

Newsletter of The Portrait Society of America DownUnder Network



**Issue 8
November
2023**



Portrait Society of America

...dedicated to promoting fine art portraiture and figurative works through publications and programs



FIRST WORD

Janelle Hatherly (Sydney, Australia)

Ambassador Australia/New Zealand, Portrait Society of America

Welcome to the **EIGHTH** newsletter of the PSoADU network. The month of May marked three years since we established our PSoADU (Portrait Society of America DownUnder) network and WHO declared the end to COVID-19 as a global health emergency. It was also the 25th anniversary of PSoA's The Art of the Portrait conference and Paul Newton was the first Australian to win their prestigious Draper Prize.



During the pandemic, we got to know each other better by maintaining communication approximately every two months: either in Zoom meetings, email correspondence or newsletters. We produced [six newsletters](#) showcasing our successes, frustrations and artistic practices. These activities fulfilled the PSoA's mission (and what most of us were looking for when we joined): to connect with like-minded artists who appreciate the practice, techniques and applications of traditional fine art portraiture and figurative work. The standard of accomplishment of this international society is very high making the PSoA the best association to be part of for both emerging and professional representational artists – everywhere!

With the opportunity to travel again, our network's communication strategy is changing. This year we will only have produced one newsletter and had three Zoom meetings. But familiarity has connected us better on social media, at conferences and exhibition openings and through individual friendships. For example, in August, despite living in different States, Vicki Sullivan, Fiona Cotton, Jaq Grantford and myself got together to paint plein-air on the Mornington Peninsular. We had so much fun and even created a new name for our group – the DownUnders.



Wouldn't it be great if the DownUnders became another Heidelberg School or Putney Painters? 😊

We're hoping to have more get-togethers like this where we share aspirations and our passion for representational art. For example, it will/would be great to see some of you at the Royal Art Society NSW in Sydney between Saturday 6 – Wednesday 10 January when Tina Garrett, Art Renewal Centre Living Master and PSoA's Faculty Artist, will be conducting [two workshops](#).



Currently there are 45 DownUnder members – four from WA, one from SA and one from Qld, two from ACT, 19 from NSW, 13 from Vic and five from New Zealand. I encourage you all to reach out to each other – especially to those who are in close proximity to you!

Thanks to everyone who has provided a contribution and a hearty welcome to eleven new members, some of whom introduce themselves here. The newsletter ends with an article about Perspective which I wrote earlier this year for PSoA's blog, as a member of their Cecilia Beaux Literary Committee. My next article, due out shortly, is on the Australian Art Scene. I am currently researching this and thank those members who have helped me by providing their useful insights.

We've been talking for some time about having an evening Zoom event so more people can join in.

You're invited to our Christmas party 🎉
5 – 6 pm (2 pm WA and 7 pm NZ) Sunday 3 December 2023.

Please put it in your diaries and BYO beverages and nibbles! 🍷 For 2024 I'm proposing we hold quarterly Zoom meetings in March, June, September and December, and produce only one newsletter. Let's confirm specific times and dates at our Xmas party.

And finally, thanks to James Stickland for providing the image for the COVER. By coincidence while writing this I see on Instagram that James has just won the People's Choice Award at the Brisbane Portrait Prize Salon des Refusés with this wonderful double portrait. Congratulations James!



*Season's Greetings
and best wishes to
you all for 2024!*



Cover image:
Unbroken
James Stickland
Oil on Poly Cotton
180cm x150cm

APRIL AND JULY ZOOM MEETINGS

Our Zoom meetings are turning into a great forum to share information, ideas and tips despite the vast distances between us. The format is relaxed and we don't take minutes or distribute recordings of the sessions. Therefore, for posterity and so we can put faces to names, in our newsletters I always include a screenshot of participants and give an overview of what was discussed. Our newsletters are being very well-received by the rest of the Society and are a great way to make our presence felt even if we can't get to their wonderful conference en masse! 🗣️



At our April meeting we chatted about what everyone had been up to and we shared aspirations for what we might do in the year ahead. We daydreamed about organising a group trip to a PSoA conference sometime in the future ... and possibly holding a PSoADU exhibition somewhere, sometime (like the now defunct Portrait Society of Australia did at the Washington Embassy in 2005). We discussed entries for this year's Archibald Prize and, with a heartfelt prayer from Ramon, we left the meeting fully inspired that some of us would make the cut!



In July, we shared stories about past and present entries in the Archibald Prize and gave HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS to Sally, Jaq and Paul for being selected as this year's finalists.

Jaq, Vicki and I talked about our time together in America during and after the PSoA conference. This was the second time I'd attended and it was *doubly* good! It's hard to believe this is even possible given how much I enjoyed it last year. I was not the only one blown away by the cohesive inclusive nature of this event. [Reflections from a Conference Attendee](#) on the PSoA's blog site, by one of this year's scholarship recipients, expresses the sentiments of so many participants.

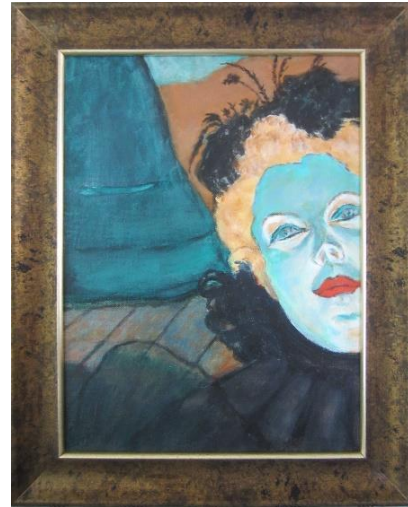
A highlight of our July Zoom meeting was a virtual tour of Peter Smeeth's studio and seeing some of his past and present works.

MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

Julie Ballis (Queanbeyan, NSW)

Most of my energy for art goes to the Queanbeyan Art Society these days. It is an extremely active organisation and runs an exhibition/competition each month. Members come mainly from Canberra and Queanbeyan although some live as far away as the South Coast, Cooma and Tumut. Sponsors donating prizes include the very supportive Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council, various local businesses and organisations and members themselves.

In June, the exhibition theme was the 'Old Masters' and there were sections for painting, sculpture and life drawing. Artists were required to paint a copy of an old masterpiece but could add some of their own ideas as well. I mainly followed the painter's work so I could learn more about their techniques.



