

ArtSpace

W o n t h a g g i

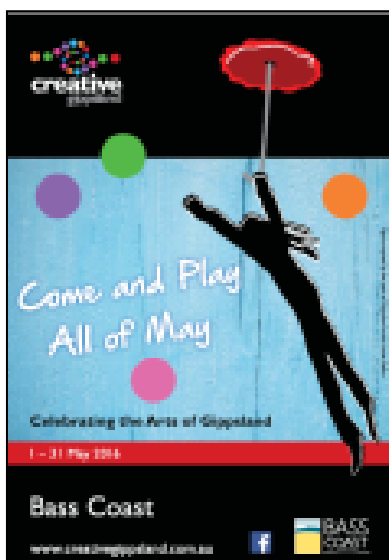
Newsletter #18

June 2016

News

Well May was Creative Gippsland Month and from what we've heard the events have been very much appreciated by those who took the opportunity – in particular the Open Studios and Galleries Bus tours run by Bron Dahlstrom.

We were also fortunate to have Mandy Gunn's exhibition – photos start on page 6 – and a reading, author talk/discussion and book signing by Pauline Mackinnon - *'Treasures from the Tide'* (pictured)



Our June event is our annual Winter Solstice Exhibition – already showing but the official opening is this coming Sunday 5th June at ArtSpace.....see photos of last year's winners and more info on page 2.

Events and Exhibitions

31 May to 27 June: **Winter Solstice** Exhibition and Competition at ArtSpace Gallery more information on page 2.
Opening Sunday 5th June – 2pm to 4pm.....



11 – 19 June San Remo/Phillip Island Art Trail 2016 – more info on page 7

20 Sep–17 Oct: **Arts-Print** – Print Exhibition at ArtSpace Gallery more info to come...

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

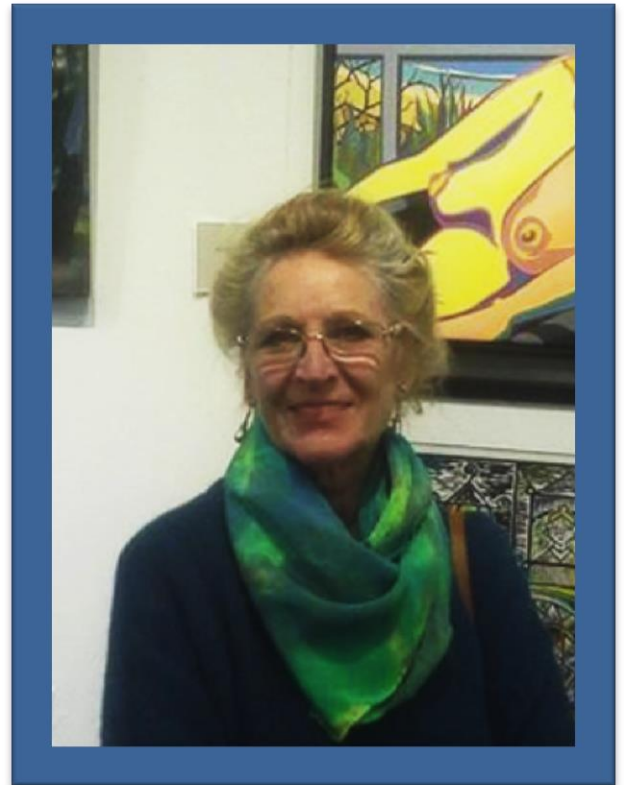


31 May - 27 June

After our successful Winter Solstice Exhibition last year ArtSpace is again bringing light into Gippsland's cold winter. The Winter Solstice Exhibition includes works from painting and drawing artists of all ages and experience.

The Exhibition starts on Tuesday 31st May at ArtSpace and our official opening is this Sunday 5th June 2016

