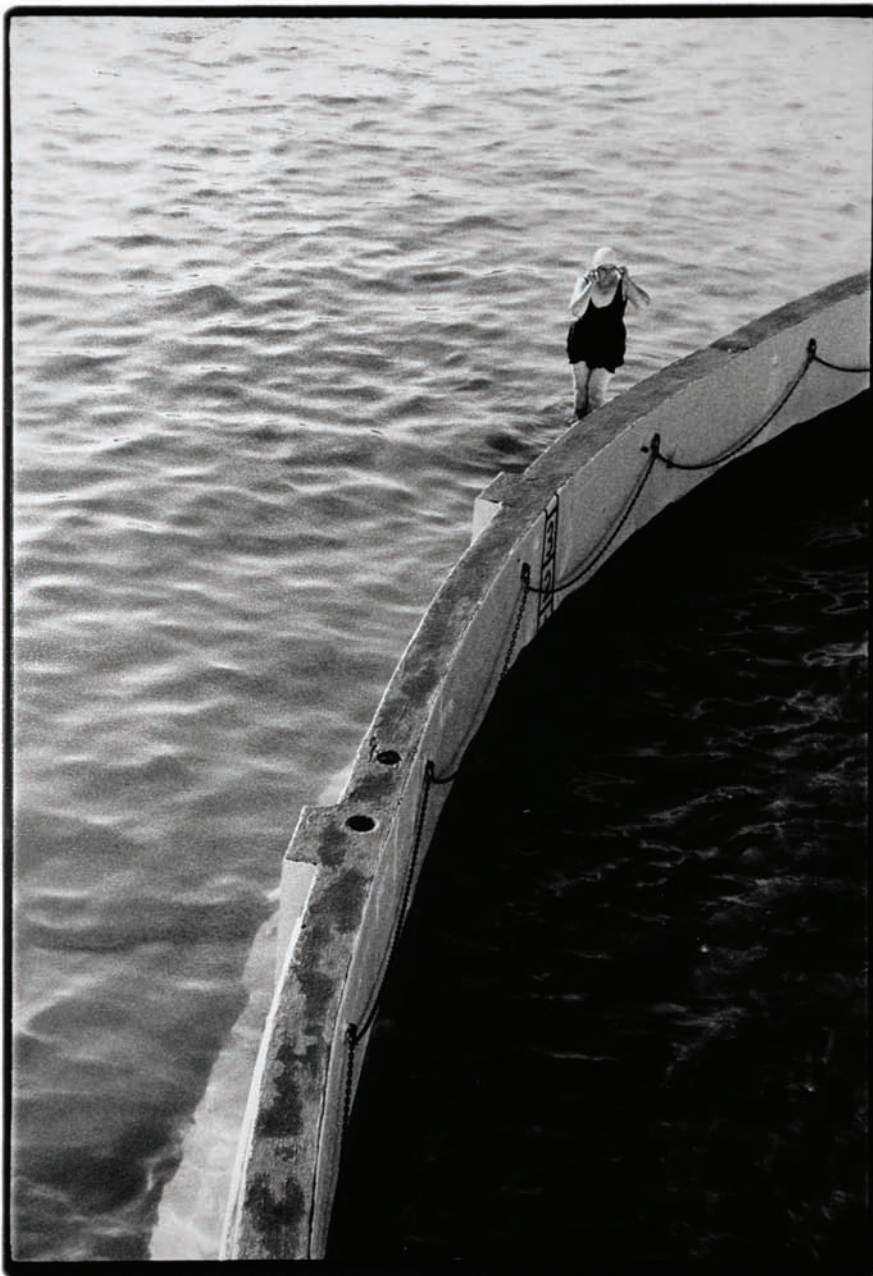


muswellbrook regional arts centre

Newsletter Vol 1 No 4 October 2005

Photography, Local Art and Ceramic Awards 23 October to 27 November



Stephen Blanch *The Bathers Act II* 2004 gelatin silver print
Winner of the acquisitive Muswellbrook Photographic Award 2004
(Muswellbrook Shire Collection)

The Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre will once again host the annual Muswellbrook Local Art and Ceramic Awards along with the prestigious Muswellbrook Photographic Award in October.

The exhibition will be officially opened by Councillor John Colvin, Mayor of Muswellbrook Shire at 6.30pm on Saturday 22 October (\$5.00 for adults including refreshments) and will run until Sunday 27 November.

Adjudicators for this year will include Debbie Abrahams, Director, Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery (local art and ceramics) along with Stephen Blanch (photography).

