

John Stevens

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**ARTS
PROJECT
AUSTRALIA**

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GRAHAM MEADOWCROFT AND KIM BUTTERWORTH, THE PUBLISHING TEAM BEHIND ART GUIDE AUSTRALIA.

COLLECTOR'S CORNER GRAHAM MEADOWCROFT + KIM BUTTERWORTH

Collector's Corner presents a series of conversations with avid art collectors, searching for the rich stories and ideas woven into their incredible (and enviable!) collections. The collectors we chat with show a boundless support of contemporary art with their ever-growing enthusiasm entwined with the story and artists of [Arts Project Australia](#).

For [Collector's Corner #3](#) we caught up with Graham Meadowcroft and Kim Butterworth, the publishers behind [Art Guide Australia](#), a print and online art magazine covering contemporary Australian art in all its forms. Established in 2000, *Art Guide Australia* features editorial articles that explore the ideas and motivations behind the art, in addition to being a guide to exhibitions nationwide.

Read below as the pair tell us about what sparked their initial interest in art, the story behind Art Guide and what makes it a unique experience...



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CHRIS O'BRIE

"I'M FAIRLY SURE IT'S A SELF-PORTRAIT OF CHRIS, WHO STANDS HOLDING HIS DOG IN A LOUNGE ROOM, WITH A PATTERNEL
CREATING A STRONG SENSE OF DOMESTIC LIFE. IT INSTANTLY APPEALED TO BOTH OF US. " CHRIS O'BRIEN, *MONTY AND CH*
ON PAPER, 24.5 X 19.5 CM.

Could you tell us about how you first met Arts Project Australia?

Kim: About five years ago we were looking to develop a long-term partnership with a gallery that gave us the chan-
more about the organisation and the people that work there. Meeting Sue Roff and Sim Luttin for the first time, we l
that it would be a great relationship. The more time we spend getting to know Arts Project the more we're in absolu
they do!

**We're curious as to how you first became interested in art? Did you have an art epiphany for instance? And
interest evolve into *Art Guide*?**

Graham: Straight out of school I didn't know what I wanted to do so I ended up making a knee-jerk decision to follo
college in the early eighties. I soon discovered that it was exactly where I wanted to be so I guess it was an epipha
like a whole new world had opened up, one I hadn't previously been exposed to. I come from the era of designers c
pen and paper to sketch out thoughts/ideas and still this is the first thing I do.

K: My father was an art teacher so making and appreciating art was always part of our family life. There's a photo c
years of age, happily perched on a plinth at an exhibition, sitting between a soft sculpture of a koala and a Robert K
metal work. Being immersed in art continues to be the thing that motivates me more than most other things.

Art Guide's evolution is a result of our combined interest in art and design. We didn't initially set out to become pub
opportunity to take on the magazine came about in 2000. We wanted to make a publication that acted as a guide to
well as including editorial that sparked readers interest in Australian contemporary art. While the early days involve
tasking, *Art Guide* today publishes over thirty articles a month (in print and [online](#)), has a dedicated team of two edi
a web manager, production assistant and a bunch of talented writers and contributors. In a media landscape that's
state of flux we're really proud to be part of Melbourne's publishing scene.

How would you describe your approach to collecting art? Or, even better, what kind of collector are you?

K: I think our collection of art is probably best summed up as a snapshot of experiences, friendships and spur-of-th
purchases. Many of the artworks are by friends and colleagues and a number are from artist-run spaces. There's n
style, theme or subject matter that dominates, although I have a bit of a leaning towards ceramics. We're pretty rel

artworks and display them throughout the house, moving things around often. Our approach is essentially to buy what we connect to, and this can be informed by a multitude of different factors.

What do you love about collecting art and what compels you to collect and keep collecting?

G: The minute you start looking at art there's a very strong drive to want to begin collecting. It's been important to support the work of living artists and the work of galleries that in turn support them. I enjoy talking to artists and find that makes them tick - it brings a much better understanding and appreciation for what they're doing.

Generally speaking, which contemporary artists do you most admire and why?

