

# ᠵᠠᠮ ᠵᠠᠭ | Zam Zaag|2024

ᠵᠠᠮ ᠵᠠᠭ | Zam Zaag | 2024 showcases the creative works of  
**Diana CHESTER** & **Ariuntuya JAMBALDORJ**

This exhibition explores both the issue of water scarcity in Mongolia and the boundaries that are created by the dried-up riverbeds. This work is made from materials gathered, recorded, and documented in the Gobi Desert.

Officially opened by Dr **Diana CHESTER**

## Gallery25

Opening: Thursday 2 May 2024 5pm–7pm  
Exhibition dates: 3 May to 29 May  
Floor talk: Wednesday 22 May 12:30pm–1:30pm  
Gallery opening hours: Tuesday to Friday 10am–4pm  
Building 10, 2 Bradford St, Mount Lawley

*ECU Galleries acknowledges the traditional custodians, the Whadjuk Noongar people, and elders past and present. We pay our respects for the great privilege of living, making and researching on these unceded lands.*

# Exhibition Statement

Zam Zaag is the path that we lead or follow, it is the way life evolves and moves and travels, and it is a form of destiny that happens with and without our control. This work explores the lack or loss of water that leaves in its wake—paths and tracks in the land and in people's faith and connection. Sometimes these paths come together and sometimes they move apart. The absence of the rivers feels like a death but aesthetically these riverbeds and 'used-to-be waterways' are beautiful. We are aiming to show this beauty and to remember the loss.

In 2023, 362 Mongolian rivers significantly shrunk in size or disappeared. People around the world are worried about lost rivers and environmental change. There is a story in our paths, the paths of water and the paths of people. This work explores these stories and these paths and aims to refocus us on nature, bringing reconnection to a place that can feel lost. ZAM ZAAG | ᠵᠠᠮ ᠵᠠᠭ is made entirely from materials gathered, recorded, and documented in the Gobi Desert.

The exhibition consists of two works. The first is of two companion video pieces and a sound piece running 9 minutes and 30 seconds entitled *Zam Zaag*. This work explores the lack or loss of water that leaves in its wake—paths and tracks in the land and in people's faith and connection. It is a meditation on the human connection to earth, dirt, rock, riverbed; and the sounds that are held in and below these spaces. This work is made from video and sound documentation collected during a week-long research trip to the Gobi Desert.

The second work is entitled *Zag*, the name of a tree commonly found in the Gobi which endures and adapts to extreme conditions to survive in the desert terrain. This work puts the Zag tree in conversation with melting ice as a reflection on the large pockets of water that remain in the Gobi, much of it as ice. These glaciers and frozen waterways slowly melt through the summer months, some however remain frozen until the temperatures drop again in the winter. The work consists of a timelapse video, a dynamic soundscape, a 14-meter—long piece of silk, and a monotype—all about Zag. In the timelapse the branches have been suspended in relation to each other in mid-air, re-creating the interesting, knotted twists and turns of the Zag in the Gobi. Many of the branches are frozen into water and the installation unfolds as these blocks of ice melt slowly over a period of hours, the drips of water interacting with clay, dirt, and mud from the Gobi, creating interesting textures and designs.

Dr Diana CHESTER  
March, 2024

# Diana CHESTER

## Biography

Chester is an internationally recognized digital media artist, educator and researcher using sound to explore more-than-human dimensions of understanding existence in the time of the Anthropocene. Their work uses sound, animation, and photography in conversation with ethnographic and archival materials, to convey ideas of pasts, presents, and futures. Driven by an intense desire to re-presence story and memory, Chester uses personal narratives as a method to give voice to the world around them. To do so they fluidly explore multilingual, inter-environmental, and data generated soundscapes, finding rhythmic cadences and synergies from the natural world, and placing them in conversation with visual materials to compose “listening stories” that compel humans to think more deeply about inclusive ideas of place and belonging.

Current projects include the study of sound and culture focused on religion and the environment, the audio essay as a form of sonic scholarship, and new artistic methods and practices to sonify scientific data sets. Chester is the author of *Sonic Encounters: The Islamic Call to Prayer*, which gives a glimpse into the creative, methodological, and artistic implications of a 10-year research project making field recordings of (adhan) the Islamic call to prayer at mosques around the world.

Chester is Senior Lecturer in Media and Communication at the University of Sydney and has held visiting academic positions at NYU’s TISCH School of the Arts and Duke University.

Chester has been commissioned by the Smithsonian, been resident artist at Inter Arts Centre in Malmo, Sweden (2019), ArtsIceland in Ísafjörður, Iceland (2022), and Red Corner International Artist Residency in Mongolia (2023). Chester has been the recipient of a Sydney Environment Institute Collaborative Fellowship, has been named a Powerhouse Research Fellow at the Museum of Arts and Applied Sciences, and currently holds a visiting scholar appointment at the Oxford Centre for Life-Writing.

