

# THIS WAY UP



**an exhibition series of  
recent abstract painting**



**ANU**

THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Peter Adsett  
Micky Allan  
Justin Andrews  
Zöe Avis  
Emma Beer  
Vivienne Binns  
Julie Brooke  
Julia Castiglioni Bradshaw  
Claudia Chaseling  
Liz Coats  
Jodie Cunningham  
Fernando Do Campo  
Marie Hagerty  
Greg Hodge  
Karena Keys  
Richard Larter  
Fiona Little  
Sue Lovegrove  
Liang Luscombe  
Peter Maloney  
Tye McBride  
Suzanne Moss  
Geoff Newton  
Derek O'Connor  
Rachel Jessie-Rae O'Connor  
Elena Papanikolakis  
Dionisia Salas Hammer  
Helen Shelley  
Kerry Shepherdson  
Noël Skrzypczak  
Gary Smith  
Bryan Spier  
Aria Stone  
Frank Thirion  
Elefteria Vlavianos  
Paul Wotherspoon  
Dan Zhu

## Acknowledgements

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Laura Murray Cree very generously brought her professional experience to the planning process, assisting with the selection of artists, with developing grant applications and contributing her reflections *On Abstraction* as an introduction to this catalogue.

The success of *This Way Up* is significantly due to the excellent project management of Leah Bullen who, with Peter Maloney, has coordinated planning and liaison with artists and participating galleries.

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Finally, thanks and congratulations to all the contributing artists. Beautiful work!

## Laura Murray Cree *On Abstraction*

Some theorists argue that painting is – and has always been – abstract because it is a two-dimensional representation of three-dimensional ‘reality’; others contend that it is as recent as Cubism. According to the latter view, abstract art, although having its antecedents in Post-Impressionism, didn’t gain traction until Picasso and Braque completely deconstructed the picture plane and liberated colour, form and line from the imaginative straitjacket of the object.

This revolution in how the world may be perceived and understood was reflected not only in the visual arts but also in modernist music and dance and the radical physics of Albert Einstein. Conflict and war on a global scale ruptured centuries of accepted thought and a new conceptual and theoretical world was ushered into being. A range of formal, intellectual, material and spiritual concerns continued to fuel the impetus for abstraction throughout the twentieth century, resulting in multiple hybrid manifestations that have become increasingly complex with the advent of mechanical and computer technologies and the fusion of high and low art.

Terence Maloon’s recent Art Gallery of New South Wales exhibition, *Paths to Abstraction 1867–1917*, demonstrated that ‘Abstraction was never “a movement”, it didn’t originate in one place, and it wasn’t practised by one cohesive group of artists.’ Yet walking through the rooms of this exhibition one felt a community of intent and endeavour – a paradoxically singular, collective energy – that carried across the works. This powerful experience witnessed artists breaking new ground in their own practice, propelled by a radical change of consciousness among an informal brotherhood of creative individuals at a time of extreme transition and collision.

### *A Personal Encounter*

On 12 July 1985, in Venice, at the Peggy Guggenheim Museum, I stood transfixed before Piet Mondrian’s *Composition No. 1: Composition with Red*, 1938–39. Away from the temper of the streets, back aching and intensely homesick, I found release in the calm austerity of this painting. The world had been too much with me; art had been too much with me; I needed a place to inhabit beyond conflicted feelings, beyond referential imagery (especially of militarism and Christ crucified), and I found it in this painting. On another day, at another time in my life, Mondrian’s drastically reduced palette and asymmetrical arrangements of intersecting vertical and horizontal lines may

have left me cold. And yet, the memory of the original work remains: the way the artist used his brush, the merest ripples in the drawn lines, spoke of human connectedness – and the painting spoke to me. Discovering later that Mondrian worked intuitively rather than mathematically to achieve his visual equations of universal harmony confirmed my immediate, subjective response and the artist's deeper intent.

My experience of Mondrian's *Composition No. 1* is neither unique nor restricted to abstraction. Painting can deliver perceptions and sensations beyond the transience of film, however dramatic and multi-dimensional. It has the advantage of stillness, silence and flexibility; change is subtle, contextual, an outcome of the intimate relationship between work and viewer.

Seurat's four little pointillist nudes in the National Gallery of Australia's *Masterpieces from Paris* exhibition elicited, for some of us, an almost transcendental viewing experience; how did the artist transform paint into light, bring flesh to life, with dots so delicate that a halo of mist seemed to emanate from the work?<sup>1</sup> How do these original pointillist explorations compare with Richard Larter's ecstatic examples, also seen at the NGA, in works developed over a lifetime, where radiant pointillist patterns and ribbons of colour entranced the eye, expressing the artist's irrepressible energy and lust for life?<sup>2</sup>

### *This Way Up*

Painting has obvious limitations in the twenty-first century, where we can witness the birth and death of stars on our mobile phones and reinvention applies to almost every aspect of life; yet the relative 'archaism' of painting is also its strength. Ruth Waller, Head of the ANU Painting Workshop, had this to say about what it means to be a painter when mainstream culture is intoxicated by screen-based visual spectacle:

A film like *Avatar* is infinitely reproducible, it gives the same experience whether it is screened in New York or Broken Hill. What is peculiar about painting is that it is an absolutely specific interface at any viewing moment between the particular work, its particular material qualities and particular location, the particular hand that delivered the matter to the surface and the particular person receiving the work, viewing it in a particular light, and all these things connecting at once.<sup>3</sup>

*This Way Up* delivers a wealth of possibilities for particular intimate connection as well as immersion in a coherent viewing experience. From Geoff Newton's seductive revelries

to the visceral tension of Dionisia Salas Hammer and the cool adventuring of Paul Wotherspoon, there is an excitement in the exhibition that can only be generated by genuine artistic experiment: the business of putting down paint on a surface: moving it around, scraping it off, adding other materials, exploring other dimensions, calibrating relationships of colour and line, trying ideas that don't quite gel and developing those that do; giving form to an elusive, unruly creative imagination.

This kind of experiment is common to all painters, and it doesn't take place in a vacuum. As Ruth Waller observes: 'Painting will always reflect the technology and material culture of the day. As new technology generates different kinds of visual experience, artists will respond and explore the creative potential of all that.'<sup>4</sup> But within the academic setting of ANU, the process of painting is underpinned by structured learning situations, dynamic collegiate exchange, access to the working knowledge of senior artists (such as Vivienne Binns, Richard Larter, Micky Allan and Liz Coats, all represented in this show) and to art historians and theorists. This support provides a framework for students to fulfil the demands of academic research and writing – never easy for visual artists whose practice 'involves a kind of visual intelligence which leapfrogs over language'.<sup>5</sup>

The vitality of the paintings in *This Way Up* – and the clarity of the artists' statements – is testimony to the stimulating environment at the Painting Workshop. During February and March 2010, distinguished scholar, artist and author Anthea Callen joined ANU as Visiting Professor in Painting.<sup>6</sup> Her highly productive months at the art school coincided with the NGA's *Masterpieces from Paris* exhibition from the Musée D'Orsay. Her technical insights into these artists' work, profound knowledge of art history and down-to-earth approach proved invaluable to students. Being able to discuss specific paintings in situ at the Musée D'Orsay exhibition, followed up by lectures and technical workshops in the studio on the materials and processes of the period, enabled participants to come to grips with difficult concepts in a direct, accessible way.<sup>7</sup>

Painting is an alchemical art, more mysterious because of the very basic tools at the artist's disposal. This is particularly true in the field of abstraction. The works selected for *This Way Up* have the same kind of energy that excited me in Maloon's *Paths to Abstraction*. Time and place may be entirely different but these works exude a freshness, diversity and commonality of purpose that resonates with pioneering examples of abstraction. Although painters in a permissive, postmodern world enjoy the freedom to apply whatever techniques and technologies they choose, Maurice Denis's statement

as a youthful artist and critic still holds true: ‘Remember that before being a war-horse, a nude woman, or some anecdote, a picture is essentially a plane surface covered with colours assembled in a certain order (1889).’<sup>8</sup>

## Laura Murray Cree

August 2010

Laura Murray Cree is an independent visual arts writer and a former Editor of *Art & Australia*. She has held senior editorial positions at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation, Sherman Galleries and the National Gallery of Australia.

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<sup>1</sup> *Masterpieces from Paris*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 4 December 2009 – 18 April 2010.

<sup>2</sup> *Richard Larter: a retrospective*, curated by Deborah Hart, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 20 June – 14 September 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Conversation with the author, ANU Painting Workshop, Canberra, 15 July 2010.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Ruth Waller, ‘Creative research: arguing for abstract painting’, unpublished presentation, Australian National University, 2010.

<sup>6</sup> Anthea Callen is an independent scholar and Emeritus Professor of Visual Culture, University of Nottingham, UK.

<sup>7</sup> *Degas: master of French art*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 12 December 2008 – 22 March 2009.

<sup>8</sup> Maurice Denis, quoted in Terence Maloon’s, *Paths to Abstraction 1867–1917*, exhibition catalogue Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2010, p 120.

## This Way Up

**This Way Up presents twenty-first century abstraction as a splendid and many-headed beast. Thirty-seven heads actually, and all are painters associated with the Painting Workshop at the Australian National University: staff, Honours graduates, Postgraduates, alumni and friends of the school. Painting at ANU has always fostered diversity and independence of creative thinking. While our studio teaching and research ranges across the whole range of contemporary painting practices, this 2010 showcase focuses on abstract painting, reflecting a vigorous resurgence of interest in abstraction in recent years.**

*This Way Up* explores, via abstraction, the nature of painting itself. The practices of the artists represented here range across many processes and fields of speculation, experiment and enquiry. They draw on painting’s history, on aspects of recent cultural theory, on philosophy (most significantly, phenomenology), on psychology, optics, and current speculative thought regarding the nature of perception and sensation. However, perhaps the most striking quality of the work featured in *This Way Up* is the shared sense of celebrating the particularity, the sensuality and the extraordinary material range of painting as a studio practice.

