Recent Past: Australian painting of the 70s and 80s

The late 1960s through to the early 90s was a period of profound change in Australian painting and in Australian culture. Artists were producing assertive, bold works—Australian yet international in outlook. Australian artists took many pathways, though most were notably in touch with and influenced by wider debates. Ranging from Sydney Ball’s *Ispahan* (1967), hard-edge and resolutely abstract, to Jurek Wybraniec’s early work *Untitled III* (1990), clearly influenced by European neo-expressionist figuration, this exhibition explores the spectrum of paintings produced and ideas explored during this critical period.

*Recent Past* traces a modern history of Australian painting through the work of 36 artists, over half of whom worked in Western Australia. Abstraction, representation, politics and local history, the life of the mind and spirit, the stuff of paint and colour—all were being vigorously explored by these artists. The exhibition includes major works by artists from Sidney Nolan (with his giant multi-part *Flower panels [Paradise Garden series],* c. 1968 and *The Snake,* 1973) through to Western Australia artist Carol Rudyard (and her *Wall hanging screenprint I,* c. 1974), and from European émigré Lidija Dombrovskas Larsen (with *The lonesome traveller,* 1989–91) to an early painting by Jeremy Kirwan-Ward (*Blue escape,* 1970).

The works in the exhibition were acquired for the University of Western Australia Art Collection between 1969 and 1990—a twenty-one year period leading up to the opening of the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, which this year celebrates its twenty-first birthday. Most of the works have not been exhibited for over a decade, or even two, and the exhibition delves into a rarely examined history of both Australian art and of the UWA Art Collection.
As is Painting, so is Poetry: Talk and poetry reading
Thursday 15 September, 2.00 - 3.30 pm
Assoc. Prof. Glen Phillips, a Principal of The International Centre for Landscape and Language, ECU and John Ryan, PhD candidate, ECU, examine the perceived relationship between painting and poetry through a discussion of two of the exhibition works, Sydney Nolan’s multi-paneled *The Snake* and *Flowers panels* (Paradise Garden series).

Paintings and Emotion: The stuff of mind and spirit
Wednesday 28 September, 12.30 - 1.30 pm
Winthrop Prof. Jane Davidson, Callaway/Tunley Chair of Music, Program Leader of the ARC Centre for Excellence for the History of Emotions, will examine works from the UWA collection which form the current exhibition, interrogating her emotional responses to the works.

Poetry Writing Workshop
Monday 3 October, 2.00 - 5.00 pm
Assoc. Prof. Glen Phillips & PhD candidate John Ryan co-facilitate this workshop which will include presentations and guided writing exercises in the gallery. There will also be opportunities for workshop participants to read their compositions and receive feedback from the facilitators.
Tickets $20 full, $15 concession. Over 18 only please. Limited places.

7 Minute Speeches
Tuesday 4 October, 11.30 am - 1.00 pm
Dr Darren Jorgensen, writer, researcher and Assist. Prof, Architecture, Landscape and Visual Arts, UWA, Dr Ric Spencer, artist, writer and curator at Fremantle Arts Centre, Dr Tony Hughes-d’Ath, writer, cultural historian and Assoc. Prof, English and Cultural Studies, UWA, and Thomas Hoareau, prize-winning Western Australian artist, represented in various national and state galleries, will form a panel of four speakers. Each speaker is charged with the task of presenting a short, focussed and informative speech of only seven minutes on a painting of their choice from the exhibition, followed by questions from the audience. Strictly timed, the speeches will challenge the presenters to encapsulate the essence of their ideas in a considered, direct and engaging way.
* Please note this event may require extended periods of standing. Portable stools available on request.