

Australian artists
Bringing
art home

AMONG THE MANY GREAT THINGS ABOUT THE GREAT SOUTHERN LAND IS THE ARTISTS USING ITS MAGIC AS INSPIRATION - LET'S MEET 20 OF OUR BEST AND BRIGHTEST

Words JESSICA BELLEF



ELIZA GOSSE

elizagosse.com

Eliza's work explores the clean lines of mid-century design rendered in muted colour palettes tinted with nostalgia. The young Sydney-based painter reports she always wanted to be an artist – a slight detour into an architectural degree has given form to Eliza's strong artistic voice.

Australia, as we all know, is lush with natural beauty and creative talent that can capture that beauty. What better way to bring life, colour and meaning into your interiors than with works by Australian-born-and-bred artists who explore the splendour of their native land and the interesting nuances of everyday Aussie life? After all, home is where the art is.

We've put a spotlight on the local talent we love and compiled a list of 20 contemporary Australian painters who are definitely worthy of filling at least part of your wall space. From moody seascapes off rugged coastlines to happy snippets of suburbia, these works cover a range of artistic styles and price points. You will be certain to find something that serves up splashings of joy, inspiration and satisfaction.

ASH LESLIE

ashleslieart.com

"I don't think a creative path was ever really a choice for me, more just a natural progression," explains Ash, who trained as a graphic designer but refocused on painting a handful of years ago. Based on the NSW south coast, her works explore a balance of fluidity and structure, underpinned by a calming organicism.



Above: Ash Leslie with pieces including (from top left) 'Merlot Moments', 'Rolling Storm', 'Three Cheeses', 'Push The Button' and 'Ground Hog Day'; and (right) 'Lost in a Rainbow'. **Below:** 'Untitled 02' by Michelle Butler Nakamarra typifies her stimulating, uplifting work. Other artworks, unknown titles. **Opposite:** Eliza Gosse in front of 'Blending In At The Tennis Club'; her work 'Gravel Crunched As They Drove Away' (left).

MICHELLE BUTLER NAKAMARRA

Find Michelle's work via artmob.com.au

Michelle began painting in her early teens, guided by her grandmothers. Born in 1992 in Alice Springs, the Pintupi artist from WA depicts the sacred sites of women's ceremonies, the Seven Sisters, and water-dreaming stories connected to the Western Desert. Each piece is an instinctual expression of the deep beauty and significance of Country. >



