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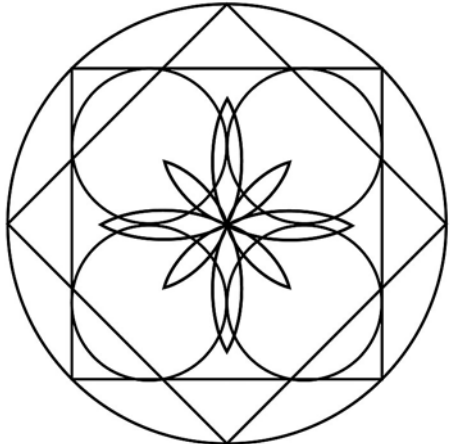
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DEBORAH KELLY : CREATION



Creation is fun, bold and adventurous. It is pertinent.

Deborah Kelly's new religion follows the ancient wisdoms of the moon, the planets, the seasons and the natural cycles of life. It welcomes everyone, excludes no-one. It responds to the natural human desire to belong, to share beliefs, to embrace rituals. It beckons us forward.

Creation's imagery draws on ritualist entities, that are of and from the earth. They are Bacteria, Moon, Infinity, Spider, Vulture, Snake, Rat, Fungus.

The exhibition opened at the Museum of Contemporary Art as part of The National and after showing in Lismore, it moves to Griffith University Art Museum in Brisbane in February 2022. By design, this

is a work in progress, growing in form and meaning as it accrues complexity and takes on new followers.

In Lismore, eight people have been photographed in costumes inspired by the entities of the new religion. They are local luminaries spanning age groups, beliefs, race, sexualities and abilities, representing the diversity that makes Lismore. Lismore also has the honour of being the first venue to show the epic large-scale animated collage *For Creation*. Visitors to the gallery can learn the gestures, dance and song of *Creation* through instructional videos.

This show is a must see, beautiful and expansive, and you never know where it could take you to.

Deborah Kelly's practice



AnA Wojak as The Spider. Photo:Mia Forrest

encompasses collage, installation, event and performance. Her projects are often collaborative and concerned with lineages of representation, politics and history in public exchange. She is an established artist whose works have been included in the Biennales of Singapore,

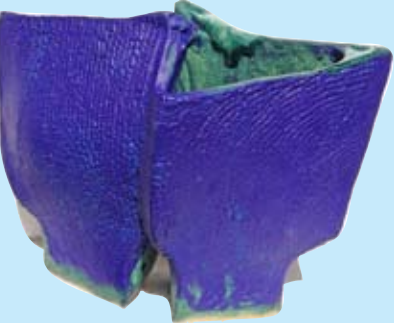
Venice, Thessaloniki, Tarra Warra and Sydney.

Kelly's work regularly crosses into the public domain, engaging others as participants, and sometimes traversing outside the art museum as political billboards, armbands, and free posters and postcards.

Blue Knob Gallery up and running



'Rainbow Bee Eater' by Elsbeth Gartly-Strassmann



'Delia' by Lorraine Lintern

Blue Knob Hall Gallery and Café will be open from Thursday 6th January with two exhibitions: 'Everything Blue' by Lorraine Lintern and Elsbeth Gartly-Strassmann in The Solo Space, and 'The Wild Side' in the Gallery/Café space. An Opening Night will be held on Friday 21st January.

Lorraine Lintern is a well-known ceramicist from Uki who, after 25 years of potting and experimenting with clays and glazes, trying out new ideas based on her five years of traditional training at both East Sydney and Penrith Technical Colleges, still finds new and inventive methods with which to experiment.

More recently she has been working with cobalt and lithium, resulting in some very bright and solid blue glazes – a very unique combination. Forever fascinated with the 'Alchemy of Chemicals', she is eager to experiment with different combinations.

Elsbeth Gartly-Strassmann is a Steiner School teacher who trained

'Thelma and Louise' by Amanda Doran

and taught in New Zealand then later in Bowral and Adelaide, and is now one of our local artists.

Originally Elsbeth worked extensively with Fibre Art – spinning and weaving – but in her more recent years her concentration has been primarily with colour. Now well-developed, using her favoured medium of pastels, she has chosen her latest works for this exhibition.