I was fortunate to receive First Prize in the Pastel Section with my painting of *Woman Adjusting Her Garter* after Toulouse Lautrec. My painting after Gauguin's *Day of the Gods* was awarded Second Prize in the Oil Section. How lucky can you be? On top of this, two of the paintings I entered were sold! It was quite exciting for me particularly as I had not been painting very much recently and was feeling quite low in spirit ... as well as feeling the cold weather. This was a lesson to me in not giving up! Keep on painting everyone and enjoy it, no matter what. The rewards are always there.

And 2024 will be off to a great start with this weekend workshop I'll be giving where, in two afternoons using two models, I will help others to paint two life-like portraits. Click [here](#) for more information.



17th February
Julie Ballis Portrait Workshop

Sukhvinder Saggi (Forde, ACT)

I am also a member of the Queanbeyan Art Society and enjoy their activities and monthly newsletter *A Brush with the News*.

In May this year I won the major Jonquil Mackey Award at the Radford Art Show 2023 for my painting *Still Life with Vase*. Below left is another of my works in the show, *Still Life with Persimmons and Turquoise*.

The exhibition was held from 19 May to 21 May 2023 at Radford College Canberra. The Radford Art Show is in its 39th year and celebrates the work of local and regional artists, as well as students' art. More than 500 works by 140 artists were on display in the college hall.



Fiona Cotton (Canberra, ACT)

Hello everyone, hope you are all thriving. Actually, I feel rather a fraud because although I have been working hard in the studio, I've not been painting portraits this year.

After the success of Amber Creswell Bell's book, *Still Life*, I have found myself committed to the production of quite a number of new still life paintings. Most exciting for me was winning an Honourable Mention in the [Almenara Collection International Art Prize 2023](#) in Cordoba, Spain. Look out for this prize as it's a lovely one to enter.

I was also delighted to be asked to take part in a group still life exhibition opening at Bett Gallery in Hobart on Friday 24 November on the theme 'A Room of One's Own'. Here on the right is one of a number of paintings I completed for that exhibition. Couldn't do without the tools of our trade in a room of my own!

In 2023, I decided I wanted to go a bit slower and work on improving my skills and exploring different mediums. I have been practising plein air painting, at which I have a long way to go, so there's nothing I want to show anyone yet! And it was absolutely wonderful to meet up with Janelle, Jaq and Vicki for plein air painting not long ago.

Also, I have really enjoyed drawing more in charcoal, such as this one. I have always been a bit of a purist, painting and drawing from life almost exclusively, but I couldn't do it with this drawing. At Officeworks I got them to print my photo out on a large sheet of paper to the size I was going to draw. I then taped it to a board on an easel next to my drawing easel and took it from there. It was a nice change to sit down as most of the time I work standing up, walking backwards and forwards from my work.



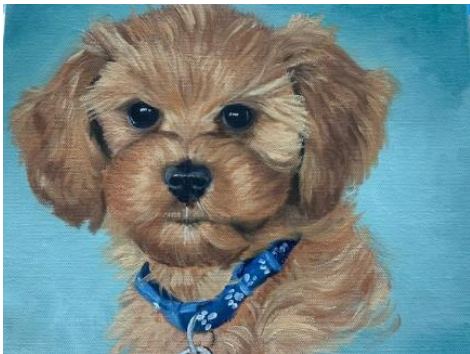
Fiona's Tip!

You will no doubt have seen people using a mirror held up along the line of their nose in order to view the subject and their painting back to front, as it's much easier to identify where you need to correct your work. From time to time however, I prefer to view the subject and my work upside down by placing my little mirror along my eyebrows and looking up. It's much easier to see the shapes and angles especially when painting portraits. Looking at them upside down instead of seeing a person, you get your eyes to see them as a kind of abstract shape. It's much easier to identify where I need to adjust angles and shapes to get an accurate likeness.

Carol Stewart (Wagga Wagga, NSW)

In July Carol wrote:

Hi Janelle, here's some information from my part of the world. As a chronic asthmatic I am allergic to oil-based paints and their mediums so used Genesis Heat Drying oils for 30 years but these are no longer available. I am now working in water-soluble oils. I'm getting used to them and quick drying medium which is great because it means I don't have to go back to acrylics. I haven't done any portraits lately as there hasn't been much call for them plus I'm getting ready for my solo exhibition in October in the Bright Art Gallery, for which I need to include between 30-40 paintings. Here are a few examples.



It's funny but I don't consider myself a landscape artist but that is what I have sold the most of over the years. I've also been teaching in my home studio for the last 27 years with students ranging in ages from seven to 83 ... and I have done some judging in NSW and Victoria. My husband does picture framing and canvas stretching, so it's all about art in our retirement, although my husband says we aren't retired, just tired! 🤔

And in October Carol added:

My solo exhibition 'Out N About' at Bright Gallery is going well and here are some photos.



I have sold four paintings so far and hope to sell more as the exhibition is on until 6 November. The Bright Art Gallery and Cultural Centre is a community-owned gallery situated in the beautiful Alpine Shire town of Bright, Victoria. I have had to be down there some weekends to be on duty which I have enjoyed. I can't believe the people who come to Bright from Queensland, Melbourne, Canberra, Wagga and from some towns I have never heard of! It's such a busy town with a lot going on including walking trails, bike trails, wineries and lots to do. It's especially busy in the winter with the snow fields in close proximity.

John and I are also organising our 7th Art Trail for Wagga on 11 and 12 November, with nine artists in total participating, so I have been busy doing some smaller paintings for that and making some gift cards for sale. It's always a profitable weekend and gets me some more people for my email monthly newsletter. So, life for us is busy in Wagga Wagga at the moment.

Jane Pestell-Litten (Arrowtown, New Zealand)

Thanks for being in touch, Janelle. Currently in my studio I'm continuing with a number of commissions, and in between I'm finding time to put a competition entry together for 2024.

Here's a little portrait I've completed recently for an overseas client. It will be rolled for shipping and stretched over there.

Like Hamid Assabi I was also hanging in the 'Lester Prize: Black Swan Years Retrospective' earlier this year in Western Australia. It opened on 28 April at Perth Town Hall. It's funny being old enough to be a part of a Retrospective but it's been great to see so many familiar contemporary artists' portraits all under one roof!



