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# Artist of the month: Katka Adams



'Peace' pastel and pencil on paper

Born in Prague, Katka flew to Australia as a political refugee with her mother in 1969.

Through a rollercoaster childhood, her love of drawing kept her afloat, and led to her studies at Sydney College of the Arts.

After graduating in 1985 she drove to Lismore in a white Suzuki hatchback with her husband and newborn baby, full of hope.

Lismore felt like home, and her new



'The Dance' pastel and pencil on paper

family put down roots and grew.

Living on Bundjalung land in the Northern Rivers, Katka found a community that was safe and caring, lots of sunshine, beauty and a connection to nature that nourishes and inspires her every day.



'Aflame' pastel on paper

Katka lives and works from her studio in Clunes. From here, she exhibits locally and nationally and has been honoured with 80 awards and prizes for painting and drawing.

She is currently exhibiting at Nimbin Artists Gallery.

## Printmaking to photography



by Ruth Tsimbinis

During the month of May, the Roxy Gallery transitions its exhibition genre from Printmaking to Photography, when the current printmaking exhibition, 'Mud and Ink,' finishing on 14th May, is replaced with a photography exhibition of 'Fire Stories.'

This transition will be a telling tale of how art is embraced to support the healing of our region, which has been faced with the numerous natural disasters that have scarred the land and many peoples' lives.

Currently the fantastic exhibition of printmaking, 'Mud And Ink,' has brought over twenty of the region's printmakers to tell their stories about encounters with the 2022 floods.

Some artists lost art works in the floods, and some also lost their studio space; while others lost their works, their studio space, their homes and their businesses.

Through these challenges, and as a means to support the healing process, Steve Giese coordinated Northern Rivers printmakers to ink up their mud story to print.

At different moments, this exhibition will exude a sense of discovery, contemplation, and optimism, engaging viewers in works, which express the lives in limbo moving forward once again.

From the theme of water, the gallery will move exhibitions to the theme of fire, and the technique of photography that will tell the stories from the bushfires that ravished our region in 2019/2020.

'Fire Stories' is a locally produced

'The Bungawalbins with Myall Creek Road and Bora Ridge fire' by Jimmy Malecki

multimedia exhibition featuring audio-recordings and photographs on the 2019/2020 bushfires. The exhibition is part of the larger Fire Stories project delivered by Kyogle Family Support Services and funded by the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund.

The project saw Northern Rivers writers, Jarrah Dundler and Anastasia Guise travel around the region recording stories from people who were impacted by the fires. Along the way they were joined by photographers Jodie Harris and Ben Belle who photographed people who were interviewed.

The words and photos collected, along with more photos generously contributed by community members, will appear as a podcast to be published on the Fire Stories website, as well as in the book *Fire Stories: Reflections from Northern Rivers locals on the 2019/2020 bushfires*, to be launched at the exhibition opening night.

'Fire Stories' will run at the Roxy Gallery from the 18th of May to the 18th June. It will feature photographs contributed by community photographers, as well as portraits by Jodie and Ben with linking podcasts of people's fire stories.

Visitors will be able to access these podcasts via a QR code and listen on their smartphones (so please bring your headphones if you have a pair!).

The exhibition launches on Friday, 19th May at 6pm when artists, writers



Tall Vase and Triune Ritual Bowl by Denis Hopking

and community participants will come together to acknowledge their achievements.

The Fire Stories project is funded by the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund and the exhibition is proudly supported by Kyogle Council's Roxy Gallery and Kyogle Writers Festival.

### Steppin' Up Gallery

'Drink the Tea, Appreciate the Tea Pot' is currently on exhibition in the Steppin' Up section of the Roxy Gallery, located in the entrance foyer area to the Kyogle Memorial Hall.

Master potter, Denis Hopking has installed an interesting display of his works with a focus on the many people, both teachers and students who have inspired his work.

As a retired Steiner teacher, Denis believes a teacher's philosophy is a description of their values, goals, and beliefs regarding both their approach to creating ceramics but also their understanding how a student learns. The student will benefit if the teacher knows how to explain, guide and develop what he is imparting.

