

Jonathan Nichols

Jonathan Nichols is an artist, independent curator and writer born and raised in Canberra and based in Melbourne. He began painting in the early 1990s after studying sculpture at the ANU and the University of NSW. Jonathan's paintings are based on figure arrangements that he finds in photographs he has taken himself or found online, or that he collages from memory. He is concerned with a painting's painterly character and its particular history. He builds a muted palette—tonal browns and greens, blue greys and shades of pink—and his works on paper, canvas and fabric are generally small scale. His paintings have been described as conveying 'the experience in seeing someone at a distance.

Jonathan has participated in recent group exhibitions in Australia at the National Gallery of Victoria, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Canberra Contemporary Art Space, National Portrait Gallery, Ian Potter Museum of Art, Karen Woodbury Gallery, Geelong Gallery and Bendigo Art Gallery, among others. He has held solo exhibitions in Kuala Lumpur, Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney.

In 2012 Jonathan initiated the online publishing project stamm.com.au, which reciprocated the work of contemporary artists through writing and collaborative editing practices. He co-founded Melbourne artist-run initiatives The Green Door (2005), Lovers (1998–99 and 2014) and Stripp (1996–98). Recent curatorial projects include Learning to Leave at the VCA Margaret Lawrence Gallery, Melbourne (2014). For a year in 2012–13 he was an artist-in-residence at Rimbun Dahan, Kuala Lumpur, and for six years until late 2019 he lived between Melbourne and Singapore. Jonathan regularly contributes to art magazines and journals. He is currently a Doctor of Philosophy candidate at Monash University.

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2014 *Frank Gardiner, Lovers*, Melbourne
- 2013 *18th Rimbun Dahan residency exhibition*, Rimbun Dahan, **Kuala Lumpur**
- 2008 Kaliman Gallery, **Sydney**
All I know about her, Helen Maxwell Gallery, **Canberra**
- 2007 *paradise*, Karen Woodbury Gallery, **Melbourne**
- 2005 *painting*, Kaliman Gallery, **Sydney**
- 2003 *new painting*, Kaliman Gallery, **Sydney**
- 2002 *paintings*, Kaliman Gallery, **Sydney**
One painting and seven watercolours, Photospace Gallery, ANU School of Art, **Canberra**
- 2001 *forgetting pictures*, 200 Gertrude Street, **Melbourne**
- 2000 *anonymous pictures*, 1st Floor Artists' and Writers' Space, **Melbourne**
- 1999 *Mary, Mary, Lovers*, **Melbourne**
- 1997 *whiteboard*, Stripp, **Melbourne**
- 1996 *prey*, Stripp, **Melbourne**
- 1994 Studio 12, 200 Gertrude Street, **Melbourne**
- 1992 *Good intentions are inevitably punished*, First Draft West, **Sydney**
Genuflexion, WINDOW, **Sydney**
- 1990 *Explaining our pictures*, EMR Gallery, **Sydney**
- 1989 *Return*, City Art Institute Sculpture Studio Gallery, NSW Institute of the Arts, **Sydney**

