

Mitch Cairns

b. 1984, Gadigal Country/Sydney, Australia

I. Gadigal Country/Sydney, Australia

EDUCATION

2003-2006 Bachelor of Fine Arts with Honours, National Art School, Sydney

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2024 *Mitch Cairns — hallway project | Coloured Glass (after Long Before the Long Before)*, The Commercial, Sydney

2023 *Mitch Cairns — Free TAFE & Railway Cake*, The Commercial, Sydney

2022 *102.5fm*, Knulp, Sydney

2020 *Waylaid S T O O P*, The Commercial, Sydney
MINUTES/BEANS, Ankles, Sydney

2019 *TASTE etc ...*, The Commercial, Sydney

2018 *Mitch Cairns - Soliloquy Workshop*, The Commercial, Sydney

2017 *TUG OF WAR (rope): TUG OF LOVE (bon-bon)* (with Matthew Tumbers), KNULP, Sydney

2016 *Mitch Cairns - Stray Geranium*, The Commercial, Sydney

2015 *The Reader's Voice*, curated by Linda Michael, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
Mitch Cairns - FINCHES, The Commercial, Sydney

2014 *Mitch Cairns - Dip or Skinny Dip*, The Commercial, Sydney
Cigarette cm, TCB art Inc., Melbourne
Studio Leak - Drawing Wall #14, curated by Elise Routledge, Shepparton Art Museum, Shepparton, Vic

2013 *Masters Resting*, KALIMANRAWLINS, Melbourne

2012 *Bass Principals*, BREENSPACE, Sydney
Piano Removalist, Boxcopy, Brisbane
Blue Period (with Mathew Tumbers), curated by Susan Gibb, Society, Sydney

2010 *Man Rose*, BREENSPACE, Sydney

2008 *Written and Recorded by Ringo Starr*, BREENSPACE, Sydney
Slow dancing, Locksmith Project Space, Sydney
Hey, hey, hey, my, my, my, gone, gone, gone, MOP Projects, Sydney

2007 *I want my pants ripped off by someone wild*, MOP Projects, Sydney

2006 *We got the bright lights shining on our backs*, Firstdraft, Sydney
Re-establish something of a bond (with Nana Ohnesorge), MOP Projects, Sydney

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2024 *2024 Darling Portrait Prize*, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra

2023 *Thin Skin*, curated by Jennifer Higgie, Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne
The Commercial Group Show, Sydney Contemporary, Carriageworks (Booth F16), Sydney

2022	<p><i>Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: Free/State</i>, curated by Sebastian Goldspink, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide</p> <p><i>Zombie Eaters</i>, curated by Michael Moran, Murray Art Museum Albury, NSW</p> <p><i>Ten Years</i>, The Commercial, Sydney</p> <p><i>LIGHTMOVING — Augusta Vinall Richardson, Jazz Money, Mitch Cairns</i>, The Commercial, Sydney</p>
2021	<p><i>The National: New Australian Art</i>, curated by Abigail Moncreiff, Carriageworks, Sydney</p> <p><i>This is a poem</i>, curated by Melissa Keys, Buxton Contemporary, Melbourne</p> <p><i>The Commercial – Mitch Cairns, Nigel Milsom, Jude Rae</i>, Explore Sydney Contemporary, The Commercial, Sydney</p>
2020	<p><i>NEXT</i>, The Commercial, Sydney</p> <p><i>The Kings School Art Prize</i>, The Kings School, Sydney</p>
2019	<p><i>The essayist</i>, curated by Jasmin Stephens, Cross Art Projects, Sydney</p> <p><i>Waiter Waiter</i>, The Commercial, Sydney</p> <p><i>The Whiteley at 20: Twenty Years of the Brett Whiteley Travelling Art Scholarship</i>, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney</p> <p><i>Electric! Portraits that Pop!</i> National Portrait Gallery, Canberra</p>
2018	<p><i>The Horse</i>, curated by Noel McKenna, Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney</p> <p><i>National Art – Part One</i>, National Art School Gallery, Sydney</p> <p><i>Bowerbird: Clinton Bradley and the Art of Collecting</i>, curated by Kent Buchanan, Western Plains Cultural Centre, Dubbo, NSW</p> <p><i>Unreal City</i>, curated by Sarah Rees, Firstdraft, Sydney</p> <p><i>The drawing is just not there</i>, curated by Patrice Sharkey & Christopher L. G. Hill, Westspace, Melbourne</p>
2017	<p><i>Grounded</i>, curated by Judith Blackall, National Art School Gallery, Sydney</p> <p><i>The Commercial</i>, Sydney Contemporary, Carriageworks (Stand E06), Sydney</p> <p><i>Game</i>, Bowerbank Ninow, Auckland, New Zealand</p>
2016	<p><i>Painting. More Painting</i>, curated by Max Delany, Annika Kristensen and Hannah Mathews, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne</p> <p><i>The Commercial</i>, Auckland Art Fair, Auckland, New Zealand</p> <p><i>Un Leg</i>, curated by Nick Strike, 55 Sydenham Rd, Sydney</p>
2015	<p><i>DEADPAN</i>, curated by Abigail Moncreiff, Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, Goulburn, NSW</p> <p><i>The Commercial</i>, Sydney Contemporary, Carriageworks (Stand A01), Sydney</p> <p><i>Writing Art</i>, curated by Scott Donovan, Artspace, Sydney</p> <p><i>TPOLR</i>, The Commercial, Sydney</p> <p><i>21st Century Heide: The Collection since 2000</i>, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne</p> <p><i>Outside Thoughts</i>, curated by Wes Hill, Contemporary Art Tasmania, Hobart</p> <p><i>Six people in a room</i>, KNULP, Sydney</p>
2014	<p><i>Now the heart is filled with gold as if it were a purse</i>, curated by Glenn Barkley, Arts Project Australia, Melbourne</p> <p><i>No fond return of love</i>, Institute of Contemporary Art Newtown, Sydney</p> <p><i>The Commercial</i>, Melbourne Art Fair, Royal Exhibition Centre, Melbourne</p> <p><i>OUI we</i>, The Commercial, Sydney</p>
2013	<p><i>The Knock-Off Show</i>, curated by Liang Luscombe and Brook Babington, SLOPES, Melbourne</p> <p><i>Relationshippal – Mitch Cairns, Susan Jacobs, Tim Silver</i>, BREENSPACE, Sydney</p> <p><i>Ten out of Ten</i>, curated by Rob and George Adams, MOP Projects, Sydney</p>
2012	<p><i>Sprezzatura</i>, OK Gallery, Perth</p> <p><i>Cool World</i>, ALASKA Projects, Sydney</p> <p><i>The Drawing Room</i>, BREENSPACE, Sydney</p>
2011	<p><i>Eastern Seaboard</i>, curated by Reuben Keehan and Melanie Oliver, Artspace, Sydney</p>

