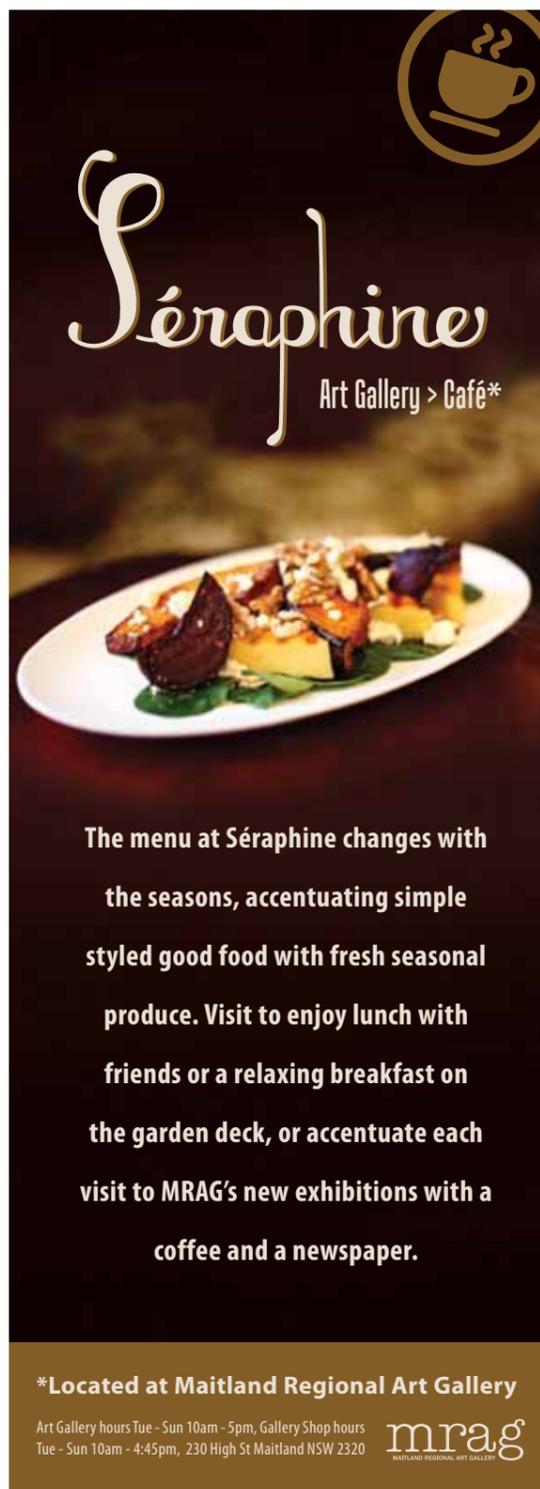


# ARTEL

QUARTERLY ■ NEWSLETTER

FREE



**Séraphine**  
Art Gallery > Café\*

The menu at Séraphine changes with the seasons, accentuating simple styled good food with fresh seasonal produce. Visit to enjoy lunch with friends or a relaxing breakfast on the garden deck, or accentuate each visit to MRAG's new exhibitions with a coffee and a newspaper.

\*Located at Maitland Regional Art Gallery

Art Gallery hours Tue - Sun 10am - 5pm, Gallery Shop hours Tue - Sun 10am - 4:45pm, 230 High St Maitland NSW 2320




## THE GALLERY SHOP

*The Gallery Shop stocks a wide range of unique cards, books, scarfs, bags and homewares. With stock sourced from a constantly expanding stable of artists from the local region, across Australia and the world; our Gallery Shop is sure to have something you'll love.*

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The Gallery Shop hours : Tuesday - Sunday 10am - 4:45pm  
230 High St Maitland NSW 2320 | 02 4934 9859  
artgallery@maitland.nsw.gov.au www.mrag.org.au

## A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the Autumn edition of Artel – did any of you see where summer went? I think I remember two sunny days in February!

Well, climate change, mortgage rates lifting, economic gloom in Europe, uninspiring politicians, aargh! Shall we all jump off the precipice? No – don't let the doomsayers triumph! Some people refer to these as matters of the "real world", of course these things may affect us, and, with the continual bombardment of hyped-up media reports, perhaps they affect us more than they should. However, for several thousand years, once basic needs had been met, the "real world" was one of music, philosophy, art and literature. Guess what! – They are all still there, thank goodness.

