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ART STREAMS

Vol. 10, No. 3, 2005

Whittlesea • Banyule • Darebin • Manningham • Nillumbik • Yarra

City of Darebin La Trobe University Acquisitive Art Prize Winners

The winners of the Alan Marshal Short Story Awards for 2005

Ephemeral Sculpture

Leigh Barker Quintet

featuring~

Eamon McNelis
John Felstead
Al McGrath-Kerr
Matt Boden

ARTSTREAMS GALLERY

Leigh Barker Quintet
Performing at Artstreams Gallery
2.30pm, Sunday October 2

Leigh Barker has appeared with Jamie Oehlers, Dale Barlow, Scott Tinkler, Julien Wilson, Gian Slater, Michelle Nicole, Nichaud Fitzgibbon, Alison Wedding, and many others. In 2004 Leigh travelled to the US where he studied with Ben Wolfe, Eric Revis, Reginald Veal, Branford Marsalis and Doug Wamble.

The quintet is Leigh Barker, double bass; John Felstead saxophones; Eamon McNelis, trumpet & flugel horn; Matt Boden, piano and Alastair McGrath-Kerr, drums.

The Leigh Barker quintet is influenced by Miles Davis, Keith Jarrett, Duke Ellington and Branford Marsalis. They have performed at the Merimbula Jazz Festival (2002, '03, '04), the Moruya Jazz Festival (2002, '03, '04) and the Wangaratta Jazz Festival (Reid St. stage 2003). A recording for ABC's 'Jazztrack' program is planned later this year.

What the critics say:

"...strong tunes and accomplished improvisation kept the appreciative audience with them every step of the way." - Helen Saunders, Muse arts magazine."Y'all swinging! Australia in the house...that first tune is killin', my man."
- Doug Wamble, guitarist with the Lincoln Centre Jazz Orchestra.

"...His group made their musical statement in language we could all understand, appreciate and enjoy... They knew about the blues and knew how to swing and swing hard they did when they had to."
- Murray Lavelle, North West Jazz Action Society.

news in arts and Cultural heritage

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Front Cover: Viki Petherbridge's photograph 'And She Was (Homage to Talking Heads)'. Bottom: Ephemeral sculpture by Vicky Shukuroglou.

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Comment

Throughout history art has changed as much as our lifestyles. Human concepts about the world, life and meaning while remaining as important as ever, acquired new images. Technological innovations somewhere along the way managed to strip a few outer layers off visual art. The shell that was rigidly tied to certain skills that an artist had to posses before he/she tackled any conceptual work has disappeared. Those skills sometimes could dominate the whole work of art. With every step of advancing technology artists had to dig deeper and wider to express true emotion, to reflect life in a new, different way. This process inevitably brought to life the use of new tools, creating powerful new languages of expression. In a sense, modern art of the day is the art created on that day, reflecting the latest technologies available to the mankind on that day and expressing the ideas and emotions of that time.

A creative person – an artist is able to pick up the fragmented ideas that exist in society as a whole or in different groups of it. He/she works on visual expression, articulating them and projecting them back to the public. It all seems to happen very much on a somewhat unconscious indescribable level. The public which in most cases has been only vaguely aware of new emerging trends makes decisions on the images that have clearly formulated ideas that they can comprehend or intuitively recognise. And that's where it gets tricky. Different people like and recognise different emotions and images. In other words, they like different art.

People will adopt a work of art, style or image which in their view represents the emotion/idea they long and search for. Usually it starts with a very small following that could eventually grow into millions. At that point we say that the artist became popular and well known. The galleries and auction houses, trip over themselves in the hurry to purchase or to be associated with the artist's work. With a bit of luck the artist is still alive to enjoy his or her popularity. As history shows, some artists do work well ahead of their time.

So what is it all about? As we know, some images that were well-accepted hundreds of years ago still move contemporary viewers. While others - hardly last a few years or so. Prediction of future trends is turning into fine science. Gigantic publicity machines turn their wheels to prove that somebody's decision was right at any cost. While some artists just get it right. How do they do it? Just by sitting in their studio? The answer probably would be somewhere along the lines of being truthful to oneself; believing in oneself and shedding known formulas. It may be found by experiencing surrounding life with an open heart and open eyes, by feeling not only for oneself but for everyone around, by living the life of the day.

Ausra Larbey

Artstreams takes pleasure in welcoming the following institutions as 'partners' in it's task of promoting and supporting the arts and culture of the North Eastern region of Melbourne.

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FAMILY BUSINESS

Short story by Llewellyn Pritchard

1962, warm and safe, still a baby and being held by three young women, dark skinned from 60,000 years of Australian sunshine, all happy to be together on our family holiday. They are with Dad and Mum and me on a break from St Mary's in Alice Springs.

My big sister, gentle, loving, tolerant, peaceful – where did she come from? I would sit on her bed to the quiet greeting "how you goin' mate". Her name is not her real name. To me now she is Nungala.

Then I'm four years old, in the bath. Mum and Dad come in to say they need to ask me something. "Your foster sister has a little brother at St Mary's who needs to stay somewhere to go to school in Melbourne, what should we do?"

"He should stay with us of course" I said.

The first day I meet my new brother from the centre of Australia, he rides my tricycle, at my invitation, round and round the fireplace of our modest 10 square weatherboard home in a bushy Eltham Shire. Eventually it's my turn, I ask again and again. Then I grab the handlebars for a turn on my own trike. I see cream bricks on the side of the fireplace coming at me fast. Then pain as the egg starts to grow on my forehead. My first meeting with my foster brother causes me pain. He is a bit different from his sister. Brothers but not brothers; family but not family. To me now he is Jungala.

Dad sets up a rope as a boxing ring. We get plastic boxing gloves. I'm supposed to be the great white hope against a brother too much like Lionel Rose. I never win. We play at war together against a common foe. Sometimes we put on a play for Mum and Dad. I get a blood nose; great, that is the wounded kangaroo and we can track the blood trail. Brother shows me how to make the shape of their paws in the dirt. It is like we had been acting the parts forever; perhaps we really were those animals once. We cut our wrists lightly and tie them together; blood brothers forever.

Nungala does well at Eltham High School and secretarial studies and then stays with my Grandmother for a while and she's off on her own career and life, back to Alice Springs.

Diamond Valley Little Athletics. Jungala is winning as usual as we cheer him on. His room is full of sports trophies. Why would I think of competing in athletics myself, when Jungala is so naturally talented? People we meet fall over themselves to talk to him, ask about him, and praise him on his civilized skills. His little white brother pales comfortably, into the background.

Our house is full, vibrant crazy with Dad, Mum, Nungala, Jungala, my three genetic younger sisters and me in a ten square weatherboard and small bungalow. Sometimes tensions mount. There are good and bad times as with any family. Sometimes it is a major exercise just to find the car keys and all get in the car to go out. Mum and Dad work three jobs each and sacrifice much to raise their own four children and two foster children. They are not the sort of people who would ever say that to anyone. Being altruistic, socially minded people, driven by high principals rather than their own material needs, they take on each challenge in an optimistic way without a lot of thought for the consequences for them or their family.

It's Nungala's wedding to the cheeky pom who won her heart in Alice Springs. The wedding is in Melbourne with an Anglican priest and also Sir Pastor Doug Nichols presiding.

1973, Jungala is gone again, to boarding school at Ballarat College with all the other boarders. Mostly whitefellas and many the children of farmers in the western district. I visit with Dad in the dorm. Its awkward, what can you say?

Proud of my Aboriginal sister and brother, I defend their people and honour against racist comments even at school when in second form. At the backward boys Grammar School I attended I had to stand up and argue with several boys, stupid sons of businessmen who had made a few bucks, about the integrity of the Aboriginal people.

It's Summer 1980 I get a lift back from a family holiday at Lake Fyans to stay with my brother in his flat in South Yarra to attend the interview for Architecture at RMIT. The interview goes alright, I get in and defer a year. But more than the interview I remember stretching with

Jungala at the Botanic Gardens and running around the tan in the beautiful cool of a Melbourne summer evening. He is fit and has been playing with an under 19 Aussie football league team. We are equal in the dark. The air is clean I breathe easily, there is no effort, no constriction; I have a life ahead of me, endless possibilities.

A couple of years later in the middle of the night on a bus to Alice to see my brother and sister, I talk with an old man who is going home. Our conversation turns to men's business it seems natural to be talking to him. We stop at a roadhouse and get out into the 40-degree heat at 2.00 a.m. in the morning. Inside the fluoro lights reveal how dark he is and how white I am. There is embarrassment, who is this young fella he thought he was talking to? Have I overstepped the mark? Who knows, we don't speak again. I am walking through an air-conditioned shopping centre in Alice Springs with my young girlfriend. People of all colours and cultures walk around, locals and tourists, most are Celtic Anglo Saxon mongrel like me. Suddenly I catch the eye of an old blackfella. He stares back and sees something in me - a cheeky smile comes to his face. Its as though he doesn't see the young whitefella but someone else. He is looking right through me. What does he see? The concrete, plastic and steel vaporize in the strong desert wind. Its just him and me in red sand, mulga, desert oak, sharp grass, snake tracks and dry heat. I'm on his land; what am I doing there? Was I invited, did I invade?

Its 1986 I am getting married to my beautiful young wife at St Margaret's Anglican Church in Eltham opposite the pub. We go back to Montsalvat for the reception. Well what else would I do growing up in Eltham? Nungala is there with her husband and two young children, they have driven down from Alice Springs to be there. Jungala is also there. He drove all the way too, with his girlfriend at the time. He made a special effort first driving on the wheels, then on the roof, then on the side of the car and then on the roof again. The blowout nearly took them both out. Miraculously somehow by light plane and other transport he got there in time. What an effort to get to my wedding on time - I will never forget that!

