

VAS MAGAZINE

Victorian Artists Society

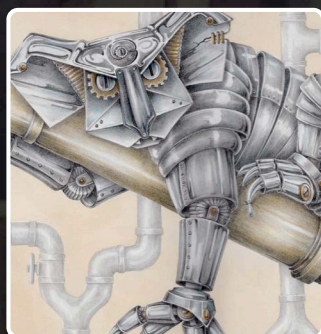
October to December 2023



**Merry
Christmas**

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PATRON IN CHIEF
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 Professor the Honourable Margaret
 Gardner AC

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OCTOBER–DECEMBER 2023

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The VAS Magazine is printed through the Office of the Victorian Artists Society. 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: *Found and Lost*, Oil by Joe Whyte
 The Hylton Mackley AM VAS Artist of the Year Award Winner 2023



Australian Christmas Card, by Susan Morris

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

After a very busy two years of Presidency, as you probably know I stepped down at this year's AGM. It's been a fabulous time reinvigorating VAS with the assistance of Councillors, members, teachers, and volunteers all contributing in so many ways. I thank you all.

As I write now, plans for next year are being put in place. Bookings for functions, hire of Galleries are well in advance and planning for various VAS functions, workshops and classes are proceeding. A big change for us over the Christmas break is our offering of Young Artists Workshops for 15- to 20-year-olds to hone and expand their artistic skills for themselves or in preparation for their VCE or Tertiary Art courses. The attending young artists will have the opportunity to showcase works from these workshops in the VAS Cato Gallery with an open day on 23 January. So far in these early stages of advertising, the bookings for these workshops are being very well patronised.

I farewell our councillor Rachel Robertson who has reluctantly resigned due to family reasons. Rachel has been doing a brilliant job organising the guest sculptors' exhibitions at VAS and running the En Plein Air painting group. Her enthusiasm, dedication and skills will be sorely missed.

Our Artist of the Year awards night was a great success. It was a time to come together and meet old friends and make new acquaintances. Artworks by our top artists for the year were beautifully hung around the three upstairs galleries. Food and drinks flowed aplenty to the large gathered crowd providing sustenance whilst they previewed the art and socialised with others around them. The musical performances by Lily Jones, Eliza Carlin and David McNicol, added another quality layer of glitter and finesse to this sumptuous event. A big thankyou to the sponsors for the prize money for the three



Digital Artworks by Richard Impey
 Top: *Cornish Blue Tea Set*
 Above: *Nine Politicians*



awards: The Members' Choice Award, sponsored by the company U Do (Website Builder) was awarded to Greg Smith; The Noel Waite AO Exhibitors' Choice Award, sponsored by the Waite family was awarded to Ron Reynolds; and the top award, The Hylton Mackley AM VAS Artist of the Year Award, sponsored by the Mackley Family was awarded to Joe Whyte.

Make sure you write The Artist of the Year awards night into your 2024 calendar of events. As usual I preferred the hassle-less public transport option to get to and from VAS.

Finally, please consider the Victorian Artists Society galleries as the perfect space for your next corporate or family function, book launch, demonstration, concert, photo-shoot, or wedding. Having these functions at VAS greatly enhances our revenue stream, supports membership benefits and opportunities, promotes our society, and puts our gallery in the forefront of people's minds.

I hope you all have a wonderful creative holiday season along with joyous celebrations and many social gatherings with family and friends. We're particularly looking forward to the VAS 'Paint the Town' holiday party on December 21. Hope to see you there!

Richard Impey FVAS MEd DipEd
President
Victorian Artists Society

MRS STREETON, MRS ROBERTS & MRS McCUBBIN

The wives of the leading members of the Heidelberg School usually don't rate more than a line or two in their husband's biographies. Yet, Nora Clench, Lillie Williamson and Annie Moriarty all have a story to tell.

Let's look first at Nora Clench.

Violinist Nora is delighting audiences in Europe when she meets Arthur Streeton in England in 1899. Residing in London's fashionable St John's Wood, the multi-talented Canadian-born sophisticate has rubbed shoulders with Tchaikovsky and played privately for Queen Victoria.

Streeton on the other hand had been living in a tent by Sydney Harbour two years earlier.

Acclaimed in Australia, he is virtually anonymous in England, selling few paintings and struggling to make ends meet as he seeks international exposure.

Little wonder he is smitten!

'She is well read in all poetry and can draw in the most original way... I feel absolutely faint with her sweet attraction when she is near,' he declares, now with a renewed zest for life and painting.

Six months later Australian newspapers announce news of their engagement.

Marriage doesn't follow though, not then. Nora pauses her music career and takes off for Paris to paint for a few years before returning to form the Nora Clench Quartet, an avant-garde all-female string group that is the talk of London Town. Meanwhile, Arthur continues to live in poverty before fundraiser exhibitions in Australia enable him to marry his sweetheart in 1908 in London when both are aged 40. She then gradually retires from professional music. Ironically, a 1908 Streeton purchased at the Victorian Artists' Society in 1914 by the Baillieu family sells for over \$3 million in 2021!

Moving into Nora's home, Streeton's career prospects improve with commissions arising from his wife's wide social circle but reaching the level of

success experienced in Australia proves elusive. He further calls on Nora when recuperating from the strain of working as a medical orderly during the Great War.

The Streetons, with only child Oliver, eventually make their home in Melbourne in the early 1920s. Nora plays the role of a Toorak hostess, occasionally performs at St Pauls Cathedral and to other small audiences and dabbles in book illustration. Arthur Streeton sets about embellishing his role in Australian art.

Reportedly distant from her son and distant too from her beloved Europe, Nora dies as Lady Streeton in 1938, five years before Arthur. In a reversal of career status, Arthur Streeton has become a national institution on the back of his pre-1900 national landscapes while Nora has drifted into obscurity. The bond of a mutual love of music, painting and poetry had held firm though.



Left: Detail from *At Templestowe*, 1889, Arthur Streeton, Art Gallery of South Australia
Right: Nora Clench, c.1890



Using a broad square brush, the relationship of Lillie Williamson and Tom Roberts bears some resemblance to that of the Streetons: the long courtship, professional wife, just one child and the wife's bankrolling of the struggling husband when in England for an extended period.

It is the early 1900s in London. Tom Roberts has just completed his painting of the opening of Australia's first federal parliament but flow-on patronage from the so-called Big Picture disappoints, precipitating a black period of several years duration.

In contrast, Mrs Tom Roberts' career as a picture framer blossoms. She hangs 'on the line' at the Royal Academy, sells to royalty and wins awards with her hand-carved and gilded frames. This daughter of a wealthy Melbourne merchant uses inheritance funds and framing income to support the family, including financing a new house and studios at Golders Green where framer and painter collaborate to exhibit as one on occasions. As an under-appreciated colonial, Roberts leans on Lillie for emotional support as well before the family returns to Australia in 1923.

Lillie Williamson had attended the National Gallery School and exhibited for several years at the VAS in the 1880s prior to marrying Tom Roberts in 1896 at Kew.

After her death in 1928 and Tom's three years later, it is left in part to Roberts' widowed second wife Jean Boyes to successfully resurrect his reputation and inspire institutional interest with a memorial retrospective.



Portrait of Mrs Tom Roberts, 1910, Tom Roberts, National Portrait Gallery, frame by Lillie Roberts




Annie Moriarty may not have matched the professional achievements of Mrs Streeton & Mrs Roberts but appearing in many of husband Frederick McCubbin's signature canvases including *On the Wallaby Track* (1896) and the monumental triptych, *The Pioneer* (1904), guarantees her lasting exposure in Australian galleries.

