

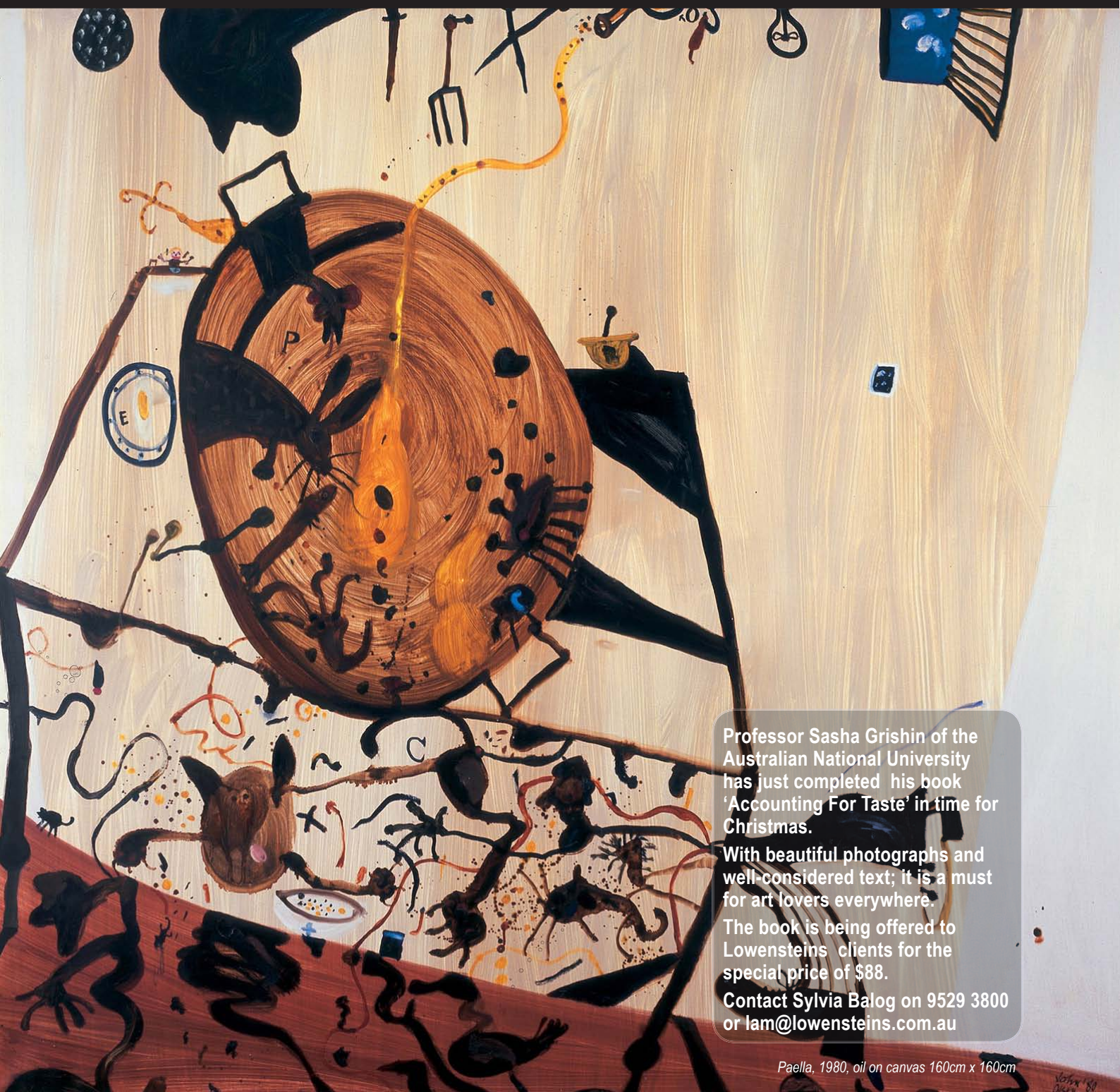
Lowensteins

ARTS MANAGEMENT

www.lowensteins.com.au
NEWSLETTER DEC 2013

Accounting for Taste: The Lowensteins Arts Management Collection

Text by Professor Sasha Grishin, AM



Professor Sasha Grishin of the Australian National University has just completed his book 'Accounting For Taste' in time for Christmas.

