

VAS MAGAZINE

Victorian Artists Society

October to December 2022



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 Ph: 9662 1484
 W: vasgallery.org.au
 E: admin@vasgallery.org.au

430 ALBERT STREET
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Bruce Baldey VAS, Richard Impey FVAS
& Anne Scott Pendlebury HON FVAS

Design & Typesetting

Mark Russell

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Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the VAS Council or the editors of this magazine.

Articles from members will be appreciated. Contributions will be published on a strictly honorary basis and no payment will be made.

The Victorian Artists Society acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which they meet. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present, and the Aboriginal Elders of other communities.

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Cover Image: Jill Rogers—No Man is an Island, Acrylic on Canvas, first prize winner 2022 SMLXL Fine Art Print Studio Maritime Exhibition

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Richard Impey FVAS MED DipEd

It has been so pleasing to see VAS re-emerging so successfully this year after the last few years of COVID lockdowns. So many great exhibitions, many new members and lots of visitors. The Council and staff have instigated new initiatives in areas such as extended opening hours on weekends, improved operational management and processes, more opportunities for members, the trial of a VAS Art Course (See Summer Holiday program), performances by musicians, collaborations with organisations, educational institutions, and other Art Societies. Finally, two new sponsors of awards, The Fine Art printing company SMLXL and a new sponsor of our Summer Exhibition.

Our council membership is changing. Four very long-term Councillors have retired after many, many years of dedicated services to VAS. It must be remembered that these former councillors assisted and volunteered in other areas of the running of VAS apart from 'just' their Convenorships as well as attending meetings and functions throughout the years. Often, they were also active members of other VAS committees.

Radmila Hardi (joined the VAS Council in 2015), former Convenor of Exhibitions. She oversaw the volunteers (Councillors, members and friends of VAS) assisting on the two days prior to the exhibition openings with their reception of artworks and hooking, hanging, numbering, curating the exhibition, and cataloguing. No small feat when you consider how many exhibitions we have in a year over the five galleries.

John Hurlle (joined the VAS Council in 2013), former Convenor of the VAS Collection and Paintouts program. He oversaw the cataloguing of our collection, improved our storage facilities and the security processes, created policies and guidelines for the management of the collection and instigated the establishment of a fund dedicated to the care and maintenance of the current collection including an annual budget for any possible future purchases. Paintout days don't just happen. John organised a yearly program involving discovering suitable locations and fun painting trips away as well as attending and supervising those activities.


Sue Ireland (joined the VAS Council in 2018) was the convenor for the art studio. She would regularly pop in to maintain the Art Studio in a pleasant and functioning state. At the end of each term Sue, sometimes with volunteers, would do a major clean and tidy to get the Art Studio right up to scratch for the next term.

Maxine Wain (joined the VAS Council in 2016) was the Convenor for Catering. This often required her to shop, prepare food at home and at VAS and organise the serving at the various occasions such as major exhibition openings. Many thanks to all of you.

As of the 2022 AGM we now have two new councillors. Lucy Maddox and Nathalie Anne Marion. Both of these enthusiastic new councillors are heavily involved in the arts scene with creating and exhibiting their own artwork. Lucy is also one of our dedicated and much respected art teachers. I have found being on Council to be a very rewarding experience. It can provide you with an opportunity to use the skills from your working life in new and creative ways, you get to meet lots of other members and feel like you really belong to an exciting and progressive art society.

The upcoming VAS Retrospective Exhibition has a new name: 'Artfest23'. The new name was in response to the feeling that we wanted to recognise and celebrate the past whilst also acknowledging the present as we are in many ways a very different Society now compared with its origins. We are planning a three-week festival of exhibitions, concerts, demonstrations, talks and other inspiring events to bring our art loving community together and draw in new visitors.

I'm also pleased to announce that a PDF version of our 150th book is now available for download from our website. This is a fascinating and informative resource that is now easily accessible by every current and future member of the society. Many thanks to Rosemary Noble and her team in creating the book and for Rosemary in organising the PDF version.

Finally in closing, I wish you all a happy Christmas, family gathering or summer holiday season; whatever is most applicable in your household. 

2022 VAS MAVIS LITTLE ARTIST OF THE YEAR EXHIBITION

Bushranger

Julian Bruere VAS FVAS has been declared VAS Artist of the Year (AOTY) for a fourth time. (2010, 2013, 2018). At the official opening of the 2022 Mavis Little AOTY Exhibition on 15 November his First prize of \$5000 was presented by Mr Paul Little AO a member of the Little Family and the Hansen Little Foundation. The Foundation has sponsored the AOTY Awards for the last 5 years donating a total prizemoney of \$50,000. Julian is a watercolourist who draws on a variety of themes, with a preference for landscapes, alpine snow gums, city and marine themes, figure and portraiture. After many years in advertising publishing and animation, he now works with the VAS and other Art Societies teaching, painting, demonstrating and judging.



Top: Julian Bruere and Paul Little AO; Above: Julian Bruere with Hannah Little; Left: Charge of Beersheba, Bronze by Judith Leman FVAS, Sculptor of the Year Award Winner 2022; Below: Judith Leman. Photography by Ron Smith OAM HON FVAS



The VAS Sculptor of the Year is Judith Leman FVAS pictured here with her bronze sculpture *Charge of Beersheba* (Left and bottom left).

Second Prize was awarded to Ulrich Stalph VAS and Third Prize to Bronwyn Hunt. This is the first year that prizes have been awarded for Second and Third places.

The AOTY Exhibition is for those artists who have received the highest number of votes by VAS members and exhibiting artists at Select Exhibitions (Autumn, Winter and Spring) during the year.

43 other painters and sculptors made the shortlist with the opportunity to exhibit three original works not previously shown at the VAS. Landscape paintings continue to dominate VAS Exhibitions (49/108) Famarz Mokhtarpour's romantic hyper realistic *The Spring Valley* is full of the light and colour absent here in Victoria this year.



*Across the Paddock—Yea, watercolour by Julian Bruere VAS FVAS
VAS Mavis Little Artist of the Year First Prize Winner 2022*



*Left: Ulrich Stalph with Predawn Landscape; Right: Bronwyn Hunt with New Day
Photography by Ron Smith OAM HON FVAS*

Anne Melloy's (below) fine grained pastel Sunlight and Shadows Coolum and her two watercolours earned her the approval of her peers and the 2022 Exhibitors' Choice Award. Pastel is a medium undervalued and underrepresented at the VAS.

The Exhibitors' Choice Award, sponsored by Noel Waite AO, is given to the most votes from the exhibiting members exhibiting at the AOTY Exhibition.



Photography by Ron Smith OAM HON FVAS



Above: The Spring Valley by Faramarz Mokhtapour

Figurative art is always welcome on our walls and this exhibition includes some fine examples of storytelling. Figurative is not the easiest of genres and most of our exhibiting artists seem to avoid it. John Daniels' *Eat the Feeling* is the latest addition to his social commentary oeuvre. The composition of this particular work impresses especially the positioning of the ubiquitous red label.

Other artists with a story to tell include Des Parkin VAS and his *Contemplation* and Mary Hyde VAS FASMA with *The Episode*.

Lucy Fekete is a new star in our firmament and her wit is on display with *Mrs Smith's Trivia & the GBH Last Supper*. Mrs Smith was the Trivia Night Host at the now defunct Great Britain Hotel in Richmond. She is seen here handing out Jesus Disco lamps to a cast of real life characters on the occasion of the final Quiz.

Lucy shouldn't worry about the bell jar; this is her breakout year at the VAS.

Finally, and as a portent of summer we have *Sunny Day* by Zhong Hua Fan its highlights beckoning us across the Hammond Gallery.

Below: *Mrs Smith's Trivia & the GBH Last Supper*; and right, *Don't Worry it Doesn't Matter* by Lucy Fekete



Eat the Feeling by John Daniels



The Episode by Mary Hyde



Contemplation by Des Parkin





Sunny Day by Zhong Hua Fan

The Mavis Little Artist of the Year (AOTY) Award Exhibition showcases the year's best artistic talent in painting and sculpture. Artists are selected based on participation in at least two of that year's Select Exhibitions by the votes of their peers.

