

Anne McMaster

Biography

Anne McMaster grew up at Lake Bolac in the Western District of Victoria. She majored in Printmaking at Warrnambool Institute of Advanced Education in 1987; with tutorage from Leslie Duxbury, Ron Quick and Martin King. Her background has led her to widely explore interpretations of and responses to the type of rural landscape of her formative years. For two years she has been a Studio artist at the Art Vault in Mildura, Victoria. In 2011, Anne will return to the Tiwi islands, N.T. to live. She will maintain her strong connection to the Tiwi, whilst studying and further researching her art making practices.

Currently, by using double plate etching techniques, Anne's work explores the themes of synergies between Indigenous and Anglo Celtic cultures, through their connections to the land.

After being granted a Summer Fellowship with the State Library of Victoria in 2010, Anne successfully completed her (First Class) Honours in Visual Arts through La Trobe University.

In 2008, Anne was a commissioned artist for the Print Council of Australia. She travelled to Mt. Borradaile, in Arnhem Land, N.T. in 2007 to broaden her scope of understanding of indigenous connection to country.

Her work can be found in collections such as Artbank in Sydney; National Gallery of Australia; Print Council of Australia Archives, Melbourne; Australian Print Workshop Inc.; Deakin University Art Collection, Geelong; National Centre of Fine Arts, Giza, Egypt; Kanagawa Arts Foundation, Yokohama, along with several regional galleries and many private collections throughout Australia.

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Artist Statement

As the drought thickens I am drawn to the continuing dry and barren land that is evident in rural Australia. As a child I grew up on a sheep property at Lake Bolac in Western Victoria, where our family went through 2 droughts. Like many artists who draw on their memories or experiences to communicate imagery in their artworks, I feel that my childhood existence has a major role in the art that I make.

Presently I have returned to printmaking and using metaphors of kangaroo bones and broken crockery to communicate two cultures. One being our indigenous culture of Australia with Kangaroo bones and the other being an Anglo-Celtic culture using shapes of broken crockery.

Kangaroos are know to be very tolerant to dry weather conditions and can survive throughout droughts. They have an inbuilt instinct not to conceive until there is an abundance of water to then create new generations of young. To find kangaroo bones is the epitome of drought at its worst. Broken crockery on the other hand congers up images of the farmers wife serving cups of tea, and eating roast beef off china plates. It is not until that the drought is at its worst that the farmers walk off the land and find greener pastures. All that is left is chips of broken crockery buried in the red Mallee dust.

The technique of printing multiple etching plates over each other is a physical effort to mix the two cultures, to join them together. It is the mixing of the Indigenous culture with the Anglo Saxon culture. The images are shapes of broken cutlery and kangaroo bones all found out in the drying landscape. Over etched plates showing foul biting and spit bite techniques all add to the weathered and textured landscape aesthetics. Sometimes the zinc plates are etched three times to gain this effect. Residue of plate tone by ink is another technique I employ. My small sheets of BFK paper are randomly placed onto the etching plates and then printed, then placed together when dry into a composition for the finished artwork. At the moment my works are presented as "unique states", all being unique artworks.

I have recently been inspired by the aboriginal rock art of Mt. Borradaile in Arnhem land where I went on an art camp with Mandy Martin and Basil Hall. The multiple layers of time and imagery of the rock art, along with the ochre and aged rock cave surfaces are elements I am drawn to.

Exhibition: "IN THE SHADOWS OF LEXINGTON"

Lexington is the name of the homestead once occupied by the Wills family. Tom Wills - who is widely acknowledged as being one of the key founders of AFL football – grew up at this homestead. He played as a boy, in the Shadows of Lexington.

Lexington is located in the western district of Victoria. It is the country of the Djabwurrung - it is also where my Scottish and Irish ancestors lived.

Tom Wills grew up playing with the local Djabwurrung children. It has been said that he spoke their language and had a great insight to their stories and ceremonies.

