

panorama



Official Newsletter of Brighton Art Society Inc.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear BAS members,

As flagged in the September Panorama and follow-up email, our energetic Committee member Sharon Desailly, has completed the preparations for our 2020 Online Gallery and we are now able to submit our work. There is more detail of how to do this on Page 2.



Sharing of artwork this way, has become more common for galleries and art groups alike, under the present restrictions, so have a look through your work, pick a favourite and send in a photo. We all want to see what everyone's been up to.

Some of our members remain uneasy with using computers and if you find yourself in this situation, it's important that you are not excluded from the chance to participate. Often help is at hand with children or grandchildren, but if not, please feel free to telephone the BAS office on 9553 8506 and leave your name and contact number. We will get back to you and attempt to organise the photographing and entry of your chosen work.

LYNTON DAEHLI

brightonartsociety.com.au

BAS MEMBERS - ONLINE GALLERY for 2020

As announced in the recent Panorama, an Online Gallery to allow members to display and share our work has been setup on the Brighton Art Society website.

The government restrictions related to Covid 19, mean we are unable to hold our usual Annual Exhibition scheduled for November. Many of us however, have continued to beaver away on our picture making and this will provide us with a chance to share our efforts and enjoy those of other members.

At this stage, we can only accept **one** picture per member. Depending on the response, it may be possible to increase this subsequently.

We are presently also working to relaunch our Facebook and Instagram pages on the website and in the near future, this will be another way for our members to share their work.

We now have the Gallery open and ready to submit your work.

Here's how it works.

- * Each member and tutor is invited to select one of your artworks from this year.
- * Take a clear digital colour photo.
- * Email that to BAS (brightonartsociety@icloud.com)
- * Deadline for receipt of emails by BAS is 5pm on 1 November 2020.
- * In the email, please include the following:
 - Artist Name
 - Artwork Title
 - Medium (eg acrylic on stretched canvas, watercolour on paper etc)
 - Size (in cm)
 - Whether For Sale or Not (BAS will forward any enquiries to you)
 - Your current phone number (this will not be published, only used by BAS if we need to contact you)

We are excited to launch this new website feature and to share the efforts of our talented BAS members.

SHARON DE SAILLY

MARGARET OLLEY- KEYS TO COLOUR



In the teaching of colour use in painting, the suggestion is often made to us by experienced artists and teachers, to limit the range of tube colours we work with and learn to achieve variety by mixing from this limited range. This not only helps us to hone our understanding of and attention to the character and nuance of colours, but also assists in giving our pictures a sense of unity, as each of the final colours present in the picture, will have a family relationship to the initial pigments from which they are mixed.

There are of course, many different recommended colour palettes, but particularly when our experience is limited and we are developing our skills and sensitivity with colour, it is valuable to heed these recommendations of restraint.

Another important aspect of colour selection in any given picture, is what we might describe as the establishing of a prevailing colour “key” within the picture. This term “key”, is more commonly used in reference to music where a piece is referred to as for example, “The Bach Mass in *B Minor*” or “The Mozart Piano Concerto in *C Major*”. Across the duration of the piece, the tonalities will fluctuate outside of the respective B Minor or C Major scales, but they will in general, modulate to a key which has a relationship to this primary key and the movement will open and close in this primary, or so-called “tonic” key. It is of course somewhat more complex than this, but the parallel I wish to draw, is to the establishment of a prevailing colour palette or “key” in a given painting, around which modulations to harmonised, or dissonant colours can be added as required by our expressive purposes.

Many of us will know of the Australian painter: Margaret Olley. She died in 2011 at the age of 88 and is said to have been working that evening before retiring, on some final adjustments to a picture to be included in her upcoming exhibition scheduled for later that year. The story may be apocryphal, but it has a charm and it could certainly be said that her’s was “a life well lived”.

Although in her early career, she claims she was better known for her landscapes, she became more recognised in maturity for her still-life painting. She also on two occasions, sat as a model for portraits which went on to win the prestigious Archibald Prize. First in 1948 for William Dobell and then in 2011, the year of her death, for Ben Quilty.

