

Natalie POPOVSKI
Stuff of Life 2021
Oil on Canvas



TWEED artifacts

FRIENDS
Tweed Regional Gallery and
Margaret Olley Art Centre Inc.
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GALLERY BY BACARO

Ciao! Welcome from Giorgia, Luca and team at Gallery by Bacaro! Open Wednesday - Sunday, 8:30am - 4pm, we're excited to also be open for dinner on Friday nights over spring and summer. In true Italian style, this includes a festive happy hour from 4pm-6pm with cocktails and pizza! Our delicious breakfast menu is available till 11:30am, and a fabulous lunch menu with delectable daily specials from 11:30am. Scrumptious home-made cakes, biscuits, Italian morsels and other goodies are available all day. And opening soon is a new takeaway station and a deli with all local produce! So, come and enjoy our new menu and the spectacular view.

THE GALLERY SHOP has a beautiful range of wares in a wide range of prices. There are many new lines, some of which use images of Margaret Olley artworks and are ideal for gifts and souvenirs. Purchases at the shop help boost the Friends' contributions to the Gallery.

TWEED REGIONAL GALLERY & MARGARET OLLEY ART CENTRE
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Open Wednesday to Sunday
10am to 5pm



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Editor: Janice Jones

Absorption

As an emerging Gold Coast artist, I am honored to be showcasing my works at the Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre as part of their Community Access Exhibition Program in July of this year.

I have spent the last two years developing a body of work titled *Absorption*, wherein I have been painting scenes from the inside of people's homes around Australia. Some of these people I knew prior, but the majority were complete strangers who I convinced to let me peer into their homes, most with the email subject "May I paint you?" And as it turns out, few people said no to being a muse.

I didn't always explain right away that I wouldn't be painting them, but rather their 'stuff'. The seemingly insignificant corners of mess that you're often unaware you keep. Your bathroom cabinet, your kitchen benchtop, or your bedside table. They say a lot about your beliefs, your personality and your rituals. I call them Indirect Portraits.

There are no strict criteria as to who I ask to be my subjects, they just have to be interesting to me. And in all honesty, most people are interesting if you are willing to really listen. This entire project has been about finding the sacred in the mundane, the moments of awe all around us that we dismiss so easily, the great novels being written right under our noses.

To give you an understanding of the process: I reach out to someone of interest, brief them on the project and ask to be invited into their home. I spend some time chatting with them, learning about their history, their interests, their priorities, and values. And then it's a matter of photographing corners of interest that I then take back to my studio to paint.

While most people guide me through their house, pointing out things they think I might find interesting, they're usually mortified at what I choose to document. They laugh nervously and with a dismissive wave of their hand and explain that that's just some insignificant ornament from their past ... they don't understand that's exactly what I'm looking for. The thing that is most unassuming and ordinary to them is exactly the interesting thing that defines them and their quirks. Essentially, these paintings are a mirror.

Take Glenn, for example, one of the featured individuals in my upcoming exhibition. In my short time with Glenn, we fostered a deep connection and I came to understand much about him. For a man that appears stoic and impenetrable, he is completely ruled by his heart, and his life's journey has been one of deepening that connection. With a booming masculine voice, he speaks of softness and feminine energy. He has a deep foundational understanding of the world that is distinctly Indigenous. Glenn is humble, he is humorous and he is generous.

I couldn't find his bedside table more curious. A jumble of things that could easily be looked over as clutter, they actually served as symbols of his life's philosophy.

One such item was a small traditional Maori carving (now over-popularised). Glenn explained its original meaning as a spearhead designed to be thrust into an enemy's heart, causing severe wounding as it's ripped out. It no doubt served as a reminder of our primal ancestry. Next to that was a small cast metal sculpture of the masculine and feminine symbols interlocking, another reminder of the distinct way Glenn perceives the energy that governs the world. All this thrown amongst an open packet of Fisherman's Friends, a Griffith University USB, and an old post-it-note provided a fairly accurate and amusing snapshot of Glenn.

