



# Art News

January 2017

## Art realities from a working artist

Michael Leeworthy left school at 16 to become a window dresser. Before long he began running his own window display business, mainly in fashion, which lasted a cool 20 years.

Then, after a move into interior design which saw him design and hand build several homes and gardens, Michael began attending art courses that included painting, life drawing, ceramics and stained glass, subsequently going onto become an internationally known gallery and commission artist.

His creative art now resides in Britain, Ireland, Belgium, France, Nigeria, Spain, Singapore, Canada, the United States of America, Australia and New Zealand.

Now in his 60s, Michael operates his own art studio and gallery located in Shoreham Road Red Hill where he exhibits and sells his art, as well as teaching the art of painting and drawing.

When asked what it took to be a successful working artist, Michael said,

“First you have to accept that it’s not an easy game to be in, and that tenacity and belief in one’s self play equal parts to any talent involved. To be a successful artist, generally speaking, one needs a distinct style that varies little over ones career. Jon Olsen would be a good example of that.”

“With that calibre of artist you would expect he or she to be represented by reputable art galleries in most states throughout Australia and hopefully overseas. Of course this is usually only for the fortunate few.”

“In my case, my style varies quite considerably. Although I have exhibited at dozens of galleries over the years, it is difficult to pin point one particular style either in acrylics or watercolours. The only common denominator is that my art is about me and not the customer.”

“For instance, prior to the Global Financial Crisis, I was supplying a gallery in Belgium with my quirky Outback paintings of Australia which did exceptionally well for all concerned, even though I was known for other sorts of works as well.”

“These days I own and run my own art gallery and rarely exhibit outside of it. And like most professional artists, I must have more than one string to my bow. As such, I teach art privately and at various institutions, as well as receiving grants to undertake public murals.”

“I’ve also written a couple of books on the subject, the last one being titled, So you want to be an artist?”

[www.michaelleeworthy.com](http://www.michaelleeworthy.com)



French countryside vista while walking across France in 2015 – watercolour



Creek setting in Tasmanian bush - Acrylic



French village while walking across France in 2015 – watercolour



Outback - acrylic



# Are artists sane, or just crazy?

It has been suggested that making art can be as creatively satisfying, stimulating and enjoyable, as it can be frustrating, challenging and exhausting.

Even so, many people have no choice, they simply must make art to feel whole.

Some people have difficulty verbally articulating their feelings and emotions, so they let it out in their art, which is why creativity is so good for you.

The practice of art is an expressive outlet that can channel as much joy as it can sorrow.

It has been said that art is the window to a person's soul and judging by the comments of those below, perhaps that is true.

*"If I could say it in words there would be no reason to paint."*

**Edward Hopper**

*"The emotions are sometimes so strong that I work without knowing it. The strokes come like speech."*

**Vincent Van Gough**

*"If people knew how hard I worked to get my mastery, it wouldn't seem so wonderful at all."*

**Michelangelo**

*"Colour is my day long obsession, joy and torment."*

**Claude Monet**

*"If a man devotes himself to art, much evil is avoided that happens otherwise if one is idle."*

**Albrecht Durer**

*"Painting is a means of self-enlightenment."*

**John Olsen**

*"Creativity takes courage."*

**Henri Matisse**

*"The only time I feel alive is when I'm painting."*

**Vincent Van Gough**

*"Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life."*

**Pablo Picasso**

*"Those who do not want to imitate anything, produce nothing."*

**Salvador Dali**

*"Every good painter paints what he is."*

**Jackson Pollock**

*"Art is not what you see, but what you make others see."*

**Edgar Degas**

*"Don't be an art critic, but paint, there lies salvation."*

**Paul Cezanne**

*"Life obliges me to do something, so I paint."*

**Rene Magritte**

*"The artist is a receptacle for emotions that come from all over the place: from the sky, from the earth, from a scrap of paper, from a passing shape, from a spider's web."*

**Pablo Picasso**

*"Don't think about making art, just get it done. Let everyone else decide if it's good or bad, whether they love it or hate it. While they are deciding, make even more art."*

**Andy Warhol**

*"A work of art which did not begin in emotion is not art."*

**Paul Cezanne**

*"Have no fear of perfection, you'll never reach it."*

**Salvador Dali**

*"There's no retirement for an artist, it's your way of living so there's no end to it."*