I am in a cave but I can see as if in daylight. It's an old sacred place with hand painted walls. Perhaps there is a fire going, clapsticks and singing. Just me and the old man. He is speaking or singing to me in language – Luridja, Arrente, I don't know. I can't speak language anyway. Somehow I understand what he is saying. Isn't this what every whitefella in Australia secretly desires – to truly be a part of this ancient land and culture. The scene is vivid, lucid more real than the waking dream. I wake with a jolt, sheets wet with sweat, strange for such a mild evening.

The Stolen Generation Report is published. Pride turns to shame. I can no longer say to people that I have a foster family with pride. Melbourne as the thinking capital of Australia has many self-righteous, P.C., latte-sipping, intellectuals who have never actually met an Indigenous person, but who can tell you exactly what went wrong and what should be done. As a parent now, all I know is, that if someone came to take my children away I would kill that person with my bare hands at the front door.

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My own sensitive caring mother is torn apart by the grief of it all and it plunges her into depression. Are the media talking about my brother and sister? About these proud Warlpiri people who have carved out successful lives for themselves, bridging two cultures and improving both? Are they talking about my brother and sister who appear on the Parliamentary document giving them Native Title Grant to their traditional Homelands at Yulurrjirrki? Are they talking about my brother and sister who have pursued successful careers and both reconnected strongly with their traditional family, both working for indigenous culture and education. My sister who raised two beautiful accomplished children who have given her six grandchildren? Her own children going on to earn respect working with indigenous communities.

It is cleansing for the nation to have the truth in the public domain to address the wrongs, apologise and acknowledge the pain of all involved. And there is real pain for the foster families too. Things that don't happen in ordinary genetic families, different challenges, different opportunities. Worst of all to be part of something at a time when it was common for white girls to give up babies for adoption if unmarried, when white kids went to boarding school to get an education, when the Indigenous people were not even regarded as citizens of their own country. It was a different time, a simpler time, a worse time. 27 May 1967, my fifth birthday, Australia voted to make my brother and sister citizens of Australia. Perhaps the 200 plus Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander nations could get together and vote on whether they will accept us as citizens on their land; perhaps not? We might get to stay!

Prime Minister Howard is banging a lectern, on the television screen, screaming at a packed gallery of Indigenous elders and educated people from all over Australia. The Stolen Generation Report is fresh and raw in the psyche of Australia. The whole audience stands and turns their backs to him as he explains that no bad things have been done to Aboriginal people in his lifetime or by his Government. Strange I would have thought that the Commonwealth Government would have had an ongoing responsibility for its actions, not limited to the term of some small person or political party. I am horrified, disgusted, aggrieved by his behaviour and I am a white-fella. Is this the way we are supposed to treat people who have suffered massive loss and grief? I am ashamed to be Australian and join the Reconciliation movement in reaction.

Its 2000 we are driving along the Tanami Road out to the homelands with the elders to plan the new community project. Jungala wants to drive my four-wheel drive down the homelands track and starts fishtailing in the bulldust. "Deadly driving Jungala" Napurrurla shouts out from the back seat. When we head off the track Japananka knows where the spiky tree stumps are, it's his country, so I let him drive. Now we are in the beautiful desert of the homelands, the old woman, Napangardi runs under bushes like a child and finds bush tucker and shows us where the water is, she hasn't been here for around sixty years. We meet other family members on the road back. Jungala and Nungala say that we are family, I believe them with all my heart.

The client is talking to me about his didgeridoo workshop in the Bend of Islands Environmental Living Zone. Apparently it's just the same as an Aussie making violins, just as authentic. Right. Another client is telling me, "I have studied Aboriginal artifacts in my Archeology degree and my husband has been on a five day workshop with Aboriginal people in Broome and we have this German friend who is so cool and organizes huge collaborative rock concerts in Arnehm Land". Wow. I stop attending meetings at the local reconciliation group that I am a founding member of. It's the latte-sipping thing again. Too much time spent talking about words. How can we reconcile something that was never formed as a whole to begin with? Good point. Gary Foley at our invitation comes in to tell us what an irrelevant bunch of do-gooding white-fellas we are - probably right. I drive Evelyn Scott to the Eltham Community Centre; she is an elegant articulate leader as chair of Reconciliation Australia. Mick Dodson speaks to us in inspiring well-educated moderate language. Richard Frankland tells us what its like to be a Koori of mixed descent in Melbourne. I watch his film "Harry's War" it is beautiful and heartbreaking all at once. Jim Wandin, Ngurungaeta, (head elder) of the Wurundjeri People opens the Gawa trail for our group and welcomes me to land; it's a huge honour.

My brother Jungala calls and talks in a faulting voice. Another loved relative has died. I cannot believe it's true. The gentle strong young fella, now grown into a man with a family, who once rode on my shoulders as we walked around Alice Springs, has left us? My breath catches and slows, grief constricts my chest - remember to breath. Out of respect for traditional family members I can no longer speak his name. He is now simply Kumanji. I scrape together some money, gather up my elderly parents and we fly up.

Hundreds of people are already there at the Lutheran Church when the traditional family arrives and the women are wailing. The air is full of the dry intense electricity of grief, respect and love. Standing and reading for the family is an honour, like standing on the top of an iceberg in an infinite unfathomable sea; speaking with respect and compassion but not really understanding the incomprehensible. A culture, sixty thousand years old, imbues everything with a powerful vibration - nothing escapes it. Even the childlike buildings and structures built in the last hundred years to the glory of western civilization seem transient. Its as though the vibration in all the quantum strings of matter, could with a small tweak, intensify and effortlessly, completely vapourise the here and now agreed upon matter of the modern town, reducing all back to sand and desert scrub.

Our grief is real. We are foster family, not family, real family. My nephew has died. My parents grieve for the loss of a grandson.

Family Business by Llewellyn Pritchard was the winning story in the Local Award section of the 2005 Alan Marshall Short Story Awards

The winners of the Alan Marshal Short Story Awards for 2005:

Open Award: Winner, *In Shadows* by Bill Collopy of Victoria

Highly Commended: *Seven Bob Head* by Suzanne McCourt of Victoria;
Alaskan Swan by Sian Eldridge of Queensland

Commended: *Naked Nicholas* by David Maney of South Australia;
And ? by Patrick Cullen of New South Wales;
The Line by Phil Guy of New South Wales;
Patsy's Magic by Gwenda Ennis of Victoria;
White, on White, On White by Andrea Dawson of Queensland;
Venus Descending by Allan Mackay of New South Wales

Local Award: *Family Business* by Llewellyn Pritchard of Eltham, Victoria

Highly Commended: *Spindrift* by M Joseph of Victoria;
The Death of Guilt by Lena Capasso of Eltham, Victoria

Commended: *The Race* by Richard Trembath of Eltham, Victoria;
Perfect Eyes by Michèle Dodd of St Andrews, Victoria;
Tidal by Frances Lemon of Eltham, Victoria;
Catherine in Wonderland by Richard Trembath of Eltham, Victoria.

Young Writers Awards: *Troubled Waters* by Rafaela Henry of Queensland.

Highly Commended: *What it feels Like To Ruin Your Reputation* by Emma Halfpenny of Victoria.

Commended: *My Esteemed Dad* by Helena Holman of New South Wales.

Ephemeral Sculpture

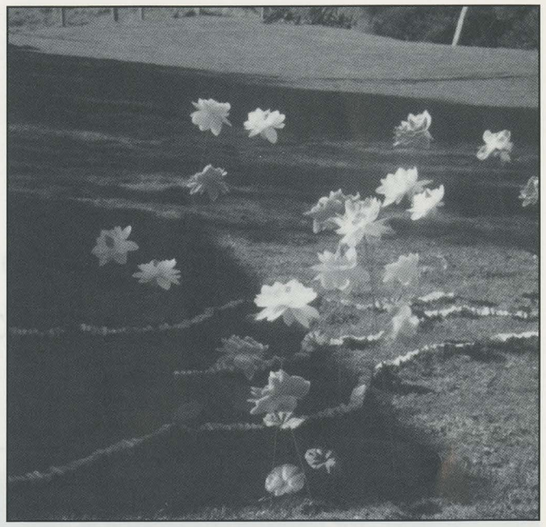
by Peter Dougherty

According to the dictionary 'ephemeral' means: lasting only a very short period of time; transitory; fleeting; evanescent; momentary. I have always associated such definitions with cinema, theatre and musical experiences. Alas today every such experience is packaged into products that people take home and experience over and over till they are killed off.

Nillumbik Shire Council and Nillumbik Tourism Association Inc. have now attached the word to sculpture and commissioned five artists to create Ephemeral Sculptures, all with a reference to wining and or dining.

The sculptures were all created in or in the grounds of Culinary establishments in the Shire of Nillumbik. Denise Keele-Bedford constructed *Ou Well* at Wellers Restaurant in Kangaroo Ground.She 'planted' a stand of artificial lotus flowers in the lawn through which streams of wine corks wend their way. *Ou* means lotus flower in Chinese and *Well* refers to the location. The significance of the brilliantly colored artificial flowers is that they represent a very edible variety of flower and the corks speak for themselves. Time will tell how ephemeral they really are.

Vicky Shukuroglou, also at Wellers set up cotton banners that are printed and painted with natural dyes from onion skins, spinach, radish beetroot, turmeric and charcoal. She has used the colours and forms from the plants to evoke the place of her subjects in the culinary culture.



