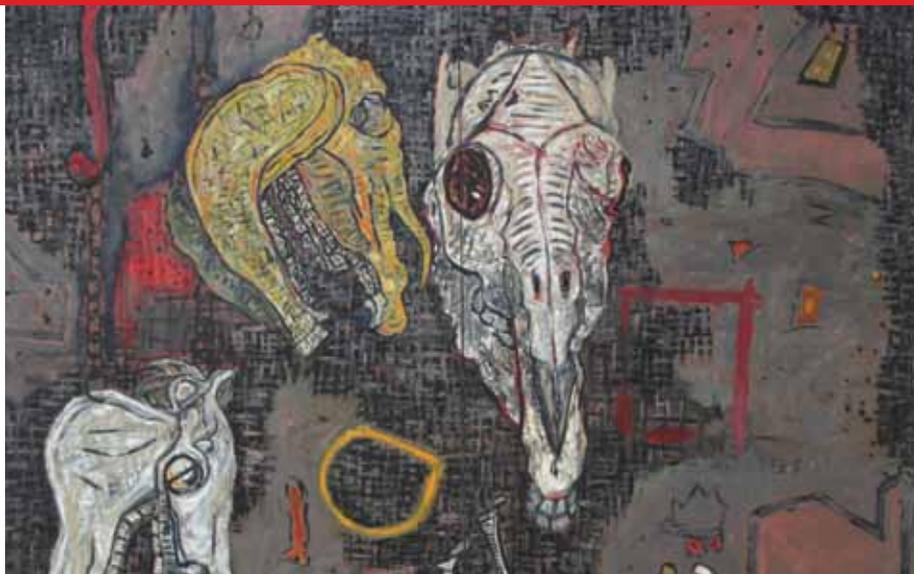


# MRAGM SPRING NEWSLETTER 2010



## EXHIBITIONS

mrag  
midland regional art gallery



**MRAG** always provides plenty of diversity in its exhibition spaces, from traditional to contemporary, from adults to children, and from fragile to interactive. Something for everyone's taste.



### CURRENT

#### SUZANNE ARCHER: AFTERLIFE

18/9/10 - 14/11/10  
Opening 3:00pm Saturday  
18 September 2010

#### RUTH DOWNES | LUNCH FOR THE TRADES

An Art Factory Exhibition  
10/09/10 - 31/10/10  
Opening 3:00pm Saturday  
18 September 2010



### COMING

#### SOLITARY PURSUITS IN RED

15/10/10 - 05/12/10  
Opening 6:00pm Friday  
15 October 2010

#### OUR WATER | QUESTACON TOURING EXHIBITION

An Art Factory Exhibition  
05/11/10 - 12/12/10  
Opening 6:00pm Friday  
19 November 2010



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

As many of you know MRAG has just celebrated its one year anniversary since the grand re-opening. To coincide with this celebration MRAG curated its most ambitious exhibition to date *in[two]art*. For this exhibition MRAG invited 30 couples, who are not only life partners but practising artists to participate. The artists come from across 5 states and the ACT, and 4 of the artists/couples are from the Hunter region. This exhibition was also the second exhibition supported by our Patron Ray Wilson OAM and fittingly was opened by him. For the exhibition opening Ray wrote a speech and for those who were unable to attend or indeed for historic value we have reproduced Ray's words with his permission in this edition of the newsletter.

JOE EISENBERG



Good afternoon everyone and welcome to "IN [TWO] ART" I promise it won't be a long speech, and I hope not a boring one.

After I opened *Labelled Queer* in January Joe asked me to open an exhibition of art by couples, he said "you and James were a couple for 40 years so you know all about it". I thought, this is an amazing concept for a show and I readily accepted.

As with *Labelled Queer* I am not going to talk about the art, I am leaving it to you to view the exhibition and make your own judgements.

Although I am really too old, I like to think I am part of the "ME GENERATION", so I am going to talk about myself.

I get most of what I think are my best ideas, shaving, showering or lazing in bed in the morning – they are my most productive times. I know I should be ashamed of myself.

I was shaving the few bits of my face I wanted hairless and thinking about couples and art and being creative and suddenly it hit me.

James and I were an artist couple.

We, as serious art collectors, created 3 collections together. One, Australian Surrealism, being nationally recognised – WOW – I was thunder-struck; all the frustrations of not being able to make art or music fell away.

We had created works of art from works of art.

I walked around the house with soap on my face and looked anew at our aboriginal collection, which you saw at the opening of the new building, and thought we really have done it again.

A few days later in the shower I was mulling over my as yet unwritten speech and it occurred to me that James and I had created other works of art.

In 40 years together we had decorated two apartments and renovated two homes, all were much admired in their time.

Even the ugly, red brick, two bedroom walk-up flat in North Bondi that James owned when I met him looked like a palace when you closed the door.

We painted, tiled, wallpapered in the late 60's and 1970's when it was very fashionable, chose furnishings, planted gardens and created unique environments.

Just like the Turner Prize winner Tracey Emin did with her work "My Bed" – aren't we brilliant and we did it before her.

Mind you our environments were definitely not a grungy mess like her bedroom.

