**MEDIA RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Friday 2 May 2025
**GULLOTTI GALLERIES MEDIA RELEASE: FACT CHECK**

**This fact check responds to misleading claims made in Gullotti Galleries’**

**media release dated April 2025, promoting Boonji Spaceman, correcting the record on ownership, originality,**

**and public value.**

🔍 **FACT CHECK**

1. **“Only six other cities across the globe who own a personalised BOONJI Spaceman”**

❌ *This is misleading.*

Only two cities are known to own a Boonji Spaceman sculpture, the others are privately owned.

✅ Cities that *own* a Boonji Spaceman:

1. Oslo, Norway – *What’s Next* (Installed 2023, Aker Brygge)
	* Owned by the City of Oslo
2. Perth, Australia – *Lightening* (Installed 2025, Stirling Gardens)
	* Accepted as a gift and owned by the City of Perth

❌ Cities with *displayed* Boonji sculptures (not city-owned):

* London, UK – *Dreams Matter* (Private gallery, ARX)
* Antigua – Resort installation (Privately commissioned by Hodges Bay Resort)
* Houston, Texas, USA – Stadium artwork (Installed at Minute Maid Park, not city property)
* Riyadh, KSA spaceman displayed at the Four Seasons Hotel
1. **“Perth’s Own One-Of-A-Kind Boonji Spaceman” “Western Australia’s very own specially created BOONJI Spaceman” “personalised BOONJI Spaceman”**

❌ *This is misleading.*

While the sculpture may be “customised” for Perth, the Boonji Spacemen are part of a mass-produced series.

There is no evidence that the Perth sculpture is materially distinct beyond potential colour or inscription variations.

1. **“Murphy’s wide range of work can be found in museums, and galleries around the world and famous collectors include Serena Williams, Novak Djokovic, Larry Page, Warren Buffett, Ryan Gosling and Grant Cardone.”**

❌ *This is misleading.*

As far as we know there is no verified evidence that Brendan Murphy's artworks are part of any major public museum or gallery collections.

While his works have been exhibited in various galleries and art fairs globally, and are held in numerous private collections, claims regarding their presence in museums lack substantiation.

🔍 **WHAT THE CITY AND GULLOTTI ARENT SAYING:**

* ﻿﻿The Boonji Spaceman will be installed on the footing of the Ore Obelisk - a major public artwork and cultural landmark for 50 years.
* ﻿﻿The Ore Obelisk was cut up with a gas axe, which means it was essentially destroyed, and it has been sitting in storage somewhere - the City of Perth won't say where - for four years.
* The City destroyed a regionally significant public artwork (the Ore Obelisk by Paul Ritter), without community consultation, without conservation assessment, and without plans for reinstallation.
* ﻿﻿Despite a petition, volumes of letters from the public and letters from experts including Emeritus Professor Jenny Gregory, the Heritage Trust, the History Council and the Chamber of Arts and Culture - the City of Perth is ignoring the calls to reinstate the Ore Obelisk and is proceeding with the Boonji Spaceman.
* ﻿﻿The Boonji Spaceman is one of many editions. The ‘gift’ brokered through a backroom deal between Paul Gullotti and Basil Zempilas, and paid for with public funds. It is no gift.
* Brendan Murphy's practice is heavily connected to commercial NFT sales, resorts, and private celebrity collectors—not museums, public commissions, or civic contribution.
* ﻿﻿The cost to ratepayers? A quarter of a million dollars!!! With ~ $171,000 going directly to Gullotti Galleries without any oversight.
* The City of Perth appears to have bypassed due diligence by striking a backroom deal with Paul Gullotti - an art dealer with multiple legal cases against him - raising serious concerns about the fair treatment of artists, commercial accountability, and the appropriateness of public partnerships with individuals who carry unresolved reputational and ethical issues.
* ﻿﻿The cost to Perth's cultural identity? Much harder to measure.
* In 2023 the City of Perth emptied out the arts reserve and put the funds into the surplus clearing the way for the funding of the Boonji Spaceman and leaving the City of Perth without funds to carry out necessary work
* The Boonji installation is officially "temporary" (12 months), but the City has not said where it will go next, who will pay for that move, or what future liabilities ratepayers may face.
* This "temporary" installation will need to be removed, relocated, and reinstalled raising serious questions about additional future costs and who is accountable for them.
* The City of Perth has made space for a hyper-commercialised, mass-produced spaceman at the cost of an original, site-responsive civic artwork rooted in Perth’s cultural history.
* This entire process sends a message to WA’s arts community: you can be overlooked and displaced by a flashy offshore import with no connection to place.
* No WA artist would be allowed to bypass process, ignore policy, and walk away with $171,000 in ratepayer funds without accountability.

Save The Kebab campaign is calling for:

* An immediate pause on the *Boonji Spaceman* installation.
* Locating the *Boonji Spaceman*, once, in a more appropriate site.
* Urgent restoration of Paul Ritter’s Ore Obelisk to its original site in Stirling Gardens.
* Lorenna Grant to be commissioned to remake *The Arch*, in its original site in Northbridge.
* A commitment to culture that reflects Perth’s unique identity.
* Full public disclosure of procurement processes, quotations, and project costs.

Visit [www.savethekebab.com](http://www.savethekebab.com/)

- Ends -

**For media inquiries, contact:**
Helen Curtis
info@savethekebab.com
0413 560 413

Instagram @savethekebab