



ARTEL

QUARTERLY ■ NEWSLETTER

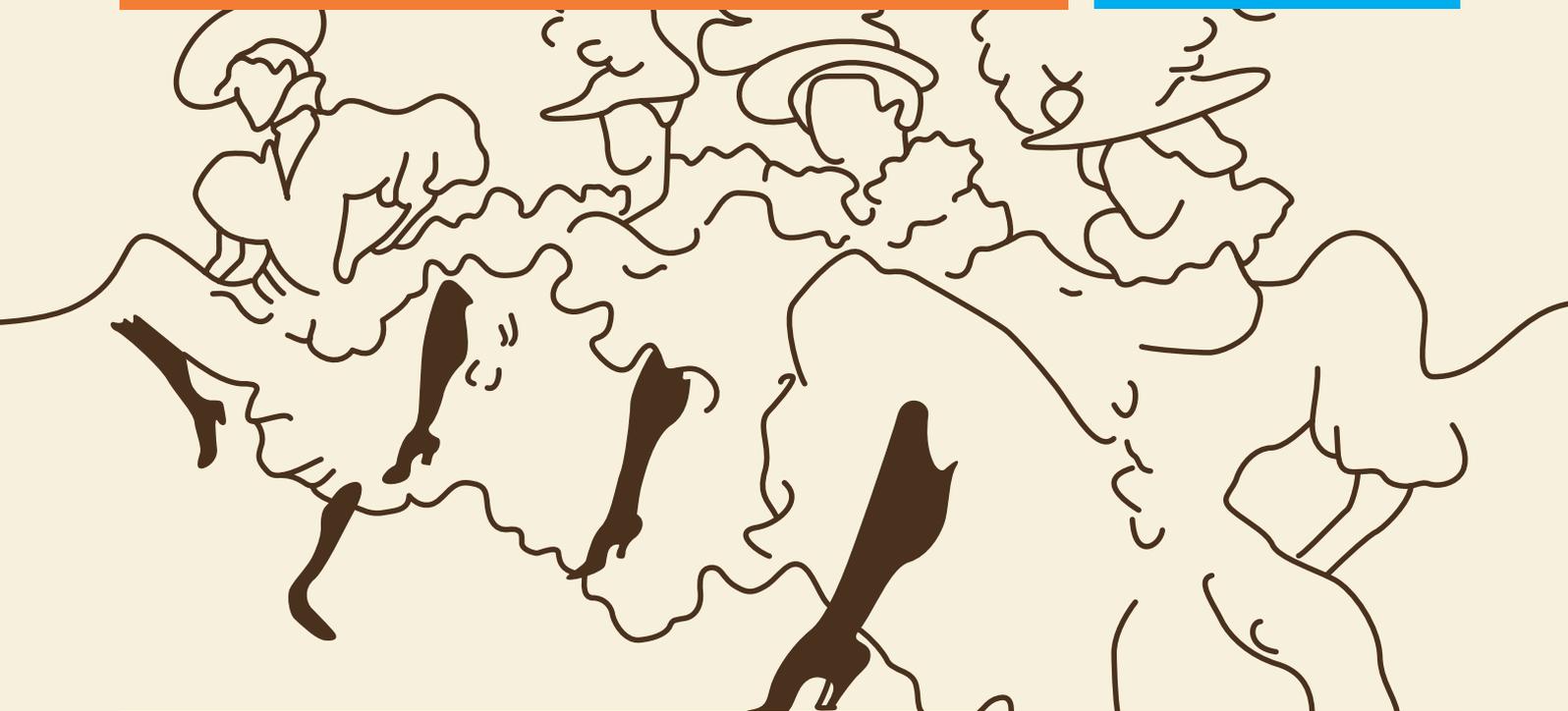
TOULOUSE-LAUTREC

PARIS & THE MOULIN ROUGE

at the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

COACH TRIP TO
CANBERRA
ORGANISED BY:

mragm
MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY MEMBERS



YOUR WEEKEND*

SATURDAY 23 MARCH:

