

Donnie Byrne

Artist Statement

Thanks to my great-grandparents coming to Mildura in 1888, my recent family history has been centred around the Sunraysia District.

They were a family of hoarders, where history was most important, and therefore I soon came to the conclusion that everything had a story to tell - no matter how old, battered and broken it was, it had had a life, and was therefore worthy of acknowledgement and respect.

My childhood was spent 'in the bush', or on the Murray River, as my father was a true, old-fashioned Bushman, and so I grew up learning about, and respecting, all that he could teach me from his vast knowledge, about the flora, fauna and history of this area.

I also owned an Antique Shop in Mildura for thirty years, and as a result of this I learned much about Antiques and Collectables, and more about Mildura's history in general. I became particularly interested in Australiana, and collected Australian Pottery.

Almost every day I walk 'in the bush', and it is on these walks that I have come to appreciate the human detritus that is scattered where I walk, and the stories it tells of the people who have been there before me.

My favourite saying is "If only it could talk", as the stories these objects could tell us are beyond our imagination. I think it's out of curiosity and respect that I pick up 'bits' of all shapes and sizes, and take them home to give them another *chance*.

I am particularly interested in the shapes of the things that I pick up, as I can see the potential of them in my work. I am fascinated by the shape and texture of bones, feathers, gnarls from trees, grasses, roots, bark, insects, broken china, (particularly with the maker's marks on the back), rusty tin, wire, etc., and enjoy using them in my work to create interest and depth.

Bio

2009

Wangumma meets Peaka Exhibition, Wangumma Artist's Group Exhibition, Stefano's Gallery 25, Mildura.
Wetland Dreaming Exhibition, (Selection), Stefano's Gallery 25, Mildura.

2008

Portrayed Photographic Exhibition, (Invitation), Stefano's Gallery 25, Mildura.
Wangumma Exhibition, Wangumma Artist's Group Exhibition, Wentworth. N.S.W.

2007

Winner Open Photography, Mildura Rotary Club Easter Art Show.
Member, Wangumma Artists.
White Exhibition, (Invitation), Stefano's Gallery 25, Mildura.

2006

Solo Exhibition, Hommage to Hallett, Mildura Arts Centre.
Student Exhibition, La Trobe University, Mildura.
Wentworth Sweat Box Exhibition.

2005

Student Exhibition, La Trobe University, Mildura.
Wentworth Sweat Box Exhibition.

2004

Student Exhibition, La Trobe University, Mildura.
Wentworth Sweat Box Exhibition.

2003

Student Exhibition, La Trobe University.
Gallery 25, Mildura, Exhibition.
Student Exhibition, Mildura Arts Centre.

2003-2006 - Part-time Bachelor of Visual Arts student, La Trobe University, Mildura.

2005-2007 - Chair, Mildura Arts Festival Mardi Gras Street Parade Committee.

2002-2003 - Member Mildura Arts Festival Board.

1990's - Organising Committee, Gentle Arts Exhibition, Mildura Arts Centre.

1980's/90's - President, Friends of Mildura Arts Centre, for eight years.

1972-2002 - Proprietor 'Granny's Antiques', Mildura.

1970's - Organising Committee, Henderson Park Art Shows.