In 'The Wild Side' we hoped artists would get in touch with the wild side of life in all its forms – inner and outer – and the artworks reflect this theme.

While we have had to deal with a wild and free-ranging organism causing havoc in our world, many of us have still had the privilege of seeing nature, being in nature, with all its beauty and tempestuousness.

Both exhibitions were unable to get up in 2021, so with the artists waiting in the wings, we're having another go.

Artists and Friends

The next Artists and Friends Lunch will be held on Thurs 27th January at 12.30pm with a set menu for \$20 incl mains and dessert.

Blue Knob Cafe is up and running and looking forward to seeing you all. For updates you can check Blue Knob Cafe on Facebook or contact the Café directly at: bkgcafe@gmail.com

Blue Knob Hall Gallery & Café

Both venues will be open Thurs, Fri, Sun 10am-3pm, and Sat 8.30am-3pm.

You can also contact Blue Knob Hall Gallery on 02 6689-7449 or email: bkhgallery@harbourisp.net.au for any information about these events.

Art for 2022

by Anne Cook

Christmas has passed, but it's never the wrong time to shop for gifts. Buying art is always a great gift choice, and one should not feel that art purchases need to be a high-minded business. Buying something that "matches the lounge suite" is also okay.

At Nimbin Artists Gallery you can choose from works on canvas and paper, sculptural and ceramic pieces, glassware, timber works, jewellery and clothing, all created by local artists.

The restful landscape 'Purple Noon' by the highly accomplished artist Janet Hassall would make a welcome addition to any household.

Regular exhibiting artist Maureen Whittaker's acrylic on canvas 'The Runner' would bring colour and energy to most interiors.

The Nimbin Artists Gallery is open 7 days a week from 10am to 5pm, and we do lay-by as well.

It is with sadness that we have learnt of the passing of Janet Hassall, whose artwork has been admired and collected by many. She was a great teacher, prolific artist and a lovely person. Condolences from the Gallery to her family and friends.



'The Runner' by Maureen Whittaker



'Outback Landscape' by Anne Cook



'Purple Noon' by Janet Hassall



'Mt Warning' by Janet Hassall



'The Eye' by Robert Sheather

Get aboard Murwillumbah's Art Trail

The philosophy of Murwillumbah Open Studios Art Trail is to give an insight into the creation of art by the opening of studio doors to interested members of the public.

For many Trail goers, this is the major attraction of the Art Trail; the environment in which work is created, the tools, the process of making, and work in progress are all revealed and add depth to the artwork on show. This generosity is a well received privilege for visitors and a rewarding experience for artists.

For some artists, the Art Trail is an opportunity to sell work. For others, the pleasure is in welcoming, inspiring and talking to visitors, which adds fuel to their own practice and makes valuable connections.

Registration for the 2022 Murwillumbah Open Studios Art Trail is currently open. If you would like to take part in the event, you can register your details online using an online form. Murwillumbah Arts Trail is on the weekend of Saturday 28th and Sunday 29th May.

Join the artists and makers, the crafters, musicians, poets, storytellers and all the



other creative people of the Murwillumbah Art Trail. Make new friends, develop your skills, showcase your work and share your ideas with like-minded people.

If you are unable to open your place of work, you may still take part in a venue such as a hall, or join one other artist in their studio. If multiple artists work in a studio group environment, all members must register.

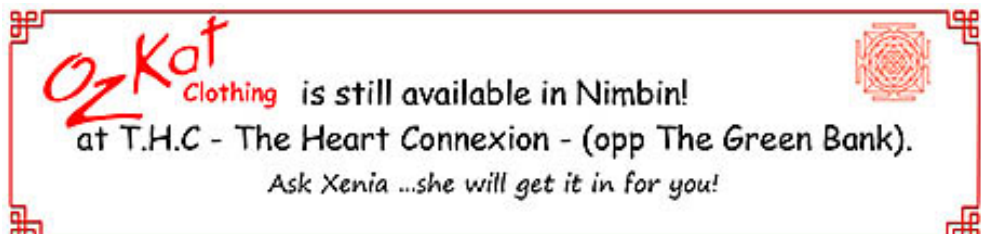
While it is preferred that artists open their own studio, workplace or home for the Trail, it is evident that not all artists have a venue suitable to invite hundreds of visitors. In this situation an eligible artist may join another artist in their venue, or you can hire a

suitable venue within the Trail area or join one of the group exhibitions.

