



FROM THE DIRECTOR

It has been wonderful to see so many visitors in the Gallery since we re-opened to the public on 3 June. It is gratifying to know that so many of you were keen to revisit the Gallery after the closure. From the surveys that visitors have been completing, we also know that we have welcomed many new visitors as well, which is very encouraging. The Gallery Downtown has been busy too, those visitors having the bonus of checking out the exhibitions and artists' studios of the M|Arts Precinct.

Thanks so much to our wonderful volunteers who have been on deck helping the staff out with the wide range of new duties associated with operating the Gallery in this period of 'new normal'. We wish for you all to feel and stay safe during your visit, so we are very grateful to our supportive volunteers who help us to achieve that on a daily basis.

It was a joy for the Gallery to host the stunning exhibition *John Mawurdjul: I am the old and the new*, and to see visitors' responses to the artwork. The artist's work was literally breathtaking, and I so enjoyed seeing visitors being captivated by the extraordinary detail of the work and learning so much from the video featuring the artist and the materials he uses. All of the Gallery staff were thrilled that we didn't miss out on the opportunity to host this exhibition as a result of the COVID-19 closure, as it was one of the highlights of the Gallery's program. This exhibition was developed and co-presented by the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia and the Art Gallery of South Australia, in association with Maningrida Arts & Culture. I hope that many of you had the chance to see the show, as it is one that I've no doubt you'll remember for many years to come.

I've recently been on a road trip to Dubbo with my sister, nephew and niece. It was quite a different road trip from those I remember from my younger years, with days filled with games of Eye Spy and my father's pop quizzes. These days with the younger generation it's more about how much data is left on your phone plan and where you can get decent wi-fi connection. Our destination in Dubbo was to visit the zoo, (which is fabulous – I think the hilarious and mischievous lemurs and meerkats were my favourites) but while I was in Dubbo I had the chance to visit the Western Plains Cultural Centre for the first time. It was great to see my colleagues there and talk to them in person about how they have adapted to these strange times.

I always like being a visitor in another gallery too. I thoroughly enjoyed seeing their exhibitions on display, especially the beautifully curated show from their permanent collection. Inspired by their proximity to the Taronga Western Plains Zoo, the Dubbo Regional Gallery's collection primary focus is animals in art. This theme seeks to explore issues surrounding the representation of animals in the visual arts. Animals are also viewed as metaphors or symbols, so there's a treasure chest of interpretations to explore. From the vibrant blue budgerigar by artist Ben Quilty in the foyer, to the quietness of Arthur Boyd's dead fox, I saw some striking works from Dubbo's great collection. This exhibition made me reflect on the relevance of our current collection exhibition here at Tweed, as it showcases where we live and the artworks by the many talented artists who live and work in our region. There's no doubt that regional galleries are storehouses of gems in the visual art world. Our show, 'You Are Here: art of the region' explores artists' different interpretations of the unique landscape and characteristics of the region. Artists include Margaret Olley, William Robinson, Angus McDonald, James Guppy, Karla Dickens, Guy Maestri and Hiromi Tango. The exhibition includes

historical and contemporary works and covers a vast range of media. I know you'll enjoy seeing this exhibition.

That much anticipated Prize, Australia's favourite portrait prize, *The Archibald Prize*, is coming to Tweed early next year! The Gallery will be launching the tour of *The Archibald Prize 2020* here on 22 January 2021, and we know that our audiences will eagerly anticipate this exhibition. First awarded in 1921, it is one of the nation's oldest and most prestigious art awards. The Prize of \$100,000 is certainly a conversation starter and we're thrilled to be included on the tour. Under the terms of the Will of the late J.F. Archibald dated in 1916, the prize will be awarded to best portrait 'preferentially of some man or woman distinguished in art, letters, science or politics, painted by any artist resident in Australasia during the 12 months preceding the date fixed by the Trustees for sending in the pictures'. It's always so exciting to see the finalists, and there's the additional prizes of the Packing Room Prize and the ANZ People's Choice. Definitely something to look forward to on our calendar. Keep an eye out for further information on our website and social media platforms.