The National Gallery of Victoria set aside Felton Bequest funds to purchase *The Pioneer* following its appearance at the 1905 VAS Winter Exhibition. Today, it hangs proudly at NGV Fed Square.

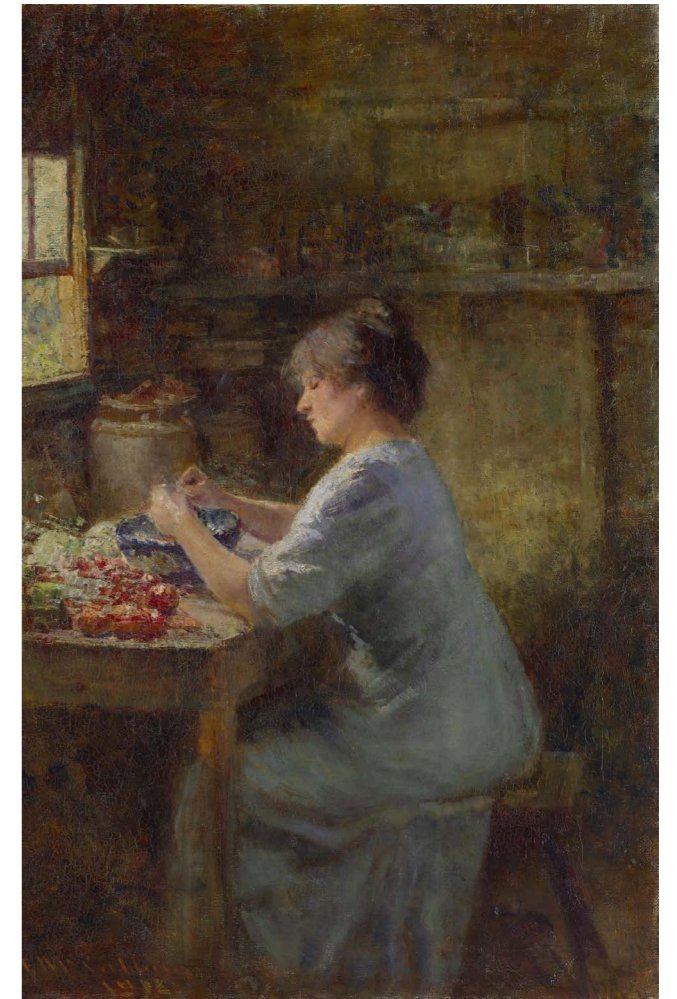
Former art student Annie married McCubbin, lifelong drawing master at the National Gallery School, at Richmond in 1889 with Tom Roberts as best man.

The greatest accolade accorded Mrs McCubbin is that her contribution to uninterrupted family harmony served as a stabilising backdrop to her husband's career. Popular in Melbourne art circles, including the VAS, Annie drew painters, writers and musicians to the McCubbin home and organised exhibitions while raising seven children. One child, Louis, followed in his father's footsteps as both an artist and president of the VAS.

Although his reputation rests on the early large narratives, much of McCubbin's best work came after a visit to Europe in 1907 when he re-saw his own environment. At this time, Annie is central in many of the tender depictions of home life, so well illustrated in *Shelling Peas* (1912), described as more love letter than painting.

Streeton, Roberts and McCubbin are household names in Australian art, but as the saying goes, no one becomes successful in isolation. 

Ian Hobbs



Shelling Peas, 1912, Frederick McCubbin, National Gallery of Victoria

THE 'MAGNIFICENT DOODLE'

Sydney Opera House

This year is the 50th Anniversary of the opening by Queen Elizabeth II of the Sydney Opera House—Australia's Number 1 tourist attraction but its most controversial public building. Never before or since have otherwise harmless Architects taken to the streets to demonstrate their feelings. Never before or since has the general public been so engaged with the procurement of a major public building.

The Architect of the Sydney Opera House Jorn Utzon (1918–2008) quit the project after winning an international open competition in 1957 with a scheme that the critic Robert Hughes described as;

'NOTHING MORE THAN A MAGNIFICENT DOODLE'.

Today the Opera House is loved and admired by the people of Sydney, but while it was under construction attitudes were very different. The newspapers continually attacked its cost, its delays, its architect and the fees he was earning. Journalists gave the now familiar white sail roofs nicknames such

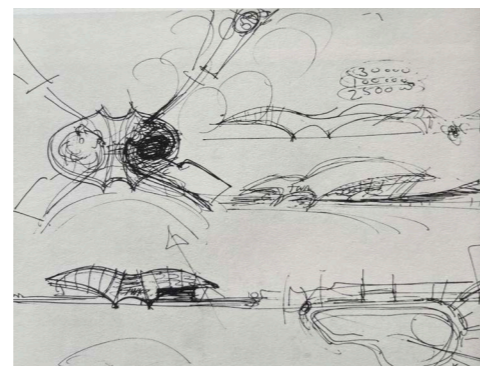
as 'the concrete camel', 'copulating terrapins' and the 'hunchback of Bennelong Point'.

However the fact is that the project was flawed from the outset.

Some VAS members might agree with me that competition winning entries more often than not reflect the personal preferences of the judge or judges. So it was, evidently, with Sydney Opera House Competition. It was an all architect jury but by far the most prestigious and influential architect on the panel was the American Eero Saarinen (1910–1961). Although hotly disputed by one of the judges, the rumour persists that arriving late for the judging Saarinen sorted through the pile of rejected designs and pulled out Utzon's drawings declaring;

'THIS IS THE WINNER'.

Concurrent with the Opera House Competition Saarinen was developing his design for the TWA airline terminal at JFK airport New York. The roof of the terminal featured bird like wings remarkably similar to the sail shapes of Utzon's. At the time Engineers were experimenting with thin shell parabolic roof structures and it was assumed that the Opera House



Left: Utzon's 'doodle' for the Opera House
Right: Saarinen's 'doodle' for TWA



roofs could be built the same way. The gull like roof of the TWA Terminal was ultimately built in the traditional way using poured concrete into timber formwork supported by a dense forest of temporary props. The scale and complexity of the Opera House roof made this method impossible in practice and ultimately it was formed from pre-cast segments assembled LEGO-like and lifted into position with purpose built giant cranes. In fairness the huge

technical and structural problems of building had been overcome by Utzon and the Engineer Ove Arup, but Utzon was finding it impossible to fit the required number of seats into the larger of the two main halls. Unless it contained 2,800 seats for concerts the Sydney Symphony Orchestra would refuse to use the building.

There is nothing that will destroy the reputation of an Architect and their standing with their client more than the failure to control time and cost. Costs

Above: *Opera House*, Oil on Canvas by Otto Boron VAS



Left: TWA as built
Right: Sydney Opera House as built

escalated from an admittedly optimistic \$3.5 million at the start of the project to \$25 million nine years later when Utzon departed. The final figure at the Opening was \$102 million.

The NSW Government tried to control the costs and speed up the programme. Architectural fees were withheld, Utzon proved to be somewhat intransigent in his attitude to the client and by February 1966 the pressures reached the point where Utzon wrote to the Minister for Public Works, Davis Hughes, saying 'You have forced me to leave the job'. Davis Hughes accepted with alacrity what he assumed to be the architect's resignation.

