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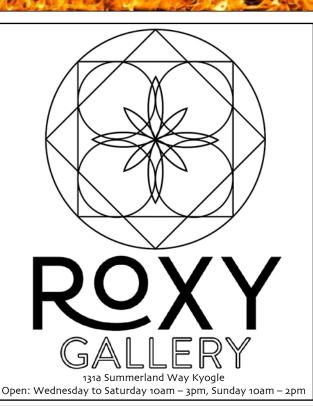
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Earthmoving





The subtle art of Mokuhanga



by Anne Cook

The Nimbin Artists Gallery's artist of the month for February is Yoko Tsushima.

From very early on, Yoko sensed that her journey in life was going to take her down a path of design and creativity. Primary school in Japan was where this journey started with an introduction to the creative processes of woodblock printing and calligraphy.

Yoko left Japan when she was aged 25 and spent a considerable amount of time travelling around India, South East Asia and Europe. After coming to Australia, Yoko established a small jewellery shop in Sydney where she enjoyed the design,

manufacture and presentation of her work.

After an initial exploration of the practice of Shibori, which is a traditional Japanese dyeing technique, Yoko found her true love in Mokuhanga. Under the tutelage of Australian Mokuhanga master, Roslyn Kean, Yoko has become a highly accomplished practitioner of this traditional Japanese woodblock printing

The expressive and organic qualities of this artform enable Yoko to remain connected to her origins while at the same time reflecting the influences her Australian surrounds have made on her art. This process yields a markedly different result to Western style print-making, it is much more subtle and delicate.

Yoko's most recent offerings reflect her many years spent in the Hawkesbury region. These dreamy landscapes show great discipline and sensibility, transporting the viewer to a place of calm and serenity.

If you would like to see these beautiful works, we are open seven days a week from 10am 'til late afternoon.

ights up at Blue Knob Hall



Blue Knob Hall Gallery, Café and Ceramic Studio volunteers have had a good break and are enjoying being back for the start of a new year with a new exhibition to kick it off.

Our first exhibition for the year is called 'Out on a limb...' which once again seems an appropriate theme given what the last year has been, and with the possibility of more to come for a while yet.

This theme covers a variety of ideas and possibilities of interpretation. Many of us have felt a bit 'out on a limb' over this last year in regards to not knowing where we're headed, dangling at the end of a branch, wondering and watching if we're about to fall off or not.

Many different opinions have been expressed around so many issues over the past year and when that happens, controversy can put one in a risky place and the phrase 'going out on a limb' can have that connotation as well.

It also relates literally to a part of an animal or human body as distinct from the head and trunk. With tree limbs,

artificial limbs, the 'four limbs of a cross' and 'going out on a limb', the variety of work from the artists exhibiting makes for interesting interpretations.

On exhibition until Saturday 3rd April. Blue Knob Hall is supported by its members and friends as a not-for-profit community gallery, café and ceramic studio. The membership helps immensely with ongoing costs of keeping us alive and thriving. The benefits of being a member are the access to exhibiting if you're an artist; 10% discount on art/craft purchases if you support the arts; and a variety of other options.

As a member you can volunteer on a regular basis or help out when you can. The 2021 memberships are now due for the initial \$25 joining fee and for those who are already members, an annual \$10 renewal.

Blue Knob Café is up and running after a much needed break, and plans for the future include opening on Friday nights once or twice a month. For more details and to see what might be in store,



'The Basics' (Tapestry weaving) by Rupda Wilson

'Hung out to dry #1' (Ceramic) by Heather Kimber



you can follow the Café on Facebook or contacting the Café directly at: bkgcafe@ gmail.com

The Blue Knob Hall Gallery & Café are open Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays from 10am to 3pm, and Saturdays 8.30am-3pm when the Blue Knob Community Market is on.





The start to the new year's program of exhibitions at Kyogle's Roxy Gallery kicks off with the Practicing Artists Network's creative narrative of works to a poem by Henry Lawson, *The Wander-Light*.