So, now you see, a haven of peace, sensory and spiritual elevation (not to mention a good coffee!), is Maitland Regional Art Gallery. Not to be too precious about it, I would also recommend some music (especially live), the local theatre, a good book or some poetry. If classical style poetry isn't to your taste, listen to, or read the words of many of the songs by Bob Dylan, Leonard Cohen or Tom Waits. Lyrics, or "poetry to music" – you be the judge.

Now, enough of my philosophical ramblings, let me tell you that the Committee is working on some exciting ideas that should make your Membership more interesting (and even better value). "Something More", a series of special events curated by MRAGM Committee Member, Juno Gemes will begin in April. The first of these will be "Poetry Land" with readings by distinguished poets, Kate Middleton, Martin Harrison and Robert Adamson on a Saturday afternoon, followed on Sunday by a workshop with Kate Middleton. Details of this will be made known soon. In addition, more talks by artists, possibly "art-house" film showings and maybe even some wearable art. Moves are under way to bring these and more, to MRAG in the not too distant future.

In the meantime there is a continual series of greatly varied art, sculpture, photography and craft exhibitions as well as the fascinating shop and delightful café. All, or some of which should serve as suitable succour if you sense you are suffering from starvation of the soul. (Yes folks, it was the letter "S" in Sesame St. today!)

Finally, I would like to thank Jean-Paul and Megan for instigating and organising the bus trip to Sculpture In The Vines back in January. There is a report elsewhere in Artel with some 'photos I took on the day. Everyone who came along enjoyed the day, with some great artworks, a nice lunch and only one brief rain-shower!

I hope to see you in the Gallery soon,

Jeff Sinclair  
Chairperson, MRAGM



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

*A close focus on an extraordinary vision,  
an exciting exhibition*



In the past ten years there have been a number of exhibitions demonstrating the skills of Australia's last remaining, relatively recently departed, surreal artist, James Gleeson. So why present another exhibition, and one that includes some paintings that have already been shown?

*A close focus on an extraordinary vision* is an opportunity to examine and investigate a select number of works of art gathered from only three owners - with one of these owners being a public art gallery. The primary source and justification for this exhibition is Geoffrey Hassall, collector, donor, and art lover.

Hassall is a long-time friend of MRAG and has lent art, whole exhibitions, and advice on many occasions. He has also been a donor of both art and funds at every opportunity. He has also been very free with ideas and has been to Maitland on numerous occasions. This may not be unusual but he is a busy business man and does live in Sydney.

This exhibition came out of a discussion we had about what was the best of Gleeson, after he had seen *Dreamweavers*. This was a touring exhibition which contained the responses of a number of artists to one Gleeson painting that was at the shows heart. Because I knew Gleeson's art relatively well, having curated a traveling exhibition which toured through many regional galleries in Australia, the discussion was lively. I knew Gleeson because that exhibition was the first major showing of his works on paper, begun in the 1980's, a time both Hassall and I agreed was probably the richest for the artist, the best of the best.

This exhibition, *a close focus on an extraordinary vision*, is therefore curatorially somewhat

unusual as it is the outcome of a discussion, and the final statement made by a now art gallery professional. Nevertheless this is an amazing exhibition as Hassall intimately knows Gleeson's art and extensively knows Australian art. I do encourage you to come and visit MRAG when this exhibition is on display. I have been proud of much that I have done while in Maitland but this exhibition is one of those times when I truly believe that MRAG has done something that is very special and you, the viewer, will, I am sure, be thrilled at what you will see.

To accompany the exhibition Clare Hodgins has designed an outstanding catalogue. Again the best of the best! Lou Klepac, author and regular supporter of MRAG and a member of the James Gleeson Foundation, who has written and published much on Gleeson, has penned an incisive essay. His words are golden and supported by a colour image of each painting in the exhibition. And finally Ray Wilson who was the supreme collector of surreal Australian art and another member of the Gleeson foundation will open the exhibition. It is also his donation of annual funds for the Agapitos/Wilson that has supported this exhibition and the printing of the catalogue. Ray Wilson and the late James Agapitos were the first MRAG patrons. Ray continues to support the art gallery as a patron.

Only MRAG could, with all these contacts, friends and supporters mount such an extraordinary exhibition. Do not miss this singular, unprecedented and fantastic exhibition ..... please enjoy

**Joe Eisenberg OAM**  
*Cultural Director, MRAG*



## SCULPTURE IN THE VINES



In January this year, a lucky group of MRAGM travelled to Wollombi, south of Cessnock, for the 'Sculpture in the Vines' exhibition.