	Salon, Eastern Bloc, Sydney
	Out of the Comfort Zone, Curated by Virginia Wilson, Customs House, Sydney
2010	<p><i>Redheads & Power Chicks & Men who sew</i>, curated by Barbara Flynn, Deloitte Building, Sydney</p> <p><i>BREENSPACE</i>, Melbourne Art Fair, Royal Exhibition Hall, Melbourne</p> <p><i>Alpha Romeo – Mitch Cairns, Christopher Hanrahan, Nigel Milsom</i>, curated by Matthys Gerber, Peloton, Sydney</p> <p><i>They call them Pirates out here</i>, curated by David Elliot, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney</p> <p><i>Group Show</i>, BREENSPACE, Sydney</p> <p><i>20/Twenty</i>, curated by Ron and George Adams, University of Technology Sydney Gallery, Sydney and Dubbo Regional Gallery, Dubbo, NSW</p> <p><i>In Temperance</i>, curated by Mark Titmarsh, City of Sydney Laneways Project, Sydney</p>
2009	<p><i>What I think of When I think about dancing</i>, curated by Lisa Havilah and Susan Gibb, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Sydney</p> <p><i>Adam, Adam, Mitch, Nigel & Ron – Big Painting</i>, Fraser Studios, Sydney</p> <p><i>Reality Check</i>, curated by Daniel Mudie Cunningham, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Gymea, NSW</p> <p><i>Video Time</i>, curated by Abigail Moncreiff, MOP Projects, Sydney</p> <p><i>Colleagues & Peers (hokey-pokey)</i>, The Cosmic Battle for your Heart, Sydney</p> <p><i>The Shilo Project</i>, curated by Chris McAuliff, Ian Potter Museum, Melbourne</p>
2008	<p><i>Locksmith Annual</i>, Locksmith Project Space, Sydney</p> <p><i>30th Anniversary Exhibition</i>, Wollongong City Gallery, Wollongong, NSW</p> <p><i>Downtown</i>, curated by Firstdraft, City of Sydney Laneways Project, Sydney</p> <p><i>Rimbaud/Rambo</i>, Neon Park, Melbourne</p> <p><i>Rookie Show</i>, curated by Ron and George Adams, Inflight, Hobart</p> <p><i>Stupid Little Dreamer</i>, curated by Ron & George Adams, Inflight, Hobart</p> <p><i>I am a Good Boy</i>, curated by Elise Routledge, Firstdraft, Sydney</p>
2007	<p><i>Victory! Triumph!</i> (performance with Agatha Gothe-Snape), Firstdraft 21st Anniversary Smash Hits, Parramatta Artist's Studios, Sydney</p> <p><i>Deck</i>, MOP Projects, Sydney</p>
2006	<p><i>The Year in Art</i>, S. H Ervin Gallery, Sydney</p> <p><i>Plastic Myth</i>, curated by James Steele, Firstdraft, Sydney</p> <p><i>Drawcard 06</i>, National Art School, Sydney</p> <p><i>Cones of Zontact</i>, Loose Projects, Sydney</p> <p><i>Post-it</i>, Peloton, Sydney</p> <p><i>Six</i>, Mary Place Gallery, Sydney</p>
2005	<p><i>Punch</i>, MOP Projects, Sydney</p> <p><i>Last show of the year</i>, King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney</p>
2004	<p><i>Art on the Rocks</i>, ASN Gallery, The Rocks, Sydney</p> <p><i>Salon de Refuses (Wynne Prize)</i>, S.H Ervin Gallery, Sydney</p>

