



BLUE MOUNTAINS CREATIVE ARTS CENTRE NEWSLETTER April / May 2020

WEBSITE: www.bmcac.org.au

FACEBOOK: [bmcacsaturdaypotters](https://www.facebook.com/bmcacsaturdaypotters)

HOT OFF THE PRESS NEWS

Dear Members,

We have some great news for some of you with restrictions for COVID-19 being eased. As of the 1st of June, our group activities at the centre will be able to start back up again. This will apply to our pottery groups, life drawing group and our printmakers who access the print room.

There will be social distancing measures in place. We will require members to remain 1.5m apart and we do have to adhere to the one person per 4sqm rule. Because of these requirements, spaces will be limited and you will need to contact your facilitator to book your position for the week.

The pottery room will be limited to 7 people maximum (this includes the facilitator).

The main room will be limited to 12 people (10 students, 1 model and 1 facilitator).

The print room is to have 3 people maximum at any time.

The kitchen is to have 2 people maximum at any time.

Hand washing/ hand sanitising will be required upon entry and facilitators will be required to disinfect all tables, chairs, benches, handles and light switches before leaving.

Thank you all for your understanding and cooperation as we endeavour to adhere to all the necessary requirements. We can't wait to see you all creating again.

Kind regards,

Alison

Get in touch with us !

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FROM THE EDITOR

It has now been many more than the 40 days the term "Quarantine" implies. I hope you have all kept safe and well during this time.

Fortunately, it looks like the worst of the lock-down might be over. Many galleries and museums are reopening, alas with restricted admissions. Our group activities and classes are to restart as well quite soon.

Throughout this strange time "social distancing" seemed a bit of a misnomer. Perhaps, "physical distancing" might better describe our unfortunate but necessary restrictions. Though often awkward, at least it is possible to maintain rudimentary social connections with video calls, meetings online, even virtual schools thanks to technical media of every kind such as Messenger, Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp, etc.

Naturally, the situation was more isolating for people not 'wired up' in this manner. On the other hand, self-isolation may have inadvertently focussed some people's art practice or may even have suited some artistic temperaments.

In any case, I hope, your health has not suffered and despite the lock-down over the past weeks, you have been able to do some art at home. Indeed, this issue features some recent artwork by BMCAC members. Also included are a number of poems that express the spirit of women and men who may help us prevail in times of adversity.

Perhaps in poetry we can find consolation, encouragement and meaning, or distraction at least.

Hoping to see you soon face to face.

Rudi Christen



*Rudi Christen, WAVY LINE,
42cm X 29cm, collage &
drawing*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT *Alison James*

Dear Members,

While we aren't running classes at the moment, due to the NSW Government restrictions that we are abiding by with the COVID-19 pandemic, you can rest assured that the committee are still here looking after the centre.

We held our first ever FaceTime Committee Meeting on the 7th of May at 7:30pm, which was a new experience for many of us but also very productive and fun. A trial run in the morning saw a few of us answer the video call in our PJ's and not camera ready, which was quite funny but by 7:30pm we all had our best faces on and a comfy spot with the camera angle worked out to make sure we all looked a lot better.

A small group of the committee have had the opportunity to help Richard with his end of lease move and give the yurt a fresh coat of paint, clean-up of the flooring and fix and repair anything that was necessary. Thank you to David Attwood, Richard Cutler, Liz Bryden and David and Ingrid Russell for all you have been doing at the centre over this period.

We lost a large branch off one of the trees with the huge winds we had a week or so ago, but they have been cleaned up and removed already thanks to the fantastic maintenance team we have.

The remaining asbestos cladding on the east side of the main building has been removed thanks to the contacts we made through council and cost us a lot less than we were quoted by another company. David Russell will now be able to assess what needs to be replaced or repaired on that wall and once the work is done we will be able to paint it.

The committee have decided that the Jade Yurt will be leased as an art studio in three-month intervals with the artist being given the opportunity to have an exhibition at the end of their lease in the main building. This will be a fantastic opportunity for the centre to welcome new artists and have regular exhibitions at the centre.

Liz is currently putting together a grant application for further improvements that we would like to see at the centre so we will have our fingers and toes crossed for that one.

I also want all of our members to know that we are keeping a very close eye on the lifting of restrictions, while we most likely won't be starting up classes until Term 3 now (if we are allowed by then) there may be the possibility that some of our groups may be able to start back up as soon as they lift the restrictions on Community Centres (whilst it was recommended in this round by the federal government it was not supported by our state government so we are still waiting).

