

NEWSLETTER

February 2024 No. 503

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Australia Post Publication No: 241613/00090



From the desk of the President – John Perkins FRAS

I was pleased to welcome International Portrait Artist Tina Garrett to the RAS. Tina conducted two workshops which were enjoyed by enthusiastic students and my thanks go to Tina and also Janelle Hatherly for organising this event.

To get our exhibition year off to a great start we are delighted to host The Purity of Australian Light Exhibition by Greg Hansell FRAS. This will be opened by The Governor of NSW Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beasley AC KC and she will be accompanied by her husband Mr. Dennis Wilson. We look forward to welcoming them to the RAS for what promises to be an excellent exhibition.

Our Autumn Exhibition featuring the Thora Ungar Award, is fast approaching so it's time to dust off the brushes and get busy if you don't already have your entry.

Happy Painting

Maintenance of the Society's Premises

As all members will appreciate the Society needs ongoing maintenance to keep our beautiful premises in tip top condition.

We wish to express our appreciation to Ian Douglas for the great job he did in cleaning the front courtyard, which now looks much more presentable.



RAS Artists in the Landscape

En Plein Air

We are featuring artists of the RAS painting en plein air.

The box easel, or French box easel, is one of the most significant equipment inventions from the 19th century. There is no consensus on who first developed this box, but the incredibly portable easels with a built-in paint box and telescopic legs made painting *en Plein air* much easier. These easels fold up into the size of a briefcase, making them easy to transport and easy to store, and are still popular among artists today.

Next in the series is of Fellow, George Largent and his artist statement is:

“Sketching, drawing, or painting in the great outdoors is one of the most satisfying things an artist can do.

I’ve always avoided painting from photographs, it seems so constricting and nowhere as much fun.

My large watercolours of course are almost impossible for me to do outside my studio, but all are products of smaller sketches and paintings done on site.

Everywhere I go I take my “kit” just a small bag consisting of sketch pad, pens, little watercolour pan set and water brush.

Whether it’s countryside, seaside or city building it’s all such great fun.”



Stay Connected

Have you “liked” the Royal Art Society of NSW on Facebook? If you want to keep up to date with news and events at the Royal, simply “like” our page and invite your friends to “like” it too. Supporting us in this simple way helps to get the message out that we are continuing our tradition of great art and exhibitions, exciting classes and life-time friendships.



RAS EXHIBITORS ENTRY FORM

'ANNUAL AUTUMN EXHIBITION 2024 and The Thora Ungar Memorial Award

OPEN EXHIBITION TO ALL SUBJECTS, MEDIUM

SEND IN DAY: MONDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2024

(Including the Saturday 24 and Sunday 25)

NO LATE ENTRIES WILL BE RECEIVED.

NAME: _____

EMAIL: _____

CONTACT NUMBER: _____

STATUS: FELLOW ☐ ASSOCIATE ☐ EXHIBITING ☐

GST REGISTERED YES/NO

TERMS AND CONDITIONS . .

One entry per member

\$20 entry fee for all paintings. Cash on the day only or Direct Deposit: BSB: 062-217. Acc: 0000 0203

All works must be signed.

All works must have standard hanging cord.

Old and damaged frames not accepted.

Works to be delivered between **10am and 3pm** on the stated Send in Day or the Sat/Sun just prior.

TITLE	MEDIUM USED	AUS \$

I AGREE WITH THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS SET OUT ON THIS FORM:

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

ENTRY FEE \$20 PER PAINTING

- Artists are advised that the paintings to be hung are selected by the Council of the Royal Art Society based on quality of work and space limitations and that their decisions will be final and **no correspondence will be entered into.**
- The Royal Art Society cannot accept responsibility for paintings, sculptures left on the premises.
- The commission rate for members is 30%.
- Unsold paintings must be collected at the conclusion of the exhibition. *Country members excluded.

I give permission for the Royal Art Society to reproduce an image of my work for the purpose of advertising the exhibition. YES/NO.

Paint Away

by Desiree Prinsloo FRAS

Sometime during the winter of 1988, a group of us from the Castle Hill Art Society were painting en plein air in Bathurst when I received news that I had been accepted as an Exhibiting Member of the RAS. I started demonstrating painting techniques at art societies including egg tempera, an ancient technique learned from Fokas, famous Greek icon painter on the island of Aegina, Greece, early in the 80s. I discovered Hydra at the time, an island that would become significant in later years.

