

# WATERMARK

January - March 2025

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**THE WATERCOLOUR SOCIETY OF VICTORIA Inc.**

Incorporated No. A0045768L

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## WATERCOLOUR SOCIETY OF VICTORIA INC COMMITTEE 2024

<b>President</b>	Ev Hales 0400 560 156
<b>Vice President</b>	Alison Fincher 0418 577 115
<b>Treasurer</b>	Carmen Ayres 0413 013 711
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<b>Membership</b>	Sue Crosbie 0420 845 113
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**Postal Address:** PO Box 415 Ashburton 3147

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## Editor's note

I remember receiving my first Watermark Magazine and being so impressed by the Artwork and articles that the Watercolour Society volunteers were producing. When I saw the second plea for a new Editor I took the plunge and put my hand up. Reason being, I liked the people and they were an organised, committed team. Hooray for the Committee!

Let me introduce myself. I am Maggie Wells and I only joined the Watercolour Society of Victoria recently. *What have I been doing with my Life!! Oh yes, Children....* My introduction to your wonderful community was through the Beaumaris Art Group, who have inspired and mentored me in the pursuit of Watercolour painting.

My aim for the magazine is to continue Brenda's great work, bringing your Art and achievements to the fore and sharing interesting articles and insights with all the members. For many years you have had the luxury of an Editor who you all knew and more importantly knew you. Brenda has her finger on the pulse and was able to track down and highlight what was important for the magazine. I am going to need to rely on you all to reach out to me with information about your exhibitions, workshops, tours, achievements and your beautiful Artworks. Deadlines for submissions will be announced in the e-newsletter

wsv.editor.maggie@gmail.com, or 0424 649 364

Warm regards  
Maggie Wells

**Don't forget the website is a great resource where there are links to Facebook and YouTube**

[www.watercoloursocietyofvictoria.com.au](http://www.watercoloursocietyofvictoria.com.au)

**This QR code will take you to the website**



**You will be delighted with many hours of demonstrations and talks**

The Watercolour Society of Victoria acknowledges  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples  
as the First Australians and Traditional Custodians  
of the lands where we live, work and paint



**T**his is my final message to you as WSV President and I have to say the time has flown. It has been a roller coaster ride. When I started the first meeting was a last-minute Zoom session because of Covid uncertainty. The last meeting, November 2024 was a packed house at VAS. The buzz felt great and we are still welcoming new members. I am not sure where we are going to fit any more but what a great challenge to have.

Life is full of pivotal shifts some making a huge impact, others just small changes in focus. Our primary goal is sharing a love of watercolour and the tide is slowly shifting from an aging population to a younger cohort eager to share the fascination of this medium we love. This is bringing a different energy with new voices in the mix. Indeed, the article by Rohita Singh about the creativity of AI illustrates how new voices are introducing current issues. Rohita is presenting in March at our monthly meeting and I am sure a dynamic conversation will evolve from some of her insights.

At the November meeting we announced and welcomed Joseph Zbukvic, a long-time member, as our new Patron and it was interesting to hear Joseph speak about the how the WSV was crucial to him when he was starting out. He spoke of the casual, informal suggestions that shifted his focus and took him on different pathways. These informal exchanges are priceless because as we are artists, individualistic and often solitary by nature the opportunity to meet with colleagues in a collaborative sharing environment cannot be underestimated.

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*I have said it before, but I still pinch myself every time I am reminded how lucky we are in Victoria to have the breadth of talent and opportunities so close at hand. Do not take it all for granted.*

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The WSV is running on volunteer fumes and currently 'EV' charged. I did get a buzz the first time I saw the EV charging signs for the electrical vehicles -reading them as my personal fill up spot. Our meetings and events are like EV charges.

They spark ideas and inspire us and when *painting out* fill our creative banks until they are overflowing with ideas. I have enjoyed working with each of you over the three years and it is with some regret that I step back. I have so enjoyed my time being able to give back some of the richness I have received in the past. The volunteers working behind the scenes have made the ideas realities. I trust they feel the same sense of satisfaction that being part of this dynamic team as I have. Special lifetime connections have been created for me from working with this group.

The WSV is ready for the new ideas and energy that will come with a new Executive and committee who will take this group from strength to strength. Make sure you do not miss the WSV express for this next part of the journey. It is no fun standing on the station waiting for the next train to come,

I am an artist not because I want to paint like anyone else, no matter how brilliant they are. I am an artist because I want to tell my story put down what I see and what interests me. Doing that can be an exhilarating, frustrating, humbling and exhausting process but it is something I am compelled to pursue. Whether anyone sees or likes my work is irrelevant for me. I have to make art regardless. As I said being an artist is essentially a solitary process. Thank you for letting me, as your President, carry the richness of this experience into my life as an artist. I trust that by sharing activities it is evident how important this special WSV group can be for watercolour here in Victoria and for all of those lucky enough to work with this magical medium.