Both awards provide a great opportunity for local and regional artists to put their work out in the community across a variety of mediums. The open section of the Photography Award adds immensely to the development of the Arts Center's collection with two works to be acquired from the exhibition.

Both exhibitions will run until Sunday 27 November and will be on display with selected works from the Max Watters Collection.

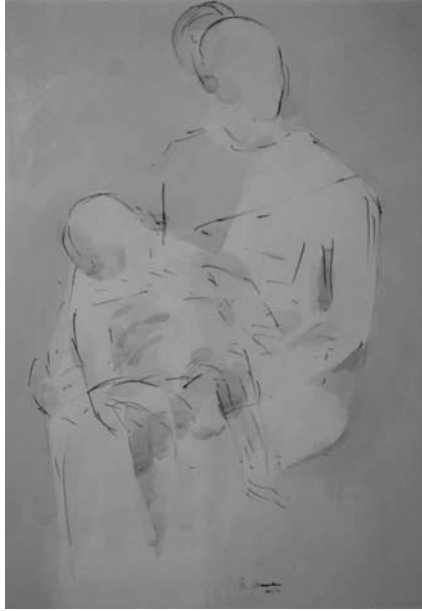
Unseen Treasures - selected works from the collection

As part of the ongoing exhibition program at the Arts Centre, the 2006 calendar will commence in January with an exhibition of works on paper from the Collection. Many of the proposed works have not have been seen for some time. Some of them were acquired by donations in the past and they arrived unframed. A special conservation and reframing program has been initiated, however, to provide for these drawings and prints to be shown to their best advantage in generous, archival mounts and museum quality frames. This program has allowed for a greater scope in presenting exhibitions from the collection and this suite of proposed works contains a number of names very familiar in the Australian art world. Of particular note will be two small etchings of portrait studies of young boys by the 2002 Archibald Prize Winner, Cherry Hood. The artist donated the works, *Untitled No 3* and *Untitled No 7* to the Collection as a direct result of her having been impressed by the way in which exhibitions were being presented at the Arts Centre. They are both typical examples of the artist's continuing study of the concepts of youth, beauty and innocence.

On a similar note, Cameron Sparks *Mother and Child*, which won the drawing section of the 1968 Open Art Prize, was specially remounted and reframed for *The State of Art: Peace*, a touring exhibition which consisted of selected works, on the theme of "peace" from the Collections of the Regional Galleries of New South Wales. It is a very competent and interesting pen and wash study which demonstrates economy of line coupled with sensitive applications of minimal areas of soft watercolour washes. It continues the great traditional theme of the "Madonna and Child" in Western Art and it has parallels in works by such artists as Mary Cassatt, Henri Matisse and John Passmore.

Another donation, by Hal Missingham, of a linocut by the Lithuanian born artist, Henry Salkauskas, demonstrates a boldness of approach and a sense of drama. The new frame and mount certainly increases its presence. *Untitled* and *Composition* another donated work by the same artist are perfect examples of the technique of linocut and will be of particular interest to both the general public and students of art alike.

Other artists in this selection will include: Fred Cress, Garry Jones, Brett Whiteley, Warren Breninger, Colin Lanceley, Manuel Ruiz Pipo, Tony Coleing and Birgitte Hansen-Chawner.



Cameron Sparks *Mother and Child* 1968
pen and wash



Henry Salkauskas *Untitled* 1976 linocut



Cherry Hood *Untitled No. 7* 2002 etching

Manager's Report

October brings the annual Muswellbrook Local Art and Ceramic Award along with the Muswellbrook Photographic Award and the usual busy time associated with these events. The arts centre has achieved a great deal in raising our internal operations to industry standards over the past nine months, including improvements to our "front of house", lighting and work areas. We have also upgraded our collection catalogue and rephotographed a large proportion of the artworks. While this has taken time it all adds to how we manage and get the best out of our collection.

Work has also been undertaken on stabilising the air-conditioning system to what is known as "museum standard". This process will ultimately enable us to host exhibitions of national significance from some of the larger institutions around Australia.

Importantly, this period of detailed work will now free our staff to focus more on conservation and public program events such as visiting speakers, arts workshops and the development of our long term exhibition program.

The 2006 exhibition program is almost finalised with a number of important exhibitions booked throughout the year. We commence the program in February with *Primavera*, the MCA's annual and highly-regarded "talent spotting" art event. *Primavera* features work by Australian artists 35 and under and this year will include artists from remote areas of Australia alongside those from urban centres. 2006 will mark the first year that this exhibition has toured regional areas and Muswellbrook will be the first venue to host this important exhibition.

