

THE COMMERCIAL

MITCH CAIRNS

b. 1984, Sydney

l. Sydney

Education

2003-2006

Bachelor of Fine Arts with Honours, National Art School, Sydney

Solo Exhibitions

2020

Waylaid S T O O P, The Commercial, 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

Group Exhibitions

2019

The essayist, curated by Jasmin Stephens, Cross Art Projects, Sydney

Waiter Waiter, The Commercial, Sydney

The Whiteley at 20: Twenty Years of the Brett Whiteley Travelling Art Scholarship,
S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney

Electric! Portraits that Pop! National Portrait Gallery, Canberra

2018

The Horse, curated by Noel McKenna, Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney

National Art – Part One, National Art School Gallery, Sydney

Bowerbird: Clinton Bradley and the Art of Collecting, curated by Kent Buchanan,
Western Plains Cultural Centre, Dubbo, NSW

Unreal City, curated by Sarah Rees, Firstdraft, Sydney

The drawing is just not there, curated by Patrice Sharkey & Christopher L. G. Hill,
Westspace, Melbourne

2017

Grounded, curated by Judith Blackall, National Art School Gallery, Sydney

The Commercial, Sydney Contemporary, Carriageworks (Stand E06), Sydney

Game, Bowerbank Ninow, Auckland, New Zealand

2016

Painting. More Painting, curated by Max Delany, Annika Kristensen and Hannah
Mathews, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne

The Commercial, Auckland Art Fair, Auckland, New Zealand

Un Leg, curated by Nick Strike, 55 Sydenham Rd, Sydney

- 2015 *DEADPAN*, curated by Abigail Moncreiff, Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, Goulburn, NSW
The Commercial, Sydney Contemporary, Carriageworks (Stand A01), Sydney
Writing Art, curated by Scott Donovan, Artspace, Sydney
TPOLR, The Commercial, Sydney
21st Century Heide: The Collection since 2000, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
Outside Thoughts, curated by Wes Hill, Contemporary Art Tasmania, Hobart
- 2014 *Six people in a room*, KNULP, Sydney
Now the heart is filled with gold as if it were a purse, curated by Glenn Barkley, Arts Project Australia, Melbourne
No fond return of love, Institute of Contemporary Art Newtown, Sydney
The Commercial, Melbourne Art Fair, Royal Exhibition Centre, Melbourne
OUI we, The Commercial, Sydney
- 2013 *The Knock-Off Show*, curated by Liang Luscombe and Brook Babington, SLOPES, Melbourne
Relationshippal – Mitch Cairns, Susan Jacobs, Tim Silver, BREENSPACE, Sydney
Ten out of Ten, curated by Rob and George Adams, MOP Projects, Sydney
- 2012 *Sprezzatura*, OK Gallery, Perth
Cool World, ALASKA Projects, Sydney
The Drawing Room, BREENSPACE, Sydney
- 2011 *Eastern Seaboard*, curated by Reuben Keehan and Melanie Oliver, Artspace, Sydney
Salon, Eastern Bloc, Sydney
- 2010 *Out of the Comfort Zone*, Curated by Virginia Wilson, Customs House, Sydney
Redheads & Power Chicks & Men who sew, curated by Barbara Flynn, Deloitte Building, Sydney
BREENSPACE, Melbourne Art Fair, Royal Exhibition Hall, Melbourne
Alpha Romeo – Mitch Cairns, Christopher Hanrahan, Nigel Milsom, curated by Matthys Gerber, Peloton, Sydney
They call them Pirates out here, curated by David Elliot, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
Group Show, BREENSPACE, Sydney
20/Twenty, curated by Ron and George Adams, University of Technology Sydney Gallery, Sydney and Dubbo Regional Gallery, Dubbo, NSW
In Temperance, curated by Mark Titmarsh, City of Sydney Laneways Project, Sydney
- 2009 *What I think of When I think about dancing*, curated by Lisa Havilah and Susan Gibb, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Sydney
Adam, Adam, Mitch, Nigel & Ron – Big Painting, Fraser Studios, Sydney
Reality Check, curated by Daniel Mudie Cunningham, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Gympie, NSW
Video Time, curated by Abigail Moncreiff, MOP Projects, Sydney
Colleagues & Peers (hokey-pokey), The Cosmic Battle for your Heart, Sydney
The Shilo Project, curated by Chris McAuliff, Ian Potter Museum, Melbourne
- 2008 *Locksmith Annual*, Locksmith Project Space, Sydney
30th Anniversary Exhibition, Wollongong City Gallery, Wollongong, NSW
Downtown, curated by Firstdraft, City of Sydney Laneways Project, Sydney
Rimbaud/Rambo, Neon Park, Melbourne
Rookie Show, curated by Ron and George Adams, Inflight, Hobart
Stupid Little Dreamer, curated by Ron & George Adams, Inflight, Hobart
I am a Good Boy, curated by Elise Routledge, Firstdraft, Sydney
- 2007 *Victory! Triumph!* (performance with Agatha Gothe-Snape), Firstdraft 21st Anniversary Smash Hits, Parramatta Artist's Studios, Sydney
Deck, MOP Projects, Sydney
- 2006 *The Year in Art*, S. H Ervin Gallery, Sydney
Plastic Myth, curated by James Steele, Firstdraft, Sydney
Drawcard 06, National Art School, Sydney
Cones of Zontact, Loose Projects, Sydney
Post-it, Peloton, Sydney

- 2005 *Six*, Mary Place Gallery, Sydney
Punch, MOP Projects, Sydney
Last show of the year, King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney
- 2004 *Art on the Rocks*, ASN Gallery, The Rocks, Sydney
Salon de Refuses (Wynne Prize), S.H Ervin Gallery, Sydney

