



Botanical Art

• QUEENSLAND •

Newsletter of the Botanical Artists' Society of Queensland Inc.

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*Beach Moonflower,
silverpoint*

One of our own

Eva Richards began a 12-month residency as Artist-in-Residence at the Brisbane Botanic Gardens in February 2018.

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BASQ

The Botanical Artists' Society of Queensland (BASQ) is a voluntary, non-profit organisation formed to foster a greater knowledge, love and understanding of Botanical Art.

The Society's focus is two-fold: to provide courses for those beginning or improving their art, and to exhibit members' art.

This biannual newsletter will keep you informed of BASQ's current happenings. If you would like to contribute, please email news@botanicalartqld.com.au by **1 February 2019** for the Autumn edition.

From the president

Welcome all to our spring newsletter. The collection of articles within celebrates not only the expertise of our members but also the wide variety of the Society's activities.

A number of our members have had solo or group exhibitions over the past 12 months. Congratulations to you. If you are considering an exhibition, but unsure what or how to advance the idea, please contact those who had success or contact our secretary and the management committee will advise you.

Floressence 2018 paperwork has been circulated to all so please consider exhibiting your new work. Again, if you need assistance or have questions, contact Kay Sullivan our secretary.

The Banks and Solander project is advancing, with a number of works completed and many underway. There are still opportunities for you to select and begin. Please keep enjoying. Less than 12 months now for finished works so if you have completed a piece, please make contact via bankssolander2020@gmail.com and discuss next steps.

Best wishes everyone, rest well and enjoy all.

■ nita

Dr Nita C Lester

Guide to BASQ classes

The following is a guide for people considering enrolling in BASQ classes:

Beginner: no prior instruction in botanical drawing or painting techniques.

Intermediate: emerging ability in botanical drawing and painting techniques; basic knowledge of perspective and composition; ability to control wash and recognise colour mixes.

Advanced: ability to accurately depict the subject so that it can be identified by a botanist; understands botanical drawing techniques with a sound knowledge of composition; able to control the application of colour with excellent colour mixing and glazing skills; can apply perspective.

Introducing Glenn R Cooke

We are pleased to announce Glenn R Cooke as our opening speaker for *Floressence 2018*.

Since his retirement, in 2013, as Research Curator Queensland Heritage at the Queensland Art Gallery|Gallery of Modern Art (QAGoma), he has continued to be actively involved in researching and writing on Queensland's art and history.



Glenn has a particular interest in gardens and is a member of the Australian Garden History Society (Qld). He has published widely on a diverse range of topics that connect gardens, art and history for the journal *Australian Garden History*, including 'The poinciana: icon of a Queensland summer' (Vol. 29; No. 2; October 2017) and 'Vida Lahey's floral palette' (Vol. 19; No. 1; June 2012).

Glenn's garden, on a steep block in Brisbane's West End, features heritage plantings reminiscent of times when seeds and cuttings were exchanged between family and friends, and is enlivened by his colourful mosaic work.

You can see the garden, and meet Glenn online in 'West End Creative: A Garden Pocket' and Jerry Coleby-Williams interview, 'The Curated Garden', for *Gardening Australian*.

<https://ouraustraliangardens.com/2015/03/02/west-end-creative-a-garden-pocket/>

<http://www.abc.net.au/gardening/factsheets/the-curated-garden/9436882>

BASQ Officers 2018

Committee positions

President:

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Vice-president:

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Non-committee positions

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Native plants Queensland shows:

Dorothy Muller
• rd.muller@bigpond.com

Artist Profile ~ Eva Richards

Originally from the UK, I worked as a lawyer in private practice and government for over two decades before retiring from legal practice and turning my attention to art classes.

Having trained in areas of art that require rapid, loose sketching and painting, such as life drawing and expressive drawing, I found myself drawn back to practices that require slow, deliberative, even meditative work. I worked first with still-life in oils and acrylic and finally came to botanical art, requiring acute observation and a close attention to detail.

I was inspired initially to work on calfskin vellum by the works of **Rory McEwen**, and still return to vellum when I feel the need to work in rich saturated watercolour. The rest of the time I prefer the monochrome of silverpoint, graphite and ink that allow me to explore textures and tonal ranges, light and shade. Silverpoint, or metal point, is a drawing method dating back to ancient times involving drawing with silver, gold or other metals – originally lead – on a surface specially prepared to capture the metal particles. The metal wires or rods used can be sharpened or rounded and allow the artist to draw in very fine detail but, unlike graphite, a drawing cannot be easily erased.

