



2018

CALLEEN  
art award

COWRA REGIONAL  
ART GALLERY

## **Background**

**The Calleen Art Award was founded in 1977 by Cowra arts patron Mrs. Patricia Fagan OAM.**

**The Calleen Art Award is an acquisitive national prize open to original paintings in any style or subject and for adjudication purposes using any traditional painting medium such as acrylic, oil or watercolour (other traditional “mixed media” may be used to a lesser extent).**

**During the past 41 years this prestigious award has grown into a prominent art prize through the continued support of the Calleen Trust.**

**The winning works acquired since 1977 form the splendid Calleen Collection - the foundation collection of the Cowra Regional Art Gallery.**

**Brian Langer,  
Gallery Director  
Cowra Regional Art Gallery**

**2018**  
**CALLEEN**  
**ART AWARD**

**EXHIBITION CATALOGUE**

**6 MAY TO 10 JUNE 2018**

# AWARD FINALISTS

XIAO BAI

SUSAN BAIRD

MICHAEL BELL

KATE BRISCOE

ANNABEL BUTLER

DANIEL BUTTERWORTH

JEMMA CALAVASSY

JANE CANFIELD

DAVID COLLINS

PETER COOK

KATHRYN COWEN

DAGMAR CYRULLA

TRACY DODS

BRIDGET DOLAN

KATE DORROUGH

JOHN DOWNTON

SHANNON DOYLE

GRAEME DRENDEL

ASHLEY FROST

KEITH FYFE

CRAIG HANDLEY

RACHEL HANNAN

SAMIR HAMAIEL

HOPE HARDY

GEOFF HARVEY

VICKI HERSEY

KERRY JOHNS

VAL JOHNSON

COL JORDAN

HUI (KATHY) LIU

STEVE LOPES

ROBERT MALHERBE

NIC MASON

ROWEN MATTHEWS

KERRY McINNIS

PAUL McKNIGHT

WAYNE MILES

ANNABEL NOWLAN

HAL PRATT

CLAIRE PRIMROSE

PETRA REECE

BRIAN ROBINSON

BRENDA RUNNEGAR

STUART SMITH

SALLY STOKES

ZOE YOUNG

# Director's Introduction

Welcome to the 2018 Calleen Art Award finalists exhibition showcasing 46 artworks selected from over 200 entries.

Since the Calleen Art Award was established 41 years ago by arts patron Mrs Patricia Fagan OAM it has developed into a prestigious national art prize, this year worth \$20,000 through the generous support of the Calleen Trust. There's also a People's Choice Award of \$500 made possible by the Friends of the Gallery.

I would like to thank Calleen Trustees Jenni Fagan and Peter Fagan and acknowledge their commitment and generous support.

Thank you also, to the Cowra Shire Council for its ongoing support of the Calleen Art Award and the Cowra Regional Art Gallery.

Also, thanks to the Friends of the Gallery committee for their generous support of the People's Choice Award.

Special thanks to the pre-selection panel Rhonda Davis, Senior Curator, Macquarie University Art Gallery, Peter Haynes, Curator, Arts Writer, Art Historian, Arts & Heritage Advisor, and the Award Judge Michael Hedger, Director, Manly Art Museum & Gallery for their dedication, assistance and support.

Finally, my congratulations to the winner whose work will join the splendid Calleen Collection at the Gallery and to the finalists.

I'm sure all visitors to the Gallery will find this outstanding collection of artwork an enjoyable art experience.

Brian Langer  
Director  
Cowra Regional Art Gallery



**Xiao Bai**  
*Yin and Yang* 2018  
oil on canvas  
30 x 60 cm

I want to combine Western techniques with Chinese philosophical concepts of Tao and Hunyuan Qi with the objective of producing a painting that creates a new combination of visual language.

Usually nature is a source for my images. It is real lily pads that exist in a garden. But beyond the actual lily pads, my intention is to evoke an atmosphere of calmness, vital energy and contemplation for the viewer. In this painting, I pay particular attention to the manipulation of space, light, the edges of form, surface, format and scales.



**Susan Baird**  
*Bush Hum* 2017  
oil on linen  
127 x 137 cm

*Bush Hum* is inspired by a tailing pond that quietly exists on a track of road in the scrub in Tambaroora.

The pond is a place I visit and revisit time and time again and I love to see how its form changes with the seasons, the rainfall or lack of it and the light at dusk. This particular spot on the way down to Valentines mine was a well trodden path and I feel the echo of the past.

Over time, and as I get to understand the bare structure of the hill, the trees and reflections I hope to convey something of myself in this place and time. I find the landscape in these surrounds nostalgic and evocative as well as harsh and unforgiving and a constant reminder of the fragility of life.



**Michael Bell**  
*Seven Self Portraits* 2017  
oil and aluminium on board  
140 x 120 cm

This picture is based on things I do  
and things I think about almost  
every day.



**Kate Briscoe**

*Sandstone Rockface - Depot Beach 2018*

sand, pigments and acrylic  
on canvas

76 x 230 cm triptych

This work references a sandstone cliff face at Depot Beach in Murrumbidgee National Park New South Wales. This is from a series of works that are explorations and observations of landscapes that demonstrate particular geological structures. I focused here on cliff faces and rock faces where weathering has exposed layers and structures.

**Annabel Butler***Alongside the Hume* 2017

oil on board

29 x 81 cm

For many years my practice has been to paint multiple iterations of particular scenes *plein air*. The aim is to hone observations and direct gesture to delineate essential aspects of a single space and time across a series of works.

When painting a subject repeatedly, even though working physically in front of the scene, I am not observing as much as drawing on my memories, which have been created by the process of repeated looking and painting. This enables me to abstract, pare down and find the essence of the scene.

There is a section of the Hume Highway that I love. It is embedded in my memory from countless trips between Sydney and Canberra but I never cease to be struck by the beauty of the area when I reach it. As the Hume Highway nears Lake George gently rolling hills rise up to flank the road and telegraph poles break the space into regular measured intervals, like notes on a score. I always stop alongside the Hume when I reach this area.



