



GLEN EIRA ARTISTS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Spring 2020

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From the President – Claud Bennie

It has really been fantastic to see that our artists have not allowed the COVID-19 put a damper on their art or their spirits. I do not want to dwell on all our activities that we have had to cancel because of the lockdown. Let us look to the future and plan ahead for when we can once again be ourselves!

Rachel has really been doing an excellent job, in very trying circumstances keeping our art alive. We have seen some amazing work done in lockdown! It has been good seeing so many people trying out new “things”. If you have any inspirational ideas please share them with everybody!

Andrew Inglis has written a well-researched and inspirational treatise on masks as an art form. I am sure that those of you with children could get their children to come up with some creative ideas to embellish the masks that we are all supposed to be wearing at the moment, or to come up with some new ideas. I can do no better than to quote what Andrew has to say:

Masks serve many functions

- *Design statement*
- *Disguise (creating anonymity)*
- *Substitution (becoming another persona)*
- *Health or work protection i.e. protection during COVID-19*
- *Fulfil religious or political purposes symbolising a myth or “God”*
- *Symbolic (free speech being silenced e.g. “Free Julian”)*
- *Theatrical character: Tragic, Romance. Comedic or Sanguine.*

Masks can be in many sizes and shapes; of fur and feathers, leather, beaten gold or precious metals, be-jewelled, painted paper Mache or soaked plaster bandages. They can be delicate handicrafts, 3D printed or latex, repetitious or gloriously unique.”

Andrew is more than willing to let all members have access to his full essay. I do recommend it to all.

GEAS would like to remind members that, in the current COVID-19 State of Emergency sanctions all gatherings are not permitted. Accordingly, GEAS activities remain suspended until further notice.

Breslin ‘Big Frog’ Murrumbeena Mural

Heather Welsh – GEAS Secretary

GEAS member, Anthony Breslin, was invited by a local businessman to install a 40m mural on the external wall of his Murrumbeena supermarket at the corner of Railway Parade and Murrumbeena Road.

The mural will be based on Anthony’s book ‘Brezania’, a children’s book that encourages readers to follow their dreams. The central character is ‘**Big Frog**’, which fits with the heritage of Murrumbeena as one of the meanings of the word ‘Murrumbeena’ is said to be, ‘**Land of frogs**’. The mural will take approximately eight months to complete.

Although Anthony and his team of assistant artists are working pro bono, the costs of art materials and installation of such a massive mural are almost prohibitively high. Thus the Rotary Club of Caulfield has adopted the project as a Centennial project. But it is a small club with limited resources and due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions was unable to undertake the usual methods of fundraising.

Whilst the project is supported by local traders, businesses and residents as well as the City of Glen Eira with a \$10,000 community grant, more funding was needed. So GEAS and the Rotary Club of Caulfield turned to crowdfunding, to which Rotarians, GEAS members and the general public have responded enthusiastically, with donations ranging from ten dollars to hundreds of dollars!

Local businesses and Anthony contributed ‘Thank You’ gifts as incentives to donate – from signed copies of Anthony’s books to vouchers for the supermarket and a cafe. All donors will be acknowledged as community supporters in a plaque on the wall.

Because of the Stage-4 lockdown restrictions, Anthony is confined to working from his home studio on the smaller tiles as well as signing copies of ‘Brezania’, to be given to donors once the lockdown is over.

For details of the project go to:
<https://www.gofundme.com/f/murrumbeena-wall-art>



Member Profile – Emily Levin

Emily grew up in Brakpan, a typical South African gold mining town on the Witwatersrand about 30 kilometres east of Johannesburg. After matriculating at Brakpan High School she enrolled in the Witwatersrand University where she spent a year studying art. During that period she sent a portfolio of her works to her aunt in London who submitted it to the prestigious Hammersmith School of Art. On the strength of that portfolio Emily was accepted as a student.



At that time London was a dreary, drab, grey city and Emily decided that this was not for her. Before returning to sunny South Africa she did a secretarial course at the London Pitman Secretarial College. On returning to South Africa she married Noah and concentrated mostly on raising her family, allowing her art to slip into the background.

Events in South Africa caused the family to migrate to Australia in 1977 in search of new opportunities. Soon after Emily helped Noah, her husband, to establishing a dental clinic in which she worked until 2002. They have two sons, one daughter and seven grandchildren with some living abroad. For her 60th birthday the family gave her a one year membership in the Malvern Art Society (MAS). After lying dormant for so many years Emily rediscovered her joy of art. In 2011 she became a member of GEAS shortly after meeting Ester Lewis, one of its members, and being highly impressed by the standard of Ester's work.

