
Flight Recorder

2013 Journal Entries

A selection of journal articles from Flying Arts Alliance artists, facilitators, and organisers working in the front line of artist creative development and arts management in regional and remote areas in 2013

FEBRUARY 11-12

DALBY

Damien Kamholtz- Flying Arts Artist

Artist Journaling in the Bunya Mountains

"An invitation to be free can be a hard one to accept, just as playing can seem contradictory to create a serious work."

I arrived at Dalby State High School and was given directions to the DSHS 'Bunya Mountain Campus - 10 minutes out of town. Turn left, go over the railway line, turn right and right again, and then headed towards the Bunya Mountains. This is what I love about Flying Arts gigs- they are always an adventure! The Artist Journal workshop I delivered is designed to better engage students with the practice of creating visual diaries as a valuable tool for expressing, recording and developing their ideas, while exploring how ideas can be visually and conceptually added to the pages of the journal to encourage a creative evolution of ideas for art works. To start with I asked a few simple questions:

'Hands up who has a visual diary?' I asked. Everybody in the room put up their hand.
'Who likes keeping a visual diary?' One or two lone hands went up.

I began the workshop by showing the students a variety of images, some of my works in construction in my often messy studio, to final works in exhibition context. I shared with the group the two visual journals that I had kept during that same 12 month period. This allowed students to see the seed of an idea grow from a vague concept, to something more tangible. To see some ideas explored and discarded and other ideas translated into a visual form, become metaphor and evolve and change on the pages of a journal.



Image: Students creating their artworks

Using an image, students were encouraged to employ specific drawing techniques. These techniques are designed to produce a particular abstraction, with the aim of freeing the students' creativity. These drawings inspired further compositions by cropping, cutting up, replicating and developing new images. A mixture of new media was added to the mix and it is made important that all developments visual and conceptual be made note of in their journal, this serves to record and make the artist more aware or give greater awareness of what was occurring in their creations. An invitation to be free can be a hard one to accept; just as playing can seem contradictory to create a serious work. The students accepted the challenge, became playful, happily made mistakes and, in turn, discovered they could create some very exciting works. These works, like journal pages, could become the starting point or catalyst for further visual images, and so on.

MARCH 27-28

CAIRNS

Joachim Froese- Flying Arts Artist

Light Graffiti at Kick Arts

From 2012 to 2014 Flying Arts is touring an exhibition of my still life photographs and in March/April [2013] the work was up at Kick Arts in Cairns. In conjunction with the event I flew up North to give workshops and participate in a symposium at James Cook University.

The first workshop took place at Trinity Bay State High School and a group of very talented High School students gathered to learn more about still life photography, lighting and composition. All participants showed amazing dedication and we got some really interesting results.

The next workshop took place at 'The Space' at the Centre for Contemporary Arts. This time 'Painting with Light' was the focus. 'Painting with light' is a process in which you use torches and flashes to 'draw' objects by shining a light onto them from various angles. The theatre stage of 'The Space' was the ideal setting for our workshop and we all got quickly involved in our lighting exercises. The results are proof of the fun we had.

Straight after this I rushed to James Cook University to give a presentation at the symposium 'Art and Environment'. The symposium was video linked with speakers at the James Cook University Campus in Townsville and QUT in Brisbane. Presenters were, Lawrence English, Keith Armstrong, Napoleon Oui, Sandra Landholt and myself.

Once again it was a busy and exciting schedule, which ended the next morning on Good Friday at Russell's market, where all the Cairns locals meet on the weekend for a relaxed coffee and samosa. Many thanks to Kylie Burke, curator at Kick Arts, Janelle Williams at Trinity Bay High School, Russell Milledge from James Cook University, and of course Chrissy Dwyer at Flying Arts for a perfectly organized chain of events!



Image: The photography workshop was a great success

APRIL 3-4

MACKAY

Pam Finlay- Flying Arts Artist

Microscopic Flower Painting Workshop

Workshops took place at Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens over 2 days on the 3rd and 4th April. The workshops were conducted in conjunction with the opening of my solo exhibition centred on the same theme at the Gardens Gallery space entitled “Glory – The Full Manifestation”.

The aims of the workshops were to view the garden and its flowers from a microscopic perspective and interpret the same. It commenced with an excursion around the Botanic Gardens led by the workshop organiser and myself, encouraging children to look “up close and personal” at nature. Children observed plants and animals through magnifying lenses and viewfinders. Photos were taken to give inspiration for when we arrived back in the studio.

