

# ARTEL

SPRING  
2018



**Concerning Peace**  
*Artists Unite*

**Member Artist**  
*Nicola Bolton*

**Community Chest**  
*Collection Treasures*

**mragm**  
MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY MEMBERS

QUARTERLY  
MAGAZINE

## MEET

# Olivia Sophia

## SECRETARY



## MRAGM COMMITTEE

- PATRON:** Jenny Aitchison MP  
**CHAIRPERSON:** Sui-Linn White  
**VICE CHAIRPERSON:** Leeroy Chapman  
**SECRETARY:** Olivia Sophia  
**TREASURER:** Alasdair Smart  
**MAGAZINE SECRETARY:** Sally Denmead  
**EVENTS COORDINATOR:** Andrea Pugh  
**GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBER:**  
Holly Fisher-Bidwell  
**COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE:** Cr Ben Whiting  
**MRAG REPRESENTATIVE:** Brigette Uren

(Cover) Nicola Bolton in her studio (see story on page 9)

Maitland Regional Art Gallery | [mrag.org.au](http://mrag.org.au)  
230 High St Maitland NSW 2320 | 4934 9859

**NAME** Olivia Sophia

**LIVES** Dungog

**FAMILY** Partner Dom and two cats called Parker and Jezza

### BACKGROUND + EXPERIENCE

Olivia grew up in Tauranga, New Zealand and Canberra, where she studied Art History and Curatorship at the ANU. As part of her degree she did an internship at the National Gallery of Australia, working on the exhibition *Imants Tillers: One World, Many Visions* in 2006, and has worked part-time as Tillers' archivist and administration assistant ever since.

After university Olivia lived in Sydney for 10 years, working for Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery (2007-14) and the Australia Council for the Arts. In 2015, wanting a tree change, she and her partner moved to Dungog where his parents have a biodynamic farm and bakery. They really enjoy living in a small community-oriented town and Olivia volunteers as a shopkeeper once a month for the Local Growers' Market.

Earlier this year Olivia curated an exhibition of Tillers' work at the University Gallery in Newcastle, and she recently travelled to Riga for a major retrospective of his work at the Latvian National Museum of Art. Whilst there she enjoyed seeing singers and dancers in the streets of Riga as part of the Latvian Song Festival, which happens only once every five years.

Olivia feels very lucky to have a career in the visual arts, and says that the best part of her job is meeting and working with artists. In her spare time she loves to garden or crochet while listening to podcasts. She is currently working part-time at the National Art School Gallery as Curatorial and Gallery Assistant.

### IN HER OWN WORDS

One of the first things I did when I moved to the Hunter three and a half years ago was to visit MRAG. I found it to be one of the most interesting and welcoming regional galleries I'd been too. It has a great exhibition program, with a good mix of the contemporary, local and traditional. I've been on the Members' Committee since October 2017 and have really enjoyed being part of a team that's passionate about art and community. I'm the Secretary of the Committee but I also help with other projects where I can and am currently assisting with the upcoming Art Sale fundraiser, which is shaping up to be a very exciting event indeed.

**mragm**  
MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY MEMBERS

EVENTS CALENDAR | SAVE THE DATE

**COACH TRIP: SCULPTURE ON THE FARM, FOSTERTON**  
Saturday 29 September 2018

**MRAG CONTEMPORARY ART SALE OPENING NIGHT**  
6 - 8 pm, Friday 19 October 2018

**MRAGM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
5pm, Friday 19 October 2018

**MRAGM CHRISTMAS PARTY**  
Friday 7 December 2018

## FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

**Henri Matisse talked about wanting to “recapture that freshness of vision which is characteristic of extreme youth when all the world is new to it”.**

The exhibitions and experiences offered by MRAG do that ‘recapturing’ for me, and a recent rise in the number of MRAG members suggests there are many others who are also moved by our Gallery. This is very encouraging; the more members we have, the stronger our support can be for vibrant, diverse arts education and access programs.

To this end, the Committee is trying some new things. For our **Soup & Shakespeare** event in August, neighbouring Maitland Repertory Theatre’s opening night audience joined the MRAGM Committee for a pre-show supper for the very first time. We have also listened to your feedback and carried out a review of ARTEL; we ask for your patience as we take a break over Summer to give our magazine a facelift, returning next Autumn with a brand new look and feel!

