

studio A

Annual Report 2020-21





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Who we are

Studio A is a social enterprise that specifically provides professional pathways for artists with intellectual disability. Based in the Crows Nest Centre in Sydney, Studio A is the only supported studio of its kind currently in NSW.

At the studio, we place importance in fostering and valuing our artists' creative talent and individual expertise. With support systems and resources provided, Studio A helps artists with intellectual disability to realise their personal career ambitions and earn income as practising art professionals. The result is the continuous making of great art, created through an array of disciplines, which embrace each artist's unique style and inspirations.

As practising artists, members of Studio A have experienced increased self-esteem, improved mental health and a sense of belonging and community. Professionally, our artists have been able to network, secure increased financial stability and make a strong impact on the contemporary art scene. Studio A aims to increase diversity and inclusion in the arts and works to reduce the stigma associated with people with disability in the wider community.

The creative output of the studio appeals to a diverse range of target markets such as art, design, craft, and corporate. We possess a history of strong and sustained creative partnerships and collaborations, with our artists providing creative services to leading Australian corporations, institutions and organisations. Creative partnership is also essential to Studio A, often sharing ideas and inspiration with fellow art and design professionals, and collaborating on innovative projects. We also facilitate weekly workshops with invited contemporary artists.

During the past year, Studio A artists have continued to feature in exhibitions, secure commissions, sell their work and win awards. Studio A talent has appeared in major public art institutions such as the Art Gallery of NSW and Carriageworks, and commissioned works have also frequented public and private spaces in Sydney and beyond. We have continued to increase our artist's visibility in the Australian art sector, which works to ensure a powerful voice for artists with intellectual disability in contemporary Australian culture.

Studio A Artists

Victoria Atkinson	Lauren Kerjan	Lisa Scott
Katrina Brennan	Daniel Kim	Damian Showyin
Emily Crockford	Jaycee Kim	Skye Saxon
Mathew Calandra	Catherine McGuinness	Phillip Sidney
Peter Dudding	Adam Mandarano	Greg Sindel
Guy Fredericks	Thom Roberts	
Annette Galstaun	Meagan Pelham	



Studio A site visit to The Art Gallery of New South Wales, October 2020. Image courtesy of Studio A.

Studio A Staff

Gabrielle Mordy: CEO/Artistic Director

Emma Johnston: Principal Artist

Christopher Haysom: Digital Solutions Manager

Ann Hinchliffe: Growth Manager

Karla Hansen: Marketing and Communications Manager

Lise Anderson: Collection and Sales Coordinator

Katrina Dunn-Jones: Projects and Administrations Coordinator

Clare Choi: Artist Facilitator

Cassilda Parkinson: Artist Facilitator

Yesmin Hassarati: Artist Facilitator

Florence Araniago: Artist Facilitator

Tim Bell: Archivist and Gallery Assistant

Kathie Najar: Artist Facilitator

A message from the CEO



As I write I am wearing Studio A artist Meagan Pelham's gorgeous t-shirt made in collaboration with Romance Was Born. Her lyrical text 'Dreams Come True' dances across the fabric. Meagan's design captures the theme of FY21 at Studio A, a multitude of dreams manifesting. It was twelve months filled with Archibald finalists, prestigious commissions and exciting experimentation with new creative mediums. Artists were not just flying high metaphorically, they were literally working at heights metres above ground painting a momentous mural on the wall of the Art Gallery of NSW.

Despite our successes FY21 was not an easy year. It was a year involving many kinds of grief. Artists grieved parents who had passed away and grieved old ways of working in person side by side in a previously bustling studio. The worldwide pandemic transformed how Studio A artists work. In the face of this change it became even more apparent that having a creative mindset really is a superpower. At Studio A our team adapted to working remotely, online, in masks, in a whole range of new ways.

Studio A artists channelled their struggles, and for some, their sense of isolation into their artwork. Emily Crockford painted a beautiful homage to her beloved father John who had recently passed. Studio A's 300sqm mural at the Art Gallery of NSW became a celebration of enduring relationships with family, friends, pets and even the angelic realm. If you could not see people in person you could at least manifest them in paint.

Studio A artist Skye Saxon worked from her home studio (her bedroom) to create her own deck of tarot cards. As part of the exhibition 'No Show' at Carriageworks Skye provided tarot card readings in her guise as 'Madame Witch'. Made remotely, Skye's cards brought new people together for chats, insights and sometimes just a laugh. For me this dynamic captures the essence of Studio A in FY21. Our art connected diverse people in new and surprising ways.

Leading Studio A is a great honour. It is especially rewarding to see our diverse team work so effectively together. Studio A is the culmination of many hands, talents and minds. At the centre is our artists. They are supported by our generous Board's skill and dedication, our committed staff, countless volunteers, tireless family members and crucially our network of supporters, donors and clients. All these parts fuel Studio A's success.

To our incredible community who support and energise Studio A, thank you. And as always a particular warm thanks to our exceptional Chairman Shane Simpson AM.

Gabrielle Mordy
- CEO / Artistic Director Studio A



Mathew Calandra and Meagan Pelham working on 'Love owls and mermaids singing in the rainbow pop' commissioned by The Art Gallery of NSW. Image courtesy of Diana Panuccio/AGNSW.

A message from the Chairman



Because of the continuing pandemic, 2021 was another difficult year for all of us. However, Studio A has continued to thrive, and its artists have continued working hard, enjoying the support of their mentors (either in person or by Zoom), and breaking social, economic and artistic barriers.

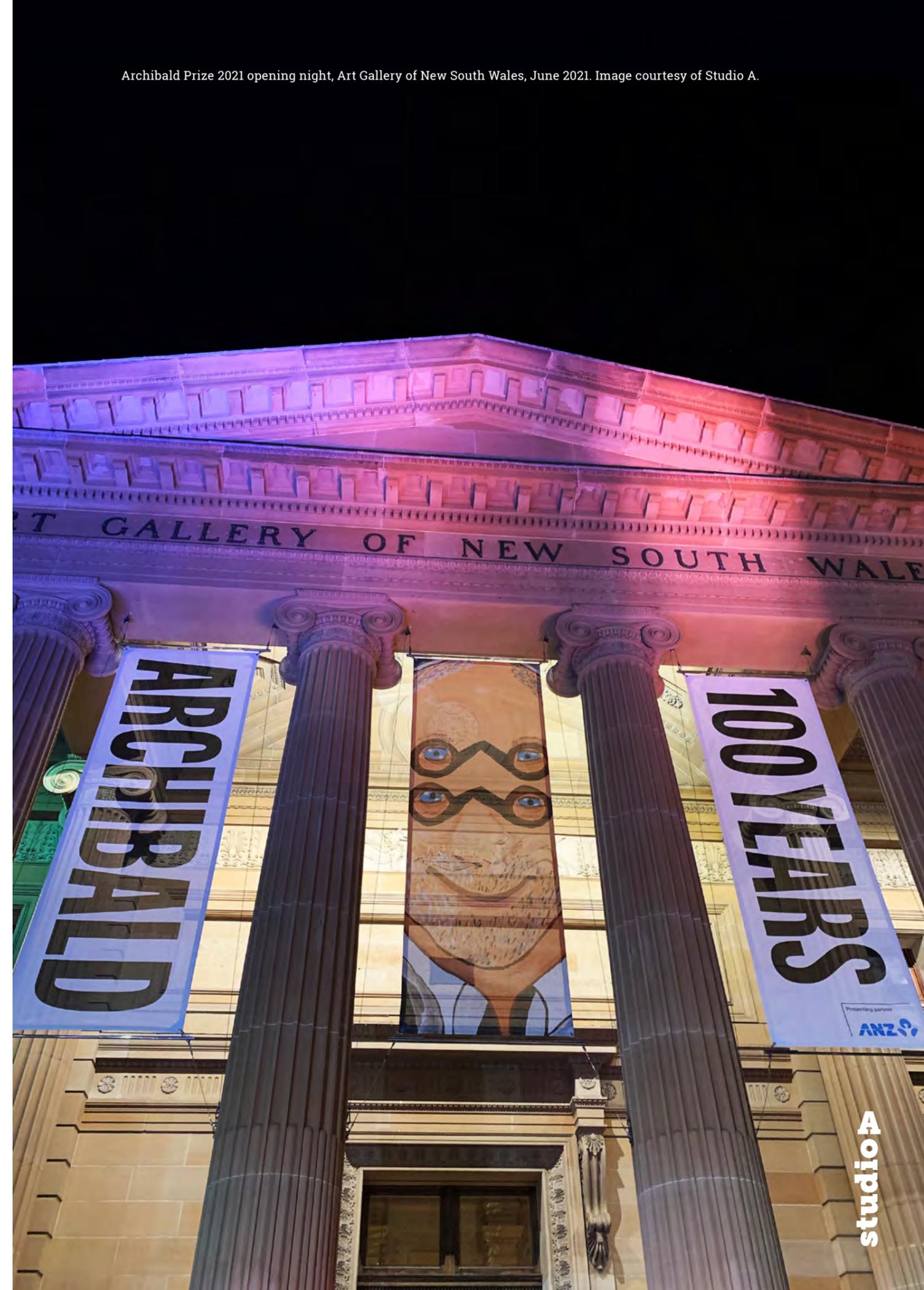
2021 saw both Thom Roberts and Victoria Atkinson selected as finalists for the Archibald Prize and Mathew Calandra selected as a finalist for the Sulman prize. Mathew's triptych was later acquired by the Art Gallery of NSW – a major coup for Mathew and Studio A, and is a very welcome step by a major public collecting institution. Thom's portrait (or as he calls it, a "portriff") of me, was used by the AGNSW in its advertising celebrating both the exhibition and the centenary of the Prize: it adorned the front of the AGNSW as well as being used on flags, advertisements and posters around Sydney promoting the exhibition. It was great recognition for a wonderful painting and a very talented artist.

