



Annual Report 2020

Table of Contents

Director's Summary	
Introduction	3
Partnerships	4
Program	5
Governance and Fundraising	7
2020 Snapshot	8
2020 Exhibition Program	13
Professional Development	32
Public Programs	
Talks	33
Club 4A	35
Family Workshops	36
4A Kids	37
4A Papers	38
2020 Artist Engagement	39
4A Patrons, Benefactors, Friends and Partners	40

4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art acknowledges the cultures of Indigenous peoples in Australia, in particular the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation, and their continuing cultural and creative practices in this land. 4A pays respect to elders past, present and emerging as the traditional custodians of the lands where we live, work and create.

4A recognises that Australia's culture has been, and continues to be, uniquely shaped by Indigenous peoples, by centuries of migration and by generations born in Australia.



Cover: Holding Patterns: Crossing Threads® (Installation view) AA Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, 2020. From Left: Crossing Threads®, Seek, 2020, bamboo, cotton, hand-dyed Merino wool, hemp, Japanese silk and paper, linen, mixed natural fibres and sari silk framed in Tasmanian oak. Handwoven by Lauren Hernandez. Centre: Crossing Threads®, Consolation, 2020, bamboo, cotton, hand-dyed Merino wool, handspun upcycled yarn, hemp, leather, linen and mixed natural fibres framed in Tasmanian oak. Handwoven by Kass Hernandez. Right: Crossing Threads®, Inward State, 2020, bamboo, cotton, hand-dyed Merino wool, hemp, Japanese silk and paper, linen, mixed natural fibres and sari silk framed in Tasmanian oak. Handwoven by Lauren Hernandez. Courtesy the artists. Image; kail Wasikowski.

Director's Summary

Introduction:

In 2020, the work of 4A and our creative community showed our resilience and strength and the importance of dialogue through contemporary art in an Asian and Australian context. With the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, 4A had to rapidly shift our core operations, artistic programming and daily operations. In adjusting our ways of working, 4A prioritised supporting our staff, artists and the wider Asian and Australian communities.

With 4A's focus on understanding and developing the dynamic relationship between Australia and the wider Asian region through travel and exchange of contemporary art and ideas, the pandemic presented particular challenges to our organisation. With international travel no longer possible, 4A quickly pivoted to ensure that all artists originally contracted in our 2020 program were supported, making a small contribution to sustaining artists' practices by honouring at least 50% of all contracted fees. With the delivery of international programs on hold, 4A moved to develop digital projects that could support local Asian Australian practitioners while still connecting internationally. With the support of the City of Sydney we launched 4A Digital and 4A Kids, sustaining our creative output while our doors were closed under government health restrictions. When able to reopen, we delivered a new project, *Holding Patterns*, which allowed the development of COVID-safe exhibition projects by four Asian Australian practitioners, highlighting emerging practice in an environment where new opportunities for exhibition were severely reduced.

In mid 2020, 4A was advised by our accommodation partner, the City of Sydney, that the Hay Street premises in which 4A has resided for over 20 years would close temporarily for major remediation. From October 2020, 4A closed our upper level to exhibitions, and in December 2020 vacated the whole building in order for the City's

remediation works to commence. While working offsite in a small temporary gallery on William Street, Darlinghurst, and an office in Alexandria from January 2021 has reduced our capacity for physical exhibitions, we are working closely with the City in anticipation of returning to a much-improved Hay Street premises that will allow 4A to stage expanded exhibition programs and events.

December 2020 saw the departure of 4A Director Mikala Tai, after her return from maternity leave in mid 2020, as she took up the role of Head of Visual Arts at the Australia Council for the Arts. Over 2020, 4A Deputy Director Bridie Moran acted as Director, leading a team of two full-time (Engagement and Development Manager Mariam Arcilla, and Assistant Curator Con Gerakaris), one part-time (Assistant Curator Reina Takeuchi) and four casual staff (Dacchi Dang, Lucia Nguyen, Nicole Beck and Rujunko Pugh). In late 2020, a restructure was undertaken, promoting Bridie Moran to Executive Director and establishing a new role of Artistic Director/CEO, for which Amrit Gill was recruited at year end, ensuring 4A's organisational stability.

4A's role as a leader in contemporary art in Australia was recognised in 2020 by the awarding of uplifts and renewals in multi-year funding at a State level through Create NSW and federally through the Australia Council for the Arts. Combined with our building renewal project at a local level, the commitment of government funders to support 4A in 2020 will see us able to increase our capacity, support for artists, commissioning of projects, and wider connection with local, national and international audiences, over the coming years — ensuring that Asian Australian experiences, creativity and connection remain a key part of our contemporary arts landscape.

Partnerships:

In a year of change, partnerships remained crucial to 4A being able to sustain and grow our operations, support artists and engage with ideas, art and networks in Asian and Australian contemporary art contexts.

4A started 2020 working on a major, multi-level partnership project: Wansolwara: One Salt Water, presented in partnership with UNSW Galleries as part of Sydney Festival 2020. Wansolwara: One Salt Water was a series of exhibitions, performances and events from across the Pacific and throughout the Great Ocean, staged in partnership with venues at 4A, UNSW and Dynasty Karaoke, with Writers' Program support from FBi Radio and Art Monthly Australasia, and funding assistance from the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts. While exhibition Drawn by Stones was unable to be staged in 2020 due to international travel restrictions and the City's planned remediation works, support from the Cultural Division, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Sydney enabled 4A to commence development of the project by exhibiting Monuments by Dean Cross, engaging Annette Liu as curatorial assistant and commissioning works for 4A Digital and 4A Papers by Annette Liu and Biung Ismahasan.

In 2020, 4A continued our commercial partnerships, working in early 2020 with Place Management NSW and Lendlease to deliver major public art project *Louise Zhang: Lunar New Year Moon Gates*, an installation of immersive, colourful moon gates that over 25,000 people interacted with as part of the City of Sydney's Lunar New Year Festival in Darling Harbour and Darling Square. 4A's partnership with World Square Sydney also continued in 2020, with 4A providing consultancy services and refitting a shop space ahead of 2021 Lunar exhibition projects. Working in partnership with Place Management NSW and the Chinese Garden of Friendship, 4A continued our series of highly successful artist-led children's workshops in January 2020, and transitioned these projects to the digital realm through 4A Kids, with support from the City of Sydney.