CURATORIAL PROJECTS

2020	<i>KNUCKLES, ANKLES and KNULP</i> , Sydney
2019	<p><i>Primavera 2019: Young Australian Artists</i>, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney</p> <p><i>PLATES</i>, ANKLES, Sydney</p> <p><i>Nouveau Think</i>, ANKLES, Sydney</p> <p><i>TAP SUCCESS</i>, ANKLES, Sydney</p>
2018	<i>Composite Order</i> , ANKLES, Sydney
2012	<i>Cool World</i> , Alaska Projects, Sydney

2010	<i>New Apartment</i> , 'NICE' at The Cosmic Battle for Your Heart, Sydney
2008	<i>Look out Wembley Arena</i> , MOP Projects, Sydney
COLLECTIVE AND ARTIST-LED ORGANISATIONS	
2023-present	Founder/Director, Cellar Door, Sydney
2018-2021	Founder/Director, ANKLES, Sydney
2009-2011	Founding member, The Cosmic Battle for Your Heart, Sydney
2007-2008	Committee member, MOP Projects, Sydney
2006-2007	Volunteer, Firstdraft, Sydney
2005-2007	Studio Assistant to Adam Cullen
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	
2023	Wes Hill, <i>Mitch Cairns — Free TAFE & Railway Cake</i> , exh. text, The Commercial, Sydney, 2023 Mitch Cairns, 'Self-Portrait as a Lemon Tree', <i>Thin Skin</i> , exh. cat., Jennifer Higgie and Chloe Aridjis, eds., Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne, 2023, pp. 58-59
2022	Bradley Vincent, 'Spectral State', <i>2022 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: Free/State</i> , Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 2022, pp.42-45
2021	Daniel Mudie Cunningham, 'Mitch Cairns', exh. text, <i>The National: New Australian Art</i> , Carriageworks, Sydney, 2021 Courtney Kidd, 'The National 2021: New Australian Art', <i>Artist Profile</i> , no. 55, 2021
2020	Michael Snape, 'Mitch Cairns - Waylaid S T O O P', exh. text, The Commercial, Sydney, 2020
2019	Mitch Cairns, 'Making Sense as Language Forms', <i>Primavera 2019: Young Australian Artists</i> , exh. cat., Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney, 2019, pp. 9-12. 'Mitch Cairns', <i>The Whiteley at 20: Twenty Years of the Brett Whiteley Travelling Art Scholarship</i> , exh. cat., National Trust of Australia (NSW) and S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney, 2019, pp. 40-41.
2017	'Mitch Cairns wins the Archibald Prize', <i>Blouin Art Info</i> , 1 August 2017. Andrew Frost, 'Archibald 2017: objections to winning work are merely whinges over style', <i>The Guardian</i> , Saturday 29 July 2017. 'Mitch Cairns wins \$80,000 Archibald Prize', <i>Artforum</i> , 29 July 2017. Marese O'Sullivan, 'Sydney artist Mitch Cairns wins \$100,000 Archibald Prize', <i>SBS</i> , 28 July 2017. Riley Stuart, 'Archibald Prize: Mitch Cairns wins 2017 portrait gong for painting of his partner', <i>ABC News</i> , 28 July 2017. 'Archibald Winner Mitch Cairns was Led by Love', <i>Australian Financial Review</i> , 28 July 2017. Eoin Blackwell, 'Mitch Cairns Takes Archibald Prize for Portrait of His Partner', <i>Huffington Post</i> , 28 July 2017. Jane Albert, 'Sydney Artist Mitch Cairns wins 2017 Archibald Prize', <i>Broadsheet</i> , 28 July, 2017. Garry Maddox, 'Mitch Cairns' portrait of Agatha Gothe-Snape wins Archibald Prize', <i>The Sydney Morning Herald</i> , 28 July 2017. Wes Hill, 'Around Town', <i>Frieze</i> , No. 186, 9 February 2017.
2016	Stephanie Berlangieri and Hannah Matthews, 'Mitch Cairns', <i>Painting. More Painting</i> , exh. cat., Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, pp. 54-57. John Cruthers, 'Stray Geranium', exh. cat., The Commercial, Sydney, 2016.
2015	Dan Rule, 'Mitch Cairns: Poetics and Pragmatics', <i>Vault</i> , September 2015, no. 11, pp. 20-23. Matthew Holt, 'Midnight All Day: Notes on Mitch Cairns' New Work', <i>Mitch Cairns – FINCHES</i> , exh. cat., The Commercial, Sydney
2014	Ash Kilmartin, 'Condensity', <i>Mitch Cairns – Cigarette cm</i> , exh. cat., TCB art Inc., 2014.
2013	Owen Craven, 'Emerge: Mitch Cairns', <i>Artist Profile</i> , no. 22. Susan Gibb, 'Collector's Love', <i>Australian Art Collector</i> , no. 63.

