

ArtSpace GALLERY

Newsletter # 27

January 2018

NEWS

As well as Meg Viney-Bell's wonderful exhibition currently showing at ArtSpace, we are also featuring works by **Sofie Dieu**, a Sydney-based artist inspired by the Gippsland coast.

Artworks by Sydney Artist Sofie Dieu

Born in France Sofie Dieu is a culturally and linguistically diverse artist, working in a variety of mediums.

Multi-art prizes and award finalist, Sofie's work was included Hornsby Art Prize Sydney North Art Prize, Ravenswood Australian Women's Art Prize and others.

She recently took part in the Great Alpine Artist in Residence program in Victoria.

'On The Great Alpine Road'

Long walks, river wandering and stone reading led Sofie to talk about East Gippsland and its people living in rural Victoria. Also with a strong affiliation with nature, dry land and stiff winds drove Sofie to '*call for rain*' by painting black clouds heavy with rain and storm. Sofie's intense images create her book as an ode to celebrate each resident of Tambo Valley and acknowledge their hardship. Copies of the book are available at ArtSpace.



Bye-Bye Jess!

Dear Jess, who has been a wonderful addition to the ArtSpace team, is finishing up on Monday 29th January after many happy months with us. Jess has been an outstanding ambassador for information and technical expertise. We are sorry to see you go, Jess, and wish you all the best.

Tech Stuff

Don't forget you can find ArtSpace on Facebook and Instagram for all the latest.

ArtSpace Gallery Wonthaggi 1 Bent Street Wonthaggi Vic 3995
T 03 5672 5767 E artspacenquiries@gmail.com W artspacewonthaggi.com.au

EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS

ArtSpace GALLERY Wonthaggi

EXHIBITION INVITATION

Current exhibition 21 Jan – 19 Feb

SIPAPU

Opening Sunday 28 Jan 2-4pm - ALL WELCOME

An exhibition by renowned Gippsland Artist Meg Viney – Bell

In a strong affinity with Nature, Meg is inspired by Native American culture and **The Sipapu** as well Japanese culture and **Shibori**.

She artistically combines and links the materials and processes of these two very different cultures.

Her aesthetic is captivated in her Sipapu installations of ceramic, cotton and bamboo thread, dyed with indigo and Shibori dyed linen.

An intriguing and reverent exhibition of these most unique artworks. An experience .

SIPAPU- Bamboo, Indigo dyed cotton thread, Shibori dyed linen



ArtSpace Gallery Wonthaggi
The Centennial Centre [1 Bent Street,](#)
[Wonthaggi](#)

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MEET OUR FEATURED ARTIST ... MEG VINEY-BELL



Artist Statement

My practise involves a relationship with Nature's momentum – I find something wonderful in gathering her cast-offs, and, through a number of simple processes, transforming them. The cast-offs that would otherwise decompose are recycled to become new materials, which have a life of their own – thus the beauty inherent in the plant fibre and subtly concealed by the living plant is revealed as new form. Pulp, for paper making, for example.

Years ago, whilst living and studying in U.S.A, I was strongly influenced by Native American Culture with its gentle approach to the world, its belief that spirit is inherent in all things, and with the attitude that 'less is best' - the ultimate statement of conservation of the environment.

The central concern of my work is 'containment' - the assurance of emotional, spiritual and physical security. Vessels refer to the concept that all living entities emerge from a vessel that has self and nurtured the gestating form from contraception to emergence - be it an egg, cocoon, a uterus, a bud, a seedpod, a shell - the reality is Universal - the inference, the assurance of containment.

Article from Bass Coast Post

Stop reading right now. Look outside your window and look at nature's cast-offs. Look at the eucalyptus leaves that have dropped from your native gum trees now stressed with the heat. Look at the pine needles that have made a silent carpet under the canopy. And now take your eyes to the cauliflower leaves you have peeled off the head before cooking your dinner and the rhubarb leaves that lie discarded in the organic waste bin. I want you to look at them with fresh eyes. I want you to look at them with the eyes of Meg Viney. Because, for Meg, these cast-offs are the start of a journey of creating the most exquisite forms.

