Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation and the Queensland Art Gallery Children’s Art Centre present *Contemporary Art for Contemporary Kids* – an interactive exhibition featuring a selection of projects created by leading contemporary artists especially for children and families. Through active participation – such as drawing, storytelling and construction – the projects engage children with contemporary cultures and enable them to experience the many ways artists approach their work. The projects affirm that contemporary artists’ ideas are an authentic and appealing means through which children can learn about art and its importance in the lives of millions of people around the world. Additionally, through the development process, the artists explore anew the fundamental ideas and concepts concerning them and are encouraged to incorporate innovation in their practices.
IN-FLIGHT
(PROJECT: ANOTHER COUNTRY)

Maria Isabel Gaudinez-Aquilizan b. 1965
Alfredo Juan Aquilizan b. 1962

The artists are Maria Isabel Gaudinez-Aquilizan and Alfredo Juan Aquilizan. They were born in the Philippines and live and work in Brisbane, Australia. This artwork is made of recycled sticks, string, wool, and sound files.

First commissioned by the Queensland Art Gallery for The 6th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, 2009
Supported by the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation
Presented at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation 2010

In 2006, Isabel and Alfredo Aquilizan moved from the Philippines with their five children to start a new life in Brisbane. Working together, Alfredo and Isabel make art using everyday materials and objects based around ideas about home, family and journeys. As busy people who now live far from their home country, they often have to fly between Australia and the Philippines, so the aeroplane is important to them and has become a symbol of travel and living in another place.

Alfredo and Isabel’s huge installation, In-flight (Project: Another Country), is made up of thousands of different ‘aircraft’. For Alfredo and Isabel, the recycled and found materials used to create the aircraft carry stories from the past. The artists are interested in these individual stories as well as the combined story of all of the people making the planes together.

What could you make using materials that usually get thrown away at home or at school? You could start collecting for a week or two and then work together with your family to make a display of objects.
Sutee Kunavichayanont is an artist who lives and works in Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand. In the past, Sutee has carved many different types of symbols and images into the wood of classroom desks. For this work, he has turned all of the desks upside down and carved pictures underneath, on the sides and even on the legs of the desks! The carvings of different animals and people are inspired by Sutee’s home country of Thailand as well as Australia.

By taking rubbings of these images, children can combine familiar symbols of Australia, like the koala and kangaroo, with well-known images from South-East Asia, including the endangered Asian tiger and the Asian elephant, to create new animals and people. The new pictures make us think about the different ways cultures can work together in real life.

Australia is a multicultural country. The traditions and customs of many different countries have become a part of the Australian way of life. Can you think of any festivals celebrated in Australia which are from other parts of the world?
CLASSROOM UPSIDE DOWN
Growing up in Iran, artist Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian was surrounded by beautiful patterns. At home, her father designed Persian carpets, and Monir used to spend time stitching embroidery and drawing flowers. Patterns are an important part of Islamic culture and date back to the beginnings of Islam over 1000 years ago. In Iran, as in all Islamic countries, holy places and important buildings – such as mosques, shrines and royal palaces – are decorated with complex, colourful designs. Many different patterns of plants, geometric shapes and elegant Arabic script cover domes, walls, ceilings, archways and courtyard arcades.

Monir likes to work with these Islamic geometric patterns in her art. She is particularly interested in the six-sided shape of the hexagon, and works closely with artisans in Iran to turn these shapes into mirror mosaic sculptures and installations. Artisans today use the same tools – a ruler, a cord and a compass – that have been used for more than 1000 years to measure and trace the complex patterns. Patterns of Infinity invites participants to discover geometric patterns by creating their own colourful designs using a multimedia touchscreen.

What kind of patterns and designs do you see around your home? There may be patterns on the bathroom tiles, the plates in the kitchen, the carpet or the couch. Try to create your own pattern – like Monir, you could start with a hexagon shape.
UNSEEN SUPERHEROES OF THE WORKING WORLD

Arlene TextaQueen b. 1975

The artist is Arlene TextaQueen.

