



BLUE MOUNTAINS CREATIVE ARTS CENTRE NEWSLETTER

Jan / Feb 2022

WEBSITE: www.bmcac.org.au

FACEBOOK: bmcac

bmcacsaturdaypotters



MEMBER'S WORK



**FRESH OUT OF OUR FIRST
FIRING FOR THE YEAR**

The AGM will be held on Saturday, 26th Feb at 1pm followed by a general committee meeting that takes the place of our March general meeting.

ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME.

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Henri Matisse, *Annelies*, 1946

Matisse is showing at the Art Gallery of NSW
until 13 March.

EDITOR'S NOTE

As we try to puzzle together a 'new normal' in our Covid-infected world I find a wonderful analogy in Marian Shapiro's work (www.dariandesign.com.au).

The preview of her new mosaics series *A Stitch in Time* (p. 9) which will be featured in the *Beyond Ordinary* exhibition at Sturt Gallery, Mittagong from 13 Feb. to 3 April is on page 11.

Her mosaics are the perfect metaphor of what is required of us. Our accustomed habits have been quite shaken up and we need to acquaint ourselves with the new pieces and altered rules. Rather than creating replicas of what was before we have to get used to constructing new reference points and routines.

Such changes have affected the running of our Life Drawing group (p.5).

Language also can be seen as a mosaic, one of words. In our Poetry Corner Tristan Tzara's poem resembles a puzzle of words and fragments of sentences. In the spirit of the DADA movement, it expresses the perplexity over the devastation caused by the First World War and the Spanish flu pandemic, refusing to uphold much logic of syntax and meaning. (p.10)

Keep well and please pay attention to our Covid rules (p.3) when attending the Centre.

Rudi Christen

Get in touch with us ! We like to hear from you.

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BLUE MOUNTAINS CREATIVE ARTS CENTRE, GLENBROOK

PROTOCOL FOR CLASS ATTENDANCE 2022

In order to protect our members and avoid having to cancel our classes and groups, we ask that members follow the following protocols as close as possible.

- 1) Classes and groups will begin on the 7th February.
- 2) Teachers and facilitators **please ensure the roll is filled** in.
- 3) Masks are to be worn indoors.
- 4) Sanitise hands on entering and leaving the building.
- 5) You must sanitise chairs, furniture and equipment you have used before leaving.
- 6) Class numbers will remain as of last year.
 - 6 in the yurts
 - 2 in the kiln room
 - 8 in the purple building
- 7) Students, teachers / facilitators are asked to please not attend if they feel even slightly unwell.
- 8) Students and teachers / facilitators are asked not to attend if they have a positive Covid case in their household or know they have had close contact with a positive Covid case.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT *Alison James*

Thank you to you all for joining the Centre in 2022 for our classes, groups and open studio access. We look forward to seeing you all learn and create this term and would love for you all to become confident enough in your skills to participate in our members exhibition, pottery exhibition, art prize and print prize which we hold annually.

We encourage you all to get involved in the centre as much as you can. The committee is always happy to have extra helpers who would like to gain experience in setting up events and if you have a particular skill set that you think you might like to volunteer, please feel free to ask. The Centre is here for you, so if you have suggestions for what you would like to see happening at the Centre let us know and we will see if it can be implemented.

There have been so many improvements over the last few years, and we still have a few that we would like to do this year, so we will work hard to make them happen.

If you are already at the stage where you are making your own things and would like to try your hand at selling them in our Hare St. Gallery, please contact the committee and ask about joining. The gallery is one of our initiatives to help our members showcase their work and gain sales experience with a hands-on approach.

We also have the Jade Yurt that can be leased out by members who may wish to hold their own exhibition or need some studio space on a short-term basis.

So, we hope you all enjoy yourselves this term as you let art take you on a creative journey and don't forget the possibilities of where it can take you are endless.

Your President

Alison James

Being an artist is not just about what happens when you are in the studio. The way you live, the people you choose to love and the way you love them, the way you vote, the words that come out of your mouth, the size of the world you make for your selves, your ability to influence the things you believe in, your obsessions, your failures — *all* of these components will also become the raw material for the art you make.

Teresita Fernández

ART DIRECTOR'S REPORT *Ingrid Russell*

Welcome back to a new year of Creative learning.

A welcome to new teachers Victor Peralta, who will be teaching oil painting on Tuesday mornings, and Kassidy Monsieur, who will be teaching kids pottery on Friday afternoons, and Andrea Ketterling, who will be providing Nature Craft classes for preschoolers.

Unfortunately it looks like Merindah Funnell won't have a class after all as there were no enrolments.

After a few glitches online enrolments went quite smoothly. 69 students have enrolled so far.

Classes start week of February 7 and will run for 8 weeks. COVID protocols are in place and need to be observed.

Term dates for 2022

Term 1: February 7 to March 1

Term 2: May 2 to June 24

Term 3: July 25 to September 16

Term 4: October 17 to December 9.

Hare St Gallery Report

The gallery has been closed all of January and reopens February 5.