Emily is an accomplished artist. Her landscapes are evocative and make the viewers feel as if they are part of the scenery; and her flowers are delightful and exuberant. She exhibits regularly with MAS and U3A in which she won a number of minor prizes. At the GEAS annual exhibitions her works attract highly favourable praise from visitors to the gallery, and quite a number of her works won the People's Choice Award. She participates in Studio Art and is much liked by her fellow artists.



No Corona Virus Here – Emily Levin

"Water" Exhibition 2020

Convenor – Mary Lewin

Following the cancellation of the planned exhibition in March due to COVID-19, there was a glimmer of hope for it being held during September-October. Alas, this was not to be as much tougher sanctions were introduced – the state of emergency Stage-4 with which we are still living. But not all is lost and our hard work has not been wasted. The good news is that the Glen Eira City Council has agreed to convene this exhibition next year.

Other Exhibitions

Convenor – Rachel Mackay

Local Talent

This exhibition originally scheduled for late July has been postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions. The show will run at a later date.

Kinch Cafe

The COVID-19 pandemic had some bearing on artists' exhibition at the Kinch café. Although the café remained open for limited takeaway service there is some opportunity for the public to view the works. The following exhibitions were held at the cafe since the last newsletter:

- *Fabric Layerism* – Mark Ewenson
March to May – during the worst distancing and self-isolation period. Even so, Mark sold one work.
- *Allergro* – Liz Coyle
Installed on 1 June the show will remain open through September.

GEAS On-Site Art Display (online)

Convenor – Rachel Mackay

This is a great initiative that encouraged artists to work from home during the lockdown period in lieu of *On-Site Painting and Drawing*.

Titled *Art in Isolation*, it is open to members and non-members alike, inspiring them and providing a much needed impetus to continue creating art. It also provided an opportunity to exhibit the works online. These displays will continue as long as on location sessions are not possible.



"Falling in Love" Qing Zhang. Watercolour – 9 x 14 cm

Cityscape

Convenor – Faye Kirkwood

Due to the ongoing lockdown situation, there is uncertainty as to the likelihood of this event taking place. Members will be notified in due course of any changes.

We fell asleep in one world and woke up in another.
Suddenly Disney is out of magic
Paris no longer romantic
New York doesn't stand up anymore
The Chinese Wall is no longer a fortress
And Mecca is empty.

Hugs and kisses suddenly became weapons
And not visiting parents and friends became an act of
love.
Suddenly you realise that power, beauty and money
are worthless.
They can't get you the oxygen you're fighting for.
The world continues its life and it is beautiful
but humans are in cages.
I think it is sending us a message:

"You are not necessary.
The air, earth, water and sky
Without you are fine.
When you come back, remember that
You are my guests... not my masters".

(Author unknown)

GEAS Activities, Convenors, Fees

Due to COVID-19 sanctions activities were cancelled effective from March to September inclusive. We look forward to the possible resumption of activities in Term 4 (5 October to 18 December 2020).

Life Drawing (Monday nights, 6.45- 9pm)

Convenor – Richard McClelland

Fees – \$18 members; \$20 non-members payable on the night. Additional fee applies on tutored sessions (once a month).

Studio Art (Tuesdays, 12 noon to 4pm)

Convenor – Margaret Bellamy

Fees – \$16 members; \$20 non-members

On Site Painting and Drawing

Convenor – Rachel Mackay

The group meets on the first Sunday of the month at various locations, mainly outdoors. This is a free event that is also open to non-members.

Portraiture

Convenor – Mary Lewin

This too is a free activity that is hosted by individual members at their homes. Most sessions are held during the day from 10.30am to 1pm, with two yearly evening sessions from 6.30pm to 9pm.

Art & About

Convenor – Louis Balis

A program of two or three visits a year to galleries and to events of exceptional and distinctive merit. This too is a free event that is open also to non-members

At the galleries

NGV – Although the gallery is closed to the public, it offers a variety of interesting online virtual tours
<https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/channel>

Google Arts and Culture – Check this link for a wonderful exploration of artistic expression
<https://artsandculture.google.com/color?col=GREEN>

Glen Eira City Council Gallery – Check this link about Erica McGilchrist's live session

<https://artsandculture.cmail20.com/t/ViewEmail/t/95729BB15B4957412540EF23F30FEDED/DF8A421B24D40B262540EF23F30FEDED>.



Portraiture@Home

Convenor – Mary Lewin

Building on the success of *Art in Isolation* the GEAS Committee approved the proposal to introduce Portraiture@Home so that artists may continue with portraiture work from the comfort of their home. Artist relied on family members as models or photographs for inspiration. One artist drew whilst zooming with family in the UK. A selection of those works is included in the last page of this bulletin.

New members

We welcome Carmel O'Connor and Deidre Colbert and apologise for our failure to include them in the last newsletter. We wish them a long and productive association with the Society.