The Victorian Artists Society holds three Select Exhibitions throughout the year; the Autumn, Winter and Spring Exhibitions. All exhibiting artists in these three exhibitions and artist members are invited to cast votes for their four favourite artists. These votes are used to decide the list of candidates for the Mavis Little Artist of the Year Award exhibition. The VAS Mavis Little AOTY is awarded to the artist gaining

the most votes for the select exhibitions including the Mavis Little AOTY exhibition at the opening night award ceremony.

This award is unique as it is not awarded by a committee or judge, but by the peers of the winning artist and demands sustained performance over the exhibiting year. Invited artists may submit up to three works into the final exhibition.

HANSEN LITTLE
FOUNDATION

A QUESTION OF ATTRIBUTION: DENISE SCOTT-BROWN AND MARION MAHONEY-GRIFFIN

Bruce Baldey VAS

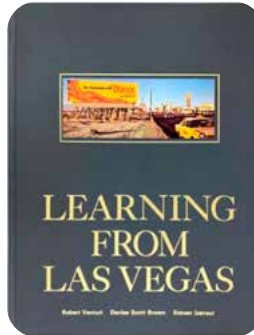
The Pritzker Architecture Prize is referred to by some as the ‘Nobel Prize for Architects’. The Prize was established in Chicago in 1979 by the Pritzker family through their Hyatt Foundation with the blessing of the profession. Because it is only given to ‘living architects’ it has quickly run out of worthy winners.

Nevertheless the Prize is still awarded annually true to its charter. Early winners of the prize include James Stirling, Kenzo Tange and I.M Pei, all of whom are undisputed giants of 20th century architecture.

Significantly only 4 of the 43 Winners in the history of the Prize have been women.

In 1991 when Robert Venturi (1925–2018) won the Prize there was still a pool of talent worthy of the ‘profession’s highest honour’. Venturi burst upon the architectural scene in 1966 with a radical call to arms in his book *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*. He is generally credited with drawing the attention of the profession to the worst excesses of the Modern Movement and famous for converting the modernist dictum ‘less is more’ into ‘less is a bore’. The Award Citation made only passing reference to Denise Scott-Brown (1931–) his wife and business partner from 1967. Scott Brown was already a prominent practicing town planner and lecturer before she married Venturi and began collaborating with him. At Yale University she had developed courses that encouraged architects to ‘study problems in the built environment employing both traditional and empirical method of social science but also media studies and pop culture’.

In 1972 Venturi and Scott-Brown published *Learning from Las Vegas* which analysed the Las Vegas strip as an archetype arguing that architects should be more receptive to the relevance of the planning and architecture of popular culture and the everyday landscape.



Scott-Brown boycotted the Pritzker Prize giving ceremony in protest reigniting the debate on the attribution of professional work and, in particular, the role of women in the architecture profession. In 1989 Scott-Brown had published ‘Room at the Top?: Sexism and the Star System in Architecture’. It was written in 1975 but not published by her for fear it would adversely affect her career.

Closer to home but farther away in time another accomplished female architect has struggled to receive recognition for her work—Marion Mahoney Griffin (1871–1960) the wife and business partner of Walter Burley Griffin (1876–1937).

It is Walter’s name that is synonymous with the design of Canberra although Marion was responsible for the plans and renderings that accompanied the winning entry in the 1912 Competition for the new Australian Capital. It is generally accepted that it was Marion’s bird’s eye watercolour perspectives that clinched the commission for the Burley Griffins. Marion Mahoney was only the second woman to graduate from the MIT, the first woman to be licensed to practice as an Architect in the State of Illinois and possibly the first woman to be registered as a licenced Architect in the USA. Marion set out on a career as a female architect in a male dominated profession in a time when most women could only look forward to a life of children and domesticity.

She was the first architect hired by Frank Lloyd Wright (1867–1959) in 1895 where she designed buildings, furniture, stained glass windows and

decorative panels. She was thought to be a 'brilliant intellectual and a match for Wright in debate', and one of the few employees that Wright would not dare patronise.

Wright relied on Mahoney to produce the famous renderings associated with his work. Her unique and memorable style provided Frank Lloyd Wright with a powerful brand identified with his practice. The DeRhodes house drawing is an example of Mahoney's original form of graphic renderings which challenged the conventions of the times:

Her extraordinary feel for line can be seen in the way she integrates the architecture entirely with the natural world, part of the same continuous linear composition. Much of the foliage is depicted as individual leaves and blades of grass, drawn as sharply as the building and in the same plane. Depth and emphasis are indicated by varying the line weights rather than changing the tone of applied washes. Several compositional techniques are derived from Japanese prints; the trees that break the picture plane, for example, as well as the use of negative space, unusual perspective, and abrupt changes of scale, such as close up bird and flowers in the foreground as they relate to the house behind.

(Krutzy 2009)

Clearly Wright was the dominant creative force in his office, even if he said so often enough. However such was the volume of work a significant amount of the detailed design responsibly would have been delegated to Marion Mahoney and the other qualified architects in his Practice. Even in the Office of a 'Starchitect' it is impossible for the Principal to maintain full control of a project. Wright's regard for the ability of Mahoney was such that he offered the Practice's work to her when he eloped to Europe with the wife of one of his clients. Wright hired another architect to run the Practice on the condition that Mahoney would have control of all design work. These days more care is taken to credit the roles of the other key players in the design of buildings and the planning of places. Frank Lloyd Wright was a relentless self-promoter and it is inconceivable that he would ever acknowledge publicly the contribution of his associates. This applied to both men and women and was reinforced later in his career by an apprenticeship scheme where his apprentices paid him for the privilege of working in his Office.



*DeRhodes, IND Residences (Above)
Willits, Oak Park, ILL (Below)*





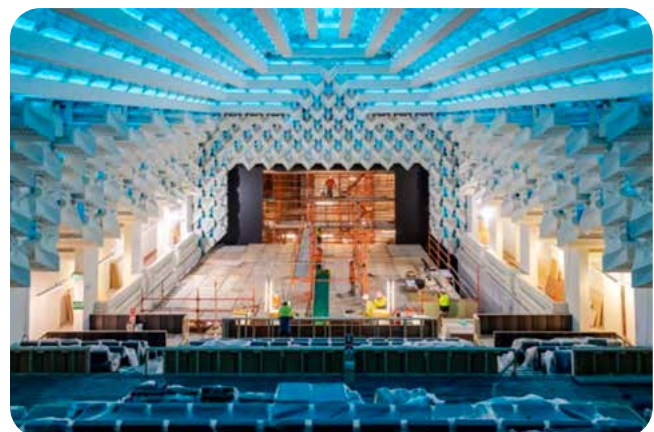
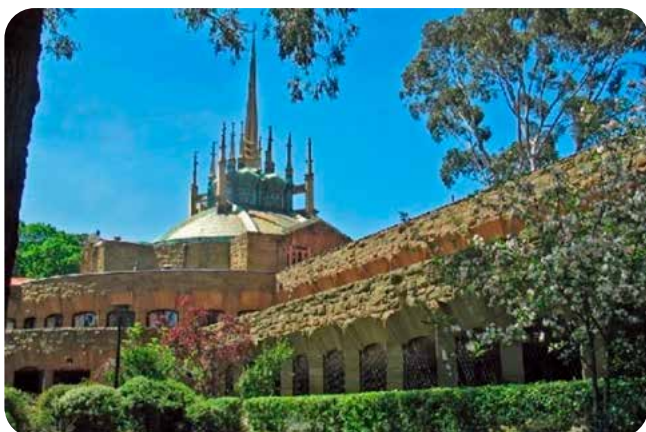
The Burley Griffins and an early Canberra Concept Plan