The diversity that he was exposed to as a student at the Medway College of Art and Design in Kent UK (1978-80) from potters from the UK, USA, Africa, Japan and Spain enabled him to appreciate the various cultural and social environments that these visiting teachers shared.

'Drink the Tea, Appreciate the Tea Pot' commemorates those who have inspired Denis as an artist who works in the field of ceramics.



# Anything Goes and Aquarius50 events



'Let it be Life on the Farm' by B.E. (Brigitte and Ester)

The current exhibition at Blue Knob Hall Gallery is 'Anything Goes'.

With a variety of work from paintings, sculpture and mixed media this exhibition invited any artwork that artists and members wished to bring in.

The painting 'Let it Be Life on the Farm' by B.E. (Brigitte and Ester) is a homage to all the people who lived and farmed in this area before the Aquarius Festival, and those who have come later and made this life their own.

This show ends on Sunday 7th May, which is when artwork is due in for 'The Young Ones – Rivers & Rainbows' between 9.30am and 3pm. An exhibition for young people 18yrs and under (three age categories) with prizes.

## Celebrating Aquarius50

**Thurs May 11th** – Cafe & Gallery open

**Fri May 12th** – Cafe & Gallery open

**Sat May 13th** – Artisans Market: 8.30am – 12.30pm. Stalls, Backyarders Table, Demos, Music

**Mon May 15th** – Opening event: 3.30pm 'The Young Ones – Rivers & Rainbows' exhibition. Performance by Blue Knob Choir. Peace Mandala creation from 10am

**Tues May 16th** – Cafe & Gallery open with 'The Young Ones – Rivers & Rainbows' exhibition

**Wed May 17th** – Artist's Social: 5.30pm – 7.30pm. An evening for artists to meet and share knowledge



and skills

**Thurs May 18th** – Artist's & Friends Lunch: 12.30pm – 2.30pm

**Fri May 19th** – Cafe & Gallery open with 'The Young Ones – Rivers & Rainbows' exhibition

**Sat May 20th** – Family Fete: 8.30am – 12.30pm. Stalls, Backyarders Table, prizes presented for 'The Young Ones – Rivers & Rainbows' exhibition.

**Sat May 20th** – Concert – Blue Knob Soiree: 2 – 4pm

**Sun May 21st** – Cafe & Gallery open with 'The Young Ones – Rivers & Rainbows' exhibition.

Events are subject to change. For more info or enquiries on any of these events, please contact: [bkhgallery@iinet.net.au](mailto:bkhgallery@iinet.net.au) phone 02 6689-7449, or go to Blue Knob Gallery & Cafe Facebook page or our website: [www.blueknobgallery.com](http://www.blueknobgallery.com)

Blue Knob Hall Gallery & Cafe will be open for the 10 days over this period from Thursday 11th May to Sunday 21st May from 9.30am to 3pm, Saturdays 8.30am – 3pm.

Come and relax on the cafe verandah overlooking beautiful Blue Knob.

## Art and craft show

Ballina Arts and Crafts Centre Inc presents its fun art and crafts exhibition at Ballina on 6th and 7th May.

On exhibition will be quality original paintings and unique, locally handmade ceramics, jewellery, weaving, woodwork, silk art, printing, resin work, pet portraits, cards, lampshades, plant decor, crochet and more – all for sale.

Entry is free. The raffle, with two major prizes, will raise funds for the local Marine Rescue. The prizes include passes to the Crystal Castle plus \$250 to spend in their gift shop; and a beautiful Equine Sculpture by local and international artist Sue Fraser.

Enjoy our pop-up cafe stocked with sweet and savoury homemade treats.

Open from 9am to 3pm both days at the Masonic Centre, 56 Cherry Street Ballina. Plenty of free parking.

For more information, got to: [www.bacci.com.au](http://www.bacci.com.au)



'Small Trees' by Mathew Daymond, collage on paper

## The complacency of man and machine

Mathew Daymond is an artist, musician, poet, and instrument player.