For whatever reasons and regardless of who was to blame, Utzon had committed another fatal mistake—falling out with the client

Utzon never returned to Australia sending his son instead when invited in the 1990s to advise on its refurbishment and on future works. Despite going

on to earn himself a permanent place in the history of modernism Utzon never received a major public commission in his home country of Denmark his reputation tarnished by what happened Downunder.

Peter Hall (1931–1995), the Australian Architect appointed to complete the project and resolve the acoustic and seating arrangements, was broken mentally and physically by the project as well as earning the opprobrium of his profession.

Bruce Baldey VAS

Further Reading

Watson, A 2017, *The Poisoned Chalice: Peter Hall and the Sydney Opera House*, opusSOH, Ballina NSW

Pitt, H 2018, *The House*, Allen & Unwin, Crow's Nest, NSW

Young Artist Workshops

VAS Gallery
January 8–23, 2024

Book Online at
the QR Code

One-day workshops available for painting, sculpture, collage, drawing and more! For artists aged 15 to 20.

430 Albert St East Melbourne | vasgallery.org.au



AROUND THE GALLERIES

Linda Weil: Bestiary Mechanica

4–21 October 2023, TACIT Art Gallery, Level 1, 189 Johnston Street, Collingwood 3066

tacitart.com.au

Winner of the 2023 VAS Autumn Select Exhibition and popular VAS Teacher Linda Weil recently exhibited at TACIT ART Gallery deep in the heart of Collingwood. VAS members will be familiar with her extraordinary drawing skills and the detail applied to her mechanised subjects.

The Bestiary, or Book of Beasts, was one of the most popular illuminated texts of the European Middle Ages (circa 500–1500 CE). Religiously allegorical, the Bestiary brought creatures both real and fantastic to life, offering devotional inspiration as well as entertainment. They reflected the belief that every living thing was the work of God and that each creature had its own special character and meaning. The pelican, for example, was believed to be a representation of Jesus, tearing open its breast to give birth to its young. The medieval Bestiary is written in Latin and each creature is given its Latin name.

Linda's modern Bestiary Mechanica draws on this rich medieval tradition and blends it with the modern world of AI and cybernetics. She is in good company as throughout the ages artists such as Leonardo and Toulouse-Lautrec have produced their own bestiaries.

'The beasts are creations of mechanical, organic and biomechanical body parts offering a contemporary take on the established form. Each beast was selected based on my own personal affection for the animal, from dragons to cats, each drawing holds elements from my own time and place.'



Top: *Felis Catus*
Bottom: *Corvus*

Linda's menagerie of mechanical monsters includes a number of Australian native animals reimagined in her inimitable way as living cyborgs.

For example, *Osphranter rufus* or Red Kangaroo in English dominates the sparse Centralian landscape its powerful hindquarters on display.

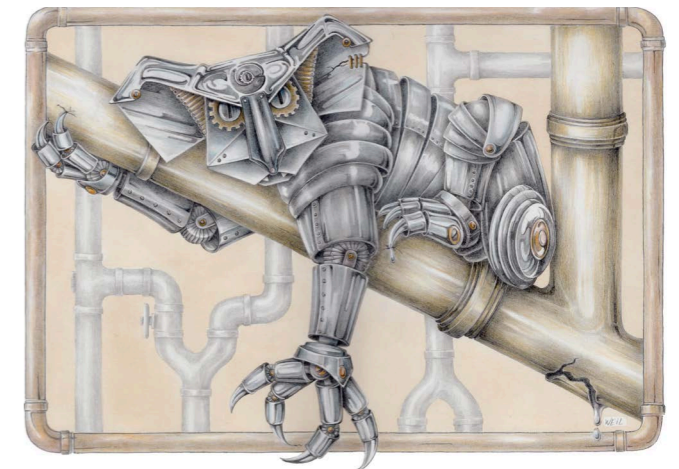
Ursus gutta or Drop Bear is our not-so-cuddly koala.

Corvus or crow has never appeared statelier. Cat lovers however might be somewhat taken aback by *Felis catus* which is supposedly our domestic cat.

Take from these beasts whatever moral lesson you will but above all enjoy the line and colour of the art.

Bruce Baldey VAS

Linda Weil is represented by TACIT ART



Top: *Osphranter rufus*
Middle: *Ursus gutta*
Bottom: Linda Weil and *Lepus*
Above Left: TACIT Art Gallery, Collingwood

RAINY DAYS IN LUCERNE, SWITZERLAND

The Rosengart Collection

Grey, rainy days seem to encourage long walks, visits to book shops and museums and I found the Rosengart Collection for that same reason.

I had been travelling Europe for a few weeks and the Lucerne rain drew me into viewing an exceptional and surprising collection of sculpture and 20th Century art.

The villa now housing the Collection was once a branch of the Swiss National Bank (1924). The wood panelled conference rooms remain from the heyday of handshakes and large secret bank accounts. This early century building houses over 300 19th and 20th Century art artworks which were once the private collection of Sammlung Rosengart.

The outstanding works are testament to the passion for art collecting by its founders, Angela

Rosengart and her father Siegfried Rosengart. In 1978, Siegfried and Angela Rosengart presented the City of Lucerne with eight masterpieces by Picasso to mark the city's 800th anniversary.

This laid the foundations for the Lucerne Picasso Museum, which they further endowed over subsequent years. In 1992 Angela Rosengart set up the Rosengart Foundation, the purpose of which is to maintain the art Collection and to make it accessible to the public in Lucerne on a permanent basis.

Today, the museum showcases an unparalleled collection of works by Pablo Picasso, with pieces spanning his entire career. You can experience the evolution of Picasso's style, from his early Blue and Rose periods to his Cubist and Surrealist phases. Notable works include *Arlequin Assis* and *Femme en chemise*.

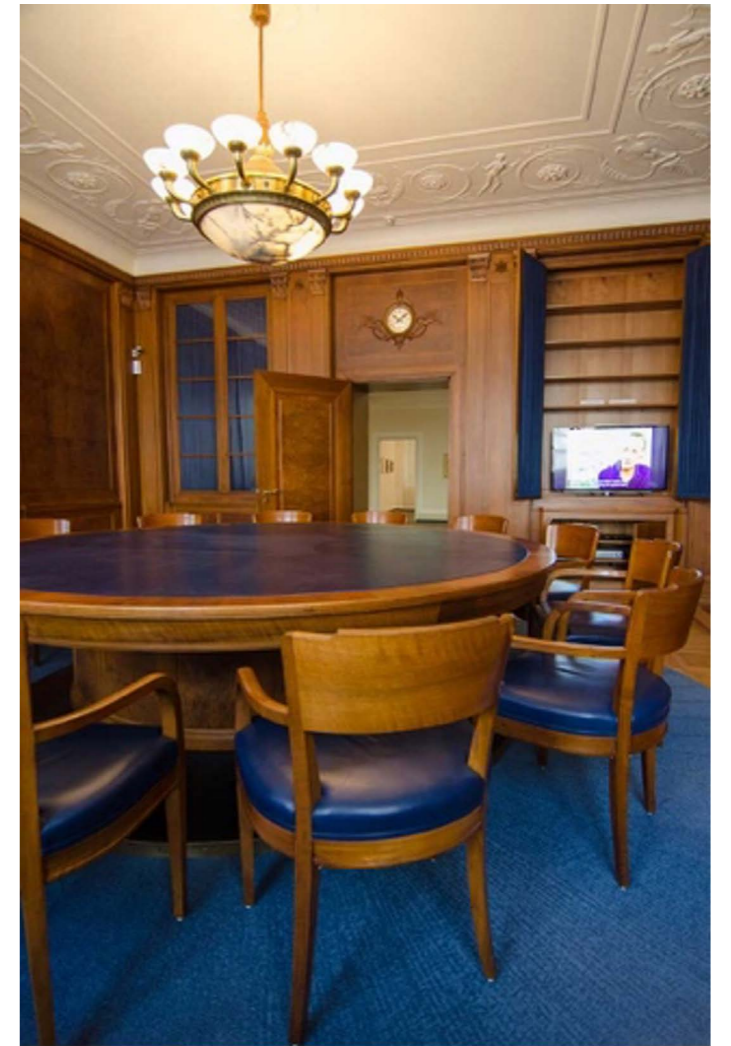
There is also an extensive collection of artworks by Swiss-German painter Paul Klee. Klee's playful and imaginative compositions provide an insight into his distinctive approach to color and form. Iconic pieces like *Senecio* and *Föhn im Marc'schen Garten* are among the highlights there.