- 7.00 am: Board coach at 3 Woodford Place, Northern Highlands Travel, Thornton (free off street parking available) map will be supplied upon booking
- Morning Tea en route
- Raffle on board coach
- Visit to Cambelltown Arts Centre featuring Suzanne Archer's sculptures and paintings and Shane Cotton's creative framed work
- Lunch at Melaleuca restaurant, Mount Annan Botanic Gardens
- 5.00 pm: Arrive at hotel in Canberra and check in, free time for the rest of the evening

SUNDAY 24 MARCH:

- From 7.00 am: Breakfast at hotel and newspaper
- 9.00 am: Check out of hotel
- Embassy tour prior to arrival at National Gallery of Australia (NGA)
- 10.00 am: Visit to Toulouse - Lautrec exhibition at your own pace; you will also be able to visit the National Portrait Gallery which is adjacent to the NGA
- 1.00 pm: Depart gallery
- Lunch at Fedra Olive Grove (between Canberra and Goulburn)
- 3.00 pm (approx.): Depart Fedra Olive Grove
- Raffle on board coach
- 8.00 pm (approx.): Arrive Thornton

DATES:

Saturday 23 March 2013
Sunday 24 March 2013

COST:

\$320 pp twin share members
\$350 pp twin share non members / guests
[single supplement \$85]

RSVP: Thursday 14 March 2013*

*Please inform gallery staff at time of booking of any dietary requirements

DETAILS AND TIMELINE FOR THE DAY WILL BE GIVEN OUT ON COACH

[minimum number of participants: 30]

* Some changes may occur due to unforeseen circumstances

FEATURES AND INCLUSIONS: Travel in luxury air-conditioned coach, free off street parking at NHT premises, Robert's famous home - made morning tea on the way to Canberra, visit to Campbelltown Arts Centre with artist's talk, two course lunch at Mount Annan Botanic Gardens Melaleuca House on the first day, overnight accommodation at four star "Quality Inn Dicksons Hotel", Canberra, breakfast and local newspaper, Entry to the National Gallery of Australia to see "Toulouse Lautrec" exhibition, Dips at Fedra Olive Grove's "Collector Restaurant" on the second day, Movies "The Moulin Rouge" and "Midnight in Paris" on board coach, Toulouse- Lautrec promotional video on board coach, informative "Toulouse Lautrec" package, visit to National Portrait Gallery, water available on board coach



A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the first edition of Artel 2013! It amazes me how quickly the year is going - Autumn already! I enjoy this time of year when the nights are cooler and the days still warm.

Since our last edition of Artel, the dedicated staff and volunteers of MRAG have successfully organised and delivered a great opening celebration with five exhibitions: *The Year of the Bird*, *Maitland International Salon of Photography*, *Co-Isolated III*, *Marguerite Tierney* and *Artstars*. A diverse and interesting range of exhibitions. It is always wonderful to see so many supporters enjoying the festivities and the official openings.

I hope you've had the chance to drop in and browse through these exciting exhibitions.

We have many exciting events organised for 2013. Firstly, Jean-Paul and the MRAGM have organised a coach trip to Canberra in March visiting the Toulouse-Lautrec exhibition at the National Gallery of Australia. The weekend is sure to be a lot of fun, so to get your taste of Paris and the Moulin Rouge, book soon. An outline of other bus trips planned for the year, is included in this edition.

The staff and members of MRAG have been busy organising a Community Partnership Program with the Rotary Club of Maitland Sunrise, to raise funds for an outdoor seating area and a labyrinth. This exciting project will continue to be developed throughout the year.

I am happy to be able to confirm our inaugural fundraising event will be held on the 1 June 2013 and will be a Q&A evening. Watch for more details coming soon.

