

**ARTS
PROJECT
AUSTRALIA**



**Annual
Report
2025-26**

COVER: Fiona Longhurst solo exhibition *5 7 3 Float Fall Petals 10 Trees*
RIGHT: Paul Hodges *Untitled* 2020, cotton, thread, ink, stuffing

Arts Project Australia acknowledges the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land on which we work and our artists create and exhibit their art.

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President's Report

Tiffany Lucas



It has been another remarkable year for Arts Project Australia (APA). Looking back on the past 12 months, I am struck by the energy, optimism and creativity that defines APA. We continue to build on our strong foundations, delivering new opportunities for artists while strengthening the organisation for the future.

Throughout 2025–2026, our artists were represented through ambitious exhibitions, public programs, brand collaborations and professional development opportunities. APA artists also achieved national recognition, with Anthony Romagnano becoming the first APA artist to be a finalist in the Archibald Prize, and Georgia Szmerling being announced as a finalist in the Wynne Prize. These achievements reflect not only the exceptional talent of our artists, but also the dedication of the many people who work alongside them to champion their practices and create meaningful career pathways.

I'd like to thank the APA Board for their dedication, time and expertise. This year we welcomed new Board Members Joshua Pether and Susan Thacore, whose diverse skills and experience further strengthen our governance and strategic direction. I'd also like to thank Board Member, Marie McCarthy, for stepping back into the treasurer role, while acknowledging and thanking Rick Hemphill, who concluded his term as treasurer during the year. It was an absolute pleasure working with our talented Board members over the past year.

Philanthropic support, including from a generous and growing community of individual donors, has enabled us to achieve great things this year, and to plan for the future with confidence. The APA Foundation plays a key role in stewardship of our donor programs and it's a privilege to work with the Chair of the Foundation, Virginia Lovett, and the APA Foundation Board Members who are passionately committed to APA. Thank you all for your wonderful support.

On behalf of the Board, I also extend my thanks to members of our Exhibitions, Finance and Policy Committees whose skills and guidance continue to support the organisation's growth and good governance.

Thank you to Executive Director, Liz Nowell, APA management and the entire APA team. Your professionalism, creativity and commitment ensure that APA continues to deliver outstanding outcomes for artists while remaining a respected leader within the contemporary arts and disability sectors.

Excitingly, this year we established APA's first Artist Advisory Committee - an important milestone in strengthening artist voices across the organisation. The Artist Advisory Committee ensures the lived experience, ideas and perspectives of APA artists help shape organisational decision-making. The Committee reflects our ongoing commitment to meaningful participation and recognises artists as leaders whose insight is essential to the continued growth and success of the organisation. Thank you to the Advisory Committee members for your time, expertise and dedication.

My sincere thanks also goes to our donors, members, volunteers, funding partners, philanthropic supporters, government agencies, collectors and collaborators. Your continued belief in APA makes our work possible and enables us to create new opportunities for artists to develop sustainable and rewarding creative careers.

Above all, I want to acknowledge the artists of APA. Your creativity, generosity, curiosity and unique perspectives are what make this organisation so special. Every exhibition, partnership, program and milestone begins with your extraordinary artistic commitment.

On behalf of the Board, thank you to everyone who contributes to this remarkable organisation. We look forward to another year of celebrating artistic excellence, embracing new opportunities and continuing to champion APA artists.

LEFT: Anthony Romagnano *Red, Orange, Yellow Flowers*
2025, colour pencil on paper

Executive Director's Report

Liz Nowell

There is an old adage that in uncertain times, we return to what matters most. At Arts Project Australia, that has always been community.

One Wednesday afternoon this year, artists and several staff gathered around tables in the downstairs studio for the inaugural Quilt Club: a space to come together and make individual quilt squares that (may) eventually become one large collaborative piece. It struck me that this simple activity perfectly reflected APA: a place where individuality is celebrated, creativity is shared, and our diverse community comes together with a common purpose.

Over the past year, I have witnessed this spirit time and again. It was there in Fiona Longhurst's long-awaited exhibition and publication, at Studio Open Day, in commemorative exhibitions celebrating Cameron Gresswell and Dionne Canzano, and in the unparalleled generosity of our supporters during a challenging cost-of-living environment. Day in, day out our community shows up for our artists and one another.

While community remains our foundation, the recognition of APA artists in the broader art world continues to reach new heights. Anthony Romagnano became our first Archibald Prize finalist, alongside Georgia Szmerling's selection in the Wynne Prize. Jordan Dymke's solo exhibition at Gertrude Glasshouse, commissions for *A velvet ant, a flower and a bird*, a national tour of *Intimate Imaginaries*, and partnerships with WAH-WAH Australia and GUP all introduced new audiences to the remarkable work of APA artists.

This momentum extends well beyond Australia. Late last year, artist Nnena Kalu from our sister organisation ActionSpace in the United Kingdom was awarded the Turner Prize, one of the world's most prestigious honours for contemporary art. While this achievement belongs to Nnena, it also represents a watershed moment for artists with intellectual disability internationally. For more than fifty years, APA has championed the belief that artists with disability should be recognised

as equals within contemporary art. Moments like this remind us that the world is beginning to catch up with that vision.

This has also been a year of investing in the future. We were delighted to secure significant multi-year support from The Ian Potter Foundation to establish our new Guest Artist and Curator in Residence Program, which commenced in June 2026. Together with renewed multi-year investment from Creative Victoria and support from the Bowness Family Foundation, these partnerships strengthen our ability to create ambitious opportunities for artists in the years ahead.

As the financial year drew to a close, we were proud to welcome Kat Theophanous MP, and the Hon. Vicki Ward, Minister for Creative Industries as well as Senator the Hon. Jenny McAllister, Minister for the NDIS and the Hon. Ged Kearney MP to APA. Without a doubt, the highlight of these visits was watching our artists confidently share their lived experience, advocate for their creative practice and demonstrate the vital role that Arts Project Australia plays in their lives.

To our artists, and to your families, carers and support networks, thank you. Your creativity, generosity and trust are the heart of Arts Project Australia, and it is a privilege to work alongside you.

Finally, none of what we achieve would be possible without the dedication of our staff, Board, committees, volunteers, donors, partners and supporters. Thank you for your unwavering belief in our vision.

As we look ahead, I remain optimistic. While the path ahead may bring uncertainty, the recognition of APA artists continues to grow, our community is strong, and our commitment to championing artists with intellectual disability remains as resolute as ever.

Year at a glance





Landscape: A Different View

10

Landscape: A Different View invited audiences to explore the world through a range of artistic perspectives that reimagine our relationship with place. This group exhibition brought together a diverse collection of works by APA artists that blend the energy of urban life with the calm of rural settings, challenging traditional ideas of landscape.

Each artist offered a unique lens, transforming familiar environments into compelling narratives. From structured cityscapes to organic natural forms, the works reflected the fluid, ever-changing nature of the world around us.

Celebrating difference in vision, style, and experience, the exhibition revealed that landscapes are not fixed—they are shaped by how we see and feel them.

Together, these works formed a shared vision: one that encourages us to look beyond the surface, embrace multiple viewpoints, and discover beauty in all environments.

Curated by Paul Hodges, Suzie Brown and James McDonald.

Visitation: 2095



Embodied: Limitless 2025 Commission Series

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Limitless is a landmark exhibition series that invites APA artists to undertake ambitious commissions on a significant scale. Launched with two inaugural bodies of work, the series establishes a framework for immersive, long-form creative development, building momentum toward new possibilities and opportunities. It affirms APA's commitment to seeing neurodivergent artists and artists with intellectual disabilities central to the national and international arts landscape – visible, valued, and flourishing in their practice.

As the first exhibition in the *Limitless* series, *Embodied* signaled a focus on artistic rigour and experimental, process-driven practice. Featuring major new commissions by Mark Smith and Bronwyn Hack, the exhibition framed the body as both subject and metaphor, inviting expansive and deeply personal interpretations.

Curated by Jo Salt.

Visitation: 1373

23 August
- 4 October

2025



Stop Work

Stop Work contained artworks that acted as proposals to remake the purpose, shape, and meaning of work in our collective experience.

In the last five years, our globalised society has experienced multiple transformations that have complicated our ways of exchanging labour for money. The COVID-19 pandemic rendered many in-person jobs untenable, prompting a wave of improvised adaptations to prop up business as usual. The rug-pull has continued into the era of artificial intelligence and robot labour, driving both economic and existential dread. With the concept of a ‘steady job’ now obsolete, it’s nearly impossible to predict what employment will look like in even two years’ time. This offers artists the perfect vantage point to ask: what was work?

