

Bronwyn Hack

Eyeball Body Piece 2019

Heart, Body Piece 2019

graphite pencil, ink, and coloured pencil on paper

Untitled 2021

Untitled 2021

cotton thread, material, mixed media

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Intimate Imaginaries

Intimate Imaginaries is a group exhibition featuring artists who currently work out of the nationally and internationally renowned Arts Project Australia (APA), a gallery and studio based in Northcote that supports artists with intellectual disabilities. This presentation is the first major exhibition surveying the work of APA artists in an Australian museum, highlighting 13 vital contemporary practices that have emerged from this self-described ‘boisterous hive of creativity’ over the past five decades.

The term ‘imaginaries’ is commonly used to describe realms of pure invention or flights of fancy, but it can also refer to more everyday creative activity: how we perceive, shape and make sense of ourselves and the world around us. This open-ended conception is one that accords with the ethos of APA where ‘art is not taught, but rather the innate creative direction of each artist is nurtured to elicit works of personal meaning and style’. In this spirit, *Intimate Imaginaries* brings together bodies of work by a range of artists who each express a compelling, richly inventive and deeply felt worldview.

Many featured works convey the artist’s personal perspectives on everyday environments, interactions and phenomena. Other works employ abstract shapes, vivid colour and highly tactile forms of mark-making to evoke emotive, intangible and interior states of being. While the exhibiting artists work across a range of media and disciplines—including painting, drawing, ceramics, soft sculpture and video—they all share a distinctive handmade aesthetic; a personal touch which draws us closer to the creative processes embodied in their works.

Cathy Staughton

Born 1968, Melbourne/Narrm

Joined Arts Project Australia in 1989

Although her extensive oeuvre explores a range of different themes, this exhibition homes in on one of Cathy Staughton's most recurrent and significant subjects: the St Kilda landmark of Luna Park. The iconic amusement park and tourist destination has not only entertained millions of visitors since it opened in 1912, it has also inspired many artists over a sustained period. In Staughton's case, her ongoing creative engagement with the theme park interweaves autobiographical references with fantastical imagery that is often drawn from her dreams.

Staughton's lifelong fascination stems from her vivid childhood memories of St Kilda where her family home had a direct view of Luna Park through the front windows. This clearly made a lasting impression with one of her earliest drawings, *Cathy of Queen St Kilda*, featuring a highly expressive portrait of 'Mr Moon'—the iconic, clown-like visage through whose mouth visitors gain entry. Prominently featured in many of her subsequent works, the character of 'Mr Moon' assumes a range of different expressions, from the relatively benign to the outright monstrous. In a series from 2001–02, the entranceway is envisaged as a kind of threshold between the real world and a supernatural realm, alternately traversing worlds that are benevolent and 'Just for fun' (Luna Park's longstanding motto), or else unsettling, sinister and populated with devils and ghosts.

For this exhibition, Staughton has reprised her riotous 'self-portrait' *Luna Park Face Witche*, 2007, as a large-scale mural. In so doing, she wittily usurps the persona of the amusement park, boldly proclaiming the significance of this integral place from her past which continues to inform the composition of her personal and artistic identity.

Cathy Staughton

Cathy of Queen St Kilda 1985

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

St Kilda Film Festival 1994

coloured pencils on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Cathy Staughton

Luna Park Dream Cathy 1989

coloured pencils on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Cathy Staughton

Bad Dream – Bev No Food and No Drink 2001

Another Barton Devill's Father 2001

Ghosts Monster Mysteries 2001

Roller Coaster Steel Big Dipper 2001

watercolour, graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Cathy Staughton

Luna Park Land Mark St Kilda Beach 2001

Good Dream, Cathy's Nightmare 2002

watercolour, graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Cathy Staughton

Luna Park 2005

gouache, graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Collection of Mary Stuart