Glenn was just one individual that I had the honor of meeting in preparation for this exhibition. I hope that you're able to visit the gallery to see these painting in the flesh so that you too can ponder your own bedside cabinet and learn just a little more about yourself. **Natalie Popovski**

Absorption, Natalie Popovski, **The Macnaughton Focus Gallery and Kelly Wall, from Friday 15 July to Sunday 18 September 2022**

ARTEXPRESS 2022 *continued*

while others had full access to schooling, teachers and facilities. As we are becoming accustomed to the inequities of the impacts of COVID it is important to acknowledge the disruptions and the resilience of all.

As such this particular ARTEXPRESS is a celebration of the challenges and hard work of the students and teachers who have endured the difficulty of creating artworks during a global pandemic. We commend all those involved and celebrate all senior students nationally. We hope that art making provided something more in this difficult time.

The works in ARTEXPRESS showcase a variety of themes and topics that reflect the lives of young people. They provide a welcome insight into the minds of this group, who in their pre-voting years rely on us to advocate for them in the political arena, while straddling a world between childhood and adulthood. In this context it is a valuable exhibition for everyone to see.

This year Tweed Regional Gallery has launched the Wollumbin Youth Art Award to further showcase artwork by regional youth. We are also initiating a youth collective to give young people more opportunities to participate in the arts, connect with each other and have fun.

Claire Conroy - Education and Audience Development Officer

ARTEXPRESS 2022 from Friday 22 July to Sunday 18 September 2022



FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Gallery is very proud of our collection and enjoys presenting it to our visitors. The Gallery has collected a diverse and remarkable variety of portraits during its 34 year history, with many artworks being acquired through prizes and awards, including the Doug Moran National Portrait Prize, the Josephine Ulrick National Photography Prize and the Olive Cotton Award. Others have been generously donated to the Gallery by artists, philanthropists, and of course by our wonderful support organisations – the Friends of the Gallery and the Gallery Foundation.

Portraits and self-portraits often reveal close and private relationships, providing viewers with a link to the personal lives of the artist and their chosen subject. I always think there's an added element of curiosity in portraits as the viewer is almost obliged to ponder the development of each work and the narrative of the portrait.

Contemporary artists today continue to challenge the conventions of the portraiture genre. Our new collection exhibition *Transcending Likeness: Contemporary portraits from the collection* opens on Friday 17 June. The exhibition includes works by 28 contemporary artists, including Joanna Braithwaite, Guy Maestri, Ben Quilty, Justine Varga and Michael Zavros.

Who doesn't love a prize! The Gallery is thrilled to have recently launched two new exciting prizes – the Wollumbin Art Award (WAA) and the Wollumbin Youth Art Award (WYAA).

The Awards, named for the sacred mountain which the Gallery overlooks, will be held biennially and are open to artists residing in the Tweed, Byron, Ballina, Kyogle, Scenic Rim Shires, as well as Lismore and Gold Coast City.

We are so thrilled to be able to present this new Award, which reflects the calibre of talented artists we have living in our region. Announcing the Award at this time is bittersweet as we are also keenly aware that many artists would have lost work, materials and their studios during the recent floods. We are grateful to be able to offer opportunities for artists at a time like this.

The WAA offers a First Prize of \$15,000 and a two week residency in the Gallery's Nancy Fairfax Artist in Residence Studio.

The Friends of the Gallery have a long history of supporting the Gallery's programs and prizes. Our new Art Award for youth is no exception. For young artists aged between 5–18 years who live in the geographical areas, the Wollumbin Youth Art Award (WYAA) will also be open. The Award offers an incredible range of sponsored prizes and cash prizes, generously funded through the Friends of the Gallery, across four age categories. The past two years have been hard for young people in this region and this Award intends to be a celebration of the extraordinary talent and creativity of our young artists. The Inaugural Judge for the Youth Award 2022 is internationally recognised contemporary artist and Tweed resident, Hiromi Tango.

With the support of the Gallery Foundation, the Gallery has also established a \$10,000 First Nations Award, an important, timely and critical addition to the prize. The Award also includes a solo exhibition in the Gallery.

A \$5,000 Emerging Artist Award has also been established for artists within the first 5 years of their practice.

