

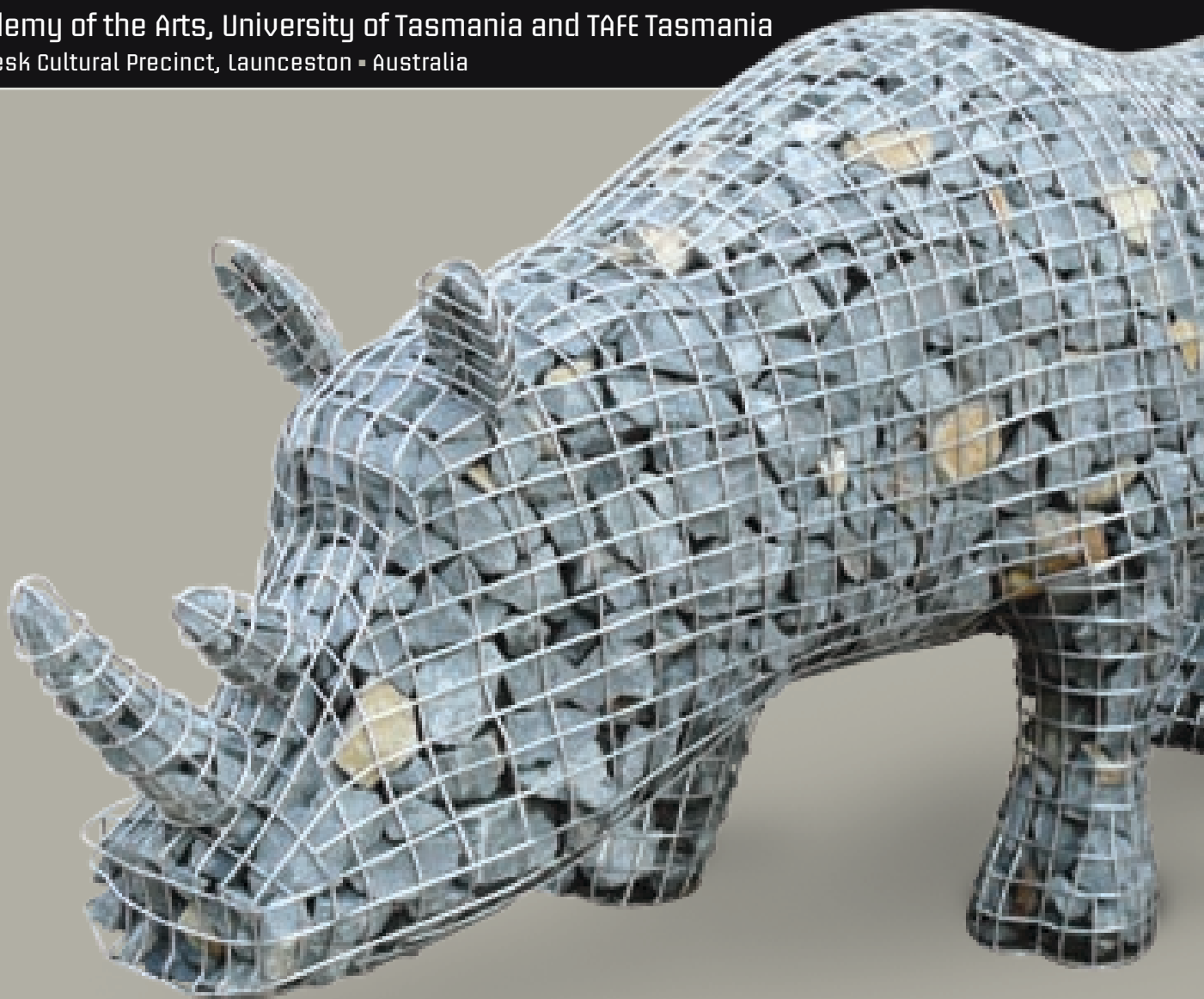


ART & DESIGN MAGAZINE : 2008



the academy

Academy of the Arts, University of Tasmania and TAFE Tasmania
Inveresk Cultural Precinct, Launceston • Australia



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A commissioned sculpture for the Academy of the Arts, 2007

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The Academy of the Arts is a dual-sector University and TAFE arts enterprise located in world-class facilities on the 17-hectre cultural precinct in the City of Launceston. The Academy of the Arts enjoys the privileged position of being a comprehensive arts education and training site offering awards from Certificate and Diploma levels, through to Bachelors, Master and PhD degrees.



We are pleased to share with you some of the highlights from the Academy of the Arts during the past twelve months and also introduce you to some of our exciting initiatives for 2009. I hope that when you read through the Academy magazine you will sense that we have a dynamic visual and performing student arts community, a commitment to high quality teaching and learning, and a set of unique opportunities for our students to test themselves in professional workplace settings here and overseas.

Professor Vincent McGrath : WELCOME

The Academy of the Arts places immense importance on the possibilities arising from collaborations between the various disciplines associated with the visual and performing arts. In using this cross-disciplinary approach we nurture and develop each student's creative intelligence in ways that give full reign to their innate talents. When our students leave we want them to possess a rounded understanding of the arts per se, have a capacity for specialist, in-depth investigation and be able to function effectively in the workplace and the wider national and international communities.

This edition of the Academy magazine features several stories of success in the profession and the community. For example, Angela Driver, a theatre practitioner and alumni from the Academy tells us of her Churchill Fellowship experience, and Sue Bateson, a current visual arts Masters candidate

shares her experience of working with young people in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. And the article of the Academy's 2007 major theatre event Tamar Tidings, a history of the Tamar Valley, recalls the participation of hundreds of players and several theatre groups in this wonderful community production.

The Academy magazine is about student experiences and accomplishments, alumni successes, major staff projects and our professional and community engagement projects.

Please enjoy.

Professor Vincent McGrath
Head of School
Visual and Performing Arts
Academy of the Arts
University of Tasmania



It is exciting and a privilege to be involved with the Academy of the Arts which continues to flourish and take a leading role in the development of the arts in Tasmania. The

Stephen Watts : WELCOME

stimulating surroundings and innovative programs offered by TAFE and UTAS, provide the perfect setting for you to develop your knowledge and skills.

The major changes to the Tasmanian education system in the coming year will significantly increase the role of the Academy in the development of young artists. Many of the activities currently taking place within the senior secondary colleges and the Academy of the Arts will significantly benefit from a much closer college, TAFE and University operational relationship. This will include better student

transition arrangements, resource-sharing, joint semester course planning and cross-sector community arts projects.

The Academy truly provides an opportunity for anyone from any background to follow their artistic passion, develop their knowledge and skills, and benefit from being part of this creative, dynamic arts environment.

Stephen Watts
Team Leader – Art, Craft and Design
TAFE Tasmania
Academy of the Arts



By Peter Hammond, Deputy Head of School & Head of Performing Arts

TAMAR TIDINGS

: A story told on the Tamar River

Tamar Tidings was a rehearsed theatre production, that chronicled events from the history of the Tamar River. The production was staged on a 26 tonne barge that docked at selected, accessible pontoons stretching along the full length of the Tamar River, from Launceston to Low Head. Once the barge was moored, the floating stage became a 'showboat' offering an amalgam of contributions from all Tamar-based theatre/music/dance groups that told the story of the Tamar River as a whole-of-family entertainment.

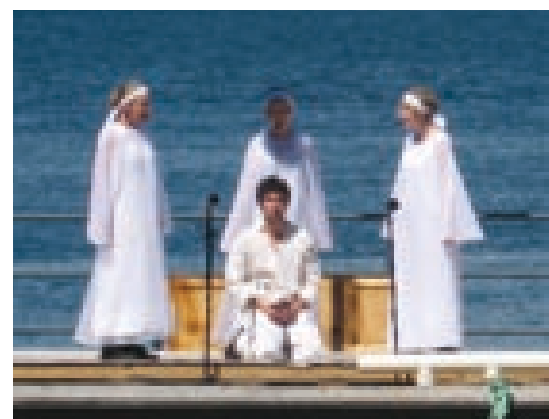


Photography : Peter Hammond



A 'central' scripted dramatic presentation (written by local playwright Stella Kent) related the ancient and modern history of the river. The barge was towed to the next performance site every third day by a 'Husky' on loan from North West Shipping and Towage. This event made for a grand spectacle with the river as a backdrop and as a multi-group presentation with a local flavour. The show included 137 performers each night (and two matinees) plus 45 support staff in all. It included not only events of social and political import but also personal stories of the people who lived and worked by or on the river. Themes included in the production were: Tasmanian Aboriginal history, our gateway to the world, the river as a thoroughfare, the gold years, 1929 flood, decline of the Apple industry, the War years and, finally, what may occur if we don't look after our local waterway.

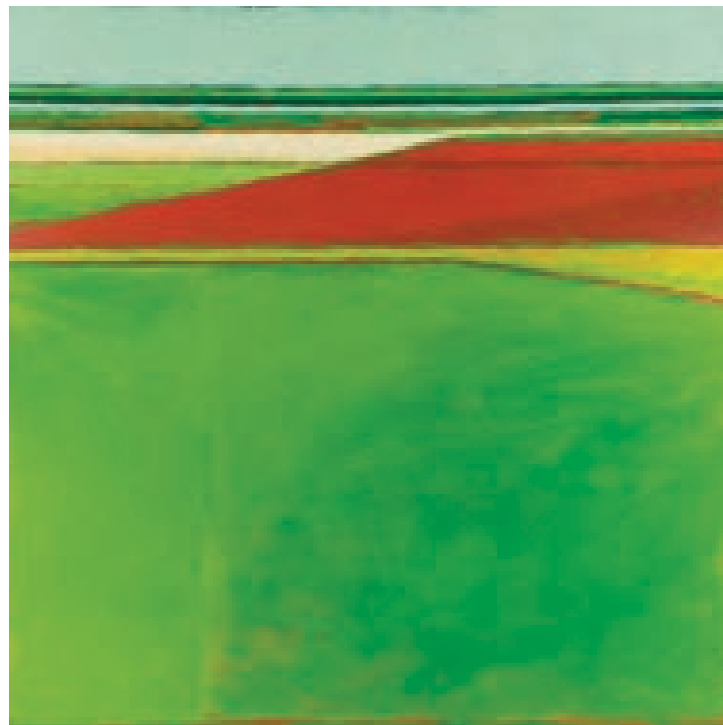
The 'engine' behind *Tamar Tidings* was the community itself: graduating students of the class of 2007 at the culmination of their arts training; directors and choreographers from various community arts groups; businesses, bureaus and part-time builders, all of whom have been most benevolent in supporting and turning a multi-facetted idea into reality. We found it very enjoyable working alongside volunteers from the TRESKA Men's Shed (Exeter) who made our scenery items and a series of speciality props. Then there was the logistics behind costuming the 162 characters which meant 162 costumes. It was fantastic to see all the groups rallying as to what they could contribute and what their wardrobes might reveal. Beyond the immediate show was a whole raft of sponsors (48 in fact) who offered everything from free advice on the dangers of the river tides to free backstage



catering. The cast and crew were most grateful but may never eat sausage rolls again.

