

Bridget Seaton - NEWSLETTER – July 2020

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN THE STUDIO

As COVID 19 restrictions eased in WA I was thankful to resume my teaching in the middle of June. A number of my classes were not running due to restrictions, so I still had plenty of extra time to mess around in my studio. At present I am enjoying being able to teach all my regular classes and am adjusting to having less 'studio' time on my hands.

PRINTMAKING

For the month of June my studio was strewn with the mess of printmaking. After much trial & error I devised a way of collograph printing that was satisfactory to me. A collograph is a print making method where materials such as card and textures are stuck onto a piece of card and inked up using both the intaglio and relief method. The plate can be inked up differently each time which means that one plate can be used to produce a series of non-identical prints. This organic method is my kind of printmaking as I like to get my hands dirty and alter the print as I go.

I have been working on a series of square prints that take inspiration from the textures and patterns found on the ground whilst walking through the bush. Sometimes when out walking I will cast my eye to the forest floor and take many photos of the natural treasures that arrange themselves on the ground. I have produced about 40 prints so far from just 3 collograph plates. Each one is different, and the initial print is just the first step in the process. Once I have run my plate through the press I alter the image by double printing, adding a stencil, adding areas of rice paper collage or colour tinting by hand. I have yet to select and frame some of these prints which will be displayed in groups of 4 .



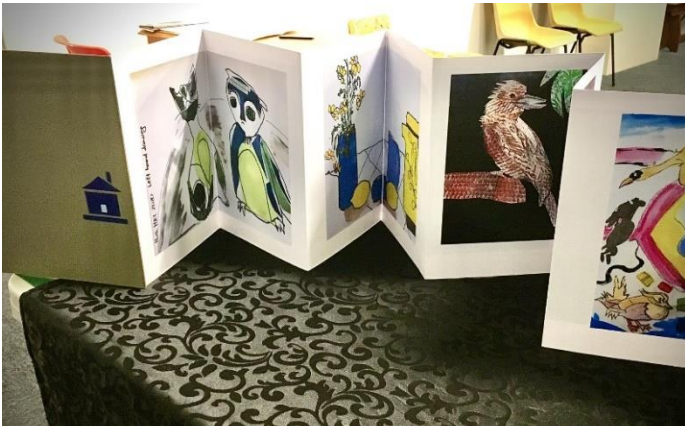
ACRYLIC PAINTING

I have also been working away on my painting experimenting with a cooler colour palette and pushing my landscapes a little further towards abstraction. Below are some of my experiments/studies on paper that will hopefully lead to something bigger in the near future. Currently I am interested in the place where bush and granite outcrops meet. At this time of year the outcrops in the Perth Hills take on wonderful tinges of colour due to recent rains



THE CURIOUSLY CREATIVE SKETCHBOOK CHALLENGE

As many of you know during Perth's period of home isolation I ran an online sketchbook challenge where I posted video demonstrations twice a week with suggested tasks. About 20 people got involved and some wonderful work was produced. Thanks to all those people who took part in this project. During the second week of July I sat down and made a giant collaborative sketchbook that compiles images from the sketchbooks of 18 participants. I dabble in the craft of book binding, and I made a large accordion book that stands upright and snakes across 2 trestle tables. The book was made by a combination of lots of measuring, cutting and folding and includes a linen cover. Here are some photos of it in the making and on display. I have been in contact with the State Library and the book will be donated to their historical archives as a record of what people did with their time during the restrictions imposed by COVID 19.



left – making the book

above left – on display at Atwell Gallery

BUSH TRAVELS

I mentioned in my last newsletter that we were awaiting the conversion of our 4 wheel drive into a camper. The vehicle is now converted and means that we can be fully self-sufficient and prepared for travel into some more remote areas. It is the remote and deeply quiet areas that inspire me the most to paint and create.



Left - our compact home away from home

As WA opened its regional borders again my recent camping trip was much anticipated and appreciated. I spent a week in the remote Helena and Aurora ranges which is a stunning ironstone banded range surrounded by the wilderness of the Great Western Woodlands which is the largest intact woodlands on earth. The area is about 100km north of Southern cross and is of exceptional beauty. Unfortunately, mining companies have an eye on this area so the more people who know about this area the better. I spent a happy week here exploring the area and managed to do some plein air painting every day. I also discovered the fun of drawing trees by torchlight – shine a light on a tree in the darkness and the form is rendered simple and clear.



Helena and Aurora Ranges



Gouache painting done at camp on a very cold morning.

TREE PLANTING

Much of my work is about trees and they are my obsession and ‘muse’. I don’t think I will ever tire of painting eucalypts and I think there should be more of them in the world. Every year I get involved in some tree planting events and this year I joined **Activate The Wheatbelt** in their annual tree planting event at Gabbin. Gabbin is a small rural community in the wheatbelt and the group is working with farmers to replant green corridors and create links to nature reserves in the area. There is something very satisfying about planting a eucalyptus and imagining it standing tall in 10 years or so. I have links with this group and each year I endeavour to raise some money for them through a percentage of sales of my artwork.

Activate The Wheatbelt is a small volunteer based organisation that holds community events in the wheatbelt to improve the health of the rural environment.

You can find out more about Activate The Wheatbelt on <http://www.avongro.com.au/activate/>



UPCOMING WORKSHOPS/CLASSES/EXHIBITIONS

MAKE YOUR OWN SKETCHBOOK

I am hoping to run a ‘make your own sketchbook workshop’ sometime in term 3. So if you are interested in making an A4 book of assorted art papers with a stitched binding that ensures the book opens flat please let me know.

EXHIBITIONS

The large collaborative accordion book from the Curiously Creative Sketchbook Challenge is now on display at Atwell Gallery until the 9th of August. If you are down that way please come in and have a look, it’s fascinating to see lots of peoples work displayed together in this form.

MCAA Art Awards 2020 - These take place in August at Atwell House so I plan to enter one of my landscape paintings.

A QUOTE TO FINISH..... Art is a line around your thoughts.” **Gustav Klimt**

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