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2017 *Patrick Pound: The great exhibition*, NGV Australia, **Melbourne**
- 2016 *Painting. More painting*, curated by Max Delany, Hannah Mathews and Annika Christensen, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, **Melbourne**
- 2013 *Imprint: Growing up planned*, curated by Virginia Rigney, Canberra Contemporary Art Space
- 2011 *Schnittmengen/Intersections*, Emmanuel Walderdorff Galerie, Cologne
- 2010 *Present tense: An imagined grammar of portraiture in the digital age*, curated by Michael Desmond, National Portrait Gallery, **Canberra**
Fletcher Jones art prize, Geelong Gallery, Victoria
- 2009 *Figuration now*, Karen Woodbury Gallery, **Melbourne**
The Shilo project, curated by Chris McAuliffe, the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University of Melbourne
Kaliman Gallery, **Sydney**
Arthur Guy memorial painting prize, Bendigo Art Gallery, Victoria
- 2008 *Selected gallery artists*, Karen Woodbury Gallery, **Melbourne**
Big group, Kaliman Gallery, **Sydney**
- 2007 *New deities: Art and the cult of celebrity*, curated by Catherine Wolfhagen, Devonport Regional Gallery, Tasmania; Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney, and tour
- 2006 *New objectivity*, Karen Woodbury Gallery, **Melbourne**
Salon, Bett Gallery, Hobart
Reflections in a golden eye, curated by Kate Barber and Jan Duffy, Linden—St Kilda Centre for Contemporary Arts, **Melbourne**
ABN AMRO emerging artist award, ABN AMRO, **Melbourne and Sydney**
- 2005 *'I'm travelling light' ... 'No, no, you don't travel light'*, curated by Deborah Ostrow, Spacement, **Melbourne**
Gallery show, Karen Woodbury Gallery, **Melbourne**
Re:thinking, curated by Quentin Sprague, Bus Projects, **Melbourne**
Four dudes, Dudespace, **Melbourne**
Salon des refusés, SH Ervin Gallery, **Sydney**
Into the quadrangle, RMIT Project Space and Spare Room, **Melbourne**
Tales of the city, curated by Claire Mitchell, Australian Galleries, **Melbourne**
- 2004 *Fletcher Jones art prize*, Geelong Gallery, **Victoria**
The decadence of the nude, Ocular Lab, **Melbourne**
- 2003 *Redlands Westpac art prize 2003*, Mosman Art Gallery, **Sydney**
Scratch the surface, curated by Lisa Byrne, Canberra Contemporary Art Space, and Logan Regional Art Gallery, **Queensland**
Heat, curated by Kevin Wilson, Noosa Regional Gallery, **Queensland**
1st Floor final, 1st Floor Artists' and Writers' Space, **Melbourne**
Modern portraits, curated by Kirsten Rann, Ord Minnett Gallery, **Melbourne**
- 2002 *Art on paper II*, Kaliman Gallery, **Sydney**
2002 Geelong contemporary art prize, Geelong Gallery, **Victoria**
The Robert Jacks drawing prize, Bendigo Art Gallery, **Victoria**
ATM: Intersections of technology, art and life, curated by David O'Halloran, Glen Eira City Gallery, **Melbourne**

- 2001 *Afterglow: Painting now*, Kaliman Gallery, **Sydney**
Love don't live here anymore, Blaugrau, **Sydney**
Mary Mary fire walk with me (collaboration with Raafat Ishak), West Space, **Melbourne**
- 2000 *Paintings are ace*, curated by Clare Firth-Smith, Linden—St Kilda Centre for Contemporary Arts, **Melbourne**
- 1999 *Handle with care*, curated by Lisa Young and Megan Evans, Steps Gallery, **Melbourne**
- 1998 *Sundowners* (collaboration with David Franzke and David Jolly), Stripp, **Melbourne**
- 1997 *Wer schützt uns vor Hansi?*, KRD, Cologne
- 1996 *Snow show*, Stripp, **Melbourne**
Fuss, Galerie Constantinople, Queanbeyan, NSW
Things in you (watch your business), curated by Bala Starr, Basement, **Melbourne**
Abstraction now, curated by Simeon Kronenberg, Geelong Gallery, **Victoria**, and tour
- 1995 *0055 29334 Art hotline*, curated by Mark Titmarsh, Performance Space, **Sydney**
Carlos Ras, Studio 12, 200 Gertrude Street, **Melbourne**
- 1994 *John Doe*, curated by Louise Paramor, 200 Gertrude Street, **Melbourne**
Zac Patafta, 108–110 Gertrude Street, **Melbourne**
Group show, Arts Victoria, **Melbourne**
'High heels' or 'The best shoes in Paris', studio exhibition, 200 Gertrude Street, **Melbourne**
- 1993 *(un)authorized duplication*, curated by Anna Nervegna and Roisin O'Dwyer, 200 Gertrude Street, **Melbourne**
Fascination, studio exhibition, 200 Gertrude Street, **Melbourne**
Emergency, studio exhibition, 200 Gertrude Street, **Melbourne**
Via crucis Australis, Museum of Contemporary Art, **Sydney**
- 1992 *Liebe und seele*, Campbell Street Studio, **Sydney**
0055 29334 Art hotline, curated by Mark Titmarsh, Bond Store, **Sydney**
Supermart, Blaxland Gallery, **Melbourne**
- 1991 *The decade show*, curated by Julie Ewington, Canberra School of Art
Drawings, EMR Gallery, **Sydney**
- 1990 *Art dock: Contemporary Australian art*, curated by Annie Roses, **Noumea**
- 1989 *Social romance*, EMR Gallery, **Sydney**
Fresh art, curated by Felicity Fenner, SH Ervin Gallery, **Sydney**
4 sculptors, First Draft, **Sydney**

