

# ARTEL

SUMMER  
2017

Snape.  
Materiality Performed

mragm  
MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY MEMBERS

QUARTERLY  
MAGAZINE

## MEET

# Holly Fisher-Bidwell

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBER



## COMMITTEE

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Holly Fisher-Bidwell

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### ARTEL ON-LINE

If you are interested in receiving ARTEL online only please contact MRAG Reception. You will also receive flyers and brochures regarding exhibition openings, art classes and excursions by email.

**NAME** Holly Fisher-Bidwell

**LIVES** Morpeth

**FAMILY** Husband Ben and daughters Peggy, 6 and Bonnie, 3

### BACKGROUND + EXPERIENCE

I have a Bachelor Arts (Communication) and Bachelor Laws obtained from the University of Technology, Sydney in 2005. Whilst studying, I worked at two major Sydney Festival events in the role of Artist Liaison.

For three years between 2005–2008 I worked for *Sculpture by the Sea* to produce their two annual flagship exhibitions in Bondi, NSW and Cottesloe, WA as well as subsequent marketing and promotional events. *Sculpture by the Sea* continues to be one of the country's premier arts events and is primarily renowned for making arts accessible to large numbers of people. I began as an Artist Assistant before becoming full time in the role of Exhibition Coordinator, and later the Exhibition Production Manager.

In 2008 I moved from Sydney to Morpeth, NSW and was engaged as a consultant by Maitland City Centre Management to assist in re-vitalising the city centre. The main events produced to fulfil this aim were the Maitland Taste Festival and the Maitland Aroma, both which continue to be established events on Maitland Council's calendar of events. I played a key role in the planning, delivery and decision making of the events. These festivals had a positive effect on the local community in providing a space to reflect the quality produce, culturally diverse food, coffee and music reflective of the local area, and therefore for residents to celebrate what their community has to offer.

In 2009 until present, I have worked as the General Manager of the Commercial Hotel Morpeth. It is a family owned and operated hotel - with a real community focus.

### IN MY WORDS

I believe the arts are key to creating a vibrant, inclusive and dynamic community. Maitland Regional Art Gallery (MRAG) is a key cultural institution in the region. Subsequently it plays an important role in the vibrancy of the greater area.

I have always elevated the importance of being an active participant in one's community, and the opportunity to become a committee member envelopes this. My relevant experience working across the arts, community and cultural development and events sectors could have direct benefits in achieving the objectives of the committee.

I have been following the inspiring work of MRAG and it would be a privilege to work together on achieving a joint vision for the region.

As a resident and business owner within the community it would be a fulfilling experience to assist in delivering the aims of the Maitland Regional Art Gallery for the community, its residents and visitors.



Director's Choice MRAGM Art Sale, 4 November 2016

Greetings and welcome to the Summer edition of ARTEL. It's that time of the year again; Christmas parties and presents, New Year and resolutions; a time to review and a time to plan. For the Members Committee, a time to review its activities of the past 12 months and a time to make plans, on your behalf, for 2017.

At the MRAGM Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 20th October, the Members Committee gave an account of its stewardship for the 2015 – 16 year. At this December meeting, the focus will be on planning social and fundraising events for 2017; a draft outline of events for 2017 will be presented in the next (Autumn) ARTEL.

The Annual Report, which gives an account of Committee activities is available on request either as a hard copy or by electronic mail. I commend the report and the work of Committee Members who, during the past year, have reviewed current activities and practices and proposed initiatives aimed at furthering the accountability and development of the Members Committee and the service provided to members.

This included a review by the Membership Secretary of ways of attract new members, offer corporate membership and establish a special category for the 12 to 24 year old age group. An electronic survey by the Events Coordinator provided feedback on members' experiences and sought opinions, comments and suggestions to assist in planning future social and fundraising events. The cost of the production of

ARTEL was also reviewed with adjustments made to the print run to minimise costs without in any way detracting from the quality of ARTEL which plays a key role in communicating the activities and events organised by the Gallery and the Members Committee.

During the year under review much effort went into preparing the documentation required by Council in the proposed move from an S.355 committee of Council to an incorporated association. Unfortunately this issue is 'on hold' and will remain so until the matter of Council amalgamations is resolved.