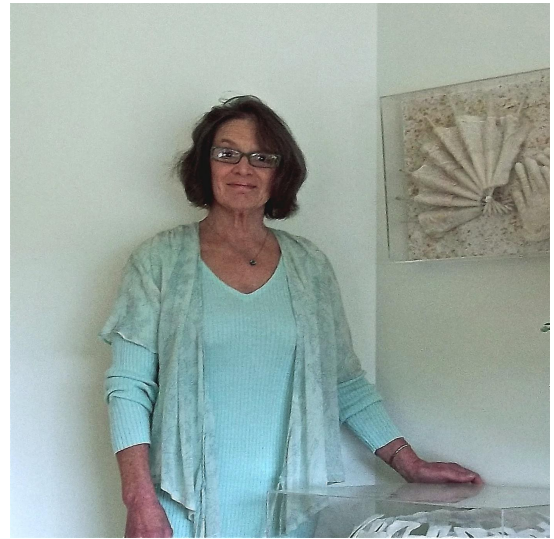


Meg is constantly searching for inspiration from Nature. Nothing escapes her attention as she contemplates how any fibrous material can be re-shaped and used for one of her wondrous, ethereal creations.

Meg was born in a time when career choices were limited and education for women unusual. When she was born the term fibre artist did not exist. Working with fibres at that time was to knit or weave functional pieces – scarves and jumpers. But then in the 1970s, spearheaded by women like Meg who had a traditional understanding of the use of fibre in the domestic sphere, fibre art came to its own where works could be figurative or fanciful prioritising aesthetic value over utility. Meg's work was immediately in

demand, now found in collections around the world including Dame Elisabeth Murdoch's and has delighted and confounded a multitude. Each of her pieces has a story behind it, some confronting social issues, others simply expressing joy. Many of her works are figurative, but in her eyes, she sees them as vessels, as containers of life, of love, of one another.

Before meeting Meg Viney, I did my research and found a constant reference to 'containment' being central to her work. Her description was of it being a safe place out of which to emerge -- the assurance of emotional, spiritual and physical security. And yet when I looked at the dictionary definition of 'containment' my Google search provided, "the action of keeping something harmful under control or within limits".



And so when I met this vivacious, energetic woman who seems constantly on the move, I found it hard to reconcile the dictionary definition with what I saw. And then as I learned more about her, I realised that when Meg started creating her art in the 1970s in California, which her new husband had compelled her to travel to and settle, it was her way of escaping from the controlling, shallow, materialistic, narcissistic world she found herself in.

She would escape into 'a zone' - of comfort and safety, totally immersed in creation. Some of her work is almost disturbing as there is no place for the figures to speak, no mouths for words to form, silent witnesses to a foreign land, and then with others there are many mouths - mouths with which to heal, to succour.

Her latest exhibition, *Sipapu*, derives its existence from her love of tribal cultures, and in this case in particular, the Hopi people of Arizona.

The name Hopi is a shortened form of *Hopituh Shi-nu-mu* which means Peaceful People.



The Hopi's belief system involves a state of total reverence and respect for all things, and to live in accordance with the instructions of *Maasaw*, the Creator or Caretaker of Earth. The Hopi observe their traditional ceremonies for the benefit of the entire world.

The Hopi Indians believe that their ancient ancestors were underground dwellers living in kivas, and were 'born' when a Shrike (bird with sharp beak) pecked a hole in the earth's surface. They changed from their lizard like state and were able to emerge as the First Peoples of the Earth. *Sipapu* is the Hopi word for this small hole in the floor of a kiva.

Whilst the Hopi created above ground dwellings, the *shaman* (spiritual leader) remained in the kiva in which a fire was constantly tended. A tribesperson wishing to see

the shaman would descend through this hole into the smoke filled kiva. The descent through this *Sipapu* symbolised the transition from the secular to the sacred world. And emergence symbolised a new life.

