

**studioA**

**Annual  
Report  
2023/2024**





Catherine McGuiness,  
*Night Blossom* installation view,  
Mosman Art Gallery, 2024.  
Photo by Jacquie Manning  
courtesy of Mosman Art Gallery.

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# Our Mission

"To professionally empower artists with intellectual disability and ensure their voices are heard within contemporary Australian culture."



# The Team



Studio A artist and staff at the Sydney Opera House. Photo by Joy Screen courtesy of the Sydney Opera House.

## Studio A Staff

- **Gabrielle Mordy**  
CEO/Artistic Director
- **Emma Johnston**  
Principal Artist
- **Lise Anderson**  
Collection and Sales Coordinator
- **Tim Bell**  
Archivist and Gallery Assistant
- **Tanja Bruckner**  
Artist Facilitator
- **Clare Choi**  
Artist Facilitator
- **Emilio Cresciani**  
Artist Facilitator
- **Katrina Dunn-Jones**  
Projects and Administrations Coordinator
- **Lily Elrich**  
Artist Facilitator
- **Karla Hansen**  
Marketing and Communications Manager

- **Yesmin Hassarati**  
Artist Facilitator
- **Christopher Haysom**  
Digital Solutions Manager
- **Pernille Jack**  
Operations Manager
- **Sam Kalis**  
Administration Assistant
- **Kathie Najar**  
Artist Facilitator
- **Cassilda Parkinson**  
Artist Facilitator
- **Shan Turner-Carroll**  
Artist Facilitator



## Studio A Artists



Victoria Atkinson



Katrina Brennan



Mathew Calandra



Emily Crockford



Guy Fredericks



Annette Galstaun



Lauren Kerjan



Daniel Kim



Jaycee Kim



Adam Mandarano



Catherine McGuinness



Meagan Pelham



Thom Roberts



Skye Saxon



Damian Showyin



Greg Sindel



Lisa Tindall

## Guest Artists

- Ellen Bagge
- Tanja Bruckner
- Rosie Deacon
- Paula do Prado
- Aimee Frodsham
- Brooke McEachern
- Helen Macnair
- Shan Turner-Carroll
- Chloe Watfern
- Simon Wheeldon

Artist portraits by Scott Heldorf.

# Message from the CEO

A three eyed anthropomorphic character explains to an alien why legal contracts are important for artists. This is one of my favourite moments from FY24.

The scene is the creation of Studio A artist Greg Sindel, part of his Artists Rights project. Made in partnership with The Arts Law Centre of Australia and UTS, Greg was commissioned to create a graphic story and animation to make artists' legal rights more accessible. It is important work and Greg was the man for the job.

Greg typically draws superhero characters - through this project he became one himself! Using his quirky humour and imaginative power Greg transformed complex and serious content into snappy reels making legal information funny and engaging. Greg's graphics are the national guide bringing important artist rights information to artists across Australia.

I tell this story as I feel it captures something essential about Studio A. We find pathways for our artists' unique artistic talent to be optimised in ways that are beneficial to both the artist and the community. In this case, Greg got to flex his storytelling muscles. He worked with new creatives, he got paid, his work reached a national audience and now Australia has a new resource designed to empower all artists. This Annual Report is filled with countless examples of this dynamic in action. Artists with intellectual disability are empowered and everybody wins.

This winning dynamic is made possible first and foremost by the strength of Studio A artists' talent. But working tirelessly behind the scenes is a network of dedicated staff and volunteers who play a key role in all we achieve. I would like to particularly thank my Co-founder and Studio A's Principal Artist Emma Johnston. Her mix of artistic skill and sensitivity enables her to powerfully foster the individual creativity of a diverse range of artists.

Our Board of Directors are expert professionals who volunteer their time to ensure Studio A remains focused on our strategic objectives with best practice governance.

I would like to personally thank each Director for their dedication and particularly thank our tireless and ever-wise Chair, John McCabe.

Studio A's achievements are created by our donors, supporters, fans, families and a national community that embraces and celebrates diverse voices. The report is a testament to the success an effective community can foster.

**Gabrielle Mordy**  
CEO / Artistic Director Studio A



Greg Sindel, Thom Roberts and Gabrielle Mordy presenting at the Studio A new building party, 2024. Photo by Emilio Cresciani.

# Message from the Chair

Reflecting on 2024, I am constantly amazed by the boundless energy and the continued success of our artists, and I am humbled by the unwavering support of the Studio A team of professionals and the families and carers who support them in so many ways.

In spite of the disruption caused by the move to our fantastic new premises in St Leonards in September 2023, our Studio A artists have achieved remarkable success. They were featured in more than 17 public exhibitions and fulfilled 26 private and public commissions for corporations, government departments, galleries, museums and more. Many artists were finalists or shortlisted for major prizes and awards; 4 were finalists in the prestigious Archibald Prize (Emily Crockford, Thom Roberts, Meagan Pelham and Daniel Kim), with Thom also a finalist in the Sulman Prize. It is truly an impressive list.

As we reflect on the success that our artists have earned during the year, we must remind ourselves that central to all of this activity is community. While it is a goal of the artists that through their success, they not only earn money from their talent, equally important is that they earn the admiration and respect of the community in which they live and work. Studio A's success is the outcome of a whole community. It is fostered through love and support from friends, family, professional services, donors and more, with their artistic achievements only widening the community network that Studio A artists feel safe with and connected to.

As mentioned in the 2023 annual report, 2024 saw a large change in the board composition after many years of dedicated and loyal service from

Shane Simpson AM, Steve Badgery, Barbara Ward and Kim Spinks. While no longer on the board, all continue to offer advice and assistance whenever asked and I am truly grateful to have been given this opportunity to work with a group of outstanding people. To our artists, their wonderful support team, the board, and all our generous supporters, thank you.

**John McCabe**  
Studio A Chair



Mary McGuinness, Catherine McGuinness and John McCabe at the Studio A new building party, 2024. Photo by Emilio Cresciani.

# Message from an Artist

*“My favourite art experience this year was being part of the Sydney Biennale.”*

— Adam Mandarano

This annual report debuts a new segment, a yearly recap in the words of a Studio A artist. Kicking off this tradition is textile artist Adam Mandarano, whose masterful weaving has been showcased in esteemed makers' markets and commissioned by fashion label Romance Was Born. Adam reflects on his highlights for the year and shares the joy he finds working as an artist alongside his friends. We thank Adam for so generously sharing his insights in this inaugural contribution

Me and Damian were weaving and Skye was dressing up. People came in and saw our work and had a go with the weaving. They used our wool and our ribbons. Our wool was everywhere, on the ceiling and hanging down. There was loud and soft music playing.

Everybody was there. Little kids, grown ups, artists and people I did not know. All having a look at my work. And having a go. Making art like me. Crowds of people. Meagan Pelham was there doing her 'love box' artwork.

I like coming to Studio A because people hear what I have to say. I get money, I get paid and I can say 'Can I get help with my art work, with my making and weaving.'

At Studio A I get talked to about what I want to make. Staff help me to be able to make by getting me the right colours and good product. Weaving is my thing. I like making a lot of stuff. I tell my Mum everytime I sell work. I feel excited and shocked when I sell something. Proud of myself.

I like coming to Studio A and seeing all the people. We talk and see other people's art, showing my work to others. I see my friends I have known for a long time.

I am proud of other artists like Skye. I like when she shares her magical tarot. Seeing Kristel Saxon making work with clay. And Meagan making her owls. I love all the artwork other Studio A artists make.

**Adam Mandarano**  
Studio A Artist



Adam Mandarano portrait by Scott Heldorf.



Damian Showyin and Clare Choi at the Biennale of Sydney, White Bay Power Station, 2024. Photo by Jacquie Manning.