The Inaugural Judge for the WAA 2022 is writer, curator and editor of VAULT Magazine, Alison Kubler. Ali brings a wealth of knowledge, from art history to contemporary practice, and as a resident of the Gold Coast she is the perfect choice for an award that celebrates the visual arts on both sides of the border.

I encourage you and your friends and family to enter these exciting new Awards. Entries for both the WAA and the WYAA are currently open and will close 5pm, Sunday 17 July 2022. Applications are submitted online via the Gallery's website: <https://gallery.tweed.nsw.gov.au/whats-on/prizes-awards>

Until next time, **Susi**



Bella LUU
Emergence 2022
Sefton High School

ARTEXPRESS 2022

ARTEXPRESS is the annual exhibition of exemplary art works from NSW Higher School Certificate [HSC] Visual Arts students. This event brings many school groups and families to the Gallery, whirling through the doors looking for what it takes to create a successful artwork for the HSC. For some, it is the only exhibition a young person or family member has ever been to. Visitors are often heard commenting on the quality of the work, the inventiveness of materials, the venerability expressed in the subjects and the sophistication of the viewpoints of young people.

The tradition of this showcase stems from its inauguration in the late 1960's. As longstanding as it is, the exhibition has gone through changes over the years and in particular had disruptions in the past few years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Typically, the showcase will include up to ten galleries each with a unique selection of student works resulting in a greater number of works selected. Curators from regional centers attend the marking center at Olympic Park in Sydney to choose works to suit each gallery, curatorial vision and audience. However, this was unable to happen in 2020 and 2021 due to travel restrictions and lockdowns. The marking center was non-operational and marking was completed at each school. The exhibition program also altered with only three exhibitions in total in NSW two of which were selected by the Art Gallery of NSW. Tweed Regional Gallery is very happy to be one of the regional venues in 2022.

The reduction of the exhibitions and the halting of the marking center significantly changed the process for teachers during the pandemic. The final marking for the HSC and the pre-selection of the works for ARTEXPRESS has become the responsibility of classroom teachers and art departments. Teachers were given additional training which was included in their professional development hours. This has been a significant shift in the workload for teachers not only in time but also emotional labor. From 2020 schools submitted images of works they deemed eligible for ARTEXPRESS. In 2021 this changed and each school was allowed to submit a maximum of three works. This pre-selection went onto the panel of curators. Pre-selection for some schools proved difficult to limit to three pre-selected works from a wide pool of talented students. The process was also made difficult for some students and teachers whose schools were in hard lockdown providing no access, *Continued on back page*



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to our first edition of *artifacts* for 2022, another year when COVID has affected our plans. We were organising a bus tour to Brisbane in early February to view the Asia Pacific Triennial however we felt it was a risk to our members. I hope that many of you had the chance to make your own way to Queensland's Gallery of Modern Art to see this exhibition. I went up in early April and was amazed by the talent and imagination on display.

One of our greatest achievements recently has been the purchase of Margaret Olley's *Hawkesbury Wildflowers I* 1970. Anne McLennan heard that the work was coming up for sale and contacted the Committee. Owing to our successful fund raising activities we were able to provide the \$65,000 to cover the purchase of this beautiful painting. Our thanks to Rose Wilsher who does an excellent job sourcing articles to sell in the Gallery Shop, Martin Sullivan who works long hours selling raffle tickets and the whole Committee who put many hours into organising events such as bus tours, film screenings and running the bar at Gallery openings. This all helps to bring much needed funds to our coffers.

There have been no welcoming New Friends Morning Teas for almost two years due to restriction on numbers allowed in the Friends Room. The Committee had hoped to reinstate these events recently but once again our hopes were dashed and we had to cancel due to the floods that devastated so many. Hopefully we will see a recommencement of these events soon.

It has been very enjoyable catching up with Friends as we serve refreshments at the Gallery openings and 'Meet the Artist' events. I am usually at these events so please remember to say hello.

The Ken Done raffle was a great success for the Friends. Ken Done kindly donated the prize and the lucky winner was Jeff Sandon from Randwick, Sydney who collected it in person. The following prize, a collection of Margaret Olley themed gifts from the Gallery Shop, was also very popular, so we'll offer a similar raffle next year. Our current raffle prize is a framed photograph by artist Rob Olver.

