

Generous collaboration—frequently without financial reward—is commonplace within the arts. Evidence is how musicians, dancers, singers and performers have all piled in to entertain us *gratis* on the internet. One hopes that for them this is largely fill-in time till audiences are permitted to return.

It's a bit more complex for visual artists. Beyond this disruption will galleries and exhibitions continue to be the economic mainstay of visual artists and craftspeople? One way galleries and artists have overcome the loss of a physical audience and income is by going online. Susan Cochrane describes the innovative changes which GANG GANG GALLERY in Lithgow introduced when their important *Hands on Clay* exhibition had to be cancelled early this year. Creating virtual galleries with the aim of selling online is becoming



Rose Wilson with subject Tom and portrait *The Stonemason* (pages 5-15)

a necessity rather than a sideline for many gallery owners. But take away the personal contact and the social aspect of gallery exhibitions and you take away a very important part of community life. Add more and more virtual galleries to the smorgasbord, in a hugely competitive international environment and... who knows? There may be some winners but there may well be many losers.

How to earn a living is hugely problematic for all artists. What about competitions—is this a good way for an artist to earn some money? The notion of competing for a cash prize against many equally talented fellow artists doesn't sit comfortably with everyone but many artists love them and there are bumper numbers of entries to the major competitions this year. Who was it who said that before entering a competition check who the judges are—that will give you an indication of what your chances will be. From the other side, the wonderful Nadine Amadio (famed arts writer) warned me in the 1990s against ever accepting to be a judge. She had relented and

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joined her friend Dame Joan Sutherland in judging the Moet & Chandon prize and lived to regret it. It can be divisive and you will lose friends.

Elizabeth Walton interviewed the winner and some on the shortlist of the SHIRLEY HANNAN PORTRAITURE PRIZE and shares some interesting insights. My favoured style of art competition is an acquisitive award such as is followed by the Kedumba Drawing Award thereby adding high quality works to its collection. It is now in a permanent home and shows a rotating selection of works by the country's best artists. What would be amazing for all artists would be for council areas to introduce an art levy on all public & commercial (why not?) residential new developments.

It would be impossible for those who did not experience the sounds, the smoke and the fear and confusion of an approaching bushfire to really know what it is like. The smell, the dead and injured animals and wildlife, the devastated townships; the land laid completely bare. For many people, including many artists, what has come to the fore is how passionately we care for our animals and wildlife and how we will go to any lengths to ensure their safety, wellbeing and continued survival. ANNA CULLITON is a wildlife carer of macropods and wombats, when she isn't telling stories in ceramic. Young artist WILL HAZZARD is on the autism spectrum, and with his parents assists WIRES at the family homestead which has been turned into a haven for wildlife.

Our cover artist DIANE GARRETT was artist, curator, gardener and archivist of a pioneering 'slow food' restaurant. An artist with a multiplicity of creative talents, RITA ORSINI invited friends and students *In the Footsteps of My Shoes* and we show you the entertaining results in French and English. And for something completely different, there's fashion historian, designer and scenographer with a vivid imagination, Helene Markstein and her quirky *FrockQWerks*.

WA sculptor ANDREW HICKSON has spent much of his career working larger than life on unusual commissions, including a giant crocodile, kangaroo and ram. His is an extraordinary legacy which Julie Parsons wanted to share in this issue. She also contributes her detailed research on the life of a young man, RAYMOND MOULT-SPIERS, an artist who kept secret diaries during the 2nd World War, most poignantly while a prisoner of war of the Japanese, building the Thai Burma Railway.

I have many bowerbirds in my garden and when I noticed a blue peg had been dropped on the path – a little too heavy for a male bowerbird to carry to his nest? — I picked it up and removed the clip so that it became two pieces and returned them to the garden. When I checked barely minutes later, both had gone... presumably to adorn beautiful bowerbird nests nearby. We are not the only artistic ones.

Carolynne Skinner, Editor