The idea for celebrating a river revisits a theatre form which gives a sense of ownership to the participants. The form is a prime example of how a community theatre project relates back to the grass roots of the community. To a great extent this project purveys a new form and attitude to traditionalist practices amongst Launceston theatre companies.

The concept of community is about understanding that we are not isolated and about being part of something that can control itself, have some impact on itself and is part of a larger whole. Community theatre is about illumination and validation of people's experiences. As initiator of the project I hope *Tamar Tidings* holds resounding long-term memories for our river community.



Catalogue Essay by Peter Timms

FOLDED LAND AND MEMORIES

: An Exhibition by Patrick Grieve

Patrick Grieve is a well-known Tasmanian artist and an alumni of the Academy of the Arts.

It's the colour that strikes you: specifically, its intensity. Few places in Australia are so saturated in colour.



Photography by The Examiner Newspaper, Launceston

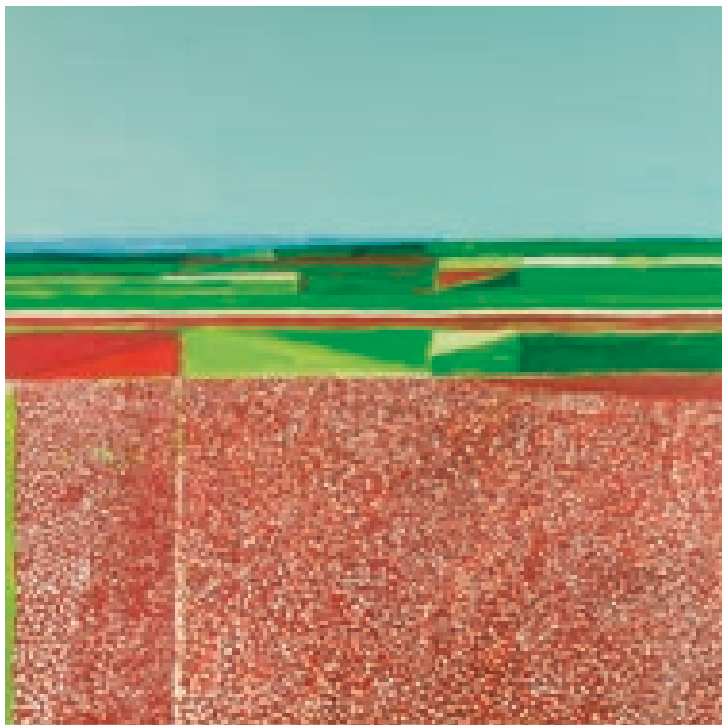
Having left a grey, sunless Melbourne on the Bass Strait ferry the previous evening, you emerge, bleary-eyed, into a crystalline Northern Tasmanian dawn and the transformation is palpable. The sudden greenness of its pastures, the almost unnatural red of its newly-ploughed soils, the drama of its distant horizons and overarching skies, make this a world in which everything exists more keenly, with more clarity and vividness. After a time, of course, the impact of difference wears off; extraordinariness becomes normalised. Patrick Grieve's mission, therefore, is to rekindle wonder. And it speaks of his power to evoke the particular qualities of this landscape that ex-Tasmanians living interstate are among his greatest admirers.

He has said that 'one of the best things you can do is to get off the highway and drive up through Cressy, through the country lanes. It's slower, the roads are narrower but you get a much more interesting look at the world. People have busy lives but they just

need to stop.' The identification of the specific locality is key. These paintings, despite their abstractions, are very responsive to place. (When a Tasmanian journalist referred to Grieve recently as 'a local painter', he was perhaps being more profound than he knew.)

Also key is the simplicity and directness of the sentiment. Sometimes the deepest insights arise from the most innocent and apparently naive endeavours. Think, for example, of Thoreau in his hut by Walden Pond, of Emily Dickinson peering out at the world from her bedroom window, or Proust conjuring up an entire universe of memory from his sickbed.

At a time in which the study of nature, and of human interactions with it, has taken on a fearful philosophical complexity, there is something refreshing about Grieve's innocent *looking*. Here, he says, is something beautiful, something worth noticing, and he asks us to give it our attention, free of rhetoric or blame. These are paintings about the pleasures of the visual, and Grieve highlights these pleasures,



Images from left : Farmland coastal series 61, Farmland coastal series 62, Farmland Poppy Field, Study 1

concentrates them, distils them and transforms them. In a word, he *poeticises* nature.

You might complain that this does not suggest any practical outcome, any strategy for change. Yet, without the element of poetry – the uncomplicated appreciation of beauty for its own sake – our plans, schemes and policies will be drained of human meaning and vitality. Imagination must underpin action, something too little understood in these materialistic, goal-driven times.

Grieve's avoidance of moral instruction or theorising, his concentration on what's there in front of his eyes, makes his paintings Realist in the nineteenth-century sense of the word (in the way Courbet might have understood it). But of course they are not realist in the aesthetic sense. They are not like photographic records. We read the big swirl of white in *Study 1*, for example, as a bank of cumulus cloud billowing above the horizon, but we read it first and foremost as an exuberantly-applied swathe of paint. And, while the energetically-dotted foreground of *Farmland Series: Poppy Field* suggests a mass of flowers, it has, like so many of this artist's views, been drawn up parallel to the picture plane, denied its natural perspective, as though it were a sign or cipher.

It is in this carefully-calibrated disjunction between picturing and abstracting – between soil, sky and grass, on the one hand, and sheer painterly energy on the other – that the poetry lies. You can appreciate it best by

concentrating on the edges where one solid slab of paint bumps up against another. A lot happens at the edges: it's where the paintings' energy is released.

Being constantly reminded of the physicality of the paint leads us to think of other art, other ways of seeing: of Aboriginal dot painting, perhaps, in the case of *Poppy Field*, or (with regard to the *Farmland Coastal* series) the cool, detached abstractions of the American, Richard Diebenkorn, another painter of light and space.

Yet, while we shouldn't be looking for overt commentary, there is one sense in which Grieve is defying orthodoxies, and that is in his choice of subject matter. Significantly, he avoids the awe-inspiring wilderness with its promise of salvation. The countryside he depicts is lived in, productive, divided into fields, planted with crops, ploughed and fenced. It is a thoroughly domesticated landscape.

After all, it is not necessarily those lands that present the most spectacular scenery or those that are most remote from human influence that are closest to our hearts, but rather those in which a history of adaptation between people and their environment has brought out the best in both; in which the land, in being shaped by people, has shaped them in turn, so that each has taken on the character of the other. The countryside we respond to best is that which is inextricably bound to our stories.

Perhaps if there is a message in Grieve's paintings it is that what matters is how we

use the land, how we respect it and work it, nourish it and are nourished by it: how we interact with it in a fruitful and productive way. Paradoxically, perhaps, these are unashamedly humanist paintings.

The American writer Robert Finch wrote, when he arrived back in the city following a period of isolation in the New England forest: 'I had expected to feel a certain letdown upon returning, but the effect is just the opposite. Somehow the fact of human existence strikes me as miraculous, as though never seen clearly before ... I want to cry out to those I pass and who pass me the simple wonder of us all being here together in this lovely place under sky and shade and sun-dappled yards and the song of birds. I know that inevitably I will sink back into the dulling effects of routine, into possessiveness, into trivial irritation, into the short-sighted pursuits that hobble and frustrate so much of our short lives. But for a few hours I am granted a fresh look at what I have left, which, if not, as T S Eliot claimed, the sole point of all our journeying, is reward enough.' *

* Robert Finch, 'North Beach Journal', in *Antaeus on Nature*, Collins Harvill, London, 1989, p. 149.



Dr Deborah Malor : **COLLECTION STORY**

In late 2006 I was redesigning an undergraduate unit, 'Australia, art and design', to use in the inaugural Tasmanian Creative Arts Summer School. The eight-day Summer School format required a series of new experiences outside the classroom for history and critical theory students. Recognising the part that Tasmanian photographers Olegas Truchanas and Peter Dombrovskis played in the politics and picturing of wilderness in the Australian and international mind, I wanted at least one session to look at this work.

Wilderness photography is a special area of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery's Community History Collection. With the help of curator Rhonda Hamilton, I selected Dombrovskis and Truchanas images; some elegant black and white 1970s work by Frank Bolt together with his negative registers; a 1920 Florence Perrin album; and a 'boy's own' album of photographs by Fred Smithies with commentary from Charles Monds, also at Lake St Clair in the same year. Adding an 1899 West Coast album by J. W. Beattie and the session seemed complete. Then in early January, the week before the Summer School, an email from Rhonda: '...just acquired an album of a trip to Port Davey (Eclipse Expedition to Tasmania 1910) ...men lugging their gear across land etc

for an important scientific occasion. But perhaps this might be "too much information?"'

A quick trip into the Community History Collection: how could it possibly be 'too much information'? The album was quite ordinary, in a 1910 sort of way: faded green cloth cover, with a faint caption hand-written in white ink: Eclipse Expedition to Tasmania 1910. There were, indeed, lots of pictures of men lugging boxes, sitting around a camp, and assembling a range of instruments that clearly did things astronomical. Each photograph was captioned in the same white ink. No one was claiming ownership, however – not a signature, not even initials. Given the time frame for Summer School I selected two images that would generate discussion about what might be wilderness



Album Plate 17

photography (and did the presence of humans and a whole lot of scientific equipment preclude the definition in this case) and left it at that.

After the Summer School the opportunity arose to present a wider range of wilderness material from QVMAG to a Faculty research centre, Colonialism and its Aftermath. Rhonda and I collaborated on the session that brought aspects of the collection and the possibility of research projects to a multidisciplinary audience. The album lay dormant until in June 2007 I had a paper based on the wilderness research accepted into a conference in Hobart. I chose twelve images, ten of which I could caption in detail. The two remaining were from the Eclipse album. At this point curiosity took over, as I started to research this collection of 74 photographs, of an expedition into southwest Tasmania in 1910.