PHOTOGRAPHY (ELIZA GOSSE) EVERLASTSECOND



DYLAN COOPER

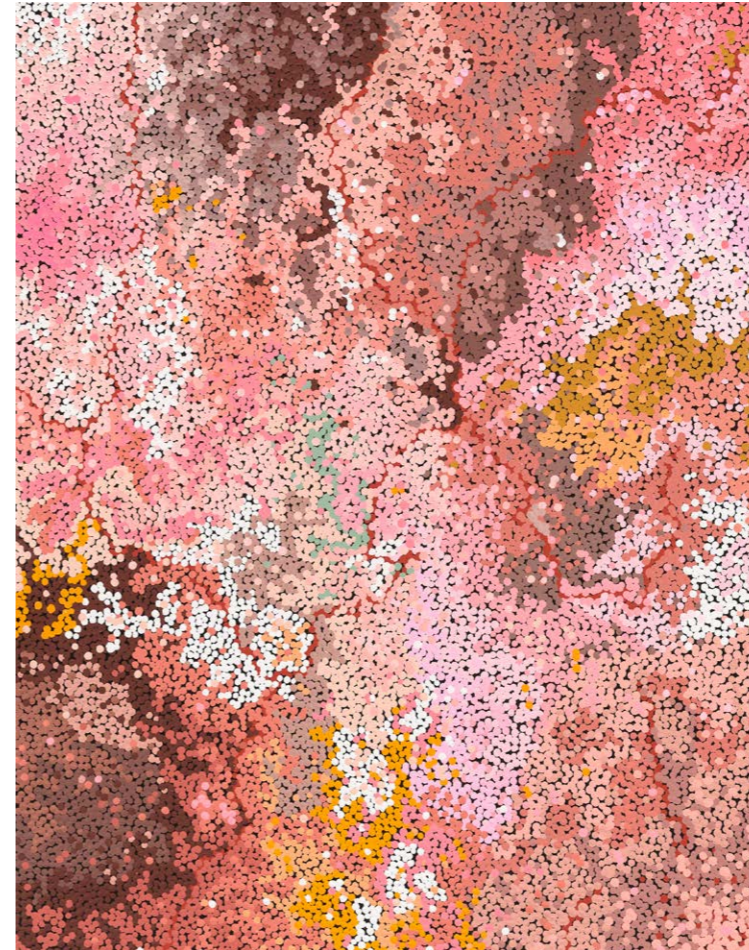
dylancooperart.com

Dylan found his true calling in 2010 when he hung up his chef's whites and enrolled in art school. His work is infused with happy memories, capturing a clarity of light that washes over the built and natural landscapes of Australia. In 2019, Dylan was the artist in residence at the Anna Spiro-designed Halcyon House on the NSW far north coast, where he is based.



This page: Dylan Cooper (top) specialises in works such as the acrylic-on-canvas 'Milk And Honey' (above). **Opposite page, top:** As well as being the creator of pieces such as 'Atnwengerrp - My Great Grandmothers Country' (left) and 'Dreaming in my Grandmothers Country', Jade Akamarre runs Pwerle Gallery. **Opposite page, bottom:** Skye's large-scale oil/acrylic-on-canvas creations include the 122cm x 91cm 'Watch Me Grow'.

"IT IS AN *honour* TO TAKE WHAT I HAVE LEARNT FROM MY *elders* ONTO CANVAS" JADE

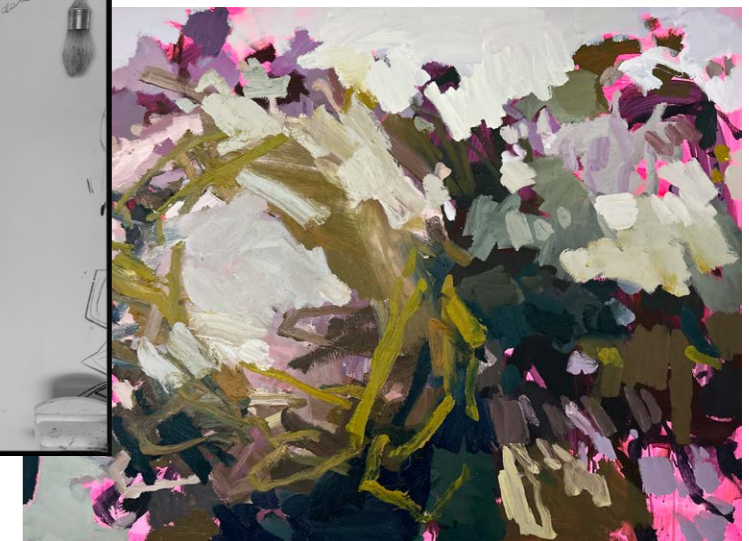


PHOTOGRAPHY (JADE AKAMARRE APOLLO VISUAL (LLEWELLYN SKYE) THE HOLISTIC PHOTOGRAPHER (DYLAN COOPER) DAMIEN CAUCI (MILK AND HONEY) SARAH COOPER

LLEWELLYN SKYE

llewellynskye.com.au

Skye's exuberant abstract expressions are realised with confident brush strokes and bold, intoxicating hues. The works are large in scale and lush with emotion and energy. Originally a hairdresser, Skye re-trained at the National Art School in Sydney. She exhibits frequently, sells internationally to places including Italy and France and calls the Gold Coast home.



