

studio A

Thom Roberts – CV

www.studioa.org.au/thom-roberts

enquiries@studioa.org.au



Born Sydney 1976, lives and works in Sydney.

Thom Roberts sees the world through a kaleidoscope lens. He interprets people, transport and infrastructure systems as colourful multiples. A Tangara train is named Kylie and also perceived as the Gold Coast Tower. Thom himself identifies as the Country Link Express train and the Kingdom Tower in Saudi Arabia.

Thom's unique interpretation of identities is also informed by the equally peculiar practice of crown reading (peering into the spiral of hair on the top of a person's head). There Thom might find anything from "holes" to millipedes, collie dogs and cows' bodies.

Synthesising this information, Thom frequently bestows people with new identities and translates them in his work.

The photocopier is Thom's other great muse and core to his process and practice. Beginning with images found online or through his travels, Thom manipulates and duplicates them, forming the basis of new works.

Thom's work is instantly recognisable, adorned with new features - extra eyes, noses, moustaches or 'piano teeth' – Thom's work invites us to see ourselves and our world anew.

Thom works across painting, drawing, installation, animation and performance and is an awarded and recognised contemporary Australian artist. He is a four-time Archibald Finalist, most recently with *Big Bamm-Bamm*, a portrait of iconic Australian artist Ken Done. In 2023, his portrait of architect Farhad Haidari, *In the future there might be new tall buildings built by Bert*, was selected, and in 2022 a portrait of Mud founder Shelley Simpson was named a finalist. In 2021, it was his enigmatic portrait of Studio A Chair Shane Simpson, *A portriff of Adam*, that was selected, not only as part of the prize but also as the primary exhibition banner on the Gallery's facade.

Thom has been curated into a number of prestigious exhibitions, including The National 2019, Salon des Refusés, Sydney Contemporary, Cementa, Big Anxiety Festival, and Artbank's 20/20 Shared Visions: 40 Years of Collecting Australian Art. He has undertaken important residencies both here and abroad: at Carriageworks, Bundanoon Trust, Canberra Glassworks and Societas Raffaello Sanzio (Cesana, Italy), and in 2023, he was invited to present at the College Art Association Conference in New York, where he presented 'How to be an artist until you are a very old man'. In 2025 the National Portrait

studio A

Gallery, Canberra will present a major solo-survey exhibition and monograph of Thom's work, titled *The Immersive World of Thom Roberts*, curated by Isobel Parker Philip.

Thom's work is held in numerous collections, including the Freudenberg Collection, University of Technology Sydney (curated by Stella McDonald) and Artbank.

Solo Exhibitions

- 2025** *The Immersive World of Thom Roberts*, solo-survey exhibition, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, curated by Isobel Parker Philip
- 2023** *Pink Panther Station*, The Cube, Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney
- 2022** *Courthouse Cats*, Cement Fondu, Sydney
Thom, the Architect, Brand X at Greenland Centre

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2025** Finalist Sir John Sulman Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, with *Mrs Picture Book and the Three Bears*
- 2024** Finalist Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, with *Big Bamm-Bamm* (Ken Done)
Finalist Sulman Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, with *Dinkie is Thom's friend*
Packsaddle Exhibition, New England Regional Art Museum, Armidale
- 2023** Finalist Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, with *In the future there might be more tall buildings built by Bert* (Farhad Haidari)
Portraits From Studio A, NSW Parliament House, Sydney
Creative Precinct Block Party, St Leonards
A woven together wonderland, Working Dog Gallery, St Leonards
- 2022** Finalist Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, with *Rachey in the Mirror* (Shelley Simpson)
Season One, Art et al, Cromwell Place, London. Initiative of the British Council and the Aust Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade
- 2021** Finalist Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, with *A Portruff of Adam* (Shane Simpson AM)
Project 2060: Homeward Bound, Coal Loader, Waverton
ART ET AL. x APA, Collingwood Yards, Melbourne as part of the UK/Australian Season of Culture 2021/22
- 2020** *20/20 Shared Visions*, Artbank, Sydney