**Henry Moore**

*"No great artist ever sees things as they really are. If he did, he would cease to be an artist."*

**Oscar Wilde**

*"The aim of art is to represent not the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance."*

**Aristotle**

*"Life beats down and crushes the soul and art reminds you that you have one."*

**Stella Adler**

*"I saw an angel in the marble and carved until I set it free."*

**Michelangelo**

*"Art is the stored honey of the human soul."*

**Theodore Dreiser**

*"Painting is easy when you don't know how, but very difficult when you do."*

**Edgar Degas**

*"To practice any art, no matter how well or badly, is a way to make your soul grow. So do it."*

**Kurt Vonnegut**

*"The greater the artist, the greater the doubt. Perfect confidence is granted to the less talented as a consolation prize."*

**Robert Hughes**

*"If I were called upon to define briefly the work art, I should call it the reproduction of what the senses perceive in nature, seen through the veil of the soul."*

**Paul Cezanne**

*"Every artist dips his brush in his own soul, and paints his own nature into his pictures."*

**Henry Ward Beecher**

# Art News



## Artistic milestone

Founded in 1952, the Box Hill Art Group celebrates 65 years of artistic service to its community this year, and it's still going strong offering a wide range of classes covering all painting mediums and styles, which are conducted by highly qualified tutors. What's more, regular paint outs, workshops by visiting artists, and exhibitions to display member's work are also provided across each year. For more information, visit [www.boxhillartgroup.com.au](http://www.boxhillartgroup.com.au)

## Art as therapy?

Increasing numbers of people are recommending the practice of art for those who want to build their confidence, artistic skills, friendship networks, and self-worth. Drawing and painting with friends not only decreases social isolation, but also increases self-awareness and positiveness in the ways people interact with their communities.

Because creating a drawing, painting or sculpture requires thought, contemplation, and cognitive ability, as well as the actual artistic skills to complete a work, it's been suggested that the practice of art also helps ward off such debilitating things as depression and even dementia.

Well-being consultant, Dr Nadine Cameron, a former Barr Fellow in Social Inclusion at The University of Melbourne, was quoted as saying, "Art can help us practice being patient with ourselves, being brave, and increase our empathy."

## National Gallery of Victoria exhibits David Hockney

With a reputation as one of the most influential living artists in the world, over 1200 David Hockney works from the past decade will be on show at the National Gallery of Victoria until 13 March 2017. These include never-before-seen in Australia paintings, digital drawings, photography and video works.

A dedicated 60 metre long gallery lined with more than 80 recently painted acrylic portrait paintings of David's family and notable friends such as Barry Humphries and John Baldessari will also be a major highlight.



## 2017 membership fees now due

Our annual membership fee of \$45 is now due and can be paid online at [www.boxhillartgroup.com.au](http://www.boxhillartgroup.com.au) or by contacting Eric Harvey on 0424 775 540.

Returning artists are also encouraged to enrol for class terms in advance and pay online as detailed above. And remember, if you miss your normal class, you can make it up at a different class of your choice.

For those unable to commit to a regular term of painting classes, we also offer a casual rate of \$22 per class, payable on the day.

And if you're new and not sure what to expect, we invite you to try before you buy. Simply pre-book and pay \$10 online to attend a class of your choice and experience the magic first hand.

## Housekeeping

A quick reminder that the Box Hill Community Arts Centre is a public space, so please be aware of your belongings at all times.

## Forthcoming paint outs

**5 February 2017** – 109 Tram from Box Hill Terminus to Port Melbourne and return

**5 March 2017** – Royal Botanical Gardens – Terrace Café

**2 April 2017** – Mullum Mullum Creek  
Details for each of the forthcoming paint outs when they come to hand will be listed at [www.boxhillartgroup.com.au](http://www.boxhillartgroup.com.au)

## Untutored Life Drawing

Life drawing sessions will again be presented on Wednesdays between 1 and 3pm featuring professional male and female artist models. With varying body types and challenging poses, the experience will sharpen observational and drawing skills. Participants must bring their own paper, charcoal or other drawing mediums. A board and easel is supplied and a fee of \$20 is payable on the day. Confirmed 2017 dates are:

- |                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| ● 8 February 2017 | ● 8 March 2017 |
| ● 19 April 2017   | ● 10 May 2017  |
| ● 14 June 2017    | ● 19 July 2017 |
| ● 9 August 2017   | ● 13 Sept 2017 |
| ● 11 October 2017 | ● 8 Nov 2017   |

# Annual Exhibition a huge success

## ... so I'm told.

Covering this year's Annual Exhibition was important for this reporter because in its 64th year, it was suggested to me by event organisers that the exhibits were varied and stunning, so I could barely contain myself.

