

An abstract painting with a textured, layered appearance. The dominant colors are various shades of olive green and yellow, with some darker, muted tones of brown and grey. There are visible brushstrokes and some thin, dark lines that crisscross the composition, giving it a sense of movement and depth. The overall effect is one of organic complexity and earthy tones.

PAINT THE TOWN

**THE TOURING EXHIBITION OF THE 2021
QUEENSLAND REGIONAL ART AWARDS**

FLYING ARTS
ALLIANCE INC



Touring Exhibition Partners and Supporters



Paint the Town, touring exhibition of the 2021 Queensland Regional Art Awards, is an initiative of Flying Arts Alliance in partnership with Museums & Galleries Queensland. This project is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland; and proudly sponsored by Holding Redlich.

Queensland Regional Art Awards Partners and Supporters



ARTIST PROFILE

[THE JOHNSON]



onespace



Flying Arts Alliance gratefully acknowledges The Booth Memorial Fund of Annie Tan (Yuh Siew), the Geoff Booth Foundation, Woolloongabba Art Gallery, Turner Family Foundation private donors and the government, philanthropic and corporate supporters and Award partners who help make the Queensland Regional Art Awards possible.

Acknowledgements

Flying Arts Alliance acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands and seas on which we work, live, and create. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Flying Arts Alliance is honoured to acknowledge the Governor of Queensland, Her Excellency Dr Jeanette Young PSM as our Patron. We also acknowledge Mr Tim Fairfax AC and Mrs Gina Fairfax as our Cultural Patrons.

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Paint the Town Cover Image:
Kym Barrett, *Gateway* (artwork detail), 2021,
Oils, mixed media on canvas,
120 x 120 x 4 cm.
Photograph by Louis Lim.

Information in this catalogue is correct at time of printing, but is subject to change during the course of the exhibition period.

ABOUT THE AWARDS

The Queensland Regional Art Awards (QRAA) is Flying Arts' signature annual art awards for established and emerging artists living in regional and remote Queensland. The awards aim to highlight the wealth of creative talent located outside the capital city and provide a platform for professional development.

Evoking the spirit of celebration, artists were invited to respond to the question: *How do you celebrate?* Is it a jubilant party or a simple elegant affair, serene or riotous, extended explosions of joy or quiet moments reflection and gratitude, ceremony, tradition or ritual, expressed in dance or song, full of sentiment or tears, an anniversary, a farewell or a whim, with family, friends, a whole community or alone, a sense of occasion, a festival or just because? Whatever the reason or season, whatever your medium or practice, we invite you to Paint the Town.

Award participants have their work featured in an online gallery, and are considered for the major prize. Participants can also enter several minor award categories and may also have their work selected for exhibition.

The 2021 QRAA coincides with Flying Arts' 50th year anniversary, half a century of connecting artists, educators and communities.

The touring exhibition of the Queensland Regional Art Awards travels to metropolitan and regional galleries in the years following the award.

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S INTRO KERRYANNE FARRER

Flying Arts Alliance is pleased to present the 2021 Queensland Regional Art Awards (QRAA) in what is a pivotal year for the organisation; our 50th anniversary of connecting regional Queensland artists, educators and communities to quality visual arts and cultural services.

In 1971 Flying Arts Founder Mervyn Moriarty made his very first flight, soaring solo from Archerfield airport in Brisbane on a 6,000 km round journey across Queensland to establish a mobile art school. This flight was the first of over a thousand that Mervyn took until 1983, at which time he and a dedicated group of tutors visited on average 26 centres four times a year to teach visual arts classes across a variety of mediums.

During these years, the organisation was credited as being a catalyst for social regeneration for hundreds of artists living on rural properties and regional towns throughout the state. This legacy lives on today in the work of Flying Arts, as the organisation became known in 1994, and the many art groups which formed across the state thanks to Mervyn's tutelage. Since 2010, the QRAA initiative has flourished thanks to the multitude of art classes and practice fostered by Flying Arts tutors.

In the spirit of celebrating our half-century milestone, we asked artists who entered the 2021 QRAA to respond to the theme 'Paint the Town'.

Artists submitted works that examine both the public and personal ways they commemorate important occasions. Whether this is a loud and riotous affair, or a process of quiet contemplation, what is captured by this exhibition is the uniquely Queensland spirit of community, culture and place.

This year's entries were judged by an esteemed panel of arts professionals: Chris Stannard, Curator at Tanks Art Centre; Carol McGregor, Program Director, Contemporary Australian Indigenous Art, Queensland College of Art; and Jan Manton, a previous Flying Arts Chair of the Board and Director of Jan Manton Art. I thank you all for the discernment you brought to this challenging task.

Thanks to the generosity of our award sponsors, in 2021 we were able to offer one of the largest prize pools in QRAA history including three new categories; the Mervyn Moriarty Landscape Award, the First Nations Artist Award, and the Photography Award. Our thanks also goes to the Queensland Government's Touring Queensland Fund which has enabled the tour of this exhibition until 2024 in an exciting partnership with Museums & Galleries Queensland, supported by Holding Redlich.

Congratulations to this year's prize winners and finalists, an exciting collection of regional talent from as far North as Gununa (Mornington Island) and as far west as Charleville.

We recognise the amount of courage it takes to put your art into the world.

To the art lovers visiting the exhibition, thank you for your support of our vision of Art for Life. I hope you reflect on celebration as you view, experience and share these outstanding works of art.

VIEW THE VIRTUAL EXHIBITION

Step into a virtual regional Queensland town to explore the vibrant artists and communities that enrich our vast state.

Paint the Town touring exhibition is available to view as an interactive, online exhibition on Flying Arts' 50th Anniversary extended reality (XR) platform. Scan the QR code below with a smart device to immerse yourself in a virtual world with new 'experiences' being unveiled until October 2022.



Search flyingarts50.holoscribe.site in your web browser.

TOURING DATES FEBRUARY 2021 - DECEMBER 2024

The Court House Gallery, Cairns	18 February–23 April 2022
Tablelands Regional Gallery, Atherton	May–June 2022
Banana Shire Regional Art Gallery, Biloela	July–August 2022
Emu Park Art Gallery, Emu Park	November–December 2022
Bundaberg Regional Art Gallery, Bundaberg	November 2022–January 2023
Mundubbera Regional Art Gallery, Mundubbera	March–April 2023
Dogwood Crossing, Miles	May–July 2023
Roma on Bungil, Roma	August–September 2023
Gallery 107, Dalby	October–November 2023
Warwick Art Gallery, Warwick	December 2023–January 2024
Lockyer Valley Art Gallery, Gatton	March–April 2024

For information on the exhibition tour see magsq.com.au/touring-exhibitions/ or flyingarts.org.au/exhibitions/

2021 AWARD LIST

THE FLYING ARTS 'ART FOR LIFE' AWARD AND SPOTLIGHT AWARD

\$10,000 cash, non-acquisitive, thanks to Holding Redlich. A catalogue essay valued at \$1,000, thanks to Onespace Gallery and artworks; Print and digital editorial and promotions valued at \$10,000+, thanks to Artist Profile.

THE ANNIE TAN MEMORIAL WATERCOLOUR AWARD

\$3,000 non-acquisitive cash prize, thanks to The Booth Memorial Fund of Annie Tan (Yuh Siew) and the Geoff Booth Foundation.

