



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

mragm
MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY MEMBERS

MEET

Brigette Uren

Deputy Director
Maitland Regional Art Gallery



NAME Brigette Uren
TITLE Deputy Director, Maitland Regional Art Gallery
AGE 36
LIVES Vacy
FAMILY Married with 3 children - Harry 5, Poppy 3 and Beatrix 2

BACKGROUND

Born and educated in Sydney, Brigette initially intended to study psychology at university. She went to Austria on a Rotary Scholarship after finishing her HSC and was inspired by the art around her and the excitement of new experiences to change her career direction. Brigette undertook a degree in Art Theory at COFA (College of Fine Art) followed by a Masters in Art Administration and later studies in Project Management.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Brigette worked for Sydney City Council for the Sydney Open Museum. This involved working with developers, architects and planners to establish an outdoor art collection with commissions throughout the city. Brigette also initiated Art and About which has grown into a major public art festival in the streets of Sydney.

Brigette was Director of the Dubbo Western Plains Cultural Centre for six years which involved responsibilities for Gallery, Museum and Community Arts programs. The last three years she has been a Trustee of NERAM (New England Regional Art Museum).

IN HER OWN WORDS

"I have no artistic talent but I can bring art and the community together. I love working in spaces that offer a diverse range of works to a diverse audience and present stories to enjoy..."

I love meeting artists – they can be intimidating and sometimes scary but always inspiring and stimulating...

MRAG has been a familiar place on my radar. My previous jobs in Dubbo and Armidale had positive interaction with Maitland and I hope to further develop these relationships and expand on my interest in digital programs. MRAG has an enviable reputation within the artistic community and attracts high calibre artists, keen to exhibit and discuss their works. I support avidly MRAG programs and look forward to growing these with the staff."



ARTEL

SUMMER 2014

A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

BY ROSEMARY KEEGAN



(above) MONA MRAGM trip

As we wind down to the end of another year, I ask myself where has the time gone?

Each year seems to go faster and they are now flying by...

With the recent AGM I am pleased to welcome Penny Lee to the MRAG Members' Committee. Penny brings to the committee some great skills and I feel sure she will complement the current committee members and the great range of skills they provide. I must give my sincere thanks to our Members' Committee for all their work over the previous twelve months. It has been a true pleasure working with everyone - your passion and professionalism always shines through.

I recently had the opportunity to meet some of our members who caught up for dinner following the MONA trip. It was great to see everyone re-acquaint and compare their MONA experiences. What fun they had! It was so interesting to hear various interpretations and insights of the exhibitions and be able to witness their collective pleasure.

A big thank you to Jean-Paul and Megan for organising and hosting the MONA trip. Your hard work contributed to such a resounding success!

I wish you all a safe and happy Christmas and New Year. See you in the art gallery in 2014.



ART CLASS
FOR TEENAGERS
ART THURSDAYS
4.00 - 5.30 pm

LOOK!

THE GALLERY SHOP



Looking for something interesting, unique, beautiful, quirky or locally crafted? We invite you to explore our Gallery Shop where you will find the perfect gift.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

BY JOE EISENBERG



(left) Joe Eisenberg standing in 'Wilfredo Prieto, *Untitled* (white library) 2004-2006' (right) Ground floor of the Cascades Female Factory.

MONA, MONA, MONA – the Museum of Old and New Art is all that you hear when you tell the initiated or the committed tourist that you are Hobart bound. All the brochures stress this is a 'must see' while spending time in Hobart. And rightly so.... MONA is out of this world. Edmund Capon, the former Director of the Art Gallery of NSW, said recently on television that it was "the future" for the Australian art movement.

However, there is more, much more, in Hobart. It has a multiplicity of art and museum experiences on offer. This may, in part, be due to the MONA flow-on but certainly there are other sites and public art works interspersed with harmonious, progressive architecture worth exploring. In particular there is TMAG, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery and the Cascades Female Factory, both of which are in the centre of the city tantalizingly close to the catamaran that takes you to MONA.

Corten steel which rusts profusely is used in abundance for sculpture and signage, as it is a durable material in the urban and rural landscape. It has been employed in all three Hobart sites in a vibrant and distinctive manner. It is found both inside and outside at MONA.

At the Cascades Female Factory, the steel moulds the site, defining the exposure to and familiarity with, the story of the women. As a sign, it remains one of the lasting and memorable reflections to this journey. The Female Factory employs the steel as meaningful and enduring art, commenting on the work and life that was endured by the women at the factory. It also articulates the didactic panels. At TMAG there is a similar use of this material, as there is throughout the Salamanca Place precinct and the old IXL developments.