K: It's impossible to narrow it down to a few select artists! One of the best aspects of doing what we do is looking at art every day, so my interests tend to move all over the place. Over the years there have been many artists (who I admire and respect. There's often a huge amount of commitment and sacrifice made by artists to achieve what's genuinely remarkable. In general, I tend to like art that challenges my thinking or gives me a new way of looking at

G: I'm drawn to photomedia works and have a keen interest in drawing.

Can you describe your best art experience for us?

G: For me, the best art experience includes talking to the artist and being able to share the experience with others. It can be about being in the right place at the right time – a sunny day at Heide or TarraWarra with a good exhibition with friends, is hard to beat.

Tell us about your first encounter with Arts Project?

K: I first stumbled across Arts Project about ten years ago. My early working life had begun in the not-for-profit sector, especially interested in the way the organisation had established itself and created such a successful platform for them to engage in the visual arts. I remember seeing Arts Project works at a Melbourne Art Fair years ago, the number of people around the stand showed just how dynamic the art is.

Getting to know the organisation better in recent years, the way they've developed links to the wider contemporary art world, collaborating with artists, curators, arts organisations, gallerists, is amazing. The waves being made internationally by Arts Project artists is particularly exciting.

Can you describe the artworks you have collected from Arts Project. Is there a pride of place where they sit?

G: We really enjoy the works we've collected so far from Arts Project. The most recent purchase is from the exhibit [*Fabric of the Familiar*](#), a work by [Chris O'Brien](#) in black and white. I'm fairly sure it's a self-portrait of Chris, who stands with a dog in a lounge room, with a patterned wallpaper creating a strong sense of domestic life. It instantly appealed to both of us.

also have a group of small ceramics made by [Terry Williams](#) that are miniature models of items in the studio; such as a toaster, radio and a box of Saxa salt! Without fail, everyone who walks through the house can't help but stop, look up.

K: We have our own version of *Girl with a Pearl Earring* courtesy of [Bobby Kyriakopoulos](#). Bobby's interpretation of the classic is definitely unique. There's also a landscape by Robyn Doherty and a beautiful pastel work by [Fulli Andrić](#) bright in colour.

In 140 characters or less, distil for us what it is you like about being a collector and friend of Arts Project?

G: Time spent at Arts Project is always enjoyable, welcoming, unexpected and definitely makes you view the world

If you were to purchase another Arts Project artwork right now, which artist would you look at and why?