The artists in this exhibition offered singular perspectives on the imploding norms of labour. They reflected on what work once was, what it is now, and what it might become – drawn from lived experiences that challenge conventional understandings of productivity. Artworks explored sabotage and monkey-wrenching, inefficiency and de-optimisation, and imagination as a defiant force against exploitation.

Featuring Michael Candy, Nicholas Capaldo, Samraing Chea, David Fitzpatrick, Martin Forster, Lychandra Gieseman, Pascale Giorgi, Cameron Gresswell, Christian Hansen, Rakhi James, Adrian Lazzaro, and Cathy Staughton.

Curated by Loren Kronemyer.

Visitation: 900

18 October -
22 November

2025



Annual Gala

APA's *Annual Gala* is our end-of-year celebration, honouring the achievements and diverse practices of every artist in our studio. This much-anticipated event is the only exhibition each year to showcase the full breadth of talent across our program – with up to 200 works on display spanning painting, drawing, printmaking, photography, ceramics and textiles.

All artworks were available for purchase and could be taken home on the day. When the bell rang at 3pm, sales began – first-come, first-served – with buyers removing works directly from the gallery walls and plinths.

Visitation: 1283

13 December
2025



Houses, Spouses, Crises and Chrises

14

Houses, Spouses, Crises and Chrises was the 3D Real Estate fantasy of APA artist and co-curator Chris O'Brien. Starting with a floorplan, Chris narrated a tale, enlisted assistance, and it appeared before him. Real and imagined characters became cohabitants of the space. Long-time collaborator Joanna Anderson observed Chris, acting as an editor and illustrator of our auteur.

Set in and around an abandoned old house in Northcote, the show constructed a world both mundane and surreal: where furniture was stolen in slow motion, burnt beans bubbled in the fireplace, and the roar of V8s echoed through the TV on lazy afternoons. A red 1971 Fiat Autobianchi waited outside – engine sputtering, ready to go, but only made it halfway down the road before the petrol ran out.

Featuring: Adrian Lazzaro, Aidan Sefo, Alan Constable, Alessandra DiMattina, Boris Cipusev, Brigid Hanrahan, Bronwyn Hack, Chris Mason, Chris O'Brien, Christian Hansen, Christian Semertzidis, Daniel Pace, Daniel Richardson, Emily Dober, Fulli Andrinopoulos, George Aristovoulou, Jasmin Kolodziejczyk, Joanna Anderson, Josef Power, Julian Martin, Lisa Reid, Malcolm Sturrock, Margaret McIntosh, Matthew Gove, Michael Camakaris, Miles Howard-Wilks, Monica Lazzari, Paul Quick, Rakhi James, Rebecca Scibilia, Ruth Howard, Simon Paredes, Terry Williams, Thomas Iacono, Tim Noble, Valerio Ciccone, and Will McConnell.

Curated by Chris O'Brien, Caroline Wylds and Sarah Lamanna.

Visitation: 3149

31 January -
18 April

2026



5 7 3 Float Fall Petals 10 Trees

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For over three decades, Fiona Longhurst has cultivated a distinctive visual language grounded in pattern, repetition, and colour. A longstanding artist in the APA studio since 1991, her practice has evolved with quiet persistence, producing a compelling body of work.

Her intricate fields of mark-making are animated by recurring motifs – floral forms, delicate compositional arrangements, and text. Through intuitive layering and patterning, Longhurst builds a personal visual lexicon.

This exhibition celebrated Longhurst's enduring contribution to the APA studio and the broader contemporary art landscape, offering insight into an artist whose evolving practice is defined by tenderness, a nuanced use of colour, and a quietly compelling sense of introspection.

Coinciding with the exhibition, and in partnership with Perimeter Editions, APA announced the launch of a new monograph series, with Longhurst's accompanying publication *5 7 3 Float Fall Petals 10 Trees* marking the first release.

Curated by Jo Salt.

Visitation: 1508

9 May -
13 June

2026



Exhibition Program

Northcote Project Space



Sound and Image Cameron Gresswell

21 July – 15 September 2025

Celebrating the life and work of APA artist Cameron Gresswell, this commemorative exhibition honoured his bold, music-infused visual language – a body of work defined by expressive colour, rhythmic composition, and a deep personal connection to sound and collecting.

Cameron Gresswell *Barnes Single* 2017, pastel on paper

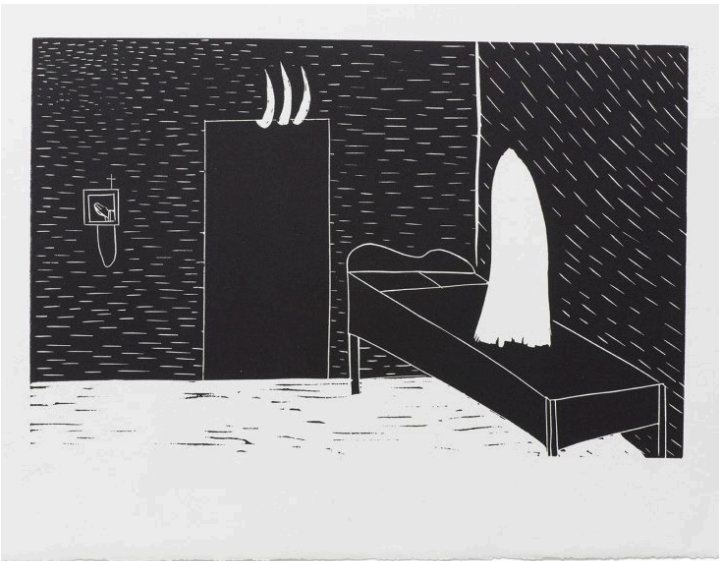
Whispers in the Walls

13 October – 19 December 2025

Whispers in the Walls gathered artists whose work traverses the eerie, the surreal, and the quietly unsettling. Shadows stretched, forms blurred and liminal figures emerged—ghostly, grotesque, and at times absurd. Not always threatening, not entirely benign.

Curated by Aidan Sefo and Carolyn Hawkins.

Aidan Sefo *Untitled* 2022, lino print on paper



So Fresh

3 February – 27 March 2026

So Fresh is an annual exhibition celebrating the dynamic and diverse voices of new and emerging artists from the APA studio. Featuring a range of recent works, the exhibition showcases the vibrant talent and innovative practices shaping the next generation of Arts Project Australia.

Alanna Dodd *Hawaii USA* 2024, ink, pastel, pencil, acrylic on paper

Always on our mind Dionne Canzano

17 April – 27 June 2026

An exhibition that celebrated the incredible artistic career and life of beloved APA artist Dionne Canzano (1970-2025). For 25 years, Dionne Canzano was a dedicated artist and a deeply valued presence in the APA studios. Her practice stands as a testament to a career shaped by talent, passion and quiet determination.

Dionne Canzano *Kelpie* 2023, pastel on paper



External Exhibitions

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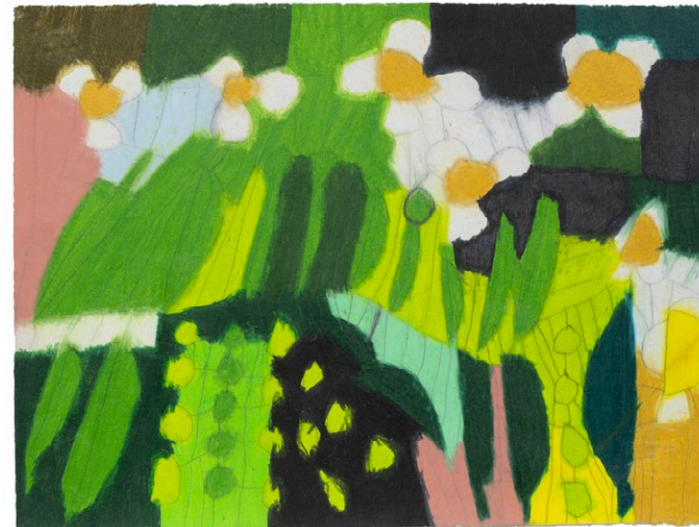
Lemon Myrtle

Benalla Art Gallery, VIC

2 June - 30 September 2025

George Aristovoulou solo show featuring his drawings – in partnership with Benalla Art Gallery

George Aristovoulou *Lemon Myrtle* 2018, greylead pencil, colour pencil on paper



The Oracle: 36th Ljubljana Biennale of Graphic Arts

Multiple venues across Ljubljana, Slovenia

6 June - 12 October 2025

Featuring a selection of works on paper by Miles Howard-Wilks.