On arrival back at the workshop venue the first activity involved choosing an image to create a series of monoprints from an abstract perspective of the flora that had inspired them. Emphasis was on colour, form, pattern and texture. Varied tools were used to achieve the outcomes. The second activity involved cropping a chosen image with a viewfinder and drawing the flower from a microscopic perspective.

This was a thoroughly enjoyable and inspirational workshop experience.



Image: Pam and an interested student working on botanical prints

MAY 3-6

CLERMONT

Pamela Denise - Flying Arts Artist

Clermont 150 Years Celebration Mosaic Project

This was a drop-in community art project that ran Friday to Monday inclusive at the Clermont Civic Hall. Ten people, including myself, created a beautiful mosaic to commemorate Clermont's 150th anniversary. The mosaic was applied to a 15mm thick compressed concrete panel 1200 x 1200mm to be installed in the Rose Harris Park later in the year. The design is a close interpretation of the 150th anniversary logo, simplified a little to suit the medium. The design features three primary industries of the district being mining, beef production and agriculture.



The drop in format worked very well for me as the leading artist. The local newsletter advised that people were welcome to drop in between 10am and 4pm. Locals could visit to view progress or they could get involved in the actual making. There was a steady flow of visitors and good conversation all weekend keeping the energy levels up as well as some quiet times where I could steam ahead.

The drop in format worked well for those interested because it provided a reasonably large window of opportunity to get involved without tying up the whole weekend. I enjoyed walking about town and around Hood's Lagoon, the site of a catastrophic flood in 1916 which resulted in the town being moved to higher ground shortly after. I discovered a multitude of monuments, and started to make connections as I went, asking questions about it all back at the workshop. I came away feeling there's an awful lot more to discover about Clermont with its long and varied history. Thanks to Candice Jenkins, Place Officer - Clermont in the Isaac Regional Council for pulling the project together.

JUNE 24-28

BIRDSVILLE/BEDOURIE

Josh Cleary- Flying Arts Artist

Aerosol Art

Six and a half hours on a plane and 5 stops later I arrived in Birdsville (population 80). Jo Lewington (organiser) picked me up from the airport and took me for a tour of the town. 5 Minutes later we were back to the beginning and began setting up for the first night workshop.

Six participants arrived and quickly began designing their “deadly” decks whilst their families assisted Jo in the kitchen to make Spaghetti Bolognese for everyone’s dinner. The following day they all returned with a few extras to paint portraits. Although this proved to be a challenging task for some, everyone succeeded in the end.

A quick stop at the famous Birdsville bakery for a rabbit pie and Jo and I were on our way to Bedourie (population 120).

The skateboard workshop in Bedourie was well received and saw 10 participants create the masterpieces.

Day 2 in Bedourie had participants painting portraits. There was a range of images from family members, celebrities to one girl’s favourite horse, and after a visit from the town’s policeman we also had the task of painting a sign for the Bedourie Gun Club. After 6 hours of almost nonstop painting no-one wanted stop, let alone go home. Eventually we managed to pry the cans from their hands, pack up and say farewell to Bedourie.



Image: A finished work from Josh Cleary’s workshop

JULY 13-14

CLERMONT

Christine Brassington- Flying Arts Artist

Painting with a Chinese Brush

I was looking forward to my second visit to Clermont, having been there just six weeks before to do a drop in children's workshop at the Regional Show. This time, the workshops were for adults, and they were just as enthusiastic and friendly as the children. Six people came along on Saturday, and four of these returned on Sunday, along with six new people. Most had done some painting with traditional western watercolours and acrylics, but none had experienced Chinese painting before; some were quilters, and were interested in gaining new ideas to incorporate into their quilts. Participants were of all ages, and came from many walks of life, including teachers and gold prospectors! As well as taking home their workshop notes, exercises, and a completed painting, everyone received a card with a traditional Chinese poetry seal that translates as "Keep learning as long as you live" – an appropriate memento, and hopefully an inspiration to continue painting... with a Chinese brush.

