

# Art News

January 2018

## What's in a water colour class?

Master watercolour exponent Joan Richard calls everyone up to the front table from where she works. As she paints the various components of her picture, she explains the techniques she uses and why they work in this particular instance.

People ask questions as she goes where you hear responses such as, "add a touch of ultramarine to the violet to add depth to the shadow colour; paint the dark contours on first to anchor them to the page before covering them with a light coloured wash; and, turn your paper upside down to let the colour make its own way down the page giving it a natural faded look."

Joan covers all of the important aspects of painting in water colour such as the best types of paint brushes to use, how to hold them for the best outcomes, and how to mix paint colours for the best colour effects.

She demonstrates how to structure the composition of a painting, the techniques required to achieve depth to the page, and where shadows should fall according to where the primary light source is.

The beauty of attending one of Joan's water colour classes is that you actually get to take home a completed painting after each two hour lesson.

Then you have the opportunity of framing it, improving it, or having another go at it while it's all still fresh in your memory.

"Painting with water colours is quite unforgiving so you've got to practice your techniques at home or out in the field, and if something goes wrong, you've got to learn how to wash out or paint out the mistake," says Joan.

"My classes are not exercises in babysitting people, rather, they're full of vibrant exchanges of ideas, techniques and individual interpretations of the painting I introduce each week."

*Each class member has a slightly different take on the scene of the day*

*Master watercolourist Joan Richard builds up a scene*



# How will I know if I'm a painter?

*A music teacher once said to a student, "If you wake up in the morning wanting to sing at home, in your room, at school, at work, in the car, walking somewhere, or simply while you're doing something else, then you're probably meant to be a singer!"*

*And so it is for visual artists.*

*Regardless of what you have to do for a living, if the art of painting consumes your thought; if it's the very essence of your expression and creativity and you practice it often, then you're probably a painter.*

*In this edition, we look at two different painters, their approaches to their art and indeed to their lives.*

## *Cath Williams* Auckland New Zealand

I started off painting as a kid for fun. I just loved it.

In my teenage years I used to paint Beatle album covers onto my bedroom cupboards, and by the time I was in my early 20s and living the poor bohemian lifestyle, I had progressed to painting pictures onto board covered with PVA, calico, and roller blinds using old house paints.

Although primarily self-taught, I was influenced by two of my school teachers being Marte Szirmay and Christine Hellyar, two of New Zealand's foremost visual artists, which is why I still enjoy lino cutting and screen printing as well as painting in oils.

In any case, art is obviously in the family genes because my cousin, Mervyn Williams, is also an internationally successful print maker and painter.

While I always wanted to be an artist, I also liked the idea of being involved in social work. Unable to make a decision, and not wanting to starve for my art, my school career guidance officer suggested that I become an Occupational Therapist, which I ultimately did.

But it didn't keep me away from art for too long. Painting is simply something I do when I'm not working. I am always looking at the world as a picture waiting to be painted and I get great satisfaction when I've finished a new piece.

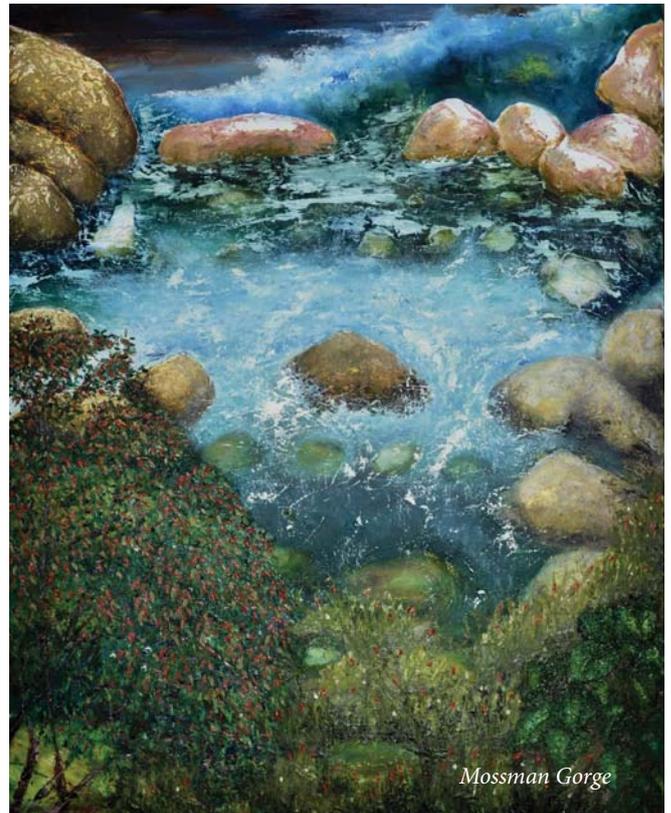
When I was living in Melbourne, my paintings were influenced by the ever present threat of bushfire and the beautiful harshness of rugged mountains and coastlines around Victoria, but since returning to New Zealand, I'm taking notice of its more subtle colour, soft light, hazy hues and moisture which has come to the fore in my recent work.

