CITY OF ADELAIDE

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 25 November 2026

ARTWORK CHALLENGES VICTIM-BLAMING MYTHS

Clothing worn by survivors of sexual violence will feature in a City of Adelaide art exhibition commissioned for the international 16 Days of Activism campaign.

On display from 25 November to 10 December 2026, *What Were You Wearing?* is a powerful art commission and city-wide campaign that challenges misconceptions about sexual and gender-based violence.

Artworks by South Australian artist Rosina Possingham will feature across a media wall in Rundle Mall and exhibition at the City of Adelaide ART POD at 25 Pirie Street.

The artworks have been developed from submissions by victim-survivors of sexual and gender-based violence and depict representations of clothing they were wearing at the time of being assaulted.

The artwork commission and exhibition mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on 25 November.

It forms part of the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence campaign, which concludes on International Human Rights Day on 10 December.

The project is supported by Embolden SA and What Were You Wearing? Australia, who have partnered with Council to deliver the project at a critical time for South Australia and the nation.

City of Adelaide Lord Mayor Dr Jane Lomax-Smith said the Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence recommended local government play a greater role in preventing violence through education, awareness and cultural change.

“Councils have a moral obligation to stand up and speak out against domestic, family and sexual violence, just like anyone else in our community,” said the Lord Mayor.

“While public art gives us a feel-good hit that makes us enjoy the city, it should also challenge our assumptions and confront the harmful myths that stand in the way of positive change.

“Rosina’s work challenges the misconceptions that underpin victim-blaming and reinforces a simple but important message: what someone wears is never an invitation for violence, and clothing does not equal consent.”

Embolden SA Chief Executive Mary Leaker said harmful attitudes and myths surrounding sexual violence are a key driver of gender-based violence.

“We can all play a role in challenging ideas that serve to enable and protect those causing harm," said Ms Leaker.

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What Were You Wearing? South Australia General Manager Abbey Hardie said sexual violence victims were frequently questioned about what they were wearing at the time they were assaulted.

“This exhibition demonstrates the ordinary nature of the clothing involved and redirects attention to where responsibility belongs, with those who commit acts of violence,” said Ms Hardy.

The project relied on lived experience perspectives from members of the Lived Experience Advisory Network (LEAN) and What Were You Wearing? Australia to inform its presentation.

LEAN member Amanda Brownlie, who provided a written submission for the exhibition, said it reinforced the absurdity of asking sexual violence victims what clothes they had been wearing.

“It's one of the many victim-blaming questions and statements that I, and so many others, have faced when coming forward. It's time to question the myths, not the victim-survivors,” said Ms Brownlie.

In addition to the exhibition and media wall, the City of Adelaide Library, North Terrace is offering:

- **Social worker drop-in sessions**, every Tuesday 1-4pm and Thursday 10am- 1pm
- **Special Storytime for children 3 – 5 and their families**, 2 December 10:30am
- **Words That Hold Us: 16 Days of Activism Reading Circle**, 9 December 5:30pm

For more information visit www.cityofadelaide.com.au/community/programs/16-days-of-activism/