Miles Howard-Wilks *Untitled* 2021, gouache, pencil on paper



Protest is a Creative Act

Museum of Australian Photography, Wheelers Hill VIC

7 June – 31 August 2025

By facilitating a conversation between women and nonbinary artists across the decades, Protest is a creative act confirmed that many of the issues addressed by women photographers in the 1970s – around the body, sexuality, race, national identity and the environment – have not been resolved. Featuring Eden Menta and other artists. Curated by Kelly Gellatly and Angela Connor.

Eden Menta *Eden And The Gorge* 2019, digital print

Assembly

Jacky Winter Gallery, Collingwood VIC

11 Jul – 16 Aug, 2025

A group exhibition celebrating artists who are part of the Jacky Winter Gallery community. Featuring Andrew Nicolaides, Emily Dober and other artists.

Emily Dober *Untitled* 2016, collage, gouache on paper



Hysterical Legacies

Queen Vic Women's Centre, Melbourne VIC

8 – 24 October, 2025

A group exhibition responding to the ongoing impact of historically sexist narratives - particularly those surrounding the stereotype of the “hysterical woman”. Eden Menta and other artists, curated by Amelia Saward.

Eden Menta *Courage to Play Again* 2025, digital



Biophilic Tendency

Mailbox Art Space, Melbourne VIC

3 August – 27 September 2025

A group exhibition of APA ceramic artists with an innate human inclination to seek connections with nature and other living systems. Curated by Shell Odgers.

Sam Forster *Untitled* 2021, glaze on ceramic



Ruth Howard: Woven Mantle

Benalla Art Gallery, VIC

14 November – 28 February 2025

Ruth Howard solo show featuring her ceramics – in partnership with Benalla Art Gallery.

Ruth Howard *Untitled* 2025, glaze on ceramic

A velvet ant, a flower and a bird

Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne, VIC

19 February – 6 June 2026

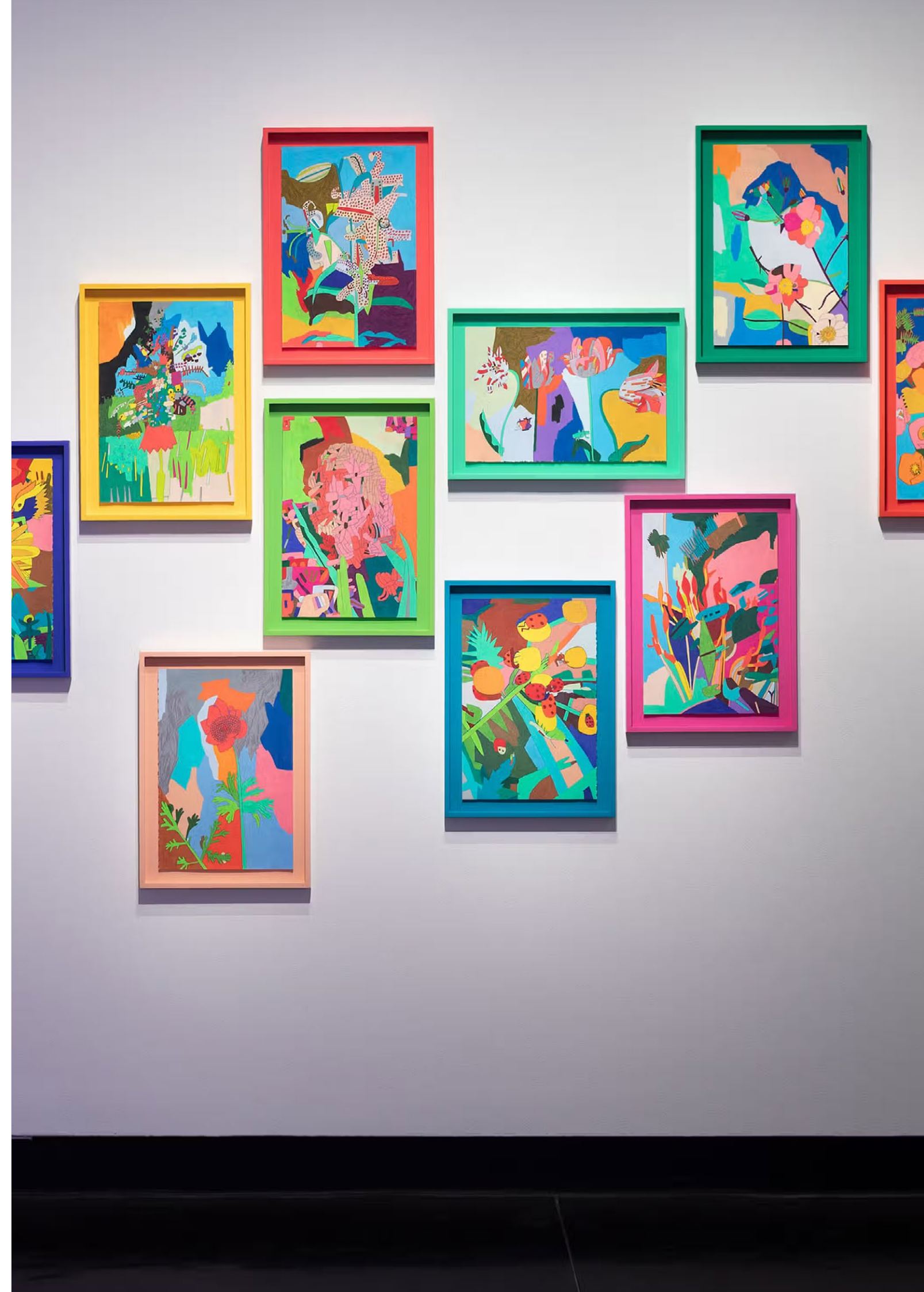
A velvet ant, a flower and a bird evoked a garden of knowledge anchored by three familiar figures from nature — a velvet ant, a flower and a bird. These figures represent a parliament of beings, each carrying symbolic and metaphorical weight that encourage us to reimagine what intelligence means.

Drawing from the University of Melbourne's Classics, Biology, and Art collections, alongside new commissions and performances; historic and contemporary art co-mingled to envision intelligence as living, continually evolving, interconnected and interdependent.

APA artists Miles Howard-Wilks and Anthony Romagnano unveiled newly commissioned artworks, with Howard-Wilks creating a series of ceramic ants, and Romagnano responding with a series of botanical and insect inspired drawings.

Guest curated by Professor Dr Chus Martínez, Head of the Institute of Art Gender Nature at the FHNW Academy of Arts and Design, Basel, Switzerland.

BELOW: Miles Howard-Wilks ceramics, RIGHT: Anthony Romagnano drawings



Jordan Dymke – Who Am I?

Gertrude Glasshouse, Collingwood, VIC

30 January – 28 February 2026

Gertrude, in partnership with APA, presented a new exhibition initiative as part of a program designed to foster artistic exchange and creative development for practicing artists. Each year, an APA studio artist will be paired with a Gertrude Studio Program artist (current or alumni) to collaborate over a 12-month period. The partnership culminates in a solo exhibition at Gertrude Glasshouse, supporting artistic growth, opportunities for professional development, and deeper connections between creative communities.

For the first iteration of the project in 2026, APA artist Jordan Dymke partnered with recent Gertrude studio artist Francis Carmody to explore new modes of self-portraiture, personal narrative and identity through large-scale painting. *Who am I?* focused on a commitment to using oneself as both the subject, and the subject of enquiry.



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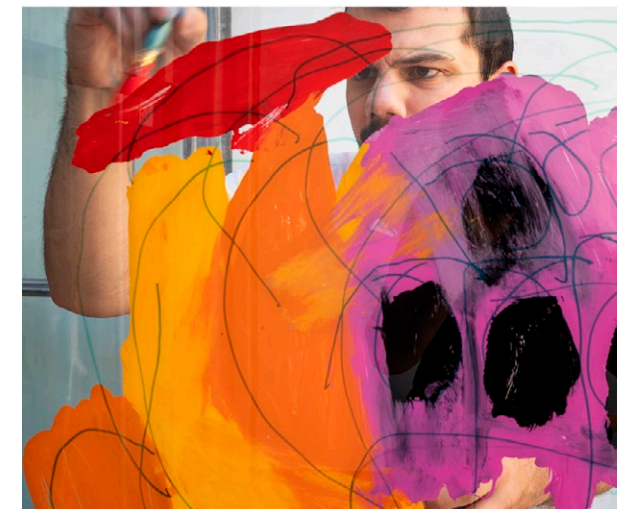
Sharing Practice – The APA Portrait Project

Glasshouse Project Space,
Collingwood, VIC

29 January – 28 February 2026

A series of photographic portraits by Penelope Hunt created in close collaboration with artists from APA. The exhibition explored portraiture as a site of exchange, where relationships, time, and shared practice shape how artists see and represent one another. Commissioned with the generous support of Michael Schwarz and David Clouston.