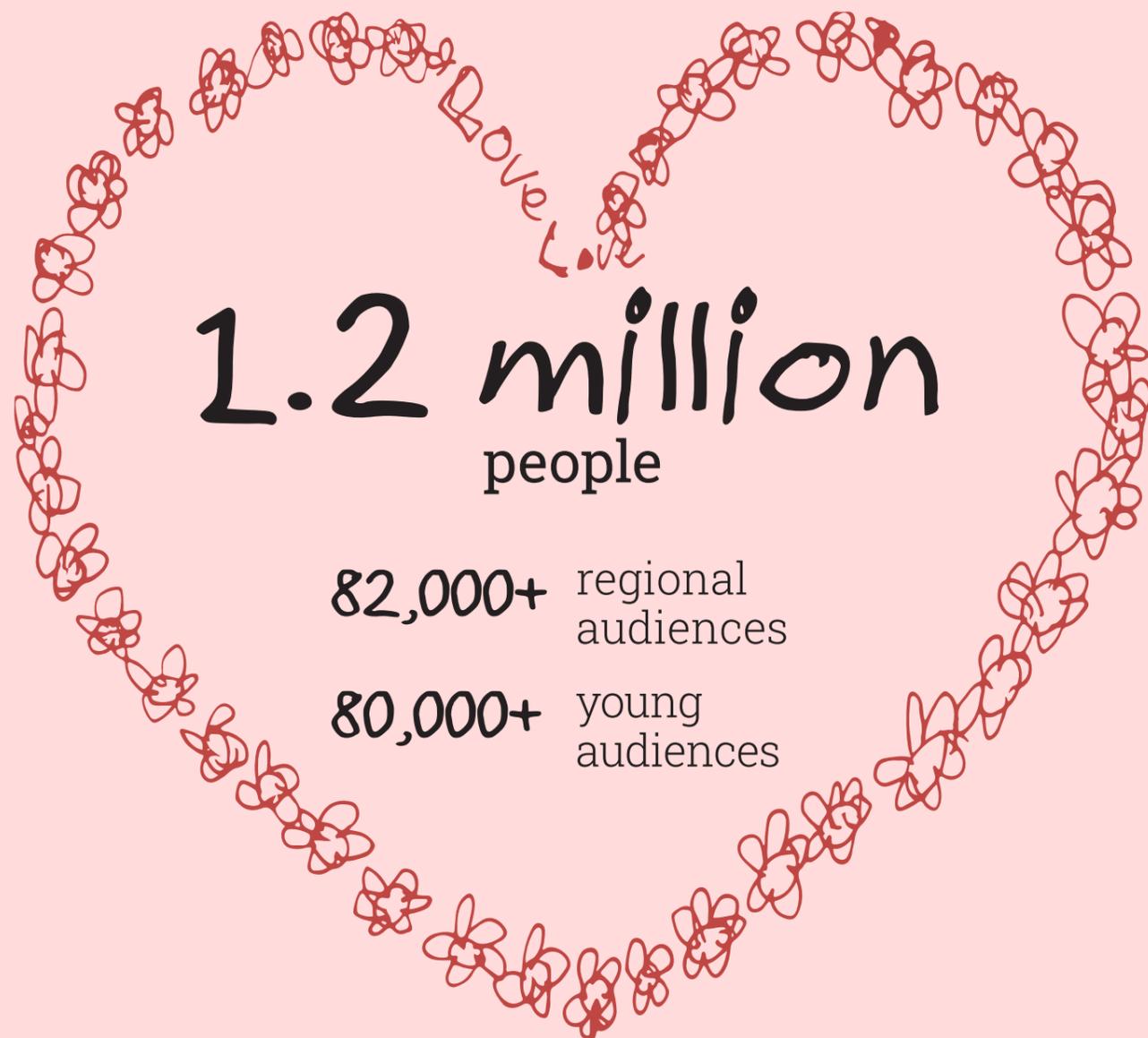
**“I’m always going to be an artist, artist is in my future. I’ll never give up! I love being an artist.”**

— Meagan Pelham  
Studio A Artist

# Impact Statement FY24

Studio A bravely traversed new ground, tackling ambitious projects and reaching audiences Australia wide.

## Audience reach of over



**100%** of artists identify as professional and earn income from their art

## studio A

52 exhibitions featured Studio A artwork

4 solo artist exhibitions

14 public programs

30 unique artwork licenses sold

90% increase in artist income from commissions

2x demand for artwork leasing **doubled**

*“I am Emily Crockford. I am a professional artist at Studio A. I always wanted to be an artist. **I love it so much.**”*



Meagan Pelham performing at the Biennale of Sydney, White Bay Power Station, 2024. Photo courtesy Jacquie Manning.

# Our Supporters

Catherine McGuinness and audience member at the Biennale of Sydney, White Bay Power Station, 2024. Photo by Jacquie Manning.



We would like to express our sincere appreciation to our amazing community, which includes our all-important donors, funders, and volunteers. Their generous contributions of time and resources enable us to fulfil our mission, supporting our artists to create exceptional art and achieve professional excellence in their fields.

Every person within the Studio A community plays a part in keeping our studio functional and thriving. Thanks to you, our artists create in a studio space equipped with high-quality art materials and are supported with professional development, empowering mentorship, and career management.

We hope that by reading our FY23/24 Annual Report, you can explore the scope of how all your collective efforts and contributions culminate. This year, the support shown for our annual program has seen our artists continue to earn income from their creative services, be included in large-scale exhibitions, prestigious collections and prizes, and make important commissions and partnerships happen.

Thank you for being a part of our ever-evolving journey and continuing to make our artists' dreams possible. Every action of support you make has a tangible impact, and we are so grateful for every single one.

## Studio A is proudly supported by



# Donors

- Liberty Speciality Markets
- Incognito Art Show
- The Jace Foundation
- Turner Freeman Lawyers
- Anita & Luca Belgiorno-Nettis Foundation
- Hireup
- Simpson-Michel Foundation
- Callan McNamara
- Annette Pittman
- Pop It Up Art
- Daryl Dixon
- John McCabe
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- Sandra Ferman
- Steve Badgery & James Hayes
- Mira Joksovic
- Tim de Mestre
- Kim Spinks
- Lindsay Clement-Meehan
- Nick Johnston
- Robbie & Alex Macintosh
- Roger Sebel
- Taryn & Andrew Boyarsky
- Anthony Halas
- Lindsay & Celeste Showyin
- Tim Gerrard
- David Solsky
- Michelle Fischl
- Daniel & Yve Wise
- Danielle Palan
- Jenny Gould
- Frankie Lewis
- Heather Spencer
- John Cheeseman
- Carrie Kibbler
- Miri Sonnabend
- Tom Curtis
- Alex Mendel
- Alexandra Mitchell
- Dannielle Taibel
- Joann See
- Natalie Simmons
- Darren & Natalie Topper
- Steven & Jodi Sher
- Marnie Perlstein
- Larry Kalish
- Annie Tennant
- Stanley Hurwitz
- Annie Russell
- Donna Wang
- Euan Carlisle
- Fernando Tiglio
- Gabrielle Mordy
- Gillian Corban
- John Haysom
- Leila Aron
- Loretta & Phil Bingemann
- Philippe Dancak
- Cate Dening
- Alon Mizrachi
- Jess Mayers
- Mary Moss
- Stephen Richardson
- Victor Cory Burak
- Wadih Hanna
- Alice Holland
- Anne Muller
- Clare E Choi
- Jena Ye
- Leslie Martin
- Sam Hemphill
- Sarah Oakes
- Stefania Mua
- Mathew Patoulios
- Jan Knight
- Magdalena Guevarra
- Trevor Parmenter
- Katie Walton
- Ken Fletcher
- Margaret De Le Motte
- Paul Collis
- Matt Devine
- Dean Duckworth
- Mary Wyburn
- Sue Mordy
- Declan Keenan
- Mark Haggith
- Lin Stanton



## Volunteers & Interns

- Catherine Haysom
- Sam Kalis
- Cheuk (Zoe) Wong
- Katie Harvey
- Louise Nade
- Liz Mclean
- Lauren Barlow
- Rachel Zhu
- Kathie Najar
- Liberty Specialty Markets team
- Westpac team

Emily Crockford, *Singing with my selfie at the top of the world with my imagination*, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 150 x 120 cm



“The audience is taken through a space you self navigate, where you are invited to find your own points of interest, moments of meditation and immerse yourself in his dynamic world.”

— Shan Turner-Carroll

Damian Showyin, *Suede Blue* installation view, Mosman Art Gallery, 2024.  
Photo by Jacquie Manning courtesy of Mosman Art Gallery.