As well as your artwork, a flavour of your working environment is still to be presented. An aspect of work being undertaken, a selection of tools and equipment, some working drawings or sketchbooks, can be used to convey the creative practice behind your art.

The Murwillumbah Arts Trail is open to all artists and makers resident in the Tweed area or those who have their full-time art studio in the area. Registration closes at midnight on 31st January.

For more info or to register, see: www.murwillumbahartstrail.com.au/for-artists/



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EXPRESSION OF INTEREST – WEED CONTROL

The Aquarius Park Landcare Group is seeking expressions of interest from appropriately qualified bush regenerators to work on weed control and regen. The project site is the area known as 11a Alternative Way.

This site is low lying, containing a small dam and gully, and has had some regen done in the past. The works are anticipated to start as soon as we can secure project funding.

Duties will include removal of large weed infestations, natural regeneration, liaison with the landholder, LCC project officer for the Nimbin Rainbow Road Walking Trail Project and neighbors, bank stabilisation and participation in workshops and field days.

A certain level of fitness is expected to undertake the work, and successful applicants will be overseen by a Project Manager from Aquarius Park Landcare Group.

Hourly rates should be included; rates must include all operational costs such as transport, chemicals, equipment and tools. Applicants should specify if they are registered for GST or not, and supply their ABN.

The following selection criteria need to be addressed and evidence of compliance provided. Please identify your weed control methods in your response.

Bush regeneration contractor selection criteria:

1. Qualifications in Conservation and Land Management (Minimum Cert III) or equivalent and demonstrated bush regeneration skills and experience.
2. Chemical use certificate
3. Own transport and current driver's license
4. Good plant ID skills and knowledge of the major North Coast weed problems
7. 132C license to work near threatened species (desirable but not mandatory).
8. Work Health and Safety policies in place
9. Hazard and risk assessment process in place.
10. Understanding of Safe Work Method for all activities
11. Insurance – Public liability
12. Ability to complete Daily Record Sheets, invoicing and tracking hours worked

Desirable but not mandatory:

13. Knowledge of the Nimbin Village and Valley
14. Knowledge of aquatic ecosystems

Please send addressed selection criteria to: ncci@nimbincommunity.org.au
by 30th January, 2022.

Genesis: Lichens

by Scott O'Keeffe

There are about 20,000 species of lichens worldwide and about 3000 in Australia.

Lichens are a unique form of life that is a partnership between a fungus species and a cyanobacteria (aka algae) or in some cases two species of fungi and one algae. The bond between these is so close that the lichen does not exist without the two kinds of organisms in symbiosis. Lichens reproduce vegetatively and by the dispersal of spores.

An organism that consists of two species is difficult to name scientifically. The fungus in each combo provides the genus name. Some lichens are relatively easy to recognise and can be identified to genus without detailed inspection. However microscopic examination and chemical tests are usually needed to determine the exact species of a sample.

Most lichens can be assigned to one of these groups based on their form:

- Crustose: flat, thin and crust-like;
- Fruticose: growing in 3 dimensional multi-branched tufts resembling upright or hanging miniature shrubs;
- Foliose: consisting of flat, leaf-like lobes;
- Leprose: powdery;
- Filamentous: stringy, similar to strands of hair;
- Squamulose: composed of leaf-like crustose scales but with the tips being free of the supporting surface. Being able to recognise a

lichen's form is the first step in identifying it. Microscopic examination is used to observe the structure of the vegetative parts (thallus) and the reproductive parts (apothecium) and spores.

This part of the identification process takes practice and a bit of equipment. Samples are sometimes treated with chemical reagents which indicate the presence of chemicals unique in certain species of lichens – a sort of chemical fingerprint.

The way lichens transform barren minerals into ecosystems is remarkable – some might say miraculous. Lichens weather rock. They break up surfaces and increase water penetration as the fungal strands exert mechanical pressure on small fissures in the stone. This breaks it apart and exposes it to the elements.

Lichens also alter the chemistry of the growing surface by exuding acids, and other chemicals that break down the stone. Lichens trap particles of dust and organic materials. The lichens themselves break down eventually leaving nitrogen fixed from the atmosphere by the algal component. Only these organisms are able to make direct use of atmospheric nitrogen.

