

ArtSpace

W o n t h a g g i

Newsletter #16

April 2016

News

It's been a warm Autumn so far with trees barely starting to change colour and crazy zucchinis still flowering – well at least in my garden!

In March we were delighted to host the exhibition 'Life in a Tin Can' by Janice Orchard. Her works, lovely in themselves, were complemented by the display of her art notebooks showing the development of some pieces and other jottings.

We were fortunate to have Brian Paynter MP, Member for Bass, open the exhibition with an inspiring and entertaining talk congratulating Janice and encouraging artists more broadly. Janice told stories about the creation of some of her works – including the one about painting on the beach up north and eventually realising that the log swimming towards her was not actually a log....

More photos on page 5



Events and Exhibitions

- 9th April Mandy Gunn – Creative Waste Workshop at Arc Yinnar . 10am to 4pm. Cost \$125. contact 03 51631310
- May: **Creative Gippsland :**
- 5 - 30 May Mandy Gunn at ArtSpace Gallery – *'Once Was Now Is Exhibition'*
- 15 May Mandy Gunn - Exhibition Opening and Artist's Talk – ArtSpace 2-4p.m.
- 28 May Susan Hall - **Polychromatic workshop - screen printing on fabric. \$65 11am to 4pm Meeniyann Gallery**
Meg Viney Bell. Ph. 5664243
- 29 May Reading, Author Talk/Discussion and Book Signing by Pauline Mackinnon - *'Treasures from the Tide'* ArtSpace
Other Creative Gippsland events - TBA
- 31 May to 27 June: **Winter Solstice** Exhibition and Competition at ArtSpace Gallery
Opening Sunday 5th June – 2pm to 4pm.....more information and application forms to come!
- 20 Sep–17 Oct: **Arts-Print** – Print Exhibition at ArtSpace Gallery

Featured Artist – Deb Watson

In her role as a Human Resources Professional, Deb often contemplates whether it is nature or nurture that defines a person. In most cases she comes to the conclusion that it is probably a bit of both. Certainly that is the case for her. Growing up in a house surrounded with a huge range of craft projects of her mother's she probably didn't have a chance of being anything but artistic

I am sure you can picture the scene – macramé hanging baskets, embroidered cushions and a whole bunch of hand painted china, mostly featuring cats.

Mary Watson's cats...



Deb's mother had studied art but Deb studied science throughout high school and into university. She was one of those gifted children who didn't have to study to sail through her high school years. When she went on to study at University she thought she could do the same thing and arriving at the city after a limitations of a small country town upbringing she decided she should enjoy all the temptations of the city. She made it through first year but in second year she failed ... and got kicked out!

So she went to try out her luck in producing art pieces. She was interested in design and her first project was a series of designs which her mother then painted onto a set of ceramic goblets for her brother's 21st. In her 20s she was making earrings and necklaces out of polymer clay for a shop in Melbourne. Remember the old Southern Cross Hotel? If you do you will remember the souvenir shop at the bottom. She would turn out her jewellery based on Australian animals and birds and sell them for \$6 to the store owner. The tourists would pay \$36 – which wasn't a bad mark up by the store owner – but Deb was just as happy to sell her work. (Not sure that I would have paid \$36 back then to have a pair of galahs hanging off my ear lobes – but who am I to judge?)

At the same time she worked at the State Chemical Laboratories undertaking all sorts of chemical analysis. She even managed to work with Shell Oil and Gas in WA before realising that she was never going to succeed unless she completed some qualifications. She decided to head back east and took a business Degree in Human Resources – this time she studied and would eventually, early this century, complete the circle with a Masters in Applied Science...but that's another story! Whilst living and studying in Wagga Wagga she immersed herself in the strong local arts community and sat on the local arts committee. She helped to project manage the first major wall mural in the town.

She left the country for the city life again but there was little work to be found in Melbourne in the late 80s. Ultimately she found herself in a role with CSL which after 10 years laid the way for her to work in the USA for three and a half years. She lived in Kansas and found it to be very friendly and very conservative but with a rich music and arts culture. She then travelled to Florida for a new project and found an interesting mix of people. She spent long hot days socialising with a mix of cantankerous locals and exotic travellers....and snow birds, of course!

Featured Artist – Deb Watson

What she did do when she returned to Melbourne was to start working with glass. She tried beading first of all but found that the hot flame and the labour intensiveness were not for her. Then she was to try glass blowing. It was far too hot for her to handle and she didn't enjoy being so close to the molten glass which reaches 1700°C. And so she arrived at her passion which is kiln formed glass.