I will allow we weren't the first to make a home but to think of it as a work of art was elating and has changed my attitude to my environment, I will be much more careful with decisions in the future.

A week or so later lying in bed on Sunday morning around 10.00am, slightly hung-over, and thinking about my still unwritten speech I thought, you dill, you have missed the whole point.

I had been looking at the bits and pieces of being a couple and making art.

That light bulb above my head was a thousand watts and shining brightly.

The real work of art was 40 years of being a couple, creating a world as unique and rewarding as you could want.

James and I had changed from being individuals and created a new entity, a new being, called *James and Ray*.

As our time together passed we weren't even being acknowledged as separate people.

And what an amazing, totally unique, creation it was.

How fabulous, without knowing it we were an artist couple just like *Gilbert and George*, and we even started performing about the same time.

*Gilbert & George* live their lives as a work of performance art 24/7 every day of the year.

Alright, we didn't paint ourselves gold and sing "Underneath the Arches" endlessly for one of the Kaldor Public Art Projects, but our lives as a couple was a brilliant, publicly recognised and admired performance.

I crawled out of bed, made a cup of tea and started to write in a real state of excitement despite the pounding head generously supplied by Opera Australia at their fund raising Dinner in the Paint Dock.

During the banging away at the keyboard I had the real revelation.

Whether we are individuals or in that magical state of being a couple we are all works of art.

We have an obligation to make sure we are masterpieces.

Thank you.

Ray Wilson OAM



## HI TEA AT THE GALLERY SUCCESS

FROM THE CHAIR PERSON: JUDY HENRY



It all started coming home from the trip to the Archibald, Wynne & Sulman prize last March 2010.

A group of our members Kim Aquilina, Virginia Solomon, Lorraine Tindle, Ruth Harden and Gaile Witt, who were on the trip came up with the idea of the Hi Tea at the Art Gallery.

Funds raised on the day came to roughly \$6,000. The funds will go towards selecting the best design for our children's outdoor seating. A competition will be set up for Tertiary Level design students across Australia.

We would like to thank Juanita Farmer for her beautiful singing, Rebecca Daines

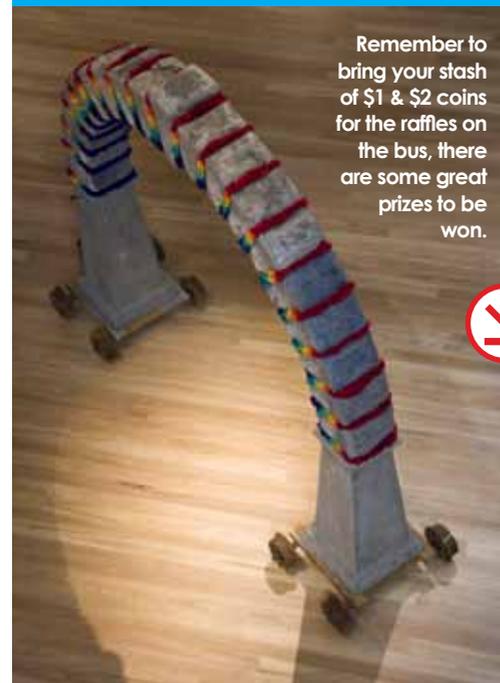
from Liza's of Lorn for presenting Atlantis Dreaming Spring Summer Collection, Janelle from Sekt Hair and Body and Michael Aquilina of DJ Aqua.

Without the help of the many members, volunteers and friends this very successful event would not have been possible. A very big thankyou also goes to all those who attended the afternoon and for supporting the Art Gallery and obviously enjoying themselves.

Continue to support MRAGM by renewing your membership when it becomes due, contact the Art Gallery on 4934 9859.



## SCULPTURE BY THE SEA FROM BONDI TO TAMARAMA



Remember to bring your stash of \$1 & \$2 coins for the raffles on the bus, there are some great prizes to be won.

**DATE:** 6th November 2010

**COSTS:** \$60.00 members  
\$75.00 non members  
or (guests)

**RSVP:** Monday 1st November 2010



### ITINERARY

**6.40am** Time to be at the gallery

**7.00am** Leaving sharp from MRAG

**7.30am** Depart Bluetongue brewery with the Novocastrians

*Convenience stop – includes free morning tea*

**WATERS GALLERY VISIT:** Where Frank Watters will welcome us and take us on a guided tour of his private apartment.

**12.30pm** Lunch at Bondi (byo/buy)

**1.30pm – 4.30pm** Sculpture by the Sea: explore the sculptures from Bondi Pavilion to Tamarama at your own leisure ( takes 2 ½ -3 hours to view sculptures from over 100 Australian and international artists)