Beautiful STYLE



JADE AKAMARRE

pwerle.com.au

Jade is an Aboriginal artist and Alyawarre woman hailing from a line of prominent First Nations artists, including her grandmother Barbara Weir and great-grandmother Minnie Pwerle. Based in South Australia, Jade established the Pwerle Aboriginal Art Gallery in 2015, following in the footsteps of her renowned art dealer father, Fred Torres. >



SAXON QUINN

saxonjquinn.com

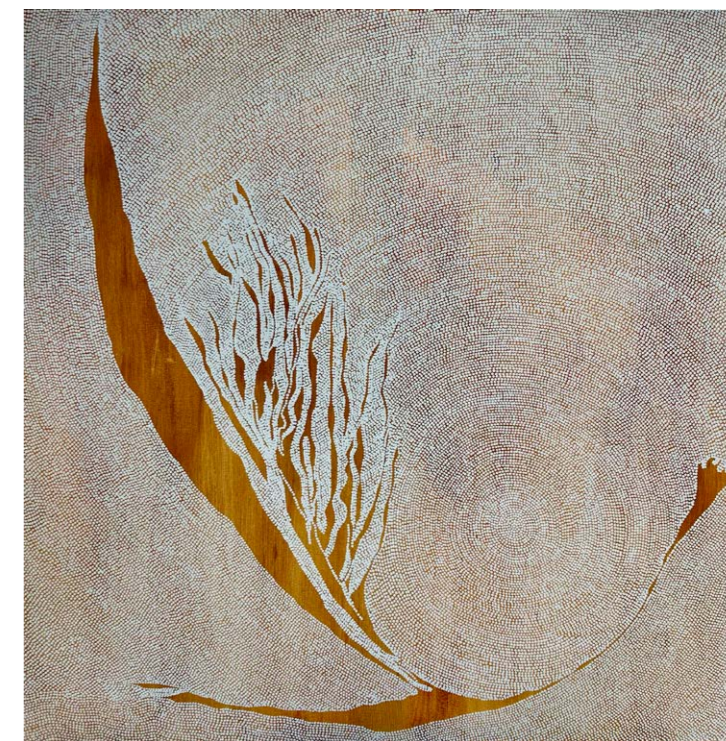
Charged with the energy of the urban landscape, Saxon's work is shaped by his background in graphic design and an interest in the symbolism of contemporary culture. The self-taught artist grew up in country Victoria, spent over 15 years deep in the bustle of Melbourne, and is now based in the Northern Rivers region of NSW.



KONSTANTINA

@konstantina_aboriginalart

Konstantina is a proud Gadigal woman of the Eora nation whose art practice provides a modern narrative for all Australians to better understand First Nations culture. Her artwork tells of Gadigal history and relates the challenges and inspirations she feels being a mum, a storyteller, a woman and, above all, an Aboriginal person connected to Country.



Above: 'Negative Space - Djurali' by Indigenous artist Konstantina. Below: Anya Brock's vivid creations include 'Hide in the Implications'. Opposite, top: Saxon Quinn in front of (from left) 'The Wu', 'Room With A View', 'Toothless Smile', 'Tee', 'Sweet River' and 'Flatbush Ave' (also seen far left). Opposite, bottom: Bianca Harrington and her 'Glass Pitcher' print.



ANYA BROCK

anyabrock.com

Hailing from Western Australia and with a background in international fashion, Anya is a prolific creator whose pieces are splashed with bright colours and life-affirming vigour. She has also found popularity as a muralist for public and private spaces, spreading her instantly recognisable mark-making style across Australia and Los Angeles. >



"I WORK FROM MY *imagination*, INTUITION AND INCLINATION FOR *experimentation*" BIANCA