I like to combine silverpoint in 24K gold (which makes a light bluish grey) and sterling silver – which tarnishes to a warm grey – with both graphite and ink in order to exploit the tonal ranges of all to the full. The ability to use warm and cool greys in the same drawing creates greater depth than graphite or ink alone. Silverpoint is meditative in practice; each stroke of gold or silver wire must be applied gently and repetitively to achieve the richness of tone desired. Pressing harder doesn't work!

Most recently I have worked entirely in stippled ink. Using a 0.1 mm technical pen, I have been creating works composed entirely of tiny dots. This technique also dates back to the Renaissance and became extremely popular for medical and botanical illustration, because it replicates well in the printing process as well as producing highly detailed results. Needless to say, when working with 0.1 mm dots, patience is a necessity.

Influences on my work include early masters like **Leonardo da Vinci** and **Albrecht Dürer**. Also the artwork of **Ernst Haeckel**, whom I can thank for sparking a lifelong interest in the



Xerochrysum bracteatum, silverpoint

pattern, forms and symmetries of the natural world, influenced me greatly.

In February 2018 I began a twelve month residency as Artist-in-Residence at the Brisbane Botanic Gardens that has been a unique opportunity to engage with the flora and fauna of the Gardens as well as the staff who work there. As well as giving monthly workshops to the public, I am producing work recording my year that will be on display at the **Richard Randall Studio** from 25–31 March 2019.



Melastoma & bee, stippled ink



Hibiscus and Monarch, stippled ink

■ **Eva Richards**

On show

Mangroves of Moreton Bay

Clare Loveband

Redlands Museum,
16 August–16 October 2018.

Clare has been selected as the promotional artist for *Florescence 2018*, and her *Strelitzia nicotii*, featuring on our Facebook page and exhibition promotion, is included in the exhibition.



Clare with *Phais australis* notebook and finished work.

The inspiration for an artist is often driven by the quest to find answers. Redlands artist Clare Loveband observed that the Orange and River Mangroves¹ growing near her home varied remarkably in their growth habit and flowering from the more common Grey Mangrove, which was her 'initial impression of mangroves'². The flamboyant, orange-red tasselled flowers of the Orange Mangrove contrasted with the River Mangrove's delicate clusters of white flowers. 'If these three are so different, does this indicate an even wider diversity throughout mangrove species?' was the question she posed³.

1 The common name is cited in the species quoted throughout, the scientific names are: *Bruguiera gymnorhiza* (Orange Mangrove); *Aegiceras corniculatum* (River Mangrove); *Avicennia marina* (Grey Mangrove); *Lumnitzera racemosa* (White Flowered Black Mangrove); *Ceriops australis* (Yellow Mangrove); *Acrostichum speciosum* (Mangrove Fern). The remaining two species are: *Exoecaria agallocha* (Milky Mangrove) and *Rhizophora stylosa* (Stilted Mangrove)

2 From artist's statement

3 In conversation with the artist



Rhizophora stylosa (Red Stilted Mangrove), coloured pencil and watercolour

Clare lives near Eprapah Creek Bushland at Victoria Point, part of the 15,300 ha of mangrove forests that are found in Moreton Bay. Significantly, Australia has 37 species of mangrove, which constitutes over 50% of mangroves worldwide, with eight found in Moreton Bay. The southern region, where Clare is located, is home to the most extensive and diverse forests⁴. Clare's research led her to local landcare workers and bush regeneration groups, including Redland IndigiScapes Centre at Capalaba and Back to Natives on MacLeay Island, with support from the Queensland Herbarium to identify locations and to check specimens that she collected. She also linked with MangroveWatch, coordinated by eminent mangrove ecologist Dr Norman Duke⁵.

4 N Duk and D Pedersen, *Mangroves of Moreton Bay*, TropWATER JCU and UQ, 2012

5 Centre for Tropical Water and Aquatic Ecosystem Research TropWATER, [www.mangrovetwatch.org.au]

Kath Kerswell, exhibition coordinator



Clare with mangrove drawing

Plants from Eprapah and Oyster Point on the mainland, and at MacLeay Island and Amity Point, North Stradbroke Island were observed over an eighteen month period. Clare noted that some of the flowering times differed from the literature, important feedback for scientific monitoring.