She was born in Perth, Australia, and lives and works in Melbourne, Australia.

Children create this artwork using card and felt-tip pens.

First commissioned by the Queensland Art Gallery for ‘Kids: Contemporary Australia Summer Festival’, 2009

Presented at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation 2010

Ever since she was a little girl, Arlene TextaQueen has been drawing the world around her with brightly coloured felt-tip pens. As an artist, she likes to create portraits of the fabulous characters that inhabit her world.

Arlene TextaQueen is always drawing – on the bus, in her studio, and outdoors. She likes to start her drawings with an open mind, and never knows where a drawing will end up. Sometimes she draws so close to the edge that the images nearly fall right off the page!

In Arlene TextaQueen’s game of snap, called Unseen Superheroes of the Working World, the characters are not really superheroes but everyday people who are the artist’s friends or people she admires. They do not have super powers that can change the face of the world, but each in their own way helps other people as part of their job or daily life, whether they are librarians, checkout operators in a supermarket, or taxi drivers.

You might be a young unseen superhero yourself!

At home or at school do you have jobs to do which help out the family or the teacher? Which jobs are you good at and which ones do you have to do every day?
UNSEEN SUPERHEROES OF THE WORKING WORLD

Waiting person

Super Waiter

Lights

Power

On

Next person

Super Waiter

Wait person

Super Waiter

Customer

Super Waiter

Flower

Wait person

Super Waiter


William Yang is an Australian-Chinese artist who is well known for the photographs he takes of himself, his family and his friends. He is also a great storyteller and often writes his stories directly onto the images. One story that he likes to tell is his own.

Like many Australians, some members of William Yang’s family came from another country. His grandparents moved to Australia from China to dig for gold in the 1880s. When William was about forty years old, he realised that being Chinese was a very important part of who he was. He worked hard to find out more about his family, their lives in Australia and around the world, and Chinese culture, and has created artworks to communicate these new stories he has discovered.

In Australia Now, the artist invites children to tell their own stories and draw a self-portrait to create a big display in the activity space.

Do you have photographs of family and friends on display at your place? When you look at them do you think about the time when the photo was taken, the people in the photo and their stories?
I just had my birthday and I turned 6. I have 2 dogs, Tom and Figger.

I was born in Australia. I live in Sydney. My pet cat is called Oscar and she sleeps on my bed. I like to play soccer and build with Lego.

Name: Jasmine Year I was born: 2004

Name: Shakar Year I was born: 2002
My life has been a very happy life. My home is 10 my street. My pet is a fish.

Name: Imogen  Year I was born: 2002

I live in Rockdale in Sydney. Some of my family live in Canberra, and some live in Mudgee on a farm. I wish I lived on a farm like my country in Mudgee. I would have a horse and other animals.

Name: Joseph  Year I was born: 2001
Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s Émile ou de l’éducation, written in the mid-eighteenth century, proposed a revolutionary experiential model for child education. Latin and Greek verb conjugations, dry theological text studies and classroom-bound tutoring were to be replaced with forays into nature and direct contact with the world in its infinite diversity and wonder. A real revolution was, of course, around the corner. 1789 marked the beginning of democracy as we know it and, despite Napoleonic and future royal interventions, the people’s path was outlined and ultimately realised. On a personal level, the treatise is associated with a degree of nostalgia – I taught Rousseau at university and named my son Émile after the child protagonist.

Over 200 years after its publication, Rousseau’s model remains a viable option in the ongoing debate surrounding teaching strategies and educational goals. How, where and when to apply the core theory is still a point of discussion and a degree of nostalgia – I taught Rousseau at university and named my son Émile after the child protagonist.