It was in the Office of Frank Lloyd Wright that Marion Mahoney met her future husband and business partner Walter Burley Griffin. Marion and Walter were kindred spirits and shared an interest in social equity, democracy and other progressive philosophies. During an extended trip to Japan by Wright when he arranged the commission for the Imperial Hotel (1923–1968) Burley Griffin effectively ran Wright’s practice in Chicago overseeing the design and construction of many of Wright’s housing projects. Upon Wright’s return there was a falling out over a number of issues both financial and professional although it seems that the real problem all along as far as Wright was concerned was that

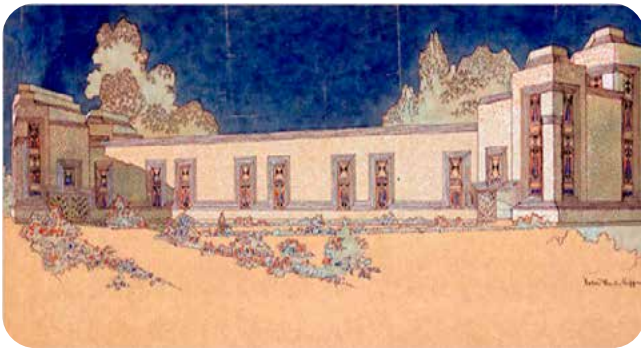
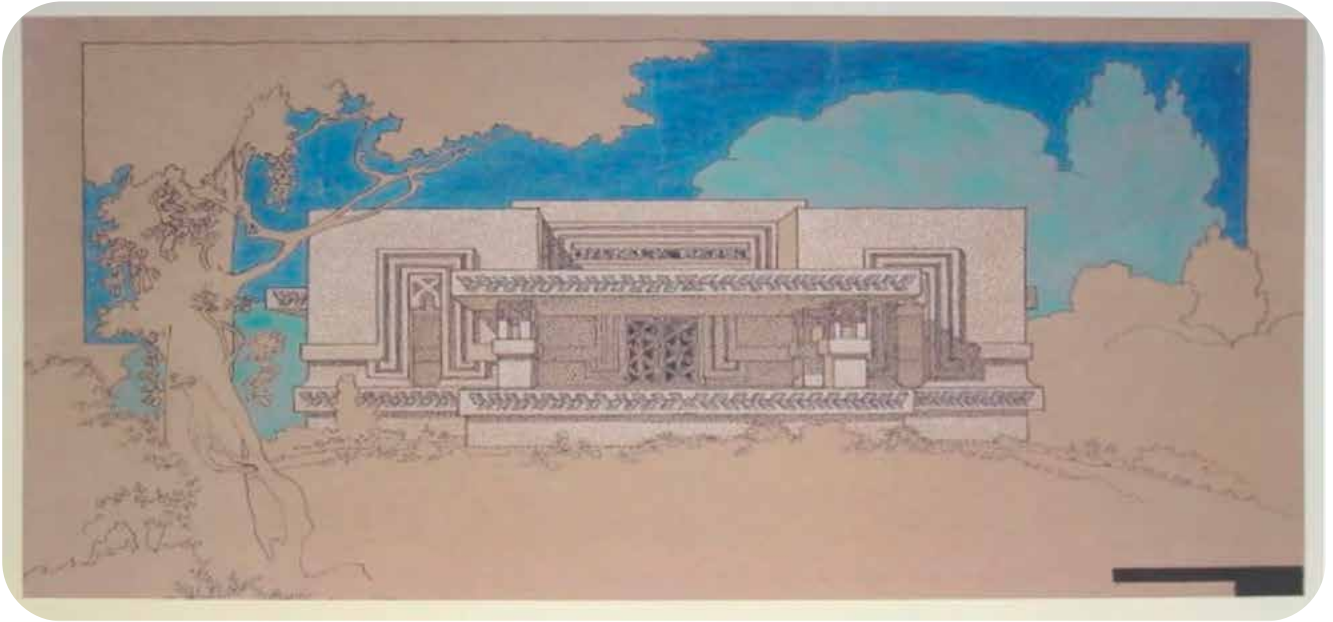
two highly talented and ambitious architects in the Practice was one too many.

Walter had long since left Wright’s employ when he and Marion won the Canberra Competition having completed more than 130 designs in the Chicago area for buildings, urban designs and landscape architecture.

In 1914 Walter and Marion relocated to Australia to start the design development of their winning scheme for Australia’s new Federal Capital. When the development of the winning design became bogged down with political interventions and bureaucratic delays, Walter and Marion established



*Newman College (Left)
Capital Theatre, Melbourne (Above)*




Following an invitation to undertake work in India Walter Burley Griffin spent the last 15 months of his life with Marion setting up a practice in Lucknow and between 1935 and 1937 they produced more than 50 projects.

Walter died of peritonitis in India aged 60 on February 1937 and was buried in Lucknow's Nishatgani Cemetery. Marion eventually returned to America and died in 1961 at the age of 90.

private architectural practices in Melbourne and Sydney. Marion deliberately painted herself into the background of the practice to avoid threatening the prevailing view of women in the profession in Australia. Clearly, like Scott-Brown she was afraid that assuming her rightful profile in the Practice could jeopardize future commissions.

Mahoney's extraordinary skills are evident in the design of Newman College (1918) and the Capitol Theatre (1924), Melbourne. Her conceptual and drawing skills combined with those of her husbands' have made possible the realisation of the complex internal and external form of these buildings.

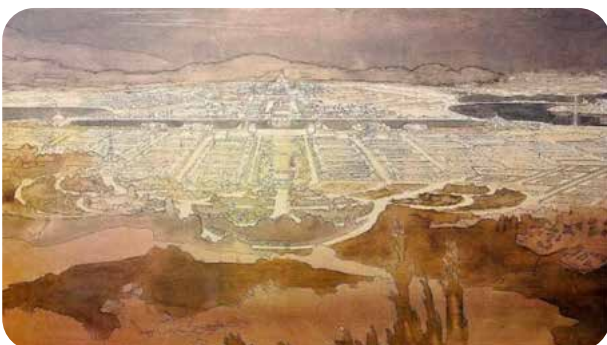
In 2021 a bronze head (below) of Marion Mahoney Griffin was installed overlooking Canberra as part of celebrations of her legacy and her 150th birthday, acknowledgement of her career as an architect and artist and the part she played in winning the prize of designing Canberra. 

References

Gray, J 'A Powerful Brand; Marion Mahoney's Original Form of Graphic Representation', FLW Foundation Feb 2022

McGregor A 'Grand Obsessions' Penguin Australia 2009

Krutzy, P 'Graphic Depictions' Chicago Press 2011



WET EVENING

Ross Gillett

(after the painting by Clarice Beckett, and written in the aftermath of the Black Saturday bushfires in Victoria)

To make the world like this
and keep it that way, with only the dusk

blackening roadside trees, the washed road
reflecting the coolest of skies

and that patch of flame colour
nothing to worry about, maybe

a street lamp. This would be a creation
worth the creator's restraint.

Not to be tempted by summer
its gale force blue and tinder distances,

its withering brilliance. To know that the blur
of rain is a sure sign of salvation,

that a shimmer of light on bitumen
is all we need to mark our passing.

This is the knowledge we want
in a maker. Whoever is in the van

with its huge warm tail-light
is safe, steering towards the next

mysterious bend, heading for home
through the unburnt world.

CLARICE BECKETT

A POET'S PAINTER

Ian Hobbs

Little Collins St bookseller and art critic, Gino Nibbi, said artist Clarice Beckett was the 'best-read woman in Melbourne'.

Well educated in literature, music and poetry Clarice would have surely then appreciated Ross Gillett's ekphrastic poem, *Wet Evening*.

Such a soothing antidote as well to the art establishment critics' mainly dismissive and patronising reviews of her annual solo exhibitions in the 1920s and 30s.

Beckett suffered as a woman, Meldrumite, non-conforming artist and as a dutiful daughter to ageing parents for almost her entire painting career before dying exhausted with life and unvisited at a private hospital after a brief illness in 1935 aged just 48 years.

This now recognised trailblazer paradoxically wandered little further than the streets and foreshore of suburban Beaumaris, pushing her painting cart to work in all weather, later in life restricted to the early morning and evening.


