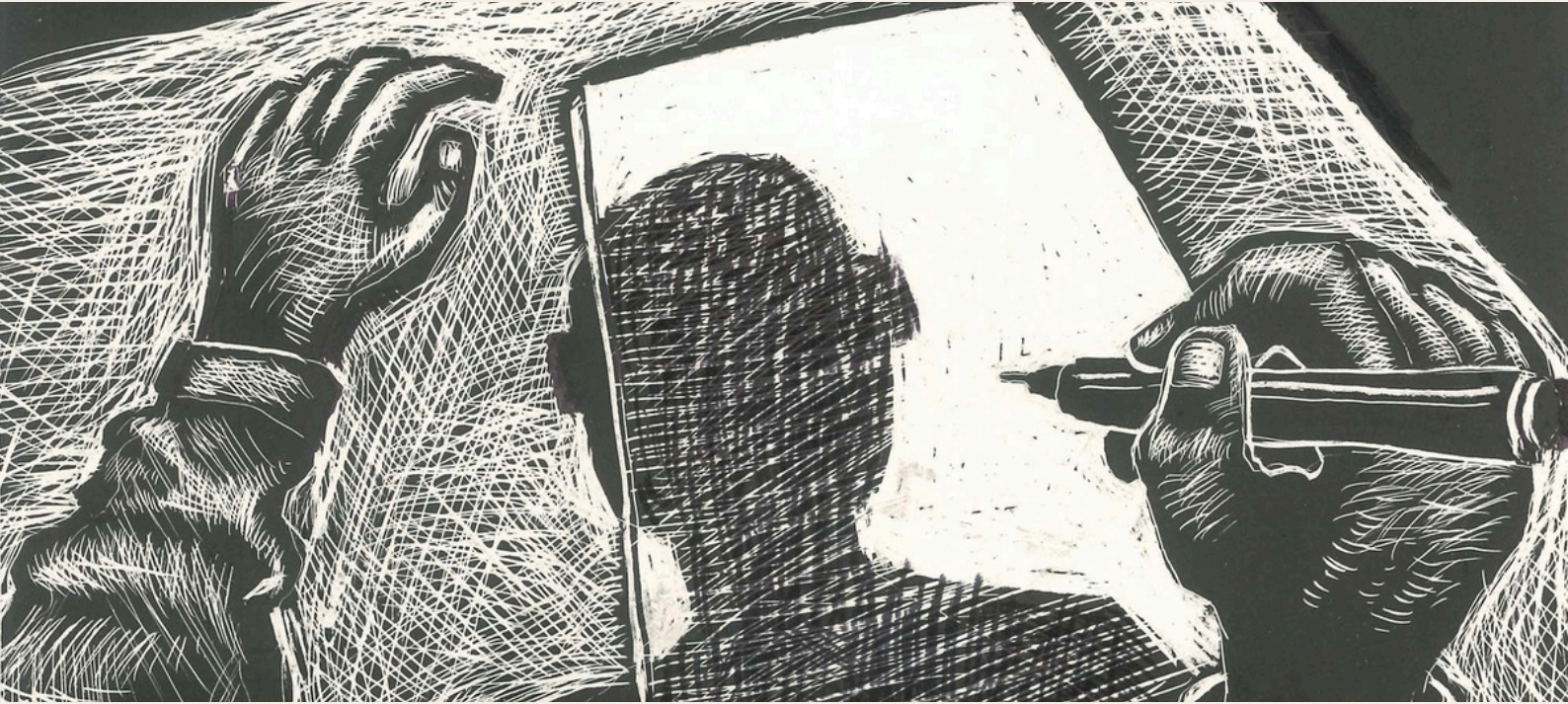




Centre for
Contemporary
Asian Art

30
Years



Andrew Ewing, *Putting Pen to Paper*, Sydney Star Observer collection. © The Estate of Andrew Ewing.

4A honours pioneering queer Vietnamese-Australian artist Andy Ewing with a major posthumous survey

Andy Ewing: Ancestor Spirits, the artist's first major posthumous survey, opens alongside *Kirthana Selvaraj: In the Half Light*, a new body of work by the inaugural recipient of the Andy Ewing Fellowship.

4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art presents *Andy Ewing: Ancestor Spirits*, the first posthumous survey of pioneering queer Vietnamese-Australian artist and curator Andrew (Andy) Hau Ewing (1964–2021), alongside *Kirthana Selvaraj: In the Half Light*, a newly commissioned body of work by the inaugural recipient of the Andy Ewing Fellowship. Opening on Friday 9 October and on view from 10 October to 13 December 2026, the exhibitions bring together works spanning Ewing's career and new paintings developed through Selvaraj's year-long engagement with his practice.

Presented across 4A's galleries and 4A LAB, the exhibitions explore cultural inheritance, queerness and the body. Artworks, archival material and personal ephemera offer an intimate account of Ewing's life, while Selvaraj's paintings respond to his explorations of identity, memory and illness through her own experiences. Together, the exhibitions trace how Ewing's practice continues to resonate through a new generation of artists.