With beautiful photographs and well-considered text; it is a must for art lovers everywhere.

The book is being offered to Lowensteins clients for the special price of \$88.

Contact Sylvia Balog on 9529 3800 or lam@lowensteins.com.au

Paella, 1980, oil on canvas 160cm x 160cm

Lowensteins has a new email address which came into being on December 1st.

lowensteins.com.au will make it easy for people to remember and hopefully prevent emails bouncing back.

While the old email address will still work in the short term, lowensteins.com.au will eventually takeover.

So if you want to contact Evan, it will be evan@lowensteins.com.au or Tom tom@lowensteins.com.au and so on

'Accounting for Taste' book launch



1. Evan & Tom Lowenstein with Adam Micmacher; 2. Evan & Tom Lowenstein with Gerard Vaughan; 3. Jenny Zimmer & Tom Lowenstein; 4. Tom Lowenstein; 5. Kallie Blauhorn, Sylvia Lowenstein & Andrew Penn; 6. Jack Thompson, Tom Lowenstein & Prof. Sasha Grishin AM; 7. Prof. Sasha Grishin AM; 8. Jack Thompson; 9. Jack Thompson AM, Paul Sumner, Sylvia & Tom Lowenstein & Amanda Swanson. Photos were taken at our book launch at Mossgreen Galleries on 3rd December 2013.

Ross Watson - A Star in the Art World

If Ross Watson is feeling satisfied with himself, he has every reason to be.

The artist has had a phenomenal ride to glory, and in the last 12 months has launched a book and hosted one of his most successful shows ever.

Few Australian artists can boast Sir Elton John collects their works, and fewer still have had an exhibition opened in London by Sir Ian McKellen.

Says McKellen: "Ross Watson's paintings are obviously the work of a master of technique. The conjunction of modern naturalism and classic works makes it hard to believe one's eyes."

If art sales are a good barometer, Sir Ian McKellen is not alone in admiring Watson's work.

His work 'Before the Noosa Iron Man' sold to a private collector in New York in July this year for a record price.

London wasn't Watson's first overseas exhibition.

The artist has had five international shows, and about half of his art has been collected by American, British or European collectors.

The support of famous people, such as British comedian and author, Stephen Fry, (whom Watson painted) has added to the artist's star value and his work is undeniably highly regarded.

In an email to Watson, after seeing his portrait, Fry was effusive.

"Ross - I am completely astonished by this wonderful work. Firstly, your generosity in terms of talent and time for the Terrence Higgins Trust is a gift so supreme it cannot properly be expressed.

Secondly, for me to be involved, to be inside a colour and texture world so perfectly rendered, so wittily transformed to suit me, and so accurate without being cruel, is an honour I shall never forget."

Sir Elton John is also a fan and collector of Watson's work.

The performer, who reportedly has a



Untitled #12/09 (after Caravaggio, 1603), by Ross Watson

distinguished photography collection, has been acquiring Watson's work for 25 years now and has become a friend.

On the artist's website he says: "Having known Ross Watson for a long time and been a collector of his art, I had the opportunity to recently visit his gallery, which reconfirmed my belief that he is a great talent. I never tire of his paintings – he is a leader in contemporary realism."

Watson grew up in Brisbane, which he says was "less culturally developed in the 1960's and 70's" so where did his yearning to be an artist come from?

"Art felt like an exciting obsession for me from as early as I can remember. Michael Kirby, who interviewed me for my most recent book, asked did I feel this obsession has been a life-long one, which remains constantly within. That is certainly true, and I feel very grateful it has always stayed with me."

Watson says he was fortunate that as a child his parents and teachers recognized and encouraged his love of painting and drawing.

He says being selected for a scholarship at the age of 10 at the Queensland Art Gallery was "a hugely valuable opportunity".

"I really benefited by joining 15 children at the QAG each Saturday morning for art classes where we could enjoy the museum's collection and sit and draw."