I now needed to look closely at the narrative within the album. Why was the first view one of Rarotonga, and why did the last images show groups of very brushed-up pipe-smoking men and a glorious scene of breakers at Hell's Gate, Strahan. Just one image showed the 'Eclipse party' and was fully captioned. Following these names, stories of the expedition are slowly being revealed.

In February 1910 a young Englishman, F K McClean, travelled to the Pacific with A E Young, where they met with well-known New Zealand photographer, Henry Winkelmann. In April the expedition (eventually totalling seven scientists and two assistants and funded almost entirely by McClean) assembled in Hobart. The Royal Astronomical Society did not participate,

claiming the Port Davey climate together with the timing of the eclipse – almost on sunset in winter conditions, indicated the chances of recording the event were extremely low.

On 9 April the *SS Wainui* dropped the party at Port Davey with 120 cases of equipment and stores, to construct an observatory and prepare for the eclipse of 9 May. In that time, there were three clear days. On the others it rained and blew. The instrument tent was ripped from its guys and narrowly escaped destruction in a scrub fire. Tents were flooded and instruments knocked over in the constant gale. The afternoon of the eclipse was cloudy. No images could be taken. The expedition packed up camp and departed, 'without regret' at leaving this particular part of Tasmania's wilderness. McClean, in his published report of the expedition, relied on photographs taken by the Methodist minister in Queenstown to show the eclipse.

Ironically, the inability to photograph the eclipse gave Henry Winkelmann more plates to record scenes of the expedition and the landscape. Winkelmann's plates and negative registers are held in the Auckland War Memorial Museum, at least 120 of them. Comparison of the captions in A E Young's album, those used by McClean for Winkelmann's photographs in the report, plus those of Winkelmann himself in his registers enrich the story of the Eclipse Expedition. Biographical detail for A E Young remains a tantalising mystery but his story of the expedition beckons for a contemporary interpretation of his narrative.



Album Plate 24



Album Plate 67

Album Plate 17: *Panorama of Port Davey. The smoke seen is due to a bush fire which broke out from an unknown cause, 1910*

Album Plate 24: *Jeffs, the cook, in the Galley, 1910*

Album Plate 67: *After the last load. Packing cases ready for embarking on SS Wainui, 1910*

Images reproduced with the kind permission of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston.



THE POIMENA VISUAL ARTS CENTRE AND GALLERY

: Launceston Church Grammar School

Clare Blackaby, Paul Snell, Mark Webster, Katie Woodroffe, Ross Byers, Abbey MacDonald, Lucy de Vere Measures, Professor Vincent McGrath, Janine Wright.

The Poimena Visual Arts Centre and Gallery at the Launceston Church Grammar School has gained a reputation as one of the leading centres of innovative art education and community involvement in Tasmania. The attractive old building houses the entire art department of the School and Poimena Gallery, a highly respected contemporary art space. Poimena Gallery has established itself as one of the leading venues for cutting edge exhibitions in Launceston and is host to the very successful biannual Poimena Art Award. The Poimena Arts centre also offers an internationally recognised Artist in Residence programme where visiting artists live and work in the building producing an exhibition at the end of their stay.

With all this involvement in the arts community, it seems fitting that the art staff in Poimena are all connected to the Academy of the Arts. Katy Woodroffe, the head of a very lively and enthusiastic staff, completed her Bachelor of Education specialising in Art in 1982 and her Master of Fine Art and Design in 1999. Paul Snell, the Co-ordinator of Media Arts finished his Honours Degree in

Photography in 1995 and specialist art theory teacher, Clare Blackaby, completed her Honours Degree in Painting in 1999 and the Bachelor of Teaching in 2004. Mark Webster completed his Bachelor of Fine Art in Sculpture in 2001 and the Bachelor of Teaching in 2005. The latest addition to the teaching staff, Abbey MacDonald, completed the Bachelor of Teaching with First Class Honours in 2007 and is currently embarking on a PhD. in Education. All five teachers are committed practising artists in their own right.

In 2008, the art team in Poimena has been joined by the vitality of two outstanding technicians, Lucy de Vere Measures and Janine Wright. Lucy completed the Bachelor of Contemporary Art in 2007 and is currently undertaking the Bachelor of Teaching degree, and Janine is in the third year of the BCA specialising in sculpture. In May this year Ross Byers joined the staff for a five-week residency. Ross, who recently completed his Masters Degree in sculpture at the Academy of the Arts, made a tremendous contribution to the Poimena Art Centre with his innovative "Thinking Machine" project.

The very happy, productive and inclusive atmosphere of Poimena Arts Centre is one of the first impressions visitors comment upon – as well as the very supportive and homely feel of the place. And the success of this environment is evident in the large numbers of students who elect arts subjects throughout their school life. Launceston Church Grammar School enthusiastically supports the arts and students have gained many accolades over the years, including five Summer Scholarships to the National Gallery of Australia, National Silk Cut Awards, as well as the inaugural Inveresk Art Prize last year.

The art staff of Poimena Arts Centre, Launceston Church of England Grammar School characterise the career success of University of Tasmania alumni. They work as a dedicated, dynamic, caring team of professional arts educators, interested in widening the artistic experiences of young people under their care. It could be said they are the 'dream team' of secondary art education in Tasmania.

Photography : Ellissa Nolan



NEW INITIATIVES

at the Academy of the Arts

By Professor Vincent McGrath, Head of School

In February 2008 the Academy of the Arts commenced offering the Master of Contemporary Arts (MCA) by distance mode to students in Queensland. Our principal supporters and partners in this project include CQ University (CQU), Central Queensland Institute of TAFE, Artspace, Mackay Regional Art Gallery and the Mackay Regional Botanical Gardens. I am especially indebted to Dr Trevor Davison, Head of Campus, CQ University who kindly allowed the University of Tasmania use of CQU video conferencing facilities, the library, tutorial rooms and exhibition spaces. Ann Williams Fitzgerald, a well-known local arts practitioner, has been appointed as the Academy's field officer in Mackay to oversee marketing, course promotion and community liaison.

Eighteen students have enrolled in year-one of the Master of Contemporary Arts. Our MCA students come from Mackay, Rockhampton, Bowen, Airley Beach, Proserpine and Kakadu.

Many of the MCA student projects focus on people of the region, the history and nature of place and contemporary issues surrounding tropical and sub-tropical environments. Even at this early stage the similarities and differences between student projects in common study themes from Queensland and Tasmania are generating an impressive dialogue within the MCA.

Over the years we have attracted many students from Malaysia into the MCA who, after graduation, have taken up interesting and

very successful careers in the arts industries at home. We are currently preparing a University of Tasmania Trans National Education (TNE) business plan to be able to offer a significant part of the Master of Contemporary Arts from Alfa Academy of Art in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Alfa Academy has been an active cultural exchange partner with the Academy of the Arts for many years and will make an excellent host for the MCA in Malaysia.

Closer to home the Academy of the Arts has made important progress in the formation of a joint sector partnership in arts education. Known as the University College model the Academy intends to partner senior secondary college visual and performing arts departments by offering degree level study units to talented year-twelve students. This will mean that while some senior secondary college students are studying for their HSC they will be able to gain University credits towards the Bachelor of Contemporary Arts ahead of the normal post year-twelve entry.

The University College initiative has generated immense goodwill between the senior college sector and the University of Tasmania. We are developing our model as a whole-of-arts enterprise. Our intention is to advantage young, talented arts students, forge a much closer professional working relationship between teaching staff of colleges and the Academy, and enable sharing of specialised studios, workshops, high-end technology

Photography supplied by Auz Visions Photographics. First intake of MCA students in Mackay, Queensland, March 2008

Standing: Wanda Bennett, Ann Fitzgerald-Williams, Sally Cunnington, Professor Vincent McGrath, Kassandra Ellison, Lee Hutton, Janine Whitting, Chris Neely, Pam Finlay, Donna Robinson, Kerry Williams, Jenny De Thomas, Jane Moore. Front: Juanita Connolly, Belinda Curry, Carol Forbes

laboratories, galleries, performance spaces and library resources. Our model will be a genuine partnership where staff from each sector productively participate in the other's teaching programs through guest lectures and artist in residence programs, seminars, professional development opportunities, community arts festivals and summer schools and research projects. We view our University College model as a wonderful way to enrich the arts education experience in the region to a point, well beyond what each sector could hope to achieve by working separately. For example, discussions between the Academy of the Arts, Launceston College and Newstead College have identified several cross-sector possibilities in visual arts, music, radio, screen and television and theatre, especially the potential in new media and the creative communication industries.

The day-to-day operating partnership with key senior secondary colleges will enable us to present visual and performing arts programs that retain the values of traditional discipline skills and complement these with the exciting conceptual and technical possibilities of new art forms, genres and technologies. By positioning the visual and performing arts within a strategic partnership of like-minded local institutions I am confident we can deliver a challenging visual and performing arts teaching and learning program full of depth, innovation and variety, equal to any in Australia.



A moment with : **ANGELA DRIVER**

Churchill Fellowship Recipient, 2007 and Academy of the Arts Alumni

In 1999 I graduated with a Bachelor of Performing Arts from the University of Tasmania. During the course of my studies I not only developed my acting abilities but also gained very important behind-the-scenes skills in stage-management and scriptwriting. During my final year I began a love affair with directing that continues to this day. It was the very eclectic nature of the course that gave me a sturdy base to launch what has become a diverse and satisfying career in the performing arts industry.

My first summer since graduation was filled with a series of lucky breaks. Both Second Storey Theatre Company and CentrStage invited me to direct productions, encouraging me to take greater creative risks than I had experienced in the classroom environment. I also worked in event management and began managing events ranging from intimate private gatherings, big budget corporate affairs, to those that were just theatrically insane. I could not have survived this period if I did not have

the broad range of skills developed at University. After two years and approximately 400 events I decided to shift my focus to arts administration at Tasdance and festival management at Streets Alive Youth Arts Festival.

I enjoy the business side of the arts and balance this with concurrent creative projects. I love working with other creative people and get a huge buzz out of creating employment for others. Besides, I believe all work demands a level of creativity. I think life is creative. It is not something you can switch on or off.