### Material culture

Many of these artists speak of their passion for painting as a *material* and *physical* practice which, consciously *and* unconsciously, engages the senses, the body, the intellect and the emotions of the painter in a simultaneous complex of actions, sensations and reflections.

**Emma Beer** explains “I am particularly interested in the materiality of a painting, surface quality, colour relationships, the edge, painting becoming an object. Above all the act of painting is my subject...the painting becomes object and model. Every interaction with paint requires both a physical and mental response...the canvas becomes a site of impulsive enthusiasm.”

For many artists and artfans the compelling directness and tactility of such painting acts as a gratifying and provocative foil for all the screen-based virtuality of contemporary mainstream culture. Strikingly, **Derek O’Connor** transports us *visually* through colliding swaths of *material* colour delivered with a highly charged physical energy. Contemporary painters explore the material scope of painting from traditional oil and acrylic media through to industrial, domestic and craft derived products. They mix it up and give it a good shake. **Fiona Little** enjoys “the combinations of glossy surfaces next

to matte, textured next to flat, a large block of dull colour<sup>1</sup> next to a glimpse of highly saturated colour” in paintings built up over many weeks. **Rachel Jessie-Rae O'Connor** uses industrial and craft materials like laser cut foils, stardust, textured gels, iridescent powders, leaf metals, stickers, textures and plastics “to explore surface novelty through absorbed and reflected light.” **Helen Shelley's** iconic geometric compositions pulse through physical fields of perspex or vibrate with glitter.

Twenty-first century painting also engages the third dimension, projecting from the wall into space or becoming sculptural or a form of installation. In recent years **Noël Skrzypczak** has developed a series of spectacular paintings which activate architectural spaces, extending across walls, ceilings and floors in blooms of luminous colour. Like a modern-day baroque visionary, she sees these transporting the viewer physically and emotionally, like “living entities...to make visible an idea or feeling that is real but not normally seen”.

**Karena Keys** works acrylic paint as a dry material, like a fabric, skin or skein. This “misuse” of the medium engenders “a fragility, an organic poetry, leaving you unsure of what you are looking at.”

**Liang Luscombe** and **Geoff Newton** are hybrid practitioners, ranging over painting, sculpture, video and performance using prefabricated, found and recycled materials, and are also each active in art writing, commentary and curation. The enthusiasm for radical and transgressive practices evident in these younger painters is sparked by the energy of **Vivienne Binns** and **Richard Larter** who electrified the 1960s and, as we see here, maintain their vibrancy in 2010.

While abstract painting may, for some, represent a reaction against the image saturation of screen-based culture, others reflect experiences of high-tech mainstream culture, reinterpreted and reprocessed through the low-tech materiality of painting. **Dionisia Salas Hammer** works with oils, sprays, enamels, fluorescent and chrome pigments in paintings “made fast, observed fast” compressing and exploding sensations from “sound, music, film, images sourced from the net, science fiction and literature”.

Abstract painting can be seen as conjuring a virtual world, a speculative space. This phantom space may be generated technologically, then “realised” as painting, as in the work of **Peter Maloney** and **Justin Andrews**.

**Maloney's** works of the 1980s reflected tensions surrounding homosexuality and AIDs via “a kind of abstract language formerly associated with the robust masculinity of the New York School painters. Recently the irony of those appropriations has become more

evident in... intricate studio processes, using a photocopier to develop and enlarge tiny drawings subsequently translated in paint to large canvases.” **Andrews** cuts scrap materials into assorted geometric forms, photographed in random arrangements, and these photos become the reference material for his paintings.

**Jodie Cunningham** derives her luminous geometric abstractions from the patterns of the domestic realm, celebrating the decorative arts and feminine experience.

### *Do you see what I see?*

In 1936 Alfred Barr referred to abstract paintings as “question-producing machines” and many contemporary artists use abstraction to question the nature of perception, generating experiences of formal and chromatic optical ambiguity and illusion.<sup>1</sup> Recent international exhibitions like *Optic Nerve* (2007) re-engage with issues raised by Op art of the 1960s. In the accompanying book, Dave Hickey rethinks Op:

Op artists take up a notch the tradition...of making paintings that resist interpretation – by making paintings that resist being seen at all, and that, by resisting our efforts to see them, literally move us around the room in the hope of seeing what we cannot... (As) we stand before Op paintings that resist our understanding, we introduce ourselves to our unconscious selves. We become aware of the vast intellectual and perceptual resources that await our command just beyond the threshold of our knowing.<sup>2</sup>

**Frank Thirion**, **Julie Brooke** and **Bryan Spier** all engage us in different ways in this process of optical and neural speculation and experiment. Asking “can we see space?” **Tye McBride** works directly onto the wall, creating illusions of impossible three dimensional forms, “blur(ring) the lines between formal abstract painting and installation.” **Suzanne Moss** seeks to give visual form to the sensation of love, as a counter to the alienating experience of contemporary mainstream culture. Considering “what might love look like?” she responds with paintings which test the thresholds of visibility, engendering “luminosity, emanation and a sense of the infinite”.

### *What's up?*

**Paul Wotherspoon** explores “what it means to physically present a painting”: Where does painting end and the support begin? Indeed, what happens when we hang a painting on the wall? It hovers before our eyes defying gravity, simultaneously presenting and denying its materiality. Abstract paintings are generally hung on the gallery wall as if historically and conventionally continuous with traditional representational pictures. But what happens when they come off the wall? What happens if they are made and viewed horizontally, across a stretch of floor, as in **Peter Adsett's** provocative work?

### *The poetics of process*

**Micky Allan** whose practice moves fluidly between abstraction and representation, conjures an abstract realm by considering the extremities of our visual reach and “the macro/micro convergences within our planet and way beyond, (extending) our sense of the physical and conceptual space in which we live”. She speculates that abstraction may be taking us toward “embodying the world beyond form”.

The sense of embodiment we experience in abstract painting operates on a number of levels. A painting is a physical thing, it *is* a kind of body. Paintings communicate the actions of the painter’s body, indexical to actions great and small, fast and slow, overt and covert, measured or abandoned... We as viewers experience, bodily, our reception of a given work, how it effects our sense of scale, or generates sensations of implied motion, stability or instability, solidity or spatiality.

In these ways abstract painting delivers us sensations for which we may not have a ready language,- direct experiences “not pictures of visual things that we can name” (**Fiona Little**), but the “realm of the nameless and the unknown” (**Micky Allan**).

As **Zoe Avis** writes, abstract painting can “draw the viewer’s attention to the physicality of the painted surface and yet can simultaneously communicate...the transcendent, beyond language and beyond the physical”. **Gary Smith** conjures gaseous atmospheres of colour within which ambiguous forms arise and shift just below the threshold of recognition. **Greg Hodge** alludes to the Romantic Sublime as a pathway to abstraction. His paintings involve a process of overlaying and patterning, a weaving and knotting, designed to “set up a figure-to-ground drama...between these motifs and the ambiguous picture spaces they occupy.”

The process of layering, and the layering of processes is key also to the work of **Fiona Little** who works in “an improvisational manner through the building up of many layers...over a period of weeks”. Little also speaks of music as a stimulus to her process. **Aria Stone** draws effectively on her experience as a professional musician in developing an improvisational approach to drawing and painting, recording the evolution of a work scored to music using video .

**Julia Castiglioni Bradshaw** sees “the activity of painting” as her subject, layering marks and motifs. Like **Fernando Do Campo**, she plays with figure/ground interaction or the play of positive and negative space “questioning our perceptions with this interaction”. In **Marie Hagerty’s** immaculately crafted paintings flat planes and swelling volumes interact

in a highly tuned state of illusion and ambiguity.

Lyrical colourist **Elena Papanikolakis** explores concepts of “eternity, motion time and evolution”. Like Elena, who often works “from all angles and rotating the canvas,” **Kerry Shepherdson** works with no “this way up”. Her compositions are driven by branching growth-pattern systems.

An immersion in the poetics of the natural world and its landscapes is key to the work of **Sue Lovegrove**, in the chaotic, natural weaving of Tasmanian grasses. **Liz Coats** absorbs “all the detail and breadth of growing things that fuels a desire for connectivity amongst materials, colours and shapes in painting.” **Claudia Chaseling** invents “schwebende Landschaften” warped and multilayered abstracted landscapes with no horizon, no beginning or end.

Whereas a sense of the relation between place and the picture space, and cultural and family heritage are underlying currents in the work of **Eleftheria Vlavianos** and **Dan Zhu** through lyrical gestures alluding to script and calligraphic traditions.

In 1992 in *Socrates and the alligator: Whose problem are you trying to solve?* painter Joseph Marioni discusses tensions between painting, bodily experience and language, in articulating those “unique problems that are specifically related to the concrete reality of a painting as a thing.” The art of painting he writes, is “intimately involved with the perceptual sharing of a sustained state of seeing. The perceptual identity of a painting at its radical source does not stand for some other place...The painting is the place and we know we have arrived at that place when it appears that nothing is taking place but the place itself.” Thus, Marioni proposes that, “we rethink the history of painting from the point of view of a painter”.<sup>3</sup> Abstract paintings deliver us directly to that “place” of painting, and *This Way Up* takes us there in thirty-seven different ways.

Ruth Waller, Head of Painting, ANU, 2010

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<sup>1</sup> Barr, Alfred cited in Perl, Jed, *New Art City*, New York, 2005, p.75

<sup>2</sup> Hickey, Dave in *Optic nerve, perceptual art of the 1960s*, Columbus, 2007, p.13

<sup>3</sup> Marioni, Joseph in *Abstract Painting between analysis and synthesis*, Madlener, Elisabeth (ed.), Vienna, 1992

## Peter Adsett

Peter Adsett was born in Gisbourne, New Zealand in 1959. Since 1989 he has exhibited extensively in Australia and internationally.

Peter is currently a PhD candidate at the School of Art, ANU with the support of an Australian Postgraduate Award scholarship.