The featured works have been designed to introduce young audiences to artists and their ideas through active participation in the art-making process. Commissioned over the years for major Queensland Art Gallery exhibitions, the works were conceived and realised for kids but, as is the case with all good artworks, they transcend age, gender and cultural differences. Australia Now, by famed Australian-Chinese storyteller William Yang, a central figure in the Queensland Art Gallery’s 2009 exhibition The China Project, encourages children to tell their own stories through words and self-portraits. For Patterns of Infinity, the traditional and beautiful geometric patterns crafted by octogenarian Iranian icon Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian have been translated and reconfigured onto computer touchscreens, to be endlessly adapted and redesigned by the hands of young visitors. Sutee Kunavichayanont’s upside-down school desks (Classroom Upside Down) – at which children can make crayon rubbings of the lavishly carved representations of animals, buildings and people from Sutee’s native Thailand – sit alongside Arlene TexteQueen’s imaginative Useein Superheroes of the Working World characters that are reinvented daily in illustrations by children visiting the gallery. The conceptual and visual piece de resistance might well be in-flight, the wondrous homage to migration and displacement created by Alfredo and Isabel Aquilizan, which takes the form of an unruly mountainous pile of audience-created aeroplanes made out of recycled materials that have soared through the gallery’s space – aspirational, global, fragile and created by the adventurous among us who dare to engage.

In both the teaching and commercial gallery phases of my professional life, education played an intrinsic part. While contemporary art remains my dominant focus at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation (SCAF), my early interest in communicating across generations has never wavered nor waned. Interpretive publications, forums and community interactions focused on literature, culture and ideas remain important components of SCAF’s programming. Reading continues to be my greatest pleasure and constant comfort. My leisure time is invariably spent in the company of great men and women, mostly twentieth century key figures, whose imaginative thoughts stimulate and sustain me. To this end, the Contemporary Art for Contemporary Kids publication aims to keep children engaged with the artists and their ideas by providing a permanent visual record of their work, succinct explanations of key ideas at play, and prompts for related learning.

Collaboration is a major theme of Contemporary Art for Contemporary Kids. The artworks in this exhibition rely on a partnership between artists and audience. Visitors become, in effect, art-makers; they respond to the artist’s invitation to participate and contribute to the creative process. Collaboration also features strongly in the curation and organisation of this project and we are truly grateful to the Queensland Art Gallery for sharing these extraordinary works with us.

The Queensland Art Gallery has been our most significant institutional partner to date. Two previous projects – The View from Elsewhere, an Asian moving image exhibition overlaid with a substantial film festival component, and Charwei Tsai’s Water, Earth and Air, a Sydney-based expansion of her 2009–10 Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art projects – brought us into a working relationship with this visionary, professional and collegial state arts institution. We share an intense focus on the Asia-Pacific region, an emphasis on education (especially with regard to young people), a scholarly framework, a positive, practical approach, and a vibrant aesthetic sensibility. The Gallery’s extraordinary Director, Tony Ellwood, and his wonderful Deputies, Andrew Clark and Suahanya Raffel, and previously Lynne Seear, have served as role models for original thinking and exemplary planning and we thank them for sharing their expertise. We are proud and honoured to be thrice associated with such a forward-looking key institution.

Curating is a non-linear activity. It involves the careful following of multiple paths, some leading to an unexpected impasse, others morphing into threads, ready to be woven into a visually, conceptually and emotionally coherent story. In the case of Contemporary Art for Contemporary Kids, SCAF’s journey began with a trip to the Queensland Art Gallery in January 2009 for the conference ‘Art is for Everyone: Programming for Children and Families in the Art Museum’. SCAF’s General Manager, Dona Merrilee, her daughter Shaker, myself, and my granddaughter Jasmine had a magical time.

The conference sessions were illuminating and much was learned and shared. Simultaneously, we explored the exultant Contemporary Australia: Optimism exhibition and the eleven related projects in the Children’s Art Centre. The Centre’s decade-long project, involving the commissioning of serious and often seriously famous contemporary Asian and Australian artists to create work specifically for young people, is unmatched in terms of scale and continuity of practice. The two girls, six and four years old at the time, literally plunged into the worlds created specifically for them by renowned Australian artists. Two days were not nearly enough to satisfy their interest or enthusiasm.