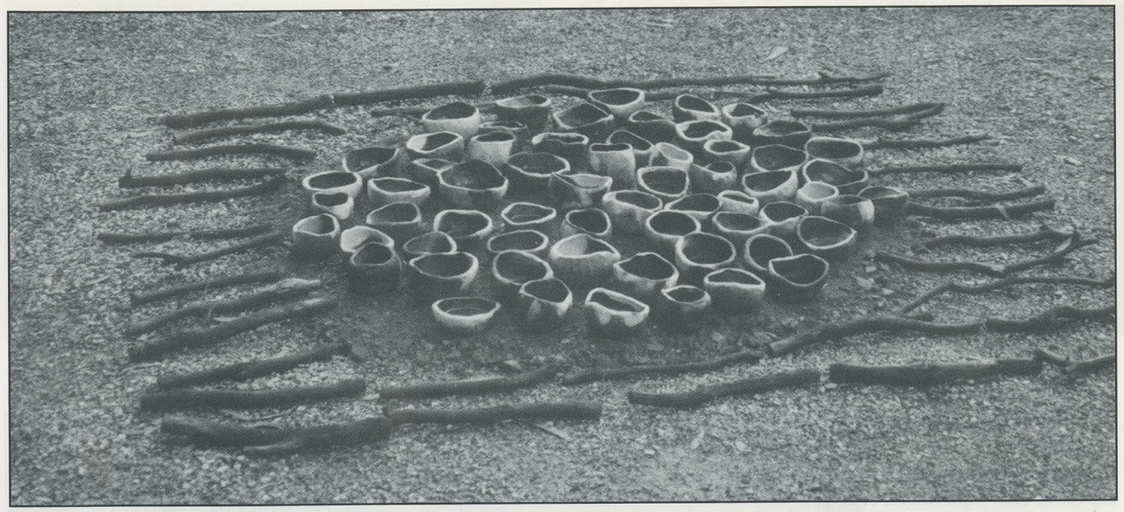
The charcoal refers to the preparation of food and a shell midden assembled at the base of one of the banners relates it all back the original residents of the region.

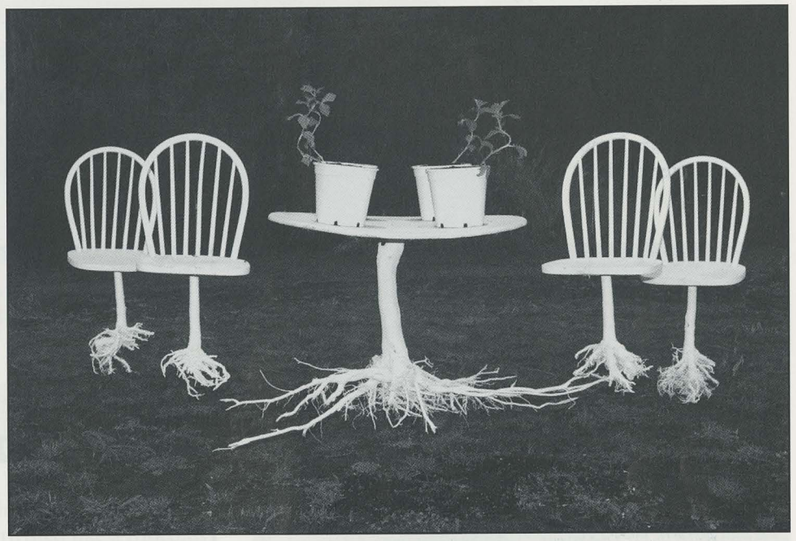
A dialogue between food and the ephemeral was created at Café Z in Research. Victoria Edgar decorated a wall with 42 found object works that include lolly teeth, marshmallows, sea horses, sea urchins, dried fish, cheese and biscuits, among many other objects. Purposely challenging the ephemeral nature of foodstuffs she underlines the fact that so much of our foodstuffs are prepared to resist decomposition almost permanently. She makes the point that we take longer to decompose after death nowdays because we are so full of preservatives. (See John Jenkins on Victoria Edgar, page?)

Food, celebration and ritual have been brought together in *Ancient Feast*, an installation at Watson Creek Antiques and Café by Leanne Mooney. A circular mound symbolizing a gathering or meeting place is decorated with empty black ware ceramic vessels for the preparation and consumption of the feast. Nature has intervened to fill the vessels with rainwater. Arranged in ritualistic form around the perimeter are charred sticks that address the time honoured cooking methods.

Working in a more recognizably traditional 'sculptural' way, Lloyd Godman created a table setting at Bridges restaurant in Hurstbridge. The table and chair legs consist of tree roots, but the fact that they all hang above the ground denies them the possibility of permanence. Three pots of bean stalks set on the table reintroduces the idea of growth, denied to the chairs and table but guaranteed for the beans that will eventually be consumed.

A progressive feast on Wednesday, July 22 gave a party of culture buffs an opportunity to eat and drink in the four participating venues while relating the experiences of food and wine to the art that addressed them.





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Food and a Question of Time

by John Jenkins.

Victoria Edgar currently has work displayed at Café Z, 1530 Main Road, Research, as part of Nillumbik's 2005 annual exhibition of ephemeral sculpture. Edgar, a local artist, joins four others taking part, with work displayed in various locations throughout the shire.

Our municipal website reflects on what we might expect to see: "Ephemeral sculpture can have a limited life. It can be created for the moment, designed to respond to the elements or grow and change gradually over time…"

Fair enough. Which then makes me think about ephemeral versus the solid, made-to-last variety.

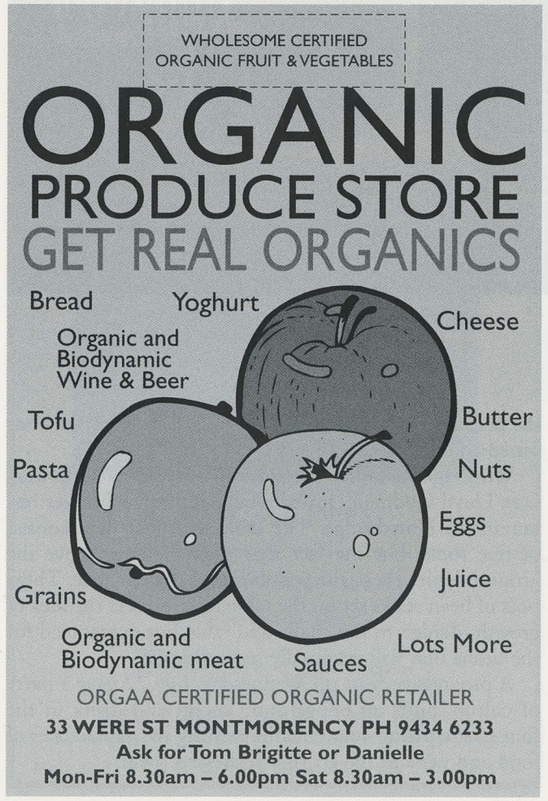
Diamonds are forever, but even diamonds were once lumps of coal compressed deep below the earth, and one day, after our sun goes nova, will become star vapour. All art is ephemeral, and even the pyramids – which I must agree were definitely made to last – are now looking a bit ragged, particularly up close. For art, like everything else, it's all a matter of time.

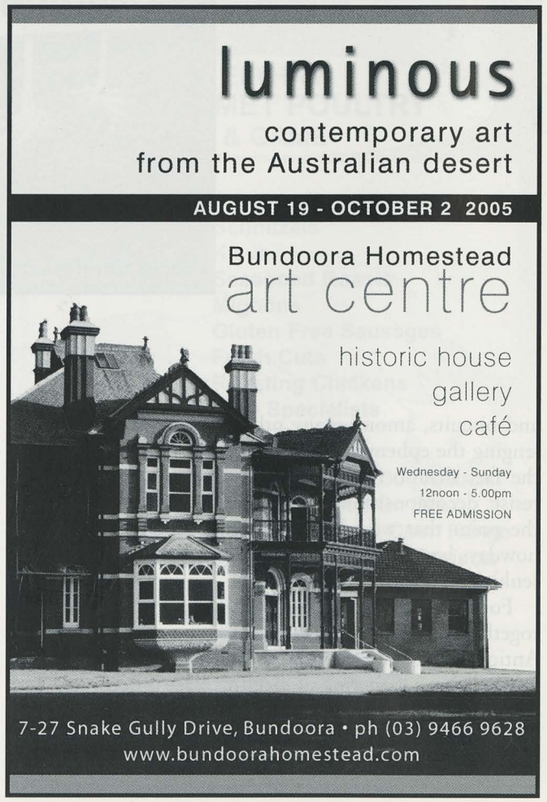
I paraphrase Edgar's description :"(My work at Café Z) will comprise a patchwork blanket made from everyday items found in the pantry- such as dry biscuits, beans, wheat, rice paper and so on."

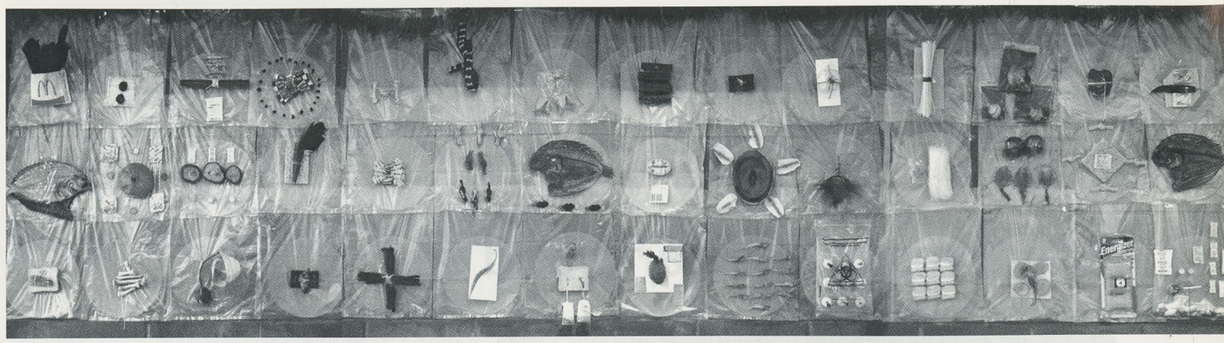
She reflects that some items also have a shelf life that's amazingly long, while being minutely short on nutritional benefits."