Wollombi, population 300, is noted for its dramatic scenery and heritage village atmosphere and it provided the perfect setting for the more than 80 sculptures, in indoor and outdoor locations.

'Sculpture in the Vines' has grown rapidly over its nine years and 2011/12 had exhibitors from Victoria as well as across NSW. Local Hunter artists have returned each year, often exhibiting numerous works.

Our group left MRAG at 9:00 am and visited two sites before lunch. The first stop was Stonehurst Cedar Creek Wines where after a welcome morning tea we met Tod Fuller, the curator of 'Sculpture in the Vines'. Todd is a local artist, now resident in Sydney, who is a former volunteer at MRAG. At Stonehurst, we enjoyed the 'serpent' made of recycled North Sydney street signs (Anthony Whyte) and the intriguing fibreglass tree stumps positioned amongst the poplars (Bjorn Goodwin). Overhead yellow 'clouds' moved in the breeze amongst the trees (Ingrid Van Der Aa).

Secondly, we visited Gate Gallery where we had both outdoor and indoor sculptures. The extensive lawn area with a lavender garden and reed pond provided varied settings for a diverse range of sculptures. Ro Murray, designed 'Two by Two' using old compression cylinders from trains and we were fortunate to have Ro at the site, to describe her sculpture. This work, resembling large seed pods, inspired some lively discussion. At Gate Gallery we also enjoyed Will Coles' 'Armchair' made from cold cast resin and the intimate detail of the ceramic 'Picnic' by Madeleine Hayes.



We had Lunch at "Shea's at Wollombi", the two course menu accompanied by a Tyrell Pinot Noir Chardonnay was of excellent quality; the lunch break provided the opportunity to view the sculptures and buildings within the Wollombi village. The 'Greater Crater' by Jimmy Rix proved a drawcard, as did the museum, church and craft shops. In the afternoon, we visited Wollombi Wines and enjoyed a varied range of standing, hanging and hiding sculptures. A particular attraction was 'Teenage Games' by Kathie Najar. This sculpture was made from ceramic tiles in a series of letterboxes, reflecting Dutch Delft influences and telling a story of teenage behaviour.

Our last stop was Undercliff Winery, set in a lovely valley, with a sandstone cliff backdrop. 'Dandelion' by Al Pherrister was a popular exhibit along with the fluid 'Horse Walks' by Harrie Fisher. The charming, musical 'Canopy' by Amanda Humphries was a centrepiece to the garden, set amongst the branches of a willow tree.

The day concluded with afternoon tea (provided by Highland Travel) under the trees at Undercliff and the drawing of two lucky draw prizes courtesy of MRAG Cultural Director and the Gallery Shop; congratulations to our winners Heather Mann and Pattie Graham

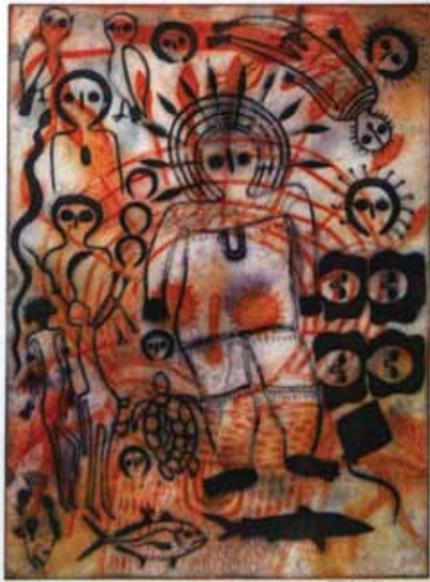
The outing to 'Sculpture in the Vines' proved a great success and we were lucky with the mild weather and little rain. Thank you to our happy members for their interest and support and to Robert from Northern Highland Travel for his excellent transportation, guidance and afternoon tea. Special thanks to Todd Fuller for his valuable art expertise and Jean-Paul Ruellé for leading our group to Wollombi.

Megan Dewsnap

[left] Sculpture in the Vines, Wollombi - 2012 MRAGM coach trip.



[right] Donny WOOLACOODJA, *Wandjina Spirits*, 2004, etching on paper 53 x 38.7cm  
Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Robin Gurr, 2011.



I must apologise – to my workmates and our volunteers – over the last few weeks I have been avoiding eye contact and conversation as I pass you in the gallery. The reason being.....

The Cultural Gifts Program submissions are due in Canberra!

A part of my role as Collection Curator is to manage the Cultural Gifts donations to the collection. This means accepting the donation, accessioning the donated artworks into the collection, organising valuations and Certificates of Donation, compiling the paperwork and submitting all the documentation to Canberra prior to the submissions closing date.