Mangroves range from trees to shrubs to ferns, each adapted with a specific niche for their tidal foreshore and estuarine environments. In each of these eight plant portraits of the mangroves of Moreton Bay, Clare has responded to the nuances of each species and sensitively realised them in a combination of watercolour and Polychromos coloured pencil. The verdant lushness of the ground-hugging Mangrove Fern contrasts with the dark grey bark of the Black Mangrove – its tracery of branches reminiscent of an Ikebana arrangement. The artist’s finely-detailed observation picks up the subtle textures and colour transitions on stems, seedpods and leaves, with the delicate rendering of an occasional chewed leaf rewarding the viewer who looks closely.

The exhibition also includes a retrospective of Clare’s work. Coincidentally, it was the 2004 exhibition ‘Heritage Plants’ at Redlands Museum, one of the first exhibitions organised by the then fledgling Botanical Artists’ Society of Queensland, that drew Clare to pursue botanical art. In this section of the exhibition, Clare’s attraction to working with tropical and sub-tropical plants is evident, with the vibrant colours and striking geometries of Gynea Lillies, Phais Swamp Orchids, Pandanus, Bromeliads and Strelitzias dancing on the gallery walls.

The Redland Museum is to be commended for supporting this local artist’s exhibition, especially as the theme resonates with current and contentious issues within its’ community. These fragile Ramsar wetlands⁶, that are designated of international importance by UNESCO, are under stress from the encroaching threat of development projects, pollution and oil spills.

This exhibition demonstrates the intersection between art and science that is at the heart of botanical art practice, and it also attests to the vision of one artist to follow one question – only to uncover many more questions to answer!

6 Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, signed 1971, [www.ramsar.org/about-the-ramsar-convention]

Native Plants Queensland at Rosewood Showgrounds

Sunday 2 September

Thank you once again to Dorothy Muller for coordinating our member’s display at Native Plants Queensland’s Ipswich Branch Native Plant Sale & Enviro Day, held at the Rosewood Showgrounds on Sunday 2 September. Dorothy was assisted by Lynda Young, Marcelle Stirling, Gwenda White and Kath Kerswell, who were all kept busy with sales and enquiries, especially for the introductory workshop program, and Lynda’s scraperboard demonstration was popular.



Lynda Young, Marcelle Stirling and Dorothy Muller setting up the display

The day is a gathering of groups with a focus on environmental conservation and native plants, including community and commercial nurseries specialising in native plants as well as organisations such as the Butterfly and Other Invertebrates Club (BOIC) and Birds Queensland. With all artworks and merchandise featuring Australian native plants, there was much interest in our activities from visitors to this event.



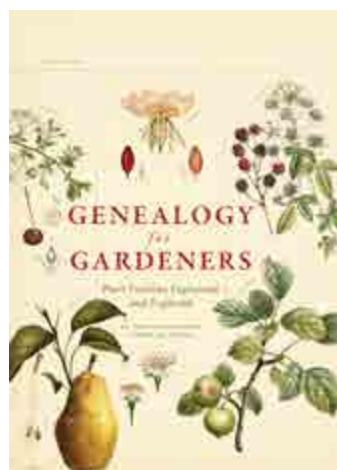
Lynda Young doing a scraperboard demonstration

We also mounted a display at the Native Plants Queensland, Brisbane Branch Spring Wildflower Show and Native Plant Sale at Mt Coot-tha Auditorium on 15–16 September.

General Reviews

BOOK: *Genealogy for Gardeners: Plant Families Explained and Explored*

Dr Ross Bayton and Simon Maughan, Allen and Unwin, 2017



As my interest in Botanical Art grew, I realised how much I needed to understand the botany as well as the practicalities of drawing and painting. Although I did find some books that had been written to explain some of the basic botany for artists, mostly by other botanical artists, none seemed to fully provide the information I was really looking for, until recently, when I came across *Genealogy for Gardeners: Plant Families Explained and Explored*, which provides exactly the sort of information I have been seeking.

The Introduction begins with clear diagrams to explain plant family trees; provides details about the beginnings of plant life and the development of the many forms now found; explains the botanical terms for plant parts and keys to the major plant groups to provide first steps in identification.