We made a very successful bus trip to view the Byron School of Arts in Mullumbimby, The Pack Gallery in Bangalow, and the Lone Goat Gallery in Byron Bay. This was an important trip in support of our northcoast neighbours recovering from flood.

On behalf of the Friends, the Committee donated \$1000 to the



Margaret OLLEY
Hawkesbury Wildflowers I 1970
©Margaret Olley Art Trust



John Honeywill (b.1952)
Jug and artichoke flower 2018
©The Artist

Friends of the Lismore Regional Gallery. Hopefully this funding will be of some assistance to help them re-establish their activities.

At present the Friends Committee is organising a trip to Canberra in October to visit the *Cressida Campbell* exhibition in the National Gallery of Australia, the National Portrait Gallery, Floriade and the Arboretum. A visit to the Australian War Memorial to observe the Sunset Ceremony at 5pm is also on the list of activities being considered. At present we aim to fly out of Coolangatta on 11 October and return on 14 October. More information will be advertised as the planning progresses, but please keep these dates in mind.

Another very special 'save the date' is Friday 19 August where the Friends and Foundation invite you to join us to celebrate some significant acquisitions for the Gallery's collection. This will be a very special celebration and we hope to see you all there.

I hope this edition of *artifacts* finds you and your family safe and well and to those recovering from the devastating floods our thoughts are with you. **Penny Hall** – President

An artist's view: Margaret Olley and contemporaries from the Tweed Regional Gallery collection

Margaret Olley's incredible career is celebrated through her life-affirming paintings, but it is also her unique charisma, generosity and capacity for friendship that contributes to the texture and dimension of her extraordinary legacy. Her singularity made her, and her home studio, the subject of many other artist's work, both during and beyond her lifetime.

The current exhibition in the Margaret Olley Art Centre celebrates Olley 'the artist' through superb examples of her work, as well as Olley 'the subject' and Olley 'the protagonist' in a world of art and artists.

In this exhibition we see different artists' views of common subjects including objects, interiors and Olley herself, via painted and photographic portraits. The combination of artworks by Olley alongside artworks by contemporaries offers a lens through which we see the world via the unique view of each artist.

Friends of the Tweed Regional Gallery and Margaret Olley Art Centre

Inc. will be especially pleased to see, on display in MOAC for the first time, Olley's *Hawkesbury Wildflowers I* 1970, gifted to the Tweed Regional Gallery collection by the Friends in 2021. The Friends' ongoing support of the Tweed Regional Gallery collection is vital to the continued growth of this important community asset.

Hawkesbury's Wildflowers hangs alongside John Honeywill's *Jug and artichoke flower* 2018. By invitation, Honeywill, a Brisbane based artist, did a residency in the Gallery's Nancy Fairfax Artist in Residence Studio in 2018. Honeywill selected objects from Olley's home studio as subject matter for painting. One of the objects he selected to paint was the blue banded jug that appears in Olley's *Hawkesbury Wildflowers I*. To see these paintings exhibited side-by-side we can appreciate the alchemy of the artist and how they capture a unique view of the same subject.

At the entrance to this exhibition is Cressida Campbell's spectacular hand-coloured, woodblock *Interior with poppies (Margaret Olley's house)* 1994, generously donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Philip Bacon AO in 2016.

Cressida Campbell met Margaret Olley in the early 1990s and in 1994, when Olley was planning to spend some time overseas, she invited Campbell to use her Duxford Street home studio as a subject for her artmaking. Campbell's *Interior with poppies (Margaret Olley's house)* is one of two works she created during this time. It depicts a view of Olley's blue kitchen, positioned at the rear of the terrace section of the property. Here we can see Campbell's distilled view of the world. Her careful editing of the space creates a composition of unity, beauty and elegance through a distinctive process of drawing on board, carving the contour lines into the board, colouring the board with layer of watercolour, as well as taking one direct print from the board.

