spring
- 2016 Melissa Fletcher, *Artist Interview: Gerwyn Davies (AUS)*, Medium, 2 November
- Liam Bryan-Brown, *Glisten*, Exhibition Essay for Subtropics, July
- 2015 Miriam Kelly, *Gerwyn Davies: Chux, Glitter and the Occasional Hissy Fit*, Sturgeon Magazine, April
- 2014 Denise Carter, *Brisbane artist Gerwyn Davies brings Paradise to Cairns as part of KickArts Contemporary Arts triple exhibition launch*, Cairns Post, 13 November
- Gerwyn Davies: Beast/ Paradise*, Carnival Magazine, Issue 2
- 2013 *Gerwyn Davies' 'Beast'*, British Journal of Photography, 1 September
- Dr Nadia Buick, *The Body Made Strange*, Exhibition Essay for Beast, May
- Anthony Thomas, *Interview: Gerwyn Davies*, Moustache Magazine, 27 March

COLLECTIONS

Artbank

City of Sydney

HOTA Gallery, QLD

Ipswich Art Gallery, QLD

Museum of Sydney, Sydney

Museum of Brisbane, Brisbane

Queensland Children's Hospital, Brisbane

Queensland Centre for Photography, Brisbane

Redland Art Gallery Collection, QLD

Sunshine Coast Art Collection, QLD

Tweed Regional Gallery, NSW

Private collections nationally and internationally