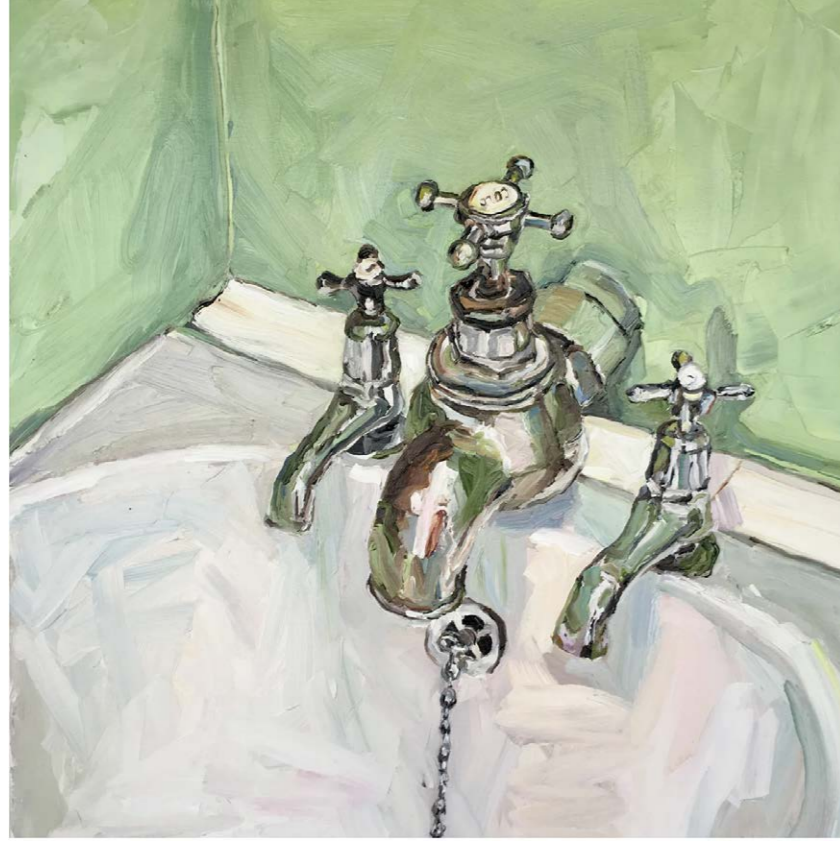
BIANCA HARRINGTON

biancaharrin.com

Quiet simplicity and a folk-art naivety define this Melbourne-born artist's style. Prior to picking up a paintbrush, Bianca trained as a milliner in the UK, where she developed an eye for balancing texture, form and colour. An exploration of botanical illustration formed a stepping stone to the work she produces today.



PHOTOGRAPHY (KONSTANTINA) DAVIDE BALDUZZI (SAXON QUINN) CINTHIA FRANCA OTHER ARTWORK (BIANCA HARRINGTON) SYNCHRONISED DIANTHUS BIANCA HARRINGTON



STEF TARASOV

steftarasov.com

Stef's childhood in rural NSW – “where nothing much grew except tussock and rock,” she says – trained her eye to search for poetry in the simple moments. “I am very attracted to the stories that seemingly banal scenes or objects evoke, and am compelled to find their beauty and form,” shares the oil painter.