Adsett is interested in the construction and reception of his paintings in phenomenological terms; process, materiality and the physical context of the paintings take precedence over other readings of his works. In his recent work Peter addresses 'horizontality' as a primary issue.

*"Horizontalty refers to the site of production, on the floor. Each placemat is a residue of an event that tests the limits of the material under a set of given rules. By examining each work one can determine the similarities and differences of each splice and understand that as a series each work operates differently. This places the viewer in a position of negotiating the fundamental tension of the materiality of paint and what sublimation leads to."*

Alex Macdonald writing about Peter Adsett's GRANTPIRRIE exhibition "Serial Killer", 2004 notes, "All six paintings are simply numbered 1 through 6. In the room notes, the same list of materials accompanies each work: one litre of red paint, 250ml of blue, 180ml of white, brush hair, water and urine.... The presence of any colour does not become obvious until you begin to really look closely at the surfaces of these paintings. Further inspection reveals numerous marks, including bits of brush hair, bruises and discolourations. In some of the works faint scratches of red pigment have managed to permeate the thin white veneer"

Macdonald continues, "Adsett's real target is figurative painting and he does away with it in dramatic fashion - by suffocating it with paint, hair, water and urine. The only traces left are the scratches and the worn, scuffed surfaces of his works."

Peter Adsett lives and works in Melbourne and is represented by GRANTPIRRIE, Sydney.



*Jason*, 2010  
black, brush hair, studio detritus, acrylic paint and Jason placemats  
dimensions variable

## Micky Allan

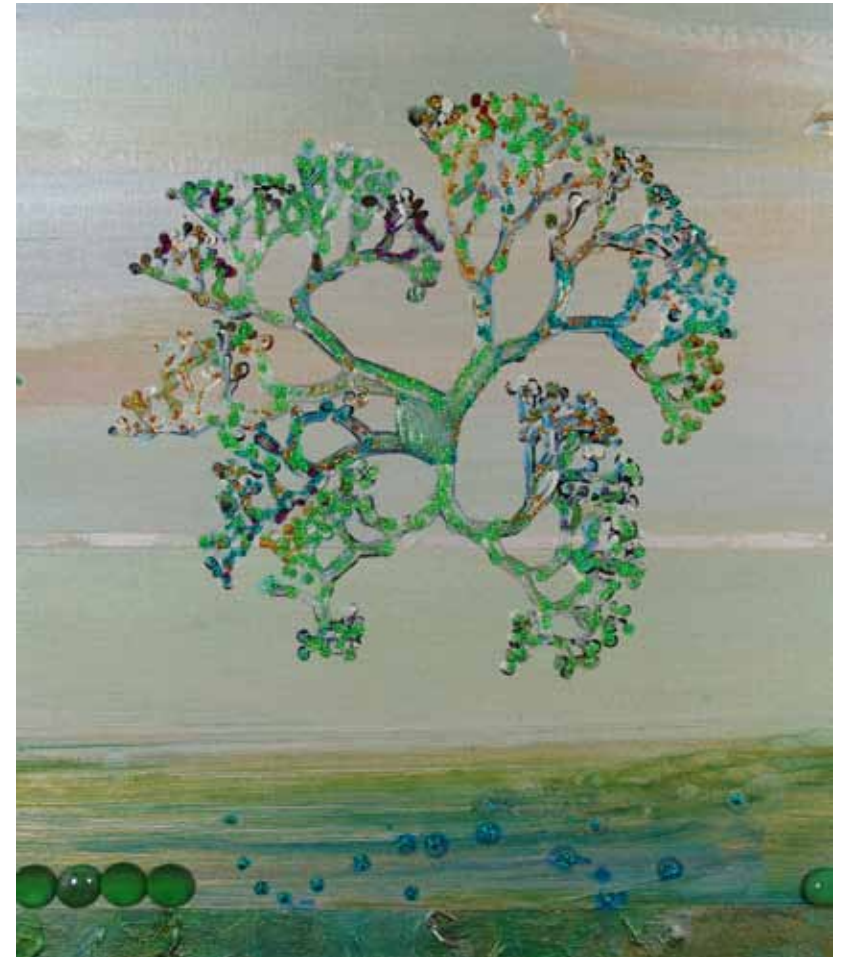
Micky Allan is currently a candidate for PhD Graduate Studies in Visual Arts at the School of Art, ANU and is supported by an Australian Postgraduate Award. She is represented in the NGA, most state galleries and many regional, corporate and private collections.

Micky Allan has exhibited since 1975, both in Australia and overseas, after initial training at the National Gallery of Victoria Painting School under John Brack. Her practice includes painting, drawing, engraved glass, photography and installation.

*"For me, abstraction does sometimes cast us more directly, if not necessarily more completely, into the realm of the nameless and the unknown. Its metaphoric layering can be more subtle, less spelled out. Neuroscience has established that our brains love the 'ah ha' experience in perception where we establish that something, (a shape, colour, movement etc) is 'like' something else, and that there are universal principals at work in these multiple layers of neurological response. Perhaps abstraction links us very directly to our delight in this basic 'ah-ha' experience. While setting up ripples of 'likeness' and metaphor, some culturally specific and some universal, abstraction for me also draws attention to the inherent life in form itself - that colour, shape, rhythm, texture etc have meaning in and of themselves and in the relationships set up between them, regardless of whatever kind or degree of metaphor they might also hold. They may or may not then go on to hover in the realm of Bachelard's 'poetic reality', an arena involving a level of poetic ungraspable in either material or conceptual terms alone."*

Micky Allan currently lives and works in Canberra.

[www.mickyallan.com](http://www.mickyallan.com)



*Tidal Drift* (detail), 2010  
mixed media and acrylic on linen  
142 x 112 cm



## Justin Andrews

Justin Andrews was born in Melbourne 1973, received a Diploma of Art from North Melbourne Institute of TAFE, a Bachelor of Visual Art (Honours) from the School of Art, ANU and gained his Master of Philosophy (Visual Art) at the School of Art, ANU 2003. He has exhibited extensively nationally and internationally, notably with solo exhibitions in Germany, The Netherlands and Belgium.

Justin's work has been included in numerous group exhibitions and in 2008 he was awarded the Australia Council Tokyo Studio Residency.

*"I use random occurrences to produce abstract work.*

*My work uses present-tense information, but is not specific to a particular idea or site.*

*I aim to maintain a level of immediacy with the world that surrounds me.*

*My paintings, drawings, constructions, films and photographs use studio-based experiments involving automatic configurations of sculptural materials to reference the passing of time and the momentary nature of activity. Scrap materials are cut into assorted geometric forms then photographed in random arrangements. These photographs become the reference material for designs leading towards finished works.*

*By expanding and taking my work into the area of random occurrence and chance, the generation of my art is based upon results unknown to me until their moment of occurrence. My aim is to extend the terms of geometric abstraction – into something that is fluid, immersive, vibrant and intuitive."*

Justin Andrews is represented by Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne.



*Dissidence*, 2010  
mixed media on MDF  
90.4 x 60.0 x 1.9 cm  
Image courtesy the artist and Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne.

## Zöe Avis

Zöe gained her Bachelor of Arts (Visual) from the School of Art, ANU in 2008. She lives and works in Canberra.

Zöe Avis makes bold material-laden paintings that she says allude to Romantic traditions and “....communicate something about the transcendent, beyond language, beyond the physical....I often have the experience of deep meaning and awe, especially in nature. My work is about yearning to capture and create this even in the physicality of paint....My work brings a number of opposing elements into relationship: control and abandon, density and lightness, matter and illusion, beauty and revulsion in fast and slow passages. By using painterly devices such as pouring, dragging, and layering of heavy mediums, house-paint and other non-traditional materials I create a sense of chaos or abandon. However I do not allow these passages of abandon to operate freely across the entire picture plane, preferring to divide the painting into bands as a way to impose order within the fluid nature of the paint...the painting is held static and in a state of tension.”



*Untitled (Unseen World 1)*, 2010  
acrylic and oil on canvas  
50 x 35 cm  
Photography: Peter Boal

## Emma Beer

Emma Beer gained her Bachelor of Visual Arts (Honours), Painting at the School of Art, ANU 2009. She spent the early part of 2010 travelling extensively in Spain courtesy of The Embassy of Spain's Torres Travelling Scholarship.

Emma's work has been included in numerous group exhibitions in Canberra, Melbourne and Tasmania. She lives in Canberra and works as a Technical Officer in Painting at ANU.

*"The 'act of painting' is my primary focus together with an exploration of the physical properties of paint as my medium. The paintings themselves have become the subject, object and model. Every interaction with paint requires both a physical and mental response and involves the hand, the eye and the mind. To avoid over-determination in the "act of painting" I recognise the need for spontaneity along with exploring what this means, and where the spontaneous gesture comes from. My painting practice has become a means of transformation and abstracted interpretation, looking closely at the process of shifting the three-dimensional and unfolding it onto the two-dimensional picture plane. Through the notions of painting I aim to understand and challenge the expectations of painting itself. I investigate not only the process and "the act of making", but also engage with the relationship of the viewer to painting. I seek ways to engage the viewer with formal tensions within the work that hover between levels of stability and instability. Importantly, through juxtaposition of tactility, chaos and order I strive to challenge those viewer expectations and interrogate paintings' conventions."*



*Unfolding and enfolding, thirty two, 2009*  
acrylic and oil on canvas  
170 x 150 cm

## Vivienne Binns OAM

Vivienne Binns lives in Canberra and is Senior Lecturer in Painting at the School of Art, ANU where she was Head of Core Studies from 2000-2007.

Vivienne Binns came to prominence in the late 1960s, producing paintings with a bold, psychedelic aesthetic. In the 1970s she was active in the crafts and fought for improvements for women artists and conditions in the arts generally. Throughout the 1970s, Binns implemented a number of collaborative projects in urban and rural communities, the best known of which is Mothers' Memories Others' Memories (1979-1981). By way of these projects, Binns sought to define the practice of making art as a human activity rather than simply an aesthetic or institutional concern.