Her 'patchwork blanket' at the cafe consists of 42 wafer-thin plates placed inside square-shaped, transparent oven bags, all joined together and disposed in three vertical rows of 14 panels each: enough to fill a wall on one side of the eatery. The piece is fringed at the top with a festive-looking string of red chilli peppers, suggesting meanings piquant, if not downright sharp.

Initially, there is a fascination with looking at each panel separately, and finding recognisable ingredients way out of their usual culinary depth, and placed in an ingenious and bizarre dialogue with eachother. For example, there is a distinctly unhealthy-looking dyed-green biscuit,







sewn with thread and topped with a large brown moth. In another panel, a liquorish strip, twisted like a Moebius, is dotted with tiny bone-shaped dog biscuits along its convoluted length. Each is like a separate dinner setting, bristling with odd morsels and offerings.

Part of the real pleasure of this piece is to become absorbed in the detail, then look again over the work in toto, letting the details sink back once more into the surface, as just part of the overall texture. Then, of course, you can re-focus on the panels, each with its serving of sly or mordant humour.

In one panel you notice dried whitebait, composed head to tail and seemingly still on their life's great journey. A fleeting fleet, indeed, resisting decomposition. In another, sugar straws and coffee beans are arranged around a lightbulb. Maybe they have a good idea: another cappuccino, anyone? Read, compose, decompose, spot the meaning.

Then there is an array of thin and desiccated chicken bones, arrayed like a little child's drawing of a house, complete with little door. The mordancy comes in that door. All these titbits, made not to last, are just marking time here, preserved until the inevitable. We must eat to live, but growing things must die for us to eat to live. And so on, thus it ever was.

Diets and livers also come to mind. And vegetarianism is no escape. Each feeds on each, and this is what keeps all this eating eating and this dying dying. Food is preserved, and it literally, preserves us.

Look across at another serving. *Eat or die*, silently warns a hill of beans, dried before its time. A hill of has-beans, perhaps? On every panel, bits and pieces are pressed, taped, stuck, pinned, sewn, glued, chewed – like canapes for Alice and the Hatter. There are multiple puns and lots of fun: much beguiling detail, playfulness. But it leaves a certain taste, read into it what you like.

These work and the other Ephemeral Sculptures will be on show until… well, until they are not there any more (they're ephemeral, after all)

'Rhythms of the Land and Sea'

The paintings and found objects that are presented in this exhibition celebrate and acknowledge the endless cycle of birth, death and renewal. A cycle, that is repeated in nature and is influenced by the rhythms of the seasons and the natural laws of the land and sea," Julie Tipene-O'Toole.

Julie Tipene-O'Toole is a storyteller and visual artist whose love of the ocean and the bush is reflected in *Rhythms of the Land and Sea,* a series of paintings that will be exhibited in Manningham Gallery from the September 6 to September 24. By incorporating seeds, feathers, driftwood, shells and pebbles into her work, Tipene-O'Toole has connected the painting to the source of her inspiration. Mixed media is used to build layers of modelling compound and paint, which are shaped to create textures both on and off the canvas. The found objects and other materials are then overlaid during this construction process and contribute to the artist's effort to build the layers of a story. For Tipene-O'Toole, the finished painting is a story in itself.

Tipene-O'Toole's visual art also draws inspiration from her own writing. For this body of work she has drawn on stories she has written about the wildlife that inhabits the land and the sea. The stories are diverse and deal with subjects such as: the migration of whales and birds; the magic of earthworms and fungi and the struggle between nature and human development to co-exist in the same space.

Some of the paintings were created on a beach and left to weather naturally. The results include: subtle brushstrokes created by wind swept grasses; the marriage of feathers, sand and pebbles against canvas, modelling compound and paint. These objects were collected from the beach where the paintings were created and contribute to such works as 'When the tide goes out' and '11.00am low tide'.

The work poses questions of what happens when the balance between nature and human development is disrupted. What happens to the health of the land and sea? What is the impact on the wildlife that depends on these environments for food, shelter and breeding?

Rhythms of the Land and Sea will take the viewer on a journey that explores the natural rhythms and laws of the land and sea. The artist' stories that inspire the work include topics such as: the plight of whales; the magic of the earthworm dance; our shifting seas; the migration of birds and environmental pollution. On the other hand, she has depicted nature's beauty in the texture of tree trunks and the fascinating organic shapes found in fungi. Workshops for children principally between the ages of seven and nine will take place during the exhibition. Activities will include story telling and the making of sea and nature installations by the children. the resulting work will hang in the galley during the exhibition "In celebrating the beauty of our natural environment, I am also compelled to share my concerns about the current and future health of these environments"

Top: *Earthworm*
Above: *Orange fungi*

Silver Stars – A Mongolian Story

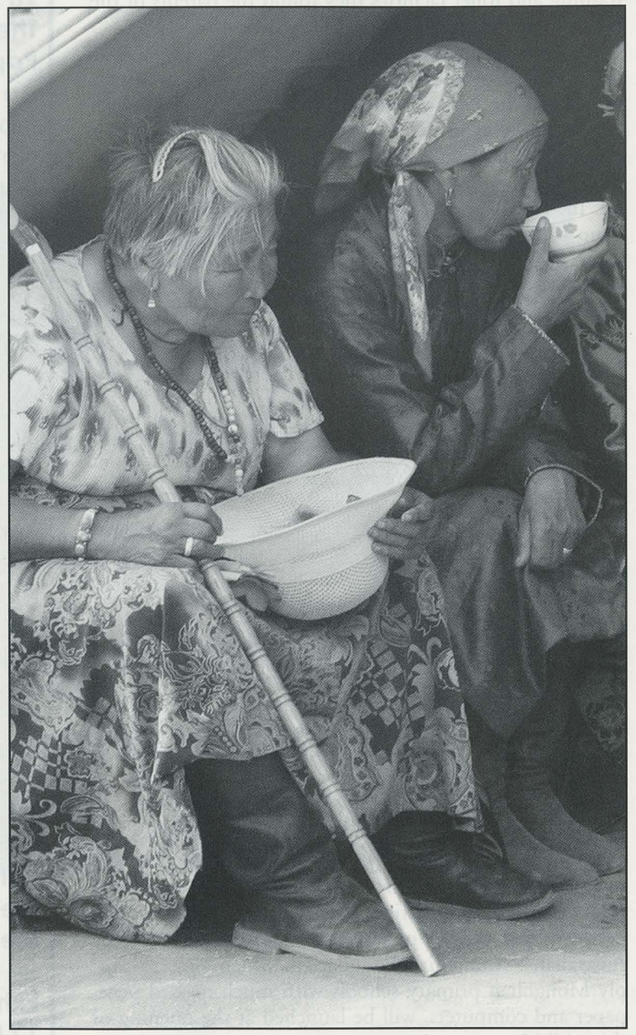
Lisa Edwards and Jenny Grinlington already had plenty in common before they travelled to Mongolia together. They are both professional photographers, but their work in Melbourne does not have the romantic ring of adventure that's to be found in their exhibition to be shown from August 16th at Manningham Gallery.

Edwards is a specialist in photographing weddings, graduation groups and other occasions where her skill at composing the participants in social rituals is required. Grinlington on the other hand works closer up. She is a portrait photographer whose special skill is in finding that special individual thing that reflects a sitter's personality. She has also run a business for 20 years specialising in photographing medicinal plants.

What got the pair out of Melbourne and onto the road to adventure was Lisa Edward's romantic desire to experience the unknown and become involved in a culture steeped in history and a life so different to what we know. They were to discover that the Mongolians still revere the memory of Chinggis Khan, which when translated means great king. He may have been brutal, but he was a winner and it was his practise of religious tolerance for his captives that earned him such success.

When Lisa decided to turn her back on virtually every creature comfort she enjoyed she felt that she needed some friendly company at least. It didn't take much talking to convince Jenny that she should provide that company and the trip was on.

After a few catch 22 problems with obtaining visas were solved the intrepid adventurers found their way to another world on the vast steppes of Mongolia. Their accommodation would not be rated by its number of stars, but rather by the number of camel skins used in the construction of the ghers in which they were offered hospitality. Gher is the name of the tent like homes of the indigenous nomads. They are similar to but shallower than the better-known yurts of the Russians. The accommodation may have come as a bit of a surprise, but the cuisine came more as a shock. The Mongolians live almost exclusively on mutton and milk, with a little bit of root vegetable thrown in occasionally. Being nomadic they grow no food. The travellers put the local's robust good health down to a spartan, hardworking life and remarkably pure air. The hardworking bit applies principally to the women. Surprise, surprise! the men spend almost all their time caring for their beloved horses and meeting for



Nadaams – carnivals similar to a gymkhana where they collect on the plain and conduct horse races, wrestling and archery competitions.

While travelling through the Gobi Desert in a four wheel drive van with two other western travellers, their guide would watch out for a family that had enough horses and sheep to indicate that they could afford to put the group up for the night. Once found, the family's hospitality would know no bounds. On one occasion when they were put up in a moderately sized gher they wondered how everyone was managing to find a sleeping spot. In the morning as they emerged to seek out the rudimentary washing and toilet facilities they found the parents of the family asleep in an old car parked nearby.