In 2007 I set off on a Churchill Fellowship to examine how performance events can create shifts in ideas and perceptions within a community with emphasis on social and political change. This life changing experience allowed me to travel throughout North America, the United Kingdom and South Africa working and interacting with some truly inspiring artists.

After five months of travelling, settling back to home was an initial shock, but without

wanting to sound cliché I have found a new appreciation for Tasmania. As the Northern Arts Development Officer for Tasmanian Regional Arts I am travelling a lot and think the scenery is stunning providing great inspiration for our arts practitioners. I am currently using the inspiration of the Tassie landscape in the production of a short film that will be launched at the Regional Arts Australia Conference in Alice Springs in October

One of my passions at the moment is creating work that provides opportunities for meaningful social interaction between strangers.

I value all events as a tool for social, economic and cultural development. Even the football! And although I love travelling and the idea of studying or working abroad is exciting, while there are jobs in Tasmania that extend and challenge me I will be happy to stay.

Photography : Ellissa Nolan

Interview & Photography by Ellissa Nolan

KATIE WIGHTMAN

: Making a difference in Tasmanian Arts Education



Twelve years ago Katie Wightman graduated from the School of Visual and Performing Arts with a Bachelor of Fine Arts. In December, 1998 she was admitted to the degree of Bachelor of Teaching. Ever since that time, Katie's been off and running in her professional career. Katie went straight into teaching at Latrobe Primary School, where she taught visual art from Prep to Grade 6 and was a resource teacher supporting students with additional needs.

In 2000 Katie Wightman accepted a teaching position at Scottsdale High School (SHS). While there, Katie taught visual art to Grades 7-10 and coordinated the MARSSS (managing and retaining secondary students in schools) program. It was at SHS that Katie accepted her first senior teaching position working as an AST (advanced skills teacher) coordinating the schools curriculum leadership team. She said, "Working in a rural school can often mean isolation, however if you are prepared to utilise every network available you can make a difference. In my experience engagement in the Arts is one way to bring the community into the school and for students to improve their learning outcomes".

Katie has worked as a Northern Visual Art Moderator and in the years of the Essential Learnings worked with a team of teachers in the North to share models of best practice in all strands of the arts. She said, "The Essential Learnings brought the arts together. For the first time in my career, music, drama, dance, visual art, and media teachers worked together: It empowered teachers".

Katie speaks of the many opportunities that have opened up for her since graduating. She won a Hardie Fellowship and spent time working in New York and has been involved in writing the Tasmanian Arts Curriculum. Katie is currently working at Winnaleah District High School teaching visual art Prep to grade 10, English literacy to Grade 7-10 students and is working one day a week for Learning Services North as the Network coordinator for the arts. When I

asked Katie how she balances work commitments and the continuation of her own artistic practice, she said, "It is a continuous tension. My first practicum teacher said not to expect to make any of my own art in the first five years of teaching, and he was right. After that time I was determined to do something for myself! In fact, I think my husband, Brian, was more determined than I to see me making art again. Now that I have embedded myself in teaching theory and practice I feel I can take time to make art. The concept in my recent body of work explores childhood memories of places. Current work in progress explores the question *how many people does it take to make a baby?*"

Katie is a very committed arts educator. So I asked her what it is that inspires her. She replied, "That's a deeper question. I am inspired by success. It's a wonderful feeling when students engage in learning and you can see their light bulb moments of understanding. I guess I was driven early in my career by the desire to see effective teaching in all classrooms across all schools. Kids deserve the very best".

On a final note, I asked if there are any words of encouragement or advice Katie can offer to people thinking about taking on a career in Arts Education, either state-wide, nationally or globally? Katie believes, "If you're enthusiastic about learning, sharing knowledge and developing positive relationships then I would encourage you to share your passion for the arts with the next generation. Students need committed, *kind and clever* teachers".



Christina Booth : **PURININA, A DEVIL'S TALE**

When I started studying Fine Art at the former T.S.I.T, now UTAS, in 1986 I had no idea that 22 years later I would be writing and illustrating children's books. It seems so far away from the processes that I went through for four years of study to gain my fine arts degree and for a time, I have struggled with that distance.



I decided to have a go at writing only a few years ago and soon had a contract for my first picture book, 'Purinina, A Devil's Tale', released May 2007 with Lothian/Hachette Children's Books. Illustrating my own book enabled me to conquer the doubts about whether what I was doing was real 'art'. I love to use texture, light and movement in my paintings and so I took this to the pages of my book, keeping it available for access by younger viewers. There are subtle references to Munch's *Scream* on one page and the use of crayons and gouache allowed for me to use contrasting colour and tone and strong black and white images.

Australia has some wonderful illustrators who bring art to the pages of children's books. I feel that this is often a child's first experience of art and it is exciting that picture books are moving away from relying heavily on text narrative and are now equally, and in some examples, primarily relying on visual images. Illustrators such as Shaun Tan and Armin Greder spring to mind when considering this brilliance. I believe that our first experiences of something new need to be good. Good quality art in picture books is essential and I am excited to be a part of the industry.

So, how is what I do now even relevant to my art studies and art practice pre-kids books? Skills, processes, learning to communicate through your art, technical drawing skills and an appreciation of how a picture develops, grows and evolves are just as essential in one-off

pieces as they are in illustrative work. There are many levels of art. The thinking, processing and sorting, the creating, resolving and evolving, the letting go and opening up to others and then the interpretation, interaction and visual connection with an audience. All this is so important whether you are creating a print, a sculpture, an installation, a painting or an illustration. It is an exciting and exhilarating process.

When I first started to illustrate I grappled with the doubt in my mind that perhaps I was, as an artist, selling my soul. Now, with a number of books on the shelves, three this year, winning Notable Australian Children's Book Awards, a successful exhibition of art work from *Purinina* (How a Children's Book is Made, QVMAG, 2007) and thoroughly enjoying the art process I work through, I have no doubt that this is truly art and important art. This 'job' now has me employed full time, but more importantly takes me into schools to work with students and teachers, inspiring them about art and literature. Only through a good experience will students consider a career in the arts and will have society accept it as a viable profession.

I am very pleased to be able to be working in the arts industry, making a living and loving what I do. Art is a many faceted thing and it can take us along many roads, twists and turns and produce many challenges. If it is in your heart and soul it can't be ignored and so I would like to challenge anyone out there who wants to be a professional artist to do just that!

Photograph of Christina Booth : Elissa Nolan
Artwork images supplied by artist

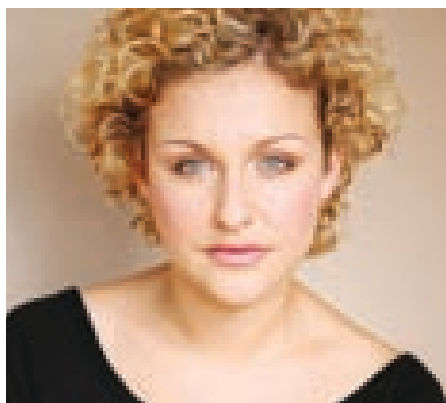


BROOKE NEWALL

establishes new children's talent agency 'ZooKids' in Brisbane

Story by Ellissa Nolan

After completing the Bachelor of Contemporary Arts (Theatre) at the School of Visual and Performing Arts in 2003, Brooke Newall began her professional journey into the unknown and largely unpaid world we call *The Arts*. Following graduation Brooke established herself as a dedicated actor performing for a number local companies and featuring in numerous CentrStage productions from 2004 – 2006. These included *The Return* 04,



Photographs supplied by Brooke Newall

360 Positions in a One Night Stand 04, *Up for Grabs* 05 & *Hitchcock Blonde* 06. In 2004, Brooke was successful in gaining the position of coordinator for Launceston's Police and Community Youth Club Youth Theatre and found herself facilitating weekly workshops for children aged 5 – 16 years. During her time at PCYC Brooke produced, wrote and directed many theatre performances including major productions of *HONK* 05 and *The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe* 06 both held at the Princess Theatre, Launceston.

On the final day of 2006 Brooke headed to Brisbane in the hope of advancing her career in the arts and found it to be the move that cemented her passion for this exciting yet unpredictable industry.

In 2007 Brooke applied for and won the position of Performance Coordinator for the *2high Festival*, Queensland's largest and longest running emerging arts festival. *2high* is a vibrant, multi-art form event showcasing the work of young and emerging Queensland artists. In 2007 *2high* was held at the world-class contemporary

arts venue, the Brisbane Powerhouse. In 2007 Brooke was approached by Backbone Youth Arts to step in to the senior role of Festival Manager for *2high* 2008 and is currently leading this year's team of 13 coordinators to create a fresh, new and cutting edge arts program. The 2008 *2high Festival* will be held in November this year at the Brisbane Powerhouse.

Last year Brooke Newall was approached to create the children's talent management agency *ZooKidz* under the guidance of longstanding Queensland agency V Management. Brooke is now Manager and Head Agent for *ZooKidz* and professionally represents children aged 6 months – 14 years in the Film, TV and modelling industries.

While in Brisbane Brooke has continued to work as an actor and has performed in corporate DVD's and short films. The Bachelor of Contemporary Arts at the Academy of the Arts provided Brooke with a solid foundation in the arts. Coupled with Brooke's natural talent, drive and commitment, the degree has led her into a theatre career full of excitement, challenge and professional rewards.

STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

: Upfront and on the move

National Gallery of Australia Acquisitions

Penny Mason, Sub-Dean Visual Arts and Head of Painting, Drawing and Printmaking at the Academy of the Arts.

Recently the National Gallery of Australia purchased three of Penny Mason's lithographs for its collection. Imagining 'Here', 2005 (Impressions: 3rd and 7th states), and The Illusion Of "1", 2005, were added to the NGA collection in 2007.