- **The Archibald and Sulman Prize 2024**

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Jun 24  
Emily Crockford, Daniel Kim,  
Meagan Pelham, Thom Roberts

- **Flirty Fashion Fancy Romance Runway**

Cement Fondu, Jun 24  
Meagan Pelham, solo show

- **Night Blossom**

Mosman Art Gallery, May 24  
Catherine McGuinness, solo show

- **Suede Blue**

Mosman Art Gallery, May 24  
Damian Showyin, solo show

- **Make Dreams Come True**

Biennale of Sydney,  
White Bay Power Station, Apr 24  
Victoria Atkinson, Adam Mandarano,  
Catherine McGuinness, Meagan Pelham,  
Skye Saxon, Damian Showyin

- **Bleeding Hearts and Morning Glory**

Manly Art Gallery & Museum, Mar 24  
Guy Fredericks and Chloe Watfern, solo show

- **Future Dreaming**

Randwick Town Hall, Feb 24  
Victoria Atkinson, group show

- **Infinite Landscapes**

KPMG Sydney, Dec 23  
Mathew Calandra, Emily Crockford, Meagan  
Pelham, Thom Roberts, Damian Showyin,  
group show

- **A Woven Together Wonderland**

Working Dog Gallery, Dec 23  
Victoria Atkinson, Katrina Brennan,  
Emily Crockford, Annette Galstaun, Adam  
Mandarano, Catherine McGuinness, Meagan  
Pelham, Thom Roberts, Damian Showyin

- **Northern Beaches Environmental  
Art & Design Prize**

Manly Art Gallery & Museum, Aug 24  
Guy Fredericks finalist

- **TWT Block Party**

St Leonards, Oct 23  
Thom Roberts

- **Packsaddle**

New England Regional Art Museum, Sep 23  
Katrina Brennan, Annette Galstaun, Daniel  
Kim, Catherine McGuinness, Meagan Pelham,  
Thom Roberts, Damian Showyin, group show

- **ECO Zine**

Maitland Regional Gallery, Sep 23  
Meagan Pelham, group show

- **Cosmic Beings**

Cement Fondu, Sep 23  
Mathew Calandra, group show

- **Plate**

Bankstown Art Centre, Aug 23  
Jaycee Kim, group show

- **Octopus Disco**

Ridge Street Window Gallery, Jul 23  
Emily Crockford, Guy Fredericks

- **Portraits from Studio A**

NSW Parliament House, Jul 23  
Victoria Atkinson, Mathew Calandra,  
Daniel Kim, Jaycee Kim, Meagan Pelham,  
Thom Roberts, group show

# Biennale of Sydney



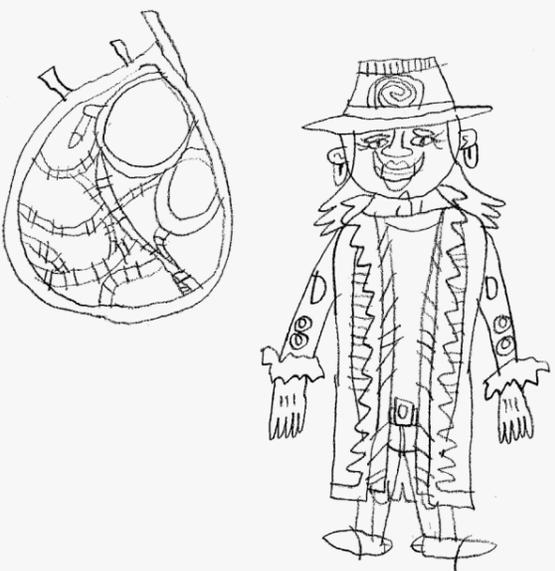
Weaving Dreams installation at the Biennale of Sydney, White Bay Power Station, 2024. Photo by Jacque Manning.

## For the 24th Biennale of Sydney, Studio A showcased *Make Dreams Come True* at White Bay Power Station, kicking off a series of disability-led Family Days hosted by the venue.

Featuring a program of exciting, inclusive, participatory works from Studio A artists Meagan Pelham, Skye Saxon, Catherine McGuiness, Victoria Atkinson, Adam Mandarano and Damian Showyin, the day introduced audiences, new and old, to our artists' love for storytelling and crafting personas in a four-part extravaganza. There was an amazing turnout of 4K+ attendees to the Biennale on this day, which was the fourth-highest day of visitation recorded across the whole festival.

As *Love Poem Sorceress*, Meagan Pelham entranced audiences with love affirmations from the heart-shaped window of her handmade fortune-telling booth. Skye Saxon, alongside Damian Showyin and Adam Mandarano, created a woven wonderland for *Weaving Dreams*, where audiences could drop in and contribute to an ever-growing woven portal of threads and recycled materials. Catherine McGuiness transformed into the *Roaming, Wish-Granting Angel*, equipped with a purple tulle dress and wand, bestowing 'fish wishes' upon those frequenting the exhibition space. Lastly, *Spin the Wheel and Let's Get Ready to Rumble* saw Victoria Atkinson bring joy to all watching in her wrestling-themed performance featuring a rainbow-decorated wrestling cloak and gameshow-style wheel.

MAKE DREAMS  
COME TRUE



Make Dream Come True program illustration by Greg Sindel.

Let's Get Ready to Rumble



Victoria Atkinson at the Biennale of Sydney, White Bay Power Station, 2024. Photo by Tanja Bruckner.

# Night Blossom & Suede Blue



Damian Showyin, *Suede Blue* installation view, Mosman Art Gallery, 2024. Photo by Jacquie Manning courtesy of Mosman Art Gallery.

*“I painted love hearts and flowers, I painted them because I love them, they make me happy.”*

— Catherine McGuiness

May 2024 saw Catherine McGuiness and Damian Showyin exhibit their first solo exhibitions, *Night Blossom* and *Suede Blue*, respectively, at Mosman Art Gallery. These major projects saw Damian and Catherine work alongside Studio A Guest Artist Shan Turner-Carroll, who supported both artists to create new and ambitious bodies of work, curating them into bold, large-scale displays.

For *Night Blossom*, Catherine unleashed her creativity unrestrained on metres-long canvases that were suspended from the gallery’s ceiling, depicting spirited flowers, shells, and fairies. To symbolically welcome guests to her show,

she created a spectacular table setting adorned with custom-printed textiles, and ceramic dinnerware and candelabras, which were created through partnerships with Mud Australia and Kil.n.it ceramics.

Damian assembled a sprawling cityscape for *Suede Blue*, which popped against the brightly painted walls of Mosman Gallery’s top floor. On repurposed materials such as cardboard boxes and timber, Damian applied his signature paint marks, forming geometric patterns and colour-blocks of primary hues. These pieces created a three-dimensional built environment that visitors could walk amongst and explore with wonder.

## Additional Accolades

### Lisa Tindall

Highly Commended—  
Artful Art Prize for her textile piece ‘Moon and Star’.



Catherine McGuiness, *Night Blossom* installation view, Mosman Art Gallery, 2024. Photo by Jacquie Manning courtesy of Mosman Art Gallery.

# Archibald & Sulman Prize 2024

Studio A's Archibald finalists at the Art Gallery of NSW, 2024. Photo by Karla Hansen.



## Studio A sustained its Archibald and Sulman success in 2024, with five finalist placements across the two celebrated prize categories.

Emily Crockford, Thom Roberts, Meagan Pelham, and Daniel Kim were all named as Archibald finalists, with Thom gaining double accolades as a finalist in the Sulman.

Emily Crockford's entry, *Singing with my selfie at the top of the world with my imagination*, was her fourth finalist-placing portrait in the Archibald Prize. Emily depicted herself smiling, surrounded by her favourite Australian botanicals and wildlife, patterned love hearts, and Studio A's St Leonards HQ, where her masterpiece was created.

This year, Thom Roberts selected famed Australian artist Ken Done for his work *Big Bamm Bamm*. Reimagined in "Thoms' way", Done is depicted with extra eyes, cat's ears, and a candy-coloured striped sweater. From their first meeting at Mosman Gallery, Thom connected with his artist peer and soon invited him to Studio A for his sitting.