When restrictions do allow activities to start back up we will contact the relevant groups and ensure that you know the regulations that we will need you to abide by.

As you know our annual members exhibition was cancelled and we have decided that our Art Prize and Print Prize will be postponed for this year as sponsorship opportunities are going to be very hard to secure in these uncertain times. However, we still have our Life Drawing exhibition booked for September and our Potters Exhibition booked for October and we are hopeful that they may go ahead. We will look at possibly expanding these two exhibitions to make up for the lost opportunities of our prizes and annual exhibition. This is something the committee will discuss at the next meeting, which will hopefully be in person next time.

In the meantime, we hope you are all doing well and have had the opportunity to be creative.

Take care everyone,

Alison James.

Bits from Bronwyn

Just thought I'd give you a little insight into what I have learnt over this period of isolation.

I have made a couple of pottery videos that I have posted on the BMCAC Saturday Potters Facebook page. I made them on my phone and they are pretty imperfect but this is something I would never have attempted before. Now I am motivated to learn a bit more about editing videos etc. I have participated in a video messenger meeting – again something new. I have used duo to do video sessions with my grandson to read him stories at night and for him to read to me and to help him with his school work. I think these sessions have brought us much closer. I have learnt that I am surrounded by lovely neighbours. They have all offered help at various times.

A short story: went to Woollies looking for split peas for pea and ham soup, couldn't find any in the usual place, asked a youngish staff member where they were, she looked at me with a mystified look, "Do you mean frozen peas?" "No I mean split peas, you put them in soup." – again a mystified look. She had no idea what they were. (I thought that was hilarious but sad.) She asked an older staff member who said they were "sold out". I told my neighbour this sad story of the state of our non soup cooking young people (LOL) and the next day his daughter brought me a packet of yellow split peas she bought in the city. What a lovely thing to do! We have since shared a delicious pea and ham soup over the fence.

At the beginning of lockdown I vowed to use up all my half bags of clay before I opened a new bag. Below is a sample of some of my work.



Left: Using up my JB1 - Part of a set of unfired tumblers.

Below

Last oxidised firing before lockdown. JB1 stoneware fired to 1220 degrees.



My current project is a bird bath for my son's birthday with a forest theme, using up my sandy raku clay.

Paper Clay and Balloon Vessel / Pot

These balloon-formed, clay vessels/pots (whatever you would like to call them) are fun and quirky, quick and easy to make. They can be made to any size and used for anything from a decorative to functional ware. You can really use any type of clay, but damp paper clay seems to work better.

Materials:

- Paper Clay
- Balloons
- Plastic Wrap



Method:

1. Start blowing the balloon up to any size, depending how large you would like your vessel to be.
2. Roll out a thin slab of paper clay large enough to go half way around the balloon.
3. Cut the slab into a circular shape. It doesn't have to be perfect. Just freehand.
4. Using a spray bottle, slightly wet your slab and wrap the clay around the balloon.
5. Take a square of plastic wrap and place the paper clay-covered balloon in the centre of the square. The clay should be against the plastic wrap, the tied end of the balloon pointing straight up.
6. Gather the plastic wrap around the balloon as gently as you can, ease the clay up the balloon with your fingers.
7. Twist the plastic wrap a few times.
8. Leave your vessel in the plastic wrap until it can hold its shape. The plastic will unwrap a little and you may need to support your vessel to keep it upright.
9. After removing the plastic wrap, allow your vessel to completely dry, pop the balloon and they are ready for firing.
10. Decorate/glaze as you wish.

Helen Howe

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Written as the coronavirus outbreak became a pandemic, this poem soon went viral. Kitty O'Meara suggests social distancing could be taken up by purposeful activities such as dancing, exercise and selfreflection. Perhaps something other than darkness could come from isolation.

Untitled by Kitty O'Meara (2020)

And the people stayed home. And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed.

Catherine Campbell (solascct@gmail.com) is recommending **Pottery Gurus** that can be watched online during this time of being stuck at home.

Everyone is invited to pipe in more favourites. My five favourite online mentors are as follows

1. The Great British Pottery Throwdown seasons 1-3: must see viewing for all aspiring potters plus a lot of fun!
2. YouTube videos by Simon Leach. I love his friendly conversational manner, it's as if he is just chatting to you, his techniques are clearly demonstrated - and he comes from a long lineage of famous English potters.
3. Online courses by Diana Fayt, especially her surfacing techniques. I took this course a few years back and really enjoyed it.
4. Instagram - videos by tortus (Eric Landon) making impossibly huge pots from his studio in Copenhagen.
5. Instagram - videos by KeyWestPottery, a husband and wife duo, who own a gallery in Key West, Florida. Before lockdown they often had videos of pots being thrown in the gallery.

