

**Artist** VIOLA DOMINELLO



Left: *Trunk line 1* (detail), oil on board 183 x 28.5 cm. Right: *Falling tide, Marramarra* oil on board 30 x 40 cm

#### Information from Viola Dominello

*I feel the Hawkesbury River is part of my backyard. It is immediate, I don't have to travel far to get there and it always appears 'undiscovered' to me. I work en plein-air in many locations – but both the Hawkesbury and Venice provide an interplay of light and water that is quite magical. I find it is uplifting and grounding at the same time.*

#### Studying

- Dominello's 'Trunk Line' series closely examines the rich surface texture of tree bark found in the Hawkesbury area. Her 'micro' observations recorded in thick impasto paint upon the paintings surface in the foreground are in contrast to the looser mark making in the background. The vertical panels tower above the viewer enhancing a sense of scale, space and the illusion of depth.
- Boats are a reoccurring motif in Dominello's paintings and a reminder the waterways have been a mode of transport for thousands of years. A sea kayak allows her to access unusual vantage points along the Hawkesbury's shore line from which to record her subject directly 'en plein-air'.
- Watch the Youtube video on John Russell, Australia's pioneer 'en plein-air' painter.  
<https://iview.abc.net.au/show/australia-s-lost-impressionist>
- To learn about contemporary approaches to 'en plein-air' painting look at the NSW Parliament Plein Air Painting Prize <https://pleinair.com.au/>
- Dominello describes the Hawkesbury River as Sydney's backdoor and Sydney Harbour as the front door. Consider this statement in compare with Peter Kingston's paintings of Sydney Harbour, such as "Passing Ferries".  
<https://sydneylivingmuseums.com.au/stories/about-bohemian-harbour-artists-lavender-bay>

#### Making

- Produce two artworks in response to the same landscape. The first artwork looking at the landscape from a distance or 'macro' (large scale) and the second artwork focussing on a detailed feature or 'micro' (close up). Display the outcomes side-by-side.
- Draw a landscape from three different vantage points, such as from above (birds eye view), below (worms eye view) or broadly panoramic. Choose one to develop as a painting with an emphasis on surface texture.
- Produce three 'en plein-air' paintings of a corner of your garden. Record at different times of day to see how the light and shadows change.

Viola Dominello exhibits with Stella Downer Fine Art: <http://www.stelladownerfineart.com.au/exhibitions-details/viola-dominello-3>