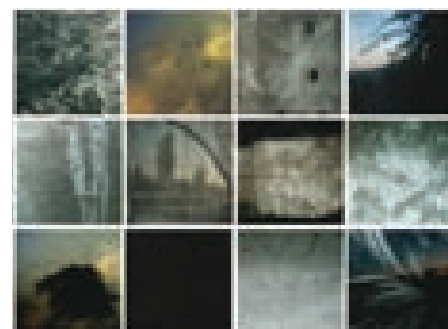


Photography: Ellissa Nolan

Dr Troy Ruffels : International Exhibitions

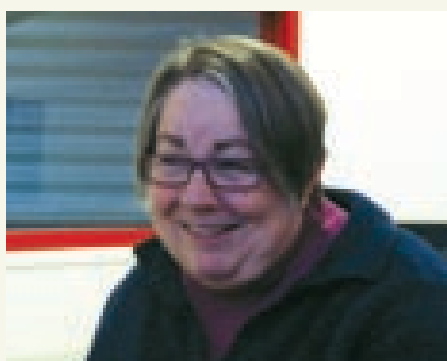


Since undertaking a year-long artist residency in Malaysia in 2003-04 Troy Ruffels has maintained an ongoing professional and personal relationship with South East Asia, participating in numerous exhibitions and commission projects. In 2007, his solo exhibition 'Night Air' opened at Taksu Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, and 2008 his one-person exhibition 'Filtered Sky', comprising photo media and paintings opened at the Taksu Gallery's Singapore venue.



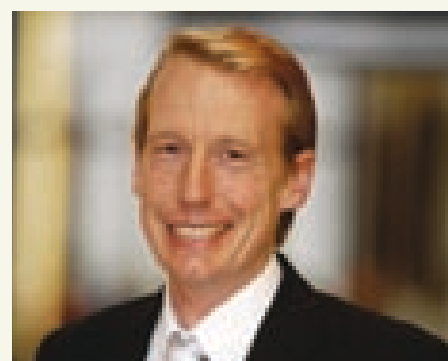
Teaching Merit Awards

In 2008, Dr Deborah Malor and Zsolt Faludi received the University of Tasmania's Teaching Merit Award for excellence in Teaching.



Australia Council Appointment

Academy Gallery Director Malcom Bywaters was appointed to the Australia Council Community Partnerships Committee in June 2008. The Australia Council is the Federal Government's peak arts advisory committee.



Photography by The Examiner Newspaper, Launceston

Interview & Photography by Ellissa Nolan

The final call for **MICHAEL EDGAR**



Ellissa : Michael, you've been teaching Performing Arts at the Academy of the Arts for over 20 years, and spent the past 50 years working in the Theatre industry in the United Kingdom and Australia. Can you talk a little bit about how much the Performing Arts has changed or developed throughout those years?

Michael : This is an interesting question because in one sense the straight play theatre I trained for has been taken over by television and films. Also I think on the small scale there is a further reaction in that live theatre is not just about the curtain going up, but there is a lot more interesting theatre using different forms. Many of our graduates who continue to do theatre work, don't make all of their living from it, they usually devise their own kind of scripts and create work that is always new. There is a lot more emphasis on the creation of your own work rather than being an actor. It's kind of a self-generating creativity.

Ellissa : In coming from an urban context into a regional setting, have you

observed any kind of impact or influence that community theatre has in the development of talent?

Michael : Yes, well I suppose I differentiate between community theatre and regional theatre. I had a chance at Deakin University to work in community theatre with the Mill Theatre Company. It was at the forefront of community theatre experimentation. I think at that time, the end of the 70's, there was a great emphasis on process, not on ego and demonstrating your talents, but using those talents as theatre workers to help and allow the community to explore things it was interested in. It was very different from what I had worked in until then. Coming here was regional, in the sense of being a smaller scale. I think when I first came here there wasn't a lot of top class theatre going on at the time. For example, Theatre North wasn't established nor did we have professionals from the mainland. The local players such as Peter Hammond, put their energies into producing

a musical once a year, to a very high standard. So there wasn't a lot of straight theatre. That's why we started CentrStage, and from there it has grown with Mudlark and a range of smaller local theatre companies. Now we see a lot more professional theatre coming into town.

Ellissa : Do you think there are fewer boundaries across the traditional disciplines now in the comprehension and interpretation of art and culture? How do you think cross-disciplinary approaches change the role of the arts in contemporary society?

Michael : I think there are increasingly fewer boundaries. But I think it's still a slow business. Many students come in to the Academy of the Arts wanting to concentrate on one discipline. I understand this and they are quite conservative. But I think they've got to a certain point in their own work and discipline and suddenly people are challenging their ideas and they feel like they are having their foundations pulled down. For example the use of technology and video camera presentations can appeal to students from both disciplines. I really think it is conceptual skills that are important. The more experience you have of thinking about your art the more you are developing portable transferable creativity. Even if you don't make your living from your art-form the problem-solving creativity is applicable in many other contexts.

Ellissa : You've often recited wonderful poetry in your lectures and staff functions. I'm wondering if you could leave us with one final verse....

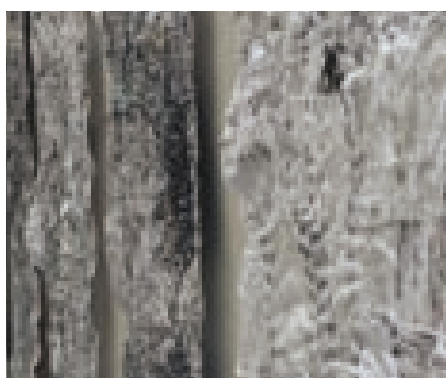
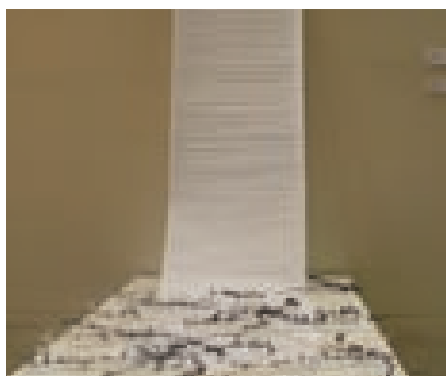
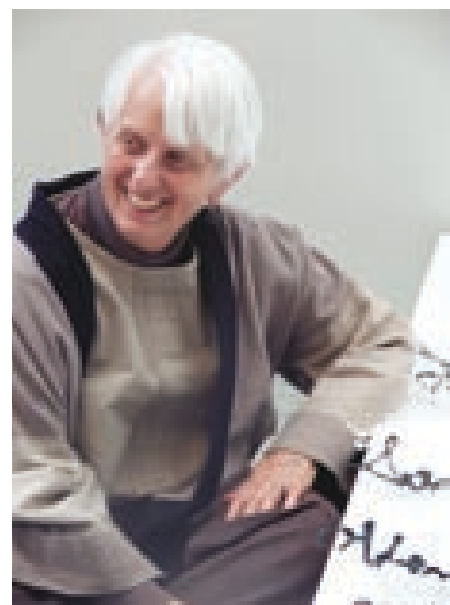
Michael : One of my favourite poems is Dylan Thomas' *Fern Hill* which I used in my monodrama about his childhood. The final verse is:

*Nothing I cared, in the lamb white days,
that time would take me
Up to the swallow thronged loft by the
shadow of my hand,
In the moon that is always rising,
Nor that riding to sleep
I should hear him fly with the high fields
And wake to the farm forever fled from the
childless land.
Oh as I was young and easy in the mercy
of his means,
Time held me green and dying
Though I sang in my chains like the sea.*

Artist-in-residence : PROFESSOR PATRICIA HICKMAN

An extract from the Ripples Exhibition Catalogue, 2008

Quiet time is essential to my work; my excessive, obsessive labour is a slowing down of time, a stepping out of the urgent pace of daily life. Out of seemingly nothing – a thin thread, a scrap of paper, a rusty nail – something emerges, makes a statement, holds briefly what cannot be captured: light, breath, time, impermanence, mortality.



An artist residency is a gift of quiet time. This one has allowed me to return to Tasmania, where I first came in the early 1990s to work at the Pilot Art Foundry with David Hamilton, casting monumental entrance gates, *Nets of Makali'i* – *Nets of the Pleiades*, for the Maui Arts and Cultural Centre in Hawaii. I call this exhibition *Ripples*, to suggest the series of pieces and collaborations that, for more than 15 years, has grown out of that first encounter with this place. *Ripples* is also the name of a specific work that will be on exhibit as a digital print. It, along with *Hunger*, and a video of the making of the Gates, represent some of what I

brought with me to this quiet time, previous ideas that continue to inform my practice. But I came with no idea of what I would do here; I wanted the work to grow out of being in residency.

The first day I was in Launceston, I read Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's "Sorry Speech," which he had delivered just a week before. I knew immediately that the speech and what it represents would shape what I would do. I had brought with me a piece, *"The Beginning of the Beginning,"* and it didn't take me long to see how my response to the Sorry Speech was related to it. In this piece, and in five additional

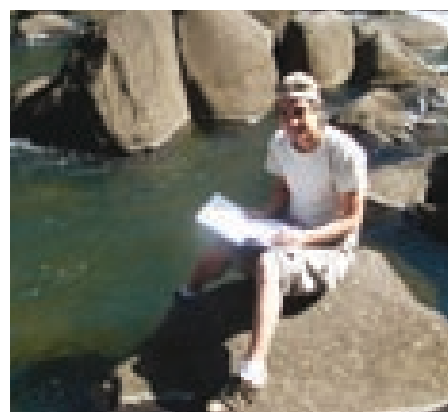
panels I have made here, I make use of throw away notes, inexhaustible lists of things to be done, items crossed off when accomplished. To hold the mark-making on these scraps together, I draw with thread; individual words disappear into a larger design, and finally, a new image emerges. I call these five new panels *Eye Chart*.

My residency in Launceston is, of course, temporary. I leave having received the gift of quiet time here in Tasmania, a gift that also includes an inevitable, necessary disquiet.

Photography : Ellissa Nolan

THE TASMANIAN CREATIVE ARTS SUMMER SCHOOL

By Ellissa Nolan

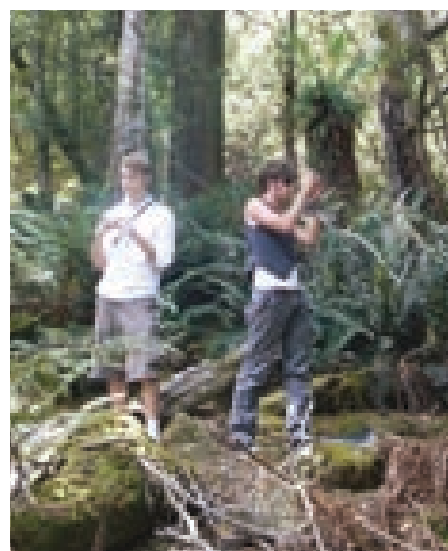


The second Tasmanian Creative Arts Summer School was held from 9-18 January 2008 in the City of Launceston, Tasmania. It was particularly exciting to be involved in managing a creative arts education event that attracted over 500 participants who gathered in Launceston to engage in hands-on workshops over these 8-days. We attracted a broad range of participants who travelled from all of Tasmania, mainland Australia and overseas to attend. The 2008 Tasmanian Creative Arts Summer School was a wonderful collaboration between the University of Tasmania, Newstead College, Launceston College, Launceston City Council, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery and TAFE Tasmania. This event positioned Launceston as a dynamic creative arts city in the Summer.