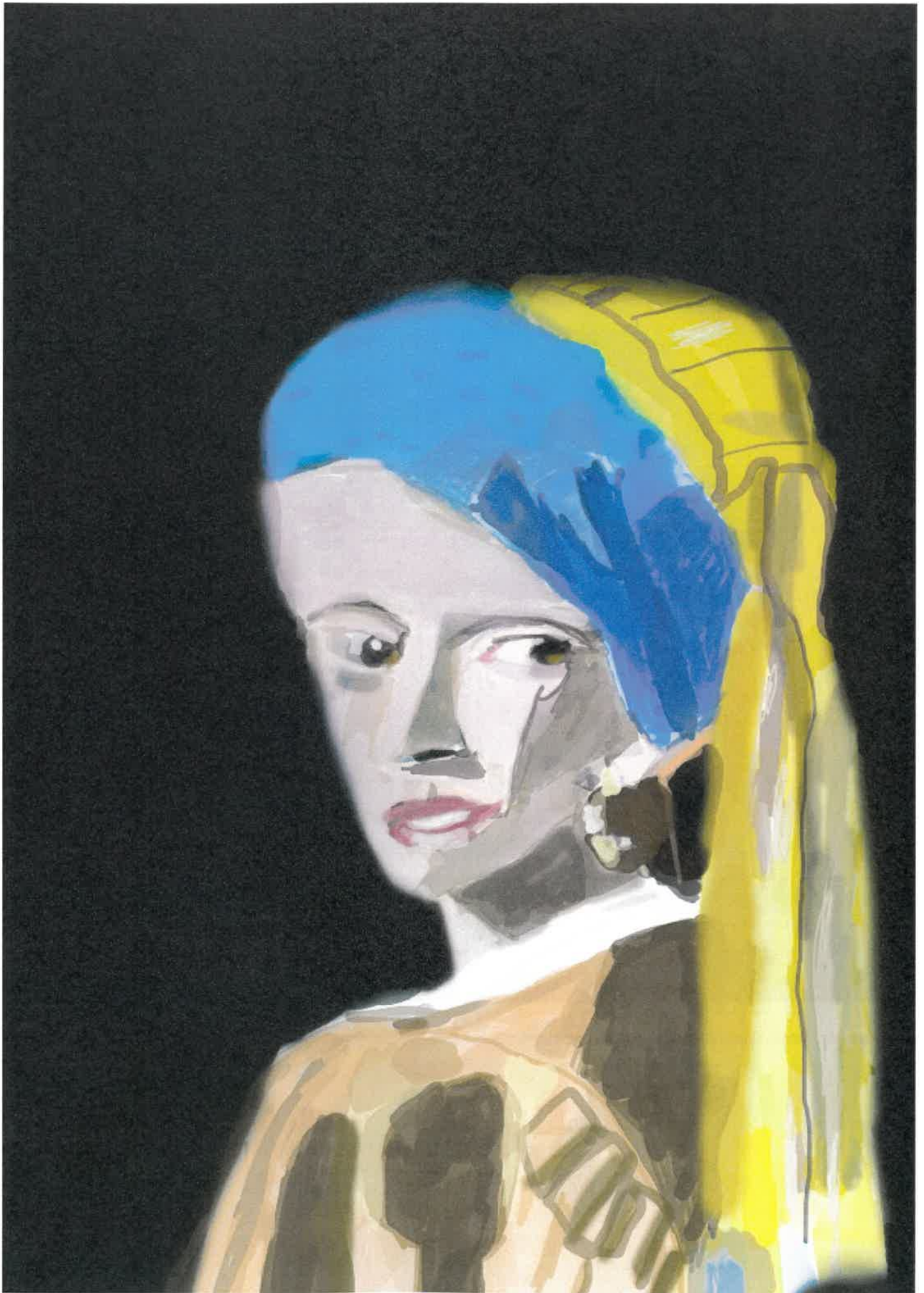
K: [Boris Cipusev](#) produces drawings using text as images. They're often poetic and funny, and I love the way his word combinations create new meaning and phrases.

G: I'm a fan of [Cathy Staughton](#)'s work. She recently painted her famous impression of Luna Park [on the façade of Third Drawer Down](#) in Fitzroy. It was literally stopping people in their tracks. Cathy's personality and humour really comes through

And finally, what pearls of wisdom would you give a first-time collector?

K: A few years ago we started using a tag line with the magazine that said 'spend some time with art'. It's the easiest advice to give. Taking time to look at art offers different experiences and develops your own taste for various types of art. Visiting exhibitions and galleries, asking questions, reading about art, looking at art online, trusting your own tastes are the best path for any collector. There isn't necessarily a right or wrong way. Be brave and set your own rules.

This is Arts Project Australia's third edition of Collector's Corner. Have a read of [Collector's Corner #1](#) with Clive Stanger, founder of Sofitel Melbourne and [Collector's Corner #2](#) with Abi Crompton, founder and director of Third Drawer Down. Stay tuned for future editions and feel free to gander through our [art collections](#), as well as find out more about Arts Project Australia's [art](#)



"WE HAVE OUR OWN VERSION OF GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING COURTESY OF BOBBY KYRIAKOPOULOS. BOBBY'S INTERPRETATION OF THE VERMEER CLASSIC IS DEFINITELY UNIQUE." BOBBY KYRIAKOPOULOS, *AFTER GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING*, 2014, WORK ON PAPER, 10 X 15 CM.



"WE ALSO HAVE A GROUP OF SMALL CERAMICS MADE BY TERRY WILLIAMS THAT ARE MINIATURE MODELS OF ITEMS IN THE KETTLES, A TOASTER, RADIO AND A BOX OF SAXA SALT! WITHOUT FAIL, EVERYONE WHO WALKS THROUGH THE HOUSE CAN STOP, LOOK AND PICK THEM UP." TERRY WILLIAMS, *NOT TITLED*, 2010, CERAMIC, 4.5 X 4X 2 CM.



"RICH AND BRIGHT IN COLOUR." FULLI ANDRINOPOULOS, *NOT TITLED (PINK ON GREEN AND BLUE)*, 2014, WORK ON PAPER, 15



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