The final quarter had good sales and we are looking forward to a profitable 2022. There is space for new artists. Email for an application.

LIFE DRAWING REPORT *Bronwyn Campbell*

Following Liz's resignation as coordinator of our Life Drawing group a survey regarding the future of Life Drawing was sent to nine members. Seven members expressed a continuing interest in attending Life Drawing. Most of those opted for starting in March but, unfortunately, no one volunteered for the position of facilitator. There was some agreement for an upfront payment and three were willing to pay more if the group was smaller. Only one member was interested in any type of alternative focus for the group, either to run on alternate days or to replace Life Drawing.

In view of the drop in numbers compared to pre-pandemic times and no volunteer to take over the facilitator's position, it has been decided to discontinue Life Drawing for Term One.

In Term 2 an eight-week, two-hour class will be offered for Life Drawers at a cost \$220 per person to be paid up front. It will run on Friday morning in the previous time slot.

Two electricians looked at Baby Bear in January (Fee \$456). After lots of testing and discussion they surmised the problem was in the kiln's operating system. Part of the problem was heat loss that would occur due to lack of insulation in the kiln itself and the building during winter. It was decided that they would convert the kiln so that a Harco computer could be used to operate it. It will now share Father Bear's computer. It is a simple process of plugging in two cords. They stressed it was important to only hold the plugs and not pull them out by the cords - particularly the orange cord as it is very thin and has small delicate plugs. Using the computer allows us to have a more nuanced ramp rate, thus giving the kiln a chance to build up its heat more slowly.

Their suggested program for an earthenware firing is:

50° to 700° 80° to 980° 60° to 1080°

This is the same as that previously recommended by Harry from Elmak that repaired Mother Bear.

I am in the process of reprogramming all of Father Bear's programs to match program numbers and ramp rates to Mother Bear's. In the future we will have one book of programs for both Harco computers.

Once again the electricians agreed that although the kiln has a manufacturer's rating of 1300°, this puts enormous strain on such a small kiln with only minimal insulation in the walls. They recommend only firing to 1220°, preferably EW.

In future B Bear will only be fired to SW very infrequently. An example might be if a member has a large piece that needs to be fired for an exhibition.

I have created:

- a 2022 book to book firings. Please use a pencil to make it easy to rub out changes.

- an advice sheet for all adult potters to help you get your pieces fired. I will leave copies in the pottery yurt as well as laminated copies on the wall.

Re enrolments for pottery have been slow, with some saying they wish to join later in the year. Having said that, I have a full group of 6 on Monday and Tuesday will open again and still has a couple of spaces. Saturday also has room to expand.

For 2022 plans are in hand to renovate the kiln room and to put a shed up between the kiln room and the storeroom to give us some much need storage space.

I would like to welcome all our returning members and those new members who have enrolled. We hope you have a fantastically creative year.

The clay says

I've been slammed onto a hard, spinning wheel,

I'm flying around out of control.

Under pressure, I'm squashed and squeezed, and I know a fire lies ahead.

The potters say

Carefully I threw you onto just the right spot.

Your imperfections are smoothed as you spin.

By the loving pressure of my hands,

I am holding you and moulding you, proud and pleased with my creation,

And the fire that lies ahead will only enhance your beauty.

Author unknown

Always feel free to ring me if you have any questions.

Bronwyn

DO YOU WANT YOUR POT FIRED?

Think carefully about the shape and size of your creation. Your piece will expand and contract during the firing? Does it have a good solid base. Will it be stable?

Be aware of the size of the shelves. Make pieces that fill a shelf economically e.g. Can you fit two or three bowls together? If you have made a large piece, make something that will fit on the shelf with it. Large pieces often get left out because we have nothing as tall to fill the space. We need to be able to pack a kiln as full and economically as possible.

Have you planned where you are putting the glaze to allow the piece to stand on the shelf?

You must leave at least 4mm free of glaze from the base.

Always check the base before putting it out to be fired.

Packers will not pack pieces glazed incorrectly.

Kiln shelves are approx. \$100 to replace. Overlapping glazes makes a glaze more fluid and likely to run, leave extra unglazed area to allow for this.

Always put setters under your pots where possible.

Be aware that the glaze you are using is appropriate for the clay (EW or SW) and the temp you want to fire to. Check the details on clay bags and glaze bottles.

Think about your design and where you are going to finish the glaze. As a general rule a foot ring is not glazed.

Your underglaze should finish on the same line as your glaze. Don't leave underglaze unglazed. It is not food safe, is rough and collects grease and dirt. Neaten your finished glaze line. The bottom of your piece should be as neat as the top.

Badly cracked and broken pots need to be discarded. It is a part of the making process. Do not waste time and energy on a failed piece

-TRY AGAIN!

GARDENING REPORT *Liz Bryden*

I mowed a few times during December and January but I would appreciate it if someone could mow while I am away. I last mowed on Thursday last week. Importantly, the type of grass newly planted at the front grows quickly and it is very dense and spongy. This makes it very difficult to mow if left for more than a couple of weeks. Although it is good to have the Ryobi on hand, it is difficult going with this type of grass. I have had to use my own batteries to complete the job in addition to the centre's 4 volt due to the time it takes.

