

# NEWSLETTER

produced by the Friends of the Cowra Regional Art Gallery

## Calleen Art Awards for 2016.

The announcement of the 2016 Calleen Art Award winner took place at the special opening of the finalists' exhibition at the Cowra Regional Art Gallery on Saturday night 30 April, attracting over 100 visitors. Guest speakers were Bill West, Mayor, Cowra Shire Council who opened the exhibition and the Awards Judge John Cheeseman, Cultural Services Manager and Gallery Director, Mosman Art Gallery.



Mayor Bill West

The Calleen Art Award is an acquisitive prize for painting in any subject established in 1977 by Mrs Patricia Fagan OAM with the winner receiving \$19,000 prize money in 2016. The Calleen Art Award encourages originality, creativity and excellence in the visual arts with the winning work joining the Calleen Art Collection at the Cowra Regional Art Gallery. This year the Gallery received 272 entries from across Australia and 47 works



Awards Judge John Cheeseman and Gallery Director Brian Langer.

were selected by a panel of art professionals as the finalists.

The 2016 Calleen Art Award went to Tania Mason from Sydney for her work *Irregular Plasma* a gouache and acrylic painting on canvas 102 x 84cm.

Winning work pictured at right. The Judges comments of the winning work were: "In the first passing of works I did not think this was in the running. But then I looked at all works in detail and the more I looked the more I was drawn to this work. This is a painting exploring the mind and pioneering new ways of expressing neural connections – organic complex geometric shapes and connections, neurological patterns and pathway formations. What I especially admired was that this was a beautiful work and, on balance, a positive and optimistic painting with a sense of wonder. The artist herself was driven to explore the neural condition of her son



who has faced behavioural challenges – a very personal work and a brave work to share."

John Cheeseman

Above: Awards Judge John Cheeseman, Jenni and Peter Fagan, with Tania Mason and her son.



Highly Commended awards were presented to Ivan Goodacre for his Oil on canvas *The Dam*, shown with the artist on the left, and below left - Hal Pratt for his watercolour *Hidden Gorge NT*.



Commended awards went to Peter Lankas' *Helen Street*—left above, and Rachel Milne's *Potters Studio* on the right.

### PEOPLE'S CHOICE



Shannon Doyle  
*Diego 2015* acrylic on canvas  
80 x 60cm

The People's Choice Award is decided by popular vote over the course of the Exhibition.

**CALLEN HIGHLIGHTS.**

The Gala Opening night of the 2016 Calleen Art Awards was a great success, with some of the finalists and their friends and family present, as well a large number of visitors. Below are some of the Finalists.



Glen Preece and *Poem*. Oil on canvas



Michael Simms with his self portrait *Transcendence 2015*. Oil on polyester. Image courtesy Cowra Guardian.



Kate Gorman - *Sunken Treasure*. Acrylic on canvas



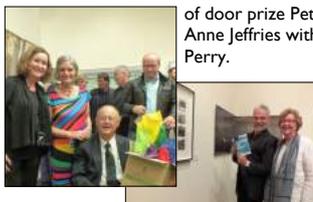
Kate Fennell and *Skylight blue, red, grey 2015*.



Terry Lavis. *From Billy Goat Hill. 2016* Acrylic.



Andrew Hagar and *The Gleam 2016*. Oil on canvas



Below left: Winner of door prize Peter and Anne Jeffries with Jacqueline Perry.



Nic Mason with her portrait of *Sharon Riley II. 2016*. Oil on canvas.



Above and left: Some of the crowd who enjoyed the night.

At left: Judy and Glenn Reynolds.

**Warakurna: All the stories got into our minds and eyes - 25 June to 31 July 20**

This fascinating exhibition was opened by Andy Greenslade, Curator, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program, National Museum of Australia.



Andy Greenslade is shown at left, and at right with Cowra Regional Art Gallery Director Brian Langer, in front of her favourite work in the Exhibition.

Ken Shepherd, *Helicopter Ride with Brooksie to See My Father's Ngurra (Country)*, 2001 acrylic on canvas.

The works in the exhibition combine familiar Western Desert symbols and dots with a figurative style, to recreate scenes of everyday life and to tell historical and contemporary stories.

Western Desert people were among the last groups of Aboriginal people in Australia to have contact with Europeans. Warakurna lay in the middle of the flight path of missiles launched from Woomera in the

South Australian desert in the 1960s.

A National Museum of Australia Travelling Exhibition, supported by Visions of Australia, an Australian government program supporting touring exhibitions by providing funding assistance for the development and touring of Australian cultural material across Australia.

Enjoying the display at the opening were Catherine Bennett and Wendy Quilter, Tessa Allbright and Bea Britestar, and Barbara Proctor with Alan Wilson.



**GALLERY HIGHLIGHTS**

**The Wilkins Collection** 19 March to 24 April 2016.

This exhibition opened by Kimberly Oats, Project Officer, The Art Unit/ Art Express, NSW Department of Education, was a special survey of artworks selected from **The Wilkins Collection** which is managed by the Arts Unit, Department of Education, (named in honour of William Wilkins (1827 – 1892) the first permanent head of the Department of Education in New South Wales) was established in 1974. The collection has over 1500 artworks, and each Year it continues to grow through the acquisition purchase of 10 new bodies of work selected from student submissions in the annual ARTEXPRESS Exhibition Program.



Kimberley Oats speaking at the opening.