Displaying the creative diversity by members of this non-profit incorporated association, this exhibition carries a diverse narration of the poem.

Artists have responded to this poem using a variety of media to visually reflect on the context of the whole of this iconic piece of poetry, while others have responded to a verse, or just a fragment of a line from the poem

PAN is a locally based artists' network committed to the visual arts in the Northern Rivers, and provides an opportunity for artists to hold group exhibitions, participate in social events such as life drawing and plein air activities.

PAN also provides a forum for support and networking between artists. This group of artists are avid supporters of exhibiting their art at the Roxy Gallery, and this will be their first showing in the new gallery space.

"The Wander-Light' exhibition consists of works by 26 members of the Practicing Artists Network, and will be on show at the Roxy Gallery until 28th February.

Encaustic workshop

Kyogle Council, with the support of the Kyogle & District Arts Council, are offering a weekend workshop in encaustic mixed media by Mo Godbeer on 13th and 14th March.

For the cost of \$180 you will have the pleasure of learning about the history of encaustic, studio safety, and how to prepare your own encaustic medium and paints.

Mo will go through board preparation, fusing, how to create smooth and textured surfaces, and layering to achieve amazing effects with beeswax and resin.

There will also be discussion on how to set up a studio for working in encaustic, what things you will need and how to do it cheaply. You can expect to take home four completed pieces.

Mo will impart her vast knowledge of encaustic and share with you loads of tips and tricks for working in encaustic. You will get to try techniques such as collage, image transfer, etching, scraping, layering and use of other materials such as charcoal, graphite, inks, dry and oil pastels, stencils, batik pens.

This class will give you enough information plus a great worksheet with encaustic recipe and resource list so that you can start to explore the exciting medium of encaustic.

All materials to be provided – all you have to do is bring your lunch, apron and your creative self.

This workshop has 12 places only and will be held in the Banquet Room of the KMI from 9am to 3.30pm on both the Saturday and Sunday. Be quick to secure your place by registering at the Roxy Gallery, or contacting Ruth on 6632-0230.

Local artist Dongal Binns

by Fiona McConnachie

The next exhibition at Serpentine Gallery is called 'Paintscapes', a solo show of current work by well-known local artist Dougal Binns.

The show runs from 18th February to 1st March, with the opening on Friday 19th February at 6pm.

As Dougal says in his artist's statement: "With my current work I have shed my geometric explorations for more unconscious action paintings. With these works, sometimes I discard the paintbrush and use my hands for an even more immediate application.

"In this process I am guided by space and colour. I want the canvas or board to be as open ended and as light as possible, even as I apply layers to the piece. I clear my mind as I approach a session of painting. I draw on my energy (be it calm, excitement, fear or other) to guide me in the process.

"The finished paintings engage an inner dialogue and always result in a mapping of new territory. I try to not judge or edit them as I want them to remain as purely responsive to the moment as possible."

We are very excited to be hosting this exhibition, and hope that you will come along to enjoy the show.

Alongside 'Paintscapes' we will be showing a collection of artwork by local artists including Rhonda Armistead, Michelle Gilroy and John Adams. We are calling this small exhibition 'Random' because that's what it is – a random assembly of work by our members.

In support of the Lismore Women's Festival, the Serpentine Gallery is inviting women artists to submit works for our annual exhibition celebrating women. The campaign for the festival this year is called 'Choose to Challenge'.

A challenged world is an alert world, and individually we're all responsible for our thoughts and actions. We can



choose to challenge and call out gender bias and inequity; we can choose to seek out and celebrate womens' achievements, and collectively we can all help to create an inclusive world. From challenge comes change, so let's all choose to challenge!

Our exhibition will be called 'Choice', and is open to all women artists in the region regardless of whether they are members or not. This show is about being as inclusive as possible for all the creative women in the Northern Rivers, in celebration of International Womens' Day on 8th March.