With the exception of Lizzie McLaughlin who did not renominate owing to professional commitments that have made it impossible for her to attend all meetings, all members re-nominated and were re-elected. As Chairperson and on behalf of the Committee I wish to express our appreciation for the valuable contribution Lizzie made to committee discussions and her work in preparing the draft constitution. The Committee welcomes new member Holly Fisher-Bidwell who brings experience in general and events management to the committee.

As we wrap up 2016 I would like to thank you, our members, for your support and welcome you to our still to be finalised Calendar of Events for 2017. Thanks too to the Cultural Director, the Gallery staff and volunteers for their support and assistance during the year.

On behalf of the Members Committee we wish you all Seasons Greetings and a happy and successful 2017.



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Linda Greedy, *Rachel on High, Creek Cut*, 2016, Oil on Board, 122 x 244 cm

*'The amount is of no importance. My parents gave and gave and gave, not only to us, but to other people. I'd like to make giving contagious'* - **Margaret Olley AC**

Maitland Regional Art Gallery (MRAG) aspires to emulate Margaret Olley's spirit of generosity in all we do and we share this with the 75,000 people who visit annually. This year we strove to become smarter and more focused in how we operate; in the process we increased visitors and revenue whilst decreasing operational expenditure.

Art is the catalyst to change community dynamics, in the same way music, theatre, sport or other initiatives can bring us together. To support art engagement and extend its capacity to add value to a changing community socially and economically, we must be active in a full range of other pursuits. As you know, we run a small business through The Gallery Shop and function hire on finite resources. We care for a heritage listed building, a nationally significant art collection, educate 1000s of kids each year, plus stage 100s of events. We are connected to multiple community organisations, offering art therapy for people living with mental health and other inclusion needs. I am very proud that these initiatives are funded exclusively by third party donations and supported by a team of 54 volunteers each month. And as I pen this note we have just successfully raised \$20,000 with the Rotary Club of Maitland Sunrise to support the Art & Dementia Program into 2017.

I mentioned in the Winter Artel our vision for the Gallery Garden Upgrade, and in Spring launched a \$25,000 fundraising initiative *The Giving Tree*. The MRAGM Committee committed to \$6K on behalf of the membership and I offer my gratitude with gravitas.

I have since issued letters to the business community and had a stirring response, be it in-kind or cash, as well as interest from diverse businesses to open partnerships with MRAG and I look forward to updating you as the project continues. I invite you also to become involved, particularly in the lead up to Christmas – contributions towards *The Giving Tree* really do give twice and start from as little as \$5.

One of the motivations for the upgrade of the Gallery gardens was the popularity of *Free Art January* - also bolstered by the MRAG Members Committee - and I am excited to welcome it back in 2017. We will be hosting some fantastic exhibitions over the Summer months, with *Free Art January* taking inspiration from each of them, including two exhibitions of note: one on tour from The National Portrait Gallery *Awesome Achievers: Stories from Australians of the Year*; and the second *Inside Bloomfield* from closer to home. *Awesome Achievers* brings to life the underlying complex and shifting notions of national identity that are exemplified or challenged in the portrait of each person. Interestingly, the juxtaposition of Linda's portrait of a colliery from the inside is a stunning complement to *Awesome Achievers* and a proud collaboration between MRAG and The Bloomfield Group.

Much energy has been invested to promote dear Margaret's ambition to make giving contagious. We have sought to lead by a generosity of spirit, connecting artists and community, yet that kindness has been returned to the MRAG organisation in the most unexpected of ways, coming full circle and encouraging us to keep going and going. Such as the stunning donated collection of Lionel Lindsay detailed by Cheryl on page 6. It has been a wonderful year indeed. Thank you for your contribution as members of this Gallery.

Long may it continue! and long may we make giving contagious in 2017

When it's too hot outside, come into MRAG and see what is hot in the world of all things creative. There will be a total of fifteen new exhibitions at MRAG across the Summer period covering whimsical drawings and prints, landscape and portraits, audio-visual, painting, photography even an installation or two; there is artwork by students as well as more established artists; newly-created artwork both figurative and abstract as well as artwork from another era - MRAG has it all!