Nationally, 4A partnered with Museums & Galleries of NSW (M&G NSW), Visions of Australia and the Gordon Darling Foundation to tour *Eugenia Lim: The Ambassador*. The exhibtion was presented with partners The Riddoch Art Gallery in Mount Gambier, Bega Valley Regional Gallery, Goulburn Regional Art Gallery and Griffith Regional Art Gallery on one of the few successful contemporary art tours that continued during the pandemic. 4A and M&G NSW worked closely with our exhibition partners to develop a digital exhibition experience during the New South Wales lockdown. In partnership with Wollongong Art Gallery, our *On the Move* project reached regional audiences in early 2020.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some partnerships planned for 2020 were unable to go ahead. These included our annual Performance x 4A Program as part of Art Central Hong Kong, which was cancelled in March 2020, and in-person components of the Curatorial Associates Program presented in partnership with the Factory Contemporary Art Centre (Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam) and the Australia Council for the Arts. In these instances, 4A has been working closely with our partners to ensure that programs are able to be adjusted and delivered when restrictions ease.

Without the support of our partners and commitment to working collaboratively, the majority of 4A's 2020 programming would not have been possible and we look forward to extending the opportunities we offer for artists, audiences and our community through continuation and expansion of our partnerships in 2021 and beyond.



Program:

Throughout 2020, 4A's planned artistic program was drastically altered, responding to government health advice for institutional operations and COVID-19 safety guidelines. 4A was open a total of 150 days with *Wansolwara: One Salt Water* accounting for 64 days of pre-COVID operation. In total, 1,593 people visited 4A's Haymarket gallery and 72,693 people attended our offsite exhibitions and programs.

Most of 4A's 2020 audience engagement is reflective of the year that was: exhibitions, public programs and public installations from Lunar New Year and Wansolwara: One Salt Water, and the continuation of Eugenia Lim: The Ambassador to multiple venues in regional New South Wales. Our usually strong international reach was diminished due to the cancellation of Art Central Hong Kong in late March.

To commence the year, 4A in partnership with UNSW Galleries, presented Wansolwara: One Salt Water, a multi-venue project comprising exhibitions, performances and events. Unfolding across multiple sites over the summer of 2020, the exhibition profiled the creativity of the Asia-Pacific region through multi-disciplinary forms. Throughout both venues and exhibitions, Wansolwara presented work from Sebastián Calfuqueo Aliste, Mitiana Arbon, asinnajaq, Mariquita 'Micki' Davis, Sarah Biscarra Dilley, Winnie Dunn, Terry Faleono, Ruha Fifita, Troppo Galaktika, Amrita Hepi, Rebecca Ann Hobbs, Shivanjani Lal, Enoch Mailangi, Caroline Monnet, Faye Mullen, Paula Schaafhausen, Talia Smith, Shannon Te Ao, Angela Tiatia, Vaimaila Urale and Gutiŋarra Yunupiŋu.

4A's annual symposium was held at UNSW Galleries with artists and leading academics discussing the role of art, galleries and curating in the Pacific Region. *Please Explain: No one's drowning, baby* saw Sydney Festival Artistic Director Wesley Enoch moderate a poignant discussion on climate change with exhibiting artist Paula Schaafhausen, Guardian Australia Pacific Editor Kate Lyons, and UNSW Professor John Church. Guest-programmed by well-known artistic party collective Troppo Galaktika, *CLUB 4A: SALTY BITCH* was a performance and music event celebrating resistance with performances by Bhenji Ra, STELLY G and Seini "SistaNative" Taumoepeau alongside DJs and video work by VJ Vaxxx.

In May, we launched 4A Digital, an online platform for artists, writers and creatives to experiment and investigate ideas outside of exhibition and published journal formats. Pieces were regularly published online throughout the year with contributions from Elyas Alavi, Rachel Ang, Dacchi Dang, Joanna Frank, Azadeh Hamzeii, Libby Haward, Alana Hunt, Bing Ismahasan, Sanjay Kak, Kazkom, Lee Lai, Dorothy Lau Gwan Tung, Hyun Lee, Hunyara Mahbub, Johanna Ng, Meg O'Shea, Nadia Refaei, Spectator Jonze, Jasmin Stephens, Strict Face, Mel Stringer, Garry Trinh and Andrew Yee.

Released during school holiday periods, 4A Kids commissioned artists to produce children's art activity kits to provide early engagement with contemporary art. Artists commissioned in 2020 included: Nathan Beard, Freda Chiu, Amy Ge, Alana Hunt, Leyla Stevens, Shireen Taweel and Louise Zhang.

In July, 4A reopened its gallery doors with *Holding Patterns*, a four-part exhibition held in our ground floor gallery. From July through October, 4A presented solo exhibitions from Kien Situ, Crossing Threads, Sofiyah Ruqayah and Shireen Taweel. Examining concepts of repetition and physical labour in artistic practice, *Holding Patterns* presented new and existing work from Sydney-based artists responding to the period of stasis and uncertainty due to the COVID-19 lockdown.

While numbers in galleries were extremely limited, monthly public engagement programs were produced for *Holding Patterns* in response to the exhibition. Drawing upon his tertiary education, Kien Situ sat down with architect John Choi to discuss their respective practices alongside ideas of heritage, preservation and rebuilding structures as society and cities develop and grow. Sisters Lauren and Kass Hernandez of Crossing Threads guided virtual audiences through their exhibition with co-curator Con Gerakaris over Instagram Live. Fellow co-curator Reina Takeuchi interviewed Shireen Taweel and Sofiyah Ruqayah in their studios, providing a glimpse into the spaces and lives of the artists as they discussed their experiences making work during home isolation.

Concurrently, Dean Cross presented the 2020 iteration of *Monuments* as a precursor and grounding to the delayed and forthcoming *Drawn by Stones* exhibition curated by Bridie Moran. *Monuments* is a site-responsive work — an ongoing project since 2016 and intended for exhibition every two years. Handfuls of white ochre — sourced from Ngunnawal/Ngambri Country where the artist grew up, and gathered with permission from local elder and custodian of the land Aunty Matilda House — build a grid that spreads across the gallery floors. A number of the 'monuments' are interspersed with gold leaf. With each handful representing one year of colonisation in Australia, Cross' 'monuments' to strength, survival and custodianship challenge colonial concepts of ceramics, memorialisation and memory.

As heritage remediation works began on 4A's gallery in Haymarket, *Eugenia Lim: The Ambassador* opened at its final location at Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery. After visiting The Riddoch Art Gallery in Mount Gambier, Bega Valley Regional Gallery, Goulburn Regional Art Gallery and Griffith Regional Art Gallery throughout 2020, *Eugenia Lim: The Ambassador* saw diverse and encouraging engagement and visitation throughout Australia and concluded 4A's artistic program for the year.



Crossing Threads®, THE DIVIDE, 2020, alpaca, bamboo, canvas, cotton, cotton roping, felted Merino wool, hand-cut denim, hand-cut leather, hand-dyed raffia, hand-dyed Shibori, hemp, linen, marine roping, Merino wool, mixed natura fibres, Pima cotton. Suspended off a painted Tasmanian dowel. Handwoven by Kass Hernandez. Courtesy the artist. Image: Kai Wasikowski.