There will be a \$10

participation/ hanging fee, and if you have any questions as to special requirements with hanging and/or installation, please call us on our new number: 0492-964-819, and we will be happy to help with any problems. 'Choice' opens at 6pm on Friday 5th March.

To contact us for more information, either email us at: gallery@serpentinearts. org or phone us on the above number. The Serpentine Community Gallery is situated at 17a Bridge Street North Lismore and our opening hours are Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm and Saturday 10am to 2pm.

In my town an<mark>d your town</mark>

Lucas Wright is an emerging artist based in Lismore, who creates his work at REDinc. Supported Art studio.

Lucas draws
inspiration from the
history of Western
painting, and infuses
his artworks with a
great sense of romance.
He studies the old and
modern masters as well
as contemporary pop
culture to develop his
work.

Lucas embraces a broad range of influences, from Rembrandt through to Van Gogh and Matt Groening's Simpsons to his own home town and family road trips.

He is a connoisseur of high and popular culture, who revels in the beauty around him and translates this into his paintings.

In my town and your town is a collection of buildings and places that pique his fancy, and offer a chance for audiences to view the world through Lucas's eyes.

The exhibition is showing at the Lismore Regional Gallery from 6th February to 28th March.



'St Pauls and sky' 2020, acrylic on board

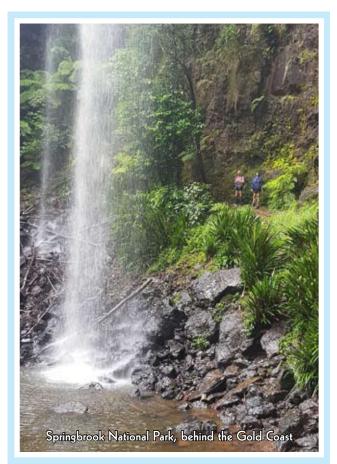
ART PRIZE EXTENDED

The Brolga Young Persons Art Prize has extended its deadline to 28th February.

This decision has been made in order to support young people, who may have not had a chance to get their entry in over the holidays, and also understanding the impact a disruptive 2020 has had on our young people.

There are great prizes including cash, a chance to exhibit and mentorships on offer, so head over to: https://kyogletogether.org. au/brolga-art-prize to get your entry in.





NimbinBushwalkers head further afield

by Peter Moyle

he bushwalking year is back on. Even though it is still a bit hot we have decided to head off into some cooler rainforest to get out and about.

The recent rains have really freshened up the landscape, and hopefully the big wet will not curtail our walks. Always check with the walk leader if the weather is looking a bit rough, either too hot or too wet.

The club has insurances, but in these days of duty of care and liability issues, we need to be very conscious of conditions and possible problems. All walks have a description of conditions that may be encountered, so always be mindful of your own capabilities and as they say, be prepared. The walks leader will give you any

extra info you may need. Storm damage has required we change our walk schedule a bit, as both the Toonumbar and Border Ranges National Park have both vehicle and walk restrictions and closures at the moment, so for our walks camps we will have



Korrelah National Park, west of Woodenbong

Walks Programme

Sunday 14th February Minyon Falls, Whian Whian

Leader: Megan Myers 0415-063-302. Contact to register.

Meet: 9.30am at Minyon Falls main carpark/picnic area at the top of the falls not to be confused with the lookout car park. Bring: the usual, hat,

drinking water, lunch, good bush walking boots/shoes and a poncho is a good idea if showery. Insect protection recommended.

Sunday 28th February Terania Creek Basin, Nightcap National Park Leader: Peter 0412-656-498. Contact for more info

and to register. Meet: 9am at the Channon Tavern for car-pooling or 9.30am at the picnic area at the end of Terania Creek Road 15km from The Channon. Bring the usual, hat, drinking water, lunch and good bush walking boots/shoes.

