



The Botanical Art Society of New Zealand Inc

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WINTER 2017 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our Winter 2017 Newsletter. We hope you are all keeping warm and painting furiously for our upcoming exhibitions. Despite not having any formal meetings in July, the Christchurch group has been keeping busy.

There was a special outing to the Botanic Gardens propagation unit where members were able to sit amongst the plants and draw or paint. This was such a huge success we are all keen to go again and have already been invited back!

A group of members also met up for a light lunch at Oderings Café in Barrington. It was lovely to sit amongst the plants and talk about art and other things.

2 August saw us all back at Avice Hill for our regular Wednesday morning session. Jacquie called a meeting to firm up what is happening for the rest of the year, it will be a busy one!

Avice Hill Diary

make a note of the following dates – there have been changes to our program

Meeting times at Avice Hill are from 10 am – 1pm – Those who live out of town, if you find yourself in Christchurch on a Wednesday, please come along and join us.

August – at this point no special workshop during the month, Karen Atherton has had to postpone.

Regular meeting **at Avice Hill** on **9, 16, 23, 30**

September - 13TH Coloured Pencils “Leaves and Seeds” with Tina Grey who is a very accomplished coloured pencilist.

Regular meeting dates **6, 20 & 27**

October – 18th Bookbinding with Ann Clay This proved so popular last year, where journals were made using your favourite paper to paint/draw on that it is being repeated in October and again on 14th Feb 2018. A “needs” list will be emailed out nearer the time

Regular meeting dates **4, 11, 18, 25**

November – 8th Suzy Abbott – Botanical Art UK

15th Lorraine Thompson – Plant Anatomy

Regular meeting dates **1, 22, 29,**



December 13th End of Year Christmas Lunch 12 noon at Riccarton House

February 7 2018 first meeting of the New Year

Potential Workshops for 2018

Lesley Alexander would be happy to come to Christchurch to run a 2 day workshop on Pen & Ink Techniques for Botanical Art

This would have to be in a school holiday – possibly somewhere between April 14 -29th. At this stage, we are looking for expressions of interest to attend.

Jo Ogier is interested in teaching a Nature Journal course, again details still need to be ironed out, but expressions of interest are welcome.

If you have ideas of other workshops you would like to see run, or know of any tutors who would be interested in teaching, please get in touch with Elizabeth at elizabethayp@gmail.com also with any expressions of interest in the two workshops

Exhibition News

Botanical Art exhibition at the Selwyn Gallery Darfield Sept 29th – 26th October

<http://selwyngallery.co.nz/exhibitions/2017-xhibitions/>

If you are out of town, please get your paintings in by 13 September – post to our PO box . They only need to be matted

If you would like help matting your painting, Jo Ogier has kindly offered to help. Please contact her directly at: Jo.ogier@xtra.co.nz Note Jo is away 31 August – 2 Sept and 6 – 13 September, she is very busy so please give plenty of prior notice. Each person to pay BASNZ for matting and we will reimburse Jo

27th Sept - Please get your raffle materials to Ann Clay prior to this please

27th Sept - two members will be going to Darfield to help with layout

28th Sept - Hanging will be after 1pm



29th Sept – 5pm

OPENING OF EXHIBITION

Exhibition runs until 26 October.

Do not forget:



Announcing
A WORLDWIDE EXHIBITION
linking people to plants through botanical art
Submissions close 5pm 16th November 2017
for more information go to
www.friendsabg.co.nz/en/botanical-art.html
or email botanicalartnz@gmail.com

Hot off the Press!

We have been invited to hold an exhibition of Botanical Art at the Orion Gallery, Akaroa from Friday 2nd March – Sunday 18th March 2018. There have been suggestions made to hold a “painting” day at Suzy Abbotts home at French Farm prior to this and to then go on to the opening.

Help would be appreciated with hanging & collecting, dates and times to be advised nearer the time.

As you can see, 2017 is turning out to be a very busy year for us. We still need more entries for Darfield, so pull out your pencils and paints and get creating!