The Black Swan Years was an exhibition exploring the history of The Lester Prize, and its emergence as one of Australia's most prestigious portraiture prizes. Beginning in 2007, the Lester Prize aims to provide Western Australia with the opportunity to engage with the best of the portraiture artform each year, in a format that puts the artists and community front-and-centre.



More Moore (Margaret Moore)

oil on canvas

Jane Pestell-Litten

Margaret Moore entrusted me to sit for my first ever competitive portrait. The composition reflects an underlying implied duality in her life at the time. Margaret is in internal conversation with her external self. There was a sense of change of direction in consideration. The strong diagonal and cross lighting is softened by the curved chair arms with her wedding ring being the centre of the composition. The palette selected reflects Margaret's personal choice in dramatic geometric attire.

Margaret Moore is an independent arts consultant, working as an agent, advisor, curator, sessional lecturer examiner, and writer.



James Bogle (James Bogle)

archival oil on Italian linen

Jane Pestell-Litten

The colour palette of this work and posing the sitter against a WA coloured sky reflects James' childhood roots in outback stations in WA. Posing the sitter in the heroic position and painting on a large scale, the artist draws attention to a celebration of everyday modern heroes and evinces the iconic veristic tradition of portraiture.

The three quarter view with a diverted gaze nuances a sitter lost in inspiration and innovation whilst allowing the viewer to study the sitter at length.

James Bogle is a director, writer, and co-producer of Australian feature films and television drama series.

I've been enjoying listening to books in the studio and can really recommend Bridget Quinn's *Broad Strokes - 15 Women who made Art and Made History in that Order* (an easier read than Germaine Greer's *The Obstacle Race* - which is no longer in print) and Victoria Finlay's delicious work *Colour - Travels through The Paintbox*.

Many thanks to all my art friends who have been travelling this season and allowing me to vicariously enjoy all the exhibitions and antiquities via social media. It's been quite the treat!

Jane's Art Questions ...

Is anyone using and recommending Turpenoid? Oh, and are there any suppliers of **Holbein Foundation Greenish** oil paint in Australia that anyone is aware of? The only supplier I can find online is Dick Blick - which is a long way to travel given that the paint is manufactured in Japan. If you've got any answers, please drop me a line to jane@justquietly.nz.

Vicki Sullivan (Rye, Victoria)

Hi everyone,

I was absolutely thrilled when I received a surprising invitation from Eric Rhodes himself to travel to Austin, Texas and collaborate with his esteemed film company Streamline to create an instructional video on portrait painting. I was graciously accommodated in the 'world famous artists' cabin' nestled in Eric's backyard, which turned out to be a cozy haven that exceeded my expectations. It felt like my own private motel room but even better. To my delight, Eric, being the gracious host he is, took me on a fun-filled expedition to various art supply shops, ensuring I had everything I needed for the filming days ahead.



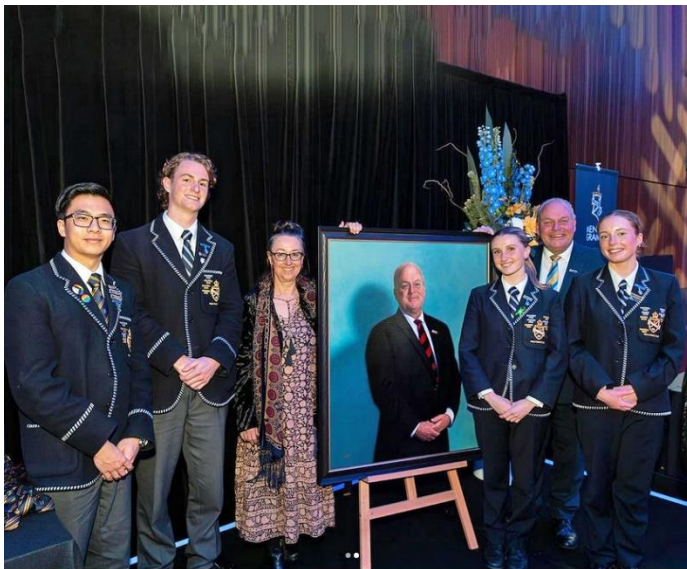
Each morning, the film company would pick me up, and we would dive into the project, capturing my artistic process on camera as I painted a portrait from a photograph over the course of five days. While painting, I found myself embracing a real learning curve as I explained every step of my process, which was a unique challenge in itself. Yet, with Eric's encouragement and the support of the talented team at Streamline, I gradually became more comfortable talking while painting, offering insights into my techniques and approach to art.

It was an incredible experience that not only helped me grow as an artist but also allowed me to share my passion with a broader audience. The memories of this journey in Austin will forever hold a special place in my heart, and I am immensely grateful for the opportunity Eric Rhodes and Streamline provided me. Another consequence of this relationship is that I am on the faculty of this year's world's largest online realism art event REALISM LIVE.



[Realism Live](#) runs from 11am - 7:30 pm EDT 9 - 11 November with an Essential Techniques Day on 8 November. Registration allows participants around the world to watch live or access replays for either seven, 60 or 365 days.

Otherwise, it's been business as usual – plein air painting, creating still lifes for the galleries that support me and painting commissions such as these ones of Mal Cater, the former principal of Mentone Grammar and businessman Paul DeLutis.

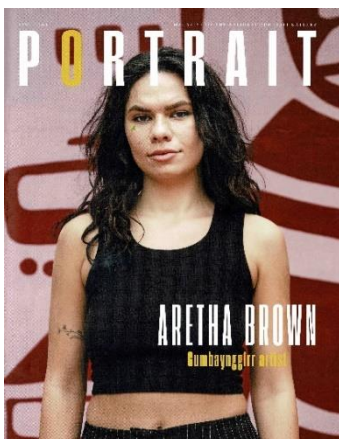


Vicki's Link

I've just found out about another free audiobook app called **LIBBY** which has free audiobooks available through certain libraries. You just use your library card to sign in. I know a lot of us listen to audiobooks when we paint so it may be useful information.

Betina Fauvel Ogden (South Melbourne, Victoria)

Hi Janelle, I'm pleased you enjoyed reading the article about my artwork in the Spring issue of the National Portrait Gallery's PORTRAIT magazine. My commission from the National Portrait Gallery was not only a surprise but an honour, and Lady Potter was a delight to work with.