Governance and Fundraising:

In 2020, 4A focused on building our governance capacity and board expertise. With the resignation of long-serving board members Lisa Corsi in February 2020 and John Young Zerunge in November 2020, 4a recognised that over many years, both Lisa and John were key in developing our strategy in supporting artists, creatives, and audiences, and were crucial players in helping 4A grow into the ambitious institution that it is today. In late 2020, the Board was pleased to appoint new members Chun Yin Rainbow Chan and Michael Rolfe. Chun Yin Rainbow Chan is a vocalist, music producer and interdisciplinary artist who has performed at Sydney Opera House, Vivid, MONA FOMA, Gallery of Modern Art, Iceland Airwaves, National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, and Tai Kwun. Michael Rolfe was most recently the CEO of Museums & Galleries of NSW, and has over 30 years experience working in the visual arts, with an in-depth overview of funding, governance and policy. Rainbow and Michael commenced their board appointments on 6 October 2020, joining 4A's existing board members Adrian Williams, Susan Acret, Caroline Choy, John Choi, Maree Di Pasquale, Julie Ewington, and Hannah Skrzynski.

In one of the most volatile years in corporate memory due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 4A returned a surplus of \$22,649, with revenue of \$790,232 in 2020. This represents a \$12,782 increase in surplus from 2019. The first quarter of 2020 saw

a significant downturn, with a drop in philanthropic and commercial income. Due to the economic climate, commercial and philanthropic support were significantly less than in 2019, with the organisation only able to secure \$57,450 in commercial and co-producer fees (compared to \$170,797 in 2019) and \$65,340 in philanthropic donations (compared to \$189,418 in 2019). Compared to 2019, income across these key sources represented a reduction of \$237,425. 4A's surplus in 2020 was only able to be drawn from a highly conservative approach, reduction in exhibition and travel costs, retention and security of project grants and through our eligibility for JobKeeper funding and COVID-19 recovery grants. Despite these challenges, and as a result of government assistance, 4A was able to deliver programs, honour artist contracts and pay fees (even where exhibitions were

Exhibition expenditure in 2020 was forcibly limited for 4A by three main factors: COVID-19 forcing gallery closures, a ban on international travel and state-wide lockdown, and the City of Sydney's notification of remediation works to our Hay Street building, requiring 4A to vacate in late 2020.

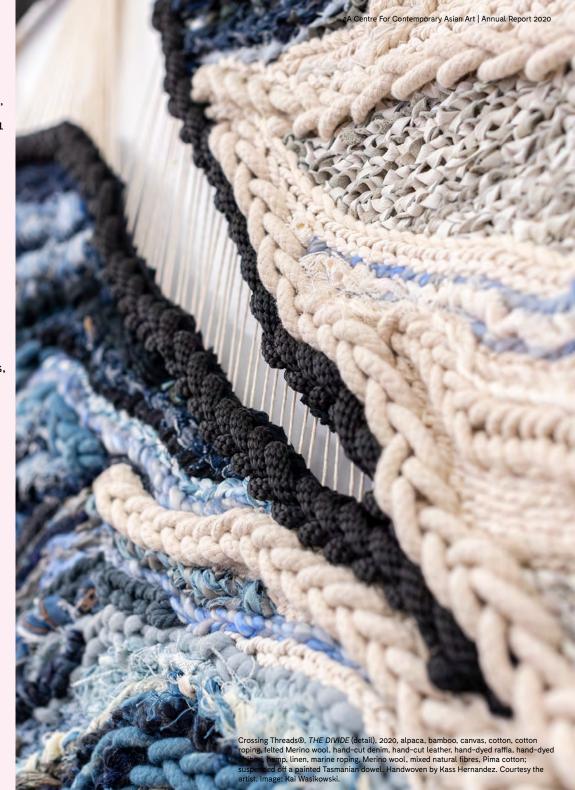
delayed or cancelled) and retain staff capacity.

These three factors led to 4A significantly reducing our onsite exhibition programming, with only three exhibition projects presented: *Wansolwara: One Salt Water*, Dean Cross' *Monuments* and *Holding Patterns*. A number of projects have been rescheduled to 2021 and 2022, with exhibition budgets accommodating significantly increased costs for international shipping as a result of the pandemic.

Staffing movements in 2020 included the departure of our Business Manager in late 2019, and Director Mikala Tai's maternity leave for the majority the year. Thanks to support provided by JobKeeper and Create NSW's Rescue Restart program, 4A was able to retain staff capacity through the engagement of casuals at an increased level, and all full-time and part-time staff at existing levels. Without the support of these programs, retaining our staffing would have proved highly challenging in 2020.

At the conclusion of our 2017–2020 multi-year funding agreements with Create NSW and the Australia Council for the Arts, 4A secured meaningful uplifts for the 2021–2024 period from both agencies. Through Create NSW, 4A was successful in securing \$300,000 annually over this four year period. Through the Australia Council for the Arts, a total amount of \$234,993 for the 2021–2024 period was secured through the Visual Arts and Crafts Strategy, and \$740,000 from the Four Year Funding program. Over 2021–2024, this will represent an investment of \$2,174,993 in 4A from state and federal governments. This uplift in funding represents an unprecedented commitment to supporting 4A into the future and will allow the organisation to embark upon an expansion of operations and ensure stability in an unstable arts landscape.

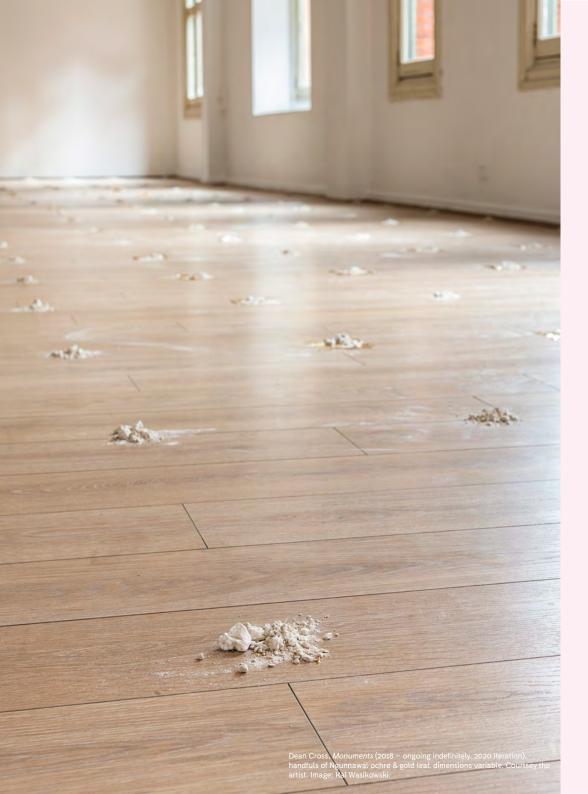
As the City of Sydney's remediation works continue in our Hay Street premises, we are planning additional venue upgrades and expansion. We anticipate our commercial and philanthropic income sources will be reduced in coming years as the sector recovers. It is expected that higher costs and challenges to international to mobility will affect our work across the Asia-Pacific region. 4A's excellent financial result in 2020 will be pivotal to ensuring our survival and delivery of high quality programs and outcomes as we move into 2021 and 2022.