MEMBERSHIP NEWS!

29th Dec – 14th Jan 2018 -One of our members, **Janet Marshall** has an exhibition opening at the Orion Powerhouse Gallery, 1 Rue Pompallier, Akaroa, Banks Peninsula

Another member, **Lesley Alexander (Smith)** has had a lovely piece written about her in the latest New Zealand Artist Magazine available now. You will find the article will be attached to the email for you to read. Lesley has kindly given us permission to add it.

Doreen Connelly has been in touch to say she will no longer be able to be an active member of the society (she is now 91!) but she is interested in our goings on and would like to be remembered to everyone.

If you know of any Botanical goings on in your area please email me so we can include it in our next Newsletter.

Internet

If you find any interesting links, please get in touch.

If you know of anyone who wants to give Botanical Art a go and has no idea where to start, there are quite a few sites online which can be accessed easily. One such is run by Anna Mason who as an easy approach in watercolours to get you going. There is even a free taster lesson:

<https://www.annamasonart.com/free-class-sign-up/>

If coloured pencil is more your thing – Wendy Hollander has a number of free lessons on youtube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9u8Lawkq7mw>

from that link you can find others of Wendy’s clips

Here are some interesting watercolour tips from Julia Trickey

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qLBHhWciOoo>

Another, newer online is run by “Sketchbook Squirrel” – Jarnie Godwin. She too has a free taster session you can try

<https://sketchbooksquirrel.com/online-tutorials/>

Get Painting! Elizabeth Yuill Proctor – Editor

Submissions for inclusion are welcome!

elizabethayp@gmail.com

Lesley Alexander fondly remembers receiving a book from her Aunt Betty for her 9th birthday titled 'How to draw flowers'. She poured over the pencil drawings and thoroughly enjoyed following the step-by-step instructions. This is probably the spark that started her on her very creative journey.

Lesley tells us more.

Botanical Brilliance



*'Tulip - Pink Twist'. Watercolour
330 x 212mm.*

I have always loved 'creating', whether it be knitting, card or jewellery making, mosaic or painting but it was the chance visit to an exhibition of botanical art back in the 90s in London that set me on the path to where I am today.

In 1987, after deciding nursing wasn't for me, I took an Art Foundation Course at Chelsea School of Art, London, and followed that with a First Class Honours BA in Graphics (Scientific Illustration) from Middlesex University in the UK. I began a career as a freelance medical illustrator but I soon became disillusioned when computer generated illustration started to take over scientific illustration.

My watercolour skills were becoming obsolete in the medical field.

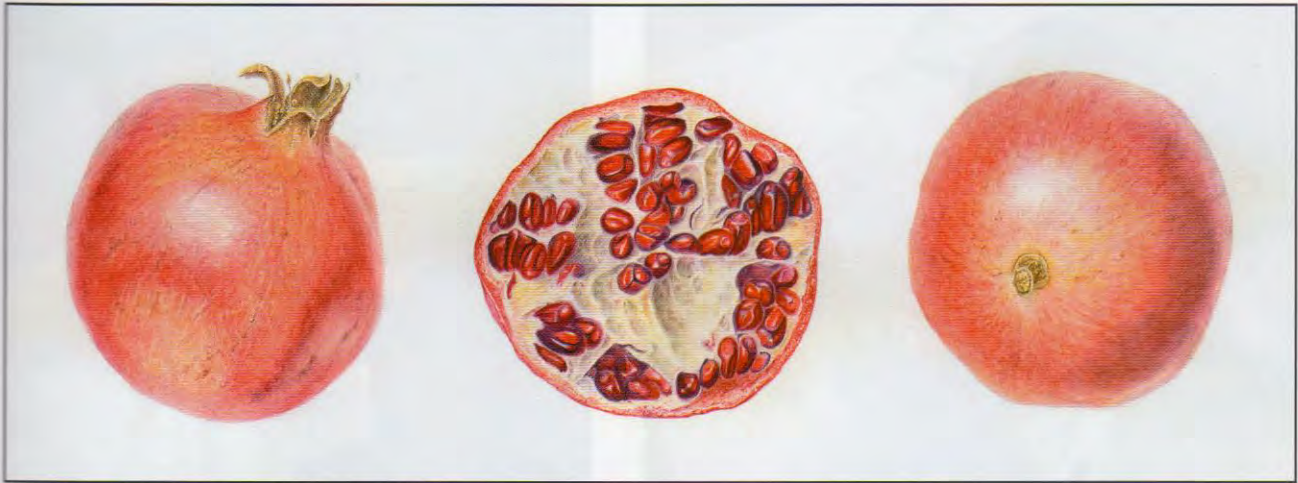
My first foray into botanical art was when the editor of the UK Clematis Society asked me to paint a Clematis of my choice for the cover of their journal and write an article describing the process. This happened in the middle of our UK winter, and with great excitement I naively went to buy a Clematis from the local garden centre. Of course they were just bare twigs, having been pruned weeks before. I bought one anyway and somehow I managed to nurse and sweet talk this poor 'Nelly Moser' specimen into thinking it was spring. It eventually obliged by producing a few leaves and eventually a flower! They titled the article 'The Illustrator's Challenge' - rather an understatement I thought. However, I was asked to paint another one so I must have done something right.