YOUNG ARTIST DEVELOPMENT AWARD

\$2,000 non-acquisitive cash prize, thanks to Turner Family Foundation.

TEXTILE ART AWARD

\$1,500 non-acquisitive cash prize, thanks to an 'Art for Life' Donor.

NEW MEDIA ART AWARD

Fully funded one-week residency at State Library of Queensland, The Edge including 7 nights' accommodation at The Johnson- Art Series, valued at \$4,000.

REMOTE ARTIST AWARD

\$1,500 cash, non-acquisitive, thanks to Woolloongabba Art Gallery.

FIRST NATIONS ARTIST AWARD

\$1,500 non-acquisitive cash prize, thanks to Mitchell Fine Art.

THE MERVYN MORIARTY LANDSCAPE AWARD

\$3,000 non-acquisitive cash prize, thanks to Consolidated Property Group.

PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD

\$3,500 non-acquisitive cash prize, thanks to BMD Group.

PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD

Adult: \$1,250 cash, non-acquisitive, thanks to TAFE Queensland.

Young Person: \$750 cash, non-acquisitive, thanks to TAFE Queensland.

JUDGING PANEL

CHRIS STANNARD (TOURING EXHIBITION CURATOR)

Curator, Tanks Art Centre, Cairns Regional Council

CAROL MCGREGOR

Program Director, Contemporary Australian Indigenous Art,
Queensland College of Art

JAN MANTON

Director, Jan Manton Art

PURCHASE ENQUIRIES

Prices of touring artworks are available upon request.

Please contact Flying Arts at ProgramLead@flyingarts.org.au to discuss your interest and receive a Purchase Inquiry form to complete.

Artworks will not be available for collection until the exhibition tour concludes in June 2024.

EKPHRASIS CHALLENGE

The Greek poetic device of Ekphrasis is a vivid, literary description of a work of art, staging an encounter between two artistic mediums: one visual and the other verbal.

For the second year running, the Queensland Regional Art Awards Ekphrasis Challenge invited poets Australia-wide to respond to artworks featured in the Queensland Regional Arts Awards. Each of the nine poems selected are available to view on the label of the corresponding artwork.

The QRAA Ekphrasis Challenge 2021 category winners are Kai Jensen, Ben Walter, Linda Albertson, Pri Victor, Anna Black, Dave Drayton, Judy Durrant, Roger Callen and Carlo Caponecchia.

View the full list of Ekphrasis Challenge winners at <https://www.qldpoetry.org/qraa-ekphrasis-challenge> or scan the QR code.



The QRAA Ekphrasis Challenge is a co-production of Flying Arts and Queensland Poetry Festival, and is supported by Australian Poetry via the Cultural Fund.

ABOUT QUEENSLAND POETRY

Queensland Poetry's (QP) mission is to support great artists to inspire, entertain and challenge a diverse audience base by delivering excellence in all forms of poetry and spoken word, to create stronger communities and improve people's health and wellbeing through the power of poetry.



CURATOR FOREWARD

CHRIS STANNARD

It is a strange thing, an art contest. For decades, I've had a profound ambivalence about the merits, and demerits, of competitions for artists and their work. As a curator, I am frequently faced with decisions and choices about inclusion in exhibitions and other projects. This artist, this artwork, or that one? Who am I to judge? Ordinarily, a good curator shares curatorial decisions with participating artists, colleagues, project partners, etc. But when it comes to competitions, that becomes inappropriate.

This is why we have judging panels. Like fish, we group and swim through our dilemmas as one body, looking, to any shark, bigger than we are. My fellow fish in this year's judging panel were Jan Manton and Carol McGregor, both of whom I have come to admire for the genuine care and sensitivity they brought to this task.

Without breaking the tradition of judges deliberating behind closed doors, I'm sure Jan and Carol wouldn't mind me sharing some of the discussions that these artworks provoked. As we poured through all the entries in a long zoom meeting, then sat amongst the finalists' entries at the Judith Wright Centre, we were struck by the strength of the themes that had emerged. Many of the entrants had responded to the title *Paint the Town* by addressing notions of Place and Community - perhaps not surprisingly, given we've spent much of the last eighteen months travelling only

within Queensland, and our focus has become increasingly localized. The result is a collective body of work, that is very much from and about regional Queensland, as seen by its artists.

Some of the entries made an immediate impression on us all. Darren Blackman's text-based painting *Stolen*, for example, is almost audible - two syllables, like a stamp and a clap, over a rumble of words in the background: sacred sites, sovereignty, dignity. Darren's artist's statement simply states the truths of colonisation and his assertion that facts are not controversial. As judges, we were grateful that such a work was received and how important it's place in the exhibition would be.

Other entries crept up on us over time. For days after my first glance at the photograph *Jimmy and Denis - Its in his Jeans* by Melaine Doheny, I kept seeing the image of this man and his horse in my head. And I wondered why. Discovering that my fellow judges had the same experience, was comforting, but we had to talk about this photograph for quite a long time to work out why it had this effect. Both man and horse have the look of love. The man stands solidly in his jeans, with his legs astride, yet folds his arms protectively to his chest. The horse stands behind, with his head peering round the man's shoulder. There's nothing in the photograph to tell us what the horse is thinking, but somehow, we know.

Another work we enjoyed for its sheer cleverness is Libby Derham's *Celebrating the Colours of Coolum*, watercolour on paint chips; a series of nine vignettes featuring details of the landscapes, architecture and vegetation of Coolum. Searching a colour swatch for the hues of her hometown, Derham has neatly plucked out the essence of the place. This was certainly one of the most creative approaches to the theme, *Paint the Town*, and at least for that reason, it belongs in the exhibition and deserves an award.

The Young Artist Development Award winner, Weston Campbell, captured more than a moment with his photograph, *Town Meets Town*. This shot of action at a polocrosse match in Charleville was taken with his camera in the rust-red dirt on a blue-sky day. Anyone familiar with Western Queensland recognises this landscape and knows that the distances between towns are measured in hours. Roma - Charleville: 3 hours, with horse and family. Campbell's artist statement talks of celebration; of communities coming together. To him, it is not about the contest of the sport. *Town Meets Town* is about the meeting. Just as the Queensland Regional Art Awards is not about the contest. It's about the coming together of artists and communities.

Many of the entrants had responded to the title 'Paint the Town' by addressing notions of Place and Community... the result is a collective body of work, that is very much from and about regional Queensland, as seen by its artists.



Kym Barrett, *Gateway*, 2021,
Oils, mixed media on canvas,
120 x 120 x 4 cm.
Photograph by Louis Lim.

KYM BARRETT *GATEWAY*

GYMPIE REGION, WIDE BAY BURNETT

ART FOR LIFE AWARD AND SPOTLIGHT AWARD

I'm not a party girl. Never have been. What makes me feel most alive and uplifted is the simplicity of being in Nature, alone. No "painting the town red" for me.

I live in open hilly bushland beside a rainforested creek. That fact is cause for daily celebration and, especially during COVID-19 restrictions, it was a source of emotional and spiritual sustenance.

Gateway emerged as an abstract expression of the animating and sustaining life-force that flows at my place and in all of nature. In all our busyness and distractions, it is a reminder of our need to connect with and celebrate the green places. When we pay attention, listen and just be there, it can be a portal to slowing down, breathing deeply and feeling joy. Our hard edges soften and our difficulties subside.