Also the pathway area, top area and the pottery yurt area need to be cut regularly too as the long wispy grass makes the place look neglected. But at least these areas are easier to mow as the grass is a different type. Also I did try to cut the thick grass near the brick "mosaic" wall and yellow yurt using my whipper snipper, however it couldn't get through it. Maybe a manual cutter of some sort (sickle) can do the job.

Generally, I am hopeful that someone will help with the mowing in the future as I did say way back when grass was being proposed, that I don't want this added job. It takes all my time and energy to maintain the garden and clean up the leaves. Your thoughts on this please.

There are also a lot of leaves and branches on the yurts which need to be cleaned off properly. I can come down with my blower etc and remove the leaves and branches on the same day if you let me know when this will be happening. Just let me know.

Here's to a more settled and productive 2022. See you when I get back.

OTHER BUSINESS

- ♦ **Nominations** for Committee positions for 2022 were completed, with two new members applying : Bruce Dwyer and Andrea Ketterling. We give them a very warm welcome.
- ♦ **Enrolments** – Ingrid gave a breakdown of numbers for enrolments so far.
- ♦ **KEYS** - David Russell expressed great exasperation that the main room door key and toilet key (purple building) and the Jade Yurt key constantly go missing. It makes it very difficult for him and David Attwood when they wish to come and do work at The Centre. Also, he is very concerned about the security of our space in general. If you have either key could you please return it/them ASAP.
- ♦ **Builder's Report**
Building has been on hold over the Christmas period. David Russell is in the process of sourcing some extra flagstones to finish the path and intends to finish the wall ready for our new sign.

Mosaics in the Southern Highlands.

Marian Shapiro, mosaics teacher at BMCAC, will be one of the artisans featured in the *Beyond Ordinary* exhibition coming up at Sturt Gallery, Mittagong. "An extraordinary exhibition showcasing the work of 28 of Australia's most inspiring contemporary makers."

Marian will be launching her new series *A Stitch in Time*. She says "In Australia, mosaic is currently predominantly practised by women and balances on the cusp of craft and art. My work explores this area by focussing on the crafts of knitting and embroidery, often seen as being the traditional domain of women. I also have some collaborative pieces with woodworker Ruth Thompson."

The exhibition runs from 13 February to 3 April 2022. All are welcome to the opening - free but you need to book a ticket at this COVID-safe event - trybooking.com/BWWAX



Marian Shapiro

Casting Off, detail of *A Stitch in Time*.



Marian Shapiro

Knitting, detail of *A Stitch in Time*.

Poetry Corner

MARCEL JANCO

nerves zigzagged in cosmic harmonica draw draw the line through foliage and
pauses
in a black light the egg hot and sick-happy stretches out the fence
for him:
the art is stabile sensitivity serious account of time leaves and points
seriosity of unchanging necessities in the arranged fantasy
great ruler
keenly ruled
he made surface sculptures until him we made body superimpositions
and employed the wire like drawing in space (for the first time)
the superior part of construction 3 gives possibility to the master to
show his life wire trembles sensitive moon sun blue hippocampus and the bottom of
the sea
he makes reliefs to be constructed entirely in the wall architectural pro-
ductive protestation against the frame and the baroque
pursuing the tradition of pure art after 5 centuries of syrupy dreaming
direct reality specialization without exterior or compromising influences
vertical joy I name naivety the view of the object itself in the soul in the blood
sorrowful souvenir of iron of sickness of the rock of the cloth of the rain
of violins of soldiers of furniture of fire
that pushed through past centuries
rusty religious bitter
clear order in the complex rich whole
without transformation, without decomposition: direct clear order reality
tableau: with pure elements: colors in the form line point surface
necessity
in its order: struggle against his temperament
skeleton-tree-matchsticks scrape humanity
share in large group grand plans
there where the sensors and the smoke are the paintbrushes and the crystal dissolves in mo-
vement
TRISTAN TZARA

Marcel Janco, *Portrait of Tristan Tzara*, 1919



WHAT'S ON ?

Workshops, Galleries, Exhibitions, Prize Entries, Coming Events

IMPORTANT DATES

The AGM will be held on Saturday the 26th Feb at 1pm followed by a general committee meeting that takes the place of our March general meeting.

Workshops

Alison is negotiating with Damian, winner of the Print Prize, to do a workshop in conjunction with his exhibition (part of his prize) in April.

Andrea Ketterling is planning to hold a series of women's workshops later in the year. So, watch this space for further details.

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Marian Shapiro | Sara Smith | Ruth Thompson | Sarah Tracton | Tyla Veney | Helen Walsh | Clancy Warner | Stephanie White | Vivienne Wong

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The Summer Show 2022



Lisa Hoelzl



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Sandy Lockwood



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John Tuckwell



Jules Irving



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Robert Linigen



Denise MacDonald



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