

LANDSCAPES 2011

Gallery 126, Armidale

Interview With Focus Magazine

When and why did you first become interested in painting?

I have always liked painting and drawing, but it became evident that it was a real passion at about 12 years of age, and I discovered the more I did it the better I got at it. I was always interpreting things visually and I think it is a drive you are born with and it has to come out, or be expressed in some form, otherwise it presses in on you in a negative way. Most of my memories from primary and secondary school are all about the thrill of creating specific works of art. I decided to go to art school at the end of high school, which involved a move from the family farm at Kootingal to Sydney to attend. It was wonderful to have access to so many galleries and to work creatively full-time around a lot of other artists.

What materials do you prefer to work with?

I have painted in oils quite a lot in the past and love the richness of the colour. Over the years I found myself using a lot of layering techniques, and I discovered acrylics to be much more practical due to their fast drying times and versatility. The down side to acrylics is that they dry darker than their wet state which is eternally frustrating when you are working with colour nuances. I add collage (felt), pumice, sand and modelling compound to the work to build texture and bas relief qualities. I would like to do some more sculptural work and am looking at lightweight mediums at the moment.

Why have you chosen to exhibit at Gallery 126?

I'm fond of the Gallery as a venue, and Ann and Stuart have given many artists over the years the opportunity to exhibit, which has done much to promote New England culture. The openings are always buzzy and its a great time to meet other artists, and people who enjoy art.

What can we expect to see at your exhibition?

I am essentially a semi-figurative landscape painter but my interpretations of the landscape have become more geometric and stylised over the years. The exhibition will include a number of semi relief works where I have been extending shapes out from the flat surface of the canvas or board with felt collage. The felt has been coloured, shaped and contoured while wet, then allowed to dry before cutting into shapes. These shapes are filled with plaster to maintain their 3D shape, and then adhered to the canvas or board. I am also showing works on paper, some of which are more figurative, and inspired by specific locations.

Where do you get your inspiration from?

I'm drawn to the simplicity and purity of basic shapes and patterns in nature; and the constantly changing light and colour in the landscape. I live on a bush block and have only to look out of my window for stimulus. I am constantly inspired by other artists through exhibitions, art books and magazines, and the media.

Artists that inspire you?

My ultimate painting would be a work that incorporates Aboriginal art stylistically, for patterning and colour; Turner for colour, light, atmosphere and brushwork; Klee and Miro for colour and whimsy, and Vasarely for optical illusion. In my mind's eye I can almost see this ultimate work of art, and this is what spurs me on to keep painting. It's a slow progression towards this image, with many tangents, and much experimentation on the way. I enjoy the challenge, though its extremely frustrating a lot of the time, attempting to translate what's in your psyche onto a 2D surface.

Exhibition dates

Friday 4th February to Saturday 5th March 2011

Opening Function Friday 4th February 5pm-7pm