If at this point you are wondering what Corten steel is, you can view it on site at MRAG near the back entrance from the car park. Two new sculptures (*Curve I* and *Curve II*) are now on display. They were created for our Art Museum and donated, by the artist, Christopher Hodges.

Back to Hobart and TMAG: the indigenous art exhibits, with commentary and sound were the best I have ever seen. It was an exciting, revelatory experience to see art gallery works and museum

artifacts positioned side by side and not competing for attention. Each was highlighting aspects of one to the other. This, too, can be found within the spaces of MONA, a new and raw aspect for any form of display.

Technical devices, audio tours and other new technological aids are also available in various qualities and quantities at all the Hobart sites. Of course, MONA, with its adaptable "return home and have your visit recorded on your iPhone," is top of the range. It allows the visitor more time to interact with art and objects while visiting the gallery and then revisiting and searching for deeper, explanatory information whilst away from the gallery or at home. It really is like visiting the exhibition one more time and can be repeated indefinitely.

I write about technology and audio assistance at art galleries because MRAG is ready (early 2014) to 'launch' its audio tour.

MRAG is an historic site and a newly built art gallery with walls and corners where specific art can be seen in a permanent hang. The audio tour will not relate to a particular or specific exhibition and can, therefore, be taken at any time. It is the place and the site which is described and each tour will last about 35 minutes. It can be downloaded onto your iPhone or Android at home or at MRAG. Alternatively, you can borrow a hand held audio device and take a tour that explains with the voices of 'others' the history, culture, art and use of the MRAG site. Hear the artists talk about their art on exhibition around the art gallery and hear me talk intelligently or intelligibly, for a change. It will be better, than what is offered at TMAG, a state museum and art gallery and not quite as sexy as MONA - the ultimate in a private art enterprise where money seems no object.

Enjoy the Xmas break and see you either next year or at MRAG's next 'mega' exhibition program which opens in mid-December. Maybe that will be your next visit to MRAG?

2014 will be another busy year and the beginning of a new era at your Art Gallery.

BUS TRIPS 2014

BY MEGAN DEWSNAP

On Saturday, November 16th we had our last art excursion for the year, visiting Sculpture in the Vineyards at Wollombi. This was a great success and we were very lucky with the weather – it did not rain.

As most of the sculptures are set amongst the vines and trees at the various sites it is a wonderful opportunity to stroll freely around the works, look closely at their materials and even touch them.

We had the added bonus of interesting guided talks, particularly from our very own Catherine Kingsmill who had three sculptures in the exhibition. Please look at Catherine's article below, as her works were one of the highlights of the day. Congratulations to Catherine on her success at Wollombi.

We are already planning our trips for 2014 and hope you will be able to join us for these events. Firstly, will be the Sydney Biennale in April/May with the final date confirmed in the new

year. The date of the Archibald Prize exhibition has changed and we anticipate an August visit to the AGNSW next year. Later in 2014 we will visit Sculpture by the Sea and Sculpture in the Vineyards. We are also considering a visit to nearby Hunter galleries to support and experience their art collections.

Information on all future bus trips will be in *Arte!* and supplied at MRAG reception. Keep a lookout as we value your ongoing support and enjoy meeting you.

The co-ordinators of the 2014 bus trips would love to hear from anyone who has the time and interest to help with the hosting and planning of the trips. Please contact the reception desk at MRAG, talk to Maree or Anna and they can pass on your details to our planning team.

We would love to have some new, friendly people as hosts and to help share the work.

CATHERINE KINGSMILL



(above) Catherine Kingsmill, MRAG Member

Catherine recently entered the 2013 Sculpture in the Vineyards, with three of her sculptures being chosen as final entries. On the 2nd November, Catherine was awarded the Greater Emerging Artist Prize and the Cessnock Regional Art Gallery Exhibition Award for these works.

Catherine uses natural materials to create her work and plans to focus on large scale sculptures for the private and public sector as well as producing printed fabric.

"My art practice has come to me later in life. My initial studies were in the field of Australian and Pacific history with an emphasis on Post-Colonialism. Further studies concentrated on public history, education and textiles. I have always been a big collector of material culture. When I started to create artworks, I found I was using all my previous skills and also referring to my collections. My work is informed by past discourse and guided by nature. When I start a sculpture, I search for the initial component in the bush or by the sea. My hand is guided by the natural form of the object and I allow the work to grow organically. My sculptures inspire my printmaking. My works relate to each other like a collection and there is always some overlap of sentiment or meaning in them.