The Cultural Gifts Program (CGP) is a program administered by The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, in accordance with the gift provisions of the income tax law. The program encourages Australians to donate items of cultural significance from private collections to public art galleries, museums, libraries and archives.

Most (although not all) donations of artworks to the MRAG Collection are made under the CGP. Like MRAG, most galleries have an accessions committee that decides if they will accept the donation and that the gift conforms to its collection

policy. If the donation is made under the CGP, galleries then submit their donation documentation to the Committee on Taxation Incentives for the Arts. This committee meets twice a year, to assess all the submissions, ensure that the gifts meet the program guidelines and then officially endorse the donations.

For the next meeting I am submitting donations from 11 separate donors, comprising 89 artworks, created by 41 different artists. Phew!

Donated works include:

- ▶ Etchings, silkscreen prints and other works on paper by 8 important indigenous artists including Kitty Kantilla and Sambo Burra Burra.
- ▶ Two rare late 19th century paintings on paper from China.
- ▶ An eclectic collection of 19 artworks from one benefactor, which includes the portrait of Maurice O'Shea at Mt Pleasant. (This painting is currently on display in our Hose Reel Space in the corridor upstairs).
- ▶ Some wonderful works on paper by artists including Dick Watkins, Nell, Robert Klippel, Susan Norrie, Graham Kuo.
- ▶ Prints of works by John Beard, Fred Cress and David Boyd.
- ▶ The beguiling *Victoria Street Woman*, by Kevin Connor, who you may have seen peering over the balcony into the gallery below.
- ▶ And more....

I am constantly grateful to the wonderful individuals that support MRAG by donating artworks to our collection. Without their support we wouldn't have such a wonderful and evolving collection.

Cheryl Farrell  
Collection Curator, MRAG



mragm  
MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY MEMBERS

PRESENTS

Coach trip to AGNSW with a private guided tour of the Archibald, Wynne and Sulman prizes.

We also have the rare and privileged opportunity to visit and tour the corporate collection of major art collector, and friend of MRAG, Geoffrey Hassall.

DATE: Saturday 5 May 2012      RSVP: Monday 30 April 2012 (4934 9859)

COST: \$65.00 members // \$75.00 non members/guests

YOUR DAY:

- > Deluxe coach
- > Two departure locations:
  1. Maitland Regional Art Gallery (230 High St.)  
Please be at the Art Gallery at 6.15 am, bus leaves Maitland at 6.30 am sharp.
  2. Bluetongue brewery, 42 Stenhouse Drive, Cameron Park, 7.00 am
- > Morning Tea and homemade cookies provided by Northern Highland Travel
- > Raffle on board coach
- > Private Tour of Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Prizes at the Art Gallery of New South Wales
- > Visit, at your own pace, *Dragon, Making Sense, Eugenia Raskopoulos, Mother India, Blue*, also on exhibition at the AGNSW
- > Free time for lunch, coach will drop you close to The Rocks
- > 2.00 pm, private visit of corporate art collection of collector and friend of MRAG, Geoffrey Hassall
- > Return trip to Maitland is scheduled to leave Sydney at 4.00 pm
- > Raffle on board coach
- > Arrival at Cameron Park at 6.00 pm and Maitland at 6.30 pm

[left] Winner: Archibald Prize, Ben Quilty, *Margaret Olley*, oil on linen, 2011



[left] Helen Tolhurst beaded necklace. [right] Keith Rowe, hand blown glass (moonlight design).



If you haven't visited our Gallery Shop, you might like to jot it into your diary as a must do for that special gift you may be looking for.

We are very lucky to have so many Hunter Valley artists represented in our shop, with a large range of beautiful objects, ceramics, jewellery, glass, woodcarving, sculpture, bags, scarves, felting bags, children's books, hand made cards and antiques, just to mention a few.

Helen Tolhurst is a bead and textile artist who focuses on the use of colour and texture to express feelings and ideas in her art. She says; 'the human eye can see a million colours, and this provides an endless palette for my work'. Inspiration for her work comes from the beauty of nature as well as the world of fantasy and myth, and much of her work is in the style of Art Nouveau. She has always loved the range of ways in which fibre and textiles can be used in art and over the years has experimented with a variety of mediums including fabric dyeing and manipulation, crazy patchwork, felting and creative embroidery. Most recently she has focused on beading and jewellery making. Helen states that 'the beads are very beautiful in themselves and it gives me a thrill to put them together and create something even more beautiful'.