Penelope Hunt *Jacob Cartelli* 2024, digital photograph



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Marjorie Street – Chris & Friends

Australian Tapestry Workshop,
South Melbourne, VIC

2 March – 2 May 2026

In partnership with the Australian Tapestry Workshop this group exhibition showcased the breadth and diversity of APA artists working in textiles. Curated by Chris O'Brien with Carolyn Hawkins and Jodie Kipps.

Chris O'Brien *Margaret and Kris' House* 2018 cotton, foam, wool



Anna Dehm: Cabbage Salad

Benalla Art Gallery, VIC

2 March – 31 May 2026

Anna Dehm solo show featuring a selection of her drawings – in partnership with Benalla Art Gallery.

Anna Dehm *Chocolate Flavour* 2024, paint pen on paper



NETS Victoria: Intimate Imaginaries national tour

Presented in partnership with TarraWarra Museum of Art and NETS Victoria

Pinnacles Gallery, Townsville, QLD
20 June – 4 October 2026

Following the success of the landmark exhibition *Intimate Imaginaries* at TarraWarra Museum of Art in 2024/2025, in June 2026 NETS Victoria announced a national touring edition of the exhibition, beginning at Pinnacles Gallery in Townsville (QLD). Featuring a selection of works drawn from the original presentation, the tour brings this rich and compelling body of work to audiences across regional and metropolitan Victoria.

Intimate Imaginaries explores deeply personal and imaginative worlds, showcasing a range of practices by APA artists that reflect distinct visual languages, emotional depth, and powerful storytelling. This touring iteration continues to celebrate the unique voices of neurodivergent artists and artists with intellectual disability, and deepen engagement with contemporary art across diverse communities.

Curated by Anthony Fitzpatrick.

Mark Smith works installed at *Intimate Imaginaries*, TarraWarra Museum of Art, 2024
Photo: Andrew Curtis



Archibald and Wynne Prize

Art Gallery of New South Wales, NSW

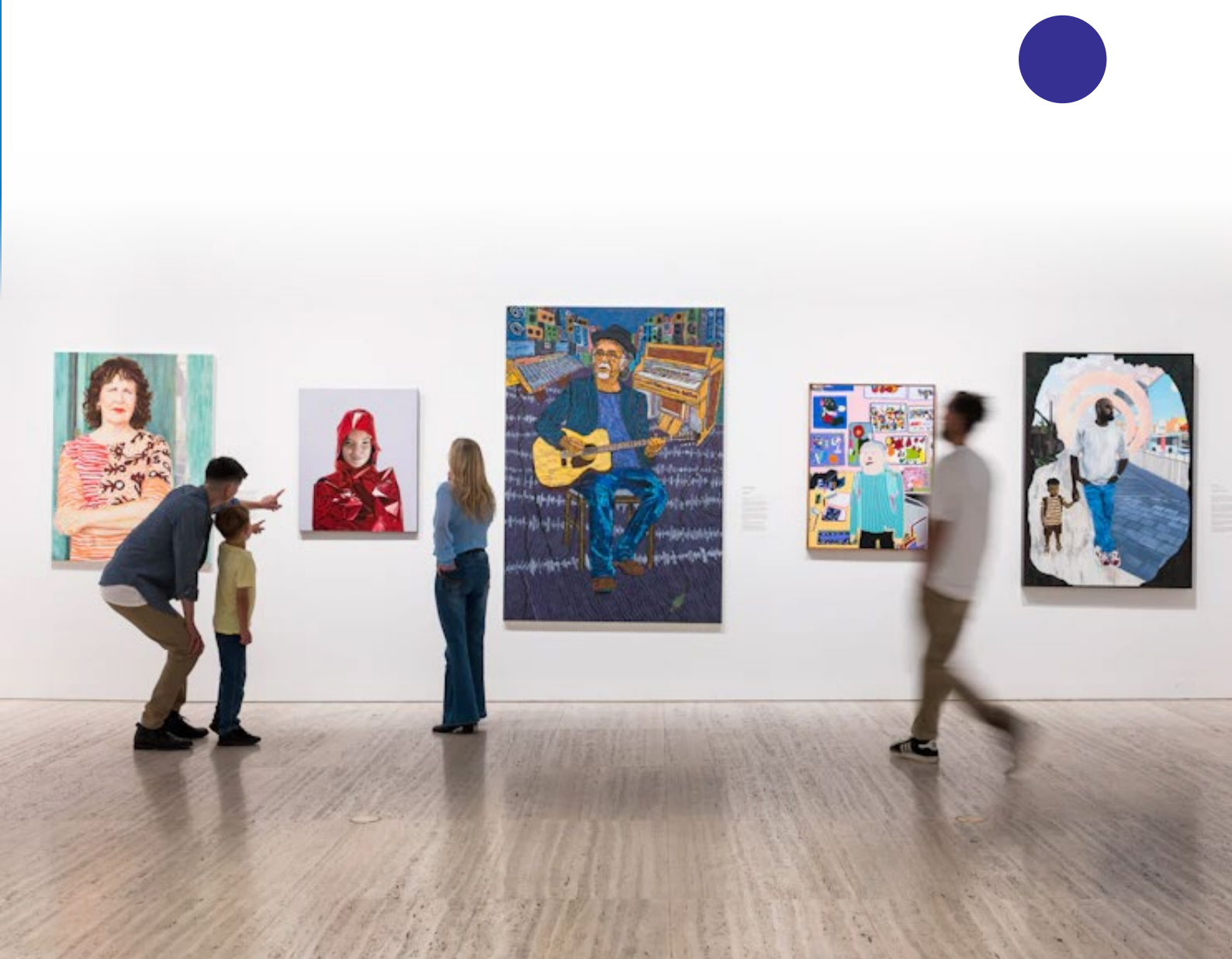
9 May – 16 August 2026

The Archibald and Wynne Prizes delight and surprise audiences every year with fresh presentations of contemporary Australian painting and sculpture.

At its heart, the Archibald Prize is about storytelling. In this exhibition, Australian and New Zealand artists use portraiture to share the beauty and complexity of our times. APA artist Anthony Romagnano was named as a finalist with his portrait *Fiona in the Studio* (2026), featuring fellow APA artist Fiona Longhurst.

The Wynne Prize celebrates two major categories of art: Australian landscape painting and figurative sculpture. Diverse representations of our country appear alongside the variety and ingenuity of contemporary sculpture. APA artist Georgia Szmerling was named a finalist with her landscape *Reflection of a Pond with Nature* (2026).

Anthony Romagnano *Fiona in the Studio* installed at AGNSW, courtesy AGNSW



Art Fairs

Melbourne Art Fair

Melbourne Exhibition
and Convention Centre, VIC

19 – 22 February 2026

APA presented two booths. The first showcased Wendy Dawson's colour field drawings, with Chris Mason's ceramic sculptures of voluptuous female figures. The second booth featured a group exhibition of works that showcased the diversity of contemporary practice represented by APA artists. Throughout the fair APA also hosted a series of workshops, demonstrations, installations, and artworks by a wide selection of APA artists within the second booth.

Spring1883

Hotel Windsor, Melbourne, VIC

13 – 16 August, 2025

Spring1883 brings a fresh energy to the traditional art fair model through its immersive setting in an historic luxury hotel, offering genuine discovery and connection between artists, gallerists, and audiences. APA presented a selection of works within a suite, recording record sales over the event.

Healesville Zine Fair

The Memo, Healesville, VIC

31 October 2025

The inaugural Healesville Zine Fair is a bustling marketplace of zines in regional Victoria, proudly hosted by Yarra Valley FM. APA zine artists presented a stall.

APA stall at Melbourne Art Fair 2026



Melbourne Art Print Fair

Linden New Art, St Kilda, VIC

6 – 8 February 2026

In February at the Melbourne Print Art Fair, Kaleidoscope Editions (Naarm/Melbourne) collaborated with APA artist Simon Parades, to create original hand-printed limited editions on paper.

For this collaboration, they released a striking series of two works by Simon, screen-printed by Troppo Print Studio. In these prints, which represent Simon's first engagement with the production of limited edition screenprints, he focused on the elegant design of a French perfume bottle and the distinctive red, white and blue packaging of Brillo soap pads.

