

VAS MAGAZINE

Victorian Artists Society

April to June 2024



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Excellency Professor the
Honourable Margaret Gardner AC

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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 we meet. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present, and the Aboriginal Elders of other communities.

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Cover Image: *Corot and Crow*, Oil by
Rachel Dettmann Smith VAS
VAS Autumn Exhibition 2024
Highly Commended Award Winner



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FALLING LEAVES, RISING ART

A Review of the VAS Autumn Select Exhibition

The Victorian Artist's Society congratulates all the artists who were selected and gives thanks to everyone who celebrated with us at one of the most well attended Autumn Selects we've had in recent times. With 122 artworks chosen from a strong field of submissions, and a turnout of around 250 visitors on opening night alone, we congratulate the winners of this year's Autumn Select. Gregory R Smith was awarded first place in painting for his artwork *The Dragon and Golden Gown*, an exceptionally skilful still life. Gregory R Smith is a longtime member, previous VAS President, and a current teacher and Coterie mentor at the Victorian Artists Society, once again demonstrating his strong ongoing artistic contribution and value to the community. In contrast, first place in sculpture was awarded to young emerging artist D'Arcy Rouillard for her bronze sculptures *Descending* and *Ascending*, an accomplished display of balancing stability in functionality with precarious vulnerability in appearance.

Alongside this, the night served to present three esteemed members with VAS awards. This consisted of Radmila Hardi with the Fellowship Award for her exhibition convening of over seven years, Andrew Mackenzie with the Honorary Fellowship Award for his historical advice and ministrations, and Hylton Mackley with the Life Membership Award for his extensive contributions. Downstairs from the Autumn Select, our young artists were allocated their own space for the first time in the Cato Gallery. It was exciting to see them excel and take the opportunity to demonstrate their evergrowing skills. On opening night, we were delighted to award Julia Wang the Young Artists Award for her *The Beauty in Their Eyes*, a highly refined charcoal artwork. Our Coterie, consisting of Natasha Ber, Rhi Edwards, Jenny Gad, Liz Gridley and Michael Smith, also demonstrated their development in the Hammond Gallery. In particular, Liz Gridley's piece *Falco, Bird of Prey* proved to be

successful as she received Highly Commended for her oil portrait on the challenging surface of aluminum. Sam Bruere, another young Artist, in addition to being a longtime member and a fellow staff member, received the Curator's Award for his warmly composed and well executed oil work *The Wanderers*. Truly a time to savour the satisfaction of consistent hard work being validated, as another longtime member, Tracey Yannopoulos, sold her painting *Time and Tide*, a more abstracted style than her usual traditional realism. The Autumn Select evidenced that diligence, experimentation, and persistence really is paramount to success; a motivating and reassuring idea to all our artists regardless of how long they've been making art.

The Dragon and Golden Gown, Oil by Gregory R Smith VAS FVAS, Autumn Select Exhibition Winner 2024



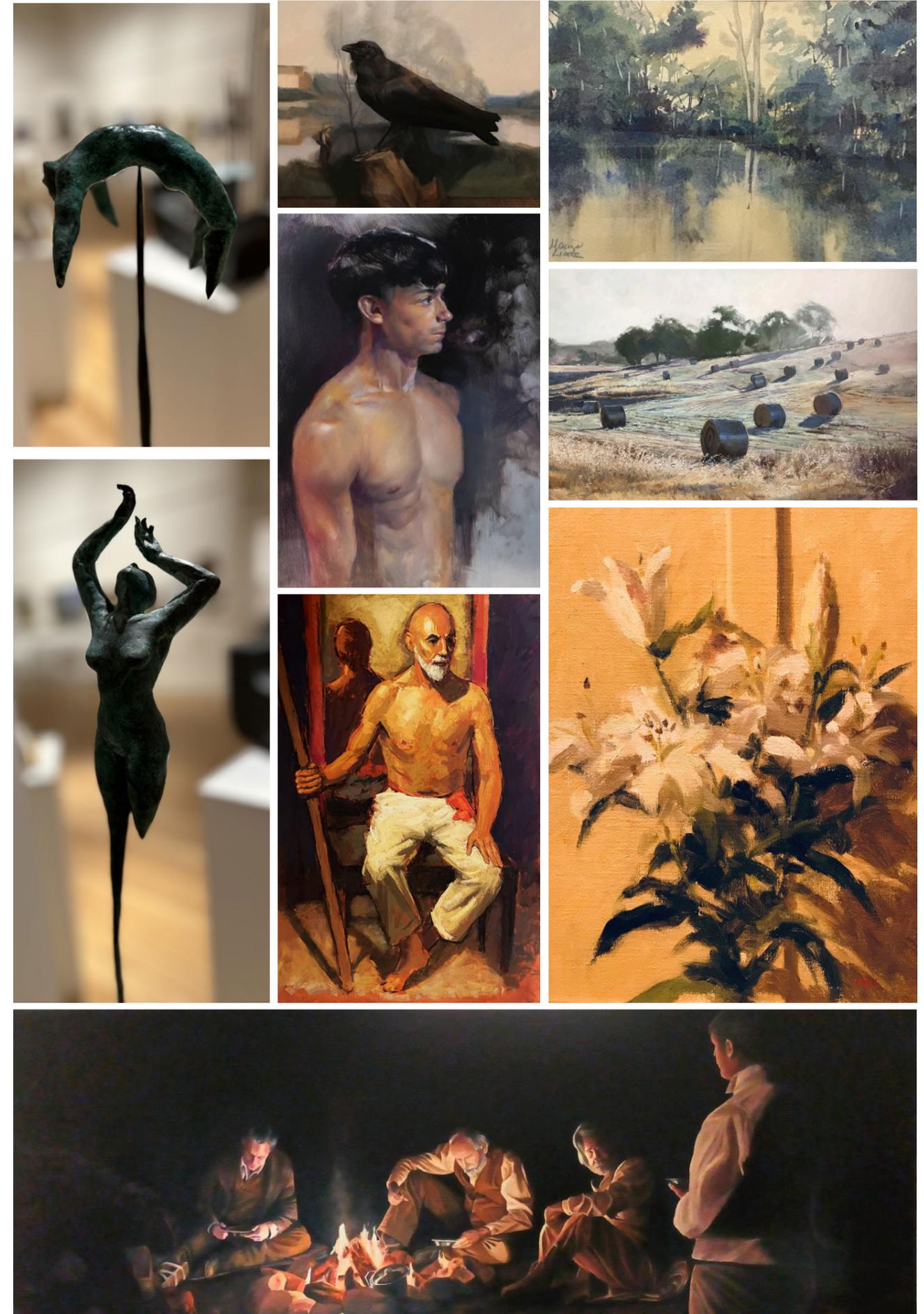
The exhibition was a high-quality arrangement that thoroughly showcased the variety of abilities within our society, with a range of distinct styles and media, from the more traditional oil paint to the printmaking of linocut. Meanwhile other media of choice included acrylic, pastel, graphite, ink, and watercolour. With regard to sculpture, the materials used by different artists consisted of wood, metal, stone, bronze, glass, lead crystal, and steel, indicating a continued growing shift and intrigue into the sculptural form. This is visible in the small-scale mixed media works *Firetails* and *Redfin* of Linda Weil, displaying her attention to detail and thought given to placement. In contrast to the smaller scale is Maxine Wade's stone artwork *The Voyagers*, which conveys a profound sense of

foreboding, and exhibits a preference for simplicity through balanced positioning. Meanwhile, in two-dimensional form, Louis Sauzier's pastel landscape *Moonrise* has been laboriously layered with gestural movements, communicating the sense of an ethereal presence to the viewer. After an honoring experience of witnessing the evolution of teachers, members, staff, and young artists, we eagerly look forward to seeing how our artists manage to exceed this at the upcoming Winter Select, or even to see what new artists the next season brings.

Lucy Wilde

Right: *Redfin* by Linda Weil
Below: *Time and Tide* by Tracey Yannopoulos

Opposite, Left Column: *Descending & Ascending*, Bronzes by D'Arcy Rouillard, Sculpture Winner
Opposite, Centre Column, Highly Commended Works: *Corot and Crow*, Oil by Rachel Dettmann Smith VAS; *Falco, Bird of Prey*, Oil on Aluminium by Liz Gridley; *Richard*, Pastel by Rodney Edelsten
Opposite, Right Column, Highly Commended Works: *Summer Morning on the Yarra*, Watercolour by Maxine Wade; *The Sun is Up*, Oil on Linen by Ben Winspear; *Christmas Lilies*, Oil by Don James
Opposite, Bottom: *The Wanderers*, Oil by Sam Bruere VAS, Curator' Choice Award



SMOKE NIGHTS

AT THE VICTORIAN ARTISTS SOCIETY

The Scene

The year is 1899.