As this report shows, the artists of Studio A have continued developing both their artistic experience and their economic opportunities. You will be delighted to read of the public exhibitions, sales, corporate commissions, copyright licensing and workshops by which our artists share their talent, their interests, their insights with the community – and by which they make an income.

None of this would be possible without the support that the NDIS gives our artists, the grants from Create NSW and the Australia Council for the Arts, and the wonderful generosity of our corporate and private donors. Your support is truly life changing.

I would also like to acknowledge our wonderful team headed by Gabrielle Mordy (CEO and Artistic Director) and Emma Johnston (Principal Artist) and all the extraordinary support our artist facilitators, volunteers, board directors and, of course, our 'mother ship', Studio Artes. Most of all, I would like to acknowledge our artists. They work hard and generously share their successes.

- Shane Simpson AM



Our Impact

Studio A is dedicated to its mission of supporting and facilitating the practice and careers of artists with intellectual disability. For this reason, since 2020 we have employed an Impact Assessment Methodology to rigorously measure the quantitative and qualitative impact of our activities on our artists, organisation and community. Despite the ongoing pandemic and its immense challenges, this second annual impact statement paints a picture of great success and optimism for the future. Our achievements can be directly attributed to the support we receive from you, our community, and it is with pleasure and pride that we share this 2021 Impact Statement with you.



Meagan Pelham and Gabrielle Mordy at the launch of 'Love owls and mermaids singing in the rainbow pop', The Art Gallery of NSW, November 2020. Image courtesy of Diana Panuccio, AGNSW.

Here is how Studio A used art to create connection and empowerment in a year of lockdowns and enforced distancing.



100% of artists



- Identified as professional artists
- Felt more positive about the future
- Earned income from their art

"Studio A makes me feel happy. I love it here at Studio A, because I like working here."

- Damian Showyin



Increase in artist income

36%↑

19

significant exhibitions



6 prizes or awards won

"I love art: being chosen at the Archibald 2020, AGNSW Mural, M5 Mural, winning awards, big announcements - I love everything and it relaxes me."

- Emily Crockford



44

media features



"I love giving to Studio A because I can see the impact my donation has - improving not only lives, but also Australian arts and culture."

Over

3,000 sq metres of

public seen by over 476,000 people



75%↑

growth in social media audiences



20 major public art installations



14

unique digital art experiences created



Close to

30,000

digital views of Studio A artworks and programs



32

creative facilitators and guest artists engaged



Over

90K visits to

WWW.STUDIOA.ORG.AU



Our Supporters

HEROIC
VOLUNTEER

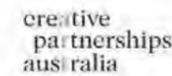


- Greg Sindel

Studio A's success is built on the generous support we receive from our donors, funders and dedicated volunteers. Quite simply we could not do what we do without their contributions.

Their support provides our artists with accessible studio space, quality art materials, logistical and skilled support and mentorships, alongside opportunities to undertake residencies and take on new commissions and challenges. Ultimately enabling our artists to achieve their artistic dreams. The accomplishments in the Annual Report this year are theirs as much as ours and we thank our supporters, with utmost gratitude.

Studio A is supported by:



Volunteers and Interns

Isabella Azzena	Kelsey (Eun) Heo	Cassilda Parkinson
Gabrielle Bates	Will Kollmorgen	April Phillips
Zoe Borhani	Lily (Amelia) Langley	Tara Price
Amelia Bowe	Tsz Kin (William) Liu	Raghav Raj
Samantha Chan	Ari Lobos	Margot Renton
Xanthe Cuta	Jayne Madden	Kristina Salopek
Javiera del Rio Benitez	Lizzie Nagy	Ella Shul
Imogen Dixon-Smith	Kathie Najar	Chloe Watfern
Hannah Dunn	Dung (Jaime) Nguyen	Julie Wang

“Volunteers I love them a lot. I want to invite them to my birthday, I want to be kind to them. They help me be an artist. They’re awesome and great.”

– Studio A artist, Meagan Pelham

Volunteer Spotlight

William Liu

William joined Studio A in the final year of his Media Arts degree at UNSW, undertaking a Graphic & Digital Art internship at the studio. Bestowed with the ‘Thom-name’ Gonzo he quickly became a valuable support to the team managing the studio’s digital catalogue.

What started as a 3 month internship morphed into over two years of dedicated volunteer work at Studio A! William has gifted us with his talents in graphic design, digital illustration, photography and web development.

We are so incredibly grateful to have William as part of the Studio A family and can’t thank him enough for the generosity, lively spirit and stories of his solar racing adventures that he brings to the studio.



Donors

Ricky Poon	Cate Denning	Elizabeth Bates
James Phillips in honour of the late Claire Phillips	John Hudson	Iva Strnadová
Kate Thorley	Roger Sebel	Justine Daverio
Daryl Dixon	Ben Mills	Loretta Bingemann
The Anita and Luca Belgiorno-Nettis Foundation	Carrie Kibbler	Lynda Drummond
Simpson-Michel Foundation	Gillian Corban	Sim Luttin
Cathrine Long	Jacqueline Calandra	Amy Willing
Tim Gerrard	JoAnn See	Annie Russell
Mira Joksovic	Marie-Louise Ayres	Jeffery Blake
Jan Cappelen	Helen Wyatt	Sarah Plummer
John McCabe	Robyn Ayres	Trevor Parmenter
Lindsay and Celeste Showyin	Vanessa Scarf	Keziah Morgan
Maija Pelham	Anthony & Jan Browell	Wendy Muir
Marianne Kerjan	Natasha Liondos	Christopher Haysom
Sandra Ferman	Sue Roff	Karla Hansen
Steven Badgery & James Hayes	Tracey Nearhos	
Heather Spencer	Laura Lucas	
Declan, Judith & Kobi Keenan		

Special thanks to Anna McKey and Zoe Borhani for making this Annual Report happen.

“Thank you for all your support. You’re superstars.”

– Studio A artist, Lauren Kerjan

Butterfly Universe. Rainbow Plait, No Show, Carriageworks, February 2021. Image courtesy of Zan Wimberley.