Biographer Rosalind Hollinrake sees influences of Corot, the poets and even of Beckett's beloved composer, Chopin, in the spontaneous and misty tonal renditions of the commonplace—roads, vehicles and telegraph poles—often after rain, softly edged in harmonic atmospheric unity.

In a copy of Walt Whitman's poetry collection *Leaves of Grass*, Clarice marked lines that could well have guided her work: 'All truths wait in all things ... the insignificant is as big as any.'

When exhibited at the Athenaeum Gallery in 1931 *Wet Evening* drew blunt criticism along with a plea to 'give nature the credit for some firm lines'; a case of convention shunning innovation.

Beckett friend and benefactor, Maud Rowe, daughter of a Western District grazier, bequeathed *Wet Evening* to the Castlemaine Art Gallery along with two other paintings from the artist's oeuvre, all acquired through Max Meldrum in 1937.

Forgotten for decades, this unassuming artist is regarded today as one of Australia's important modernist painters.

Clarice Beckett may not have travelled, but she did arrive. 

*Ross Gillett is a multi-award winning Australian poet. His awards include the prestigious Newcastle Poetry Prize, the John Shaw Nielson Award (twice) and consecutive short-listings in both the Blake and Peter Porter Poetry Prizes. 'Wet Evening' is included in Gillett's book *The Mirror Hurlers* (Puncher and Wattmann, 2019). His new book, *Swimmer in the Dust* (also from Puncher and Wattmann), was released in August 2022.*



Wet Evening, Clarice Beckett, c.1927, Maud Rowe Bequest, Castlemaine Art Museum

BOOK REVIEW

Linda Weil

THE STORY OF ART WITHOUT MEN BY KATY HESSEL

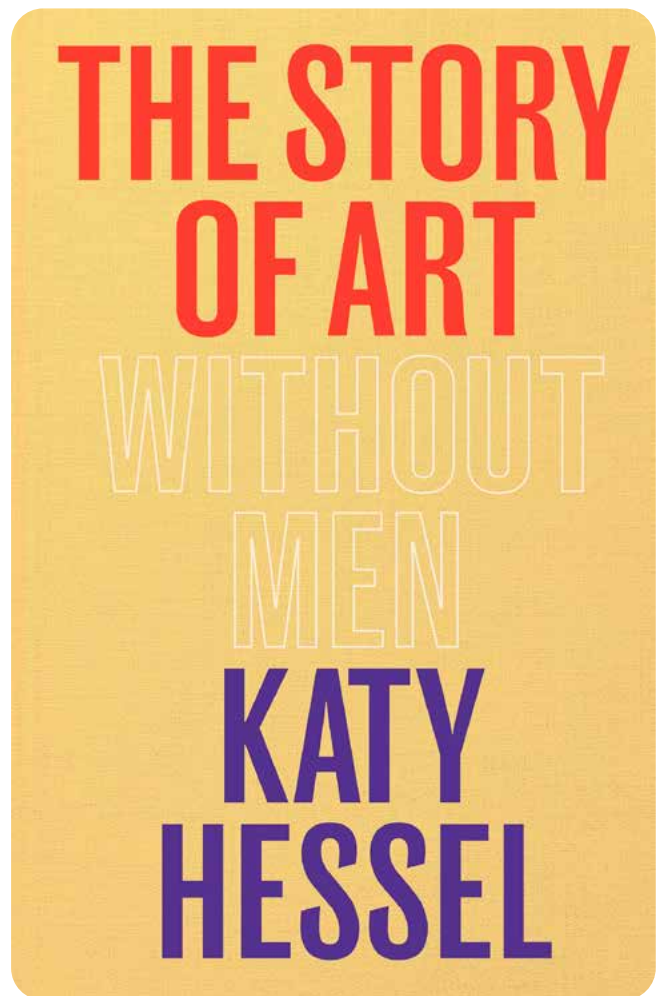
Penguin Random House/Published
by Hutchinson Heinemann 2022

If you took HSC/VCE Art or Art History at University any time in the past 40 or so years, chances are your textbook was the classic art history tome, *The Story of Art*, by EH Gombrich. Do you still have your copy kicking around somewhere at home? If so, pull it off the shelf, dust it off and flip to the index. See if you can find these well-known names, Mary Cassatt, Frida Kahlo, Barbara Hepworth, and Georgia O'Keefe.

Not there? Surprise! The 1950 original edition did not have a single female artist represented. Not one. My copy is the 1970, 11th edition, and I cannot find mention of any women artists. In fact, apparently it was not until the 16th edition that any female representation was included—with a single artist. While Gombrich is a well-respected and knowledgeable European art reference, it is an unbalanced and lopsided view of art history. It should be retitled as '*A* History of Art, not *The definitive history*.

Why are women not better represented in art history? And why have women been kept out of galleries and art institutions in the past centuries? Can women become 'real' artists? Katy Hessel investigates these and other questions in her book, *The Story of Art without Men*. While a solid book of 500 pages, no single volume could encompass all female artists across history, but Hessel's book is a good beginning to redress the imbalance.

Hessel discusses the prejudicial, educational, social, and financial restrictions faced by female artists over the centuries and how this has impacted on the chances of their art being seen and valued. It was not until the end of the 19th century that women were even allowed to attend Art School with Life




Drawing sessions and learn the anatomy of the nude figure—a cornerstone of traditional art education. Prior to 1900, a female artist could really only learn to draw and paint if she had the good fortune of being the daughter of an artist. Even then her works were often misattributed to her father or husband. The Victorians had the delightful practice of scratching out a woman's name on a painting and replacing it with a male name to ensure it sold. Outright theft of concepts and ideas were not uncommon; did Duchamp really copy Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven's previously submitted work similar to *Urinal Fountain*? The reoccurring pattern of success then oblivion is also pointed out to us, women artists who were famous and celebrated in their lifetime only to fade into obscurity after death. And let's not forget the so-called 'lesser' art forms, that of drawing, botanical or floral painting, ceramics, as well as the textile art forms of quilting, weaving and embroidery. All relegated and dismissed as women's work and not viewed as viable art forms in themselves.

With informative and accessible text, supported by images, Hessel expands the story of art to include the influence of women artists and creators. She has a deep knowledge which she shares with us, and a delight in the subject and artists she discusses. The

book is far reaching, tracing from the earliest known women artists, Caterina de' Vigri (1413–63), Properzia de' Rossi (1490–1530) and moving forward through the eras to the modern day, tracing the evolution of females in art chronologically and through various art movements. The work is inclusive, representing international artists, artists of colour, and LGBTQIA artists. Hessel does not shy away from including the non-traditional and it was a delight to read about women's influences in fibre arts, ceramics, and photography.

I enjoyed this book greatly and will refer to it often. It is an enlightening account of remarkable artists and their achievements, all the more impressive once you understand the barriers faced by them. I was introduced to a number of artists whose work I was unaware of. I also gained a greater understanding of the influences and social constraints of the artists I did know. A direct result for me after reading this book was to discover several of the artists mentioned were featured as supporting artists at the recent Picasso exhibition at the NGV. To view these artist's works in person after learning and reading about them and see them represented as influential contributors to art in this exhibition was personally satisfying.

I was disappointed not to see more of Australian artists represented. While the inclusion of Emily Kame Kngwarreye was great to see I also wondered at the omission of artists such as Margaret Olley or Clarice Beckett. But a book like this cannot be expected to include every woman artist from every country. It can, and does, however, give us an overall comprehensive view of women's artistic contributions over 500 years. Hessel brings back to light talented women that have been far too long overshadowed by a gendered view of art. I would have liked to have seen more colour plates in the book. But space is limited, and you can always use the internet to see the works mentioned that were not illustrated. Or go to the galleries and seek them out in person!

I would highly recommend this book as an inclusion in your art library. It is not a companion piece to Gombrich, but stands on its own beside it, overturning your preconceived ideas of art history. This book will open your eyes to many art forms and artists that have been overlooked, suppressed, or dismissed. Hessel proves that women can be, and are, 'real' artists, equal to men. This is a history of art we all need to read. 