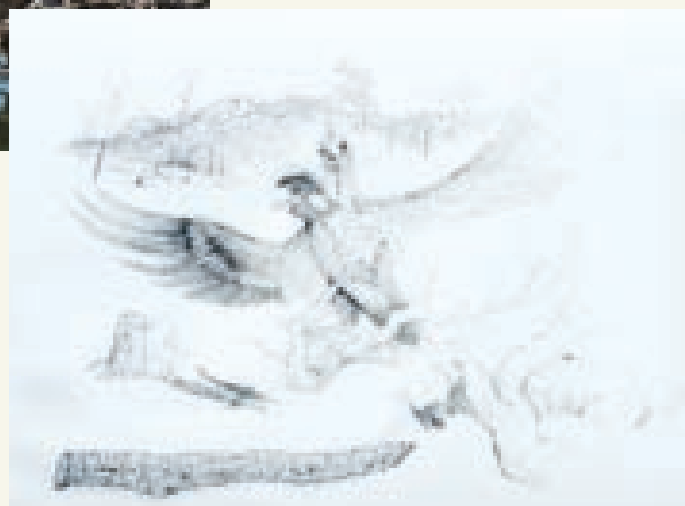
The 2009 Tasmanian Creative Arts Summer School will be held from 14-23 January and will be bigger and better than last year's event.

I hope you will be inspired to join us for the 2009 Tasmanian Creative Arts Summer School. It is possible for you to attain a credit towards your UTAS degree or apply for cross-institutional credit with another university. You can also participate for personal interest, or for professional creative development to take back to the workplace or classroom.

Please visit our website from August to get all of the workshop and program information www.acadarts.utas.edu.au. Alternatively please call 03 6324 4400 or email Ellissa.Nolan@utas.edu.au for a copy of our new brochure and workshop information.



Photography : Ellissa Nolan



JOHN PARISH

: Master of Contemporary Arts Alumni

My three main interests since childhood have been nature, drawing and building mechanical and electrical machines.

When making my decision to become a full time artist, I naturally found this combination becoming central to my subject matter and my art production methods.

I have always been drawn to wild and isolated places and have worked as a fisherman on the West coast of Tasmania and an opal miner at Lightning Ridge in outback NSW. I also ran a welding business on Flinders Island in the Bass Strait where I lived for ten years.

The peaceful isolation of my property at Badger Corner Inlet on the clear cool waters of Franklin Sound stimulated the latent artist within me. Memories of other wild places such as Albatross Island, home of the magnificent Shy Albatross and the thought that such unspoiled spaces could be in danger because of human interference, lead me to contemplate that, as a visual artist, I could highlight problems of environmental destruction.

For several years now I have lived at Golden Valley on the slopes of Quamby Bluff, on the edge of the high country. Surrounded by bush land I have observed the behaviour of the animals and birds, gaining some understanding of the inter-connectedness between different

species (including humans) and the natural world. Seeing and hearing the destruction of this environment has become a catalyst for the subject matter of my work. Fears for the survival of our native species have been expressed as drawings and sculptures in my exhibition "Last Wave". Here, Tasmanian birds have been displayed, bound, restricted, enclosed and driven from their nesting sites.

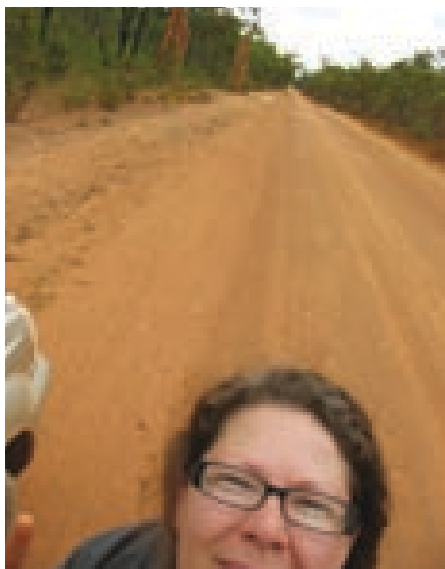
The Tasmanian Emu, Shy Albatross, Wedge-tailed Eagle and Yellow-Tailed cockatoo were chosen because of my previous association with these birds, as well as their place in the extinct and endangered rare categories.

Construction of the sculptures began with quick pencil sketches, then 3D wire "drawings" and finally, casting of some with aluminium skins. Skeletal parts were made from stainless steel. Electrical solenoids produced their pathetic feeble mechanical struggles when movement sensors were triggered by the viewer's own free movement about the exhibition space.

Photography : Ellissa Nolan

ACADEMY OF THE ARTS ALUMNI

: Where are they now?



Dr Susan Lowish

Susan was a sculpture and then printmaking major at the Launceston campus way back in 1988-1992. Since then she has moved to Melbourne gained further qualifications in the areas of critical theory and art history, the latter resulting in her appointment as the Lecturer in Australian Art History at the University of Melbourne. She is currently the Victorian Executive for the Art Association of Australia and New Zealand and is looking forward to taking up a prestigious Research Fellowship at the Australian National University in early 2009. Susan was inspired to make a career of the study of art by her experiences at art school in Launceston and is still in contact with staff and students from this time. In addition to her main job, she writes crosswords for Australian Geographic and travels to remote locations across the continent.



Dr Margaret Baguley

Dr Margaret Baguley currently lectures in arts education at the University of Tasmania. Margaret's responsibilities include generalist and specialist visual arts education. Her contribution to quality learning and teaching has been recognised through the award of a Teaching Merit Certificate (UTAS, 2004, 2007), Mentoring Award (UTAS, 2005) and Teaching Excellence Award (2007). Dr Baguley's research work is concerned with the complexities of the collaborative process which she examined in her PhD entitled *Partnership or Perish? A study of artistic collaborations*. This research examined the role of leadership, authorship, ego and support in the arts education sector. Dr Baguley is currently investigating the collaborative relationship between senior art teachers and their students in the context of the senior art secondary studio. She recently completed an evaluation of the youth arts policy for the Australia Council for the Arts. Dr Baguley has been awarded a prestigious Manning Clark/CAL Residential Fellowship to undertake six weeks research in Canberra during 2008. Her work was recently shown in the 'Green Zone' exhibition at the Academy Gallery and is currently on display as part of the 'Artists in the Mall Program' organised by the Brisbane City Council.



Aminyasin

Aminyasin is currently teaching Art and Design at secondary school level in Singapore. A graduate of Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and a member of APAD (Association of Artists of Various Resources), Aminyasin has participated in numerous art exhibitions locally as well as overseas. He started his career as film crew and made his way into an Artistic Director for a major film company in Singapore. As a sculpture major, Aminyasin gained his Bachelor of Contemporary Arts at the Academy of the Arts in 2006.

In his teaching of art, Aminyasin encourages his students to push their creativity to the maximum, emphasising the value of originality as the trump card to a successful career, whatever the profession.

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Academy of the Arts Alumni : Where are they now?



Dr Tim Edwards

Tim Edwards began study at the University of Tasmania in 1995, focusing his study in sculpture under the guidance of David Hamilton. As an undergraduate Tim was awarded the Helen Clarke prize by the University of Tasmania, and won The National Tertiary Art Prize including the Peoples Choice Award. During this time he created large-scale outdoor works for Arts Tasmania's Public Building Scheme. Tim achieved first class honours and subsequently was awarded an Australian Post-graduate Award to undertake the PhD. Tim has exhibited widely in solo and group shows and was a finalist in the 2006 Helen Lempriere National Sculpture Award. Recently Tim has worked on several high profile public commissions in Melbourne. Dr Edwards recently took up the position of lecturer in Spatial Practice and Sculpture at the Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne.



Shirley Bond

A twenty-year ambition set Shirley Bond off on a pathway that took her, at the age of 50, to TAFE and to a career as a successful professional studio potter. Shirley completed her Diploma in Art, Craft and Design in 2000. Since then she established her studio at the Tin Shed Pottery, Invermay Launceston. She works in functional and decorative ceramics with marine themes, incorporating lustres for pearlescent effects. From 2000 Shirley has exhibited widely including, Pride of Tasmania Exhibition, Red Door Gallery, Southern Forests Gallery and the Crohill Gallery. Shirley Bond's works have been purchased for national, international public collections and several private collections.



Richard Rowlands

Since Richard Rowlands' time at the Academy of the Arts he has continued to teach Art at Clatsop Community College in Astoria, Oregon, U.S.A focusing on integrating art and community. Richard's experience in Australia broadened his sense of community, not only in the present time, but also back through a long, unique cultural and geological history. Richard's Masters study in Tasmania assisted him in the reflection and study of cultural differences and similarities – both in art and in life and about his own nature. Richard's recent exhibitions and projects in Oregon include: 'Comanche Reconciliation Project', 'Eloquent Listening – Getting Everything Right', 'Women's Resource Centre 5th Annual Benefit for both Clatsop and Tillamook counties' and 'Painting with Fire' Anagama Exhibit in Lake Oswego.



International student profile :

JAMILENE TAN HUI PENG



Photography : Ellissa Nolan

Immediately after arriving in Launceston from Singapore in 2006, I went to see Professor Vincent McGrath. The Arts building at Inveresk completely overwhelmed me when I stepped inside its massive space. I immediately fell in love with the environment as a place to cultivate my passion for the arts.

I then had a face-to-face portfolio interview with Professor McGrath. It was a beneficial interview because I could see how the making skills integrated with the knowledge I would gain from the arts theory program. This was somewhat different to my past art education experiences.

In making my final decision on where to study I had to weigh up the strengths of two programs. Namely, the Bachelor in Contemporary Arts offered from the University of Tasmania (UTAS), and the Bachelor in Art Education, offered by Nanyang Technological University (NTU)/ National Institution of Education (NIE) in Singapore.

The very strong reputation of the Academy of the Arts in Singapore art circles and Tasmania's rich history and arts culture added to my determination to come to the University of Tasmania. I felt that the Tasmanian experience

would be a perfect complement to my previous studies at La Salle SIA School of Arts and the National Institute of Education in Singapore.