She is one of the subtlest colourists amongst Australian painters of her generation and her work at its best, provides a fine illustration of this idea of establishing a prevailing colour “key” within a given picture. There is also much to be learnt from her about restraint in palette selection, without sacrificing what can be best described as a sumptuous brilliance of colour.

Something of the character of Dutch Delft-ware ceramics pervades this painting. It certainly hinges on an exploration of blue as the main colour key. The central white jug with its horizontal blue band establishes the boundaries of the palette. The wall behind, explores and extends the tonal range of this key colour, as well as introducing some slight modulations of the colour itself, to link it to the counterbalancing warm browns found in the table and platter on which the two pears sit.

We could describe the painting as hinging on a complementary blue/orange palette, with the orange expressed in its darker tones of brown. However, I would definitely set it as a “Still-life in the key of Blue”.



Hawkesbury Wildflowers and Pears - 1976



Yellow Lupins - 1989

The title “Yellow Lupins” gives us advance notice of where Margaret Olley will take us in the colour key of this painting. The lupins with their petite yellows blooms are centrally placed, fanning out to left and right. The tonal drama of this picture is worth noting, with its almost diagonal split. The deepest tones being grouped in the lower left and the highest tones toward the upper right. The colour key however, our main focus here, is decidedly Yellow, modulating to its related deeper toned browns.

From the perspective of composition, Olley’s decision to position a small group of lemons in the lower left corner, so that she can introduce an echo of the intensified yellows dominating the picture’s upper right, is shrewd.

There are of course other sub-themes present in the colour drama of this picture. The central stoneware jar containing the flowers, has a greater warmth and includes a few small reddish accents, which allow a complementary red/green discussion to open up with the green foliage on the flower stems. Other discreet red/green colour plays can be seen in the bowl of lemons to the left, or the plate with the knife and single lemon to the right. If pressed however to choose a key signature for this painting, we would be secure in calling it a “Still-life in the key of Yellow”.

The aubergines of this picture's title, are the important clue to appraising its colour key. The sonorous lustre of this dark fruit, can shift from magenta to purple and almost to black, with its surface sheen, allowing it to pick up and reflect the colours of the objects surrounding it.

Olley has chosen to place her set-up, on a fabric with strong dark/light tonal contrast and ornate decorative patterning. For me, she is evoking here, the world of the Spanish painters such as Goya or Zurbaran with their use of deep shadows and dramatically contrasting darks and lights.

If in our imagination, we divide this picture diagonally from lower left to upper right, we can discover some interesting subtleties of its colour composition. Below that imaginary line, we are left with a dramatic tonal study, determined by the dark of the aubergine skin and a light tone we would reveal, if we cut through to the whitish flesh within, expressed here in the warm white vase. Above that imagined diagonal, Olley has set up a drama, based on the three primaries of red, yellow and blue. The structure here is much simpler, the reddish yellow of the wall, the blue vertical drop to the far left and the deep red of the earthenware jar. I'm not sure what colour key I would choose for this picture, but it would certainly be a minor.



Still-life with Aubergines - 1982

In the later years of her life, Olley had her studio in the generous Victorian terrace house she lived in in Paddington, an inner Sydney suburb. The house was cluttered with bric-a-brac, bunches of flowers and assorted still-life arrangements she had used previously or was still using. The rooms were painted in various rich colours. She had no time for white walls.

The rich vermillion depicted behind the objects here, may have been present in the house, but is definitely used to advantage in setting the colour key of this painting. In extent, vermillion is the picture's main colour, though a complimentary red/green drama better describes the palette.



Basket of Spinach - 1976



Katie's Apples - 1989

“Katie’s Apples” is another of Olley’s pictures, built on a red/green complementary palette. The balance however, is very different from the “Bunch of Spinach” we have just looked at. For me, this would be better described as a picture in the key of Green and its associated nuances.