Fredrick Bates was our President, an interesting man and wonderful artist. Our current President John Perkins was teaching and arranged en plein air groups on weekends and we would paint all day in great camaraderie. John invited me to meet Guy Warren and we got together a few times for lunch, talking painting. Lovely times. As Vice President of CHAS, I was a founding member of Combined Art Societies along with John. Life was busy with life drawing, painting, demonstrating, arranging exhibitions and exhibiting.

Over the next decade we followed my husband's profession while I connected with art groups and artists, joining life drawing and group shows. Early 1990s we spent a sojourn in Africa. I did field sketches in northern Namibia and illustrated a cookbook amongst others. We went canoeing and rafting on all the major rivers of Southern Africa, my sketch books at my feet in watertight containers along with the trip's food supplies and sleeping bags. Best time for sketching was daybreak before we started rowing, around 20 to 25km a day dodging elephants, crocodiles, and hippo on the Zambesi. A wildlife tour group found me drawing on the banks of the Great Orange River, next minute I flew to Botswana to guide painters on safari. It was a magical time.

We found ourselves in New Zealand. The best way to see a country was to paint through it, I decided and started a solo five-month journey from Cape Reinga to Steward Island. Another most rewarding experience and a year later exhibited my journey through NZ. I was an active artist throughout my NZ years all the while staying in touch with the RAS.

Back in Australia in 2000, I reconnected with the RAS, with art groups and over the next years, entered competitive shows, became a member of the AWI and just kept working and showing. Over time I travelled to Greece to see Desiree, my father's sister living on Aegina, in the shadow of the Temple of Afaia. Around 700 years older than the Acropolis in Athens, a place of great inspiration and mystery. Being so close to Italy, I met up with a NZ artist friend for a painting trip through Tuscany, Umbria and Sicily, a tradition we kept for two decades.

At some point I started renting a house on Hydra and set up studio. One summer I ran into old friends, Peter Griffen and Denise and other Australian artists came at a steady pace. One year, on a painting trip to Italy, my husband suddenly passed away in Spoleto. The hospital commissioned a painting and 'Faith and Hope' hangs in the public hospital, a large landscape diptych merging Australian and Italian soil. I retreated in solitude between Australia and Greece for a few years.

Recently I bought a beach house in Jervis Bay and built an art studio. The studio is now established, and I delight in my space, materials and sketching around the natural beauty of the nature reserves. At the same time, I bought an old farmhouse on Hydra, restored it during a bitter winter alone, instructing two Albanian tradesmen with sketches and mime as we had no common language. The results were sometimes hilarious but fresh and spartan, the upper floor a spacious light filled art studio.

'Bougainvillea House'; is a couple of doors from the Leonard Cohen house and a short walk to the 'Australian House'; where George Johnston and Charmian Cliff lived and wrote, and Sidney and Cynthia Nolan visited regularly. A throng of Aussies make their way to the Cohen and Johnston house every summer and artists of note either live or visit the island. Brice Marden, late American abstract artist was a local, as was colourist Tetsis, Ghikas and Craxton. The island exudes inspiration and creativity. In two degrees of separation, on the other side of the world, Susan Chick, adopted out daughter, wrote 'Searching for Charmian', lives in my Jervis Bay suburb.

I hope to establish an Australian art community, specifically for members of the RAS with 'Bougainvillea House'. Come visit, join me en-plein air painting, come for a workshop, take a retreat, meet artists and writers and feel the Aussie spirit on the island. William Kentridge from Johannesburg asked me this summer, "What's it like to live on the island?" It is a dream, I said, a dream over two islands, Australia and Hydra

Happy painting and a fabulous 2024



An Aussie art studio and a Greek island house with top floor studio.

HYDRA PAINTING CLASS/WORKSHOP



Desiree is offering painting classes/workshops on Hydra this summer in Greece. Painting, drawing, sketchbooks in watercolour and acrylics. The idyllic setting and tranquility of the island inspires wonderful painting, drawing and sketch-booking.

Contact: desireeprinsloo@yahoo.com or +61 419 612 494 for further information.

Greg Hansell FRAS

The Purity of Australian Light

BOOK



If you would like to reserve a book from this spectacular exhibition, just send an email to Christine at our email: lavender@royalart.com.au or phone on 9955 5752. The books will be here in early March.

Limited edition which includes an original pastel by Greg Hansell FRAS (20 x 20cm) = \$650

And one for \$80.

Orders through the RAS and in this way, you won't miss out.

Members' News:

Freda Surgenor FRAS -Highly Commended in the Australian Society of Marine Artists Online "Lighthouses" Exhibition. This Exhibition finishes 31 March.