**Daniel Butterworth**  
*Self as Egotistical Wanker 2*  
2018  
house acrylics on board  
165 x 120 cm

*Self as Egotistical Wanker 2*, is a direct response to a comment put to my work.

I exhibited in a group show at Cairns, and once finished I quickly had a look at the comment book and one read:

“He has good technique and skills but is an egotistical wanker”.

This, I believe, is because of my subject which is predominately me. I use my image as a tool to connect with the viewer.



**Jemma Calavassy**  
*Submerged* 2017  
acrylic on canvas  
46 x 46 cm

My current series, *Rockpools and Reefs* is an abstract reflection of the earth's body of water and the wonder which lies beneath the surface. Like life, beauty is deeper than what one initially sees. I have a memory of a very vibrant Great Barrier Reef experience as an eight year old child and the colours will forever remain in my memory. This drives the vibrant colour selection for *Submerged*.

Painting is a constant distraction in my world and there is stream of thoughts and images flowing throughout my mind, particularly in relation to water, beaches, rock pools and the Great Barrier Reef. This busy mind of mine means there are many pieces on the go at any one time, enabling layers to form.

There is a lack of rigidity in my artistic process. It is more a creative flow that happens. I am a 'colour outside the lines' kind of girl, which is where my style comes from and enables me to embrace imperfection into my work.

As the colours flow together like water and reefs forming, the viewer is left to witness the fluid and playfulness of the pieces.



**Jane Canfield**  
*Mount Banks* 2018  
oil, conte and charcoal  
on linen  
76 x 76 cm

This is a work I developed mid 2017 and kept coming back to and it has totally changed from the original painting.

I like to work with the layering and 'accidents' that occur from using scratchy brushes or drawing back into the wet paint, revealing colour from other layers.

Although there is a move toward abstraction and paring back, I like to see the landscape that it has come from.



**David Collins**  
*Brooklyn* 2017  
oil on canvas  
94 x 224 cm

My painting is a response to the man-made and natural environment of Brooklyn, on the Hawkesbury River, in New South Wales.

It is one of a series of paintings that draw their inspiration from the interplay between the landforms of the Hawkesbury and the linear structure of the Brooklyn Railway Bridge. The individual spans of the bridge echo the land masses around them and appear to float above the water surface.

The painting has a long, thin format to emphasise the expanse of the bridge across the river and the colour has been dramatically reduced in order to focus attention on tone, shape and calligraphic line.



**Peter Cook**

*Approaching Gloucester* 2018

acrylic

45 x 90 cm

Gloucester sits in a beautiful valley framed by rolling hills and to the west by the jagged range known as The Bucketts. There are great lookouts in the surrounding hills, but this view approaching from the north is my favourite with its appealing and dramatic view of the Bucketts above the town.



**Kathryn Cowen**  
*Guide 2017*  
 acrylic, oil and aerosol  
 on board  
 32 x 32 cm

Hill End is a strange place, a town where the past is living in the present. I was fortunate enough to spend some time there with my friend and fellow painter, Natalya Shinn. We stayed at Bryant's Butchery on Clarke Street whilst participating in an artist-in-residence program offered by the National Art School.

A collection of photographs taken by Beaufoy Merlin chronicles the life and characters that once filled the dusty streets of this gold rush town. This suite of 3500 photographs came to be known as the Holtermann Collection and a selection can be seen throughout the town, filling in the gaps in time.

I am indebted to Beaufoy Merlin for providing inspiration for many of the works made during and after this residency, including *Guide*. The female figure stands at a threshold, looking both forward and back. She reminds me of a long time resident of Hill End who walks the streets in similar clothing. We had to look twice when we saw her strolling purposefully past our house.



**Dagmar Cyrulla**  
*Time Out II* 2017  
oil on linen  
153 x 153 cm

Mostly, my work concerns itself with relationships and what it is like to be human. This particular painting started with the mother in the left hand side, slumped in a chair – finally a moment to herself. Modern technology entertains the daughters.

Thinking this was too obvious, and also for compositional reasons, I removed the motherly figure and felt the two girls, engrossed in the iPad, to be enough of a message.

There is a mix of old with the wallpaper, and new with the iPad, and the way in which the paint is handled. I am interested in the shift of thinking from traditional expectations of women, relationships, and so forth. Thus, the wallpaper alludes to this, as the iPad highlights new ways of thinking.



**Tracy Dods**  
*Vis Intertiae* 2018  
acrylic on canvas  
107 x 183 cm

How strong the forces of national apathy, the organised corruption and the voluntary entropy of our government.

Are we not all bewildered by their disregard for our environment? What more irrefutable evidence do we need? When the rising seas lap at their designer shoes only then will they realise the heavy price to pay for their vis inertiae.



**Bridget Dolan**  
*The Unseen* 2018  
oil on polyester  
120 x 120 cm

My work investigates the complicated nature of human relationships - what civility means in contemporary life and how we reach each other across cultural and ideological divides.

I draw on my experience in the performing arts as a dancer and theatre maker to paint work that holds tension between brave vulnerability, tenderness and fear.



**Kate Dorrrough**  
*Totems of the land* 2017  
 acrylic on linen  
 137 x 153 cm

Recent work has focused on landscape painting, specifically an exploration of “The Inland River in an Enduring Australian Landscape”. I see the river as a source of fertility, a vital and pivotal life force with its cyclical nature of renewal and destruction. In our nations psyche with limited water resources, droughts and floods mark our consciousness. The river is a potent historical and cultural emblem embedded in our literature and our inherited visual language.

My work has moved away from a specific landscape, to become my own inner recollections, a reduced abstracted essence of the land. The river, trees, rocks and broad spatial vistas become a series of signs or totems.

Focusing on abstracted gestural calligraphic mark making, the marks on the land suggest text or a series of musical notes, an implied language to be understood or deciphered.