*Are you ready to share how amazing this medium is with the world?*

Ev Hales,  
President of the Watercolour Society of Victoria  
2022—2024



## VALE

*It's with sadness that the WSV acknowledges the passing of our fellow Member and Friend*

**Lynne Bertalli**



# MEMBER'S NEWS

We would like to congratulate the following WSV Artists for their achievements October—December 2024

**Figure 1:** *Tallarook State Forest* by **Nina Volk**, Best Watercolour at The Art Beyond The Divide Exhibition at Seymour Art Society

**Figure 2:** *Lady in Red* By **Colin Shaw**, Kath Ballard award for best watercolour at the AGRA 50th Anniversary exhibition . Judged by Julian Bruere

**Figure 3:** *Nestled on the River* by **Wilma Green**, Runner Up for Works on Paper Whitehorse Exhibition Oct '24. Judged by Fiona Bilbrough

**Figure 4:** *Lake Mungo 1*, by **Jan Martin**, Honourable mention and Highly commended, at the AGRA 50th Anniversary exhibition. Judged by Julian Bruere

**Figure 5:** *Wet Sands, Marazion, Cornwall* by **Julian Bruere**, Frederick McCubbin medal, Whitehorse Exhibition Oct '24 Judged by Fiona Bilbrough

**Figure 6:** *A walk to remember* by **It Hao Pheh**, Best Watercolour, Knox Art Show , Judged By Jeffery Murphy

**Figure 7:** *Serenity Warrandyte* by **Annee Kelly**, Best Watercolour, Brighton Annual Art Exhibition , Judged by Lee Machelach

**Figure 8:** *St Mark's Basilica, Venice*, by **It Hao Pheh**, Best in Show-Runner Up, Moonee Valley Art Show, Judged by Rob Candy

**Figure 9:** *Seymour Railway* by **Dina Matei** Most Outstanding Artwork in show plus Best Local Content at The Seymour at the District Art Society exhibition. Judged by Dr Jill O'Sullivan

**Figure 10:** *6th Day-Melbourne City Council*, by **It Hao Pheh**, Best Watercolour, Emerald Arts Society, Judged By Barbara Tyson

**Figure 11:** *Sunflowers* by **Pauline Stewart** received a *Highly Commended* at DTAS Spring Exhibition. Judged by Ben Winspear

**Figure 12:** *Barossa Valley* by **Debbie Rosenberg**, Best Watercolour , Glen Eira Cheltenham Annual Exhibition, Judged by Michelle Zuccolo

**Figure 13:** *Peacock*, by **It Hao Pheh**, Best Watercolour, Sherbrooke Art Society - Judged by Andrew MacKenzie

**Figure 14:** *Morning on the river* By **Dina Matei**, Highly Commended watercolour at the District Art Society exhibition. Judged by Dr Jill O'Sullivan



Figure 1: NINA VOLK



Figure 2: COLIN SHAW



Figure 3: WILMA GREEN



Figure 4: JAN MARTIN



Figure 5: JULIAN BRUERE

*"Plan like a turtle and paint like a rabbit"*  
Chan Dissanayake





Figure 6: IT HAO PHEH



Figure 7: ANNEE KELLY



Figure 8: IT HAO PHEH



Figure 9: DINA MATEI



Figure 10: IT HAO PHEH



Figure 11: PAULINE STEWART



Figure 12: DEBBIE ROSENBERG



Figure 13: IT HAO PHEH



Figure 14: DINA MATEI



## Our New Patron Joseph Zbukvic



*"I'll always keep those early memories at the WSV, and those painting trips and friendships which were instrumental in paving the early steps of the long road to my current success"*

**M**y earliest connection to the *Watercolour Society of Victoria* started when I met **Morris Callow** at an Art Show in Toorak, where he was a judge, and awarded me a prize for a wildlife section of the show. Not many people know that I started my professional career as a wildlife artist until I tired of it. He insisted, with his usual endless enthusiasm, that I just simply must join what was then, the Australian branch of the *London Old Watercolour Club*. I was in my early thirties then, and went to my first meeting with my long

Melbourne watercolour scene were there: **Kath and Stan Ballard, Robert Miller, Reg Cox** and many others, but most of all there was **Bob Wade**, who became a great mentor and friend, and encouraged my watercolour journey in a huge way. I was eager and hungry for knowledge about art which was only available in a few books and American magazines. No internet then. After the 'meetings' a group of us would retreat to *Pizza by the Metter*, now long gone, and talk art. It changed my life from a solitary existence in my makeshift studio at a time, and introduced me to plein air painting. I can say that is the fundamental turn in my career. Friendships grew and painting trips were organised to numerous places, Flinders Ranges, South Australia and many

I could tell you endless anecdotes from those excursions! There was a time **David Freedman** nearly started a bush-fire when he decided to destroy a



hair and leather jacket. Nobody would sit next to me! However, I persevered because all the current doyens of the

others to places closer to home, like Mansfield, Grampians and Castlemaine.