Wills grew up in a settler frontier. At 15 he was sent to Rugby Public School in England. On his return he worked for his father and they moved to the new colony of Queensland. There his father and other workers of their homestead were murdered.

Wills continued to prove himself a talented sportsman. He played colonial cricket and played over 200 games of football. 170 of these being with Geelong. Wills instigated the first ever Australian cricket team to tour England – composed of Indigenous men chiefly of the south –western countries of Victoria. He umpired the first recognized game of football between Melbourne Grammar and Scotch College.

Wills captained the Geelong Football Team. At the time this position had great influence in the selection of teams. It has been written that he captained the first senior team consisting of an Indigenous person - from the Framlingham mission, near Warrnambool.

Tom Will's upbringing has interested me. We were brought up in different times; but shared the same country. My family shares a connection with football and the Geelong football club, which celebrates its 150th anniversary this year.

My work here shows images of Indigenous flora and fauna against the shapes of our Anglo-settler's society. I've used a multiple plate etching technique; printing two plates together through a press - as a physical act to join two cultures together. Shapes of kangaroo bones are seen overlaying broken crockery and hints of shearer's wool bale stencils. The lacing of the football acts as a metaphor of bringing two cultures together in the one "field". The football acts as a display of the field of play; the scope of contemporary tribal battle; a vignette into the Indigenous culture.

The works titled "Trust" show broken crockery and kangaroo bones as a metaphor of the Anglo-Australian and Indigenous cultures. It is my newest work of this exhibition. Due to drought, the crockery pieces have been revealed from an old swamp at Lake Bolac. I like to think that some of these could have belonged to my ancestors. The kangaroo bones refer to the Djabwurrung culture. I've called these works "Trust" as a reminder of what should have happened on our Settler frontiers.

When you view my work please question yourself about the Indigenous contribution upon AFL football and our contemporary society. Football is now an avenue for Indigenous people to feel strong and proud in our culture.

Exhibition: "Culture Space" August 2010

I would like you to appreciate that the stones used on the floor have come from Djab wurrung country, at Lake Bolac. I am using them in a symbolic manner with permission from the Traditional Land Owners.

Culture Space is an ongoing investigation into my interest of an Indigenous culture merging with an Anglo Celtic culture. Recently I have been looking at the Western District of Victoria to inform my work, and this year I am concentrating on the region of Lake Bolac, where I grew up as a child.

On our family property at Lake Bolac, there is a significant site of Aboriginal stones. These stones are believed to be a ceremonial site for local and neighbouring indigenous peoples, and it is because of these stones that I began to appreciate and learn of an indigenous culture of the Djab wurrung of Western Victoria. I use the stones as a symbolic reference to my family's country, and the shape of an oval and circle to define a space where these two cultures can continue to grow strong. It is from my work that I refer to the title as the new "Culture Space".

*My work is a somewhat eclectic mix of my investigation this year. The artist books were made while on a 12 day Healing Walk, along Mt. Emu Creek in central Western Victoria. The watercolour and diary entries in these books, documents the walk from the source of the creek at Mt Emu near Skipton, and follows steadily south to the mouth of the Hopkins River near Terang. We passed through dry sheep and wheat country, to the wet and green dairy country 230 klm later.

Our intention for the walk was to walk along indigenous waterways using the creek as a means to navigate us through country. Both indigenous and Anglo Australian people talked and walked and shared knowledge of the landscape through which we passed. We avoided roads and climbed through fences, and camped out under the autumn skies. As we passed through properties the land holders were there to greet us and walk with us. I learnt of the importance of keeping our waterways fresh and as natural as possible, with incentives to replant indigenous grasses and trees. Along the creek we saw many scar trees to remind us of indigenous culture. The walk was a moving experience and I feel a much healthier and stronger person because of it.