Curatorial Projects

- 2020 *KNUCKLES*, ANKLES and KNULP, Sydney
- 2019 *Primavera 2019: Young Australian Artists*, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney
PLATES, ANKLES, Sydney
Nouveau Think, ANKLES, Sydney
TAP SUCCESS, ANKLES, Sydney
- 2018 *Composite Order*, ANKLES, Sydney
- 2012 *Cool World*, Alaska Projects, Sydney
- 2010 *New Apartment*, 'NICE' at The Cosmic Battle for Your Heart, Sydney
- 2008 *Look out Wembley Arena*, MOP Projects, Sydney

Collective and Artist-led Organisations

- 2018-present 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

- 2019 Mitch Cairns, 'Making Sense as Language Forms', *Primavera 2019: Young Australian Artists*, exh. cat., Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney, 2019, pp. 9-12.
'Mitch Cairns', *The Whiteley at 20: Twenty Years of the Brett Whiteley Travelling Art Scholarship*, exh. cat., National Trust of Australia (NSW) and S. H, Ervin Gallery, Sydney, 2019, pp. 40-41.
- 2017 'Mitch Cairns wins the Archibald Prize', *Blouin Art Info*, 1 August 2017.
Frost, Andrew. 'Archibald 2017: objections to winning work are merely whinges over style', *The Guardian*, Saturday 29 July 2017.
'Mitch Cairns wins \$80,000 Archibald Prize', *Artforum*, 29 July 2017.
O'Sullivan, Marese. 'Sydney artist Mitch Cairns wins \$100,000 Archibald Prize', *SBS*, 28 July 2017.
Stuart, Riley. 'Archibald Prize: Mitch Cairns wins 2017 portrait gong for painting of his partner', *ABC News*, 28 July 2017.
'Archibald Winner Mitch Cairns was Led by Love', *Australian Financial Review*, 28 July 2017.
Blackwell, Eoin. 'Mitch Cairns Takes Archibald Prize for Portrait of His Partner', *Huffington Post*, 28 July 2017.
Albert, Jane. 'Sydney Artist Mitch Cairns wins 2017 Archibald Prize', *Broadsheet*, 28 July, 2017.
Maddox, Garry. 'Mitch Cairns' portrait of Agatha Gothe-Snape wins Archibald Prize', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 July 2017.
Hill, Wes. 'Around Town', *Frieze*, 9 February 2017, <https://frieze.com/article/around-town-15>.
- 2016 Berlangieri, Stephanie and Hannah Matthews, 'Mitch Cairns', *Painting. More Painting*, exh. cat., Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, pp. 54-57.
- 2015 Cruthers, John. 'Stray Geranium', exh. cat., The Commercial, Sydney, 2016.
Cairns, Mitch. *The Reader's Voice*, artist book, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 2015.
Rule, Dan. 'Mitch Cairns: Poetics and Pragmatics', *Vault*, September 2015, no. 11,

pp. 20-23.

- Holt, Matthew. 'Midnight All Day: Notes on Mitch Cairns' New Work', *Mitch Cairns – FINCHES*, exh. cat., The Commercial, Sydney
- 2014 Cairns, Mitch. *Dip or Skinny Dip*, Gang Atelier, 2014, 94p.
- Kilmartin, Ash. 'Condensity', *Mitch Cairns – Cigarette cm*, exh. cat., TCB art Inc., 2014.
- 2013 Craven, Owen. 'Emerge: Mitch Cairns', *Artist Profile*, no. 22.
- Gibb, Susan. 'Collector's Love', *Australian Art Collector*, no. 63.
- 2012 Jensen, Erik. 'Blue Period', *Runway*, no. 21, pp. 66-69.
- Gibb, Susan. 'Sensitive Art', *Base Principles*, exh. cat., BREENSPACE, Sydney, 2012, https://www.breenspace.com/exhibitions/mitch-cairns-bass-principals/001.mitchcairns_bassprinciples2012_1348194357.jpg.php.
- Hemer, André. 'Discussing Painting without Irony – Bass Principals', *EyeContact*, 20 June 2012, <http://eyecontactsite.com/2012/06/discussing-painting-without-irony>.
- Ford, Danny. 'Heavy Lifting: Piano Removalist', *Shift Focus Without Warning*, 4 March 2012.
- Fuller, Rachel. 'Piano Removalist', exh. cat., Boxcopy, Brisbane. 2012.
- 2010 Gothe-Snape, Agatha and Shane Haseman., 'Man Rose', exh. cat., BREENSPACE, Sydney, 2010.
- 2008 Haseman, Shane. 'Written and Recorded by Ringo Starr', exh. cat., BREENSPACE, Sydney, 2008, https://www.breenspace.com/exhibitions/mitch-cairns-written-and-recorded-by-ringo-starr/001.mitch_cairns_instal.jpg.php
- Jaspers, Anneke. 'Conversation with Mitch Cairns', *Runway*, no. 11.
- Davies, Kerrie. 'New Work', *Art World Magazine*, February/March 2008, no. 1.
- 2006 Steele, James. *Twenty Love - Firstdraft 20th Anniversary*, exh. cat., Firstdraft, Sydney, 2006.
- Lopez, Annemarie. 'Artists of Tomorrow', *Australian Art Review*, March-June 2006, no. 10.

Grants and Awards

- 2017 Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (winner)
- Arthur Guy Memorial Art Prize*, 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 Vanila 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
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
Wollongong University Art Collection, Wollongong