This season we are very excited to offer three fabulous fundraiser events. On Saturday 29 September join us for a day out on a rural gallery crawl with our **Sculpture on the Farm** coach trip to Fosterton and Dungog. On Friday 19 October (following our **AGM**, to which all members are invited) don’t miss the opening of our **Contemporary Art Sale!** Start or add to your own original art collection, with over 300 artworks to choose from. On Friday 7 December our very popular **Members Christmas Party** is a chance for you to celebrate being part of this wonderful community. Your support for these events is essential to enable us to expand the Members program and continue supporting both Free Art Sunday and Free Art January. I look forward to meeting you and your friends at these events!

**SUI-LINN WHITE**

## FROM THE GALLERY DIRECTOR

*Great things are done by a series  
of small things brought together – Vincent van Gogh*

**One of the privileges the MRAG team has in working at the Gallery is seeing first-hand the impact of all the little things we do which, brought together, improve community wellbeing.**

Until recently a young boy visited MRAG’s year-long exhibition *Lionel’s Place* each week; it provided the only space in which he felt he could share with his counsellor what was troubling him. The Gallery is a sanctuary in the City where it is okay for people to talk about unsafe ideas. Through our exhibitions, creative learning activities and wellbeing programs, we strive to meaningfully connect with, and nurture the capacity of, people of all ages from across the community. We partner with many people and organisations (99 groups in 2017 alone) to ensure this is possible.

This Spring I encourage you, as a member, to consider the broader community service the Gallery offers. I humbly ask you to help us build on our wellbeing and access programs through any means you can – put spare change in the donation box; buy a Gift Membership or an artwork at the Art Sale (prices start at \$50); or come dance at the Arts in Health fundraiser on 2 November (proudly supported by Walka Grange Lifestyle Village).

I also encourage you to visit the **2018 Brenda Clouten Memorial Travelling Scholarships exhibition**. Established to nurture the talent of young achievers in the visual arts (30 years or under) in the community, the scholarship gives a student or recent graduate in the Lower Hunter the opportunity to travel overseas for a program of professional development and is proudly supported by Vicki and Bruce Woods of Bushrangers Bar & Brasserie in Largs. I congratulate all eight finalists who are competing for two awards: Nick Barlow, Brigitte Beyer, Leeroy Chapman, Annie Corey, Genevieve Graham, Ileigh Hellier, Alessia Sakoff and Elliot Watson. The winners will be announced on 8 September, when the exhibition opens.

**BRIGETTE UREN**

pearson|smart  
accountants + business advisers

**MYOB and XERO specialists**

[www.pearsonsmart.com.au](http://www.pearsonsmart.com.au)

**FOR A REFRESHING AND PROACTIVE APPROACH  
TO BUSINESS SPEAK WITH US**

Phone: 02 4933 6966  
373 High Street Maitland 2320



## THE GARDEN PALETTE | NICOLA BOLTON

Exploring the artist's strong affinity with the gardens surrounding her late Victorian era home in Bolwarra, as well as gardens she has visited on her travels, this exhibition features 384 images of flowers and plants that blend notions of the photographic and the painterly. By encouraging the viewer to question the medium they see, they invite close contemplation of beautiful details of colour, texture and pattern. **Until 14 October**



## OPEN HOUSE: 3RD TAMWORTH TEXTILE TRIENNIAL

This Tamworth Regional Gallery touring exhibition celebrates the open-ended, porous nature of textiles practice today. The exhibition has a strong indigenous, multicultural and environmental focus, with works including dolls, mixed media wall-hangings and installations that overlay traditional textiles practice with new technologies.

**Until 14 October**



## PAUL PARTOS | FROM THE MRAG COLLECTION

This series of etchings by Czech-born Australian artist Paul Partos – who exhibited in two landmark exhibitions of Australian abstract art in 1968 – examines the physical and conceptual limits of the square and rectangle, which was a major characteristic of his paintings.

The series was acquired by the MRAG Collection in 2016 with the assistance of the artist's estate. **Until 14 October**



## CONCERNING PEACE | VARIOUS ARTISTS

Curated by Eric and Robyn Werkhoven, this group exhibition features 27 artists working across all media – painting, drawing, sculpture, printmaking, photography, ceramics and video installation. Exploring the artists' responses to conflict around the world and their hopes for peace, it includes work by George Gittoes, Kathrin Longhurst and Peter Tilley. **Until 25 November**



## FINDING COUNTRY | FROM THE MRAG COLLECTION

A selection of 45 artworks from the MRAG Collection by Aboriginal artists from across Australia who each represent their own language groups, dreaming and country. Works include bark paintings from Arnhem Land artists and painting from the Central Desert, with visitors encouraged to reflect on the meaning of being 'on Country', which is so central to Aboriginal culture. **Until 17 February 2019**