Two images from the Diana Fayt course



Stella Kypriotis has been painting during self-isolation.



Virginia Woolf (1882—1941),

from MEMORIES OF BEING

I hazard the explanation that a shock is at once in my case followed by the desire to explain it. I feel that I have had a blow; but it is not, as I thought as a child, simply a blow from an enemy hidden behind the cotton wool of daily life; it is or will become a revelation of some order; it is a token of some real thing behind appearances; and I make it real by putting it into words. It is only by putting it into words that I make it whole; this wholeness means that it has lost its power to hurt me; it gives me, perhaps because by doing so I take away the pain, a great delight to put the severed parts together. Perhaps this is the strongest pleasure known to me. It is the rapture I get when in writing I seem to be discovering what belongs to what; making a scene come right; making a character come together.

From this I reach what I might call a philosophy; at any rate it is a constant idea of mine; that behind the cotton wool is hidden a pattern; that we — I mean all human beings — are connected with this; that the whole world is a work of art; that we are parts of the work of art.



I have continued to take care of the garden at the Centre and have planted some new things, also trying to keep on top of the leaf and branch fall. It doesn't take much wind to make the place look uncared for.

In March, the council sent their contractors to remove two trees at the front of the main building. They did a great job and a word in their ear about not damaging the plants proved effective. It has made a big difference to the appearance of the Centre and safety has been improved too.

Also, the turquoise yurt has been renovated in the meantime, thanks to David Attwood's painting and repair work and I have helped by cleaning the floor with lots of steel wool and scrubbing just to get the dirt off. New blinds and light bulbs have improved the yurt and made it ready for whoever the new occupant will be.

With no events on the calendar at this time means no advertising is needed which is a nice break for me. However, I am in the middle of applying for a second grant this year. If successful, this grant will be used to install a safer path between the main building and the front of the site as well as some dead tree removal if money allows. So, two possible grants this year.

Apart from that, I have been keeping up with my own gardening and taking the dog for a walk etc. I think my newish dog has been a good distraction from the pandemic and has kept me from going mad too. There are so many people out walking dogs at the moment, so it seems many have more time on their hands. The dogs must be loving it.



Miss Marple and her friend, Mrs McGillicuddy, taken from an Agatha Christie mystery, "The 4.50 from Paddington".

Ardengo Soffici (1879–1964) poet and painter

ATELIER

Five meters by seven

carved from the amaranth of the sun
Radiotelephantastic booth open to all messages
Every painting is a window onto the frenzy of life
I am a thrower-open of windows
And senses
Every colour
Sings like a bird
An instrument
A passion
Blue yellow green cobalt
Black vermillion and tender pink
My magnetic eyes attract lights
And memories
From the four corners of the world
I unravel the rainbow
Let things men countries
Come to me like simple children
Settle down around me each in its place in the picture frames
Bottles of every kind of spirit
Sher Tvui Césa written on the labels
A fine white fig
Mouth-watering watermelons
Vermillion rooftops the repose of lovers in the shadow of summer branches
Wine flasks toys newspapers
Posters of nude bodies in full bloom
Cirque Médrano
La Gaîté-Rochechouart
Each creation more divine than the last
In the great international chaos
Of this existence strewn across table and walls
Letters unanswered
Telegrams petits bleus
Of rendezvous business deals invitations
Here's the Russian coachman with the golden top hat
Just arrived from Kiev in Marinetti's pocket
A guitar
The white clay pipe
From Gambier à Paris
And the fresh young tulip
Of a girl who isn't coming back
On a trop répété cette parole "Je t'aime"

In every language
Hundreds of books all lined up
Repugnant as cadavers of old friends
Stendhal's the only one you can still read
In the floral armchair between tea and fruit salad
But the inscriptions in charcoal and chalk
On the door and the walls
Keep better time with the bewildered music of a day juicy as a ripe orange
"I'm at the café across the street"
"A. came at 5 Will be back"
"Salaud tu poses tout le temps des lapins! Germaine"
"Anita Caputo model 57 rue de Vaugirard"
(Rue de Vaugirard! I shed half my best tears there in vain
On a sofa scented with Jicky perfume and ether)
"R.L.L. 3.75"
"Remember to write Irene at Fondukleskaja D. 27"
"N.V. 104 Prussian blue 3"
Mysteries mysteries on sale cheap
Paid for with 24 hours of youth per day
Atelier ateliers
Compass roses
Joy beauty miseries
Dissolved in the depths of harmonies
In the cubic vat minute by minute
Just open the crystal vials and magic spells will smother you
Pull aside the curtain
Facing the street that rises and falls
The twilight that festers in the white basin
Smokestacks towers chimneys stars
Cities of Europe deep in the night
And trains speeding through lit up like theaters
trains laden with nostalgia
All the earth comes to rest
Halcyon bird tired of flying
Unfurled like a flag over our hearts