The meaning of my works can be esoteric, but the outcome seems to hold some aesthetic value as well. I am happiest when I'm making something."

Catherine Kingsmill has been a member of the Maitland Regional Art Gallery for many years. More recently, she has been a volunteer assisting Jean-Paul Ruelle and Megan Dewsnap with the gallery's coach trips and also works as a gallery tutor for home schoolers and school groups.

After raising her family of three children in Maitland, Catherine decided to add to her previous studies by studying art at Newcastle University and Newcastle Art School. She completed her Advanced Diploma in Fine Arts in 2012. While it started out as an adjunct to her teaching career, her arts practice has now taken a full-time position in her life.

MUSEUM OF OLD AND NEW ART, HOBART TASMANIA

BY MEGAN DEWSNAP

A much-anticipated MRAG excursion took place in October this year. Twenty four excited art-lovers left Maitland for Sydney by bus to connect to a flight to Hobart with the intention of “doing MONA” – the Museum of Old and New Art.

This innovative and challenging new art experience (opened in 2011) was developed and financed by David Walsh, a Tasmanian with a fascination for death. Our three-day trip to Hobart was the opportunity for MRAG Members and friends to see the exhibits, artworks and architecture that have provoked and astounded the Australian and international art world.

We arrived in Hobart on Thursday afternoon to cold and rain – a welcome change from the 30+ days in Maitland! After settling in to our hotel we enjoyed a lovely, welcoming dinner at the Ascot Grill, a short stroll down the street. The dinner was delicious and we had the chance to mix with our fellow travellers.

Friday was “MONA DAY”.

We walked from our hotel to the ferry wharf and boarded the camouflage-patterned boat to arrive by water at the museum. David Walsh wanted this water approach to reflect the ancient Greeks and their arrival at temple sites. Approaching by water allows the imposing, rusting steel walls to rise before you, a dramatic contrast to the surrounding river. Leaving the ferry, we climbed the ninety odd steps to the forecourt of the museum, comprising a tennis court and a terrace bordered by the dramatic steel walls. We entered the museum doors to descend by a spiral staircase or a glass lift to the centre of the museum and then we were on our own...

To try and describe the museum and its exhibits is almost impossible. It makes you laugh, cry, reflect, shiver and challenge yourself. Some people hated it, some went back for a second visit on Saturday and most walked and looked and wondered for the whole of Friday.

I was thrilled by the spaces and the scale of the achievement. The massive stone cutting in the centre of the gallery was the best artwork for me, allied with the quiet moments found in some intimate, empty space. Everything was a challenge to my concept of a gallery and museum, because it was so much more. We are very lucky it is in Australia.

MONA was the main reason we went to Hobart but we did get to see and do other things. On Saturday, several of the group went to the Botanical Gardens, most went to Salamanca Markets and some went to the newly renovated Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. Others went on bikes, buses or walked the streets. We all came together in the evening to have dinner at “The Drunken Admiral” restaurant near the docks.



(above) MONA MRAGM trip

The whole weekend was a delight. We had a lovely group of people; everything went smoothly; we ate well and enjoyed Hobart and its sights. Some of the photos of our weekend are shown here but I suggest you go for yourselves. MONA is a must.

Jean-Paul Ruelle and I extend our thanks to all who shared this adventure. Thank you for your good humour and your support of MRAG and its programs. We look forward to seeing you on another art excursion.

‘IF NOTHING EVER CHANGED, THERE’D BE NO BUTTERFLIES.’

BY KIM BLUNT

author unknown



(above) MRAG under construction 2009, photo by Carla Feltham

Maitland Regional Art Gallery (MRAG) has undergone significant change and growth since its redevelopment during 2008/2009 which led to the grand opening of the new extended art gallery in August 2009.

To ensure that the new art gallery could maintain its delivery of diverse and successful programs and services to the community, Maitland City Council undertook a series of reviews with a final report considered and adopted by Council in April 2013. Following this, Council is pleased to announce a new staffing structure for MRAG, effective from Monday 23 September 2013.

Joseph Eisenberg will remain Cultural Director of MRAG on a part time basis over a two year period to allow him to transition into retirement. Joe’s role will be to continue to secure sponsors and donations, curate exhibitions and write catalogue essays and be the public face of MRAG. He will also mentor and continue to impart cultural and commercial knowledge of the arts industry to staff and provide advice on special projects, of benefit to Council and the wider Maitland Community.