In between commissions my love is to paint paintings of stairs, doorways and windows. This year I returned to Paris to gather more information on these subjects. One of the highlights of this trip was the Manet and Degas exhibition at the Musee d'Orsay ... and of course the wine and food. *Doorway in Paris* above is an example of the kind of thing I go searching for ... and I recommend *The Private Lives of the Impressionists* by Sue Roe as a good read.



Jaq Grantford (Melbourne, Victoria)

Thanks to everyone for their kind words about my getting selected as a finalist – for the first time ever – in this year's Archibald Prize. It has been the most wonderful experience. The AGNSW puts a lot of care into looking after the artists (right from when they deliver works to the loading dock) and I was very impressed with the volunteers who conduct their gallery tours. Prior to the opening of the exhibition, there was a tour guide lunch where we met with the guides. They work incredibly hard interviewing all the finalists and taking notes so that they are well-informed ready to answer any questions visitors might pose to them.

I was completely blown away by opening night. It was an absolute blast; unlike any other art event I'd attended! There were about 1,500 people there, at least ... and there was dancing. I got to have a boogie with my daughter – a real hoot! And one of the genuinely fantastic things was seeing friends there as other finalists – Sally and Paul from this group. We build an incredible community through art and these shared experiences. About a month after the opening, as an added event, the AGNSW had an Archie party which was open to the public and looked terrific. If I lived in NSW, I would have gone. Apparently, it went all night!

This year was the first year there were more women finalists in the Archibald Prize. It was only a few years ago that it was consistently about two-thirds men in all portrait prizes in Australia, and now that is changing. How wonderful it would be to see this reflected worldwide.



Soon afterwards I flew with my other daughter to Washington for a portrait sitting and to attend the PSoA's conference for one day. I caught up with Janelle and Paul very briefly and got to meet fellow Melbournian Sean Layh, and Tina Garrett who will be coming to Australia in January. Despite my state of exhaustion, it was great to be with like-minded people and to share the joy of art. A huge congrats to Paul, who won the main prize with his wonderful portrait – so happy for him. Sean was a finalist as well, with such a beautiful painting!

In the Art Materials and Exhibitor Hall I picked up some Grey Matters Brush Sets from Jack Richeson Art Supplies for an absolute bargain and I really like them. I'm vegan, and the ones I bought ticked that box.



My portrait sitting was with the CEO of PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals), which was fascinating. Ingrid Newkirk is an extraordinary woman who works tirelessly for the rights of animals. She gave Sophie (pictured here outside PETA) and me tickets to hear a talk by Neil Barnard, a wonderful physician who has done an incredible amount for animal welfare. He spoke about his medical training and how dogs were used to help train doctors, but died during the process. Thanks to his fantastic work, that practice no longer happens in the USA. I'm not sure what we do here.



I mention this because, as a portrait artist, I find all this back story and information about the subject, the people, and the ideology surrounding them so important. It helps inform me about what I want to portray and, as a single image, it's about finding that right moment that encapsulates the subject – for me at least. 😊

And, as an addendum, my portrait of Noni Hazlehurst titled *Through the Window* (170 cm x 131.6 cm) went on to win the People's Choice Award at both the AGNSW and on tour at the Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery. I am so grateful to be honoured in this way by viewers of this prestigious Australian exhibition and it's wonderful that the general public is acknowledging and supporting traditional fine art portraiture.

James Stickland (Palmview, Qld)

Hi everyone, the lead up to the Sunshine Coast Open Studios, where we had 77 artists and galleries open up to the public over two weeks, in May was hectic. The night before my open studios weekend I managed to win Best Oil and Best Overall Painting for my painting *To Be Seen* from around 500 entries in a local Arts Prize. This helped to boost visitors to my studio over the weekend resulting in a few sales and a commission, although I have stopped doing them! They chew up too much of MY TIME!



Trying to manage my sign shop business means being crazily busy while finding enough time to put into painting has to be managed well. Hence my style of late is a quick and relaxed approach letting me paint a portrait in approximately three days; the latest being 180 cm x 150 cm. I am really having fun with my backgrounds, keeping them very textural and attacking them first. This helps me keep the same flow going into the portrait.

My normal approach would be to paint the figure and rework the background a few times until I was happy! *Unbroken* (the COVER image for this newsletter) was my attempt for this year's Brisbane Portrait Prize. My main focus was to capture the bond between mother and daughter showing how tight they are; the glazed background approach representing their life in ceramics.

Feeling deflated when I didn't get into the main exhibition, I decided to involve myself by volunteering with the Brisbane Portrait Prize anyway. Wow! The month of guiding people through the exhibition was exhilarating. It was an experience I recommend: a chance to talk art (and about your own) to people who actually appreciate it, made the experience even better. On the plus side, *Unbroken* made it into the Salon des Refuses where I was fortunate to win the People's Choice Award. I find the Salon generally has a standard on par with the main prize and it definitely lived up to that standard this year.



To Be Seen was fortunate to have been selected as a finalist in the 2023 Kennedy Art Prize. I headed over to Adelaide where I was more excited to be catching up with fellow finalists Jaq and Janelle. Unfortunately, my chance to meet Jaq will have to wait. Janelle had been tight lipped with her artwork, so it was great that it was finally displayed for all to see. Wonderfully created, Janelle!



My next challenge is this Saturday where I have been invited with eight others to an 'Artists Battle'. Using the theme 'Temptation', we have to create an artwork

in 2.5 hours in front of a live crowd – with a DJ, food vans and activities as further entertainment. The crowd gets to decide who wins the battle ... must say I'm a little excited for this!

Podcaster Maria Stoljar from 'Talking with Painters' was my sitter for this year's Archibald Prize which unfortunately didn't make the cut. However, the experience of meeting her in Sydney (and a quick trip away) made it all worthwhile – she's such a beautiful soul! Huge congrats to our members who did make the Archy this time around. So it's onwards and upwards – I've since had a sitting with my next year's Archibald Prize entry. I have it ready to go, well I think I do, I'm always changing and adding! Keep creating, you beautiful people! 🍷

Janelle Hatherly (Sydney, Australia)

I can't believe how quickly 2023 has come and is almost gone! With COVID-19 behind us my hubby and I have been catching up on our retirement travelling. We started the year in Slovenia where I researched and wrote my article on perspective for the PSoA's Cecilia Beaux Literary Committee). Then in May I went to Washington and Peter and I toured Morocco in September. Peter's now away trekking in Nepal while I'm compiling this newsletter! It's all good fun and important to do while we still can but it seriously compromises my commitment to serious painting and developing my art skills.