Until next time, **Susi**



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the latest edition of *artifacts*. I hope you have adjusted to the new normal way of living and you are staying safe and well. It was great to read the Lonely Planet describing the Gallery as: "an exceptional gallery – home to some of Australia's finest art in a variety of media". We are so truly fortunate to have it on our doorstep.

There are some wonderful exhibitions on view at the Gallery now. If you have been to Kingscliff and Fingal Head you will be able to relate to *Double Vision*. This current exhibition features the work of Euan Macleod and Ron McBurnie, who were artists in residence in the Nancy Fairfax Artist in Residency Studio in early 2020. They have captured the coastline and plants with which we are all so familiar. This exhibition will be on display until 15 November 2020.

As people are being encouraged to be cashless during this pandemic and pay by 'card', the Friends have purchased a Point Of Sale machine. This can be used for raffle ticket sales, membership fees and donations, but not shop sales. I would like to thank Karlene Polglase for researching the best option and for her wonderful work as Treasurer of the Friends for the past three years.

The online booking system for entry to the Gallery is working well. So make sure you remember to book your visit on your desired date and time. An added highlight is that Marty may be sitting at his designated COVID-safe raffle table and would be delighted to sell you a ticket.

It was good to be able to have a face-to-face committee meeting in July while abiding by the COVID-safe rules. However, we are still unable to make any decisions regarding coach trips, visits to galleries or other social events. I can advise though that the AGM is planned for 28 October, so save that date.

Most of the Friends will receive information on future events via e-mail so make sure Friends is in your contact's list so the information will not go to the junk folder. That can be disappointing especially if an event is popular and sells out quickly.

Bronwyn Lewis

Margaret's House

In 2019 we invited three leading contemporary Australian artists to undertake residencies in the Gallery's on-site, live-in Nancy Fairfax Artist in Residence Studio.

The intention of their residencies was for each of them to respond to aspects of Olley's art, life and legacy – with a particular focus on her famous home studio. The artists, Nicholas Harding (NSW), Pam Tippett (NSW) and Adam Pyett (VIC), explored the home studio re-creation and made new work in response to its intriguing interiors and the incredible collection of objects that Olley assembled as subject matter for her work.

These interiors, the furnishings and the objects that filled them, were subject matter for Olley's paintings for nearly 50 years. Every room in the house – from the kitchen, to the dining room, and the bedroom – was a studio first and foremost. But it was also her home – a place to



Adam PYETT drawing in the re-creation of Margaret Olley's 'yellow room'.



Pam TIPPETT with a still life painting in progress during her residency in the Nancy Fairfax Artist in Residence Studio.



Nicholas HARDING making studies in the re-creation of Margaret Olley's sitting room.

cook, to entertain guests, and to live. In this unique way Olley did not separate art from life – her art and life were intrinsically intertwined. She did not need a separate studio as a place to paint. This co-existence of art and life resulted in lively, ever-changing interiors with arrangements moved over and over, or kept in place for decades, depending on the progress of a painting.

With her once ever-changing home studio, now a static display in the Margaret Olley Art Centre, we endeavour to explore ways in which to enliven the re-creation and re-activate it as subject matter for painting – just as it was for Olley.

Known for her realist paintings, Pam Tippett selected objects from Olley's eclectic collection and re-staged them against neutral surrounds. Removed from the context of the home studio re-creation, the objects are given centre stage and their every detail eloquently rendered. Tippett's incredible attention to detail warmly conveys every surface change, colour shift, highlight and shadow. As such her sublime still lifes elevate even the most humble of objects, as she captures them with regal devotion.