### Contact Information

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Instagram: @dr\_dianachester

Facebook: @drdiana.chester

# Ariuntuya **JAMBALDORJ**

## Biography

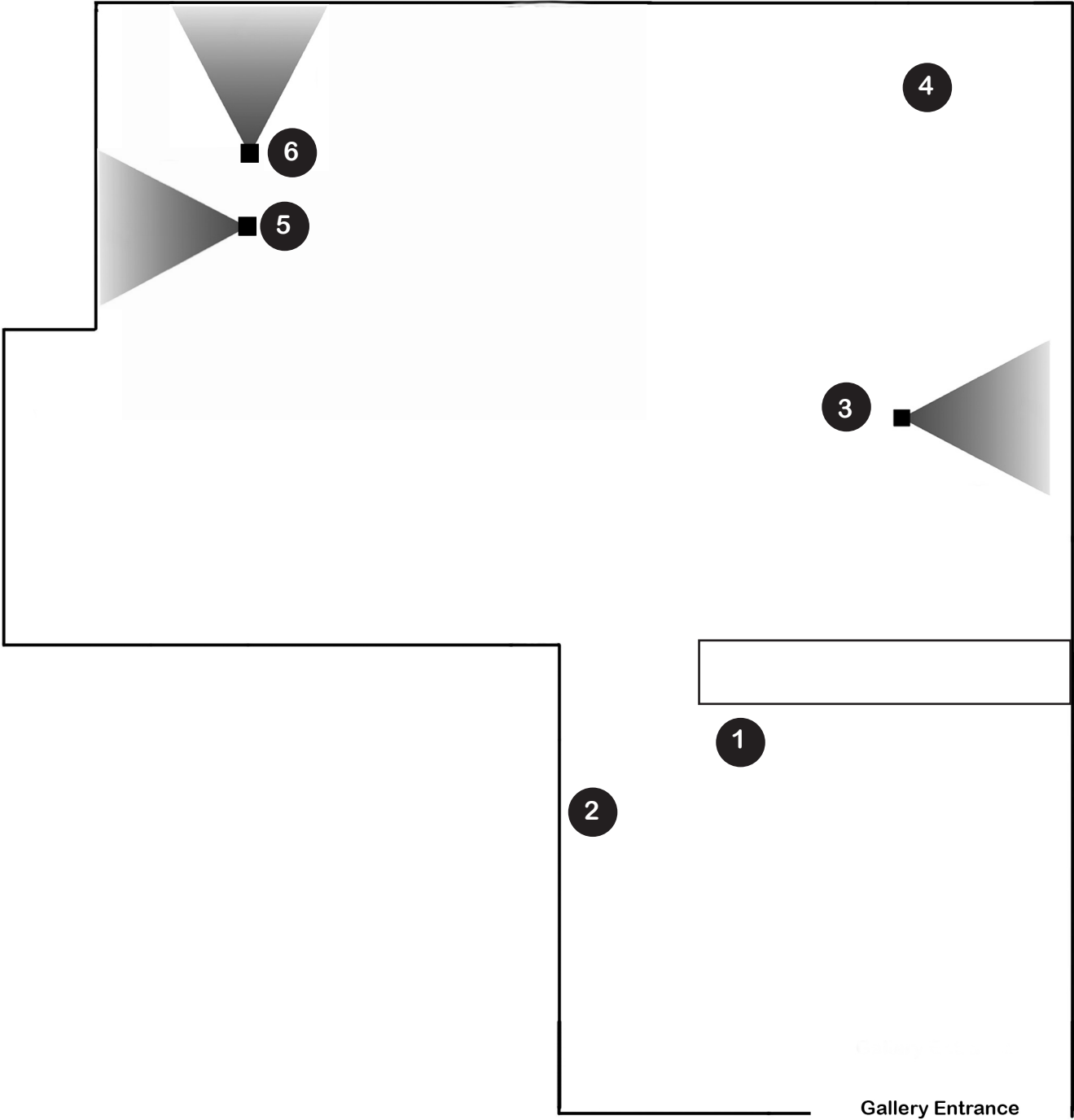
Ariuntuya Jambaldorj is a neo-nomadic contemporary artist, and one of the most prolific young artists working today in Mongolia. Her art conveys concepts and questions about the existence of the individual; the relations between man and nature; natural processes; and time concepts. She works with simple materials including ink, watercolor, paper, rice paper, pen, thread, and papier mâché, through multidisciplinary arts including drawing, painting, poetry, installation, performance, public and video art.

Jambaldorj displayed her first solo exhibition titled “A Drop of Air” (2019) at 976 Art Gallery and a second solo exhibition “The Fountain” (2019) at Red Ger creative space. Her animation work ‘Thread’ won “the Best Animated Film” prize at the AKIFF- Altan Khalis International Film Festival in 2019. Jambaldorj has presented media artwork “Origin 21” under the theme ‘XXI’ at the 6th Ulaanbaatar International Media Art Festival, organized by Arts Council of Mongolia and Art Week 2021, organized by the Ministry of Culture of Mongolia. In 2016/17 Jambaldorj worked as visual artist and mentor for project “Re-Imagine Mongolia” funded by the Arts Council of Mongolia (ACM) and Swiss Cooperation in Mongolia (SCM). In 2017, Ariuntuya worked on the organizational team of the National Pavilion of Mongolia at the 57th Venice Art Biennale.

### Contact Information

Instagram: @ariuntuya.j

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# List of Works

- 1 Ariuntuya JAMBALDORJ**  
*Zag 3 2024*  
Mixed media painting on watercolour paper  
158x108cm  
\$1,000
  
- 2 Ariuntuya JAMBALDORJ & Diana CHESTER**  
*Zag 4 2024*  
Video work  
6min  
NFS
  
- 3 Ariuntuya JAMBALDORJ & Diana CHESTER**  
*Zag 2024*  
Sound and video work  
11min  
NFS
  
- 4 Ariuntuya JAMBALDORJ**  
*Zag 2 2024*  
Oil Paint, fabric paint on cotton fabric  
1.5x14m  
\$3,500
  
- 5 Diana CHESTER & Ariuntuya JAMBALDORJ**  
*Zam Zaag 2 2023*  
Sound and video work  
9min 30sec  
NFS
  
- 6 Diana CHESTER & Ariuntuya JAMBALDORJ**  
*Zam Zaag 2023*  
Sound and video work  
9min 30sec  
NFS