failed painting by burning it! Or the time we had to relinquish all the fruit we'd just purchased in Mildura, only to hit a border quarantine post a few minutes afterwards! Exchanging ideas and learning from each other was the only way to grow your artistic skills in those days. There was no internet or online anything, just hard work and gaining knowledge from people on a personal level. I will forever remain thankful to those people who helped to grow my career in its infancy, by simply being around with friendly advice or criticism. Those were the days of plenty for most artists, with ready sales for our paintings, unlike today. Melbourne had numerous galleries competing for artists work. There was *Tom Roberts Gallery* in Kew, *Melbourne Fine Art* in



the city, *Wiregrass Gallery* in Eltham where I had my first solo, and also *Gallery 21*, run by **Noel Stevenson**. Rotary Art Shows had booming sales and were aplenty, with large prize money on offer. We could not produce enough work to satisfy the market. I remember people had to get tickets and wait in a line at sales desk. Some even slept in cars in front of the gallery to be first in line! Hard to believe today. Most, if not all those galleries are now gone,

and my career has become increasingly international. Sadly, I don't even have a gallery representing my work here. However, I'll always keep those early memories at the WSV, and those painting trips and friendships which were instrumental in paving the early steps of the long road to my current success. It is indeed my great privilege and pleasure to follow the role of **Bob Wade** and accept the nomination to



be a Patron of the *Watercolour Society of Victoria*.

## NOVEMBER DEMO

JOSEPH ZBUKVIC

*Report by Maggie Wells*

Joseph didn't waste any time getting started on his demonstration painting. It took the focus away from the fact that he had just been announced Patron of WSV

He chose a Melbourne scene that he has painted many times as it is close to his studio. Gertrude Street looking towards the Exhibition buildings. A good choice.

He was chatty as he painted, making references to his early years before he decided to make a career as a professional painter. He reminisced as he applied background washes and accents of yellow. His first coat went from top to bottom and after relating a couple of stories about WSV members and legends of the past he started on the dome and focal point of the painting. Joseph demonstrates internationally but the



way that he spoke to his audience this evening was unique and from the heart. Only the people in this room understood his anecdotes, related to the wet wintry scene and didn't question all the wires and power poles crossing the painting.

Joseph spoke about his use of grey. It is never simply one particular grey but always has undertones, overtones and

tints of many other colours.

As we watched his painting come to life, Joseph was remembering attending his first meeting at WSV. He spoke of the painters who influenced him and how Plein air had set him on his course. Now with his *magic* fan brush and his very lovely riggers from China he applied the foreground and details.



The flow of paint from the angled board created the perfect reflections. Red traffic lights and car tail lights the finishing touches. It was an intimate evening even with a full audience but we were not an ordinary bunch. He was amongst friends.



# MEMBERS GALLERY

Thank you to these WSV Artists for their contributions  
October—December 2024

Figure 1: *Old Railway, Lancefield*  
by Annee Kelly

Figure 2: *Camino*  
by Mark Reid

Figure 3: *Upstream*  
by Louise Foletta

Figure 4: *Morning Rain Sorrento*  
by Peter Porteous

Figure 5: *Robin's Boat. Finland*  
by Terry Jarvis

Figure 6: *Cape Bridgewater*  
by Denise Nethercote

Figure 7: *Nest*  
by Meredith Graham (Withers  
recipient 2024)

Figure 8: *Lake Mulwula*  
by Pat McKenzie

Figure 9: *Untitled*  
by David Freedman

Figure 10: *Venice morning*  
by Clive Sinclair

Figure 11: *Untitled* by David Taylor

Figure 12: *Island of Astypalea*  
by Vivi Palegeorge

Figure 13: *Seaside Farms*  
by Nina Volk

Figure 14: *Tree*  
by Priscilla Fenton

Figure 15: *Butterfly*  
by Jane Rusden

Figure 16: *Horkings Farm*  
by Jo Taylor

Figure 17: *Two boats Coobly*  
by Bruce Noel Griffiths

*"the camera takes an  
image and Art gives it  
a personality"*

Bob Wade



Figure 1: ANNEE KELLY



Figure 3: LOUISE FOLETTA



Figure 5: TERRY JARVIS



Figure 7: MEREDITH GRAHAM



Figure 2: MARK REID



Figure 4: PETER PORTEOUS



Figure 6: DENISE NETHERCOTE



Figure 8: PAT MCKENZIE





Figure 9: DAVID FREEDMAN



Figure 10: CLIVE SINCLAIR



Figure 11: DAVID TAYLOR



Figure 12 VIVI PALEGEORGE



Figure 13: NINA VOLK



Figure 14: PRISCILLA FENTON



Figure 15: JANE RUSDEN



Figure 16: JO TAYLOR

WSV members present current paintings for screen display on the WSV Facebook page, at the monthly meetings and publication in Watermark. Above is a selection from those presented. Don't forget to give your image a title and bear in mind that the printing process also creates a challenge to the accurate replication of your artwork's tonal value.



Figure 17: BRUCE NOEL GRIFFITHS



## CHARLES REID 1937 –2019

The editor of this article chose to highlight the artistic career of the American watercolourist, Charles Reid who died relatively recently, for several reasons. Firstly, to my generation of watercolourists, his publications were the first to purchase for beginners and secondly the other Australian artist we purchased, our late Patron Bob Wade was a good mate of his and was instrumental in Charles' renown in Australia.