Rosemary Keegan
Chairperson



2013 BUS TRIPS - TOULOUSE LAUTREC AND BEYOND



Welcome to 2013 and our exciting year-long programme of art excursions.

The success of our regular day bus trips has prompted expanding our activities to include an overnight and a short-stay excursion this year, whilst maintaining the popular events.

First for 2013 is *Toulouse Lautrec – Paris and the Moulin Rouge*, exhibiting at the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra. This is an overnight excursion (Sat 23rd – Sun 24th March) and includes a visit to Campbelltown Arts Centre on the way to Canberra. The Members are very excited with this “adventure” and look forward to your support. Further details and bookings are available at the Gallery reception.

In May, we have a day trip planned to the *Archibald Exhibition* at the AGNSW. Details to be announced

shortly. Mid-year we hope to visit and support another art gallery within our region. This will be a day trip to see new artworks and sample local food and wine. More information will be available closer to the date.

A very exciting event is planned for the second half of the year – a three night trip to Hobart to visit The Museum of Old and New Art (MONA). MONA was opened in 2011 and has gained an enviable reputation as a vibrant and provocative art space. We are planning this trip for October 2013.

In November a visit to *Sculpture in the Vineyards* at Wollombi is scheduled.

We have planned a busy year of art exploration in 2013 and we look forward to your ongoing support. Please keep an eye out for notices in the post or on-line about each proposed excursion or ask at the Gallery. All monies raised will go towards Education programmes at MRAG.

We hope that many of you can share in one or all of these exciting art experiences.

Megan Dewsnap
Newsletter Secretary



FROM THE DIRECTOR

(left) James Gleeson: a close focus on an extraordinary vision, MRAG 23 March – 3 June 2012 (right) RiverStories, MRAG 10 February - 9 April 2012



Curating an exhibition is a curious, interesting and essential facet of an art gallery's activities. This role usually falls to a person within an art establishment who has a knowledge, in the case of MRAG, primarily in the visual arts and craft in Australia.

Some art galleries and museums actually have a position of a curator. At MRAG, there are a number of people who curate exhibitions but, as a Director/Curator, it primarily falls into the orbit of my duties. It is a task which I enjoy, in fact cherish. It takes me away from the everyday management of MRAG and the daily jobs that any director must accomplish. I find it inspiring.

What is curating and what does it entail? I write about this aspect of the role at MRAG because a number of people have asked me and others, I am sure, think that it is probably no more than hanging paintings and deciding in what order to position them on a wall. The installation of all exhibitions is the important final outcome of curating before the opening. It is a thrill to walk into an exhibition space with newly hung paintings and observe the outcome of our labours, but it is just that - the end of a lengthy exercise. Together with a catalogue, an exhibition is the result of much hard work.

At the beginning of a curatorial expedition, I look for a theme for the exhibition. This could be an area of interest, a topic around an event, a particular period or even an idea or subject which requires a closer inspection through a particular medium or across a spectrum of approaches. A subject needs to be fresh, novel or new although it is sometimes interesting to go over well trodden ground.

Of course, rather than a story to express an interesting idea, I may explore the art of one particular artist or a given group of artists. And now

comes the interesting part. The research into the artists that have been chosen for the exhibition and searching for the particular art works that are desired from the artist/s or indeed public or commercial gallery where the art is now placed.

In the midst of the searching for the art, comes the research of the artists, their backgrounds and any information that may help to understand their styles and motivations. This is necessary not only to make the exhibition explicable to the audience but also to be able to compose a catalogue, if it is necessary, to accompany the exhibition. Research can be broad, looking in all areas from various collections, visiting galleries, reading books on or about the artists, word of mouth and keeping good notes. By now the exhibition should be taking a shape or form that can be discussed with fellow curators and directors while also looking for more current and previous venues where the artists' work has been displayed. Once the exhibition is a reality and you have organised for the art to arrive at MRAG and the catalogue to be designed, it is still not over. There is the role of working and perceiving how the exhibition will look in whatever gallery it is to be hung. Getting the art transported to Maitland, preparing the gallery and hanging the exhibition are further meticulous exercises but they also are an integral part of curating.