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF CLARKE'S COTTAGE OR, 'YOU PENDLEBURY KIDS GET 'ORF MY FENCE ... OR ELSE ...'

Anne Scott Pendlebury

During his Presidency at the VAS in the early 1960s my father Laurence painted the beautiful oil study of an old house we know as Clarke's Cottage.

This work is now part of the VAS Collection—it's perhaps one of the finest of his career and it was on display in the Member's room as a worthy centre piece during our June Exhibition of some of my late father's work.

The subject of the painting is the dilapidated remains of what was once a gracious Edwardian family home.

But by the time father painted it—the house—and the family who had lived there—had gone to rack and ruin...

It looks like an old home one might see out in the country—the long grass—the old double gates, and the rusty tin roof above the broken and squeaky back door.

But no ...

It was the house right next door to our family home, in a comfortable and charming, leafy Eastern suburb of Melbourne.

Let me explain.

When I was a child the blocks in our area were very large. We had a landscaped rear garden, plus an apple orchard and a grass tennis court.

The old house next door also had a huge garden at the back, in an even more rural setting which included an old two-storey barn—built many years earlier. It was quite a handsome old construction in many ways with high windows featuring probably the original glass and much of the original timber—a reminder of a past era.

Mrs. Clark lived in the house in front with her two middle aged sons—both rather dull and unimaginative sorts of fellows if I remember correctly.

However, their only redeeming features were their two prized Daimler vehicles parked in the derelict barn at the back.

When we were very small, my brother and I would climb onto the shared fence, and call out to Mrs. Clark in 'funny voices' and throw figs at her porch.

She would appear, banging the wire kitchen door behind her.

'You children stop that!'

Many times, dad would also appear from his studio to find out what all the shouting was about, still wearing his painting coat and carrying a couple of brushes. 'Hop down from the fence immediately—both of you,' he would say.

One very dull Saturday afternoon, when I was at ballet class and my parents were painting in their studio, my young brother found several penny bungers and old firecrackers from somewhere.

With nothing better to do, he apparently placed them in a can, which he then secreted in a metal tube which was attached to the old iron roller used to flatten and mark out the grass of our tennis court.

He took matches from the kitchen and lit the end of one of the crackers—and took aim at the top windows of the Clark's old barn. He was only 10—what else would a creative little boy do on a quiet Saturday afternoon?

I understand there was an almighty explosion like a bomb going off—with shards of glass and splinters of old wood crashing down onto the two Daimler vehicles below.

I never did hear all the details. My brother seemed to emerge from it all quite unscathed and I never really found out what Mrs Clarke or her sons said. I also never found out exactly what my father said when he rushed outside on hearing the explosion.

But a few weeks later, Mrs Clarke was carried from the house and a month or two after that both sons left also.

I was too scared to ask about the cars.

For many months to follow, the old home lay silent—as the grass grew up along the driveway.

I think it was during this period, that dad took advantage of the peace and quiet and took his small easel and paints next door and captured so beautifully

what remained of the rear of the old home. For us living next door—the house had been a nightmare—but to capture it on canvas was an artist's dream. It turned out to be one of dad's best works ever.

Postscript

A year or so later Clarke's 'Cottage' was pulled down, and a young family purchased the land and rebuilt. They had a small, fair haired son called Ian.

Our two families became good friends—and I remember my father giving the painting to them—in memory of the home which had once stood on their land and perhaps as a gesture of gratitude that his own young son hadn't lost an eye or come to any harm during the afternoon of the 'great explosion'.

That was a long time ago.

During our recent VAS renovations, a middle-aged man appeared in the foyer carrying an art work under his arm. It was Ian. No longer small or fair-haired.

He held up the painting of *Clarke's Cottage* and said to no one in particular, 'This was painted by a neighbour of ours and given to us back when he was connected with this place. My children don't want it anymore. Would anyone here like it?'

And that is how the Society acquired it. The painting was taken upstairs amidst all the dust and building debris and was eventually accepted into our Collection.

I am so pleased it has finally found its rightful home at the VAS and that it became such a focal point and created so much interest during our 2022 Scott Pendlebury 'Reflective' Exhibition.

Laurie too, would have been pleased to see it hanging in the Members' Room and knowing that it was part of the VAS Collection—more than pleased I think.

He would have been honoured.



THE QUIZ



1.
Australia's first National Gallery opened in which city?

2.
Who has won the Archibald Prize more than any other artist?

3.
Did Walt Disney draw or voice the original Mickey Mouse?

4.
In which Spanish city was the artist Diego Velasquez born?

5.
Which famous street artist is from Bristol UK?

6.
What Italian term literally means 'light-dark'?

7.
Jackson Pollock's *Blue Poles* was purchased by the NGA in what year?

8.
Which new State Contemporary Art Gallery is due to open in December this year?

9.
Arthur Streeton's *The Purple Noon's Transparent Might* is in the Collection of which Australian Gallery?

10.
Which of Henri Matisse's paintings was hung upside down at the MOMA New York for 46 days without anyone noticing?

11.
Nighthawks is the work of which famous American artist?

12.
In which Spanish Museum can you find the painting *Guernica* by Pablo Picasso?

13.
Who designed the Capitol Theatre in Swanston Street and Neumann College at the Melbourne University?

14.
The artist Geoffrey Smart spent most of his career in which European Country?

15.
What is the English translation of the French word 'gouache'?

16.
Grace Cossington Smith frequently painted which iconic Australian Bridge?

17.
Bronze is an alloy primarily of which two metals?

18.
An argyle pattern features what shape?

19.
In which Australian city is the Araluen Arts Centre?

20.
The work of which artist occupies the whole of the top floor of the Prado Museum Madrid?

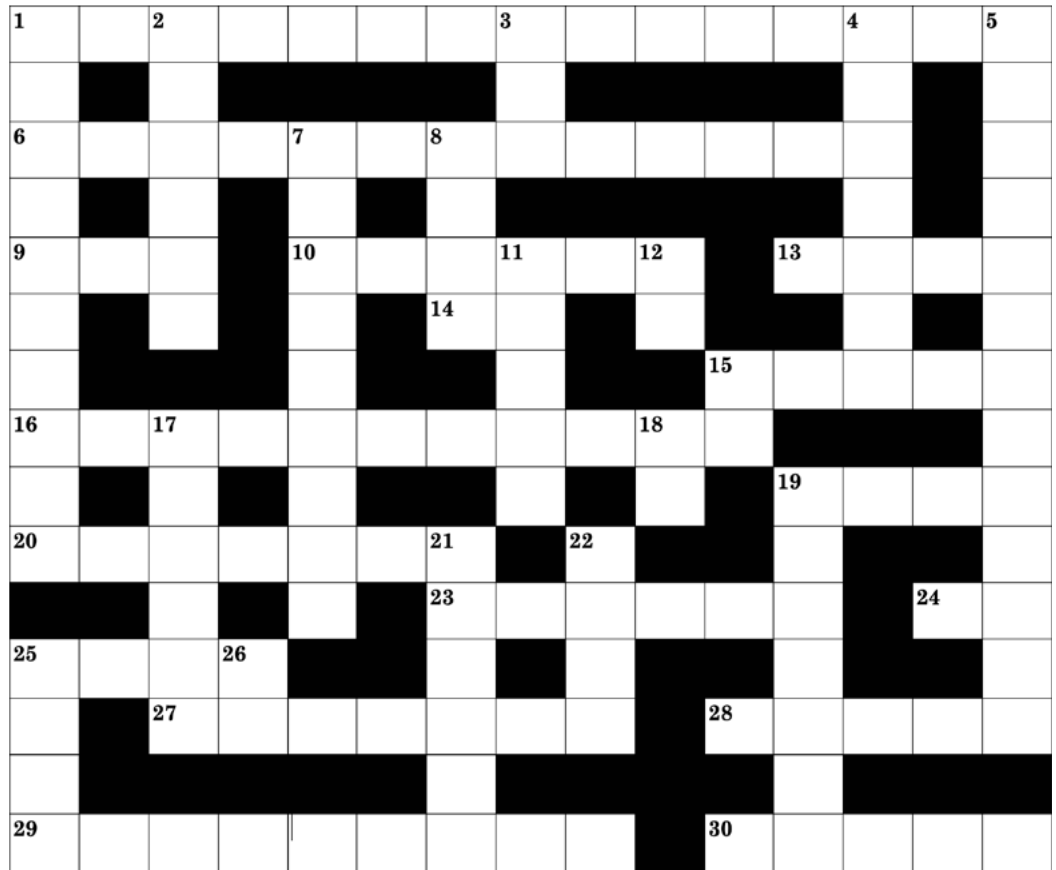
21.
What is the given name of Hans Heysen's artist daughter?

