



### FROM THE DIRECTOR

At the time of writing this message for *artifacts*, the Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre and the annexe Gallery DownTown have been closed to the public from Tuesday 17 March 2020.

The Gallery staff have continued to work on site during the closure and are busy establishing new ways to engage visitors with our exhibitions and collections online as the situation continues to evolve.

Any new information about the operations of the Gallery in the days and weeks ahead will be posted on the Gallery website, as well as distributed via our social media channels. This is the perfect time to follow us! If you haven't joined us as yet, take the plunge! We're on Instagram: [www.instagram.com/tweedregionalgallery/](http://www.instagram.com/tweedregionalgallery/) Facebook: [www.facebook.com/tweedregionalgallery/](http://www.facebook.com/tweedregionalgallery/) There'll be lots of great images too! As always, there's lots of information on our website, so please visit: [www.artgallery.tweed.nsw.gov.au](http://www.artgallery.tweed.nsw.gov.au)

Entries are OPEN for the big biennial event that is the *Border Art Prize*. This much-anticipated Prize in the artistic calendar of the region supports the endeavours of artists living and working in N.E. NSW and S.E. Queensland, and is open to all media and subject matter.

Since closing to the public as a precautionary measure to protect the community from the COVID-19 emergency, the Gallery staff have been working hard to develop online strategies in an effort to support artists whose exhibitions are presently on the walls of the Gallery and Gallery DownTown. The *Border Art Prize 2020* will also be affected by COVID-19. The Gallery is resolute in our desire to offer regional artists a platform to show their artwork and celebrate their strength in adversity. **We are proceeding with the *Border Art Prize 2020* as an online exhibition.**

To view the new Conditions of Entry, including Frequently Asked Questions please read the information at <https://artgallery.tweed.nsw.gov.au/PrizesAndAwards/BorderArtPrize>

We have reduced the entry fee to \$15, but the prize money remains the same! On offer is a First Prize of \$3,000 funded by Tweed Shire Council. Second and third prize, of \$1,500 and \$500 respectively, are funded by your membership support - the Friends of the Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre Inc. I know how grateful artists of the region are to the Friends for supporting them all in this way.

The exhibition typically includes painting, photography, textiles, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics and more and reflects the wealth and breadth of artistic endeavour in the region. The *Border Art Prize* is always popular with the public and provides the opportunity to purchase work from the region at some very reasonable prices! Our Judge for 2020 is the lovely Niomi Sands, Director of Grafton Regional Gallery.

Check for details on our website and social media platforms to keep updated on the progress of the Prize, and details of associated events.

Earlier this year the Gallery was delighted to announce an exciting new partnership with the National Art School (NAS) in Sydney. Each year, this new partnership will award a graduate of the NAS, Masters of Fine Art (MFA) the opportunity to undertake a residency in the Tweed Regional Gallery's Nancy Fairfax Artist in Residence Studio. One of the outcomes of the residency will be a solo exhibition at the Gallery. The partnership was inspired by Margaret Olley, a National Art school Alumni. Olley graduated from the prestigious art school, known then as East Sydney Technical College, in 1945, and went on to have her first solo exhibition in 1948. Residencies and solo exhibitions are significant milestones for any artist. By partnering with the NAS, the Gallery will play a pivotal role in these milestones for the very best of the emerging artists in NSW.

Through this partnership we want to implement a dynamic program that

will celebrate Olley's legacy, her dedication to painting and her generous mentoring of emerging artists. We are thrilled to connect audiences to new work and new artists in this way. The first recipient of this exciting initiative is graduate Jacqueline Hennessy. Jacqueline said of her opportunity, "Being awarded the residency at the Nancy Fairfax Artist in Residence Studio was a wonderful and exciting way to conclude my studies at the National Art School. Being immersed in the creative energy of the Studio and its uniquely inspired surrounds will provide me with the time and space to engage in a period of intensely focused research aimed at extending and expanding my studio practice. The opportunity to exhibit my work at the Friends Gallery next year is truly invaluable."