Grade 4: Mostly off-track; there will be some slippery rocks and rough walking particularly after rain. We will walk through wild, rugged rainforest, the site of the historic battle to save this precious patch of pristine forest. Plenty of lush rainforest and plenty of water over the falls. This is one of the gems of this World Heritage-listed area. Meet: 9am at the Channon Tavern for car-pooling or 9.30am at the picnic area at the end of Terania Creek Road 15km from The Channon.

Bring: the usual, hat, drinking water, lunch and good bushwalking boots/shoes.

Your little garden can make a big difference

by Steph Seckold

ollinators across the country need your help! There is increasing evidence that many pollinators are in decline, with insect populations collapsing, even in 'wild' ecosystems.

Habitat loss is one of the main contributors to the decline in pollinator numbers. Much of the lost habitat has been converted to agriculture, resource extraction and urban development. The remaining habitat fragments do not provide enough of the food, shelter, and protection to ensure the species'

Pesticide exposure is also partly responsible for the decline in pollinators. When we target a garden pest, these chemicals do not discriminate between the problematic target and beneficial predatory and pollinating bugs!

So why should we care about this decline in pollinator populations? Insect pollination maintains genetic diversity in plant populations and provides advantages such as increased fruit quality and quantity, seed production



and fertility, leading to greater vigour in the next generation. While birds and mammals also transfer pollen, insects are responsible for the bulk of this necessary work.

Global agriculture relies mostly on the honey bee Apis mellifera for pollination, which is likely to lead to significant food-security issues should the humble honey bee become a further casualty to pesticides and the infectious diseases carried by varroa mite.

But there is a way to help reverse this trend! Creating your own pollinator

garden provides food as well as a place for these critical creatures to prosper. Pollinators need all the help they can get and your garden will make a difference!

Whether you live in a rural, suburban, or urban home you can help protect the environment and add beauty to your surroundings. Just be especially sure to use plants that are native to your region in order to have the most effective and productive garden.

Visiting author and butterfly garden expert, Helen Schwencke (pictured) will be hosting a workshop at 7 Sibley Street, Nimbin's Sustainable Living Hub on 13th March to explain more about the importance of butterflies, other insects and creatures without backbones (invertebrates), the roles they play and how we can help make a difference to species diversity and conservation in our own local spaces

Learn how to bring back beautiful butterflies to our backyards and start your garden for wildlife using butterfly host plants. For bookings, email: sibley@nnic.org.au



Weed identification workshop

Nimbin Environment Centre will present a weed identification workshop led by local bush regenerators, John Blatch and Tristan Mules on Sunday 21st February, 8am – 12 midday

The event includes a plant identification workshop which will focus on weeds and also include natives, hands on hand-weeding practice, bring your gloves and hand tools.

Please wear a hat, covered footwear, long sleeves and long pants, and bring your water bottle, morning tea, and a

notebook and pencil.

Register your interest with Nimbin Environment Centre at: nimbinenvironmentcentre@gmail.com or phone 6689-1441 during opening hours 11am – 4pm, or come into the shop at 54 Cullen Street and leave your contact

This project received grant funding from Australian Government's Communities Environment Program, and is also supported by Gungas Road Valley Landcare.

Environment Trust funds combat Bell Miner Die-Back

by Vanessa Pelly

→he NSW Environmental Trust has been funding the battle against Bell Miner Associated Die-Back (BMAD) in the Nimbin/Blue Knob localities.

BMAD occurs where forest structure is out of balance and the native bell miners have moved in, nested and chased away the local diversity of birds. This is becoming increasingly noticeable in and around Nimbin eg Blue Knob, Stony Chute, Avalon and Lillian Rock.

If you drive past an affected area it would be hard to not hear the "wall of noise". The bell miners use this wall of



noise as a technique to help chase away other birds. The literature tells us that bell miners are known to nest under a eucalyptus canopy that has a disturbed lantana understorey, and some landholders have had success by just removing the lantana.