*The wrapped stones in this exhibition are displayed quite formally in a horizontal line to emphasise their shape and significance and also a journey. The hand written documents wrapped around them are from my family history archives from the late 1930s and indicate hand written evidence of goods bought at the general stores. The wrapping is a metaphor of protecting the stones and their history, the knowledge they have, and the stories they may hold. With these stones I have included the museum-like tags which is a way of including the methodology of my printmaking practice with double plate etching techniques. The tags are to be picked up and handled, to be

read and inform the viewer of an almost lost language of the Djap wurrung peoples of the Lake Bolac area. The reverse side of the tags shows shapes and lines of kangaroo bones and broken crockery, a reference of two cultures and a direction my artwork has taken for the last few years. I have been using double-plate etchings as a means of merging two cultures together in a harmonious and reconciled manner.

A permeating reference to hand written text has been enriched from a Fellowship at the State Library of Victoria. Here I read many settler diaries and read many old hand written manuscripts from the Western District of Victoria. It was a valuable time to begin my research for my Honours year.

Here tonight, my thoughts are with the people of the Highlands of Scotland and the Djap wurrung of the Western District. The McMasters of Scotland and the peoples of Djap wurrung country share a common theme of being outsiders by way of society. Stones are an integral part of the geography and culture of Scotland, and the ceremonies of the Djap wurrung peoples. Ceremonial stones now lay protected on McMaster property at Lake Bolac. I am naturally drawn to these stones to inform my artwork. The organic arrangement of stones, and the knowledge they hold are symbolic of a vignette into a contemporary society where cultures are mutually respected. In here lay my "Culture Space".

Exhibition: "Change of Address" The Art Vault January 2012

This body of work has been produced in response to my new place of residence at Pickertaramoor on Melville Island, Tiwi, in Northern Territory of Australia. I maintain my art practises while teaching part time to indigenous students at Tiwi College. This is an extreme remote location with only the school community of 70 students. There are no shops or restaurants, and the students live in a boarding house set up, arriving on Mondays and returning on Fridays to their own communities. It is here that I maintain my art practises, and find a highly inspiring and challenging landscape to work with.

The title of my exhibition Change of Address suggests my physical move from Mildura last year to the Tiwi Islands. It also lends itself to the thought of how I might address the tropical environment and landscape that I now experience.

Horizontal rectangle formats appear subtly in my work to simulate the louvered windows of my studio and home, from where I look out daily onto the remote landscape. Louvered windows found in tropical architecture have been replicated into shapes of paper and etching plates which reveal an outside representation of the Tiwi countryside. These louvered shapes also appear subtly in the background of the ash paintings, yet are dominated by the strong organic and vertical lines of branches, sticks and trunks of eucalyptus trees.

The majority of this work has been created in the Dry Season, June-August, when the tropical weather is cooler and drier. It is the time of year that Indigenous people practice the burning off of country to clear and maintain country. Vegetation is burnt and cleared to encourage re-growth and to make way for clearings for hunting wildlife. It is within this charred landscape that I have walked and collected ash as a painting material. Mixed with binders I have applied my new medium with a range of black charcoals to white powder ash to canvas. It is my intention to also experiment with ash and plate oil as an ink in my printmaking practises.

Solo Exhibitions

2012 – Change of Address, The Art Vault, Mildura

2010 - Cultural Space, The Art Vault, Mildura

2009 - In the Shadows of Lexington. The Art Vault. Mildura

2009 - "Tom Wills Country" Ararat Regional Art Gallery

2007 - Portland Bay Press, Artist in Residency

2000 - Momenta, Geelong Arts Festival

1997 - Brim Brim Art Gallery, Geelong

1996 - Mildura Art Gallery, Victoria

1988 - Powell Street Graphics, South Yarra, Melbourne

1987 - Artery Art Gallery, Geelong Victoria

Group Exhibitions (selected)

2010

Shilo Project. Mildura Regional Art Gallery
Mildura 3, La Trobe University Research Centre, Mildura
Honours Exhibition, View Street Gallery, Bendigo
Rick Amor Print Award, Monstalvat, Melbourne
Fair & Square. Rona Green Portfolio, Wagga Wagga Regional Art Gallery. N.S.W

2009

Palimpsest, La Trobe Uni, Mildura
Wetlands Exhibition, Gallery 25, Mildura
Hutchins Art Prize Exhibition. Hobart
Writers Festival Art Exhibition. Art Vault. Mildura

2008-09

Commissioned print, travelling Australia.