Living with the gift of autism, he makes art his way, exploring many ideas and processes, including nature's beauty and mystery, narrative and old-world images, and the rich possibilities of collage, paint, words, and found materials.

His latest exhibition, 'The Complacency of Man and Machine', is now showing at the Lismore Regional Gallery pop-up space at 46 Magellan Street, Lismore until 13th May.

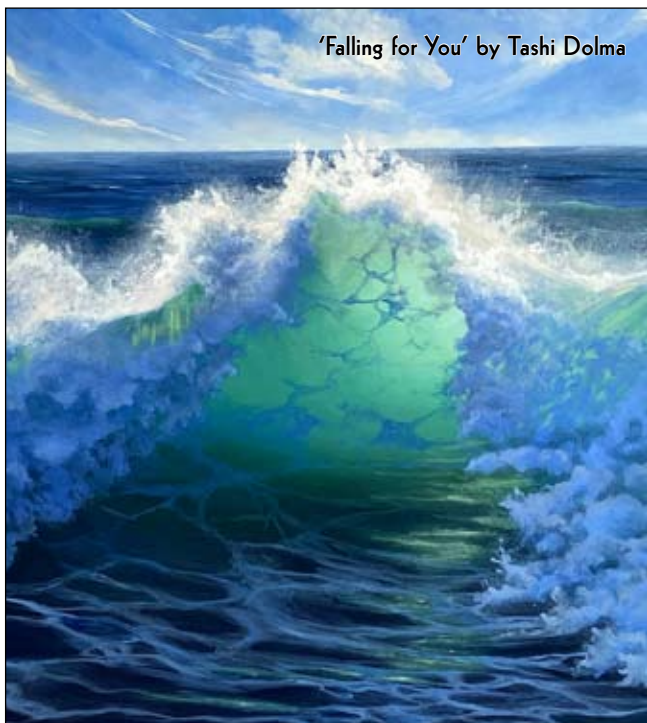
The venue is wheelchair accessible.

### 1973 Aquarius Festival photographs

Lismore Regional Gallery is also curating a collection of images by Peter Derrett OAM which demonstrate what was unique about the 10-day festival.

The exhibition at Nimbin School of Arts will be open from 12th to 20th May, from 10am to 4pm daily.

For more information on the gallery, go to: <https://lismoregallery.org>



'Falling for You' by Tashi Dolma

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# Good Friday coastal trail walk



by Peter Moyle  
Nimbin Bushwalkers Club

With the mild weather and no serious wet, the club headed to Ballina on Good Friday for the walk to Lennox Headland along the coastal trail. Always a popular walk we had 16 members and a couple of visitors. The walk started at Shelley Beach and after a nice section of regenerated littoral rainforest that had some interesting but sad colonial-indigenous history, we made our way along the coastal track much used by walkers and bike riders. The rocky headlands and sandy beaches were at their sparkling best, with dolphins riding the waves as a

treat for all. After smoko at the headland, taking in the elevated view, we retraced our walk before some went for a swim while others made it to the fisho for prawns and lunch on the river. Another great day with good company and another enjoyable walk.

## Walks programme

### Sunday 21st May – Mount Cougal via Murwillumbah

**Leader:** Sue Macklin 0402-220-973  
**Grade:** 4. This is a solid walk about 10km and 4-5 hours for the fit with good footwear and stamina. Ring Sue for latest update if unsure if this is for you. Some climbing and scrambling and off-track walking, but you will be rewarded with great views.  
**Meet:** 9am at Taylor's Corner just before Murwillumbah Showgrounds, Queensland Road, then carpool. On the border between NSW and Qld. For more information and to register, ring Sue.  
**Bring:** lunch, hat, and water.



### Sunday 4th June – Christies Creek between Burringbar and Murwillumbah

**Leader:** Mark Osberg 0408-113-125;  
**Grade:** 4. 10km with some off-track and along creek beds. The creek walk is special and a highlight. Will be at its best after the wet season.  
**Meet:** 9.15am Burringbar train station park where we will carpool to the start.  
**Bring:** Good walking shoes/boots needed and a hat and lunch.