There, I hope that this gives you an idea what I do at least ten times per year, if not more. Welcome to my world.

Joe Eisenberg OAM
Cultural Director, MRAG



CULTURE, CREATIVITY AND THE COMMUNITY Q&A FUNDRAISING EVENT

WHEN:

1 June 2013 from 6pm
(so keep the date free and
join in on the fun)

WHERE:

Maitland Regional Art
Gallery (MRAG) and the
Maitland Town Hall

COST: TBA

MRAG in conjunction with The Rotary Club of Maitland Sunrise is presenting an evening of light-hearted fun to raise funds for the Maitland Regional Art Gallery public sculpture garden: outdoor seating and learning area.

The night will include upon arrival at MRAG, canapés and champagne [Tyrrell's Wines as our sponsor] with everyone moving to the Town Hall for dinner and dessert (catering by Seraphine Café). Raffles and auction items e.g. artwork, a mini getaway, wine and much more will be followed by a stirring and interactive debate between the audience and special guest panel.

The Maitland Regional Art Gallery public sculpture garden: outdoor seating and learning area is a project that will bring together, unique sculptures utilised as seating and an interactive Labyrinth, to create an innovative cultural and learning facility. This addition to the grounds of MRAG will benefit not only the local community but also visitors to Maitland from further afield.

MRAG is visited by an average of 4000 people per month. School groups regularly participate in activities throughout the art gallery and grounds. In the past 12 months, over 4500 children have attended the art gallery for an educational visit or organised workshop. A sculpture garden, incorporating seating, would provide another learning area for use by educational visitors as well as an area for families and other visitors to linger and relax.

This project will be designed and created by local artists' further enhancing links between MRAG and the Maitland community. Local children and young people will be able to listen to a lesson from an educator or using the space at lunchtime when visiting the art gallery. Children and visitors alike currently, do not have a comfortable outdoor area for such activities and need to sit directly on grass or on the concrete pathways.

Adjacent to the proposed outdoor seating will be a Labyrinth. Created at ground-level using native grasses and low-growing plants and surfaced with a variety of paving materials, e.g. weathered timber, it will form a contemplative space. A traditional Labyrinth has a defined route to the centre and is not designed to be difficult to navigate. Walking and experiencing a labyrinth (mentally or physically) is *not* intended to be overly challenging. There are no dead-ends within the labyrinth, only meandering waves of smooth lines designed to gently nudge us back to our destination. Labyrinth walking is among the simplest forms of focused meditation, and demonstrated health benefits have led many hospitals, health care facilities, and spas to install labyrinths in recent years.

It is anticipated that these new outdoor spaces will prove popular with all visitors to the art gallery and provide an interesting diversion for pedestrians moving between High Street and James Street.

Art in open space is art that is available to everyone, not just visitors to the art gallery.

A sculpture garden of public art at MRAG will strengthen our community resource by:

- providing an inviting local "meeting point" for people to gather,
- enhancing regional awareness of our vibrant school and family programs.
- adding a dedicated outdoor, educational space to maximise the art learning experience
- creating a place of contemplation and inspiration for our visitors, local artists, staff and volunteers and
- being a place of fun and beauty within the gallery grounds



WHAT DOES A PUBLIC ART GALLERY BRING TO A COMMUNITY?



This is a good time to talk about how any gallery and Maitland Regional Art Gallery (MRAG) in particular contributes to a community. What does MRAG bring to Maitland?