CHARLES CLARK REID WAS AN AMERICAN PAINTER, ILLUSTRATOR, AND TEACHER, NOTABLE FOR HIS WATERCOLOUR STYLE

Throughout an almost sixty-year career, Mr. Reid worked as a fine artist, illustrator, author and teacher. He became interested in painting at the age of 14 when his parents encouraged him by letting him use a room in the family home for his art. His father gave him illustrated history books and books about Charles Marion Russell and Frederic Remington, both known for their paintings of the American Old West. Reid's father enrolled him in a correspondence course at the Famous Artists School, when he was 16 years old. He also attended University of Vermont (1955–1957). Disillusioned while at the University of Vermont he enrolled in the Art Students League of New York while in Manhattan from 1957 to 1959.

Reid received teachings based on the contributions of the great pictorial movements and his art is influenced by French impressionists like Edouard Manet, whose simplification of forms he appreciated. As Amanda Apostol said he also refers to the Nabis and particularly Edouard Vuillard, Pierre Bonnard, and Toulouse Lautrec, who Reid also counts among his favourite painters. He took from them the use of pure colours for half and midtones values, and the absence of a centre of interest. Reid was also influenced by American post-impressionists such as John Singer Sargent, Winslow Homer and the more contemporary Fairfield Porter, Andrew Wyeth and Joan Mitchell.

In 1961 Charles married Judith Hendrickson and it was while on his honeymoon in Madeira, he met George Jacobs (1926–2002) who coloured pen and ink drawings with watercolour. George Jacob's method of painting with watercolour relied heavily on pen lines. On Madeira they took daily van trips, painting street scenes and landscapes with Reid first copying Jacobs' style. These painting excursions with Jacobs greatly influenced the development of Reid's distinctive style.

*"The more you know the more you can improvise".*

He painted directly onto paper, with the intention of getting the right value and colour on the first try.



Emma

When Reid came back to the US in 1964, at twenty-seven he took a job teaching at the Famous Artists School becoming the youngest instructor employed there. At the time, there were no watercolour instruction. At the end of 4 years, he was asked to set up a figure class in watercolour with no experience other than the month with George Jacobs. His supervisor, Frank Jones, gave him a brief demonstration of a tugboat, highlighting the wet-in-wet technique, and in how to deal with his edges to improve his watercolour technique. That was enough to help create this weekly figure class.

He taught for 10 years at the correspondence school, and he spent each day at the easel. This work served as the basis for his first book, *Figure Painting in Watercolour*. Its publication in 1973 put him in the forefront of people's mind as a watercolourist.

Charles Reid left the Famous Artists Schools in 1973 and struck out on his own as a fine artist. He won many awards for his work in subsequent years, including the Childe Hassam Purchase Award from the Academy of Arts and Letters. Mr. Reid also won numerous awards at the National Academy of Design, including the 1st and 2nd Altman Prizes for





Figure Painting, the Julius Hulgarten Award, the Clark Prize, the Salamagundi Award, the Ranger Fund, and the Emil Dines awards for watercolour and oil. Mr. Reid was awarded a gold medal by the Portrait Society of America, and a silver medal from the Society of Illustrators. He holds the Samuel Blumenthal Award and High Winds award from the American Watercolour Society



*Coot With Flowers*



*Heavy Rain, The Sun, Trinidad"*

His work was simple and direct. For portraits he used contour drawings to connect the figure to the background. As a pupil of F. Reilly, he focused his works on drawing and usage of perfecting tonal value in his painting.

He applied the principles of tonal painting to his watercolour technique and painted from mid-darks to lights rather than starting light and going dark.

He used *alla-prima* approach, and didn't glaze, which is the traditional way to paint watercolour. He only glazed sometimes for the features of the figures.

Charles perceived still life in an abstract way, seeing large "spots" of light and dark. Then he put paint as a diagram of colours in order to establish the colour combination of his painting. He painted directly onto paper, with the intention of getting the right value and colour on the first try.

This contributed to the sense of spontaneity and freshness of his work. Although not necessarily happy with mistakes, he considered them to be essential in retaining a sense of freshness, suggesting things are "alive".

Contrary to what his style suggests, he worked in a meticulous manner avoiding overworking, each brushstroke counted, and he dealt with edges. He considered painting a "happening", like jazz. To *American Artist* he said, "The more you know the more you can improvise". He started each painting like a new experience, pretending he does not know how to paint.

Charles was the author of eleven instructional books on watercolour and oil painting, instructional DVDs and created a postage stamp and an iconic advertising campaign with his watercolour depictions.



*Belize*

He was a member of the National Academy of Design and the Century Association. His work has been exhibited in galleries throughout the United States, and is included in the permanent collections of Smith College, Brigham Young University, the Century Club, the Yellowstone Art Centre and the National Academy of Design.

For all of these reasons, Charles Reid has long been considered a master of the medium of watercolour. His paintings are fresh and spontaneous, displaying his profound understanding of light and colour and expert drawing ability. The viewer is immediately drawn into his rich compositions. His figures are beautifully rendered, in a simple, direct and natural, gestural manner that reveals his interest in painting the light as much as the person.