22.
Who won the 2016 Archibald Prize with her portrait of Barry Humphries?

23.
How many paintings did Paul Gauguin sell during his lifetime?

24.
Michelangelo's *David* is in which Italian city?

Answers Page 25



ACROSS

1. Innovative Australian female modernist painter and printmaker, died 1963, Sydney (8,7)
6. An exhibition that covers an artist's body of work (13)
9. Type of drawing (3)
10. Prolific winner of the Archibald (6)
13. Celebrated opera singer; like VAS-connected Dame Nellie Melba (4)
14. Painted *The Big Picture* recording first Australian parliament, (init.) (2)
15. Support for a canvas (5)
16. Pull the canvas too tight (11)
19. Greenish-blue pigment (4)
20. Degas' 'Blue ____' (7)
23. Three legged (6)
24. Impressionist with Monet etc, English citizen, born, lived and died in France, (init.) (2)
25. Artist's source of inspiration (4)
27. Klimt's Golden Period masterpiece (3,4)
28. Foggy, hazy; like a Clarice Beckett painting (5)
29. Russian-born pioneer of abstract modern art (9)
30. Australian precision landscapist, died 2013, Italy (5)

DOWN

1. Melbourne ceramicist and sculptor, from artistic family (6,4)
2. Emotion-invoking New York abstract expressionist (6)
3. There have been many visual interpretations of this poet's 'The Waste Land', (init.) (3)
4. Victorian Artists Society (3,4)
5. Multi-talented artist, born Creswick, resided Blue Mountains (6,7)
7. Term for highly skilled artist in centuries before 1800 (3,6)
8. Monet painted *Impression, Sunrise* at Le Havre's ____ (4)
11. Colour of popular drink among French artists late 19th and early 20th century (5)
12. Troubled painter, responsible for one of the world's most iconic images, (init.) (2)
15. VAS President, 1977-1980, (init.) (2)
18. Heidelberg School member, only spent six years in Australia, (init.) (2)
17. ____ Buckmaster (6)
19. Pigment, yellow to red (7)
21. Gets ready to pose for a life drawing class (6)
22. Poses on a chair (4)
25. First name of New York abstract expressionist at 2 down (4)
26. Regarded as most important realist painter of 20th century America, (init.) (2)



GOING TO PARIS? ... AND WANT TO DO SOME LIFE DRAWING?

Then seek out Academie de la Grande Chaumiere, one of Paris's oldest art academies.

Ian Hobbs

This institution in Montparnasse offers cheap, walk-up classes in surroundings that have barely changed in close to 120 years.

Sit in a studio smelling of oil paint and history imagining yourself in another era for a moment rubbing shoulders with Modigliani, Miro, Giacometti or Australians Bessie Davidson, Ethel Carrick Fox, Margaret Olley and so many more who attended here.


When its doors first opened in 1904 as an alternative to the more formal schools, the academy owners promised little more than 'no constraints, warmth in the winter and live models'. It has thrived ever since and is held in high esteem today.

From the early 1900s to World War II, artists and intellectuals, especially foreigners, flocked to Montparnasse, this area having superseded Montmartre as the artistic centre of Paris. Many artists there lived on a shoestring in garrets where in the words of Jean Cocteau 'poverty was a luxury'.

Picasso, Camus. Joyce. Hemingway, De Beauvoir and Sartre frequented nearby cafes such as La Rotonde, The Dome and La Coupole, all still operating around Place Pablo-Picasso.

Academie de la Grande Chaumiere is located in rue de la Grande Chaumiere, a small street that boasts Modigliani's former home and studio that he shared for a time with Gauguin and where he lived in the years before his early death. The quality art supplier Sennelier is a few doors further on.

The charge for a 2 & 1/2 hour life drawing session is 20 euros. Zoom is available for those not travelling at 15 euros.

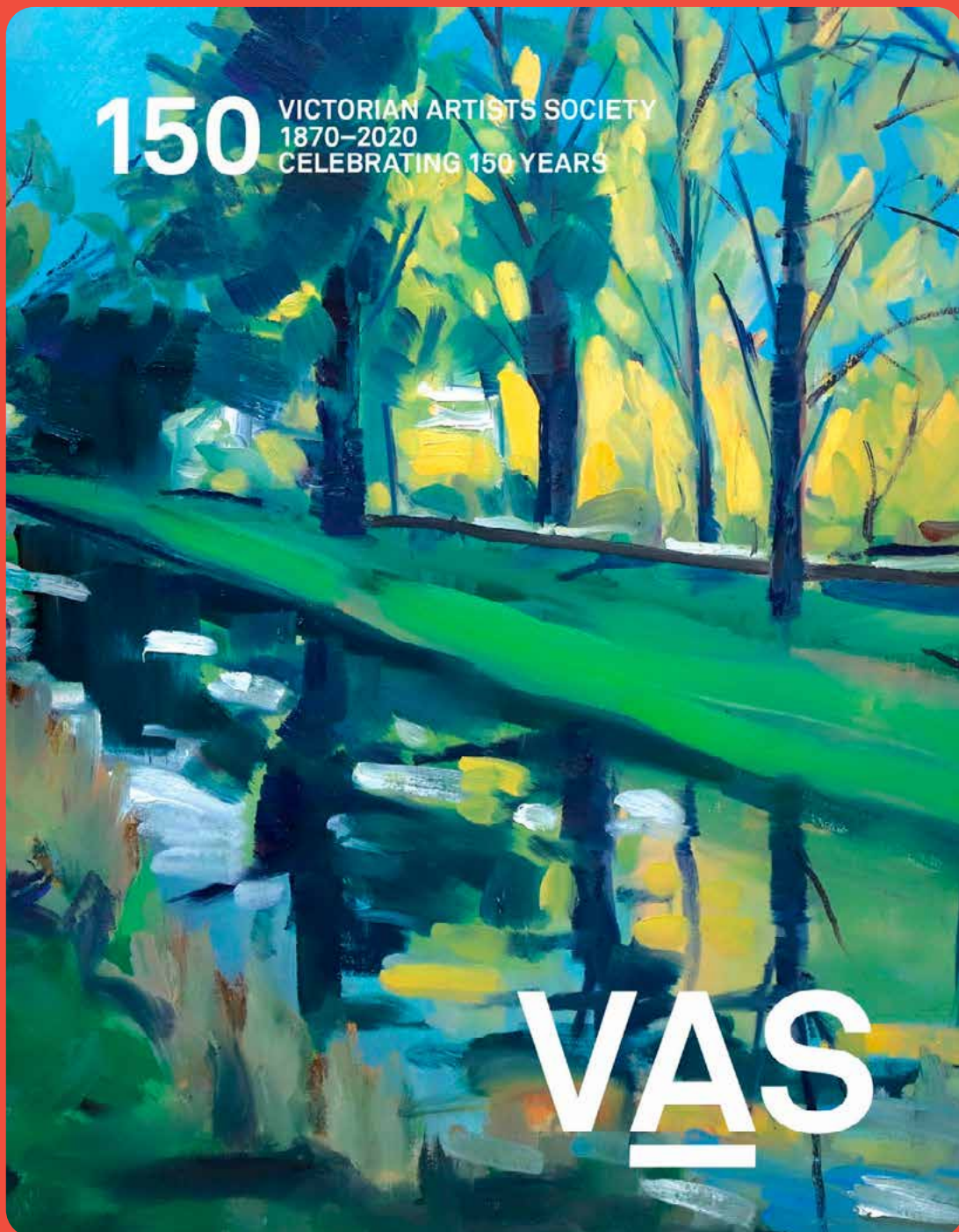
If your visit is in May the free Open Studios event over four days at Belleville is recommended. Pere Lachaise and Menilmontant hold similar open days during the year. For a quirky art experience try 59 Rivoli, The Art Squat of Paris. 