In *Totems of the land* the marks have become a series of totemic signs or emblems suggesting shields, trees and a bird. They emerge, hover and dance across the shallow pictorial space; the river in the foreground reflects the stars and suggested hidden depths.

The work acknowledges our need to understand the land, its rivers and its language, in order to work with and preserve its fragile ecosystems.



**John Downton**

*Fairy Dust. Kosciusko N. P.* 2018

oil

51 x 76 cm

This painting in oil, obviously of our snow country, is depicted at that special time of day where every aspect is touched by colour as if sprinkled with fairy dust and is transformed into an enchanted scene of wonder.

As William Morris once wrote:

*'That thing which I understand by real art is the expression by man of pleasure in labour'.*



**Shannon Doyle**  
*Power Struggle* 2017  
acrylic on canvas  
90 x 120 cm

The work represents our modern society's dependency on electricity and is an allegory for our struggle to transition from environmentally damaging energy sources to renewable energy.

The figure is depicted with an extension lead over his shoulder, the tension on the extension lead combined with the grimace on the figure's face symbolizes the struggle faced by a society so reliant on electricity.



**Graeme Drendel**  
*Rope Trick* 2018  
oil on paper  
29 x 25 cm

*Ropetrick* is one of a series of small paintings I have been working on as an ongoing series, aiming to produce one piece a week over a twelve month period.

The subject matter of these paintings has varied between figurative pieces to portraits and still life compositions.

This painting is typical of the many single figure pieces that have emerged, painted in a single session and typically addressing (to my mind, and in a slightly humorous fashion) something of the ultimate aloneness that is a positive/negative factor pertaining to the human condition.



**Ashley Frost**

*Passing Storm* 2018

oil on linen

122 x 137 cm

In this painting I wanted to capture the final light of the day from an area of the New South Wales south coast area near my home. My regular art practice involves drawing and painting *plein air* works from places that I connect with on a practical and emotional level.

In this work I wanted to explore the convergence between the escarpment, the urban areas, the sea and the sky. This is set against the fleeting light, where the day ends and night begins. There is a regular pattern of storms rolling in and over the escarpment from the southwest which often miss the area entirely and leave a dramatic display of cloud and colour in its wake.



### Keith Fyfe

#### *White Geography Black History* 2017

oil on British Paints colour chart  
samples  
98 x 30 cm

The experience of landscape is affected by what you know and not just what you see.

Here I have presented just a few of the places on record where indigenous people were hunted and murdered as the British gradually and forcefully took over the land. Outright defiance or passive resistance was met with brutal retaliation.

Those unaware of what transpired here will see only landforms and other physical details. There is very little or no visible acknowledgement in the places where these things happened and our generic history books are generally evasive about the scale of the killings.

There can't be any true attempt at reconciliation until the truth of this dark past is brought out into the open and due recognition is given to the extent of the damage inflicted on the Aboriginal people of this land.



**Samir Hamaiel**  
*Unseen* 2017  
acrylic on canvas  
61 x 46 cm

A hazy unseeing viewpoint, this work employs a subtle colour palette suggesting the camouflage of a damp misty morning. A scene in Toowoomba, it could just as easily be anywhere in my home country of the United Kingdom.



**Craig Handley**

*The Trappings Late 2017* 2017

oil on linen

112 x 122 cm

...this is a painting about the influx and exodus surrounding real estate in outlying areas.



**Rachel Hannan**  
*Mount Hay, Cliff Rock  
Pools 2018*  
oil on canvas  
122 x 122 cm

Mt. Hay is one of my safe places that I go to when I need to see myself in perspective, take myself less seriously and feel the elements surrounding me.

It is rugged out there - often windy, sometimes freezing and earache inducing, sometimes hot and dry. It is vast and wild. There are extreme contrasts between the miniature wildflowers and alpine plants, and the giant sheer cliffs and rolling clouds and storms that can move across so suddenly, often when you are least prepared.

I love the uncertainty and the danger of the place. I perch on cliff edges and stand tiny and fragile in the beating winds. This painting is an amalgamation of many visits and memories - the unmoving almost two dimensional backdrop of the cliffs in the distance and the small windblown, dwarfed heath and casuarinas in the foreground.

Mt. Hay feels saturated with history; ancient and sacred. The plants, rocks, wind and light dance with each other; all as one indescribable energy, unharnessed and free. This place will always be an inspiration for me, where countless layers of experience and meaning are recreated in my studio, shaped by my misshapen memories.

**Hope Hardy**

*Lost Memory* 2017  
oil and cold wax  
medium on canvas  
61 x 31 cm

My artwork comes out of my practice of using the landscape as a means of gaining inspiration. My practice is also my way of creating compositions in which the viewer can mentally encapsulate my feelings about landscapes from my artworks.

Through artistic practice I explore the relationship between my *plein air* experiences and how I interpret those experiences.

The influence of Fred Williams work has encouraged me to take an interpretative approach when composing and painting landscapes. My art incorporates training my eye to look and interpret what I see and then use a limited palette to mix my colours to enhance that interpretation.

My art works are a mix of the real and unreal and are the result of research in the field using a variety of mediums. As my paintings evolve I will often take different directions such as laying colours next to each other to see how they respond. If it works I aim for those colours to vibrate together and make my work “Zing”.



**Geoff Harvey**  
*Ash Landscape* 2017  
acrylic and charcoal on  
board  
123 x 153 cm

This picture is sombre, calm, serene and has been painted with a limited palette.

It depicts the aftermath of a bushfire and it reveals the haunting beauty of the land after a devastating fire.

It is part of a series that deals with the theme of the land from bushfire to regeneration that I am painting at present.



