

CREATING ART CONNECTIONS

President's COLUMN

We have had a magnificent start to the year for the Society!

The New Zealand Painting & Printmaking Award has been an outstanding success in every respect and it was a privilege to be the MC at the Gala Opening.

Whilst the many supporters and sponsors were thanked on the night, I want to again acknowledge the amazing work undertaken by our Art Awards Committee – Pam, Prue, Graeme, Martha, Stuart, Margi, Barry, Janet and Mark – on behalf of all our members, Thank You! Read more about the Award in this newsletter.

It sure didn't feel like summer at the Hamilton Gardens Summer Festival on Saturday, 23rd February. The wind and some rain meant that visitor numbers were



Eriko Hulse and Jenny Scown ready for action in the WSA Stall.



Paula Spiers observes Carril Karr doing her art at the Right Bank Arts Festival.

well down on last year but a reasonable flow of people visited the WSA stall which was fortunately sheltered in the Piazza.

This year we booked two sites and successfully filled them with members' art and many sales were made. Several WSA members donated their time to make the stall successful – thanks to you all. A big thank you to Robin Cuff who made the hanging walls.

Takings were down from last year but revenue for the WSA was around \$320 (t-shirt sales and donations – special thanks to Campbell Smith). As usual, those volunteering enjoyed their day, getting to know one another and some of the adjacent stall occupants. Your editor observed many warm reunions as old friends recognised each other. Our sincere thanks are due to Eriko who organised the event this year and co-ordinated the volunteers.

Upcoming Society activities include a Social Event in May and the WSA Members Exhibition in June. Also, don't miss the Taonga and Treasures of Our People exhibition in Ngaruawahia. This is a great initiative of Trust Waikato and the Museum to take this exhibit out into the community. Several of our Executive Committee will be assisting as docents.

BRENDA SAYERS

The New Zealand Painting and Printmaking Award (NZPPA)

It is generally agreed that this has been the WSA's most successful Award to date. Certainly the standard of entries rises every year, as this event is now recognised as an important fixture on New Zealand's art calendar. continuing support from our sponsors is of critical importance to us – and particular recognition is due to Mr and Mrs Philip Vela who have made this event possible by not only providing \$15,000 as a prize for the winning work, but also undertaking to purchase the winning work. This year, winner, Michael Taylor, received \$21,000, making it an extremely valuable achievement.

It is worth noting that of the 49 finalists, eleven were from the Waikato. Three Hamiltonians received Merit Awards – well done Meredith Collins, Paul Judd and James Ormsby.

One of the highlights for some was the Judge's floor talk for the volunteers and docents. Our very articulate Judge, TJ MacNamara, spoke about the "democracy of art" and compared the role of art in modern society and compared it to the earlier days when the church and aristocracy controlled, not only the subject matter and the style, but the artists themselves! He took us on a tour of the art works and gave us an excellent rundown on each of the works and the main features he looked for in the works. Very enlightening.

To top things off, WSA has sold a record number of art works, which realises our goal of supporting artists



Mrs Lyn Vela and TJ McNamara with the winning entry and artist Michael Taylor.

– the reason for the red dot in our NZPPA logo.

The Art Award committee wishes to thank the many WSA helpers who gave their time and talents so willingly to ensure the success of the gala event, and the manning of the exhibition. We hope that you enjoyed this as much as we have!

WSA acknowledges the generous support of the following local and national organisations:

Philip Vela Family Trust, ABN-AMRO Craigs, Media Arts, Wintec, Waikato Times, WEL Energy Trust, Sky City, Bayleys, Allied Pickfords, Ventura, Gordon Harris, HamiltON, Vivid Images Ltd, Pernod Ricard and Carlton Hire.

In return, we encourage members to use their services whenever possible.

We have sold more artworks this year than ever before, and the amount of the sales is considerably more, which is a thrill.

The exhibition is now at ArtsPost, where we will have WSA people working for a few hours each day from 11am. Having our own staff there is an experiment in the hope that we can make further sales. Even if you saw the exhibition at the Hamilton Gardens, if you are in the vicinity pop in and see the exhibition at ArtsPost – it always looks quite different in that setting.

