

Rosi GRIFFIN
Albatross 2020
Watercolour



TWEED artifacts

FRIENDS
Tweed Regional Gallery and
Margaret Olley Art Centre Inc.
Newsletter Vol23 No2 Sept 2022

Modern Beloved

Artist Rosi Griffin examines the architectural history of the Gold Coast in her new exhibition *Modern Beloved*. The exhibition is a continuation of the body of work developed for her solo exhibition *Best Before* at Gallery DownTown, annexe of the Tweed Regional Gallery, in 2019.

In *Best Before*, Rosi exhibited a series of paintings of fibro shacks. These simple beach houses, found all along the south-east Queensland coastline, are fast becoming a fragment of the past. In her paintings, Rosi emphasised the ephemeral nature of these buildings, detailing the subtle marks of decay and conveying a sense of emptiness. The works explored ideas around home and memory. The artist said:

"Families built simple fibro shacks unconcerned about wealth and class. It was a time of simple pleasures of swimming, fishing and surfing and a much less complex existence. These holiday homes hold a special place in Australia's collective consciousness. It's the subtle sense of decay and loss that I want to evoke."

Sadly, since the exhibition many of the shacks have been demolished, making way for larger, ultramodern homes and apartment buildings.

This new body of work, *Modern Beloved*, documents the suburban development of the 1950s and '60s – the mid-century modern buildings dotted all along the Gold Coast. Some of these treasures are well-known icons, and others are hidden along the coast. All are filled with character, colour and architectural interest – featuring generous, large windows, lush gardens, and views to and from the landscape or the ocean. Each house is set against a backdrop of vivid blue sky, evoking the Queensland sun and the rise of Surfers Paradise in the post-war era.

In contrast to the simple fibro shacks in *Best Before*, Rosi has a much more positive outlook for these buildings, as we experience a revival and renewed appreciation of our mid-century history. These are more substantial buildings she hopes will survive the bulldozers of developers. Yet she highlights most of these buildings are underrepresented on heritage registers, vulnerable and at risk of disappearing – "old enough to be unstylish but not old enough to be worth preserving."

An important part of Rosi's art practice involves her daily walks through the streets. The artist takes photographs or creates small sketches, which later become her reference material.

Alongside her signature watercolour paintings of facades of homes, Rosi zooms in from a macro to a micro perspective; focussing in on details, such as the various designs of breezeblocks. She collected these designs, then expands and repeats the geometric pattern in an exploration of colour and design. Creating Op Art-style abstract paintings and coloured Perspex sculptural reliefs, Rosi transforms the humble and ubiquitous breeze block into a

geometric work of art. Her laser cut breeze block designs in coloured Perspex sit away from the wall, and reflect glorious light and colours onto the gallery walls and floor – creating a fun and vibrant exhibition that I hope you will all enjoy.

Rosi Griffin is a contemporary artist based between Melbourne and the Gold Coast. Her practice includes photography, video, drawing, painting and installation. She holds a Bachelor Degree of Visual Arts from Monash University and has been a full-time artist since 2000. Griffin has held numerous solo and group exhibitions and her work has been shortlisted for various awards.

Sarah Wallace Curator – Exhibitions

Modern Beloved, Tweed Regional Gallery from 23 September to 27 November 2022.

Apex Dining *Continued from page 1*

"With Apex Dining, we hope to fully realise the potential for this stunning space and match the amazing vista and surrounds with an exceptional dining experience catering to all gallery visitors. Our long range view is to create a destination dining venue in its own right, that the Gallery, Murwillumbah and the region can be proud of."

Toby said they have been very lucky in attracting experienced, friendly staff who, managed by Nakita and Head Waiter Reuben, provide a warm welcome as they offer table service and share their extensive knowledge of food and wine.

What I like about Toby and Hannah's approach is that they look for and appreciate honest feedback. As Toby says: "You're only as good as your last meal and you must be ready to listen".

I'm sure, from what I've heard, they have received a lot of good feedback but check it out for yourselves. You can book by calling 02 6672 5088 or pop in and say hello.

Janice Jones
Editor - artifacts



FROM THE DIRECTOR

There's a definite feeling of Spring in the air at the Gallery - with Margaret Olley's stunning paintings in full bloom in *The Art of Flowers* and the gorgeous fresh blooms supplied by our wonderful local florist Flowerista. Be sure to visit the Gallery to see this beautiful exhibition - it truly is glorious. I guarantee

you'll find yourself smiling and inspired. I am thrilled that so many of Olley's exquisite works are included in this exhibition, and thank all of the lenders from private and public collections for contributing to this landmark exhibition.

