

28 November 2024



A medal-worthy take on 2024: MoAD unveils *Behind the Lines*

Relive the thrills and spills of the 2024 political season through the lens of Australia's best cartoonists at *Behind the Lines 2024: No Guts, No Glory* – officially open today at the Museum of Australian Democracy (MoAD) at Old Parliament House.

As one of Australia's longest-running annual exhibitions, *Behind the Lines* celebrates the talent of this country's leading cartoonists as it gathers their work to present a unique time capsule of the year in Australian politics.

Showcasing the work of 40 artists from across Australia, this year's exhibition, *No Guts, No Glory*, uses the passion and spectacle of sport as a powerful metaphor to explore the key political issues and current affairs that have defined 2024.



Museum of Australian Democracy
at Old Parliament House

Megan Herbert has been named the 2024 Political Cartoonist of the Year. Her work was praised by the judges for demonstrating a sophisticated range of visual techniques and commenting on a broad range of issues in an even-handed way that connects with and involves her audience.

Chair of the Board Barrie Cassidy said Old Parliament House was a natural home for the annual exhibition.

“Just as sporting events come alive in the great stadiums, we think Old Parliament House is the ideal venue for an annual exhibition of political cartoons,” Mr Cassidy said.

“Those who come for the cartoons can stay on and explore more of the building and the displays on our political and democratic history.

“MoAD’s work, to share the story of Australia’s democracy, has never been more important. The world today reminds us that democracy is a fragile concept—not just globally, but here in Australia as well. Our goal is to connect people with democracy, inspiring them to explore, understand, and actively participate in our democratic system.”

MoAD Director Stephanie Bull said *Behind the Lines*, like the big event of any sporting season, remains a perennial favourite that crowds flock back to year after year.

“This exhibition reminds us that we are fortunate to live in a robust democracy where we are free to express our ideas and opinions,” Ms Bull said.

“As the community comes together to enjoy this year’s *Behind the Lines*, our hope is that visitors leave MoAD with a greater understanding that every person has a role in, and can contribute to, our democracy.”

In what proved to be a golden Olympic and Paralympic year for Australia, exhibition Curator Matthew Jones said there could be no more appropriate theme for 2024’s retrospective than sport.

“The exhibition draws a dynamic connection between the grit, strategy, and resilience of sport and the equally charged arena of politics,” Mr Jones said.



Museum of Australian Democracy
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“Much like elite athletes competing for glory, politicians navigate high-stakes moments, strive for victory, and face relentless scrutiny.

“The individual cartoons explore topics that have preoccupied Australian audiences and dominated political debate. These include cost-of-living pressures, housing affordability, the war in the Middle East, climate change, asylum seekers, Australia Day, nuclear power and the impact of domestic violence.”

This year’s *In Focus* section is curated by Dr Anne Summers AO, a leader in the women’s movement and best-selling author and award-winning journalist. As part of the exhibition, Dr Summers has selected historical and contemporary cartoons to raise awareness about domestic and family violence in Australia.

Audiences around the country will also have the opportunity to see a selection of works from *Behind the Lines 2024* when it tours to four venues from March 2025. The tour has been generously supported by the Federal Government through a grant from the National Collecting Institutions Touring and Outreach Program (NCITO), and will travel to:

- Pinnacles Gallery, QLD: 8 March to 11 May 2025
- Gladstone Regional Art Gallery and Museum, QLD: 17 May to 28 June 2025
- Old Treasury Building, VIC: 17 July to 28 August 2025
- The Hawke Centre, SA: 4 September to 31 October 2025

Behind the Lines 2024 opens at MoAD at Old Parliament House, Canberra today (29 November 2024) and will be on display for a year. Entry is free from 9am to 5pm, daily (except Christmas Day).

Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House (MoAD)

The Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House (MoAD) is a modern museum located inside a heritage-listed building that was once home to Australia’s national parliament.

MoAD protects, conserves and interprets this national icon to highlight the crucial role the building and its collections have played in shaping today’s Australia.



Museum of Australian Democracy
at Old Parliament House

The museum strives to share the story of Australia's democracy through exhibitions, educational programs, publications and digital content to increase understanding of the nation's social and political history.

By actively exploring how Australia's democratic systems work, audiences of all ages are inspired and equipped to participate as engaged citizens in our democracy.

Megan Herbert, 2024 Political Cartoonist of the Year

Megan Herbert has been named the 2024 Political Cartoonist of the Year. Her career has spanned over 20 years, and her cartoons feature regularly in *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*. Besides her work as a cartoonist, she has written for television and film, done life drawing and created children's books.

Megan's work was praised by the judges for demonstrating a sophisticated range of visual techniques and commenting on a broad range of issues in an even-handed way that connects with and involves her audience. This year's judging panel comprised TV personality, sports journalist and educator, and Yankunytjatjara and Wirangu woman Shelley Ware; cartoon academic Dr Lucien Leon; Cathy Wilcox, President of the Australian Cartoonists Association; Anne-Marie Condé, Head of Interpretations and Curatorial at MoAD; and our guest curator, Matthew Jones.

Images available [here](#).

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Lead image caption: Visitors explore *Behind the Lines 2024: No Guts, No Glory* at the Museum of Australian Democracy (MoAD) at Old Parliament House.

MOAD

Museum of Australian Democracy
at Old Parliament House



Caption: Megan Herbert, *Legislative Failings*, Nine Papers, 5 August 2024