GATEWAY

*I was a textured trunk
and nudged between shade
something ran along
the ground another hung
upside-down I was that
going (growing) on traded
in greens in chlorophyll I was
laced with streams enchased
with peach-coloured rock I was
that kind of dream.*

Kai Jensen
in response to Kym Barrett's *Gateway*

ABOUT THE PRIZE WINNER

A stillness had fallen, whether it was her mood, or the forest overhearing her thoughts. She watched the play of light dappling the trunks around her. The earth was damp, the memory of those trees that had already lived and died and fallen rich in the humus... The rustling and chirruping and gentle shift of the leaves smoothed her, until she was breathing with the forest. She was forest.

- Inga Simpson, Nest, Hachette Australia, 2014: 224.

Place imprints each of us in unique ways. I think it is for that reason that Kym Barrett's *Gateway* takes me to eco-fiction, writing in which ecology is central. This evocative painting, which took out the *Flying Arts Art For Life / Spotlight Award* (2021), uses shades of green, changes of light, scribbled marks, ladders and vertical lines in black and colour, to create an abstraction of the forest around Barrett's home studio. It represents her journeying, physical and spiritual, through the forest and natural south-east Queensland environment in which she lives. What is so rewarding is its offering to the viewer: a gateway to pursue their own similar, singular journey.

That this contemplative painting, with its depth of surface and overarching quietude, was chosen for the top award in a competition predicated on the theme 'Paint the Town' is gently subversive. Its choice was driven by the quality evident in *Gateway*'s technical execution; in this work our attention is turned away from the urban centre toward an environment and atmosphere that is quiet, meditative and nurturing.

Gateway has a waxy surface which emphasises the lines scribbled into its picture plane and the juxtaposition with strong, seemingly random, vertical and horizontal marks. The darkness in the top right segues into a brighter centre around which blue lines establish a conversational relationship. Although these are not necessarily present in Barrett's "open hilly bushland beside a rainforested creek", the black lines remind me of the burnt trunks in my own forested environment, the sooty memory that decades-old bush retains long after the fire has passed. The conflagration of green evokes new growth, the endless regenerative possibilities, while behind them densely overwritten layers peek through like the way memories of place jostle together over time.

Within Barrett's practice, this work (and the series from which it has emerged in recent years) marks a new phase of exposure. She writes, "During Covid-19 isolation I relished quiet time spent beside our creek in the bush, drawing with quick gestural marks, later tearing and reconstructing these drawings as collage. This led to the urge to allow the raw, bold, untidy and risky marks to be on the surface of my oil and cold wax paintings rather than covered up". Its revelation of the layers from which it is built, her scribbled marks, and underpainting offers up possibilities physical, spiritual, temporal; this shift in her practice has seen her awarded both this *Art For Life / Spotlight Award* and Gladstone's *Martin Hanson Memorial Art Award (for Home, In A New Rhythm)* in 2021.

Judges for the *Art for Life Award* – Jan Manton, Carol McGregor and Chris Stannard – described Barrett's work as having:

captured a balance between softness and tranquillity with the vibrancy of being surrounded by the energy of living things. This work has a wonderful surface that displays purposeful integration of composition and mark making. The artist demonstrates that they are an expert in the colour palette and mastering the medium of wax, which is applied in a gestural and intuitive manner.

Prizes like this one have the potential to enhance an artist's opportunities and momentum is building for Barrett. After completing her studies in Fine Art at Brisbane College of Art and Kelvin Grove CAE, now QUT, in 1975-76, Barrett spent the majority of her career teaching in schools. However, in the last ten years she has practised as an artist full time, also leading twice-monthly workshops with other artists in her home town of Gympie, fostering a creative community with "like-minded people".

Her paintings evolve, developing through their processes, oil paint mixed with cold wax medium, either on board or canvas. She starts by making marks, building the layers, adding, subtracting and changing their orientation. Each layer requires drying time, allowing Barrett to work on a few paintings at once, seeking out the balance between structure and freedom, "a tightrope walk" tethered obliquely to a visible landscape, but also an internal state. "As time goes on, the work starts to speak to me. What really happens is the painting comes to a point where I like what is going on. I am drawing intuitively. I try to let go of the thinking so that something deeper can emerge." She defines success when her vulnerabilities "and my contradictions, in some way, are exposed through my work. I want paintings to have a vitality – not a wild, chaotic energy but an inner life force, a bit like a single green shoot emerging from the ground, embodying so much potential. But I also want a firm scaffolding and a sense of depth and mystery underpinning that immediacy."

The title of the work, *Gateway*, is a marker to its ability to offer a portal to landscapes both inner and outer: in her creative space, or in the depths of this canvas, she offers up a link to "a quiet inner space that you could call God or the divine". It seeks out a connection to the forest, nature, ecology in which urban realities may dissipate. In its holistic embrace of a green locale, Barrett depicts her palpable psychic investment in "forest", a place where "our hard edges soften and our difficulties subside".

WRITTEN BY LOUISE MARTIN-CHEW
AS PART OF THE SPOTLIGHT AWARD
THANKS TO ONESPACE GALLERY AND ARTWORDS

Unless otherwise noted all quotes from Kym Barrett in conversation with the author, 2021.



Libby Derham, *Celebrating the Colours of Coolum*,
Watercolour on paint chips, 71 x 63 x 4 cm.
Photograph by Louis Lim.

LIBBY DERHAM

CELEBRATING THE COLOURS OF COOLUM

SUNSHINE COAST, SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

THE ANNIE TAN MEMORIAL WATERCOLOUR AWARD

I have the best job in the world. Celebrating my surrounds every day as a landscape painter and my local town doesn't disappoint. The colours are majestic, Stumers Creek golden orange, Tickle Park green and famous golden sands of Coolum Beach. Aqua hues emerge beyond rocky outcrops below Point Perry and boardwalk views take in salt and sand. This is the natural beauty that Coolum is renowned for and many flock from near and far to appreciate these great delights. Mt Coolum even has its own water show in monsoonal rain! Come together where the community and tourists meet, at the local surf club, where red represents courage and dedication and raise a cold one for Coolum, a celebration of the unspoilt beauty.

AURUM

ft. a net of ripe mandarin, over by the Gumtree

Adirondack chair underneath tucked up

this hour of honey enamel finish over the east-facing façade

slipping into the pm and peel

tease the chlorine purlieu w a toe en pointe

dripping tropical Calippo frost goosebump

arqué 'tween the pitch in the porcelain

there, with long salty curls suspended

scaling a wall small smile all glow and furrow

Anna Black

in response to Libby Derham's *Celebrating the Colours of Coolum*



Weston Campbell, *Town Meets Town*, 2021,
Photograph, 40 x 60 x 1 cm.
Photograph by Weston Campbell.