Vivienne received the Order of Australia Medal for her contribution to art, craft and community in 1983, the Ros Bower Memorial Award in 1985 and the Australian Artists Creative Fellowship in 1990. She was the CAPO fellow (Capital Arts Patrons Organization) in 2003. Her work is held extensively in museums and collections throughout Australia.

Since she returned to studio-based painting in 1983, her work has been shown in many solo and group exhibitions. Notable among these are:

- Vivienne Binns Solo Exhibition, 2006-7 which toured from the Tasmanian Museum and Gallery to Victoria, NSW and ACT.
- Cross Currents: Focus on Contemporary Australian Art, Museum of Contemporary Art 2007, Sydney.
- Clemenger Contemporary Art Award, National Gallery of Victoria, 2009

Vivienne Binns is currently represented by Milani Gallery, Brisbane, Sutton Gallery, Melbourne, and Helen Maxwell in Canberra.



*Particle thought* (detail), 2009  
synthetic polymer paint on composition board  
(1-42) variable installation



## Julie Brooke

Julie Brooke studied biochemistry before turning her attention to art. She received her Bachelor of Science (Biochemistry) in 1986 at the University College London and a Master of Science (Biochemistry) from Sydney University, 1989. She was awarded a Bachelor Arts (Visual) with First Class Honours and a University Medal at School of Art, ANU in 2008 and is currently a PhD candidate in Painting, School of Art, ANU with the support of an Australian Postgraduate Award.

Julie's work has been included in group exhibitions in Canberra, Adelaide and Fremantle.

*"My current focus on abstraction has emerged from my practice as a representational painter. In earlier work I have investigated in detail Renaissance ideas of the painting as a window into another world, and Lacan's more contemporary view that the picture plane is a screen – a metaphor for the ideas and conventions that govern representation."*

*In my current work I am experimenting with ways of fracturing this screen. Using a limited palette, I have made works in which I develop crystalline geometric forms of increasing complexity across a series of images. I have also developed a series of 'impossible' forms in which, for example, two apparently joined planes can be 'lifted' out of the picture plane in opposing directions using tonal shifts. My aim is to create complex spatial illusions to explore tensions and parallels between rational thought and the more nebulous and unexplained aspects of our experience."*

Julie Brooke currently lives and works in Canberra



*Machina Memorialis*, 2010  
oil paint, polyurethane and gesso on board  
90 x 90 cm

## Julia Castiglioni Bradshaw

Julia completed a Bachelor Visual Arts in Painting at the School of Art, ANU in 2007 following a semester in an exchange program at Universidad Politecnica de Valencia, Spain, 2006. Her work has been included in a number of exhibitions in Canberra, Sydney and Tasmania.

*"The activity of painting itself is the subject of my practice, bringing together elements of paint as matter, colour and shapes to create works. I build up new surfaces and marks over old ones alluding to what was there before by leaving remnants of past marks. I create a sense of depth with this interaction of mark overlaying mark on the surface of the two dimensional format on which I am working; playing with the interaction of figure and ground, and questioning our perceptions with this interaction."*

Julia currently lives and works in Tasmania



*Untitled, 2010*  
acrylic on canvas  
100 x 80 cm

## Claudia Chaseling

Claudia Chaseling was born in Munich in 1973. She studied painting at the Hochschule der Künste, Berlin, 1994-2000 and gained her Masters in Visual Arts in Painting at the School of Art, Australian National University, 2003. She has received numerous awards and grants and to date has had 8 solo exhibitions and been included in numerous group exhibitions in Australia and Europe.

*"How do we experience space? Is there a consensual understanding of reality, with set parameters for orientation? In my work I layer seen, memorized and imagined images of natural landscapes and build structures upon each other, trying to find what is the visual melting pot of all the information and dynamics I experience in my mind. I aim for a composition and depth through colour that is coherent to a theme I follow. The theme is intuitive and emotional - some personal information I circle around for a long time. The process of painting allows me to capture movement in a static form. Painting and drawing for me is immediate and the most direct way of my subconsciousness and intuitive thinking of a picture. Space can be painted but I am not interested anymore to replicate anything referential to what I see in the outside world in the first instance. Whilst painting, the work takes its own path and my focus lies on the essence of the experience of my inner and outer."*

*"These might be remembered landscapes with warped multi-layered perspectives, floating landscapes with no horizon, with neither top nor bottom. I call them 'Schwebende Landschaften', something like 'pending landscapes'. They are no longer the landscape to which I have responded, but an abstract version, altered in form and through the concentrated time making the work."*

Claudia currently lives and works in Berlin.



*Pool 2, 2010*  
egg tempera and oil on canvas  
80 x 80 cm



## Liz Coats

Liz received her Master of Fine Arts (Research) at the University of NSW 1997 and is currently a PHD candidate in Painting, ANU with the support of an ANU scholarship.

She has had 35 solo exhibitions in Australia and New Zealand and has had her work included in a large number of group exhibitions. She has received several awards including the Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant 1999.

*"I keep on re-learning how immersion in landscapes that are relatively undisturbed informs the body's spatial responses and restores vitality. Vivid impressions that don't last long when brought into the studio.*

*How the scent of a bush in flower draws one closer to it, or seeing eucalypt branches cross over and under while the leaves rotate against a bright sky. How stones and leaf litter intermingle on the ground that one walks over, and watching light snow melt in the undergrowth.*

*Colours and textures, the softness and hardness of surfaces, patterns of growth that reveal internal consistency. All the detail and breadth of growing things that fuels a desire for connectivity amongst materials, colours and shapes in painting.*

*These paintings are the beginning of a new strand of work called Organica. I'm playing with 'nature' and geometry, something that*

*has interested me for a long time. Seeing what happens when I pose a question that I don't already know the answer to, like the difficulty of describing a colour experience from memory, or visualizing what it was that made the binding of two or more shapes so memorable."*

Liz Coats is currently represented by Utopia Art Sydney and lives in the ACT.



*Organica #2, 2010*  
acrylic media on board  
74 x 76 cm



## Jodie Cunningham

Jodie Cunningham gained her Bachelor of Fine Arts (Visual) with First Class Honours and a University Medal from School of Art, ANU in 1996.

She received a Master of Fine Arts from Hunter College of The City University of New York in 2000 and a Master of Fine Arts, by Research from the College of Fine Arts, University of NSW in 2002.

Jodie has received a number of awards including the National Museum of Australia Travelling Scholarship, 2003 and a Fulbright Scholarship, Visual & Performing Arts in 2000.

*"My paintings and drawings explore the use of colour and pattern. Using formal elements of design my work references personal experience, memory and domestic interiors; and pays homage to hard edge abstraction."*

*I am completely seduced by colour, its energy and its power to express and evoke emotion. I am drawn to warm colours and use the resonance of hues and tints of the complimentary opposites red and green in the majority of my works. Red becomes shades of pink, magenta and rose - warm, charged and feminine, green is limes from my 70's childhood and mints from my 1940's kitchen.*

*I am inspired by my Ainslie cottage: retro kitchen canisters, peeling lino, Nanna's gingham table cloths, the Marimeko patterns and colours of my childhood curtains, my collection of Japanese obi's, Liquorice Allsorts at Christmas, sour plums at the fishing cottage and pressed metal ceilings in the crumbled mud brick home near Billabong Creek."*

Jodie Cunningham currently lives and works in Canberra and lectures in Visual Arts and Design at Canberra Institute of Technology.



*Nest*, 2010  
synthetic polymer paint on canvas  
105cm x 105cm

## Fernando Do Campo

Fernando Do Campo was born in Mar del Plata, Argentina in 1987 and migrated to Melbourne in 1997. He completed a Bachelor of Contemporary Arts (Visual) at the University of Tasmania in 2007 and received a Bachelor of Visual Arts, Honours from the School of Art, ANU in 2008.

Fernando has been included in numerous group exhibitions around Australia as well as solo exhibitions in Tasmania, Canberra and Melbourne. He is currently Director of Artsalive Inc. Launceston and sessional Lecturer in Painting and Art Theory at the University of Tasmania, Launceston.

Do Campo uses pictorial space to question his geographic and cultural sense of space. He uses the picture space to activate and discuss spatial exchanges through colour, line and varied forms of abstraction. He is also interested in questioning the way pictorial space has been defined throughout the history of painting, in particular abstraction. His recent works focus on conversing with

the dichotomy between negative and positive space particularly the way these definitions shift. Fernando proposes that shifts in painting vocabularies, varied projection systems and a challenging of conventional pictorial space can be used to discuss his fluid and often nostalgic sense of space.

Fernando lives and works in Launceston. He is represented by Colville Street Art Gallery, Hobart.



*mind the gap*, 2010  
acrylic on board  
dimensions variable

## Marie Hagerty

Born Sydney in 1964, Marie Hagerty lives and works in Canberra. In 1987 she gained her Bachelor of Arts (Visual) School of Art ,ANU.

Since then Marie Hagerty has established an impressive national profile making paintings that hover gently between their biomorphic qualities and a kind of graphic inference of planar tension. Marie generally limits her palette to blacks, whites and reds from which she also constructs the compositions of her photomontage works on paper.

Sebastian Smee, writes in the Sydney Morning Herald about Marie's work in 1998 "....what really makes these works so effective is the optical trickery they employ. By the subtle shading of the squares and a clever manipulation of the black lines separating them, Hagerty creates a beguiling impression of three dimensionality. As you stand there, each plane seems to push out from the one 'behind' it, so that each painting has it's own aura of quiet movement and mystery."

Marie has held in excess of 15 solo exhibitions in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne. In addition to this she has also participated in numerous group exhibitions including:

- Sweet Spot, Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne, 2009.
- Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2005 & 2006.
- Into the Quadrangle, RMIT University, Project Space, Melbourne, 2005.
- Contemporary Australian Culture Now, National Gallery of Victoria, 2004.
- Geelong Gallery Contemporary Art Prize, Geelong Regional Gallery, Victoria 2004.
- Public Artworks at the ANU, Canberra, 2001.
- On the Brink, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 2000
- Moët & Chandon Travelling Exhibition, Touring Australia (1995).