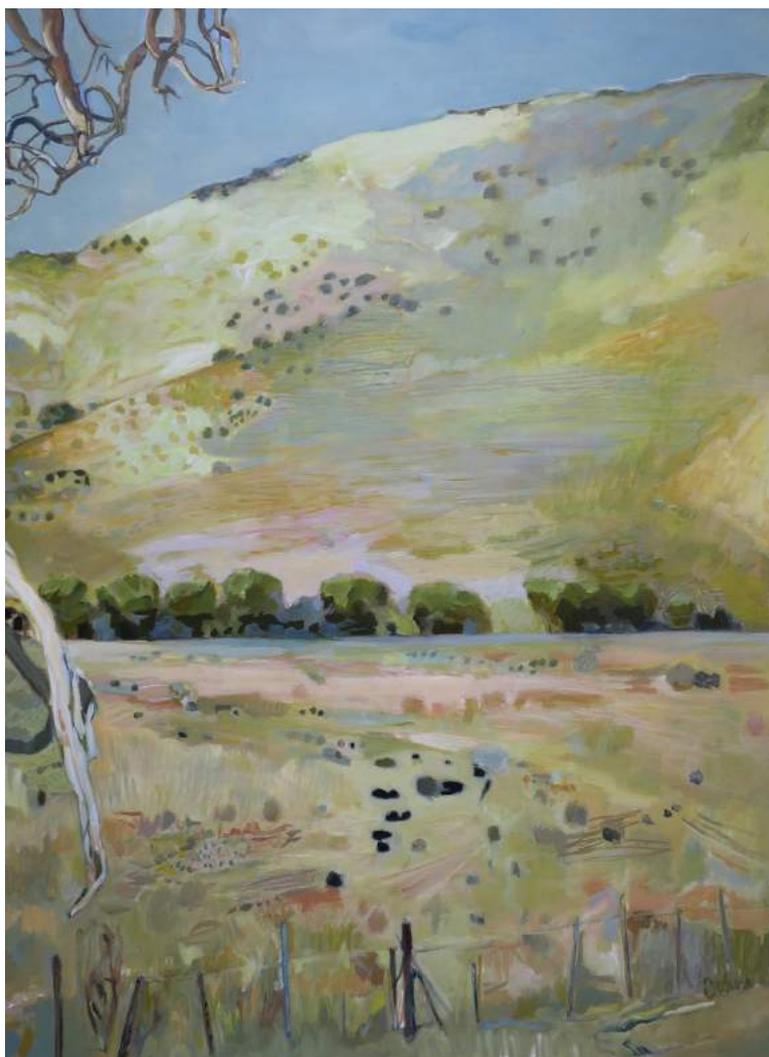
**Vicki Hersey**  
*In the Gully* 2017  
oil on linen  
31 x 38 cm

This painting was made *en plein air* in a small gully at the back of the property where I live in the foothills of the Blue Mountains.

This gully is significant to us as my husband's family has lived here on the property for a hundred years and the gully was the playground of his mother, and then him and then our daughter when she was young.

The gully has an intimate feel to it as the space is quite small and the sandstone rocks are wonderfully visible, and my small painting platform is nestled into the area. Once down there in the gully, it feels as though you are worlds away from any other influence but the rocks, the bush, the slender angophora and the spindly casuarinas.

While painting in the gully I have been conscious of the intimacy of the space around me and the fond memories that have accumulated and been attached to this place over the course of four generations.



**Kerry Johns**  
*Sawyers Creek* 2018  
acrylic on canvas  
110 x 80 cm

In the pastoral lands west of Canberra, the steep, bald hills of Narrangullen are finely marked with zigzagging tracks from sheep crossing the precipitous slopes. The hills rise so suddenly they seem to present a strange perspective, like huge vertical canvases held up to view flattening the landscape.

Sawyers Creek runs close to the base of these imposing hills. The trees on the creek line break the sense of spatial incongruity and the paddocks on the plain come to meet the viewer in a perfectly ordinary way.

I wanted to paint this impression of a place not quite real, hard to believe yet actual and quite marvellous.

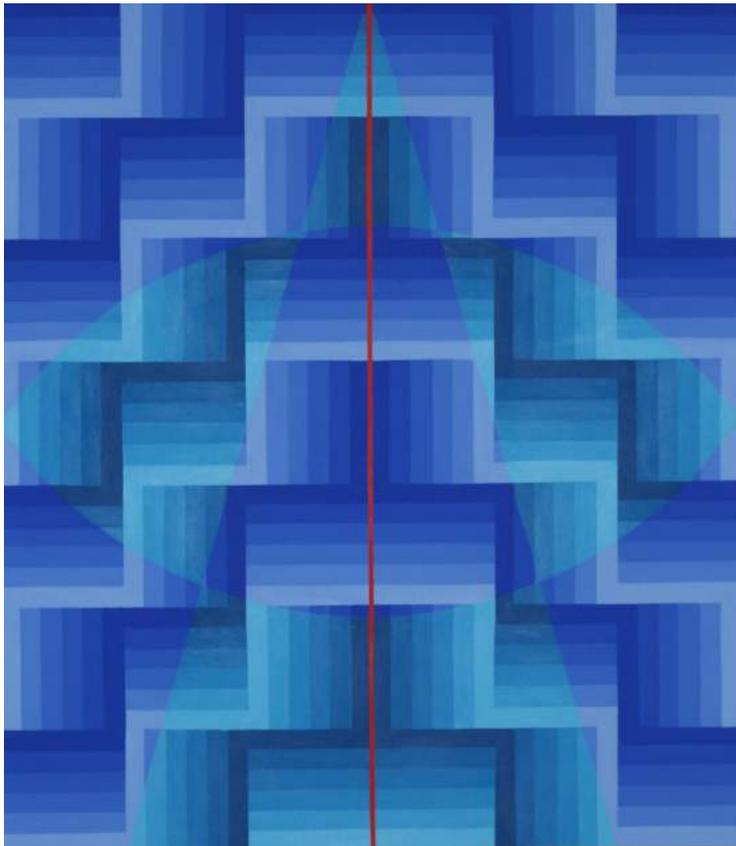


**Val Johnson**  
*Black and Whites* 2016  
oil  
78 x 103 cm

I have been fascinated by black and white cows. I have taken numerous photographs and have done many sketches over the years. I have had friends on properties in the Cowra district who have sent me photos of their cows for reference.