Watson says influences on his art have been varied, although generally confined to 16th-18th Century European Art.

"Caravaggio and Vermeer have been influential to me: the former because his art was revolutionary, the latter for his art's powerful ambiguity and intrigue. Many things inspire me, though often I've been inspired to explore contemporary themes which affect many of us. I admire art which tells us something of its time.

My painting featuring Stephen Fry dealt with communication, isolation and social media. Referencing Vermeer's 'Mistress and Maid' provided a fascinating contrast between an un-opened letter and the self-confessed 'Prince of Twitter' engaging us holding his iPad."

Watson, who is openly gay, rebuffs suggestions that his art is defined by his sexuality.

"I don't agree my sexuality is necessarily defined by my art. Consider how heterosexual male artists who paint the female figure are not asked this question, and rightly so. Francis Bacon

2013 Sydney Contemporary Art Fair a Hit

A Star in the Art World cont.

primarily painted the male figure, like me, though his sexuality was not considered as defining his art. I've painted female figures, and in fact Tina Arena sat for a portrait recently which will be included in my Melbourne and Sydney exhibitions early 2014. Rather than being related to my sexuality, I am inspired by her as a singer and performer. There are numerous themes I'm drawn to investigating in my art which do not relate to my sexuality."

Watson doesn't take his success for granted and is grateful for the support of his high profile acquaintances, such as Sir Elton John and his patron in New York, James J. O'Donnell.

"Elton and Jim's incredible ongoing enthusiasm and belief in my painting and photography sometimes produces surreal moments: catching up, talking art, and learning about the extraordinary artworks they might have recently bought."

Watson's new book 'Untitled #' in which he writes about his art, has sold well and introduced his art to many who were previously unfamiliar with it.

"After following my art and observing me speaking about my art at my Berlin exhibition, a German publisher committed to producing a book and suggested readers would really appreciate it if I wrote about the work just as I spoke about it."

The book had an international release and has done particularly well in the UK prompting the artist and his partner, Stephen Morgan, who is the director of the Melbourne gallery, to plan another overseas exhibition.

For Ross Watson the future looks bright.

*Watson's work is held in significant Australian public galleries, including the NGV, NGA and NPG.



2013 Sydney Contemporary Art Fair Opening; Courtesy Jac & Heath Photography

Applause all round for the director of the Sydney Contemporary Art Fair, Barry Keldoulis, who pulled off an unimaginable feat in attracting close to 29,000 people for the first high-end art fair of its kind in the salubrious city.

The inaugural Sydney Contemporary Art Fair was held over four days in late September and on opening night more than 10,000 people crammed into an old railway shed in what is known as the Carriageworks cultural precinct.

The sheer numbers took Barry Keldoulis, CEO & Group Fairs Director of Art Fairs Australia, by surprise.

"There were some teething problems, but all to do with too many people not too few! The opening night was vastly oversubscribed, and we will be organising it very differently next time. Luckily, for most the buzz of the crowd overshadowed the service problems associated with the numbers far in excess of what was expected."

Sydney Contemporary 13 was the biggest international art fair to ever hit

the city, exceeding the expectations of its founder, Englishman Tim Etchells, the co-founder of the highly acclaimed Hong Kong Art Fair.

Two months had passed since the event when we asked Barry Keldoulis to reflect on its unprecedented success.

"I think there were a number of reasons, not least of which is the fantastic job our marketing team did to create awareness and excitement about the event! However I think the sheer numbers and the buzz also point to the fact that Sydney was overripe for a premium art fair, not only amongst the usual suspects, the collectors and art lovers that frequent the commercial galleries, but also a whole new audience that we managed to reach. Over 40% of respondents to our visitor survey said they did not visit galleries, and a larger percentage didn't read art magazines."

The Sydney Contemporary Art Fair featured more than 300 artists from 85 galleries from 12 countries spanning four continents.

While 35% represented the international contingent (mainly from New Zealand and Asia), 40% of the galleries represented came from interstate.

Barry says the organising body was able to deduce that 15% of visitors to the Art Fair came from outside Sydney.