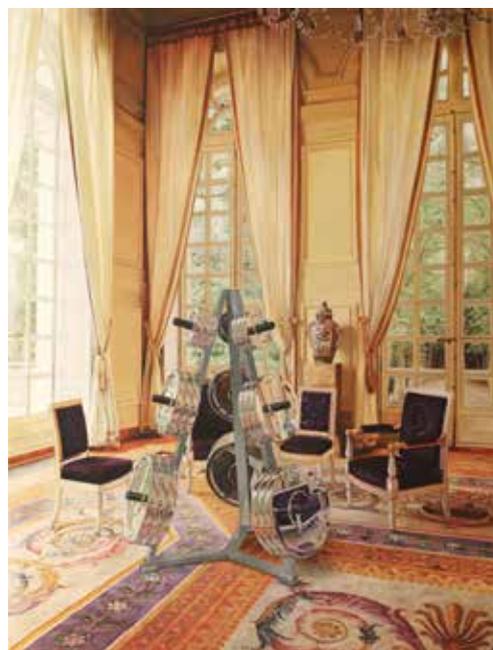
Late last year the Gallery's Foundation launched an appeal to acquire a beautiful, and significant painting titled *The new Garden Drawing Room*, by leading Australian artist Michael Zavros. I chose this work with the Directors of the Foundation as an extraordinary example of Michael's work - I like to call it a portrait of his practice. The Foundation was most fortunate to be in a position to be able to acquire this painting created as a companion to *The new Round Room* - which was awarded the coveted Bulgari Prize in 2012 and in the collection of the Art Gallery of NSW. Measuring 190cm x 145cm and featuring a room in the Palace of Versailles, *The new Garden Drawing Room* absolutely complements our collection of contemporary works by leading Australian artists.

The acquisition appeal has been successful to date, with donations coming in regularly. We are asking all of our supporters to consider the extraordinary value that the acquisition of this painting will bring to our Gallery, and to assist us by contributing financially towards the purchase of *The new Garden Drawing Room*. All donations attract tax deductibility. There's several ways to donate towards this acquisition, so don't be shy - please feel free to contact us about it if you're keen!

Please stay safe. The Gallery staff look forward to welcoming our members back to the Gallery. Until next time, **Susi**

Below: Michael ZAVROS  
*The new Garden Drawing Room* 2019  
oil on canvas

Pending gift of the Tweed Regional Gallery Foundation Ltd.





## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to my first artifacts report in my role as the new President of Friends of the Tweed Regional Gallery and MOAC. I look forward to working with our enthusiastic committee who are so very proud of the Gallery and the wonderful asset it is to our region.

On a sad note though, the committee said goodbye to our Secretary Sue Strickland. Sue has relocated back to Canberra to a new job and new twin grandchildren.

The committee gathered for a Christmas Lunch at 'Bacaro' in Murwillumbah in December following a busy morning planning our activities for 2020. Most of the Friends have chosen to receive information via email, so reading emails has become even more important if you wish to keep abreast of what is happening. Future mail-outs will have details of planned activities and I suggest you book early for our outings to avoid disappointment.

One of the main functions of the Friends is to raise money to acquire artworks and provide art activities for the Gallery. We do this through membership fees, functions, raffles and especially shop sales of our Margaret Olley merchandise. As a result, we recently made a funding commitment for five years for the Gallery's summer program for families. The Friends have also recently funded the purchase of two of *The Unseen Monotypes* by Margaret Olley. They are exquisite monotypes (which are hand coloured, one-off prints on paper) that document Olley's travel in Europe during her first overseas visit in the early 1950s.

During February, the Friends catered for two 'Meet the Artists' and an opening that attracted over 200 people. The exhibitions opened were: JamFactory ICON Clare Belfrage's *A Measure of Time*, Judy Oakenfull's *Floral Appreciation* and Anne Smerdon and Corinne Lewis' *Captive Companions*. Hopefully you will be able to visit the Gallery before 3 May to view these excellent exhibitions.