Two significant exhibitions at MRAG across the Summer seasons encompass ideas of partnerships. *Awesome Achievers: Portrait stories from Australians of the Year* is an exhibition curated by the National Portrait Gallery and has been developed exclusively to tour and MRAG is excited to be an exhibiting partner.

*Awesome Achievers* is an exhibition of major portraits drawn from the National Portrait Gallery collection and supplemented with some works from private sources. This dynamic exhibition showcases selected Australian of the Year recipients from diverse fields of endeavour. Featuring around forty artworks across a range of media, complemented with audio-visual material, the exhibition will showcase twenty-eight recipients from diverse fields of endeavour in eight thematic rather than chronological groupings. In grouping the portraits into eight key themes, the exhibition aims to bring to life the underlying complex and shifting notions of national identity that are exemplified or challenged in the person and portrait of each selected recipient. An inspiring array of talent and achievement, with many examples of triumph over adversity, is celebrated in this exhibition.

The other exhibition which was developed in partnership with MRAG is *Inside Bloomfield* and tells the story of the Bloomfield Colliery and specifically Bloomfield Open Cut Mine and Four Mile Engineering - both located in close proximity to East Maitland.

Linda Greedy was selected as artist-in-residence to spend twelve months visiting the two sites where she was able to talk with staff and watch them work, visit iconic landmarks, attend a blast, and see the trucks, loaders and other diverse machinery in operation. The resulting exhibition addresses five distinct yet overlapping themes: the workshops, the people and their spaces, the machinery, the coal, and the landscape.

In the landscape there are, of course, the pit and the trucks. On a human scale, both are enormous and arresting. In her paintings and drawings Linda has also included images of the landscape, near and far. Working spaces, such as the pit, are framed in the distance by the even larger Brokenback Range and surrounding ridges.

It is also in the landscape that we find Rachel, the wild goat known to visit the activities at the colliery. At times, she decides that to sit under a colossal sized dumper is the place to be and there she will stay until she is ready to move.

Linda was set no boundaries and was given open access for the story that she felt was the most interesting for her to tell. This body of work celebrates the working life of a local coal mine, its history and its place in the community of the Hunter and Maitland in particular. It is about the land, the machinery, the people needed to make it happen - and a wild goat known as Rachel.

All fifteen exhibitions MRAG will host across summer are each supported by numerous education and learning events, fun activities like Art Sunday and augmented by the much enjoyed not to be missed Free Art January. So forget the beach and potential sunburn this summer, find yourself in the sanctuary of MRAG.

## TREVOR DICKINSON GREETINGS FROM MAITLAND

15 October 2016 - 29 January 2017

## NATHAN KEOGH AND GISELLE PENN SHHHH

12 November 2016 - 29 January 2017

## LINDA GREEDY INSIDE BLOOMFIELD

12 November 2016 - 29 January 2017



## 2016 BRENDA CLOUTEN MEMORIAL TRAVELLING SCHOLARSHIPS FOR YOUNG ACHIEVERS IN THE VISUAL ARTS

26 November 2016 - 5 February 2017



## AWESOME ACHIEVERS: STORIES FROM AUSTRALIANS OF THE YEAR, A NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY EXHIBITION

26 November 2016 - 5 February 2017

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY EXHIBITION



This exhibition is supported by the National Collecting Institutions Touring and Outreach Program, an Australian Government program aiming to improve access to the national collections for all Australians.

## MAITLAND INCLUDES YOU

presents artworks created by artists from the Maitland community in collaboration with a variety of local disability service providers.

