

The best artist-run initiatives (ARIs) in Sydney

Want to see the bleeding edge of Sydney's art scene? These galleries and spaces, run by artists themselves, are a good place to start.

By Dee Jefferson | **Posted:** Friday November 17 2017



Photography: Kit Baker
107 Projects: United Walls (March 2015) featuring work by Penelope Benton and Alexandra Clapham

If you're after emerging and experimental art, the best place to look is the independent spaces run by artists themselves, who tend to be more focused on the production of interesting work than profitable work. Sydney has a healthy ecosystem of artist-run initiatives (ARIs) – here are some key ones to get you started.

Sydney ARIs



Photograph: Daniel Boud

Art, Galleries

Firstdraft

📍 Woolloomooloo

Australia's longest-running artist-led initiative, Firstdraft's charter is the development and exhibition of emerging and experimental art and art practise. It is run by a team of eight volunteer directors (all either practicing artists or arts professionals) on a staggered two-year term, with an annual rollover of four directors.

[Read more](#)



Photograph: Anna Kucera

Art, Galleries

Boomalli Aboriginal Artists' Co-op

📍 Leichhardt

Boomalli's focus on contemporary urban Aboriginal art (primarily from NSW) sets it apart from most indigenous galleries, which tend to prefer regional works. The gallery has associations or past links with many of Australia's foremost indigenous artists, including co-founders Michael Riley, Brenda L Croft, Tracey Moffatt.

[Read more](#)



Art, Installation

107

📍 Redfern

This artist-run space, opened on Redfern Street in 2011, features a sound-proof performance space, a gallery, a cafe and bar, a workshop, and a permaculture garden on the roof. Head there for performances, workshops, life-drawing classes, gigs and exhibitions.

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Art

Alaska Projects

📍 Elizabeth Bay

This artist-run-initiative was established in 2011 by Sebastian Goldspink, for the purposes of showcasing contemporary art in unused and abandoned spaces. Its first project, titled Car Park, is an ongoing gallery that is housed on an underground level of a Kings Cross car park.

[Read more](#)



Photograph: Anna Kucera

Art, Galleries

Wellington St Projects

📍 Chippendale

This artist-run-initiative was founded by Belem Lett and Katherine Brickman in March 2013, within the bottom level of a warehouse of studio spaces.

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Art, Galleries

China Heights

📍 Surry Hills

This ARI (artist-run initiative) was founded in 2004 by Edward Woodley, Michael Sharp and Mark Drew – three pals who straddled the divide between fine art and design/creative work. The roster of shows at Heights reflects this, with an emphasis on creative slashies, street art, graphic design and low-brow.

[Read more](#)



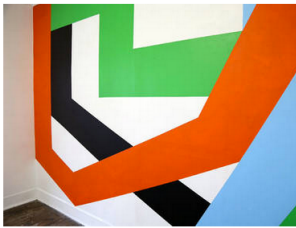
Art, Galleries

Kudos Gallery

📍 Paddington

Located in the heritage-listed St Sophia Hall, this gallery was established in 1998 to give students of UNSW Art + Design school (formerly College of Fine Arts) the opportunity to present in a gallery space off campus. Kudos exhibits a diverse range of work by artists from first year through to post-grad; it is run by the student body ARC.

[Read more](#)



Photograph: Seva Vlaskine

Art, Galleries

SNO

📍 Marrickville

Since 2005, Sydney Non Objective has been showcasing non-objective contemporary art, across multiple galleries within the space.

[Read more](#)



Art, Galleries

Verge Gallery

📍 Darlington

Administered by the University of Sydney Union, Verge is also open to the general public and programs exhibitions that feature works by current and former students as well as further afield. It is currently curated by Siân McIntyre, formerly part of the Paper Mill curatorium.

[Read more](#)



Photograph: Anna Kucera

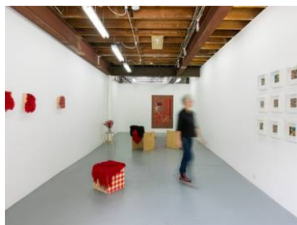
Things to do, Classes and workshops

Frontyard

📍 **Marrickville**

This 'Not-Only-Artist Run Initiative' in Marrickville is a three bedder that's been turned into a multi-purpose creative space complete with kitchen garden and research library. The aim here is to build community by allowing participation and collaboration between people with a passion for culture. It's a place where the process of making art is just as important as the result.

[Read more](#)



Art, Galleries

Airspace Projects

📍 **Marrickville**

This artist-run initiative (ARI), founded in 2014 by artists Sally Clarke and Brenda Factor, has four exhibition spaces, a residency space, and can host workshops, talks and events. Airspace is open the first three weeks of the month, for the following hours: Week 1 Fri 11am-6pm (exhibition preview) / 6-8pm (exhibition opening night); Sat 11am-5pm Week 2 Thu & Fri 11am-6pm; Sat 11am-5pm Week 3 Thu & Fri 11am-6pm; Sat 11am-5pm

[Read more](#)

Airspace Projects

Art, Galleries 📍 Marrickville



Photograph: Anna Kucera
Mainly Martha - Susan Buret Nov 2017

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TIME OUT SAYS

DETAILS

USERS SAY

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Week 2

Thu & Fri 11am-6pm; Sat 11am-5pm

Week 3

Thu & Fri 11am-6pm; Sat 11am-5pm

Posted: Sunday November 12 2017

Near Airspace Projects

Hellenic Bakery



Beejay's Cafe



Crafted Addiction



Vesbar Espresso



Warren and Holt



Photograph: Anna Kucera
Place of all return - T-E-A-R Collective Nov 2017



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Photograph: Anna Kucera
Corpus - Catherine Polcz Nov 2017



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Photograph: Anna Kucera
Jewellery - Brenda Factor Nov 2017





Photograph: Anna Kucera

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Photograph: Anna Kucera

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Photograph: Anna Kucera