Meagan Pelham secured her second Archibald finalist placement this year with her portrait, *Highlight in the Moonlight*, of curator Isobel Parker-Philip. They met when Studio A showcased their landmark mural at the Art Gallery of NSW in 2020; Parker-Philip being the Senior Curator of Australian Contemporary Art at the time. Upon her visit to Studio A, Meagan thought she looked like a "top model in moonlight", inspiring the theme of the piece.

Daniel Kim's *Blue jeans and flowers* is a portrait of Laura Jones (2024 Archibald winner), Ed Liston and David Liston, the founders of Incognito Art Show, who have supported Studio A since 2021 with their art show fundraising initiative. Daniel visited Laura Jones' Sydney studio to paint the trio, ultimately creating the largest work on canvas he had ever completed. In the painting, the studio environment played a central role, surrounding his subjects with art materials, Laura's signature flowers, and paint splashes.

Thom's Sulman Prize entry, *Dinkie is Thom's friend*, is a portrait of Subita, the cleaner at Studio A, whom he affectionately calls "Dinkie Duck". Thom asked to paint her "as big as real life" after he formed a friendship with Subita and found joy and excitement when she would arrive at the studio, wheeling her cleaning trolley each day.

Every year that Studio A artwork is included in the Archibald and Sulman prizes is a major achievement for artists with disability, and a testament to their talent and hard work in creating such impressive and ambitious artworks.



Daniel Kim, *Blue jeans and flowers*, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 150 x 190 cm



Meagan Pelham, *Highlight in the moonlight*, ink, gouache, synthetic polymer paint pen, gold and silver foil, and glitter spray on paper, 115 x 85 cm



Thom Roberts, *Big Bamm-Bamm*, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 152.5 x 102.5 cm

“The dancing possum in the tree watches as the passers go by, watching from the possum zoo. There is green to make you feel good. To make you feel happy, joy and safe. Happy, joy, tall and fun possum tree love.” — Emily Crockford



Emily Crockford, *A Possum is Watching*, 2024.

FY24 saw us complete over 25 commissioned projects, with our artists creating bespoke artwork for exhibitions, public activations, digital resources, and products. Demand for Studio A artwork was derived from cultural, corporate, and non-profit organisations, as well as private sources seeking personalised pieces of great art. Highlighted here are some of the commissions that make us proud.

- **National Association for the Visual Arts**  
*Code of Practice illustrated guide*  
Greg Sindel
- **Sydney Metro**  
*A Possum is Watching* concourse glazing,  
Hurlstone Park Station, Emily Crockford
- **Spilt Milk Festival**  
*Large-scale artwork*  
Canberra, Ballarat, Gold Coast,  
Annette Galstaun, Lauren Kerjan,  
Catherine McGuinness, Skye Saxon

- **Sydney Theatre Company,**  
*Seven Cosmic Sunsets* chiffon banners  
Skye Saxon
- **For Change Co.**  
*Team member portraits*  
Greg Sindel
- **Woolworths Group,**  
*Painting, Mini Wollies* Coreen  
Jaycee Kim

- **National Gallery of Australia**  
*Illustrated Disability Inclusion Action Plan,*  
Greg Sindel
- **Westpac Scholars**  
*Super Alter Ego Portraits*  
Greg Sindel
- **Liberty Specialty Markets**  
*Advent Calendar and Annual Event Design*  
Annette Galstaun + Studio A team

# A Possum is Watching

Concourse glazing

Sydney Metro –  
Hurlstone Park Station,  
Emily Crockford

Emily Crockford with a glazing sample, 2024.  
Photo by Karla Hansen.



# Illustrated Disability Inclusion Plan

National Gallery  
of Australia,  
Greg Sindel

Digital cover, *The National Gallery of Australia  
Disability Inclusion Plan*, 2023

THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF AUSTRALIA



# DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN



In January, Emily Crockford's *A Possum is Watching* at Hurlstone Park Station was unveiled, commissioned as part of Sydney Metro's major public art program.

Emily's design was overlaid onto an 8-metre window, illuminating the glass with colour and the light reflecting from the open sky. Inspired by the station's 19th-century title, 'Fern Hill', lush green fern leaves spread across the panels, along with a playful orange possum resting on a branch to watch commuters embark on their journeys. In creating this project, Emily wishes to bring calmness and grounding to the bustling urban space, like the feeling of a forest breeze. The work is a major achievement for Emily, as one of 10 leading Australian artists selected to design work for 10 upcoming metro stations spanning from Marrickville to Bankstown.

***"Metro Art commissions public art by leading Australian and NSW artists, both experienced and emerging. Uplifting, intriguing and diverse public art will be prominently and permanently located at each new Sydney Metro station."***

– Metro Art  
(from [transport.nsw.gov.au](https://transport.nsw.gov.au))

Greg Sindel was commissioned by the National Gallery of Australia and Accessible Arts, to interpret and create an illustrated edition of the institution's Disability and Inclusion Action Plan.

Greg used his masterful skills in graphic art to render diverse animal-like characters. These characters tell the story of the Plan and its creation, cementing it within the context of the Gallery and visually communicating areas of action, such as encouraging positive attitudes and awareness of people with disability.

This illustrated DIAP was launched on the NGA's website on December 3rd, coinciding significantly with the International Day of People with Disability. The resource is available online for public use alongside other accessible interpretations of the plan, and physical copies are available at the gallery for patrons to explore during their visit.



# Partnerships

Guy Fredericks, Canberra Glassworks, 2024.  
Photo by Emma Johnston.

*“I briefed Glassworks using some sketches I had and talked about Bushlink’s work. Aspects of their work we then symbolised in glass. It was a major part of the exhibition at Manly. I was really happy with the results of the work we created together.”*

— Guy Fredericks on collaborating with Canberra Glassworks.

Thriving in collaboration, partnerships are integral to our organisation’s success. Partnerships often span broad territory and can take many forms, with each relationship reaffirming the value of our artists’ work and furthering their professional development. This financial year, we have worked with organisations and creatives in new and established partnerships, inspiring each other with new perspectives.

- **Studio A x Arts Law Centre of Australia**  
Artists Rights by Greg Sindel is an animated resource that makes legal rights information accessible, created in partnership with Arts Law, with animation support from the University of Technology Sydney.
- **How Art Works: Stories from Supported Studios by Chloe Watfern**  
Informed by the latest thinking on neurodiversity and art, Dr. Chloe Watfern joined forces with Studio A and fellow leading supported studio, Project Art Works in the UK. Written as a personal narrative, the book features thoughtful, inspiring stories from both studios, launched June 2024.
- **Incognito Art Show**  
*Verona Gallery, Paddington, July 2023*  
FY24 saw Studio A partner with Incognito for a 3rd year. The not-for-profit organisation supports Australian artists and is Australia’s biggest and most inclusive art show. We are so grateful to partner with this fundraising initiative that continues to see annual growth and reach.
- **Canberra Glassworks Residency**  
Studio A artists Katrina Brennan, Guy Fredericks, Thom Roberts and Skye Saxon undertook a residency at Glassworks in Canberra, one of Australia’s leading glass-making art studios. Guy Fredericks went on to produce bespoke pieces for his *Bleeding Hearts and Morning Glory* exhibition in partnership with the Glassworks team.

# Studio A x Arts Law Centre of Australia

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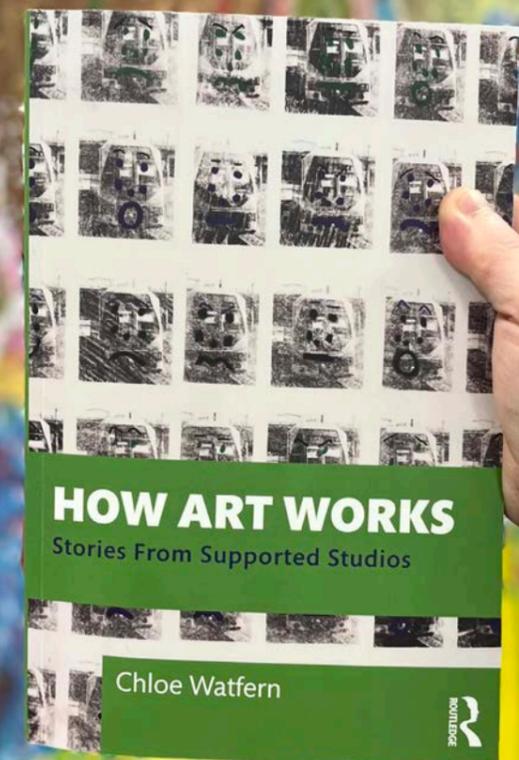
Animation still, *Artists Rights* by Greg Sindel



## How Art Works: Stories from Supported Studios

.....