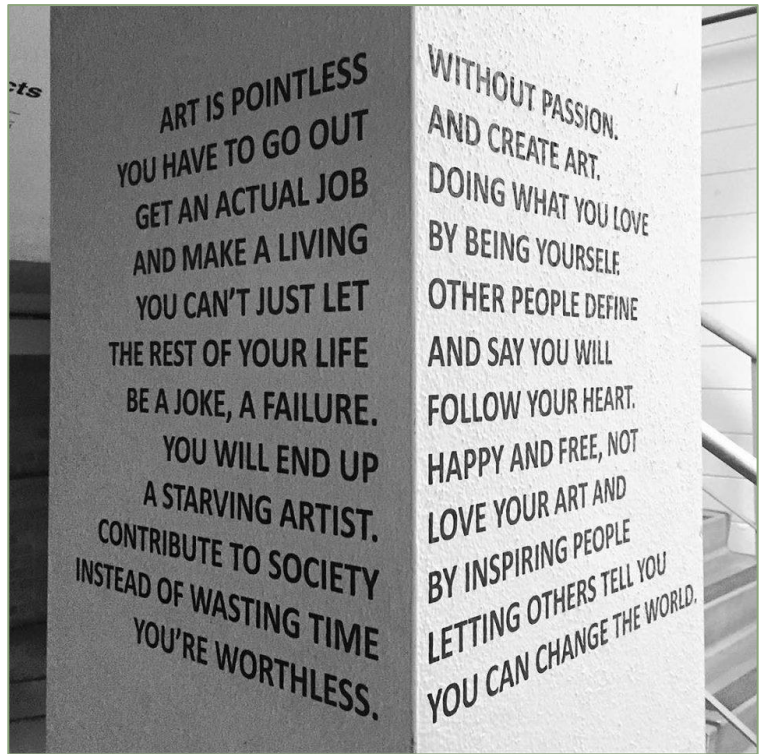
Everybody welcome – come along and see the wonderful works of local artists and nominate your favourite for the popular 'peoples' choice' award.



*Bob Hickman and Heather Towns
joint winners of the
2015 Winter Solstice*

Featured Artist – Bob Hickman

Prior to meeting Bob Hickman I had met some amazing artists. And in each instance I had tried to do a bit of research beforehand. I checked out Bob's Facebook page and came across this which was by Jasmine Kay Uy. I loved it because it was a representation of the sense of all the artists I had interviewed to this point. But – then in speaking with Bob I exclaimed, "You are the first artist that I have met who can support themselves through their art." Bob Hickman is no 'starving artist' but a man of energy and passion who not only creates his own art in a number of media, but revels in sharing his creativity with others through regular art classes or though day long workshops.



Bob is a great believer in taking art to the people. No stuffy galleries with rarefied airs where many are made to feel that they are not welcome. Instead people should be able to view art in public places or in galleries where people are encouraged to enjoy art. (I do need to put a plug in for ArtSpace here – because he thinks ours is a very welcoming gallery.) And so he puts his sculptures in what others might think are surprising places such as at wineries. At Lucinda Estate for example a dozen people last year bought sculptures after sipping their wine whilst enjoying the scenery.

He is frustrated by the barrenness of his closest large town, Leongatha, where as he says if you want a spanner after 12.30 on a Saturday – forget about it. But then he is used to large vibrant cities. After all he studied for his Diploma of Fine Arts in London before gaining his Honours Degree in the English Midlands. He has a strong view that it is artists and artisans that invigorate cities. He points to Fitzroy as an example which was quite dead in the 70s which is when the artists moved in and created a wonderful, eclectic environment.

"Every job I have done is now redundant," says Bob. Emigrating (for the second time) to Australia in the late 80s on a Thursday, he read the Age on a Saturday and had a job as a screen printer on the next Wednesday. He worked for a 'pre-press' trade agency to create images for big brands such as Mars, BMW and Fosters. He was responsible for working on the re-brand of Fosters Lager when it was seeking to enter the international market. The design change was minimal given the old adage "if it ain't broke don't fix it", the agency made a fortune, the beer sold well – and Bob was thrilled to say, "I did that." And his biggest, and as yet unachieved, challenge was to print on ice. "It doesn't work – don't try it."

Around the same time he started taking photos of the images on a huge camera on essentially railway tracks and then take the film and "hope to god you got it straight" when you put it into an offset printer. This was a million dollar machine imported from Israel an E-print– which revolutionised the printing industry and rendered other systems obsolete.

Featured Artist – Bob Hickman

He met his late wife at this time in South Melbourne. (Sadly she has now passed away from breast cancer.) They met through working for the same company. Whilst this was good in one way – it was bad in another in that when the company went belly up – they both lost their jobs – and their superannuation. And so they decided to move to the country and in 2001 bought their home in Koonwarra. His wife worked as a typesetter at the Star Newspaper and Bob started teaching at the local Community House and CCG Gippsland. He started teaching kids who frankly had lost their way. They didn't fit into the traditional streams and so Bob started to teach them that art can give them a purpose. In order to do so he needed to understand street art to give him credibility. Interestingly it is a theme that he now incorporates in his paintings – and people love it enough to purchase. I am surprised by this – but then he points out it is his Melbourne clients that purchase this sort of art – not locals.



