

a circular logic

Lisa Sammut

23 July to 8 October 2023



canberra glassworks

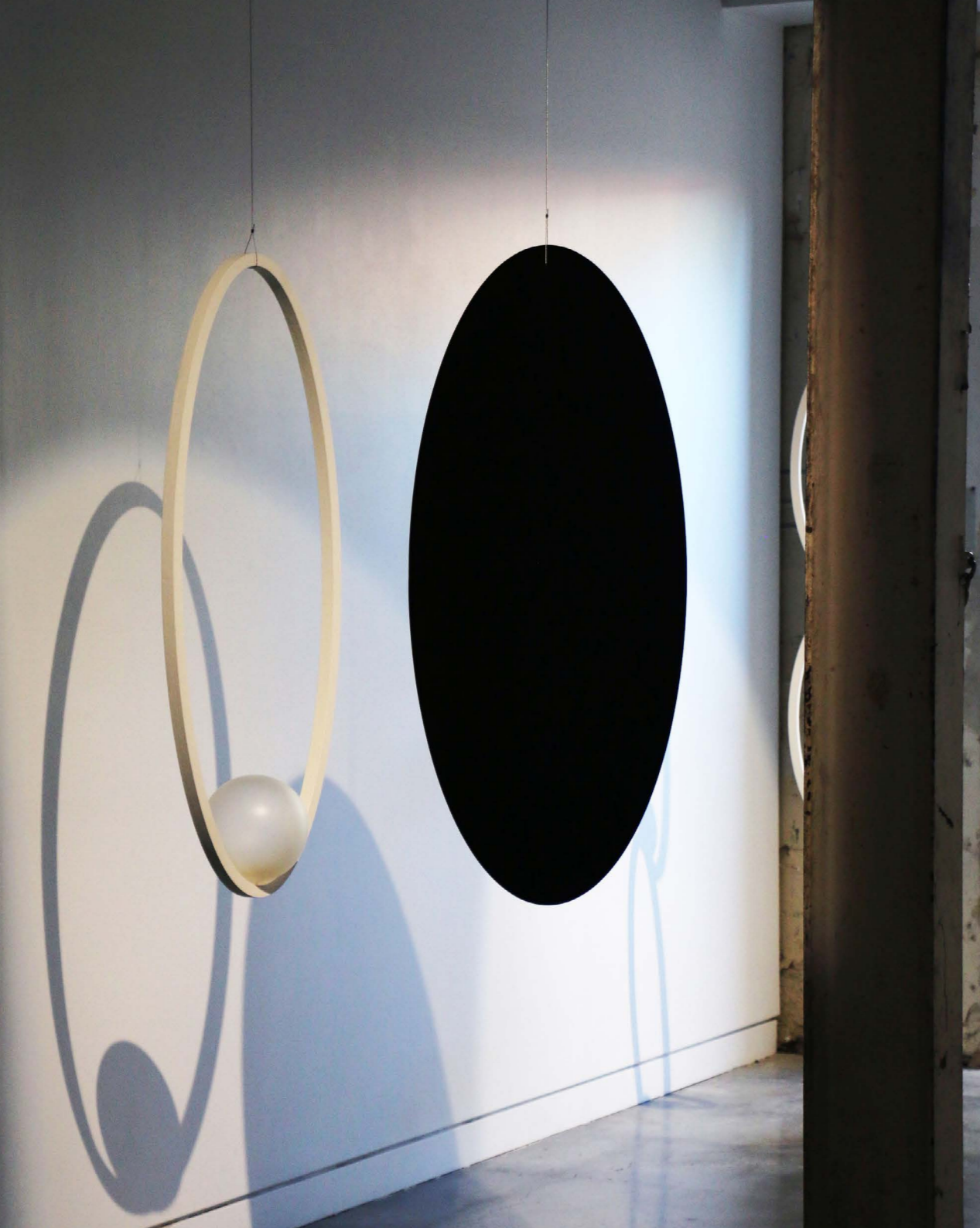




Lisa Sammut creates immersive installations that offer the viewer the chance to experience and encounter something magical. These are spaces for deep reflection where nothing else seems to exist.