*incubus III*, 2008  
oil on canvas  
157 x 137 cm

## Greg Hodge

Greg Hodge was born in 1982 in Canberra and gained his Bachelor of Arts (Visual) Honours at School of Art, ANU in 2005.

Greg has maintained an active professional studio practice in Sydney over the last five years. He has been included in group shows in Sydney and Canberra.

He was chosen to participate in *Audible Surface*, the inaugural exhibition at the newly relocated M16 Gallery. Greg has had three solo exhibitions in Canberra and Sydney, most recently "Spinning Tops" at First Draft Gallery, Sydney.

*"My work is concerned with the development of a visual language through an investigation into abstract painting within a contemporary studio practice. Through drawing and painting the work explores themes relating to landscape, architecture, art history and spirituality."*

*"My current studio explorations involve the overlay of repeated weave motifs and their placement within a painted space. While the motifs start as something solid and recognisable, through the painting process and the repeated overlay of differing patterned devices, they begin to lose their identity as mere formal elements within the painting. I enjoy this repetition of the weave or knot and I use this motif in various ways throughout the development of a painting. Using these varying formal devices I aim to establish a figure-to-ground drama between these motifs and the spaces they occupy."*

*"These painted spaces derived from my interest in Romanticism and the Sublime and their importance within Western Landscape tradition as well as the current relevance of abstraction within the contemporary art discourse surrounding painters like Tomma Abts and Mark Grotjahn. The atmospheric conditioning of a painted surface over a ground as in the works of Turner, Constable and Friedrich is an important formal device within my work. Recently I travelled to Europe and the United States. The works I saw during that trip and my constant drawing practice has enabled me to experiment and develop the use of certain motifs and their relationship to the space in which they are painted."*

Greg Hodge divides his time between his Sydney studio and Canberra while teaching part-time in Painting at the School of Art, ANU.



*Carnivale*, 2009  
acrylic and oil on canvas  
122 x 122 cm

## Karena Keys

Karena Keys gained her Bachelor of Arts (Visual), Honours at the School of Art, ANU in 2005. She is currently a candidate in the MFA program at Sydney College of the Arts.

Throughout her painting practice Keys' impetus revolves around the materiality and texture of paint and its ability to evoke an emotional and physical response, with the intention of extending the medium into 3 dimensions.

Although Karena has chosen paint as her primary material it is difficult to categorise her as a painter as such. Paint becomes for her a modeling material with which she creates objects, sculptures and jewellery. One of her earlier painting strategies was to construct 'facsimile paintings' by stretching and weaving dried paint onto conventional wooden supports making painting itself the subject of these faux paintings/objects.

Keys works with dried acrylic paint as a material like a fabric or thread; often making suspended 3-dimensional objects with it. This way of working allows for a direct, tactile encounter with the paint without the barrier of a brush or palette knife, while she can concurrently explore the process of sewn constructions. The resulting works retain an adherence to the painterly tradition as the unconventional painting techniques she enlists begin to take on the appearance of different brushstrokes. This 'misuse' of the medium leads the work to take on a fragility that imbues it with an organic poetry, leaving you unsure of what you are looking at.

Karena currently lives and works in Sydney.



*inter Gold*, 2010  
woven acrylic paint and cotton thread  
240 x 100 x 80 cm



## Richard Larter

Richard Larter was born in 1929 in London and emigrated to Australia in 1962 at a time when abstraction was fast replacing figurative painting in global art practices.

Never one for partisan adherence, Larter flaunted his affinity with representational painting relentlessly developing his larrikin and passionate engagement with sex, human rights and political freedoms while simultaneously developing a prodigious body of abstract painting. He declared both painterly forms necessary to his practice, stubbornly refusing to be pigeon-holed.

Larter's abstract paintings are imbued with the same ecstatic, freewheeling characteristics and prolificacy of his figurative paintings. His idiosyncratic use of the paint roller as de facto brush disperses his colour in repeated, albeit ecstatically askew rhythms often registering the effects of seasonal changes in blooms, landscape and atmospheric effects.

He has had over 50 solo exhibitions nationally and been represented in even more group shows and in 2008 was the subject of a major retrospective at the National Gallery of Australia.

Since the mid 1960s Richard Larter has been represented by Watters Gallery, Sydney and by Niagara Galleries in Melbourne since 1991. He lives in Canberra.



*Work Over*, 2010  
Chroma acrylic on polyester  
120 x 90 cm

## Fiona Little

Fiona Little gained her Bachelor of Arts Visual (Honours) from the School of Art, ANU in 2007. She has exhibited in solo and group exhibitions at Canberra Contemporary Art Space and M16.

*"My paintings are abstract in the sense they are not pictures of visual things/objects that we can name. They are explorations of paint materials, applications of paint, compositions, colour combinations, surface, space, tones. I enjoy the combinations of glossy surfaces next to matte, textured next to flat, a large block of dull colour next to a glimpse of a highly saturated colour. I work in an improvisational manner through the building up of many layers. I enjoy focusing on elements such as the quality of edges – hard edges created through using tape, edges with seepage under the tape, peeling edges.*

*Ideas that interest me most are to do with paintings about painting or the history of abstract painting, yet at some point I stopped thinking so obviously about history and re-hashing the past in a new way.*

*I am interested in process and decision-making and how we see and feel. I am often analyzing my working processes and working out ways to change or challenge them. In new paintings I often take elements from old paintings and explore them in new ways. I build up paintings over a period of weeks, usually working on one painting exclusively. Through doing this I think a painting will often encompass a feeling from that period of my life. Sometimes I want to create the same mood in my paintings as the music I am listening to. Generally I don't like my paintings to be too upbeat or too dark, just somewhere in between."*

Fiona Little lives and works in Canberra.



*Untitled, 2010*  
acrylic on canvas  
91 x 61 cm  
Photographer: Max Milne

## Sue Lovegrove

Sue Lovegrove was born in Adelaide in 1962. She completed a Bachelor of Arts (Visual) at the School of Art, ANU in 1990 and completed a PhD in Painting at ANU in 2002.

Sue has had 16 solo exhibitions in Canberra and Melbourne and her work has been included in numerous group exhibitions throughout the country.

*"My work has always been about an intimate and personal experience of particular places where I have spent time. These are often remote and isolated places that are relatively free of the presence of human beings: Antarctica, Macquarie Island, Maatsuyker Island and most recently, Tasman Island, all places where the weather and the wildlife dominate and where the balance and order is still in favour of the natural world rather than the human world.*

*For me painting is not just about looking at landscapes, but experiencing them, being in them and being touched by them. It's about allowing the self to be changed by experiences of places. My work always starts with close observation of real spaces and forms. In this way I feel a strong connection to the artist/explorers and naturalists of the 17th and 18th Century. I try to imagine what it would be like to*

*come upon these islands and to see and experience the landscape for the first time. It is the vegetation that captures my imagination the most, in particular the grasses.*

*Tasman Island is a wild and rugged place off the SE coast of Tasmania. The dominant vegetation on the island is a mix of native grasses and pasture escapees remaining from the time when the island was occupied by lighthouse keepers. These grasses are very dense and grow up to a metre high, covering about 70% of the island. The chaotic natural weaving of the grasses reflects the way they are shaped by the wind and weather. Grasses are often disregarded or seen as insignificant in the ecological scheme of things, and yet they harbour a vast biodiversity and the mixture of indigenous and non-indigenous species growing tangled together and competing for space strangely echoes the bigger world."*

Sue Lovegrove lives and works in Tasmania and is represented by Christine Abrahams Gallery in Melbourne and Bett Gallery in Hobart.



*The Shape of the Wind*, 2009  
gouache on paper  
16 x 20.5 cm (one of 14 image)  
Photography: Peter Whyte



## Liang Luscombe

Born in 1987 Liang Luscombe completed her Bachelor of Visual Arts (Honours), Painting at ANU in 2009.

Liang's work thrives on a deliberate, almost perverse, complexity of materiality and motifs creating connections and tensions between issues of permanence and temporality and startlingly coloured beauty and the abject. She incorporates recycled plastics and other prefabricated materials into her work to further develop this hybrid language.

*"I have dispersed my practice over a number of different media: painting, sculpture, video and kaleidoscopes. Currently my work emphasises interconnected relationships and mutations across different media."*

In her determination to delve beneath the conventions of painting and the art market, Liang has recently made work that refers to 'branding' and 'merchandising' and enthusiastically embraces ideas of art being considered outside the gallery system and within areas of social activity.

Liang currently lives in Melbourne and also works as an art writer and curator.



*Slomo demo*, 2010  
oil, enamel and acrylic on board  
dimensions variable,  
Photography: Max Milne

## Peter Maloney

Peter Maloney was born in Cottesloe, WA and associated with the ANU School of Art, since the late 1970s as a student and currently as a lecturer in the Painting Workshop.

Maloney's earlier works in the late 1980s attempted to suggest the tensions surrounding sub-cultural issues associated with (homo) sexual identity and the HIV pandemic utilizing a kind of abstract language formerly associated with the robust masculinity of the New York School painters. Recently the irony of those appropriations has become more evident in his intricate studio processes; using a photocopier to develop and enlarge tiny drawings subsequently translated in paint to large canvasses.

*"I am interested in the mutability of language especially the languages of abstraction and lately, the way language manifests as text. I have always favoured the use of line which seems more useful in my work than shape or even colour. If I feel the need to make representational work I choose photography and collage before painting."*

Maloney's practice has included photography, sound, video, collage, drawing and painting. His work has been shown nationally and abroad including the Legge Gallery, Sydney, Canberra Museum & Gallery and a number of artist-run and regional galleries including the inaugural Tarrawarra Museum of Art's Biennial Exhibition "Parallel Lives: Australian Painting Today" 2006.

He is currently represented by Utopia Art Sydney. Peter lives in Canberra.