What the locals do love are his paintings of old cars and even ice cream vans. These paintings take you back to days of innocence. His paintings sometimes include a Vespa. Bob has a love hate relationship with his Vespa which he likens to sitting on a toilet seat as you have nothing to grip between your knees. Which is a bit tricky when the gears seize as they did one day on the South Gippy Highway when Bob had it in a state of slow motion negotiating the scrub on the side of the road to avoid the cars coming the opposite way. Bob's love of vehicles with classic lines came from his father who was always tinkering with them and even raced in the Formula V on Phillip Island. His dad was a practical man and as Bob grew up told him, "Go and get a trade." If his father had known that he had actually studied fine art he would have railed at him suggesting he wasn't a 'real man.' Bob used to pretend that he was studying the trade of graphic arts – which he was – sort of ...

The thing that is amazing about Bob when you meet him is that he is such a ball of energy. He doesn't stop. He clearly never wants to stop creating or learning. He reaches into a drawer and pulls out some wood blocks. You can feel his love of the process of making engravings from these pieces of wood. He lovingly describes the type of wood and the grain to use that makes the best engravings. Beware, he warns, to remember that it is a reverse image. He has only made that mistake once, called himself an idiot, and added the back to front image to his wood heater.

Bob always had fun creating things at home but it wasn't until he went to middle school that he created his first painting. He was back in England again and was fascinated with castles having spent his early childhood in Australia. He picked up a palette knife and was immersed in creating turrets on his castle when his art teacher walked up behind him. Bob announced, "When I grow up I'm going to be an artist" – he was 13!!! The teacher looked at Bob, then at the painting, and then back to Bob again. Her expression suggested she didn't think much of his painting, or Bob's prophecy. But the one thing she didn't do was to discourage him.

Featured Artist – Bob Hickman



And that is Bob's philosophy in teaching his students. He wants them to retain their innocence and not to grow up. He has had many 'left brainers' as students. He says these people have been in business or corporate life and think that because they are fantastic in business they think that all they have to do is apply themselves for the couple of hours' lesson per week and they will be able to turn out masterpieces. But it of course takes years to be a master, or as Bob puts it, "they think because they can tinkle a bit on the piano they can play a concerto." As Bob says, "They don't call them the Old Masters for nothing." Bob will put his hand to anything and was even commissioned as one of four artists to create a gate for the Bass Coast Shire for its Creative Gippsland 'Gatescape'. He was thrilled to create the gate – and even more so when he was paid \$1500 by a keen art buyer who wanted the gate for his veggie patch.

Bob's latest venture is in association with 34 other artists to work on a project by Anne Rousanne Hoyne. Anne has given each of the artists a canvas measuring three feet square. She has then provided them with four natural ochres. There are strict instructions that the colours are not to be mixed, but other than that the artists can create whatever they wish. The finished products will then be hung at Fish Creek Hotel. Bob is not telling me what he is thinking of – other than it won't be aboriginal dots. One thing I am sure of – it will be worth seeing.

By Liane Arno.

Note from Bob....." the ochres event is on at The Fish Creek Hotel till the end of June. Called ' Things of wood & stone'. My piece, 'Fishy business'-(pictured here) , is on display in the foyer at the hotel.

It inspired two of the works I've put in the Winter Solstice exhibition. Both local hotels, both in the same limited range of 4 ochres .One is just across the road....

It has also inspired a new wood engraving of the Fish Creek Hotel that I intend to exhibit later this year at the printmaking exhibit at ArtSpace."



Mandy Gunn – Once Was Now Is



SAN REMO/PHILLIP ISLAND ART TRAIL 2016

PHILLIP ISLAND TOURISM & BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (PITBA)

In association with

PHILLIP ISLAND RSL (PIRSL)

SAN REMO DISTRICT TOURISM & BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (SRDTB)

and

ARTISTS' SOCIETY OF PHILLIP ISLAND INC. (ASPI)

Experienced Bass Coast visual artists are invited to submit a **maximum of 2 works** for selection for display in local businesses during the Queens Birthday weekend and until the end of the following weekend:

Saturday 11th June – Sunday 19th June 2016.

Entries close on Friday 20th May.

Enquiries: Maxine Sando, PIRSL: 59521004

Lois Green, ASPI: edlo@westnet.com.au

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE

Remember, 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

VOLUNTEERS

*Just a reminder to our current volunteers (and any potential volunteers....?) that our inaugural gathering is coming up on **19 June from 1pm to 4:30pm upstairs at the Wonthaggi Club** (just across the road from the Gallery...if you haven't RSVP'd please do soon...*

LAST WORD...