The MRAG structure includes a new position of Deputy Director responsible for day to day management and running of the Gallery. Reporting to Lynn Morton, Manager Community and Recreation Services, newly appointed Deputy Director Brigette Uren will manage two teams –the Curatorial and the Business and Support teams.

The Curatorial team will be responsible for the exhibition programming, the collection and developing and presenting creative and inspiring education and public program events. This team will be led by Gallery Curator, Kim Blunt and will consist of:

- Learning and Audience Development Curators, - part time, - Anne McLaughlin and Michelle Maartensz
- Graphic Designer - part time - Clare Hodgins
- Collection Management Curator - full time - Cheryl Farrell

The Business and Support Team will be responsible for the management of front of house, merchandise and café, installation and de-installation of exhibitions, venue hire, building maintenance and security, MRAG members and volunteers. The team will be led by the Arts Administrator and will consist of:

- Merchandise Officer - part time - Judy Henry
- Gallery Officers - full time - Anna Buxton-Soldal, Maree Skene and part time Lizz Cooper and Lisa Kirkpatrick;

Over the coming months, management will work alongside staff to ensure a smooth transition to the new structure ensuring a sustainable, well-resourced and accessible art gallery that enhances the cultural fabric of the city of Maitland - we thank the Members for their support of the changing MRAG staff structure.

ART EDUCATION AT MRAG

BY ANNE MCLAUGHLIN,
MICHELLE MAARTENSZ



(left) Barbara Licha, *Chaos and order*, 164 x 133 x 133 cm (right) Jasper Knight, *Duck Spring Rocker*, 2009, mixed media collage, 80 x 80 cm

Our summer exhibition in the Art Factory *On a summer's day*, opening 23rd of December, offers children and young people the opportunity to explore summer through artworks selected from the Maitland Regional Art Gallery Collection. Fun activities are set amongst the artworks so children can go on their own summer's day journey through this exhibition, *On a summer's day...*

Our program of school holiday workshops will run from **Tuesday 14th to Friday 24 January 2014.**

These workshops will focus on different aspects of our summer exhibition program to inspire our young creative visitors. The workshops range from permanent sandcastle sculptures, wire sculpture to waterless snow domes and many other fun art-making activities. Children will have the opportunity to look at the exhibitions and be inspired to create their own art work. More information will be posted to our website soon.

Don't forget our free Art Sundays will run throughout the Summer Holiday period every Sunday from 11am – 1pm.

Next year in our new roles as Learning and Audience Development Curators we will be presenting *Showcase 2*, from 14 February – 6 April. This is an exhibition of artwork by local high school students following on the success of *Showcase* this year.

ARTEXPRESS will grace our gallery walls in 2014, building on the fantastic *ARTEXPRESS* show we had here in 2013. From 23 May - 6 July 2014, Maitland *ARTEXPRESS* will include artworks by local and state-wide students selected from the over twelve thousand works submitted by Year 12 students for the 2013 HSC.

In October, in the Art Factory, *FACE* will be on - one of our annual exhibitions of art by young people. *FACE* highlights the creative output of local students from Kindergarten to Year 10 on the theme of the face.

Watch our website www.mrag.org.au for upcoming Artist Talks, Adult Workshops and other events and public programs that will run in conjunction with the MRAG exhibition program.

Best wishes for the New Year.

DOCUMENTING YOUR COLLECTION

BY CHERYL FARRELL

I know that there are quite a number of art collectors amongst our members and as MRAG's third annual print and art sale has just finished, I know there are some members that have added a few more artworks to their collections. It seems timely, therefore, to give you some tips on how to document your own art collection.

Cataloguing, or documenting, your collection is a worthwhile endeavour. By creating a list of the artworks in your collection, you can keep track of all their details - acquisition information, the location of each piece and, most importantly for insurance purposes, have a record of their value.

BASIC CATALOGUING TIPS

- Photograph the work – a picture paints a thousand words and a photograph will identify and describe the item better than you probably could in words.
- Create a document or database with the following information:
- Allocate a reference number for the work.

You could do this in the order that you acquire the work, like we do at MRAG. In my example below accession number 2013.071 means this was the 71st item acquired in 2013.

OR

Just start listing the works in numerical order, no.1, no.2 etc.