We could debate this question for many years and still not come to a definitive answer – certainly not one that would be agreed upon. Here are some of the facts:

In 2004, Joe Eisenberg was appointed as the new Cultural Director of MRAG. Joe came to Maitland with over 30 years experience in arts management, including an art gallery redevelopment. He, with the Manager of Community and Recreation, set about developing the vision for MRAG. The plan that was developed for the next few years included:

- The introduction of additional gallery spaces and creating an extensive exhibition, education and public arts program,
- starting a gallery shop and introducing a cafe,
- establishing a volunteer and members programs, introduction of MRAG Patrons and MRAG Partners and welcoming corporate sponsors,
- developing the Art Factory and related educational programs,
- growing the collection (a Council asset).

In the nine years since, each and every one of these visions, outlined in 2004, has been realised.

What do we have now in 2013?

We have:

- A world - class cultural facility which attracts many visitors, most importantly, the majority from our local community. The feedback received from visitor surveys, our visitor's book or our on-line feedback service is positive and appreciative,

- an art gallery which attracts interest from artists, curators and other cultural facilities wanting to showcase art from various Government and private collections and institutions, in our gallery,
- a touring program which has attracted consecutive years of federal funding for two separate exhibitions generated from MRAG - promoting art and Maitland across the east coast of Australia,
- the Art Factory – the first of its kind in regional NSW and now the bench mark for other galleries to follow. The Art Factory is alive with kids of all ages from babies to teenagers. Baby art, Pipsqueaks, afterschool art classes – Tuesday's (6-12 year old), Wednesday's (6-12 year old) and Thursdays (12-16 Years) and Art Sunday's. The Art Factory, with its newly named workshop spaces, the Engine Room and the Power Plant, is buzzing! These activities are all led by our wonderful art tutors, who inspire making, singing and experiencing of art in many different ways. Children and young people, explore the galleries as part of their workshops to look at and talk about the artworks for ideas and inspiration,
- over 1000 financial members and a wonderfully supportive executive committee,
- more than 60 volunteers managed by one dedicated volunteer who for the last 5 years has developed a workable instruction and activity program (supported of course by all the volunteers) which MRAG could not function without. The MRAG volunteer program is an avenue for these willing and generous people to contribute, with passion and loyalty, to their community and the art gallery,
- a growing Collection of art – an asset to the city, developed astutely, primarily through donations under the Cultural Gifts Program and which, in the last 12 months alone, has contributed over \$600,000 in artwork to the Maitland City Council Collection.

We have an ART GALLERY, a part of our MAITLAND COMMUNITY, a destination where EVERYONE can come TOGETHER and enjoy food and coffee, learning and shopping, ART and FRIENDSHIP!

Do you agree?

Kim Blunt
Public Program Coordinator



FROM THE COLLECTION



George Baldessin

Many people may not realise that our collection is older than the gallery. The Art Gallery was established 38 years ago in 1975, but the collection is actually 56 years old this year.

The MRAG collection began in 1957 when art works were purchased by Maitland City Council with the intent to create an art collection for the City of Maitland. Since that time the collection has grown to more than 3500 individual items and these works have been acquired through purchases and generous donations. Between 1965 and 2004, the winning artworks from the Maitland Art Prize were also gifted to the MRAG collection. Since 2005, acquisitions for the collection have been guided by an acquisition policy that focuses on collecting works on paper, to expand upon the existing strengths within the collection and work towards building a cohesive and unique regional collection.

One of the Art Gallery's treasured works, which provided a basis for acquiring works on paper, is our George Baldessin, etching on paper, *The World of Tinsel*, 1966. We were very fortunate to acquire this work as a winning entry in the 1967 Maitland Art Prize for Prints. It was judged by John Stringer who co-curated the seminal *Field* exhibition, in 1968.

Visitors to MRAG may now be more familiar with George Baldessin's work after the very successful exhibition at MRAG late last year titled *Creative Power, the art of George Baldessin*.

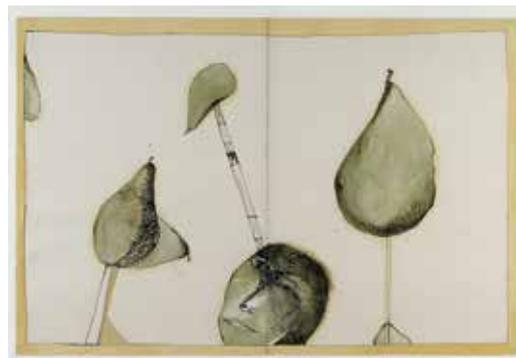
George Baldessin is now recognised as being one of Australia's most influential and important printmakers from the 1960s and 1970s. His works are held in the collections of major art galleries in Australia and internationally, including the Museum of Modern Art, Guggenheim Museum in New York and the British Museum in London.

The World of Tinsel is from the period in Baldessin's art practice in which he developed his own figurative iconography based upon circus performers. He was particularly inspired by the 1953 Ingmar Bergman film, *Sawdust and Tinsel*, a story about a small, second rate, travelling circus. The moody, black and white film focussed on the interaction between the characters and is filled with dreamlike flashbacks, sexual tensions, seduction and jealousies. The three figures in this work are dressed like circus performers and appear incongruously suspended in a circus-tent-like room. This work directly reflects the themes and feel of the film. Like a lot of his figurative works, the bodies are distorted and appear weightless and vulnerable.

Despite his short life (he was 39 years old when he died in a car accident in 1978), George Baldessin left a huge body of work which continues to impress and astonish with its contemporary feel. MRAG is now touring two separate exhibitions from this legacy across the east coast of Australia. It is a testament to the appeal that his work still holds, that the tour has been taken up by nineteen galleries and is being supported by the Australian Government with a \$71,000 Visions Australia Grant.

P.S. To those of you who join the Toulouse Lautrec bus trip in March – be sure not to miss the George Baldessin steel pear sculptures, *Pear - version number 2*, 1973 outside the NGA gallery entrance.

Cheryl Farrell
Collection Curator



[top left] George Baldessin, *The World of Tinsel*, 1966, etching on paper, 50 x 46 cm, MRAG Collection
[lower right] George Baldessin, *Portrait with pears*, c. 1975, pen, black ink, wash and watercolour, 76.4 x 113.0cm, on loan from Australian Galleries for the touring exhibition: *Creative Power, the art of George Baldessin*. © Tess Edwards Baldessin



[top] Just Jane (Jane Burbidge), [lower] Oscar & Matilda (Zoe Tjanavaras)



Jane Burbidge: Just Jane

Ceramic Artist

These delicate white ceramics present a pure, fragile face to the world. The artist Jane Burbidge has created several styles and shapes, reflecting natural elements.

Artist Statement:

'I draw inspiration from colours, textures and patterns from within nature and the natural environment and from the effects that nature has on manmade items. My work is also influenced by a long interest in Archaeology and Paleontology and the strata layers in which the remaining shards, remnants and artifacts have been encased. These influences have led me to speculate that, the death of a living organism- or demise of a culture- is not the end. Rather, it is the beginning of the removal of outer layers to reveal innermost secrets.

For me, these artifacts have become a part of the earth and gained an artistic beauty with the passing of time and effects of weathering, erosion and decay. These beliefs, linked with my admiration of nature and its intricacies, juxtapose within my work, creating tensions between the order and structure of human civilization and the random effects of nature.'

In 2001 Jane was selected to take part in the Jam Factory's two year design associate programme, which she completed in 2002. Jane remained at the Jam Factory for a further two years as a tenant and became the ceramic departments production thrower which continued until early 2011 when the production lines were discontinued.

Jane, during 2004, set up her home based studio in Echunga, which is situated on the overlap of the Adelaide hills and Fleurieu Peninsula, where she now works full time. Jane is a dedicated arts practitioner in her chosen field of ceramics.

Zoe Tjanavaras: Oscar & Matilda

Resin Designer, Maker, Creator and Artist

This innovative local artist is constantly reinventing herself with exciting displays of colourful jewellery.