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VICTORIAN ARTISTS SOCIETY
1870-2020
CELEBRATING 150 YEARS

Our book, 'Victorian Artists Society 1870-2020: Celebrating 150 years' is now available as an e-book on our website. [Download it here](#) to relive the first 150 years of our society and enjoy the many featured artworks and stories from our members over the years.



EDWARD HEFFERNAN DRAWING PRIZE

Editor

2022 is the inaugural year of the Edward Heffernan Drawing Prize made possible through a bequest from the Estate of the late Edward Heffernan's wife Maree Elizabeth Heffernan.

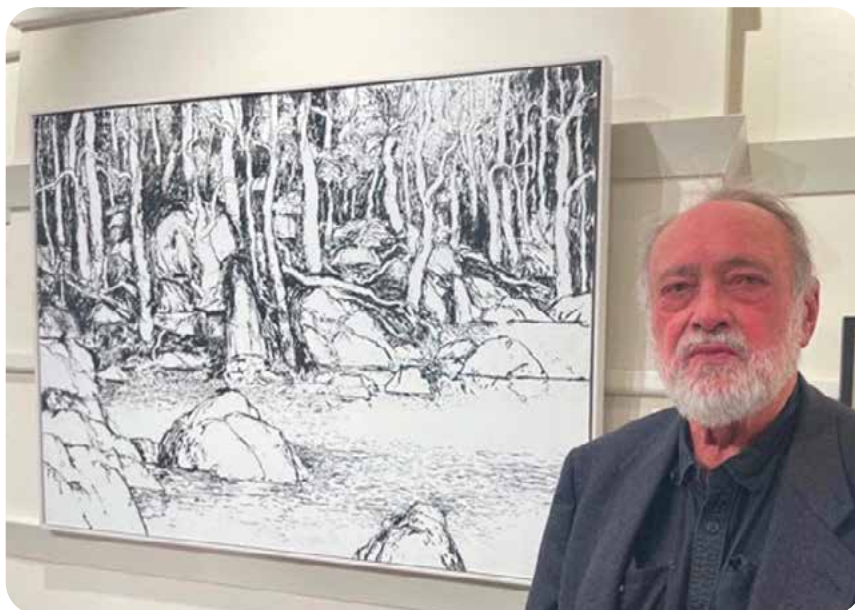
Painter, sculptor, etcher, lithographer, teacher, muralist, art conservator and industrial designer, Edward Heffernan's reputation is firmly cemented in the story of Australian Art. His work covers a wide range of media, genre and subject matter including seascape, landscape, portrait, abstract, still life and figurative.

VAS President Richard Impey FVAS opened the Exhibition on the evening of November 2 and the Judge Warren Crossett presented the 'Edward Heffernan Drawing Prize' and Highly Commended Awards to the VAS artists. The winning artist was Jill Shalless's charcoal, pastel and pencil drawing *Twisted Dance Anglesea*.

Second and Third Prizes were awarded to Gwendoline Krumins VAS and Ulrich Stalph respectively.



Twisted Dance Anglesea by Jill Shalless




Left: Gwendoline Krumins with *What was That?*; Right: Ulrich Stalph with *Pamula River*. Photography by Ron Smith OAM HON FVAS

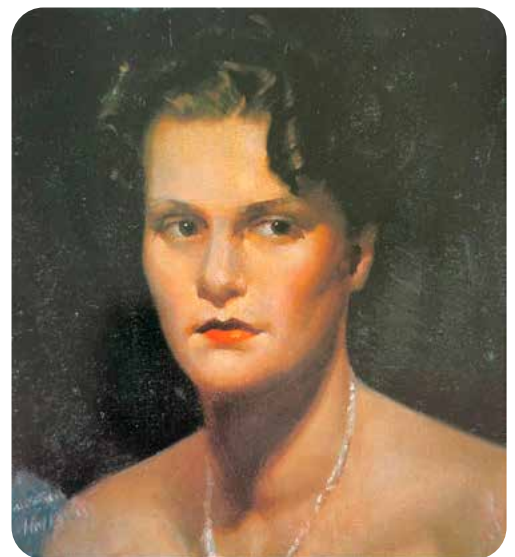
In 1945 Heffernan commenced his full-time teaching career at the Melbourne Technical College a position that was a stepping stone to Head of the Art Department at the Gordon Institute of Technology (Geelong TAFE).

The National Art Gallery School prepared Edward Heffernan for an artistic career however it was not until 40 years later that he was able to become a full time artist.

In his studio in rural Victoria he was able to return to an exploration of print making media, for example *Study for Age of Aquarius* (1982) a pencil study for a linocut. It demonstrates a confident use of bold and

spare line to create shape and suggest movement. Similarly *The Bather* a hand coloured linocut was described by critic A Clarke in 'The Age' as '... strong and forthright, showing bold composition and skilful use of the medium'.

Edward was elected President of the Victorian Artists Society in 1977 and held this position for three years until 1980. He was associated with the VAS for more than 50 years. As a Councillor in 1950 he shared responsibility for issuing 'The Victorian Artists Bulletin'. He was the third person in the Society to receive what was the Distinguished Service Award. In 1984 for his services to the arts he was honoured with the Order of Australia. 



Left: Study for Age of Aquarius, Pencil 1982; Top Right: The Bather, Linocut 1986; Bottom Right: Marjorie Streeta-Payne, 1941 Oil

FROM THE VAS COLLECTION



Artist: Margaret Cowling

Title: Maggie

Date: 1997

Medium: Watercolour

Size: 74cm H x 54cm W

Donor: M Cowling

The subject of watercolour portrait 'Maggie' in the VAS Collection is Maggie Cowling, Margaret's daughter. Painted in 1997 in the kitchen of Maggie's grandfather's cottage, it coincided with an intimate family occasion with her elderly grandfather over a period of 3 hours.

Margaret Cowling was born in Perth WA in 1941. Between 1957 and 1960 she studied Art (Illustration) at the Royal Melbourne Technical College (RMIT) under the tutelage of Murray Griffin, William Frater and Harold Freeman. During 1972 and 1973 she

studied oil painting at the VAS under Shirley Bourne OAM. Margaret was an Assistant to the State Artist Harold Freeman from 1977 to 1978 and collaborated with him on the History of Transport mural (Spencer Street Railway Station) and the History of Geelong mosaic (State Offices, Geelong). From 1993 to 2009 Margaret taught Watercolour and life drawing at the VAS and conducted painting tours to mainland Italy and Sicily. Her watercolour portraits were hung in the Portia Geach Memorial Art Award Exhibition in Sydney in 1993, 1994 and 1997.



Top: 'Coburg Lake', 2017; Above: 'Early Roses', 2016

The majority of Margaret's work is in watercolour. Good draftsmanship, accurate colour and tonal observation are central to her work. She paints boldly en plein air and from studio subjects, often painting one subject from different aspects over a period stretching her skills 'in a little game of problem solving'.

Margaret is a Signatory Member of the VAS, a member of the Twenty Melbourne Painters Society Inc. and the Women's Art Register.