Style-wise, these days I tend to apply paint using my fingers, even going so far as sticking or sewing items onto my works to give them an abstract element or a sense of depth, which is probably due to my training as an Occupational Therapist.

I currently exhibit my work at Northart in Auckland as well as on my website at [www.quinch-art.com](http://www.quinch-art.com)

As for the future, well, I'll be retiring from my 'day job' in a few years at which point I may return to Melbourne where I'll reopen my Quinch Art Gallery there, or I may build a new gallery here. Time will tell.

*Cath Williams*



*Mossman Gorge*



*Hunua*



# Yolande Oakley

Mallacoota, Australia

It's a much discussed question, but I can't recall a particular moment in my life when I knew that I was an artist. There's certainly no qualification, certificate or degree that entitles you to call yourself one. Yes, you can be taught how to paint well, the methods and media, but is the artistic part educable, or do you have to be born with it?

Perhaps it was the realisation that I was more contented and less irritable when I was painting or printmaking which made me think that I was probably an artist.

I had a wonderful teacher, Mrs Moloney, who introduced me to painting and who followed my progress with interest through my high school life. When I first walked into her studio classroom I was overcome with a sense of peace. It was a colourful sanctuary where students were quietly absorbed in their creative pursuits.

While I was strongly encouraged to apply for The National Art School - the most well-known institution in its day as time went on, it was not the need to be a full time practising artist that drove me on, but rather, the desire to follow Mrs Moloney's example.

Like her I wanted to teach, to devote myself to making a difference and changing lives. I realized that teaching is a powerful profession. Teachers are in a position to make, or sadly break, lives. I saw that it was the obligation of a teacher to recognise the gold that is in every child, and to dig it out.

I was fortunate enough to land a full time job immediately after finishing art school in one of Sydney's top schools, where all students, including and especially the brightest, are encouraged to have a sound education in the visual arts. I remained there for 24 years and still maintain contact.

Since then I have devoted myself to my own art practice. Yes, I do make a modest income from that, as well as some part time work mentoring year 12's through their major works.

I have never considered living solely from making art, although these days my own art practice is very important to me. I am always looking for ways to improve it, and I admit

that at most times it falls just short of expectation. I gather that is the nature of it. That's what makes us press on to do more and the more we know, the more deflating it can be. There is no space for egos, just the hope that the next one will be wonderful.

These days I don't paint scenes of landscapes, but rather I endeavour to paint the experience of being inside them. For example, when I walked the Camino in France, I took in the little stone villages nestled in folds of landscape, the sounds of baby goats in misty rain, the shepherds wandering past and composed lyrical compositions.

On my coastal wilderness walks in Mallacoota I am aware of meandering pathways, what I see when looking up into trees, over cliffs and into water. I try to find the essence of the actual experience, not a specific location.

So, how does someone know if they're an artist? I think if you believe you are, say you are and believe it, then others will believe it too.

Yolande Oakley [www.yolandeoakley.com.au](http://www.yolandeoakley.com.au)