Curatorial Projects

- 2014 Curator, *Learning to leave*, Trevelyan Clay, Eliza Dyball, Tim Johnson, David Jolly, Michelle Mantsio, Moya McKenna, John Spiteri, Anca Rujoiu, Quentin Sprague and Nyapanyapa Yunupingu, VCA Margaret Lawrence Gallery, the University of Melbourne
- 2012–15 Initiator, editor (2012–13), stamm.com.au online publishing project
- 2012 Curator, *S.A.A.P.*, Trevelyan Clay, Oscar Perry and Kristina Tsoulis-Reay, Lowrise Projects, **Melbourne**
- 2009 Curator, *Mac*, Centre for Contemporary Photography, **Melbourne**
 Curator (with Hannah Mathews), *Alicia Frankovich: Lungeing chambon*, Beyond the Green Door, **Melbourne**
 Curator (with Hannah Mathews), *Bradd Westmoreland's wall painting*, Beyond the Green Door, **Melbourne**

- Curator (with Hannah Mathews), *Deb*, Beyond the Green Door, **Melbourne**
- 2004 Curator (with Raafat Ishak), *The decadence of the nude*, Karen Burns, Raafat Ishak, Jonathan Nichols, Sangeeta Sandrasegar, Vivienne Shark LeWitt, Lara Travis and Stephen Zagala, Ocular Lab, **Melbourne**
- 1998–99 Curator (with David Jolly), exhibitions and events with Jon Campbell and Adawo, Nadine Christensen, Raafat Ishak and Ocular Lab, Andrew McQualter, Derek O'Connor, Anne Schneider, Cameron Robbins, Michael Stevenson and Slave Pianos, *Lovers*, **Melbourne**
- 1997 Curator, *Feeling machines*, Lyell Barry, Nadine Christensen, Robert Cleworth, Raafat Ishak, David Jolly, Mandy Ord, Jacinta Schreuder and Darren Wardle, Stripp, **Melbourne**
- Curator (with David Jolly), *'High Heels' or 'The Best shoes in Paris'*, studio exhibition, 200 Gertrude Street, **Melbourne**
- Curator, *Zac Patafta*, 108–110 Gertrude Street, **Melbourne**
- 1993 Curator, *Fascination*, studio exhibition, 200 Gertrude Street, **Melbourne**
- Curator, *Emergency*, studio exhibition, 200 Gertrude Street, **Melbourne**

Grants and Artist Residencies

- 2012–13 Artist residency, Rimbun Dahan, **Kuala Lumpur**
- 2010 Studio residency (Liverpool), Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council
- 2003 Artist residency, Caulfield Grammar School, **Melbourne**
- 2002 Artist residency, ANU School of Art & Design, **Canberra**
- 1998 New work grant (with Stephen Zagala, to research ni-Vanuatu sand-drawing), Visual Arts/Craft Board of the Australia Council
- 1997 Studio residency (Los Angeles), Visual Arts/Craft Board of the Australia Council
- 1993–95 Studio residency, Gertrude Street Artists' Spaces, **Melbourne**
- 1994 Project grant, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- 1991 Project grant (field trip to urban South Pacific), Visual Arts/Craft Board of the Australia Council.

Published Writing by Jonathan Nichols

- ['Hany Armanious: Relative nobody'](#), *Fifty artworks from the Monash University Collection*, Monash University Museum of Art, 2017.
- 'Walking the slow angles' (with Quentin Sprague), *Learning to leave*, VCA Margaret Lawrence Gallery, the University of Melbourne, 2014.
- Essays, interviews and reviews of contemporary art, published by stamm.com.au:
- ['Against nature – Charles Lim and "Sea state"'](#), Nov. 2015.
- ['Free action: Marco Fusinato'](#), Sept. 2015.
- ['Taking notes'](#) (Terry Smith, *Speculations on anonymous materials* exhibition, Boris Groys), Aug. 2015.
- ['Modern zombies'](#), July 2015.
- ['Chua Mia Tee's Singapore'](#), Dec. 2013.
- ['Xmas: Jordan Marani'](#), Oct. 2013.
- ['John Aslanidis – New York noise'](#), Aug. 2013.
- ['Default: "Everyday rebellions" \[Emily Cormack, curator\] and Frances Stark'](#), June 2013.
- ['The cultivator: Hou Hanru'](#), May 2013.
- ['New ACCA'](#), Apr. 2013.
- ['Group portrait: Atul Dodiya'](#), Mar. 2013.

[‘Traumatic acts and therapeutic structures: A few ideas in, around and associated with Stamm’](#) (with Amita Kirpalani), Dec. 2012.

[‘Kate Smith’s empire’](#), Nov. 2012.

[‘John Spiteri’](#), Oct. 2012.

[‘Konnichiwa Osaka. National Museum of Art, Osaka’](#), Sept. 2012.

[‘Bradd Westmoreland—wet’](#), Aug. 2012.

[‘An interview with Azam Aris’](#), July 2012.

[‘Rafaat Ishak’s “decadence”’](#), June 2012.