2020 Snapshot

74,600 **Total Visitation** 1.6k visited our Haymarket gallery 73k visited offsite presentations 9 Exhibitions, public programs and presentations 6 **4A-curated exhibitions** 102 Artists, curators, writers, speakers and other professionals engaged **73** Artists exhibited or commissioned 48 Australian artists 25 international artists 125 Separate artworks presented 48 at 4A 39 digital 38 offsite 19 **4A Digital commissions** 12 Writers commissioned for 4A Papers Internship and paid assistant opportunities offered





Presented projects, artists' work, activities and worked collaboratively at 10 local and regional external venues:

Bega Valley Regional Gallery, Bega, NSW

Chinese Garden of Friendship, Sydney, NSW

Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery, Coffs Harbour, NSW

Darling Harbour, Sydney, NSW

Dynasty Karaoke, Haymarket, NSW

Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, Goulburn, NSW

Griffith Regional Art Gallery, Griffith, NSW

The Riddoch Art Gallery, Mount Gambier, SA

UNSW Galleries, Sydney, NSW

Wollongong Art Gallery, Wollongong, NSW

2020 Marketing Snapshot



6,375 Total Instagram Followers

1,364 New Followers229 Total posts

174,706 reach (57% increase)



7,984 Total Facebook Followers

New Followers
Total posts



340 Total LinkedIn Followers

(activated August 2020)

Exhibition profiles and

Art Collector

artist features in: LIMINAL Magazine

Time Out

Concrete Playground

SBS News

Art Monthly Australasia

Exhibition reviews in: Running Dog

Arts Hub

Sydney Morning Herald

Artist interviews on: 2SER

FBi Radio

Eastside Radio



SPECIAL ISSUES

POETRY

NEWS

REVIEW

HOLDING PATTERNS PART 2: CROSSING THREADS®



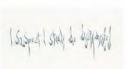
BY PATRICIA ARCILLA

A few weeks ago, my partner and I travelled to the Philippines-we took a Street View sojourn to my maternal grandparents' former home in Manila. I remembered the street name, but not the house number, so I typed the name into the address field and clicked slowly along the street-pausing to point out every jeepney on bricks, every haunted house, every Jollibee delivery bike-until I found it.

The house is now an office, but the flat, gently-pitched roof, the pebblecrete balcony enfolding the top floor, and the big tree spilling over the top of the yellow stucco gate remain the same. For a moment, nostalgia distracted me from the fact that I will not see the house in person, nor step foot in the Philippines, any time soon. Earlier this year, days before we were due to fly to Manila for my grandma's 92nd birthday, the country entered one of the world's longest coronavirus-lockdowns.

Plenty of people who grow up in the diaspora know how homesickness for a place you've never actually called home adorns you like a birthmark: you can cover it up or forget about it, but it'll never go away.

> Filipino-Australian sisters Lauren and Kass Hernandez, known professionally as Crossing Threads®, understand this diaspora experience well. Their exhibition, as part of the Holding Patterns series at 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, grapples with this-amongst other topics-with a stunning, startling sensitivity. Rather than creating self portraits in a quest to probe their cultural heritage and identities, the duo creates something else entirely: landscapes.











Listening to Tagaloa

Channelling the Oceanic God's Voice in the Work of Paula Schaafhausen













Shireen Taweels artistic practice draws from the personal experiences of being a Lebanese-Australian living between cultures and how the physical spaces within her community reflect a complex cultural landscape of transformation expressed through hybridity and plurality.

for community—focused conceptual development and a manipulation of the traditional acts of making that leads to possibilities of cross-cultural discourse, opening dialogues of sbared histories and fluid community identities.





3 DEAN CROSS

2020 Exhibition Program





Louise Zhang's *Moon Gates* are traditional in form but adorned with the artist's signature flair for colour and vibrancy. Zhang presented a contemporary spin on the traditional architectural structure, enlivening Darling Square in celebration of Chinese New Year.

Louise Zhang: Lunar New Year Moon Gates was curated and produced by 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art for Place Management NSW and Lendlease in Darling Harbour and Darling Square, as part of the City of Sydney's 2020 Sydney Lunar New Year Festival.

Artist: Louise Zhang Curator: Mikala Tai

Venue: Darling Square, Darling Harbour, NSW **Exhibition dates:** 9 January – 25 January 2020

Louise Zhang: Lunar New Year Moon Gates is produced by 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art.



Delving through more than a century of the Dion family history, an indelible part of the Illawarra's social fabric as members of the Chinese diaspora and operators of the region's bus services, *On the Move* tells a story of migration, survival, acceptance and community spirit of a remarkable family through archival material and responses from contemporary artists.

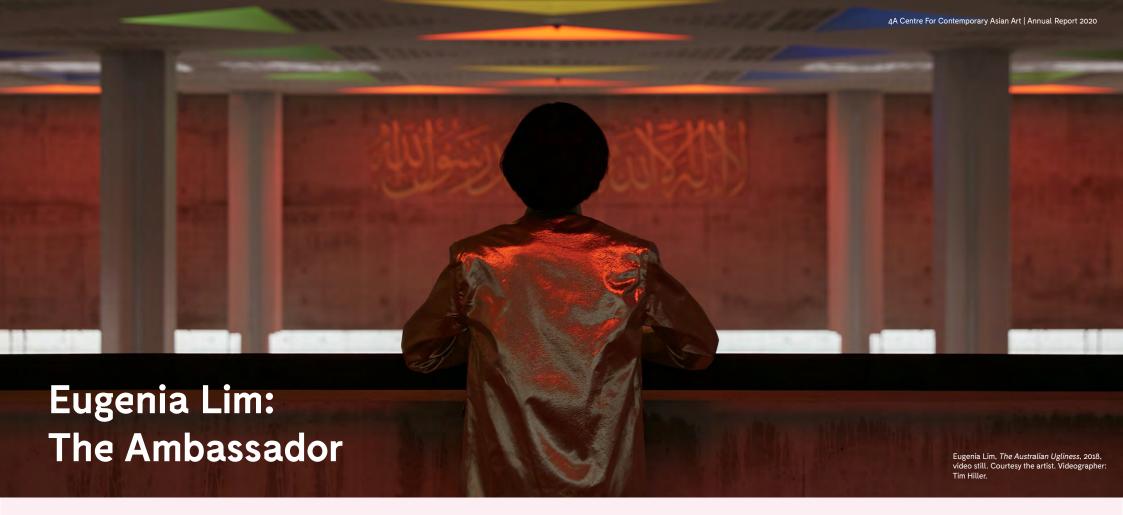
Produced and presented by Wollongong Art Gallery in partnership with 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art with support from The Dion Family.