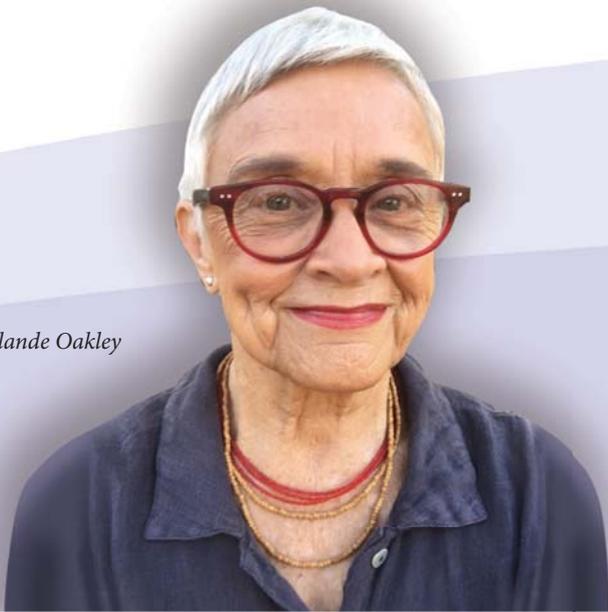
*Luminescence*



*Walking in the spring*



Yolande Oakley



# What's Newz

**Term one commences on Monday 29 January to Thursday 29 March.**

**2018 sketching in the wild with lunch**

**Sunday 4 February**, 10am – Schwerkoldt Cottage, Deep Creek Road, Mitcham

**Sunday 4 March**, 10am – Wattle Park, Riversdale Road, Burwood

**Sunday 8 April**, 10am – Banksia Park, Templestowe Road, Bulleen

**2018 session times**

Mondays, 10am to 12 midday	All art media	With Farimah Eshraghi
Tuesdays, 1pm to 3pm	Watercolour painting	With Joan Richard
Tuesdays, 7.30pm to 9.30pm	Drawing skills	With Craig Rawlings
Wednesdays, 10am to 12 midday	Oils and pastels	With Paul MacDonald Smith
Wednesdays, 1pm to 3pm	"My Time" in any art media	No tutor
Wednesdays, 7.30pm to 9.30pm	Painting & drawing	With Gail Shawyer
Saturdays, 1pm to 3pm	"My Time" in any art media	No tutor

**A word from our President**

Let me start by wishing everyone a Happy New Year for the year ahead. I hope the break was refreshing and prepared everyone for yet another fabulous year of creativity.

There were a number of highlights that I am pleased to report on which happened across 2017.

First of all, we enjoyed record entries in both our mid-year and Annual Art Exhibitions which resulted in significant prizes for exhibitors. Our sketch days, life drawing sessions and special workshops also added to the overall success of the year.

However, our regular classes still reported erratic enrolments during the year with healthy numbers one term, and sparse the next. While the committee is constantly looking at ways to remedy this dilemma, if you have any ideas on why this happens and/or how to fix it, please call me to discuss on 9898 4526.

## Contact

**The Box Hill Art Group**  
(An Incorporated Association No A0015337S)  
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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, 9801 2173

Speaking of the committee, I would like to thank my fellow members for their dedication again this past year, and invite new people with new ideas to come on board and join the committee for the next 12 months. Call me if you're interested.

Two well deserving 'shout outs' too for our long serving Treasurer, Jim Shelley, for all of his brilliant work over the past decade or so, and who is stepping down from this important position – as well as Paul

MacDonald Smith OA, our longest serving art tutor at 30 years! Congratulations to both.

With membership fees now due for 2018, it's a good time to reflect on the benefits of being a member of the Box Hill Art Group.

Apart from the social aspect which is good for the soul, members can learn how to draw and paint in any number of medias; can exhibit their paintings where

it's possible to pick up a sale; as well as advertising their art on the profile section of our website.

With this in mind, we ask you to renew your membership for 2018 now, either by paying online or contacting Eric for other methods on 0424 775 540. Our banking details are:

Bank Account: BSB 063 109  
Number: 00900030  
Account name: Box Hill Art Group

Remember, it's impossible to keep our art group functioning without your financial support through membership and class fees.

Finally, in the light of increasing costs, our committee voted for a minimal 50 cents increase in term fees. This means that instead of paying \$16.50 for a two hour class, the cost will now be \$17.00. That said, annual membership fees and casual class fees will remain the same.

*Ray Jones*

To our sponsors, we thank you  
**Box Hill Community Arts Centre**  
**City of Whitehorse**  
**Creative Framing** – 9888 8225,  
[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,

## An eye for realism

Sketching from life is possibly the most difficult art form to pursue when the artist is seeking accurate realism.

Correspondingly, of the many life subjects available to us, it's the human body which has been the most enduring art subject historically, if not one of the hardest to visualise accurately.

There are a number of ways to develop an image of the human.

These include focussing on the shapes created by tonal effects of light and shade on the body. Another is to focus on the muscles and bone structures of the body, while there are those who like to construct a visual image of a body from geometric shapes before refining them into a realistic form.

Whatever method is preferred, we provide a monthly opportunity to draw nude models in various poses that enhance the artist's ability to draw what is in front of them – life. We also alternate each month with male and female life models.

Each of our untutored two hour sessions of life drawing begins with five 2-minute poses in quick succession that enables the artist to practice drawing the flow of the form, thereby getting the eye and hand in sync.

Then comes two 5-minute and two 10-minute poses which allows for a little more detailed work before breaking for coffee and a chat.

Following the break, our professional life model provides two extended poses of 20 minutes each so artists can hone in on the detail of the form – the body shapes, the joints, the muscles, the way the light highlights the body giving it a three dimensional look.

Our life drawing sessions are open to beginners and accomplished artists alike, and are an important way of practicing drawing which is paramount to all paintings covering portraits, landscapes, seascapes, still life and yes, even abstracts.

The cost for each session is \$20 with boards and easels supplied. Artists must provide their own paper, charcoal or other drawing mediums. Non-members are also welcome – ring Ray on 0419 114 126 to book a place.