Meetings followed in Sydney and Brisbane. Shortlists were drawn up and narrowed down; visuals were blown up and circulated. Designers from both teams conferred and conflated information relating to scale, visual impact and durability. The exhibition that resulted from this planning, Contemporary Art for Contemporary Kids, aims to imbue our young people with knowledge, vision and passion; to give them a meaningful framework within which they can be creative and respectful of their own traditions and those of others. They will, we hope, learn to communicate, to share, to laugh and to innovate. Wouldn’t that be a great outcome for us all?
Over the past two decades, there have been significant shifts in the art museum sector. Galleries have made leaps and bounds away from the outdated model of static, object-oriented institutions visited only by the elite. In its place has come an emphasis on enriching visitor experiences, and on presenting art as an interconnected part of broader culture – a shift that has made many galleries and museums vital and inspiring parts of people’s lives.

But, for all these shifts, the core business and activities of the art museum have changed very little. We already had at our fingertips a boundless source of ‘content’, if you like; that is, art and artists. The most significant changes have been in how we communicate with audiences, how we invite them to experience and participate in art and culture, and how the right programming can provide pathways into educational, social and cultural experiences for those who might otherwise never have had the inclination to visit a gallery or museum. For the Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art, such visitors have included, to no small extent, children and their families.

From the very beginnings of the Gallery’s dedicated children’s programming, we found that our two key ‘stakeholders’ in this initiative – children and the contemporary artists we approached to create for them – were overwhelmingly responsive. In 1998, Scary Monsters, one of our first exhibitions for children and still a small-scale project, drew nearly 80,000 visitors. The following year, Kids’ APT was launched as part of the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art and, again, visitor response emphatically confirmed our burgeoning belief that children could, and should, be recognised and fostered as legitimate, receptive viewers of contemporary art.

Since these beginnings, more than half a million children have participated in our programming for young visitors. Unfortunately, however, a degree of scepticism persists in some corners. We still encounter some resistance to acceptance that there is no hidden agenda behind our commitment to this sector of our audience, or that some ideal of art is not being compromised in the process. In reality, encouraging children’s natural curiosity about the world around them – including art and culture – is a simple idea.

At the Gallery, this simple idea takes on many varied meanings and manifestations. It is this constantly evolving nature that makes programming for young visitors such a rich and rewarding part of the Gallery’s contribution to the community – both for the museum workers and artists ‘behind the scenes’ and for those who so actively participate as viewers and patrons.

Indeed, the degree of community participation and sense of ownership with regard to the children’s program has increased to such an extent that what began as a tentative new offering is now expected as the norm. Many parents and educators today would be horrified to think of the difference in opportunities for children available to them at the Gallery as little as just over ten years ago. They have come to rely on the range of projects presented under the auspices of the Children’s Art Centre, whether they are specially commissioned artworks for children (as showcased in this exhibition), interactive projects and educational materials that make existing works or artists’ practices accessible to young audiences, or summer festivals offering a feast of tours, workshops and performances.
Every project is different, and every artist approaches the challenge of creating for and communicating with kids in a unique way. It’s been our privilege over the years to work with a wide range of local, national and international artists on our children’s program. Some of the most successful projects have involved artists conceiving of interactive spaces that encourage children’s own creativity; for example, Cai Guo-Qiang’s bridge-building project in the very first Kids’ APT in 1999, and senior Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama’s The Obliteration Room, 2002, in which young visitors were asked to transform a pristine white environment using coloured dot stickers. In 2009–10, with the generous support of the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation, The 6th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art included the most ambitious Kids’ APT program presented to date, with seventeen artworks and projects, an eleven-day Summer Spectacular festival and a regional program reaching nearly forty different venues. In mid-2010, the Children’s Art Centre spaces were transformed by Australian artist Callum Morton’s major interactive installation, Ghost World. Creating a complete environment for children to explore, Ghost World reflected the artist’s ongoing interest in architecture and his fascination with various twentieth century experiments in redesigning modern living.