Artists: Matt Chun, Pia Johnson and Naomi Segal

Curator: Mikala Tai

Venue: Wollongong Art Gallery, Wollongong, NSW **Exhibition dates:** 1 December 2019 – 23 February 2020

Produced and presented by Wollongong Art Gallery in partnership with 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art with support from The Dion Family.



The Ambassador presents three distinct series by Melbourne-based artist Eugenia Lim that centre upon a gold-suited figure who appears halfway between truth and fantasy. In each series, Lim transforms herself into her eponymous invented persona, the Ambassador, an insatiability curious character who traverses time and space, playfully exploring Australia's cultural and built landscapes.

A 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art and Museums & Galleries of NSW touring exhibition. This project has been assisted by the Australian Government's Visions of Australia program and the Gordon Darling Foundation.

Artist: Eugenia Lim Curator: Mikala Tai

Venues: The Riddoch Art Gallery, SA, Bega Valley Regional Gallery, NSW, Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, NSW, Griffith Regional Art Gallery, NSW and

Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery, NSW

Exhibition dates: 17 January – 16 February 2020, 24 April – 21 June 2020, 10 July – 15 August 2020, 11 September – 18 October 2020, 20 November 2020 – 16 January 2021

A 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art and Museums & Galleries of NSW touring exhibition. This project has been assisted by the Australian Government's Visions of Australia program.



Vaimaila Urale, Manamea ma Anivanuanua, 2020, black card and sand, 240 pieces across two walls, each wall installation measuring 5940 x 2520mm. Courtesy the artist. Image: Kai Wasikowski.

Wansolwara: One Salt Water is a series of exhibitions, performances and events from across the Pacific and throughout the Great Ocean. Wansolwara – a pidgin word from the Solomon Islands meaning 'one-salt-water' or 'one ocean, one people' – reflects not a single ocean, but rather a connected waterscape that holds distinct cultures and communities. Through art, performance and conversation, this project celebrated the depth and diversity of contemporary visual and material culture throughout these regions, placing customary practices alongside contemporary articulations in art, writing and the moving image.

Wansolwara: One Salt Water was produced and presented in partnership by 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art and UNSW Galleries, in association with Sydney Festival. This project was assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts. The Wansolwara Writers' Program was presented in partnership with FBi Radio and Art Monthly Australasia.

Exhibiting artists at 4A: Terry Faleono, Rebecca Ann Hobbs (Aotearoa New Zealand), Paula Schaafhausen (Aotearoa New Zealand) and Vaimaila Urale (Aotearoa New Zealand)

Creatives: Sebastián Calfuqueo Aliste (Chile), Mitiana Arbon, asinnajaq (Canada), Mariquita 'Micki' Davis (USA), Sarah Biscarra Dilley (USA), Winnie Dunn, Ruha Fifita, Troppo Galaktika, Amrita Hepi, Shivanjani Lal, Enoch Mailangi, Caroline Monnet (Canada), Faye Mullen (Canada), José Da Silva, Talia Smith, Shannon Te Ao (Aotearoa New Zealand), Angela Tiatia, and Gutiarra Yunupinu

Curators: Mikala Tai, Léuli Eshraghi (Australia/Canada) and José De Silva **Venues:** 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, Haymarket, NSW and UNSW Galleries, Paddington, NSW

Exhibition dates: 17 January – 29 March 2020 and UNSW Galleries 17 January – 18 April 2020

Wansolwara: One Salt Water was produced and presented by 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art.



Exhibition series *Holding Patterns* presents four solo exhibitions highlighting and supporting Sydney-based artists. *Holding Patterns* reflects on making in the time of Covid-19, celebrating the adaptability, resilience and ingenuity of artists during this challenging period. Through textiles, sculptures, metallurgy, drawing and painting, the artists of *Holding Patterns* deftly navigate cultural histories, identities, object permanence and transmutation through process-based practice.

Curated and produced by 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art.

Artists: Kien Situ, Crossing Threads®, Shireen Taweel and Sofiyah Ruqayah

Curators: Con Gerakaris and Reina Takeuchi

Venue: 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, Haymarket, NSW

Exhibition dates: 9 July – 2 August 2020, 6 August – 30 August 2020, 3 September – 25 September 2020 and 1 October – 29 October 2020

Programmed and produced by 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art.

Holding Patterns: Kien Situ (installation view) Left: Kien Situ, Shanshui (Wall Plate), 2020. Chinese Mo ink, gypsum plaster, 48 x 48 x 8cm. Centre: Kien Situ, Shanshui (Scroll), 2020. Chinese Mo ink, gypsum plaster, 88 x 64 x 8cm. Courtesy the artist.



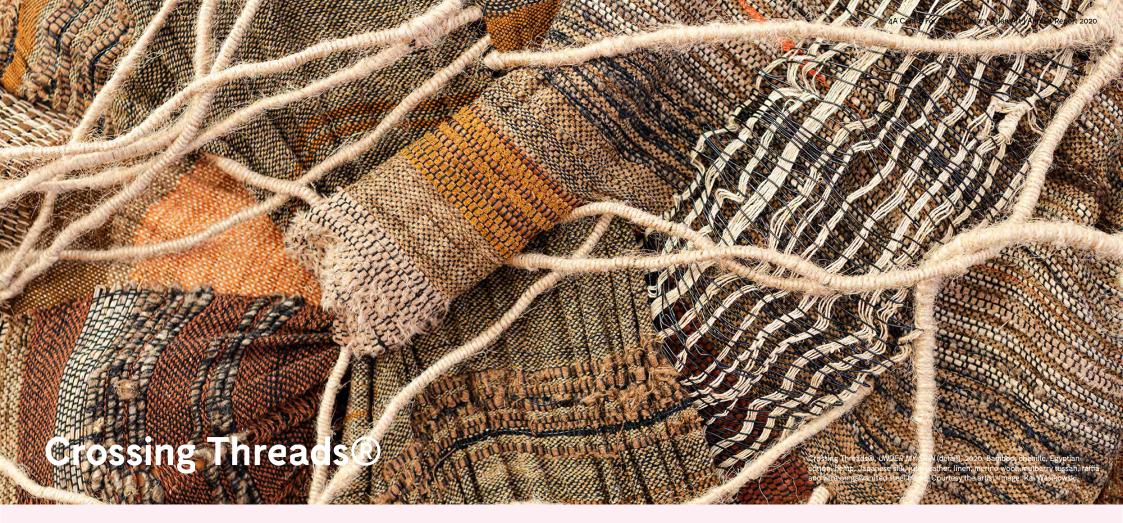
Kien Situ's work presents the internal struggle of identity and the dichotomy of personal and cultural understanding of self. For *Holding Patterns*, he exhibits a sculptural body of work which distorts the form and purpose of functional and decorative objects found in domestic and sacred environments.