In her jewellery making, Helen uses a number of techniques including threadwork, stringing, polymer clay work and the use of mixed media. In another life Helen works as a doctor so she enjoys the opportunity to work creatively and at a different pace which her art provides. In particular she finds the process of threadwork, which involves sewing tiny seed beads together, to be meditative. Helen loves creating jewellery and wearable art



because it is a way to share her work with others and she feels a special connection to the wearer of a piece which she has created.

Glass artist - Keith Rowe, is primarily a glass blower but also enjoys working with sand and kiln casting.

Based in the Blue Mountains' at Blackheath, Keith has worked with glass for over 25 years and enjoys creating balanced forms with exciting decorative elements. Keith's work is held in many public and private galleries in both Australia and internationally and he has won a number of international competitions and awards.

Over the years Keith has developed his own individual style, often working on a body of works to produce a series. Working this way he can explore many ideas and discover new directions. One style often leads to another. As Keith explains, 'There is so much to be done in glass that working on one series often leads me on a whole new path and to a new series of works.'

The Moonlight designs are inspired by Keith Rowe's trips to the bush with the moonlight reflecting in the streams and rivers and around a campfire. The use of reactive coloured glass creates the design.

*"My aspiration, whether making the simplest of goblets or the most bizarre of artworks, is to create objects that transcend the mundane ... this is the beginning and ending of my search for each new design."*

Judy Henry  
Merchandise Coordinator



[left] Maitland Regional Art Gallery - Marnling Press and Whaling Road Studios, 2012.

For those printmakers reading this, I am not trying to be sensationalist with a statement like that but it is a question that is often asked.

Printmaking has well and truly been established as an accepted method of art practice but many artists still haven't worked in the medium and many art buyers are still unsure what the different styles of printmaking mean.

Maitland Regional Art Gallery (MRAG) exhibition policy is informed by its collection policy which revolves around the acquisition and donation of works on paper. With this in mind, MRAG has programmed a number of exhibitions for 2012 which focus on printmaking and the many ways in which artists can use this expressive, intuitive, and sometimes quite technical art medium.

The first printmaking exhibition for 2012 at MRAG was *Marnling Press/Whaling Road Studio* with Michelle Perry along with Diana Davidson and Peter Stevens; the exhibition showcased the artwork of master printmakers and their working relationship with other artists.

The second printmaking exhibition *New Directions, A Sydney Printmakers Touring* exhibition will be on show at MRAG between 13 April - 24 June 2012, and is an exhibition of prints made by artist printmakers who are also members of the Sydney Printmakers group. As part of the exhibitions MRAG delivers to the community each year, a number of public program events are also established to

allow opportunities for the viewing public to meet the artists and talk about the art in an intimate setting.

Remember to make available in your diary the Sunday *Art speak* event along with an exhibition opening in which you will have the chance to discuss and enjoy both the art medium of printmaking and the artwork created.

Art speak, 15 April 11am - 12noon - A morning with Janet Parker Smith, Elizabeth Pozega and Karen Ball. Three printmakers represented in the exhibition *New Directions, A Sydney Touring exhibition* will present at floor talk about their personal art practice and their involvement with the Sydney Printmakers.

Three new exciting exhibitions include:

*James Gleeson: A close focus on an extraordinary vision, Nell: Hometown Girl Has Wet Dream and New Directions: A Sydney Printmaking Touring exhibition*

These events are all free to attend and bookings for the *Art speak* event can be made at MRAG, via email ([artgallery@maitland.nsw.gov.au](mailto:artgallery@maitland.nsw.gov.au)) or call the Art Gallery on 4934 9859. Of course everyone is welcome so support the art gallery and the artists and bring a friend.

Kim Blunt  
Public Program Coordinator



[left] James Gleeson, *A Landing Place*, 1987, oil on canvas, 188 x 274cm, private collection  
[right] Michael B Platt, *Hoop Jumper*, 2011, pigment print on archival paper, 53 x 35 cm

**JAMES GLEESON**

> *A close focus on an extraordinary vision*  
Agapitos/Wilson Annual  
23 MAR > 3 JUN 2012

**THE ROOST CREATIVE**

> *Versus 2012, Blue vs. Red, battle of the pigments*  
Curated by Luke Oliver and Keo Match  
4 MAY > 24 JUN 2012