Exhibitions



The Archibald Prize and the Sulman Prize 2021

The Art Gallery of NSW
5 June – 26 September 2021

2021 was the year when the Archibald Prize celebrated its 100 year anniversary, with Thom Roberts and Victoria Atkinson both selected as finalists for the prestigious portrait prize. Out of 939 entries, the two Studio A representatives were amongst the 52 artists shortlisted for the award. Mathew Calandra also gained acclaim as a finalist in the 2021 Sulman Prize, which was exhibited alongside the Archibald from the 5th of June at the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

Thom Roberts' submission A Portruff of Adam (Shane Simpson AM) depicts Shane Simpson, Chairperson of Studio A and founder of the Arts Law Centre. The work encapsulates Roberts' distinct approach to painting faces, with graphic strokes and a tendency to duplicate his subjects' facial features. The completed portrait characterises Simpson through Robert's perspective and is an expression of the friendship between the two.

"Roberts taps into an energy that captures Simpson, in the most distilled way, ticking the gongs of the prize conditions but also demonstrating that within the vast realm of portraiture being grand or photoreal isn't exclusive to 'a likeness'."

– Gina Fairley, Arts Hub

"Being in the Archibald makes me happy, smiling and proud. I would love to inspire other people to become a famous artist. I would like to be an artist until I am a very old man."

– Thom Roberts



Thom Roberts at the Archibald Finalist artists lunch at The Art Gallery of New South Wales, June 2021. Image courtesy of Studio A.

Victoria Atkinson painted the portrait of Trent Zimmerman, Federal Member for North Sydney, in her work Trent mango tree, all the colours of the rainbow, Trent. In order for the painting to express a positive and vibrant attitude, Atkinson used a selection of vivid acrylic tones. According to the artist, the portrait is a celebration of both her and Zimmerman's shared "Rainbow Love" identity.

Mathew Calandra's nomination for the Sulman Prize, a triptych titled Stations of the Cross, acts as a biblical reimagining, as Calandra uses inked linework to depict an Easter bunny with a crucifix. The work has since been acquired as an addition to the Art Gallery of NSW's collection.



Victoria Atkinson working on her Archibald Prize submission at Studio A, April 2021. Image courtesy of Studio A.



Victoria Atkinson and Mathew Calandra attending the Archibald Finalist artists lunch at The Art Gallery of New South Wales, June 2021. Image courtesy of Studio A.

The Archibald Prize 2020 and Salon des Refusés 2021

The Archibald Prize 2020
The Art Gallery of NSW, 26 September 2020 – 10 January 2021

Salon des Refusés 2021
S.H. Ervin Gallery, 5 June – 26 September 2021

The past few years have been immensely successful for Studio A artist Emily Crockford, with an array of accomplishments situating her as a prominent figure in the Sydney arts community. In 2020 she exhibited as an Archibald Prize finalist at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, and a year later featured in the Salon des Refusés exhibition at the S.H. Ervin Gallery. Crockford was also awarded the Australia Council's National Arts and Disability Emerging Artist Award in late 2020 and was Hornsby's Woman of the Year for 2021.

Crockford became the first Studio A artist selected as a finalist for the well-renowned Archibald Prize, with her entry *Self-portrait with Daddy in the daisies, watching the field of planes* reinventing conventions of traditional portrait painting. Painted in Crockford's signature embellished style, the painting possesses a deeply personal meaning for the artist, as it pictures herself alongside her late father John. The dreamlike work acts as a tribute to him, and to the memories they shared together.

The following year, Crockford exhibited at the S.H. Ervin Gallery for Salon des Refusés, which occurs yearly during the Archibald and Wynne Prize exhibitions (5th June – 26 September). The collection is a diverse array of portrait and landscape works, unselected as finalists in the aforementioned prizes, yet highlighted in this well-respected exhibition. Emily Crockford's feature was a portrait of politician Trent Zimmerman in a vibrant work titled *Trent Zimmerman watching the sun with all the clouds and the lorikeets are singing*.



Homely Offerings

Coal Loader, Waverton
10 March - 21 March 2021

Showcasing 49 artists and collectives, including work by Studio A's Emily Crockford, Annette Galstaun, Mathew Calandra, Daniel Kim, Guy Fredericks, Katrina Brennan, Phil Sidney, Thom Roberts and Victoria Atkinson, *Homely Offerings* was part of Project 2020: Homeward Bound. A major multi-venue curatorial initiative of Arts & Culture North Sydney. Celebrating the breadth of individual and collective creativity and resilience of artists working in the region.

"This painting is my dream come true. It's my dream of my daddy. I watched him flying his beautiful planes in the fields. He made amazing models. This painting is very special to me, because he's my lovely father."

– Emily Crockford



Emily Crockford with her Archibald Prize 2020 portrait, Art Gallery of New South Wales, October 2020. Image courtesy of Studio A.

Museum of Futures

Pandemic Pivots
Museum of Futures Virtual exhibition
2020

The Museum of Futures Pandemic Pivots exhibition was a virtual showcase conceptualised during unpredictable times, following the COVID-19 lockdown of 2020. As artists reflected on such events as the pandemic and 2019/2020 bushfires, nine sculptural works were created for the exhibition, all sharing an objective to communicate the transformative possibilities of art and to encourage the importance of future-thinking.

Guy Fredericks was selected by curators Claire Marshall and Mel Rumble for the project, and was briefed to craft a three-dimensional 'artefact of the future'. His skilful papier-mache sculpture Bear Mountain depicted a hibernating bear, somewhat camouflaged, with a fig tree flourishing from its back. Fredericks identifies that likewise to the bear, the world has hibernated during the Covid-19 pandemic and through the bountiful fig tree, Fredericks symbolises dreams of hope and regrowth. Following its design process, the sculpture's figure was formed with armature wire and recycled papers to form its shape, then painted with a natural colour palette.

Each object created for Pandemic Pivots was accompanied by a narrative, where the artists envision a hopeful destiny for both their artefact and the environmental world. Fredericks dreams of a future of sustainable technology, regenerative agricultural solutions and a greater sense of inclusion in education.



Claire Marshall and Guy Fredericks. Image courtesy of Sherman Lo.

"The bear is my favourite animal, and when creating this work, I felt it holding the weight of the world on its shoulders."

– Guy Fredericks

No Show

Carriageworks
12 February – 7 March 2021

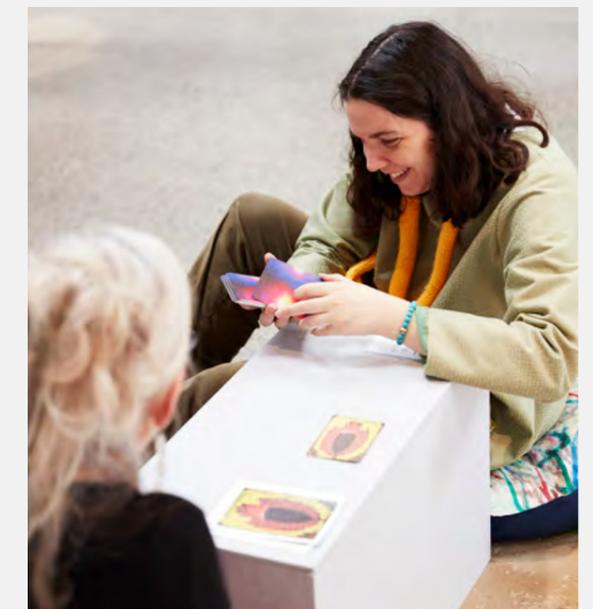
From the 12th of February to the 7th of March 2021, Carriageworks presented the free exhibition No Show featuring interactive works from Studio A's artists Skye Saxon, Mathew Calandra and Jaycee Kim for their installation Butterfly Universe. Rainbow Plait. The exhibition showcased emerging artists, highlighting the experimental contributions of 11 independent artist-led organisations to the arts community of NSW.