Other highlights for 2006 will include *Utopia: A Picture Story* featuring batiks made in the 1980s by Aboriginal women from the Utopia community in Central Australia, and *Regarding Retro: Reanimations of the Preloved* which examines the work of artists who have embraced the discarded object in society. The NAIDOC Week exhibition held in July this year will now be a major fixture in our exhibition calendar. We will also be continuing our strong relationship with the staff at the Newcastle Region Art Gallery and negotiating the loan of more travelling exhibitions following the success of *From the Streets of Paris*.

Congratulations to three of our volunteer group who successfully attended a recent Responsible Service of Alcohol course, organised by the Muswellbrook Rotary Club. In December 2003 changes to liquor laws were implemented by the State Government requiring that people who are to serve alcohol be trained accordingly. This training opportunity means that the Arts Centre will conform to the requirements of the Liquor Act.

The Arts Centre would like to extend its thanks to Bev Gill for her voluntary effort in making up a large curtain for the community room. This addition now makes the presentation of objects much more effective and professional and is greatly appreciated.

On a final note the staff of the Arts centre would like to thank all our volunteers for a magnificent job during 2005. Their efforts at openings and with administrative tasks help to raise the overall standards of service at the Arts Centre. We would also like to thank all those who patronised our exhibitions and events during the year and wish you all the best and we look forward to seeing you in 2006.

Bruce Tindale
Arts Centre Manager

SCONE ADFAS - COMING EVENT

**11 October - St Petersburg 1703
to the Revolution**

6.30pm Arts & Craft Hall, Kingdon
Street, Scone

Visitors are very welcome at \$20 (includes light supper)

ART CLASSES WITH MAX WATTERS

Fridays - Scone Youth Club, Susan Street 3 -
6pm Tel: 02-6545 2203.

Tuesdays - Aberdeen Community Hall 7 - 9pm.

Saturdays - Aberdeen Community Hall 2 - 4pm.

Mondays - Wybong Hall 6pm contact Judy 02-
6547 8189

Artist Profile - Gilbert Hermon

Walking into Gilbert Hermon's studio is like entering the proverbial Aladdin's Cave of treasures. It's also like entering the artist's brain – the history of Gilbert's development over the past three years (like memories), various partly finished works (like half formed ideas) all amid the detritus of art making (like random thoughts).

As you may have guessed Gilbert is extremely prolific. It is only three years since he began to paint and draw and the works are piled up on every surface, stacked in every corner, hanging on every inch of wall. So much so that it looks as though Gilbert has to wiggle and squirm his way in to reach his work bench and yet this looks and feels right. Gilbert and his work are one - joined by his passion for exploring both art and himself.

What started as a hobby has grown to become a vocation. "Each step inspired me to go to the next step and to improve on the previous work" explains Gilbert. He first started drawing and was encouraged by friends, friends who suggested he meet with Max Watters. Since starting in Max's classes



Muswellbrook artist Gilbert Hermon



Gilbert Hermon *Specter* 2005 oil & plaster casts on calico (work in progress - courtesy of the artist)

at the Pot House in Muswellbrook Gilbert has also become a regular at Max's weekend gatherings where ideas and encouragement flow freely. "I thank Max for getting me this far" says Gilbert, who acknowledges the support that Max Watters offers to artists in the Upper Hunter. That support was justified when Gilbert was Highly Commended last year in the Banool Conservation Prize for Painting (Scone Art Prize) at Scone.

Gilbert's work is often an art of ideas. He began drawing the real world but very quickly his pieces became "very personal explorations of life itself as seen from the inside". His earliest 'paintings' (Gilbert draws no distinction between techniques or styles and yet has quickly developed a personal and very recognizable language) were largely collages, constructions in two dimensions, often inspired by reading the Bible. Always interested in the landscape (a lovely and quite traditional little landscape hangs in pride of place in one of the few clear wall spaces in his studio and which is his earliest painting) this soon became a featured subject. But rigorously examined through the eyes of the thinker influenced by what goes on around him, Gilbert's landscapes captured the "yin/yang" of the local debate over coal

mining and development and the traditionally rural life style of the farmer and more extremely the views of the environmentalist. It was one of these pictures that was so commended in the Scone Art Prize.