Well-dressed gentlemen numbering well over one hundred are seated at chairs and tables in a Gallery setting.

They comprise members of a Society of artists and sculptors including many distinguished male guests from various other walks of life.

The President of this Society steps forward onto the podium. He suspects that one or two uninvited females have been secretly allowed in- but he must, at all costs, remain tactful.

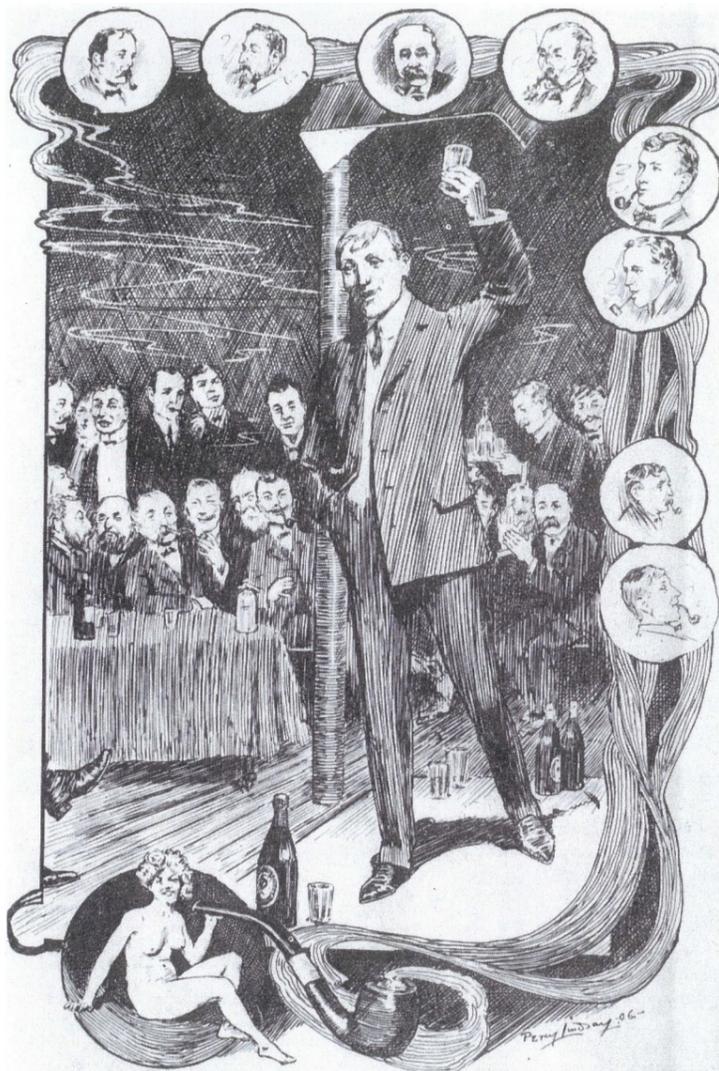
After his brief welcome to everyone and a toast to the Queen, a dapper looking young chap with a generous moustache is invited to step up and set the tone for the evening with a light-hearted snippet of verse.

Cyril Beaufort, rakish young artist, accepts, thanks the President and rather carefully steps forward on to the podium, for he has already enjoyed several glasses of the excellent claret being handed around.

He clears his throat and rather dramatically begins in a well enunciated manner:

**There's a combative
artist named
Whistler,
Who is, like his hog
hairs, a bristler;
A tube of white
lead,
And a punch on the
head,
Offered varied
attractions to
Whistler.**

Whereupon there was instant applause and calls for 'More! More!'



'Gentlemen, welcome to you all this evening!'

So, was this perhaps a typical opening to one of our famous Smoke Nights, held well over 100 years ago?

It is rather unlikely that this was the actual limerick recited by Mr Beaufort. However, it may possibly have been doing the rounds of Melbourne's art circles at the time, as both composing and reciting limericks was all the rage during this era.

Thus along with 'Charades', impromptu recitations and feats of performing on solo instruments 'extemporare'—these Gentlemen Only evenings from our early days must have been quite rowdy and jolly events.

But do we actually know how or why these evenings, these 'Smoke Nights' came into being?



The Early Years

What we do know from archival records, Council Minutes, newspaper reviews and the old VAS Newsletters, is that years before our Galleries in Albert Street were built a number of gentlemen members of the Society organized themselves under the guidance of a Mr A Hart, into a dedicated group who met once a month on a Friday evening for a night of 'good banter and entertainment, excellent rare roast beef sandwiches and even better red wine.'

The night began with a short address by the President and a toast to the Monarch followed by a brief 'Comical Interpretation' to get the evening started.

The meeting place was the Buxton Gallery in the heart of 'Marvellous' Melbourne.

These convivial evenings grew in popularity, and as participation increased, by 1893 the meetings were moved from Collins Street to Eastern Hill and into our fine new Albert Street building.

Upstairs in the Hammond Gallery there was seating for over 200.

It was, of course back then, an all male affair—apart from the presence of an occasional assortment of 'lady friends' who after charming their way in, were seen clinging adoringly to the arm of a less than discreet gent. This fellow then quickly ushered the lady in question out onto the balcony to enjoy a glass of something sparkling where she was probably forced to listen to a diatribe on the complexities of the Gothic architecture of St Patrick's Cathedral across the road.



So who attended these illustrious nights?

Apart from our own painters and sculptors, there were all sorts of businessmen, local politicians, men of letters, legal and medical professionals, and a mix of musicians, theatre designers and other 'arty types' as well as the rich and infamous.

We quickly became a central meeting place for many of Melbourne's most

**significant and notorious
society gentlemen.**

Our Smoke Nights being a regular and major local event were well publicized and gained frequent reviews in local daily papers such as the 'Argus.'

Smoke Night July 13th 1901
Drinks & Consumed

10 Bottles Whiskey	3/9	1. 17. 6
2 Bottles Claret	1/6	1. 6
15 Bottles Lager	3/4	6. 11
3 Bottles Stout	9/11	2. 9
6 Bottles English Ale	9/11	5. 6
12 Syffhaus	4/4	4. 0
24 Bottles Soft Drinks	9/12	3. 0
Biscuits & Cheese		3. 0
Cigars & Cigarettes		14. 0
		<hr/> 3. 14. 2
Cash taken 4. 19. 3		
		28
4 Bottles Whiskey	1- 0- 0	
Hire of glasses	4- 6	
Spice & Sauce	5- 0	
Attendance	10. 0	
Expenses 5. 13. 8		
Paid Cash 3- 0- 0 to Post		
Expenses 1- 19. 6		
		<hr/> 4. 19. 6
		Spotted July 17/01

The 'Drinks and Refreshment' List for a typical 'Smoke Night', July 13, 1901

The Middle Years

Evenings began around 8pm and were strictly ticketed events.

Members and guests were met by the presiding Council and President and the wine began to flow immediately.

There was an abundance of refreshments and no shortage of alcohol either.

For a typical Smoke Night in 1901, for example, the food and liquor bill amounted to around 12 pounds with a final total after all expenses of 16 pounds.

Items included:

10 Bottles of Whisky at 3/9d per bottle.

There was fine Claret, Lager, Stout, English ale, soft drinks, cigars and cigarettes.

On top of everything else, 3/- worth of cheese and biscuits accompanied a feast of rare roast beef sandwiches.

There was also a hire fee for glasses as well as other innumerable expenses 'not recorded'.

And of course there was entertainment too.

Fred McCubbin, for example, sang Schubert and Walter Withers recited Banjo Paterson, whilst other artists amused the audience with bawdy ditties, questionable limericks, skits and dramatic monologues. There was something for all tastes.

Professional musicians were also called upon to offer instrumental solos in the finest classical tradition.

One performer was Councillor John Ford Paterson, who regularly recited in his rich Scots brogue 'We are Na Fou'—a tender tribute perhaps to his own expanding young family.

There were excellent speeches, anecdotes, arguments and vigorous discussions and by the early 1900s our Smoke Nights were at the height of popularity.

In his contribution to our book *Gallery on Eastern Hill*, G Hermon Gill writes:

Guests filled the Galleries and overflowed onto the staircase and out onto the street- where they contemplated with artistic meditateness the glories of St Patrick's Cathedral in the cold moonlight.