Cover, Chloe Watfern, *How Art Works: Stories from Supported Studios* (Routledge, 2024)



*“Knowing that my animations will be helping artists everywhere to understand their rights, I feel absolutely proud of it!”*

— Greg Sindel.

Studio A partnered with the Arts Law Centre of Australia to create *Artists Rights* by Greg Sindel, a digital legal resource featuring Greg’s artwork, animated to articulate arts law protocols through engaging visuals and accessible language. Launched on International Day of People with Disability, the project aims to help creatives better understand their legal rights and protect their intellectual property. The video series addresses foundational questions about copyright, moral rights, and contracts, enabling artists to feel empowered in professional contexts and receive fair compensation for their work.

Supported by Create NSW and Westpac Foundation, this project was a culmination of the expertise and efforts of many. Arts Law Centre of Australia is a not-for-profit community legal centre dedicated to the arts, which provided legal expertise to the project and launched the resource on its online platform. Accessible Arts NSW facilitated consultations with artists with disability and promoted the resources amongst

supported studios. The University of Technology’s Bachelor of Animation Production students, led by lecturer Deborah Szapiro, worked with Studio A to animate Greg’s comic characters, making the resources engaging and simple to follow. Along with his artistic and voice acting talent, Greg’s lived experience as a practising artist with intellectual disability was a key contributor to the project’s success and the scope of its impact.

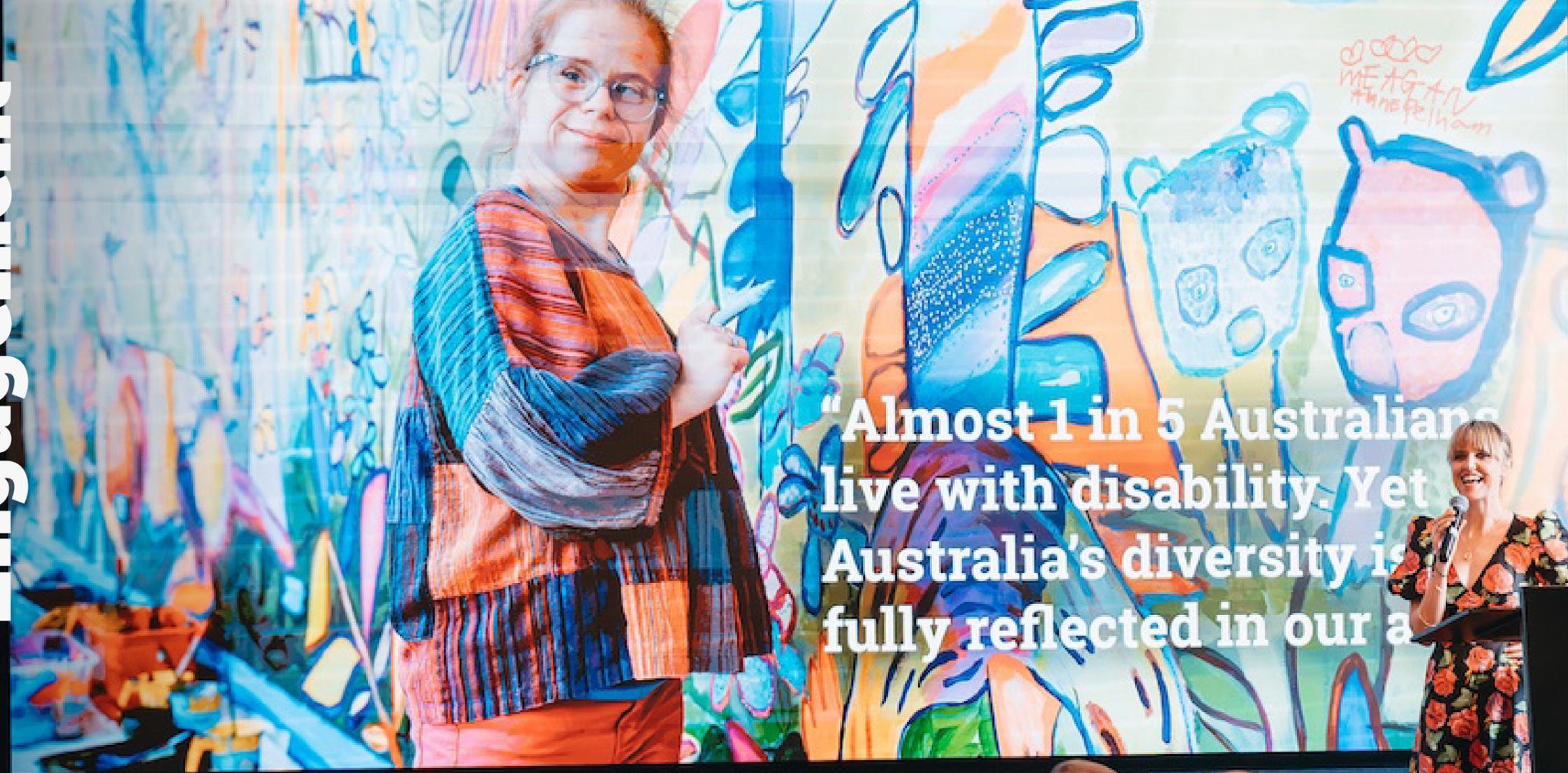


In June 2024, Dr. Chloe Watfern published her book ‘How Art Works: Stories from Supported Studios’.

The publication is based on the extensive research she gained firsthand at Studio A, along with fellow supported studio, UK-based *Project Art Works*. As a transdisciplinary researcher and maker, Watfern explores and reflects on the processes of talented contemporary artists from across the world and the pivotal role art plays in their lives. In her own voice, she shares her encounters and collaborations with Studio A artists Thom Roberts, Skye Saxon, and Lisa Tindall, which authentically capture their everyday experiences both in the studio and at home. The publication has since been praised for its fresh contributions to the art and neurodiversity fields and for blending both theoretical and humorous insights.

*“Writing this book opened my eyes to new ways of making art, as I learned about the amazing work being created in two studios on either side of the world.”*

— Dr. Chloe Watfern.



Gabrielle Mordy presenting at The Funding Network Event, 2024. Photo courtesy The Funding Network.

*“Australia’s 2023 National Cultural Report says ‘Almost 1 in 5 Australians live with disability. Yet Australia’s diversity is not fully reflected in our arts. Artists with disability...continue to be underrepresented’. At Studio A our mission is to address this injustice to ensure artists with intellectual disability are seen, heard, respected and paid fairly for their skilled work.”*

— excerpt from Gabrielle Mordy’s The Funding Network Pitch

- **Affordable Art Fair Sydney**  
Royal Randwick Racecourse, 13-16 June 2024
- **The Funding Network Equity and Inclusion Event**  
Sydney, 30 May 2024
- **NSW Social Enterprise Gift Market & Showcase with Social Traders and SECNA**  
SECNA Community Hub, South Eveleigh, December 2023
- **Parramatta Good Gift Market**  
Parramatta, December 2023
- **Variations book launch, Monash University Publishing**  
Melbourne, October 2023
- **Powerhouse Late Drawing Club,**  
Powerhouse Museum Ultimo, 3 August 2023

# Variations Book Launch

Monash University Publishing

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Skye Saxon and Meagan Pelham celebrating the launch of Variations, Melbourne, 2023. Photo by Studio A.



In October 2023, Meagan Pelham and Skye Saxon travelled to Melbourne to attend the book launch of *Variations: A More Diverse Picture of Contemporary Art*, celebrating the inclusion of their artwork and writing in the publication.

Produced by Monash University Publishing, this beautiful hardcover edition showcases the art practice of people with unique and varied lived experiences and stories. Bringing these artists into their deserved spotlight, authors Tristen Harwood, Grace McQuilten and Anthony White aim to establish a new, vibrant lens to analyse and appreciate contemporary art.