I did however manage to complete two projects this year: a very special commission to paint the portrait of this beautiful young girl, Olivia and my entry for this year's Archibald Prize. The whole Archibald experience was terrific – just delivering my painting for judging was a blast. I can't compliment the staff of the AGNSW enough for their professionalism and empathy with the artists. The closest I got to success was to make one of the AGNSW's Instagram posts! 🍷 This was my subject's last opportunity (he made over twenty unsuccessful entries) to have his portrait hang in the Archibald. Vale Ed.



Three cheers for the Kennedy Arts Foundation, because *Born Posthumously* was selected as one of 55 finalist this year's Kennedy Prize ... and it received an honourable mention. You can see both my and James's large portraits at this opening event.



Janelle's Insights

In case you're not aware, the 2024 Darling Portrait Prize has made a great leap forward in recognising the reality of life as an artist and has come up with this wonderful set of concessions: no entry fee and each finalist selected will receive: an artist fee of \$1,200; a copyright and image licensing fee of \$1,000; domestic artwork freight allowance to and from the Gallery; domestic travel allowance and accommodation in Canberra for the exhibition launch. Also in 2024, the winner will receive a prize of \$75,000. I think this might be attributed to the release of the Australian Government's new [National Cultural Policy](#) published on 30 January 2023 and the announced appointment on 7 February 2023 of [Bree Pickering](#) to the role of Director of the National Portrait Gallery of Australia.

Baocheng Yang/Morris (Sydney, NSW)

On 26 July, Sydney Art School, where I teach, had a tutor exhibition. It was a good opportunity for the tutors to show their students and the broader community their own artistic creations. My works *Flowers at the Corner* and the charcoal drawing *Looking up* both sold.



At the beginning of the year, I joined the PSoA's webinar with Mary Qian – she is one of my favourite artists in the world. I really like her jumping colours and expressive strokes. I think brushstrokes are the artists' ID and one of the most important features of painting language.

I also really like the style of Pam Irving, one of the tutors at the RASNSW where Janelle and I are members. Here's my portrait of Pam. I put it in the RASNSW Spring exhibition. Actually, I painted it for the last year's Archibald Prize, but it didn't get in. I'm now teaching a weekly Still Life and Landscape session at the RASNSW and, when Pam took holidays recently, I covered her Portrait Class.





Here is my portrait of Bene, created to demonstrate artistic principles. Regarding the artist ID, I think it includes three elements: strokes, colour and edges. These are very subjective. If ten artist paint one model, there will be ten different outcomes.

Good artists will have their own choice of strokes, colour and edge-handling. Inexperienced artists tend to copy the exact colours they see, do too much polishing and leave no evidence of their brushwork. The result is as smooth as a photo and their edges are generally hard – like in a photo. Edge is the soul of painting, which makes a huge difference. It's easy to forget to paint the air around the subject. The air is part of the painting, which need a good study. Rembrandt has his own ID, Mary Qian has her own, etc. Without developing our own artist ID, we risk just duplicating photos.

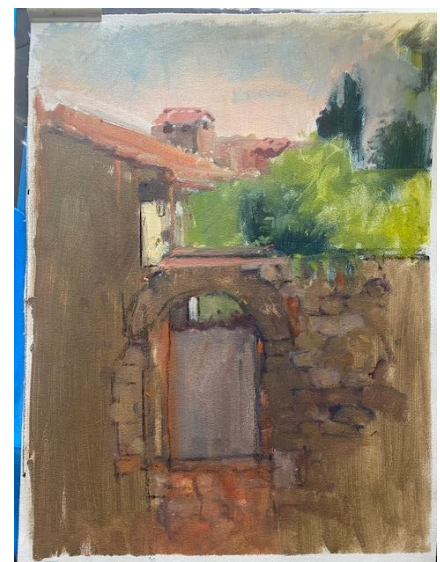
Morris's Insights

I've found that some artists don't appreciate the difference between drawing language and painting language. Some of them using drawing language in their paintings. Drawing language is concerned mainly with lines, whereas painting generally presents shapes of colour and tones to express ideas. There are very few lines to see. Personally, I don't like using curved lines. You might be interested in this article by the Elevate Society which explores this quote by Antoni Gaudi [The straight line belongs to men, the curved one to God.](#)

Marion Richards (Sydney, NSW)

I have recently returned from a 4-week adventure in Italy. The dual purpose of my trip was to try my hand at landscape painting by attending a workshop with Kasey Sealy (an impressionist landscape painter from Berowra) and then visiting some of the well-known galleries in Rome, Florence and Milan: home to some of the great Renaissance artists as well as paintings by artists from the late C19th and early C20th. I was impressed to see Paul Newton's wonderful paintings at the Chapel in Domus Australia in Rome.

[Kasey Sealy](#) runs annual landscape workshops in Lucignano, Tuscany. Lucignano is a small medieval town that has not been overrun with tourists, thereby retaining much of its authenticity and culture. We felt quite comfortable setting up easels in any one of the narrow streets or squares to paint the unique architecture with arches and stone walls going back to medieval times. We also painted views of the Tuscan landscape. I loved the dark green of the pines against the terracotta rooftops. Kasey knows all the best eateries in town and made sure we had plenty of time to savour amazing pizza, pasta and local wines. Here is one of my plein air landscape sketches.



NEW MEMBER CONNECTIONS

I reached out to the eleven new members who joined the PSoA this year and invited them to be part of our PSoA DownUnder network. Half of them tell us a bit about themselves below and the rest might do so in future newsletters. Welcome to you all and we look forward to your company at our Christmas party! 🥳

Maria Radun (Safety Beach, Victoria)



I'm thrilled to be a part of PSoA DownUnder, and it's truly a joy to connect with all of you. I call the beautiful Mornington Peninsula in Melbourne my home, having relocated here with my husband four years ago. We love living near the ocean!

My professional journey began in graphic design, occasionally venturing into freelance illustration. Drawing has always been my biggest passion. I had the dream of becoming a professional artist from a very young age, though I couldn't envision how to make it a reality. It wasn't until I turned 32 that I finally mustered the courage to pursue it.