At one particular Smoke Night, when John Mather was President, he stood tall and spoke about the influence of 'the amateur in artistic practice'.

This comment sparked much shouting and discussion, after which Ford Paterson (having just completed 'We are Na Fou' for the fifth time in as many months) proposed that:

The first and most important of the Society's aims should be to encourage Australian National art.

There was a chorus of approval and calls for a 'toast'.

Glasses were raised.

Hence, in addition to the long running Autumn and Spring exhibitions, the Society soon added several more shows to the annual calendar.

By 1908, with over 200 attendees at each evening, our VAS July Newsletter reported:

There was an exceptionally good attendance of members; the large Gallery being crowded.

The arrangement could not have been better.

The programme was a varied and most excellent one—songs, recitations, musical selections and every item more than good.

The President Mr Mather occupied the Chair and during the evening, as usual, made a few timely remarks upon the present position of Art in Victoria.

Mr White presided at the piano and at the close of the evening was afforded a hearty vote of thanks.

A similar compliment being paid to Mr Hart for arranging and carrying through such a successful evening.

A further report concluded:

The audience fully complied with the traditions of Bohemia by absorbing the usual amount of the distilled dew of Bonnie Scotland.



A "Bit of the
Dinner
Victorian Artists
Society

The Final Years

However, as time passed and World War 1 approached, our artists became distracted by the need to harness their skills and talents and turn their attention to making money for the War effort.

Sadly, during this period a number of our most significant painters passed away—Charles Condor, Fred McCubbin and Walter Withers—and many of the younger members were enlisting for active service.

Smoke Night numbers may have increased but visitors and guests soon outnumbered our own members—and the hard work and organization required to continue with these nights simply came to an end.

Although our building remained open during the War and the pandemic which quickly followed, our classes and exhibitions could only continue for our members on a very modest scale.

Convivial social gatherings became undesirable as energies were concentrated on Fund raising and supporting needy Charities.



And so by the end of the War our Smoke Nights ceased altogether.

There was certainly a strong active membership of artists within the Society, but the heady nights of boisterous gatherings and vigorous debate had disappeared along with the cheerful banter and clever, but risqué entertainment.

The muffled female laughter from the balcony at midnight had long gone and the pungent odour of beer and cigars, and the cheap scent of Eau de Cologne wafting back into the Galleries was also now a thing of the past.

With it, the President's hearty welcome and call to toast the new King had also, over time, simply become just a fading memory.

A new generation of art and artists had emerged.

A new order had begun.

Anne Scott Pendlebury

Interested in VAS Smoke Nights?

Watch this space for future updates ...

AN AUSTRALIAN IN GAY PAREE

Agnes Goodsir 1864–1939

Paris is the epicentre of the art world in the 1920s and 30s.

Painters, writers and performers from around the globe flock to the City of Light in their pursuit of artistic and social freedoms.

Female fashion changes from the buxom curves and restrictive clothing of the pre-war Belle Époque to a liberated, boyish look in the Roaring Twenties.

The new woman is emerging, and so is open Sapphic love.

Australian artist Agnes Goodsir steps into this world to capture it on canvas with her muse, model and partner, American divorcée, Rachel Dunn, 21 years younger.

Goodsir's works *La Parisienne* and *Girl with Cigarette* epitomise the times and hint at an affaire de coeur.

But more of those paintings later, let's look first at the background to Agnes and Rachel arriving in Paris together.

Born at Portland in 1864, raised in Melbourne and trained at the Bendigo School of Mines as a mature-age art student in the late 1890s, Agnes, like so many Australian artists, joins the rush to Paris. Arriving in 1900 she quickly establishes a reputation, wins medals at painting academies and opens a studio in Montparnasse, close to the popular lesbian bar and safe haven, Le Monocle, which she reportedly frequented. The first of almost annual appearances at the prestigious Paris salons begins in 1902.

Agnes moves to London in 1906, exhibits at the Royal Academy and through necessity turns to commissioned portraits of the rich and famous.

Meanwhile, Rachel Dunn, an only child, in the company of her widowed mother travels to

England from America in 1909 to pursue a career as a concert pianist. Soon after arriving she meets Agnes and plays at her St John's Wood soirée where guests include Arthur Streeton and John Longstaff.

The Dunns and Agnes share a house before Rachel's marriage, a childless union that lasts just a few years in wartime London. One of Goodsir's best paintings, *A Letter from the Front* (now *Girl on Couch*), emanates from this period. Rachel, set free by divorce and her mother's death, partners Agnes before both head to Paris in the early 1920s.

As the pair take up residence in the same apartment block as the English-language bookshop Shakespeare & Co where the female owners are publishing James Joyce's *Ulysses*, a French art critic declares Goodsir has 'the best two portraits in the Salon' in 1922.

the best two portraits in the Salon

Soon after the Société Nationale des Beaux Arts elects Mlle Goodsir as an associate before she becomes a full member in 1926, an accolade of the highest order and rare among foreigners. The only Australians so honoured to this point are Emanuel Phillips-Fox, Rupert Bunny and Bessie Davidson.

Back to the paintings.

La Parisienne (c.1924) portrays Rachel as a sophisticated Parisian flapper of the day sporting cloche hat, short bobbed hair, high collar and cigarette in hand in a clearly androgynous image, challenging contemporary expectations of womanhood. In short, 1920s female emancipation personified. The ring on each hand too may suggest a past and present relationship in this 'gently seductive' portrait.

Art curator Deborah Hart says of *La Parisienne*:

The tonal palette and delicately modulated forms recall Goodsir's early training in contrast with modernist practices at the time. Yet a more subtle feeling of modernity pervades the sitter.

As it does in the decorative interior portrait *Girl with Cigarette* (c.1925) where Rachel, dressed in a boldly-patterned shawl, sits at a Latin Quarter café with her coffee gazing at the viewer while imparting an air of individuality and assuredness, with a cigarette once again used to symbolise women's liberation in the 1920s.

Goodsir says of French art at the time:

It is altogether different from Impressionism for it seeks to portray more than a passing phase. There is real depth behind it and the hope to enshrine some piece of beauty.

Some of that depth surely includes chemistry with the model.

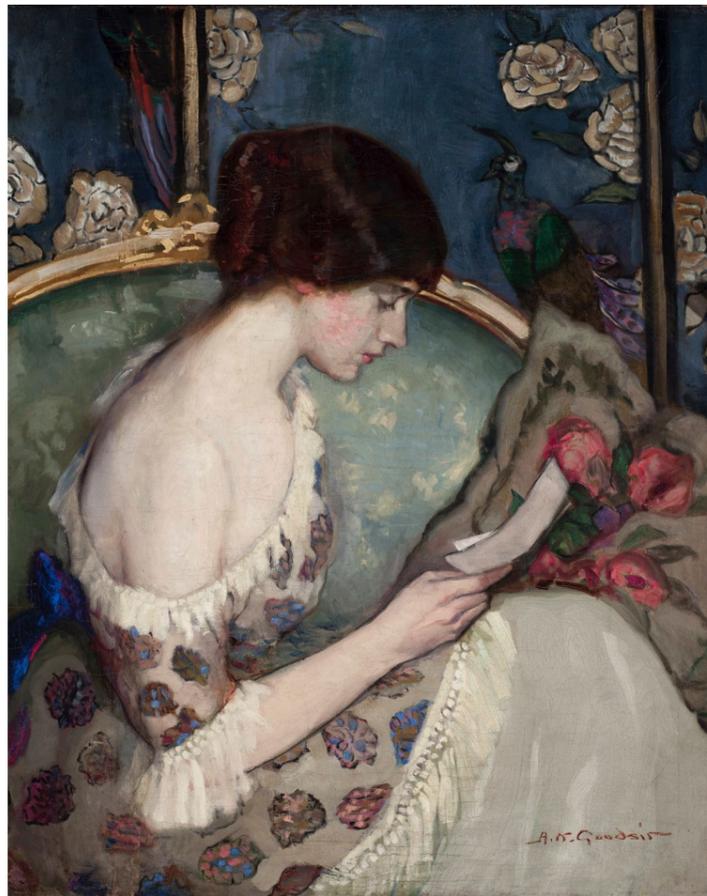
Agnes' painting prowess, portraits of 'international repute' aside, also extends to still lifes, landscapes and shock, horror ... female nudes, traditionally a man's domain.