There's certainly something about the genre of still life that has fascinated artists for centuries, and continues to do so. It is also a genre that is one of the most sophisticated and powerful categories of the art of painting. The current exhibition in the Friends Gallery features the superb oil painting of our region's Dutch Master, René Bolten. The exhibition *More than just objects* documents memories and what might be considered odd combinations of objects, all of which explore the personal connection the artist has to his subject matter. René has painted some of these objects time and time again in different configurations, each time with endearing reminiscences, loaded with humour and reserved recollections.

René has an extraordinary talent and an eye that speaks volumes in its quietness, making still life a perfect genre for his practice. There is so much capacity required of an artist to seamlessly arrange a few simple items and render them flawlessly. It is the space levied between the objects that truly completes a still life – that delicate compositional and aesthetic balance that is integral to the perfection of the arrangement. To create a successful still life the application of paint or the extravagance of the objects cannot be overworked, lest the composition be ruined. Bolten knows this – his respectful approach to the genre combined with his painting skills, moderation and vision, creates symphonies of objects, light, colour and shade.

In contrast, the new exhibition from the Gallery's collection is all about the genre of portraiture. It is a joy for me to enter the Withey Family Gallery and see some of the most recent contemporary works from the collection on display. This exhibition, titled *Transcending Likeness: Contemporary portraits from the collection*, explores artists' approaches to portraiture today, from realistic representations that aim to capture the sitters' likenesses, to interpretive and symbolic portraits that communicate hints of their innermost selves. This exhibition includes some portraits which explore the diverse and sometimes unconventional ways of representing a sitter. I feel sure that some of these works will encourage you to think differently about what a portrait can be. Including fantastic portraits by 28 contemporary artists, this exhibition makes me proud that the Gallery has acquired such striking works over the last 10 years or so, and includes works by Joanna Braithwaite, Guido Maestri, Ben Quilty, Justine Varga and Michael Zavros, as well as a wonderful recent acquisition by Fiona Lowry.

In early August I enjoyed both the pleasure, and the difficult task of being part of the pre-selection committee for the Wollumbin Art Award, which included our exhibitions curator, as well as Kylie Caldwell, Indigenous Art Officer, Arts Northern Rivers and respected Local Elder Aunty Joyce, and of course our 2022 Guest Judge, curator and editor of Vault magazine, Alison Kubler.

It was a genuine pleasure to see what artists of the region have been working on recently. I am thrilled that the Gallery's newest prizes attracted such an incredible response to our call for entries, despite



René BOLTEN
Slice of bread and shoe polish 2021
oil on canvas
© The Artist

so many artists of the region being affected by the recent devastating floods. I wish we could have included all the works in the exhibition, but alas, there is only so much space on our Gallery walls. I am excited for you to see the finalist selection, and I know you will all be impressed by the calibre and diversity of artists living and working in our region. Be sure to mark the date of 1 October in your diaries for the announcement of the winners!

Until next time, **Susi**

Apex Dining

Have you noticed the new vibe at the Gallery's restaurant? Proprietors Toby and Hannah are making their presence felt with a new look and feel to what is now the Apex Dining experience.

A local couple from Cabarita, Toby and Hannah have had years of experience in the catering/restaurant business both locally and overseas. Many years ago Toby opened his first restaurant called Marine on Marine Parade Kingscliff. It offered a modern Australian cuisine which back then was a very new and contemporary theme. This proved to be a successful initiative for Toby. After that he travelled extensively furthering his knowledge of food and wine and spent many years working in London. On his return he joined forces with the PLB Hospitality Group with interests in many eateries we know well: Taverna in Kingscliff, The Bombay Cricketers Club at Salt, Osteria and Lolita's in Casuarina.

The realities of COVID saw PLB restructure with Toby and Hannah branching away to focus on the PLB cafes, taking on Baked at Ancora on the Tweed River, Pastry Bread Espresso in the Tweed Mall and Kiosk Casuarina, as their own in early 2021. Based on the success of these three diverse cafes and all thriving from the hub of their central bakery kitchen at Baked, they jumped at the opportunity to operate the cafe at our Tweed Regional Gallery. They have spent the best part of 2022 fine-tuning the concept of 'Apex Dining' taking it to another level – offering Pan-Asian cuisine; "a little inspiration from everywhere". Using locally sourced produce, they are providing a fresh, sustainable approach to their

breakfast and lunch menu which will change with the seasons, and of course there will always be a selection of their famous artisan pastries and delights.

But it doesn't stop with the food. Always looking for new ideas they are planning special attractions such as guest chefs, live music, Indigenous fare and many more events inspired by the arts. They will also be catering for the Gallery's Opening Nights and other occasions such as weddings etc. *Continued on back page*



APEX DINING
TWEED REGIONAL GALLERY
Toby and Hannah, Tweed Coast cafe operators of Baked at Ancora, Kiosk Casuarina and Pastry Bread Espresso Tweed Mall, invite you to enjoy their newest offering, Apex Dining at the Gallery.