The main part of the book consists of three chapters: (1) Gymnosperms, (2) Monocots and Early Angiosperms, (3) Eudicots. Each chapter provides a double page spread for each of the families within these major divisions, giving details of size, range, origins, identifying parts and the uses of that family, all accompanied by beautiful illustrations.

This book is one of a series that The Royal Horticultural Society of Great Britain has produced to help inform gardeners, which are of great value to others, including botanical artists. Two other books are: *Latin for Gardeners*, by Louise Harrison, 2012; and *Botany for Gardeners* by its own scientists, published in 2013.

For botanical artists who do not have any formal training in botany, such as myself, this trio of useful and informative books with their integral beautiful illustrations, provides an excellent basis for developing a much better understanding of the plant world, its family trees and relationships between plants, as well as helping to identify individual plants and understanding their structures.

WORKSHOPS: conservation of works on paper with Caroline O'Rourke and Kath Kerswell

As botanical artists we hope that our work will last a life time, and beyond! This workshop presented by Caroline and Kath was invaluable in helping artists to understand how fragile and how susceptible our paper is to all types of deterioration. So for the artist it is all about preventing that deterioration as best we can. Trying not to handle the paper we are working on, to wash our hands or wear gloves, before during and after we have painted on its surface. Acid-free paper, colour-fast pigments and how we handle the paper will have an effect on its durability.

We learnt about: conservation mounting and framing; making sure there are archival barriers on backing boards and metal staples are clear of artwork. A useful tip is to expose your work to sunlight for 10-15 minutes before its framed, which should be sufficient to kill mould spores.

The storage of works on paper to aid in their preservation was also discussed. There are so many factors that will decrease the life of your paintings and drawings, such as; light exposure, moisture, dust, insects – silverfish and cockroaches. Even our finger prints will decrease the life of your paper.



Caroline demonstrating methylcellulose hinging technique

I would highly recommend you go to the next conservation workshop to be held in March 2019 which will include some additional information on transport and packing.

Stay tuned for more workshops reviews in the enews.

Example of foxing on old paper



Dr Zahra Maarten, assistant workshop coordinator

Louise Saunders, workshop coordinator



BEYOND BRISBANE

Just because you don't live in Brisbane doesn't mean you can't enjoy meeting up with like-minded people who enjoy botanical art. Lots* of regional groups exist in Queensland:

Gympie Botanical Art Group

Meets Tuesdays 1–4 pm at the Gympie Regional Gallery.

Contact Jan Tabler at tabler.jan@gmail.com for details.

Mackay Botanical Art Interest Group

Meets at the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens twice a month. The group has just hung its annual exhibition *Botanica 2017* in the Lagoons Cafe at Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens. Themed *Useful Plants*, which covers all plants in some way, the group also printed the research done on each plant depicted.

Contact Madge Barnett at madge.barnett@bigpond.com for details.

Noosa Botanical Art Group

Meets at Wallace House, Noosaville on Monday afternoons from 1 pm–4 pm.

Contact Pauline Putland on (07) 5449 9223.

Sunshine Coast Art Group

Offers workshops.

Contact Nita Lester at nita.c.lester@gmail.com for details.

Tablelands to Downs Group

Meets at different places/homes each time, and sometimes at Stanthorpe Art Gallery, from 10 am–3 pm on the fourth Thursday of the month.

Contact Nola Sindel at ashnol@skymesh.com.au for details.

Tamborine Mountain Botanical Art Group

Allied to Tamborine Mountain Creative Arts Inc., this group meets for three-hour sessions twice a month. Contact Cassandra Hodgins at quiescence@bigpond.com or Helen Lynch at gerry_helen@bigpond.com.

The Artists – Botanic Garden Tanawha

Meets at Maroochy Bushland Botanic Gardens, Tanawha; workshops available.

Contact Nita Lester at nita.c.lester@gmail.com for details.

* If you know of any other regional groups, please let us know and we will feature details in the next newsletter.

Botanical eye



A Banks and Solander species

Kennedia *rubicunda*, Dusky Coral Pea, is a vigorous creeper. The long stems are either spreading or twining. Leaves are glossy green and divided into three leaflets. Each leaflet is up to 16 centimetres long by a maximum of six centimetres wide with either a rounded or pointed apex.