This is a composite painting from those photographs and sketches. What appealed to me most were the black and white shapes. No one cow has the same pattern on its coat.

In this painting I concentrated on the design that the black and white shapes made, and I stylised the shapes of the cows to complete the design. To balance the design I made patterns of the green field that the cows are standing in.



**Col Jordan**  
*Symmetrist I* 2017  
acrylic on canvas  
106.5 x 78.5 cm

In 2015, my wife and I spent a month living on the island of Giudecca in Venice. In the months that followed, I tried to distil the essence of that experience in a series of paintings entitled From Venice.

My entire career has been devoted to the exploration of abstraction but in From Venice I came as close to landscape as it is possible to go, short of realistic imagery.

When I completed the series, I felt the need to clear my mind. I chose to investigate again the paradox which might be described as the ambiguous clarity of abstraction.

The simple clarity of the *Symmetrist* paintings comes from the repetition of squares, each consisting of six tonal bars alternating between the vertical and the horizontal. The ambiguity lies in the mystery suggested by the alternating tonal bars which become enclosed spaces: sometimes advancing, sometimes receding.

What begins as geometry becomes a beautiful new entity. Let your imagination make whatever you will of these paintings for there is no correct answer to the questions they pose.



**Hui (Kathy) Liu**  
*February 2018*  
oil on canvas  
76 x 61 cm

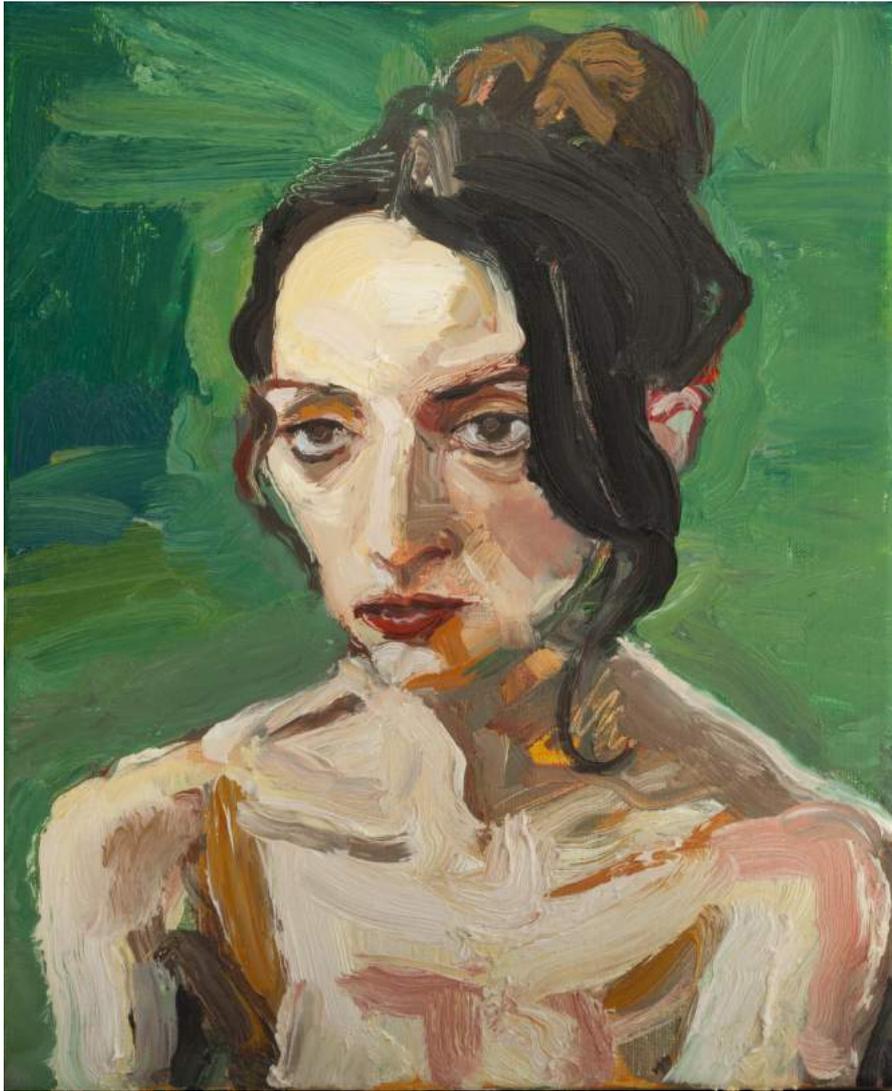
Late afternoon in February she loves to read by the window, soft wind blowing in, warm sunlight casting on the desk and wall. Inspired by Vermeer, the artist would invite the viewers to share this tranquil time of summer afternoon.



**Steve Lopes**  
*Russell's Top* 2017  
Oil on canvas  
128 x 180 cm

This painting is a response to a recent trip to Gallipoli.

It is a view from the tip of Russell's Top on the Gallipoli peninsula. It has taken me quite a while to complete the painting, the whole time reflecting on the sacrifices made on this particular area for our nation.



**Robert Malherbe**  
*Nina* 2017  
oil on linen  
50 x 40 cm

I never paint from photographs. I'm more interested in how people are rather than what they look like.

When painting directly from life you get closer to the subject matter, to how the person thinks and feels and what the face does when it forgets it's being looked at. This is what I was attempting to capture in *Nina*, a living presence.



**Nic Mason**  
*Rabbit* 2017  
oil on linen  
40 x 32 cm

Narrative and symbolism are central to much of my work, and this painting featuring familiar and hinted at domestic furniture and shadows, is no exception. Here I am attempting to draw one in with my play of shadows and objects, mark marking, repetition and considered compositional elements.

**Rowen Matthews***Thin Fall* 2017

oil on paper

70 x 80 cm

At the close of the day, escarpments are light catchers.