(top - bottom) 1. Nicola Bolton, *The Garden Palette* (detail), 2018, digital print on matt paper with gouache and coloured pencil, 19.5 x 19.5cm each. 2. Ema Shin and Tamworth Textile Artists, *Devoted Body* (detail), 2017, linen, silk, muslin, water-based ink, acrylic ink, cotton thread, woodblock print, block print, urauchi (Chinecollé), natural dye, embroidery. 3. Paul Partos, *Untitled (No. 9)*, 1981, etching on paper, aquatint on copper, 19.3 x 14.7cm, Purchased by Maitland Regional Art Gallery. 4. Lachie Hinton, *Idomeni Riot and the Call for Peace* (detail), 2016, oil on canvas, 140 x 200cm. 5. Doris Gingingarara, 1946 – 1999, *Bush Tucker Dreaming*, silk screen on paper, 50.5 x 62cm, © estate of the artist licensed by Aboriginal Artists Agency Ltd. Maitland Regional Art Gallery Collection Purchased with the assistance of the Art Gallery Society, 1991.

**ALSO ON** (see the MRAG website for more details)

**2018 Brenda Clouten Memorial Travelling Scholarships for Young Achievers in the Visual Arts** | 8 September – 3 December

**American Visionary: John F. Kennedy's Life and Times**  
20 October 2018 – 17 February 2019

**Anything But Still | Tim Maguire**  
10 November 2018 – 27 January 2019



**(left)** Zac Whittaker, age 7, with Garry Shead's portrait of Maurice O'Shea, *Maurice O'Shea Mt Pleasant*, 1971, oil on board with wine glasses, 91.5 x 60cm, Donated to MRAG through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Michael Hobbs, 2011  
**(centre & right)** *Wall of Treasures* and *Community Chest* project

**This year the Gallery has been celebrating collections, with visitors given unprecedented access to the MRAG Collection through our *Community Chest* and *Wall of Treasures* project.**

Earlier this year we celebrated the Gallery's Lionel Lindsay collection through the exhibition *Lionel's Place*, which won a national award (as did our *Lionel's Place* children's Storybook!) and by uploading our entire Lionel Lindsay collection to the MRAG website. We also took members on a trip to visit the home and private art collection of Max and Nola Tegel, who donated the Lionel Lindsay works to MRAG in 2016.

We have celebrated the region's cultural collections through the *Hunter Red* project, which saw MRAG, Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery, Newcastle Art Gallery, Newcastle Museum and the Lock-Up sharing their collections to present four unique, but complementary, exhibitions showcasing collection treasures in different ways. MRAG Partner Geoffrey Hassall recently gave MRAG access to his personal collection to borrow two beautiful Nonggirnga Marawili paintings for semi-permanent display in the Gallery. And our new *Finding Country* exhibition features 45 artworks by Aboriginal artists from the MRAG Collection.

The Gallery is committed to sharing and promoting its wonderful Collection and, as I've discussed previously in ARTEL, it is our aim to create the most accessible public collection in the State by (one day) offering a permanent 'behind the scenes' experience through an open and visible Collection store. Our recent project *Community Chest* and *Wall of Treasures* was the first step towards this goal.

For eight weeks, between May and July, Gallery visitors had unprecedented access to the MRAG Collection – we invited visitors to wander into the beautiful architectural space of the Collection room and explore it at their leisure. It was like a treasure box for people to indulge in – they could open up the map drawers which