And if that is not enough there are other artists including Chagall, Kandinsky, Matisse, Bonnard, Miro, Cezanne, Monet, Renoir and many others.

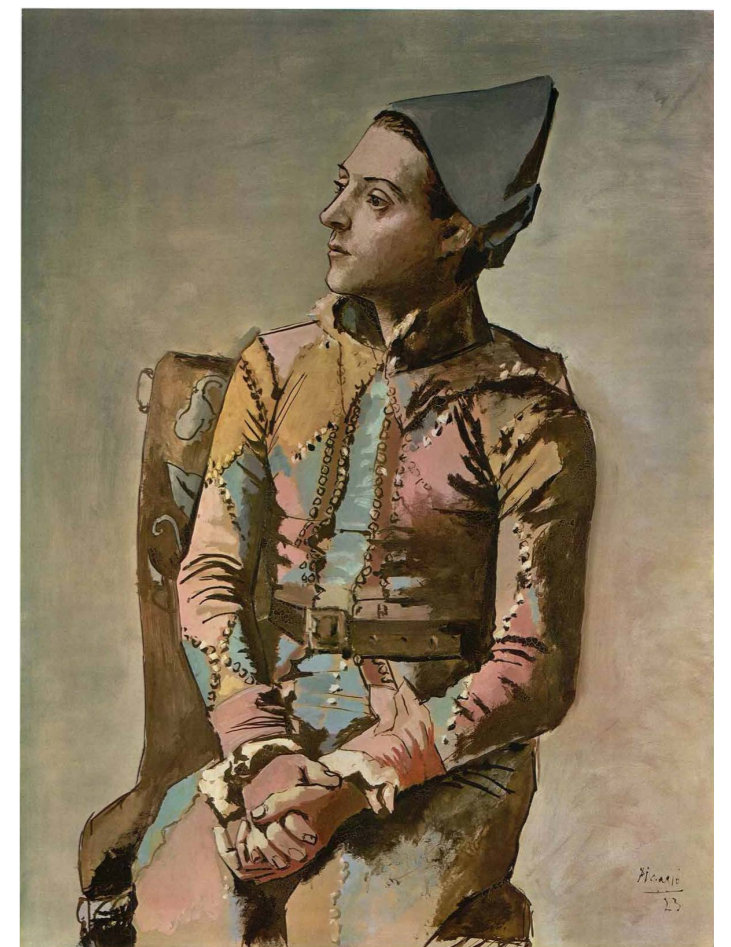
While it was a very large public collection, it still seemed 'private'. It was easy to recognise the hand of each artist but without researching further, I was unsure if I had ever seen that particular artwork published before. So, my time at the museum became more exciting not knowing if I would rediscover an artwork that had been under the dust covers for years.

So if you are travelling to Switzerland soon or if you would like to view this wonderful museum on line, I don't believe you will be disappointed. ✍️

Laurel Sloan



Above: Angela Rosengart



Top: Conference Room
Bottom: *Arlequin Assis*, Picasso 1923

MORE TALL TALES—AND TRUE

FROM THE NATIONAL GALLERY SCHOOL OF EARLY DAYS

During the ideological and challenging days of the 1930s and 40s, between the Great Depression and the Cold War when the radical and bohemian students from the National Gallery School in Swanston St Melbourne met head on with the establishment, ‘demonic larrikinism’ abounded.

In his fine book, ‘Rebels and Precursors’ author Richard Haese vividly describes the times.

‘Throughout the 1930s there was, then, a procession of brilliant students at the Melbourne National Gallery School who set the intellectual tone and pace for the group that surrounded them.’

In Haese’s own words, shining from the Swanston Street Art School was;

'A GALAXY OF TALENT'.

The combined precocious brilliance, intellect and wit of these young radicals was prodigious.

They were also described in the Haese book as ‘rebellious, violent and aggressive.’

While Richard Haese has scrupulously done his homework and researched all his facts, as a professional writer does, I can only contribute my anecdotes of those times through the stories and chit chat gleaned from many exchanges between my parents during my early years.

I was always eager to hear about the ‘olden days up at the Gallery’, for my father was one of those

young rebellious bohemians—never violent or aggressive (for that was not his nature) but certainly witty, rebellious, perhaps precocious and definitely a shining talent.

Students such as Sidney Nolan, Sam Ateyo, Roger Kemp, Gordon Daniels, Charlie Bush, John Sinclair and my dad Laurence Pendlebury appeared to be the instigators of the trouble and ringleaders of pranks during those years, while the female students stood back at a safe distance encouraging and rallying the boys on, enjoying every moment.

As a young girl I never grew tired of my father’s colourful, but accurate retelling of his early student days—I suppose my interest helped keep alive those memories for my parents, who agreed that their student years were ‘one of the happiest times of their lives.’



Here is one of my favourite stories:

The Gallery School itself, with its own student entrance in Russell Street, was in fact just a long tin shed, a kind of annexe between the National Gallery and the National Museum.

This allowed the young students easy access to the Fine Art Gallery—where they spent time between classes observing, admiring and in awe of the technique of the great Masters’ works covering the walls.

It also permitted access to the grand stairway and facilities used by members of the public visiting the Museum.

One day, with time on their hands, a group of the lads descended the stairs, when the Concierge was having a cup of tea in his small storeroom, and very



quickly and efficiently managed to turn each one of the signposts standing in the marble floored foyer in the opposite direction.

The old polished timber signs with their faded gold lettering displaying ‘Ladies Restroom’ now faced in the direction of the Dinosaur exhibits.

‘Extinct and Exotic Mammals’ was pointed in the direction of the Gentlemen’s Cloaks and Umbrellas while ‘Tea Room & Refreshments’ led the eye to follow in the direction of some sort of poorly lit doorway bearing the words ‘Keep Out.’

The girls leaned over the banisters of the balcony giggling in anticipation, and the fellows beat a quick retreat, as another group of 11am visitors ascended the front steps from Swanston Street.

Of course what followed was chaos.

The red faced Concierge, having finished his morning cup of tea and Milk Arrowroot biscuits, came out of his cramped quarters, to find distressed people confused and threatening to leave before their visit had fully begun.

One or two elderly old dears searching for the lavatories had ended up confronted by the skeletal remains of a creature resembling a Brontosaurus Diplodocus at the same time as weeping and

disappointed children were hastily dragged out of the Gentlemen’s Cloak Room.

Families who had trekked down a long corridor seeking Tea and Scones and a quiet sit down, came face to face with a foul smelling dingy sort of scullery, the foggy glass double doors of which were badly scratched and bearing the hard to read words ‘No Entrance—Restricted Access.’