The participating Studio A artists invited audiences to experience their own unique and captivating worlds as they created and performed within the Carriageworks space. Skye Saxon showcased her mystic intuition by performing live oracle readings as Madame Witch, revealing the participants' destiny using her own beautifully illustrated tarot deck.

Madame Witch, mystic oracle, invites the brave to have their fortunes told. Scan the QR code and have your tarot cards read...



Skye Saxon performs as Madame Witch. Photo courtesy of Zan Wimberly.



"It's like having a cartoon light bulb above your head, that flickers on and off every time... well...a bit like morse code."

– Skye Saxon on turning ideas into exhibitions.
(From her interview with Chloe Watfern)

Stations of the Cross 2021

Northmead Creative and Performing Arts High School
22 March - 4 April 2021

Mathew Calandra presented his work Stations of the Cross at the annual exhibition of the same title that explores the journey of living, dying and humanity. The watercolour, ink and coffee wash triptych, is an interpretation of the Easter story (with an almost Postmodern spin).

Commissions



Harbour Garden, The Australian National Maritime Museum, June 2021. Image courtesy of Cassandra Hannagan.

Love owls and mermaids singing in the rainbow pop

Art Gallery of NSW
September 2020

In a milestone commission, seven Studio A artists collaborated to create a monumental mural for the Art Gallery of New South Wales' Archie Plus project. Mathew Calandra, Emily Crockford, Annette Galstaun, Lauren Kerjan, Jaycee Kim, Catherine McGuinness, and Meagan Pelham all contributed to the expansive work, titled Love owls and mermaids singing in the rainbow pop. From September 2020 to February 2021, the painting flourished upon the largest single wall of the institution, situated within the entrance court, creating an uplifting atmosphere for gallery visitors.

The Archie Plus commissions were chosen to support New South Wales-based artists, highlighting the talent and diversity of the local artist community following a challenging year. The Studio A mural blends together the creative styles of the featured artists and celebrates themes of community spirit, togetherness and friendship. The dreamlike imagery reflects the meaningful connections and companionships that have impacted the artist's lives. Included are influential people, animals and even imaginative creatures, all painted with love.

The commission was significant for Studio A, being the first commission of its kind by an Australian State or Commonwealth collecting institution. The work was painted across a period of two weeks, with collaborative assistance from mural artist Reuben Broughtwood.

Love owls and mermaids singing in the rainbow pop. Image courtesy of Diana Panuccio/AGNSW.



Meagan Pelham, Emily Crockford, Annette Galstaun, Jaycee Kim, Lauren Kerjan, Catherine McGuinness and Mathew Calandra at the launch of Love owls and mermaids singing in the rainbow pop, The Art Gallery of NSW, November 2020. Image courtesy of Diana Panuccio/AGNSW.

"Love owls and mermaids singing in the rainbow pop ... on the largest single wall in the Art Gallery of NSW...provides an optimistic vision of care and personal connection, featuring portraits of people, animals and imaginary companions"

– Vyshnavee Wijekumar, Arts Hub



Love owls and mermaids singing in the rainbow pop in progress, October 2020. Images courtesy of Diana Panuccio/AGNSW.

Oysters Eating Rainbows

Kingsgrove, Karingal pedestrian tunnel
July 2020

Emily Crockford was selected in 2020 to produce a major public art display, a painting stretching across the walls of the Kingsgrove Karingal underpass tunnel. The mural, Oysters Eating Rainbows, was commissioned by Westconnex in partnership with Cultural Capital, a part of their program Canal to Creek which aimed to invigorate parklands with contemporary public art.

Crockford was the perfect candidate for the project, renowned for numerous large-scale art commissions in the Sydney area, all painted in her distinguishable style featuring bright colours and striking pattern work. For Oysters Eating Rainbows, the pedestrian tunnel was transformed into an immersive space of ecological beauty, depicting unique creatures from the land and sea. Crockford's design was inspired by the diverse landscapes of the surrounding environment, habitats to wildlife and sealife, which require ongoing protection and preservation.

Crockford and her team brought this vision to life, painting the concrete surface with an explosion of unique shapes and vivid hues, communicating the vitality of the natural world. She encourages her audience to 'swim with her river creatures' as they move through the tunnel.

"I love to imagine the creatures under the water and the possums sitting on the trees looking at the house. I love foxies in the tree and owls having a happy life. Birds singing in moo moo trees. I wish for my tunnel audience to swim with my river creatures."

– Emily Crockford

Detail from Oysters Eating Rainbows, July 2020. Image courtesy of Document Photography.



The Magic Photocopier goes to Cloud Heaven for Fuji Xerox

Taking pride of place in their North Sydney Head Offices, Thom Roberts was inspired to create The Magic Photocopier goes to Cloud Heaven after a creative workshop with the Fuji Xerox team, led by Thom. The 'magic' of the painting unveiled with the use of augmented reality technology.



Image courtesy of Fuji Xerox.

Magic Robot Machine for Art Bank

Magic Robot Machine by Thom Roberts was Art bank's first augmented reality acquisition, presented at the launch of Artbank's 40th Anniversary Exhibition.

With special guest the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, the exhibition titled 20/20: Shared Visions was a celebration of 40 years of Artbank and its role in directly supporting Australian artists.



Image courtesy of Studio A.

Harbour Garden

Australian National Maritime Museum
June 2021

Studio A joined forces with Goldberg Aberline Studio for a public art commission called Harbour Garden, installed waterfront at the Australian National Maritime Museum next to Sydney's Darling Harbour. Created for the Sydney Solstice Festival, the collective of glowing inflatable sculptures immersed the attendees who were invited to walk amongst them.

The work originated with two-dimensional oceanic illustrations by Meagan Pelham, Lauren Kerjan, Daniel Kim and Annette Galstaun, which were enlarged and printed onto fabric made from recycled PET bottles. The material was then crafted together to create a range of abstract shaped light installations, which illuminated against the harbour nightscape.

The commission brought the artist's designs to life, as vibrant sea animals including 'Punk Punk the supermodel turtle', octopus, starfish and seahorse, swam through colour and light. Renewable energy was also utilised to power Harbour Garden, demonstrating the Museum's commitment to the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

Another feature of the Solstice festival was Jaycee Kim's animated work Merman Metamorphosis, presented in nighttime screenings on the Museum's rooftop. A collaboration with digital artist Christopher Haysom, the film discusses restricting gender norms through the story of a shape-shifting underwater creature.

Winged Wonderland mural design for Lendlease

Hickson Park, Barangaroo
November 2020

The artwork titled Winged Wonderland showcases the power of diversity in both nature and culture. The unique style of each Studio A artist – Emily Crockford, Guy Fredericks, Annette Galstaun, Lauren Kerjan, Daniel Kim and Meagan Pelham – works together to create a new language forged through the collage of each artists' particular expression.



Winged Wonderland, digital collage, 2020.



Emma Johnston, Gabrielle Mordy, Bill Harris of the ANMM, Annette Galstaun, Meagan Pelham, Maurice Goldberg of Goldberg Aberline Studio and Daniel Kim, June 2021. Image courtesy of the Australian National Maritime Museum.

Partnerships



Anna Plunkett, Meagan Pelham and Luke Sales for Romance Was Born, February 2021.
Photo courtesy of Tanja Bruckner/Romance Was Born.

Meagan Pelham x Romance Was Born

March 2021 saw the release of Meagan Pelham's second partnership with the Australian fashion label Romance Was Born. A dreamy capsule collection that speaks the language of love. Creative collaboration is key to the artistic process of Romance Was Born founders and designers Luke Sales and Anna Plunkett, who share with Pelham a passion for storytelling and a strong aesthetic vision for their art.

This collection included a range of ready-to-wear garments featuring Pelham's love poetry verses, that were embroidered across various beautiful textiles such as denims, linens and on t-shirts. Stitched in red, her script becomes a statement on the fabric as it describes a philosophy of romance; dinner dates, ice cream and falling in love. A custom wedding dress, embellished with Swarovski crystals and Pelham's poetry verse, also debuted on the Romance Was Born runway at the 2021 Australian Fashion Week.