For all their diversity, the Gallery’s Children’s Art Centre projects share the common aim of building, for each young visitor, a storehouse of experiences and memories that will contribute over time to opening their minds to creativity, knowledge and the richness of human endeavour and culture in all its forms. While it’s not possible to definitively gauge what future impact such experiences will have, we hope to play a part in better equipping today’s generations for the challenges that lie ahead.
Collaboration and Contemporary Art Projects

Kate Ryan, Curator, Children's Art Centre, Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art
Donna McCollm, Acting Head, Public Programs, Children's Art Centre and Membership
Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art

Increasingly, the making of contemporary art involves forms of collaboration – from artistic partnerships and collectives, to audience participation, community involvement and social engagement. Contrary to past perceptions of artists as sole creators and artworks as autonomous objects, the relatively recent shift towards collaborative aspects of art-making draws further attention to the importance of inclusiveness, that people contribute meaning and relevance to art.1 In recognising this, collaboration has the ability not only to inspire an artist’s development, but also to enable their work to evolve over time, inspiring multiple viewpoints and exchanges of creative ideas – key characteristics of successful contemporary art.

Whether hosting an afternoon tea party, producing zines, or embarking on a campervan excursion across Australia with friends, Melbourne-based artist Arlene TextaQueen’s art-making involves working with others, artists, friends and audiences. It was therefore a seamless transition for the artist to direct her collaborative approach to engaging a new audience for her work – children. The drawing activity and card game Unseen Superheroes of the Working World cleverly intertwines the popular theme of the superhero with the artist’s conception of the overlooked and underpaid superheroes of today’s workforce, such as taxi drivers and cleaners. Children produce colourful pen drawings by adding to illustrations partly completed by the artist, and play card games with friends and family, creating links to TextaQueen’s event-based practice.

Community collaboration is central to the work of husband and wife team Alfredo and Isabel Aquilizan. The monumental installation In-flight (Project: Another Country) comprises hundreds of small planes made by hand from recycled materials, a concept first developed by the artists as a workshop. Evolving over a number of years, In-flight is the result of an ongoing collaboration with local communities. The work reflects upon ideas of place and home, central concerns in today’s mobile world, and is inspired by the artists’ own migration to Australia from the Philippines in 2006. For the artists, the project is chiefly about ‘having people directly participate and engage in the actual art-making’, which the artists recognise as being particularly important today, when so much of our activity is individual rather than communal.2

Through the medium of photography, William Yang’s work makes the personal stories of his close friends and family members a shared experience. Australia Now is an evolving portrait that captures the diversity of the Australian community by inviting participants to contribute images and anecdotes of their family’s history. The collective portraits are the catalyst for a deeper level of participation when visitors select and read the contributions of others. The audience is the creative force behind this work – through active participation, a form of collaboration with the artist takes place and extends the ideas inherent in his work.

Sutee Kunavichayanont’s Classroom Upside Down is an installation featuring a set of upturned wooden desks carved with the heads and bodies of different animals and cartoon characters familiar to children in Thailand and Australia. The artist’s concept for this installation becomes activated when children make crayon rubbings of the images to create new compositions. Often humorous and thought-provoking, these montages celebrate hybridity and cross-cultural exchange – building understanding and making visual the artist’s ideas about the creative possibilities of interaction and cultural dialogue.

Collaboration can also transcend the obstacles thrown up by technology and distance. Senior Iranian artist Henriette Farmanfarmaian’s Patterns of Infinity, an interactive work in which participants can create colourful geometric designs using a computer touchscreen, is the result of a collaborative process between the artist, curators, educators and computer technicians that bridged traditional techniques and new technologies. Inspired by the age-old methods with which Farmanfarmaian creates her geometric mirror mosaics, the work reveals the complexity and beauty of these patterns and recasts the painstaking, handmade quality of the mosaics using the contemporary medium of computer interactive technology. While it is a medium that may never enter this artist’s process, it immediately illustrates for young audiences the power of the imagination.