2012	Erik Jensen, 'Blue Period', <i>Runway</i> , no. 21, pp. 66-69. Susan Gibb, 'Sensitive Art', <i>Base Principles</i> , exh. cat., BREENSPACE, Sydney, 2012. André Hemer, 'Discussing Painting without Irony – Bass Principals', <i>EyeContact</i> , 20 June 2012. Danny Ford, 'Heavy Lifting: Piano Removalist', <i>Shift Focus Without Warning</i> , 4 March 2012. Rachel Fuller, 'Piano Removalist', exh. cat., Boxcopy, Brisbane. 2012.
2010	Agatha Gothe-Snape and Shane Haseman., 'Man Rose', exh. cat., BREENSPACE, Sydney, 2010.
2008	Shane Haseman, 'Written and Recorded by Ringo Starr', exh. cat., BREENSPACE, Sydney, 2008 Anneke Jaspers, 'Conversation with Mitch Cairns', <i>Runway</i> , no. 11. Kerrie Davies, 'New Work', <i>Art World Magazine</i> , February/March 2008, no. 1.
2006	James Steele, <i>Twenty Love - Firstdraft 20th Anniversary</i> , exh. cat., Firstdraft, Sydney, 2006. Annemarie Lopez, 'Artists of Tomorrow', <i>Australian Art Review</i> , March-June 2006, no. 10.

ARTIST PUBLICATIONS

2021-present	<i>Pebble</i> , with Mitchel Cumming
2015	<i>The Reader's Voice</i> , artist book, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 2015, 232 pages
2014	<i>Dip or Skinny Dip</i> , artist book, Gang Atelier, 2014, 94 pages

GRANTS AND AWARDS

2024	National Portrait Prize, Canberra (finalist)
2023	Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (finalist) Still: National Still Life Award, Yarrila Arts and Museum, Coffs Harbour (finalist)
2020	The King's School Art Prize, The King's School, Sydney (finalist)
2017	Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (winner) <i>Arthur Guy Memorial Art Prize</i> , Bendigo Art Gallery, Bendigo, Vic (finalist)
2015	Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (runner-up)
2014	Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (runner-up) Geelong Contemporary Art Prize, Geelong Gallery, Geelong, Vic (finalist)
2013	Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (finalist) Doug Moran National Portrait Prize, Juniper Hall, Sydney (finalist)
2012	Brett Whiteley Travelling Art Scholarship (winner) Linden Art Prize, Linden Contemporary, Melbourne (winner postcard prize)
2011	Fishers Ghost Art Prize, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Sydney (finalist)
2010	Doug Moran National Portrait Prize, State Library of New South Wales, Sydney (finalist) Redlands Westpac Art Prize, nominated by Nell, Sydney (finalist)
2009	Helen Lempriere Travelling Scholarship, Artspace, Sydney (finalist)
2008	Redlands Westpac Art Prize, nominated by Vanilla Netto, Sydney (finalist)
2007	Helen Lempriere Travelling Scholarship, Artspace, Sydney (finalist) SOYA, Qantas Spirit of Youth Art Prize (finalist) Redlands Westpac Art Prize, nominated by Newell Harry, Sydney (finalist)
2006	Helen Lempriere Travelling Scholarship, Artspace, Sydney (finalist) ABN AMRO Emerging Art Award (finalist) Waverly Art Prize, Sydney (winner)
2005	Clitheroe Foundation Painting Scholarship, Sydney (winner) John Olsen Drawing Prize (finalist)
2004	Gruner Landscape Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (highly commended)

2003

Gruner Landscape Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (winner)

COLLECTIONS

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide

Artbank

Deloitte Art Collection

Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne

Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne

Murray Art Museum Albury, Albury

Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney (Ergas Collection)

National Portrait Gallery, Canberra

Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane

Wollongong University Art Collection, Wollongong