[‘Atlas: Andrew Hurler’](#), May 2012.

[‘Background/middle-ground/foreground: Speaking about art’](#) (with Hannah Mathews), Apr. 2012.

[‘Doom and gloom: Ronnie van Hout’](#), Mar. 2012.

‘Anthony Pelchen: Kuang Road prayer’, *Anthony Pelchen: Kuang Road prayer*, exh. cat., Horsham Regional Art Gallery, Victoria, 2013.

‘Stupid as a painter’ (with Melanie Flynn), *S.A.A.P.*, exh. cat. Lowrise Projects, Melbourne, 2012.

‘Folk’, *Mac*, exh. cat., Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne, 2009.

‘Altitude: A conversation between Jonathan Nichols and Helga Groves’, *Helga Groves: Microclimate*, exh. cat., Sutton Gallery, Melbourne, 2009.

‘Andrew Browne—night pictures’, *Night pictures 2*, exh. cat., Lister Gallery, Perth, 2007.

‘Demonology’, *Just a feeling: Brent Harris: Selected works 1987–2005*, exh. cat., the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University of Melbourne, 2006, pp. 15–17.

‘Derek O’Connor’, *Del Kathryn Barton, Cathy Blanchflower, Derek O’Connor, Monika Tikachek*, exh. cat., Karen Woodbury Gallery, Melbourne, 2004, p. 14.

‘Derek O’Connor’, *Derek O’Connor: Recent work*, exh. cat., Karen Woodbury Gallery, Melbourne, 2004.

‘Report—“All this and heaven too”—Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art 1998’, *Globe E*, no. 8, 1998.

‘Mono Poly’s pathos—Matthys Gerber’, *Broadsheet*, vol. 27, no. 2, 1998, pp. 21–2.

‘Helen Fuller: Shed tears’, *Broadsheet*, vol. 27, no. 1, 1998, pp. 6–7.

‘Report—“Documenta X”’, *Globe E*, no. 7, 1997.

‘Deborah Ostrow: It’s a beautiful day’, *Globe E*, no. 6, 1997.

‘A picture of insecurity—LA’s Lari Pittman’, *Broadsheet*, vol. 26, no. 3, 1997, pp. 6–7.

‘A truncated conversation with Derek O’Connor’, *Fuss*, exh. cat., Galerie Constantinople, Queanbeyan, NSW, 1996.

‘Natural heat, simulation, or just addiction—Deborah Ostrow’, *Where to from here*, exh. cat., Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, and Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia, Adelaide, 1996.

‘18 portrait paintings—Louise Paramor’, *A4–95*, 1st Floor Artists’ and Writers’ Space, Melbourne, 1996.

‘Breathing in evil—Paul Quinn and Alison Weaver talking with Jonathan Nichols’, *Broadsheet*, vol. 25, no. 1, 1996, pp. 10–11.

Lewis Ryan (pseud.), ‘MDF I luv you: “Ruins in reverse”’, *Broadsheet*, vol. 25, no. 3, 1996, pp. 22–3.

Louis Ryan (pseud.), ‘A certain fussy order: “Fashion, décor, interior”’, *Broadsheet*, vol. 24, no. 3, 1995, p. 13.

‘Higher voices—Richard Grayson’, *Broadsheet*, vol. 24, no. 3, 1995, pp. 21–2.

Louis Ryan (pseud.), ‘The mistress—Susan Norrie’, *Broadsheet*, vol. 24, no. 4, 1995, p. 17.

‘Islands in the stream—boat sinking’, *Art Monthly Australia*, Sept. 1990.