*Slow Dive*, 2009  
acrylic on polycotton  
189 x 123 cm

## Tye McBride

Tye McBride was born in Perth, Western Australia in 1984.

She completed her Bachelor of Arts (Visual) at the School of Art, ANU in 2008.

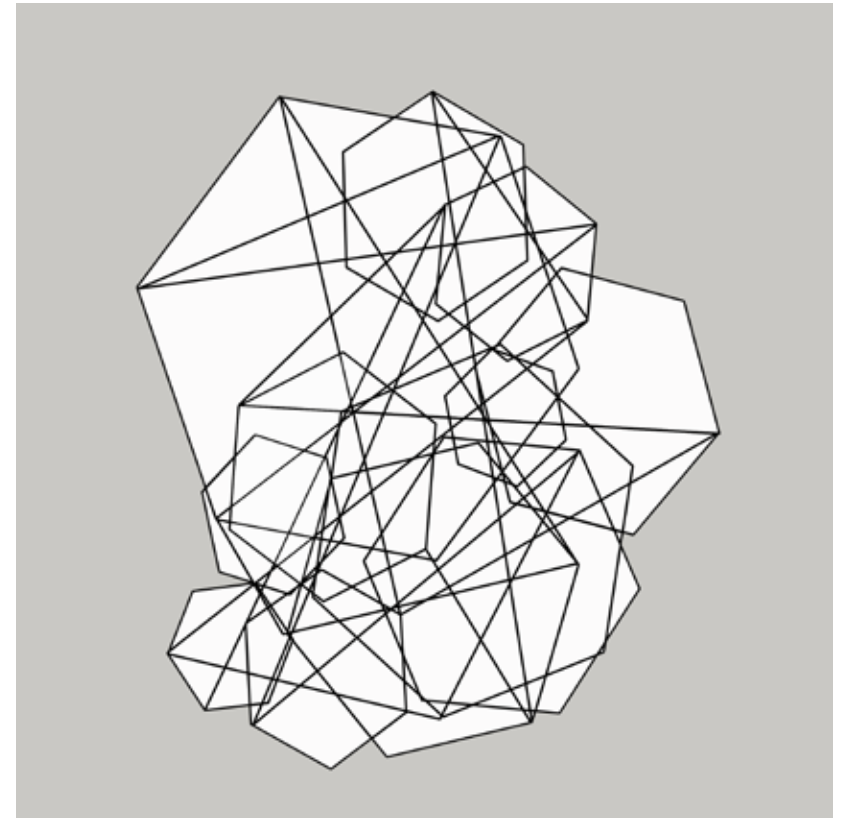
Tye's studio practice takes her painting to extremes. Using cardboard constructions, wall-mounted vinyl, photography and lights she tests definitions of painting, sculpture and installation.

Tye writes *"Space can be thought of as the 'empty shape' which exists around solid shapes. Can we see space? To the extent which the air, or atmosphere is not really empty, space can be seen under certain conditions. Space is perceived more clearly when its boundaries are clearly defined.*

*Currently my practice explores the universal laws of geometry, expressing the extension of the common perceptions of space. Using the application of form, line and colour in concrete terms, I'm attempting to construct and deconstruct space, exploring the ways in which our perceptions make sense of spatial information.*

*In my vinyl paintings, I'm asking the viewer to question the traditional role of canvas. In Greenbergian terms, abstract painting is to be confined to the material or formal dimensions of the canvas, and was not to refer to anything outside of those parameters. By extending the surrounding 'empty space' to the gallery wall, essentially referencing the entire gallery, I wish to blur the lines between formal abstract painting and installation."*

Tye McBride lives and works in Sydney.



*Being Bound*, 2010  
Vinyl  
Dimensions variable

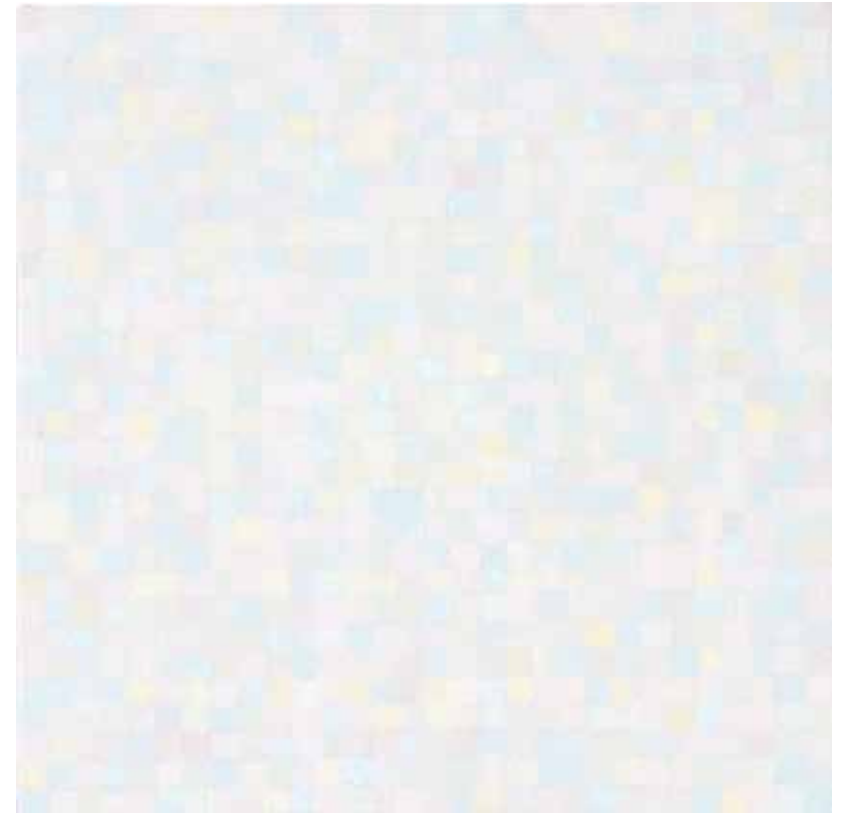
## Suzanne Moss

Suzanne completed her Bachelor of Visual Arts with Honours in Painting at the School of Art, ANU 2003 and was awarded a University Medal. She completed a PhD in Painting at ANU in 2010 with the support of an Australian Postgraduate Award.

*"This painting; "#33 (metta)" from my PhD research "Painting light, touching space", investigates the spatial and poetic effects of painted luminosity. My desire to work non-objectively in this way was inspired by asking the question – what might love look like? Not the romantic kind, but rather the universal, strong and peaceful, necessary-for-survival kind of love. I associated three qualities to formlessly translate into paintings: luminosity, emanation and a sense of the infinite. "#33 (metta)" translates the qualities of loving kindness through high value colour interactions and varied handling of materials resulting in a subtle range of spatial effects, depending on one's perceptions and view-point.*

*My palette is informed by the observation of peaceful natural phenomena and objects such as shells, skies and blossom. Curious about how a painting and even an idea can seem to emanate light (think the cartoon character with light-bulb overhead), I am informed by a wide range of paintings and literature including Fra Angelico's San Marco frescoes, the late oil paintings of JMW Turner, works by the Russian avant-garde, Agnes Martin's abstractions, John Berger, Susan Sontag, Krishnamurti and Christopher Alexander. If only I could paint Gaston Bachelard's idea of the intimate immensity of the poetics of space...."*

Suzanne is currently living and working in Canberra.



*metta study #3, 2010*  
acrylic and oil on linen  
30 x 30 cm



## Geoff Newton

Geoff Newton was born in Albury, NSW in 1977. Geoff completed a Bachelor of Art (Visual) at the School of Art, ANU in 2000. Since then he has maintained a reputation in the Australian art community as a man who brings energy, wit and passion to not only his own art practice but to the many curatorial, musical and media projects he initiates. Geoff has been a member of the artist collective DAMP, director of artist-run initiative, Dudespace and since 2006 has been co-director of the influential Melbourne gallery, Neon Parc.

Since leaving art school Geoff has had 14 solo exhibitions and had work included in numerous group shows nationally and abroad.

Geoff Newton's practice incorporates painting, collage, sound and performance. Exploring art history and the ideas of authenticity, authorship and the mythology of the artist, his casual and meandering aesthetic intentionally defies the rules of artistic conventions in an ironic and informed manner. In addition, Newton's training and background in museums and galleries influences the conceptual and formal foundation of much of his work.

Geoff Newton lives and works in Melbourne.



*Painting*, 2010  
acrylic on polycotton  
152 x 112 cm

## Derek O'Connor

Born 28th March 1957 Warwickshire, England. Arrived Adelaide 1969 and currently lives and works in Canberra.

Derek O'Connor has been showing paintings with shifting emphasis on line, form, colour and painterly materiality for over two decades. He has shown extensively at the Legge Gallery, Sydney since the start of the 1990s and is currently represented by Watters Gallery, Sydney and Karen Woodbury Gallery, Melbourne. While primarily a painter his practice includes photography and photomontage.

Mark Van Veen, (Assistant Dir. Exhibitions & Curatorial ACT Museums & Galleries) in his catalogue essay for Derek O'Connor's Canberra Museum & Gallery exhibition 2007-08 wrote "Contrasting forms and competing colours play with our perceptions of perspective, as the foreground becomes the background and vice versa. They challenge us with their viscous surfaces and ostensibly disconcerting colour combinations, applied with as much a sense of daring as with a sense of humour." About "Petroleum, Lake, Lake 11 and Cross" Van Veen writes "O'Connor employs the pallet knife to apply thick broad areas of paint to

be layered across the surface like skin that has been stretched so tight it begins to tear and reveal the flesh below. Exposed colours from previous layers punctuate the surface and even though the subsequent layers of paint have threatened their existence, they survive to be a dominant force in the composition."

Derek O'Connor lives in Canberra.



*Molonglo River Canberra ACT 2600, #1, 2010*  
oil on wood panel  
41 x 51 cm

## Rachel Jessie-Rae O'Connor

Rachel Jessie-Rae O'Connor gained her Bachelor of Arts (Visual), Honours with a University Medal at School of Art, ANU 2002. She was awarded a Graduate Certificate of Public Art from RMIT, Melbourne in 2009.