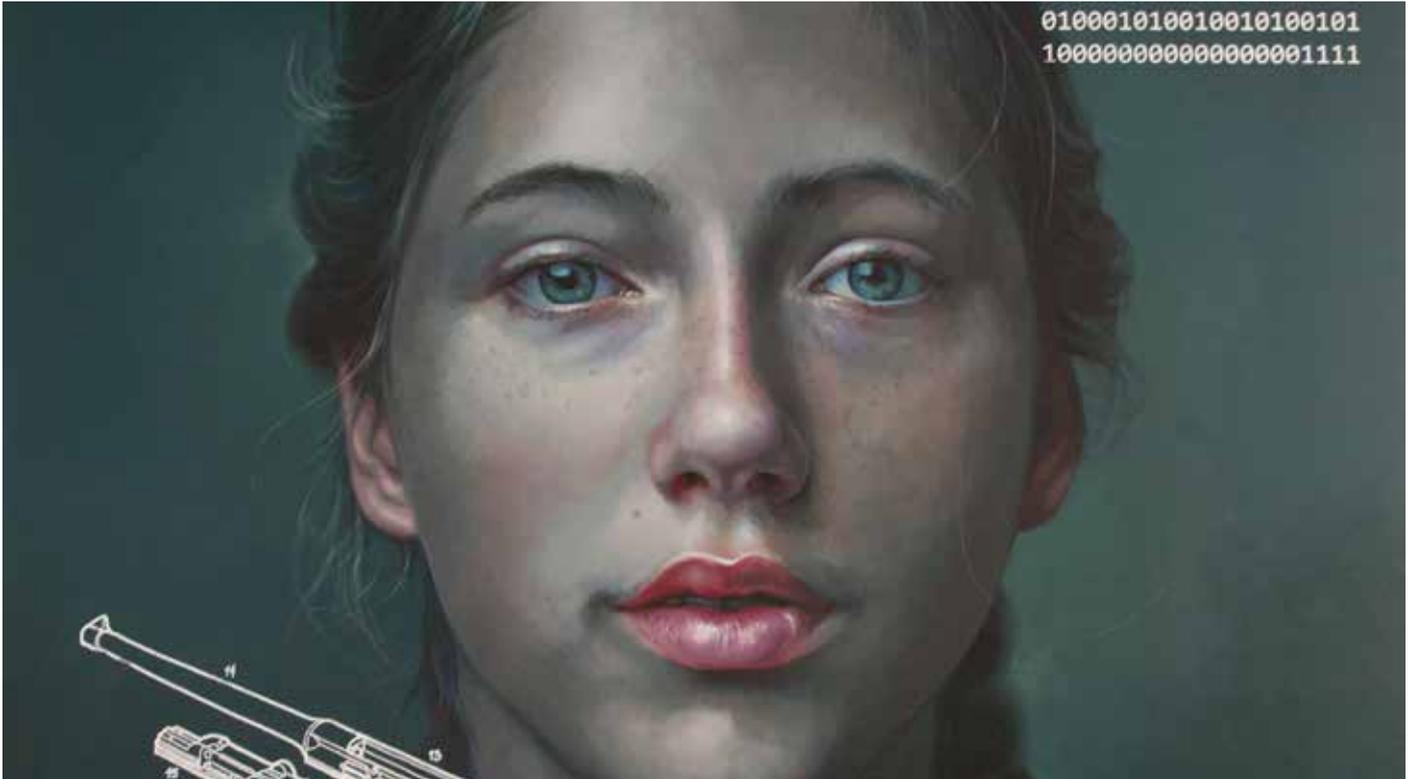
store our unframed works on paper, get up close to Collection 'highlights' featured on easels throughout the room and look at 3D objects that were unwrapped and on view on our shelves. They could watch MRAG staff work with the artworks and engage more meaningfully with staff and volunteers on duty, hearing stories about the Collection, the artists, individual artworks and the history of how they came to MRAG.

We also invited visitors to tell us what they would like the MRAG Collection to be, by going to a 'polling both' filled with postcards of images from the Collection and writing down their ideas. They could then add these to the *Wall of Treasures* next to the Collection room, and by the end of the eight weeks more than 600 postcards were completed and attached to the wall, in effect creating a visitor-curated exhibition (as well as providing us with lots of feedback).

Just over 1400 people came through the Collection room during this period and we received overwhelmingly positive responses. Visitors were excited to have been able to see behind the scenes and felt privileged to have been given such access, with some even telling staff that this experience was the best part of their visit to the Gallery.

A big thank you to the team of volunteers who supported MRAG staff while the Collection room was open and who helped make this project such a success: Kim Aquilina, Sandra Caramanico Walker, Annie Corey, Jenny Hunter, Judy Mueller, Hari Rao, Annette Robertson, Ron Royes, Madelyn Smith, Scott Smith, Barbara Stirrat, Sandra Tweedie and Chris Walmsley.

*Cheryl Farrell is the Collection Management Curator at MRAG.*



**Eric and Robyn Werkhoven have curated a powerful new group exhibition that responds to global conflict and expresses hope for peace. *Concerning Peace* is on until 25 November.**

We all want a peaceful world. Is it possible? Eric and I have always passionately protested against war and the injustices perpetrated by greed. But though we've presented several dramatically themed art exhibitions in the Hunter in the past, such as *Nightmares* at Newcastle Art Space Gallery in 2013, this is the first time we've curated an exhibition in direct response to hostile world events. We felt the time was right to invite artists to express, interpret and explore their hopes for world peace.

