



## EDITORIAL

The subject of portraiture was definitely in the air when this issue was planned. **David Newman-White** is highly regarded as a portraitist and a teacher and his portraits have travelled across the world yet he laments that older women are rare subjects for his works. So it is good to see photographer **Carole Hampshire's** studies of jeweller Cindy Smith showing what memorable subjects older women can be. Artist **Olga Cironis** utilises photography to stunning effect in her projects, particularly striking being the portraits of descendants of the Afghan cameleers who came to Australia in the mid-19th century. In another project involving her Greek family's history Cironis makes a powerful statement with her own portrait with lips sewn.

Some years ago artist **Jeff Rigby** researched the history of Arthur Streeton's famous work *Fire's On!* which is one of the Art Gallery of NSW's best loved exhibits. His research was part of the *Land out of Time* project which was exhibited at Penrith Regional Gallery and the Lewers Bequest in 2004 where a group of artists re-visited the sites in the Blue Mountains made famous in paintings in the decades following the first

European crossing of the Mountains. Jeff Rigby went in search of the now disused Lapstone Deviation Tunnel, the site of an extraordinary engineering feat in 1891 recorded in detail by the young Arthur Streeton. In this issue Rigby has now gone much further. He has been able to detail how the tunnel and its hundreds of workers became the subjects of Streeton's remarkable work which depicts the dangers faced and the daily heroism of these workers doing back-breaking manual work in 100° temperatures. At the time Streeton was, to quote Julian Ashton, 'a slim debonair young man of about 24 years of age, with a little pointed beard and a fair complexion, who when he wasn't painting, was quoting Keats and Shelley'. Shown here is part of a letter to Theodore Finke which Streeton wrote in October 1891, which includes a sketch of the work on the tunnel (now in the State Library's collection). While the site today is immediately beside the busy Great Western Highway at Glenbrook, it has been almost entirely



subsumed by nature, graffiti covers the tunnel entrance and surrounds and the ground is water-logged. It is hoped that Rigby's story will encourage local authorities to make this scene of an epic feat of railway engineering accessible to walkers and visitors and so remind artists of today what artists of the past were prepared to endure in order to create memorable works.

Ceramics teacher **Robert Linigen's** home was destroyed in 2013 in a catastrophic bushfire. He tells how he has used glazes made from the ashes to help heal that loss. **Ian Swift's** artworks include some of the 56 kilos of flip flops he collected which had washed up on our pristine beaches. We hope you enjoy another inspirational issue.

Carolynne Skinner