The Festival of the Photocopier Zine Fair

Meat Market, North Melbourne, VIC

7 – 8 February 2026

Presented by Sticky Institute, The Festival of the Photocopier Zine Fair has run in Melbourne every year since 2008. Zinesters and independent publishers come from around Naarm/Melbourne, Victoria, Australia and even from around the world to share their work. APA zine artists presented a stall.

Outsider Art Fair

Metropolitan Pavilion, New York (USA)

19 – 22 March 2026

Presented by Sonia Dutton, a selection of Alan Constable's ceramic cameras and Alvaro Alvares' drawings were exhibited.

Melbourne Art Book Fair

National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), VIC

15 – 17 May 2026

APA's stall at the annual fair featured a range of artist zines, publications and merchandise. Artists Iain Gordon, Darcy Scott, Lisa Reid and Matt Gove made cameo appearances.

Awards

Archibald Prize 2026 finalist:
Anthony Romagnano

Wynne Prize 2026 finalist:
Georgia Szmerling

Linden Postcard Prize 2025 finalists:
Alan Constable, Alessandra DiMattina, Brigid Hanrahan, Bronwyn Hack, Chris Mason, Chris O'Brien, Elizabeth Dunkley, George Aristovoulou, Georgia Szmerling, Jordan Dymke, Mark Smith, Miles Howard-Wilks, Ruth Howard, Shoshanna Brott

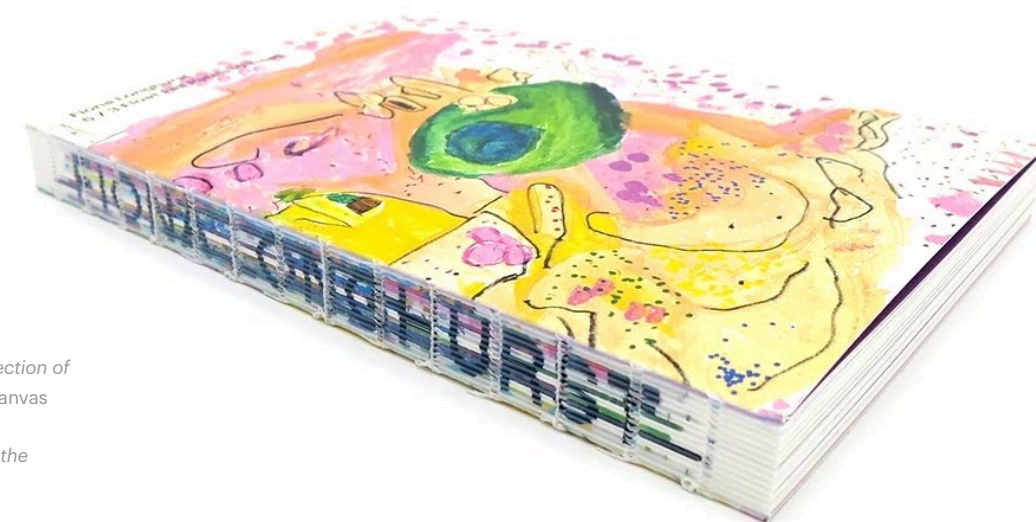
Linden Postcard Prize 2026 finalists:
Abigail Michell, Alvaro Alvarez, Daniel Pace, Jasmin Kolodziejczyk, Joanne Nethercote, Jordan Dymke, Josef Power, Kate Knight, Mark Smith, Michael Trasancos, Miles Howard-Wilks, Rosie O'Brien, Salome Felsigner, Samantha Ashdown,



Publications

A major milestone for APA was the launch of a new monograph series in partnership with Perimeter Editions, beginning with Fiona Longhurst's *5 7 3 Float Fall Petals 10 Trees*. Co-published by Perimeter Editions and APA, the publication traces more than three decades of Fiona's drawing, painting and collage practice, celebrating her distinctive visual language of pattern, repetition, colour, text and delicate compositional forms.

Created alongside a survey exhibition at APA, the book brings national and international attention to Fiona's enduring contribution to the studio and affirms the importance of long-term, artist-led practice within the contemporary arts sector.



TOP RIGHT: Georgia Szmerling *Reflection of Pond with Nature 2026*, acrylic on canvas
RIGHT: Fiona Longhurst publication
LEFT: Anthony Romagnano *Fiona in the Studio 2026*, acrylic on canvas



Public Programs

Selected APA Gallery Public Programs

- Hard Rubbish Day – An urban landscape workshop:** with Paul Hodges and Margaret McIntosh (for *Landscape: A different view*, July 2025)
- Body Pieces – Embroidered poetic text:** with Bronwyn Hack, Mark Smith, Jodie Kipps and Peter Douglas (for *Embodied: Limitless 2025 Commission Series*, August 2025)
- Lamination Station – Company collage workshop:** with Adrian Lazzaro and Debris Facility (for *Stop Work*, November 2025)
- Rats & Barbells – Soft sculpture vermin or workout gear:** with Chris O’Brien, Terry Williams & Joanna Anderson, Nic Megchelse (for *Houses, Spouses, Crises and Chrises*, March 2026)
- Cup, Clock, Clover – Grids, colour, collage and text:** with Fiona Longhurst, Anna Finlayson and Kate Knight (for *5 7 3 Float Fall Petals 10 Trees*, June 2026)

Selected External Public Programs

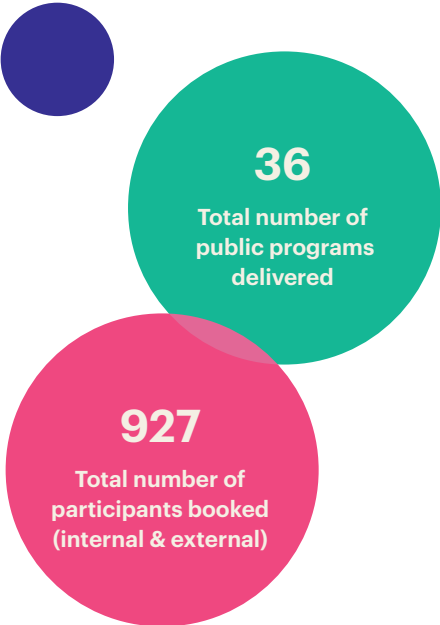
Melbourne Art Fair 2026: Open Studio Booth

- Rats & Barbells – Soft sculpture vermin or workout gear:** with Chris O’Brien, Terry Williams, Nic Megchelse, and Amy Parker
- People Painting People – Gouache portraits of each other:** with Amani Tia and Rob McHaffie
- Pussycat Patches – Fun-sized feline embroidery:** with Joanne Nethercote and Carolyn Hawkins
- Big Beautiful Still Lives – Still life meets life drawing:** with Chris Mason, Rakhi James, Oscar Donati, Christian Semertzidis, and Marcel Cooper

Other External Public Programs

- Magnetic Imaginations – Contemporary ceramics in supported studios:** with Lisa Reid, Michael Camakaris, Mark Smith, Marcel Cooper (for WEDGE: Australian Ceramics Triennale, Fremantle, October 2025)
- Through the Square Box – Screening and artist talk:** with Aidan Sefo, Lesley Pinder (for Composite Moving Image Agency & Media Bank, October 2025)
- Make a Mini ATW – Soft sculpture workshop:** with Chris O’Brien, Jodie Kipps and James McDonald (for Australian Tapestry Workshop, March 2026)
- In Conversation:** with Mark Smith and Anthony Fitzpatrick (for *Intimate Imaginaries* NETS Tour, Pinnacles Gallery, Townsville, June 2026)
- Possible Milestones – Embroidered poetic text:** with Mark Smith & Marcel Cooper (for *Intimate Imaginaries* NETS Tour, Pinnacles Gallery, Townsville, June 2026)

RIGHT: Various workshops held at APA Collingwood Yards Gallery



Studio Open Day

Sunday 14 September 2025

This free one-day event was an opportunity for visitors to explore and experience a packed program of artist-led drop-in workshops, talks, roaming performances, art and merch sales, zine stalls, and live music. Highlights included a studio exhibition, zines and storytelling by Daniel Pace, costume life drawing with Bronwyn Hack, live portraits by Amani Tia, music from PARSNIP, and the return of the iconic Retribution Teddy Bears workshop hosted by Adrian Lazzaro.