Mongolia is a land of extremes where the temperature range can be as much as 100C, from -50C in winter to 50C in the heat of summer. Washing was done with extreme care, as in the Mongolian summer water is at a premium. The local inhabitants use a glass of water to wash their hair and do it carefully, centimetre by centimetre. In winter the steppes are covered in snow and water is no longer a problem. The treeless 'gibber desert' that stretches unbroken to the horizon can present unexpected problems. When you are looking for nature's toilet, the best you can hope for is a dip in the flat surface that can afford a bit of privacy.

From the very beginning, the trip was planned as a photographic expedition and that is what it was. Nevertheless, it became much more than that as time went on and the two photographers came to understand that they were witnessing a way of life that is on the edge of extinction. Working almost back to back, Edwards recorded the family life of the people in black and white while Grinlington used colour to capture the individuals who make up those communities. She also indulged her other artistic interest of documenting the wildflowers of the region. Silver Stars refers to the flowering plant commonly known through Europe as Edelweiss. It blooms prolifically in the woodlands of Mongolia, while it is endangered in other parts of the world.

"Silver Stars: A Journey in Search of Chinggis" will be exhibited at Manningham Gallery from August 16. It aims to promote understanding and an awareness of Mongolia.

Grinlington and Edwards were so struck by the warmth of the people and the obvious threats to their culture that they have also created a charitable foundation to facilitate and foster cultural, artistic and educational exchanges between the people of Australia and Mongolia. The Australian - Mongolian Foundation, which aims to supply Mongolian primary schools with much-needed pens, paper and computers, will be launched at the opening of the exhibition.

Artist floor talks will be held in conjunction with the exhibition on Tuesday 23 August 7pm and Saturday 27 August 2pm.

For more information about the public program and the exhibition contact Manningham Gallery on 9840 9367, visit www.manningham.vic.gov.au or email gallery@manningham.vic.gov.au

What's on at La Trobe

EXHIBITIONS

28 July – 8 September 2005-08-04
The Art of War: Shields from Papua New Guinea
An exploration of art as found in inter-tribal fighting rituals of selected Papua New guinea societies. Works drawn from the Ethnographic Collection held at La Trobe University. Curated by Dr Ross Bowden.

20 September – 29 September 2005-08-04 Extraordinary Elements
Works by young adults with disabilities form the La Trobe Lifeskills Program

City of Darebin La Trobe University Acquisitive Art Prize '05
Bundoora Homestead Art Centre
7-27 Snake gully Drive, Bundoora
8 July – 14 August

Buller Magic Photographic Exhibition
High Country Photographic exhibition by Chris Hilton-Wood
Level 5, Mt Buller campus
Friday, July 8 till Friday, September 30

Exhibitions are held at: La Trobe University Art Museum, Glenn College, Melbourne (Bundoora) campus. Medway 473 G5, Parking Carpark 6 or 7

Exhibition hours Tues Wed Thurs Fri 12.00 noon – 4.00pm or by appointment. Free admission. (Exhibition dates are subject to change. Please contact Art Museum staff to confirm.)

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

City of Darebin La Trobe University Acquisitive Art Prize

Both of this year's winners in the City of Darebin La Trobe University Acquisitive Art Prize were women and both artists have created their works through manipulation of imagery via photography and/or digital processes.

Viki Petherbridge, took out the $5,000 prize for 'Best Work on Show' acquired for the La Trobe University Art Collection with 'And She Was (Homage to Talking Heads)'. Her surreal, black and white photograph is accompanied by the following quote from Man Ray.

"...to the developed mind that creates an image whose strangeness and reality stirs our subconscious to its inmost depths, the awakening of desire is the first step to participation and experience." The strangness and reality in Petherbridge's work is contained in a framed portrayal of a woman slung over the arm of a second woman whose head is largely out of frame. The fact that they are images of the same woman suggests a dichotomy between the person and the representation of the person. An open window in the background compounds the problematic aspect of the

overall image as it exposes an enigmatic combination of internal and external views, thus adding to the question of where the final reality lies.

Nusra Latif Qureshi, originally from Pakistan and now living in Melbourne, won 'Best Work by an Emerging Artist' award worth $3,000, acquired for the City of Darebin Art Collection.

'Island Dream I', (pictured right) a digital print on paper combines images from an 18th century Phahan painting of Radha and Krishna and botanical drawing. It draws threads from both these areas to redress the sexual power balance between Radha and Krishna and link it to the idea of colonisation by drawing parallels between the body of a woman and land that has been colonised. Qureshi has altered the expression on Radha's face, strengthened the tones in her representation and paled Krishna back to something more akin to a shadow. Rhadha becomes the assertive central character in the picture. The illustration of Lantana Camara by Sydney Parkinson, one of the artists on Captain Cook's Endeavour introduces the idea of the colonisers documenting and classifying the captured lands and their contents.

Among the other works that offered an interesting perspective were *Untitled,* an oil painting by Melinda Harper. She makes the point that "One of the more powerful arguments in favour of abstract painting is that it presents us with opportunities to experience the act of looking g in its purest form..." Her canvas is divided into forms that resemble facets of crystal rock; the colour relationships give the work its form. Felicity Gordon offers *Special Pants.* Her oil on canvas offers the sight of an pair of y-fronts on a tailor's dummy, though they are placed where a bra would normally be found. In her artist's statement she explains: "Although realistically depicted, the objects offer no definitive answer or narrative. What I hope to offer is a visual investigation into the complex world of human anxiety and gender."

I'm alright when I'm on painkillers, a lino print assemblage by Nada Poljski reflects on the effects and the repercussions of contagious diseases. The work relates to the universal nature of disease and evokes Albert Camus' *The Plague* to reflect on the times when disease is more than a normal part of the process of living. On a lighter note Sharon West added to her series of satirical views of Australia's colonial history. *Mr. banks presents to the Royal court his menagerie of natural curiosities from New Holland*, is a rich, impasto oil painting on linen. West has combined the stories of Cook's and Baudin's voyages to present a menagerie of live animals. She has included an Aborigine in recognition of their perceived scientific status in that situation; but that's only the beginning of the story. Among the three dimensional works is *People I know,* a ceramic stoneware assemblage by Connie Ngai. Gnai who came to Australia from Hong Kong has depicted a series of the people who have helped her, hindered her or simply been bit players in her life. *Bottle, bottle, who's got the bottle* by Claire Blake "... is an arrangement of 20 ceramic bottles dealing with spacial relationships, interconnectedness and placement." It could be said to owe something to Morandi, but ultimately it is about what almost all still life painting is about. Michelle Kaucic also exhibited vessels, but *Ripple Vessels* consists of only two pieces and they are blown, wheel carved glass. Kaucic wishes to "...convey the ripples in beach sand, the veins of a leaf or the scales of a fish." They are not about relationships but about the delicate and unique forms inherent in themselves.

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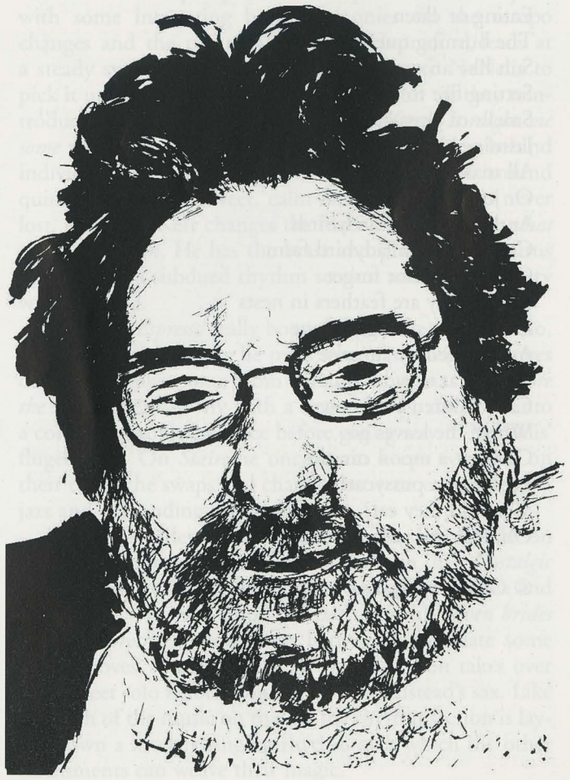
Jill Kahans mixes her media

by Peter Dougherty



Jill Kahans has a history of producing confronting and thought provoking art. Synergies, an exhibition of new work was exhibited in Eltham Library Community Gallery in July. Kahans also has a long history in classical music; longer than her history in visual art. Her musical expertise is as a cellist and her art expertise is in bringing pertinent ideas together in exciting and challenging forms.

In Synergies, she found a way to combine a new fascination with the possibilities of digital photography with her proven mastery of traditional art media. The music provided much of the subject matter

If *Blue Conductor* and *Ship of Fools* are etchings, then *Brooding Girl* is a free flowing pen drawing and *Thoughtful cellist* and *Concert at music camp* combine photography and drawing. It is mostly difficult to judge where the traditional media stops and the photography starts, but it doesn't matter. The image is all and *'Cello player'* which combines photography and brush strokes works beautifully as an image irrespective of its qualities as a portrait. It uses black and white shapes and lines in support of a strong, central portrayal of a partly obscured face.

Poetry

Written for 9 year old Holly to commemorate the inaugural Children's Reading at the Annual Poetry and Song Festival 2004.