It all took a bit of sorting out, but Mr. Bill the Concierge, by now very red in the face finally ascertained the problem and eventually all signage was returned to the correct positions.

He then withdrew into his small cubicle to prepare a Report of Complaint to the Head of the Gallery School—for he knew exactly who was responsible for the morning’s mayhem.

Upstairs over cups of cocoa and corned beef sandwiches for lunch- the students rocked back and forth with laughter, re-enacting the confusion they had all witnessed in the foyer on the ground floor.

The boys ‘took off’ the sight of doddering old people being confronted with unexpected sights, and respectable families holding their noses as they hastened from the dreaded out of bounds cleaning room, reeking of all sorts of putrid and gassy substances.

This typical anecdote of those student days, paints a delightful picture of the goings on amongst the students when they took time out from their art studies—but there was, in retrospect, something very innocent about it all.

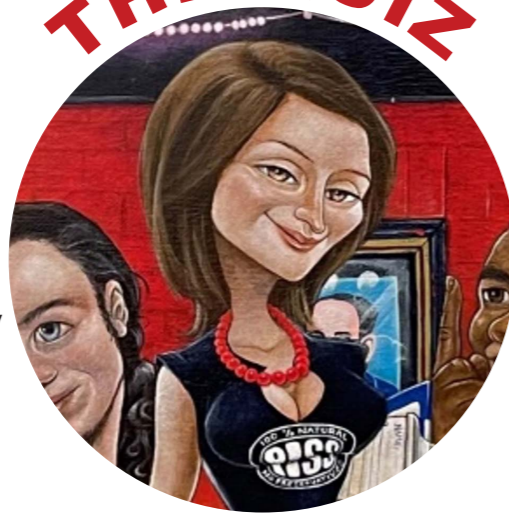
Their adventures were definitely rather ‘undergrad’ but never malicious or dangerous, for the students revered and respected the Gallery School as a place of learning and many spent the rest of their lives indebted to their tutors—artists like, Charles Wheeler, WB McInnes and Harold Herbert.

They were simply high-spirited young people, devoted to their studies and enjoying what were to be for many of them—‘the happiest years of their lives’.

Anne Scott Pendlebury

Above: Students at the National Gallery of Victoria Art School in 1930

THE QUIZ



1.
The South Australian Art Gallery is in which city?

2.
Which type of painting depicts scenes from everyday life in a realistic style?"

3.
Early photographers made their images on what material?

4.
What is the shape of farfalle pasta?

5.
What are the three primary colours?

6.
What are short flat brushes called?

7.
What is the term used to describe paints which have a high oil content?

8.
What are the comics or graphic novels originating from Japan called?

9.
What is the optical illusion whereby objects appear to diminish in size as they recede into the distance?

10.
Name the form of painting that depicts Christian sacred personages or events?

11.
Which French painter is called the leader of the 19th century Realism movement?

12.
The format of a painting or drawing which is taller than it is wide is called?

13.
Who is the richest living artist?

14.
What is the name of the practice in art of applying small strokes or dots of colour such that from a distance they blend together?

15.
Tom Roberts ashes are buried in a churchyard near which Tasmanian town?

16.
2023 is the 50th anniversary of the Opening by the late Queen Elizabeth II of which Sydney landmark?

17.
Who was the first major Australian painter to be selected to study at the Royal Academy of Arts in London?

18.
What is the technical term a surface used for a painting or drawing: canvas, board, paper, etc.?

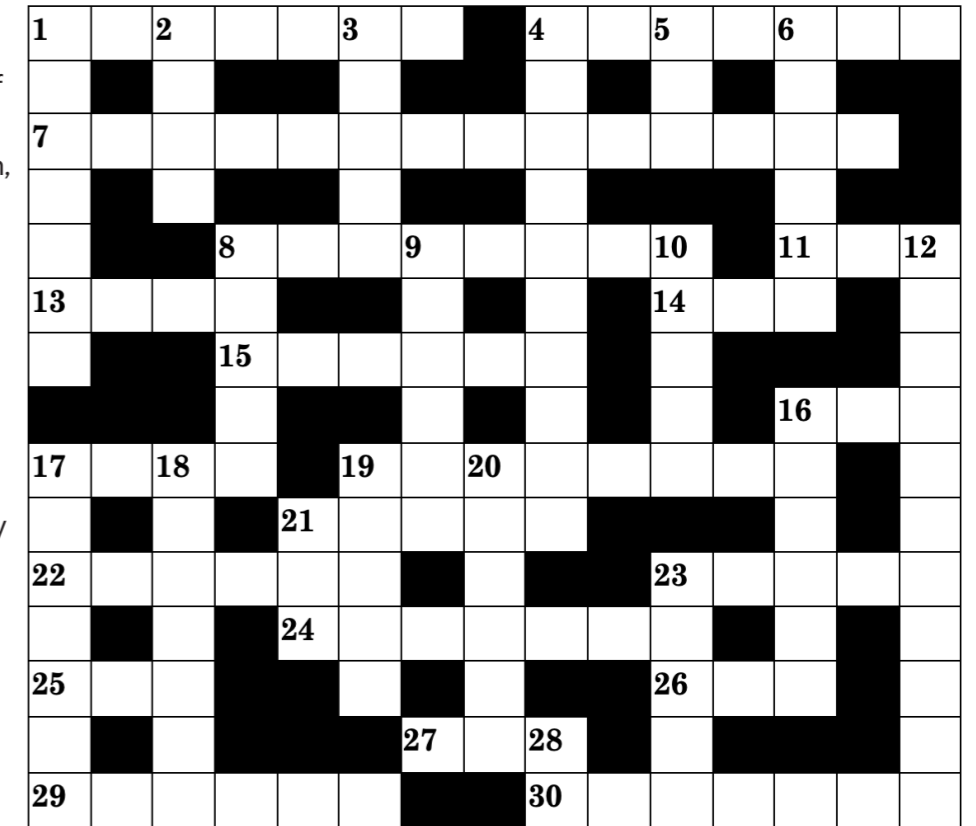
19.
Papunya is an Indigenous art centre in which State or Territory?

20.
In which State or Territory capital is the National Portrait Gallery

21.
Which is the largest art gallery in Australia?

Across

1. International design style of 1920s and 1930s (3,4)
 4. Australian artist, _____ Pugh, 1924-1990.
 7. Member of the Heidelberg School, known for blue and gold landscapes (6,8)
 8. Posterior of the human form, often depicted in nudes (8)
 11. En plein __ (3)
 13. A light stick used to steady the brush hand (4)
 14. Peninsula Arts Society (init) (3)
 15. VAS building is in this street (6)
 16. International ornamental style 1890s-1900s, ___ Nouveau (3)
 17. VAS councillor, ___ Bagally. (4)
 19. Extra copies, usually of a book, maybe about an artist for example (8)
 21. Matisse painted the Paris cathedral ___ Dame (5)
 22. Too important to be changed, Religious Art is called this (6)
 23. Female Mexican painter, ___ Kahlo (1907-1954) (5)
 24. Computerised art (7)
 25. Estonian Artists' Association (init) (3)
 26. Order of the British Empire, landscapist Fred Williams, 1927-1982, received one (init) (3)
 27. A primary colour (3)
 29. Margaret Olley (1923-2011) resided in this state capital (6)
 30. Greatest Australian cricketer, painted by Robert Hannaford (7)



Down

1. Old London art institution, the Royal _____ (7)
 2. Famous London art gallery (4)
 3. French landscape painter, preceded Impressionism, Jean-Baptiste-Camille ____, 1796-1875 (5)
 4. Drawing that shows a person in a simplified or exaggerated way, especially in newspapers (10)
 5. Anger, as in between the VAS and Max Meldrum (3)
 6. First name in full of Heidelberg School painter, Roberts (6)
 8. Opposite of white (5)
 9. Short name for the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (3,3)
 10. Goya (1746-1828) was born in this country (5)
 12. The repair of paintings by a conservator (11)
 16. Aim or hope to, as in artists _____ to create original work (6)
 17. Renowned European painters before 1800 are called Old _____ (7)
 18. First name of VAS President this year (7)
 19. Famous French sculptor (5)
 20. A verbal pat on the back, painters like it (6)
 21. Sidney Nolan's ___ Kelly Series (3)
 23. Foliage, as depicted by flower painters (5)
 28. Pioneering Australian modernist Dorritt Black, 1891-1951 (init) (2)

Answers Page 30

Image: Detail from *Mrs Smith's Trivia & the GBH Last Supper* by Lucy Fekete

Solution Page 30

HERE'S A BIT OF TRIVIA FOR YOU ...