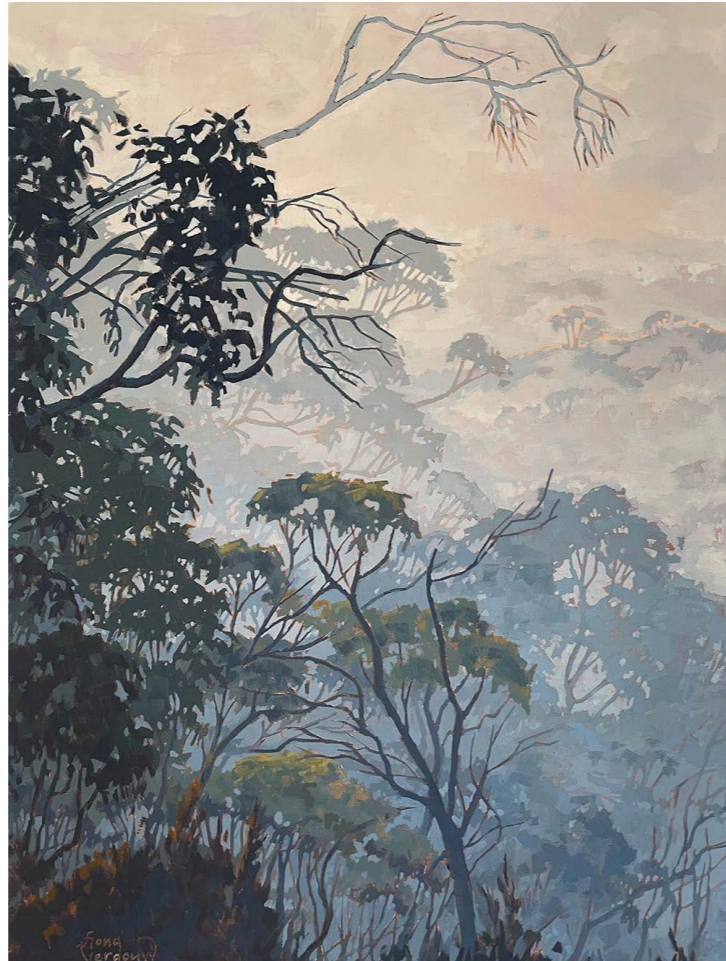
“WHEN I PAINT, I re-live MY EXPERIENCES IN THE Tasmanian wilderness” FIONA



FIONA VERDOUW

fionaverdouw.com

Fiona's artworks transport viewers deep into the Australian bush, with scenes capturing the beguiling atmosphere of the Tasmanian wilderness. She grew up in Adelaide but moved to Tassie for love in the late 1990s. Enthralled by the distinctive shapes, light and colours in her surroundings, Fiona started painting in earnest in 2016.



Top: Stef Tarasov's simple, but striking, 'The Faucets'. **Above:** Fiona Verdouw's original oil paintings include (above) 'Changing States' and 'Lead The Way' and (right) 'Where There's Smoke...'. **Opposite:** Landscape artist Emily Imeson with 'Floating Qld Waratah turned Flame Tree Season' draped over her Toyota 'Troopy', which she lived in for a couple of years with her partner while travelling and painting.



EMILY IMESON

@emilyimeson

Emily's formative years spent in the NSW Northern Rivers fused her deep connection to the land. Her expressive works are inquiries into the changing climate and the relationship between humans and delicate ecological systems. Immersing herself in the natural environment plays a vital role in Emily's art practice. >

PHOTOGRAPHY (EMILY IMESON) ABBIE MELLE (STEF TARASOV) RICH COOPER (FIONA VERDOUW) PHIL GLADDISH OTHER ARTWORKS (STEF TARASOV) ROAD TO NUMERAL (A STEF TARASOV (RIGHT) UNKNOWN ARTIST (LEFT))



BELINDA JEANES

@belinda_jeanes_art

A childhood in the country and a career in environmental science have led Belinda, a self-taught artist from Perth, to explore botanicals and the minutiae of life in her work. Patterns and shadowy tones prevail, as does a sense of melancholy tempered by the beauty of her still-life arrangements.



Top: Belinda Jeanes' collection of works includes (above) the acrylic-on-wooden panel 'Storm Chaser'. **Below:** Sue Tesoriero surrounded by paintings in various stages. Her oil-on-board 'Interior With Window And Sascha's Flowers After Matisse' (left). **Opposite:** Allira Henderson works on 'Exile, The Lonely Haze' on site in Hopetoun, WA. Her pieces (top) 'Quiet Creeps, Pump Station' and (bottom) 'Distant Wanderings'.