Adam Pyett chose to work initially in the re-creation of Olley's Yellow Room, which she described as her favourite room in the house. Of this he said: "The first part of Margaret Olley's house that intrigued me as a subject for still life painting was the display of objects on the mantelpiece in the yellow room. Set against a lemony yellow the objects all look similarly petrified, austere and sculptural."

After drawing a selection of objects in the Yellow Room, from which he later developed oil on board compositions, Pyett focused more on patterns in the house, on cushions and other textiles. These patterns were worked into still life compositions featuring vessels from Olley's collection and coupled with Banksias. In doing so he paints a homage to Olley's love of flowers, in particular wildflowers, and a celebration of their strong character and structure.

Nicholas Harding's residency experience had a major point of difference in that Harding was friends with Olley and spent time in her Duxford Street home studio in Sydney. He said: "Drawing all day in the Gallery's re-creation of Margaret's home and studio is a lovely way to be in conversation with someone who isn't there but whose presence can be felt everywhere in the room. As it always was, ABC Classic FM is on the radio but I'm missing Olley's gossip and the birdsong, a magpie or currawong warbling away outside in Duxford Street."

During his residency Harding made studies of the sitting room interior within the re-creation, as well as studies of selected objects removed from the context of the house and re-arranged in the Artist in Residence Studio. The culmination of the interior studies is a large-scale oil painting called *The Poppy Rider* 2020. Capturing the view across Olley's sitting room, from an armchair Harding would sit in when he visited Olley, *The Poppy Rider* captures the wonderful, energetic chaos of the room, densely layered with pattern, colour and texture. He depicts a decorative porcelain horse and human figurine that sit on Olley's coffee table as lively, dynamic elements leaping through the room as though it is a landscape. A colourful spray of poppies fan out behind them.

Alongside these contemporary responses, this exhibition includes some of the finest examples of Margaret Olley's still lifes and interiors, from public and private collections. This intersection of contemporary responses and Olley's home studio re-creation presents a renewed context for Olley's practice and the genre of still life painting in Australia today.

Ingrid Hedgcock
Curator, Margaret Olley Art Centre & Collection Manager

During the exhibition *Margaret's House* the Gallery will continue to present *Unlocking Margaret's House: Still Life Challenge* as part of our *Gallery At Home* initiative. This online program gives audiences access to a selection of objects from Olley's incredible collection of things, inviting them to respond via their own artmaking and share their responses on social media using #unlockingmargarethouse #stilllifechallenge.

Just Not Australian

As a first-generation Australian, growing up in a predominantly white suburb, I have often considered my own cultural identity. I was the child of a Scottish father and a Filipino mother who both wore 'assimilation' as a badge of honour (a term that made its way into the Australian lexicon in the 1990s). Yearning for a sense of belonging, I had no real connection to a 'motherland' – neither Scotland nor the Philippines felt like my home. I was just Australian. And I was defiantly so. Even when asked where I was really from. It frustrated me that just being Australian wasn't enough. Eventually I came to realise that my experience was far from unique.

Sydney-based artist Abdul Abdullah expressed a similar experience. Despite being able to trace his family's history in Australia back to the days of convicts, his brown skin and Muslim name meant he has "never really been allowed to feel like an Aussie," he said. "I'm no flag-waving cricket fan. No tinny-smashing, thong and singlet-wearing larrikin. There's nothing *Home and Away* about me. *Current Affairs* doesn't talk about my current affairs." It is these complexities of contemporary Australian nationhood that the exhibition *Just Not Australian* explores.

Abdul Abdullah is one of 19 multidisciplinary artists featured in *Just Not Australian*, an exhibition that deals broadly with ideas of race, place, belonging, and what it means to be 'Australian', and conversely, what it means to be 'unAustralian'. The themes of this exhibition are (unfortunately) as relevant now as they were in the 1990s when Prime Minister John Howard and One Nation Party Founder Pauline Hanson used the term 'unAustralian' to spark Nationalistic ideals and grow political support. The term is predicated on an 'Us vs. Them' dichotomy, and is intended to exclude and disparage 'the other'.