However from speaking to locals, they have been spotted nesting in other weeds such as crofton weeds that have been woven together, so I think

there is still much to learn. From experience, the bell miners don't necessarily go when the lantana goes. This may be applicable on large-scale examples, but in smaller, rural settings it would need an approach by all landholders to be able to reduce their numbers.

The problem is the aggressive nature of the birds, and that they actively farm the psyllid insects (Glycaspis bailey) to eat their lerps (sugary secretion). This means the other psyllid-eating birds such as honeyeaters, pardalotes, thornbills and rosellas are chased away and the psyllid population gets out of control, leading to the tree die-back.

The Environmental Trust has provided funding to undertake bush regeneration and restoration specifically in the Blue Knob area. Large amounts of lantana and bana grass have been removed along Websters Creek headwaters, and regular bird surveys have been undertaken.

More work will be undertaken in 2021 to continue to reduce weeds and monitor how the bird diversity is changing. It is critical that landholders work together to combat this very real threat to our wet sclerophyll forests. The bell miners move rapidly through the landscape, and so we need a landscape approach.



Nimbin Garden Club notes



by Peter Brooker

Jell here we go again, we've got the band back together and we are ready to launch the Nimbin Garden Club into the hurly burly/hustle and bustle (yes it's a tautology but it reinforces the intention) of a brand new year.

That other year has gone and it's time for us to bloom. Last year is now part of our history, and the present and future offer us the opportunity to do the things we can do and not let them become the things we should have done. Amid the gloom, the trials and

tribulations, the lack of social interaction we have faced, we should remember that Australia is indeed one of the luckiest places on the planet and our little piece of it is luckier still.

We should, therefore, grasp our good fortune, with a highly sanitised hand, and take in the fresh air and space still denied so many around the world.

On that note, the NGC will be descending upon the Bush Theatre at 2pm on Saturday 20th February to be guided around the refurbished cafe and chef's garden by Kaz.

We will still be bringing plates, as

is our well established custom, and the ever-present urn will also make an appearance.

This is however a business, and anyone wanting a proper coffee or tea or an alternative to the food supplied by members is encouraged to purchase same from the cafe. The food and coffee come highly recommended.

This would be an ideal opportunity for any newcomers to the area, or anyone thinking about joining this great club, to come along, meet some 'locals' and see how it all works.

See you there.



View from the loo by Stuart McConville

while taking a dump is a most pleasant thing. The insects buzzing, birds chatting to each other, wind softly caressing the rustling branches.

Brmmm... the sound of a tractor starting. Oh well, it's a rural life and even the tractor doesn't take away from the serenity entirely. Someone nearby is getting a good early start to their slashing.

I listen more closely. The engine revs like a racing car... the slasher cranks up and you can hear the mesh of the gears as they whine their constant scream. Except it's not constant. The operator has not set the hand throttle

Tree changers and tractors

and is driving the tractor like a car. Every time it finishes its row, the engine drops revs and the slasher slows, then spins up again after the turn is made. Very inefficient. Hmmm.

It got me to thinking how many people have bought into our beautiful area recently and do not have the skills to operate or maintain a tractor safely or effectively. I was one such person years ago, and after too many close shaves have now learned to be very careful.

They are such an essential piece of kit, especially if you want to get rid of the cows. Here are a few key concepts to consider when buying / driving your new tractor.

Prior to purchasing a second hand machine

 Buy a machine suited to your terrain and your needs. In our area that normally means 4WD. Big is not necessarily better. Big machines cause soil compaction and are much less useful in wet weather. Hydrostatic transmissions are not always great on steep country.

- Balanced ballast. Ensure that front weights and rear loads are approximately the same. A loader on the front is ideal for steep terrain and front end traction. A heavy slasher on the back needs weights on the front. Water in tyres is advisable (2/3 full).
- Make sure that all the safety gear is there. ROPS (Roll bar), PTO covers, operating hand brakes, hydraulic locks etc.
- Check all fluids and operating systems such as the brakes, steering slack and gear operation.
- Make sure you can fix it! Find out how available spares are.