In addition, Meagan presented an energetic live performance as a part of Romance Was Born's creative residency for Powerhouse Late. The Museum's theatre space was transformed into a Romance Was Born wonderland, with a program of curated fashion, performance art, music and video work.

"The collection is absolutely AMAZING...Romance Was Born are great people, I love them a lot like part of the family."

– Meagan Pelham

Meagan Pelham for Romance Was Born, February 2021. Photo courtesy of Tanja Bruckner/Romance Was Born.



Incognito Art Show

Verona 1 Studio Paddington
5 June 2021

The Incognito Art Show was an art sale unlike others, uniting both emerging and established Australian artists to support Studio A through donations of artwork. Held on the 5th of June 2021, the exhibition consisted of over 1000 A5 postcard-sized artworks, that were available to purchase each for a flat price of \$100.

With inclusivity as a driving force, it was not revealed to the buyers the identity of the artist behind their chosen piece until after purchase, encouraging art lovers to choose based on an authentic connection to the work. Incognito organisers encouraged all artists to enter, with inclusions from both up-and-coming artists and from Australia's most prominent art figures (eg. Reg Mombassa, Ben Quilty, Tom Polo, Laura Jones, Abdul Abdullah, Zoe Young), including many renowned Archibald, Sulman and Wynne prize finalists. Amongst the entries were the works of many Studio A representatives.

The show was a major success, with lengthy queues of art lovers trailing Oxford street, waiting to enter the show at the Verona 1 Studio. The art show raised \$70,000 for the Guest Artist program, which connects Studio A's artists with influential mentors and collaborators from the arts community. The program allows artists to empower one another and therefore continues Studio A's mission for more diversity in the arts.

Opening night of Incognito Art Show, June 2021. Image courtesy of Studio A.



MUMA: Art You Can Wear.

Phil Sidney was announced as one of 10 artists selected for MUMA's Art You Can Wear T-shirt series, with his work Night Owl. With galleries, museums and public art spaces closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, MUMA invited submissions from artists and non-artists worldwide for a series of limited edition Art You Can Wear T-shirts.

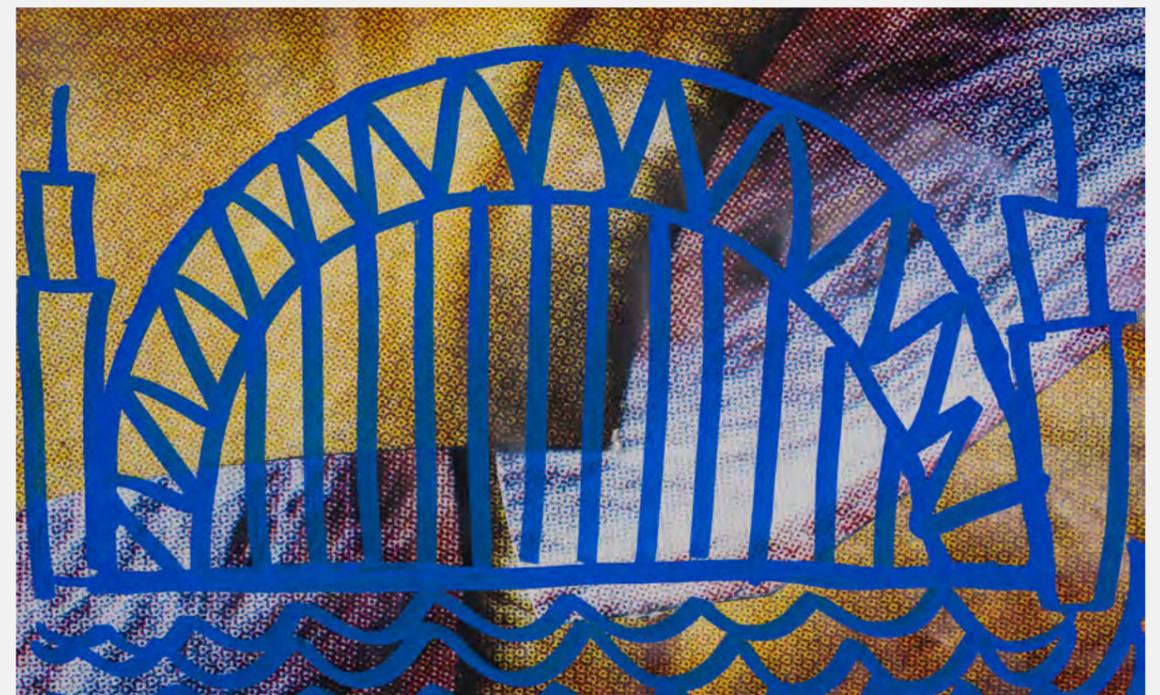
Art et. al: Peer/Peer

During three months in 2021, Studio A's Thom Roberts formed an artistic partnership and friendship with UK based artist Cherrille Sappleton. The two joined forces for the Art et. al. facilitated Peer/Peer program, which fosters collaborative art practice between two geographically separated artists. Established with core values of inclusivity and accessibility, Art et. al. works to connect supported-studio artists with fellow creatives, new audiences and art professionals globally.

Roberts and Sappleton are both fascinated by the process of scanning and photocopying existing images to create their artworks. The pair corresponded with one another primarily through video messages, discussing techniques and sharing artist portfolios. By exchanging and experimenting with digital artwork files, they began to develop a body of work that combined and transformed their individual art practice. The finished series saw manipulation and layering of images and text, blending digital art with graphic illustration to create statement visual collages.

Snippets of their video interactions are available to view on Art et. al.'s website, offering a glimpse into the possibilities and richness of virtual creative collaboration. During their correspondence, Robert's portrait of a mysterious subject named 'Woody Tiger' captured the curiosity of Sappleton. This became a recurring theme in the project, with a text motif reading "Who is Woody Tiger?" featuring in the final art series.

Thom Roberts, The Blue Sydney Harbour Fridge, 2020, acrylic on photocopied paper, 42 x 29.7cm.



Guy Fredericks and Laura Jones, on set of filming 'Studio A: MAKE ART', December 2020. Image courtesy of Studio A.

Audience Engagement

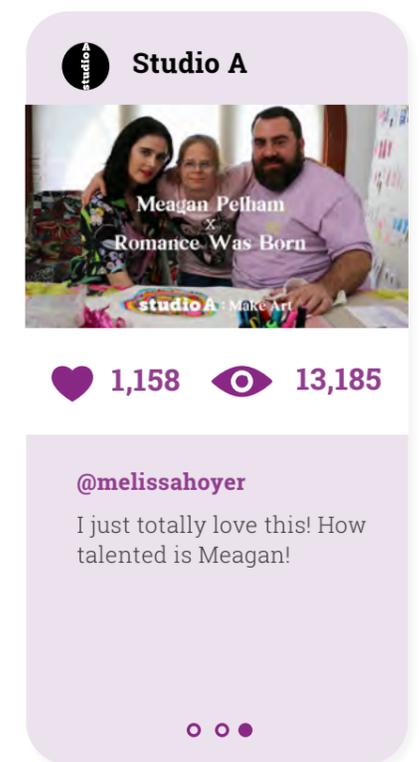
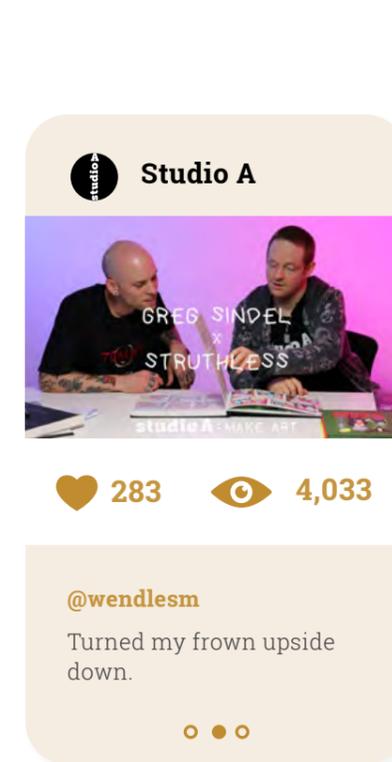
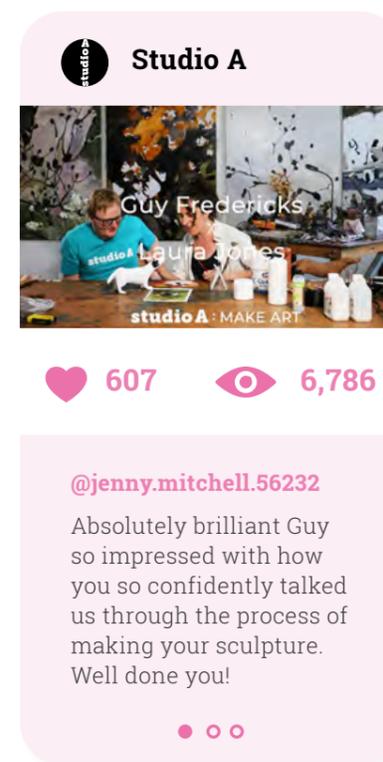