The expanding interest in collaboration by artists, which in turn has informed art museum practice, has provided an ideal climate for engaging children in contemporary art. Artist projects created especially for children enable young visitors to take part in the thinking and making processes of contemporary artists. Their active participation and experiences help build an understanding and knowledge of today’s contemporary art and the diversity of cultures from which it springs.

Endnotes


Dr Gene Sherman AM is Chair and Executive Director of Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation. She has a specialised knowledge of art, literary theory and French and English literature and spent seventeen years teaching, researching and lecturing at secondary and tertiary levels. As Director of Sherman Galleries (1998–2007), she initiated, negotiated and organised twelve to seventeen exhibitions annually, as well as regional and national touring exhibitions within Australia, and international touring exhibitions through the Asia-Pacific region. Gene and Brian Sherman sponsored a Master of Fine Arts Administration student at the College of Fine Arts, The University of New South Wales (1997–2007), a studio at Bundanon and a contemporary Australian art-research room at the Schaeffer Fine Arts Library, The University of Sydney. Dr Sherman is on the Board of the Art & Australia Advisory Board, and the Venice Biennale Commissioner’s Council. Andrew Clark is the Queensland Art Gallery’s Deputy Director, Programming and Corporate Services, and a member of the Gallery’s Executive Management Team. Andrew is one of the executive staff responsible for the creative development of the Gallery’s major exhibitions, including Picasso & His Collection, 2008; Andy Warhol, 2007–08; and the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (APT) exhibitions. Andrew’s professional interest is programming, and since 2001 he has developed and implemented a range of innovative exhibitions, festivals and other programs for children, families and young people, including overseeing the development of the Children’s Art Centre as part of the Gallery of Modern Art. He was responsible for commissioning Stephen Page’s acclaimed production Kin for APT5, and most recently has led the development of the highly successful ‘Up Late!’ Friday night program at the Gallery of Modern Art.

Kate Ryan is the Gallery’s Curator, Children’s Art Centre. From 2004 to 2006, Kate was one of the staff responsible for the creative development of exhibitions and artist projects for children and family audiences in the lead up to the opening of the Gallery of Modern Art and the establishment of a dedicated exhibition and programming space, the Children’s Art Centre. Since 2006, Kate has played a leading curatorial role in the Children’s Art Centre, focusing on the development of projects and initiatives that directly engage contemporary artists and children. Kate was co-curator of the children’s exhibition, Made for this World: Contemporary Art and the Places We Build, 2005, and has played a key role in developing major projects for young visitors such as Kids’ APT, 2006 and 2009, The Silver Factory: Andy Warhol for Kids, 2007–08, Kids: Contemporary Australia, 2008–09, and The Met for Kids, 2009. Kate has recently contributed to the establishment of an annual solo artist project at the Children’s Art Centre, working with contemporary artists Anne Wallace on Release the Bats, 2009, and Callum Morton on Ghost World, 2010.

Donna McGurr is the Gallery’s Acting Head, Public Programs, Children’s Art Centre and Membership, and is one of the staff responsible for the design of a diverse range of public programs to support and extend visitor engagement with the Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art. Since 2000, Donna has contributed to developing the Gallery’s audiences in the areas of young people, students, adults and seniors. This includes the development of innovative large-scale opening programs for the Gallery’s major exhibitions, late night programming, and symposia for arts professionals such as ‘Art is for Everyone: Programming for Children and Families in the Art Museum’ in 2009 and ‘Sites of Communication: Artists, Audiences, Art Museums’ in 2010. She holds a Bachelor of Arts, Honours (Art History), The University of Queensland, and a Master of Philosophy (Art History and Theory), The University of Sydney.

We are deeply appreciative of the warm words of welcome and support by Tim Fairfax AM, Deputy Chair, Queensland Art Gallery, at the opening of the exhibition Heartfelt thanks as always to Brian Sherman for his unwavering support for SCAF’s activities.

Thank you to Johnnie Walker, A.R.T., Tokyo, for his commitment and advice.

We thank Credit Suisse Private Banking for its support of SCAF’s Culture + Ideas program.