Rachel's gleefully dynamic, glittering paintings flaunt their ambivalence to conventional materials, colours and other formal structures. She sources her glitters, fluorescent paints and gels etc from craft, design and hobby stores imbuing her work with as heightened a sense of FUN as she can muster.

*"Modern materials present an enticing invitation to explore surface novelty through absorbed and reflected light. Laser cut foils with holographic properties, superfine stardust in a rainbow palette, textured gels, iridescent powders, leaf metals. Stickers, texas, plastics. Digital and machine-made happiness. Reflecting an interest in fun, my work sets out to utilise the materials of our times because they provide visual gimmicks and new levels at which the colour and form of paint can collide. I generate compositional forms automatically as collage studies. These are then drawn, accuracy and detail are added and lost in the process refining the tone and form which become the final painting. I refer back to the surface textures and characteristics of the collage studies to inform the materials used for the final stage, replicating or mimicking the special effects as they arise."*

Rachel Jessie-Rae O'Connor currently lives and works in Melbourne.



*Untitled after Tony Woods, 2009*  
glitter and acrylic on canvas  
50.5 x 50.5 cm



## Elena Papanikolakis

Elena completed a Bachelor of Arts (Visual), Honours in Painting at the School of Art, ANU 2007. Since graduating she has had 3 solo exhibitions and had work included in 5 group exhibitions in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne. She was twice a finalist in the Brett Whiteley Travelling Art Scholarship.

For some years Elena Papanikolakis's small scale paintings have tested the limits of representation and abstraction to a point the paintings themselves seem sufficient as subject and object.

Her representationally ambivalent paintings often flaunt heavily impasto painterly surfaces capable of carrying extremely subtle passages of colour.

She writes *"A large part of my process involves the exploration of paint itself. I use oil paint as it is full-bodied and I often have thick painterly passages that best reflect the nature of this material. I also like to explore colour, varying weight, texture and brush marks. Space and composition are also a strong focus."*

Lately Elena has been making paintings in response to experimental music.

*"Using audio as a source helps me emphasize this approach to the medium. Terms like colour, weight, texture, space and composition are all descriptors also applicable to music, so as I am painting I can be reacting to the music quite directly".*

Elena is currently "taking it all in" in Europe and is living and working in London.



*massMarcher*, 2009  
oil on wood  
60 x 60 cm



## Dionisia Salas Hammer

Dionisia Salas Hammer gained her Bachelor of Arts (Visual), Honours from School of Art , ANU in 2007

Dionisia has described her paintings as being *"based on the furious speeds of contemporary life and technology"*. She sources her material from the internet, documentary films and photographs and is drawn to imagery of eruption, explosion, implosion and dramatic atmospheric activities. These hyperactive paintings operate as sites of excess registering Salas Hammer's reflections on the contemporary condition.

*"I work with ideas of compression and explosion."*

*Because consideration of scale is crucial to me I use a dynamic range of scales from small paintings that hold too much visual information to large ones that aim to explore the physicality of large format.*

*Partly through my choice of materials, colours and composition I strive to stretch the limits of canvas painting and application of paint.*

*The materials I am using range from oils to sprays, enamels, fluorescent and chrome pigments applied fast, thick or liquid. I want the viewer to be able to see underneath the finished surface, to get a sense of the marks and movement that occurred in the construction of the painting. In theory I aim to compress the information I gather in order to construct the paintings. For example sound, music, film, images sourced from the internet, science fiction and writing impact on my decisions when painting in terms of colour, composition, texture or gesture. I aim for the paintings to be fast-paced occurrences; made fast and observed fast."*

Dionisia currently lives and works in Melbourne.



*Xerc*, 2010  
oil and acrylic on canvas  
122 x 112 cm

## Helen Shelley

Helen Shelley graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (Visual) with Honours from Painting at ANU in 2003. She has gone on to work in art education, teaching in high schools, colleges and in Painting at ANU, while developing an innovative and technically distinctive practice which ranges across figuration and abstraction through paintings which movingly address themes central to human experience.

In explaining the thinking underlying her recent solo exhibitions such as “Death Proof” (2010) and “Immortality without the assistance of God”(2009) shown at Canberra Contemporary Artspace, Shelley writes of painting as a means of “*subverting my fear of death through devices which aim to mock or make light of the macabre. However in doing so, I recognise that attempts at reconciling one’s fear of death through painting are futile and thus I am making work which is inherently and consciously flawed. More abstract interpretations of these concerns are more specifically aimed at creating a pseudo-spiritual experiences; with faux-enlightenment represented though bands of radiating glitter and a garish palette on a plastic ground*”.

Helen has exhibited in group shows in Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne, Newcastle and Auckland.

She currently lives in Sydney.



*Death Proof no.1*, 2010  
mixed media on Perspex,  
62 x 62 cm  
Photography: Brenton McGeachie

## Kerry Shepherdson

Kerry Shepherdson gained her Bachelor of Arts (Visual) Honours from the School of Art, ANU in 2004. She is a current Master of Philosophy candidate in Painting at ANU.

Since 2004 Kerry's work has been included in numerous group exhibitions in and around Canberra and she had her first solo exhibition at the Tuggeranong Arts Centre, ACT in 2005.

Her painting has always reflected her abiding passion for natural growth patterns and plant forms. Lately she has based her paintings on grids and botanical schema, incorporating random fractal-like activities to generate pattern.

*"I am investigating abstraction in painting, by generating non-representational, asymmetrical patterns, starting with a symbol relating to a branching system, often used to describe growth patterns in mathematical, scientific and computer graphics.*

*There is really no 'this way up' for my painting, because I work my way around it on a flat table. After creating a formal grid element in the ground, the picture plane is filled with lines that branch out, self-avoid, overlap, intersect and terminate in all directions. In this process shapes emerge with little deliberate intervention. These outcomes, both planned and unexpected, provide structure in the painting and by defining and outlining the positive and negative shapes, the integral element of visual balance and harmony develops within the composition.*

*My choice of colour is a response to colour combinations of preserved specimens in my plant collection. I think about the square format of the painting as a perfect cradle for an invisible planetary sphere. It is a metaphor for knowledge that life began with plant forms and the branching patterns express the idea of expansion and evolution."*

Kerry Shepherdson lives and works in Canberra.



*Composition XLY*, 2010  
acrylic on canvas  
90 x 90 cm



## Noël Skrzypczak

Noël Skrzypczak was born in Toronto, Canada and relocated to Canberra with her family as a young child.

She completed a Bachelor of Arts (Visual) with Honours at the School of Art, ANU in 2000.

Noël's paintings are often freed from the dimensions of a stretched canvas and occupy vast interior architectural wall and ceiling spaces. By surrounding us with the super-saturated coloured skeins of paint Skrzypczak generates heightened sensory reactions.

*"I am interested in the spatial and emotive possibilities of colour and the spatial and emotive possibilities of the corporeal properties of paint."*

*I want to set paint free so it can occupy space as itself. When flowing across the wall and dripping onto the floor, paint becomes a sculptural presence occupying real space and time. Its form relates to the viewer physically, on a one-to-one scale.*

*I also want to be free to explore and exploit the language of painting - the gamut of historical and cultural marks and methods that is the*

*inheritance of the contemporary painter.*

*I don't think of myself as an abstract painter as such because my paintings are, for the most part, in my mind, landscapes or 'living' entities. They are the result of an attempt to make visible an idea or feeling that is real but not normally seen."*

Noël Skrzypczak currently lives in Melbourne.



*Where did I come from? Where am I going?*, 2008  
Acrylic on canvas  
2.6 x 1.52 m  
Photo by Jenni Carter

## Gary Smith

Gary Smith gained his Bachelor of Arts (Fine Arts) from RMIT, Melbourne in 1982. He was awarded a Graduate Diploma at RMIT the following year.

Gary gained his Master of Philosophy (Visual Arts) from the School of Art, ANU in 2005.

He has had 5 solo exhibitions in Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney and has had his work included in numerous group exhibitions throughout Australia since 2006.

Gary Smith makes multi-paneled paintings with a limited palette of rich but satin-smooth oil paint. His gauzy layered greys and heavy blacks are seemingly embedded with illusive imagery, subtly reflecting his interest in Romanticism, history and memory.

He lives in Canberra, working at the Canberra Museum and Gallery.



*Wolf*, 2010  
Acrylic and pigment on canvas  
200 x 270 cm

## Bryan Spier

Bryan Spier completed a Bachelor of Visual Arts at School of Art, ANU in 1998 and was awarded a Master of Visual Arts from the Victorian College of the Arts 2005. He has had a number of solo exhibitions in Melbourne between 2004 and 2008 and has exhibited nationally and internationally in numerous group shows, most recently in Chromophobia at Ryan Henshaw Gallery, Brisbane in 2009.

*"I am not interested in abstraction as an historical or ideological movement. I eschew representations of things so that my paintings are wholly present at the time and place of viewing. Representations are pointers to things that are absent, things that may be tainted by memory or interpretation. In place of 'things' there is colour."*

*Colour action, reaction and interaction are events that occur as the painting is being observed.*

*Representation provides easy answers to questions of organization, such as composition, colour and movement; without it there is nothing. From this 'nothing' I must find momentum enough to make colour travel around the canvas. So the first line has no context, it is just a push; a coloured manifestation of directional force. The second line responds to the first, and so on until every space is accounted for."*

Bryan lives in Melbourne and is represented by Sarah Scout Gallery, Melbourne.



*Ruthless and flagrant*, 2009  
acrylic on canvas  
120 x 80 cm

## Aria Stone

Aria Stone completed her Bachelor of Arts (Visual), Honours at the School of Art, ANU in 2007. She is currently a candidate for a Master of Visual Art at the ANU.