26 November 2016 - 5 February 2017



## ANDREW CHRISTOFIDES' ABSTRACTION FROM THE MRAG COLLECTION

26 November 2016 - 19 February 2017

## DAVID CAPRA TEENA'S BATHTIME, 2015, MCA JACKSON BELLA ROOM COMMISSION

4 February - 28 May 2017

Museum of Contemporary Art Australia

Exhibition organised and toured by the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia

## WELCOME TO WOOF WOOF VANESSA EVANS

4 February - 28 May 2017

## SUSAN AND PETER O'DOHERTY MOVING HOUSE

4 February - 2 April 2017

## PORTRAIT OF PAT FROM THE MRAG COLLECTION

4 February - 19 February 2017

## LIONEL LINDSAY FROM THE MRAG COLLECTION

11 February - 14 May 2017

## WENDY STOKES WALKING THROUGH THE SPACE OF LANDSCAPE

11 February - 30 April 2017

## CATHERINE ROGERS PICTURES FOR WAITING ROOMS

11 February - 30 April 2017

## MAITLAND INTERNATIONAL SALON OF PHOTOGRAPHY

25 February - 2 April 2017



(left) Lionel Lindsay, *Macaws* (detail), 1938, Wood engraving printed in black ink on paper, 13.2 x 12.4cm

(right) Lionel Lindsay, *Jerez De Los Cabelleros, Estremadura, Spain* (detail), 1928, Drypoint etching printed in black ink on paper, 30.2 x 32.6cm

Earlier this year MRAG received a most unprecedented donation offer: a significant collection of etchings, wood engravings and watercolours created by the artist Lionel Lindsay. This donation was offered to MRAG by two private art collectors - Max and Nola Tegel – collectors who loved all things Lionel Lindsay and who were determined to acquire as complete a collection of Lionel Lindsay works as they could. Over twenty years Max and Nola tracked down more than two hundred of Lindsay's works, most of which they displayed in their home. Once satisfied that their Lionel Lindsay collection was as complete as they could make it, they sought a public art gallery that could maximise the potential within such a collection to reach a broader audience than their own friends and family. Much to our delight and pride Max and Nola decided that MRAG was the one gallery that could and so, in April this year, MRAG accepted their donation of Lionel Lindsay artworks: 106 wood engravings, 3 engraved wood blocks, 69 etchings, 4 watercolours, a handwritten letter by Lindsay and 9 rare books featuring his prints.

Lionel Lindsay (1874 – 1961) was one of Australia's finest black and white graphic artists of the twentieth century. He was an illustrator who honed his skills in etching and wood engraving so finely that by 1927 he was hailed as the most internationally successful Australian printmaker of all time. The works in this donation encompass all the themes that Lindsay explored over his career and feature: romantic landscapes from Spain, Italy, North Africa and India; Australian imagery including Sydney streets, laconic swagmen and portraits of literary personalities such as Henry Lawson; mythical and domestic gardens; still life depictions of flowers and fruit and vegetables; and a menagerie of birds and animals.

So the challenge had been set to honour this gift in the spirit in which it was given. Next year MRAG will feature this donation in an exhibition, *Lionel Lindsay from the Maitland Regional Art Gallery Collection*, on display from 11 February until 14 May 2017. The exhibition will be complemented by an MRAG designed and published catalogue which will include an essay by writer and academic Associate Professor Joanna Mendelssohn. In addition to the exhibition and catalogue, we are very excited to be working on MRAG's first children's book (!!) made possible with additional financial support, offered specifically for this project, by Max and Nola Tegel.

In this children's book we will introduce Lionel Lindsay's work to a whole, new, young, 21st century audience. The narrative will be entwined around Lionel Lindsay's images of castles and camels, peacocks and pelicans, turkeys and pheasants, chickens, cats and kittens, macaws, cranes, goats, crabs and even a polar bear.

Lionel Lindsay's finely detailed, black and white images describe a magical world of far away and familiar places, exotic and domestic animals and birds, and the lushness of gardens and floral abundance. Within the exhibition, catalogue and children's book we are sure these images will entrance young and old.

# CREATIVE LEARNING IN THE ART FACTORY

BY MICHELLE MAARTENSZ AND ANNE MCLAUGHLIN



David Capra and his sausage dog Teena in the 2015 Bella Room Commission: David Capra, *Teena's Bathtime*, 2015, commissioned by the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia for the Jackson Bella Room, 2015, image courtesy and © the artist, photograph: Anna Kucera

The Brenda Clouten Memorial Travelling Scholarship for a Young Achiever in the Visual Arts, now in its eleventh year, has expanded into two scholarships of \$5,000 and \$3,000 respectively. Vicki and Bruce Woods established this scholarship in 2004 in memory of their close friend Brenda Clouten as a unique opportunity for young emerging artists from the Lower Hunter to further their art studies overseas. The 2016 finalists are Dale Collier, Liss Finney, Maddysen Hatton, Maisie Neale, Jessica McLeod – Yu, Louisa Magrics and Dylan Reilly. We would like to acknowledge the continued support of Vicki and Bruce Woods and the Bushrangers Bar & Brasserie.

