

Art News

July 2018

The benefits of workshops

“Take your own artwork seriously,” was one of the numerous pieces of advice offered by Brock Q Piper at the Abstract workshop back in April this year.

Brock, a softly spoken tall bearded man with a calm manner, said that our artwork needn't be good, it needn't even be finished, but it should be interesting at least to us. He said that once we have produced a piece of art we should consider it carefully even if our inclination is to tear it up. We should try to understand what made us make the marks we did, and what mental processes led us to our design.

Brock advocated framing even small artworks temporarily so we can appreciate them, understand their potential and at the very least find the good bits in them. For his part, he spends a lot of time in the studio thinking before painting and building his paintings in layers to obtain a complexity of design.

Brock spent about two and a half hours talking about art in general and

abstraction and how to approach the topic. Then he involved us in some exercises to get us to think more deeply about ourselves. Abstraction is about understanding the subject deeply and finding ways to convey the feeling that the subject evokes in us rather than its visible manifestation. Thinking about the opposite of the feeling and alternate ways of considering the subject are also necessary. In order for light to look significant in a painting, it needs some dark as a counterpoint. Similarly our abstract paintings need some of the opposite emotion or idea to make them work.

Art only means something when considered within the prism of our own life experience so Brock suggested that we only try to paint from what you know.

Finding inspiration to develop a composition to express the subject was another of his topics, so we tore up and screwed up pieces of paper and considered the possibilities of bent pieces of wire and their shadows.

The principles of composition still apply in abstract painting and it's a good idea to see whether a painting is working better upside down or on its side.

After a quick lunch each of the 12 participants applied the morning's lessons to put some of these ideas into practice. Some very interesting pieces were produced using a variety of inspirations. There was an abstraction of the nude, some paintings based on words and some paintings of leaf shadows painted rapidly as the sun moved across the sky. There was even a painting of mossy rocks painted to abstraction and yes a painting derived from the torn and screwed paper exercise.

This was a useful workshop for me. I had no idea how abstraction came into being before this, I thought it was random patches or colour applied haphazardly and now at least I have some tools to enable me to try this again.

Eric Harvey



Art in public places wins support

In its fourth year, the Rochester Mural Festival is usually held between late February and early March.

The festival was inspired by Tasmania's International Mural Fest which has been held annually in the town of Sheffield since 2003. With established links to the Tasmanian festival, the Rochester is the only town in Victoria to run a mural festival in conjunction with Sheffield.

The festival is part of a strategy to entice travellers to stop in Rochester rather than just pass through it.

The Rochester Mural Festival engages eight finalists from far and wide in a public paint-off over 7 days. Finalists go through a selection process based on the identification of a mural theme and artistic merits.

Participating artists living outside of the Campaspe Shire are offered free accommodation.

At the completion of the paint-off, a formal judging panel identifies the

award winners, all of whom receive \$500. The overall winner's award is \$5000, with a Highly Commended or second prize being \$1000. Then there is the People's Choice award which attracts a prize of \$500

The completed murals remain on display in the Mural Park for the following 12 months, while the winning mural is acquisitive, staying permanently in the park.

Box Hill Art Group member, Jon Lam, has been a finalist in this event over the past three years and was declared the winner in 2016. A spin off from this came when Jon was commissioned to paint a mural for the local primary school in 2017. He was also invited to exhibit in the biennial (by invitation only) Rochester Fine Art exhibition. This year would be Jon's second appearance in this exhibition. He was also invited to paint in Eugowra.

Please visit the Rochester Mural Festival website of Facebook for details of next year's festival. It is well worth the experience for your effort.

Jon Lam receiving his award from MP Peter Walsh



Painting outside

Sitting beside the Yarra River at Banksia Park, Heidelberg, at a spot similar to that captured by Charles Condor's 1890 painting 'The Yarra Heidelberg: Boys Bathing', what I noticed was a scene with many more trees lining the riverbank than that depicted in his painting on a Parks Victoria sign nearby.

But the essence of the scene was still there: the winding brown river, the muddy banks, native trees, shrubs and grasses along with plenty of bird and insect life.

Six of us shared the riverbank on this sunny, warm autumn day to sketch our own interpretations of this beautiful scene. We could have been in the bush somewhere far away, the main reminder for me that we were in suburban Melbourne being the sound of traffic humming away in the background.

It was a very relaxing way to spend a Sunday morning, followed by lunch, with friends.

Robyn Jenkins



Persistence pays off

Drawing is an art, one that requires persistence. This drawing is by our own Ray Jones.

If you would like to learn and practice the art of drawing, come along to our Drawing Skills class on a Tuesday evening between 7.30pm and 9.30pm.



"Persistence": Bank of the Murray River, Yarrawonga

Exhibiting art with success

Hsin hasn't as yet taken one of our classes, nor has she delivered a workshop to our artist members, but she has successfully exhibited her original work at our Annual Art Exhibition in 2017.

A Melbourne based artist originally from Taipei in Taiwan, Hsin's main artistic focus is in acrylic floral art.