Kiln formed glass is very simply glass formed in a kiln. Deb assembles the pieces of fusible glass in the kiln. Once they are heated they will soften or melt depending on the heat and assume the shape of whatever surface they are resting on. They can be flat from the kiln floor – or curved as they assume the shape of a mould. Whilst the technicalities can easily be learned, it is the artist's ability to understand design, composition and colour that makes the wonderful pieces that Deb now creates. By the way it doesn't always work to plan. Deb explains there is always that terrifying moment when the finished pieces come out of the kiln and she hears the sharp 'click' that means her beautiful creation is no longer in one piece.



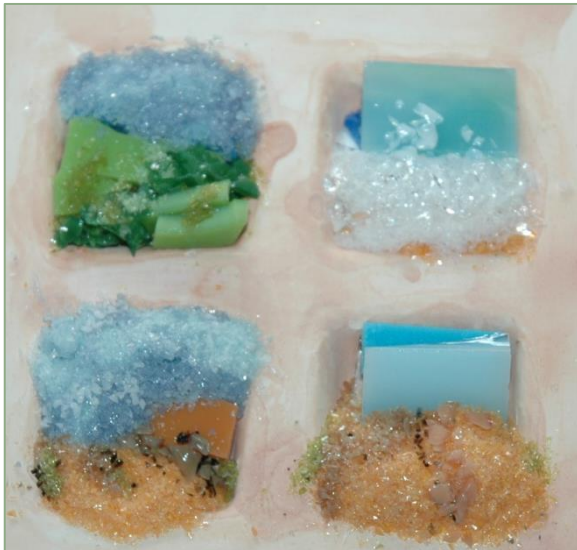
These four pieces illustrate different styles of kilned form glass art. Top left, Koi, uses a technique where the frit is layered on top of the flat glass and used to 'draw' the picture. Top right, Imperfect Mondriaan, is made from pieces cut from different coloured glass sheets, laid on top of another sheet cut to the full size, separated using black frit or black strips. Bottom left uses the natural tendency of molten glass to create a soft coral look from strips of glass cut and arranged. The technique in the bottom right piece, Perseive I, is relatively simple – a large circle is cut from clear glass and a circle of the same size is cut from specialist glass, in this case it's called Santé Fe, and they are then fused together. All four of these pieces have had a final firing to slump them into the bowl shape.



Featured Artist – Deb Watson

Deb was fortunate to be able to purchase a kiln of her own when she moved to Wonthaggi in September of last year. She and her soon to be husband, Brent, found a perfect house (and most importantly studio garage) in Wonthaggi. She never expected to move here. She was really looking for something on the rail line that would take them to Melbourne when they wanted to. But then the practicality of owning a house so close to the beach where they could walk their dog daily took over.

Deb works with System 96 art glass in its various forms – sheet glass that she cuts to size as needed and frit which is glass crushed to various sizes. These Australian miniature landscapes (made into brooches eventually) are shown here before and after firing. The crushed glass is spooned over or layered with small cut glass pieces into square moulds. Before firing it is difficult to predict the outcome and the final look of a piece – mostly nice surprises but sometimes not so.



Before firing



After first firing

Deb has now immersed herself into the local community, such is her wont. Deb has been 'conscripted' into ArtSpace and is the Secretary. Besides continuing to improve her art form (she plans to move into 3 dimensional sculptural pieces next) she also has an on-line HR information site designed to help people unravel the mysteries of human resources. You can visit it on www.yourworklife.com.au. It comes through in Deb's advocacy for finding the right work/life balance. I think she might have found it for herself.



Ps Deb and Brent were married in March in the State Coal Mine gardens. Their cake topper, of course, was made by Deb in glass.....



Life in a Tin Can – More Photos from Janice Orchard's Exhibition

XXX



ArtSpace
W o n t h a g g i

Winter Solstice Exhibition 31 May – 27 June
It's time to get painting in readiness!
Application forms will be available very soon.....