*Reclining Nude*





On a mild September evening in Melbourne, we were all delighted to a talk and demonstration by Christine Porter. Rob introduced Christine stating she was an “Australian image” rural artist (since 1990) whose works shows changing times, loss of the family farm and other themes. Christine is a professional artist and has had 40 solo exhibitions and is a member of the Australian Watercolour Institute. Christine explained that there were 3 parts to her presentation:

### 1. Travel Log, 2. Process, 3. Retrospective Compositioning



#### 1. TRAVEL LOG

Christine showed us a range of photographs of her shearing shed paintings which she started when living in North Queensland. Christine now lives in Lismore and encouraged us to visit to support the community which is still re-building following the floods. Any visitors would be very welcome!

Both exteriors and interiors of shearing sheds, shearers and portraits of sheep feature in Christine’s work. Christine sensitively paints the complex interiors emphasising line, architecture and light which form an abstract pattern in her work. The result is a feeling of the intense activity that occurs during the shearing season and you can almost smell the lanolin of the wool! With a limited palette (Holbein paints), Christine paints on Saunders 300gsm hot pressed

paper and told us that she likes to be precise in her work and uses cropping to assist with composition. Whilst mostly painting working shearing sheds, Christine has painted at “Newstead”, Inverell, NSW where Tom Roberts painted “The Golden Fleece” (1894). Christine showed us her fascinating print work of this famous shearing shed.

#### 2.PROCESS

When approaching her work, Christine applies the following process:

- Visits the shearing shed (at times very remote with 2 hours drive to the nearest town)
- Completes onsite sketches and listens to stories told by the family requesting the work
- Starts her painting at the most interesting part which is placed in the middle of the painting and then Christine works outwards

Finishes the work, cropping and adjusting the composition as required

- Presents the work to the family of the farm or exhibits the work

#### 3.RETROSPECTIVE COMPOSITIONING

To finish a painting, Christine analyses the work and then makes any final adjustments needed. This involves asking the following 7 questions:

- What is in the middle part of the painting?
- Where is the greatest tonal contrast?
- Where are the warm parts?
- Are there any patterns?
- Where is the greatest colour contrast?
- Is there anything that is different?
- Is there repetition of shape?

Christine demonstrated how she applies Respective Compositioning by analysing and adjusting a copy of one of her shearing shed paintings to improve the composition.



## Ev Hales Studio ARTSItoya

OCTOBER 2024

**M**y work this year in Takeo Japan started with a love of man hole covers seen all around Japan. These starting motifs morphed into aspects of Japanese design and aspects of life in Japan that fascinate me.. This resulted in a collection of work in groups of three. I based each of these around an event that I had witnessed. Each group of three consisted of the following:

- 10 cm circle study of a man hole cover, or design.
- 16 cm circle with pen and colour
- 32 cm circle watercolour painting

Each of them explored different aspects of Japanese life . Here is just one of the 21 sets I completed during my stay

Okawachicho, Imari—See adjacent

The Artwork I have chosen to share is from an annual event in a small porcelain village that we just came across. It was the unloading of one of traditional kilns (these traditional kilns are fired only once a year and this was just one of the many kilns loaded with porcelain. The lowest kiln is filled with wood and kept burning and the heat flows up from one kiln to the next firing them all. Kilns are now gas and they do this traditional firing just once a year for their festival. One family is chosen from the village to create the signature piece for the festival and we just happened to be walking past as the kiln was being unloaded. We watched them pass the pottery by hand down the line to the crates at the bottom. (one man inside the kiln handing the pottery out to others) How lucky were we to see this happening?

This series of 3 shows the signature piece being unloaded, the kilns along the hillside and the small piece the beautiful vase that stands on the bridge as you enter the town. No vandals present.



Signature piece



Okawachicho, Imari



## Hidden treasures, October Meeting

PRESENTED BY ART HISTORIAN AND CURATOR : ANDREW MACKENZIE OAM

**A**t the October WSV meeting we were privileged to be able to view a wonderful collection of historic Australian watercolour paintings from the Art Gallery of Ballarat, which opened in 1884 as the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery and now houses a collection of over 11,000 works including a large collection of fine Australian watercolours. Andrew Mackenzie as an art historian was privileged to be able to view hundreds of watercolour paintings and sketches held in their collection. Rarely viewed by the Public

Andrew chose 75 of these watercolour paintings to present to the WSV members, which included paintings and sketches by famous artist such as: **David Davies, Sydney Long, Harold Herbert, Blamire Young, Reginald Ward Sturges, Arthur Streeton, Fred Williams, The Lindsay Family, Penleigh Boyd and Emma Minnie Boyd.** A design for a stained-glass window by **Christian Waller** was also included.