I especially thank Peter Taylor, our new catering co-ordinator, and his wife Gay, for the wonderful job in organising the food for these events. Only positive comments were received and when no food is left, it makes a statement that the guests approved (or were really hungry).

One of the best jobs at an opening is the drawing of the raffle. Our raffle prize *The Waterfall* by David Preston was a very popular choice and lots of tickets were sold by Marty before the draw and on the night. The winner is one very happy lady, Linda Bouwmeester from Melbourne, who will now have a permanent reminder of her holiday in the Tweed Region.

I also thank Susi and her staff for their guidance and patience as I navigate my way as President and I look forward to continuing to work with them for the benefit of the Gallery. **Bronwyn Lewis**



Catherine O'DONNELL  
*Urban perspective – large window* 20.7.18  
charcoal on paper, 98.5 x 135.2cm  
Image courtesy the artist  
and MAY SPACE, Sydney

## Fibro Façade

My art practice is anchored in the suburbs, depicting the urban aesthetic which shape and inform our everyday lives; it searches for the humanity, history and politics of a place by reframing the familiar. Presenting untethered architectural details; my drawings strip back the supposed uniformity of suburbia, unveiling the individuality within its often dismissed or overlooked dwellings.

*Fibro Façade* investigates social housing built in the mid-twentieth century. With a political history rooted in international social theory and an aesthetic history in the modernist movement, these housing estates hold a significant and contentious place within Australian history. For me, and for many, the fibro and red brick façades of these buildings speak eloquently of home.

The starting point for these works was my old home in Busby, a suburb within the Green Valley estate, approximately 40km south west of Sydney. Returning to my former address, I was shocked to find that my house was gone, replaced by a shiny new mini 'McMansion', bulging proudly from between two 1960s fibro homes. When the estate was developed, these same fibro homes were also shiny and new, full of promise for a better tomorrow, but now they stand quietly as a legacy of the past.

Growing up in these estates, I was blissfully unaware of the politics they were embroiled in; in government urban planning policies, in social theory, in the classist stigma against them. My small ordinary house, identical to the next one, was just home. My time spent in these places has had a profound impact on my art practice, shaping my love of geometry, minimalism and abstraction.

Within this body of work, I have aimed to give renewed attention to social housing in Australia by abstracting and reinterpreting the dwellings. Using minimalism, I isolate these modest buildings from their contexts and represent only their structure to explore their compositional potential and underlying symmetry, striving to offer a renewed vision of these landscapes, often seen as bleak. I aim to inscribe the lives lived within the houses into their fibro cladding, to insinuate the qualities of home, to reassert value.

I want to both present the formal aesthetics of the buildings and to extract the sense of humanity that emanates from lived-in spaces. I employ realism to ignite the imagination of the viewer and invite them to look beyond the mundane and banal. My work intends to reinterpret and reinvigorate inhabited environments by accentuating attributes of life and longevity, beyond physicality.

While my work displays a high level of realism, my interests do not lie in simple reproduction. Rather, I delete extraneous information and reveal signs of life, both historical and contemporary. Small moments of suspended narrative enter my images through detail; an open window or drawn curtain suggests habitation and bears witness to lived experience. These moments maintain an element of the personal within the impersonal, and as such, my drawings become active reminders of human existence. The viewer is called to delve into their own memories of home and to contemplate the individual narratives embedded in these historic structures. **Catherine O'Donnell**

Catherine O'Donnell is represented by MAY SPACE, Sydney



## Double Vision

*Euan Macleod and Ron McBurnie recently spent time in the Gallery's Nancy Fairfax Artist in Residency Studio. During their residency, the artists worked en plein air both on the Gallery grounds and across the surrounding region. Here they provide us with some insight into their shared experience.*

I've had a long relationship with the Tweed Regional Gallery and, to a large extent, because of that, the area around it, which I've grown to love and love painting.