Abdullah's work in *Just Not Australian* is hard to ignore, and that's precisely what he wants. A large wall-mounted lightbox with the outline of Australia and text overlaid declaring "FUCK OFF WE'RE FULL". The work, while potentially a shocking statement to those unfamiliar with it, is an appropriation of a commonly found bumper sticker. "If you don't feel the phrase applies to you, it's really easy to walk past and ignore," Abdullah said. "But if you do feel like it applies to you, it's like a slap in the face every time that you see it. So I wanted to make it hard to ignore in that sense – so I made it big and glow in the dark."

The works in this exhibition showcase the sensibilities of larrikinism, satire and resistance as a way of presenting and representing Australian national identity – how we represent ourselves to ourselves, and what we project to others and the rest of the world.

Iranian-born Melbourne artist Hoda Afshar uses satire to interrogate the clichéd nationalistic idea of pride in her photographic series *The In-Between Place* (2011). The title of her photograph *If you don't love it, live it* (2011) is a play on the adage 'love it or leave it' that has become synonymous with Australian nationalism. The photograph features a couple sitting in a dark car, dressed in traditional Middle Eastern clothing with Australian flags, balloons, and tattoos on their cheeks. They are caught between two worlds – trying to keep their traditions and culture from their homeland alive, while attempting to make sense of what it is to be 'Australian'. Afshar has said the series is based on her own personal encounters as a migrant in Australia. "The *In-Between Spaces* illustrates social parodies based on performative masquerade... this series also criticises the current nationalistic fantasies that intend to enforce a standard image of what it means to be an Australian."

While *Just Not Australian* asks what it means to be Australian, it does not impose an answer or present solutions to the concerns it raises. The exhibition, however, does reveal that there can be no single 'true' representation of Australianness.

With the recent upsurge of the Black Lives Matters movement in Australia and around the world, and the xenophobic, racially-motivated attacks that evolved out of the coronavirus pandemic, this exhibition is certainly a timely one.



Hoda AFSHAR
Dog's Breakfast 2011
archival inkjet print



Installation view of Tony ALBERT: *Visible* at the Queensland Art Gallery 2019, featuring *exotic OTHER* 2009/2018

Photograph: Natasha Harth, QAGOMA
Courtesy the artist and Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney | Singapore Collection of Tom Snow, courtesy of Annette Larkin Fine Art, Sydney

This year, 29 April marked the 250th anniversary of Captain James Cook's first arrival at Botany Bay. While the milestone came and went without much relative noise, Artspace, Sydney, curated this exhibition as an opportunity to engage critically with this moment in Australia's colonial history and the meaning of 'arrival' as a continuum within this country that has seen ongoing immigration historically and contemporaneously.

As a first-generation Australian living on Bundjalung land, I continue to reflect on and interrogate my own ideas about what it means to be Australian and what it is that today's Australia stands for. I look forward to bringing this important exhibition to the Tweed and engaging in the conversations it sparks.

The artists in the group exhibition include Abdul Abdullah, Hoda Afshar, Tony Albert, Cigdem Aydemir, Liam Benson, Eric Bridgeman, Jon Campbell, Karla Dickens, Fiona Foley, Gordon Hookey, Richard Lewer, Archie Moore, Vincent Namatjira, Nell, Raquel Ormella, Ryan Presley, Joan Ross, Soda_Jerk and Tony Schwensen.

Just Not Australian was curated by Artspace and developed in partnership with Sydney Festival and Museums & Galleries of NSW. The exhibition is touring nationally with Museums & Galleries of NSW.

Sarah McGhee
Curator – Exhibitions,
Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre





Gallery by Bacaro
BACARO

THE GALLERY CAFÉ

Enjoy having lunch, morning or afternoon tea in the beautifully situated licensed café with its magnificent views over the Tweed Valley and the Border Ranges. View the artworks and treat yourself to delicious cakes and great coffee or a light meal and a glass of wine.