# Behavioural problems

by Donna Connolly

**D**ogs Behaving Badly is quite a popular UK TV show, with Graeme Hall doing house calls and offering some tips and advice on many behavioral problems. His work and perspective is very powerful.

According to his bio, he is a “master dog trainer who is on a quest to restore harmony, and with more than 10 years’ experience, has built his reputation on finding quick but long-lasting fixes to almost any dog behaviour problem.”

I thoroughly enjoy watching the program. However, I do have a slightly different perspective from the vantage point of animal communication, a form of intuitive interspecies understanding.

I don’t disagree with his approach, at all. Good training, with strong boundaries and limits are definitely the key.

I just feel that you can go deeper and really get to the crux of the matter, by seeing things from your pet’s perspective: getting to the why!

I promise you, animals aren’t ever trying to behave badly or trying to be naughty or vengeful. There will always be a reason.

Animals in general, are wired to seek fundamental things, such as food, shelter, stimulation, purpose, play and occasionally attention, especially if they are domestic household pets.

Oftentimes the perceived bad behaviour continues because it comes with rewards and benefits, such as they will dig in the garden, because it brings you outside and they have your undivided attention!

Sometimes there is a very strong message that they are trying to give you; for example, they won’t eat the new food; they could be allergic to it. Meanwhile they may be called fussy.

Or the behaviour can even be an indication of an underlying health condition or illness. Sometimes urinating or defecating in unusual places can be a site of urinary tract infection or they could actually be “pissed off” with something.

It is only our perception that creates right or wrong, good or bad.

I suggest you become curious and try to see things from their perspective. Try and disassociate from the emotional energy of the situation. And ask these fundamental questions:

- What are they gaining from this behaviour?
  - When did it begin?
- There can be an answer in the timing of when the behaviour began or was initiated.

Also, please stop calling your animals/pets defamatory names, as the words associated with this also hold



Maybeline, one of my greatest teachers of animals behaving badly

energy. And they really feel all the derision in this. It is so sad when an animal has a nickname that the humans find hilarious and the pet is really embarrassed or feels upset by it. No-one likes being called a derogatory name, including our fur friends.

When I am working with pets and their guardians; especially around behavioural issues, it is amazing what comes through from them. And it is wonderful to see the situation resolved once the purpose has been identified and the guardians implement any changes.

One of the biggest challenges that shows up is our lack of boundaries and clear and concise communication. After all, we communicate most with our energy, followed by our tone of voice, then the words, so make them short and straight to the point, backed up with appropriate energy and tone!

Animals, like children, flourish when they have understandable boundaries and limits. Consistency is absolutely crucial, and in a household with multiple people and pets, everyone needs to be on the same page with the same messages. It will make everyone’s life a lot easier.

And I think it’s worth mentioning that there will always be a cheeky moment or two, and nearly always that is to lighten the mood and create laughter, also very much our pet’s purpose.

Also, if you are integrating a new pet into your household, it is so important to start as you intend to go on. Show them your expectations from the beginning, and if they are a rescue animal give them time to adjust and acclimatise.

The studies recommend three days to see slight relaxation, three weeks to make them recognise routine, three months to feel comfortable and at least a year before it feels like a true home. These are just guidelines, and each animal has its own individual experience.

Ultimately we are all co-habiting on some level, so doing so with understanding and respect is the key to happiness.

If you would like to gain a better understanding of any perplexing behaviors, feel free to reach out, via: [www.rivergem.com.au](http://www.rivergem.com.au)



## Nimbin Garden Club notes

by Kerry Hagan

A beautiful autumn afternoon saw garden club at the home of Diana and Sam. Built in 1896, the homestead is one of the oldest in the Nimbin area and originally sat on a large parcel of land that included the Showgrounds. Having been subdivided over the years, Diana and Sam now have 10 acres of beautiful established gardens and park-like grounds.

Livingstonia and Bismarckia palms, and huge cycads nestle amongst old exotic species, creating lovely areas of light and shade around the house.