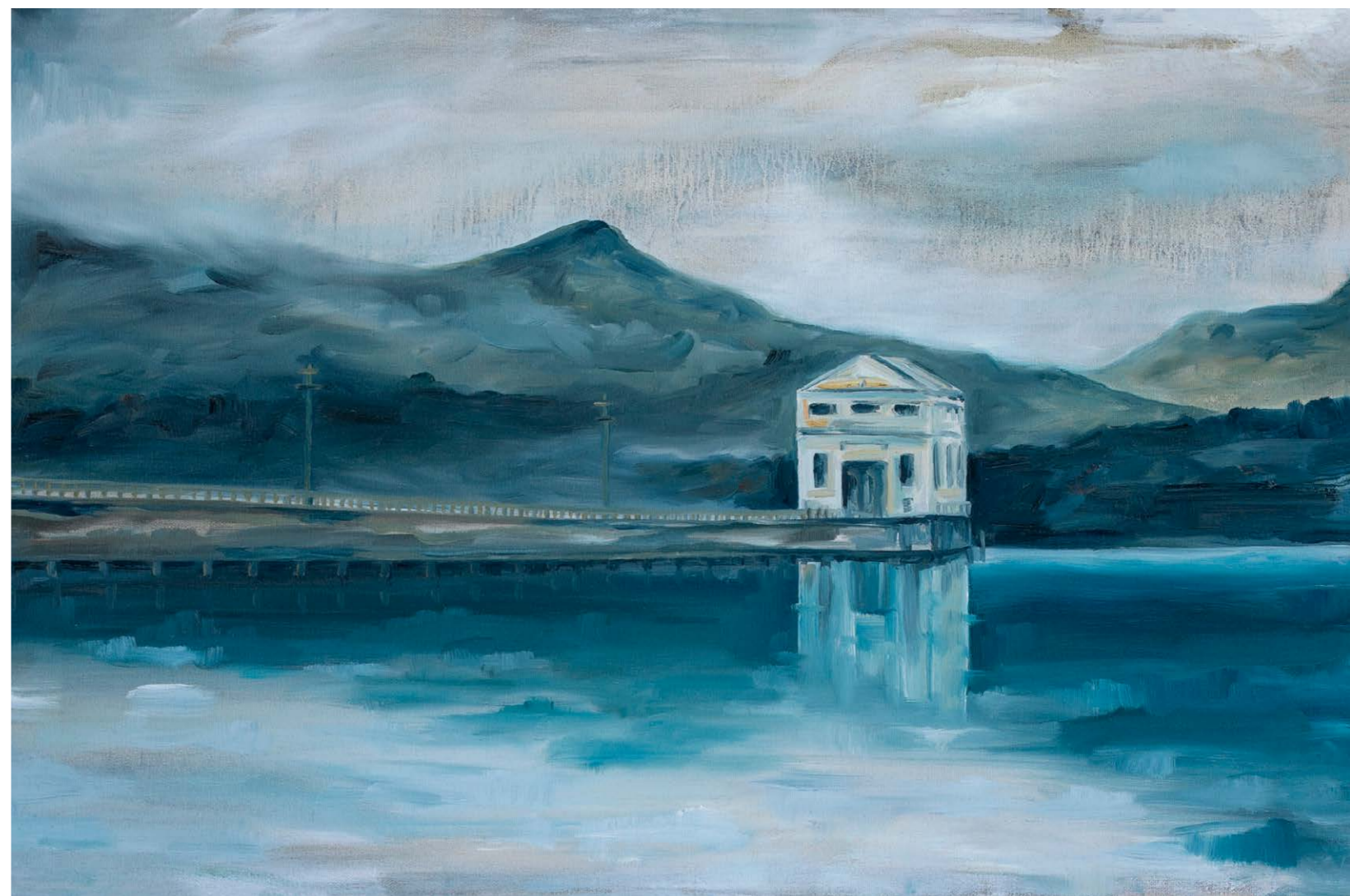
SUE TESORIERO

@sue_tesoriero_art

From her studio in Sydney, Sue captures the domestic and lends a sense of nostalgia to everyday life and familiar settings. "No matter the style of the interior, they all embrace colour, pattern, decoration, creativity and, most importantly at this time, joy and a sanctuary to those within," she says.