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE

Yes, it's membership renewal time of year..... Your membership entitles you to

- Newsletter,
- Exhibition invitations,
- 10% discount on Wayne Foenander Courier Service
- 10% discount on bottles of Mallani Wine and
- 20% discount on a case of wine
- An invitation to Annual Event

The annual dues of \$10 need to be paid by 30th June to continue your membership for another 12 months. You can pay when you next visit the gallery – Thursday to Monday 10am to 4pm. Or if you prefer direct deposit our bank details are:

BSB: 633000

A/c No: 153496120

a/c Name: Wonthaggi Community Gallery

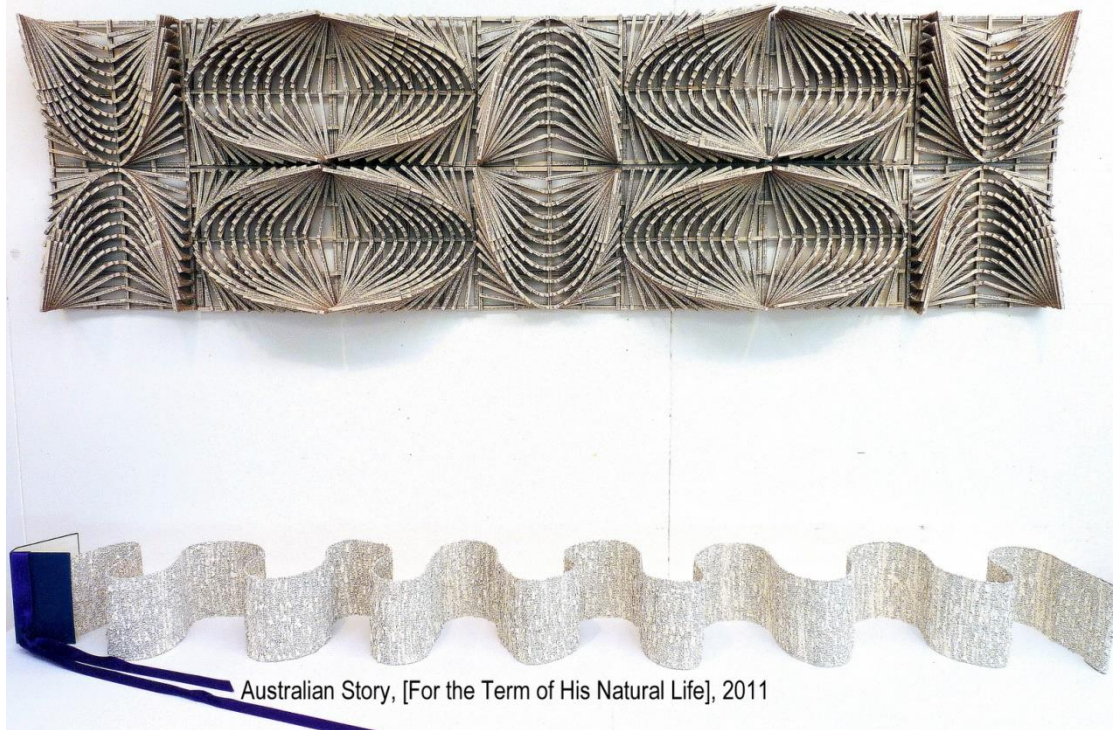
Please add your name as a reference

Cheques made payable to ArtSpace Wonthaggi can be mailed to: 5-7 McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi 3995

CREATIVE GIPPSLAND EXHIBITION

ONCE WAS NOW IS

MANDY GUNN



ARTSPACE WONTHAGGI
5-7MCBRIDE AVENUE
WONTHAGGI
5672 1415

OPEN THURS-MON 10-4

ARTIST TALK AND OPENING SUNDAY 15TH MAY 2-4PM

Join us for a glass of wine and a walk around talk with Mandy who will discuss her creative processes with the various recycled materials used in her works.

ArtSpace Wonthaggi Gallery – 5-7 McBride St, Wonthaggi Vic 3995
www.artspacewonthaggi.com.au

CREATIVE GIPPSLAND DURING THE MONTH OF MAY

POLYCHROMATIC WORKSHOP - SCREENPRINTING ON FABRIC

Tutor: SUSAN HALL. Artist printmaker.

SAT. 28TH MAY .11- 4PM.

Cost. \$65. Fabric can be purchased on the day. screen and inks supplied.

MEENIYAN GALLERY WORKSHOPS

back of Gallery .

Whitelaw St .MEENIYAN.

Booking essential.

Contact Meg Viney Bell. Ph. 5664243

or email meg.v@bigpond.com



Samples of Susan's work.

LAST WORD...

"If you treat glass right, it doesn't crack. If you know the properties, you can make things; the color of dusk and night and love. But you can't control people like that and I really, really wish you could. I want the world to be glass."

— Cath Crowley, Graffiti Moon