Cathy Staughton

Luna Park 1994

synthetic polymer paint on composition board

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Gift of Stuart Purves, Australian Galleries,

through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2018

Cathy Staughton

Blue Angel, Luna Park Dream 2006

synthetic polymer paint on canvas

Collection of Mary Stuart

Cathy Staughton

The Luna Park Sydney Harbour Bridge 2007

gouache and marker on paper

Collection of Michael Josephson and Rod Macneil

Cathy Staughton

Luna Park Dragon 2012

synthetic polymer paint on canvas

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Cathy Staughton

Untitled (Roller Coaster Luna Park) 2012

synthetic polymer paint on canvas

Collection of Mary Stuart

Untitled (after Luna Park Face Witche) 2024

synthetic polymer paint on plaster wall

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Lisa Reid

Born 1975, Melbourne/Narrm

Joined Arts Project Australia in 2002

Inspired by her family upbringing, the domestic environment and fond memories from her childhood, the work of Lisa Reid is rich with autobiographical references. Working across a variety of media, her practice is characterised by a meticulous attention to detail, with some works often taking many months, even years, to complete. A key inspiration came in 2002 when the artist discovered a family photo album spanning multiple generations. In the ensuing months, she sensitively recreated the photographs as a series of delicate, sepia-toned gouaches, with her reimagining of the family archive moving beyond the indexical nature of the original images. Whether it's a lively wedding or an informal portrait, Reid has an uncanny ability to distil the personalities and emotional qualities of her subjects and imbue each scene with an atmospheric mood that gently evokes a tender, almost wistful reflection on the past.

Reid's autobiographical approach to her work also extends to her longstanding ceramics practice. For over a decade now, Reid has produced a series of lovingly rendered earthenware objects that are redolent of her personal family history. Her latest ceramic, *Mum's 1971 Elna Supermatic Sewing Machine*, is a meticulous recreation of the appliance with which her mother would sew clothes for the artist and her sister when they were young. Created over a period of eight months, and replete with all the sewing machine's specific components, the artist's investment in making her replica as faithful to the original as possible demonstrates the profound and abiding emotional connections that particular domestic objects hold for her.

Lisa Reid

Lisa's Story 2012–ongoing

digital animation

video duration: 00:01:56

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Lisa Reid

The Reid Family in the 1940s 2005

gouache on paper

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Gift of Stuart Purves, Australian Galleries

through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2018

Mum and Dad's Wedding 2002

gouache and pencil on paper

Private collection

Grandma, Aunty Shirley and My Dad 2002

gouache on paper

Grandma Aged Two 2002

gouache and pencil on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Lisa Reid

**Grandma Ade Patting Spotty on the
Old Wooden Bench in the Backyard 2003**

synthetic polymer paint on paper

Collection of Deb Stewart

Mother and Uncle John 2005

gouache and pen on paper

Private collection

**Mum Giving Me a Hug on My Christening
Day Back in 1976 2022**

gouache on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Lisa Reid

**Mum's 1971 Elna Supermatic Sewing
Machine 2024**

earthenware

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Red Handbag 2015

earthenware

Collection of Catherine Bell

Navy Blue High Heel Shoes 2015

earthenware

Private collection

Lisa Reid

1950s Vintage Sunbeam Electrical Hairdryer
2022

earthenware

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased, Victorian Foundation for Living Australian Artists, 2023

Lisa Reid

Little Red Riding Hood 2018–22

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Samraing Chea

Born 1995, Cambodia

Joined Arts Project Australia in 2011

The intricate drawings of Samraing Chea combine astute observation and narrative invention in an ongoing series of poetic ruminations on the world as he sees it. Following his commencement at the APA studio in 2011, Chea quickly established his preferred format of tightly cropped compositions contained within thin borders, all drawn in freehand. Intensively worked using graphite and coloured pencils, Chea's striking graphic imagery singles out everyday scenes, interactions, and phenomena that often go unnoticed.

Since 2013, Chea has incorporated the title of individual works as a line of text at the base of each drawing, aligning many of them with the layout of a storyboard or comic book. The artist's enigmatic inscriptions suggest a broader narrative dimension, ranging from the playful to the menacing, that invites viewers to use their own imagination to fill in the gaps. In other instances, Chea's combinations of image and text convey wry observations on the folly of human behaviour and, at times, pointed socio-political commentary.

Another visual template that recurs in Chea's practice recalls the illustrations one might find in a textbook or academic journal.

In *Eyes Muscles Nerves to the Brain that the Movement Can Rotate the Rectuses*, for example, he describes in vivid detail the anatomy of human eyeballs and their direct connection to the brain. Representing a potent metaphor for the primacy of perception, in many ways this striking composition speaks to the core of how Chea's unique and nuanced outlook on the world has been shaped; always keeping his eyes wide open.