Meagan and Skye contributed to the book using their colourful and individualistic handwriting styles. They write of their experiences as professional artists, their inspirations and life experiences, as well as their artistic aspirations for the future. Printed next to a selection of

their work, Meagan and Skye's inclusion in this publication proves the important place for these two artists in Australia's cultural landscape.

Joined by Gabrielle Mordy, both artists loved attending the launch event and sharing stories with fellow artists and the team behind the book. Skye Saxon even used her very own printed tarot deck to perform a live reading in front of the crowd.

(Pictured Right) Skye Saxon's handwritten reflections on art making for Variations.

He painted Landscapes. sadly He died before we were born but we still have some of his Landscapes and his art supplies. I remember seeing one of the paintings we have at home the artist's name is Alan. It's a painting we have in the family that has stuck with me for many of years. **The Way I** would describe my experience of being an artist is that it can be fun. It can be exciting. It can be interesting and yes, it can be exhausting but it can also be magical and mysterious. I find art making is sometimes social and sometimes individual. For approximately half of the week I work in a studio environment with other artists some are friends, and sometimes you work with other people that you might not like, but you try to get along with. On another couple of days I work at home and tune into the studio via a zoom link. I like to think I've got an artistic flair. I wouldn't describe my art practice as boring it's interesting and imaginative. I think my art practice allows other people to experience what I experience in my dreams. When people are looking at my art it's important for people to not be closed off and to have an open mind. I feel it's important that people can go on a journey through my art work. Having exhibitions and exhibiting my work to the public allows me to have something to work towards. Sometimes I can get stuck in my creative process or on particular artworks. Having an exhibition helps me work through creative complications as I am aware I have a set timeframe to work in. Sometimes it helps to have boundaries. After all the hard work of working towards an exhibition and it's finally opened to the public it's fun and exciting and it can be explosive. I do a happy dance and giggle a lot. Having an exhibition is something that makes me really happy. When people finally see my artwork it's a performance. I feel I've opened up their mind and made their minds go ka-boom! People have told me how they have resonated with my work whether they've experienced a tarot reading viewed a performance or on a cosmic journey via my 2D art works. It's really nice to hear how people have reacted to my art work and not only to my art work but to me as well. If people don't like my art work that's ok. They can't tell me what they don't like about it and I can be on board like a bit of a challenge to make something that they might like in the future. I think it's good to have feedback because if you don't have feedback you might never know what your strengths and weaknesses are. I may not have seen a lot of contemporary art in Australia but what I have seen is really pretty damn good. I see my art in the future as being in many more places other than just museums and galleries. I see it on the side of a building. **studio A**

*“Studio A aims to strengthen the Australian cultural sector in such a way that broader support can be provided to more artists with intellectual disability nationally. I want to see more artists reaching their potential, earning income and feeling proud.”*

— Gabrielle Mordy for  
Peppermint Magazine.



Annette Galstaun at Studio A.  
Photo by Cassilda Parkinson.

# Media Highlights



Cover 2065 Crows Nest magazine



Behind-the-scenes of filming at Studio A with 7NEWS.

This financial year, Studio A received attention from a wide range of media platforms, including digital press, print media, and television segments, all of which contributed to expanding the studio's reach to new audience bases.

The Archibald and Sulman Prize season saw a rise in media presence, with articles celebrating Studio A's finalist success in the competitions. The Sydney Morning Herald published the piece 'Why being an Archibald finalist can mean a lot more than fame', centred around the studio's various achievements and how inclusion in these prizes helps to break through stereotypes. In The Conversation's Archibald Prize article, Studio A's presence was strong, and noted the works of Emily Crockford, Meagan Pelham, and Thom Roberts as highlights.

In July 2023, journalist Amy Clements gave viewers at home the opportunity to tour the studio and meet the artists in her segment for 7NEWS. The news crew captured the creative and dynamic nature of the studio space, along with interviews with Emily Crockford, Gabrielle Mordy, Thom Roberts, and his mother, Nancy.

Studio A featured in magazine articles throughout the year, including creative publication, Peppermint Magazine and the debut edition of 2065 Magazine. The bright acrylic work of Damian Showyin was selected for the front cover of the new local publication, which also included a profile on the studio and an interview with the artist.

## Sydney Morning Herald

### Being an Archibald finalist can mean more than fame

By Helen Pitt

"In the past four years, Studio A has had 11 finalists in the nation's best-known portrait prize and two in the Sulman Prize for subject and genre painting. "What recognition in the Archibald Prize really brings Studio A artists is legitimacy as 'artists'," the studio's chief executive and artistic director, Gabrielle Mordy, said."



## 2065 Magazine

### Cover & Inside Feature

September 2023

"Studio A is now a leading Australian supported studio, operating with a dedicated team of artists, staff, art facilitators and volunteers since 2016. Over the years, we have continued to grow our capacity to create wider social change by securing milestone projects and commissions, engaging wider audiences and challenging stereotypes associated with disability."



## The Conversation

### Archibald Prize 2024: this year's finalists range from downright fun to politically ferocious

By Joanna Mendelsohn

"There is a special pleasure in looking at Emily Crockford's Singing with my selfie at the top of the world with my imagination, remembering her previous exhibits and seeing how her art has developed."

## Peppermint Magazine

### Art for all An interview with Gabrielle Mordy.

Issue 61, May 2024

"As CEO and artistic director at Studio A, Gabrielle Mordy is helping to make art accessible for everyone by supporting those with intellectual disability to thrive in a creative career."



# Development



# We Moved!

**Crows Nest  
to St Leonards**  
September 2023

September 2023 marked a new era for Studio A with the announcement of a move to a fresh and spacious headquarters in St Leonards.

With the studio increasing its creative output and securing more major projects and commissions, a larger space was needed for Studio A to continue flourishing.

The Crows Nest Centre had been Studio A's home since 2018, a place where lots of memories, friendships, and art were created. Luckily, relocating to the neighbouring suburb allows Studio A to continue as a well-loved part of the local community.

Moving to this new studio space brings a range of benefits and opportunities for the artists to flourish professionally and personally. This location opens doors for more ambitious, large-scale projects, thanks to its spacious layout and abundance of natural light through wraparound windows. Conveniently located close to major public transport routes, the new studio can be easily accessed by artists, carers, and visitors, and is a safe and accessible high-rise where all can feel comfortable.

Additionally, the improved storage facilities mean that Studio A's ever-growing art collection is better cared for, and a designated admin space allows the team to manage the program efficiently. Inbound are further opportunities for hosting open-studio events, workshops, studio visits, and artwork viewings.

Officially gaining the artist's tick of approval, Catherine McGuinness exclaims that the new studio is a "good, good place... a big, big place and I love it here!". Meagan Pelham describes the studio as "humongous, warm and cosy" and that such a space is "helping me be famous as an artist".

The Studio A community officially celebrated this major move on the 6th of June 2024, with a 'Fancy soiree new building party' attended by artists, families, board members, guest artists, studio volunteers, donors, and corporate supporters.

Guests were invited to dress in their best to warm the new studio, explore art exhibits, and enjoy treats from sponsors ButterBoy, Pals, and The Grifter Brewing Co. Formalities included a ribbon-cutting ceremony led by Catherine McGuinness and speeches by Gabrielle Mordy and Studio A Chair John McCabe.

The event was a great success, and saw the new space come alive with crowds of art lovers. It signifies the first of many exciting events planned for St Leonards and the boundless opportunities the new space brings.



Opening spread and above; Images from the Studio A 'Fancy soiree new building party'. Photos by Emilio Cresciani.



Meagan Pelham and Studio A merchandise.  
Photo by Tanja Bruckner.

- A new and improved studioa.org.au**  
 Following the engagement of a digital agency, development of the new and improved studioa.org.au is now well underway. Designed to boost sales and enhance user experience, the new site integrates Studio A's CRM, accounting systems, and digital catalogue. With final checks underway, the website is in its final stages and set to launch imminently. The refreshed platform will better showcase our artists' work and make it easier for supporters to engage with and purchase from Studio A.