studio A

- 2019** *The National: New Australian Art 2019*, Carriageworks, Sydney
home, Retort House, Sub Base Platypus, North Sydney
- 2018** *Salon des Refuses*, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Millers Point
Paired, Firstdraft, Woolloomooloo
Suburbia, Cement Fondu, Paddington
One Another X Studio A Launch, Pop Up at 21 Foley, Darlinghurst
- 2017** *birdfoxmonster*, Carriageworks, Eveleigh
The Big Anxiety Festival, Customs House, Circular Quay (Thom and Angelmouse)
Cementa Festival, Kandos
Phoenix Serenade, Art Month Art Bar, Redfern/Chippendale Precinct, Cake Wines, Eveleigh (The Props Collective)
- 2016** *Westpac Diversity and Inclusion Strategy exhibition*, Barangaroo, Sydney
Wonder: Contemporary Art For Children, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Gympie (Thom and Angelmouse)
Studio A: Flying High, SCA Galleries
- 2015** *Underbelly Arts Festival*, Cockatoo Island, Sydney (Thom and Angelmouse)
- 2014** *Renegades*, national touring exhibition, curated by Camille Masson-Talasier and Ingrid Hoffman
- 2013** *Paper to Puppetry*, GAFFA gallery, Sydney
Queens, Screens and Cone Heads, Koskela, Sydney
- 2011** *Four x Four*, The Papermill, Sydney

Commissions and Public Art

- 2024** Public Artwork Commission for North Sydney Festival, *The Seven Oracle*, Brett Whiteley Place, North Sydney
Public Artwork Commission for Bus Stop Films for Driving Change Summit, Bondi Pavilion, Sydney
- 2022** Public Artwork Commission for *Spilt Milk Music Festival* touring Canberra, Ballarat and the Gold Coast
- 2020** Commission for Artbank, *Magic Robot Machine*, on the occasion of Artbank's 40th anniversary

studio A

City of Sydney Creative Hoardings commission with *Midnight Zoo*. (Collaboration with four Studio A artists)

2018 Public Artwork Commission for *Spilt Milk Music Festival*, Canberra

Residencies and Collaborations

2023 Residency with Glassworks, Canberra

2020 Collaboration with Red Room Poetry

2019 Residency with Chiara Guigi at Società Raffaello Sanzio
<https://www.arch-srs.com> (SRS), Cesana, Italy

2018 Collaboration with One Another, ethical homewares design company

2016 Artist in residence, Hazelhurst Arts Centre (Thom and Angelmouse)
Bundanon Artist Residency, Bundanon
Artist in Residence for *birdfoxmonster*, Carriageworks, Sydney
Artist in Residence for *birdfoxmonster*, Bundanon Trust, Bundanon
Artist in Residence for *birdfoxmonster*, Mud Australia, Newtown

2014 Collaboration with artist, Harriet Body: Thom and Angelmouse (concluded 2018)

2011 Artist in residence at The Paper Mill, Sydney

Performances and Public Programs

2024 Invited speaker, GLAAM Conference, Museum of Art & Culture Lake Macquarie

2023 Invited speaker, College Art Association Conference, New York
Powerhouse Late Drawing Club, Powerhouse Museum, Sydney

2020 Empathy Clinic, The Big Anxiety Festival

2018 Live drawing, Spilt Milk Festival, Canberra
Live drawing *Bird Love Colour Wheel*, North Sydney Children's Festival, North Sydney

2017 Invited speaker, Arts Activated: Pathways to Practice, conference for Disability Arts sector (Thom and Angelmouse)

Awards, Prizes and Grants

studio A

2019 Cultural Copyright Ignite Award Recipient to undertake a residency at Società Raffaello Sanzio <https://www.arch-srs.com> (SRS), Cesana, Italy.

2016 Recipient of the Westpac Diversity and Inclusion award
Recipient of Blooming Arts Award: Judges Choice Award, Inner West Council

2013 Amplify award for emerging artists

Collections Artbank, University of Technology Sydney (curated by Stella McDonald), Freudenberg Collection