Samraing Chea

**The World Going To Be a Wonderful
Rainbow Era 2012**

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Armstrong Family Collection

Samraing Chea

Eternal Sky Wind With Beauty Plants 2012

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Armstrong Family Collection

Samraing Chea

**A Very High Hill With a Watchman Tower
Below of the Cityscape Sight 2013**

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Private collection

**Evolution of Urban Planning and
New Developments in the U.S.A. 2012**

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Collection of Sue Roff

Samraing Chea

**Up Across the Long Steel Suspension
Bridge Built in the Early 20th Century 2016**

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Samraing Chea

Eye Muscles Nerves to the Brain That the Movement Can Rotate the Rectuses 2014

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Collection of Michael Schwarz

Every Truckers Enjoy Having Barbecue to Eat for Picnic. Where They Sit Outside Near the Truck Stop During Recreation 2018

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Everyone Think Dogs Put Their Machine-Interface That Controls Their Brains 2014

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Collection of Danielle Hakim

Samraing Chea

Two Foolish People Saying Something Stupid That They Are Mean 2013

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Collection of the Armstrong Family

When Teenage Boys Wonder Out Through the Forest at Night, the Wolves Bite Them and Scratches Their Bodies 2017

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Collection of Nartchanok Jansri and Rob McHaffie

Someone Fires a Flare up to the Sky of the Night for Rescue at Sea 2023

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Very Hot Sunny Day in the Summer While People Are Dehydrated 2013

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

During Autumn Season Trees With Leaves Are Dying and Changed Into Orange Colors When They Start To Come Off 2017

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Collection of Fernée & Meredith

Wendy Dawson

Born 1950, Melbourne/Narrm

Joined Arts Project Australia in 2008

An engagement with abstract art lies primarily on a sensory response to the artists' distinctive handling of their chosen medium. Encountering the works on paper of Wendy Dawson, one is immediately struck by the presence of the artist's hand. In *Untitled*, 2016, and *Untitled*, 2017, a range of incidental shapes, lines and squiggles, inscribed with her favoured range of acrylic paint pens, hover above a nebulous, ink wash background. These airy, floating forms allow us to trace Dawson's delicate movements as she scratches and etches each mark across the surface.

In her later works made between 2019 and 2022, Dawson eschews the ink wash, instead filling each sheet with an intricate structure comprised of thousands of short paint pen strokes in two or three colours. Here, the artist's mark-making is much more concentrated, the intensity generated by the repetitive actions of her wrist generating distinctive movements and rhythms across the surface.

This year Dawson's practice has shifted to a series of striking monochrome works. From a distance, these works have the appearance of a uniform field, however closer inspection reveals they are made using the same technique of densely hatched lines, all painstakingly knitted together. Perhaps more akin to paintings than drawings, the array of vibrant, high-key colours and subtle variations in the underlying compositions that are employed in these monochromes, express a range of different moods.

Wendy Dawson

Untitled 2013

Untitled 2024

paint pen on paper

Untitled 2017

Untitled 2016

paint pen and ink on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Wendy Dawson

Untitled 2022

Untitled 2022

Untitled 2019

Untitled 2019

paint pen on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Wendy Dawson

Untitled 2024

Untitled 2024

Untitled 2023

Untitled 2023

paint pen on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Julian Martin

Born 1969, Melbourne/Narrm

Joined Arts Project Australia in 1988

A regular studio artist at APA since 1988, Julian Martin has consistently worked with pastel, a notoriously challenging medium. In his hands, this powdery substance is transformed through a vigorous and dense application by which each sheet of paper is completely saturated with colour. Two large-scale works on paper from 1995 highlight the largely figurative nature of Martin's early practice. Belonging to a series of self-portraits that he produced at this time, the flattened, geometric planes of bold colour employed in these striking compositions foreshadow the predominantly abstract practice that followed.

Shown alongside these works is a suite of Martin's better-known form of biomorphic abstraction. Working predominantly from photographs found in books and magazines, the artist distils this source material into formally inventive abstract compositions. Martin's reinterpretation of this imagery often retains a distinct sense of the original, albeit in a radically pared down, flattened and simplified way. In such works, we might detect the spare outline of a distant landscape, the graphic shapes of a street sign, or the silhouetted forms of household tools or utensils. In this way, these bold and playful configurations provide discrete windows into Martin's everyday imaginary.

In his more recent series, Martin brings together two (occasionally three) pure pigments and combines them in dynamic compositions in which the gestural sweeps of his arm and hand are clearly visible. While some works sensitively elicit a range of different moods and states of mind, others convey a curious ambience suggestive of changing weather patterns.

