

## *Intimate Imaginaries*

- The first major survey exhibition of Arts Project Australia artists in an Australian museum -

30 November 2024 – 10 March 2025  
TarraWarra Museum of Art, Wurundjeri Country

Curated by Anthony Fitzpatrick



**TarraWarra Museum of Art** today announced a major group exhibition featuring artists who work out of the nationally and internationally renowned **Arts Project Australia (APA)**, a gallery and studio that supports artists with intellectual disabilities and which this year celebrates its **50th anniversary**. Presented from **30 November 2024 to 10 March 2025**, *Intimate Imaginaries* is the **first major survey** of the work of APA artists in an Australian museum, highlighting the vital contemporary practices of **13 artists** that have emerged from the studio 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. 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. While the exhibiting artists utilise a range of media and processes in their works — including painting, drawing, ceramics, soft sculpture and video — they all share a distinctive handmade aesthetic.

**TarraWarra Museum of Art Curator Anthony Fitzpatrick said:** *“My relationship with Arts Project Australia has evolved over a number of years, and one of the highlights was in 2017 when I had the great privilege of being invited to participate in their guest curator program. Initiated two years ago, Intimate Imaginaries has provided an enriching opportunity to strengthen this relationship through the significant partnership that has been established between the studio and TarraWarra. This close collaboration has been vital in the development of this exhibition which presents the distinct practices of each artist in ambitious ways.*

Bringing together early and recent works alongside several new commissions, highlights include established artist **Terry Williams**’s improvised, hand-stitched soft sculptures of everyday objects. With a career that spans over three decades in which he has explored a diverse range of materials and techniques, Williams will also present a newly commissioned large-scale sculpture of himself in the armchair that he works on in the studio. Other exhibiting artists working across soft sculpture include **Bronwyn Hack**, who will present her carefully crafted fabric models depicting different organs of the human body; and multi-disciplinary artist **Mark Smith**, whose text-based soft sculptures use colours and textures to elicit emotional responses from his selected words.

Figurative painter **Cathy Staughton** will present her bold and colourful works of Luna Park (spanning almost four decades) that interweave her autobiographical and fantastical dream imagery of the iconic landmark, and she will also recreate one of her self-portraits, in which she substitutes Mr. Moon with her own visage, as part of a commissioned large-scale mural. Inspired by notions of family, home and childhood memories, **Lisa Reid** will present a selection of her meticulously rendered ceramics of vintage appliances and objects including her new commission, a sculpted recreation of her mother’s 1971 Elna sewing machine, alongside a suite of sepia-toned works on paper. Multi-disciplinary artist **Alan Constable** will showcase hand-modelled, wet-finish colour glazed ceramic replicas of various types of cameras — including a newly commissioned telescope — reflecting his life-long fascination with optical instruments.

The youngest exhibiting artist, a selection of **Samraing Chea**’s detailed drawings created using coloured and graphite pencils highlights the artist’s humorous observations and wry social commentary on daily life. Employing abstract shapes and vivid colour, **Julian Martin** will present his refined pastel compositions distilled from found imagery; and **Georgia Szmerling**’s highly expressive paintings of plant and water formations will feature alongside a newly commissioned large-scale mural of forest landscapes of Wurundjeri Country of the Yarra Ranges. Revealing his fascination with suburban life, **Chris O’Brien** will showcase his sculptures and zines, as well as three video works that include *The Cop Shop*, a cop show drama filmed onsite at TarraWarra.

**APA Executive Director Liz Nowell says:** *“We are incredibly excited to be collaborating with TarraWarra Museum of Art on the first survey exhibition of APA artists in an Australian museum, which reflects our continued mission to position artists with intellectual disabilities within artistic discourse and advocate for their inclusion in the contemporary art space.”*

The exhibition *Intimate Imaginaries* is the culmination of a year-long series of events and programs celebrating Arts Project Australia’s 50th anniversary, including a major new publication titled *Arts Project Australia: 50 Years*. Throughout 2024 and beyond, APA continues to acknowledge that individual creativity will always triumph over conformity.

On **Saturday 8 March 2025**, TarraWarra will host a special day-long celebration featuring talks, performances and family-friendly making activities, inviting audiences to connect and create with participating APA artists.

# Media Release

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**Full list of participating artists:** Fulli Andrinopoulos, Samraing Chea, Alan Constable, Wendy Dawson, Bronwyn Hack, Julian Martin, Chris O'Brien, Anthony Romagnano, Lisa Reid, Mark Smith, Cathy Staughton, Georgia Szmerling and Terry Williams.

## **ENDS**

## **MEDIA CONTACTS:**

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**IMAGES** available [HERE](#)

**IMAGE CAPTIONS (L-R):** Cathy Staughton, *The Luna Park Sydney Harbour Bridge* 2007, gouache, marker on paper, 76 x 56.5 cm. Collection of Michael Josephson and Rod Macneil. Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia; Terry Williams *Untitled* 2011, cotton, marker, stuffing, vinyl, 21 x 43 x 14 cm. Collection of Norman Rosenblatt. Courtesy of the artist and Arts Project Australia

## **ABOUT ARTS PROJECT AUSTRALIA:**

Arts Project Australia is a gallery and studio that supports artists with intellectual disabilities, promotes their work and advocates for their inclusion in contemporary art practice.

For 50 years Arts Project Australia have been recognised and celebrated for the quality of the work produced by the artists in their studio which is exhibited in their Collingwood gallery and around the world and represented in multiple public and private collections.

## **ABOUT TARRAWARRA MUSEUM OF ART:**

TarraWarra Museum of Art actively engages with art, place and ideas within global, national and First Nations contexts. Established in 2003, the Museum presents a changing exhibition program of twentieth and twenty-first century art, creating dynamic and memorable experiences for all audiences and encouraging curiosity and creativity within the wider community. The Museum, located in Healesville, has a collection of over 700 works of twentieth and twenty-first century Australian art.

**TarraWarra Museum of Art**, Wurundjeri Country, 313 Healesville-Yarra Glen Road, Healesville VIC 3777 T +61 (0)3 5957 3100 W [twma.com.au](http://twma.com.au) **Opening Hours:** Tuesday – Sunday, 11am to 5pm.

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*Intimate Imaginaries*, curated by Anthony Fitzpatrick

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