Top: *La Parisienne*, Agnes Goodsir, c.1924, National Gallery of Australia
Right: *Girl with Cigarette*, Agnes Goodsir, c.1925, Bendigo Art Gallery





Agnes Goodsir, self-portrait, 1900, National Portrait Gallery



Girl on Couch (aka Letter from the Front), 1915, Bendigo Art Gallery

For all the acclaim she receives in Paris though, the name Agnes Goodsir rates little mention in Australia during her lifetime, outside women's pages.

Why?

Well, many reasons. Agnes is unknown before she ventures overseas, is not the self-promoting type or radical in style and only exhibits solo once in Australia, in 1927 to reviews that fail to capture the essence of her nuanced interpretations.

More importantly, a well-entrenched patriarchy runs the show at home and favours outward-looking pastoral works, not inward-looking sensual ones. Little wonder then that a string of local female artists take off for Paris and London, some to live permanently.

Why rush home when the misogynistic and homophobic State Gallery director in Sydney and later Melbourne, JS MacDonald, is asserting 'women had always painted badly' and rails against their 'intrusion' into art.

'Unless real painters speak up for themselves and right art, the women and their near-men abettors will ruin both', he adds.

Agnes, now a real parisienne, stays on until she dies in 1939. In a loving tribute, Rachel sends 40 paintings to family and galleries in Australia before passing away in 1950.

Our painter rests with her muse in the same grave at Cimetière parisien de Bagneux, occasionally recognised here but still largely overlooked. ✍

Ian Hobbs



Agnes and Rachel (at left) with friends, France, c.1930

FROM THE VAS COLLECTION

AW 'Bill' Harding FVAS (1930–2010)

Arthur William (Bill) Harding joined the VAS in 1960 and served as VAS President from 1991 to 1995. In 1991 he was VAS Artist of the Year. Bill chose teaching as a profession attending the Melbourne Teachers College and later studying at the RMIT as a mature age student under William Frater and Bernard Smith.

The influence of Frater is evident in Harding's work with its broad and fluent brushstrokes placing him firmly in the company of the mid-twentieth century moderns.

It was Frater after all who taught his students to 'draw with the paintbrush'.

Like Morandi, who explored his subjects with a passionate patience and caressed the simplest 'natura morta' (still life) until it reached a higher realm, Bill renders his subjects and figures with a quietude that steadies then transcends a moment in time. He uses a disciplined palette, a uniform brush size and often the plainest of board supports.¹

The somewhat limited tonal and colour range of the Self Portrait belies his command of colour and chroma (see *Kitty with Chapeau*).

Primarily a figurative painter working in oils Bill Harding held 18 self-funded major solo exhibitions at the VAS and a further number in the Cato Gallery with fellow artist Noel Flood, exhibiting both paintings and ceramics at the VAS. He participated in each series of annual seasonal group membership exhibitions. The number of major solo exhibitions he held showing 60–80 paintings, using all three galleries upstairs on each occasion, is possibly still unsurpassed by any member to date. His first was in 1966 and opened by William Frater. The many roles he undertook as part of his membership signified his passionate

support and dedication to the VAS and his fellow members in the challenging Melbourne art scene. He curated his 'Retrospective 1960–1995', in 1998, and a second survey of 109 paintings 'An Exhibition of a Lifetime' celebrating his oeuvre, was presented by his children and held in May 2018, eight years after his death. Bill lectured in painting and drawing in a long career at many tertiary institutions in Victoria including Burwood State College and at what was then the Melbourne College of Advanced Education.

He curated the Melbourne Modernists Exhibition in 1992 and was responsible for the VAS Centenary Book *The Gallery on Eastern Hill*.

Bruce Baldey VAS



Self Portrait by AW 'Bill' Harding FVAS (1930–2010)
1980, Oil on composition board, 60cm x 49cm
VAS Collection

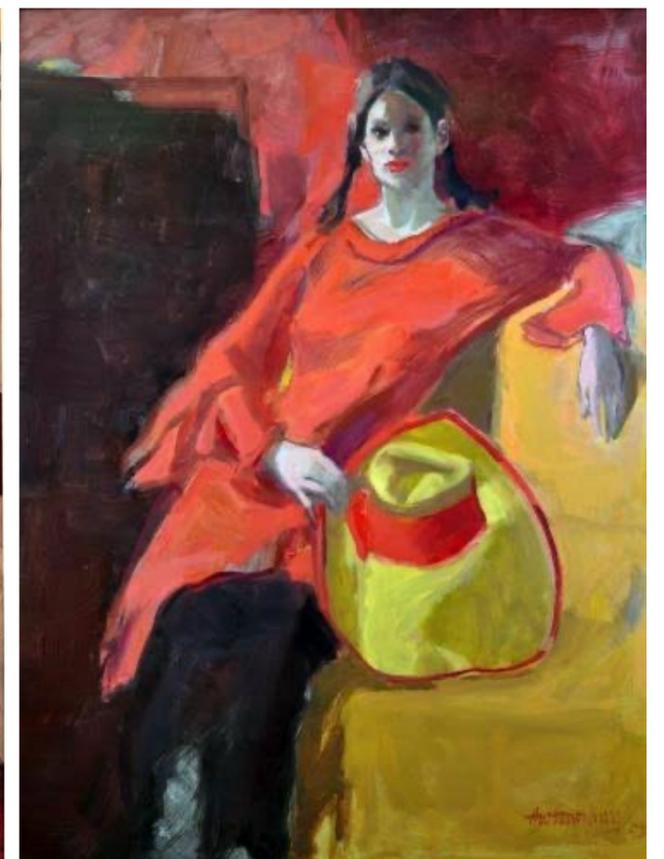
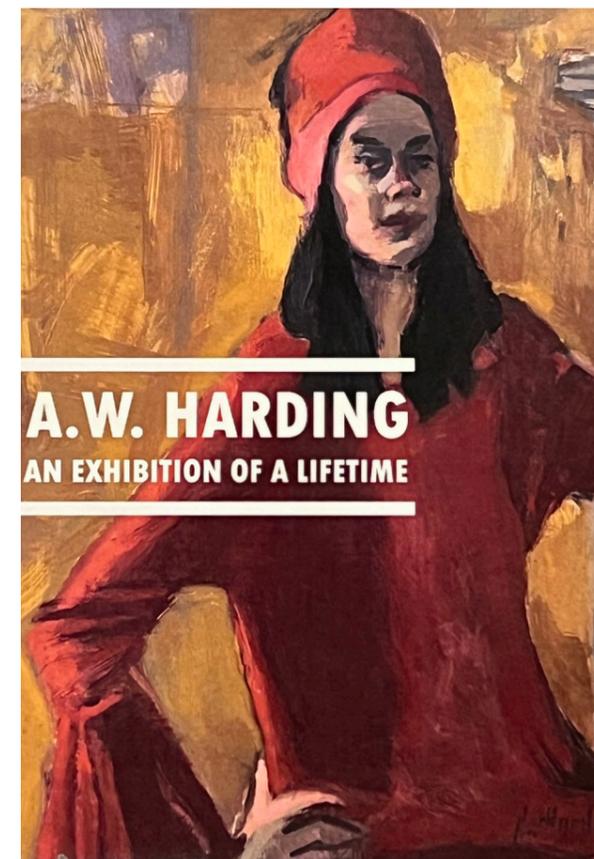
Opposite, Top: *Coffee pot and Parsnips*, by AW 'Bill' Harding, Castlemaine Art Museum Collection, 49.5cm x 59.5cm, Gift of the Artist, 1997
Opposite, Right: *Kitty with Chapeau*, Oil 1993

AW Harding is represented in the following collections:

- Bendigo Institute of Technology (now La Trobe University College of Northern Victoria)
- Bendigo Art Gallery
- Deakin University
- Geelong Art Gallery
- Benalla Art Gallery
- Victoria University
- National Bank Collection
- University of Melbourne
- Monash University
- Castlemaine Art Gallery
- Commonwealth Art Bank
- Waverley City Gallery
- Rural Finance Corporation
- Ballarat Art Gallery

References

1: Lesley Harding, from her introduction to the 1995 Retrospective Exhibition (Available in the VAS Archive).





