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## Q&A WITH TOM POLO



Tom Polo, Parramatta Artist Studios portrait. Photo: Alex Wisser

Camilla Wagstaff chats to artist Tom Polo about what's in store for 2016.

**2016 is off to a flying start, You have quite a few projects already on the go, notably a live installation wall piece at the AGNSW for Spectrum Now Festival. Can you fill us in a bit on this project?**

Im looking forward to working at the Art Gallery of New South Wales over 12 days in March and just seeing how the work becomes a record of all there is to be absorbed on site. Whilst I will be spending intense periods painting the work, I'll also be taking time to speak with members of the public and gallery staff about its development. I'm hoping this public process will offer new perspectives about what surrounds us and the different ways we interact with art.

**The piece sees you take cue from the daily goings on of the gallery, interactions with curious visitors, overheard conversations, encounters with staff, the building's own architecture and history. It's an approach that continues your investigation of the relationships between artist, image and audience. What is it about these relationships that compel you?**

I'm interested in the ways each of these elements inform, challenge and ultimately affect one another, particularly in social space where there is an opportunity for discussion. How may an artwork bring together an artist and its audience? How does being privy to the production of a work affect the reading of its outcome? I'm excited to see how candid gallery visitors are, in offering their thoughts about the work's development and their advice about how to proceed. I'll be open to suggestion.

**You're also participating in this year's Art Month in March. What are you working on for this event?**

For Art Month I'll be participating in an exhibition titled Green Eyed Monster Eating Its Own Tail curated by Barry Keldoulis. I'll be showing a selection of text-based works alongside other artists including John Citizen (aka Gordon Bennett), Heath Franco, PJ Hickman, Tracey Moffatt and Grant Stevens.

**Sydney has much in store over the coming months when it comes to art – Spectrum Now, Art Month, SafARI, the Sydney Biennale, to name a few. Are there any upcoming shows or events you're particularly excited about seeing?**

In short, all of the above! With so much on, I'm going to say I'm looking forward to everything so you should endeavour to see it all!

**The past 12 months have clearly been a very busy time for you. What do you have in store in the coming year?**

I'm currently back at Parramatta Artists Studios working towards a temporary public art project, as well as creating new works for a solo exhibition at STATION in June. Following this, I'll be undertaking residencies in Paris and London, which I am looking forward to.

**You're represented by STATION in Melbourne. Do you see yourself picking up representation from any other galleries in other states in the future?**

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