Governance and administration

GEAS Rules

The rules governing our activities were last reviewed in August 2013. The Committee plans review them given the growth of the Society and the need to respond to ongoing and new changes. Emphasis will be placed on developing clear parameters on the conduct of activities under the GEAS banner. We encourage the members to actively take part in the process.

You can access the Rule on our Website

http://www.gleneiraartistsociety.org/uploads/4/5/7/9/4579389/geas_rules_approved_at_agm_2012-13.pdf

Zoom

GEAS has taken a twelve months membership in Zoom to improve levels of connectivity with the members. We expect that it will become a useful tool in conduction activities.

For more information about art and community activities, please visit the Glen Eira City Council Facebook page www.facebook.com/gleneiraarts

Other news

GEAS Website

We are currently examining options for updating the GEAS website, including the introduction of Intranet software. The Intranet will simplify the way we communicate and share information with members. Key aspects of overhaul include a modified look and format of the website, member access via a login password (for those wishing to do so). GEAS will report on progress, and members will be encouraged to provide their input.

Members'news

Peter Roccella has submitted his work "Refuge" to the *2020 Maritime Art Awards and Exhibition* – a prestigious art event. The theme is "The Relationship of Humanity to the Sea". A total of \$20,000 will be awarded to five artists, ranging from the \$10,000 for the top prize down to \$1,000. We wish Peter success in his endeavour.



Peter Roccella – *Refuge*

SONG IN MY HEART

Waking up with a song in my heart
Winter blues swept away by the sun.
And the Muse
Once again is my companion.
Brushes in hand we dance together
On a fresh canvass
Giving life to new creations
Singing and dancing to...
Emotions in colour.

Mary Lewin – August 2020

Member feedback/comments

Like all GEAS activities, the involvement of members is important. Your stories, art works and suggestions will ensure that future newsletters are relevant and informative.

Please send your entries, comments and suggestions to geasartists@gmail.com.

CHECK NEXT PAGES FOR SELECTED ART IMAGES

Rotary Club of Caulfield



Proudly supported by the
Glen Eira City Council



Works produced by members during the lockdown period



John Selan - *Fisherman*



Angeline Bartholomeusz - *Dancers*



Doith Candy – *Woman and Covid-19*



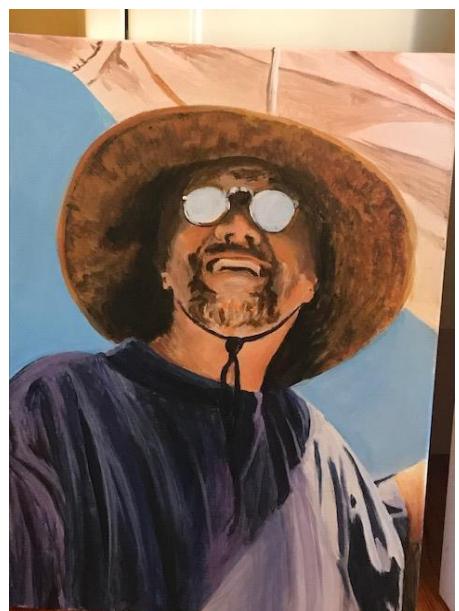
Kate Birrell – *Thursday Night*



Elizabeth Coyle – *In Tune*



Susan Fajnkind – *Restored cabinet*



Sara Longwood – *Sailing*



Mary Lewin – Guess Who



Odile Ellison – International Fashion Show on My Nature Strip



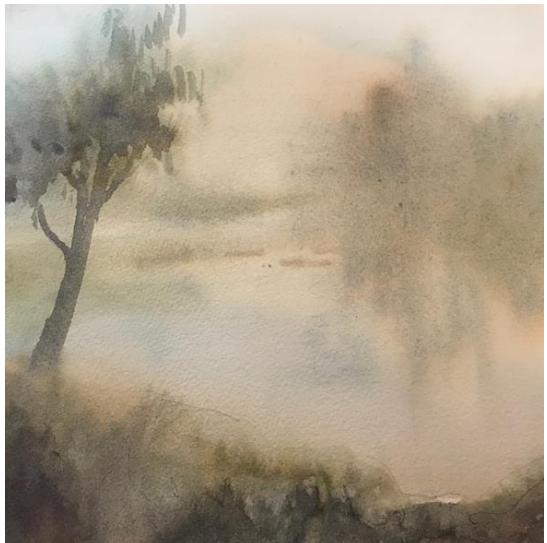
Peter Johnson – Self-portrait



Merv Ritter – Field of Flowers



Carmel O'Connor – Melbourne Quarantine



Jessica Mullen – Foggy Morning



Richard Brown - Hicksey



Sarah Friedman – Stormy Seas