Studio A: MAKE ART Series

MAKE ART was a six-part video series that utilised the possibilities of online platforms to inspire and engage with audiences. In each episode, a Studio A artist would provide step-by-step instructions on how to complete an art project, each accompanied by a suited collaborator working in art, design or social media.

Filmed following the 2020 COVID-19 lockdown, the series recognised the growing importance of virtual learning, encouraging viewers to follow along from home. Together, the MAKE ART hosts presented engaging tutorials, where they learnt from each other and discussed their artistic processes. Some of the collaborators included Romance Was Born, Deni Todorovič, Struthless and George Rose with tutorials on how to decorate tote bags, make papier mache animals and draw superhero alter-egos.

Included in the project were Meaghan Pelham, Greg Sindel, Guy Fredericks, Emily Crockford, Jaycee Kim and Thom Roberts, who communicated their world by demonstrating their signature art styles. MAKE ART was made possible with the assistance of Create NSW, City of Sydney and the Westpac Foundation, as well as filmmakers Georgina Quinn, Simon Knox and Tom Oxford.



On set of filming 'Studio A: MAKE ART' episode Jaycee Kim x Deni.



On set of filming 'Studio A: MAKE ART' episode Thom Roberts x James Gulliver Hancock.



On set of filming 'Studio A: MAKE ART' episode Emily Crockford x George Rose.



Panel discussions and public forums

Studio A's CEO and Artistic Director Gabrielle Mordy spoke at three major panel events over the 2020/2021 period, discussing her passion for accessibility in the arts sector and her experience over the last decade leading a social enterprise.

Perspectives' speaker events allow for women working in creative industries to pose important themes and contemplate the future of the arts. It brings together peers to share stories to inspire each other, acknowledging the cross-disciplinary nature of the creative field. Mordy spoke on June 21st 2021 at the Eternity Playhouse in Darlinghurst, highlighting the power of art to tell the stories of both individuals and communities.

For the Accessible Arts In-Conversation series, Mordy joined Studio A's Emily Crockford, and fellow artists Digby Webster and Neil Tomkins for an online Q and A event. Held on the 14th December 2020, Mordy spoke with the three Archibald Prize finalists, who discussed their careers in the art field.

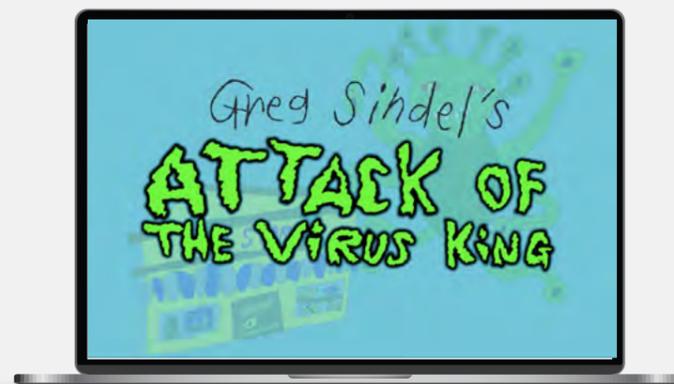
On the 13th of May 2021, Mordy spoke at the Creative Sydney Icons In Conversation panel, which centred around the topic 'Creatives Breaking Through Old Stereotypes' The event was held for the Creative Hub festival at Pier One Sydney Harbour, which brought together Sydney-based innovators with a goal to reinvigorate the city's arts and cultural scene. Mordy was one of four creatives on the panel who discussed shifting expectations and challenging norms.



Attack of the Virus King

Focus on Ability Film Festival 2020

Created as a response to the changes brought on by the COVID 19 outbreak, Attack of the Virus King is Greg Sindel's unique perspective on life through animation. The short film was selected as a finalist in the 2020 Focus on Ability Film Festival which aims to showcase the incredible talent of people with disability.



Meagan Pelham and Anna Plunkett on set of filming 'Studio A: MAKE ART' episode
Meagan Pelham x Romance Was Born.

Media

"A Sydney artist collective is defying stigmas one piece at a time."

– Emerald Pellot and Associated Press



Mathew Calandra, Thom Roberts and Victoria Atkinson at Studio A, Crows Nest, June 2021.
Photo courtesy of Studio A.

Media

In the past year, Studio A has earned a lot of recognition through media coverage, with a total of 44 features created to acknowledge the successes of the company and its collective of artists. In an article published by The Australian, arts correspondent Matthew Westwood wrote about Archibald and Sulman Prize finalists Victoria Atkinson, Thom Roberts and Mathew Calandra, in a piece titled 'Joy in making art at the heart of Studio A'. With the newspaper reaching 5.3 million readers monthly, across digital and print platforms, the article brought strong exposure to the Studio's accomplishments¹.

The Mix, ABC's arts and culture program, produced a segment on Studio A's collaborative mural 'Love owls and mermaids singing in the rainbow pop' at the Art Gallery of NSW. This platform allowed Artistic Director and CEO Gabrielle Mordy to discuss the gravity of such a project in one of Australia's leading arts institutions.

Additionally, Studio A was the subject of a range of magazine pieces from publications such as Art Edit, Art Guide, AGNSW's LOOK Magazine and Byron Arts Magazine in its 5th-anniversary edition. The publicity that Studio A has received over the 2020/21 period has assisted to recognise artists with intellectual disabilities on a widespread level, and demonstrates Studio A artists as significant figures in the Australian arts community.

"What's different about these artists is that they each have varying degrees of intellectual disability. What's wonderful is the vitality, colour and sheer joy of art-making that they bring to their work."

"Topping it all is the self-worth the artists have by being productive members of society. When they see their work on the walls of the AGNSW, or surrounding a construction site, or worn by a fashion model, their pride can hardly be contained."

– Matthew Westwood, *The Australian*, 4 June 2021.



¹ <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/media/the-australians-audience-surges-in-latest-roy-morgan-research/news-story/b6887495e2cf78894e4b94f9ac19cb2b>

"In recent years, the Archibald Prize has been a platform for shifting its own past, with a number of 'first' awarded. Should Thom Roberts take this year's Archi it would be another, as one of Studio A's artists and proudly working as an artist with intellectual disability."

– Gina Fairly, *Arts Hub*



Emily Crockford is taking the art world by storm with her bright and vibrant work capturing the attention of many around the country.

Following a hugely successful 2020, Emily has been named **Hornsby's Woman of the Year for 2021**. Member for Hornsby **Matt Kean** said, "Emily, is a clear choice for the Award. Her success over the last 12 months has been phenomenal. Her story will inspire others to keep working hard to achieve their dreams." "I met Emily when she attended **Studio ARTES** in Hornsby but it was obvious she had amazing artistic ability and was snapped up as a founding member of **Studio A**, a professional art studio," Mr Kean said. Since that time Emily has grown from *strength to strength*; you can now see Emily's art at the Westpac Concord offices, the University of Technology Sydney, Barangaroo and the WestConnex M5 Motorway, not to mention hanging in the NSW Art Gallery.