Full program:

Story Time – Daniel Pace and Marcel Cooper

MC TD – Roaming announcements, with Tycho Dahlstrom

Plein Air Portraits – Amani Tia

Costume Life Drawing: Bronwyn Hack Bodysuit Edition – Bronwyn Hack, Christian Semertzidis and Paul Hodges

Magnetic Imaginations: Contemporary ceramics in supported studios – Lisa Reid, Michael Camakaris, Mark Smith and Marcel Cooper

Retribution Teddy Bears: Revamp a soft toy – Adrian Lazzaro, Matthew Gove, Monica Lazzari and Kerrie Neilen

Fan Factor: Fan art workshop – James Dawes, Rakhi James, Andrew Nicolaides and Carolyn Hawkins

DJ Oxygen – Oscar Donati

BLEOW / RIGHT: Studio Open Day 2025





“Arts Project Australia has definitely fuelled my passion for art and greatly assisted me in my life as a professional artist. They’ve provided the studio, the space, and the platform enabling me to shine”
— Mark Smith, APA Artist

From the studio

Artist Advisory Committee

In February we established the Artist Advisory Committee (AAC) and held its first official meeting, marking an important milestone in strengthening artist advocacy at APA and formally embedding the committee within the organisations governance framework.

The creation of the AAC reflects our commitment to ensuring artists are a part of organisational decision-making and recognising artists as leaders within the APA community. By creating a dedicated forum for artists to share their lived experience, insights and perspectives, the committee will help inform the future direction of APA.

Professional Development Opportunities

Professional development creates meaningful opportunities for artists to build skills, expand networks and engage with the broader contemporary arts sector. This year, artists gained experience through exhibitions, workshops, judging roles, curatorial projects and studio traineeships.

Artists from the Zine Program installed work in the windows of Melbourne’s Sticky Institute, presenting a two-month display to new audiences.

Adrian Lazzaro also reprised his popular *Retribution Teddy Bears* workshop at the Healesville Zine and Comic Festival, inviting students to transform teddy bears into imaginative characters while exploring storytelling, creativity and self-expression.

For the third consecutive year, Scope invited an APA representative to judge its annual Kaleidoscope exhibition, with Mark Smith selecting award recipients from a strong field of work.

In the Northcote Project Space, artists continued to co-curate exhibitions and develop skills beyond their own practice, including shaping themes, selecting and installing artworks, writing opening speeches and creating accessible audience resources.

Joey Balliro completed a Studio Traineeship, supporting studio operations and delivering a new exhibition for the Northcote Project Space with mentorship from APA Staff Artists.



TOP: Suzie Brown, Rebecca Carr and Alannah Dodd at the opening of *So Fresh 2026*
BOTTOM: Hon. Ged Kearney MP visiting the APA studio



Guest Residency Program

In March 2026 we were pleased to launch the APA Guest Residency Program, supported by a two year grant from The Ian Potter Foundation.

Open to artists and curators who live in Victoria, the Guest Residency Program offers three paid creative residencies in 2026:

- Guest artist-in-residence 1 (June to November 2026)
- Guest artist-in-residence 2 (November 2026 to May 2027)
- Guest curator-in-residence August 2026 to August 2027)

Each guest artist-in-residence is provided with a fee of \$15,000 for the 6-month residency.

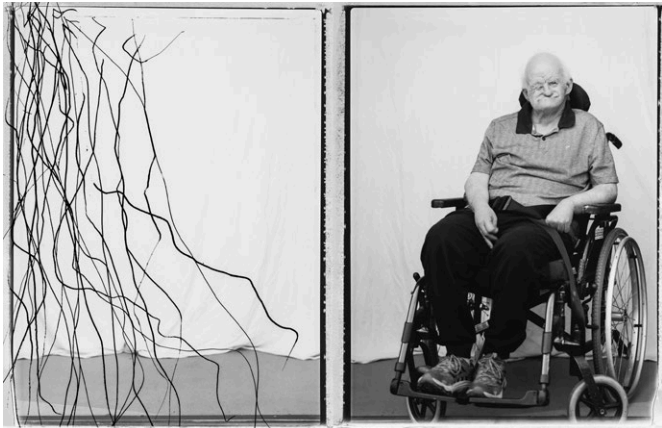
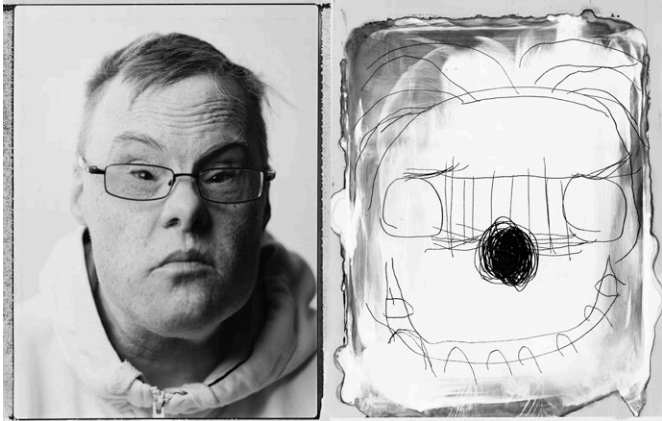
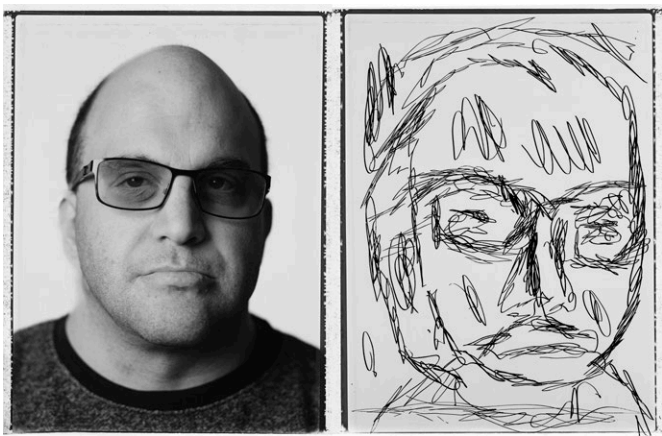
The guest curator-in-residence is provided with a fee of \$30,000 for the 12-month residency.

The APA Guest Residency Program offers an inspiring environment for guest artists and curators to engage in creative dialogue with APA artists. While APA regularly collaborates with curators, artists and designers, this residency program is the first time we have created space within our studio for prolonged creative exchange. The goals of this program are:

- To deepen the engagement between APA artists and their peers in the art sector
- To foster creative excellence and quality art-making in the studio.

The selection panel, made up of APA artists, staff, and independent assessors, reviewed a strong and highly competitive field of over 100 applications from artists and curators working across a wide range of disciplines. In May 2026 we announced our inaugural guest artists in residence – sam george (commencing June 2026), and creative partners Nur Aishah Kenton and Sean Davey (commencing November 2026), and our inaugural guest curator in residence André Shannon (commencing August 2026).

TOP TO BOTTOM: André Shannon, Nur Aishah Kenton and Sean Davey, sam george



Innovation in practice

This year, APA artists pushed their practices into exciting new territory, taking on ambitious commissions, deeper sector collaborations and experimental projects that expanded the scale, visibility and direction of their work.

Bronwyn Hack and Mark Smith were announced as APA's inaugural *Limitless Commission Series* artists, a new initiative designed to empower artists at a turning point in their careers to extend their practice, test new ideas and work at a larger scale. Supported by specialist Staff Artist Jodie Kipps and the Extended Practice team, the project has prompted a significant shift for both artists, who are now exploring larger, more ambitious modes of making. For Bronwyn, this new direction has also led directly to major new commissions.

Building on their growing profiles in Melbourne's contemporary art community, Miles Howard-Wilks and Anthony Romagnano were invited by internationally renowned curator Chus Martínez and the Potter Museum of Art to create new work for *A velvet ant, a flower and a bird*. The commission marked significant recognition of their practices and strengthened their presence within the broader contemporary art landscape.

Photographer Tobias Titz continued his collaboration with APA artists, expanding the project to 35 portraits. Using a long-exposure concertina Polaroid camera, Tobias creates silvertone portraits that are paired with etched photographic responses made by each artist, creating a unique exchange between photographer and participant.

The project has been enthusiastically embraced by participating artists and will culminate in a new publication featuring a selection of portraits and accompanying works, to be released by Light of Day Books in late 2026.

TOP TO BOTTOM: Adrian Lazarro, Shoshanna Brott, Brendan Slee, Ross O'Meara collaborations with Tobias Titz

From the studio

Residencies and mentorships

Through major residencies and sustained mentorships, APA artists deepened their practices, forged new professional relationships and created ambitious new work for leading contemporary art contexts.

Jordan Dymke participated in APA's inaugural mentorship program in partnership with Gertrude Contemporary, and generously supported by APA Life Member Michael Schwarz. Working with Gertrude studio artist Francis Carmody through regular studio visits, research and creative exchange, Jordan developed his practice while shaping a solo exhibition at Gertrude Glasshouse. The exhibition marked a significant milestone in his career and demonstrated the value of sustained artistic mentorship.