Operating the tractor efficiently and safely

- Use hearing and sun protection, wear full length shirts and pants with boots.
 Some cabs are enclosed but chances are you will have to get out to do something so best to gear up.
- · Practice attaching

implements using the three-point linkage (3PL) and power take off (PTO) and adjusting for level and sway. Never take all the slack out of the sway, so the implement can move to the sides independently if needed.

- Start machine at low revs and then set throttle speed to desired revs. Don't use the foot accelerator whilst working.
- Practice steering with the turning brakes on level ground (left and right rear brakes) whilst operating the 3PL.
- Never drive around with the front end loader up high. Keep the centre of gravity as low as possible at all times.

Far from being a comprehensive list, these are just a few starters for new owners. There are some great one day courses available through TAFE and other providers that go into much more detail.

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Making Motherwort fresh plant tincture



Nature's pharmacy by Trish Clough, herbalist

ome herbs are more effective if they are processed while fresh, instead of dried. For convenience, and also to concentrate the active constituents, most herbal tinctures are made from dried plants.

However, according to herbalist Scripta Rustica in his book *Advanced Herbal Pharmacy*, in the mid 1800s "doctors and pharmacists of the day began to macerate fresh plants in high-proof alcohol". Some plants that had been ineffective in the dried form then became "significant therapeutic agents". He claims that the extracting liquid has to be undiluted alcohol which is water-attracting and therefore draws the active constituents into the liquid.

Many herbalists of my acquaintance are dubious about the full strength alcohol concept, and use a diluted alcohol to dissolve the water soluble ingredients as well as the alcohol soluble ones, more like a dried plant tincture, but allowing for some further dilution with the water content of the fresh plants. Exploring this concept, I decided to make a motherwort tincture using full strength alcohol. The result was quite extraordinary.

To access fresh plants of course means growing them, or having a local supply. Motherwort is one of those plants that is considered superior made from a fresh rather than dried form, and it is most



effective when in flower. So I have been growing and nurturing my motherwort plants but they are still not flowering. Perhaps I should stop looking at them every day.

I was pleasantly surprised when my herbalist friend from Alstonville messaged me and asked if I wanted some fresh motherwort in flower. She has an abundance of the plants, had made a large batch of tincture but had more plants left over. So of course I said, "Yes please!"

The plants were enormous, almost filling my kitchen. I stripped the leaves and flowers, (it's a bit prickly), finely chopped them and placed in a large jar. I used the full strength alcohol method. It's important for the herb to be completely covered with liquid, which can be done by putting weights on the top. Some authors recommend using a clean stone. I decided to use some large quartz crystals instead. I like the idea of crystal-potentising the tincture. I added a piece of apophyllite as well.

After two weeks in a dark cupboard, and without being disturbed, the tincture was ready to extract. I was completely thrilled with the result. The tincture is the deepest brightest shade of green and tastes very intense. I used a press to extract the liquid and remove the plant material.

Interestingly, the left over herb had lost most of its colour and was almost crispy, as was supposed to happen using the full strength alcohol to dessicate the plant. The intense flavour is not particularly



nice, as it contains bitters which have a reputation of not tasting good. However, I love it because it seems so potent.

So what is motherwort used for? Its botanical name, *Leonuris cardiaca*, gives a clue. It is traditionally used as a heart tonic. According to herbalist Matthew Wood, in *The Earthwise Herbal*, "It is a remedy for nervous restlessness, wakefulness, disturbed sleep, and anxiety."

It is used as a supportive herb for overactive thyroid, which is often associated with heart palpitations and anxiety symptoms. Motherwort works well combined with Lemon Balm. As the name suggests, it is a useful women's remedy, for menstrual problems, menopause and during labour.

Motherwort should only be used if professionally prescribed, as it can be contraindicated with some heart medications and some medical conditions.

Trish is available for consultations by appointment on 045-219-502 or email: herbalist.trish@internode.net.au



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