Julian Martin

Untitled 1995

Untitled 1995

pastel on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Julian Martin

TOP ROW:

Untitled 2016

Untitled 2016

Untitled 2016

Untitled 2017

Untitled 2017

Untitled 2017

Untitled 2020

pastel on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Julian Martin

BOTTOM ROW:

Untitled 2015

Untitled 2016

Untitled 2016

Untitled 2017

Untitled 2017

Untitled 2017

Untitled 2020

pastel on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Julian Martin

TOP ROW:

Untitled 2022

Untitled 2022

Untitled 2022

Untitled 2023

BOTTOM ROW:

Untitled 2022

Untitled 2022

Untitled 2022

Untitled 2022

pastel on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Fulli Andrinopoulos

Born 1965, Melbourne/Narrm

Joined Arts Project Australia in 1991

Repetition is a vital aspect of Fulli Andrinopoulos's practice. For well over a decade, she has drawn and painted the form of a singular, circular formation at the centre of each of her compositions. Primarily working with ink on thick watercolour paper, the artist first saturates each sheet, allowing the fluid medium to spread and generate a range of tonal gradations. In this way, her chosen colours—usually limited to two or three pigments—often bleed into one another whereby the edges of the central motif become permeable. The overall effect is of an ethereal form which appears to emerge from the depths of the surrounding space.

A type of spatial abstraction, these otherworldly images evoke big concepts. While the circle is an archetypal symbol in many cultures, variously representing the infinite, wholeness, emptiness and the self, Andrinopoulos's paintings are equally suggestive of portals, voids, and celestial orbs.

This exhibition brings together a selection of 16 of Andrinopoulos's small-scale works arranged as a constellation. Viewed as a whole, one can appreciate the continuity and variation that defines the artist's practice. Contemplated up close, their delicate surfaces and gentle luminosity draw the viewer into their orbit, subtly conjuring a more intimate and emotive response.

Fulli Andrinopoulos

LEFT TO RIGHT:

Untitled 2021

Untitled 2017

Untitled 2021

Untitled 2024

Untitled 2021

ink on paper

Untitled 2012

gouache on paper

Untitled 2014

Untitled 2018

ink on paper

Untitled 2016

gouache on paper

Untitled 2015

Untitled 2015

Untitled 2015

ink on paper

Untitled 2013

Untitled 2014

gouache on paper

Untitled 2014

Untitled 2019

ink on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Terry Williams

Born 1952, Melbourne/Narrm

Joined Arts Project Australia in 1989

In the highly inventive sculptural figuration of Terry Williams, the familiar world is not simply reimagined; it is entirely remade. Presented as a whole-room installation, this exhibition features a range of soft sculpture works that provide a glimpse into Williams's prolific creative output. Works with a distinct Pop Art aspect such as the vibrant *Banjo* or Williams's elaborate black camera, inevitably call to mind the pioneering practice of Claes Oldenburg, whose 1960s series of soft sculptures of commonplace items such as clothespins, light switches, and hamburgers, radically expanded the definitions and materiality of the art object. However, unlike his predecessor, Williams is happy to leave elements of his process visible, with tangled excess threads left dangling and wadding escaping through the loosely stitched seams in some places. This unfussy, even messy quality is a conspicuous feature of many of Williams's works, largely stemming from his process driven approach to his art.

Williams's improvisational method of making renditions of ordinary objects and figures imbues each piece with a compelling, often enigmatic presence. Although he might use printed reference images as a source, no preparatory drawings are developed. Instead, the shapes are drawn directly onto the textiles cut into panels, assembled and hand-stitched together with wool, and then filled with polyester batting. Through the concentrated and rapid movements of cutting, stitching and stuffing, Williams seems determined to convey the immediacy of his perceptions. Indeed, it is these unrehearsed, wonky and exaggerated aspects of the artist's sculpted forms which prompt us to look at objects like tape decks, globes and instruments anew – to rediscover the distinctive thingness of each thing, what they mean to us, and how we relate to them.