The opportunity for me to undertake the Tweed residency came about quite suddenly. When I was offered a chance to do it late last year, it was at a time when I already had quite a bit planned, including a now delayed exhibition in Hong Kong and a painting trip to New Zealand. However the thought of a summer painting holiday where I could look at the area in a bit more depth was far too tempting. The gallery allowed me a lot of flexibility for both a shorter residency and also to share it with Ron McBurnie. We have worked together on many painting trips, including in France and New Zealand and also in the Tweed area, and both love painting en plein air. Ultimately, all the work produced on the residency was done in the landscape.

It's enjoyable painting/drawing with other people, sharing the experience and bouncing ideas off each other. By doing the residency with Ron, it allows for an exhibition where we can show our separate visions of the same area. Even though we worked in the same places, we each responded to different aspects in our own way. My preference is to use figures as a counterpoint to the landscape they inhabit, and the beaches are a perfect place to find potential models who are usually unaware of their role. Painting outside does mean you become a magnet to people who want to see what you are up to. I realise I often look like I don't have a clue what I'm doing while I'm painting outside. Whatever people thought, they were generally friendly and positive.

It was a huge relief at the end of the residency to be able to leave everything we'd done with the curator, Ingrid Hedgcock. She will combine the two bodies of work and make it into the exhibition that you will see on the walls of the Gallery. This also means Ron and I will see the work again with fresh eyes and ultimately I feel this is what the exhibition is about - for the viewer to experience two different visions of an area they know well and hopefully see it with fresh eyes.

I hope I can impart some of the excitement, discovery and fun I experienced during my time in this beautiful part of Australia. I wish to thank those in the Gallery who gave us the opportunity and made our time in Tweed so enjoyable. **Euan Macleod**



In my early 30s I purchased a copy of a small etching titled "The Herdsman's Cottage or Sunset" 1850 by renowned British artist Samuel Palmer. Many years later I saw many of his paintings and drawings first hand in a retrospective of his work at the Metropolitan Museum in New York where I fell in love with his modest drawings of trees like, *Oak Trees Lullingstone Park* and *Oak Trees and Beech* 1828.

In more recent years I've found great solace by spending long hours in the landscape and making work relating to it, and in particular, environments with trees. When I arrived in the Tweed Valley region a few days before Euan Macleod, the local residents I met were incredibly helpful in suggesting some spectacular places; all worthy subjects for painting and drawing. These suggestions became the starting point for finding places for the works that were made during the time of the residency. I remember setting out each day like an explorer on a voyage of discovery until I came upon a place that had all of the ingredients that I was looking for. It's difficult to describe what makes a place suitable. It's always a very personal decision based on what aspects of the landscape I enjoy to draw and paint or the way a site may remind me of a place I have seen or drawn in the past. En plein air for me is also about remembering a place better.

The first place I discovered was beside a bridge on Dunbible Creek not far from Stokers Siding. I chose it because I loved the way the trees formed an arch over the river. The January rain had not yet started and the creek was dry enough for me to set up my trusty folding chair on the creek bed beside one of the shrinking waterholes that were left. I used white ink with a pen and nib to draw onto black paper in order to accentuate the light that was hitting the edges of the trees from the other end of the creek. I passed the creek a week later and noticed that my drawing spot was submerged. What works as a subject on a particular day may not be suitable for the next.