Aria works across a variety of media including painting, drawing, sculpture, photography and video and has exhibited her work throughout Australia. Aria has a strong background in music and was a professional musician/singer/songwriter for many years before pursuing her art career. She still continues to perform in rock and blues bands playing tenor saxophone, flute and blues harp as well as recording and performing her original songs on vocals and acoustic guitar.

*"My latest series of drawings and video work have been inspired by the desire to translate my personal musical approach and improvising skills into my visual arts practice.*

*In this body of work I investigate the link between music and visual art through the processes of layering and improvisation. I begin by making marks with charcoal and pastel in response to music or sounds of the immediate environment allowing my body to move freely with the rhythms and moods of the moment. After a period of time I start introducing colour, subject or theme inspired by poetry, music or memory. Each image seems to emerge of its own accord, as I side-step the analytical mind and allow intuition to take over."*

Aria Stone currently lives and works in Canberra.



*Book of Life (still from animation video), 2009*  
mixed media on paper  
84 x 59 cm



## Frank Thirion

Frank Roland Thirion was born in Paris in 1958 and relocated to Australia in 1967.

He gained his Bachelor of Arts (Visual), Honours from School of Art, ANU in 1999 and was awarded a PhD, Painting in 2004.

Frank's work has been included in over 50 group exhibitions and his work is included in numerous collections including The National Museum of Australia and Parliament House Art Collection.

"The uncertainties of a drawn structure increase when it is composed of similar, repeated elements." Bridget Riley, 1964.

*"My current work explores the vibrating optical properties of paint to become the principle focus between perception and perceived visual experience. The eyes travel cross the surface of the painting attempting to decipher the non-representational forms. Illusive patterns appear to fill the space of the canvas with fields of shimmering dots. This optical flicker triggers unfamiliar 'qualia' colour experiences. The qualia*

*phenomenon is produced by distributing a broken field of white dots overlaid on black elliptical forms, which are themselves placed on a deep red ochre ground. The intensity of the vibrating white field over a red ground generates an illusion of movement with the emergence of an optical afterglow. The forms of overlapping optical illusions appear to create a conspicuous uneasiness in the viewer's consciousness. The visual tension created by the work contributes greatly towards an alternate optical experience."*

Frank lives and works in Canberra.



*Phantom Light*, 2010  
Natural pigment and acrylic paint on canvas  
200 x 300 cm



## Elefteria Vlavianos

Elefteria gained her Bachelor of Arts (Politics) at University of Adelaide, 1994. She subsequently gained her Bachelor of Arts (Visual) at School of Art, ANU in 2002 and is currently a PhD candidate in Painting at ANU, supported by an Australian Postgraduate Award.

Vlavianos has been included in numerous group shows throughout NSW, ACT and Victoria, most recently her work was selected to be part of “Audible Surfaces” the inaugural exhibition in the newly relocated M16 Gallery, Canberra.

She has had seven solo exhibitions in Canberra and Melbourne and in 2002 was awarded the Embassy of Spain Travelling Scholarship.

*“A key consideration in my work is the processes of reduction and the translation of culturally specific motifs into a contemporary context through the idiom of abstract painting.*

*The process of layering paint in an open and fluid form is accompanied at times with the use of a grid that is inlaid with motifs and text that dissolves and recurs. The grid in flux operates as a structural mechanism, a formal device and as an image that is seen/unseen. The exploration and use of the grid structure in my work relates to a process of mapping, disintegration, location, codification and weaving.*

*My current paintings are layered with crosshatched script. This field of script has been painted in relation to a vertical central seam. The seam is used as a linear device that acts as a locating point within the work whilst at the same time encouraging the viewer to transgress it – to look and to move across the surface of the canvas.*

*The script in the paintings are the historical sites and names of town from the Ottoman Empire, such as Smyrna, Iznik, Adana, Angora, Sis, Sivas and so forth. It is not essential that the viewer knows the content of the painting, but rather that they might feel a vibration of form and structure that is both intimate and expansive – seen and unseen; lost and found.”*

Elefteria currently lives in Canberra.



*Passage no. 1* (detail), 2009  
acrylic on canvas  
150 x 120 cm  
Photography: Derek Ross

## Paul Wotherspoon

Paul Wotherspoon completed a Bachelor of Arts (Visual) Honours at the School of Art, ANU in 2004. He has primarily exhibited his work in Melbourne where he is currently Director of Rear View Gallery and Studios.

His practice constantly interrogates the actual construction and display of this thing we call a 'painting'. Sometimes his work operates as a flat image on a wall, other times as an object or a mechanized interactive work but usually with some sign of 'painting' as subject.

He is interested in testing the capacity of objects to represent painting, or more accurately, the capacity of such representation to be conveyed by his constructions.

Through these processes Paul seems to be both testing the very limits of our ability to recognise and acknowledge his subject matter and is simultaneously confronting us with what he sees as the limits of easel painting conventions.

Paul has worked with a number of materials and processes such as stretched rubber, plastic objects and inflatables and mechanized sculptures all of which serve to confront and confound our preconceptions about the authority of the stretched canvas.



*Free Range* (detail), 2010  
wood and paint  
180 x 130 cm



## Dan Zhu

Dan Zhu was born in Hangzhou, China in 1986 and completed high school in the ACT.

Dan Zhu completed his Bachelor of Arts (Visual) at the School of Art, ANU in 2010 and as such is the most recent of our graduates featured in This Way Up.

His formative art experiences and education were in Beijing, China. Dan's subsequent exposure to the originators of Western Abstraction informed his efforts to synthesize traditional Chinese brush techniques with the more physical flourishes of gestural abstraction. This process was also informed by his experiences of European abstraction while on student exchange to the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris in 2008.

Rather than sublimating his Chinese heritage he sought to recontextualise these disparate influences, determined to identify a position for himself within Western contemporary practice.

Dan's liberated and uninhibited use of saturated colours, the fluidity of paint as it trails across his boards and the sense that there is no 'this way up' in his works coalesce to suggest that he is indeed effectively forming his own visual language.



*Figure 2, 2010*  
acrylic on board  
122 x 91 cm

## ABOUT THE ANU SCHOOL OF ART

The School of Art has a reputation as one of Australia's premier visual art and design teaching institutions. This reputation has been developed and maintained through a hands-on teaching program that emphasises excellence in studio practice in combination with a critically informed approach to the field of art and design. The School has an excellent success rate in graduating highly skilled professionals who make a significant contribution as exhibiting artists, curators, writers, and scholars and arts administrators. Graduates have achieved national and international recognition and are successful in gaining competitive scholarships and awards.

Undergraduate, combined degree, Honours and a range of postgraduate programs are offered, all taught in the School's specialised facilities by highly skilled staff. A highlight of all of our programs is the access provided to visiting artists and scholars both within the School of Art and through the University's broader teaching and research areas.

Programs are enhanced by the School's proximity to national cultural institutions. Close by are the National Gallery of Australia, the National Film and Sound Archives, the National Library of Australia, the National Museum of Australia, the National Portrait Gallery and the Canberra Museum and Art Gallery and the Drill Hall Gallery.

A special feature of the School of Art is the International Student Exchange Program. Through this program students in their second semester of second year or first semester of third year have the opportunity to study at university schools of art and design in Asia, Europe and North America.

### For further information:

**Web:** <http://soa.anu.edu.au>

**Phone:** (02) 6125 2898 or (02) 6125 5810

**Email:** [enquiries.arts@anu.edu.au](mailto:enquiries.arts@anu.edu.au)

## POSTGRADUATE STUDIES AT THE ANU SCHOOL OF ART IN VISUAL ARTS, DIGITAL ARTS AND DESIGN ARTS

The School of Art offers a range of Research and Coursework degrees at postgraduate level in all of its discipline areas.

**Research degrees** offered are the 2 year Master of Philosophy and the 3-4 year PhD. A range of options for study within these can be considered - from a combination of practice-led studio research, exegesis and coursework theory courses to a conventional text based thesis. Other options may also be negotiated.

**Coursework degrees** in both Visual Arts and Digital Arts include

- Graduate Certificate in Visual or Digital Arts (one semester in full-time mode)
- Graduate Diploma in Visual or Digital Arts (two semesters in full-time mode)
- Master of Visual or Digital Arts (two semesters in full-time mode)
- Master of Visual or Digital Arts (Research) (one semester in full-time mode)

A Master of Design Arts is offered over a calendar year in a number of the School's disciplines, and in the Digital Arts Graduate Diploma and Masters programs a Special Effects specialization is possible.

The suite of programs is designed to allow students with different levels of undergraduate and professional experience to commence graduate study and progress through increasing levels of achievement. The programs are suitable particularly for applicants wishing to upgrade their qualifications or seeking to engage in intensive studio/media arts/design practice in a stimulating art school environment. In the programs, students produce substantial creative art works and deepen and extend their skills while also exploring their own personal themes and interests. The programs also prepare students for higher degree research at PhD level.

For further information please see: <http://soa.anu.edu.au>

The ANU CRICOS number: # 00120C



**ANCA Gallery** is an artist run initiative, operating since 1992 with the support of Australian National Capital Artists Inc. and the ACT Government.

**ANCA Gallery** aims to

- present a vibrant and diverse program
- promote visual arts and cultural development
- connect with local, regional and national communities
- offer engaging, informative and accessible activities

**ANCA** maintains studios for practicing artists at both Mitchell and Dickson campuses, applications are now being accepted.

#### **GALLERY**

Wednesday to Sunday 12-5pm

T 02 6247 8736

E [anca@iimetro.com.au](mailto:anca@iimetro.com.au)

W <http://www.anca.canberra.net.au>

1 Rosevear Place DICKSON ACT 2602



ANCA Gallery is an artist run initiative, operating since 1992 with the support of Australian National Capital Artists Inc. and the ACT Government.

**M16 Artspace** is an artist run initiative providing visual arts infrastructure and development opportunities to artists, arts organisations and the community. **M16** houses twenty-eight studios, three galleries and four workshop spaces.

#### **GALLERY**

Wednesday to Sunday 12-5pm

#### **OFFICE**

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