Gilbert doesn't stand still though and his most recent works are pulling in two new directions. On the one hand he is testing out extremely abstract material whilst a new figurative element appears in paintings that also reveal a hitherto hidden humour. This is not only evident in the images of fallen angels and devil's daughters but also in the word play of the titles (titles have always been a significant part of Gilbert's work) which bring a much welcome playfulness to his work which has on occasion in the past been described as "deep and black" says Gilbert "but painting is like life, every step is a challenge and sometimes it's hard just to get through".

Gilbert has immersed himself in art, viewing

exhibitions and pouring over books and journals. He has become particularly interested in contemporary Australian art and especially the work of Richard Larter, Euan Macleod and the Muswellbrook born artist James Clifford. He takes his studies seriously as a way to further his work absorbing and learning new techniques and stylistic devices. At the same time Gilbert has been a familiar face around town volunteering for the Samaritans and here at the Arts Centre where his efforts in the kitchen on opening nights have become almost legendary.

Gilbert was invited to exhibit in the Exhibition 'I Can Do That' at MRAC and has shown his work in a number of competitions at Moree, Singleton, Scone and Muswellbrook. Currently his work can be seen at Fiddlesticks (Shamrock Hotel) Restaurant, Muswellbrook.

Opening night faces at *From the Streets of Paris*, *The Photographs of Glenn Sloggett* and *The Lyric Landscape*



Penelope Young with Allan and Evelyn Doak enjoying *From the Streets of Paris*



Mike Colreavy, General Manager, Muswellbrook Shire with Max Watter's painting *Bearami House*



Ingrid Suijkerbuijk



Roger Skinner, guest speaker at the opening of the Glenn Sloggett photography exhibition



Loraine Skinner

The Pot House

When you enter the Pot House in Lions Park (Lower Brook St. Muswellbrook) you enter a welcoming and nurturing environment dedicated to the ceramic arts. What a wonderful facility this is to have here in the Upper Hunter.

The Pot House has been supporting and fostering local potters for the past forty years as well as being instrumental in establishing and continuing to sponsor the ceramic prizes which are now part of the Muswellbrook Open Art Prize and the Muswellbrook Local Art & Ceramic Awards here at the Arts Centre.



The facilities at the Pot House include work spaces, tools, electric throwing wheels, slip casting moulds and three magnificent kilns. There is also an inspiring collection of ceramic works by members, former members and the various tutors who have conducted workshops over the years, as well as an enormous resource library of books and journals on all aspects of potting. A kitchen allows for on site refreshments. The members sell their work at a number of public sales during the year.

Membership is open to anyone over the age of eighteen and costs \$40.00 per year. Materials and firings are extra but the materials can be purchased through the Pot House. The Pot House meets every Tuesday between 9.30 am and 2.30 pm and any one interested is welcome to drop in. The Pot House does close briefly over the Christmas period. For further information please contact the President Betty Snow on 02 6543 3259.

RED CROSS

CHRISTMAS DISPLAY

Muswellbrook Red Cross is again holding a Christmas display at the Arts Centre and we are hoping that you will enter a Christmas Tree or Wreath display.

Entry forms and guidelines are available at the Arts Centre and must be returned by 17 November 2005.

Official opening at 7pm Friday 2 December and the display is up until Sunday 11 December

\$1100 in prizes to be won.

EMAIL?

Would you prefer to receive the Arts Centre newsletter and invitations by email?

If so, please contact us on 02-6549 3880 and we will amend our records to allow this to happen.

Orchestra 143

(a chamber orchestra from Sydney) at the Convent of Mercy Chapel, Queen Street, Singleton, featuring works by Haydn, Handel, Weber and a trombone concerto by Wagenseil.

Sunday 6th November at 2pm

Tickets (include afternoon tea): \$20 adults, \$15 concession, \$2 school students.

Information and reserved seating (optional but recommended!): Sr Monica Sinclair, ph 4965 4031 or consing@hunterlink.net.au

Tickets also available at the door

Artist Profile - Teresa Byrne

Teresa Byrne was born at Epsom, England. She migrated to Australia in 1981 and lives in the Upper Hunter near Wingen. Her early successes include winning both BBC and ITV Independent School competitions and her O level painting was selected to be hung at London University. Her art studies at the Epsom School of Art in 1970 were followed by four year's intensive study in painting and drawing with Nerina Simi in Florence, Italy. This classical and academic training gave Teresa a sound basis for her future art making practice. Her technical ability to render form, create the illusion of space and portray the constantly changing effects of light on her subjects, is enviable.

It is also a particular advantage when her wide range of subject matter is taken into account. Awards, exhibitions and commissions have included the whole gamut of still life, landscape, figure and portrait painting and drawing in an equally diverse selection of materials. Teresa has demonstrated a skill and confidence in all of them, clearly apparent when looking at her history of achievements.