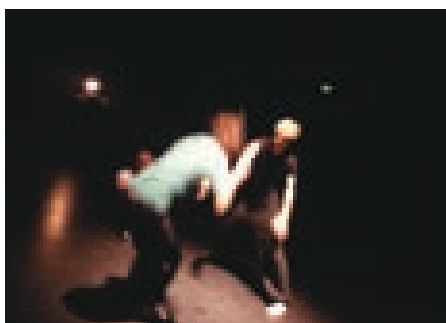
Almost two years on after deciding to come to Tasmania I can say it was the right move for me. I have experienced many new and different ideas – artistically, culturally and socially. I have learned many new things, especially the way arts practice can unify people, reveal truths and question beliefs. When I return home to Singapore I want to teach and exhibit my arts in top galleries. My biggest ambition is to represent Singapore overseas in my exhibitions.

Now that I have come to the end of my degree studies at the Academy of the Arts I am able to reflect on all the wonderful learning experiences that have enriched my arts practice. These Tasmanian experiences will stay with me for a very long time.



VOICE THEATRE LAB

Staff research project :



Since its inception in 2006, the Voice Theatre Lab has developed exploratory exercises that combine body and voice, merging East and West, with a particular focus on 'crisis'.

The group is a laboratory; it focuses on physio-vocal training and explores this through its productions. The work of the Voice Theatre Laboratory is physically and vocally rigorous and spectators that enjoy challenging, expressive and experimental work will find the experience most rewarding.

It is demanding work that investigates the performer's vocal presence through physical and conceptual acts of 'crisis'.

Voice work provides the key for the performer to rediscover his or her mysterious entity – an inner voice through improvisations and non-verbal expressions. This profound area is in need of sustained study. Voice Theatre Lab's on-going investigation aims to maintain the view that voice is an immensely important tool, a tool that has been neglected, and that physical and conceptual crisis, as opposed to freedom, relaxation and textual, 'literal reality', can benefit the voice and allow it to flourish and reveal its many colours and nuances.

The Voice Theatre Lab pushes the boundaries of the use of the human voice and body through states of 'crisis'. The work explored is the result of the application of various dichotomies and contradictions, which abandons the literal and textual, therefore focusing on opposites and non-conventional means of vocal production and physical states.

The current participants of the Voice Theatre Lab, under the direction of Robert Lewis, comprise University of Tasmania theatre graduates, postgraduate students, staff, and local performers including Chris Jackson, Laura Bishop, Andrew Peek, Nicole Dobson, Nicole Jobson and Jess Brownrigg. Initially, the group was formed to explore the sound of the body when placed under the influence of physical states inspired by Butoh dance in order to explore an 'inner voice'. The research has developed since then, and now explores the relationship between voice, body, abstract imagery and contradictions through training and performance.

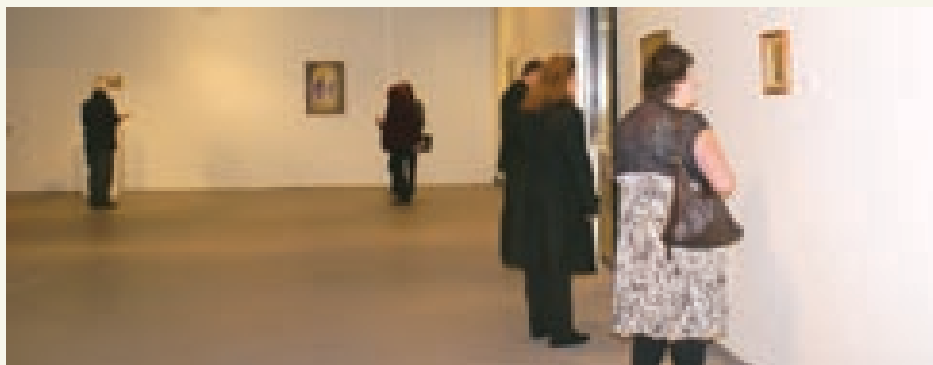
So far the group has made three productions, 'White Dark' (2007), performed as part of Ten Days on the Island, '5' (2008), explored the primeval and non-verbal aspect of vocal communication, and an adaptation of Christopher Marlowe's 'Dr Faustus', which was initially mounted in Launceston in 2007, and subsequently staged at the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA), Sydney, in May 2008.

Photography : Robert Lewis & Ellissa Nolan

TAFE EXHIBITION

Redundant Art : LEE HARPER

Image and article : Jane Deeth



What does it take to turn a strange object – any object – into highly valued art? This is the question that Lee Harper considered in her exhibition, *Redundant Art*, at the Academy Gallery in September 2007.

Lee came to the Arts Administration course at TAFE from a career in business administration. Inspired by the aesthetic of New York's Guggenheim Museum and very much aware of the capacity for display to influence or even determine buyer behaviour in the retail sector, Lee harnesses her past experience in her performative installation arts practice. In this instance, she employed arts administration as an artform rather than an administrative practice, acknowledging that, as with other consumer

items, it is the context in which artworks are placed that determines their worth and not the specific objects themselves.

Redundant Art consisted of discarded objects reclaimed from the shelves of second-hand shops. Their rehabilitation necessitated the use of the archetypal art gallery – the white cube. This space is the symbol of high art and elitism. The Guggenheim provided the model and Mies van der Rohe's concept of 'less is more' the guiding principle. The only space in Launceston that could offer this option is the Academy Gallery at Inveresk. The working relationship that TAFE Tasmania has with the University of Tasmania through the Academy at Inveresk, turned the possibility of this exhibition into a reality.

Indeed, an exhibition is nothing without an audience to witness it. At the formal opening event intense consideration of the work and measured conversation gradually gave way to an overt awareness that this was an exhibition of manners and behaviours. Fears, conventions and politeness were replaced by discussion and joy as guests came to see that the way we look at things is as important as what we look at and that judgements often tell more about us as viewers than it does about the art.

With *Redundant Art*, Lee made this relationship apparent. In doing so, she established her art practice as an extension of her life, giving viewers a memorable art experience in the process.

CENTRSTAGE

Paige Rattray awarded 2008 Country Club Professional Development Award

As the Country Club Tasmania Theatrical Development Award winner for 2008, Paige Rattray has packed a lot of jobs and opportunities into a short space of time. Paige started the year by performing for CentrStage in *Spilling Bodies* and followed up with Set Design and performance in David Mamet's *The Cryptogram*. She has also been working with the Theatre students as an Associate Lecturer and most recently appeared in *The Bridesmaid Must Die*. Paige will finish off the year Directing the internationally acclaimed play by Bryony Lavery, *Frozen*.



Photography : Nicole Jobson

Interview by Ellissa Nolan

KATE CASE

Kate Case currently teaches Jewellery for TAFE Tasmania at the Academy of the Arts. Kate graduated from the University of Tasmania [formerly TSIT] with a BA Visual Arts in 1987.



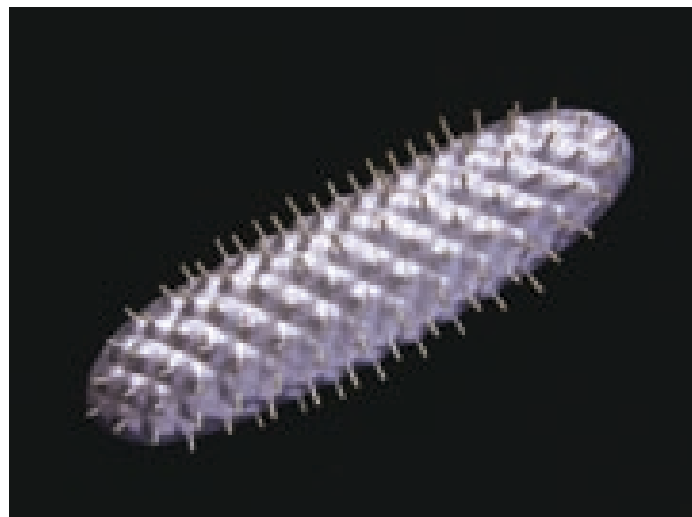
Photograph of Kate : Ellissa Nolan
Artwork images supplied by Kate Case



Ellissa : Kate, I noticed a stunning selection of your jewellery pieces on the Arts Tasmania Website. Can you please describe how your work was selected for this, which pieces are displayed and some of the themes and inspirations explored in the work?

Kate : Arts Tasmania put together a show to promote Tasmanian jewellers titled "Singular and Multiple" which showcased works by ten of Tasmania's jewellers who drew their inspiration from the island state. We were asked to present "one off" gallery type work and also production work to show the thread or differences between the two. As I didn't have a current line of production work - in fact I've rarely attempted to create any production work (see below) - It was an interesting challenge for me to "come up" with some! I had made Sterling Silver cufflinks for my son for his leavers' dinner the previous year and having seen that original non-commercial cufflinks are not that common and a gallery





director told me that they often had customers looking for them, I realised that they would be a good item to develop into a limited production range. I designed them so that they could be enameled and would still be individual and not identical. The other work of mine in the show was a range of one-off brooches representing recently made pieces as well as some older work.

Ellissa : What inspired you to become an artist / jeweller? Did this start as a fascination when you were young, or did you grow into this area after pursuing other careers first?

Kate : My mother was an art teacher and had trained as an interior designer. We were always doing arty stuff as kids and getting taken along to Crafts Council workshops and exhibitions. Art was something that was taken seriously in our family. We were always encouraged to draw, or clay would be brought home for us to make things out of that would then be fired.