The remaining light of the day cuts across horizontally like a big torch, and that light finds the most intense colours and contrasts in rock faces, moss, lichen, clouds and crevices, just before the whole thing turns dark. These colours peak just before they lose energy.

I like to be outside at these times, soaking it all in, putting it down on paper, holding the experience as a memory, figuring out how I can best use paint to match the intensity and make a rapid record of my encounter.

This is a painting of Horseshoe Falls, a favourite spot of mine outside Blackheath in the Blue Mountains. I return to this place repeatedly, always finding new colour and form.



**Kerry McInnis**

*The Source (Ikara Country)*

2017

oil on canvas

75 x 102 cm

Ikara Country is the aboriginal name for the Flinders Ranges. I have painted there on several art trips and I, like many other artists, have noted the unique colour and tonal balances of the landscape.

The area is suffused with a pink light - indescribable really, which gives all the other hues observed a somewhat unearthly appearance. Being there is like being encased in a soft red cloud.

This particular painting, one in a series, was painted from *plein air* sketches of a dry river bed in one of the Flinders Ranges many gorges. For eons, these creeks and rivers have thundered with water sourced from the higher grounds. They are dry now, but perhaps they will flow again one day.



**Paul McKnight**  
*Dogwood on Lace* 2018  
oil on canvas  
45 x 59 cm

*Dogwood on Lace* is a continuation of my ongoing tea cup theme, however there is a departure from my usual palette to the use of a more limited colour and tonal range.

The background lace provides a neutral background to highlight the three areas of golden yellow: the tea and lemon, the spoon bowl and the cake. These tones are also subtly picked out in the centre of the flowers and the passionfruit.



*The Bystander*, innocent or complicit; the word bystander and what it bears witness to can be loaded. We observe and we assume.

I had decided to base a work on the theme "Someone is watching something". The arrangement of figures for this work I had already planned but the setting alluded me. Then, in late 2017 I came across Caragabal.

### **Wayne Miles**

*The Bystander* 2018

oil on canvas

101.7 x 152.2 cm

The village of Caragabal is 100km west of Cowra. Like many rural villages most of its shops have long been deserted and one dilapidated commercial building in Caragabal is really a large shed. The front, covered with a huge, washed-out, sun-weary sign hints it once housed an automotive service and repair business. Parked behind the shed are five or six old Chrysler Dodge model vehicles which appear abandoned to the elements.

Here I placed my "Someone is watching something" composition. A limited and muted colour palette echoes the past and creates intrigue. As the detective's attention is drawn to the sky, a boiler-suited cop glances at evidence another cop has collected and in the foreground is our casual bystander.

Or perhaps that role is reserved for the viewer, watching from a safe distance, partly obscured by the bush.



**Annabel Nowlan**

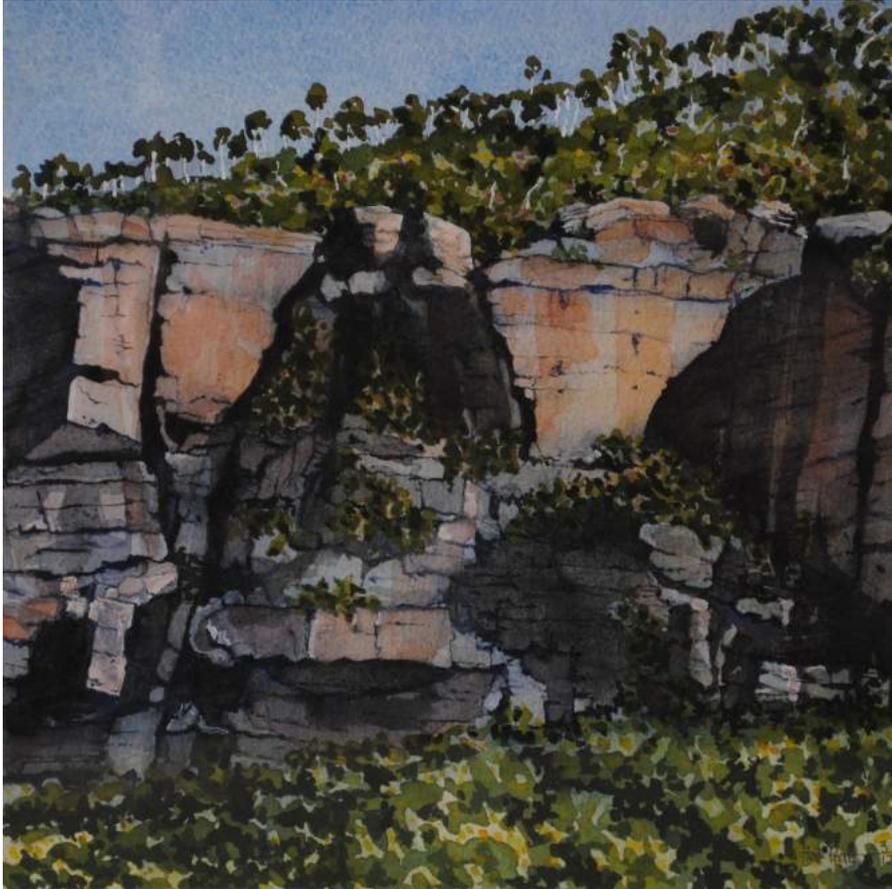
*On the Wallaby* 2017  
mixed media on  
corrugated tin  
90 x 122 cm

*On the Wallaby* was the colloquial expression for the homeless existence led by swagmen and itinerant workers during the depression after World War I ('WWI'). Thousands of men moved around the country, walking from place to place and looking for food and shelter in return for work. That was life '*on the wallaby track*'.

In this body of work, I return to the familiar theme of the strained historical relationship between people and the land. In particular, it highlights the hardship and struggle for survival endured by returned soldiers who were granted unsustainable farm blocks.