The Sipapu became, for Meg living in the heart of California in the 1980s, another symbol for containment and so has continued with this theme up to the present day.

But it is not only the Hopi people that Meg is influenced by in her exhibition but also the Japanese culture. Through this culture Meg believes that it is her role as an artist to bring the essence of all materials into existence. She says, "it is like a midwife ensuring the safe emergence of a child."

Shibori is the Japanese art of dyeing with a traditional Indigo bath with the earliest known example dating from the 8th century.

There are an infinite number of ways an artist can bind, stitch, fold, twist, or compress material for Shibori, and each way results in very different patterns which is multiplied by the type of material used. So 'accidental changes' can occur and are welcomed by Meg as she seeks a perfect combination for the materials she uses.

Today Meg finds sanctuary in Koonwarra with her beloved Bill and her cavoodle which is almost as animated as she is. She has one big project in front of her, and then she says, "I think that might be my last." I look across at her and we both know she is kidding herself.

You can find Meg's work at ArtSpace anytime or through her website:

www.megviney.com.



Sipapu

In Native American culture, the sacred and the secular are closely linked – one informs the other. Most Native American tongues have no word for art as an independent concept - there exists a high level of unconscious affinity with Nature.

The Hopi Indians believed that they were underground dwellers, and were 'born' when a Shrike (bird with sharp beak) pecked a hole in the earth's surface and they were able to emerge.

It is understandable that they lived in *kivas*, underground dwellings which were lit by fire. In time, they also created above ground dwellings. However, the *shaman* (spiritual leader) remained in the *kiva*. A tribesperson wishing to see the shaman would descend through this hole, which, due to the fire, was smoke-filled. The descent through this *SIPAPU* symbolised the transition from the secular to the sacred world. And emergence symbolised a new life.

The Sipapu became, for me, a wonderful symbol for containment, a concept central to my work. One is held and nurtured, close to Nature.

'Native American art celebrates the continuity of a land mass and man's absorption of its features.....

By subtly altering, decorating, formalising nature's materials, the perception of the quality and role of plant or animal life as man's spiritual accompaniment is enhanced....the art evokes a living treasure: nature. Its aesthetic draws us close to the earth.' *

The first time I created a Sipapu' was in the 1980's. Over the ensuing years, I have dipped into this form in one way or another. It is now time to express it as an installation, with multiple media and a variety of scale.

I have also been influenced by Japanese culture, with the belief that all materials have an essence, which it is the artist's task to bring, in almost a meditative way, into existence, akin to a midwife ensuring the safe emergence of a child.

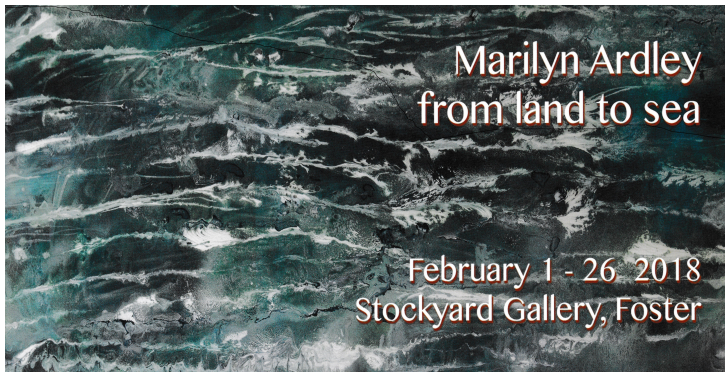
Shibori is the Japanese art of dyeing with a traditional Indigo bath, achieving pattern and design via a variety of techniques, with the attendant 'accidental' changes that are an integral part of Shibori.

Whilst these two cultures are very different, both have a strong affinity with Nature, treating it with a certain reverence that captivates my aesthetic sensibility.

Meg Viney-Bell



NOTICES



Marilyn Ardley
from land to sea

February 1 - 26, 2018
Stockyard Gallery, Foster



Stockyard Gallery, cnr Main Street & McDonald Street Foster, invites you to:

from land to sea
an exhibition by
Marilyn Ardley

Thursday 1st February
until Monday 26th February, 2018.