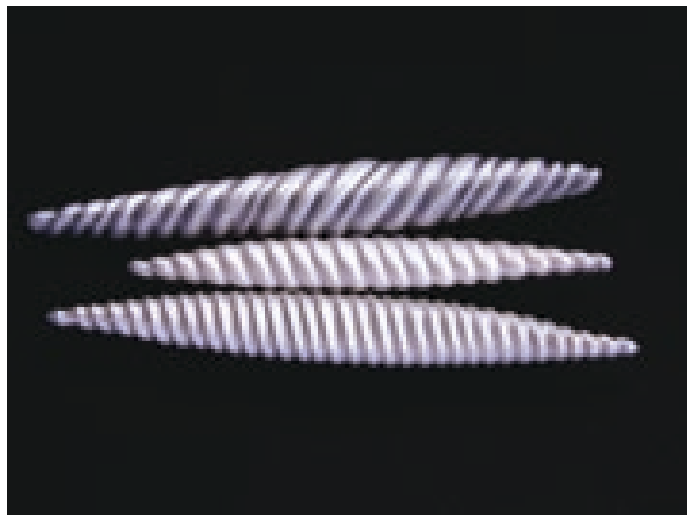
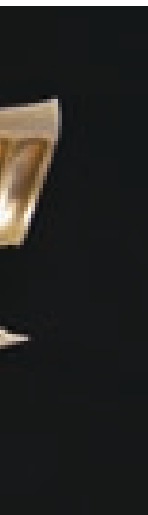
My maternal grandparents were both silversmiths. They were in England so I actually had no contact with them while I was growing up in Tasmania, but we had many beautiful pieces they had made in the house and my mother always wore jewellery made by them. So we were surrounded by their work as well as the etchings and artwork of my great-grandfather. The house was filled with art of one form or another. My paternal grandfather was a watchmaker and although he was long dead, we had a beautiful cabinet of his filled with drawers full of exquisite minute tools and watch parts. I used to love exploring in that cabinet and I still have it with all its treasures.

In spite of all this my ambition was to be a zoologist! I was definitely fascinated with the natural world, and still am. However..... while I was in the US as an exchange student in year 12, I enrolled in a jewellery making class at the high school I was attending, and that was it! I was totally hooked. The materials, the technical skills,

the scale and detail of the work, all of these aspects appealed to me. So ironically I took up something that was in the family even though I had never had any intention of doing so in the beginning.

I'm still inspired by the natural environment. All my work is influenced/inspired by my fascination with nature in one form or another. I collect seed pods, plants, pebbles, seaweeds, insects, shells, scientific illustrations, books on microscopic fauna/flora and patterns in nature. None of this is particularly methodical - I just accumulate things that I find beautiful and fascinating and somewhere along the way pieces of jewellery get made!

I've never wanted to be a production jeweller. If I was trying to make a living from jewellery making then my work would be constrained by the commercial realities of what people want to buy. No thank you.





Interview by Ellissa Nolan

THE FRAME : Naomi Miller

Naomi Miller has recently completed the Bachelor of Contemporary Arts Honours degree and was awarded an Australian Postgraduate Award to undertake the Master of Fine Arts. Naomi was selected to work in the City Park Artist Studio in Launceston last year. The Studio is provided by the Launceston City Council as an initiative to encourage top performing visual artists studying at the Academy of the Arts to focus on their postgraduate work. I recently caught up with Naomi to find some more out about the thought processes that inform the high level of sophistication in her visual artwork.

Photography : Ellissa Nolan

Ellissa : Can you describe the ideas that inform your Honours project?

Naomi : The underlying question for me is 'What is a painting?' I'm fascinated by the power that a painting can have, particularly when hung and viewed in a gallery. After all, it's made of very ordinary materials. But when I look at a painting, something happens. I've been looking for an explanation for the sense that a painting is 'something else' or 'somewhere else'. Not a window, but a portal into another world, governed by different time and different laws. That's why I titled my project 'Piero's Tardis'.

Ellissa : Your Honours project seems to have been a process of searching for answers on metaphysical space where you have investigated a number of concepts relating to perspective, spatial forces and the role of the imagination in perception. What kind of ideas did your initial investigations evoke?

Naomi : These are just some of the components that make up a painting. Perspective is a form of construction. A perspectival painting only works if you stand in the right place to view it. Spatial forces explain how we physically read a series of marks on a 2D surface, within the frame of the painting. Our imagination fills in the gaps by bringing a context to the painting. All this takes place within the psychological field of attention, which is formed by our expectations and experience.



Ellissa : It seems to be all of your preliminary investigative work that's really brought you to a new plateau in your thinking on the project. You mentioned in your research paper that reading Heidegger's essay, 'The Origin of the Work of Art' was a breakthrough point. Can you explain why?

Naomi : I am interested in the lived experience of a painting, the ongoing interaction between painter and viewer, so that a painting becomes a living thing. I think that a painting continues to evolve after the artist has finished with it. Every person who looks at it adds something to it. So the painting 'happens' every time it is viewed. And I think this is what Heidegger is talking about when he says that the work of art is a disclosure, an occurrence, where 'truth happens'. A painting is one of the places where the totality of experience is made visible. And my own paintings were an attempt to understand this unfolding of an event in a practical way.

Ellissa : You've obviously worked hard academically and creatively to arrive to this point in your work. Do you have more plans for study?

Naomi : I've begun a Master of Fine Arts research degree. I'm working on a theory of 'the frame', and the potential of paint to reveal and conceal at the same time. This is a development out of my Honours project.

A letter from : **SUE BATESON IN SAUDI ARABIA**

Sue Bateson is undertaking the project work of her MCA in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



Photograph supplied by Sue Bateson

Sue Bateson
Saudi Arabia's sense of space, history and culture have been influential in the development of my Master of Contemporary Arts project. The traditional mud brick dwellings of the region have been inspirational in the way my project has unfolded. Being here is a valuable experience which I feel will influence my art for many years to come.

I teach Visual Art at the first art school in Saudi Arabia and the first for women too. It is affiliated with Box Hill College of TAFE who employ me. Traditionally Students do not learn art in primary or high school so it is all new to these diploma level students (all women aged between 19-27). There are no men allowed in the school building at all. As a subject art has been banned except for religious art since the 1930s here so it is somewhat controversial and watched carefully by education authorities. At the moment I am flat out writing a full curriculum for the next semester, which begins soon. I teach nine Visual Art subjects over a 38-hour week.

There are no public sculptures and no depictions of anything remotely human or animal allowed in art here. Some of the students are bending those rules now though. All art is presented as pattern and is quite beautiful and intricate. The traditional silverwork is to die for. Even the furniture is sometimes covered in dense pattern and intricately worked beaten silver. Some Western ideas are creeping into life here now as the internet and shopping influence local customers.

It can be a lonely life here, as women are not allowed out in the streets so I am confined to school, my apartment and a few bus trips to shopping centres organised by the college

management. In general, Saudis do not appear to mix with other people except at school, so I have little contact with them outside school hours. We wear the black Abaya at all times when outdoors and it is always very hot. For example, it will be over 50 degrees in Summer and every day is over 38 degrees. Therefore, most people stay indoors in air-conditioned comfort. I tripped up on the Abaya hem several times going up stairs when I arrived until I got used to it. At the time I wondered how many women are injured by wearing this garment.

The streets here are amazingly empty as there are no women out walking and most men drive. Many of the cars are blacked out so the women cannot be seen. Photographing women and government buildings is banned and shopping and partying occurs late at night here because of the heat. Getting students to be punctual is a continual problem as is attendance.

There is no alcohol allowed in Saudi Arabia, there are no nightclubs or picture theatres and women are not allowed to sing or dance. Prayers are made five times a day for half an hour at a time, and shops, businesses and the shopping malls close during prayer times and then re-open until at least 11pm every night. The times change every week as prayers are set by a complicated arrangement of the moon and religious meanings. The times are published in the newspapers each week.

Recently, I was lucky enough to be taken out into the desert to a Bedouin encampment by one of my students. The tents are amazing. Very luxurious and the food just kept coming and coming! Lucky for me, Saudi people like a lot of salads. The desert was just as I had imagined, rolling sand dunes as far as the eye could see. I regard myself to be very lucky because my final MCA exhibition is scheduled to be held in a brand new gallery in Riyadh during October.



LISTEN...UNIVERSITY IS ALL ABOUT FOCUS,

By Daniel Speed

it's a step, just one in a journey that takes hundreds and thousands... *I like ice cream.*

Understandably, you might say, it took me ten years to take that one step. No really, ten years to get a Bachelor of Arts. Now that might not be your cup of tea, but the truth is I didn't love University when I started. I do now...I'm researching the places we normally "just Pass(ing) through" to gain a Master of Contemporary Arts Degree, maybe a PhD one day... The aim of my project is to explore a connection I have discovered between dead or dying trees by the side of Tasmania's roads and what I call my "environmental anxiety".

Photography : Ellissa Nolan

I was initially enrolled at UTAS in Arts Law with a focus on Business Studies. I'd just left the Options trading floor in Sydney mainly because I was desperate not to get financially trapped in a massive mortgage and well, because I didn't love the person that this life was helping me become. Within five minutes of first Business Management lecture I recognised I had exchanged a well paid job doing something I hated for three years of someone else telling me how to do the same job better: and not a cent on offer for this mental incarceration...*eject eject!*

So a meeting with the Arts Coordinator led to English, Mandarin, Philosophy and Business Studies. Two "fails" later the business studies went the way of the Tasmania Tiger...*what an over used exercise in branding?*

Eventually, I arrived on the podium with a suitably funny hat and an overly expensive rented black sheet covering my op-shop suit to receive a Degree in English and Philosophy.

The truth is that I needed space in between my years of study. Digestion is a vital part of

turning any thing you consume into a useable form and without marching off on a quest I was always going to be another constipated professional student. I ended up in Brooklyn, New York managing a children's book store and doing theatre off-off-off Broadway ...*off-off Broadway is just on Broadway ...but off-off-off Broadway is off Broadway only to the power of ten.*

Now back in Tassie I try and balance university study and work. I'm studying part time and working as a Commercial Producer for Southern Cross Television. It's not Fox Studios, but I get to write, direct and produce most of what I do. The creative aspects of my work keep me sane and the other-side pays the bills. I've also found a university course and campus that still recognises my "uniqueness". But instead of failing me, I get challenged to tune that uniqueness...*stay on target, stay on target...* to sharpen and focus my ideas into projects that can be judged by my peers. Strangely, it's that same part of me that seems to help me succeed in my vocational world.

INTERNATIONAL

Introducing Emeritus Professor Aida Yusuke - Master Ceramicist from Tokyo, Japan



Photography : Ellissa Nolan
Artwork image supplied by artist

Aida Yusuke, a Master Ceramicist from Japan, visited the Academy of the Arts in October 2007. Aida's visit was part of a national tour hosted by the Australia-Japan Foundation, where he presented lectures on the relationship between ceramics and architecture.



Island to Island

: Curated by Professor Vincent McGrath

The University of Tasmania, the University of Hawaii and Universiti of Sains Malaysia, hosted Island to Island: A collaboration between three island states. The exhibition presented the contemplations of island life by nearly 50 artists from Tasmania, Hawaii and Penang.



Island to Island opening night - Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia

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