- Artist name, plus any other artist details you may know. eg. Date and place of birth
- Title of the work
- Date the work was created
- Medium e.g. oil on canvas, silkscreen print on paper
- Edition number, if the work is from an edition
- Dimensions, height x width x depth
- Other physical details, e.g. is the work framed, what is the condition of the work?
- Provenance – the history of the item. Especially your acquisition records, such as invoice details (including how much you paid). Some items have a long provenance which could include past owners. You may also know the exhibition history.
- Location – where the work is currently being displayed or stored.

¹ I have refrained from naming these services as I cannot guarantee the products, but you can see what is available online via a simple Google search.



Here is an example from our collection with some of the main information that we record:

Accession number: 2013.071

Artist: Ildiko Kovaks, b. Australia 1962

Title: *Narrow gap*

Date: 2009

Medium: Oil on card mounted on linen

Dimensions: 54 x 58 cm

Provenance: Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program in 2013

Value: \$5500

Condition: Good condition, (no external frame)

Signed: In pen verso (on back of work), signed, dated, titled

Location: MRAG collection storeroom

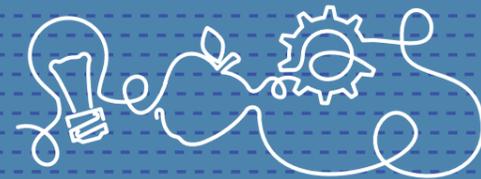
Copyright Permission: Image reproduction permission held

You can get your list started by using a simple Word document, an Excel worksheet or your own personally customised Microsoft Access database.

You may also find useful free, web-based services specifically designed for cataloguing collections (of any type) and there are also many Collection Management Software Programs that you can purchase.¹ These software programs vary in complexity and are probably useful if you have a large and/or valuable collection. Depending upon the privacy settings some of these services (including the free ones) can then link you with collecting communities where you can join forums, apply tags, comment or share.

Free ART SUNDAYS

EVERY SUNDAY 11 AM - 1 PM
For kids* ALL AGES and their families



*Adult supervision is required.

THE GALLERY SHOP

Don't miss this exciting opportunity to purchase that special gift for Christmas at Maitland Regional Art Gallery.

The Gallery Shop prides itself on its unique range of original handmade jewellery, ceramics, bags, scarves, sculpture and hand blown glass ware with a focus on local artists.

You are sure to find just what you are looking for.



\$120

Sandra Lee Brown



\$155

Giselle Penn



\$35 each

Sophia Emmett



\$36 each

Press to play



\$24 each

Julio Santos



\$30

Stephen Wright



\$216

Michael Garth



\$59 each

Margaret McBride



\$66

Brian Cox

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS



Charles Blackman, *Jumping Children*, 1961, oil on canvas, 86 x 102 cm

MASTERPIECES: FROM THE PETER ELLIOTT COLLECTION CURATED BY LOU KLEPAC OAM

6 December - 9 February

ALAN JONES PAPER AND WOOD: COLLECTING IDEAS

13 December - 23 February

BARBARA LICHA: CHAOS AND ORDER - URBANISED

13 December - 23 February

R.D.FITZGERALD'S AUSTRALIAN ORCHIDS: FROM THE MRAG COLLECTION

CURATED BY DAVINA PELLATT

13 December - 23 February



Harriet Scott, *Zeuzera macleayi*. Current name: *Endoxyla eucalypti* (Herrich-Schäffer), Cossidae, watercolour and ink (detail)
© Australian Museum Archives

BEAUTY FROM NATURE: ART OF THE SCOTT SISTERS EXHIBITION DEVELOPED & TOURED BY THE AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM

13 December - 23 February

EXPOSED: FROM THE MRAG COLLECTION CURATED BY LIESL HARVEY AND JUSTINE MALINOWSKI

13 December - 9 February

ONE SUMMER'S DAY: FROM MRAG COLLECTION

20 December 2013 - 2 March 2014

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, Gail Johnston | **PATRON:** Robyn Parker MP
COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE: Loretta Baker | **MRAG REPRESENTATIVE:** Joe Eisenberg

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.





Alan Jones

PAPER AND WOOD: COLLECTING IDEAS

13 December 2013 - 23 February 2014

mrag
MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY

m
maitland
city council

TYRRELL'S WINES

PITCHER
PARTNERS

QUEST
Student Apartments

NSW
GOVERNMENT | Trade &
Investment
Arts NSW

ALAN JONES, REDFERN 2007

digital inkjet print on Archival Matte paper

32.9 x 48.3 cm, Maitland Regional Art Gallery Collection

MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY