

Drawn Together Painted Apart

An exhibition celebrating en plein air drawing,
artistic practice and friendship through
representations of the lower Hawkesbury river.

11 October - 29 October 2016
Grace Cossington Smith Gallery



Hawkesbury Mangrove I

David Collins ink on paper 39 x 48cm

List of artists

Lyndall Beck

Susan Bray

David Collins

Peter Davis

Viola Dominello

Kay Donaldson

Narelle Hopley

Ana Pollak

Paul Stevens

Sally Stokes

Julia Tuke

Ana Young

Chris Welch

Peter Zanetti

Drawn Together Painted Apart

Opened by Stephen Curtis, 15 October 2016

Curated by Myffanwy Sharp

Thank you to:

Chris Welch for preparing the invitation

Mary Faith and Lisa Jones at Grace Cossington

Smith Gallery

A special thanks to our support teams who travel on our creative journeys with us

Drawn Together, Painted Apart celebrates human connectivity with the environment, creativity and each other. The aim of the proposed exhibition is to share this celebration and provide an insight into artistic practice and process. By going back to the beginning of art practice through mark making, drawing and recording the natural spaces around us, this group of artists moves forward in exploring a uniquely endemic view of the Hawkesbury landscape. The majestic and meandering contrasts of the Hawkesbury River and surrounding landscape, draws people to this region on the outskirts of Sydney. Richly populated by the original inhabitants, their marks and stories are etched widely through the Hawkesbury region and have influenced the artists of this group. Like a siren's call for artists, music makers and environmentalists, this landscape has become the focus of meeting, drawing, exchanging ideas and a source of inspiration to the art practitioners presented in this exhibition. Ebbing and swelling, the group evolved around a core of three artists who started drawing together *en plein air* whilst studying at Hornsby TAFE 35 years ago. Recognising the significance of looking and drawing to their growth as artists they determined to continue this practice. Several of the group live on the Hawkesbury and the others continue to come each week to draw, share a cuppa and immerse themselves in the landscape and process.

Weaving through further art studies, teaching and exhibiting paths, the group has continued to sketch and render Sydney's natural scapes and occasionally beyond. Each artist takes their personal reflections home to cocoons of creative potential where their ponderings, reflections and collated impressions evolve into insightful interpretations of the landscape, giving the viewer a connection to the Hawkesbury and sense of place. The act of collaboration whilst drawing pulls them back to a base skill, an anchor. The ensuing art work or contemplated piece, like a boat – a honed and present form, capable of inspiring and bringing emotion to the viewers.

Drawn Together, Painted Apart as an exhibition promotes the intimacy of mark making and drawing in the open, natural environment and the value of this to artists and creators to meditate on this country.

Through experiential referencing and direct observation, a rigorous process is begun that awakens self-awareness and transfers curiosity to others. Individually, these artists have followed divergent creative paths and yet privilege these moments of shared artistic communion. It is the vitality of collaboration and creativity that we want audiences and students to encounter.

The artists represented here in practice render an impression on paper, en plein air, which they then expand into more complex pieces in a studio environment. As an exhibition Drawn Together, Painted Apart reveals this as a process; the capturing of a moment followed by a stripping back and working up of ideas, line, form and tone into a cohesive visual concept. The process a part of the story behind the culminating work as much as the represented image.

With the hyper-activity of plugged in reality bringing about disembodied experience, the physicality and moment to mark-make or draw, in an unpredictable natural environment, both confronts but rejuvenates us. Art is a way for us to interpret and understand ourselves in our environment, our communities and specifically how we interpret a contemporary Australian aesthetic. The process of drawing and reflecting gives a moment to savour, provides a delicious slow-down contrapposto to the temporal pace of take-out technology. Our aim is that people will walk out of Drawn Together, Painted Apart and view the world, view the world uniquely. Pick up a tool – pen, pencil, device and capture a moment in an unbuilt space, contemplate it, change it, make sense of a random natural scene, and recognise what this is for them. And question: Why this reflection important for me, for others?

Myffanwy Sharp



The Hawkesbury River and its surrounding tributaries are at a critical point in history. Vulnerable flora and fauna habitats are at risk from developers who are pushing for multi-storey monstrosities. Until recently the backwaters of Brooklyn have escaped, retaining the charm of a bygone era. However, despite resistance and diligence, the grace and humbleness of the river culture and community is disappearing, while the health of earth's waterways becomes collateral damage to human shortsightedness.

The work for this exhibition references spaces – between the intake and outlet of breath; of water, land and air...pulsing... between what was, what is and what will be.

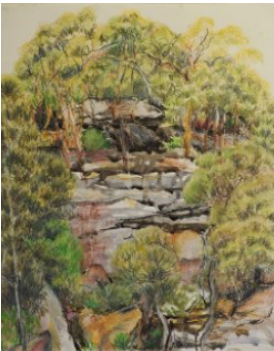
Lament For the Lost Places 2016
acrylic, oil and mixed media on hardboard
(six panels) 1100 x 920 mm

The Oyster Shed 2016
acrylic, oil and mixed media on hardboard
(four panels) 1450 x 510 mm

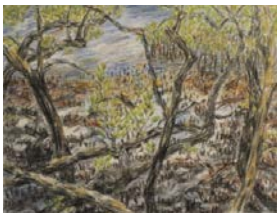
Brown's Boat Yard 2016
acrylic, oil and mixed media on hardboard
(eight panels) 1260 x 820 mm

Ana and the Dory 2016
Book Cover - ink and mixed media 10 etchings on
Hahnemeule paper (unique state - 2/6) (shown)

Susan Bray



'I have been doing plein air work with the group on the Hawkesbury for about two years, however, my original training was at Hornsby TAFE as most in the group. Since 2005 I have been concentrating on plein air works on paper, using watercolour and more recently wax crayon and gauche. I have made several painting trips to outback South Australia and the Northern Territory and two painting trips to France'



Cliff Face, Brooklyn

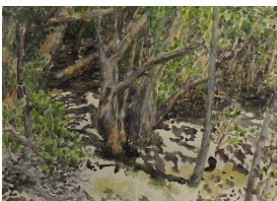
watercolour, wax crayon on paper
390 x 320 mm

Looking towards Dangar Island

watercolour, wax crayon on paper 305 x 455 mm

Mangroves Brooklyn

watercolour, wax crayon on paper 340 x 475 mm



Oyster Shed

watercolour, wax crayon on paper 230 x 305 mm

Low Tide

wax crayon on paper 230 x 305 mm

David Collins



The tide moves in and out among the mangrove, covering and exposing vast mudflats dotted with aerial roots. At high tide the reflected lines of trunks and branches play on the water surface.

The trees form a dense screen and lend themselves to gestural line, the roots to staccato marks. Windows enable glimpses to the river beyond but often appear as spatial contradictions, a push and pull between the representation of three dimensional space and the picture plane.



The Hawkesbury mangroves, breeding grounds for aquatic life, paintings and drawings.

Brooklyn Mangrove I 2016
ink on paper 530 x 745 mm (cover)

Brooklyn Mangrove II 2016
charcoal on paper 745 x 530 mm (top)

Dangar Jetty 2016
charcoal on paper 530 x 745 mm

Hawkesbury Jetty I 2016
oil on board 560 x 590 mm (bottom)

Hawkesbury Jetty II 2016
oil on board 560 x 590 mm

Mud Lines 2015-16
oil on canvas 1020 x 1020 mm

Peter Davis



'As a resident of the Hawkesbury I constantly feel refreshed by seeing the landscape through other artists' eyes, reaffirming my reasons for living here. After a long hiatus, drawing with this group rejuvenates my passion for plein air and provides an opportunity for a stimulating chat over coffee.'



Parsley Bay II 2016
oil on canvas 170 x 340 mm

Flatrock 2016
oil on canvas 275 x 340 mm

Parsley Bay I 2016
oil on canvas 225 x 325 mm

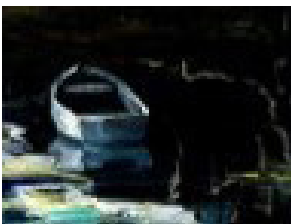
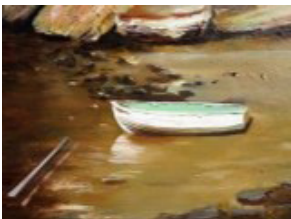
From McKell 2016
oil on canvas 325 x 680 mm

Viola Dominello



I enjoy being either in a dinghy, a dory or on the banks of the Hawkesbury river recording the untamed, unfolding landscape. Over time, images emerge using liquid watercolour washes on moleskine concertina sketchbooks.

The experience of this singular focus of working *en plein air* of looking and listening is a calming thing that is later recreated in the studio with larger painterly works.



Boats, Dangar Island 2016
oil on canvas 910 x 760 mm

Parsley Bay 2016
oil on board 300 x 400 mm

Moonlight in the Mangroves 2016
oil on board 200 x 510 mm

Hawkesbury Dinghy 2016
oil on canvas 1220 x 600 mm (not shown)

Mangroves 2016
oil on board 200 x 510 mm (not shown)

Kay Donaldson



Paul, Sally and I were *en plein air* drawing/painting after finishing Hornsby TAFE. I finished in 1981. We worked in Upper Hawkesbury, Windsor area, Webbs Creek, Cattai, Glenorie, Old Northern Road, Wisemans Ferry, Hornsby area, Berowra Waters and even Sydney Museum. All my drawings for this exhibition were *plein air* in water, oil and pastels.



Drawings

Images of Cheero Point in summer of 2015-16:

The weather was hot with water breeze, floating puffy clouds flicking the area with spots of light and colour. Changing high/ low tide exposing mudflats, sandstone oyster covered and crab movement of tides and clouds - gave me a lift in being of joy and wonder. Of place, it seemed to be an old Aboriginal midden with a rock hang blacked by old fires. The sound was also important, constant lap-lap of water, put-put of fishing boats going up Mooney Creek at high tide.



Paintings

Mangroves, Plein Air painted quickly

Peat Island on a starry, starry night

Painted from drawings and photos and memory, having driven past the island on the highway for many years in all weathers and times. At night the island had the appearance of a ship. With the island's history of being an asylum, the ship image is one of safety.

Sculpture

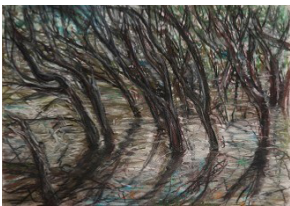
Random River Memories

Of birds, waves, bridge and mangroves. Made from found reo and tin - welded.

River Memory

Found objects - wood, metal and paint. Images of fishing, people, tinnies and moorings.

Narelle Hopley



Another artist with a long association to Hornsby TAFE, Narelle began studying Ceramics at Hornsby TAFE in the late '80s, followed in the mid '90s by the Sculpture Certificate. She gained success with awards and exhibitions, receiving commended in '97 and 1st Prize for Sculpture in '98 in the Gosford Art Prize. Back to TAFE in 2003-07 for the Diploma in Fine Arts, received the Printmaking Award, and Highest Pass in Diploma in 2007, then a few more years spent in printmaking and ceramics open studios.

Life after TAFE:: 'I feel fortunate to have found and been included in this plein air drawing group for the last five years enjoying great conversation and camaraderie, directed by our intention of meeting together to spend (at least) the day focused on art, observing and drawing en plein air, alone but together within the environs of Parsley Bay, Brooklyn, 'the mangroves and the Hawkesbury River.

This last year and for this exhibition, I have focused mostly on the mangroves; time spent deep in the gorgeous, bouncy, squishy, boggy and most essential wetlands – fertile ground in every sense! I've been drawing mainly in black and white, using pencil or charcoal, and sometimes for a bit of colour, some pastel.'

Escarpment II, Brooklyn

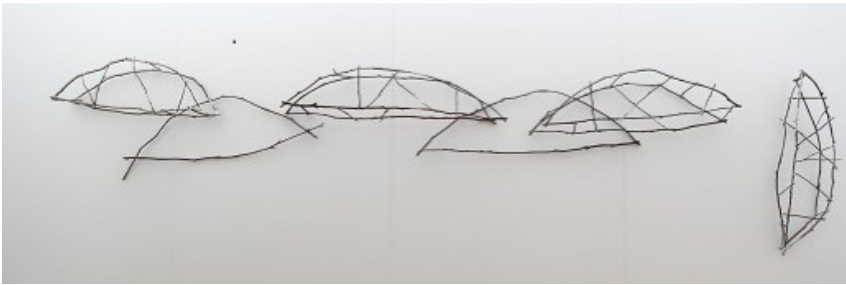
Mangroves 3, Brooklyn (not shown)

Tangled Transition

Rockface, Brooklyn

Rainy-day Mangroves, Brooklyn

Ana Pollak



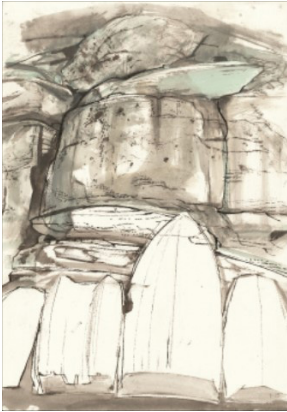
In the 29 years of living on Dangar Island, I have been able to explore the river's many bays, creeks and botanical wonders. My drawing, painting and sculpture express my wonder for this ancient estuary. The materials used in the painting and sculpture for this show have been sourced locally.

Twig Crossing 2016
twigs and clay 700 x 3700 mm

Leaf layers 2016
wash, oxides and charcoal 780 x 990 mm

River Nocturne 2016
ink 140 x 2800 mm

Paul Stevens



'Sally Stokes, David Collins and I upon starting post certificate studies at East Sydney found ourselves needing far more drawing than the syllabus at East Sydney provided. We realised that our experience at Hornsby TAFE with its strong focus on drawing as the foundation of the creative process was not a universally accepted known.

David, who had gone on to a degree course in Canberra, returned to Sydney and we established regular drawing trips in and around the city.

The group has evolved and changed over the years but has had at its core a strong, post Hornsby influence with a high proportion of ex-students and a few former teachers numbered in its ranks.

Our focus has been primarily landscape with the occasional diversion. We are a loose collective enjoying the shared interests of thermos coffee, conversation and the belief that rubbing our talents against Australia's rocks and trees with the sound of birds and insects in our ears the glint of sunlight on water, dappled shade across our paper, smooths us.'



Tinnies & Rockface 2015

Coal Loader 2014

Marra 2015

Snake Island (study) 2016

Snake Island 2016

Tinnies 2015

Sally Stokes



'The river calls me, with its ever changing lights, its unpredictable streams of colour across its surface, the weather reflected in its long history in the trees the rocks and the changes they reflect. The mud flats, where the tides show their continuity and the underworld, the crab sounds, the fish jump, the birds fly and land. Splash! Another pattern to observe. Rain falls as I glide a canoe, a pattern of dots. Clouds cover the sun, water changes colour. A boat that passed ten minutes before leaves a track on the water.'



Middens line the foreshore: people have lived and loved and died in this area for generations and generations. The patterns: in the water, in the varied shaped hills that line this river, the sky, in the trees and rocks within the hills. The textures of different trees, angophoras, banksias and rocks and grasses, and the ever moving skies all move me inside the experience and then beyond.



Drawing on Tuesdays with the group makes the mad thing of painting seem sane, mixing with others with a love of landscape, a love of art, conversations and coffee – a fellowship of sort. It's not a 'show and tell' group, hence our excitement for this exhibition. I will see what others have made from this landscape I call home.'

www.sallystokes.com.au

Moving waters 2015
oil on linen 760 x 1020 mm

Brooklyn Waters 2016
oil on canvas 920 x 920 mm

Snake Island, 2016
oil on linen 1000 x 1000 mm

Julia Tuke



Julia is a local Koolewong artist with a Diploma in Fine Arts from Hornsby TAFE. Since 2008 she has put much energy into landscape painting and has three times been a finalist for the Gosford Art Prize. Many of her works are the result of weekly *plein air* excursions made to the Hawkesbury over the past five years in company with other artists.



The unifying thought behind all the outdoor paintings is 'silence'. Julia hopes to capture a quietness in her work, a place where the viewer can find a moment of rest.



Mangroves Brooklyn 2
pastel on paper 220 x 220 mm

Looking Back at the Rail Bridge from Kangaroo Point
pastel on paper 270x 470 mm

Looking Across at Deerubin
pastel on paper 220 x 220 mm

View from Kangaroo Point
pastel on paper 700 x 500 mm

View from Deerubin
pastel on paper 700 x 500 mm

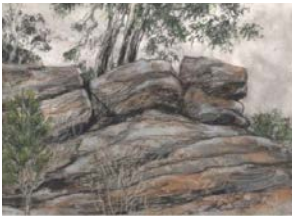
Chris Welch



'Visual odd-job man' Chris has worked across the arts in London, Toronto and since 1995 in Sydney. He has been drawing with the group for the last year.



'I spent my schooldays in a small estuarine town in North Devon so I felt an immediate affinity with the Hawkesbury and its daily ebbs and flows. I love the writhing, dynamic mangroves and the regeneration from fallen, rotting trees to the new shoots emerging from the mud. Up above on the escarpment the cycles are seasonal or fire induced. The geological erosion goes at its own pace. Nothing really stands still.'



Mangroves, High Tide 2015
charcoal on gessoed paper 580 x 457 mm

Woods behind the Mangroves 2016
charcoal on gessoed paper 580 x 457 mm

Above Parsley Bay 2015
carbon pencil, watercolour and conté stick on paper
520 x 420 mm

Mangrove Tree 2015
carbon pencil, watercolour and conté stick on paper
480 x 390 mm

Ana Young



'My paintings explore the notion of landscape as a series of ongoing journeys. Notations, studies recorded en plein air are reordered in the studio; memory alters the observed view; the immediacy of being in the landscape is transformed by the actions of painting and distance. I have focused on the mangrove walk and hillside at Parsley Bay in the village of Brooklyn. Revisiting the two sites triggers new responses and leads to closer discoveries.



I am not concerned with the depiction of a panoramic, all encompassing view. I prefer to remember small incidents: water lapping on mangroves, shadow play amongst dark tree forms, rocks angling towards the sky. "Being there", time in the landscape allows for a continuum of responses encouraging me to find new possibilities within the observed geographies of place.'



www.anayoung.com.au



Amongst the Shadows 3 2016

Amongst the Shadows 4 2016

Hillside 5-Parsley Bay 2015

Hillside 6-Parsley Bay 2015

Mangrove Morning 2016

Mangrove Morning 2 2016

Through the Shadows 2016

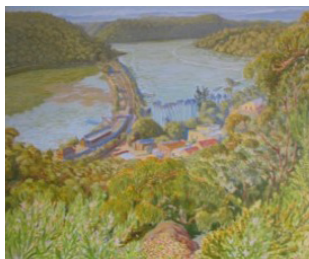
Tidal 2016

Tidal 2 2016

Tidal 3 2016



Peter Zanetti



Peter, another former Hornsby TAFE student, has engaged in full time arts practice since 2009 and drawn with the group since 2011. Prior to this, Peter held the position of Far West Arts Development Officer with the Arts Council of NSW, Coordinator of the Gosford Arts Centre and then Director, Megalo Print Studio and Gallery.



Spring View
oil on board 620 x 820 mm

Sacred View
oil on board 920 x 550 mm

Reaching Trees
oil on board 620 x 820 mm (not shown)

Reaching Trees
charcoal on paper 325 x 680 mm (not shown)