- Merchandise expansion**  
 This year, we expanded the Studio A merchandise range with two vibrant new notebook designs: *Ginger Megs Parrot* by Meagan Pelham and *Ice Cream Faces* by Thom Roberts. These A5 notebooks feature 100gsm recycled internal pages and include artist profiles and information about Studio A on the inside cover. We also restocked our popular Australiana tote bag range, introducing two fresh base colours - petrol blue for Damian Showyin's *Opera House* design and charcoal for Emily Crockford's *Hot Pink Koala*. These additions continue to celebrate the unique creativity of our artists while offering functional, art-filled items for everyday use.



# Governance & Financial Report

Studio A board members, artists and team at the Studio A Fancy soiree new building party, 2023.  
Photo by Emilio Cresciani.



# Governance

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## Chair John McCabe

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

Since joining Liberty 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, and taxation structure and evaluation of new business opportunities.

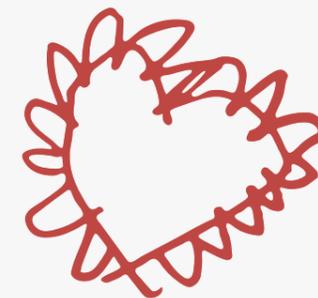
In addition to his role on the Studio A Board, John is currently an executive Director on 4 LSM company boards and has held the position of Independent Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee of Tennis NSW. John is a Chartered Accountant (ANZCA); a Fellow of ANZIIF and a Graduate Member of the AICD.

## Treasurer Evan Lowenstein

Evan is a Melbourne-based Certified Practising Accountant and the Director of Lowensteins, an accounting firm that specialises in the arts.

He holds a Bachelor of Economics (Accounting) from Monash University and has a long history of advocating and supporting the financial needs of artists. In 2002, he started Lowensteins Arts Management with his father Tom and colleague Adam Micmacher. Core to the firm was a commitment to serve the specific needs of artists. Today, the firm manages the financial affairs of approximately 3000 artists in all creative fields. Evan was also involved in the Save Super Art campaign that was set up to fight the recommendations of the Cooper Report on Superannuation and the adverse effects it would have on Artists.

Evan has also served on the Board of the Resale Royalties Art Market Professionals Advisory Panel and National Association for the Visual Arts, and has been Treasurer at Gertrude Street Artist Spaces, Westspace Artists Spaces, Theatreworks, Q44 Inc., Embraced Inc., Southern Disability Advocacy Inc. and more recently Southern Disability Advocacy Ltd., Sunshine Print Artspace Inc and Genesis Baroque Inc.



## AM Deborah Ely

Deborah Ely is an arts consultant with leadership experience in the cultural, education and community sectors in Australia and the UK. She has held advisory roles with all levels of Government and has served on the boards and committees of numerous arts and community organisations. She has a background in cultural infrastructure development and consults on housing the arts issues. She has recently assisted Studio A in resolving its accommodation challenges.

Deborah was trained in the UK as a painter and art historian and continues to curate and write on the visual arts. She was Chief Executive Officer of the national cultural institution Bundanon from 2006 to 2021. Previous roles

include Visual Arts and Craft Manager, Create NSW; Director, Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney; Director, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne; Convenor, Experimenta new media festival, Melbourne and Acting Director and Visual Arts Director of Watershed Media Centre, UK.

Deborah is a Fellow of the University of Wollongong and has worked in tertiary institutions across Australia, the USA, and the UK lecturing in cultural leadership, programming and risk management. In 2018, she was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for her contribution to the visual arts and to children's art education.

## OAM Douglas Spencer

Doug is the Principal and Director of Miller Noyce Lawyers and sits on the Board of Studio Artes, where he was Chair from 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 acting for them in difficult commercial litigation in all jurisdictions. Doug also has extensive experience in advising people on estate planning and the restructuring of their business and commercial affairs.

**AM**  
**Ross Rudesch Harley**

Ross Rudesch Harley is Emeritus Professor at UNSW's Arts, Design and Architecture. An award-winning artist, writer and educator, his career crosses the bounds of traditional and creative arts research. His work has been presented at the Centre Pompidou in Paris, New York MoMA, Ars Electronica in Austria, the Biennale of Sydney, and at the Sydney Opera House.

After serving as head of the School of Media Arts (2009-2013), he went on to become Dean of UNSW Art & Design (2013-2020). In 2024 he was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for significant service to tertiary education and the arts.

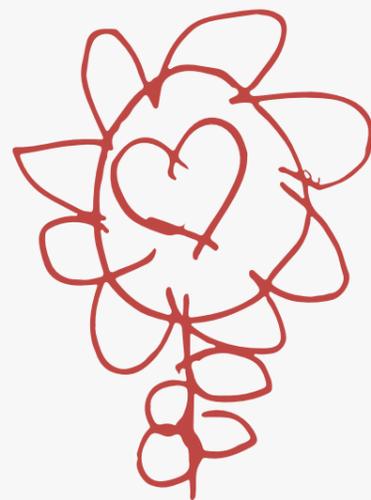
**Lindsay Clement-Meehan**

Lindsay is a communications consultant based in Melbourne, who is a passionate supporter and collector of Australian emerging contemporary artists. She began collecting almost ten years ago, which has cultivated a deep affinity with the creative landscapes of Sydney and Melbourne.

Her career in communications spans more than 15 years, with a brief stint in sports journalism before moving to communications roles with the Australian Football League and NSW Waratahs. She transitioned to corporate communications in telecommunications at Optus and Telstra, and insurance and banking with IAG Australia, Commonwealth Bank, and the Bank of

Queensland. Currently working with Baldwin Boyle Group, she manages clients across Australia and New Zealand in the financial services, manufacturing, infrastructure, venture capital and start-up industries.

Lindsay is a non-executive director of Olympic National Sports Association, Judo Australia, and a previous committee member of the Museum of Contemporary Art (Sydney) Young Ambassadors program (Now MCA Next).



# Financials

	FY24	FY23
<b>Income</b>		
Fundraising	\$273,054.00	\$194,160.00
Grants	\$286,603.00	\$312,411.00
Artist Fees	\$24,336.00	\$15,550.00
Artwork/ Merchandise Sales	\$295,238.00	\$305,302.00
Other income	\$84,873.00	\$52,673.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$964,104.00</b>	<b>\$880,096.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Administration	\$22,700.00	\$21,917.00
Artistic	\$898,994.00	\$723,635.00
Studio	\$70,374.00	\$88,004.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$992,068.00</b>	<b>\$833,556.00</b>
Surplus / Deficit	-\$27,964.00*	
<b>Expenses from FY24 audit</b>		
Cost of goods	\$155,218.00	\$155,207.00
Depreciation	\$70,374.00	\$5,286.00
Employee benefits	\$386,521.00	\$356,592.00
Interest expense	\$16,337.00	\$0.00
Occupancy	\$6,363.00	\$25,450.00
Operating	\$357,255.00	\$291,021.00

\*The FY24 deficit can be attributed a small sector-wide downturn in sales as a result of the current cost of living crisis, and costs associated with studio relocation. Strategies have been put in place to address this. For a detailed report of Studio A's financials, please visit the [ACNC website](#).

# Income

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## Where our funding came from in FY23

### Fundraising

Donations made up 28% of our FY24 income and we are incredibly grateful to 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 the recipient of multi-year program funding from Create NSW of \$110,000 per annum.

We are also the recipient of a three year grant of \$100,000 per annum from the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation providing multi core operational and capacity building support for Studio A.

### Artwork / Merchandise Fees

Income from the sale of artwork, merchandise and creative services has remained steady into FY24. Commentary within the industry has cited a downturn in artwork sales in the face of the current cost of living crisis. Studio A's steadiness in this period is a testament to the quality of the Studio A artists' work and the sustainability of the social enterprise.