If we look at the distribution of tone here and in our imagination, again split the picture diagonally, we have a similar schema to “Yellow Lupins” discussed earlier, with the darker tones amassed in the lower left and the lightest in the upper right. The most intense and extensive concentration of reddishness, is found in the rail supporting the table surface at the lower left. Although the extent of the light yellowish-green in the upper right is greater, it needs to be, to achieve a balance with the richer red of the rail.

Amongst the objects scattered across the table, most seduce us into their play of green, shifting from dark to light and hues yellowish to bluish and much between. A few of the apples, confront us with an absolute red/green contrast within the single fruit.

Although the table is essentially depicted in variations of red-brown, there are fragments of a green glaze worked onto it and if we look to its right hand end, a full mid-tone green glaze has been pulled across its surface. This is unlikely to be how it actually looked, but is rather about the balance and expression of the painting itself. A convincing and elegant harmony is achieved by the artist here.

Author Meg Stewart, published an engaging biography of Margaret Olley entitled “Far From A Still Life” in 2005. There is also an excellent monograph from 2012, by the author and curator Barry Pearce with superb reproductions of many of her paintings. Bayside library has a copy. I would recommend both.

LYNTON DAEHLI



WATERCOLOUR WARFARE

The fight to conquer watercolour painting
Maxine Wade



BOOK RELEASE OCTOBER 2020
WATERCOLOUR WARFARE
by **MAXINE WADE** (B.Ed. Visual Arts Dip.Ed)

A culmination of Maxine's 43 years of teaching, this book is suitable for all skill levels of the practice of watercolour painting, whether a beginner or a more experienced watercolourist. It has a particular emphasis on the avoidance of the danger zones using this medium, through a deeper understanding of the inherent nature of the paint, and the critical use of water. With concise and simple text, this book assists you to plan your 'battle' ahead, with the right 'weapons' in your hand - to sidestep a problem, to avoid a failed attempt. Advice is given on aesthetic choices, whilst understanding and evaluating your progress. Not a "how to paint watercolours" book - more a "how to succeed in watercolour painting" book.

CONTENTS: 14 chapters encompassing an extensive examination of: paints, paper, brushes, tools and equipment; the crucial use of elements of Art and design; the techniques of watercolour painting and their appropriate application; the application of good composition; colour and colour mixing; the importance of values; how to paint convincing shadows; how to paint 'light'; the use of drawing in watercolour; edges and backgrounds; the development of your personal style; interpretation of a subject; the use of gouache (opaque watercolour); problems and solutions; how to evaluate your paintings.

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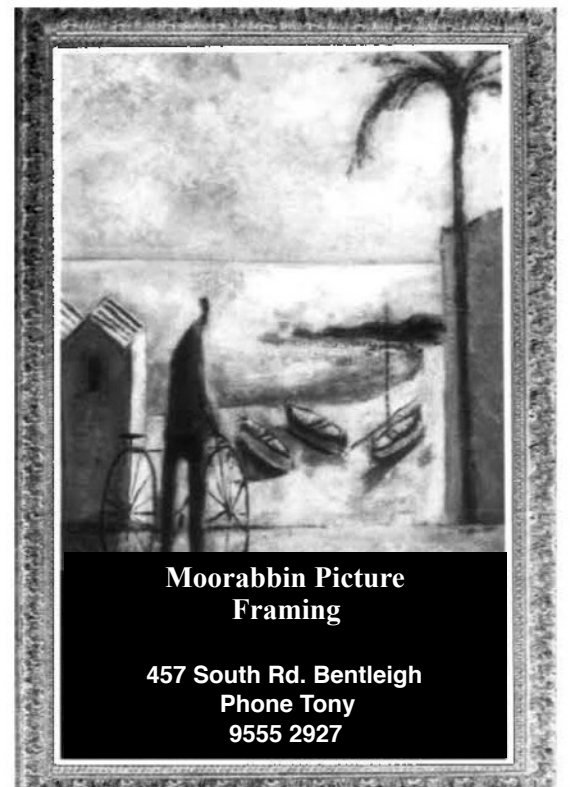
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Dates to remember:

BAS Members Gallery for 2020

*Deadline for receipt of entries for
Online Gallery is 5pm on 1 November
2020*

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