There were many failed Solider Settlement blocks in the regional area of South West New South Wales, including several on our family farm near Bimbi. No one ever talked about the shameful failures of this post WWI scheme. It wasn't until we were old enough to be curious about the paddock names; Riley's, Christie's and Gault's that we learnt they were the names of failed soldier settlers.

This work seeks to honour those ex-servicemen and their families.



*"...and then rising like a wall, facing the light... the tor face, with its high-up rim, so grey, having tiny trees feathering against the most frail sky."*

- D H Lawrence from *Kangaroo*.

**Hal Pratt**  
*Scarborough Escarpment*  
 2017  
 watercolour  
 27 x 27 cm

*Scarborough Escarpment* explores the sentiment of this extract from *Kangaroo* describing the same escarpment viewed from the coastline, the most significant feature of the north Illawarra landscape. The work was developed in the artist's Thirroul studio with drawings and paintings sketched on location.

Hal Pratt has accepted the challenge of painting Namatjira's country using his favoured medium – watercolour. The inability to rework watercolour is testing enough but the real challenge is to find one's own interpretation of this landscape, especially as it was so miraculously captured in Namatjira's paintings.

**Claire Primrose**

*One More Time* 2018  
oil and enamel on linen  
120 x 120 cm

My work finds inspiration in the direct linking of immediate locations with my own techniques of assembling a painting; transporting a real environment and recreating it in an artistic space. I evoke origins, moments in time and equally reflect my own identity and affinity with that place.

Each expression offers a personal and interactive connection.

My practice recreates surfaces, textures, depth and colours that educe and highlight binding components of particular places; each work attempts to re-collect layers of the 'place' at once of and from memory melded with specific gatherings, a culmination of many different images, spaces, experiences, and material.

**Petra Reece**

*The Royal Hotel* 2017

oil on linen

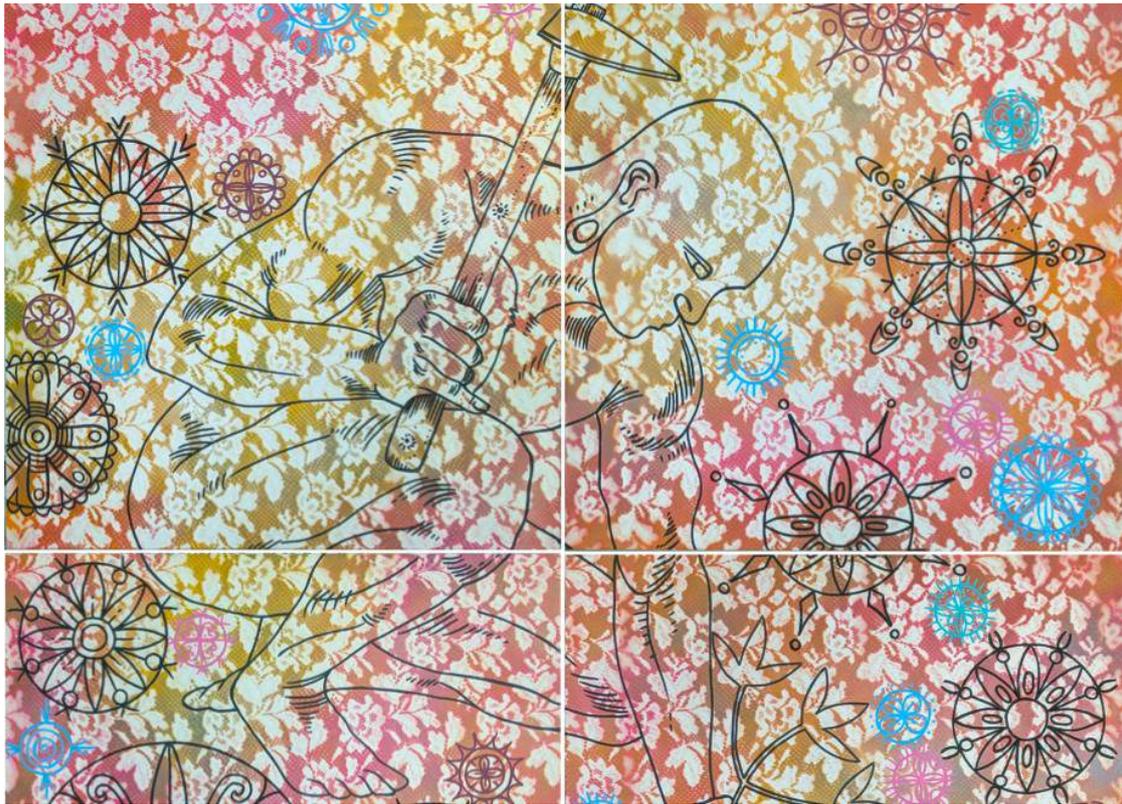
102 x 112 cm

There are hundreds of pubs and hotels across Australia called 'The Royal Hotel'.

My 'house' series refers to Australia in the 1950s, a vast and empty country with a population of just over 8 million.

Driving through country towns, these buildings stand as sentinals, some abandoned in the landscape and some with hints of past glories.

Time and nature always win.



### Brian Robinson

*Sowing the Crops and Reading the Stars* (detail) 2018

enamel spray paint, liquitex  
paint marker

152 x 122 cm

*Sowing the Crops and Reading the Stars* references the traditional gardening practices that occurred throughout the Torres Strait as well as the abundant plant life and blooms that are found growing everywhere in profusion. Skill in gardening was and still is dependent on understanding the four seasons including knowledge of the movement of stars and constellations, tidal patterns, and the migration of birds and certain sea creatures.

Agricultural fertility also entails a respect for inherited ancestral land and knowledge of how to influence rainfall and the growth of plants through actions, words, songs and the use of figures and stones.

Cosmology, particularly star constellations were of significant importance to the people who used them to encode nature's relative predictability into mythological narratives like *Usiam*, a cluster of seven stars that are more commonly known as Pleiades or the Seven Sisters. These narratives epitomise the cosmology or sense of understanding of one's place in the universe.