In the exhibition we see Olley's view of the same room in her oil on board painting *The Blue Kitchen* 1993. Olley's view edits out nothing. She captures everything in the room - every object, the blue walls, and the light filtering in from the window. Through this she shows us her love for painting, for colour and for capturing the everyday imbued with a warm sense of humanity.

Each year we present two exclusive exhibitions in the Margaret Olley Art Centre. Every second exhibition is drawn entirely from the Tweed Regional Gallery collection. This is an exciting opportunity to share the collection as it grows and to recontextualise artworks and narratives.

Ingrid Hedgcock – Curator MOAC & Collection Manager

This exhibition continues until 28 August. Visit the Gallery website for details regarding the Gallery's Masterclass Workshop Series with guest artist Lewis Miller.

Animal as Object

As a mid-career artist with a thirty-five-year practice, I can't remember a time when I wasn't trying to 'make something' of the world around me. From my early scratchy drawings of dogs which plastered the walls of my ten-year-old bedroom to a tipsy sketch of a mudskipper copied from a photo in the comprehension test I was supposed to be doing in grade five. I discovered the joys of the natural world through the lens of author Gerald Durrell and made careful copies of the Ralph Thomson illustrations in his books.

My practice has always been grounded in observational drawing and I find myself continuing to come back to this language to try and share what I see. There are stories in all things, tales of loss and destruction but also of great hope and redemption, small smiles and quiet humour. The natural world whispers renewal and hope in ways I can't ignore.

The *Animal as Object* works have come about through my weekly visits to draw and document at the Queensland Museum over the last five years. A love and fascination of natural history and a long-standing art practice within the genre of still life has collided to produce the perfect storm of subject matter and conceptual concerns.

The ideas around the objectification of creatures led firstly to a d-evolution of the Grey Nurse shark, from the valuable museum holotype skin of the Grey Nurse shark, down to kitsch soap holders and shark suit wearing Lego figurines. How do we feel about the various images of sharks within our popular culture? From shiver to

shudder, can it help our understanding and appreciation for the shark as an integral and important species?

German mystic St Hildegard of Bingen said in the 11th century "If we fall deeper and deeper in love with creation, we will respond to its endangerment with passion".

If this is the case, maybe even a plastic, grinning, dancing effigy of a shark can be redeemed.

I continued that exploration through other endangered animals like the Koala, the Bridled Nail-tail Wallaby, the Powerful Owl, Giant Barred Frog and Loggerhead Turtle. They all start out very specific and unique and then sort of devolve into generic caricatures or wildly inventive pop subspecies.

The strangeness of seeing animals become objects in the museum taxidermy became a paradox I became interested in unpacking. Just as Rachel Poliquin asks, "what does it mean to be dead but not gone?" (*The Breathless Zoo* 2012). I also wondered about the use of animals in popular culture. What does it mean to be objectified and sold as mass produced plastic?

What is the place of the animal object in both nature as taxidermy and in culture as the souvenir?

I followed the volunteer taxidermists, preparators and collections manager and documented what I saw happening in the back end of

the museum, marvelling at their dedication and wealth of knowledge. I saw that scientists and artists are cut from the same cloth, both asking questions based on what they observe. I scribbled away in sketchbooks while they worked to save the hide of a koala that had been hit by a car or made a small dead frozen kingfisher into a beautiful study skin for future reference. They save some small amount of the masses of dead birds and mammals that would otherwise be lost to us, for the benefit of education and science into the future.

We, thankfully, no longer deliberately kill birds and animals to build our museum collections and we all feel the discomfort of looking at taxidermy and wondering how that creature died. The same disquiet comes upon me with mass produced plastic souvenirs which I argue could be seen as single use plastic for all the time they spend in use.

I hope to continue to observe and 'draw out' the natural world to connect and offer that practice of mindful observation as a quiet antidote to consumption.

Through mashups of early scientific taxonomy charts and illustrations, museum taxidermy, pop culture and the mass-produced souvenir, I hope questions are asked about artifice, collection, consumerism, mimicry, wonder and beauty. **Deb Mostert**

Animal as Object – nature and culture, Deb Mostert, The Anthony Gallery, from Friday 6 May to Saturday 16 October 2022



Deb MOSTERT
Turtle as Object 2021
Watercolour