WESTON CAMPBELL *TOWN MEETS TOWN*

CHARLEVILLE, WESTERN QUEENSLAND

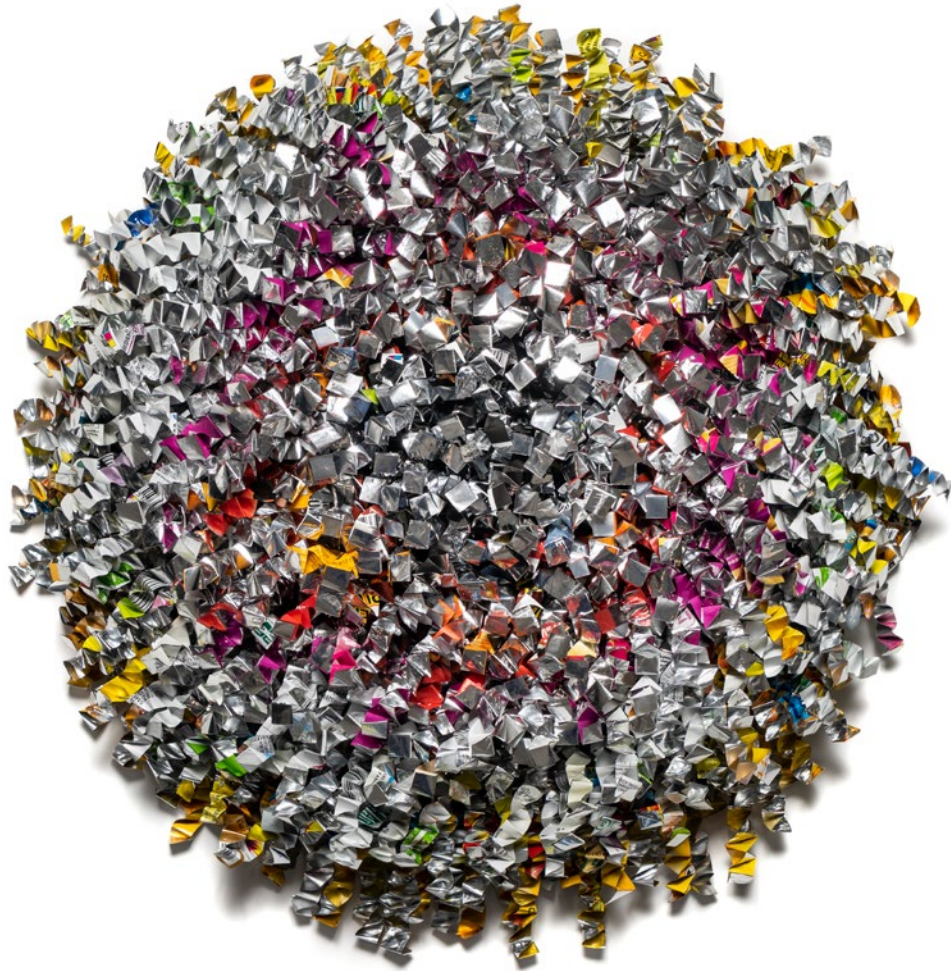
YOUNG ARTIST DEVELOPMENT AWARD

This photograph captures a high energy moment from a polocrosse event, held at the Charleville Polocrosse Grounds, during the game of Charleville (green) VS Roma (red). The team colours aggressively clash and contrast against the endless blue sky and soft red soil. The sport of polocrosse and the rural clubs that organise these events certainly build upon the unique atmospheres surrounding these outback towns, bringing people of all sorts together to compete, celebrate and ultimately have fun. The colours of each team's jersey bring the community together, vividly painting whichever town the events occur, as entertainment flourishes through the sport and the mingling of outback communities.

UNFENCED

*our four legs flung towards goal,
shoes ironing the dirt, creases blistering;
our bodies ripple with every sparkling now,
the bellowing light that
chases where we hide; we heave
a load unseen, a weight heard
in the morning when we eat,
the evening when we rest.
we hurry to their ball,
take them at their word;
the wide and empty field,
a shrieking in the air.*

Ben Walter
in response to Weston Campbell's *Town Meets Town*



Michelle Kurth, *Ignite*, 2021,
Plastic food packaging, metal fan case,
cotton wrap, 54 x 13 x 52 cm.
Photograph by Louis Lim.

MICHELLE KURTH

IGNITE

NOOSA SHIRE, SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

TEXTILE ART AWARD

My memories of fun and celebration always have a brightness about them. Thoughts re-ignited and brought back to life with feelings of joy, the images bold and full of colour.

Growing up in an English seaside resort, a special outing was often focused around the fairground. The amusement arcade with it's coloured lights and brash signs. The carnival that preceded it with it's balloons, streamers and everything that sparkled.

With these events there were always treats. Food or novelties that came in bright plastic wrappers. Overwhelmed by the choice as a child, yet wanting to have it all.

In adult years, the contents of the event changed. Bright colours came from lights in a nightclub or behind the band. Later still came the observation that celebration and fun doesn't always need to be an external source and an important learning how of how create that sweet sparkle within.

TREAT YOURSELF

your shirt matches the gingham tablecloth

my brown one the table underneath

neither one of us competes

note the way the occasion is marked by the balloons

will pop the champagne celebrates

its own release from captivity

if only briefly

before it is consumed it's the teeth the kiss the cavities

transforming confectionary to confetti conflict to confect

the time is right, the fruit ripe and plunged in caramel

the teeth furry, feet furtive, height enough to dive from

barely a splash is registered in the kiddie pool

despite the high we're all alive

Dave Drayton

in response to Michelle Kurth's *Ignite*



Bianca Tainsh, *To the Citizens of Paradise*, 2021, Digital print on Hahnemühle Bamboo paper, graphite, frame made from sustainable timber, wood chips from land cleared for a shopping mall expansion. Online video 1:46 minutes; framed digital print 65 x 44 x 3 cm; wood chips variable dimensions. Photograph by Louis Lim.

View the digital component.



BIANCA TAINSH *TO THE CITIZENS OF PARADISE*

SUNSHINE COAST, SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

NEW MEDIA ART AWARD

With a practice grounded in social change, open-disciplinary artist Bianca Tainsh generates spaces for reflection on social dilemma, with suggestive cues to self-evolve. Her work *To the Citizens of Paradise* was conceptualised as a response to the exodus of urban inhabitants to idyllic rural locations in the wake of COVID-19. As towns swell, commercial development is accelerated. This multidimensional work is an entreaty to these new neighbours to discard urban penchants for convenient consumerism and celebrate a life elevated by locality - our beautiful biosphere and village culture.

As a development of her own recent return to 'paradise' Tainsh's more current works seek to reframe the magnificence of the wilderness. At the same time, she avoids romantic and empirical approaches and comes from a place where primal connections become fundamental for the individual to identify with our true nature, as part of the whole.

TO THE CITIZENS OF PARADISE

*One dimensional: I am ink.
I am cellulose, glued
onto mashed wood, supported
by stakes that mock bush.
I am synthetic joy
A parody: a promise
that my preeminence breaks.
I won't be far away
when I'm built out
My house, framed by concrete
reflects a handkerchief of grass
To the sky.*

Judy Durrant
in response to Bianca Tainsh's *To the citizens of paradise*



Netta Loogatha, *My Country*, 2021,
Acrylic on Belgian linen, 91 x 91 x 3 cm.
Photograph by Mornington Island Art (MIART).

NETTA LOOGATHA *MY COUNTRY*

GUNUNA (MORNINGTON ISLAND), FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND

REMOTE ARTIST AWARD

This is my Country on Bentinck Island at Oak Tree Point. We call it Lookati in our Kayardild language. I was born here at Bilmee, Dog Story Place. This is the place where the Dingo came on his journey from island to island, we saw him with our own very eyes, half man and half dog. It's also a place where the love stones are found. They bring lasting and faithful love to the one who owns them.