In the Magic Garden We Understand the Birds
(for Holly)

Whatever the garden is
Vegetables or flowers
It is a treasure beyond jewels
That can fill us with wonder
And not just fill our belly
For survival and some kind of art
For the birds make music
We must remember that
For it's more than chit chat
And grass is so good
Mowed or left wild
Seeds or insects for food
Crunched into a birds beak
All those small lives
Eating or eaten
The burning question
Sun like an orange
Setting fire to the clouds
Smells of grass and verbena
Jasmine or hyacinth
All make memories
Or just sweet smells
And don't forget ladybirds
Can we have a ladybird farm
Oh, and do not forget
How pretty are feathers in nests
How leaves change colour
As if singed by surprise
And what they become
Can children yet know
Where the leaves go
Or what a moon can do
Let alone a pussycat
What do they eat?
Oh, let's not get into that!

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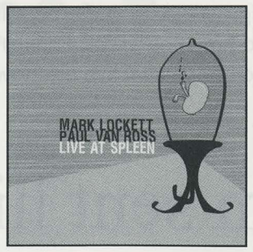
Live at Spleen
Mark Lockett: Drums
Paul Van Ross: Tenor Saxophone
With Luke Howard on piano; Daniel Gassin, Fender Rhodes and Tom Lee, double bass.
Newmarket Music



Reviewed by Peter Dougherty

A nice combination of be-bop edginess and cool relaxed swing manifests itself from the first burst of Van Ross's tenor sax on *Isotope,* the first track on *Live at Spleen.* The balance between easy, swinging music and a commitment to hard-core improvisation remains for the duration. This makes it an album that's really easy to live with. When not listening intensely to the subtleties and exciting interplays between individual musicians you can leave it on the turntable to provide some gentle company while doing other things.

It is clear from the start that Tom Lee's double bass is not just here to mark the beat. After a lyrical, dreamy piano and sax opening to *Black Narcissus,* the second J. Henderson tune, Lee is up front and very musical till he hands the lead back to Van Ross to maintain the mood. Here they don't swing along so much as they explore complex ideas and put together some wonderful combinations of gently mutating sound. John Coltrane sounds a wakeup call with his *Moment's Notice* and they respond with a rapid-fire series of inventions, improvisations and responses to each other's leads.

The set is sprinked with great little surprises. The lead in to *Beatrice* by S. Rivers is one of them. It opens with a series of extended, resonating bass notes before the tenor enters with some nice breathy statements. Much of the track is a bass and piano duet

McCoy Tyner's *Search for Peace* really takes its time as it offers some very 'after midnight' sounds from the sax with delicate, minimal backing from the drums, bass and keyboards. The feel is altered by a sparing Fender passage before reverting to breathy sax - a restful break before Charlie Mingus's Fables *of Faubus.* The beat becomes stronger and more percussive as Lockett becomes a bit more assertive. The pace picks up but the generally mellow feeling that pervades the album remains. Van Ross's *Of Passionate Things* is well titled if you like your passion restrained. This is a passion for carefully constructed patterns of sound and considered choices - sometimes sharp and clear, sometimes breathy and shaded with vibrato. It expresses a considered search for possibilities as collaborations of Fender and bass; Fender and sax and bass and drums create harmonies. The dreamy mood continues into Bernie McGann's *Spirit Song* which provides Gassin an extended spell up front though this is not an album with long flashy solos. Lockett remains a powerful presence throughout but almost never as a soloist. Those sticks and brushes just keep buzzing along at a lover level. *Inner Urge* by J Henderson picks up the pace a little and does leave some room for Locket to take a bit of room for himself. The set closes with Cole Porter's *Night and day* and the group uses it to use up any spare energy. They race into it and sign off with extended breaks all round.

Leigh Barker Quintet
Leigh Barker; Double bass
Marc Hannaford; piano
Al McGrath-Kerr; drums
John Felstead; saxophones
Eamon McNelis; trumpet, flugel horn
Ben Sampson; trumpet
Neptune Records

Reviewed by Peter Dougherty

The Leigh Barker Quintet which on this CD consists of six relatively young music graduates from ANU, Canberra and the VCA in Melbourne. They may be young, but already they have packed a wealth of experience into their working lives and received glowing reviews here and in the USA. We don't have room to list the jazz giants with whom they have played, but with Miles Davis, Keith Jarrett, Duke Ellington and Branford Marsalis as their influences we have a right to expect a lot. They don't let anyone down.

They have all had a hand in writing the music. that has worked well on the set because, as you would expect they have written for their own instruments and given the album a good spread of emphasis.

The set opens with Barker's *Final night in New York.* No surprise that it is led in by the bass. Barker sets the mood throughout and the atmosphere of dark mystery is maintained in turn by flugel horn, trumpet and Saxophones. The colour changes constantly though the basic feel remains warm and low key till it is led out by Barker.

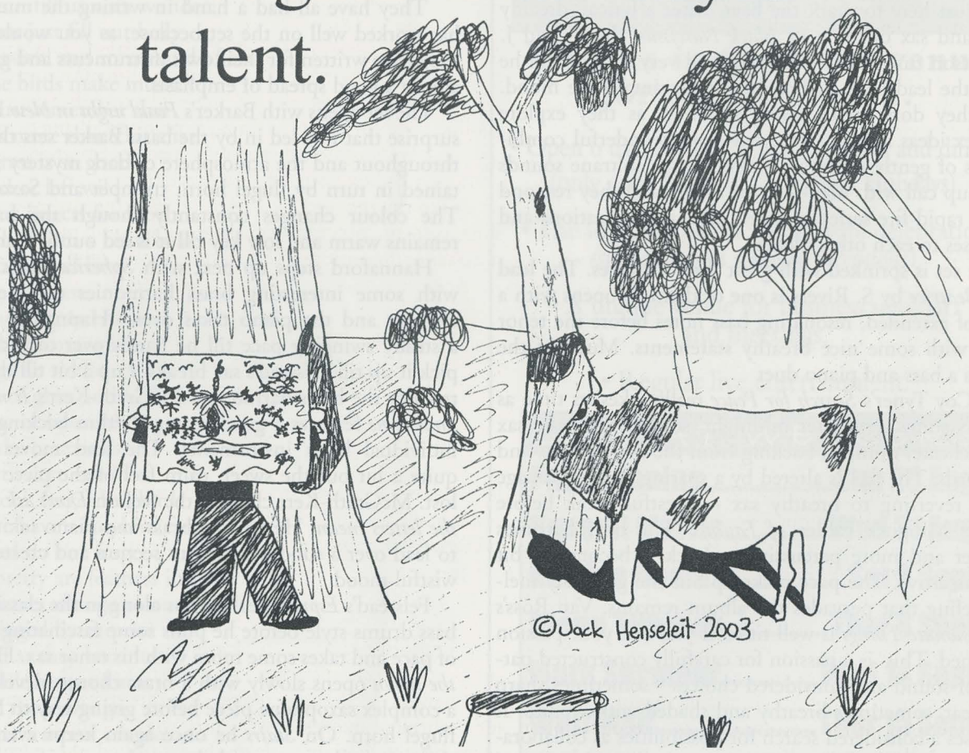
Hannaford steps up next with *Spherical* which opens with some interesting brass harmonies till the tempo changes and the piano takes over. Hannaford leads at a steady swinging pace till he hands over to NcNelis to pick it up till Felstead's sax breaks it up a bit till they reintroduce the brass harmonies. McGrath-Kerr's *It might me some time* features a good strong rhythm backing behind individual brass instruments. The lead moves around quite a bit but the sweet, calm feel of the piece is never lost. McGrath-Kerr changes the feel on *Don't ask me what the letters mean.* He has the brass and piano taking turns to lead over a subdued rhythm section and creates a very wistful mood.

Felstead's *Espresso* really bops along in the classic piano, bass drums style before he pulls some fascinating changes of pace and takes some room with his tenor sax. His *Before the moon* opens slowly with a brass chorus, develops into a complex saxophone piece before giving way to McNelis' flugel horn. On *Stairs* he once again keeps everyone on their toes as he swaps and changes between easy, swinging jazz and demanding improvisation.

Barker provides himself with a splendid vehicle on which to become expansive on bass in his *Nostalgic Homecoming* as she shares choruses with the tenor sax and flugel horn. He leads in on the last track; his *Seven brides for seven brothers,* using brass harmonies to create some lovely moves. Guest trumpeter, Ben Sampson takes over for a sweet solo before handing over to Felstead's sax. Like so much of the music on this set the rhythm section is laying down a lovely swinging rhythm over which the other instruments can weave their magic.

Editor's note: In 2004 Jack Henseleit and his father Phillip gave Artstreams permission to publish Jack's excellent drawings that illustrate the stories Neil Douglas told him along with Phillips accompanying notes. We published two of them in July/August and September/October, 2004. We are now pleased to continue the series of nine drawings.

Neil's mum sent his art work to a famous painter who immediately recognized the boy's talent.



Text note:
Even at his young age, Neil understood that when Heysen referred to decorative effect it meant optical effect, the optical ballet of juxta positioning shapes and lines. Heysen, Roberts, Streeton and McCubbin were all great artists in Neil's mind, but not Australian painters. Of McCubbin he said, "A good painter but not my style. The ground is raked and everything is tidied and English."

Illustration note:
Hans Heysen stand in a scene from his painting, A lord of the bush (1908), holding up the work of the young Neil Douglas, the cover of the 1987 catalogue for his The Land of the Lowan exhibition which is full of optical effect.

artin' about

Paul Van Ross, Mark Lockett and Leigh Barker have been serving up some great music for the patrons at Alta Vita Restaurant. Eltham. The three members of this trio bring great CVs with them. Successful musical studies and experience at venues festivals throughout Australia.

At Alta Vita they have developed an appropriate programme of gentle, swinging numbers and exciting but controlled works that venture as far into be-bop as they can without crowding out the diners' conversations.