The Art Factory exhibition space has once again been transformed and we are thrilled to have Trevor Dickinson's exhibition *Greetings from Maitland* on display. The exhibition has been well received by all and has brought back fond memories of the local Maitland locations depicted in the works. *Greetings from Maitland* will be in the Art Factory throughout summer to be followed by *David Capra, Teena's Bathtime*, 2015 upstairs and *Welcome to Woof Woof* downstairs in early February.

The exhibition *David Capra, Teena's Bathtime*, 2015 was commissioned for the Museum of Contemporary Art's (MCA) Jackson Bella Room. The exhibition is designed to incorporate a fully accessible program that is tailored to the learning and access needs of children and adults with physical, intellectual, learning or sensory disability and their extended families and friends. After working and training with the MCA team MRAG is pleased to be able provide free monthly programs for adults and families.

Planning is well underway for the Free Art January program over the summer school holidays, with free art activities throughout the month of January for all abilities young and old. Some of the

highlights of this unique free program now in its third year include an Animation Spectacular, Drop in and Draw, the very popular Fun Park and much more. All details for Free Art January program will be available on our website mid December. Free Art January is made possible with the generous support of the MRAG Members and CleverPatch.

Some dates you might like to list on your 2017 January calendar for free Art January are detailed below:

Fun Park will return from 10 am -12 noon Tuesday through to Friday with a variety of creative and playful activities to spark children's imagination.

Adults and teens keen to improve their drawing skills will be able to learn tips from artists Ileana Clarke and Linda Greedy each week of January. Drop in and Draw anytime between 12.30 pm - 3.30pm on Saturday 7 January, Thursday 12 January, Wednesday 18 January and Tuesday 24 January.

If you love all things animated don't miss the ANIMATION SPECTACULAR on Saturday 21 January we will be having animation workshops for teens and adults throughout the day and a celebratory screening of animated short films from 6pm.

In the Gallery garden, artist Denise Duffy will be installing a collaborative artwork created by the Mai-Wel Creative Arts division. Denise will also run a community art project to add to this installation with workshops open to all on Saturday 14 and Saturday 28 January.

You are warmly invited to be part of Free Art January in 2017!

# MEET OUR MEMBER ARTIST

## Catherine Croll

BY CATHERINE KINGSMILL



(left) Catherine Croll, (right) Meng Hat, Catherine Croll, Djon Mundine, Dominic Tredade, Gary Lee, Jason Wing and Shau Do, China 2015.

Catherine (Kate) Croll has been a longstanding member of MRAG. Her keen interest in the Arts was nurtured from childhood by the extensive collection of Australian art held by her parents Frank and Joan. As a teenager inspired equally by politics, art and music, it was a natural progression for Kate to gravitate to the Funhouse in Taylor Square and the underground Sydney music scene of the late 1970s; a world dominated by Radio Birdman, The Saints and the Psycho Surgeons and populated by an audience of strident, gangly youth which would produce some of Australia's most iconic musicians, curators, artists and social commentators. Kate became unofficial photographer to the scene as an art student, going on to make a living for a time as a painter and official photographer for The Sunnyboys.

After moving to a sheep station in the Riverina in the 1980s and rearing her son Tom, Kate became involved in a cultural program to engage disenfranchised youth in the community. Her new career had thrown itself in her lap, and Kate has dedicated her life to facilitating cross-cultural community engagement ever since. A move to Newcastle gave Catherine even more opportunities to utilise her enthusiasm and skills. She was the Director of the NCAC from 1996 until 2002. From *'Working with Indigenous Communities'* in the Top End of Australia to *'Ribbons of Steel'* at BHP Newcastle, Catherine has been instrumental in the establishment of theatre companies, national festivals, galleries, art prizes and cross cultural exchange programs.