*Concerning Peace* brings together 27 artists from across Australia and features all genres of the visual arts – painting, drawing, sculpture, printmaking, photography, ceramics and video installation. The response from our call out to artists was excellent. The exhibition includes nationally recognised artists, such as George Gittoes, Kathrin Longhurst, Mertim Golkap and Lachie Hinton, who are known for their fervent political works. It also includes many of the Hunter's best artists, such as Peter Tilley, Peter Gardiner and Andrew Finnie, to mention only a few.

Artist and filmmaker George Gittoes has consistently expressed his humanitarian concern in his work, highlighting the effects of injustice and conflict in the world. "My work is confronting humanity with the darker side of itself", he has said. He has twice

won the Blake Prize for Religious Art and in 2015 was awarded the prestigious Sydney Peace Prize. For *Concerning Peace*, Gittoes has contributed *The Blindfolded Leading the Blindfolded*, a large oil painting developed from drawings he made in his diaries at the time of the Siege of the Red Mosque in Islamabad, Pakistan in 2007.

Also included in the exhibition is the indomitable and prolific Sydney-based artist Kathrin Longhurst, who grew up 'behind the iron curtain' in communist East Berlin. A classically trained artist, she is known for working in the figurative and hyperrealist style, with aspects of Socialist Realism and communist propaganda art influencing her work. Her painting *Past, Present and Future* reflects "on the notion of peace and the legacy we are leaving behind for our children". The 'Past' is referenced in the work by the disassembled gun, the type used by the Gestapo, which alludes to the horror of World War II. The 'Present' is seen in the binary code, which "references our present love-hate relationship with social media and how our lives are currently intertwined with technology". The 'Future' is represented by her daughter – "It will be her generation that will inherit this planet".

Well-known Newcastle sculptor Peter Tilley says of his work for the exhibition, an assemblage of found materials titled *In Search of Peace*:

*The white dove has inspired many cultures throughout history. They are universally recognised as a symbol of peace, humanity, innocence and love. Since Picasso's La Colombe, a lithograph of a dove with an olive branch in its beak, was selected to mark*



**(opposite)** Kathrin Longhurst, *Past, Present and Future* (detail), 2018, oil on linen, 184 x 184cm. **(above)** George Gittoes, *The Blindfolded Leading the Blindfolded*, 2007-08, oil on canvas, 198.5 x 578cm **(below)** Peter Tilley, *In Search of Peace*, 2018, sculptural assemblage (found ceramic, lead, timber), 51 x 51 x 4.5cm



*the World Peace Congress in Paris in 1949, many artists have incorporated the white dove in their works as an emblem of peace. In the current world climate — environmental and political — a grid of nine white doves might seem like a futile gesture for freedom and world peace.*

Art throughout history has been used as a controlling social and political tool, as rhetoric in the propaganda machine. Has humanity learnt from its past? No, but through all dark times there is hope.

The artworks in *Concerning Peace* are visual representations of a guarded optimism. Exhibited in large adjoining rooms, together these powerful works express the plight of the human condition and the strength of the human spirit. Come and, as Eric says, “seek a window within an artwork to fly through”.

*Artists and curators Robyn and Eric Werkhoven have lived and worked in the Hunter for the past 30 years. You can see their work, including their bimonthly online Arts Zine, at [studiolaprimitive.net](http://studiolaprimitive.net)*

## MRAG CONTEMPORARY ART SALE 2018

After a two year wait, our Art Sale is back! Artworks will be exhibited for two weeks, going on sale from **6pm Friday 19 October** at the opening event, which follows the MRAG members AGM.

This is a major fundraising event, with all proceeds going towards arts education and access projects at the Gallery through the Members program. It involves partnerships with multiple artists, art dealers, Warlukurlangu Artists of Yuendumu, local artists of national and international significance as well as member artists, making it one of the most dynamic we've held.

Thanks to CleverPatch, this is the first time we are inviting children to get involved. Children who are Gallery members (or whose parents hold a current Family membership) are invited to create an artwork on a small canvas to be exhibited and hopefully sold at the event (proceeds going to the Members program). They can:

- Pick up a FREE canvas at MRAG reception from 14 September, or participate in Free Art Sunday on 7 October
- Return their completed canvas, including signed form, by 10 October
- Bring their family and friends to the opening and enjoy the thrill of seeing their work (possibly with a red dot next to it!) exhibited in the Gallery.

The Members Committee wishes to express its gratitude to artists who have donated their artworks and to Dominik Mersch Gallery. Also to Cheryl Farrell and Brigette Uren (MRAG) – co-curators of the sale with committee members Olivia Sophia and Leeroy Chapman – for attracting so many donated works.

This event is an important way for the community to enjoy and support the Members program, local artists and the Gallery. We hope to see you there!



Ginger Riley Munduwalawala, *Ngak Ngak*, 1997, screenprint, edition 66/99, 43 x 59 cm. Image courtesy of the Estate of Ginger Riley Munduwalawala and Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne, VIC. Maitland Regional Art Gallery Collection, Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Leo Christie, 2011

## The exhibition *Finding Country* features artworks by 45 Aboriginal artists from 32 language groups across Australia from the MRAG Collection.

Maitland Regional Art Gallery acknowledges and pays respect to the Wonnarua people, the traditional owners of the land on which the Gallery stands, and their elders past, present and future, who have been and continue to be integral to the life and culture of this region.

*Finding Country* presents a window into the diversity and richness of Aboriginal art and culture that exists across Australia today in 250 different Aboriginal language groups. There was a tragic legacy of the impact of European settlement on Aboriginal Australia from 1788 onwards; this legacy, in the pattern of 18th and 19th century European colonialism, ensured the decimation of Aboriginal culture resulting in a tumultuous history of cross-cultural relationships that continue to evolve in Australia today.

With the growing realisation over past decades of the centrality of Aboriginal culture to Australia, the collecting of Aboriginal art in museums and galleries has moved from an earlier age of an ethnographic focus, an antiquated and false belief of what was assumed to be a declining culture, to a conscious recognition of the complexity, uniqueness and resilience of Aboriginal people – an art and culture that links past generational knowledge, gained from continued presence on this land, with the dynamic of the present in interpreting and expressing connection to Country.

Currently there are over 140 artworks created by Aboriginal artists that have found their way through purchase or donation into the MRAG Collection over the past 40 years. Forty-five of these have been selected for *Finding Country*, including some of

the first such donations to the Collection – bark paintings by Arnhem Land artists JAMBANO Billy Djambanuwa, Manydjilga Maymaru, CURLEY Barrdkadubu and GANALBINGU George Milpururru; and *Fire Dreaming* painting by Tim Leura Tjapaltjarrii from the Central Desert, all gifted by William Bowmore in 1979, through to Tony Albert's *The exploration of a new frontier* purchased for the Collection in 2018.

Each of these works reflects the artist's Country – a unique combination of the artist's connection in stories, ceremony, language and dreaming. Particular meanings of landscape are indissolubly linked to each person's knowledge of Country and belonging; to capture variations and interpretations of that in visual form whether on body, ground, rock, bark, canvas, paper, clay or any other surface is an expression of that inherent personal connection. To have in this exhibition, and in the Collection, such diversity of artworks from over 45 language groups in total provides boundless opportunities and entry points for Maitland communities and visitors to develop an authentic understanding of the timeless concept of being 'on Country' that is central to Aboriginal culture.

One work included in the exhibition is *Bush Tucker Dreaming*, a silk screen print by Doris Gingingara (1946–1999), who was born at Maningrida community in Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory. This is how she explained her artwork in her own words:

*This is my own dreaming, it is all the yam family.  
There are three digging sticks, Junjanga.  
On the left and in the middle, they have yam design  
and on the right they have a sugarbag, honey design.  
There are also mimi spirits digging.  
I am on the top with my stick, dilly bag and coonbagulat.  
The long yam on the left we call pinya-pinya,  
the two round yams on the right are called walila  
and the one between those two is warpiritja.  
When the men are having a ceremony for making young men,  
the woman dig these and take them near the place  
where the men are, and this is the only food the men  
are allowed to eat.*

Text courtesy of the artist and Japingka Gallery, Perth, WA

Please come and explore *Finding Country* many times throughout Spring and Summer. There is space for you to sit and reflect on the artworks and a free exhibition catalogue which contains the AIATSIS map of Indigenous Australia to help you identify where each artist comes from.

Beyond the exhibition, *Finding Country* extends many conversations by, and with, local Wonnarua communities and their elders as to how the Collection may represent their stories past, present and future.

MRAG respectfully acknowledges the artists who are represented in this exhibition and their families and communities across Australia. *Finding Country* is on until 17 February 2019. Anne McLaughlin is a Learning and Audience Development Curator at MRAG.

# MEET OUR MEMBER ARTIST

BY SALLY DENMEAD



(left) Nicola's new children's book (centre) Nicola Bolton in her studio (right) Artwork from *The Garden Palette*

**NICOLA BOLTON is a Maitland-based artist with a passion for painting and drawing rural landscapes. She recently published her first children's book and her exhibition *The Garden Palette* is on at MRAG until October 14.**

Nicola grew up on a sheep farm in Goulburn, where her love of the landscape surrounding this childhood home, her grandmother's beautiful garden and a supportive design teacher at school ensured nature-inspired art would be her life's passion. Nicola remembers being in kindergarten and enjoying painting an autumn tree so much that she knew she wanted to be a painter.

Nicola was thrilled to be accepted onto the Graphic Design course at Randwick Technical College just before she sat her HSC exams. After completing the course she worked in a variety of design jobs, including designing greeting cards for John Sands and painting colourways for a fabric company.

When her son was 18-months-old, she and her husband moved to New York for two years, where she started doing creative sewing and embroidery projects. She carried on with these when they moved to the Hunter, and it was only when her children were finishing school that she really returned her focus to her own art. She enrolled in the fine arts course at Newcastle Art School (TAFE) in 2007, which she loved, and hasn't looked back.

Nicola's work ranges from small scale atmospheric oil paintings and drawings that capture the light in a landscape at dawn or dusk to large scale detailed charcoal drawings. Though she prefers to paint or draw from life – such as on a recent field trip in the Flinders Ranges – she does much of her work in her home studio, with her dogs Tilly and Bonnie by her side. She has exhibited in numerous group and solo exhibitions in the Hunter, and has been a recent finalist in the Adelaide Perry Drawing Prize, the NSW Parliament Plein Air Painting Prize and Kilgour Prize.

Nicola's first children's book, *You Can't Catch Me*, was selected as a 'Notable' in the Early Childhood category of the 2018 Children's Book Council Awards, a rare achievement for a self-published author and illustrator. It tells the story of two dogs chasing a blackbird as it collects mulberries for its three babies, illustrated with Nicola's vibrant collages.

For *The Garden Palette* Nicola celebrates her love of the gardens around her Victorian era home in Bolwarra, and elsewhere, through photography. Look for bees, frogs, ticks and even a couple of aliens in the beautiful detail of the 384 images of plants and flowers in the exhibition. Which are her favourites? "Nearly all of them".

## Q&A

### What inspires you and your art?

I am particularly passionate about the Australian landscape; it has such a magic. Whether it's by a river, in the desert or up a mountain, I am drawn to its constantly changing light, colours and textures. Another love is the garden and I find it a great source of inspiration, especially when it comes to colour palettes.

### Please tell us a bit about your current artistic practice.

Photography has always been an integral part of my artistic practice. I always have my camera with me and am constantly taking photos. Most of the images are used as a reference for studio-based work, but for *The Garden Palette* I really wanted to feature my photography. I've used the technique of overpainting the images with gouache to blend notions of traditional botanical illustration and contemporary photographic documentation, and to highlight the stunning singularity of each flower and plant.

### What do you wish you knew earlier in your career?

Don't waste learning opportunities. Learn from as many artists as you can. Draw every day and have the confidence to follow your passion. Don't give up when it gets hard.

*You can buy a copy of You Can't Catch Me, as well as greeting cards featuring Nicola's photography, from the Gallery Shop. See more of her work at [nicolabolton.com.au](http://nicolabolton.com.au)*



(left) Ruth Napaljarri Stewart Fine Bone China plate (right) Australian made cotton socks featuring artworks from Warlukurlangu artists.

**In connection with *Finding Country*, the Gallery Shop is stocking an eye-catching range of gifts and homewares from Alperstein Designs that feature the work of Aboriginal artists from across Australia.**

Alperstein Designs is a family business that was started by mother and daughter team Evelyn and Fiona Alperstein in 1996. Working with their own creative team, and also collaborating with prominent artists and Art Centres around Australia, they produce a vibrant range of products that reflect the history, language and wildlife that makes our country so unique.

Alperstein Designs is a proud member of the Indigenous Art Code and the Aboriginal Art Association of Australia, with each of their products packaged with information about the artist and artwork and royalties directly benefiting the artist and their community.

Several of their products feature the designs of Judy Watson, a Warlukurlangu artist of Yuendumu in the Northern Territory whose work is included in *Finding Country*.

*"We pride ourselves on producing quality products that showcase original and innovative Australian design".*

Whether you're looking for the perfect gift for someone special overseas or something colourful for around your home, you are sure to find something that appeals from amongst their wares.

The MRAG Gallery Shop prides itself on being a renowned destination for artisan products in the Hunter region. We are constantly on the lookout for well-made, innovative and creative wares and welcome applications from new suppliers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent.



Though we've just turned Spring's corner, we're already looking forward to December – the month that will bring warmer mornings, games of cricket, long days at the beach ... and deck the halls?

"It's too early to think about Christmas!" we might hear you say. But why not have more holiday joy and less stress by doing some early bird Christmas shopping in the Gallery Shop? As a member you get **10% off** when you show your card!

**OR** you could wait to do your gift buying at the **Members Christmas party**, when members get an extra special discount. Now in its fourth fabulous year, the MRAGM Christmas party offers a great opportunity to explore our huge range of artisan gifts in a festive atmosphere in-between enjoying delicious food, drinks and company.

We look forward to seeing *YOU* in the Gallery Shop on **Friday 7 December** between **5pm – 9pm** for the MRAGM Christmas party.



# SOCIAL GALLERY



Razzamatuzz and the Hunter Red curators in conversation at Luminosity opening, Sunday 27 May 2018



Wendy Sharpe in conversation with Scott Bevan at the Luminosity opening, Sunday 27 May 2018



Maitland High School students performing at Born to Busk



Stuart Scott and curator Kim Blunt in conversation at Luminosity opening, Sunday 27 May 2018



MRAGM coach trip to Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Prizes 2018 PLUS White Rabbit Gallery, Saturday 2 June 2018



Alexandria performing at Born to Busk Sunday 8 July 2018



Anne McLaughlin, Cr Ben Mitchell, Cr Kanchan Ranadive, Suhas Ranadive and Brigette Uren at the Luminosity opening, Sunday 27 May 2018



Newcastle Music Festival comes to MRAG 5 August 2018



Jen Denzin and Mandy Robinson in conversation at the Luminosity opening, Sunday 27 May 2018



MRAGM coach trip to Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Prizes 2018 PLUS White Rabbit Gallery, Saturday 2 June 2018



Soup & Shakespeare, August 17 2018



Meet the Maker with Jaime Pritchard at the Luminosity opening, Sunday 27 May 2018



Razzamatuzz Theatre performance, Sunday 17 June 2018



Merchandise Officer Ashley Grant's baby son Jonty

Maitland Regional Art Gallery is proudly supported by:



Maitland Regional Art Gallery is a service of Maitland City Council and supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW.



# Sculpture on the Farm

## MRAGM Coach Trip

Saturday, 29 September 2018

Join MRAGM to see the inaugural **Sculpture on the Farm** exhibition, where some of Australia's finest sculptors meet the treasured rural landscape of Dungog NSW.

- Tickets \$50 MRAG members, \$75 non-members (includes coach travel, morning tea and entry)
- Depart MRAG 9:00am and return 3:00pm
- Visit three local galleries: Dungog Contemporary, Dungog by Design and Dungog Arts Society's annual exhibition
- Enjoy lunch and explore Sculpture on the Farm at scenic rural property, Fosterton
- Delectable hamper of local Dungog produce raffle prize draw

Book online at [www.maitlandticketing.com.au](http://www.maitlandticketing.com.au) or phone/visit Gallery reception - **02 4934 9859**, **230 High Street, Maitland.**

**mragm**  
MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY MEMBERS

sculpture  
on the farm  
[www.sculptureonthefarm.com](http://www.sculptureonthefarm.com)

**m**  
maitland  
city council

Image credit: Peter Tilley, *Searching for the Sea*, 2014, cast iron, steel, corten steel, 186 x 60 x 124cm.

# MRAG 19 OCT - 4 NOV 2018

## CONTEMPORARY ART SALE

**FREE ENTRY**

- More than 300 paintings, prints and sculptures starting at \$50
- Art from established & emerging artists from the region & around Australia
- Children (U18) who are members are invited to contribute an artwork (contact the Gallery for more details)
- All funds raised support arts education & access programs at MRAG

**mragm**  
MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY MEMBERS

**m**  
maitland  
city council

**NSW**  
GOVERNMENT

DOMINIK  
MERSCH  
GALLERY

TYRRELL'S WINES

THE DOUBLEDAY  
CRAFT BEER BAR

QUEST  
Maitland

cleverpatch.

Councillor Loretta Baker, Mayor of the City of Maitland together with the MRAG Members Committee warmly invite you to the

**OPENING NIGHT**  
**6 - 8PM FRIDAY**  
**19 OCTOBER 2018**

Enjoy refreshments & live music

MRAG MEMBERS AGM  
STARTS AT 5PM

Maitland Regional Art Gallery  
230 High Street, Maitland, NSW

**NELL**  
**JOHN OLSEN**  
**LOTTIE CONSALVO**  
**WARLUKURLANGU**  
**ARTISTS OF**  
**YUENDUMU**  
**WENDY SHARPE**  
**LARA SCOLARI**  
**& MORE!**