Chris O'Brien undertook two major residency opportunities that extended his textile and installation practice. At *Cementa Arts Festival* in Kandos, NSW, he explored the town's distinctive architecture before creating a quilt inspired by its buildings and streetscape, to be exhibited at the 2026 festival.

He also returned to the Australian Tapestry Workshop for a second residency, nearly a decade after becoming the first APA artist to join its Artist in Residence program. As part of the Workshop's 50th anniversary celebrations, Chris developed new work, curated an exhibition of APA textile and fabric-based artists, and led a public soft sculpture workshop inspired by the Workshop's historic façade.



TOP: Jordan Dymke *Who Am I*, BOTTOM: Chris O'Brien at ATW

Workshops and field trips

Workshops and field trips support artists to build skills, explore new ideas and extend their creative practice.

Field trips reflected artists' interests and provided inspiration through visits to exhibitions such as *French Impressionism* at the NGV and *A Garden is a Mother* at Heide Museum of Modern Art, featuring APA Staff Artist Grace Wood.

APA's professional practice collective the Northcote Penguins continued to build their skills through gallery visits, critical discussions and creative exchange. As part of an ongoing three-year partnership with VCASS, the Penguins also presented a talk and workshop for students, while reciprocal studio and campus visits created opportunities for shared learning and artistic exchange.

External artist-led workshops further expanded our studio program, giving artists access to new techniques, materials and professional perspectives. In some instances the workshops were held onsite at the studio or the APA gallery, while others were delivered offsite at the artists studios.

Workshops delivered at APA:

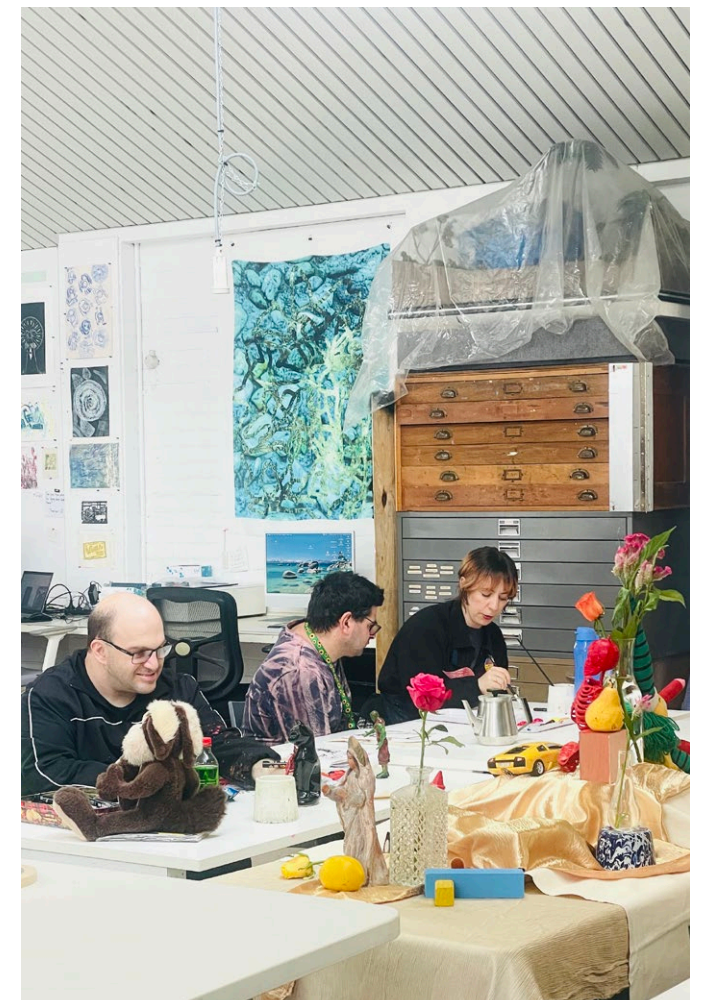
- Melissa Grisancich – painting contemporary still life
- Mark Dober – large-scale drawing workshop
- Elizabeth Hickey – etching workshop exploring line, texture and print processes.
- Louise Meuwissen Smith – textiles workshop

Workshops delivered offsite:

- Troppo Print Studio – introduction to layered image-making and editioning processes
- Brunswick Darkroom – expanded analogue photography techniques.
- Blender Creatives – stencil workshop
- Kiron Robinson – introduction to neon artwork
- Paul Borg – portrait workshop

These opportunities are important not only for extending artists' skills and confidence, but also for creating meaningful connections with peers and practitioners across the broader arts community.

TOP: Field Trip to Grace Wood *A Garden is a Mother*, Heide Museum of Modern art, BOTTOM: Melissa Grisancich workshop



Fundraising & Philanthropy

APA Foundation

Over the past 12 months, the APA Foundation, led by Chair Virginia Lovett, has played a vital role in strengthening APA's fundraising and development activities. Individual giving increased significantly, rising from \$104,000 in 2024/25 to \$145,000 in 2025/26, reflecting growing philanthropic support for APA's vision. In June 2025, we also launched the APA Director's Circle to recognise and encourage leadership gifts of \$5,000 or more, helping to build a strong community of committed supporters and a sustainable foundation for future growth.

APA Creatives

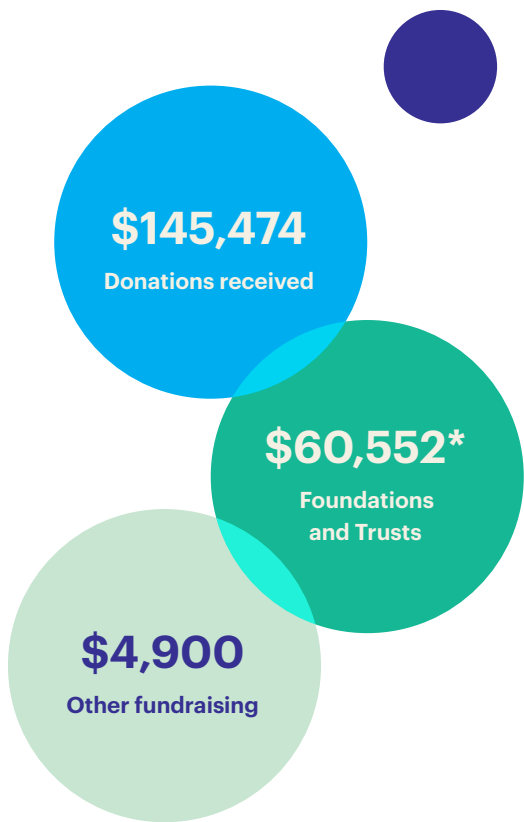
We are deeply appreciative of the support received from our generous board and committee members, ex-board members, volunteers, studio families and collectors, many of whom give annually through the APA Creatives program. Throughout the year, APA Creatives donors came together at exhibition openings and exclusive events, including a lunch and talk by Charlotte Day for *A velvet ant, a flower and a bird* at The Potter Museum of Art, and a special preview of *A Current Affair*, featuring a dramatic reading by artist Tycho Dahlstrom ahead of the exhibition opening. These experiences strengthen connections between our supporters, artists and program, fostering a vibrant and engaged philanthropic community.

Foundations and Trusts

In 2025, APA secured a \$177,000 multi-year grant from The Ian Potter Foundation to establish a new Guest Artist and Curator in Residence Program (2026–2028). Advertised in early 2026, the program attracted more than 100 applications for three residencies commencing in June, August and November. We also renewed our valued partnership with the Bowness Family Foundation, securing a further three years of funding at \$30,000 annually to support studio and gallery programs that advance the careers of APA artists. In addition, we received a \$25,000 grant from the Joe White Bequest towards the installation of our new lift, and \$5,000 from the Robert Salzer Foundation to support our exhibition program. These investments strengthen APA's capacity to deliver high-quality artistic and professional development opportunities.

*Note: while we received an \$88,871 grant from The Ian Potter Foundation, we journaled \$81,000 of it to 2026-27 as this is when the residency program expenses will occur.

RIGHT: APA creatives *A Current Affair* preview event





Brand Collaborations

Brand collaborations play an important role in creating new opportunities for APA artists, connecting their work with new audiences beyond the gallery and studio. By partnering with those whose products, style and ethos align with our own, APA creates meaningful collaborations that champion the artists' perspectives while demonstrating the value of inclusive creative practice in everyday life.