Kate not only holds a deep affinity with the Aboriginal community in Australia but has developed a close relationship with the Asian arts community, learning Mandarin and spending a large part of the year travelling throughout Asia and living in China. She is the founding Director of Cultural Partnerships Australia and has held the position of Director, Special Projects at Red Gate Gallery since 2009. She is a member of the prestigious International Association of Art Critics (AICA).

Since 2005 she has focused her entrepreneurial skills upon developing bilateral relations between Australia and Asia through long term cultural exchange projects including:

*'From Mao to Now'* Sydney Olympic Park, *'Coming Home'* Linda Gallery Beijing, *'Hard Sleeper'* Chinese Provincial Tour and Exhibition, Beijing and *'On the Edge'* New Media & Hybrid Arts from Australia (China Tour), *'Two Generations - 20 Years of Chinese Contemporary Art'* (Australian Tour) and *'Yiban Yiban - Yellah Fellah'* (China Tour)

Catherine initiated the Australia China Curatorial Exchange Program which has to date brought 14 Chinese artists and curators to Australia to work alongside her and meet with emerging and Indigenous artists and representatives of cultural organisations. Following this successful program, Catherine was contracted by City of Sydney to produce large exhibitions that celebrated Asia Australian art. Held as part of the City's 2013 and 2014 Chinese New Year Festival celebrations, *'Snake'* & *'Crossing Boundaries'* featured work by Australian artists with Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, Indonesian and/or mixed Indigenous heritage.

More recently Catherine was contracted by Waringarri Arts Kununurra to assist with the management of an exhibition by 24 Kimberley artists at Salvo Hotel & OFOTO Shanghai. She then conducted a tour by Australian Indigenous artists with Chinese Heritage to Yunnan. After that, she managed *'In the Spirit of George Rose'* a bilateral cultural exchange between Australian and Korean photographers including Mr William Yang and Mr Bohncchang Koo. This project included a number of large exhibitions which Catherine curated at the Korea Foundation Gallery, Seoul and the Korean Cultural Centre in Sydney.

Catherine maintains strong links with artists from the Hunter and, like her parents, is an avid art collector. As well as international and national art, her collection features works from many of the local artists featured on the walls of MRAG.



Members enjoying the MRAG coach trip, 24 September 2016

## Australia's favourite art award + Mexican masterpieces MRAGM Coach Tour

On Saturday, 24 September, 37 welcomed guests joined in a coach tour to Sydney for the Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Prizes at the Art Gallery of NSW - an annual exhibition eagerly anticipated by artists and audiences alike. First awarded in 1921, the Archibald is considered Australia's favourite art award, and one of its most prestigious. Guests enjoyed a private guided tour of the exhibition, which this year certainly lived up to famed expectations, and included an impressive 51 finalists.

As part of the tour, guests were also provided the rare chance to see masterpieces by the two leading figures of Mexican 20th-century art, Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera. Restricted access was provided courtesy of Art Gallery Society of NSW, MRAG and MRAGM. The exhibition presented 40 artworks from the renowned collection of Jacques and Natasha Gelman, including outstanding self-portrait paintings and drawings by Frida Kahlo, and major examples of Diego Rivera's canvas paintings.

Following scheduled activities, guests lunched and wandered the Art Gallery of NSW and surrounds, including some who visited, Barrangal Dyara (Skin and Bones) by artist Jonathon Jones - a vast sculptural installation stretching 20,000 square-metres across the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney as part of its 200th birthday celebrations.

Picture-perfect weather, and an incredibly fun and friendly group of guests made for a most enjoyable day. An enormous thank you to all guests, Art Gallery of NSW, Art Gallery Society of NSW, All Australian Journeys and MRAG Member, John Rushby - your support of MRAGM and the Gallery is greatly appreciated.