"We aimed for a more 'whole of scene' affair to give visitors to Sydney and

2013 Sydney Contemporary Art Fair cont.

those Sydneysiders who hitherto weren't art engaged a sense of how vibrant the contemporary scene is here, achieved by engaging with the institutions and non-commercial galleries and including Artist Run Initiatives. It was also the largest collection of international galleries ever under the one roof in Australia."

Barry says the response from the international galleries represented was "very positive" many of whom cited the venue as one of the "best they'd ever encountered for an art fair". He said many achieved very good sales and were pleased with the "exposure to a new and growing market."

"Pretty much all intend to come back for Sydney Contemporary 15", Barry said.

It would be remiss of us here at Lowensteins Arts Management if we didn't inquire about sales figures.

"Some galleries don't like to publicize sales figures, but anecdotally sales were good to very healthy. I was on a panel with Michael Reid (Australian art market commentator) a couple of weeks ago and he said his gallery did over a quarter of a million dollars in sales, and that was from a 20sq metre stand! Interestingly, and importantly, many sales were to new buyers we brought to the fair."

On the grapevine, we hear Sydney Contemporary 13 achieved sales around the \$10 million mark.

Barry Keldoulis is now preparing for Sydney Contemporary 15.

"Yes, I'm in for the long haul. The plan is to continue to make Sydney Contemporary different and exciting, continuing our 'whole of scene' approach, but also to complete the Pacific Rim by including galleries, collectors and curators from North and South America."



Lure of the Siren 2009, by Gus Dall'Ava

"The engagement with the eastern half of the Pacific rim began this year. We engaged a VIP liaison in Los Angeles, and, with the generous support of the Australia Council, brought over Gonzalo Pedraza, Contemporary Visual Arts Curator at Matucana 100 in Santiago, Chile. He has worked with our Video Contemporary curator, Mark Feary of Artspace, to take a program of Australian video art to M 100 this December, a wonderful outcome."

Spotlight on Melinda Harper

“My paintings are essentially about color and form. They are informed by my visual experiences, contemporary culture and art. I have been painting abstract paintings for 20 years and have a longstanding commitment to abstract art.” (Melinda Harper)

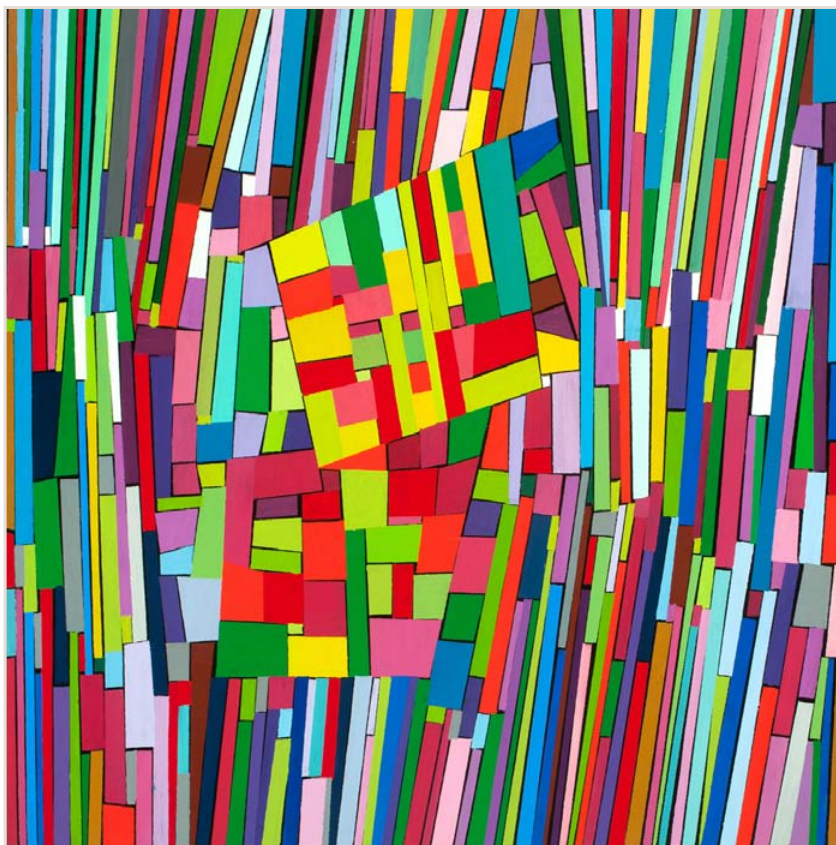
Melinda Harper's work is hard to miss. It's vibrant and commands your attention immediately, like a slap across the face. Her geometric abstractions draw the viewer in and one can spend considerable time studying the complexity of her work.

Born in Darwin, but now Melbourne based, Harper has exhibited extensively, both in Australia and internationally.

Her work is represented in major collections in Australia, including the National Gallery of Australia, The Art Gallery of New South Wales, the National Gallery of Victoria and many private collections, both here and overseas, including the Chartwell Collection in New Zealand.

Melinda uses oil paint on canvas, marking out the edges in masking tape and working on several sections of the painting at once. “The paintings come together in bits and pieces, and decisions are made slowly as the painting dries.”

“Over the last few years, I have painted on colored grounds and, more recently, predominately black grounds. Outlines



Untitled 2007., oil on canvas 81x81, by Melinda Harper

now enclose the shapes; the black acts as another line that separates the colors, extending the complex optical and formal relationships within the painting.”

Melinda was born in Darwin in the mid 60's but with her father in the Royal Australian Air Force the family “moved around a bit” and it was Canberra where the artist actually grew up.

When did you become interested in art? Was Canberra an inspiration and what was it like growing up there in the 70's?

“I always wanted to be an artist. I did weekend classes and drawing classes at night when I was a teenager. I had great art teachers at school, so received lots of encouragement. The National Gallery also opened when I was in High school, and that was extremely influential. Seeing Jackson Pollock's Blue Poles, Lee Krasner paintings, Mondrian, but the most important painting for me at that time in my life was the Hans Hoffman.

The firsthand experience of the color and texture in that painting was a pivotal visual experience. It was the moment that I think I realized how powerful a single work of art could be. I had not travelled overseas so my experience of art was always through reproductions. When I go back and look at that painting I am always shocked at how relatively small it is, as I remember my experience was that it was huge. At around the same time as the gallery opened I read a book called Through the Flower by Judy Chicago, an American feminist artist. This book had an enormous impact on me I researched all the women artists I could, all my art teachers at high school and secondary school were women so this was encouraged. I think growing up in Canberra was very important; the education system was very good, it was progressive and fostered creativity. I frequently visited The National Gallery and the National Library. In Year 12 we did life drawing at The Canberra School

Spotlight on Melinda Harper cont.

of Art. Canberra is a planned city, it has some interesting architecture, but the landscape between the suburbs creates a space, it's like a breathing space, it can throw you. We lived at the foot of Mount Majura, and the bush land was really very beautiful. It's an interesting place and has a very interesting population. I remember very clearly the day Whitlam was sacked, the controversy about the buying of Jackson Pollock's Blue Poles, and the presence of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy."

Harper's move to Melbourne was precipitated by her desire to get into art school and says she was fortunate to be accepted into Prahran College.

"My teachers were Lesley Dumbrell, Robert Jacks, Sally Le'strange and Victor Majzner. I also had access to Tony Clarke, Howard Arkley, John Nixon, and Jenny Watson. Art school was really great for me I meet some great people and worked very hard. It was an intense experience; I was very young and very committed."

What influenced your style of abstract art?

Initially constructivism, artists such as Lyubov Popova, Malevich, Sonia Delaunay as well as American abstract painting from the 60's and 70's. Bridget Riley, Grace Crowley, I have always had a passion for the Pre Raphaelite's and the arts and crafts movement. I would have to say there are many artists whom I have been influenced by.

Is color important to you?

"Colour is very important to me in my painting, they are essentially about colour and form."

What artists inspire you?

"Many, but at the moment Anne Truitt, a major American artist of the 20th century."

When you approach a new painting, do you have a set idea in mind or do you allow creativity to take over?

"I do a lot of drawing, works on paper, collages and screen prints. The drawing is a separate practice but quite often ideas do come from the drawings for paintings. To be specific the works on paper are not studies for paintings but can be a beginning or a thought that I may wish to explore further in a painting. I also do a lot of embroideries that are like drawings/paintings at times. A few years ago I did a series of small embroideries that lead to a series of paintings. Those paintings probably would not have happened without the embroideries, the embroideries are done on mesh, which is a grid, and forced a restriction which enabled other things to happen."

"I think in a way the process is very organic, it is not always deliberate with an end in mind but about exploring the possibilities. And that can be difficult sometimes, as I don't paint over any part of a painting. I have to work with the mistakes, some paintings I do have a very clear idea but most often things change. Making paintings is very exhausting, I find the space that I need to be in mentally demanding. I use oil paint, which is slow drying, this means I am working on several paintings at once, and colors can take up to three days to dry. I am often making decisions along the way and sometimes changing the direction of a painting. The slowness is an important part of the process it allows me a lot of time to look."

Where do you live in Melbourne and does that have any bearing on your work?

"I have just recently moved from Collingwood where I

have worked for a long time. I have had great living and studio spaces over the years. Collingwood was a great place to work. I am currently living in the eastern suburbs with my parents I am in limbo at the moment, but have decided to move to the country. For me personally life has become too busy in Melbourne, and I need the city less."

What does a typical week hold for you?

"I work three days a week in mental health for an organization called Neami National. Neami has an art studio called Splash in Preston. I work with people who are living with a mental illness, who are also artists, or art assists them for a period of time in their recovery. I also have two children with whom I spend a great deal of time with."

Footnote: Melinda Harper has now moved to Castlemaine.



Pear, 1971 -1972, Cast Bronze, 160 x 80 x 80, by George Baldessin

Film Applauded

Polish Australian film maker Sophia Turkiewicz's new feature documentary 'Once my Mother' has been winning rave reviews during its premiere across Australia.

At the Canberra International Film Festival in November it was awarded 'Best Film' while at the Adelaide Film Festival in October, it received a standing ovation and went on to win the Audience Award for 'Best Documentary'.

The film tells a personal story of Sophia's relationship with her mother Helen, who was one of almost two million Poles deported to Siberia between 1939 and 1941.

Once My Mother looks at Helen's life and the repercussions that it had for Sophia herself. Sophia grew up with

family stories about Helen's experiences in Siberia, but when she began research into the historical background of the personal stories, she discovered that it was a chapter of World War Two history that had been "conveniently" airbrushed from history.

"I had no idea of the scale of the deportations! I learned that on just one day alone, 250,000 Poles were put on trains in eastern Poland and transported to Stalin's gulags", Sophia says.

"What inspired me to tell this story was that I wanted my mother's life to matter. I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to record her life and discover her true story."

Sophia's mother was not Jewish but 20% of the Poles who were deported to Siberia during this period were. Former Israeli Prime Minister Begin was one of those deported.

"My mother was an ordinary woman swept up in extraordinary events, a pawn in a political game. I hope my film helps shed light on this forgotten chapter of history. I made it to honor her life, and also the lives of those who went through the same horrific experiences as she

did," said Sophia.

Sophia, who was born in a refugee camp in what was then Northern Rhodesia, came to Australia as a young child and has been working as a freelance film director in Australia for the past 30 years.

Her feature film 'Silver City' was released internationally in 1984 and won three Australian Film Industry awards.

Sophia says she actually started this documentary about her mother as a film student many years before but abandoned it for her own reasons.

As her mother slips into dementia, Sophia, who resides in Sydney, decided it was time to finish the project.

Discussions are underway to have the film open in capital and regional cities across Australia in the New Year.

Sophia is also hoping to take the film to Poland.

For those of you who can't wait to see this astonishing piece of art you can leave your name on Sophia's website – www.oncemymother.com and she will notify you when DVD's become available for purchase.

Dancing Accountant

By day Ellicia McDonald works as a mild mannered accountant for Lowensteins Arts Management in Sydney. Her cool demeanor and corporate suit belies the truth that after office hours, Ellicia is busting out the Latin dance moves in performances that can only be described as 'hot'.