Above: *Coffee pot and Parsnips*, by AW 'Bill' Harding, Castlemaine Art Museum Collection, 49.5cm x 59.5cm, Gift of the Artist, 1997
Opposite: Detail from *The Dragon and Golden Gown*, Oil by Gregory R Smith VAS FVAS, Autumn Select Exhibition Winner 2024

ART ACROSS THE STRAIT

A Tasmanian Sojourn

When I studied Art at school you could be forgiven for thinking that Tasmanian art began and ended with the colonial artist John Glover (1767–1849). Of course nothing could be farther from the truth. It was also said he was one of those early colonial painters who never adapted to the colours of the Australian landscape. Similarly, the spaghetti like trunks of his gum trees were also thought to be imported. However, it turns out that their shape is peculiar to what is called ‘Glover Country’ in northern Tasmania and related to the relatively poor soils in that area. Closer inspection of his landscape reveals the characteristic clumpy nature of eucalypt foliage containing the reds of the Australian bush. Quite different to the palettes of the Claudian landscapes that established his reputation in England.

Glover was well into his sixties when he joined his sons in Van Diemen’s Land where together they established Patterdale Farm¹ in Deddington at the foothills of Ben Lomond. The Glover Society, established in 2001 to honour and promote Glover’s legacy, has commissioned a memorial statue² in nearby Evandale by Melbourne sculptor Peter Corlett.

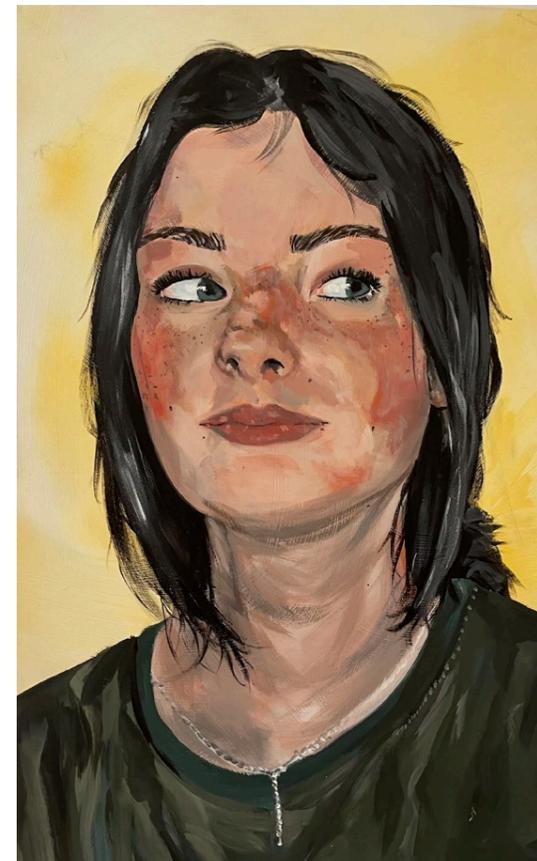
25km to the west outside the town of Longford is the gravesite³ of a VAS favourite son—Tom Roberts (1856–1931). The site could not be more serene with an outlook over the flat and fertile agricultural land sweeping eastwards towards the Ben Lomond National Park.

Roberts met his first wife in Tasmania in 1869 and visited the island frequently. He was an admirer of Glover’s work and painted *Under Ben Lomond* as a tribute. After he died his ashes were returned to the family plot of his second wife.

Below: Glover Memorial; Bottom: Tom Robert’s Gravesite; Right: *Under Ben Lomond*, by Tom Roberts 1925, NGA



Right: *Government Issued Paranoia*, by Charlee Saunders, Mixed media, ArtRage 2023
Left: *Untitled*, by Brittney Saward, ArtRage 2023



To the north in Launceston is Tasmania’s second largest public Gallery—the Queen Victoria Museum and Art gallery (QVMAG) where in January this year the latest iteration of *ArtRage* was on exhibition. *ArtRage* travels throughout Tasmania (Hobart, Launceston, Burnie/Devonport), and showcases the work of Years 11 and 12 students in Tasmania celebrating the last years of art practice at secondary school.

Now in its 29th year, *ArtRage* continues to provide a platform for students studying art as part of their Tasmanian Certificate of education (TCE), while supporting and celebrating the creativity and talent of budding artists statewide.⁴

As you might expect not only wonderful creativity but also teenage angst is on full display here.

Significantly one of the joint Winners is a piece of conceptual art by Charlee Saunders titled *Government Issued Paranoia*. The other is a visual essay on body shaming *Perfection* by Lily Chatterton. No less impressive are the traditional style portraits exhibited by Brittney Saward and Madison Low.

In the Permanent Collection upstairs at QVMAG you will find another landscape by VAS alumni Tom Roberts—*Farm, Mt Roland, Tasmania*.

Tasmania’s premier public gallery is the Tasmanian Museum and Art gallery (TASMAG) in Hobart where we shall find some more old friends of the VAS including Tom Roberts’s delightful aubade *A Morning on the Hastings River*.

Opposite: *Mount Wellington and Hobart Town from Kangaroo Point*, John Glover 1834, TASMAG/NGV
 Below: *A Morning on the Hastings River*, by Tom Roberts 1896, TASMAG



TASMAG has the largest collection of the works of Glover in the State. He is well represented throughout the nation's galleries. This is not surprising since Glover found a broader market for his Tasmanian work overseas and in the other colonies down under. He also found a niche market locally painting his neighbourhood farms. Prior to leaving England he had exhibited on and off for twenty years at the Royal Academy in London but for whatever reasons he was never offered Associate membership of that institution. Perhaps the fact that he was a self-taught oil painter and water colourist counted against him in establishment circles.

Ironically it was probably the fact that he had exhibited successfully in Britain that counted against him in provincial Hobart where most artists earned a living painting amateurish portraits of the local gentry. Ultimately Glover relied on the earnings from his painting to support the running costs of his Patterdale Farm.

He found a ready market for his landscapes in Britain although some of his clientele objected to the presence of the indigenous peoples in his work. *Mount Wellington and Hobart Town from Kangaroo Point* painted in 1834 at Patterdale, is densely populated with dancing Aboriginal people

although by 1834 they were all dispossessed of their land and deported to Flinders Island.

Mt Wellington now officially bearing its Aboriginal name *kunanyi* rises up above the colony's capital in the distance. To the right and off the edge of the painting farther upstream on the Derwent River is the future site of MONA (Museum of New and Ancient Art): another gallery, of sorts, and Tasmania's number one tourist attraction.

But that's another story.

Bruce Baldey VAS

References

1. Patterdale and Nile Farm, 173 Uplands Road, Deddington TAS. Glover's house, studio and gardens, 46KM SE of Launceston. Open 10:30–15:30 for self-guided and other tours.
2. John Glover Memorial, Cnr. Logan Road and Huxtable Lane, Evandale, TAS, Photography by Jenny Woodhouse.
3. Tom Roberts Grave, Christ Church Burial Ground, Illawarra Road, Carrick near Longford TAS, Photography by the Editor.
4. Extract from ArtRage 2023 Catalogue.

Further Reading

Radford, R 2022, *John Glover: Patterdale Farm and the Revelation of the Australian Landscape*, Ovata Press, Launceston



THE QUIZ



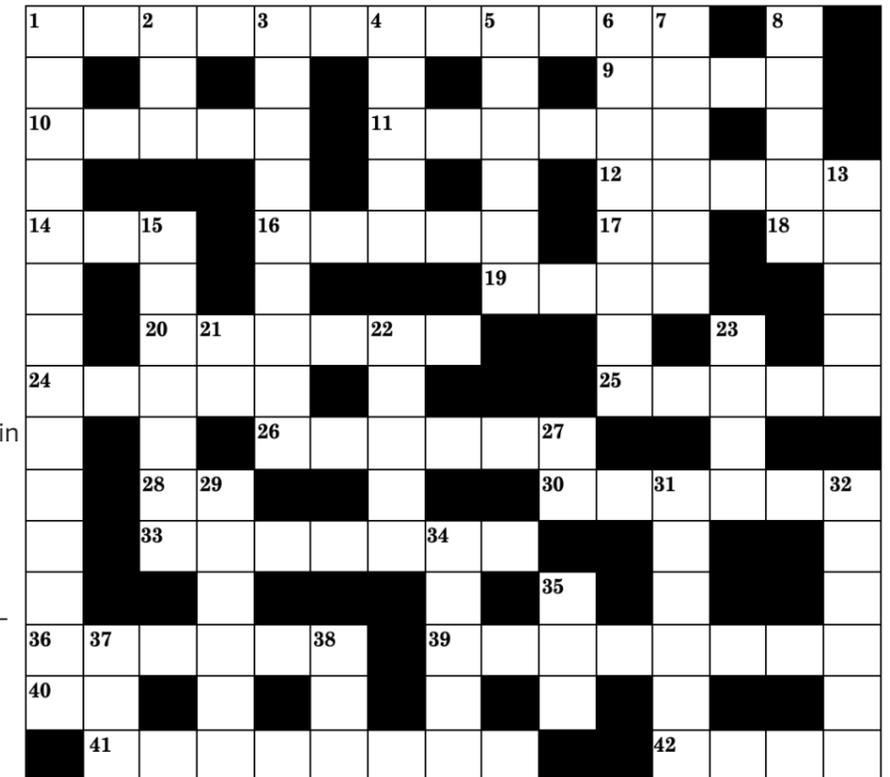
1. What do you call a point with no end?
2. What is the resistance of a pigment to gradual fading on exposure to light called?
3. What are the three primary colours?
4. What is the shape of fusilli pasta?
5. 'Warm' colours fall within which three sections of the colour wheel?
6. Which Japanese contemporary artist is heavily associated with polka dots, and uses them throughout her art across various media?
7. What print technique was used to create Japanese Artist Hokusai's *The Great Wave off Kanagawa*?
8. Which of Picasso's famous paintings was inspired by the bombings of civilians during the Spanish Civil War?