Drawing on historical celestial illustrations, Sammut explores planetary symbols that have been transformed in unexpected ways. She is inspired by historic references to comets, planetary alignment, and cosmic imagery. Cosmology is the study of the origin, structure, and evolution of the universe, where philosophy and spirituality meet nature. The etymology of the word cosmos comes from the Greek verb kosmos 'to order and arrange', 'to adorn' or 'decorate with ornaments'. A history heavily attributed to Western belief systems.

a circular logic is an installation that uses a combination of suspended mirrors and handmade glass along with timber forms to create drawings in space. The suspended sculptures are activated by time and space as the sun moves around the building and air currents shift in the gallery, catching and throwing light and shadows as they spin freely. This offers the viewer a chance to experience something theatrical and ever-changing. The use of mirrors within the installation acts like a kaleidoscope within the space. Each mirror catches parts of the space, often catching reflections of reflections. Invented in the early 19th century the kaleidoscope was intended to deliver joy and aesthetic wonder, a word that translates to 'watcher of beautiful shapes'. The optical qualities of mirror here play with our spatial awareness and provide a world in which we can lose our bearings.



The solid glass forms cradled within the suspended structure demand closeness, they invite the viewer to look deeply at the optical and magnification properties of each piece. Sammut explains her interest in these qualities is based around their ability to reflect, flip, warp and distort the surrounding environment. Like a black hole, they narrow light, condense material and reduce visual space. The sphere or 'crystal ball' is also culturally understood to be a tool for self-reflection, a way to grasp the indefinite and unclear, to glimpse our future and know our fate.^[1]

These are narratives that we construct to enable us to make sense of the unknown, this is especially true in the times before modern science. Playing on this, Sammut chooses to focus on symbols which are both familiar, contemplative, and otherworldly without stepping into sci-fi territory or a science/art framework. a circular logic links the maker, viewer, object, and cosmos together, serving as a conduit for self-reflection and connection.



The physical materiality of glass is amorphous, it moves between states of liquid and solid. This is beautifully demonstrated by the opposing clear glass forms – the curved spheres and the sharp rock forms. Sammut has embraced both forms. Through the creation of the spherical shapes, she shows how hot glass wants to pool and puddle around itself contrasting with the rawness and crystal-like formation of the rock forms. The two rocks in the space were formed ‘naturally’ or in a non-controlled way where the glass was allowed to cool without going through a sequence of managed temperatures thus splitting in a similar way during the formation of volcanic rocks. The glass fractures to release the stress built up during its transition from liquid to solid. There is a tension here between the known and the unknown, the controlled and the uncontrolled.

To Sammut, each piece is a sky disc and a cosmic egg, this concept is both sublime and ridiculous and everything in between .

This work was fabricated as part of the 2023 Canberra Glassworks Artist is Residency Program, supported by the Australia Council for the Arts.

^[1] Artist statement provided by the artist, July 2023





Lisa SAMMUT

a circular logic (series 1-8)

2023

painting timber, glass, etched mirror, stainless steel cable, digital decal, crushed quartz





We acknowledge the Ngunnawal and Ngambri peoples, the traditional owners of the ACT region, on whose lands we live and work and where the Canberra Glassworks stands. We pay respects to their Ancestors, Elders, leaders and artists past and present, and recognise their ongoing connections to Culture and Country.