Over the last three years, Diana has been regenerating the gully areas, which were overgrown with lantana. Now it’s the forest floor and planting of indigenous rainforest species.

Thank you Diana and Sam for a really lovely afternoon. There will not be a garden club meeting in May as Nimbin is much too busy with Mardi Grass and the Aquarius 50 year anniversary, but we will be back in June with another lovely garden. Details in the June *GoodTimes*.



View from the loo  
by Stuart McConville

I am up early and skimming the coast for a safe place to swim in the unrelenting surf that pounds the coast at Yuragir N.P. The tide is high and the wind is gusting 30 knots, the swell is seriously big. Waves crash, retract and suck along the coastal trench pushing cushions of foam up to the incipient dune. I find a spot that looks good, bare all and surrender myself to the mercy of the ocean. After a few good body surfing rides on the shore break, I am

## The call of the wild

exhilarated but know my limits and crawl out to freeze dry in the wind. Wandering back along the shore I notice the tide has begun to spill over the dunes and is filling the shallow lake behind the dunes. A mud crab emerges from the flotsam at the confluence and scuttles across the sand to the ocean, closely followed by another. I switch to breakfast mode and race to pin one to the ground. It’s a female and full of eggs so gets a reprieve. So is the other one. As I get closer to the confluence I realise there are a lot of female crabs hiding there, ready to make the dash to the ocean, to relieve themselves of the eggs that will wash along the coast and hopefully hatch in a safe place. Feeling honored to have witnessed this event, I make my way back to camp and get a fire going. Later that day the camp managers are kicking out a couple of backpackers that didn’t have the foresight to book ahead for camping. It began to dawn on me that we have constructed a world so disenfranchised from the art of spontaneity that a whole section of society is disadvantaged. I am one of them. When faced with the prospect of planning ahead, I tend to procrastinate and get distracted. I am sure it is the same for many folk with a bit of ADHD going on. Ironically, nature therapy is just what I need sometimes, but cannot access nature without a long-winded process and wait for a campsite, so that by the time I get what I was looking for I no longer need it. Imagine if the mud crabs had to book their egg runs! There are many examples of technology-enhanced bureaucratic processes that could exclude people on the spectrum. The NPWS

booking system is definitely biased to those who can plan ahead effectively, with no campsites left for those who act spontaneously, or even those who might not know exactly where they are going to be staying night from night – the backpackers for example. “Nearly Normal Nimbin” has a wide range of people that would benefit from ADHD-informed changes to many levels of services offered by government. The federal government is undertaking a parliamentary enquiry into assessment and support services for people with ADHD. If you feel you can contribute by making a submission, please email: [community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au) Stuart McConville runs Pooh Solutions, compost toilets and waste water services: [www.poohsolutions.com.au](http://www.poohsolutions.com.au) phone 0427-897-496.





Suzy and Toby

by Suzy Maloney

To be a person that horses feel fully comfortable and safe with, our minds need to be empty.

Humans spend a lot of time in their heads, our culture focuses strongly on intellectual learning and development. We are not taught in school how to use our other two information centres, the heart and the gut.

Horses on the other hand live primarily from these two places. They exist in the present moment, reacting and basing decisions on what they're feeling, not on what they are thinking. This is very different to humans.

If we want to really connect with horses, finding a place where we are operating from our feelings rather than our thoughts is a great place to start.

# Mind-emptiness

Horses feel unsettled around our busy minds. Our non-stop thinking is like a pressure to them, it feels uncomfortable and can make them agitated.

If we go to our horses in a mind-empty state, they are more relaxed and happier to be with us. The messages that come to us when we're emotionally open and in the present moment with horses, are more likely to give us good results than those coming just from our brains.

However, I also think it's necessary to educate ourselves about all aspects of horse care and horsemanship. I am totally on board with this, I live in a continuous state of being a student, there is always more to learn.

Then when we are with our horses, if we can dial down the brain and amplify the heart and gut, the level of communication and connection with horses reaches a whole new level.

If they know we are fully present and aware of ourselves, them, and the surroundings, they will trust us more, and feel safer.