On 25th March we will be packing up the exhibition at ArtsPost. If there is anyone willing to be part of that team Prue Butler would love to hear from you (phone 07 8569240, 021 868339, email prub@xtra.co.nz). About 8 people are required, and if you can just do 2 – 3 hours that would be fine. The majority of people are required early in the day so things are ready about 11 am when the artists and purchasers arrive. The couriers come later in the day.

ART AWARDS COMMITTEE



Judge TG McNamara with Prue Butler, Pam Nash, Elsa Lye and Frances van Dammen at the 2008 NZPPA.

WSA ART SCHOOL

The Art School is in full swing again after the hot summer recess.

It's always great seeing everyone back and rearing to go with the ideas they have formulated over the break. Our new tutors are enjoying the Art School and new students are settling in, gaining practical art skills over a wide range of subjects. Though it is too late to join a beginners class this term, you can still slip into our classes for the experienced artist.

Next term starts on the 12th May. Very positive feedback has come in on the excellent practical art skills our tutors teach, so a very big thank you goes to all of them.

Congratulations to Stephanie and George McKechnie on the birth of their baby son Peter.

Also congratulations to Tatiana Kalnins and Micheal Nawton on their engagement.

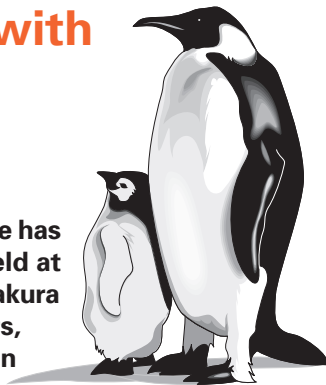
ANNE KALNINS

Afternoon Tea with the Penguins!

Social Event

May 18th 2.30-5pm

Your Executive Committee has organised an event to be held at the McMeekan Centre at Ruakura and we encourage members, friends and the public to join us.



Programme:

- Afternoon tea on arrival (members may wish to bring a plate)
- Presentation by Catherine and Barry Smith who will share their story about their expedition to the sub-Antarctic Islands and Antarctica. The trip of a lifetime at the kids' expense!
- At the conclusion we will have a short discussion about WSA's 75th Anniversary in 2009 and invite members who are keen to participate or contribute ideas to stay on.

Put this event in your diary now! Details in a later newsletter about how to get there.

10th Anniversary of ArtsPost

WSA Members Exhibition

To celebrate the 10th Anniversary of ArtsPost, the WSA has been invited to exhibit in all three galleries.

As this is the only WSA Members exhibition for the year, please help make this event a special occasion. Your exhibition committee is giving you this advanced notice to ensure you have time to complete your most outstanding work!

The exhibition is from June 27th to July 28th 2008. Criteria and entry form is on www.wsa.org.nz and will also be included with the April newsletter. The exhibition will be selected. We will be paying attention to the quality of the work and readiness for hanging. Size restrictions apply to enable us to hang the maximum number of entries. 3D pieces welcome.

We look forward to a great show!

EXHIBITION COMMITTEE

Changes at the Empire

Empire Arts Limited was founded by Peter and Pauline Lewis in 2005 with a mission to promote and support the New Zealand arts and entertainment specialists.

In February 2006, Empire Arts Ltd opened the Empire Gallery in Empire Street in Cambridge where it hosts visual arts exhibitions, runs art classes and sells quality art materials.

Now in 2008 they have decided to make some strategic changes to enable the business to become more competitive and effective – including:

Opening a recording studio and practice space able to accommodate solo musicians and bands wanting sound-proof studios for practice and access to professional recording equipment. The studio will be available for use from July 2008.

Closing the permanent physical gallery space at the current Empire Gallery in Cambridge. Empire Arts Ltd will continue to run exhibitions in temporary spaces.

Growing the event management side of the business.

Moving to alternative smaller premises the art supplies and art class activities which have been in high demand in the Waipa area.

Peter and Pauline thank all WSA members who have supported the Empire Gallery and hope that you continue to support Empire Arts Ltd in their future direction. Any enquires can be directed to Pauline on Pauline.lewis@empiregallery.co.nz or telephone 07-827 0909.

Jenni Taris Pottery



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A picture paints a thousand words...

Stuart Stubbs pens his thoughts on the New Zealand Painting and Printmaking Awards and suggests we could be looking at ways in which through shows and exhibitions, artists can connect with a wider group of viewers.