Material such as *You and the night and the music*, *That old devil moon*, *Caravan* and *Night and day* might suggest a middle of the road combo. Van Ross, on tenor Sax; Lockett on drums and Barker on double bass are not middle of the road. They combine their individual skills with timing, sensitivity and innovation to make the material as much their own as their original compositions are. The energetic and controlled stick and brush work by Locket blends seamlessly with the bass or sax parts to become the third lead instrument. At times its just bass and drums or bass and sax and then its all stops out on Milestones or Lullaby of Birdland. the trio returns for the next two weeks between 4.30pm and 7.30.

The results of a successful photographic survey of Montsalvat is currently hanging in the Barn Gallery. Eight photographers participated in an employment programme organised thought Artary Projects. The results indicate that there are some skilled artists out there on the verge of becoming valued additions to somebody's workforce.

The participants have scoured the grounds and buildings of Montsalvat insearch of images that can make a new visual statement about this very well documented edifice. Many of the resulting photographs duplicate the aspects of Montsalvat that we have become familiar with. Surprisingly, they almost all manage to make their vision look new and fresh. Other members of the group have performed the impossible and found a corner or an angle that has hitherto not been found. Also very exciting are the images that have been put through the computer enhancement process and turned into abstract compositions that ultimately owe very little to their source. The photographs are all available for purchase and a Montsalvat site survey CD Rom, developed from the project is available for $10. The CD offers a 360-degree virtual tour of Montsalvat.

Eltham artist, Lachlan Rose has embarked on a brave venture in the Eltham Library Community Gallery. Rose has put together an exhibition of paintings that revisits the formalist ideas of such artists as Maelovich, Mondrian and Rothco.

If an artist wishes to exhibit such work where the viewers demand recognisable if not traditional images, he has to make sure he gets it right. Rose has got it right. Artist, Melinda Harper pointed out recently that "One of the more powerful arguments in favour of abstract painting is that it presents us with opportunities to experience the act of looking in its purest form." Lachlan rose presents us with such an opportunity.

The paintings are monochromatic: blue, red, grey turquoise etc. A few have some texture added but not many. One needs some distance to view them successfully and to appreciate that they are hung so that the groupings create successful colour harmonies. In some respects the whole exhibition adds up to one large artwork.

The Courthouse poetry readings on July 21 turned up the usual mix of fun and angst as a line-up of featured poets and open reading entrants entranced, titivated and entertained.

Matt Hetherington opened proceedings with a suite of Haiku poems. The images were acute and poignant, but I still feel that Haiku aught to follow the line and syllable rules of tradition. John Jenkins raised a laugh with a 'lecture' on sound business principles and Joan Scott evoked the romance of male/female sexuality. Steve Smart closed the first half of the programme with a stern and austere look at the world around him.

Ian McBryde reopened the reading with a tribute to Shelton Lea. He read a poem that Lea had written for his daughter Destiny. 'Mana Gum' gave us another glimpse into the psyche of Helen Lucas. Her garden poems are sexier than most people's bedroom poems. In this instance, Mana Gum was spelt with a capital MAN. Terry Jaensch continued the evening with poems about unrequited love and a Chinese karaoke bar. He was joined by a friend to recite a very touching dialogue of stories about life in an orphanage. He closed the evening with Shakespeare's sonnet 116.

Bee Rawlinson has what amounts to three exhibitions hanging in Bridges Gallery in Hurstbridge. In one of them she has collaborated

with John Ward to produce a series of aesthetically pleasing images that also fascinate with the opportunity to observe microscopic details of natural forms.

They have used a scanning electronic microscope to document such subject matter as pollen, crystal forms and stellate hairs in magnification of up to x3600. A second series by Rawlinson features enlargements of butterfly lips, flies eyes and other minute details of insects that serve to alert the viewer of the sophisticated structures and beauty that exist unnoticed in our daily lives. Still not content the artist has used small photographic details to create a series of kaleidoscopic pictures. A series of hand cut paper works that suggests the folded torn paper patterns we made as children may count as a forth body of work. Rawlinson's however are cut in Unryushi paper and they are amazingly delicate and detailed.

Four young musicians have been making their presence felt at St Andrews Hotel on Saturday nights recently. The Jami Faulkner Band consisting of Jami on guitars, Nathan Adair on bass, Graeme Pogson on drums and Sam Cope on Hammond organ got plenty of nods of approval as they presented Faulkner's original compositions and a selection of classic soul and blues numbers. *To love somebody*, *I'm gonna buy you a watch and chain* and *Stormy Monday Blues* presented plenty of scope for the Dobro, Statocaster and lap steel guitars, a wailing organ and precise, swinging percussion. Nicolas Lyon wandered up during the final set and added a new element when he joined in with his fiddle.

A rumour that *Stove Top* is quite a good musical outfit persuaded me to call into St Andrews Hotel on Sunday July 10. Arriving well into the performance, it took a while to decide where they were heading and whether I liked what they were doing. Simon Burke was leading on vocals and keyboard. A good voice plus great hands and support from Simm Martin on guitar and Pete Jones on drums made for easy listening with a hint of *Doors* influence. More emphasis on Martin's guitar and a reggae beat made *To love somebody* even better listening.

After hearing J.B. Lenois and Skip James on TV on Saturday night, I was in the mood for high register male voices. Simm Martin provided just the sound with Marvin Gaye's *What's going on.* Vocal duets and shared instrumental solos kept up the excitement and made a couple of encores inevitable.

A series of oil paintings by Carol Kite now hanging in Volumes Café, Eltham is distinguished by its lyrical simplicity and commitment to story telling.

The work speaks of mermaids who hide their intrinsic beauty and become housewives. It is the story of all those who's golden dreams of life get dragged down into the everyday drudgery of surviving. The paintings use a naïve style of expression, devoid of technical pretension or slickness of presentation. Strong basic colours and direct paint strokes go straight to the point. An extract from *Ta Bella,* a poem by the artist that tells the story in parallel hangs on the wall beside the paintings.

Kite's love of colour and shape is used in two supplementary gouache paintings, *Waiting for Adele* in particular takes the work right into Fauvist territory where colour is all and the clashes cancel each other out.

Japanese Contemporary Clay Work, was co-presented at Manningham Gallery by the Japan Foundation and Japan Information and Cultural Centre in July.

This travelling collection exhibited the work of a group of artists who spearheaded the post war renaissance of Japanese ceramic art. While some of the work is influenced by contemporary art practice, it is essentially inspired by the Japanese ceramic traditions. Kenji Kaneko points out that the artists have sought a theory that is not merely applicable to non-functional work, but also addresses the essence of creating individualistic craftworks as works of art.

Divided into organic, geometric, vessel and figurative, the exhibits employ the simplest geometric forms and the most intriguing complex to present ideas as diverse as an old cardboard box of screwed up newspapers and time weathered bibles to a simple dedication to Chernobyl. The techniques and approaches employed vary so greatly that the initial material is the only thing that remains common to all the work.

Jessie Anne Mitchell is one of those people who make many of us groan in despair. After less than one year's acquaintance with a camera she put together a very impressive first exhibition in the Eltham Library Community Gallery.

Many of the images are admittedly 'givens', insofar as the landscapes and snow scenes are great images just waiting to be captured on camera. While these images are well handled, others are created purely by the artist's keen eye and sensibility. Mitchell has the ability to turn the common place into unique visual gems. 'Olympic Stadium' becomes an abstract composition of shape and colour relationships while 'Bus' becomes a juxtaposition of the mundane and the spectacular. In 'Train', she has used the window frame of the train in question to dissect the image and create a dialogue of opposing tones and subject matter.

That Sonia Skipper was a painter comes as no surprise. Anyone connected to Montsalvat in its formative years would have to have been creative. Skipper currently has a substantial body of work in exhibition in the Long Gallery at Montsalvat. The work displays several well-developed skills; her drawing and handling of tone are particularly strong. The fact that she ranged over so many genres has perhaps stopped her from excelling in any but it did not mean that she didn't produce any really satisfying paintings. It could suggest that she was more in thrall to the act of painting than to ambition. In more recent years her skills have been stretched to include writing. In 'My Story: Tales from a Pioneer of Montsalvat', now available at Montsalvat, Skipper has recorded her memories and anecdotes about the people of the art colony from the beginning to the present day.

Not having been a great fan of popular music over the past thirty years, I am constantly delighted to be reintroduced to the great practitioners who have stood the test of time and live on as entertainers rather than rock stars.

Peter Cupples came to fame leading *Stylus*. Performing at Wellers on June 16, he was accompanied by David Jones, percussion; Simon Watson, keyboards and flute and Stephen Morgan, bass. Cupples showcased his excellent vocal skills and left room for his backing musicians to show their talents. After 'Believe in love', 'Fear of thunder' and 'Summer breeze' they closed with an exotic and extended version of 'Come together'. Jones's performance without sticks drew gasps of disbelief.

Two nights later Jimi Hocking of *Jimi the human,* Spectre 7 and *The screaming jets* fame performed solo. After impressing with his own material, he demonstrated the guitar skills that T Bone walker had passed on to Jimi Hendrix and added House of the rising sun and Hey Black Matti, both attributed to Hudie Leadbetter.

With a sure control over the skills of blues and gospel singing, fifteen-year-old blues singer, Elle Thompson is making her presence felt on Melbourne's music scene. She has performed in all the blues venues Melbourne has to offer and has supported Joe Camilerie, Nicky Bomba and Archie Roach. Accompanied by guitarist, Fab Pertile she appeared at Wellers of Kangaroo Ground early this year.