"Hats off to MRAGM for hosting a magnificent trip to the Art Gallery of NSW. The professionalism and friendliness was outstanding. A fabulous day was had by all...well done!" - **Megan Neville**

"What a happy task this is, to congratulate MRAGM for organising the bus trip to see the Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Prizes, with extra delight, Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera. The Art Gallery of NSW was lovely. The guide to show us around gave me insight to art, wonderful. The trip was very welcoming and comfortable. The restaurant was exceptional, with a perfect view. Would love to experience more trips with friends. Great day!" - **Erin Brown**

"Wonderful structured day, very organised attending staff. Printed itinerary was a bonus. Expert gallery guide. I was happy to make the effort to travel from Newcastle 5:30am to Maitland. Will definitely be attending next year. Thank you." - **Eugenia Dunlevie**

# MEET THE MAKER

BY ASHLEY GRANT



## Meet the Maker: Maggie Hensel-Brown

Let's talk lace. Or rather, one lacemaker! Maggie Hensel-Brown is the hands and heart behind the incredible artwork that you'll find dancing above the Gallery Shop this Christmas. Exquisite, carefully articulated patterns created just for us, which speak of beauty, nostalgia and home.

A quick introduction to Maggie on paper isn't something that captures her incredible skill and intense passion for crochet and lace making. Her practice can only be looked at in awe, each detail a slow and thoughtful tangling of threads which many of us only dare dream of creating ourselves. When speaking with Maggie, it becomes obvious that her artworks are strongly motivated in some way by the material she uses. Her pebble series, (currently available to purchase in the Gallery Shop)

draws upon the simplicity of a pebble and the complexity of a crochet pattern whereas her latest installation piece uses the history of a particular piece of lace as its muse.

*'During my travels this year I came across a story from the Italian region of Emilia-Romagna where I was staying. In the early 1900s the Vanderbilt family came across a group of women working in the lacemaking style of the region. They commissioned an enormous tablecloth with images of peacocks and flowers worked into the lace itself. The tablecloth has since been lost to history and I've often daydreamed about it turning up somewhere having taken on the characteristics of its new home. These works evolved from those daydreams, imagining it resurfacing in spring here in Australia.'*

Maggie is no stranger to MRAG - having grown up and studied in Newcastle, she and her work are a well-loved part of our local art scene. In 2012 Maggie took out the Brenda Clouten Memorial Prize with a series of large sculptural textile pieces. Since then, a shift has occurred. This has as much to do with her desire to make art that is wearable, accessible and everyday as it does with an opportunity in 2013 to open her own retail and studio space as a part of Renew Newcastle. As Director of the Workroom, which up until earlier this year could be found in the Emporium (the building that previously housed David Jones), Maggie honed her skills and achieved what many young artists struggle to do; to make a living by making art.

Each creation is as lush as she is lovely, a reflection of her desire to keep this age old art alive but also remain true to her artistic inclination of innovation and design. Maggie has a range of one off pieces available in the Gallery Shop now!

## It's a very Creative Christmas

in the Gallery Shop this year!

**Make giving contagious** this festive season by shopping local and supporting working artisans!

You will see many glimmers of Christmas cheer in the lead up to 'the big day', beginning with the most exquisite installation over Shop One and to wrap things up a little something for you to gift or keep when you shop with us in December.

We are working with many incredible artisans to help make your gifting **thoughtful, unique** and most of all **creative**.

# SOCIAL GALLERY



MRAGM Coach Trip, 24 September 2016



Artist Talk: Paul Selwood, *From Matter to Manner*, 15 October 2016



Artist Talk: Braddon Snape, *Materiality Performed*, 15 October 2016



Brigette with Robyn Werkhoven, *The Hospital*, 15 October 2016



Holly Fisher-Bidwell, *Director's Choice MRAGM Art Sale 2016*, 4 November 2016



Vanessalee, Maggie & Lorrie, *Annual Art & Dementia Fundraiser*, 21 October 2016



Artist Talk: Trevor Dickinson, *Greetings from Maitland*, 15 October 2016



*Director's Choice MRAGM Art Sale 2016*, 4 November 2016



*Director's Choice MRAGM Art Sale 2016*, 4 November 2016

Maitland Regional Art Gallery is proudly supported by:



Maitland Regional Art Gallery is supported by the NSW Government through Arts NSW.



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ART  
JANUARY

MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY 2017

A MONTH OF FREE  
ART ACTIVITIES AND  
**FUN** FOR EVERYONE

Free Art January was made possible by the generous support of Maitland Regional Art Gallery Members

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