Food For Everyone

Arts Project Australia continued its creative partnership with Food For Everyone in 2025-2026 through *Postcards From Europe*. The collaboration featured new works by APA artists Christian Semertzidis and Simon Paredes, whose distinctive artistic perspectives transformed familiar European icons into vibrant contemporary designs.

Christian Semertzidis' *Parisian Café* captured the charm and energy of the streets of Paris, while Simon Paredes' graphic interpretations of artisanal French butter and the iconic Italian Moka Pot brought wit and simplicity to everyday objects.

GUP

This collaboration saw new local fashion house GUP partner with APA artist Steven Ajzenberg on a series of limited-edition long sleeve shirts and silk scarves featuring his artwork *What a Show Off, Mine's Better Than Yours* (2018).

WAH-WAH

Launching in April, APA partnered with renowned Australian independent knitwear label WAH-WAH to bring original artwork by Adrian Lazzaro to life on a 100% merino wool jumper. The collaboration saw Adrian connecting with local musician Cong Josie. Cong visited the studio for portrait sittings and drawing sessions with Adrian, before designer Kaylene Milner put it through the WAH-WAH lens to create a truly unique design.

TOP: Food For Everyone posters, BOTTOM, Steven Ajzenberg for GUP
RIGHT: Cong Josie and Adrian Lazzaro for WAH-WAH





Media Report

110,150
Website visitation
sessions

38,433
Total social
media followers

4,616
Newsletter
subscribers

Print and online media

ABC News
Architecture and Design
ArtsHub
Journal of Australian Ceramics
The Age
The Design Files
Vault Magazine
White Hot Magazine

Radio

ABC Melbourne
Radio National
Triple R
Vision Australia

Selected media coverage

Art Guide (September 2025), *Life Sized*, by Giselle Au-Nhien Nguyen

Vault Magazine (September 2025), *Embodied: Expanding the Boundaries of Contemporary Art*, by Jaime Blakeney

ArtsHub (June 2026), *An intimate exploration of artists from Arts Project Australia is now touring nationally*, by Jessica White

The Design Files (June 2026), *12 Incredible Artists to Shop from Arts Project Australia*, by Chrtistina Karras

Anthony Romagnano *Radio Times 2 2024*, colour pencil on paper

Abigail Michell
Adrian Lazzaro
Aidan Sefo
Alan Constable
Alanna Dodd
Alessandra DiMattina
Alessia Cursio
Alvaro Alvarez
Amani Tia
Amy Anderson-Fitt
Andrew Ledwidge
Andrew Nicolaides
Anna Dehm
Anne Lynch
Anthony Romagnano
Ashlee Cochrane
Barbara Gibbs
Benjamin Chan
Benjamin Russell
Boris Cipusev
Brendan Slee
Brigid Hanrahan
Bronwyn Hack
Cathy Staughton
Chris Mason
Chris O'Brien
Christian Farinacci
Christian Hansen
Christian Semertzidis
Christine Rule
Daniel Pace
Daniel Richardson
Danny Lyons
Darcy Scott
David Mendelsohn
Dennis Thorpe
Diego Pizarro

Doreen Youlten
Eden Menta
Edie Mackenzie
Elizabeth Dunkley
Emily Dober
Eugene Ang
Ezekiel Beckley
Fiona Longhurst
Fulli Andrinopoulos
Gavin Porter
George Aristovoulou
Georgia Szmerling
Giovanni Garreffa
Hao Yang Xing
Heidi Beard
Henry Deakin
Iain Gordon
Ian Gold
Jake Tynan
Jacob Cartelli
Jade McAlear
Jade Tomsic
Jakob Demirel
James Dawes
James MacSporran
Jasmin Kolodziejczyk
Jenny Ngo
Jessica Ebert
Jimmy Tran
Jodie Noble
Joanne Nethercote
Joey Balliro
Jordan Dymke
Josef Power
Julian Martin
Kalkidan Sisay
Kate Knight



TOP: Fiona Longhurst
BOTTOM: Alessandra DiMattina and Rakhi James

Katherine Foster
Keely (Kaymay) Hallas
Keith McDonald
Kitty Yan Yiu
Lindsay Sutherland
Lisa Reid
Loretta Lynch
Lygin Ang
Malcolm Sturrock
Mark Glasby
Mark Patterson
Mark Smith
Martin Forster
Martin Klose
Matthew Gove
Matthew Lam
Max Cheevers
Maxwell Sbisa
Michael Camakaris
Michael Keen
Michael Trasancos
Michelangelo Condo
Michelle Destefano
Miles Howard-Wilks
Molica Silk
Monica Burns
Monica Lazzari
Nabilah Mekawy
Nhan Nguyen
Nicholas Capaldo
Nouha Hamra
Oscar Donati
Patrick Mallard
Paul Hodges
Paul Quick
Peter Ben
Philip Truett

Rakhi James
Rebecca Scibilia
Robert Brown
Robyn Doherty
Rosie O'Brien
Ross O'Meara
Ruth Howard
Salome Felsinger
Sam Forster
Sam Hocksena
Samantha Ashdown
Samraing Chea
Samuele Fenech
Scott Ferguson
Scott Maxwell
Scott Sortino
Shoshanna Brott
Simon Cowie
Simon Madaffari
Simon Paredes
Sophie Kimball
Spenser Coombe
Steven Ajzenberg
Steven Perrette
Sula Gjomakaj
Terry Williams
Thomas Iacono
Timothy Noble
Tom McNaughto
Toufic Hamra
Trudi Coburn,
Tycho Dahlstrom
Valerio Ciccone
Warren O'Brien
Wendy Dawson
Will McConnell
William Murray
Zara Condemi



TOP: Kate Knight and Mark Smith
BOTTOM: Sarah Lamanna and Chris O'Brien

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Staff Artist

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Grace Marlow
Staff Artist

Grace Wood
Staff Artist

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Studio Support Worker

Isabella Eiszele
Staff Artist

Jack Cannon
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Staff Artist, Extended Practice Specialist

Joey Balliro
Trainee

Kate McHugh
Studio Support Worker

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Keiran Butler
Staff Artist, Digital Specialist

Lesley Pinder
Staff Artist, Digital Specialist

Madeleine Griffith
Staff Artist

Marcel Cooper
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Nic Megchelse
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Ollie Patterson
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Staff Artist, Digital Specialist

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Ruby Cooley
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Suzie Brown
Staff Artist

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Nadia Bearzatto
Wesley Kim
Yu-Chi (Doris) Huang

Internships and work experience

Anna Finlayson (Key Institute)
Katherine Maher (Miecat)

Alan Constable *Untitled*
2024, glaze on ceramic



Financial highlights

Profit & Loss

Statement of surplus of deficit for the year ended 30/6/2026

	2025/26 (\$000)	2024/25 (\$000)
Income		
Government	282	158
Artist Fees	3,067	3008
Gallery sales and other income	360	392
Other Income	82	149
Total Income	3,791	3707
Expenses		
Staff and related	2,599	2526
Gallery	294	342
Depreciation	112	96
Other	793	908
Total Expenses	3,797	3873
Surplus for the year	-6	-166
Foundation		
Foundation Income	212	273
Foundation Expenses	101	110
Foundation Surplus for the year	111	163
Other comprehensive income		
Net fair value movements in FVOCI investments	-29	
Total comprehensive income for the year	76	-3



A copy of our full audited financial accounts is available from our website artsproject.org.au

Balance Sheet

Statement of financial position as at 30/6/2026

	2025/26 (\$000)	2024/25 (\$000)
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	464	683
Trade and other receivables CA	478	335
Financial assets	753	1436
Other Assets	-86	31
Total current assets	1,608	2485
Non-current assets		
Trade and other receivables NCA	22	22
Right of use asset	50	63
Financial assets NC	995	
Property, plant and equipment	1750	1808
Total non-current assets	2,816	1893
Total Assets	4,424	4378
Current Liabilities		
Trade creditors and other payables	150	181
Employee benefits CL	331	368
Deferred income	224	183
Lease Liability Current	28	28
Total current liabilities	733	759
Non-current Liabilities		
Employee benefits NCL	36	25
Other liabilities	27	50
Total non-current liabilities	64	75
Total Liabilities	797	834
Net assets	3627	834
Funds		
Foundation Reserve	827	827
Retained Earnings	2822	2717
Investment Revaluation Reserve	-29	
Total Funds	3620	3544

Thank you

Thank you to all of our donors for building a more inclusive art world!

APA CREATIVES

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and Major Gifts

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Ray Bowler
Richard Evans
Robyn Aitken
Seb Brown
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Stephen Nethercote

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RIGHT: Georgia Szmeling
Untitled 2026, glaze on ceramic



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