She was VAS Artist of the Year in 1990 and 1992. ✍️



ANSWERS

1. Melbourne
2. William Dargie, (8 times)
3. Voice (Ub Iwerks was the animator)
4. Seville
5. Banksy
6. Chiaroscuro
7. 1973
8. Sydney Modern (AGNSW)
9. NGV Potter, Melbourne
10. Le Bateau



Le Bateau by Henri Matisse

11. Edward Hopper
12. Sofia Museum, Madrid
13. Walter Burley Griffin
14. Italy
15. Watercolour
16. Sydney Harbour Bridge
17. Copper and Tin
18. Diamond or lozenge
19. Alice Springs
20. Francisco de Goya
21. Nora
22. Louise Hearman
23. One
24. Florence

A REVIEW OF THE VAS/ASMA EXHIBITION OF MARINE AND MARITIME ART

Mark Bagally

For the first time, a joint exhibition between the Victorian Artists Society (VAS) and The Australian Society of Marine Artists (ASMA) commenced on the 2nd of December 2022, running until the 14th of December. The exhibition occupies all three upstairs galleries. The ASMA display of works was set up in the Frater Gallery with some works spilling into the McCubbin Gallery. The VAS portion of the exhibition took up occupancy in the Hammond Gallery and the majority of the McCubbin Gallery.

The ASMA is a national society with around 120 exhibiting members, spread throughout the country. The standards for acceptance as an exhibiting member are very high with applicants required to produce a body of work for consideration by a number of the Society's Fellows. Paintings for this exhibition were received from artists from various states, coordinated by Julian Bruere the ASMA Victorian Vice President. Being an exhibiting member of ASMA myself, I was delighted to assist Julian in hanging and curating ASMA's display which included many larger works. I must say the Frater gallery was filled with colour and looked a real treat. Everyone who came through during the bump in remarked on how visually appealing the display was.

Likewise, the VAS display was quite striking. There was a good mix of small to large paintings. Some of these works were full of saturated colour which caught the eye straight away. Viewed in context the exhibition, as a whole, really flowed through the three galleries. What worked, in my view, was having an exhibition with a set theme. To add to the ambiance, the exhibition judge, Claude Ciccone had brought some of his quirky sculptures being marine vessels made from various objects he had collected over the years. These large sculptures complete with fairy lights were strategically placed throughout the Hammond and McCubbin galleries, providing much entertainment for attendees as they tried to work out what some of the smaller objects were.



In a break from tradition, the opening event was held on the afternoon of Sunday the 4th December. This move to a weekend opening worked exceptionally well. A large number of people attended and there were quite a few sales recorded. The mood around the galleries was relaxed and jovial.

Attendees dined on fish and chips served in small boxes whilst enjoying a glass of wine or bubbly and listening to a catalogue of marine style music. All this added to the overall theme of the exhibition.




From Left: Ray Hewitt VAS FVAS; Mark Bagally, Mary Hyde VAS FASMA, Julian Bruere FVAS FASMA.

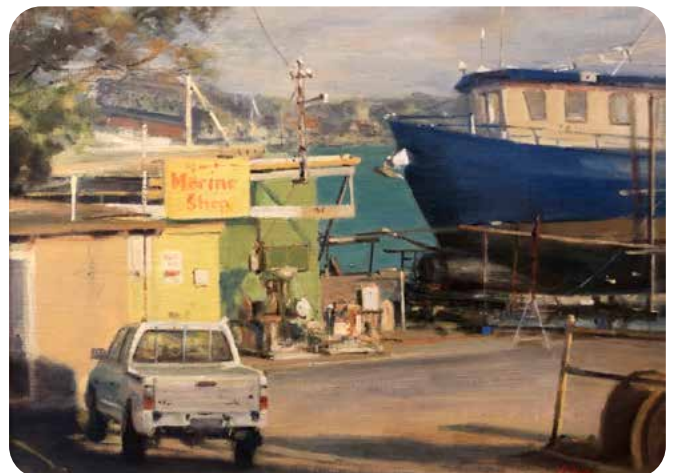


Claude Ciccone, the Judge for the SMLXL Fine Art Print Studio Maritime Exhibition with his boat Hennessy. Photography by Ron Smith OAM HON FVAS

At the VAS awards ceremony during the opening, 1st prize went to Jill Rodgers for a striking acrylic work titled *No Man is an Island* (right). The depth of colours in this painting were something to behold. 2nd prize was awarded to Mary Hyde VAS for an oil titled *The Marine Shop* (below, right) with 3rd prize going to Ray Hewitt VAS FVAS for a plein air work titled *Early Morning* (below, left).

The exhibition judge also awarded 5 Highly Commended certificates. The recipients were Karen Bloomfield, Chris Berkman, Jane Flowers, Ray Wilson and myself. In the sculpture section of the exhibition, top honours were taken out by Maxine Wain for her mixed media work titled *Survivors*. Linda Weil received a Highly Commended certificate.

The ASMA awards consisted of Certificates of Merit presented to Mary Hyde, John Sullivan and Julian Bruere, with Curators Choice Awards presented to Chris Huber and Virginia Villa. 



THE VAS MARITIME EXHIBITION IS SPONSORED
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2023

DATES TO REMEMBER

SEE FULL EXHIBITION DETAILS IN THE 2023 PROGRAMME CALENDAR

10-27 FEB

**OPENING
EVENT:
7PM TUES-
DAY 14 FEB**

SUMMER EXHIBITION

PAINTING

1ST PRIZE \$600
2ND PRIZE \$300
3RD PRIZE \$100

SCULPTURE

1ST PRIZE \$600
2ND PRIZE \$300
3RD PRIZE \$100

• **Entries: 8 Feb 11am-3pm & 9 Feb 11am-2pm**

• **View Online: 15 Feb**

• **Collection Day: 28 Feb 11am-3pm**

Members may submit 1 artwork and up to 3 sculptures.

• **Entry Fee: \$10 per artwork**

3-20
MARCH

**OPENING
EVENT:
7PM
TUESDAY 7
MARCH**

GEORGE HICKS FOUNDATION CONTEMPORARY EXHIBITION

PAINTING

1ST PRIZE \$3,000
2ND PRIZE \$1,000
3RD PRIZE \$500

SCULPTURE

1ST PRIZE \$2,000
2ND PRIZE \$700
3RD PRIZE \$300

• **Entries: 1 March 11am-3pm & 2 March 11am-2pm**

• **View Online: 8 March**

• **Collection Day: 21 March 10am-3pm**

Members may submit 1 artwork and up to 3 sculptures.

• **Entry Fee: \$10 per artwork**

24
MARCH-3
APRIL

DIGITAL AND NON-'TRADITIONAL' EXHIBITION Cato Gallery

• **Entries: 22 March 11am-3pm & 23 March 11am-2pm**

• **View Online: 24 March**

• **Collection Day: 4 April 11am-3pm**

Members may submit up to 2 small artworks. Photography accepted.

• **Entry Fee: \$10 per artwork**

29
MARCH-2
APRIL

THE MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FLOWER & GARDEN SHOW

**AT THE ROYAL EXHIBITION BUILDING &
CARLTON GARDENS**

Members will be advised of send in details closer to the exhibition dates.

8-24 APRIL

**OPENING
EVENT:
7PM
TUESDAY 11
APRIL**

AUTUMN SELECT EXHIBITION

MACKLEY PRIZE \$2000
VAS SCULPTURE PRIZE

• **Entries: 5 April 11am-3pm & 6 April 11am-2pm**

• **View Online: 14 April**

• **Collection Day: 25 April 11am-3pm**

Members may submit 1 artwork and up to 3 sculptures.

No Digital works.

• **Entry Fee: \$25 per artwork or \$30 for large works**

26 MAY-12
JUNE

ARTFEST23

Frater, Hammond & McCubbin Galleries

An Exhibition celebrating 50 years of the Artist of the Year winners



Contact us

The Victorian Artists Society
430 Albert Street
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Ph: 03 9662 1484

E: admin@vasgallery.org.au

W: vasgallery.org.au

Follow us on Facebook to stay up to date with exhibitions. 'Victorian Artists Society'

Find us on Instagram at: @victorianartistsociety
Use the hashtag #victorianartistsociety when posting about an artwork you have created.

- TRANSPORT OPTIONS -
5 minute walk from
Parliament Station
Trams 11, 12 and 109 stop on
Gisborne Street
Meter parking is available along
Albert Street

Map design by David Kaneen