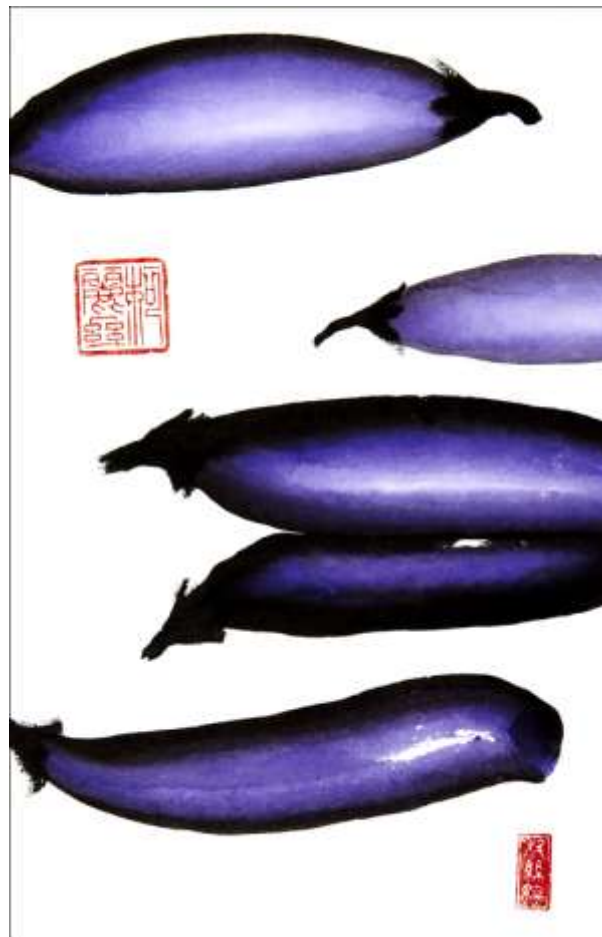


Image: The amazing depth Chinese painting can induce

AUGUST 10-11

MACKAY

Julie McEnerny- Flying Arts Artist

Mackay Botanic Gardens

Three years on, almost to the day, I found myself back in the congenial company of the BAIG ladies. Mackay's Botanical Art Interest Group is an active and dedicated bunch of women, intent on learning as much as they can about art and plants, both for personal enjoyment and for sharing. Amongst them are some very fine artists, each with their own style and way of working, but all with a desire to begin a botanical journal.

So with brand new Moleskine sketchbooks we set about filling a few pages. Not the first page of course..... "we have to leave that for when we improve". Some, grossly under estimating their abilities, will have quite a lot of pages to fill before the weekend's work is hidden amongst future masterpieces!

Our journals were small, A5 size, so after a session of eye exercises outside, we warmed up the drawing brain with some loose, gestural drawing, aiming to ward off timidity and excessive tidiness on the new pages. But then, tidiness is inherent in botanical art so it's no wonder the BAIG Moleskines already contain beautiful, meticulous, graphite drawings of funghi, roses, native grasses and curled leaves. Some complete with field notes and taxonomic notations, and all of them worthy of a place in the Botanic Garden's exhibition case.

Something tells me The BAIG Journals have a future and will exist for posterity.



Image: Some excerpts of the beautiful botanical journals

SEPTEMBER 21-22

MACKAY

Mark Paddick- Flying Arts Artist

Concept Development Workshop



Image: Mark brainstorming with students

An air of excitement filled my head as I left the cooler days of Boonah and headed north to the tropical climate of Mackay for the first time. Flying over my old home town of Gladstone I could see the parking lot of coal ships lined up in perfect rows along the Central Queensland coast. Arriving late on a Friday afternoon, I took a wander around the town and came across the remarkable building that would host my workshops over the following two days. With its Craig Walsh installation unrolling the buildings facade, I was intrigued to see such an innovative building in a regional centre.

Much like the Gladstone community I had spent 17 years in, Mackay had a similar thriving arts community that felt over shadowed at times by artists from outside the region. The weekend's workshops were aimed at reinvigorating the local artists and their approach to conceptual art. Mackay Artspace hosted a diverse range of artists over the two days, from university graduates to high school teachers, experienced artists to those picking up the brush for the first time. Many had experimented with their mediums, undertook skill based workshops or simply doodled, but they ventured into this workshop to learn a different kind of skill. This class would prove to be a different kind of learning experience. No hands on making tasks, no brushes or markers to play with, this class would be all about teaching thinking.

The post modern artist needs more than a technique, they need to develop a conceptual framework to drive their art making. This workshop would give them an insight into thinking in innovative ways and to be inventive with their ideas. Brainstorming, concept mapping, creative idea generation and even a little Edward de Bono were the tools used to open up the way they thought about their art making.

A day filled with new ideas, a little history and some important self reflection gave the class the skills to develop ways of thinking which would evolve their creative process and give direction to their arts practice. With some crucial one on one mentoring each student came away with a deeper understanding of the concepts that would inform their art making from that point onwards. Regional artists can often feel disadvantaged due to the remote nature of their communities. They are equal to their city counterparts in their development of media and techniques and hopefully after this weekend they will have an equal opportunity at a conceptual level as well.