Family commitments then took over, I went back to nursing and art was side-lined again - with a few hours snatched here and there.

During those years I never lost my desire to learn more about botanical illustration. We moved back to New Zealand in 2003

and in 2015 I graduated with distinction with a Diploma in Botanical Art from the Society of Botanical Artists (SBA) in the

UK, which I did through Distance Learning. This was a highlight in my art career - especially going back to the UK for my graduation, seeing family, friends and meeting other students I had only 'met' online. Also after completing my Diploma, I had a body of work



'Punica granata - Pomegranites'. Watercolour 310 x 120mm.

that I was really proud of and decided to have my first solo exhibition. I was thrilled by the response at the preview night, selling half my paintings, numerous limited edition giclée prints and cards.

On a whim in 2016, I submitted work to the NZ Art Show – and was amazed to hear back to say that not only was my work accepted but they would like me to be a 'Solo Panel' exhibitor. I was thrilled and my husband and I went down to Wellington see the exhibition. It was fabulous to see my work up alongside very talented, and many named artists.

I have since gone on to tutor privately and at Kumeu Art Centre, running weekly and weekend 'Botanical Art for Beginners' workshops.

I love spending time totally absorbed in my work. Each time I paint a subject, I learn something new not only about how to portray it on the page, but how that plant 'works'! I am neither a botanist nor really a gardener, but am learning all the time.

I would love to see botanical art accepted as more of a main stream genre in New Zealand – with people becoming much more aware of the importance of our botanical diversity and how we have a need to preserve our botanical heritage. If, through my art,

one more person is made aware of the importance of plants, and the need to safeguard them for the future, I feel my work is worthwhile.

I would love to be accepted by the Royal Horticultural Show (RHS) in the UK and exhibit at their annual show. The annual Royal Horticultural Show botanical exhibition is considered to be the pinnacle in Botanical Art. To be awarded a Gold Medal is very special and extremely sought after. So in the next five years, I am aiming to have my work accepted by the RHS, to be of a standard good enough for their exhibition. Once accepted you have five years to produce a themed body of at least six pieces of work ready to exhibit. That may not sound a lot, but each piece can take months to do, as there is a lot of time spent making sure that you are botanically accurate.

I have two projects I am involved in at the moment. One that is taking up a lot of my time is the 'Botanical Art Worldwide' exhibition. I am on the steering committee for NZ's participation in this.



'Autumn Flight'. Watercolour 160 x 110mm.



'Cromwell chafer - Prodontria lewisii'. Graphite 220 x 265mm.



Work in progress: 'Decaying leaf'. Pen and ink stipple.