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The Society wishes to thank The Art Scene
for all their support.



ROYAL ART SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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2024 Annual Subscription (Including GST) was due by 31/12/2023

Please tick STATUS applicable.

FELLOWS ☐ \$120 ASSOCIATE ☐ \$120 EXHIBITING ☐ \$120 SOCIAL ☐ \$50

RAS BADGE \$25 (Cash or Direct Deposit) ☐

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ P/Code _____

TELEPHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

Please update email if this has changed over last 12 months.

**NOTE: Payment can be made by MasterCard, Visa, Cheque or Direct Deposit
(Commonwealth – BSB 062 217. Account No 0000 0203)**

Please note: If payment by Direct Deposit please include our name.

**Receipts and cards will only be sent out if a self-stamped addressed envelope is
received. Receipts and cards can be collected at the front desk.**

2024 Program of Events

February

Friday 2 **Opening** Greg Hansell
Book/Exhibition (6pm-8pm)
Friday 16 RAS Council Meeting 4pm
Sunday 25 Greg Hansell Exhibition Finishes 3pm
Monday 26 **Send in** Annual Autumn Exhibition
(Thora Ungar Memorial Award) 10am-
3pm

March

Friday 1 **Opening** Annual Autumn Exhibition
(6pm-8pm)
Friday 15 RAS Council Meeting 4pm
Tuesday 19 Fellows morning tea 11am, Meeting
11.30am
Tuesday 26 Annual General Meeting 6pm
**Friday 29 Good Friday, Easter Saturday,
Sunday and Easter Monday Closed.**

April

Sunday 7 1st Term Finishes
Friday 12 RAS Council Meeting 4pm
Sunday 14 Annual Autumn Finishes at 3pm
Monday 15 **Send-in** Drawing Exhibition (features
works by Earle Backen and Cam
Sparks) also Daniel Pata Private
Exhibition
Friday 19 **Opening** Drawing Exhibition and
Private Exhibition
Monday 22 Term 2 Commences
Thursday 25 Anzac Day RAS Closed
Sunday 28 Drawing and Private Members
Exhibition Finishes 3pm

May

Monday 20 **Send in** Beagle Press Limited Edition
books, posters, lithographs (Whiteley,
Storrier, Lloyd Rees)
Opening Date to be advised
Friday 24 RAS Council Meeting 4pm

June

Monday 3 **Send in** RAS Council Exhibition
10-2pm
Friday 7 **Opening** RAS Council Exhibition
6-8pm
Monday 10 King's Birthday RAS Closed
Sunday 23 RAS Council Exhibition Finishes 3pm
Monday 24 **Last Send in** day for Ballot Paintings
Friday 28 RAS Council Meeting 4pm
Saturday 29 1st Viewing Ballot Exhibition
Sunday 30 1st Term Finishes

July

Tuesday 9 Ballot Cocktail Party 6-8pm
Monday 15 3rd Term Commences
Friday 26 RAS Council Meeting 4pm

August

Sunday 4 Ballot Draw 12 noon
Monday 5 RAS Closed
Tuesday 6 RAS Closed
Friday 30 RAS Council Meeting 4pm

September

Monday 2 **Send in** Annual Spring
(Medal of Distinction Award)
Friday 6 **Opening** Annual Spring 6pm
Tuesday 17 Fellows morning tea 11am
and Meeting at 11.30m
Sunday 22 3rd Term Finishes
Friday 27 RAS Council Meeting 4pm

October

Sunday 6 Finish Annual Spring
Exhibition
Monday 7 Closed Labour Day Holiday
Monday 14 4th Term Starts
Friday 25 Council meeting 4pm
Monday 28 RAS Art School Exhibition
Send-in 10am-3pm

November

Friday 1 **Opening** RAS Art School
Student ex 6pm-8pm
Friday 15 RAS Council Meeting 4pm
Sunday 24 Finish RAS Student Exhibition
Monday 25 **Send in** Christmas Exhibition
10am-3pm
Friday 29 Opening Christmas Exhibition

December

Thursday 12 RAS Council Meeting 4pm
Sunday 15 4th Term finishes
Friday 20 RAS closes

President: John Perkins FRAS

Art School Director: Greg Hansell FRAS

Secretary: Christine Feher **Ph:** 9955 5752 **email:** lavender@royalart.com.au

Newsletter Editor: Sue Woodland **email:** suenewsletter@gmail.com

Deadline for the next Newsletter is 28 February 2024