9. What is the phenomenon of an object seen in perspective receding towards a vanishing point but appearing shorter than it is in reality?
10. What is the brand of soup in Andy Warhol's soup can series?
11. The Art Deco style is associated with which twentieth century decades?
12. Who was the 2023 VAS Artist of the Year?
13. What type of balloon animal is Jeff Koons commonly associated with?
14. Which Norwegian artist painted *The Scream* in 1893?

15. Which period has a French name that translated to 'rebirth' in English?
16. In which country did Futurism originate?
17. Heidi Museum of Modern Art is located in which Melbourne suburb?
18. Australia's first 'National Gallery' is in which city?
19. Born in 1902 in Ntaria (formerly Hermannsburg) in the Northern Territory, who was Australia's first nationally recognised indigenous modern artist?
20. The Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory is in which Australian city?
21. Name the Australian Heidelberg School artist whose painting, shown in public for the first time in 130 years, sold in April at auction in Sydney for M\$1.875?

Across

1. Location of Victorian Artists' Society (6,6)
9. Whiteley, Quilty and Amor were born in this country (abbrev) (4)
10. Relationship between light and dark shades, Meldrum's approach (5)
11. Australian artist Buckmaster (1897–1968) (6)
12. Lead is generally not used in paint now because it is (5)
14. Mark Rothko (1903–1949), colour field painter in this country (abbrev) (3)
16. John Singer Sargent (1856–1925) painted his muse on this Italian island (5)
17. Melinda Rackham, artist, curator and writer (init) (2)
18. Cherry Hood, known as a painter of oversized children's faces (init) (2)
19. Lloyd (1895–988), Australian landscape painter, name rhymes with grease (4)
20. Create a solid object from clay, wood, metal or stone (6)
24. The name of a painting (5)
25. Light sandy brown colour associated with interior design (5)
24. Long-standing exhibition institution in London, the Academy (6)
26. Attractively simple in appearance relating to the countryside, as an old farmhouse in a painting (6)
28. Isabel Tweddle (1875–1945), foundation member of the Twenty Melbourne Painters (init) (2)
30. Visual representations of something, as in digital (6)
33. First name of French sculptor Rodin, similar to one of the months (7)
36. Colour between red and yellow, a fruit (6)



39. Surrealism took off in the 1920s, the decade known as The Roaring (8)
 40. Exhibiting a copy of another's painting is a no-... (2)
 41. A painting by Emily Kame Kngwarreye from the Territory sold for \$2,100,000 in 2017 (8)
 42. Sometimes oil paintings require a second of varnish (4)
- ## Down
1. Leading member of Heidelberg School, known for blue and gold panoramas (6,8)
 2. Melbourne artist/tutor Winspear (3)
 3. Revarnish (9)
 4. The farm animals in Tom Roberts' painting *Shearing the Rams* (5)
 5. Leading French impressionist, Pierre-Auguste (6)
 6. Suburb VAS is located in (abbrev) (4, 4)
 7. Instructors, teachers (6)
 8. Valuable old paintings are sometimes found in an upstairs (5)
 13. This nude painting hangs at Young & Jacksons Hotel (5)

15. Gustav Klimt (1862–1918), a renowned painter from (7)
21. Chlorine is used in bleach art, what is its symbol? (2)
22. Sits as a model (5)
23. German-Australian sculptor Inge.... (1915–2016) or our reigning Charles III (4)
27. Courtauld Institute, specialises in art history and conservation in London (init) (2)
29. Famous English landscape painter (1775–1851), subject of a 2014 film (6)
31. Shade of blue, named after the North Pole region (6)
32. End of the day, dusk, a time that attracts painters (6)
34. Same as 7 down but singular (5)
35. Done, artist best known for design work, has own brand (3)
37. VAS councillor and media manager Smith (3)
38. Edmund Arthur Harvey (1907–1994), English-born Sydney artist (init) (3)

Answers Page 34
Image: Detail from *Mrs Smith's Trivia & the GBH Last Supper* by Lucy Fekete

IN CONVERSATION AT THE COFFEE CART

With Lucy Fekete

The Barista Lucy Wilde sat down with Artist and Teacher Lucy Fekete to talk about all things Art on 08-05-2024.



LUCY WILDE: Thank you for taking the time to join me today, to begin, how did you first get started with art?

LUCY FEKETE: It's something I've always done, as a kid my Mum would put pencils and colouring books in front of me while she was preparing dinner. Art then continued to be a way to amuse myself through-out high school. I had built the muscle, and so Jo Reitze, who was my teacher, was very encouraging and aware of what I was capable of by Year 12. Once I finished school I studied Creative Advertising at RMIT but I soon found I wasn't 'Mad Men' material, there's a stereotype that it takes a certain type of person to be in advertising and I wasn't that type of person. I did find some work as an illustrator and that helped further strengthen my drawing skills however I soon realised that there weren't many jobs or enough pay in that area. So once I finished university, I knew I didn't want to go into advertising but I wasn't sure what to do next, so I thought 'hey I'm in my early-twenties, let's get a working/holiday visa and go to the U.K. for two years because why not?', it was procrastination instead of getting a real job. While I was living in the UK I went to Glasgow, and I was musing that I just wanted to be a bum artist and how cool that would be. At that moment my phone rang and it was this art store in Glasgow offering me a job, so I just saw that as a sign that yes art is where I want to be.

WILDE: So Glasgow was the place you recognised art is the field for you, how did you eventually become involved with The Victorian Artists Society?

FEKETE: After the pandemic, The Victorian Artists Society was looking for art teachers and I got a call from Chris Reade, who was gallery manager at the time. Chris Reade had been given my number by Jo Reitze. [The Victorian Artists Society] were looking for someone to teach acrylic painting because they already had a lot of artists who taught oil painting and wanted to find someone who could do acrylic painting, and that was my background. So I interviewed for the position, but I was unsuccessful and the job went to Lucy Maddox because she had more teaching experience. I was discouraged but I still joined VAS so I could be surrounded by like minded artists, and I knew it would give me the opportunity to learn and expand on my own techniques and approach. I was awarded Highly Commended in the Autumn Select right after I joined, so Chris Reade was still aware of my presence. Then when Lucy Maddox was unavailable a couple of times, Chris Reade would be like 'Hey Lucy can you step in', and I would, and eventually I had my own class.

WILDE: So you started out being a strong acrylic painter and have since transitioned to oil painting, how did this development occur?

FEKETE: A million years ago my partner had bought me a set of oil paints but they sat in the wooden case packaging for such a long time, and when it came to the lockdowns of 2020 I decided let's just break this case open and give it a go. I started playing around with the oil paints and it was a revelation. I had the moment where I was like 'why did it take me this long to try oil paints?'