**BEV COZAD-BUSH**

> *The Electric Series*  
23 MAR > 3 JUN 2012



**MRAGM ANNUAL PRINT COLLECTORS SALE**

Special sale opening:  
Friday 8 June 6.00pm - 8.00pm  
8 JUN - 24 JUN 2012

**NELL**

> *Local Girl Has Wet Dream*  
This exhibition is generously supported by Pat Corrigan AM, MRAG patron. Nell is represented by Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney.  
13 APR > 24 JUN 2012

**PAPERWORKS**

> *Flat and folded, watercolours and ink, drawing and photographs. Exhibitions exploring the inspiring and diverse ways artists work with paper.*

Maitland Regional Art Gallery takes advantage of its 10 exhibition spaces to present individual exhibitions by:

- JEAN BAPTISTE APUATIMI
- ELISABETTA GUT
- WILLIAM KENTRIDGE
- LISA KIRKPATRICK
- GAO PING
- MICHAEL B PLATT
- GARRY SHEAD
- BEN SOEDRADJIT

30 JUN > 19 AUG 2012

**NEW DIRECTIONS**

> *50 Years of Printmaking, Sydney*  
Printmakers touring exhibition  
13 APR > 24 JUN 2012

Lucy Barker's summer exhibition has closed and the Art Factory has now become an artist's studio.

Judith White has transformed the Art Factory with a huge - 3m x 8m - mural of the Hunter River winding its way through towns and parks.

Children are encouraged to add their own drawings to Judith's to contribute to the giant mural.

Judith is also encouraging children to record their own memories of the river on a postcard and to stick the postcard on to the mural. At the end of the exhibition we will send the postcard to the young artist as a reminder of their time at the gallery.

If young artists need inspiration for their drawings they need look only at the artists table to find live fish in a tank, river rocks and logs. There is also a film documenting the making of the artwork and previous workshops.

Numbers of young visitors continue to grow with record attendance at school holiday workshops and visiting school groups.

The young are always an appreciative audience and we are incredibly fortunate have such a wonderful dedicated children's art space in the form of The Art Factory; such a good investment in the future.



**MRAG AUTUMN HOLIDAY EVENTS**

**FOR TODDLERS, KIDS & TEENS**

**OUT NOW!**

**MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL - PH: 4934 9859**

Maitland Regional Art Gallery boasts a unique, two storey, dedicated children's art wing known as The Art Factory.

The Art Factory houses an exhibition space and an interactive art activity space along with air conditioned art workshop facilities.

We are justifiably proud of our Art Factory and are excited to offer a fantastic Autumn holiday program inspired by our current exhibitions.

Take a browse through what's on offer and make a booking to secure a spot in one of our fantastic hands on workshops. Complete list of holiday workshops on our website on [www.mrag.org.au](http://www.mrag.org.au)



## COMING SOON / *Mark the dates in your calendar*

FRIDAY 11 MAY 2012

### BIENNALE TEACHER TRAINING DAY

*Conducted by the Biennale team with visiting artists*

*Book at the Art Gallery (02 4934 9859)*

SATURDAY 16 JUNE 2012

### CROSS PROJECTIONS

*The cinematic screening of the photographic essays of 16 photographers' work,*

*Edited by Maya Newell to be shown at MRAG for one special night only.*

SATURDAY 18 AUGUST 2012

### THE BIENNALE OF SYDNEY ON COCKATOO ISLAND

*Coach trip organised by MRAG Members.*

*Details for all events will be mailed to members and will also be available on MRAG website*



## 2011 MRAGM COMMITTEE

**CHAIRPERSON** > Jeff Sinclair **VICE CHAIRPERSON** > Reg O'Brien **SECRETARY** > Sally Halliday

**TREASURER** > Jean Paul Ruelle **NEWSLETTER SECRETARY** > Rosemary Keegan

**GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBER** > Vicki Woods **GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBER** > Juno Gemes

**PATRON** > Robyn Parker MP **COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE** > Loretta Baker

**MRAG REPRESENTATIVE** > Joe Eisenberg

*Dates for future meetings are:*

*Thursday 12 April, Thursday 14 June, Thursday 9 August at MRAG at 5:00pm.*

*All MRAG members are most welcome.*

*Our meetings are brief and friendly.*



**REMEMBER! OUR NEWSLETTER IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE  
ON OUR WEBSITE AT MRAG.ORG.AU**

Art Gallery hours > Tuesday - Sunday 10am - 4:45pm The Gallery Shop hours  
> Tuesday - Sunday 10am - 4:45pm 230 High St Maitland NSW 2320  
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