The collection included watercolours by the Lindsay family of artists. The one featured below is by **Lionel Lindsay** titled:

*Landscape - An Experiment*

We also had the opportunity to view 4 seldom seen works by **Harold Herbert.** I have included this painting below titled:

*Wattle Valley Goldmine, Chewton, 1938*



There were also a number of watercolours depicting Australian wildflowers by talented women artists e.g. **Eliza Blyth, Margaret Stones** and **Ellis Rowan.** I have included an image below of a painting by **Ellis Rowan** titled: *Bull Banksia, c1890*



It was interesting to learn that Maurice Callow encouraged close ties between the WSV, the NGV and Regional galleries of Victoria. One of the first members to join WSV was **Peter Perry**, Director of Castlemaine Art Gallery.

**"We were so privileged to view images of these historic watercolour gems and we thank Andrew for his passion for the Watercolour medium"** Louise



## SARGENT'S DAUGHTERS—A BIOGRAPHY OF A PAINTING, BY ERICA E HERSHLER

CROLL SENIOR CURATOR OF AMERICAN PAINTINGS, ART OF THE AMERICAS, MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON)

Recently, I spied this small book, costing only \$7, in Sainsbury's second-hand bookshop in Camberwell (a regular haunt of mine!) I immediately recognized the front cover painting as Sargent's "The daughters of Edward Darley Boit" 1882 – a famous oil painting of his, which turned out to be much larger than I thought at 7 feet square! I was intrigued and just had to buy it, even though it was NOT about his watercolours. **The title itself is quite mysterious, as I know Sargent never married nor had children!** But it's about his "daughters" painting and this is a very unusual book – the story of the painting itself, including a deep analysis of its creation, its family and their friendship with Sargent, the later life of the daughters and the opposing views of critics' reaction to it over 40 years. The author ties in the painting to the current social culture and the accepted opinion of the day re what constitutes a "portrait"....is this a portrait of 4 sisters, or one of Sargent's genre scenes – an interior with figures dressed in their everyday clothes? (not in their finery for a formal portrait like he often painted others.) Several other famous Sargent portraits of children are also referred to (eg. Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose")

The square format places the 4 girls spread out in the composition, not really relating to each other at all, with the 2 older girls in subdued lighting in the background, near an enormous Japanese vase, the other middle girl placed on her own facing us and well-lit, whilst the youngest of about 4 years old sits on the carpet, closest to us with her doll on her lap. The location is in the front hall of their apartment in Paris, where Sargent painted it. The brushwork and bravura technique of Sargent's is plain to see in this work – it's a marvel! The lost and found edges intrigue me the most.....

Henry James the writer, a close friend of both Sargent and Ned Boit, called Sargent "a knock-down insolence of

talent" and this painting epitomizes that thought. At its unveiling, one prominent critic praised his stunning originality, but another called it "four corners and a void."

The author fills this book with descriptions and opinions on this and also other Sargent works (eg. El Jaleo, currently in the Isabella Gardner collection, Boston). These big paintings were created to enable Sargent to be accepted into the Salon in Paris, where he was admired as having a technique like



John Singer Sargent, *The Daughters of Edward Darley Boit*, 1882, oil on canvas, 221.93 x 222.57 cm (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)

Velasquez (and indeed, perhaps basing it on "Las Meninas"). Many details of Sargent's personal life and career, acquaintances and lifelong friends are described in detail...and his watercolours are mentioned!

But this is about the big painting – its initial dismissal by the critics (though accepted at the Salon), its eventual high praise, and then 30 years later it fell out of favour because it was viewed as "a social document of a vanished era" and out of step with modern art....Winslow Homer and Thomas Eakins were the

important and influential artists by then. But later in the 60's and 70's his work became appreciated again as an expatriate American artist, along with James McNeill Whistler and Mary Cassatt. These 3 artists were then almost canonized into the art of America's roots and their work was finally given the national recognition it deserved. The big painting was written about by many art scholars, some even making psychological analyses of the painting's content, as some are wont to do. Perhaps an examination of childhood to adolescence? (I think Sargent would have been horrified at this!)

It also reveals the subsequent lives of all 4 daughters (none married) and 2 died quite young, and Edward Boit's life as well, into his old age. He was himself a respected artist and a very wealthy Bostonian but did not live permanently in Boston, preferring the continent, where his daughters were raised. Indeed, as adults, the girls still lived in Italy and Paris for many years. Occasional trips back to Boston happened and the painting travelled with them. It was finally purchased by the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, where it hangs today flanked by the 2 huge Japanese urns. Go online to read much more about the Boit family – they are very interesting!

The author delves deep into the painting, quoting many reviews and opinions over several decades – and several other works by Sargent are treated similarly. I learned a lot more about Sargent's life in this book....A very thought-provoking small volume that I thoroughly enjoyed reading and it was certainly a pleasure to be presented with such thorough research into this fabulous Sargent painting.

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# PAINT OUT REPORT

## Daylesford 13 October 2024

Report By Lynn Budderbaum

Thank you **Neville Penny and Lynn Budderbaum** for organising a gathering of 13 happy watercolourists roaming the banks of the picturesque Daylesford Lake.

