



MEDIA RELEASE

FOUNTAIN COURT EXHIBITIONS AT PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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7 July 2023

Portraits from Studio A: Celebrating talent and inclusivity

A collection of incredible portraits is on display at NSW Parliament this July, showcasing the talent of six professional artists with intellectual disability – with four Archibald Prize finalists among them.

The artists include Thom Roberts, Victoria Atkison, Mathew Calandra, Meagan Pelham, Daniel Kim and Jaycee Kim. They're from Studio A, a Sydney-based supported studio helping tackle the barriers faced by visual artists with intellectual disability.

"We're all about providing a powerful sense of identity and self-worth to our artists, through fostering and promoting their genuine artistic skill and passion," says Gabrielle Mordy, Studio A's CEO and Artistic Director. "We provide a space for our artists that's equipped with specialist materials and support staff, and the work that gets produced – as visitors to NSW Parliament this month will see – is amazing."

The exhibition, '*Portraits from Studio A*', is open in the Fountain Court exhibition space of Parliament House from Tuesday 4 to Thursday 27 July. Entry to the Parliament at 6 Macquarie Street, Sydney is free, with the doors open to the public between 9am and 5pm on weekdays.

Portraits from Studio A is being hosted at the Parliament by the President of the Legislative Council, the Honourable Ben Franklin.

"It's an absolute pleasure to have these paintings on display for everyone to come see," Mr Franklin says. "Each of the 13 professional pieces reflects the artist's deep engagement with their portrait subject and, as a collective, the works are a reminder of how art can be such a powerful means for neurodivergent people to find connection – and for increasing diversity and inclusion within the community."

Other exhibitions at Parliament House in July:

With *Portraits from Studio A* able to be seen along the left wall of the Fountain Court, the exhibition space also features artworks from the Parliament's collection, including a series of watercolours by Heather Dorrrough on display together for the first time. Along the Parliament's Reconciliation Wall until Thursday 27 July is also *Songline*, a series of artworks created specifically for the space by Indigenous artist Kim Healey, exploring Bundjalung culture and connection to country.

See www.bit.ly/events-and-exhibitions for more information

A note about accessing Parliament House:

The Parliament is currently undergoing restoration works, but remains open to the public. Access is to the left of the building, via the security gatehouse. Visitors can follow the signage into the building and take either the stairs or lift to the Fountain Court.

-- ENDS --

- Interviews with Studio A's Gabrielle Mordy available: gabrielle.mordy@studioa.org.au
- For general information about the Parliament's exhibition program or further information about this exhibition, contact Lauren Monaghan, Director of Communications and Engagement: 9230 2103 or lauren.monaghan@parliament.nsw.gov.au

ABOUT THE ARTISTS**Thom Roberts**

Thom works across painting, drawing, installation, animation and performance, and is an awarded and recognised contemporary Australian artist. In 2021 he was a finalist in the Archibald Prize in 2021 for his portrait of Studio A Chairman Shane Simpson, which is currently on display at NSW Parliament House.

<https://www.studioa.org.au/thom-roberts>

Victoria Atkinson

Victoria's rainbow palette is both a personal representation of her as an openly queer woman and a manifestation of her expressed goal with making art: to bring joy to audiences everywhere. Victoria was named as a finalist in the Archibald Prize in 2021 – this work, depicting former Federal Member for North Sydney Trent Zimmerman, is on display at NSW Parliament House.

<https://www.studioa.org.au/victoria-atkinson>

Mathew Caladnra

Mathew has an unmistakable and arresting linear style, and can transform the most banal subject matter into something of deep mystical beauty. His work has appeared in both national and international curated exhibitions, and at NSW Parliament this month you can see his portrait of artist Michael Kempson.

<https://www.studioa.org.au/mathew-calandra>

Meagan Pelham

Meagan's artworks invite audiences to see the world through rose-coloured glasses and to embrace moments of beauty that surround us. She was a finalist in the 2022 Archibald Prize, and Meagan's work at NSW Parliament is titled 'Passion for love of life' and is a portrait of Debra Keenahan.

<https://www.studioa.org.au/meagan-pelham>

Daniel Kim

Daniel, who was a 2024 finalist in the Archibald Prize, paints in the tradition of the Old Masters, with an innate ability to representationally paint his surroundings. Works from his 'Station of the Cross' series can be seen at NSW Parliament, as well as his portrait of Matt Kean from 2019, and a new portrait in memory of Greg Warburton.

<https://www.studioa.org.au/daniel-kim>

Jaycee Kim

Jaycee's works transport viewers to other worlds where environments flux and identities transform. The rainbow - an immediate symbol of joy and pride - is also a recurring motif in Jaycee's practice. On display at NSW Parliament is 'Jaycee's Multiverse Self Portrait Symphony'.

<https://www.studioa.org.au/jaycee-kim>