**4.30pm** Meet bus the at Tamarama bus stop

**6.30pm** Drop off the Novocastrians

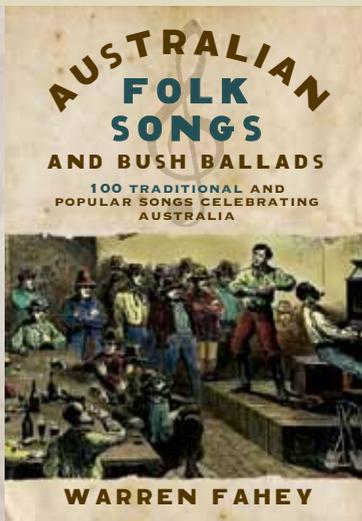
**7.00pm** Return to MRAG

**FRANK WATTERS** has been collecting art since the 1960's and before he opened his now famous Watters Gallery which he operates with Geoffrey Legge, he lives in an apartment on the top floor above the gallery in Riley Street East Sydney. In this place of residence there are easily over 300 works of art on display in every conceivable way, including hanging on handles on kitchen cupboards doors as well as covering windows. Frank is a very private person and very few people get to see his 'mass' of art. By coming to Sculpture by the Sea, you will be one of the 'privileged' to be taken on a guided tour of the apartment and addressed to by Frank – who by the way is a great talker as well as an avid collector – for ever increasing his collection.

# WARREN FAHEY AND THE LARRIKINS

23 September 2010  
7pm for 7:30 start

PLUS BOOK  
SIGNING



Warren and his Larrikins will perform songs, poetry, stories and music in their latest Hunter performance at MRAG. Warren will also be available for a book signing of his latest publication Australian Folk Songs and Bush Ballads (available for purchase on the night).

Tickets are **\$20 for MRAG members** and **\$25 for non MRAG members** and are available by booking at the art gallery 4934 9859



## Maitland Regional Art Gallery

230 High St Maitland NSW 2320 | 02 4934 9859  
www.mrag.org.au | artgallery@maitland.nsw.gov.au

mrag  
maitland regional art gallery



## EDUCATION - PIPSQUEAK

### My favourite kids program at MRAG...

BY LAUREN VAN KATWYK, EDUCATION CURATOR

BOOK  
NOW

**What is Pipsqueak?** its a special program just for little ones aged 2-5 and their parents or carers. The workshop runs for about an hour, and builds motor skills and creativity whilst encouraging bonding between adult and child.

**What does it cost?** For a one-off visit, \$8 members or \$10 non members, but if you book into the whole term of eight lessons you get one free.

**When does it run?** During school term it runs on wednesday mornings from 10:30am to 11:30am, and on special dates during the holidays.

**What do you love about it?** The classes are run by Vanessa, one of our gallery assistants who has worked a lot with children in her career. She sings songs, plays games, and they always do something different every week. She's a very easy-going, fun teacher. I like popping into the class when it's on to see whats happening, and both the kids and the parents are always having a great time.



## PUBLIC PROGRAMS

**Warren Fahey Concert** | 7:00pm for 7:30pm start | THURSDAY 23 SEPTEMBER  
TICKETS \$20 MEMBERS \$25 NON MEMBERS

There will be a book launch and a book signing at the end of the performance of his latest release.

**Look Who's Talking** | 6:00pm - 8:00pm MONDAY 4 NOVEMBER  
\$10.00 INCLUDES WINE & CANAPES

Get to know Steve Kilbey, lead singer-songwriter and bass guitarist for iconic Australian band, The Church. A biography of the music producer, poet, writer, painter and solo artist of six music albums was released in 2009, as was his latest solo record, Painkiller. Don't miss Steve's special acoustic set to be performed on the night!...

[www.maitland.nsw.gov.au/library/events/lookwhostalking](http://www.maitland.nsw.gov.au/library/events/lookwhostalking)

## CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

call (02) 4934 9859 to request a volunteer form to be sent to you or check out our website [mrag.org.au](http://mrag.org.au)

MRAG installs around 32 exhibitions per year. If you've ever wondered what it's like to install an exhibition, then consider becoming an MRAG installation volunteer.

Volunteers have the chance to work closely with artists and MRAG staff, gain professional experience, and put something back into their community and their art gallery.



## MRAGM MEETINGS

**MRAGM MEETINGS** are open to all members.



### **2010 MRAGM COMMITTEE:**

**CHAIRPERSON - Judy Henry** (image)

**VICE CHAIRPERSON - Jeff Sinclair**

**SECRETARY - Gaile Witt**

**TREASURE - Jean-Paul Ruelle**

**NEWSLETTER SECRETARY - Lizz Cooper**

**GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBER - Vicki Woods**

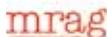
**GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBER - Ruth Trappel**

**2010 meetings** will be bi-monthly, held on the second Monday, of the month at 4.30pm, at the art gallery.

Please ring the front door bell as we are closed to the public on Mondays.

**The 2010 AGM will be held on 18 October.**

Committee positions will be called at this meeting.



230 High st Maitland NSW 2320 | P 02 4934 9859 | E [artgallery@maitland.nsw.gov.au](mailto:artgallery@maitland.nsw.gov.au) [www.mrag.org.au](http://www.mrag.org.au)  
art gallery hours Tuesday - Sunday 10am - 5pm | the gallery shop hours Tuesday - Sunday 10am - 4:45pm

**[IMAGE] (TOP) SUZANNE ARCHER EXHIBITION INSTALLATION, (BELOW) JUDY HENRY: CHAIRPERSON**