Emily's portrait of her late Dad John, who passed away in January 2020, made the finals of the 2020 Archibald Prize award. She describes the painting as a dream of her father, of her memories and the flowers he loved.

Late last year Emily was awarded the **Australia Council National Arts and Disability Award for Emerging Artists**. Emily has been chosen for this Award following a number of commissions including her most recent work *Oysters Eating Rainbows* which appears on the new WestConnex M5 motorway.

Emily is thrilled to be named 2021 Woman of the Year for the Hornsby electorate. Her advice for anyone who wants to be an artist is to *work hard, set yourself goals and do art every day*.

Emily said, "I feel happy and excited. I love to be an artist, I love colours and my favourite colour is *'rainbow'*."

"Emily is proof that no matter what you want to do, you should go out and make it happen," Mr Kean said.

Emily joins a line of impressive Hornsby women who have given back and improved our local community.

The NSW Women of the Year Awards will be held at the International Convention Centre, Sydney on March 10, 2021.

Photo above: 2021 Hornsby Woman of the Year Emily Crockford with Matt Kean MP.

"Emily Crockford is taking the art world by storm with her bright and vibrant work capturing the attention of many around the country."

– Hornsby Woman of The Year, *The Bush Telegraph*, 25 February 2021

Gabrielle Mordy, Katrina Brennan and Meagan Pelham in Kandos, February 2021. Image courtesy of Studio A.

Development



Kandos Regional Residency

In February 2021, Meagan Pelham and Katrina Brennan travelled to the regional town of Kandos NSW for a three-day artist residency. The residency allowed the pair to make art in preparation for the 2022 Cementa festival, an event that brings together over 40 artists in Kandos for a multi-disciplinary showcase of art, events and workshops.

Accompanied by Studio A's CEO Gabrielle Mordy and Principal Artist Emma Johnston, the trip allowed inspiration to thrive as they explored the local scenery and historic buildings of the post-industrial town. The art created reflected the area's rural landscapes, its plant life and wildlife, as well as the many friendly dogs they met during their stay.

On the 17th of June 2021, Pelham and Brennan returned to Kandos to lead a creative workshop with special education students at Kandos High School. The work produced in the workshop, as well as art from previous Kandos visits, will be compiled to create an installation piece for Cementa22.



Katrina Brennan and Meagan Pelham in Kandos, February 2021. Images courtesy of Studio A.

Face masks and new tote designs



Studio A has continued to expand its well-loved line of artist-designed merchandise, with new products added to the online store and sold in the Art Gallery of NSW gift store. At the end of 2020, a collection of limited release face masks were available to purchase on the Studio A website, featuring six designs handcrafted with love in the Crows Nest studio location. Purchasers could help protect themselves and the community whilst displaying the dynamic artworks of three Studio A artists; Thom Roberts, Meagan Pelham and Damian Showyin.



A selection of Meagan Pelham designed tote bags were launched at the AGNSW shop during the completion of Studio A's mural on-site at the Gallery. Pelham's artwork was prominent in the mural and featured her iconic 'love owl' motif, which was also printed in glamorous gold on the Girl Band tote. The Bondi Beach Galahs tote design was also available for purchase and featured a collection of pink galahs outlined in a bold blue colour. Both the Studio A face masks and tote bags were made using an ethical production process.



Governance and Financial Report

Daniel Kim, Bondi Beach Rockpool, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 101.5 x 76cm.



Governance

Shane Simpson AM, Chair

Shane is Special Counsel at Simpsons Solicitors, a firm specialising in the arts, entertainment, cultural property and copyright. He was the founder of the Arts Law Centre of Australia and Prelude (a national network of composer houses).

He is on the Council of the National Library of Australia and is an independent director on several private foundations.

He was formerly chair of the Bundanon Trust; the Advisory Council of the Faculty of Art + Design, UNSW; the Aboriginal Benefits Foundation; the Peggy Glanville-Hicks Composers' House Trust; the NSW Film and Television Office and Museums and Galleries NSW. He has also been a non-executive director on numerous boards in the cultural industries including: the Australian Maritime Museum; the New Zealand Film Commission; the Australian National Academy of Music; the National Association for the Visual Arts; the Crafts Council of Australia; the Music Council of Australia and the Copyright Agency.

He was appointed Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for "service to the law and to the arts through leading roles in intellectual property and entertainment law, and as a contributor to a range of cultural organisations." In 2019 the University of New South Wales awarded him an honorary Doctorate of the University.

Steve Badgery

Director of Community Engagement & Marketing – Providence Asset Group

Steve has breadth of experience across all functions of marketing, business planning and strategy as well as business development and project management. Steve has worked across various functions of marketing at Westpac and CBA as well as previous roles in Agricultural Investment Management with a focus on business planning, corporate advisory and asset management. Steve has recently changed industries and now works in the renewable energy space with a company investing, building and owning community solar farms in regional Australia.

Steve first became connected to Studio A as their mentor on the Social Traders "Crunch" program. Steve worked closely with the team to test and develop a business and marketing plan that would allow Studio A to compete in the corporate sector. Steve is also passionate about building the profiles and forging sustainable career paths for the artists but also ensuring that they gain professional development along the way.

Steve is lover of the arts having studied art throughout secondary school with a particular interest in modern art and sculpture.

John McCabe

John McCabe is Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of LSM Asia Pacific, based in Sydney.

Since joining LIU in 1999 John has held several positions including Chief Financial Officer and LIU's Global Chief Risk Officer based in Boston.

John's current responsibilities include focusing on day-to-day management of 9 regional offices in 5 countries. He is also responsible for LSM Asia Pacific enterprise risk management, capital, legal & taxation structure and evaluation of new business opportunities.

In addition to his role on the Studio A Board, John is currently an executive Director on 4 LSM company boards and has held the position of Independent Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee of Tennis NSW. John is a Chartered Accountant (ANZCA); is a Fellow of ANZIIF and a Graduate Member of the AICD.

Douglas Spencer OAM

Doug is the Principal and Director of Miller Noyce Lawyers and sits on the Board of Studio Artes, where he was Chair 2009 to 2019.

Doug joined Miller Noyce & Doust in November 1973 and became a partner in 1976. Since that time he has handled matters in most areas of law with a particular focus on business, commercial, property, deceased estates and estate planning matters. Doug was in the first group of solicitors in this State to be accepted (in 1993) as an Accredited Specialist in Business Law and has been re-accredited every year since.

Over the years, Doug has handled a wide range of legal matters for many people in many circumstances. He has extensive experience in acting for "people" in most areas of the law, whether it is in relation to their personal lives or in respect to their business and commercial affairs. This extends from assisting people in buying and selling their homes and preparing Wills, Powers of Attorney and handling estates for them to advising and assisting on the sale, purchase and restructure of businesses and in acting for them in difficult commercial litigation in all jurisdictions. Doug also has extensive experience in advising people on estate planning and the re-structuring of their business and commercial affairs.

Kim Spinks

Kim Spinks is Director of City People, a new company devoted to culture-led placemaking.

She was previously at Arts (now Create) NSW for twenty years where she worked in a variety of positions including Manager Arts Strategy and Planning, Director Arts Development and Director Strategy & Capacity and for 9 years managed the state funding for theatre and dance. In her last position as Manager Strategic Initiatives she led the team responsible for strategic programs such as the Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Strategy, the Arts and Disability Partnership with FACS, the NSW Health and Arts Framework and Western Sydney. Her responsibilities included policy development and implementation and fund raising.

Prior to working at Arts NSW Kim spent twenty years in the performing arts in many different professional capacities including co-founding Urban Theatre Projects.

Barbara Ward

Barbara Ward is the founder and Managing Director of Impact One an international strategy, capital raising and advisory company. Her vast experience in the above areas and particularly in healthcare range from small to large. Barbara has been awarded several awards for her outstanding contributions to corporate, not for profit and charity sectors. She was also awarded NSW Government Local Woman of the Year 2017, Paul Harris Fellow and NSW Volunteer of the Year 2019.