Published Writing on the work of Jonathan Nichols

- Atchison, A, 'Jonathan Nichols', *Painting. More painting*, exh. cat., Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 2016.
- Backhouse, M, *The Age*, 31 Mar. 2007.
- Butler, R, *The new objectivity*, exh. cat. Karen Woodbury Gallery, Melbourne, 2006.
- Byrne, L, *Scratch the surface*, exh. cat. Canberra Contemporary Art Space, 2003.
- Chapman, C, 'Three uses of photography', *Photofile*, no. 67, 2003, pp. 4–8.
- — —, 'Bette Davis eyes: "Scratch the surface" at the Canberra Contemporary Art Space', *Art Monthly Australia*, no. 162, 2003, pp. 30–2.
- Christensen, N (ed.), *rubik*, no. 8, 1999.
- Colless, E, *Oyster*, no. 37, 2001, pp. 52–3.
- Colman, F, 'Goya coloured vinyl—Jonathan Nichols', *Broadsheet*, vol. 26, no. 1, 1997, pp. 18–19.
- Coslovich, G, 'Judging the masters', *The Age*, 7 Sept. 2001, pp. 1–3.
- Crawford, A, 'New objectivity', *The Sunday Age*, 9 Apr. 2006, p. 30.
- Desmond, M, 'Technical terminology', *Portrait*, no. 36, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, 2010, pp. 16–21.
- Desmond, M, *Present tense: An imagined grammar of portraiture in the digital age*, exh. cat., National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, 2010, pp. 3 and 64–8.
- Delany, M, 'Jonathan Nichols—forgetting pictures', *forgetting pictures*, exh. cat., 200 Gertrude Street, Melbourne, 2001, pp. 14–15.
- Douglas, A, *Genuflexion*, exh. cat., and installed text, WINDOW, Sydney, 2002.
- Flynn, M, 'Colliding histories', *Figuration now*, exh. cat., Karen Woodbury Gallery, Melbourne, 2009.
- Frost, A, 'The new objectivity', *Art Collector*, no. 36, Apr.–June 2006, p. 233.
- Gaynor, A, 'Decadence of the nude', *un Magazine*, no. 1, 2004, pp. 21–2.
- Gellatly, K, *Reflections in a golden eye*, exh. cat., Linden—St Kilda Centre for Contemporary Arts, Melbourne, 2006.
- Grishin, S, 'Strange, quirky and unforgettable works', *The Canberra Times*, 24 June 2008.
- — —, 'The changing faces of portraiture', *The Canberra Times*, 21 May 2003, p. 24.
- Hood, C, 'Animal archives', *Photofile*, no. 45, 1995.
- Hansen, D, 'Interpretations of paradise', *The Age*, 23 Mar. 2007.
- — —, 'Whorls of oil', *The Age*, 7 Apr., 2006.
- Holt, MA, 'A declaration of independence', *Into the quadrangle*, exh. cat., RMIT Project Space, Melbourne, 2005.
- Kirpalani, A, 'The crying game', *Jonathan Nichols. 18th Rimbun Dahan residency exhibition*, exh. cat., Rimbun Dahan, Kuala Lumpur, 2013.
- Kronenberg, S, *Abstraction now*, exh. cat., Geelong Gallery, Victoria, 1996.
- Loughrey, F, 'Parker posing', *Black + White Magazine*, no. 60, 2002, p. 10.
- Low, LA, 'Bubble trouble', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 18–19 May 2002, p. 13.
- — —, 'Lords and ladies', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 19–20 July 2003, p. 12.
- Mantsio, M, '[Jonathan Nichols plays David Morse and Viggo Mortensen](#)', stamm.com.au, 2013.
- McAuliffe, C, 'Jonathan Nichols—"Pram"', *RACV Art Collection*, Melbourne, 2005, p. 27.
- McDonald, J, 'Hanging offences', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7–8 May 2005, pp. 28–9.
- O'Connell, S, 'Anonymous paintings—Jonathan Nichols', *Like*, *Art Magazine*, no. 13, 2000, p. 47.
- Rank, K, 'Reflections in a golden eye', *Artlink*, vol. 26, no. 3, 2007.
- Rigney, V, *Imprint: Growing up planned*, exh. cat., Canberra Contemporary Art Space, 2013.
- Roses, A (ed.), *Art dock: Exposition d'art contemporain*, Noumea, 1991, p. 62.
- Smith, R, 'Scratch the surface', *Muses*, June 2003, p. 18.

Timms, P, 'Abstract views', *Herald Sun*, 24 July 1996.

Titmarsh, M (ed.), *0055 29334 Art hotline 1992–95*, exh. cat., Art Hotline, Sydney, 1995.

Travis, L, 'Apricot girl', *paintings*, exh. cat., Kaliman Gallery, Sydney, 2002.

Williams, D and C Simpson, *Art now, contemporary art post-1970—book 2*, McGraw-Hill Publishers, Sydney, 1996, pp. 164–6.

Zagala, S, 'There's history here', *Into the quadrangle*, exh. cat., RMIT Project Space, Melbourne, 2005.

Zagala, S, L Travis and K Burns, *The decadence of the nude*, exh. cat., Ocular Lab, Melbourne, 2004.

Academic History

2018– Doctor of Philosophy, Monash University (expected completion 2021)

1989 Graduate Diploma of Arts in Visual Arts, NSW Institute of the Arts (now UNSW Art & Design), Sydney

Lyle Cullen Memorial Award for Visual Arts, Institute of the Arts

Emerging Artist Award—Sculpture, Institute of the Arts

1985–88 Bachelor of Arts (Visual)—Sculpture, Institute of the Arts (now ANU School of Art & Design).