'Camellia sasanqua - Gay Border'. Watercolour 330 x 200mm.



Receiving my Diploma at SBA graduation in London.

The Botanical Art Society of New Zealand (BASNZ) and the Auckland Botanic Gardens are collaborating in this venture which will take place from 30th March to 1st July 2018 at the Auckland Botanic Gardens Visitors Centre Gallery.

The other project close to my heart is with a group of artists, under the guidance of Sandra Morris and based at Cornwall Park in Auckland. We are following and documenting the year of a tree in the park and we meet there once a month to sketch and paint our chosen tree. Mine is the majestic Kauri - *Agathis australis*. This project will culminate in a group exhibition there early next year.



'Mongoose Skull'. Dip pen and ink 80 x 165mm.



'Cotyledon orbiculata - Pig's Ear'. Watercolour and graphite 355 x 220mm.



*'Gay's Garden'.
Watercolour
320 x 240mm.*

I love painting all plants but generally find seedpods, fruits and vegetables more interesting to draw than big colourful flowers. My favourite plant to draw changes regularly – it is more than likely the one I am painting at that time.

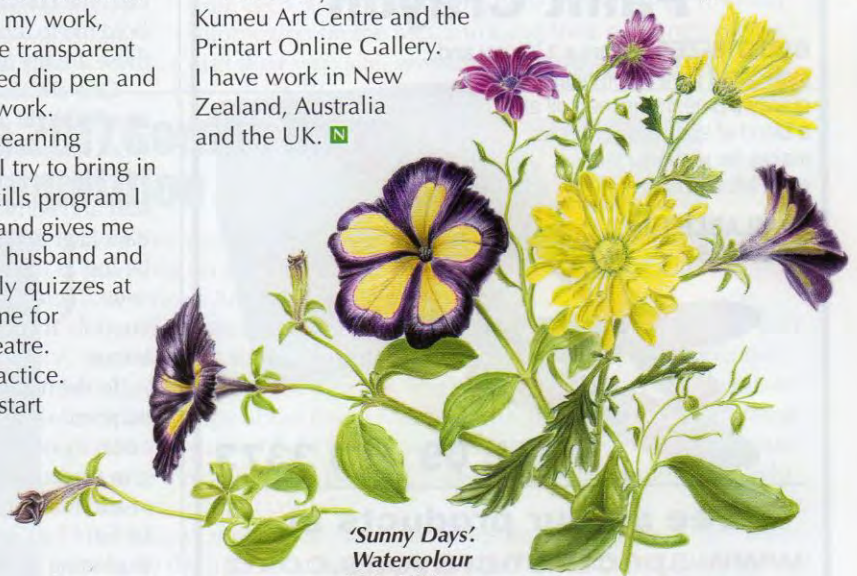
Watercolour is my medium of choice as its transparent quality allows me to add many layers of glazes which not only bring a richness and depth of colour to my work, but a softness too when needed. I mainly use transparent watercolours, but love graphite and have used dip pen and ink for more loose botanical line and wash work.

I work part time as a teacher aide in the Learning Support Department of a local college, and I try to bring in as much art and craft as I can into the life skills program I run. It's a complete contrast to my artwork, and gives me a chance to use my skills to help others. My husband and I are keen pub quizzers and enjoy the weekly quizzes at our local with friends. They always look to me for the art questions. I also love going to the theatre.

For new artists I say practice, practice, practice. If painting, learn what your paints can do – start with a limited palette and see how those colours react with each other. You should be able to paint a complete picture with three primary colours. Learn about pigments, transparency and granulation.

Use good artist quality paints, brushes and paper/ supports. It is a false economy buying student grade paints. Good quality paper is a must too. Look at artists you admire – how do they get the effects they do? Go to workshops, short courses and learn from but don't copy others.

I currently have work in The Riverhead Gallery, Kumeu Art Centre and the Printart Online Gallery. I have work in New Zealand, Australia and the UK. 



*'Sunny Days'.
Watercolour
360 x 243mm.*