



Media Release

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Jon Campbell—yEAH / dUNNO

A Geelong Gallery exhibition
28 February to 24 May 2026



Jon Campbell, *Sam Kerr's left calf* 2024, synthetic polymer paint on linen. Courtesy of the artist and Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney. Photographer: Jon Campbell, © the artist



Jon Campbell, *Pub rock* 2024, synthetic polymer paint on cottonduck. Courtesy of the artist and Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney. Photographer: Simon Hewson, © the artist

Highly celebrated artist Jon Campbell's exhibition *yEAH / dUNNO* will be on display at Geelong Gallery from 28 February to 24 May 2026.

The exhibition brings together a selection of works spanning four decades that affirm art is everywhere around us: in the words we use or overhear, on the shop signs we see in our neighbourhoods, and on the civic buildings we regularly pass by.

With his use of words and phrases as imagery, Campbell captures aspects of popular culture that are both lived and observed; local, national and international; and spoken, written, sung or read. Campbell works across paintings, drawings, neon lighting, tea towels, flags and songs to demonstrate his love of suburbia and its vernacular. His works define not only the look of the world in which he lives, but the accent and humour of its language.

From the positivity of *YEAH* to the uncertainty of *DUNNO*, the exhibition focuses on the complex and specific qualities of contemporary Australian language and Campbell's connection to the west of Melbourne and our region. With humour and optimism, he eschews strident nationalism in favour of an inclusive celebration of the small, the overlooked and the everyday.

The exhibition will activate the Gallery building, extending the transformation of the rear facade in 2025 to include installations across the Little Malop Street entrance and foyer.

Jon Campbell says: "*I don't want no Retro Spective* as the artist Ed Ruscha once said. But my exhibition *yEAH / dUNNO*, is a collection of works that articulate and celebrate my artistic output over the past 40 years. From the loose figuration of 'Celebration 1' (1985) to the large-scale text work, 'it's a world full of lying bastards' (2017-20), this long and winding road takes the viewer on a journey, engaging with the ideas and images that have kept me energized and committed to the rollercoaster that is the life of an artist."

Geelong Gallery Director & CEO
Humphrey Clegg says: 'Jon Campbell is a remarkable artist whose understanding of how language shapes our perception of the world around us makes his work highly potent and engaging. In many ways the title, *yEAH / dUNNO* embodies Jon's approach to his art: '*yEAH*' is a celebration of art and artists and their positive role in society, while '*dUNNO*' reflects his interest in empowering people to say 'I don't get it, and that's cool'. I am incredibly excited to see this important exhibition brought to life here at Geelong Gallery.'

Curator of the exhibition, Geelong Gallery Assistant Director, Curatorial
Lisa Sullivan says: 'From the site specific installations on the building's exterior, to the considered selection of works within, Jon Campbell celebrates the visual potential of words and language, the everyday and popular culture. Campbell transforms the words we use, hear and see into colourful, rich and engaging works that remind us that art is everywhere.'

-ENDS-

Exhibition partners

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