Opening Hours

Wed - Sun, 8:30am - 4pm,
Breakfast until 11.30am
Full lunch from 12pm
All day 'Baked' savoury & sweet menu. To book please call 02 66 725 088

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



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.

Editor: Janice Jones



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Since my last report the Friends have been busy organising events and working with the staff of the Gallery to support the ongoing development of the Gallery and its programs.

We collaborated with the Gallery Foundation to present the Acquisitions Showcase evening on 19 August. It is important to celebrate the successful growth of the Gallery's art collection that is funded solely by the Friends and the Foundation. The works presented that night reflect Susi Muddiman's and Ingrid Hedgcock's ongoing dedication and talent in developing the collection. It was a wonderful night and the food prepared by the new managers of the Gallery café (now Apex Dining) was delicious. I also thank City Winery for their generous contribution to the evening.

For the first time the Friends had a presence at the Murwillumbah Arts Trail. A stall in the Pavilion showcased our raffle prize, the Rob Olver photograph of the Tweed River, which was very popular and we sold a record number of raffle tickets. So successful was this event at promoting the Friends of the Gallery and raising additional funds for our coffers we have decided to make this an annual event. Many thanks to Martin Sullivan, Viv Bryant, Janice Jones and Barry Evans for managing this new initiative.

The previous raffle of the Margaret Olley gift pack was won by a very happy Paula Sullivan, from Halfway Creek, and the raffle of the Rob Olver photograph was won by Sally Schaffer, from Cabarita. It's nice to have a local winner.

The current raffle prize of the Margaret Olley print *Hawkesbury Wildflowers* is proving very popular with visitors to the Gallery. This is a print of the Margaret Olley work the Friends purchased for the Gallery earlier this year.

We were overwhelmed by the response to the invitation to join members of the Committee on the trip to Canberra in October this year. The 22 places filled up within days of opening the booking. I am looking forward to having a wonderful time in Canberra in the Spring. The National Gallery of Australia, the National Portrait Gallery, the Australian War Memorial, Floriade, and the Arboretum are all on our list of things to see and do.

I look forward to meeting more of our members at the Gallery.

Penny Hall – President

AGM Reminder

Remember to put some time aside for the Annual General Meeting of the Friends – mark the date in your calendar!

Wednesday 26 October at 5pm in the Gallery Foyer *COVID willing*



Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre launch new Art Awards

On Friday 30 September the Gallery's inaugural Wollumbin Art Award (WAA) and Wollumbin Youth Art Award (WYAA) exhibitions will open to the public. The biennial Awards, named for the sacred mountain which the Gallery overlooks, will showcase work from artists living in the Tweed, Byron, Ballina, Kyogle, and Scenic Rim Shires, as well as Lismore and Gold Coast City.

The WAA offers a First Prize of \$15,000 and a two week residency in the Gallery's Nancy Fairfax Artist in Residence Studio. Supported by the Gallery Foundation, the Gallery has established a \$10,000 Bundjalung Award which also includes a solo exhibition for the artist. For artists at the early stage of their career the Gallery has also created a \$5,000 Emerging Artist Award. This award is supported by Leanne and Greg Tong-Lyon. Courtesy of the Friends of the Gallery, WYAA winners will receive cash prizes across four age categories: 5–8 years; 9–12 years; 13–15 years; and 16–18 years.

Guest judges for the 2022 Awards – writer, curator and editor of VAULT Magazine, Alison Kubler (WAA), and acclaimed artist Hiromi Tango (WYAA) – bring years of experience and passion to their judging roles. This passion is not just for artmaking but also for the arts' community, which is an important credential after such a tumultuous couple of years for our region.

At the time of writing, all online entries have been received and await viewing by the pre-selection panels. This year respected elder Aunty Joyce Summers and Kylie Caldwell, Indigenous Arts Officer, Arts Northern Rivers will join the panel for the reviewing of 473 WAA entries. The Gallery's Exhibition Curator and Education & Audience Development Officer, alongside the Vice-President of the Friends will review the WYAA entries which sit at just under 200. Judges Alison Kubler and Hiromi Tango will then view finalists works installed in the Gallery before making their final decision and revealing the winners at the Official Opening and Award Announcement on Saturday 1 October.