PHOTOGRAPHY (SUE TESORIERO) CLARE CARTER (ALLIRA HENDERSON AND HER ARTWORKS) DENE BINGHAM (DRAWING ON SHELF (SUE TESORIERO) McLEAN EDWARDS

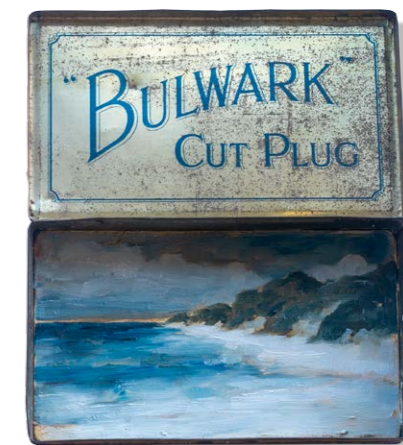


"THE OCEAN IS SUCH A BEAUTIFUL AND *unchartered* PLACE, *wild* AND UNTAMED" ALLIRA

ALLIRA HENDERSON

allirahenderson.com

Allira's work emotes the rugged romance of Esperance on Western Australia's south coast. She has experimented with subject matter over the last 20 years, but the call of the ocean is too strong. "I am always drawn back to the sea," she says. "Its inspiration knows no bounds." >





Left: Lucy Hersey at her garden studio, where she produces art like the ground-earth-and-clay-on-cotton 'Storm over Westernport' (below). Bottom: Gabrielle Penfold's 'Untitled' depicts a classic Bondi Beach scene. Opposite, top: Susan Simonini and her acrylic-on-canvas 'The Olive Tree'. Opposite, bottom: "The dots represent the people who call this land home," says Ethan-james Kotiau of 'Iningai' and his heritage in central Queensland.

LUCY HERSEY

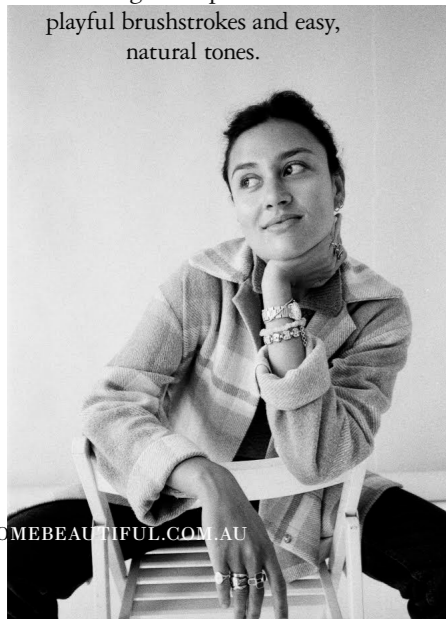
lucyhersey.com
Sustainability and collaboration with nature are at the core of Lucy's art. Based in Gippsland, Victoria, she collects clay and plant matter – such as berries, mushrooms and lichen, seeds, nuts and leaves – to mix her own earthy paint pigments. "For me, the raw elements determine the outcome of the painting," says Lucy. "I let the pigments guide me and lead me."