Zoe's medium is varied. Her brooches, earrings, bangles and necklaces are created in resin. Zoe also incorporates vintage fabrics and papers as features in her jewellery. These pieces have been created to be durable and light.

'I have been making things since I can remember... I hope you enjoy it!'

All her colourful designs are on display in the MRAG shop - they are wearable art accessories that add colour, texture and fun to any occasion.

Zoe is based in the lower Hunter Valley and has successfully developed her passion for art.

Judy Henry

Merchandise Coordinator



EDUCATION - THE ART FACTORY



Marguerite Tierney: A wolf in my yard: a tale of adaptation - installation shots.

The Art Factory at Maitland Regional Art Gallery, two floors at the back of the art gallery complex, is, as Joe Eisenberg our Cultural Director said,

a 'real' area dedicated to children and young people ...where the young and maybe even the not-so-young will have a unique experience when visiting MRAG.

Inviting children into the Art Factory and giving them plenty of opportunities to be excited, interested, active and busy is one of the gallery's main aims, and this is what the Art Factory is all about.

So any artist exhibiting in the Art Factory has to plan their show with this in mind; their challenge is not just exhibiting at MRAG, but also to create meaningful, accessible activities and installations as part of their show that engage our young gallery visitors.

One of the fun responsibilities that Linda Greedy and I have in our shared role of Education Curator is working through this process with the artists who exhibit in the Art Factory.

Right now in the Art Factory is Marguerite Tierney's exhibition *A wolf in my yard, a tale of adaptation*. Marguerite's collection of 48 works on paper and paintings were created because, in her own words

I'm captivated by all the different species on this planet. We're all so different, but share such similar instincts. I try to work that into my art. I like humanising animals and animalising humans using watercolours, ink and oil.

And in and around her artworks on the ground floor of the Art Factory, Marguerite has created things to do that involve looking, drawing, cutting, placing, pasting, jig-sawing, imagining and relaxing.

A bit about Marguerite – she grew up and went to school in Maitland, and then pursued tertiary studies in arts and art, making her way to Melbourne where she currently lives and works. Marguerite teaches illustration and watercolour to children, something she will be doing at MRAG, and is embarking on her Graduate Diploma of Fine Arts from the Victorian College of the Arts this year. And why is she an artist?

One of the first memories I have is my brother running inside to tell my parents that I had drawn all over the interior of the family van. Back then I scribbled rabbits and worried looking pirates a lot. Not much has changed except now I take scribbling seriously and use more appropriate surfaces.

Something that we hope our younger Art Factory visitors may pick up on - art can seep into your bones at a young age and become a way of life.

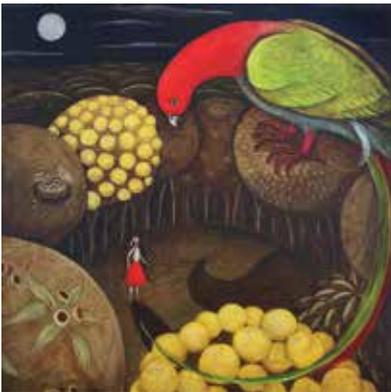
Come and be part of Marguerite's show in the Art Factory which continues until 28 April, and please bring any of your younger friends or relatives.

Anne McLaughlin
Education Curator



EXHIBITIONS

[top left] Richard Goodwin, *Proof of Consciousness Experiment 2*, 2012, mixed media, 120 x 260 x 130 cm
Helen Hopcroft, *Moonlight on your beak*, 2013, oil on canvas, 60 x 60 cm
Yau-ming Charles Ho (Hong Kong), *Cranes on Gold and Silver*, 2011, digital colour print, 26.5 x 40 cm



THE YEAR OF THE BIRD:

A celebration of Hybridity

22 FEBRUARY - 7 APRIL 2013

ROBERT BAINES: *Metal*

is an Object: Australian Design Centre touring exhibition and is part of the Living Treasures: Masters of Australian Craft series.