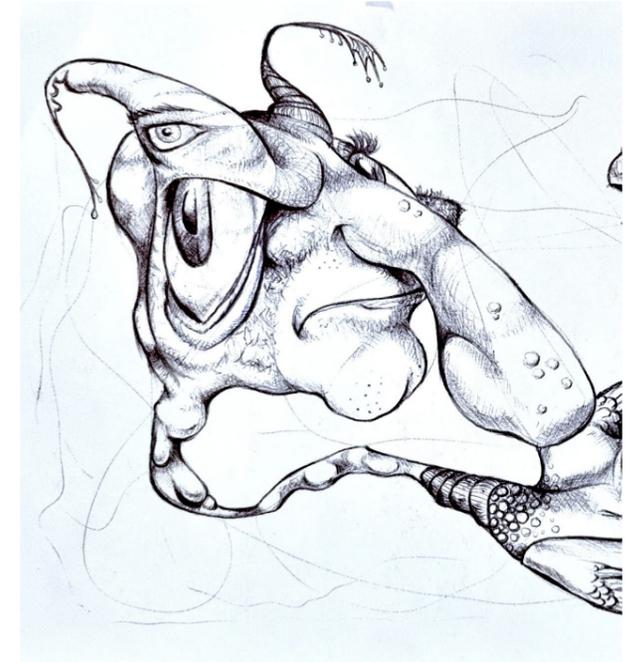
WILDE: Did you find it difficult, being in a lockdown, and having proper ventilation for your first time trying oil paints?

FEKETE: I don't think I gave it much thought, I guess because I was using odourless and so (laughs) I didn't really consider it. Nothing's happening if I

can't smell it right? (laughs), so I did not think about that, I can hear Gregory Smith tutting me on turps versus odourless solvents.

WILDE: With such a range of mediums and techniques, how do you approach teaching?

FEKETE: My current class is unstructured, this is intentional because I have a diverse range of students; there's abstract, imaginative, still life, landscape, portraiture. I prefer to wait for the student to go 'Lucy help', or if they have difficulty starting with a blank canvas, and then I talk it through with them to help them find the answers rather than giving it to them or telling them how they should paint. I find it important to play around with my own style and my own approaches. I flip from more cartoon to more traditional, and the reason for that is I want to play around with different styles, and then I can understand my students more and be a better benefit to them.



I don't approach their artwork with my own personal opinion about what art should be, it's more about what they're trying to achieve in their artwork and helping them get there.

I feel out what they need first, so if they have a problem with their work and call me over I'll go 'how do you think it's going?' and then they tell

me and I respond to that. If I ever have to give a personal opinion of their work then I always ask consent first. I think there's a place for teaching students how to paint a style and how to copy a style, but that's not what my class is. Since each student is coming in with their own style and their own ideas, it's about supporting that one hundred percent.

WILDE: You work in so many different styles yourself, where do you see your artwork headed now?

FEKETE: I have at least four projects going at the moment. The ongoing collection of works that has taken a backseat this year is a series of portraits of women artists in their studios. The fantasy is hopefully in grande ornate golden frames, but the main idea is to have an expansive series of as many women artists in their studio spaces as possible, primarily around Melbourne, although I did paint someone who is located in Adelaide. The catalyst for this is there are so many traditional portraits of important men, but women have a significant contribution to art as well so I wanted to document these women visually in their space doing what they love, what they're made for, and to contribute to their legacy. You often see an artist's work and you don't actually know what the artist looks like so this is a way to document the artist themselves. The painting I'm working on at the moment is a critique of online dating. The subject matter is a guy with a unicorn head being perceived as some prize, while in a seedy nightclub with half-naked women surrounding and throwing themselves at him, meanwhile he's a slob that continues to scroll through online dating apps. This acts as a comment on online dating where you don't know who you're actually dating and someone who might appear like a catch, isn't actually a catch in reality. I'm also working on a portrait of a live model to help loosen up my process, I'm letting

her lead a lot in regards to the composition. I'm in the midst of painting a dinosaur riding on an elephant with the idea of making a 'dinosaur riding on things' magazine (laughs).

WILDE: With so many projects, how do you find inspiration, does it simply come to you or do you have a process of approach?

FEKETE: I usually have an image in my head, then I gather reference material that lines up with that image, and I put it all together. Although it depends on the relevance to the work itself, for example, with the Women in their Studios series; I go to the studios, meet the artist and speak with her, I take note of the light and positioning, I take a multitude of photos, and then go home to go through it all. I met a lot of the women artists for this series through MSWPS (Melbourne Society of Women Painters and Sculptors), Jo Reitze got me to join them, and that group is a great resource.

WILDE: So you have a lot going on with at least four different bodies of work in the process, you aim to submit different pieces to each VAS Select, and on top of that you teach art, how do you balance and coordinate your time?

FEKETE: (laughs) I have no idea. I don't know, that's a really good question but I actually don't know. I think it's because I really enjoy everything that I do and I think that's key for anybody, [the key] is that you have to enjoy what you do, because if it's fun then you want to do it. It all falls into place and is easy, it's one step in front of the other so there's no stress or planning around it.

WILDE: Do you have a favourite aspect of art making, something that stands out for you?

FEKETE: I think, and you'll agree with me on this, art is meditation. I love having that space to myself, to completely zone out, and that's what I love. It feels really good for my mental health.

Art is meditation.

WILDE: You work and teach with a variety of different styles, do you have a preferred style or art movement?

FEKETE: I really don't, I can appreciate everything, for example, I don't paint abstract but I can absolutely appreciate it, and I can look at a piece and be like 'that is incredible, I have no idea how they did that' and be in awe of that.

WILDE: Since we've spent so much time talking about art now, is there something you love that's outside of art?

FEKETE: I'm actually really good at trivia.

WILDE: Is this something you're stating in preparation for our upcoming trivia night [on the 30th May]? Is this a threat or a challenge?

FEKETE: Maybe, I did win the last trivia.

WILDE: I'm actually bad at trivia, so my strategy is I scout people, and I win trivia by pulling together the strongest team. I can sit back and I don't have to do anything or contribute for the entire time and I still win, so I guess what I'm saying is let's be in a team (laughs). Before we finish up, are there any final points that you'd like to emphasise?

FEKETE: I'd really like to drive home the idea that art should be accessible to everyone, and that everybody is capable of creating art. 

Lucy Wilde



Sketch of the conversation drawn by Lucy Fekete while the interview took place

NITEL

Reflecting on a Highlight of 2023

Sunday 30 July 2023 was the last day of the Nitel Exhibition held at the VAS. I must say, the feedback and comments on this wonderful and historic exhibition were amazing and humbling. The work was installed on Thursday 25 May in time for National Sorry Day on the 26 May—a day for people to come together and share the journey towards healing for the Stolen Generations and their families and communities.

The Exhibition included NAIDOC week and at the end of the week Open House Melbourne.

All the artists were very happy with the hanging and display cabinets and a number of sales were made. The opening on Saturday 24 July was a great success, with Keith Gove Victorian State Secretary for Reconciliation Victoria conducting an acknowledgement to country and Aunt Di Kerr the Welcome to Country.



All the artists plus the two speakers were given a VAS Certificate of Appreciation and thanks for their generosity in attending. We were very honoured as they donated their time to us free of charge.

Above the stairs we hung the three flags—The Aboriginal, The Australian and The Torres Strait Island.

The five artists were Lorraine Brigdale (Yorta Yorta), Janet Bromley (Yorta Yorta), Annie Brigdale (Yorta Yorta), Georgina Riseley (Palawa, Bruny Island) and Trina Dalton-Oogjes (Wadawarrung-Wathaurang & Gunditjmarra)

Eight paintings were hung with four weavings & four cabinets of woven baskets, jewellery and crafts. Lorraine demonstrated how she collected rocks from a river near her home in Bendigo and how she ground them down and mixed them with gum from the wattle trees to make her paint. This demonstration was shown that night on the ABC TV News. After the official opening the guests all enjoyed a sumptuous afternoon tea.



I would like to personally thank the VAS President and Council members for giving me the time and space to get this exhibition on the walls. It took almost a year of travelling around Victoria and meeting a variety of people and I was most fortunate to find these amazing and very talented women who were willing to trust me on this journey.

Thanks to everyone who helped on the day. ✍️

Meg Davoren Honey OAM VAS FVAS

Aunt Di Kerrs' Welcome all to Country

THE YOUNG ARCHIES

In 2013 the Archibald prize sprouted a juvenile appendage named 'The Young Archies'. It purports to be a vehicle for budding John Singer Sargent's to strut their stuff. To quote, 'the Art Gallery of NSW invites budding artists between the ages of 5 and 18 to submit a portrait for the "Young Archie" competition.' The age range is very wide, from pre-school to 18 years, at which age Raphael was already an artisan painter making his way in the Renaissance world.

An examination of entrants and award winners online is very enlightening. They vary from the infantile and unsophisticated to portraits which have the finish of a trained artist and might be competitive for the adult Archibald Prize. The winner of the 'Young Archies' is newsworthy for the ABC, who announce it as showcasing the next generation of portrait painters.