"Ewing made work that challenged how Asian bodies and queer lives were represented, while speaking candidly about his own experiences of family, desire and illness. His contribution deserves greater recognition, and this exhibition is an opportunity to give audiences a fuller picture of his life and practice. Through the Fellowship, we are also supporting artists to engage closely with that legacy. Selvaraj's response shows how meaningful that encounter can be, opening up new directions in her own painting," says Thea Baumann, CEO/Artistic Director of 4A.



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Andy Ewing: Ancestor Spirits

A pioneering queer Vietnamese-Australian artist, Ewing challenged who could be seen, desired and represented within Australian visual culture. His works confronted racist stereotypes and the fetishisation of Asian male bodies while examining cultural hybridity and chronic illness. Working primarily on paper, he combined bold linework, expressive figures and surreal imagery with personal candour and wry humour.

Born in Melbourne, Ewing lived and worked across Australia and in Indonesia, maintaining close connections with artists and communities. *Ancestor Spirits* brings together artworks, sketches, archival material and studio ephemera spanning his career. The exhibition follows three intersecting concerns: cultural heritage and hybridity; queerness and body politics; and health, illness and perseverance, tracing ideas that developed from his early illustrations into increasingly personal compositions.

Early illustrations for the Sydney Star Observer document Ewing's engagement with queer rights, HIV/AIDS stigma and community life. *Reinscribing Skin* (1997), created with Eugene Hoh, took these concerns into public space. Presented on a billboard in Sydney's Taylor Square, it challenged the exoticisation of Asian men within gay culture. Removed by council workers just two days after installation, the work returns here alongside archival documentation.

A reimagined presentation of *Chronic Manageable Conditions* (2015–16) brings together raw, diaristic works produced during chronic pain. Installed without conventional frames, their immediacy reflects Ewing's description of drawing as "a form of thinking out loud". Later works, including *Where Memories Are Stored* (2019–21), interweave bodily vulnerability, memory and cultural inheritance in densely symbolic compositions.

Sketchbooks and studio belongings reveal how observations, collected phrases and provisional drawings developed into finished works. A Vietnamese-style shrine offered by Ewing's sisters, Margy and Therese, honours his memory through a family practice of remembrance, connecting the exhibition to his maternal heritage.

The design of this exhibition and Ewing's works could not have been possible without the major contribution of Fiona Morrison, Maurice O'Riordan and the Australian Queer Archive.

Kirthana Selvaraj: In the Half Light

As the inaugural recipient of the Andy Ewing Fellowship, Kirthana Selvaraj has spent the past year researching Ewing's practice, including through the Australian Queer Archives. *In the Half Light* considers how his explorations of identity, queerness and illness resonate within another life. Her paintings approach these questions through her experiences of diaspora, cultural inheritance and a changing relationship with her body.

An artist of Tamil ancestry, born in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland and based on Gadigal and Wangal land in Sydney, Selvaraj works across painting, research and writing. Her practice examines diasporic identity through gender, sexuality and embodied memory.

In Ewing's work, Selvaraj found companionship as she navigated chronic illness and its effect on her painting. In the *Half Light* moves from realistic detail towards a slower, more intuitive process. Applying, scraping away and reworking paint, she allows figures and landscapes to emerge gradually. For Selvaraj, this meant relinquishing a level of control she had protected for a decade – surrendering to a process that forced new dialogue with her practice, and with herself. Light and shadow express uncertainty and vulnerability through forms that remain at the edge of visibility.

"It is a way of working that comes from a body that has had to learn to keep time differently than the world around it does," Selvaraj writes in her accompanying artist text.

Her new triptych, *In the Half Light* (2026), is presented in direct conversation with Ewing's *Where Memories Are Stored* (2019–21), one of his final completed works. Placed together, the works draw out shared concerns with memory and unresolved forms. As Selvaraj reflects: "Andy's work gave me permission to let mine stay unresolved too."

OPENING CELEBRATION

Friday 9 October
6:00pm – 8:00pm
4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art
181–187 Hay Street, Haymarket NSW 2000

EXHIBITION

Andy Ewing: Ancestor Spirits & Kirthana Selvaraj: In the Half Light

10 October – 13 December 2026
4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art & 4A LAB
181–187 Hay Street, Haymarket NSW 2000

ARTISTS

Andy Ewing (1964–2021)
Kirthana Selvaraj

MEDIA CONTACTS

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ABOUT 4A CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ASIAN ART

Since 1996, 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art has championed the creative practice and representation of Asian and Asian Australian artists and arts workers. 4A fosters excellence in contemporary culture through the commissioning, presentation, documentation and research of contemporary art. Our program, based out of our Haymarket gallery, is presented throughout Australia and Asia, where we ensure that contemporary art plays a central role in understanding and developing the dynamic relationship between Australia and the Asian region.

ABOUT THE ANDY EWING FELLOWSHIP

Established by the estate of Andrew Ewing and 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, the Andy Ewing Fellowship supports emerging queer-identifying artists of Asian heritage through the commissioning, development and exhibition of new work. Its inaugural presentation honours Ewing's contribution while creating space for new interpretations of his legacy.

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