2008

Christmas Exhibition, Art Vault Gallery, Mildura
"Outback Art Award", Broken Hill, NSW
"Print Council of Australia" commissioned print touring Australia

2007

"Drawing Together" Exhibition. National Archives, Canberra .
"Outback Art Award", Broken Hill, N.S.W.
Burnie Print Prize, Burnie Art Gallery, Tasmania
"Stockroom Show", Gallery 25 Mildura, Victoria

2006

"Recent Works", (with Robert Watson), Gallery 25 Mildura, Victoria
"Palimpsest", Gallery 25 Mildura, Victoria

2005

"Works on Paper", Gallery 25 Mildura, Victoria

2004

John Leslie Art Award, Gippsland Art Gallery, Victoria

2003

"bon a tier" Contemporary Printmaking, Gallery 25 Mildura, Victoria
National Print Award Exhibition, Tweed River, N.S.W
Banyule Art Award, Works on Paper, Melbourne
McGivern Art Award, Victoria
Wentworth Art Show, N.S.W
25 years, Australian Print Workshop, Melbourne

2002

"Eco Art Awards", Strathfield, Sydney
"North and South", Northern Territory University Art Gallery
International Miniature Print Biennial, Quebec, Canada
"Orifice", Darwin Visual Arts Association Member Show, Darwin N.T.
"Swipe", 24HR Art, Darwin, N.T
Linden Post Card Show, St. Kilda, Victoria
Rena Ellen Jones Memorial Print Award, Warrnambool, Victoria

2001

"Greenprint", Wood Street Gallery, Darwin, N.T
"Human Rights", Darwin Supreme Courts, N.T
Members Show, 24HR Art, Darwin, N.T

2000

Angair Art Show, Anglesea, Victoria
Swan Hill Print and Drawing Exhibition, Victoria
"Palimpsest", Mildura Art Gallery. (Collaboration with Belinda Fox)
Biennale of International Miniature Art, Quebec, Canada

1999

Egypt Print Triennial, National Centre of Fine Arts, Giza, Egypt

1998

Tokyo International Mini Print Triennial, Japan
"Palimpsest", Mildura Art Gallery, Victoria

1997

International Independent Exhibition of Prints, Kanagawa, Japan
Sutherland Biannual Art Exhibition, Sydney
"Spirituality and Sense of Place" Print Survey, Mildura Art Gallery, Vic
Port Pirie Art Prize Exhibition, South Australia

1996

Martin Hanson Memorial Exhibition, Gladstone Art Gallery, Queensland
Jacaranda Drawing Award Exhibition, Grafton, N.S.W
Port Pirie Art Prize Exhibition, South Australia
"Ferals" Mildura Arts Festival, Victoria

1995

Mildura Arts Festival, Commodore Motel, Victoria

1994

Sunraysia V.C.E. Art Teachers, Mildura Art Gallery

1989

Print Portfolio, Beaver Gallery, Canberra

1988

Regional Artists Review, Artery Gallery, Geelong, Victoria
Ballarat Goldfields Print Show, Ballarat Art Gallery, Victoria
Arden Street Gallery, North Melbourne
"Works on Paper", Print Council of Victoria

1987

Henri Worland Memorial Print Award, Warrnambool, Victoria
Deakin University Print Acquisition, Victoria

1986

Oculos Gallery, Ringwood, Victoria
Mornington Peninsula Print Show, Victoria
Warrnambool Women's Art Festival, Victoria
Mitchell College of Advanced Education, Bathurst N.S.W.