The miniature landscapes of lichens provide shelter for small organisms that also leave behind their wastes, creating a sort of compost that allows the germination of seeds. The effect snowballs as more organisms colonise the new surface.

Lichens also stabilise existing soils which are prone to erosion. They form a crust with bacteria that



Photos:
Scott O'Keeffe

Lichen growth forms often seen in the Northern Rivers district

binds the surface of granular soils, preventing erosion and creating a surface suitable for germination of plants. This is particularly important for soil health in arid areas. When these crusts are broken, the soils are more prone to erosion. The damage can take a long time to repair.

Lichens don't disappear once they have rendered stone to soil. They persist and other species of lichen appear in the new ecosystems. Ecologists call this succession. Lichens grow on rocks, soil, tree trunks, branches, foliage, wooden fence posts, concrete, grave markers and plastic water tanks. Even if you live in an urban area, you will find many species of lichen etching bricks, mortar and concrete.

A few species are so sensitive to changes in the chemistry of their environment they can be used to monitor air quality. These lichens are very sensitive to the presence of nitrogen oxides and ammonia which are components of fossil fuel and agricultural pollutants. But other species are highly tolerant of these substances, so the presence of tolerant species and the absence or disappearance of sensitive species from an environment may indicate an increase in levels of air pollution.

Lichens are important to animals, especially small species. Many invertebrates use lichen for food and shelter. Even some large animals depend upon lichen for survival. In the Arctic, caribou eat them in the winter when other food is scarce. Elk in the northern hemisphere do the same.

Humans too have used lichens as food in harsh environments or in lean times. In some cultures they are still traditional foods. We still use lichens in dyes, cosmetics, toothpaste and anti-mildew paint. Lichens have recently provided us with antibiotics and other novel organic compounds. Some lichens contain hallucinogens; some are toxic or allergenic.

Does anyone know how fast they grow? Here's an idea – find a distinct clump of one type or a patch with many species. Take a reference photo. Now repeat this every six months and compare the photos to see if there are any changes. Others will surely want to see the results – you know what to do!

Lichens are colonisers of dead, new land. They transform inert material into the stuff that all terrestrial ecosystems depend upon. We can't do without them.

Plant of the month

by Richard Burer



Brush box
*Lophostemon
confertus*

A tree to 40 metres, Brush Box is a tree of moist open forest and rainforest ecotone that's very common in the area.

It's an excellent tree all round, its evergreen leaves, its hardiness and stately appearance make it a good tree on your conservation projects, on the farm and in bigger gardens.

Despite growing to large heights, Brush Box is widely planted as a street tree throughout most states in Australia, in particular in Sydney where its habit is treated to the regular chainsawing to stop it reaching the powerlines.

It's a great landscape tree as it doesn't drop branches and is evergreen and very hardy.

At home in Nimbin, I think this tree deserves a good commendation for its resilience to survive despite its popularity as a logging resource. I'm also happy to say some excellent old growth specimens can be found in the Nightcap National Park, the Channon and Lismore.

In landscape and bush regen plantings, I find this tree useful as it's reasonably fast growing, hardy and really gives good structure to an area. I also find when growing as a multi-stem specimen it's an excellent screen tree.

A great friend of the bees, Brush Box produces excellent honey, so really I can't say a bad thing about this old friend.

So go free one up on the farm, cut the Lantana back off it and you never know, you might see a Koala take refuge in this tree as it's also a secondary core Koala habitat tree.

Its usefulness never ends!

Richard Burer is a Nimbin-based local natural area restoration contractor and consultant: richard.burer@gmail.com



by Peter Brooker



Photo: Olof Jonnerstig

And so it was that the Duke of Venice did come to smile at the thief and he came in the guise of 34 NGC members to feast and be merry.

While some travel to Mil in the Andes of Peru for Pia Leon's gastronomic revolution, or to Copenhagen to experience the delights of cod collar with creme fraiche and caviar at Noma's, the lucky 34 had only to travel to Kerry and Dan's on Stony Chute Road for an equivalent taste sensation.