AFTER '*MY COUNTRY*'

*teardrop sisters water down
brothers in palmed ovals watch over
lingering in the field of mother's dome
her white sheath warmed by red dust
a blue transparency – reaching out
from the core of herself
but below them, a kin without her coat
bathed in a sun bleeding out of sky
she waits in content on pebbled shore
in faith of home, despite brushed borders
for even islands all touch through earth*

Pri Victor
in response to Netta Loogatha, *My Country*



Darren Blackman, *Stolen*, 2021,
Acrylic, enamel on linen, 92 x 122 x 4 cm.
Photograph by Louis Lim.

DARREN BLACKMAN

STOLEN

SUNSHINE COAST, QUEENSLAND

FIRST NATIONS ART AWARD

Stolen is an indigenous perspective of 'Paint the Town'. *Stolen* isn't a controversial subject or a resistance statement but a simple truth.

Australia is a young, immature nation that is coming to terms with history in all its entirety. Pre Native Title, Australian history was politically worded, hand picked articles that ignored indigenous sovereignty while reinforcing Eurocentric conquest. As the nation matured, and global human rights evolved, the less heroic stories of genocide, separation, deprivation and survival were recognised, as accounted by First Nation people's, early pioneers, explorers, government officials, missionaries alike. These were presented to a whole new generation, as well as those Australians willing to acknowledge and reconcile with Australia's past.

True history supports reconciliation and a harmonious relationship between contrasting cultures.

As every town in Australia has a story of settlement, every 'traditional owner' has a story of loss and dispossession. Discovery is a partisan story, while stolen is a shared truth.

WILL ROBINSON

owl lamp rims
light the plunder

coalmine canaries
feather destiny

spelled out on
bees' backs:

safety-yellow has
long meant danger

Carlo Caponecchia
in response to Darren Blackman's *Stolen*



LeAnne Vincent, *The Royal*, 2021,
Pigment print on photo rag, 68 x 91 x 3 cm.
Photograph by LeAnne Vincent.

LEANNE VINCENT

THE ROYAL

IPSWICH, SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD

The outback town of Winton asserts a festive atmosphere ideal for celebration, with a main street lined with carnival lights, lively hotels, and The Royal theatre, Australia's most iconic open-air cinema, and one of only two still operating.

Constructed in 1938 and still standing triumphantly, this building has largely escaped graffiti, bar a solitary, roughly painted face, aptly reminiscent of the Greek theatre masks of comedy and tragedy. The simple architecture of this shed-like structure of corrugated iron walls without a roof, adds to the quirky ambiance that serves to recreate the excitement of the silver screen era in the outback.

A chance moment led me to this experience on a recent road trip from Ipswich to Winton. On a cold evening, with freshly cooked popcorn in hand, I celebrated being in the outback, with John Wayne in *The Desert Trail*, set against the Winton evening sky.

TODAY

(after viewing The Royal, painting by LeAnne Vincent)

*A chance of ghosts
endures in the grooves
of the corrugated iron,
the cloud whistles
cowboy tunes
to the branches I can't see -
their shadows bend in time
maybe heard on yesterday's wind
maybe felt tomorrow
maybe someone
is coming.*

Linda Albertson

in response to LeAnne Vincent's *The Royal*



Andrea Baumert Howard,
Bird on a wire, 2021, Digital print on
handmade paper, 29 x 21 cm.
Photograph by Andrea Baumert Howard.

ANDREA BAUMERT HOWARD

BIRD ON A WIRE

IPSWICH, SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

For me celebrations are an everyday thing. Finding quiet moments to celebrate the beauty of an ordinary life.

The joy when you witness a magpie serenading the sun and, for a moment, you are the one being serenaded. Listening with closed eyes to their incredible and haunting songs.

Remembering that there are a million reasons to smile throughout the day and opening your heart to finding them.

This piece is a further exploration into my experimenting with handmade paper. The image is a digital photograph printed onto a sheet of handmade paper. The multilayered paper is made from the pulp of junk mail, hand dyed office discards and cartridge paper.

As a small-batch artist I am constantly trying new things and I am celebrating the joy that working with paper can offer me.



Anne Mossman, *Eucalyptian
Glad Rags*, 2021, Coloured
porcelain, 26 x 22 x 22 cm.
Photograph by Anne
Mossman.

ANNE MOSSMAN

EUCALPYTIAN GLAD RAGS

GOLD COAST, SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

Mossman's inspiration is drawn from the disparate colours on some of the eucalypt tree trunks that surround her hinterland environment. In the summer, the eucalyptus bark peels off in sheaths to reveal nude like patches of new 'skin' which is invariably smooth and lighter coloured than other parts of the bark. The contrast in colours and tones is wondrous and provides an ever changing visual feast. This vessel purposely exaggerates the colour palette as a celebration of Australia's iconic trees.



Brian Hatch, *TOWN AND COUNTRY*, 2021, Oil on canvas, 76 x 102 x 5 cm.
Photograph by Louis Lim.

BRIAN HATCH

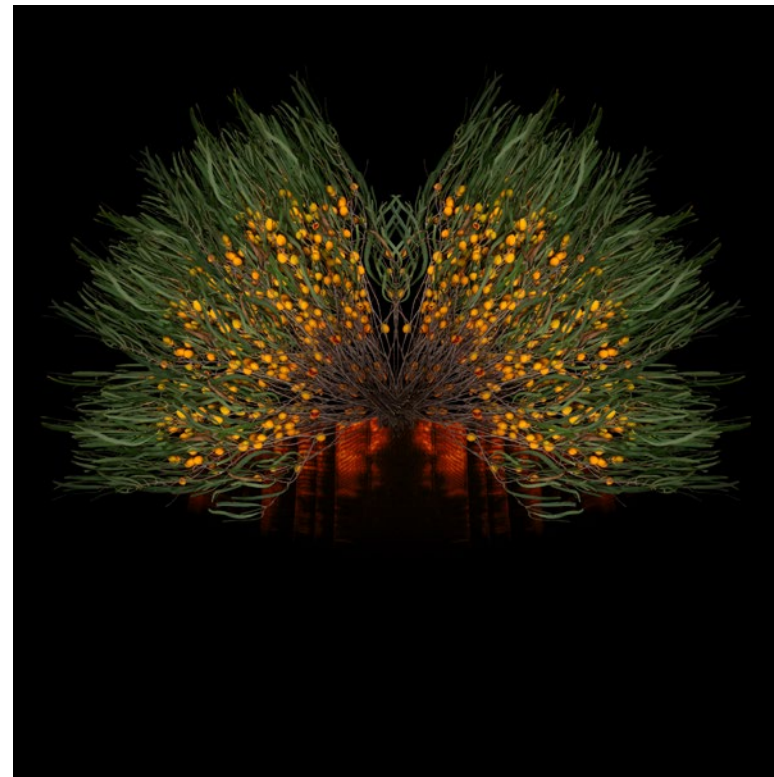
TOWN AND COUNTRY

REDLAND, SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

The theme 'Paint the Town' leaves an artist with many options. My interpretation is to do just that, namely paint a town as perched on a hill in the countryside using a contemporary approach. The blocks of colour represent shops and buildings stretched along a ridge with fields suggested by the larger yellow shapes below. The theme suggests painting the town red but instead I painted what can be interpreted as sky in orange/red to indicate the heat of an Australian summer.