We were so lucky with the weather and it was easy enough to find a view to paint. The question was which one? The first 2 hours went quickly and after gathering again we went to the iconic Convent Gallery where we were warmly received by Tina Banitska in her Parlour Room. Here we had refreshments and listened to Tina's history of the Convent Gallery and viewed photos of its beginnings.

Some wandered the gallery while others headed off in search of their next masterpiece. Someone cleverly explained, "getting all the watercolourists together in one place at the same time was like herding cats". Love that!



Daylesford Lake by Lynn Budderbaum

Personally, it was my first time at a "Paint Out". The day was so comfortable and it was invigorating spending the hours talking about artists, paint, papers, and techniques with such warm, enthusiastic artists.

I'm looking forward to many more gatherings to paint with you all and hopefully we can organise a "Paint Out Day" in beautiful Daylesford again soon.

**Annee Kelly and Maggie Wells**

pictured at the lake >



## Wednesday Wanderers



Photo by Jane Ellison



Dianne Moore, Jane Ellison, Christine Andrews, Simon Whitehead, Janette Garbuio, Suzanne Johnston, Amanda Clark, Ailan Lang, Norm Hanson

If you want to join the Wednesday wanderers you can email Jane: [janeelliston3@gmail.com](mailto:janeelliston3@gmail.com)

# A Brushstroke of Curiosity

## Why Humans Wanted to Create AI

Imagine standing before a blank sheet of watercolour paper. With every stroke of your brush, you transform the emptiness into something alive—a landscape, a mood, a story. In a way, creating artificial intelligence (AI) is similar. Humans have long dreamed of creating tools and systems that reflect their own ability to think, imagine, and solve problems. But why did we want to create AI in the first place?

At its heart, AI is the result of curiosity and the desire to mimic life. For centuries, humanity has been inspired by nature, not unlike how we as artists look to the world around us for creative inspiration. Early inventors dreamed of machines that could "think" as we do, just as artists dream of capturing the essence of light or emotion in pigment. The goal was to create tools that could help us understand ourselves better while extending our abilities.

Take a moment to think about why you create art. It's about expression, connection, and exploration. Similarly, the first creators of AI wanted tools that could help solve complex problems, speed up mundane tasks, or even spark new ideas. In many ways, AI started as an artist's sketch—a rough outline of human intelligence that could grow into something transformative.

AI, much like a new watercolour technique, began with experimentation. Early computer scientists wondered, "What if we could teach a machine to learn like we do?" Over time, they realized AI could be more than just a helper; it could be a collaborator, inspiring new ways to approach problems—just as art inspires fresh perspectives on life.

For us watercolour artists, AI may seem as foreign as oil paint on our palette. But at its core, the creation of AI was

born from the same impulses that drive us to create: curiosity, experimentation, and the urge to leave a mark. Whether with a brush or a computer code, humans have always sought ways to express their ingenuity. AI is simply another canvas—one painted with the colours of logic, imagination, and innovation.

So the next time you hear about AI, think of it not as something unknown, complex or intimidating, but as a reflection of the creative spark that drives all of us. After all, art and AI share a common ancestor: the human imagination.

**These watercolours were created by Artificial Intelligence**



# NOVEMBER PAINT AWAY

## YARRAWONGA



Have you ever been on one of our Paint Aways? They are a great way to enjoy some en plein air time at changing locations with new and old painting friends. Yarrowonga / Mulwala was the destination of choice for the Watercolour Society of Victoria's second Paint Away for 2024. Thirty plus people gathered over three days to paint and immerse ourselves in beautiful landscapes by the Murray River in northern Victoria. One of the many pleasures of these Paint Aways is that they take you to places you may not have otherwise explored. Members came from Gippsland, the Bellarine, all across Melbourne as well as regionally from Euroa and Wangaratta.

Mother Nature treated us to variable days of sunshine and wet and moody weather, so we were rewarded with all types of painting inspiration. For the first time, as the rain swept over, I set up a 'studio' in my car and discovered it can be quite the enjoyable bubble of protection against the elements. Water jar in cup holder, block paper comfortably resting on steering wheel and palette within easy reach... couldn't ask for more. Below is my 'steering wheel' painting.



On the sunny Saturday we congregated on a peninsula by the lake. Shaded by willows and gums we were able to paint, chat, share our approaches and observe our different styles. We were also visited by the local paper. Our president Ev Hales provided a great article for the locals to read, giving some insights into what it is like to be a painter.



*'Artists are essentially loners, working in isolation and such events provide meaningful interactions, an exchange of knowledge and then friendships flourish.'*

Neville Penny coordinated this event and booked us into evening meals at the local pub and clubs. Nothing better than a catch up over a drink at the end of a day's painting. It was a chance to meet new people and cement friendships. On the Sunday evening we had pre-dinner drinks in a private room at the Mulwala Club where we could set up a 'mini exhibition' and share our efforts from painting in the elements. A moment as loners to feel and see the connections between us. Wonderful.



