

# Media Release

17 May 2022



**SAM is pleased to announce the appointment of Melinda Martin as its new CEO, who will commence in the role on 11 July 2022.**

Following a rigorous recruitment process by the SAM Ltd Board, Melinda Martin joins the SAM team with outstanding credentials, having spent the past 10 years as CEO & Director of Linden New Art in St Kilda. Melinda succeeds Dr Rebecca Coates, who finished at SAM in December 2021 after 7 years heading the museum.

Bringing with her a wealth of knowledge earned from over 20 years working in arts management, Melinda is passionate about connecting audiences to the work of leading contemporary artists and creating conversations that encourage new ways of thinking and understanding the world we live in. Prior to joining Linden, Melinda was the Manager of National Programs and Services at Creative Partnerships Australia (formerly Australia Business Arts Foundation) and oversaw their professional development and philanthropic programs.

Melinda has also worked as the Gallery Manager at Anna Schwartz Gallery, Program Manager at Monash Gallery of Art, Studio Manager for Australian artist John Young and research assistant to Dr Chris McAuliffe at the University of Melbourne. She holds a Master of Fine Art & Cinema Studies from The University of Melbourne, a Post-Graduate Certificate in Museum Studies from Deakin University and a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Fine Art and Criminology from the University of Melbourne. Melinda has been a member of the Public Galleries Association of Victoria's Board from 2013 to 2018, serving as Vice President of the Board from 2014 to 2016, and previously chaired their fundraising sub-committee from 2017 to 2018. Melinda is excited to move to Shepparton and work with the SAM Ltd Board, team and community to provide thrilling and enriching arts and cultural experiences to the region.

Melinda says of her appointment:

'I am looking forward to working with the talented team at SAM to develop some exciting new exhibitions and programs to encourage everyone to engage with the museum. From programs for children and their families, and important programs for the local multicultural and multi-lingual community - I'm looking forward to leading a fabulous new museum and bringing it to life for all to enjoy.'

The SAM Ltd Board engaged the services of Slade Group to ensure a robust recruitment process was run in identifying the new leader of SAM. Since reopening, the museum has attracted much interest and acclaim both for its artistic program and its architectural excellence. Stephen Merrylees, Chair of the SAM Ltd Board, says of the appointment:

"SAM Ltd is honoured to welcome Melinda to the role of CEO, who we know will be an excellent fit for the organisation. We were pleased to have overseen a very competitive recruitment process, with many applicants from all over Australia expressing their interest. To have attracted someone of Melinda's calibre speaks volumes of the reputation SAM has earned for itself. We are confident that Melinda will continue to build SAM's legacy to the arts scene in the region."

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Melinda rounds off a decade at Linden New Art with a fond farewell. Paul Duldig, Chair of the Linden New Art Board, says of Melinda's departure:

"The Board of Linden congratulates Melinda on her new role. Melinda leaves an exceptional legacy at Linden after ten years as CEO/Director, and will be sorely missed. We wish her the very best."

Melinda joins SAM at an exciting stage in its development, with the museum having redefined the artistic and cultural landscape in Greater Shepparton and cementing itself as a major tourism drawcard, and has become an industry leader for its model of governance structure. She looks forward to immersing herself in the community and employing her learnings at SAM to ensure an experience that reflects the rich culture of the region.

Melinda will commence her role as CEO of SAM on Monday 11 July.

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## **About SAM:**

Shepparton Art Museum (SAM) is one of Australia's outstanding regional art museums, showcasing our exhibitions and collections in new and exciting ways and creating a welcoming, inclusive and engaging space for all audiences. Artists are central to our work. Our programming is designed to be locally relevant and engage with global contemporary ideas. SAM is recognised for its significant Australian ceramics collection, and our nationally significant collection of Indigenous art. As the only public art museum in Greater Shepparton and north central Victoria, our mission is to present great art in Shepparton, and to contribute to the cultural enrichment, community engagement and economic prosperity of the region.

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