There has been no activity for the Friday Morning Life Drawing Group since we were forced by Covid 19 laws to abandon our getting together after our last meeting on 13/3/20 ; so there is nothing to report, only that some drawers have told me they're missing the activity and wanting to get back soon.

I have been contemplating retiring from being the facilitator for the group for some time and this seems like a good time to do that. I started the group in 1984 after finishing a TAFE 'Art Certificate 4' course at Penrith where I was introduced to life drawing.

If you think you'd like to be the facilitator I'm sure you could. I'll give you all the help you ask for. Please give me a ring on 0422 088 741 or the Art Centre's President Alison 0416 957 688. Don't think you need to be a good drawer but being mentally flexible would be helpful. It's a labour of love and you'd have the opportunity to do things your way.

There are \$420.00 in our funds. Drawers come when they want to. Sessions are from 10am to 1pm on Friday mornings, the fee is \$20.00 per session and the model receives \$120.00. For the yearly drawing exhibition, we have always had enough funds to pay for the venue without having to charge the drawers extra to exhibit. The next exhibition is booked at the Community Hall on 18th/19th/20th September .

Sincerely,

Joy Myers Creed



"Over the years I've painted and drawn lots of trees. I like to think of them as very individual portraits. This is another 'PORTRAIT OF ANGOPHORA'.

It's one of my most recent works and I don't think it's finished yet. Not signed, 61cm X 122cm, collage & acrylic." Joy Myers Creed

Tomas Tranströmer (1931 – 2015)

FURTHER IN

It's the main highway leading in,
the sun soon down.
Traffic backs up, creeps along,
it's a torpid glittering dragon.
I am a scale on that dragon.
The red sun all at once
blazes in my windshield,
pouring in,
and makes me transparent.
Some writing shows
up inside me--words
written with invisible ink
appearing when the paper
is held over a fire.
I know that I have to go far away,
straight through the city, out
the other side, then step out
and walk a long time in the woods.
Walk in the tracks of the badger.
Growing hard to see, nearly dark.
Stones lie about on the moss.
One of these stones is precious.
It can change everything.
It can make the darkness shine.
It's the light switch for the whole country.
Everything depends on it.
Look at it . . . touch it . . .

translated by Robert Bly

Richard's Musings

IMPRESSIONS AT GLENBROOK LAGOON

The ribcage of the encased paperbark
Holds a heart layered but wholesome
The organic shoots long for a home
In you, in me – as we too tremble
On the brink of something too wonderful
To behold, down here, today, if ever
In this dark mirror of water, we glimpse
Our true self, naked.



Richard Cutler. "EXPECTATION", 100cm X 70cm, oil on paper.

Maya Angelou (1928 – 2014) STILL I RISE

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may tread me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops.
Weakened by my soulful cries.

Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own back yard.

You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise.

BMCAC STUDIO



Artists Studio lease available \$120/pw



Cnr of Hare & Moore St,
Glenbrook, NSW

Artists Benefits

- Publicised weekend exhibition at the closure of the residence including plinth and hanging system use.
- 3 month or 6 month lease option.
- A hexagonal yurt studio of approximately 41 square meters
- Become part of a thriving arts community at BMCAC.
- Surrounded by a world heritage national park.
- Close to Glenbrook village, clubs and transport (bus/trains)
- Invitation to exhibit work in member exhibitions during year of lease
- Be inspired by visiting the many public and private galleries throughout the Blue Mountains.
- Exposure to a network of professional Blue Mountains practicing artists.
- Free advertising through BMCAC socials for your exhibition of completed works/performance at BMCAC
- Temporary full membership of BMCAC which includes
 - o access to printmaking facilities
 - o access to ceramic facilities
 - o access to life drawing
 - o access to 1 free weekly class of your choice

For more information please contact bmcac.mail@gmail.com
View www.bmcac.org.au for more information about BMCAC