Having been through the exhibition with glass of wine in hand, it became obvious that the standard of art was indeed excellent, so I was really looking forward to hearing the formalities – who won what and why.

As the speeches started, trying not to make a sound, I carefully eased my way around the exhibits to get a prime position for some photographs.

Regrettably, I didn't see that pesky bit of footing sticking out from an exhibition stand.

As I tripped over the stand's leg and plummeted towards the floor, I crashed into a vertical concrete pylon with an almighty thud, leaving the surrounding paintings shaking violently.

While the pain was immense, the embarrassment was worse as people

turned to see me in a heap on the floor trying to act naturally as though nothing had happened.

One asked if I was alright and of course I said yes as I scrambled quickly to pick myself up, although I think the perfume sweating and redness of my face was a bit of a giveaway that all was not right.

By this time the raffle had been drawn, the winners were being announced, and Councillor Helen Harris, the guest speaker was about to deliver her address no doubt wondering what all the commotion had been about.

But something didn't feel quite right and upon pulling up my sleeve, I unearthed a pulsating multi-coloured bruise that was the size of two tennis balls. From this point, my wife insisted that I go immediately to the Box Hill Hospital, where I remained for the duration while the art exhibition went on without me.

I'm told the refreshments were terrific, the art brilliant and the presentation the best to date, but like me, you'll have to take their word for it, unless you were there.

## Viewing art regionally

For those seeking a very pleasant getaway to the country to view some great art, Ballarat is definitely a place to visit.

The Art Gallery of Ballarat is in a beautiful heritage building dating back to the Gold Rush that has been increased in size with a modern eye catching renovation that enhances the artistic experience with its mainstay of iconic historical paintings, as well as hosting a range of visiting contemporary exhibitions of all persuasions.

Over summer, The Rennie Ellis Show was featured consisting of a fascinating photographic exhibition focussing on social change in Australia between the 70s and 90s that was amazing. Also on show were breathtaking images covering wide ranging subjects from entrants across Australia in the Ballarat National Photographic Exhibition.

Another visiting exhibition was the Black Mist Burnt Country: Testing the Bomb that focussed on over thirty Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists that commemorated the little known story of the British atomic tests in Australia in the 1950s.

Some of the works were by Albert Tucker, Arthur Boyd, Sidney Nolan, Ian Howard, Pam Debenham, Toni Robertson, Rosemary Laing and Susie Norrie. Aboriginal artists included Jonathan Kumintjarra Brown, Judy Watson, Hilda Moodoo and Yvonne Edwards.

One of the forthcoming exhibitions scheduled between 4th February and 19th March will be Next GEN 2017. This will focus on the work of students in the Ballarat and Grampians region who have recently completed their VCE studies in Art, Studio Arts, Design and Technology, Visual Communication, Design and Media. This exhibition will give visitors the chance to get inside the world of young artists today.

Only an hour and a half drive from Melbourne, or alternately by train nearly to its door, the Art Gallery of Ballarat is open daily from 10am to 5pm with free entry. It also provides free guided tours Wednesday to Sunday at 2pm.

Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of Ballarat



Maralinga by Kate Shaw



Annual exhibition was a great success at the Box Hill Town Hall

## Contact

**The Box Hill Art Group**  
(An Incorporated Association No A0015337S)  
ABN: 7559 3958 139  
Website [www.boxhillartgroup.com.au](http://www.boxhillartgroup.com.au)  
Email [secretary@boxhillartgroup.com.au](mailto:secretary@boxhillartgroup.com.au)  
President Ray Jones, 9898 4526  
Secretary Eric Harvey, 9884 0670

**To our sponsors,  
we thank you**

Box Hill Community Arts Centre  
City of Whitehorse  
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[www.creativeframing.com.au](http://www.creativeframing.com.au)

Young Art Studio – 0406 958 558,  
[youngartstudiosales@hotmail.com](mailto:youngartstudiosales@hotmail.com)  
Frame City – 9872 5239,  
[framecity@optusnet.com.au](mailto:framecity@optusnet.com.au)