The painting had three stages. Firstly blocking in the shapes of the town, then altering the colours to free up the image. The last stage was to modify the colours by scumbling lighter tones over the previous colours to unify the whole painting. The under painting was blocked in using acrylics and then overpainting with oils to secure a more intense paint effect.

This then is my version of Paint the Town.



Cara-Ann Simpson, *medicinae crescente de terra I (medicine growing from our earth I)*, 2021, Ink infused metal, 76 x 76 x 1 cm. Photograph by Cara-Ann Simpson.

CARA-ANN SIMPSON

MEDICINAE CRESCENTE DE TERRA I (*MEDICINE GROWING FROM OUR EARTH I*)

TOOWOOMBA REGION, DARLING DOWNS

medicinae crescente de terra I celebrates returning to my heart's home: the joy, fulfilment and healing nature of place. Here I am grounded, deeply connected to the earth and sky.

The specimen is gumbi gumbi (*Pittosporum angustifolium*) from my family's farm located on the lands of the Jarowair people of the Wakka Wakka nation. Gumbi gumbi is a beautiful weeping tree, lyrical, medicinal and a peacock within the bush.

In the title, seen within the image as a spectrograph (soundwave), I remind myself that all medicine comes from our earth in some form or another. This work is part of Furari Flores (Stealing Flowers) is a vanitas series of one-on-one plant interviews. The titles are spoken in Latin and translated into spectrographs. There is an irony of speaking a dead language to plucked flowers/fruits, now also dying, and leaving only the visual representation, the movement of sound left behind.



Catherine Boreham, *Painting Aaron*, 2020,
Acrylic and oils, 122 x 77 x 4 cm.
Photograph by Louis Lim.

CATHERINE BOREHAM *PAINTING AARON*

YEPPOON, CENTRAL QUEENSLAND

Whilst getting to know Aaron in the last few years I realised he gives everything 100% effort. Much later I discovered that his skill set includes actor, writer, director and he has performed in numerous Australian and American stage and screen productions. Aaron is a graduate of QUT's Acting Strand and some of his roles were in sea Patrol, Harrow and Hobson's Choice just to name a few. He wrote, produced, directed and starred in an Australian film Talking Back at Thunder. His outstanding achievements go further than I have space to mention here. In this portrait there are no balloons, no confetti, no festivities. There is however, a lot of quiet gratitude, reflection and sentiment.

For me painting a portrait is a joyous activity and a special opportunity that has the potential of bringing a whole community together to celebrate alongside me. It may be an achievement, or a person's admirable character, a life that was well lived, or a life full of generosity, but also the forgotten, or the poorly esteemed. In an age that validates fame, fortune and followers, what a blessing it is to bring people together, to paint the town with the colours of an ordinary, or an extraordinary person's life. Not always necessarily for what they have done, but for who they are.



Cynthia Copley, *White Rock Blue Sky*, 2021, Oil, 53 x 53 x 3 cm.
Photograph by Cynthia Copley.

CYNTHIA COPLEY *WHITE ROCK BLUE SKY*

IPSWICH, SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

I explored the concept of Paint the Town through my celebration of White Rock; a magnificent landmark of cultural significance located at the Spring Mountain Conservation Park in Ipswich. The short walk to this rock, for me, musters feelings of excitement and anticipation, enlivened by the surrounding scrub, the sounds of bustling birds, scurrying lizards and the watchful gaze of kangaroos. Ascending slowly, climbing stair after stair, I finally stand in the presence of this enormous rock that has stood for eons of time. A feeling of amazement and history washes over me. It's a humbling experience; I realise I am here for just a short time. I celebrate my feet on the land. I run my hand over the warm sandstone. I am here.



Donna Glass, *Desert Rose*, 2021, Digital print in frame, 100 x 100 x 1 cm.
Photograph by Donna Glass.

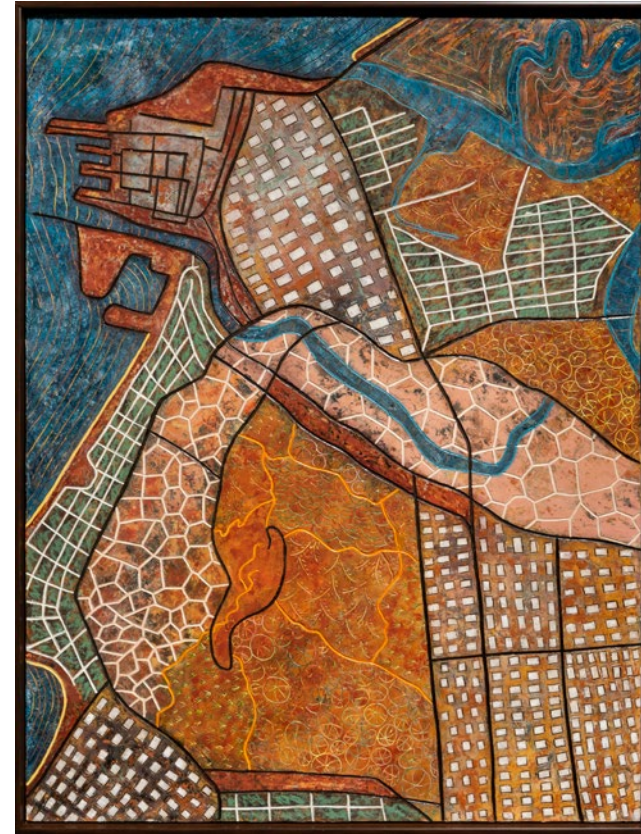
DONNA GLASS

DESERT ROSE

BUNYA MOUNTAINS, WESTERN DOWNS

Surrounded but still alone.

We are surrounded by billions of galaxies but we, alone, are the only biological life that has been explored. Life is rare and special.



Gabriel Smith, *The Ville*, 2020,
Cold wax and oil, 123 x 95 x 6 cm.
Photograph by Louis Lim.

GABRIEL SMITH

THE VILLE

TOWNSVILLE, NORTH QUEENSLAND

I have a love for patterns, colour, and how the land looks from the sky. This work explores my home of Townsville and how the built up areas interact with the wild spaces. Castle Hill has always been my special place and I wanted to explore is delicate wildness through pattern and colour, juxtaposed with the more structured pattern created by our built environment to Paint the Town.



Grant Quinn, *Gunna Need a Bigger Brush*, 2021, Photography, 68 x 96 x 3 cm.
Photograph by Grant Quinn.

GRANT QUINN

GUNNA NEED A BIGGER BRUSH

IPSWICH, SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

When you respect and preserve a town's history, you are preserving and respecting its personality - the very thing that gives it character, and brings new residents and new life. When most people think of preserving history, they envision painting the town, restoring old buildings and historical sites, and beautifying our urban landscape. But preserving the history of our town is so much more. Preserving our history has many benefits, from improving economy, to becoming more environmentally conscious. Having pride and celebrating where we come from, improves connection to community, and a strong community makes for a strong town. Our history is the heart and soul of our town, and it is vital to our future success that we work to protect it, as with preservation comes rejuvenation. In our beautiful town, our history has been our heartbeat, and we need to continue to work tirelessly to respect and embrace it.