ARTEXPRESS is showcased throughout NSW Metropolitan and Regional Galleries. This is the first regional tour of the Wilkins Collection and is a collaborative project by the Cowra Regional Art Gallery with the Arts Unit, Department of Education.

This rare presentation of works from The Wilkins Collection at the Cowra Regional Art Gallery consisted of selected acquisitions made during the past 20 years. Highlights included several multi-panelled landscape paintings and a collection of fascinating figurative works.



Dianne van Gaal and Allen Gavin from Bathurst enjoying works from the Wilkins Collection.



Kimberley Oates with works by Jason Enzhao Gai from Henry Kendal High School in the Wilkins Collection.



Heather Dunn and Clare Lavis from Bathurst viewing *Journey into the Infinite* - by Lithgow High School's Mark Dennis.

There was also a *Schools Talk* on 7 April about *The Wilkins Collection* exhibition, for students in years 9/10/11. Kimberly Oats was guest speaker. Three local schools participated (Cowra High, St Raphaels, Canowindra High) with a total of 60 students and 7 teachers in attendance.

Below are Gallery views from the Schools talks.



**WILD** 19 March to 24 April 2016.

This solo exhibition opportunity followed Nic Mason's win of the Central West Regional Art Award in 2015, and is the first substantial body of work shown by her since she began painting in oils only five years ago.



Nic Mason. *New Futures* 2016. Oil on canvas



Tracy Callinan, CEO of Arts OutWest, who opened the WILD Exhibition.

*"At first glance, there is a beguiling charm about Nic Mason's paintings. There's a little red bag and red shoes - full of expectancy, the delight of a journey - and the beautifully rendered faces of native animals. The numbat turns to look back at us as it sets off down the road; the bush stone curlew pauses with a friend for a moment in an iconic Australian forest. But there is an unease here, too. The open, innocent face of a human child is looking out under another gaze: the eyes of a fox worn as a headpiece. There is personality in those animal eyes but it's not quite clear whether they are alive."* Excerpt - catalogue essay by Tracey Sorenson.

Apart from the usual interest, this exhibition was well supported by Nic Mason's friends and family, adding to a special occasion for the artist.



Tracy Callinan, CEO of Arts OutWest, on the right during the welcome by Gallery Director Brian Langer, and some of the large crowd of supporters who attended the opening.



Nic Mason with her image *Bilby (Bilbi), rocking and waiting* 2016.



Nic's daughter Bridget with her portrait titled *Eastern Quoll (mabi) boo*



Nic Mason with portraits of her children with fox head coverings. *Fox no.s 1, 2, and 3*. All Oil on canvas

**GALLERY HIGHLIGHTS**

*Australia's Greek Café celebrated in major exhibition.* February 2016



The critically applauded *Selling an American Dream: Australia's Greek Café*, a major photography exhibition curated by photographer **Effy Alexakis** and Historian **Leonard Janiszewski** caused much interest when presented in the Cowra Regional Art Gallery. The presence of both the marvellous photographer Effy Alexakis and Leonard Janiszewski who was guest speaker at the well attended opening, added to the occasion. They are pictured at right.



The exhibition celebrated the golden age of Greek-owned cafés in Australia – from the 1930's to the late 1960's and cleverly showcased this period through historical and contemporary photographs, oral history panels and a dramatic multimedia presentation created by film-maker **Michael Karris**.

Alexakis' stunning photographs captured the Art Deco decor of the cafés, their customers and the owners who worked hard to make their businesses successful, bringing the era of Australia's Greek cafés to life, and the Talk by historian Leonard Janiszewski (shown above during his talk) provided an interesting insight into the background and development.



The exhibition included a selection of well-known Greek cafés and milk bars from regional NSW including the central west region. Many residents would have memories of enjoying a soda, milkshake or ice cream dessert after the movies at the town's Greek cafés. In Cowra these included, the Golden Gate Café, the Golden Key Café, the Garden of Roses Café, the Rose Marie Café, the Regent Café, the Liberty Café and Parris's Milk Bar.



Images above by **Effy Alexakis**.

Top: Dee and Alan Vorias – with old photos of the Regent Café.  
Above: Chris Parris with his wife Kim and daughter Sophia in front of pics of his late father Con and Con's original cafe.

Pictured at right : Con and Effie Polimeros who were owners of Cowra's Garden of Roses.

**GALLERY WORKSHOPS.**

**Children's Holiday Workshops.**



**Making a Sculpture of an Australian animal with artist Nic Mason.**

Wed.13 April, 2016.



Far Left: Artist Nic Mason with the children and their Australian animal sculptures.

Left: Nic demonstrating how to shape the clay.

Right: Models drying outside in the sun.

Images by Jacqueline Perry



**Cowra Regional Art Gallery**  
Gallery Director: Brian Langer  
77 Darling Street, Cowra NSW 2794

Hours: Tuesday to Saturday 10am – 4pm, Sunday 2pm – 4pm  
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The Cowra Regional Art Gallery is a cultural facility of the Cowra Shire Council



**"The Friends"** is a volunteer organisation formed to support the Cowra Regional Art Gallery, and operates as a 355 committee of Cowra Shire Council. Meetings are now held at 5.30 pm on the 2nd Thursday of the month in the Multi - Purpose room adjacent to the Gallery. All welcome.

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"Seek to be worth knowing rather than be well known."