Question: Which event took place at the Victorian Artist Society on October 17th of this year?



Answer: If your answer was 'The opening of the VAS Art School Exhibition' then you would be correct. Well done, have a point. For a bonus point, can you tell me what was the subsequent event to that exhibition opening?

(Cues thinking music)

Was your answer 'the VAS Trivia Night'?

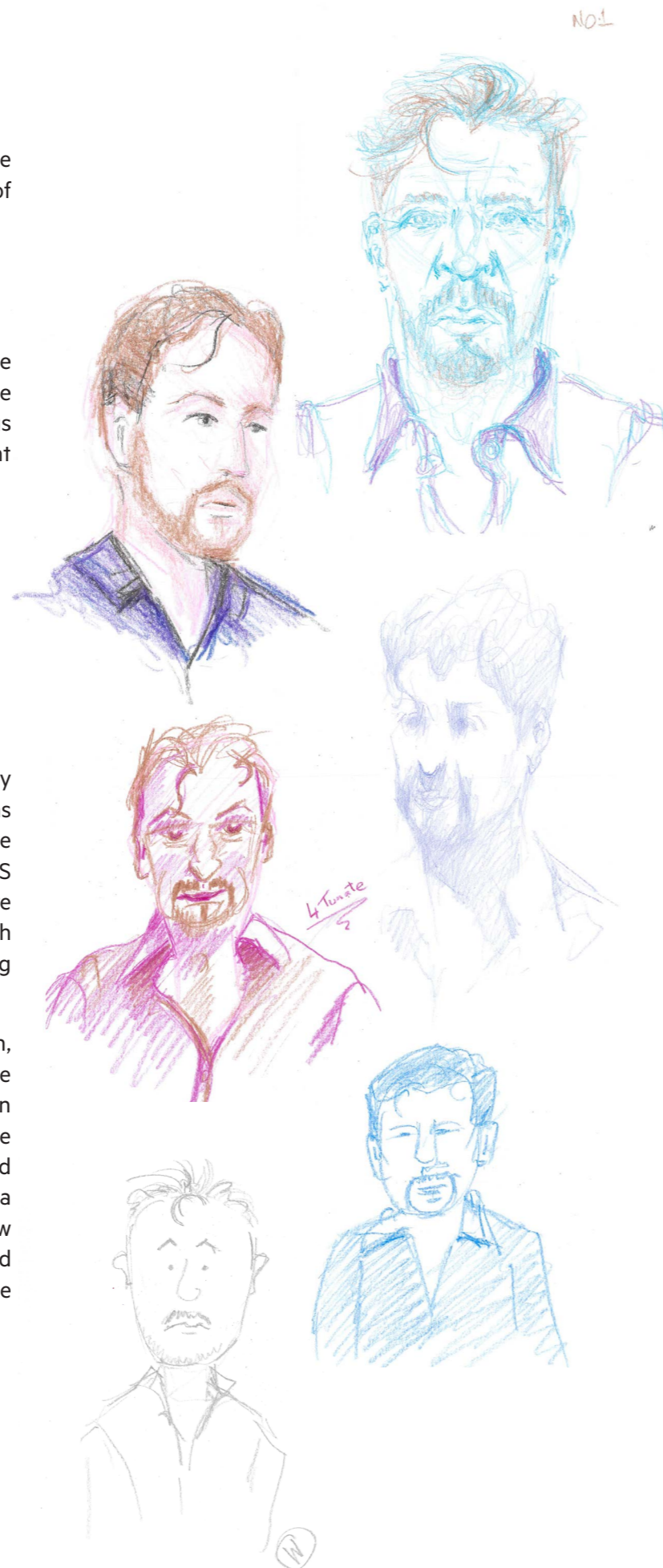
Then DING! DING! DING! WE HAVE A WINNER!

(Release the balloons! Confetti for everyone!)

Trivia night at VAS. What a terrific night it was!

The night was wonderfully social and the energy in the Hammond Gallery was buzzing. Everyone was there to battle it out in the name of fun! There were six teams competing. They were made up of VAS members plus their friends and family, but also there were people who were initially strangers to each other, without a team, showing up and then teaming up together to play. It was beautiful.

The final team names were: Dolores, Intention, 4Tunate, Pencillists, Masterpieces and It's Arthouse Not Porn. Quizmaster and special guest Mike Lyon awarded a bonus point for the most amusing name which went to It's Arthouse Not Porn. Mike then read out 40 questions over four rounds. Plus for extra fun and a quirky twist, he challenged teams to draw him with the paper and coloured crayons provided at each team's table at the end of Round One. Some examples of these masterpieces can be seen here.



For those of you who missed out, let's be clear, this was not a night for art nerds—although questions on art and art history were present to please any art aficionados in the audience. The questions had been meticulously considered with the intention to be as inclusive as possible to everyone participating, arty people and non arty people alike. If you weren't there, but you know the answers to 'Which animal has a name that means River Horse' or 'In which city would you find the Little Mermaid Statue?' or even 'What is the name of the Cathedral opposite VAS?' then where were you!?

By the end everyone there was a winner having ventured out of the house for a bit of wholesome social fun on a 'school night'. However if you are curious to know the winners, then here they are from 3rd to 1st: 3rd place 'Pencillists', 2nd place 'Masterpieces' and in 1st place 'It's Arthouse Not Porn'. When asked about their win, It's Arthouse Not Porn commented 'Rereading the past VAS Magazine quizzes leading up to the night definitely helped. However there was also a lot of general knowledge and popular culture questions that we just knew'.

Thank you Kari Lyon, Hannah Hotker and Bruce Baldey for a beautifully balanced variety of questions. Thank you Quizmaster Mike. Thank you Anne Scott Pendlebury for making the Hammond Gallery space so cosy and fun for the occasion. Guy Marion for pouring the drinks. Ron Smith for taking the photos. And finally thank you Mark Russell for the Trivia Night idea in the first place. What a great night!