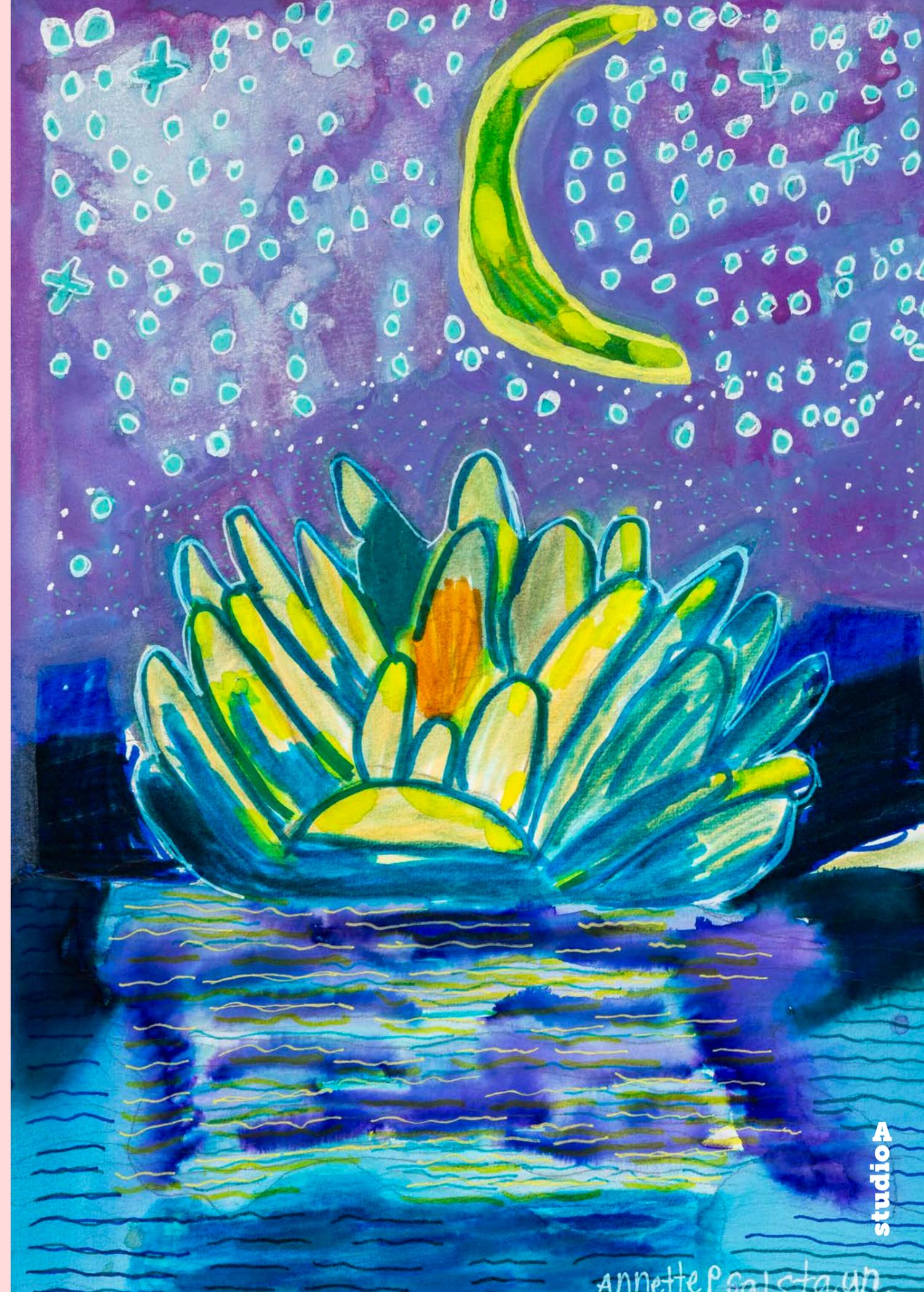
### Artwork / Merchandise Sales

Artwork and Merchandise sales made up 33% of our overall income in FY24. This demonstrates the value placed on Studio A creations in the community and the demand for the work of our artists.

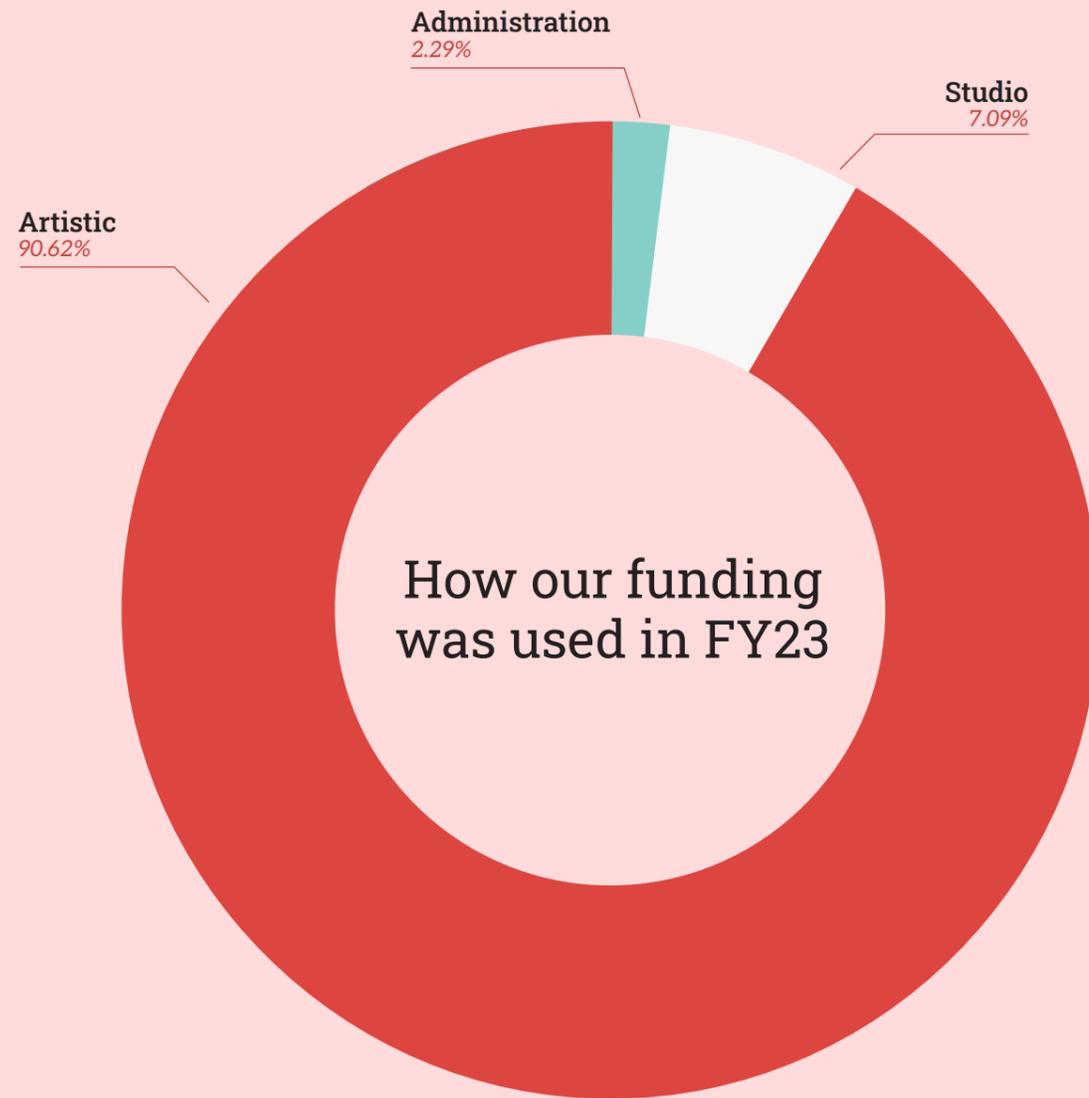
### NDIS

Studio A received income in FY24 from NDIS services delivered in partnership with Studio ARTES, a certified NDIS Service Provider. This included funding for individual artist supports and community access services provided to Studio A artists.

(Pictured Right) Annette Galstaun, Waterlily, *Reflection in the Water*, 2023, acrylic, watercolour and ink on paper, 29.5 x 42cm



# Expenditure



## Administration

Administration costs are kept to a minimum at Studio A and account for just 2.3% of our overall expenditure. This includes travel/ fuel costs, accounting, audit fees and insurances.

## Studio

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

## 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.

(Pictured Right) Thom Roberts, *Dinkie is Thom's friend*, 2024, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 183 x 122cm





# studioA



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Rachel Zhu

**Front cover:**  
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by Tanja Bruckner.

**Back cover:**  
Victoria Atkinson  
by Tanja Bruckner.