Needless to say both judges will have their

work cut out for them as entries received confirm that the region is home to so many talented artists. For any judge, meeting artworks in the flesh is a key part of the process. This is when the qualities inherent in any medium come to the fore, whether it's glistening paint, reflective or textured surface, or simply the feeling of being a body in space in front of the physical art object. The decisions artists make, the individual quality their work brings, can often be surprising when comparing the experience of viewing an image on a screen to this moment of meeting in the Gallery space, even if the artwork is a digital image, an irony not lost on judges. In addition to the technical skill or creative elements on show, what is the artist bringing of themselves to this medium, to this theme, at this moment in time? These are the questions judges must also consider.

Contemporary art is informed by both history and what is playing out in the daily lives of artists. These factors feed into their practice as they develop their skills and vision. For young artist this is also the case, with their interests and experiences reflected in the works they produce. Key threads throughout the entries are relationship to place, to Country, concerns for the environment and celebration of the small moments in life. A contemporary art award is a great way to provide a snapshot of the current conversations, exchanges and concerns happening in any community. The diversity of art practice in the region is immediately evident from the entries, with the open theme and all mediums criteria attracting 3D, 2D and time-based works. Also evident is the calibre of artists and quality of entries.

For a gallery that aims to showcase the best the region has to offer it is an absolute pleasure and most definitely a privilege to play a role in the celebration of talent in the area. We can't wait to share the 2020 WAA and WYAA exhibitions with you.

Meredith Cusack - Public Programs Curator
WAA and WYAA exhibitions, Tweed Regional Gallery, from 30 September 2022. WYAA exhibition ends 27 November 2022. WAA exhibition ends 20 November 2022

Photography: Kate Holmes



Margaret Olley: The Art of Flowers

*I've never liked housework. I get by doing little chores when I feel like them, in between painting. Who wants to chase dust all their life? You can spend your whole lifetime cleaning the house. I like watching the patina grow. If the house looks dirty, buy another bunch of flowers, is my advice.*¹ Margaret Olley

Margaret Olley's unique approach to house cleaning resulted in the eclectic, flower-filled home studio interior we have the privilege of enjoying today at the Margaret Olley Art Centre. She filled her space with subject matter for painting including fresh, dried and synthetic flowers. Even desiccated flowers, far beyond their prime, were left in place as she could see 'the bones' of the flowers and could continue to refer to them as subjects for painting as though they were fresh from the garden.

This exhibition celebrates her love of flowers. Olley dedicated her career to exploring the endless possibilities of humble, domestic objects combined with colourful, textural and sculptural arrangements of cornflowers, delphiniums, calendulas, hydrangeas, marigolds, flannel flowers, hippeastrums and more.

The Art of Flowers brings together some of the finest examples of her much loved flower paintings. The works span five decades, the earliest being *Still life* 1956 and the latest being *Poppies and checked cloth* 2011. The artworks come together from public collections including the Art Gallery of New South Wales and the Gallery's own Tweed Regional Gallery collection, as well as from private collections. The opportunity to view these wonderful paintings from private collections, here in the Margaret Olley Art Centre, is a rare privilege as some have not been on public display for many years.

In 1963 artist and art critic James Gleeson described Olley as '... a symphonist among flower painters...' as she forged ahead on the success of her first ever sell-out exhibition in 1962 at Brisbane's Johnstone Galleries with more solo shows dominated by still life paintings. Although Olley established herself as a landscape painter; explored figurative works and portraiture and of course interiors, it is her rich, evocative flowers paintings that first come to mind when we think of her tremendous legacy in art.

The exhibition includes some of Olley's early explorations of still life via a rich and expansive palette which was unfashionable in the Australian art scene of the time. From here flows the story of her extraordinary life and the evolution of her practice, both entwined and driven by her singular vision and her obsession to paint.

Albeit a humble subject, *The Art of Flowers* is a splendid offering of rarely seen paintings by Australia's most celebrated painter of still life.

Ingrid Hedgcock – Curator MOAC & Collection Manager

The exhibition is complemented by activities and events including free, drop-in artmaking activities for families during the summer school holidays. For all activity and event details visit the Gallery website: gallery.tweed.nsw.gov.au

Thank you to our exhibition supporter **Flowerista**, located in the M|Arts Precinct, Murwillumbah.

¹ Margaret Olley in Meg Stewart, *Margaret Olley: Far from a still life*, rev. edn, Random House, Sydney, 2012, p. 271.

***The Art of Flowers*, The Margaret Olley Art Centre, from 9 September 2022 to 12 March 2023**

All works oil on board by Margaret OLLEY (1923 – 2011)

Left: *Yellow lupins and coffee pot* 1996
Collection of Jon Montgomery, courtesy Philip Bacon Galleries

Below: *Delphiniums and cherries* 1976
Private collection, courtesy Philip Bacon Galleries

Cornflowers, green pots and lemons 1982
Private collection, courtesy Philip Bacon Galleries

Flannel flowers 1976
Private collection, courtesy Philip Bacon Galleries