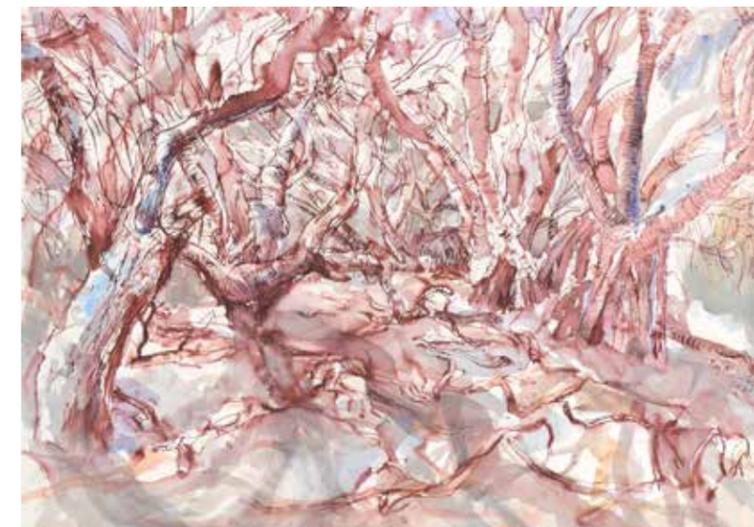
After Euan had arrived at the residency, we would each morning discuss possible localities for that days en plein air session then drive to the chosen place and each scope out individual spots to set up for the day. We are both quite familiar with working like this and over the years have worked overseas and in many parts of Australia in a similar way. During this residency the places I chose to paint and draw were usually quite different to those Euan was painting even though we were working in reasonably close proximity. We each used different materials to achieve our goals and each focused our attention on different aspects of the landscape before us. Euan would often include a figure or figures in the landscape whereas my landscapes were mostly devoid of people but would sometimes include references of human activity.

The residency itself was a great opportunity to work outdoors in such a special environment and to share the experience with a close friend. The work that eventuated through our double vision of the landscape was all made during the time of the residency either out in the field or at the Nancy Fairfax Artist in Residence studio. I hope that people seeing the work on display at the Tweed Gallery may share our excitement of this special place and to better appreciate the beauty of the surrounding environment.

I would like to thank the Tweed Gallery for this tremendous artist in residence opportunity. **Ron McBurnie**

Below left: Euan MACLEOD  
*Going right, Cabarita* 20.1.20  
acrylic on paper

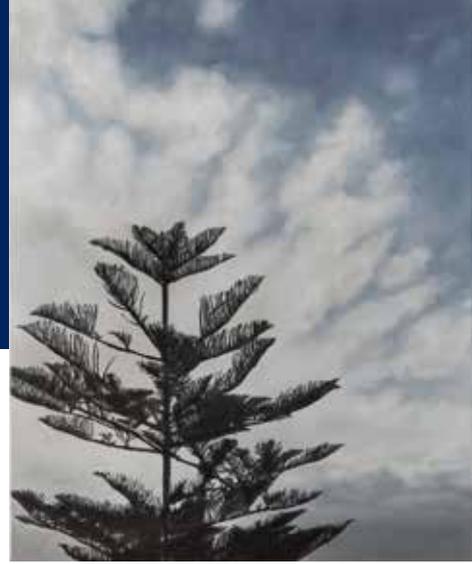
Below: Ron MCBURNIE  
*Wild wood – pandanus, Cabarita Beach* 22.1.20  
ink and watercolour on paper



**Welcome New Friends**  
We look forward to seeing you when the Gallery reopens.

Top: Cedar JEFFS  
Norfolk 2019  
oil on canvas

Below: Cedar JEFFS  
Golden hour 2020  
oil on linen



## Life's a raffle

I shifted unexpectedly from North Queensland in 2013. In my search for a new abode I was attracted to Murwillumbah by its nearness to the beach and what I then called the "Margaret Olley". Now I am aware of the fuller, correct title but its still the "Margaret Olley" to me.

Within a fortnight of my settling into a retirement village, I had visited and been overwhelmed by the Gallery, its building, its setting and its collection. And especially did I enjoy Margaret's own contribution to daily life that made me feel less guilty about the chaos of my own living.