Special thanks to Ursula Sullivan and Joanna Sturmf (Sullivan & Sturmf), Lea Mai, Robyn Gibson, and our talented team of activity assistants for supporting this project.
It gives me great pleasure to be a part of the Queensland Art Gallery’s collaboration with Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation (SCAF) on what is a first for both institutions – the national presentation of recent projects from the Gallery’s Children’s Art Centre for the enjoyment of children and their families.

The exhibition, Contemporary Art for Contemporary Kids, reflects our shared interest in providing access for audiences to engage with the work of contemporary artists. It seemed a natural fit to work with Gene Sherman and her team on this project, particularly given Gene’s longstanding philosophy regarding the immeasurable value of education and the arts for people of all ages. It is also an exciting opportunity for the Gallery, to work with the Queensland Art Gallery has achieved by working closely with contemporary artists to extend their ideas in new and often unexpected ways. Since the Gallery began developing a rigorous program of exhibitions and projects for children and families in 1998, audience interest has grown immensely. One of the driving forces behind the establishment of the Gallery of Modern Art in 2006 was the provision of the Children’s Art Centre dedicated exhibition spaces. I believe this reflected a major shift in attitude – across museum practices – about the value of young visitors’ engagement with art. The works featured in Contemporary Art for Contemporary Kids have been developed since the opening of the Children’s Art Centre and in conjunction with major exhibitions, including the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, The China Project and Contemporary Australia: Optimism. They are interactive, thought-provoking and innovative – like much of today’s successful contemporary art – and, most importantly, fun. Contemporary Art for Contemporary Kids is co-curated by the Gallery’s Children’s Art Centre team and SCAF. My sincere thanks to the artists for supporting the Gallery’s vision to develop innovative and engaging projects for children that link with their practices; to the Gallery staff involved in the project and to Gene Sherman and her team at SCAF for the opportunity to extend the projects to new and diverse audiences. I also acknowledge important supporters of the Gallery’s Children’s Art Centre program: Santos and the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation, sponsor of Kids’ APT, 2009–10, and the forthcoming 21st Century Kids, 2010–11.

Maria Isabel Gaudínez-Aquilizan
The Philippines / Australia b. 1985
Alfredo Juan Aquilizan
The Philippines / Australia b. 1962
In-flight (Project: Another Country), 2009
Recycled materials, sticks, string, wool, sound files
First commissioned by the Queensland Art Gallery for APT6, 2009
Supported by the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation
Presented at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation 2010

Sutee Kunavichayanont
Thailand b. 1965
Classroom Upside Down, 2006
Wooden desks, wooden stools, wallpaper, paper and crayons edition 2/2
Purchased in 2007 through the Queensland Government’s Gallery of Modern Art Acquisitions Fund
Commissioned for APT6 and the Queensland Art Gallery Collection
Presented at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation 2010

Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian
Iran b. 1924
Patterns of Infinity, 2009
Touchscreens, LCD screens
First commissioned by the Queensland Art Gallery for APT6, 2009
Supported by the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation
Presented at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation 2010

Arlene Tetsu Queen
Australia b. 1975
Unseen Superheroes of the Working World, 2009
Card, felt-tip pens
First commissioned by the Queensland Art Gallery for ‘Kids: Contemporary Australia’ Summer Festival, 2009
Presented at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation 2010

William Yang
Australia b. 1943
Australia Now, 2009
Coloured pencils, paper, mirrors
First commissioned by the Queensland Art Gallery for The China Project, 2009
Presented at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation 2010

Arlene Tetsu Queen
Australia b. 1975
Unseen Superheroes of the Working World, 2009
Card, felt-tip pens
First commissioned by the Queensland Art Gallery for ‘Kids: Contemporary Australia’ Summer Festival, 2009
Presented at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation 2010

Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian
Iran b. 1924
Patterns of Infinity, 2009
Touchscreens, LCD screens
First commissioned by the Queensland Art Gallery for APT6, 2009
Supported by the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation
Presented at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation 2010