I should begin by admitting that I am one of those who can't paint.

Although I should add that I have never tried. I guess it's a bit like wine. I like to drink it, but I have never, ever tried to make my own, although I have the most amazing vine on our property that I planted twenty-five years ago. My energies you might say can then be concentrated on the appreciation and enjoyment of these two most rewarding pastimes available to humankind. Now that is certainly true.

More than anything though, I have been able to develop a very healthy admiration for those who do practice the business of "artistic endeavour". The admiration is not just for the skills often displayed, but for the fact that there are people who are willing to openly lay down their ideas, feelings and dreams on a piece of paper or on a canvas, or construct something from "found objects", or whatever. After all that, like an actor on a stage, they leave themselves open to criticism that sometimes can be unkind and often brutal. If they decide to exhibit that is.

Some years ago in the middle to late seventies I think, I spoke to the arts group in Matamata. It was around the time that there were more and more cafes and coffee bars opening, and artists were taking the opportunity to display their works for sale on the walls. My theme was price and presentation, and I remember



"Grass #9" – Frances van Dammen

urging the artist members present, only to begin to hang their work in a public space when they had developed enough basic skills to allow their ideas to be clearly expressed in a way that would bring continued enjoyment to a purchaser. I also reminded them that when pricing a work they should remember that although recovering costs was good, it was not always possible to do that as hobbyists. If I charged the public a fee to watch me play golf I don't know how many takers there would be.

What I'm really getting around to is "how do our artists enhance and encourage the practice of art through the works they exhibit?"

Many of you will have visited the NZ Painting and Printmaking Award Exhibition that has just moved from Hamilton Gardens to Artspost in the city. This annual event with a substantial prize provided by the Vela family, stands alongside the Trust Waikato Contemporary Arts Awards as an example of the growing confidence being displayed by leading voluntary arts groups (in this case WSA) in making contemporary art work available for viewing to members and the general public. At the same time it gives those artists committed to improving and testing their skills, an opportunity to have their completed works judged, and if selected hung, over a number of weeks or months.

The general opinion if I sounded it out right, is that this years exhibition was the best yet. I agree with that view, and if true why? There were a small number of works that if the judge could have viewed them instead of selecting from an image, would not have made it to hanging. That is the price of expediency. Tough on some entrants but generally the system works.

I believe that this competition has grown up. It is now attracting works from some of this country's leading established professionals, as well as many of those who are forging a growing reputation for skill, persistence and style. It can be a big thing for a leading artist whose works sell regularly to expose themselves to a competition where their entry may not only attract public approval but may not even be selected from among hundreds of entries.

The quality of the "merits" was outstanding and many of those which did not receive that accolade were nonetheless examples of the giant strides some artists have made over recent years.

A examination of the works on every wall showed not only a breadth of new ideas being expressed, but a determination not be confined to the pressures that have been exerted by many of the teaching establishments, to conform to new practices that have robbed the artist of the ability to draw and apply paint, in favour of an oblique and obscure attempt at social commentary.

Social commentary yes, if that's the wish, but in a manner that encourages the viewer to ask for more. To ingest a message from an artist who is asking why is ok, but where are the answers to the questions. Artists with troubled or questioning minds rarely give us the answers we need. We all can ask questions, but to whom do we look for the reply? As I remarked recently to an outraged artist, "If you feel so strongly about it why don't you write to the New Zealand Herald, you'll get to a bigger audience."

In this year's NZ Painting and Print Making Awards we have artists who can draw, B. Broughan's "Faggot", Jenny

Dolezel's exposition on the complexity of dreams, allowing us into the artists mind while we search our own. The painting that made us look and look again for its meaning, Grant Hanna's "A Glimpse of Hope". It wasn't until some days later I recognised it was all about my old friend Chicken Licken, or was it?

Who spotted the bargain of the exhibition in Frances van Dammen's "Grass #9"? (Well Barry Hopkins actually). This was a superb example of painstaking detail with the artist displaying the courage to use a high gloss surface which made me wonder if these plants were blooming under a tiny raindrop, and Frances had magnified it wonderfully for us.