Artist: Kien Situ

Curator: Con Gerakaris

Venue: 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, Haymarket, NSW

Exhibition dates: 9 July - 2 August 2020



Crossing Threads® is a partnership of physical labour, technical expertise and emotional release with concepts of cultural heritage, personal identity and the importance of social and familial interconnectedness resonating within the fibres of their weaves. Sisters Lauren and Kass Hernandez's works in *Holding Patterns* spotlight the pair's transient relationship as well as their collective journey of self-discovery in defining what it means to be Filipina amidst a western landscape.

Artists: Crossing Threads®
Curator: Con Gerakaris

Venue: 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, Haymarket, NSW

Exhibition dates: 6 August - 30 August 2020



In Holding Patterns Shireen Taweel presents large-scale installation tracing transcendence, an evocation of tranquility and introspection, referencing the holy spaces where heaven and earth meet and join in unity. tracing transcendence provides an intimate perspective of Taweel's coppersmith-driven practice, which sees contemporary and arabesque Islamic decorative motifs hand-cut into copper.

Artist: Shireen Taweel
Curator: Reina Takeuchi

Venue: 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, Haymarket, NSW

Exhibition dates: 3 September – 25 September 2020

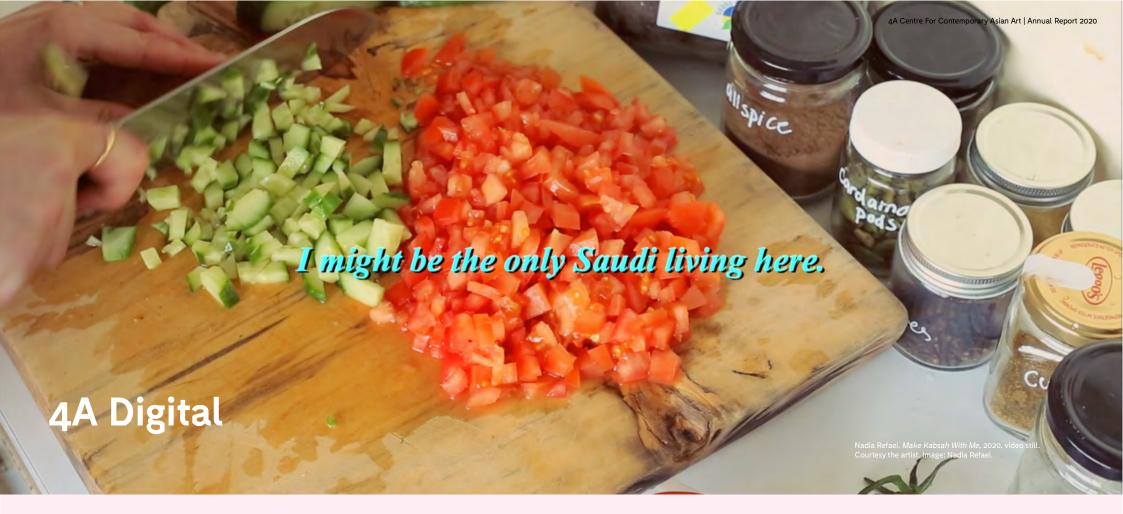


Working from the evocations of memories, Ruqayah investigates the fragile and tenuous mutations between the animate and inanimate to explore what transcends humans and animals. In her works *Harbingers of Doom* and *Self-fulfilling Prophecies*, Ruqayah draws from the nonsensical narratives of her own dreams and utilises a scientific instrument, the storm glass, to make sense of them.

Artist: Sofiyah Ruqayah Curator: Reina Takeuchi

Venue: 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, Haymarket, NSW

Exhibition dates: 1 October - 29 October 2020



4A Digital is an online platform for commissioned projects by Australian artists. 4A Digital is a space for creative and academic exploration, giving artists, writers, academics and professionals the opportunity to experiment and investigate concepts and ideas outside of exhibition and published journal formats.

Artists: Elyas Alavi, Rachel Ang, Dacchi Dang, Strict Face, Joanna Frank, Azadeh Hamzeii, Libby Harward, Alana Hunt, Biung Ismahasan (Taiwan), Spectator Jonze, Sanjay Kak (India), Kazkom, Lee Lai (Canada), Gwan Tung Dorothy Lau (Hong Kong), Hyun Lee, Humyara Mahbub, Johanna Ng, Meg O'Shea, Nadia Refaei, Mel Stringer (USA), Garry Trinh and Andrew Yee

Curators: Con Gerakaris and Reina Takeuchi

Venue: 4a.com.au Exhibition dates: 2020

4A Digital has been commissioned by 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, Sydney. This project has been supported by the City of Sydney.



Dacchi Dang's photo essay reflects on the history and power of the pinhole camera and how this device has informed his passion for alternative photographic processes during his thirty-year career.

Hyun Lee presents a personal essay and photographic series contemplating society's perceptions of shamanism and the practice's prevalence in contemporary Korean culture. In *Eunmi, Korean Shaman* Lee unveils personal revelations and anecdotes from her fate-filled research experiences in Korea.



Capturing the streets of suburban Sydney encountered during a ubiquitous daily walk, Garry Trinh's new body of work takes solace in photography during the forced upheaval of daily routine.

Whispers at the bed of an obstinate prophet brings together the enigmatic landscapes of Alavi's lived realities and imaginings. A bilingual series of poems, the works speak to calligraphic language and the slippages between linguistic differences when negotiating fluid identity.



Nadia Refaei: Make Kabsah With Me

Nadia Refaei's reverential cooking video/documentary *Make Kabsah with Me* weaves together personal and wider narratives to explore the history of migration through West Asia, the complexities of the Arab cultural landscape and the immigrant experience in Australia. The story is explored through conversations between Refaei and her father, a first-generation Saudi who grew up in Riyadh to a Syrian family, before migrating to Hobart.

Strict Face: 4A Mix

Adelaide-based DJ and producer Strict Face presents a sluggish, sensual and sombre mix for 4A Digital.





Mel Stringer: Sleepless in Seattle

Mel Stringer's *Sleepless in Seattle* is a diaristic comic following her life in Seattle during and post lockdown. Accompanying this work is a Zoom interview where curator Reina Takeuchi and Stringer discuss her playful autobiographical practice, notions of body positivity, cultural diaspora and female-driven empowerment.