The seasonal calendar of *Zenadh Kes* life reflects the changes in the seas, the winds, the stars and the land, and moves through cycles of abundance and scarcity, renewal and harvest, wet and dry.



**Brenda Runnegar**  
*Estuary - Drone View* 2018  
oil on canvas  
92 x 122 cm

*Estuary – Drone View* depicts an aerial view of an estuary as it may be seen from a drone. One of the most exciting developments in technology and in particular photography, in the past two years is the introduction of the drone high-flying cameras that enable you to capture unique viewpoints of the landscape. I love the amazing patterns and vistas you see when viewed from above.

Drones allow you to get into an area that most planes and helicopters are not allowed to go. Flying low gives a rare range of vision. I have found these exciting new ways of looking at the landscape have inspired my paintings. *Estuary – Drone View* is an example.



**Stuart Smith**  
*Foreshore* 2018  
oil on canvas  
117 x 183 cm

My landscape paintings are constructed with a reduced economy. The process involves breaking down photographic images into simplified scenes of flat tonal value, bright hues and clean lines.

Wollongong's foreshore provides an ideal scene with its clear division between the natural and man-made environment, setting industrial architecture against the beautiful views of the Illawarra escarpment off in the distance. The rich colours, patterns and shapes of the rock surfaces in foreground against a backdrop of space and light became the focus and narrative. The city's shoreline appears somewhat alienated and removed of human presence except for a solitary figure waist deep in the rock pool.

The work was completed from start to finish on un-stretched canvas backed by a smooth hard surface to give support. This allowed for large areas of colour to be applied thickly and evenly. Once dry, further colour could be scraped across the surface to increase texture. The final stage involves sanding away surface ridges and excess paint.



**Sally Stokes**

*Losing Myself* 2017

oil on linen

102 x 102 cm

Joy! Connection.... Mystery....Place.....What is it that connects me to a place? Sometimes it's immediate - I'm there, and there is a response that lifts my heart, moves my energy in different directions - playful, joyful, sombre melancholic - but it reaches into me, and the connection transforms. Sometimes it's a slow growth with a surprise at the familiar seen afresh. But there is an awe – it's mighty, I'm minor but I'm a part of 'it'- whatever 'It' is.

Colour lifts my spirit- from the greys, olives and muds of the Hawkesbury high lit by a crimson or the reflected skies - to the terracottas, pinks and oranges of the desert interspersed with greys and umbers. Surprises abound, shapes and textures lift the heart.

And then there is the mystery of painting. The hundreds of drawings to suggest the energy, the dynamism of place, details of areas, strange juxtapositions - an exploration of both the place and my perceptions.

The return to the studio, where memories are jolted by drawings and photos, a stillness of contemplation of this mystery, sitting with the paintings and waiting for something to emerge.



**Zoe Young**  
*My Mother, Myself* 2017  
 acrylic on board  
 210 x 270 cm

I wanted to paint my Mother's portrait but she is not exactly the sitting type.

I have always wrestled with the whole self portrait concept, probably something to do with my own vanity. It's no original epiphany, but with two toddlers I'm starting to see much of my Mother within myself. We speak five times a day - she's my harshest critic and my greatest admirer.

I thought I wouldn't be able to paint my children, let alone grasp any sense of the beauty and joy they bring, but I'm happy I've taken the risk. As time moves on, much of my work is about distilling moments and relationships in an attempt to distill something visceral yet intangible.

This painting wasn't strategically mapped, it developed organically.

## 2018 Calleen Art Award Judge: Mr Michael Hedger



Michael Hedger has been the Director of the Manly Art Gallery and Museum since 2012 and before this position was the Cultural and Information Services Manager for Manly Council.

He has previously been the Visitor Services Manager at the Australian National Maritime Museum, Director of the Campbelltown Arts Centre and Deputy Director of the British Council in Australia. Before these appointments he had been an Education Officer and lecturer at UNSW, at TAFE and in Sydney high schools and was the occasional art critic for The Newcastle Herald.

He has a PhD in Art Theory from UNSW and has written extensively on sculpture and on the visual arts generally.

### **Acknowledgements**

The Cowra Regional Art Gallery acknowledges Cowra Shire Council for the ongoing support of the annual Calleen Art Award and presentation of the finalists exhibition.

Thank you to the members of the Gallery Advisory Committee and the Friends of the Gallery Committee for their support and the Gallery Volunteers who gave their time and energy towards the presentation of the works in the exhibition.

## **Cowra Regional Art Gallery**

### **Gallery Staff**

Brian Langer, Gallery Director

Jacqueline Perry, Gallery Administration Officer (part-time)

Michelle Burns, Gallery Support Officer (part-time)

### **Gallery Advisory Committee 2018**

Catherine Bennett

Jenni Fagan

Lois Foster

David Henley (Chair)

Jack Mallon

Libby Murray

Jenny Thompson

Janet Ware

Cr Kevin Wright (Cowra Shire Council)

### **Calleen Trust**

Jenni Fagan and Peter Fagan

### **Pre-selection Panel**

Rhonda Davis, Senior Curator, Macquarie University Art Gallery

Peter Haynes, Curator, Arts Writer, Art Historian, Arts & Heritage Advisor

Michael Hedger, Director, Manley Art Museum & Gallery

Brian Langer (Chair)



Published on the occasion of the exhibition  
*2018 Calleen Art Award*

6 May -10 June 2018

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Published by:  
Cowra Regional Art Gallery, 2018  
77 Darling Street Cowra NSW 2794  
[www.cowraartgallery.com.au](http://www.cowraartgallery.com.au)  
Printed in Cowra, NSW, Australia

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Text: Cowra Regional Art Gallery and the authors  
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Cover design: ARMEDIA Pty Ltd  
Production: Jacqueline Perry  
Printers: Cowra Regional Art Gallery

The Cowra Regional Art Gallery is a cultural facility of the Cowra Shire Council and supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW.



# Notes



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Admission Free



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