



## EDITORIAL

EVERY ARTIST we write about in this new issue of the magazine lives and breathes their art, every day of their life. To some this may seem an exaggerated claim, but you and I know it to be true and we take it for granted. That's who artists are. If by chance they earn a living with their art then we are pleasantly surprised. For most of the time, isn't it just a hobby, or simply a certain way of living – their choice?

How many artists cultivate, actually grow, their subject matter? [Lucy Culliton](#) has just had a highly successful exhibition at King Street Gallery in Sydney. Two years ago she planted seeds in her garden to grow the flowers which she then painted for this exhibition. She calls this gardening style *Planting to Paint*. Read her story in this issue. And you can read here too about an unusual, disturbing to some, artist whose work may already have grabbed your attention. [Locust Jones](#) constantly reads and researches current events and news mainly of the Middle East which he then transforms into confronting artworks. His life is totally, utterly and completely absorbed by the daily events of horror and brutality and inhumanity which he digests and regurgitates as artworks to serve as a grim warning to us all. The multi-talented [Elizabeth Walton](#) has both interviewed and photographed these two unusual people.

A landscape artist like [Neil Taylor](#) who tells us he's 'still a white guy lost in a strange continent', helps us begin to interpret our amazing land. [WeiZen Ho](#)'s exquisite performances trace an ancient pathway from another far-off continent. And slowly we begin to understand more of who we are and where we find ourselves.

[Dianne Conomos](#) can spend up to 800 hours working on one Chinese inspired embroidery, an art form which has gripped her for over 15 years. The HSC art students whose work was selected

for exhibition in this year's travelling [ArtExpress](#) clearly spent hours, weeks and months working on their chosen projects. Poets like [Philip Hammial](#) spend much of their time participating at poetry conventions, unpaid, and like Philip they are constantly writing and – unsupported usually - publishing their poetry (Hammial has just published his 33rd collection) - because it is their passion and they can't NOT do it. Writers notoriously make the smallest sum for a published book, never enough to sustain them and so they also work at other jobs. The artists of every medium who organise and participate in arts events in communities, such as the [Art of Lunch](#) which we describe here, all have a day job in order to survive. They do what they do because it is their life.

When I look at this issue and hold it in my hands, these 72 pages, I think of what it represents in intensity, passion, extraordinary ability, love and incredible energy and I feel as though this is what powers the world. Any society which exists predominantly for commerce, strung together by only politics and economics, fails to experience the wonder of what such creativity is able to achieve.

Why does it have to be made so difficult for these passionate people to be the ones to lift us and remind us of the power of art. Does **any** society recognise the importance of artists to the extent that they simply pay them to be who they are, to give them the freedom to practise their art and not have to work at some pedestrian job to survive? Perhaps an artist's universal living wage? Meanwhile arts publications and galleries are steadily disappearing everywhere, but sometimes it is tough economic times which ignite the creative urge to action, simply because it doesn't rely on money in order to survive.

We hope you enjoy this issue and reading about the many talented and unusual people we have in our midst.

Carolynne Skinner