"Faggot" – B. Broughan



"A Glimpse of Hope" – Grant Hanna

Who didn't share the pain of the oriental girl who had suffered some dreadful indecency that should shame us all? (Han Nae Kim's, "Mutation".)

And what of the winner? Michael Taylor's " Vanitas", that made everyone run for their dictionary. For me the joy of this work was the way in which the paint was applied. I could look again and again at the texture of the finish and it makes me want to see more of this artist's work.

This February of 2008, The Waikato Society of Arts, organised as a part of their annual gifts to the city and district, an exhibition of artistic excellence we should all be proud of.

event be translated through to the numerous opportunities that members of WSA have throughout the year to display their work. I believe it is possible for every artist, beginner or veteran, to raise the bar, enthused and encouraged by what they have seen through their flagship events.

What is needed is a greater dedication to acquiring the skills to make every piece of art really count. To be "Mutation" – Han Nae Kim

able to capture the viewer as a skilled author can, to be able to draw the viewer into the work so they come back again and again and see something that might inspire them or bring them peace is a great achievement.

It would be an even greater achievement if through their art practice our artists were able to encourage a new set of "customers", for that is what we need. While retaining their individual styles and ideas there is a place in the future of now for thinking about how to do this.

How can we bring art into focus as a commentator on social life as well as a vehicle for displaying beauty and skill? How can we make our exhibitions "mean" something more than before?

In 1937 the Whitney Museum in New York was asking this very question. In an attempt to find an answer they mounted an exhibition of American art relating to the Port of New York. Held in the spring of that year the exhibition was a huge success. Art suddenly meant a great deal more to those who thought little of the pastime. Here was art with a subject they could relate to. Among the new "customers" were a large number of those whose life and work had given them special interest in the activities of the Port. To many this was a recall to a difficult time in their working lives, to others it was an emotional experience of some sort.

Perhaps as we try to develop a wider audience for the art that members produce, we could think a little more deeply about how we can connect with that wider public.

But then I can't paint. What would I know!

STUART STUBBS



"Play-Pen" – Jenny Dolezel



"Mutation" – Han Nae Kim

WHAT'S ON?

ArtsPost

28th February 2008 to 24th March 2008

"The New Zealand Painting and Printmaking Award 2008"

Finalists artworks in all three galleries.

"Hamilton Abridged" digital prints by Kate Hill, observations on the heart of the city.

Gallery Shop Space

If you would like to join the ArtsPost list to receive email notice of exhibitions, openings and Newsletters please email artspost@hcc.govt.nz.

27 June 2008 is the 10th Year Anniversary of ArtsPost Opening.

SPECIAL EXHIBITION

"Taonga and Treasures of Our People"

15th to 19th March 10am to 4pm

Ngaruawahia Memorial Hall, Galileo St, Ngaruawahia.

Entry Free. This is a Trust Waikato and Waikato Museum exhibition.



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Business hours

Monday - Friday 10am - 5pm
Saturday 10am - 1pm



Across the corridor from our WSA Office is the Hamilton Community Arts Council office. Inside are the three staff members, Tracey Wood (Arts Manager), Kat Cox (Arts Advisor) and Adreinne Clothier (Arts Administrator).



The HCAC was instituted over 30 years' ago and staffing is supported by Hamilton City Council (HCC) grant with help from Arts Council reserves. HCAC has a service agreement with HCC to deliver arts services. This includes administering the Creative Communities Scheme funding. This funding is from Creative New Zealand which is devolved to Local Authorities to distribute. HCAC also administers the art portion of the Community Wellbeing Grants, part of the HCC community grants.

Apart from administering the distribution of funding they also advise community groups seeking funding, advocate for arts and cultural groups, promote local and visiting artists, survey community needs, and several other functions aimed at developing creativity and culture within Hamilton.

HCAC is governed by a management committee elected for two year terms and currently comprising Alec Forbes, Adrian Holroyd, Daphne Bell, Lisa Pemberton, Lois Livingston, Nancy Caiger, Pippa Russell, Nick Clothier, Andrew Buchanan-Smart, Scott Ratuki,

Mason West, Craig Muntz, Ai Ee Teo and Pam Roa. Small grants (up to \$750) are available every month and applications must be submitted by 15th of the month.

Large grants – 2008 large grants close on 31st March and 26th September. Have a look at their good website to find out more www.hcac.org.nz.