Maria Isabel Gaudínez-Aquilizan
The Philippines / Australia b. 1985
Alfredo Juan Aquilizan
The Philippines / Australia b. 1962
In-flight (Project: Another Country), 2009
Recycled materials, sticks, string, wool, sound files
First commissioned by the Queensland Art Gallery for APT6, 2009
Supported by the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation
Presented at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation 2010

Sutee Kunavichayanont
Thailand b. 1965
Classroom Upside Down, 2006
Wooden desks, wooden stools, wallpaper, paper and crayons edition 2/2
Purchased in 2007 through the Queensland Government’s Gallery of Modern Art Acquisitions Fund
Commissioned for APT6 and the Queensland Art Gallery Collection
Presented at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation 2010

Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian
Iran b. 1924
Patterns of Infinity, 2009
Touchscreens, LCD screens
First commissioned by the Queensland Art Gallery for APT6, 2009
Supported by the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation
Presented at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation 2010

Arlene Tetsu Queen
Australia b. 1975
Unseen Superheroes of the Working World, 2009
Card, felt-tip pens
First commissioned by the Queensland Art Gallery for ‘Kids: Contemporary Australia’ Summer Festival, 2009
Presented at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation 2010

William Yang
Australia b. 1943
Australia Now, 2009
Coloured pencils, paper, mirrors
First commissioned by the Queensland Art Gallery for The China Project, 2009
Presented at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation 2010
Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation (SCAF) was established in April 2008 as a not-for-profit organisation to champion research, education and exhibitions of significant and innovative contemporary art from Australia, the Asia-Pacific region and the Middle East. SCAF works closely with artists in commissioning new work and developing exhibitions that energise and respond to the gallery’s four-part complex comprising a large exhibition area, mini ‘out-site’ space, versatile theatre annexe and Zen garden. Extensive projects are developed through partnerships with public art institutions at a regional, state and national level while broad public engagement with contemporary art is fostered through publishing and forum programs. In addition, Sherman Visual Arts Residency (SVAR), located directly across the road from the gallery, offers a supportive environment and accommodation for visiting artists, filmmakers, architects, writers, curators and scholars.

The experience of developing Sherman Galleries (1986–2007) as a respected commercial and educational enterprise within the international art world underpins the Foundation at both a conceptual and practical level. Dr Gene Sherman AM, SCAF Chairman and Executive Director, has drawn on her extensive international networks to establish the Foundation, and initiates and guides its activities in collaboration with an advisory board of respected peers: Andrew Cameron, Doug Hall AM, John Kaldor AM, Akira Nakayama, Tomoko Nakayama, Dr Claire Roberts and Michael Whitworth.

The driving philosophy of the two-site Queensland Art Gallery is to connect art and people. In 2009, attendance across the two sites reached almost 1.4 million people. The Gallery presents an engaging program of exhibitions and events complemented by interpretive public programs, publishing and online resources. Working closely with key corporate, tourism and media sector partners, the Gallery continues to build its profile as an important cultural tourism destination in the region.

The Gallery of Modern Art is Australia’s pre-eminent venue for the presentation of contemporary art. Included in the Gallery’s Collection of over 14,000 works is an internationally recognised contemporary Asian and Pacific collection. The Gallery’s engagement with the Asia-Pacific region continues through the ongoing activities of the Australian Centre of Asia Pacific Art (ACAPA) and the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (APT) series of exhibitions. The Gallery also profiles the artistic practice and cultural life of Indigenous Australia through its Collection, exhibitions and programs. The Queensland Art Gallery Foundation provides vital support to the Gallery, supporting the development of the Collection and the presentation of exhibition programs. The Children’s Art Centre develops and presents programs for children, young people and families, and the Gallery is recognised as an international leader in presenting innovative museum-based learning programs for children. The Gallery’s Australian Cinémathèque, launched in 2005, is the only one of its kind in an Australian art museum. In addition, the Queensland Art Gallery is the only state gallery to provide, as part of its core business, an ongoing and comprehensive program of Collection-based travelling exhibitions and public programs in regional areas.