"I FEEL SO *privileged* TO BE ABLE TO DO THIS WORK" LUCY

GABRIELLE PENFOLD

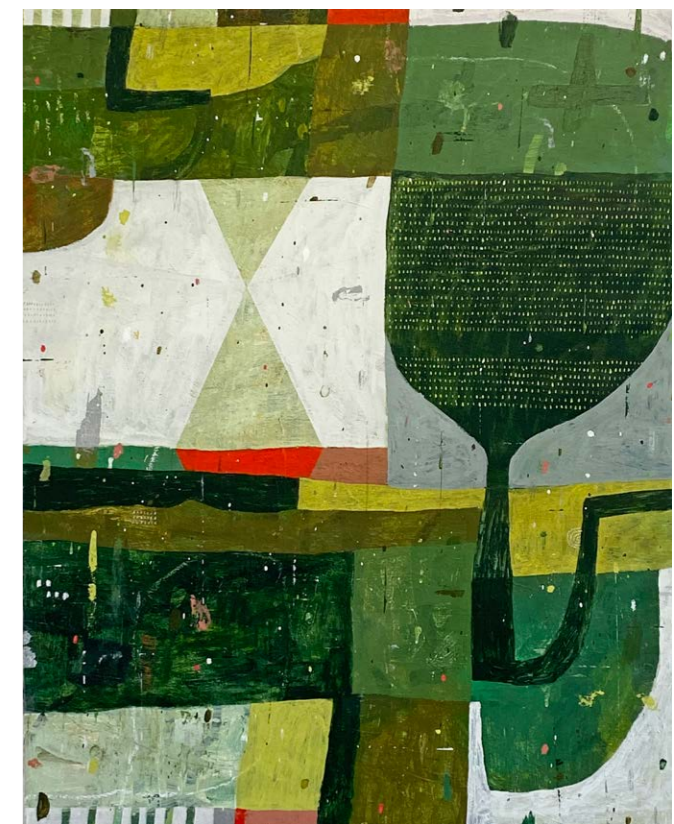
gabriellepenfold.com
Sun-soaked ocean dips, alfresco meals in the golden hours, adventures in hidden holiday hamlets – these are the moods and moments of Sydney-based Gabrielle's paintings. She reports that getting outside and living life is essential to her process, translating her experiences with playful brushstrokes and easy, natural tones.



SUSAN SIMONINI

susansimonini.com

A move from Queensland to the picturesque north-west of Tasmania inspired Susan to take up painting again after years of working with clay (some of her ceramics are seen, left). "I am fascinated with the gridded, agricultural landscape that I observe on my frequent travels along winding country roads," she shares.



BUYING INDIGENOUS ART, ETHICALLY

Supporting First Nations artists is a beautiful way to celebrate and show respect for the world's oldest living culture. But purchasing artwork from unethical operators can be damaging to both the industry and the livelihood of Aboriginal artists.

Leah Paige Bennet of Leah Paige Designs is a Western Australian designer who creates spaces, textiles and furniture inspired by her Indigenous heritage. She is a proud Wudjari Noongar woman with family ties to the Ravensthorpe region and is on a mission to showcase the complexity of her culture in ways that are ethical and aesthetic.

"Every time an Aboriginal artist paints, they are putting a piece of themselves into the work, along with over 65,000 years of culture and knowledge," explains Leah. "It is not just about respecting the time, energy and effort that goes into the work, but also respecting the significance of the knowledge being shared."

Leah offers this advice on buying Indigenous art:

1. Research the artist and what their work represents. It's important to know an artwork's provenance or source.
2. Buy artwork that is meaningful to the Country that you are on.
3. Respect the price of original Indigenous art and avoid purchasing cheap, mass-produced prints that misappropriate First Nations culture.
4. Ask questions. A gallery that is operating respectfully will be transparent about its relationship with an artist.

Also find out if the dealer or gallery is a signatory of the Indigenous Art Code, which was created to ensure the ethical conduct of art dealers and fair treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists. Visit indigenousartcode.org to learn more. For more about Leah, visit leahpaigedesigns.com

PHOTOGRAPHY (ETHAN-JAMES KOTIAU) CALEB STEWART (LUCY HERSEY) KARLU DUCKETT



ETHAN-JAMES KOTIAU

landrivercreeks.com

Ethan-james is an emerging contemporary Aboriginal artist with a strong tie to his ancestral roots, the Gunggari and Iningai tribes in central Queensland. Through his work, Ethan-james aims to communicate and preserve his Indigenous culture, drawing inspiration from his childhood and knowledge shared by his grandmother and elders of the Iningai tribe. 🍷