Barbara is the President of Rotary Club of Sydney, immediate past President of Australia India Business Council NSW, fellow and former President of Fundraising Institute of Australia. She sits on a number of corporate and charity Boards and is the President of four.

Dan Wright

Commercial Finance Manager – Seven West Media

Dan is an experienced Chartered Accountant currently supporting the News and Public Affairs division at Seven. Dan has also worked across media and retail sectors in Sydney and London. Dan gained his CA with Deloitte in Auckland in 2013 and is a University of Auckland graduate.



Barbara Ward, Ricky Poon and Gabrielle Mordy at the launch of Love owls and mermaids singing in the rainbow pop, The Art Gallery of NSW, November 2020. Image courtesy of Diana Panuccio/AGNSW.

Financial Performance

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Income		
Fundraising	241,888	175,421
Grants	168,189	118,684
Artist Fees	99,187	44,390
Artwork/ Merchandise Sales	221,440	197,704
NDIS Funding	538,741	446,479
Other income	43,232	47,589
Total revenue	1,312,677	1,030,267
Expenditure		
Administration	-99,316	-81,034
Artistic	-916,822	-622,972
Studio	-89,810	-70,632
Total Expenses	-1,105,949	-774,639
Interest income	-570	-1400
Surplus for the year	206,158	254,228

Income

Where our funding came from in FY21

Fundraising

Donations have increased 38% on FY20 and we sincerely thank all our donors for their generous contributions. Donations are critical to the success of our artists.

Grants

Create NSW is the main contributor of grants for Studio A. We are now the recipient of multi-year program funding from Create NSW of \$110,000 per annum. This is an increase from our annual program grant of \$90k in FY20).

Artist Fees

Artist fees have continued to grow in FY21, reflecting the professional development of Studio A artists. Continued growth in artist fees is key to the success of Studio A as a social enterprise.

Artwork / Merchandise Sales

Even with limited opportunities for in-person sales and events, artwork and merchandise sales have increased from FY20 to FY21 which is testament to the development of our artists and the value placed on Studio A creations in the community.

NDIS Funding

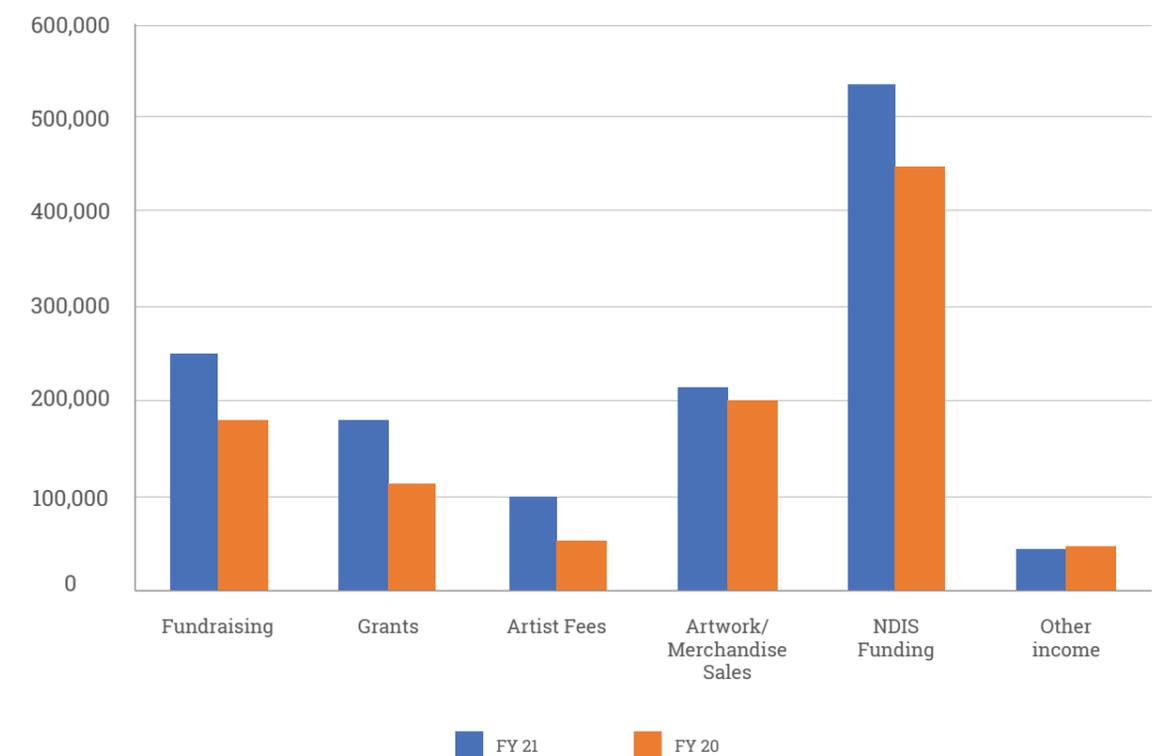
This includes member funding, one on one funding and community access income received from the NDIS on behalf of artists. The increase in NDIS income is due to artists attending increased hours, some with a 1:1 staff ratio.

Other

Other income largely consists of Federal Government COVID-19 support (JobKeeper)



Studio A artist facilitator Cassilda Parkinson displaying handwoven textiles ready for sale by Adam Mandarano.



Expenditure

How our funding was used in FY21

Administration

Administration costs are kept low at Studio A and represent less than 10% of overall expenditure. This includes travel/fuel costs, accounting, audit fees and insurances.

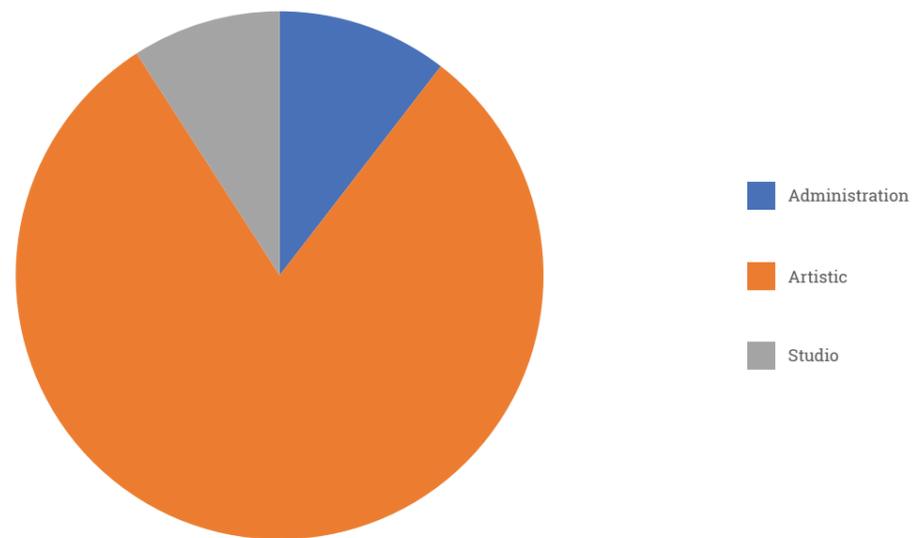
Artistic

Artistic expenses are at the core of what we do and make up the bulk of Studio A expenditure. This includes payments to our artists, art consumables, framing/printing, artistic staff salaries and guest artist costs.

Increased artistic output in FY21 has meant an increase in our artistic investment from FY20.

Studio

This is the cost of 'keeping the lights on' at our Crows Nest studio and includes rent, cleaning, IT support and depreciation.



Lisa Scott, Betty Boo, 2020, acrylic, cotton and beads on canvas, 28 x 36cm.



garden and swing
garden a tool shed
garden a tool shed
garden fairy lights without fairies
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in green Water
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On the cover: Love owls and mermaids singing in the rainbow pop. Image courtesy of Diana Panuccio/AGNSW.

studio A

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