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Exhibition supporters

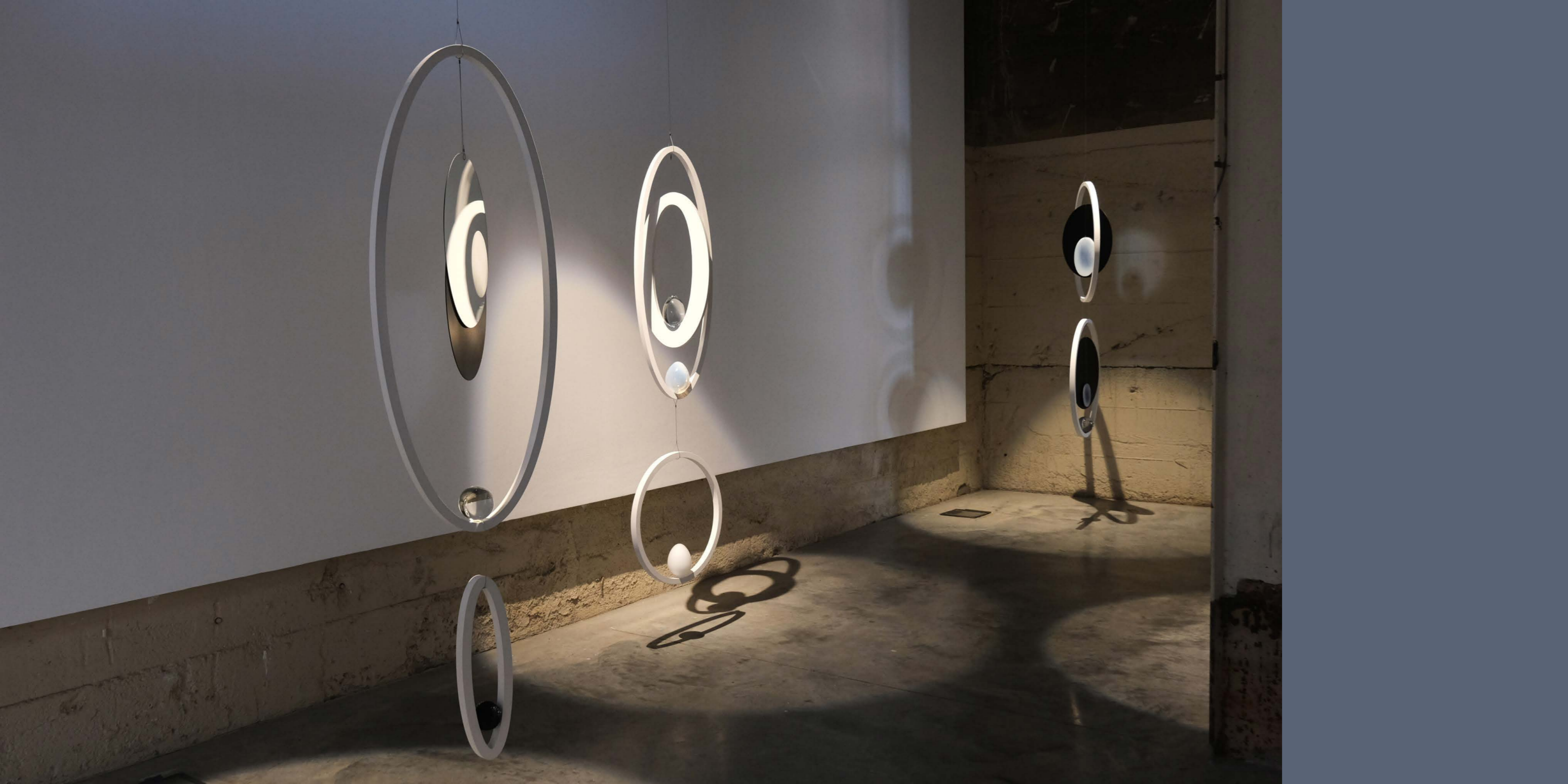


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Photography by Brenton McGeachie and Glassworks staff for Canberra Glassworks.

The artist would like to thank Katie-Ann Houghton, Louis Grant, Hannah Gason, Annette Blair, Rose-Mary Faulkner, Kirstie Rea, Aimee Frodsham, Tegan Garnett and Canberra Glassworks community.





canberra glassworks

opening hours

Wed to Sun

10am to 4pm

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