The café is open from 9am - 5pm, Wednesday to Sunday. For your preferred table, time or group bookings, please phone 02 6672 5088.

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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10am to 5pm



Disclaimer: Please note that the information contained in *artifacts* is obtained from a variety of sources and that the views expressed are not necessarily those of the Friends of Tweed Regional Gallery Inc. or Tweed Regional Gallery.

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Arm of the Sea and the Fertile Tree

Sally Anderson reflects on her creative journey...

The journey that has led me to become the artist I am today is rooted in my upbringing in the Northern Rivers region and my need to express myself creatively and to make work. Other factors which have informed the artist (and person) I am today include my study in visual/fine arts (in both Lismore and Sydney), time spent in Europe (and in particular Iceland) and a series of personal experiences, relationships, associations and encounters that interestingly feed into each other and also feed into my work.

In 2014 I undertook a six-week residency at SIM (Icelandic Association of Visual Arts). As it turned out this had a huge impact on my art, which I had not foreseen. I had just completed my Bachelor of Fine Art majoring in printmaking and had arranged to do a print focused residency at SIM. For some reason, which is still a mystery, the print studio was not available. In a way this was serendipitous, as I started to paint instead and created a series of work, which I showed in Sydney later that year. Since then I have only been painting and haven't made a print since art school.

Receiving the Brett Whiteley Travelling Arts Scholarship has been such an honour. It is truly such a unique art award. I was actually pregnant when I won the Travelling Scholarship and had a four month-old baby when it was time to undertake it, so it was quite an intense (and intensely rich) time. We spent three months in Paris, two months in the UK and one month in Italy. References to my time in Europe are apparent in almost all of my works since. The scholarship gave me recognition for my work at an emerging stage in my career as well as invaluable experience and support to focus on my arts practice.

My work is heavily influenced by personal and emotional experience; relationship dynamics, domestic experience, words, titles, meaning, language, motherhood, and memory held in landscape. I work with acrylic on linen, polycotton or board. I am also starting to play around with ways my paintings translate into both sculptural and fabric works or 'bedspreads'.

Motherhood has had an exceptional influence on my work in such a positive and constructive way. It has forced me to be much more efficient with my time in the studio and thus allowed me to realise works more directly, without overthinking them too much. My exhibition *Arm of the Sea and the Fertile Tree* at Tweed Regional Gallery is somewhat based on my transition into motherhood. There are various references to the birth; conception, gestation and parenthood woven throughout the



Sally ANDERSON
Isle of Lismore Mountains and Sea (Two Ones) 2020
acrylic on polycotton
Photograph: Michelle Eabry

works. My mother-in-law did the weaving of the Hoop Pine, which is included in the exhibition. And there is a little collaborative work I did with my son, which is also included.

I always have many plans for future works floating around in my head. I sometimes collect words and titles as starting points for works. The next 'body of work' always comes out of the one before. That's just the way it seems to go for me. I currently have my exhibition: *Arm of the Sea and the Fertile Tree* at the Gallery and now a solo exhibition at Edwina Corlette Gallery in August which has led me to explore a series of paintings on un-stretched linen. These will begin as abstracted seascape bedspread type paintings and will be shown at Olsen Gallery in 2021.



Welcome New Friends

We look forward to seeing you enjoying the exhibitions and Gallery and Friends' activities.

Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre is delighted to welcome back our visitors! Entry is free, however, tickets must be booked in advance for each visitor attending the Gallery.

Book your free Gallery ticket online
<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/tweed-regional-gallery-margaret-olley-art-centre-admission-tickets-106203980966>

Gallery Downtown is also open with social distancing measures in place. Pre-bookings are not required but visitors must register their contact details on arrival.
Monday to Friday, 10am-3pm,
Saturday, 10am-2pm ~ Phone: 0426 230 193