The large flowers are pea shaped, up to four centimetres long by two centimetres wide, deep red and held in axillary clusters. Flowering occurs in spring and summer when the blooms are usually profuse and conspicuous. Flowers are followed by flat seed pods containing a number of hard-coated seeds.

K. rubicunda is a widespread species occurring in all the eastern mainland states in a number of habitats.

K. rubicunda was introduced into cultivation in England in 1788. The genus is named after John Kennedy (1759-1842) an English nurseryman. The species name refers to the flower colour.



Dr Nita C Lester, BASQ president

Notice board

Upcoming BASQ events

Mark your calendars now. Garden and Momentum Days start at 9.30 am. For more details, contact **Kay Sullivan**, [secretary@botanicalartqld.com.au]

26 September: Garden Day

14 October: Momentum Day

22 October: Garden Day

16–19 November:
Floressence

2 December: Momentum Day

Banksia integrifolia



New members

Since the last newsletter we have welcomed the following new members to our Society: **Meghan Parker-Web, Catherine Patterson, Roger Guo, Troy Daniels, Karen McGill, Marion Loughnan, Marian James, Rosabella Borsellino, Maureen See, Tiffany Wong, John Scandurra, Liz McCormack, Katrin Seper, Charmian Murdoch, Kelly Hogan, Kelly Purnell, Prue Pettett, Cathy Paintin, Karen Austin, Beverley Souster, Jillian Warpeha, Rebecca Craythorn, Moya Calvert, Peter Markham, Margaret Rogers, Gillian Alfredson, Valerie McLean, Ingrid Bartkowiak Jacqueline Winters and Lily Tan.** A warm welcome to you all.

Advertising

Reminder to members that we need your assistance to promote our activities, especially leading up to **Floressence 2018**. www.facebook.com/botanicalartqld/

We also receive requests from people wanting to buy artwork through the Society's web page. <http://www.botanicalartqld.com.au/>

Contact Promotions Officer **Kath Kerswell** at exhibition@botanicalartqld.com.au

BASQ Facebook page

The most commented and liked posts on our Facebook page feature you and your artwork. Visit, friend, like and share at [facebook.com/botanicalartqld](https://www.facebook.com/botanicalartqld). Send your high-quality pictures (jpg format) to **Kath Kerswell** at exhibition@botanicalartqld.com.au

If you'd like to create your own videos to put online, see: hellobrio.com/learn/video-setup.

Online botanical art courses

2018 Drawing Nature, Science and Culture: Natural History Illustration 101

This six-weeks course started in September 2018. [[www.edx.org/course/drawing-nature-](http://www.edx.org/course/drawing-nature-science-and-culture-natural-history-illustration-101)



Glycoscomis trifoliata

science-and-culture-natural-history-illustration-101

The University of Newcastle and Edx offer a variety of online courses with tutors from around the world

For details on other courses available, visit: www.edx.org/course/subject/art-culture.

Seen on the web

botanicalbookshop.com.au

For those who love botanical books, this is the place to shop online.

"The Botanical Bookshop reflects the theme of the Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG) which are entirely devoted to the research, preservation and display of Australian native plants. The bookshop carries a wide selection of botanical books that cover all regions of Australia and many more titles related to Australian environment, history and culture as well as many children's titles. Please enquire if there is a particular book you are looking for and cannot find."

BVAC

Brisbane Visual Arts Community

This year the Society joined the Brisbane Visual Arts Community (BVAC). The group was established in 2011 by a group of art and craft groups to advocate for a space to meet and resource opportunities. Their main achievement has been to secure the building at Wellers Hill as a

venue for meetings, workshops and storage.

Currently there are 24 member groups, which creates networking opportunities between the groups, such as cross promoting workshops and exhibitions. BVAC also coordinates a members' exhibition and two Pop-Up Shops yearly at the Auditorium, Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens, which are well promoted resulting in healthy sales for exhibitors.

The BVAC monthly newsletters are distributed through our e-news. [www.bvac.org.au]

Other

Guild of Natural Science Illustrators conference

Brisbane, University of Queensland, St Lucia campus
29 June–6 July 2019

Geoff Thompson is a collection imager at Queensland Museum with past experience as an entomological illustrator and current skills in printmaking and deep-focus photography.

He has been a long-time member of the US-based Guild of Natural Science Illustrators (GNSI) gnsi.org.

The guild counts many great botanical illustrators as members and hope to have many of them there for the conference.