Lucy Fekete



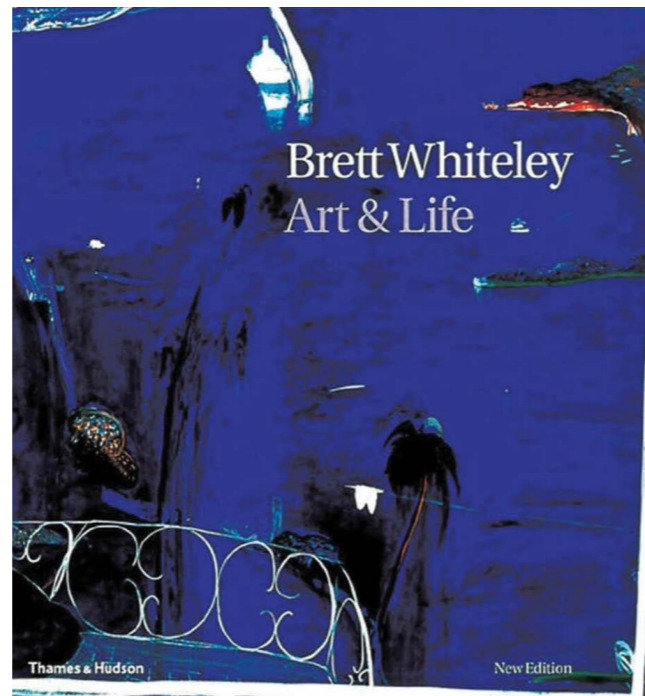
Book Review

BRETT WHITELEY ART & LIFE

By Pearce, Robertson & Capon

Thames & Hudson 1995, 2004, Paperback, 252 Pages

Available from Dymocks \$54 and Amazon Australia \$53



Thames & Hudson has reprinted the record of the 1995 Brett Whiteley Retrospective at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. It was Whiteley's first major retrospective following his premature death and contains 180 brilliant colour plates covering his work from the 1950s up until the last years of his life. His widely acknowledged drawing skill is also on display with the inclusion of 60 ink, pencil and charcoal works. The illustrations are preceded by three essays, two of which are written by people intimately associated with his life and career.

Byran Robertson covers Whiteley's early career overseas where he established his international reputation under the influences of some of the leading artists of the day e.g., Bacon, Hockney, et al.

Wendy Whiteley, his wife and partner for 30 years contributes her personal view of the artist.

Whiteley's early work which earned him his first overseas trip was abstract using a palette derived from the Australian landscape and one of his mentors, Russell Drysdale. He learnt in London that;

'Representing the natural environment and human bodies offered greater expressive potential than painting patterns or gestures with little or no reference to the universe of ordinary human experience!'

He diversified and expanded his themes and styles thereafter to become one of the most eclectic of Australian artists.

The publication has a 'stiff' rather than 'soft' cover and unlike some art folios can be easily handled when reading in bed, for example. This is still the most comprehensive visual record of Whiteley's work and its reprinting and reappearance in the Bookstores is well overdue.



And another Thing

By 1990 Brett Whiteley was trapped irretrievably in the 'Other Thing'. Thirroul, a coastal town south of Sydney, was the safe place he escaped to following relapses. Apparently Whiteley was fascinated with places where great artists worked and favoured Thirroul because in 1922 DH Lawrence lived there. Or perhaps he liked the solitude, the beach walks, and the surf.

His painting *The South Coast After Rain*—his impression of this small township after a subtropical downpour—won him the 1984 Wynne Prize for landscape painting. It belongs to a Private Collection in Melbourne and I haven't seen it. One should really see all art in the flesh before forming



Top: *Remembering Lao Tse*, 1967
Bottom: *Wendy Sleeping*, 1973




an opinion. Nevertheless it is still my favourite Whitely landscape. The brilliant ultramarines of his Lavender Bay series come a close second. At Lavender Bay Whiteley produced some of his best-known (and most forged) works: a series of lyrical celebrations of the bay and his domestic surrounds, along with others that hinted at darker aspects of his lifestyle.

In contrast to the Lavender Bay series, the colour in *South Coast After Rain* is washed out by the rain. The whole town has been rendered soupy in appearance, its perspective twisted and distorted as if seen now through a wet lens.

Or through another kind of haze.

In June 1992, Whiteley, aged 53, checked himself into the Thirroul Beach Motel on Lawrence Hargrave Drive. Several days later, on June 15, he died there from an accidental overdose of heroin, methadone and alcohol.

As he once said;

‘EVERYONE REACHES A POINT IN THEIR LIFE WHERE THEY MUST EITHER CHANGE OR CEASE’. 

Bruce Baldey VAS

References

1. ‘Expressions of suffering outlined’, Christopher Allen Weekend Australian, 4-5 November 2023

Further Reading

Coslovich, G 2017, *Whiteley on Trial*, Melbourne University Press

(If you ever thought that it was a simple matter to pin down a fake AND bring the culprits to justice, read this)

Wilson, A 2016, *Brett Whitely Art—Life and the Other Thing*: The Text Publishing Company, Melbourne

FROM THE VAS COLLECTION

Bill Coleman (1922–1992)

Bill Coleman was born in Ballarat in 1922 but his early art training was at Brighton Technical College. He was apprenticed to P C Grosser as a photolithographic and cartographic artist where he spent 34 years and used to reflect 'I used to work 40 hours at work and 40 hours home painting'.

His later art teachers Victor Greenhalgh and Murray Griffin 'made us think of solidity' and he learnt that art could be 'beyond imitation'.

Artist: Bill Coleman (1922–1992)

Title: *The Bridge*

Date: 1972

Medium: Oil

Size: 39CM W x 29CM H

Donor: Purchased by VAS



Bill's real mentor however was George Bell.

Bill described him as 'the cream above them all' and six years of study with George Bell left a lasting impression on his art.

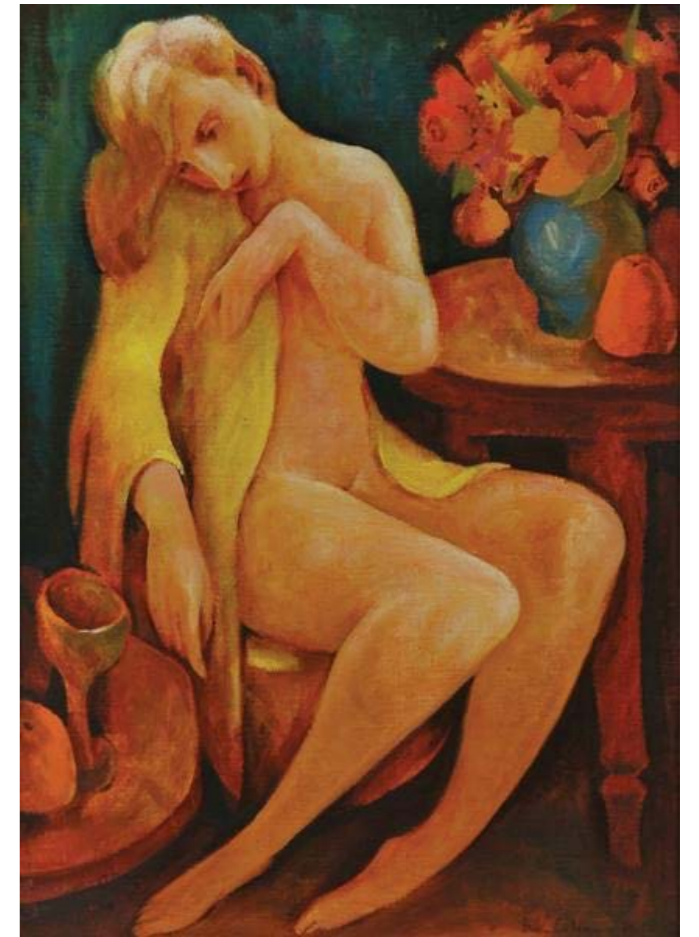
George Bell OBE (1878-1966) had a profound effect on the Australian Modern movement. Along with Arnold Shore his teaching became the centre of modern art in Melbourne incorporating the contemporary ideas of English theorists Roger Fry and Clive Bell. Their students over the years included Russell Drysdale, Sali Herman, Leonard French, Fred Williams, Albert Tucker and our own Connie Stokes and Jock Frater.