Helen Dennis, *Ephemeral Lagoon, Branch Creek, Chinchilla*, 2020, Acrylic on canvas, 62 x 92 x 4 cm.
Photograph by Louis Lim.

HELEN DENNIS

EPHEMERAL LAGOON, BRANCH CREEK, CHINCHILLA

CHINCHILLA, WESTERN DOWNS

Celebrations for those who choose the rural pathway are centred around the whimsy of Mother Nature. One season may be abundant, the next woefully lacking. When she chooses to be indulgent, her generosity is shown in the abundant blooming of the land. When she chooses to be frugal, there are cataclysmic consequences for all.

The ephemeral lagoons which fill from our property's creek are witness to celebrations of enduring life. Indigenous 'Trade Tracks' followed the watercourses and lagoons, providing substance, trade goods, tools and shelter. Early European settlers used the waters for irrigation and livestock. Today the ephemeral lagoon is a refuge for weary feathered travellers; animals foraging for succulent grasses and mussels; insects and frogs which add to the night-time chorus. It is our place of quiet contemplation and celebration, our grandchildren's playground, a gateway to the natural world, and finally, our refuge from an increasingly confusing world.

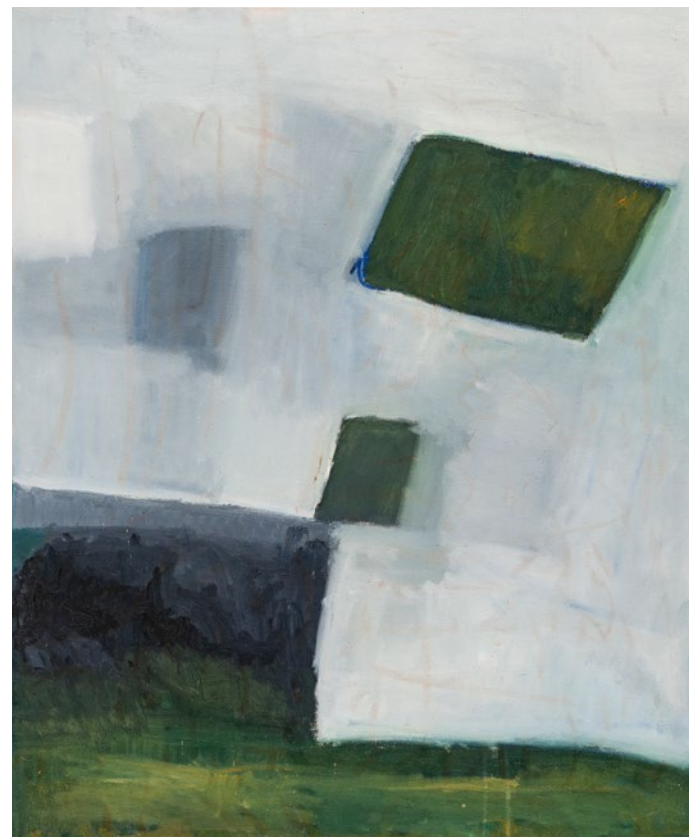


Jasna Spiranovic, *Drought Rain*, 2021, Watercolour on paper, 100 x 109 x 2 cm.
Photograph by Jasna Spiranovic.

JASNA SPIRANOVIC *DROUGHT RAIN*

GOLD COAST, SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

In Summer 2021, I was bushwalking in the Girraween National Park which had been affected by extended drought to such a degree that the local town was buying tank water. One day it rained and I couldn't believe my eyes - the colours changed immediately. I celebrated the breaking of the drought by drawing and painting in the rain.



Jasna Spiranovic,
BUSHSPACE, 2021,
Oil on canvas,
96 x 78 x 6.5 cm.
Photograph by Jasna
Spiranovic.

JASNA SPIRANOVIC *BUSHSPACE*

GOLD COAST, SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

I celebrate the little things in life by going for walks in nature.

This painting depicts a walk I did one morning where I felt I was walking on clouds one moment, and then the forest the next. I am grateful for these spaces of nature that calm my mind and intrigue me.



Jasna Spiranovic, *Abuzz*, 2020, Acrylic and oil on canvas, 90 x 76 x 4 cm. Photograph by Louis Lim.

JASNA SPIRANOVIC

ABUZZ

GOLD COAST, SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

The village surrounding my art studio becomes Abuzz each year for weeks leading up to the annual Music Festival. This painting depicts the excitable energy that I witness in this community.

I aim to capture the ambience before the festival, where sounds of the community, nature and everyday life combine as crowds enter and people anticipate the musicians.



Joolie Gibbs, *Wallum 3*, 2021, Local botanical inks on Arches paper, 95 x 74 x 4 cm. Photograph by Joolie Gibbs.

JOOLIE GIBBS

WALLUM 3

GYMPIE, WIDE BAY BURNETT

I feel thoroughly fulfilled with a day walking, listening and observing nature - particularly in the Wallum Heathland. I find quiet celebration sighting the new wildflowers each season, or contemplating the brave women in the 1960s who advocated to save the Cooloola National Park from destruction from mining and logging.

In respecting this fragile but impermanent environment, constantly in a state of transience, I chose to only use botanical inks I have made from my property. Luscious sepia-red colours from Gympie Messmate, Iron Bark, Eucalyptus, Bunya and golden yellow from the Red Kamala, compound my love of my environment.



Katie Harris-MacLeod,
Tree Poem - II, 2021,
Bloodwood tree sap on
watercolour paper,
105 x 85 x 6 cm.
Photograph by Katie
Harris-MacLeod.

KATIE HARRIS-MACLEOD

TREE POEM - II

SUNSHINE COAST, SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

Tree Poem - II is one of a series of works from an on-going project entitled, *Sap Works*. *Sap Works* is an intimate study of the interwoven connectivities between bodies of trees and human beings, focussing on the female body.

This work intricately studies Bloodwood trees and the sap that they excrete by mapping stressed Bloodwood trees across the Sunshine Coast region, and stress within my own body. These stress exchanges become a series of intimate, durational and ritualistic performances, derived from my ancestral lineage to Celtic/Gaelic culture. Enigmatic sap pigment drawings are captured on handmade paper, a poetic exchange between body and tree.

Ogham, is the ancient Celtic language of the trees, and it is this ancestral knowledge that has been the conduit connecting me to this landscape. *Sap Works* is a process of re-connecting and understanding. Cross cultural narratives give meaning to my transitory belonging.



Melanie Doheny, *Jimmy and
Denis - It's In His Jeans*, 2021,
Photography, 45 x 30 x 3 cm.
Photograph by Melanie Doheny.

MELANIE DOHENY

JIMMY AND DENIS - IT'S IN HIS JEANS

BLACKBUTT NORTH, SOUTH BURNETT

Isolation, long work days, climate change and globalisation are just some of the many pressures that make farming a vulnerable occupation. Despite these pressures, the image of Jimmy and Dennis exemplifies the joyful connection between horse and owner. From as far back as the human memory reaches, people and horses have always had a special relationship. People form an inexplicable bond with their horses, built on trust, loyalty and love.

Their image also calls to the broader community that has been forged around a love of horses, connecting people who otherwise would not meet with social events, meetings or networking programs.