22 MARCH - 12 MAY 2013

ARTSTARS:

Artwork by kids from MRAG's after-school classes

22 FEBRUARY - 12 MAY 2013

CAPTURING ABILITY: *The Mai-Wel Group's Inaugural Photographic Competition*

22 MARCH - 12 MAY 2013

MARGUERITE TIERNEY:

A wolf in my yard

a tale of adaptation

15 FEBRUARY - 28 APRIL 2013



IN THE
ART FACTORY
MRAG

TRACY LUFF:

Above below all around

22 MARCH - 12 MAY 2013

SONG OF EARTH AND SEA:

Shay docking 1955-1996

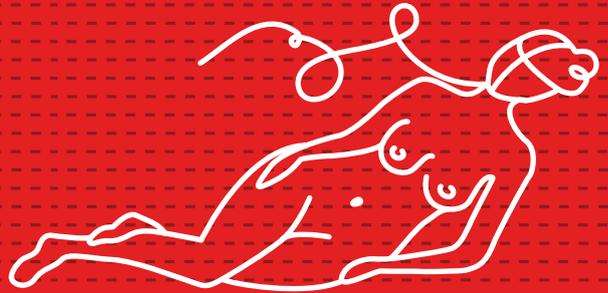
A Macquarie University exhibition, curators Rhonda Davis and Leonard Janiszewski and Kate Hargraves, travelling exhibition coordinator

22 MARCH - 12 MAY 2013



ART CLASSES

Adults

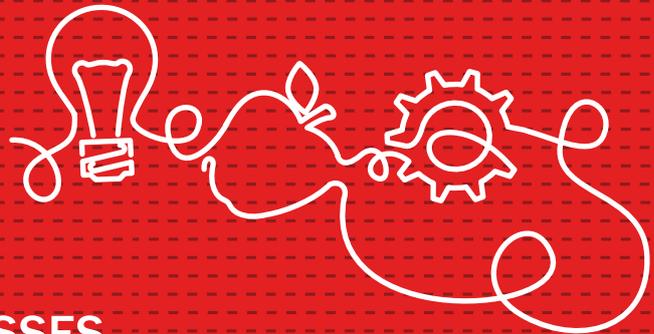


2 DAY METAL CRAFT CLASSES with Joanne Herbert

ART AND CREATIVITY with Stephen James

CREATIVE EXPRESSION IN DEALING WITH DEPRESSION with Karen Adler

Kids



AGES 0-2 BABY ART CLASSES

AGES 2-5 PIPSQUEAKS!

AGES 6-12 ART TUESDAYS or ART WEDNESDAYS

AGES 12 + ART THURSDAYS

ALL AGES FREE ART SUNDAYS

GO TO OUR WEBSITE WWW.MRAG.ORG.AU FOR MORE DETAILS OR CALL THE GALLERY ON 02 4934 9859

✨ look @ Drink ✨
 SHOP 🎈 WELCOME
 COLOUR EAT 👤 PLAY
 → HANG
 • COFFEE • taste • COLLECT •



2013 MRAGM COMMITTEE

CHAIRPERSON > Rosemary Keegan VICE CHAIRPERSON > Helen Lowe SECRETARY > Gena Parker

TREASURER > Jean-Paul Ruellé NEWSLETTER SECRETARY > Megan Dewsnap

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBER > Elizabeth McLaughlin GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBER > Gail Johnston

PATRON > Robyn Parker MP COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE > Loretta Baker

MRAG REPRESENTATIVE > Joe Eisenberg

*Upcoming MRAGM meetings: Thursday 14 March 2013, Thursday 11 April 2013, at MRAG at 5.00pm,
All MRAG members are most welcome. Our meetings are brief and friendly.*



ARTEL ON-LINE

If you are interested in getting ARTEL on-line only please contact MRAG reception. You will also receive flyers and brochures regarding exhibition openings, art classes and excursions by email.