Terry Williams

Banjo 2022

material, stuffing, wool

Terry Williams 2024

material, stuffing, wool

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Terry Williams

Untitled 2023

material, stuffing, wool

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Terry Williams

Space Helmet 2022

Untitled 2022

material, stuffing, wool

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Terry Williams

Untitled 2011

cotton, marker, stuffing, vinyl

Collection of Norman Rosenblatt

Untitled 2014

cotton, material, stuffing

Private collection

Untitled 2011

cotton, stuffing, marker

Private collection

Terry Williams

Untitled 2011

cotton, material, stuffing

Collection of Norman Rosenblatt

Untitled 2011

acrylic paint, cotton, material, stuffing

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Bronwyn Hack

Born 1979, Melbourne/Narrm

Joined Arts Project Australia in 2016

One of the main preoccupations of Bronwyn Hack's multi-faceted practice is her interest in human anatomy. Her carefully crafted and highly tactile models of a heart, brain, liver, lungs and intestines, make explicit a sense of corporeality ordinarily hidden from view. Employing techniques of hand-dyeing, cutting, assembling, stuffing and sewing, Hack chooses particular colours and textures to elaborate on the functions, drives and desires associated with each object/organ/part. For instance, in one of her most densely embroidered pieces, the human heart is adorned with a proliferation of colourful threads which are not only suggestive of its anatomical features but also correspond to its symbolic role as the vessel of human emotion.

However, it is perhaps the rawness of the stitches that bind works such as *Intestines* and *Liver* that represents their most visceral quality. While works such as these derive from illustrations found in biology reference books, as alluded to in the decorative flourishes and title of one her most recent pieces, *My Lungs*, Hack's practice is largely concerned with the process of self-construction.

Hack's interests also extend to the exterior features of the human body, as seen in her full-scale representations of a male and female figure. For these works, the artist has embellished two synthetic bodysuits with her soft sculptural renditions of eyes, noses, lips, breasts and genitalia. These works are designed to be worn, introducing a participatory and performative element to Hack's practice; one that is already implicit in the physical and durational making of her intricate pieces.

Bronwyn Hack

Brain 2015

cotton thread, material

Collection of Lynette Smith

My Lungs 2024

beads, cotton, material, mixed media,
string, stuffing, thread, wire

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Heart 2015

cotton, material, stuffing, wood

Collection of Norman Rosenblatt

Liver 2017

material, plastic, stuffing, thread

Intestines 2017

calico, ink, stuffing, thread

Collection of Jane McDougall

Bronwyn Hack

Baby Coming Out of Vagina 2019

calico, cotton, material, stuffing

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Mark Smith

Born 1976, Melbourne/Narrm

Joined Arts Project Australia in 2007

For several years, Mark Smith has considered the philosophical and emotional content of particular terms in a series of hand-stitched soft sculptures in which he playfully configures their individual letters in three dimensions. For his new work *Intimate Imaginaries*, Smith carefully selected two textiles that elicit the feelings and connotations that each word evokes for him: a burgundy velveteen for the face of the word 'Intimate', and a mesh of shimmering iridescent squares for 'Imaginaries'. Installed at the entrance to the gallery, the large-scale work is a bold declaration that signals the many different imaginaries that are represented in the exhibition.

Working with textile-based figuration, Smith is also interested in expressing aspects of human experience. His handsewn fabric work *Welcome* tenderly portrays the intimate physical and emotional bond that is established as a mother welcomes her child into the world. *Li'l Pearly Dreaming* is a delightful evocation of the exuberance of childhood as the young girl, mid-swing, throws her head back to gain maximum impetus. The third work in the series, *The Graduate*, depicts the girl's maturation into adulthood.

In two accompanying video works (which can be viewed by scanning the QR codes on the labels), Smith situates the swinging girl and the graduate in real environments and animates them with movement. In creating these short performative vignettes, Smith's figures are presented as active participants in the world, expanding the artist's imaginative celebration of significant moments that shape an individual's life.

Mark Smith

Intimate Imaginaries 2024

material, stuffing, thread

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Mark Smith

Welcome 2018

calico, cotton thread, stuffing

Monash University Collection

Courtesy of Monash University Museum of Art

Mark Smith

Li'l Pearly Dreaming 2018

calico, cotton thread, stuffing

Merri-Bek Art Collection

Scan QR code below to view the related video work
Li'l Pearly Dreaming 2019.



Mark Smith

The Graduate 2018

calico, cotton thread, stuffing

Collection of John Ridley AM

Scan QR code below to view the related video work
Living Miss Graduate 2018.



Chris O'Brien

Born 1981, Melbourne/Narrm

Joined Arts Project Australia in 2002

Chris O'Brien's practice largely centres around his fascination with suburbia. This exhibition brings together O'Brien's ongoing body of work based on a house in Northcote called 'Mona Vale' that he regularly passes on his way into the APA studio. Based on personal observations as well as real estate documentation, across the past decade O'Brien has fabricated the exterior of Mona Vale in a range of different media and formats.