1985

Warrnambool Women's Art Festival, Victoria

Collections

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Print Council of Australia Archives, Melbourne
Australian Print Workshop Inc. Archives, Melbourne
Artbank, Sydney
National Centre of Fine Arts, Giza, Egypt
Kanagawa Arts Foundation, Yokohama, Japan
Tama Art University, Tokyo, Japan
Deakin University Art Collection, Geelong, Victoria
Mildura Art Gallery, Victoria
Dr. Michael Lefebvre Collection, Sydney
Port Pirie Shire Council, SouthAustralia
Park Royal Hotel, The Rocks, Sydney
Grand Hotel, Mildura, Victoria
Hayden Real Estate, Geelong, Victoria
State Library of Victoria
La Trove University
Warrnambool Art Gallery
City of Freemantle
Queensland UT Art Museum
Gladstone Regional Art Gallery
Burnie Regional Art Gallery
Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery
Bathurst Regional Art Gallery
John Curtin Uni Gallery, Perth.
University of Ballarat
Impressions on Paper, Canberra
Arjo Wiggins/Canson Australia Pty Ltd.
Scotch Oakburn College, Launceston
Westbourne Grammar School, Melbourne
Presbyterian Ladies College, Melbourne.

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Commissions

2008 - Print Council of Australia Commission

1998 - European Carp Instillation, "Palimpsest", Mildura Art Gallery

1988 - "100 X 100" Print Portfolio, 100 Prints for Park Royal Hotel, Sydney

Awards and Recognition

2011 - Finalist Rick Amour Print Prize

2008 - Print Council of Australia commissioned artist

2006 - Best Print, Mildura Agricultural Show and Best Contemporary Artwork, Easter Rotary Art Exhibition

2003 - Most Outstanding Watercolour, McGivern Art Award and Best Contemporary Artwork, Wentworth Art Show, N.S.W.

2001 - Highly Commended, "Human Rights", Darwin Supreme Courts, N.T and People Choice Award, "Human Rights", Darwin Supreme Courts, N.T.

2000 - Most Creative Work, Angair Art Show, Anglesea, Victoria and Surfcoast Shire Council Art Calendar

1997- Artistic Merit, Local Artist, Sunset in Spring Exhibition, Mildura, Vic.

1996 -Inaugural Port Pirie Art Prize; 3rd Prize, Works on Paper, Martin Hanson Memorial Exhibition, Gladstone Art Gallery, Queensland and Artistic Merit, Local Artist, Sunset in Spring Exhibition, Mildura, Vic.

1986 - Recognition for Scholarship, Deakin University, Warrnambool, Vic

Professional Practices

2009 - Ongoing Art/Studio Art Teacher, Mildura Senior College, Victoria

2008-9 - Studio Artist, Art Vault Gallery, Mildura

2007 - "Arnhem Land Water Sun", Mt. Borradaile Art Workshop, Arnhem Land N.T. (Basil Hall and Mandy Martin)

2006 - Workshop, John Worsley woodcuts and "Etching and The Landscape" Workshop, Raymond Arnold and Warren Cooke

2002 - Art Exchange Curator, Xavier Community Education Centre, Nguiu, Bathurst Island, N.T. & St. Theresa's Primary School, Torquay, Vic and "Tiwi Designs", Part-time employee

2001 - Print Making Instructor, Vocational Education and Training, Xavier Community Education Centre, Nguiu, Bathurst Island , N.T and "Tiwi Designs", Part-time employee

1997 - Curator, "Spirituality and Sense of Place" Print Survey, Mildura Art Gallery, Victoria

1988 - Master Printer, 100 x 100 Print Portfolio, Print Council of Australia, Melbourne

1987 - Studio Technician, Painting and Printmaking Studios, Warrnambool Institute of Advanced Education, Victoria