Kerry had everything prepared when we arrived, so we all relaxed, spreading ourselves along the wide shaded verandahs or sitting in chairs listening to the reassuring hum of air conditioning as we chatted about the year that was and we hoped would never be again.

Before we indulged ourselves however, we had to complete the formalities of reading and accepting the previous year's AGM minutes, hearing the president's and treasurer's reports for the year, and go through the drama of a resigning committee and the excitement of voting on a new one.

After much campaigning, the same committee members were re-elected with Sue Hohnke elected to the new position of vice-president. So now we begin a New Year with gardens beckoning and the hope that all will be well because, as Dostoyevsky said, "To live without hope is to cease to live."

Our next meeting will be held on 19th February and, in keeping with the tradition of Christmas, the location will be a surprise to be unwrapped next month. So if you are a lapsed member, a procrastinator, or new to Nimbin, watch this space and come along.

If you want to 'try before you buy' it will cost \$2, to cover insurance, and should the worst happen and we have to cancel (very unlikely), we need only remember the words of Confucius when he said, "Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall".



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Big problem

Weed Words
by Triny Roe

First there are just one or two. It doesn't appear to be a big problem in the beginning. You're busy, they're pretty, unusual or potentially useful so nothing is done.

After a few or several years, the population suddenly explodes and you have thousands! Now you need to remove them but your work load will be huge.

Parramatta grass, *Sporobolus africanus* is a pesky perennial grass common in lawns, paddocks, and roadsides. Found up and down the east coast of Australia, it's a tough wiry clumping grass that can tolerate compacted soil and harsh conditions.

Parramatta grass spreads readily as stock won't graze it and it can soon dominate a paddock. It's problematic in lawns, forming strongly rooted tussocks and shooting its spindly flower and seeds heads up to 50 cm high.

The thin flat, partially rolled leaves grow to 40cm long. They are hard to snap, as are the flower stalks. Horses and cows don't eat it because they can't. Even whipper snippers can struggle.

When wet, the tiny seeds are sticky. Clinging to clothing, shoes, mowers, vehicles and passing animals they disperse further afield. Parramatta grass can also

arrive in contaminated mulch hay or stock feed.

Regular mowing to prevent it setting seeds can reduce its spread but biocontrol is also available. The introduction of a fungus, *Nigrospora oryzae*, causes crown rot in the *Sporobolus spp.* grasses, knocks them around and reduces the size of the tussocks. Act early to prevent one becoming hundreds.

Job's tears, *Coix lacrym-jobi*, is weedy grass which can establish along creek banks, in wetlands, swamps or ditches. Several serious infestations have been reported in the Northern Rivers. A recent project dealt with Job's tears along several kilometres of Terania Creek.

Giant devil's fig, *Solanum chrysotrichum* another environmental scourge was also targeted at the same time.

A clumping species, job's tears can be long living where there's no frost and it produces plentiful seeds, giving it a propensity to spread if not managed appropriately. It's a useful plant with medicinal properties. The dried seeds can be ground into flour and the seed pods, picked green, dry to an attractive iridescent hue and are used to make jewellery.

However, this plant has the ability to displace native species particularly in moist environments. Forming large



New growth of Giant Devil's Fig

thick clumps it will choke the waterways and reduce biodiversity.

If you see or have this plant, please report to Rous County Council (6623-3800) for identification and advice.

Like many versatile species popular with practical, creative gardeners and permaculturists, these plants are not a problem when the reproductive parts are harvested and utilised. However, abandoned and neglected they can become a significant problem.

Giant devil's fig, reportedly, was introduced into the Tuntabale Valley (not the community) in the 1970s so that eggplants could be grafted onto the fungal-resistant rootstock.

Eventually the eggplant lover returned to Europe and

the fig was free! Ignored for decades, it has now spread south to Coffs Harbour and north into Queensland. It is found in the Sunshine Coast hinterland and on sand islands in Moreton Bay.

Birds and bats have also carried it into the Numimbah Valley and it's common on the Gold Coast, often seen along the motorway and in the median strip.

Ignore at your peril. Large specimens can be felled and black plastic placed over the stump. Fruit should be removed and binned. Hand weeding small specimens is easy when the soil is moist. Wear gloves, grip the stem close to the ground, visualise the roots releasing, breathe out, give it a little shake and a pull will ease it out.

Happy weeding!

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