Ellicia and her dance partner, Mitch Billic, were recently crowned the 2013 World Bachata Champions in Hong Kong.

The duo is also the current New Zealand Dancesport Latin Champions for Salsa and Bachata while Ellicia holds the current Australian Salsa Champion for the second consecutive year.

Ellicia says winning the World title was difficult to fathom for a while.

"Winning a world title I thought would only be a dream, but it very much became a reality, and was very surreal for a while. You work so hard in preparation for a competition of such a platform and to come out with that result is the ultimate reward. I think I was in shock for a good few weeks after. But then the recognition and respect from the Latin industry worldwide was when it really hit home and made me realise just what I had achieved and I guess how proud I was."

Ellicia's background in ballet training was instrumental in preparing her for the rigours and discipline of Latin dance which she took to with a passion.



Lowensteins wishes all friends and clients a happy and safe festive season

Dancing Accountant cont.

"I first started dancing at the age of 4 with ballet and then at 6 started jazz, tap and contemporary but my main focus was ballet until I was 18 years old. I actually didn't start Latin until 4 years ago but because of my very technically trained back ground I had the basis to pick the styles up quite quickly".

Ellicia favours the street Latin styles Salsa, Bachata and Tango but is also equally proficient in Jazz, Tap, Contemporary, Musical Theatre, Bollywood and Cabaret.

Ellicia and Mitch are also known for their inventive Bachatango – a fusion style dance that combines Bachata and Tango.

Together, the duo has made their mark on the Latin Dance industry in Australia, Europe and Asia.

With Ellicia's formal training in ballet and Mitch's acrobatic skills, the couple's performances are spectacular to watch.

Sydney Ball Gift



Abstract painter, Sydney Ball, has generously gifted more than 30 of his works to the Anne & Gordon Samstag Museum of Art at the University of South Australia.

The 30 works, valued at over

one million dollars, comprise significant paintings from Ball's career, including the Modular series of the late 1960's.

Substantiate you claims

The AAT has recently affirmed a decision of the Tax Commissioner to impose a penalty on an individual equal to 50 percent of the tax shortfall amount arising from deduction claims for work-related expenses that were unsubstantiated.

The individual worked as a cars salesman and in his 2011-2012 tax return made various claims for work-related expenses amounting to around \$34,300. The Tax Commissioner determined that most of the claims were unsubstantiated and imposed a penalty of around \$6,100, representing 50 percent of the tax shortfall. The commissioner also told the AAT that the individual had made similar claims in previous years.

The individual did not dispute that the claims were unsubstantiated, but argued that the penalty was severe and that he was unable to pay an outstanding portion of the penalty of \$1,400.

The AAT noted, among other things, that the individual did NOT retain invoices or receipts, or provide satisfactory evidence to substantiate the claims.

The AAT was of the view that the individual's conduct was more serious than mere failure to take reasonable care, and held that the penalty imposed was appropriate.

Overdue Lodgements

The tax office are taking a very hard line over late lodgement of activity statements and tax returns. We are seeing fines being imposed of up to \$850 on clients with overdue documents. Please ensure that you are up to date with your lodgements of tax returns, remembering the due date for 2013 returns is 5th June 2014.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Tom Alberts who won the Rick Amor Self Portrait Prize for his 'Winter Self Portrait'.

Judged by artist, Lewis Miler, the \$20,000 award is sponsored by acclaimed artist, Rick Amor.

Albert's winning work can be viewed at the Barn Gallery at Monsalvat in Melbourne until January 5th.

The exhibition also features 30 other shortlisted works.



Hearty congratulations also to Fiona Lowry who has won the Fleurieu Art Prize for her work 'Alone With You'.

The landscape painting prize is worth a very generous \$60,000.

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IMPORTANT

This is not advice. Readers should not act solely on the basis of the material contained in this newsletter. Items herein are general comments only and do not constitute or convey advice per se. Changes in legislation may occur quickly. We therefore recommend that formal advice be sought before acting in any of the areas covered in this letter.

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