Alana Hunt: Cups of nun chai

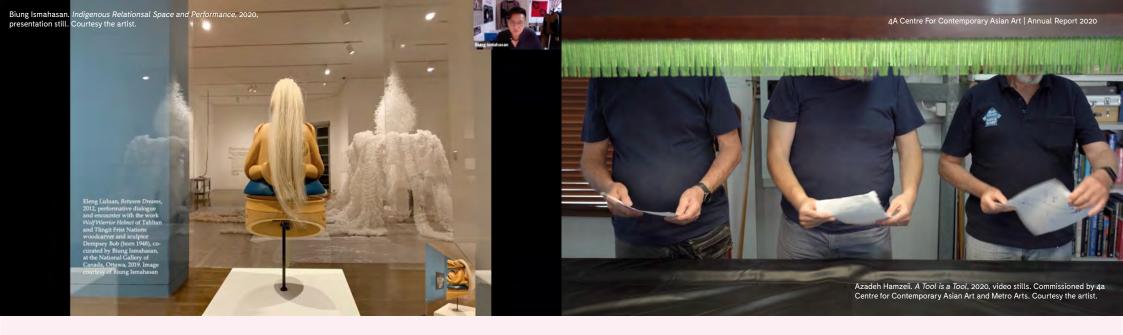
Cups of nun chai is an evolving body of work, brewed for over a decade by Alana Hunt as a requiem to the killing of over 118 people during pro-freedom protests in Indian controlled Kashmir in 2010. For 4A Digital contributing writers read excerpts of their work, which photographer Sharafat Ali responds to visually.



Gwan Tung Dorothy Lau's *Intradependent* is a digitally manipulated self-portrait that explores the tension between the natural compulsion for personal excellence, and a countervailing urge to self-sabotage.



Libby Harward's *Smoke Cloak* references the 2019 severe drought conditions of the Murray Darling, its inextricable relationship with unethical commercial systems and a call to return the management and care of the now depleted river system to its Traditional Owners and Custodians.



Biung Ismahasan, Indigenous Azadeh Hamzeii: **Relational Space and Performance:**

Curating Together Towards Sovereignty in Taiwan and Beyond

In this lecture, curator, artist and researcher Biung Ismahasan discusses their research in contemporary Indigenous curatorial practice and aesthetics, focusing on Taiwanese Indigenous contemporary art.

A Tool is a Tool

Azadeh Hamzeii's nuanced and performative practice explores her personal and familial connections between two countries: Iran and Australia. A Tool is a Tool documents two intertwined narratives that revolve around a cotton fluffing tool constructed across continents.















4A Digital: Webcomics

Artists: Rachel Ang, KazKom, Lee Lai, Humyara Mahbub, Johanna Ng, Meg

O'Shea and Andrew Yee **Curator:** Con Gerakaris

Left to right, from top:

Rachel Ang, *The Great Beautiful Ball*, 2020. Courtesy the artist. Humyara Mahbub, *Incricate Golden Dome*, 2020. Courtesy the artist. Johanna Ng, *Bay Vista*, 2020. Courtesy the artist. Kazkom, *The LifeSpan*, 2020. Courtesy the artist. Andrew Yee, *Flick*, 2020. Courtesy the artist. Meg O'Shea, *Untitled*, 2020. Courtesy the artist. Lee Lai, *Mother Ideal*, 2020. Courtesy the artist.









Ephemeral exhibition 4A Digital Hits The Streets transformed digital artworks into interactive street posters across Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. This project features works by Johanna Frank and Specator Jonze, which are accompanied by a custom-made augmented reality animation created especially by the artists for 4A. Viewers utilised the Eyejack application to bring these posters to life.

Artists: Joanna Frank and Spectator Jonze Curators: Con Gerakaris and Reina Takeuchi

Venues: Sydney: Alexandria, CBD, Darlinghurst, Leichhardt, Marrickville, Mascot, Newtown, Paddington, Surry Hills and more. Melbourne: CBD, Southbank, Carlton North, Collingwood, Fitzroy, Footscray, Richmond, Box Hill, Thornbury, Preston, Prahran and more. Brisbane: Airport, Fortitude Valley, Griffith University, Indooroopilly, Kangaroo Point, Kelvin Grove, Mt Gravatt, Paddington, Woolloongabba and more.

Exhibition dates: Sydney: 23 November – 14 December, Melbourne: 23 November – 14 December and Brisbane: 27 November – 11 December



4A's professional development program of studio residencies, curatorial workshops, publishing platforms and public talks provide substantial support for artists and career development for arts workers. These programs focus on equipping artists, arts workers and students with skills, networks and experiences that play a critical role in developing Asia literacy. In 2020, due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, a number of our annual professional development activities were unable to be staged. This includes the 4A Beijing Studio Residency, which has annually enabled up to four Australian artists to travel to Beijing to work from the studios of Shen Shaomin, the 4A Curators' Intensive, which has been rescheduled to coincide with the 2021 *Diaspora Pavilion 2* project, and the the 4A Emerging Writer's Program, which has been developed to allow early career arts writers to travel within Asia on fieldwork.

At the end of 2020, international professional development programs including the 4A Beijing Studio and Emerging Writer's Program remained on hiatus, and the organisation is working closely, particularly with the Australia Council for the Arts, to develop digital and alternative residency programming in 2021 and 2022.

Wansolwara Writers' Program

Alongside the Wansolwara: One Salt Water exhibition, a series of academic modes of enquiry elucidated key themes of the project through a writing program. Australian-based early-career writers Mitiana Arbon, Winnie Dunn, Enoch Mailangi and Talia Smith, were commissioned to participate in the Wansolwara Writers' Program. Their critical responses to the exhibition were shared in a special edition of 4A's biannual online journal 4A Papers, and a roundtable discussion published in Issue 324 of Art Monthly Australasia. The Wansolwara Writers' Program was presented in partnership with FBi Radio and Art Monthly Australasia.



Please Explain: Nobody's drowning baby

Speakers: Kate Lyons, Paula Schaafhausen (New Zealand) and John Church

Moderator: Wesley Enoch **Event date:** 19 January 2020

Slow Boat to Nerrigundah: The Dion family & the golden gardens of the Chinese diaspora on the South Coast of NSW

Speaker: Dr Joesph Davis **Event date:** 25 January 2020

4A Talks // Crossing Threads®

Speakers: Crossing Threads® Moderator: Con Gerakaris Event date: 16 August 2020

4A Talks // Shireen Taweel

Speaker: Shireen Taweel **Moderator:** Reina Takeuchi **Event date:** 5 September 2020



UNSW Art & Design and 4A present: Socially-engaged Contemporary Art in Rural Hong Kong

Speakers: Frank Vigneron (Hong Kong), Natalie Lo Lai Lai (Hong Kong) and Monti Lai

(Hong Kong)

Moderator: Paul Gladston Event date: 7 October 2020

UNSW Art & Design presents: The Complexity of Contemporary Art in Central Asia

Speakers: Thibaut de Ruyter (Germany) and Viktoriya Erofeeva (Russia).