"Most of my inspiration comes from nature," says Hsin. "I am fascinated by the barks of Australian native trees, flower petals and bird's feathers."

"The falling leaves in autumn, various blooms over the four seasons and even the most common weed flowers such as dandelion or grass seed in the streets have an inner strength and message to deliver."

"I love the vivid, contrast colour combination, splashes, speckles, and the rough texture of the stroke."

Hsin was Highly Commended for her Oil and Acrylic painting Splendid-Tuberose Begonia pictured with the artist below.

More of Hsin's art can be seen at www.hsinlinart.com



Artists are strange creatures.

In whatever medium their art falls, they can't help but make it. It makes them feel good. Creating art provides a vehicle to express their feelings and make statements. The actual process of creating something visual or audible forces the creator into a soulful space of deep experiment and thought, temporarily forcing external pressures out of the consciousness. On that basis alone, making art has to be good for you.

The will to create is so strong in some artists that they can do nothing else even if it means struggling through life without the material things that others cannot do without. Most artists at one time or another make a real effort to turn their art into an income generating business, but few, comparatively speaking, succeed. However, that doesn't devalue the artist or their art.

Success alone doesn't validate art. All art has something to offer someone. At the end of the day, beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

As such, art in all its forms gives pleasure, stimulates the senses, challenges thought, changes perceptions, makes statements and beautifies the world.

Maybe artists aren't that strange after all?

Colin Stephen

What's Newz

Odd spot: Danish artist creates tomb for living Queen

Even though Queen Margrethe 11 of Denmark is still alive, Danish artist Bjorn Norgaard has created a very artistic sarcophagus for her.

Made of glass, the sarcophagus has engraved pictures of the Queen and is made of materials from Denmark's territories.

The creating artist said, "The Queen has symbolic and constitutional power in a democratic society. Therefore I chose glass. Power has become transparent, or one could say, should be."



Camberwell Art Show 2018

Celebrating 53 years as one of Australia's leading art events for established and emerging artists, the Camberwell Art Show will run from Saturday 7 July to Sunday 15 July between 10am and 5pm daily.

Held at the Swinburne University Advanced Technologies Centre situated at 427 Burwood Road Hawthorn, admission for adults is \$10; Concession is \$5; and Students under 18 years of age for free.

President's Message

Our Saturday afternoon class with Tessa Joy is proving to be a winner with her tea break demonstrations being most appreciated. The latest (over two weeks) on stretching a

canvas and making your own gesso were most interesting. We can still accommodate a few more members, so if you're free on Saturday afternoon come along and have a try.

Our Wednesday evening class with Gail Shawyer also has a number of spots available. Gail has a wealth of knowledge and teaching skills to help both beginners as well as the more experienced artists to create some very satisfying art. Gail also selects new topics for each term such as portraiture, colour mixing and landscape painting.

Our last term workshop with Brock Piper was a huge success, so people are well advised to book early for Ben Winspear's workshop in early July. Check our website for details at www.boxhillartgroup.com.au

Jan Morgan has printed new membership cards that incorporate the date and members names. This will make them more acceptable to art suppliers for discounts. Many thanks Jan.

It was a beautiful autumn morning for our Sketch Day in the Queen Victoria Gardens (opposite the Art Gallery). Eight members attended. The gardens were full of visitors enjoying the sunshine and the picturesque setting. A lovely relaxing morning. This is a great opportunity to meet members from other classes and to develop your drawing/painting skills

After over 30 years of tutoring for the Box Hill Art Group, Paul McDonald Smith AO, held his last Wednesday morning class on 23 May before relocating to Geelong. A remarkable record by any standard and we wish

Paul the very best in his future ventures.

Taking Paul's place, we welcome well known artist Eleanor Griffiths. Eleanor brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to this role having been trained classically in tonal painting and being fluent in a number of media. Eleanor is a member of AGRA and past president of the Waverley Arts Society. She is happy to take beginners, intermediate and advanced students.

Ray Jones



Term dates

We teach you how to create, draw and paint during the following terms.

Term 3	Monday 16 July to Saturday 22 September 2018
Term 4	Monday 8 October to Saturday 15 December 2018

Art Events

<p>Portraiture Workshop Presented by Ben Winspear for those artists wanting to improve their portraiture skill!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saturday 7 July 2018 Check www.boxhillartgroup.com.au for details
<p>Sketching together plus lunch Enjoy being out and about on a Sunday with fellow artists sketching what you see</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 July 2018 – National Gallery of Victoria, St Kilda Road, Melbourne 5 August 2018 Check www.boxhillartgroup.com.au for details 9 September 2018 Check www.boxhillartgroup.com.au for details
<p>Untutored Life Drawing Sketch the human form with live models on selected Wednesdays between 1pm and 3pm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18 July 2018 8 August 2018 12 September 2018
<p>66th Art Exhibition & Sale Be creative, start painting and prepare to put your talent on show</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Friday 19 October to Sunday 21 October 2018 Check www.boxhillartgroup.com.au for details

Contact

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To our sponsors, we thank you

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