# MEMBERS ACTIVITIES

## IT'S TIME TO BOOK YOUR 2025 TOURS

See what our members are planning, save the date or make your enquiries

<https://www.paintingworkshops.net>   <https://www.paesanotours.com>   [arte-orlando@bigpond.com](mailto:arte-orlando@bigpond.com)



**QUEENSTOWN, LAKE TEKAPO AND WANAKA, NZ WITH DAVID TAYLOR**

22 Feb 2025 • New Zealand  
12 Nights



**SYDNEY AND THE BLUE MOUNTAINS WITH AMANDA HYATT**

15 Mar 2025 • Australia  
12 Nights



**IMMERSION IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA WITH ANNEE KELLY**

1 Apr 2025 • Australia  
11 Nights

**PAINTING IN VENICE AND VENETO WITH JOHN ORLANDO BIRT**



**April 14 to May 1 2025**

14 days painting, weekends are free, in the sequence of this historically rich and diverse city and surrounding area within the Veneto region. Painting the beauty of an experienced watercolour artist who has spent many months painting and teaching in Venice over the past 25 years.

Reasonably priced with a focus on painting and sketching. Limit of 10 students.

A suggested range of accommodation from in Cassinetta, Venice within walking distance of main transport, or arrange your own apartment.

For further details please contact John on 0438 280778  
[arte-orlando@bigpond.com](mailto:arte-orlando@bigpond.com)  
PO Box 901  
Geelong/Vic 3218



**CORNWALL & COTSWOLDS PAINTING WORKSHOP WITH TERRY JARVIS**

8 Jul 2025 • United Kingdom  
12 Nights



**CINQUE TERRE AND LAKE MAGGIORE WITH ANNEE KELLY**

31 Aug 2025 • Europe  
12 Nights



**ENGLAND & SCOTLAND PAINTING WORKSHOP WITH AMANDA HYATT**

2 Sep 2025 • United Kingdom  
12 Nights



**SPRING COLOURS OF BRIGHT WITH DAVID TAYLOR**

11 Nov 2025 • Australia  
9 Nights

**A NATURAL PERSPECTIVE**  
**YESIM GOZUKARA**  
Opening Night - Friday 28 February 6pm / 2025  
Exhibition Open Daily - 10-5pm / March 1-9  
More info: [www.yesimgozukara.com](http://www.yesimgozukara.com)

**ART DEMONSTRATION AFTERNOON WITH GUEST ARTIST YESIM GOZUKARA**

Saturday 6 March 2-4pm 2025  
Venue: Malvern Artists' Society Gallery  
Cost \$35 pp/ Pre-Booking Essential

**WATERCOLOUR WORKSHOP WITH YESIM GOZUKARA**

Sunday 2 March 2025- 10am-4pm  
Venue: Malvern Artists' Society Gallery  
\$145 pp /Pre-Booking Essential  
MAS Special Member offer \$130 pp

**'Plein Air' Watercolour & Sketching Workshop**  
Venice & Bay of Poets (Cinque Terre)  
24 Sept - 8 Oct 2025  
with Antoinette Blyth



**WATERCOLOUR & DRAWING**  
It Hao Pheh  
Tuesday evenings - 10 week term  
28 Jan 2025 - 1 Apr 2025  
7:00 pm - 9:30 pm

If any of our members are offering workshops or exhibiting in the coming months please let us know  
[wsv.editor.maggie@gmail.com](mailto:wsv.editor.maggie@gmail.com)





It was a proud moment receiving the *Lifetime Achievement Award* at the worlds biggest **Olympiart festival 2024**.

A fantastic shared time with Wonderful Artists from all over the world. I will always remember, a special country with Special people. Many thanks to Amit And Megha Kapoor IWS INDIA and Atanur Dogun IWS, all the volunteers and sponsors for their kind assistance and help. A huge jump for all the artists and their wonderful outcomes and awards .

A big thank you

**David Taylor**  
WSV member  
A.W.I.F.V.A.S



## THE WATERCOLOUR SOCIETY OF VICTORIA Inc.



Phone: 02 6021 3073  
Email: [contact@gatewaygallery.au](mailto:contact@gatewaygallery.au)



Open Tuesday to Friday: 10am–4pm,  
Saturday 9am–3pm  
Shop 7, Gateway Village, 48–54 Lincoln  
Causeway, Gateway Island, Wodonga,

A great example of quality small galleries in regional Victoria is Gateway Gallery in Wodonga.

This Gallery was established in 2008 with a vision to showcase local artists in a variety of mediums, to encourage and support emerging artists, to display their work and build confidence in their art journey.

Gateway Gallery also houses both a large and smaller exhibition spaces,  
that are available for hire and are refreshed monthly.

As well as the gallery building there are artist studios available for rent to local artists  
and these provide a great space for them to work in.

We welcome new member artists from across all mediums and our  
watercolour artists are a significant part of the gallery.

**WSV member Di Pritchard** is an active member of this gallery and would love to welcome you.

### YOUR CONTRIBUTION

Watermark is the members journal and we attempt to provide articles that reflect the members interest.

This is best achieved when members contribute. You too can become a contributor  
to the Watermark Journal

Forward your text and images to: [wsv.editor.maggie@gmail.com](mailto:wsv.editor.maggie@gmail.com)