This is where horses live all the time. If we go to horses while in our heads, we are not in the same world as them. This instantly sets up a wall between us.

We may not be able to feel it, but the horses can. For them it's like we have left, like we're not there anymore.

If the horse can feel we are present, they know we're on the lookout for dangers and predators and can feel safe knowing we'll alert them to danger, just as any other horse would.

So how do we do this? One possible way is through some sort of

meditation practice.

I was an on/off meditator, feeling not very good at it, until I accepted that everyone's minds wander, it's totally normal.

When we recognise our wandering, and come back to ourselves, we are meditating, that's the whole point. The skill we learn is how to bring our minds back.

This teaches us some control over these crazy busy minds of ours, and helps when with our horses, if we've already practised the skill of coming back. With time it does get easier.

For me, this frequently just happens when I'm with horses, I am more in my body and present than in other situations. I've heard other people say they experience the same thing.

This is one of the huge gifts that horses have for humans. If we're open to it, it feels like they help us be in our bodies and not our minds.

I'm not able to maintain this for as long in other situations. The determining factor is the presence of horses, I think it's their influence.

We say Horse Whisperer when we mean Horse Listener, and we say Mindfulness when we really mean Mind-emptiness, which sort of sums up just how crazy these brains of ours are!

I hope you enjoy finding this peaceful state with horses.

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# Empathy in non-human animals

by Les Rees

It seems that the human race still has much to learn about the empathy of other animals that inhabit our planet.

I'm constantly seeing images on social media of wild animals connecting with others less fortunate than themselves, offering a protective role to different species.

It always surprises me that most of the comments have an element of surprise from people who haven't noticed that animals often display empathy for weaker individuals.

Today there was news of a goose that was found stuck to a pole in ice, struggling to free itself in freezing conditions.

It was protecting a young puppy which was snuggled under its wing in an attempt to keep it warm. Fortunately, they were rescued and have been rehomed together.

There was also an image of an orang-utan offering its hand to help pull a trapped man out of a boggy river. I suspect that the orang-utan may have once been orphaned and raised by humans, but it still displayed concern and empathy.

I personally find this very interesting because it proves that animals not only recognise weakness, but they also demonstrate sympathy for others in need. There's plenty of anecdotal evidence to suggest that it's quite common in the animal kingdom, even between animals that would normally be prey.

Many years ago, our house cow



struck up an unusual relationship with a duck. They became inseparable in spite of having others of their own species around on our farm. They even lay down to sleep together, Donald lying between Sophie's front legs.

Occasionally she'd get up carefully to avoid stepping on Donald and wander off. Much to our amusement, she was ticked off by an irate Donald for leaving him behind.

On another occasion I saw Sophie nose to nose with a wild rabbit. Neither seemed afraid, in fact it was as if they were just spending some time chatting together.

I believe that all animals are sentient, like us they have the same needs for survival in our world, they have a nervous system that enables them to feel things through their physical senses.

Like us, they demonstrate fear,

happiness, delight, gratitude and unwanted emotions in the form of pain, frustration and fear.

If you have experienced a horse, dog or cat dreaming, why would you imagine that they would be incapable of thought processing?

In the past, scientists put emphasis on brain size to determine whether other animals were capable of sentient behaviour.

Fortunately, that thinking has changed, as they have discovered that animals mostly use nonverbal communication and therefore don't need the extra size of brain. An important thing, given that they wouldn't survive in the world if they made too much noise.

It seems to me that humans spend a lot of time disassociating themselves from the rest of the animal kingdom in failing to understand their humble beginnings within the family tree.

The word anthropomorphism is bandied about to quash "uneducated" ideas about non-human animals, but we are all animals and we are discovering that we share far more common traits than was originally thought.

It seems ridiculous to imagine that animals don't feel emotions or have the capacity to feel empathy for others in the animal kingdom when we share a world that is interconnected by symbiotic relationships that enable us to survive together.

*Les Rees is an equine naturopath and sports therapist. Phone 0437-586-705.  
[www.horsetailherbs.com.au](http://www.horsetailherbs.com.au)*

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