The show opened with 'The thrill is gone', a modern, bluesy composition that displayed Thompsons major weapon. She has a depth and power that belie her age. The next piece showcased another of her talents. 'Waiting on a change' is the title track and one of three songs she has written for her new album. Its demanding, complicated phrasing makes it more of a ballad than a blues. If a correction was needed it came with a commanding rendition of 'Stormy Monday Blues'. The notes rose from deeper than her chest at times and floated from high in her head. Surely, no one doubted that here was a great blues singer of the future. It was an exciting performance that could only have been improved by a bit less enthusiasm on the accompanist's part.

Journeys in Identity, hung in Bundoora Homestead Art Centre in June and took the work of five artists to examine questions of identity as they are posed in art. The artists were Ray Thomas, Adam Nudelman, Sharon West, Nusra Latif Qureshi and Eolo Paul Bottaro. Thomas and Qureshi each combined their Aboriginal and Pakistani sensibilities with observations of life in modern mainstream Australian culture. Nudelman questioned the whole idea of identity after finding in his late twenties that he was not what he though he was. West used thick impasto paint and her understanding of the art of the cartoonist to satirize the history of white settlement in Australia while Melbourne born Bottaro utilized the skills of traditional Italian painting to reconstruct a history of Sicily from where his family came. Art Centre director, Jacqueline Healy added an eloquent essay to assist with the interpretation of the body of excellent paintings.

Images of the Antarctic, an exhibition of oil paintings by Jenni Mitchell at Dickerson Gallery, Richmond in July completed another stage in Mitchell's Antarctic project. Part of the current show was shown at Montsalvat in August 2003.

'Images of the Antarctic' has extended the aesthetic exploration of the region with a more varied approach and some new insights. The stark blue and white of 'Southern Ocean with Icebergs' contrasts with the subtle variations of green that veil the distant iceberg in 'Southern Ocean Mist and Berg". 'Midnight Sun' divides the canvas into the deep, dark blues and ochres of the evening ocean and the brilliant reds and oranges of the sky. It suggests a move away from a purely realist representation of the Antarctic.

Eltham College of education offered an opportunity to view the largest ever Hans and Nora Heysen exhibition earlier this year. In recognition of the close relationship between the college and the Heysen family these reproductions of oil paintings, pastels, charcoals and watercolours were shown outside Heysen's family home for the first time.

The exhibition presented an opportunity to view Heysen's 'romantic' visions of the Australian landscape, a vision that inspires as many contemporary Australian painters as does the Heidelberg School. It also showed us that he was totally comfortable with any medium that he chose to use. Pastel paintings, 'Potato Pickers' and 'Old Man Collins' indicate that Heysen was the equal of William Strutt when it came to rendering while 'Bronze Wings and Saplings' inserts the shapes and colours of the turkeys among the peeling trunks of young candle barks to create an image more 'modern' than 'romantic'.

Eltham Wiregrass Gallery lives on at Montsalvat. The gallery's popular 'Annual Wildlife Show' found a home in the Barn Gallery this year and could conceivably become a regular feature on the Barn Gallery exhibition list

With its universal range of media, this show defies description. Oils, pencils, watercolours, gouache and pastels are just the most obvious of the graphic media represented. Three-dimensional work ranges from Damien Santamaria's ceramic, wire and leather flying foxes hanging from the roof to Amanda Louden's finely etched glass vessels. The only factor in this show that remains constant and universal is an astounding dedication to workmanship and quality.

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6 Manningham Rd W,
Bulleen. Ph 9850 5155
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Wellers in Kangaroo Ground offered a great evening of entertainment and music in May with Wilbur Wilde and Bob Valentine sharing the bill. Valentine, a crooner in the Sinatra tradition has fronted bands such as The Lonely Boys, The Sweethearts and The Providers. Wilde's early credits include Ol' 55 and Jo Jo Zep and the Falcons They both have many TV and theatre appearances to their credit.

Wilbur Wilde is such a character and entertainer that at times it is possible to forget that he is first and foremost a musician. I arrived just in time to hear a great rendition of *Mr Bojangles* sung by Valentine. Wilde moved around the vocals with his tenor sax till he took over and offered a solo to die for. The 'entertainer' then took over on *Your Mouth is Working Overtime*. After proving that if you've got timing you don't need a perfect voice, he swapped choruses with Peter Jones on piano.

After sharing choruses on *All of Me*, Wilde broke into a sublimely understated sax solo and slid into *The Nearness of You*. The rhythm section of Jones, Gary Costello on bass and Peter Hicks on drums then set out to prove that you don't have to be in the front line to be a great musician.

Through the evening, Valentine swung his way through *It had to be you, Fly me to the moon* and *Route 66* with help from Wild's sax and his own guitar. Wilde charged into *Bye Bye Blackbird* at break neck pace before he and Valentine stepped aside and left it to Jones and Hicks to sort out. The evening wound down with Valentine singing *What a Wonderful World* while Wilde turned away and provided a subdued saxophone background.

Dropping in at St Andrews Hotel on a Saturday afternoon I was surprised to see singer, guitarist and songwriter, Nick Charles playing with a group of friends. Charles, who mostly plays with little or no company had Mathew Arnold on fiddle, Howard Cairns on double bass and Pete Fiddle on Dobro lap guitar along side him.

Among the items that got an enthusiastic audience jumping was Charles' own composition: *Nobody sleeps but me*. The spooky, sleepless image was nicely coloured in by Arnold's fiddle. Turning to the blues, they did Big Bill Broonzy's *Hey Baby*. The special Broonzy style of playing bass with the thumb and melody with the fingers showcased Charles's virtuosity and left Cairns with little to do. They all had plenty to do when the punters demanded an encore and they offered Charles' *Dusty Ribbons* – a showcase for Charles' amazing finger picking style and a chance for the whole band to show what they are made of.

After what most people would consider a lifetime's work playing in jazz bands and as lead trumpet in the Victorian Symphony Orchestra, Barry McKimm gave it all up to concentrate on community music. He now spends his time composing music, producing performances and leading the Eltham Concert Band

An appreciative audience enjoyed the fruits of his labour at the Eltham Community Centre on Saturday 21 and Sunday 22. The first concert by the Eltham Concert Band for 2005, *Opera in Eltham* consisted of popular arias arranged specially for the 27-piece orchestra by Barry McKimm in his role as music director.

Soprano, Lesley Walton and tenor Ray Khong (one of the Three Chinese Tenors) sung the arias, and just for a bit of fun, Diane Morgan joined Lesley Walton in an interpretation of Rossini's *Cat Duet*.

The Eltham Concert Band will soon begin rehearsals for a cabaret that will be performed at the Eltham Community Centre in October.

Manningham Art Centre will be hosting a series of Theatre Skills Workshops at the Art Centre, 177 Foote Street, Templestowe from early August through to October. These workshops are an opportunity for up-and-coming performers to refine their acting, singing and dancing skills while getting valuable feedback from professionals working in the performing arts. They will be lead by professional directors, choreographers and a screen and theatre make-up artist and include: theatrical acting, singing and dancing for musical theatre; stage make-up and an audition workshop.

Contact the Manningham Art Centre on 9840 9381 or Manningham Gallery on 9840 9367 or visit:
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Entries are invited for an exhibition of Nine X Five (23cm x 13cm) art to be exhibited at

ART STREAMS GALLERY

September 11 2005

In homage to the Heidelberg School of painters who painted 'Impressions' on cigar box lids that measured 9 by 5 inches, artists are invited to submit works in any media and in any style.

For further details contact

Peter Dougherty

ArtStreams Gallery
63 Yarra Street, Warrandyte
(Cnr Forbes Street)

Phone: 9844 0248 or 9434 7969

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MANNINGHAM
Gallery

WHAT'S ON AT MANNINGHAM GALLERY?

16 August – 3 September
'Silver Stars – A journey in search of Chinggis'
Artists Jenny Grinlington and Lisa Edwards' exhibition aims to promote understanding and awareness of Mongolia; -the countryside, the flora and fauna; -the people and their spirituality through the photographic medium.

6 – 24 September
'Rhythms of the Land and Sea'
This exhibition celebrates and acknowledges the endless cycle of birth, death and renewal that occurs in nature. Artist Julie Tipene-O'Toole takes the viewer on a journey that explores the natural rhythms and laws of the land and sea.

26 September – 15 October
'Creative Art: Villa Style'
Work that illustrates the creative diversity of the people of the Villa Maria community; people of all ages with a disability.

17 October – 5 November
'Black and White...and shades of Grey'
The work of- students from Carey Bapist Grammar Primary School, who, having removed the stimulus of colour, focus upon the lines, shapes and patterns in their environment.

8 – 26 November
'Hanging by Threads'
Graduate students of Studio Stitch Textiles, Diploma of Arts at Box Hill Institute of TAFE tell of their experiences through the innovative use of textile, threads, fibres and paints.

29 November – 17 December
'Showing Off'
Annual celebration of the creative efforts of students enrolled in the Manningham Arts centre classes. The theme for this year's exhibition is 'GOLD'.

Manningham Gallery
699 Doncaster Road, Doncaster
Victoria 3108
Tel: 03 9840 9367 Fax: 9840 9366
gallery@manningham.vic.gov.au
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ART STREAMS GALLERY

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Eltham has a great painting tradition, producing artists who set the standards of art and then break and push the boundaries. This tradition goes back to the Heidelberg School painters, takes in the Meldrum tonal realists and continues to this day.

Artstreams Gallery is proud to present four of the most promising young artists to join that tradition in recent years. Growing up in Eltham, they have acknowledged the past and set out to create an exciting new future for Eltham painting.

Opening at 2.30pm, Sunday, October 9

ArtStreams Gallery
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Phone: 9844 0248 or 9434 7969
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