Embarking on a journey of learning, I started learning oil painting and enrolled in a three-year BFA program, graduating in 2018. The course primarily delved into post-modern and conceptual art. In 2019, the true education commenced, as I delved into a largely self-guided exploration of realism, while also learning every facet of the art business.

Today my painting practice is anchored in tonal realism. I like to paint a variety of subjects, such as still-life, landscape, the figure and portraits. I value solid drawing and composition, and I find working from life most enjoyable and try to do it whenever possible. I recently started teaching drawing and painting to adults at the local art society, which has been a very rewarding experience!



Earlier this year I had the pleasure of meeting Janelle who was visiting Melbourne. I'd been following many of the incredible artists from PSoA for some time, and upon hearing more about it from Janelle, it became clear that I should join!

Creating portraits for commissions or for myself is the highlight of my art practice. I love the challenge of capturing the likeness of a sitter as well as making a beautiful work of art. The more I paint, the more I learn, the more I am humbled, encouraged, and inspired to push my skills

further. I'm excited for the opportunity to learn from other artists in this group and to have access to all that the PSoA has to offer.



And if any of you are down Melbourne way, I invite you to my new solo exhibition currently on show at the [Frankston Arts Centre](#). Titled 'Present Sense', it opened on 2 November and runs until the end of January 2024.



Dale Rhodes (Mullumbimby, NSW)

Hi everyone, it's great to be in touch with this group. I live in northern NSW where I paint and also teach at the Byron School of Art. I have drawn and painted on-and-off most of my life and full-time for the past ten years. I joined the Portrait Society of America for similar reasons to Janelle – I love the organisation's commitment to traditional fine art portraiture.



I was extremely happy to be one of the Society's select fifty out of 2,733 international entries with this painting called *Poppy* back in 2018.



As far as prizes go, I was a finalist with this portrait of *Rosy* in the Doug Moran National Portrait Prize in 2016, and a semi-finalist in 2017. I've had four other Moran semi-finalist entries. I was also in the 2017 Archibald Prize Salon de Refuses. I was a finalist in the 2016 Black Swan Portrait Prize (now the Lester Prize) at the Art Gallery of Western Australia. I was a finalist in the Northern Rivers Portrait Prize at the Lismore Regional Gallery in 2013 and in the Border Art Prize at Tweed Regional Gallery with portraits in 2016 and 2014.



I have taught the fundamentals of painting (and drawing) at Byron School of Art and the Byron Community College for a number of years. My big project recently has been to make a complete video version of my course which has just gone online at [Dale Rhodes Paintings](#). Any feedback from anyone would be most welcome! Now I'm in the midst of editing a full demonstration of my latest portrait *Aleah* which will also be online soon. Again, great to be a part of this group. 😊

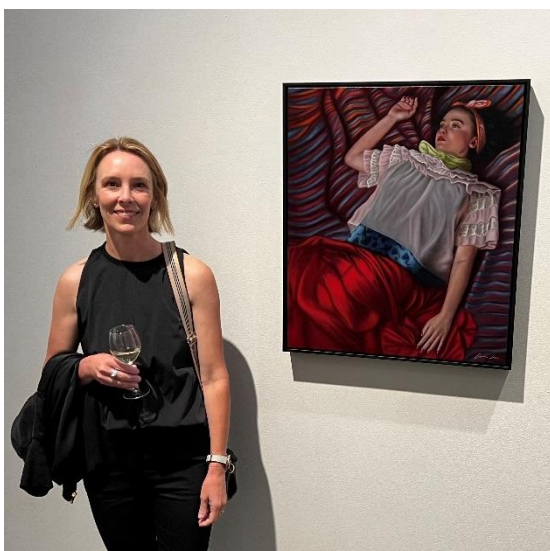
Suzanne Lawson (East Fremantle, Western Australia)



Hi, I am a West Australian oil painter and I mainly paint figurative/portraiture and still life. I was working part time in administration, education and health before taking a break approximately five years ago to focus on my family and my painting practice. I have gained a wealth of knowledge from wonderful artists along the way and continue to learn and grow. My painting style is considered contemporary 'painterly' realism with a focus on light and form and I am inspired by the traditional techniques of layering paint over a toned ground surface, slowly building up transparent layers.



Among other exhibitions and awards that I have taken part in, I have been fortunate to have been selected as a semi-finalist in the Doug Moran National Portrait Prize in 2021, as a finalist in the Kennedy Art Prize 2022 and as a finalist in the National Emerging Art Prize 2022. I was recently selected as a finalist in the Portia Geach Memorial Award 2023 which is now showing in Sydney!



Heather Lenefsky (Sydney, NSW)

Hello Janelle, thank you very much for reaching out! I have just moved to Sydney from Los Angeles, courtesy of my Aussie wife. I hope that might qualify me as I am excited to hear from you and would love to be part of the group. I ought to confess I am technically from the States (Colorado) but just joined the organisation after arriving in Australia.

For the past 5-6 years I was actually working as an illustrator, digitally, and I am quite looking forward to getting out real materials again. I am happy to share some work, though it might be a bit sketchy from shorter life sessions.



It is so fun to see that there are many life-drawing groups around as well, and I am hoping to check them out soon. If anyone in Sydney is ever looking to share a model or host a painting session, I would be interested! I have attached some oil painting sketches below.



Natalie Zuchetti (Perth, Western Australia)