Gallery hours 10:00am - 4:00pm daily.

www.stockyardgalleryandshop.org.au
stockyardgallery@dcsi.net.au
ph 03 5682 1125
contact Marilyn 0478 034 881



Scott McFadden



Robert Barron



Susan Hall

Gallery 1
Ecology

February 2 - March 2
Opening
February 4 @ 2pm



Gallery 2 - Beautiful Bones by Kerry Strauss and Robyn Cerretti Feb 2 - Mar 2 Opening Feb 4 @ 2pm

ART EXHIBITION
@ INVERLOCH COMMUNITY HUB

Come along to explore Jacquie Chambers' artistic representation of our beautiful coastal lifestyle.

16 A'BECKETT ST, INVERLOCH

9AM - 5PM, MONDAY - FRIDAY
FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2018

Jacquie chambers is an artist, based at Surf Beach on Phillip Island in Victoria.

She has been drawing since she was a child and in the last few years discovered her love for painting. Her work is predominately acrylic paintings on canvas, inspired by nature, surfing, and the coastal lifestyle.

Jacquie welcomes you to her 'Coastal native art gallery' where she has a range of original paintings, prints, gift cards and post cards for sale.

Commissions also welcome.

COASTAL NATIVE ART GALLERY
7 GLEN ST, SURF BEACH
PHILLIP ISLAND VIC 3922
OPEN WEEKENDS OR BY APPOINTMENT

Artist's Wall
Seasonal Celebrities by Carolyn Johns



84 Whiteaw Street, Meeniyah, Victoria
Open 10 - 4 (closed Tuesday)
Ph: 5664 0101
www.meeniyahartgallery.com.au





Hi,

It's a great New Year and I'm hoping to start it with a Wood Engraving print workshop in February at my Koonwarra Studio.

I need a minimum of 4, and a maximum of 8 students to enrol in a 'One-Day Workshop' [9.30-4pm], to learn the basics of this centuries old printing technique.

I'm thinking 24th Feb is a good Saturday to try for...

You'll get all your materials and tools provided, with notes to take away, and plenty of printing time & help.

Tea & coffee is on tap with a light lunch provided, and a good sense of humour is always an advantage.

The price is only \$100 all inclusive. If you have friends to bring, then make a group booking and have some fun.

Right now I need sufficient interest & numbers to book the event.



I hope you, or someone you know, might be interested in joining me for a fun day.

E-mail me back, or call 0439 303 244 for a chat about



2018 biennial **NORTH QUEENSLAND** ceramic awards

Townsville

The entry form can be accessed in a multitude of ways this year!

DIGITAL FORM:
<https://gallerieservices.typeform.com/to/n9IUH4>

PRINTABLE/FORM:
<https://tinyurl.com/Ceramics2018>

Or you may request for a printed form to be sent to you by contacting (07) 4773 8871 / pinnacles@townsville.qld.gov.au

The biennial North Queensland Ceramic Awards has long aimed to increase public exposure to a high standard of pottery from around the nation. A showcase for both well-known and emerging artists, this competition displays the diversity of ceramic art currently being produced in Australia.

The *City of Townsville Art Collection Award* of \$10,000 continues to provide both opportunity for artists to become a part of one of the nation's most significant ceramic collections, as well as ensuring the continued growth of this important subsection of the City of Townsville Art Collection.

Selected works will be on display at Pinnacles Gallery from 27 July - 16 September 2018 and will be eligible in various categories beyond the major *City of Townsville Art Collection Award*.

KEY DATES

Applications Close | Friday 30 March 2018
 Artists Advised of Selection | Monday 30 April 2018
 Delivery of Art Works | 9am - 4pm Friday 20 July 2018
 Announcement and Official Opening | Friday 27 July 2018
 Exhibition Dates | 27 July - 16 September 2018
 Collection of Artworks | 9am - 4pm, Tuesday 18 September 2018