BARRY SMITH



Tracey and Kat at work in the HCAC office.

Gordon Harris

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WSA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mark Curtis Joins

We welcome Mark Curtis onto the Executive Committee.

Mark is currently a lecturer at the Wintec Department of Media Arts, Hamilton. He is an established New Zealand artist whose work *Ultra Glister* was selected for Telecom PROSPECT 2004 curated by Emma Bugden at the Adam Art Gallery, Victoria University in Wellington. *Ultra Glister* was first exhibited at the Waikato Museum in 2003.

Mark graduated from RMIT University in 2004 with a Masters Degree in Fine Arts.

Joan Travaglia Resigns

We sadly note Joan's resignation from the Executive Committee.

She has been on the Committee for over three years and been helping generally for much longer but now needs to put more time into her art projects and grandchildren. Joan will still be about and has offered to continue helping with various WSA activities.

Thanks Joan for all the work you have put into the WSA as a member of the Executive Committee and in other roles.



Executive Committee at February meeting. Clockwise from left, Paula, Sharryn, Eriko, Brenda, Miriam, Alison, Carril. Photo Barry.

BECOME A MEMBER

Download a membership form: www.wsa.org.nz

Pick up a form from the WSA Office or ArtsPost

Phone (07) 839 4481 to get one sent to you.

MEMBERSHIP

As an Incorporated Society, members who wish to resign should notify the society in writing rather than just stopping payment of their subscriptions. We have been contacting several people to remind them of their overdue subscriptions.

Art Connections newsletters, and all the benefits of participating in the WSA now only go to those who have paid their subscriptions.

Please ensure you have renewed your subscription for the current year and remind friends that they may not have paid their subs if they haven't received Art Connections.

MEMBERS' PRIVILEGES

WSA Art School \$15.00 off class fees Full year subscribers only

The Empire Gallery 15% on art materials

Whitcoulls Hamilton 10% on art materials

Resene Paint Colourshop 20% on art materials

Victoria Cinema \$9.00 tickets

The Museum Café 10%

Canvas Restaurant 10%

Gordon Harris The Art & Graphic Store 10%

Hillcrest Fine Wines 10%

Thornton Gallery 10% framing

Auteur House 10% rental DVDs, Video and purchase of books

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

12 months (1 Sept 2007 – 31 Aug 2008)

Double \$50

Single \$40

Student \$20 Current Student I.D. required

* New Subscription Rates (1 Sept 2008 – 31 Aug 2009*)

Double \$65 (Seniors \$50)

Single \$45 (Seniors \$40)

Student \$20 Current Student I.D. required

You can pay your subscription or make donations to WSA direct or via the internet.

Our WSA Account is: The Waikato Society of Arts Inc.

03 0306 0217827 00 Westpac Hamilton North Branch.

NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING RATES

Inserts \$75 per page (printed and delivered to WSA)

Full Page \$160 (available only if space available)

Half Page \$80

Quarter Page \$50

What's On and Members short adverts – up to five lines are free

CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEWSLETTER

Art Connections monthly newsletter welcomes articles and images relating to the arts, and listings of upcoming art events. All contributions need to be provided by 20th of each month to Eriko Hulse at the WSA office, email wsa@wsa.org.nz. Please type "Newsletter" in subject line.

GRATEFUL

The WSA is grateful to:

• Trust Waikato for funding towards WSA Administration and Development.

• Perry Foundation for funding support for the WSA Art School.

• Bennett Advertising for production and printing of Art Connections.

• Warehouse Stationery, Ulster Street for providing the paper for this newsletter.
Art and Craft Supplies in-store
8.00-7.00 Week days
8.00-6.00 Saturday & Sunday.



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ADVERTISING



WSA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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(07) 855 6289

Committee: Alison Gray, Alex McPherson, Barry Smith, Carril Karr, Jennifer Lunsford, Mark Curtis, Martha Simms, Miriam Saphira, Paula Spiers and Sharryn Franklin.

WSA Office and Art School

Level 1, ArtsPost Building,

120 Victoria Street, Hamilton.

Open 8.30-3.00pm Monday to Friday

Phone Anne or Eriko on 839 4481

website: www.wsa.org.nz