Moderator: Paul Gladston Event date: 4 November 2020 UNSW Art & Design presents: Photographs, Photocopies, and Lianhuanhua: The Early Works of Wang Youshen, 1985-1990

Speakers: Dr Shuxia Chen and Dr Yu-chieh Li

Event date: 2 December 2020



Club 4A: Troppo Galaktika presents Salty Bitch

As part of Sydney Festival, Sydney-based collective Troppo Galaktika presented an evening of food, music and live performances, weaving from 4A's gallery to Dynasty Karaoke in Haymarket.

Artists, Musicians and Performers: Ayebatone, Bhenji Ra, DJ SOVTRAX, DJ Sista Agz, KILIMI, Luna Aquatica, Nadeena Dixon, Seini "SistaNative" Taumoepeau, STELLY G and VJ Vaxxx

Curator: Troppo Galaktika

Venue: Dynasty Karaoke, Haymarket, NSW

Event date: 25 January 2020



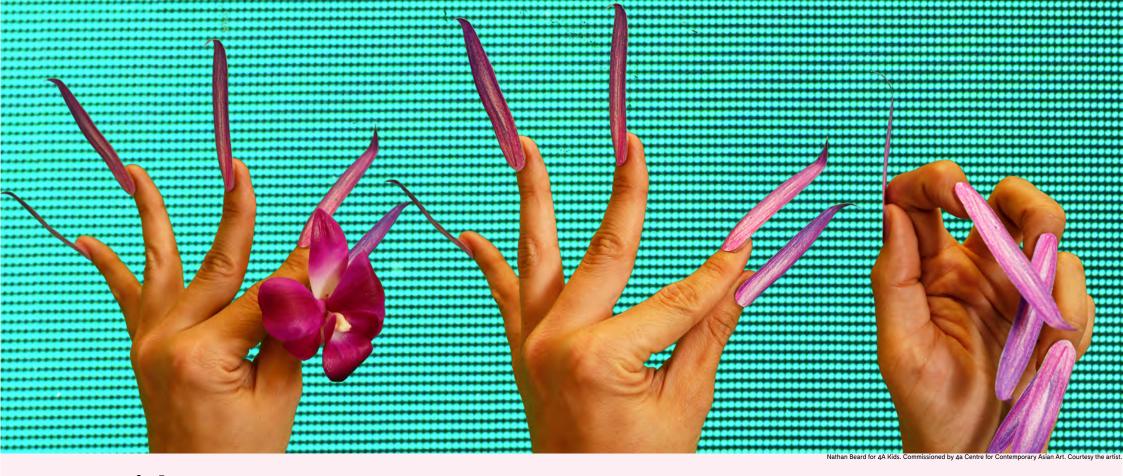
4A's artist-led Family Workshops were planned to continue throughout 2020 in partnership with the Chinese Garden of Friendship. Our free family programs are programmed in line with school holidays and have proven successful with excellent overall attendance and positive feedback on relevant social media channels.

As a result of COVID-19, 4A was unfortunately only able to present one workshop in 2020. However, with support from a City of Sydney grant, 4A was able to pivot this program and launch 4A Kids, a digital project designed to connect kids with contemporary Asian and Asian Australian contemporary art, culture and ideas. Taking the Family Workshops online in this way allowed us for the first time to connect our kids and family programming with an audience outside Sydney's CBD.

2020 Family Workshops:

Zodiac Flower Charm Workshops with Louise Zhang Venue: Chinese Garden of Friendship, Sydney, NSW

Program dates: 13 - 17 January 2020



4A Kids

4A Kids connected kids with contemporary Asian and Asian Australian contemporary art, culture and ideas. 4A commissioned contemporary artists to share new creative projects for children aged 5–17 years to try at home. 4A Kids took shape in three kits, each featuring four artists.

Artists: Abdul-Rahman Abdullah, Nathan Beard, Rainbow Chun Yin Chan, Freda Chiu, Amy Ge, Alana Hunt, Ida Lawrence (Germany), Marikit Santiago, Leyla

Stevens, Shireen Taweel and Louise Zhang

Project Manager: Bridie Moran

Venue: 4a.com.au Program dates: 2020

4A Digital has been commissioned by 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, Sydney, Australia. This project has been supported by the City of Sydney.



Community as a space beyond strug...

Eunice Andrada In the unholy hours of morning, when I lay awake...



Not Your Steppe's Stone

Vladislav Sludskiy Central Asia is a vibrant geographical area where many



A Co-creation Project: Usungan, a c...

Mohamad Faizuan Bin Mat The year was 1994. We were having a...

4A Papers

Publishing issues #8 and #9 in 2020, 4A Papers is an online writing platform published every six months. 4A Papers revolves around five degrees of perspectives: NOW, THEN, MAKE, TALK, SEE. From critical essays, historical analyses and experimental articulations of what it means to engage with the world today, to conversations, reviews and travelogues that seek to create a dialogue, 4A Papers is responsive to the art and culture of our region and what is happening around us.

Issue #8, May 2020

Editor: Susan Acret

Writers: Jos Winnie Siulolovao Dunn, Robert Henningham, Dr Léuli Eshrāghi

(Australia/Canada), Enoch Mailangi, Mitiana Arbon and Talia Smith

Issue #9, November 2020

Editor: Mariam Arcilla

Writers: Mohamad Faizuan Bin Mat (Malaysia), Luise Guest, Reina Takeuchi,

Mikala Tai, Eunice Andrada and Vladislav Sludskiy (Kazakhstan)

2020 Artist Engagement

In 2020, 4A engaged 106 individuals across our artistic program, community and public programs, and professional development initiatives. Further categorisation shows:

Artists 74
Curators 10
Writers 11
Speakers 18
Musicians/DJs 4

(includes individuals engaged across multiple roles)

State representation:

New South Wales73.68%Victoria9.21%Western Australia3.95%Australian Capital Territory2.63%Queensland3.95%South Australia2.63%Tasmania1.32%

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 17.12%

Country representation:

Australian 69.9% International 30.1%

Countries of residence Canada, Chile, China, Germany, Hong Kong, India,

Kazakhstan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Samoa, Taiwan & United States of America.

Western Sydney 28.57% of total NSW artists

15.09% of total individuals engaged

 Female
 66.98%

 Male
 27.35%

 Non-binary
 5.66%

Early-career 55.66% Mid-career 34.91% Established 9.43%



4A Patrons, Benefactors, Friends and Partners

4A is an initiative of the Asian Australian Artists Association Inc. We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, the NSW Government through Create NSW, and the City of Sydney.

4A donors, sponsors and supporters over 2020:

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Mikala Tai and Mark Howard
Gotaro Uematsu

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