Dennis is a Paint Horse. Jimmy is the custodian of Dennis - or is it the other way around?



Nicole Jakins, *A Gentle Sway*, 2021, Stoneware, brass, eucalypt pigment, 50 x 93 x 21 cm.
Photograph by Louis Lim.

NICOLE JAKINS

A GENTLE SWAY

GLENWOOD, WIDE BAY BURNETT

The winter light filters through the wattle as they sway gently in the breeze. Cradled in between soft mountain peaks, their blooms slowly turn into a burnt golden hue as the sun lowers in the sky. I breathe in the rich, heady scents of the bush, listening to the slow-flowing trickle of tannin stained water as it meanders around me.

This is how I celebrate life - by switching off and quietly reflecting on the incredible diversity of the surrounding environment, and observing the flow of things. A simple, solitary act that fills my cup so profoundly that I am completely restored, feeling blessed that I have been able to share this celebratory moment with nature itself.



Petalia Humphreys, *LCS.2*, 2021, Acrylic on plywood, 90 x 90 x 5 cm.
Photograph by Petalia Humphreys.

PETALIA HUMPHREYS

LCS.2

SUNSHINE COAST, SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

LCS.2 is a celebration of architecture, and of colour. What is at once a sunburnt roofline sitting beneath a glorious and intense ocean sky, is also a homage to Johannes Itten's formulaic ratios and fields of colour. A window of white creates a void a respite from the hazy midday heat.

Pushed into the corner, the square folds into its rigid setting whilst the work manifests itself in a space beyond its physicality. The folded painting discloses contrasts and dichotomies, exploring ideas of playfulness and interplay, mapping both movement and stillness. Although hard-edged and geometric, the work reveals itself and the inherent gestural traces left from the painting process. Marking an interplay between site and possible pathways, lines and spaces upon the surface shift, crease, flatten and straighten out and then fold again as the viewer passes by.



Sammaneh Pourshafighi, *Reconnected To The Self and The Ancestors Through The Act of Washing My Body*, 2021, Digital photograph on archival paper, 120 x 85 x 4 cm. Photograph by Sammaneh Pourshafighi.

SAMMANEH POURSHAFIGHI

RECONNECTED TO THE SELF AND THE ANCESTORS THROUGH THE ACT OF WASHING MY BODY

GOLD COAST, SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

My family and I came to Australia as refugees from Iran. As part of a diaspora, I am constantly trying to find a place as a queer, Muslim and Persian person living on unceded, stolen, indigenous land. For as many moments of struggle that exist in this experience, there are moments of joy, quiet introspection and pride. The COVID-19 pandemic has added more layers of complexity to my experience, especially around the importance of nurturing and maintaining connections to my social communities, cultural background, traditional rituals, and my family both living and ancestral.

This photograph was taken in my parents' Gold Coast garden after being reunited with them. COVID-19 restrictions had prevented me seeing them in over 6 months. My mother and her sister are wearing traditional Persian garments and ritualistically washing my body in an Islamic style. The ritual was equal parts celebration, act of love, and spiritual cleansing.



Samantha Hobson, *Sandbeach Songlines*, 2020, Acrylic on canvas, 61 x 107 x 3 cm. Photograph by Mick Richards.

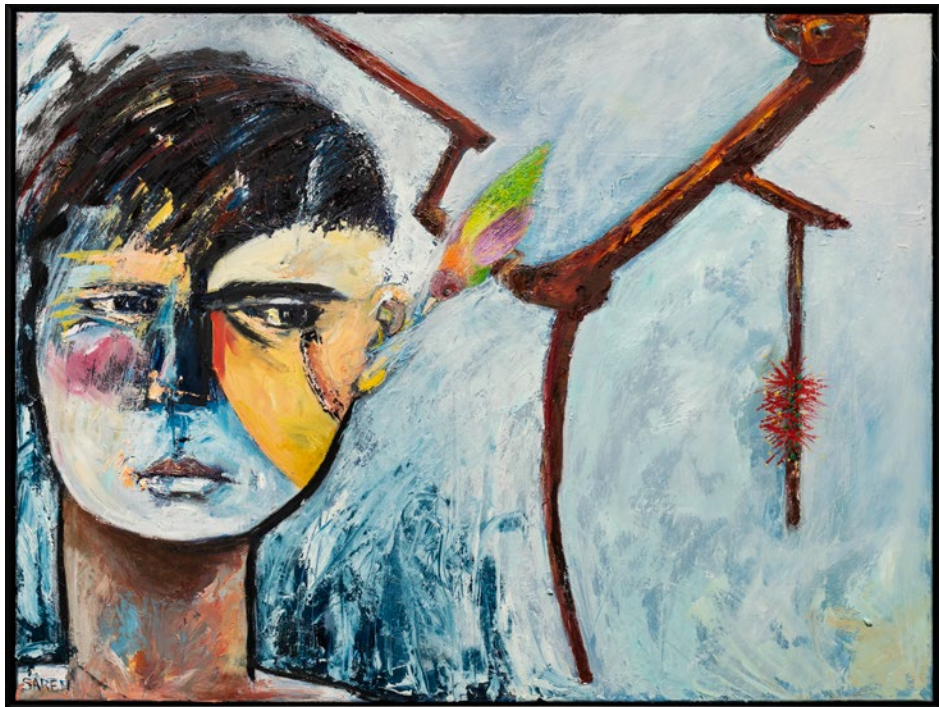
SAMANTHA HOBSON

SANDBEACH SONGLINES

LOCKHART RIVER, FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND

'Songline' is a term that is often used to define relationships between stories, ceremony and sacred sites and encompasses the knowledge that is passed down through oral tradition, song, dance and more recently, fine art painting. Sharing these stories brings the community together in celebration.

Sandbeach Songlines captures a contemplative mood. For Samantha, this begins with a creamy white background representing the pristine sands of the Great Barrier Reef, north of Lockhart River where the artist lives. Fractured lines bleed into this tranquil background. The artist often reflects how such opposing forces echo her own turbulent life, delicately balanced between a sense of apprehension and acceptance. *Sandbeach Songlines* is a gestural landscape which epitomises the inseparable dualities of land and sea, culture and identity, time and healing.



Saren Dobkins, *A Little Bird Told Me*, 2021, Oil on canvas, 79 x 105 x 6 cm.
Photograph by Saren Dobkins.

SAREN DOBKINS

A LITTLE BIRD TOLD ME

NOOSA REGION, SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

Spring is a time for celebration. I feel energised, inspired and, above all, awed by the way the seasons cycle through the years, and I look forward to Spring coming again. It has felt like a long Winter for many reasons. With the world full of uncertainty, people have been bunkering down. I look with anticipation for the awakening that comes with Spring when all the plants, trees, flowers, birds and creatures come to life again. The tree dances with the life that it embodies. The broad, painterly strokes of the background create movement that expresses 'aliveness'. Her painted face is the artist bursting with colour and hope.



Vicki Buttrose, *Happiness*, 2021, Acrylic, 76 x 61 x 4 cm.
Photograph by Louis Lim.

VICKI BUTTROSE

HAPPINESS

WARWICK, SOUTHERN DOWNS

Utilising colour, rather than 'painting the town', I have painted the emotion you feel when you celebrate. I aim to illustrate the happy glow with bubbles of excitement and whisks of freedom that you experience in those moments of elation and celebration.