OCTOBER 18-20
NOCCUNDRA (Way out west QLD)
Scott Maxwell - Flying Arts Artist

Channel Country Ladies Day

This was a workshop to really look forward to - 120 women and me (and 1000's of kms to anywhere else). Now that the dust has settled, the wind has dissipated and the flies have gone, now is a good time to pause & reflect.

The mosaic represented an aerial perspective. The theme flowed through the Channel Country incorporating the undulating landscape, the billabongs, the cattle tracks, emu paths & the gibber plains. The lovely ladies used rumbled granite & marble tesserae with found stones & pebbles from this harsh, yet vulnerable environment.



Image: Ladies from the mosaic workshop

One part that caused contention was the plastic pink bottle top that Bev (from Melbourne) plonked into place. It divided the group's aesthetic view of the artwork. I rationalised it as an ephemeral symbol of the Ladies Day event which only lasts for a weekend in the landscape. All the permanent stone work will last 1000's of years. That swayed a few peoples opinion. However it was Marie (from Darwin) who took the bold step & vanquished it to the rubbish bin and replaced it with a neat, snugly placed Cretaceous stone. I think everybody was secretly relieved!

Coordinator Kristy did a marvelous job arranging the events; the calibre of speakers, the diversity of workshops, the continuous entertainment, the scrumptious cuisine, the dedicated volunteers, the jackaroos (yes, sadly, there were other blokes present), the transportation, accommodation logistics and the eager participants.

What impressed me most was the helpfulness & determination of these women from the bush, not shying away from doing hard yakka - anything that needed to be done was done without any whinging - only a smile and a great attitude. These resourceful women didn't ask, they just chipped in & did it.

I was so grateful to be part of the Channel Country Ladies Day program and meeting all the 'lovely ladies' and 'wild women' of the wonderful west (or should that be 'wonderful women' of the wild west?)

BEDOURIE

Gerwyn Davies - Flying Arts Artist

12-14 November 2013

Where the Wild Things Are Mask Making

It's a long way to the desert oasis of Bedourie – 6 flights in fact. Up and down, bouncing through the sky really hitting all the hot spots on the way but when you finally fly over the tiny tin town in the middle of, well, nothing, it is a sight for sore eyes.

Bedourie was easily the friendliest town I have ever been to, I guess spending all that time alone out there gives you room to work on your manners and I was amazed that everyone seemed to already know my name.

A congregation of Birdsville and Bedourie youths had gathered for Splash N Arts Camp, seemingly doubling the population of the remote Western QLD town overnight. They were learning vital life saving skills and swimming lessons (not a bad gig in frequently 50C+ weather) dance and mask making.

The mask making workshops were essentially a giant opportunity for the young people to make a mess. Plastic, corks, cups, cards, feathers and hot glue were flying around the library space as they were challenged to make monster masks to match the Where the Wild Things Are dance they were learning. It was a colourful and excitable affair with the youngest groups of P to Grade 2 the most successful at destroying the joint and having a fantastic time doing so. The final presentation of their work was made at the swimming carnival/ life saving exhibition, dance recital/ BBQ and I think the parents in attendance were pleasantly surprised with the craft excesses their children had been revelling in that week. It made for an interesting affair with glittery robots, wolves and kings tearing their way around the pool long in to the desert night.

DECEMBER 3-6

MITCHELL

Sue Loveday - Flying Arts Artist

Stop Motion Animation At Mitchell SWAG Camp

Sunflowers and cactus lined the road through vast paddocks of browns on my journey to Mitchell's isolated kids and parents swag camp. I discovered a quaint little town full of public art and interesting street furniture. I was pleased to arrive somewhere with a strong artistic community and a strong community in general, still recovering from the effects of the floods. On my first day of camp I was met by kids who lived on properties and stations hours from nowhere. Smiling young people with hats almost as big as them and swags that had seen a lot of use.

We started our process to make short animated movies with drawing exercises and a trip into their imaginations as we invented robots and super heros. The kids embraced brush and ink drawing with enthusiasm and then coloured their work with water colour. Each session involved games story telling and experimenting with drawing, painting and modelling. The kids then discovered these characters were to be used in their movies and in groups they took up the challenge.

Technology is not as readily at hand in the bush so it was a novelty for most of them to jump on the cameras and i-pads to shoot their movies. Once the images were taken it was time to add sound and the groups had a chance to add their own sound effects. The results were enjoyed by parents and friends at the carnival day showcase on the last day. Lots of laughs were had as the kids personalities shone threw in movies about lost emus, alien attacks, gruesome dinosaur massacres and ice cream.

I love the sense of pride that beamed out of these kids who felt as though they had made something great. Thank you isolated kids and parents. I had a ball.