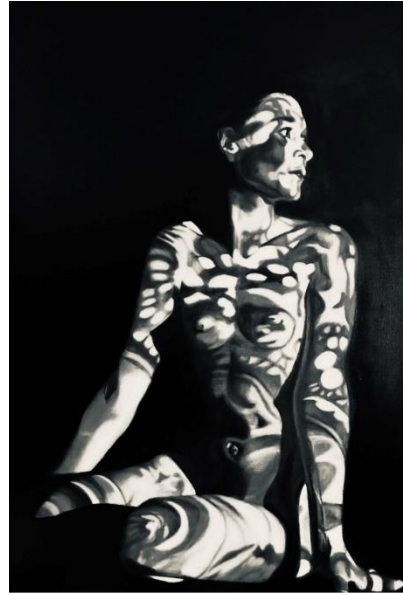
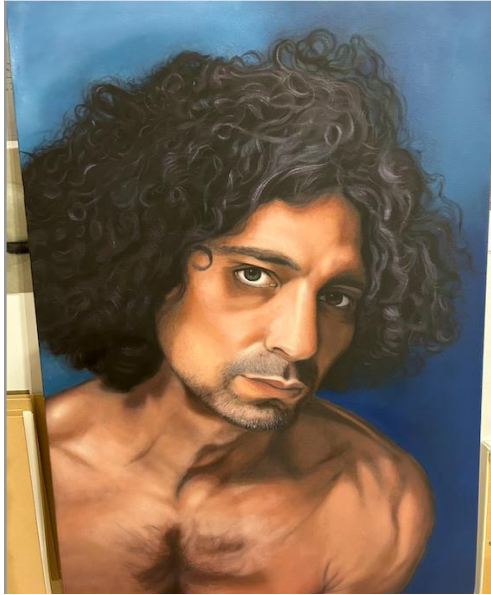
Hi everyone! Thanks for this wonderful opportunity to be a part of the PSoADU. I live in Perth, Western Australia where I have a studio and just joined Future Shelter Gallery in North Perth. I have a passion for teaching and currently teach at NMTAFE in the Art and Design Department and am also a tutor at Gifted and Talented Art High Schools. I have done this for many years and I also mentor art students from my own studio.

I have always been actively creating since a child and have a mother who is an artist. From a very young age I would spend a lot of time watching mum paint and I'd accompany her to art classes at Claremont School of Art. I am primarily a sculptor (figurative and portraiture) but having moved into the world of painting (oils) recently, I have not looked back! I study under mentor Peter Barker who trained/graduated at FAA Florence, and has he opened my world more in painting!

I joined the Portrait Society of America for the same reasons as most, the love of traditional fine art portraiture and figurative. As I am always learning and will never stop! Being a part of this

group of artists will continue to open my world even more to painting. I know both art practices (painting and sculpture) will always enrich me, and am so grateful art found me.

Here are two very recent paintings working directly from models. This portrait is of *Andrea* who is a model I work with in painting and sculpture. Andrea provides me with videos (several angles for sculpting) and photos which I end up using in both art forms. In the other painting, *Between Two Worlds* I projected light onto a model and though it was in colour, I felt it was a better choice to work monochromatically. Perhaps colour next time...



Caroline Kelly (Christchurch, Canterbury NZ)

Hi everyone! I'm very excited to be a part of PSoA and now PSoADU. I am mainly a portrait and figurative artist. Although I paint many different subjects, people are really where my passion lies; capturing the elements of life, emotions, gestures and the human condition.

I am a multi medium artist working in oil, watercolour, charcoal and graphite etc. I have a heavy background in drawing, sometimes taking up to 355 hours to complete a piece, and up until 2019 I was self-taught, then became atelier trained. At the beginning of 2020, I became very ill. Due to amnesia and trouble with my motor skills I could not remember how to paint or even draw a straight line.



In 2022 after a couple of years recovering, I began learning from artists all over the world via Zoom workshops, classes and demonstrations. This is when I met my mentor and teacher Michelle Dunaway who created a safe and compassionate environment where I was able to start practicing my art again. By facing art and having her guidance, I was able to reconnect to my passion and the huge part of myself that had been lost. I'm based in Christchurch and recently won some local awards for my portraiture, including a Highly Commended, a People's Choice and two first place awards. I can happily report that I am now teaching my own workshops, sharing what I have taught myself over the years and the wealth of information I have so gratefully absorbed from master teachers.



COVID-19 really opened up my world and connected me with so many artists. I now have friends dotted around the world. Some are even helping me with accommodation when I head to the PSoA conference for the first time next year. I can't wait to meet them all in person! I love my worldwide artist family! ❤️



Rikki Fisher (Mullumbimby, NSW)



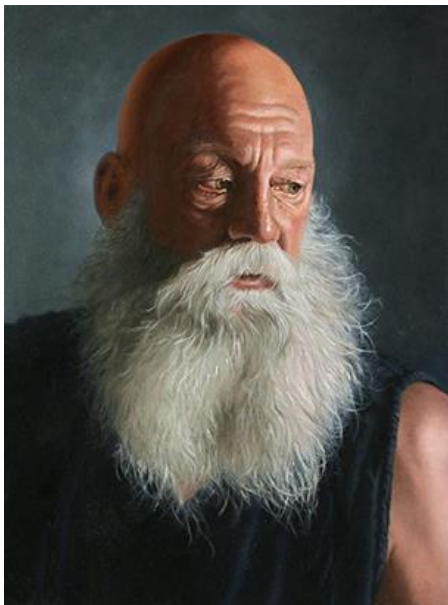
I live in Mullumbimby, in northern New South Wales, and my arts practice has been influenced by my passion for wildlife and portraiture.

From childhood I have always drawn in graphite. I ran my own business in graphic design for 20 years during which time my personal artwork had to take a back seat. When I sold the business in 2005, I was determined to concentrate on my own artwork and refine my skills as an artist. At that time, I dabbled in a variety of media but my subject matter was largely

Australian birdlife. In 2012, after visiting East Africa, my focus changed to African animals and to working in the medium of scratchboard.

As a drawer, changing to scratchboard was like a duck taking to water and I quickly mastered the medium. I entered the annual International Society of Scratchboard Artists (ISSA) in the USA with my fourth piece called *NIP* and took out Gold in the Open Category. It wasn't long after that I attained Master Level, one of only 15 in the world. This opened doors for me to teach the craft nationally and internationally.

A few years later, on a holiday to Florence, I attended a six-week course at the Florence Academy of Art, where I discovered portrait painting in the tradition of the old Masters. I came away realizing I had the talent to get people's likeness ... and I really enjoyed the challenge! I ditched my scratch tools and focused on getting a body of work together called 'The People of Nimbin' (where I was living at the time). My goal was to paint 12 portraits. The zebra painting shown here is in scratchboard while the rest of my paintings are in oils on linen.



Over five years ago I was diagnosed with level 4 bowel cancer; after five months of treatment, to everyone's surprise, I got the all clear and had 4.5 years cancer-free. I was then diagnosed with secondaries but after five months of chemo I got the all clear again. I am currently on the tail end of my third stint of chemo/ immuno therapy. As you can imagine my art output was severely curtailed, with my body of work taking a lot longer than I had anticipated.