I inquired about the Friends of the Gallery and after an interview with the estimable Greg Puch, I was 'in'. I began contributing as a watching volunteer, knowing that I would not last as my old body is not made for cruising. After a lifetime of teaching children and adults, I had no attraction to contributing as a guide so I fell into selling raffle tickets, a task nobody else seemed to be doing, at least persistently. Now I sit for an hour or so every day ready to persuade visitors of the efficacy of a purchase.

I have developed a protocol that is directed first at Susi Muddiman and her staff and is extended to hospitality staff in the Cafe: no urging, no obligation, no expectation through familiarity, notwithstanding my 'thirty second spiel', repeated so often my regular colleagues behind the front desk know the words as well, if not better than I, and they tend to scatter when I begin. My aim is not to offend, as I offer my welcome.

Down the years I have done rough counts of sales and expect that since I began raffles may have put over \$10,000, perhaps nearly \$15,000 into the Friends' coffers; the Treasurer knowing the exact truth. I tend to avoid this point because I do it for the enjoyment and satisfaction, and the Friends' Committee makes its decisions about spending it.

The gregariousness of the occasion is my special enjoyment, meeting visitors from every State and Territory in Australia, and to my continuing dismay, those who visit and enjoy the Gallery from places across the globe. My recent memories include interacting with people from Wales, Scotland, Zimbabwe, New Zealand, Switzerland and Norway. Such meetings create memorable occasions: the woman who arrived twenty minutes before the drawing of the raffle, bought one ticket and won the prize, which was a limited edition, John Olsen; the couple who had just built a new home, wanted the Margaret Olley print that was the prize, bought \$50 worth of tickets and won it; the couple who flew from the Sunshine Coast in a plane they had built to collect the prize they had won. And most memorably and recently: a woman who as she was writing her surname on the ticket drew my comment that her surname had been famous in North Queensland seventy years ago when I was living there as a kid. To my astonishment she burst into tears; "that was my father", she spluttered, to my explicable and considerable relief. Then there's the generosity of human spirit, most evident with David Preston's donations of his work for prizes.

So popular: no urging, no obligation, no expectation. Makes the whole exercise a joy for this old bloke.  
**Martin Sullivan** ~ Member of the Friends' Committee

## Brunswick sky

I have been living in Brunswick Heads with my husband and two children for the last eight years. In this time I have developed a strong connection to the landscape. This has brought me a sense of peace and belonging.

I am constantly inspired by the subtlety of colour and changes in light. I enjoy observing patterns in the weather and find the ephemeral beauty of this constant change is what drives me to make work based on the landscape. It has also become a focus for my current exhibition *Brunswick Sky*.

I have always been interested in visual arts, particularly drawing and painting. Four years ago due to a hip injury, I became very sedentary, during this time I began to draw, this daily practice reawakened the love I have for art-making and I felt compelled to keep going. Two years ago I commenced study at the Byron School of Art. This decision has been a life-changer in so many ways, my creativity has completely opened up and it's exciting to think about where this new direction could take me.

I enjoy experimenting with a range of mediums including oil painting, drawing and collage. My subject matter varies with a strong pull towards the figure and the landscape. I regularly work from life and use photographs as reference material.

I am currently in my third and final year at the BSA, over the past two years I have seen improvements in both my conceptual and technical skills. The unique mentorship and individual-based learning have supported me to realise my dreams and ideas. I am also grateful to have gained practical insights into the art industry which will assist me upon my completion of study.

This exhibition has been an amazing experience and I thank the Gallery for this opportunity.

As I look to the future my interest lies in honing my studio skills, travel, and the exploration of cultural and environmental landscapes. **Cedar Jeffs** ~ Artist

### THE GALLERY CAFÉ and THE GALLERY SHOP

Unfortunately the Gallery Cafe and the Gallery Shop will be closed until further notice.

As this is a very fluid situation we suggest you keep abreast of any changes by visiting the Gallery website:  
[artgallery.tweed.nsw.gov.au](http://artgallery.tweed.nsw.gov.au)

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Janice Jones ~ Editor

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