Buildings were one of Bill Coleman's favourite subjects, often featuring canals and bridges. There is an atmosphere not only of 'solidity' but also romantic stillness and mystery reinforced with his characteristic use of a muted colour range.

Another favourite subject was the female figure. These often appear pensive and melancholy performing everyday tasks.

A tribute exhibition was held at the VAS where for many years he was a well-respected and honoured member. He joined the VAS in 1946 exhibiting regularly thereafter. In 1985 he was elected to VAS Council. A Tribute Exhibition of his work was held in the VAS in March 1995 opened by Creagh Manning and curated by Kerry Paull.

Bruce Baldey VAS



Top to Bottom
Seated Woman, Oil, 1967
Queue on Flinders Street, Oil, 1966
Street Scene, Oil, 1970

ANSWERS

Quiz

1. Adelaide
2. Genre painting
3. Glass
4. Bowtie
5. Red, yellow and blue
6. Brights
7. Fat
8. Manga
9. Perspective
10. Icon
11. Gustave Courbet
12. Portrait
13. Damien Hirst (\$400 million est)
14. Pointillism
15. Longford
16. Sydney Opera House
17. Tom Roberts
18. Support
19. Central Australia, Northern Territory
20. Canberra
21. National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (>166,000 works of art)

Crossword

A	R	T	D	E	C	O		C	L	I	F	T	O	N
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E		B	U	T	T	O	C	K	S		A	I	R	
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R		R			R	E	D			R				O
S	Y	D	N	E	Y			B	R	A	D	M	A	N



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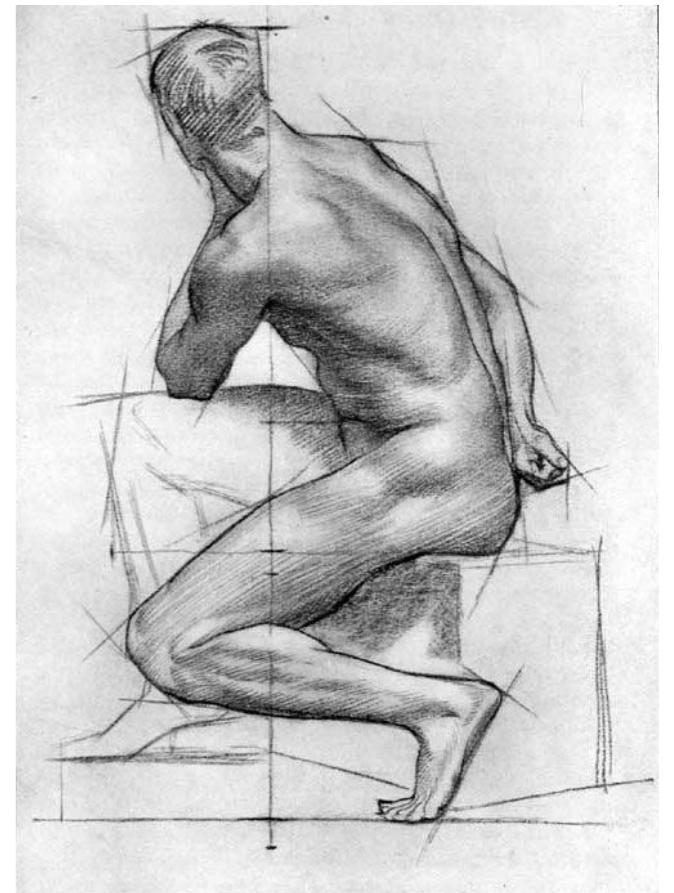
UNTUTORED LIFE DRAWING

These sessions are untutored and suitable for artists who can work confidently on their own. All experience levels are welcome for those who want to draw or paint the human form in a relaxed and quiet environment.

Artists need to bring their own materials. We supply easels and tables. Non-members are welcome to attend.

No bookings are required. Cash or eftpos is to be paid to the class monitor on the day.

Please be aware that these sessions feature male and female nude models. Artists must be 16+ and will need to show proof of age. Attendees aged 16 to 18 must provide proof of consent from a parent or guardian.



FRIDAY SESSIONS

Portraiture and Life group sessions each feature a single long pose for the entire 2 hour session.

PORTRAIT SESSION

4PM-6PM
 \$20 (members)
 \$25 (non-members)

LIFE GROUP

6:30PM-8:30PM
 \$20 (members)
 \$25 (non-members)

BOTH SESSIONS

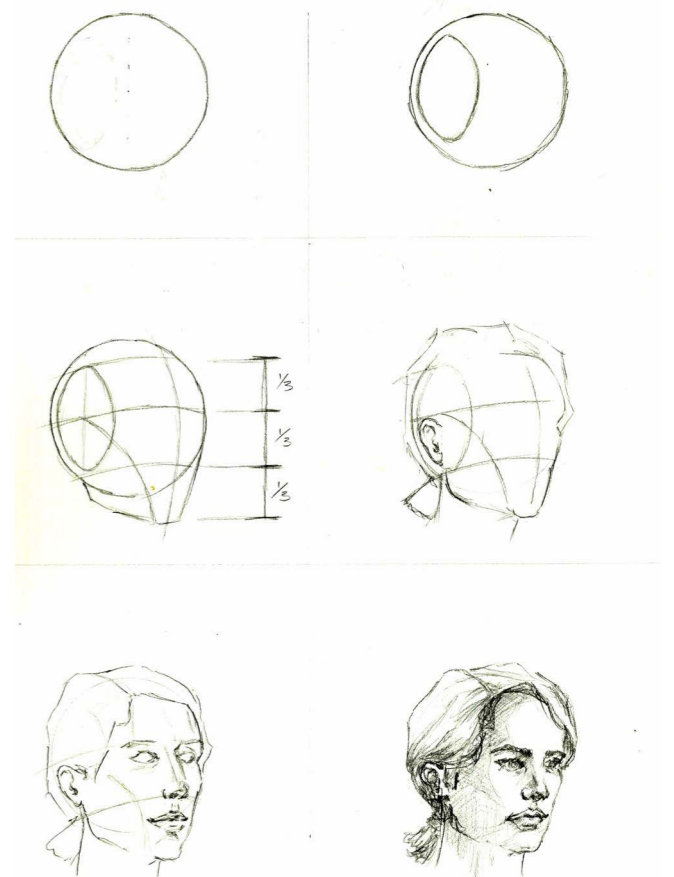
4PM-8:30PM
 \$25 (members)
 \$35 (non-members)

SATURDAY SESSION

Weekly sessions alternate between Long, Medium and Short poses as well as sessions with a single longer pose for painters who want more time to work on a piece. See the schedule of poses online.

LIFE GROUP

1PM-4PM
 \$25 (members)
 \$30 (non-members)



Sketches by Nathalie Anne Marion

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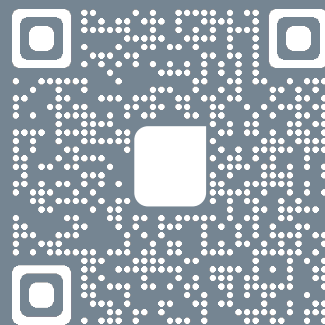
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Transport

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