Recently, I resurrected a half-finished portrait and it is now complete and I am in the process of starting my sixth portrait. My goal is to paint 12 portraits in a traditional style using a limited palette. Well, that was the plan ... but it is evolving as I go along.

That is a bit about me. I have a few years of oil painting up my sleeve but am far from feeling competent. The few years of painting have not translated into many painting hours, due to the cancer treatment. I am keen to learn and am looking forward to networking with other portrait painters. Maybe even join in that workshop in Sydney in January. I am very pleased to hear that we have an Australian/NZ branch that we can connect with and look forward to getting to know some other Aussie portrait painters.

SPECIAL FEATURE by Janelle Hatherly

Perspective For Dummies

If you could ask a millepede which legs it moves first, it would probably say 'I don't know, I just do it!' This is how many artists feel about perspective. Those who started drawing at an early age just seem to intuit correct proportions and, at the least, can tell when something doesn't look right. Others, like myself, have great difficulty drawing accurately and, when frustrated, retreat to copying photographs. There are also others who don't care about perspective at all and favour self-expression and abstraction in their art.

"Perspective is a human invention."

Perspective is a mathematical construct dating back some 600 years. Humans created it so they could accurately convey an illusion of depth of our 3D world on a 2D surface.

Most artists are familiar with the abstract concepts of one-, two- and three-point perspective, eye level, vanishing points etc. However, many find it difficult to link the theoretical with the practical – the science to the art. It's hard to see the concepts of perspective in the world around us ... and then methodically reproduce them on a flat surface.

Basically, a working knowledge of the rules of perspective helps us to draw well. It's no different to writing well. Those who say 'I can't write!' can construct words into sentences, but struggle to communicate their ideas coherently and concisely and experience difficulty with grammar.

As a portrait artist I've been drawing from life regularly for a couple of years now and my gestural drawings are full of expression and occasionally are correctly proportioned. However, I've reached a plateau in freehand drawing and, in order to better represent form in space, I've decided to get some training in perspective. I want to have a suite of tools to turn to when my proportions are off.

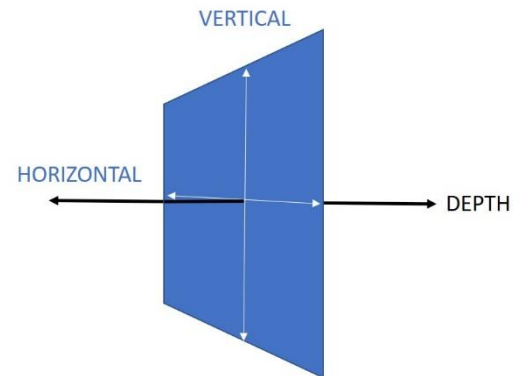
Where to start? When it comes to written guidance, I always turn to my Andrew Loomis's books first. Not only is Loomis an amazing illustrator but also a gifted writer, and I feel he communicates directly with me. On his recommendation I read (no, studied) Ernest R. Norling's *Perspective Made Easy*. These publications, (along with Carlson's *Guide to Landscape Painting*) date back to the 1930s and their explanations must resonate with many other artists because they continue to be reprinted.

Today, we are fortunate to have unlimited access to quality instructional video material – so much so, that we can shop around until we find exactly the style and approach that suits our individual needs. Mine have been superbly met by the instruction on offer at [Proko](#). Stan Prokopenko is my

kind of teacher, as is Marshall Vandruff. I really related to Marshall's Perspective lectures given at Fullerton College in 1994 and thoughtfully videotaped at the time by a friend.

Here are some 'aha' moments which helped me relate perspective theory to reality. Perhaps these insights will help you. I've titled this article 'for dummies' because, to many artists, what follows will seem bleedingly obvious.

- The most fundamental concept is that we live in a 3D world and produce art work in 2D. There are tried-and-true tricks that allow us to represent the third dimension – depth – on a flat surface. Namely: reduce in size or fade away objects that are off in the distance, converge parallel lines to vanishing points and foreshorten or overlap objects.
- We need to appreciate that the picture plane (viewfinder, window, what we produce on paper, the image on our retina etc) is a perpendicular 2D surface located between us (the viewer) and the 3D reality we wish to depict.
- Hugely important is the concept of eye level. An adult's view of the same scene is quite different to that of a small child. Just like the literal use of the word 'perspective', it's all about respective points of view and, where we choose to place our eye level, greatly influences what our art communicates.
- The 'rules' tell us that the height of the viewer's eye level is depicted by a straight line which also represents the horizon and that the horizon and your eye level are essentially the same. I failed to understand why ... UNTIL I appreciated that they do not move relative to each other because the distance between them is so great. It's why the sun or moon follows us, no matter where we are.



"If you know why, it's easier to do."

I had trouble working out where my eye level sat UNTIL I realised that looking at objects in front of me, I see the bottom/underside of those which are above my eye level and the top surfaces of those below it. Our eye level lies on a straight line between these!

This last simple concept has had a profound impact on my ability to see perspective-in-action all around me ... and I can now work out the placement of the eye level in any picture. This prepared me to make use of these next obvious-to-some concepts.

- A piece of paper is a flat 2D surface and any corner in a room is a great starting reference for drawing a 3D object. Much of our built world contains square corners and we can simplify reality to single straight lines by reducing everything we see to different-shaped boxes. Horizontal and vertical and oblique lines are all we need to draw any box form in perspective.

- The other basic form is the sphere which, when cut in half (through any plane), reveals a perfect circle. Depending on our eye level, this circle will appear as some kind of ellipse ... and once we know the properties of ellipses, we can draw any rounded object in accurate perspective.

With these basic insights, I'm seeing planes of dissected boxes and spheres all around me – whether I'm on top of a hill, sitting in a chair or lying on the ground. In baby steps I'm extending my ability to draw boxes and spheres to cylinders and cones ... and even body parts, from any perspective!

“Know a little, practice a lot.”

The secret to accurate drawing is to find time to learn the rules of perspective and practice applying them in a variety of settings ... then forget about them and just draw like no-one is watching. When you find what you've produced doesn't look quite right, you can check back with the accepted rules. Hopefully, in time, these tried-and-true principles will become second nature.



One-point perspective



Two-point perspective



Three-point perspective

Footnote: This article was first published on 13 June 2023 for [Portrait Society of America's blog](#). This section of the PSoA website contains lots of interesting articles and a wealth of information going back many years.

THE END