O'Brien's engagement with this domestic site is expanded in an accompanying zine that illustrates the history of the property, before digressing into a dramatic, action-packed narrative. In spinning his elaborate tale, the artist appears several times in various guises, where he interacts with characters based on APA staff members and various other people he knows.

A blend of the personal and the fictitious also underpins O'Brien's growing body of video works which are inspired by both his infatuation with suburban houses and his favourite television shows. In *11 Latham Street* the artist hijacks a generic real estate promotional video, appropriating the found footage and interpolating himself as the would-be real estate agent. A satirical take on a highly formulaic genre, *The Block* sees O'Brien auditioning for his favourite reality TV show. In *The Cop Shop* the artist adopts the format of the British police drama *The Bill* yet drives the script in many unexpected directions.

Through his lively, multidisciplinary practice, O'Brien expresses a deep fascination with real estate and architecture, and long-term dream of home ownership.

Chris O'Brien

Mona Vale 328 Clarke St, #1 2019

Mona Vale 328 Clarke St, #2 2019

drypoint

Mona Vale 4 2016

porcelain

328 Clarke St. 2024

cotton, cotton thread, foam, material,
string, stuffing, thread, twine, wool

**Mona Vale 328 Clarke Street, Northcote
2014**

balsa wood, cardboard, mixed media

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Chris O'Brien

Mona Vale 328 Clarke St Northcote 2022

Mona Vale 328 Clarke St Northcote 2022

drypoint

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Chris O'Brien

The Cop Shop 2021

video

video duration 00:12:52

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Chris O'Brien

11 Latham Street 2019

video

video duration: 00:03:21

The Block 2023

video

video duration: 00:02:38

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Mona Vale – 328 Clarke St Northcote 3070
2024

You are invited to read this zine by Chris O'Brien.

Once you are finished please return it to the holder.

Alan Constable

Born 1956, Melbourne/Narrm

Joined Arts Project Australia in 1991

Alan Constable is renowned for his ongoing series of glazed earthenware sculptures that take the form of cameras, recording devices and viewing apparatuses of all persuasions. Often based on found promotional images, the cameras selected for this exhibition highlight the stylistic range Constable has produced over the past two decades, including SLRs, camcorders, large format cameras, binoculars, Polaroids, telescopes and instamatics.

As he is legally blind, Constable works by holding his reference materials close, absorbing the models' essential details before kneading his clay version into its respective parts. In shaping and assembling each component into a unified sculpture, Constable is not seeking to produce a faithful replica of the original (although he often incises lines into the surface to elaborate details or to record the model and make of his subject). This is clear from the way he often enlarges their scale, allows their forms to slump and distort, and glazes them in vivid colours.

Beholding Constable's works for the first time, one might initially be drawn to their recognisable components. However, on closer inspection, it is their tactile—rather than optical—features that deepen our engagement. By substituting the precision and refinement of the manufactured prototype with imprecise construction, distinctive hand-modelling, and wet-finish colour glazing, Constable takes his ceramics beyond merely representational fidelity. In responding to the touch of the artist's hands embodied in their structure, we might perhaps recall a time when we have handled such a device ourselves, framed a scenic view or captured an important moment for posterity.

Alan Constable

Untitled 2024

earthenware

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Untitled (Blue QKA SLR) 2013

Untitled (Green Concertina Camera) 2013

Untitled (Teal SLR with Flash) 2013

earthenware

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Yvonne Pettengell Bequest, 2014

Alan Constable

Untitled (Black Mamiya Large Format Camera)
2013

Untitled (Green Binoculars) 2013

Untitled (Video Camera) 2013

earthenware

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Yvonne Pettengell Bequest, 2014

Alan Constable

Untitled (AK SLR) 2008

earthenware

Collection of Norman Rosenblatt

Untitled 2022

earthenware

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Alan Constable

Untitled 2022

Untitled 2019

earthenware

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Square Shooter 2 #2 2014

earthenware

Collection of Dean Keep and Jeromie Maver

Alan Constable

Untitled 2023

Untitled 2022

Untitled 2022

earthenware

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Alan Constable

Untitled (AKF Red Binoculars) 2014

earthenware

Collection of Dean Keep and Jeromie Maver

Georgia Szmerling

Born 1979, Melbourne/Narrm

Joined Arts Project Australia in 2003

Since joining the APA studio in 2003, Georgia Szmerling's paintings and drawings have been primarily concerned with expressing the enlivening energy of the natural world. Richly textured and highly lyrical, her paintings seek to encapsulate the experiential qualities of chosen landscapes. Largely working from found images in books and magazines, Szmerling is less concerned with the conceptual notions of what 'the landscape' represents, instead responding in a more direct and emotive way, to places that personally evoke a sense of 'calmness', 'peace' and 'beauty'.