The Young Archies raises several interesting questions. The first is whether prodigious early talent is a flag for future artistic success or even fame. To instance just two examples. John Everet Millais at 11 years, was the youngest student ever to enter the Royal Academy school. His famous *Panocrastinae* in pencil and chalk was painted at just 13 years. Yet it could be argued that he fell short of the pinnacle of Victorian painters. Conversely that superstar of picture making Norman Rockwell was still drawing quite underwhelming images at the age of 18 years.

A second question relates to the object and impact of 'drawing' at five years of age. Studies of child development show that five-year-old mark making is a journey of exploration, which may play a critical part in self-recognition and discovery of the world at large. We are advised that this activity with pencil or crayon is best left with least direction from adult supervisors. Particularly parents who are pushing their infant toward the inevitable object of their child's artistic genius.

It could be argued that at least until early secondary school, competitions like the 'Young Archies' stifle discovery and creativity. It is early in secondary education that the student is usually directed into the training which might in the long run lead to the outcome of an artisan painter. Perhaps even with the technical skill to produce a painting indistinguishable from a coloured photo. This for many is a key criterion. Listen when you next visit the Archies. 'Henry, this painting is wonderful, you can't tell it isn't a colour photograph!'

At this stage of technical competence, a handful of artisan painters will grasp the creativity that will produce an artist. For many this is a step too far. Have we predetermined this failure at the age of five years? ✍️

JD Park

NATHALIE ANNE HENNINGSEN

Nathalie Anne is an exhibiting Member of VAS Council and convenor of both Events and Education

She is a contemporary figurative artist whose work 'explores the intersection of Line, Form and Colour.' With a background in Fine Arts and fashion, Natalie's practice 'merges traditional artistic techniques with contemporary processes ... all to create immersive and eye catching work'.



'Bacchus', Gabriel Henningsen, Watercolour on Board



BRUCE BALDEY VAS

Bruce is an architect by profession and an exhibiting member of Council. He is the Editor of the VAS Magazine and Convenor of the VAS Collection

'Pen and wash are my favourite media but recently I have been concentrating on oils, a medium I didn't seem to have much trouble with as a youth. For me the struggle now is to leave behind the correctness of architectural drawing and allow myself to draw and paint more freely and expressively'

Sleepy City, Oil on Board

RON SMITH OAM (Hon) FVAS

Ron is a long term member of Council and currently not exhibiting. He is the convenor of VAS Media and Communications.

'Every time we hold an event it is a reminder of the importance of art, our members, our teachers, and staff's contribution in maintaining and growing the VAS for members and the wider community.'



Coastal Edge, Print



ANGELINE BARTHOLOMEUSZ

Angeline joined VAS Council as an Exhibiting member and is the convenor of Visitor Engagement

'I completed my Ph.D in Virology and was a senior scientist and commercialisation/business development manager for more than 30 years. I am an abstract artist that uses landscape as a metaphor.'

Girt by Sea, Acrylic

MARK BAGALLY

Mark is the current President of the VAS and an exhibiting Member of Council. He is also the national Vice President of ASMA (Australian Society of Marine Artists)

'I paint in oil and dabble in watercolour enjoying both marine and landscape subjects preferably working in the outdoors from life. More recently I have found solace in simple uncluttered compositions and minimalist landscapes which I intend to explore further in 2024'.

Bay of Fires, Oil on Board



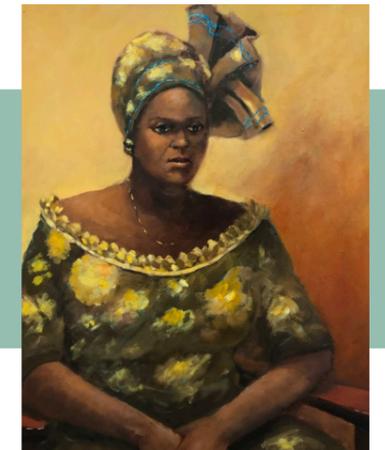
LUCY MADDOX

Lucy is an exhibiting member of Council who also teaches at the VAS and is a member of the Education Committee. Lucy is an Artist in residence at Pentridge Studios in Coburg and completed graduate studies in Linguistics at Melbourne University. 'This background informs her practice, as much as her work responds to the human body, touch and gesture.'

Hunger (VII), Oil on Canvas

MEG DAVOREN HONEY OAM VAS FVAS

Meg is a long term member of VAS Council responsible for the Foyer Exhibitions and VAS's participation in the annual International Flower and Garden Show. In 2023 Meg curated the first Women's Indigenous Art Exhibition to be held at the VAS.



The Head Scarf, Oil



LAUREL SLOAN

Laurel is the convenor of Membership, Sponsorship and HR policy at the VAS.

'My great uncle is artist George Coates and his artist wife was Dora Meeson, both Australian war artists. My family always said that it was because of them that my interest in the arts had grown. I'd like to think that they encouraged me to create art works that might make the viewer feel a bit venerable.'

Lady, Oil on Paper

ANSWERS

Quiz

1. A line
2. Lightfastness
3. Red, yellow and blue
4. Corkscrew
5. Yellow-orange-red
6. Yayoi Kusama
7. Carved Woodblock
8. Guernica
9. Foreshortening
10. Campbells
11. 1920s and 1930s
12. Joe Whyte
13. Dog
14. Edvard Munch (It proved so popular he created 5 versions)
15. Renaissance
16. Italy
17. Bulleen (7 Templestowe Road)
18. Melbourne
19. Albert Namatjira
20. Darwin (19 Conacher Street, Fannie Bay)
21. Arthur Streeton

Crossword

A	L	B	E	R	T	S	T	R	E	E	T	A			
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Sunlight at the Camp, Arthur Streeton, 1894

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS



PORTRAIT EXHIBITION

5-15 JULY

Opening: Portrait Painters in Action Open Day, Sunday 7 July 11am to 4pm

Awards presentation from 4pm

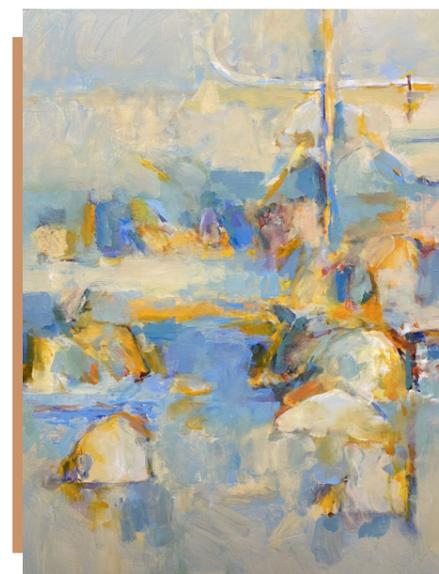
This exhibition celebrates portraiture in all genres. Our Portrait Painters in Action Open Day is a highlight of the VAS calendar not to be missed.

9X5 EXHIBITION

5 JULY-5 AUGUST

Opening: High Tea, Saturday 13 July from 2pm

A homage to the original 1889 9x5 Impressionism Exhibitions, of small works painted on cigar box lids.



WINTER SELECT EXHIBITION

19 JULY-5 AUGUST

Opening: Cocktail Event, Saturday 20 July from 7pm

The second of three Select Exhibitions, our prestige showcases for members. Peer votes are used to determine candidates for the Artist of the Year.

JUNE QUOTE

'It took me four years to paint like Raphael, but a lifetime to paint like a child ...'

Pablo Ruiz Picasso (1881-1973)

Who also said 'Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up'.

Picasso was a child prodigy who never really managed to paint like Raphael during his maudlin 'Blue' (1901-1904) and 'Rose' (1904-1906) periods. His juvenilia is the closest he came to academic realism. He held the wilful 'Les Femmes d'Alger' (1907) back from public view until 1916. It's at this point that he could be said to have abandoned tradition.

'If the subjects I have wanted to express have suggested different ways of expression I have never hesitated to adopt them'.



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VAS Gallery
430 Albert St
East Melbourne 3002

Standard Opening Hours

10am – 4pm Weekdays
11am – 4pm Weekends

Website

vasgallery.org.au

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

OUR SUPPORTERS

Eileen Mackley AM VAS FVAS & Hylton Mackley AM
Gordon Moffatt AM - Noel Waite AO
Stuart Leslie Foundation - The Naphtali Family
Foundation The Hugh Williamson Foundation

Udo



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FOUNDATION

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COPLAND
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CLEMENGER GROUP

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