Her work was included in many of the legendary Von Bertouch Galleries *Collector's Choice* exhibitions between 1985 and 2002. Art patrons would queue for days to get the chance to buy and to be continually invited to submit was a strong indication of her



Teresa Byrne *Iris* 2005 pastel on paper (courtesy of the artist)



Wingen based artist, Teresa Byrne

popularity. Other exhibitions at the Von Bertouch Galleries during this period, including a shared show with John Coburn.

As a practising Upper Hunter artist, Teresa's work was included in a specially curated, invited artists exhibition at the Maitland City Art Gallery in 1997. The Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre has also enjoyed Teresa's work in similar "Invited Artists" theme shows in the past 15 years.

Her ability to capture animals, in paintings and drawings, has seen Teresa commissioned to paint the NSW Horse of the Year Award for five consecutive years (1984 to 1989), paint the 1997 Champion Bull, Cow and Dog of the Royal Easter Show for the Heritage Society of the Royal Agriculture Society of NSW and, in 1998, the Champion Alpaca and Merino Ram. Famous horses painted include Kingston Town, Strawberry Road, Emancipation, Red Anchor, Twiglet and Lonhro.

Teresa has also been hung in the Portia Geach Memorial Award in 1997 and 2004. This award is for portraits by women artists resident in Australia of a person distinguished in art, letters or science. In 1998, Teresa was awarded 2nd prize in the Modern Figurative section at the Sydney Royal Easter Show Art Exhibition.

Studies with Esther Bellis and Trevor Weekes in sculpture has been a direct extension of Teresa's interest in the portrayal of form. Teresa is represented in private collections in Australia, United Kingdom, Ireland, United States of America, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, the Philippines and Italy.

News From the Volunteers - by Madonna Polzin

AN EXHIBITION TO REMEMBER

As you might already know St James School holds a art exhibition each year to raise funds for the school and what a great exhibition it was this year. The paintings were well hung and the organisers went to a lot of trouble finding accessories to complement the subjects painted. Art and craft were also displayed which proved to be very successful, as was the art it self.

The organisers of the exhibition are to be congratulated on all their hard work and dedication. They put on an excellent exhibition and showed their respect to the artists themselves. The organisers sent out a letter of thanks with a picture of the artists work as it was hung in the exhibition. A great idea and one that is appreciated by the artists who are not able to attend the evening. Looking forward to next year's exhibition, no doubt it will even be bigger and better yet again. Well done St James exhibition organisers.

MURAL MURAL ON THE WALL

As you go around the area to various local groups etc you may just see some fantastic work. Quite a few have done murals depicting what is in their area as it is today and in some cases like McCully's gap group what used to be once there. The McCully's Gap group painted theirs on 4 large portable canvas frames. It is currently housed on the stage of the McCully's Gap hall. The mural shows quite a bit of the history of the local area like the old fire station and truck. A tremendous effort by all involved, and a wonderful recording of history of the area. The Scone Youth Group have their own mural as well and Max Watters was there to help draw it up and help the kids paint it. It is a bright depiction of their area and show case of their talents. Something they should be proud of in years to come.

Another mural is in the Scone Nursing home. The management asked Max Watters to paint a mural depicting the local area. He was only too happy to oblige. Max organized a drawing for their approval and was soon painting with what he liked to call his dwarf helpers. The reaction of the residents was amazing. They all seemed to relate, telling us about the houses they lived in or about the school house and how they went to school in one just like it.

Mar Mu, (a nick name), a resident caught all our hearts is a lady who came to Australia for a better life, one that has agreed with her, as she is 99 years young. She looked forward to coming around to watch us paint and would always clap us as we finished a section and tell us how wonderful she thought the painting was. The mural is now complete and there will be an official opening ceremony. The artists involved took pictures as they went along and will present a picture diary to the nursing home on the day for future residents and families to enjoy.

Madonna Polzin

Red Cross Christmas Display

\$1100 in prizes

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Entry forms are available from the Red Cross or the Arts Centre and must be returned by 17 November 2005.

The official opening is at 7.30pm Friday 2 December and the display will be open to the public until Sunday 11 December.

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Corner of Bridge & Market Streets
PO Box 122 Muswellbrook NSW 2333
Tel: 02-6549 3880 Fax: 02-6549 3886

Email: artscentre@muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au Web: www.muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au
Opening hours: 10am - 5pm Tuesday to Friday, 10am - 1pm Saturday, 2pm - 5pm Sunday