Brimming with intricate line work her close-up views of diverse plant formations convey a sense of natural growth and rhythm. For this exhibition, Szmerling produced a series of new works inspired by the temperate rainforest of Wurundjeri Country in the Yarra Ranges National Park. Based on photographs of the bush surrounding the Badger Creek Picnic Area (located on the outskirts of Healesville), her painted canvases vividly convey a sense of the profusion of growth that emanates from these environs.

In preparation for her large-scale mural, Szmerling made a field trip to her site of inspiration, walking through tree fern gullies, standing before ancient mountain ash, listening to the creek rushing down from the mountain, and sensing the abundance of life that springs forth in all directions. The artist's expansive mural distils this experience into an immersive, sprawling and colourful celebration of the extraordinary natural beauty she encountered: her distinctive gestural brushwork expressing a deeply personal and embodied response.

Georgia Szmerling

Untitled 2016

synthetic polymer paint, ink and pastel on canvas

Private collection of Kim and Graham Meadowcroft

Healesville Rainforest 2024

synthetic polymer paint on plaster wall

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Georgia Szmerling

Untitled 2017

synthetic polymer paint on canvas

Collection of Ed Service

Georgia Szmerling

Healesville Scenery 2 2024

Healesville Scenery 3 2024

Healesville Scenery 1 2024

Healesville Scenery 4 2024

synthetic polymer paint on canvas

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Anthony Romagnano

Born 1985, Melbourne/ Narm

Joined Arts Project Australia in 2004

The lively, exuberant and buoyant drawings of Anthony Romagnano are largely based on photographs or images sourced in the books and magazines in APA studio's reference library. Romagnano methodically studies his chosen image before interpreting the essential outlines in graphite pencil, subsequently filling in the details with colour. Although they are all unmistakably representational, abstract shapes of saturated colour are readily incorporated as a key ingredient in his compositions. The resulting works have a 'mosaic-like structure' in which the artist's distinctive palette of vibrant, saturated colours transform the imagery into a kind of kaleidoscopic figuration.

In some instances, such as *Self-portrait*, 2021, Romagnano's approach sees the boundary between figure and ground become blurred, whereby the subject begins to merge with the background. This method results in a non-hierarchical treatment of his reference material which creates intriguing formal equivalences across vastly different contexts. A prime example is seen in the resemblance between the breasts in *After Hours Bellmer Sculpture* and some of the forms in the still life *13 Cakes*, which were both completed in 2021.

Inside Romagnano's dynamic, technicolour world, places, people and things from the past and present—including religious and mythological figures, politicians, musicians, models, artists, domestic interiors and objects, landscapes and animals—are all reimagined and melded together in a vibrant tapestry of life.

Anthony Romagnano

Cockatoo 2021

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Collection of Fernée & Meredith

2 Koalas 2024

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Anthony Romagnano

European Earwig 2020

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Collection of Kirsty Grant & Mark Galea

Anthony Romagnano

Cookware, Black Pot and an Oven 2024

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Anthony Romagnano

Tool Wall 2022

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Collection of Alysia Rees

Television 2020

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Collection of Andrea Matthews and Trevor Halsall

Anthony Romagnano

After Hours Bellmer Sculpture 2021

13 Cakes 2021

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Anthony Romagnano

Snakes Head 2021

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Anthony Romagnano

Family Portrait 2024

Terry Williams 2021

Untitled 2021

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Anthony Romagnano

St Francis of Assisi in Ecstasy 2022

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Collection of Michael Josephson and Rod Macneil

Anthony Romagnano

Spencer and Collins Street 2019

Untitled 2019

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Anthony Romagnano

Grooving 2018

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Collection of Kait James

Anthony Romagnano

Il Guercino (Saint Andrew Bears His Cross 1591) 2022

The Division of Land and Water 2021

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

Anthony Romagnano

Self-portrait 2021

graphite and coloured pencils on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia