



South Australian
School of Art

Friends of the South Australian School of Art, Inc. Newsletter

PATRON: DR H R (KYM) BONYTHON AC DFC AFC KCSJ

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ABOUT THE FRIENDS OF SASA, INC

• The Friends of the South Australian School of Art (SASA) aim to promote the work, history, and development of the South Australian School of Art, using the outstanding expertise, experience and collegial nature of its past and present scholars and staff.

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Letter to Friends of SASA from Professor Mads Gaardboe, Head, School of Art, Architecture & Design ... tabled at 2009 AGM.



May I congratulate the Friends of the South Australian School of Art on their first full year in existence. And congratulations are deserved. An impressive number of members have been attracted to join, innovative

events have also been popular, and the organisation has begun to build up funds for new activities. Needless to say that leadership is of paramount importance, and the 'Friends' have been fortunate to have dedicated and creative initiators, led by the ever active Jack Condous.

For the school, good leadership of the 'Friends' is important as we recognise that the 'Friends' is an autonomous organisation, which the school has no authority to directly influence - and vice versa, but still we are intimately connected by the name. And that name has not disappeared although the 'old' school has become part of a larger entity. SASA exhibitions are still being opened, and indeed Associate Professor John Barbour is formally appointed Director of the South Australian School of Art.

At the same time we endeavour to develop a national and international profile for the Art, Architecture and Design school at UniSA, the only university in Australia apart from Monash University that has rekindled this historic relationship between the fine arts. Founded in

1906 and 1856 respectively, the Louis Laybourne Smith School and the South Australian School of Art share an extraordinary and precious history of which we are the custodians. I would suggest that the 'Friends' is probably the most potent expression of this history, where old bonds translate into new initiatives.

And the future is our students. Giving them skills, inspire them to express themselves for own satisfaction and public benefit, helping them to launch successful professional careers supported by secure incomes is a key aim of our effort. Over the last eight months I have experienced the talent and commitment of our academic colleagues, and I have no doubt that we are on solid ground educationally and professionally.

Where the 'Friends' can play a crucial role is by adding that elusive *extra* to the program that will make it outstanding and memorable. It may be the opportunity that does not always find room in the curriculum, or the schools budget can not accommodate, or the teachers cannot fit into their busy schedule, and it might simply be to celebrate outcomes. These contributions could be mentorships, scholarships, media promotions of works, prizes, support of visiting artists, networking and introductions, donations, invitations, guest lectures, symposia, conferences, exhibitions, support of master classes, funding and supervision of research projects, travel assistance and so on. >>>**Continued Page 3**

NEWS FLASH: Unexpected opportunity for FSASA member!!

New member of the Friends of SASA, **Jillian Gregurke**, has been invited to exhibit her work at the internationally prestigious Florence Biennale that will be held in December of this year. Jillian was particularly thrilled to receive this unsolicited invitation, which came directly from the Internal Committee (the international judging panel) of the Biennale, thereby negating the pre-selection process. >>>**Continued page 4**



Above: Jillian Gregurke in her studio; Right: *Bacchus Landscape*, mixed media on canvas - one of two works going to Florence.

Message from the President of Friends of SASA

Dear Friends of SASA



Jack Condous, President of the Friends of SASA at the launch of the 'First of the Friends' Exhibition, September to October, 2009.



First of all, let me report on the success of the 'First of the Friends' exhibition. Over 300 people visited this exhibition which was held in September at the Civic Gallery, UniSA. Many favourable comments were recorded in our *Visitors Book*. With around 200 people at the official opening and 18 groups using the Kerry Packer Civic Community Centre, the show had a very good exposure to the South Australian public. Over \$5500 worth of art work was sold giving our member artists and our organization a handsome return.

Thank you to our Curator Gloria Goddard and to Mary Rawlings for organizing the roster of "sitters" for the month long show. A big thank you to the sub-committee responsible for the staging of the show, to artists who exhibited and to our members who assisted in the numerous tasks in the presentation of our first successful show. We all feel certain we have gained a wealth of knowledge, experience and benefit through this occasion. A particular thank you to Toni Corso and her team of people who did a wonderful job of catering at the opening.

Believe you me this exhibition had some real exposure. Through the many visitors who came from all over Australia and even overseas, we were able to show the excellent work produced by our members to a widely diverse audience.

In addition to reporting on this exhibition, I want to extend a big 'thank you' to all of the organisations and sponsors who have provided ongoing support for our work during 2009. These supporters and sponsors include:

- **The School of Art, Architecture and Design, Incorporating the South Australian School of Art, University of South Australia.** A particular thank you to the administrative staff and staff representative Dr Pamela Zeplin, for their support in our first 12 months of our operation. We can see the enormous potential in the future and Associate Professor Dr John Barbour, Director of SASA has kindly invited us to discuss ways and means that Friends can continue their support for the school.
- **Bartons Chartered Accountants and Wealth Advisors.** Bartons is a pre-eminent Adelaide Based

firm of Chartered Accountants and Wealth Advisors. This firm provides business and investment advice to a wide range of small and medium enterprise businesses and their owners in SA and beyond. As well as businesses, Bartons advise many professions including medical practitioners and property investors: they also, I am pleased to hear, have a number of struggling artists on their book! I especially welcome Chris Waples, Director, and John O'Connell for their support. We hope we can explore and continue our profitable partnership into the future.

- **Country Arts SA.** Thanks to Rob Johnston for his organization and personal assistance in the staging of the 'First of the Friends' exhibition and other events.
- **Gourmet Cheeses,** Stall 71 in the Adelaide Central Market: Ross Savvas has been so generous all year.
- **Pimlott Framers.** Thanks to Sonya for her generous support.
- **Premier Art Supplies.** Thanks to Clive who has always been very generous with his excellent products.
- **Tim Russell Construction:** a new sponsor in the past 12 months. Both Tim and Amanda like to collect good quality art products.
- **Scarpantoni Estate Wines.** Thanks to Michael Scarpantoni who has supported us all year with his great wines.
- **The Real Distributor.** A big thank you to cousins Paul, John, Stan and Kerry for their delicious products which the Friends have used on many occasions.
- Last, but not least is the **Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Centre, University of South Australia.** Thanks especially go to Elizabeth the Director, and Louise the Project Coordinator, both of whom have given us enormous assistance in the staging of our 'First of the Friends' exhibition.

All funds raised from the commission on art works sold go to Friends of SASA for use with our exciting History project which is led by Dr Pamela Zeplin and for scholarships for students studying at the South Australian School of Art.

Jack Condous, President of Friends of SASA

RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP

>>>>>>>>>>

Thank you to all members who have renewed their membership. For those still to renew, can you please do so *asap* so that we can continue with your support—and please try to recruit one person as a way of building up our membership. You can download the simple form for renewal from our website: www.friendsasa.com.

Welcome to a new Institutional Member, Art Images Gallery: we look forward to a long and successful partnership. Thank you also to the School of Art, Architecture and Design for their continuing support of SASA as an Institutional member.

Garrie Hisco, Treasurer, Friends of SASA

Get to know your Friends of SASA Committee for 2009-2010

The Friends of SASA was first launched at the University of South Australia on 21st August, 2008. The Second Annual General Meeting of the Friends of SASA was held on **August 27th, 2009**.

At this meeting, the following were elected to the Council and Committee of Friends of SASA. **Council Members:** President, Jack Condous; Vice President, Bill Morrow; Secretary, Lyn Robins;

Treasurer, Garrie Hisco, Membership Officer, David Northcote and Publicity/Public Relations Officer, Brian Budgen. Dr Pamela Zeplin continues as Institutional Member of Council.

Committee Members include: Jack Cross, Gerry Colella (Official Photographer), Pamela Karran (Events Coordinator), Gloria Goddard and Yvonne East.

2009-2010 FRIENDS OF SASA COUNCIL MEMBERS



Jack Condous
President



Bill Morrow
Vice President



Lyn Robins
Secretary



Garrie Hisco
Treasurer



David Northcote
Membership Officer



Dr Pamela Zeplin
Institutional Member



Brian Budgen
Publicity/Public Relations Officer

2009-2010 FRIENDS OF SASA COMMITTEE MEMBERS



Jack Cross
SASA Archives



Gerry Colella
Official Photographer



Pamela Karran
Events Coordinator



Gloria Goddard



Yvonne East

Want to know more about your Friends of SASA representatives??

You can find out more about each Council and Committee Member in the 'About' section of the Friends of SASA website www.friendsasa.com

DIARY DATES: -End of year Graduate and Undergraduate Exhibitions at SASA

End of Year Graduate and Undergraduate Exhibitions

Associate Professor Dr John Barbour, Director of the South Australian School of Art has advised that the end of year graduate shows are fast approaching. This year the school is presenting work from several graduating programs simultaneously which represents a major planning and coordination exercise. All the exhibitions are being organised by student committees from the various programs, led by staff in those areas.

Members of the Friends of SASA are invited to visit these exhibitions to support and appreciate the excellence, range and diversity of works produced by the school's many graduates.

The dates and venues (as of 2 Nov 2009) are:

- 27 Nov-4 Dec** *Architecture/Interior Architecture* (K5 & BH5_09)
 - 4-11 Dec** *Industrial Design* (Torrens Parade Ground Drill Hall)
 - 2-6 Dec** *Design (Vis Com)* (K-2 Foundations studios & K-4 studios)
 - 10-15 Dec** *Vis Arts/Grad Dip/Coursework*, and *Masters/Grad Dip Consultancy* (K-5)
 - 4-15 Dec** *Honours (Vis Arts & Vis Com)* (K-2 Gallery)
- You can find the City West Campus venues at:
<http://www.unisa.edu.au/about/campuses/access/cwaccessmap.asp>

Letter from Professor Mads Gaardboe ... Continued from Page 1.

The focus I believe should be on the enrichment of the experiences students can have during their time studying art in Adelaide. It goes without saying, that the promotion of the school by distinguished alumni in the private or public domain often is the best recommendation of a school. An additional but highly valuable mission is to simply welcome our graduates into a supportive, professional community which they can trust for guidance and seek help from to establish own careers.

I wish to conclude by contemplating the advantage of the new entity, the Art, Architecture and Design school. During my own undergraduate studies in architecture at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, we often drifted through the painters or sculptors studios on way to our own. This proximity of artists and architects left a profound feeling of shared values. Later, as the Associate Director of the Liverpool School of Art in the U.K., I experienced

the excitement students in fashion, painting, architecture and graphics gained from working together on graduation shows that attracted hundreds. Now at UniSA we have this opportunity. Rather than isolate students within jealously protected fields of study, we must present for them the richness that springs from creative interdisciplinary collaboration, or at the very least provide them with a wider cultural awareness. In fact this is already manifesting itself through the end of year shows that for the first time is coordinated and organised by students across the art, architecture and design disciplines.

My wishes for the Friends of the South Australian School of Art are to keep the good memories alive and help create new ones.

Professor Mads Gaardboe, FRSA.

Head, School of Art, Architecture and Design, UniSA.

What's on in the Galleries?

>>>SASA Gallery

The ends of the earth: Jane Castle and Linda Dement. Curator: Di Barrett.

Exploring environmental degradation ... Jane Castle and Linda Dement present a malevolent installation involving leaking and congealing blood, video loops on hacked digital players, anomalous machinery and a soundscape from recordings made at the ends of the earth.

Exhibition open: Stage 01 Tuesday 13 October - Friday 30 October; Stage 02 Monday 9 November - Friday 27 November. Exhibition launch: 6pm Wednesday 18 November. Artists Floor talk: 5pm Wednesday 18 November.



Jane Castle and Linda Dement. *wax box blood* (Detail), 2009. Pic from SASA Gallery website.

>>>Anne and Gordon Samstag Museum of Art

Skin: UniSA Max Hart Collection of Aboriginal bark paintings. Curator: Susan Jenkins

The University has a rich resource in the collection of 1970s bark paintings gifted by former lecturer Max Hart. Curated by Susan Jenkins, this focus exhibition studies a range of key works from across Arnhem Land, the Tiwi Islands, Groote Island and Mornington Island towards an understanding of subjects, ancestral narratives, social relationships and the bark painting movement's contemporary relevance.

Exhibition Dates: 11 September – 30 October 2009.

Sydney Ball: The Colour Paintings - Gallery 1

A revered graduate of the South Australian School of Art, Syd Ball is one of Australia's most acclaimed abstract painters, whose journey of discovery, experiment and artistic development was anchored in the celebrated vanguard movement that drove so

many talented young artists to New York in the early 1960s, in search of the new.

Exhibition Dates: 11 Nov 2009 – 29 Jan 2010.

George Lambert: Gallipoli and Palestine landscapes - Bestec Gallery 2 & Gallery 3

George Lambert (1873-1930) was for a time one of Australia's most influential artists, and his celebrated work as a war artist with the Australian Light Horse Brigade in Palestine, earned him great success and wide respect.

Exhibition dates: 11 November 2009 – 29 January 2010

>>>Art Gallery of South Australia

John Brack. Curator: Kirsty Grant, Senior Curator, Australian Art, NGV.

Don't miss this stunningly comprehensive exhibition of this important Australian artists' works.

Exhibition dates: 2 October - 26 January 2010

Of interest to Friends of SASA will be a **Floor Talk: My Father's Cap** with NGV Guide Robyn Cass, including portraits of her father Kym Bonython, renowned entrepreneur, art collector and Adelaide identity and Patron of the Friends of SASA.

Date: Saturday 14 November 2 pm.

Lunchtime Talk: Ian North's The Wave

Artist and Adjunct Professor, Ian North, speaks about his work *The wave*, in Gallery 9 at the Art Gallery of SA. This is a new acquisition for the Gallery and was first exhibited at Greenaway Galleries as part of his 'Sail Away' exhibition there earlier this year. Ian was Head of the South Australian School of Art from 1984 to 1993.

Date: Tuesday 24 November 12.45 pm

Discovering South Australian talent: Jillian Gregurke

On a recent visit to **eye2eye fine art gallery** (now at 95 Unley Road, Unley), the President of the Friends of SASA, Jack Condous, had occasion to meet the Gallery Manager, Jillian Gregurke. In asking her what she was currently working on - other than gallery management/curating - Jack found that she will be exhibiting internationally for the first time in December. Apparently, Jillian's work was 'discovered' through her website and she was subsequently invited to exhibit in the Florence Biennale, Italy 5-13 December 2009.

She will be exhibiting two mixed media on canvas pieces that are abstract in style. 800 artists from 70 countries will be exhibiting more than 2500 artworks.

Jillian has won many awards including Second place in the painting category in the Waterhouse Natural History

Art Prize and in the finals in the Fleurieu Peninsula Biennale. She has a Degree in Visual Art and Applied Design (Majoring in Painting) from SASA and is a member of the Friends of SASA. To see more of her works visit Jillian's website at:

www.withallmyart.com.au

Jillian Gregurke, *When two worlds collide*, mixed media on canvas, 124cm (w) x 96cm (h). This is one of the two works to be exhibited in Florence.





Desperately seeking 'Outlook 71'ers

The SASA History Project is keen to find images of works by those students who exhibited in the 'Outlook 71' exhibition which was held at the Art Gallery of South Australia from May 12 to June 6, 1971, for inclusion in their archives. A close look at SASA records suggests that this invitation

was most likely a 'first' in the history of the school!!

By all accounts, the exhibition was enthusiastically received. Ivor Francis, art critic for *The Advertiser* and *Sunday Mail* wrote:

In a word – Stupendous.

If you over enthuse about something, people tend to doubt your judgment. Yet "stupendous" is the only word to describe a mammoth, top-quality exhibition of 117 works by advanced students of the SA School of Art, now showing at the Art Gallery of SA.

With 61 exhibitors, this is no mere piece of window dressing by a few specially hand-picked talented students. Entitled "Outlook 71", the display includes ceramics (recently made a diploma course), printmaking, drawings, and paintings ranging over the entire field of today's most significant art thinking and practice. Minimal art, op, pop, abstract-expressionism, process and conceptual art, grotesque, Funk, environmental, colorfield, color-form, soft-sculpture, nihilist – you name it, it's here!

Through it all runs the strong influence of surrealism which, with its overseas impetus, is making a second bid to gain Australian acceptance. Interesting to note, conventional figure-painting still has its place, if a minor one.

Art critic for the News, Stephanie Britton, was equally as enthusiastic about the 'Young Promise' shown in this exhibition. In her review, she singled out the works of two of the exhibiting students: Kim Polomka and Aleksander Danko, both of whom continue today to work successfully as professional artists. Stephanie wrote:

A better than usual catalogue design makes a good first impression in this show, and this is reinforced as one continues. Kim Polomka's cloud box painting [at right] is the first show stopper – it solves problems of combining two and three dimensions in order to create spatial illusion and is an exceptionally good painting for such a young artist.

Aleksander Danko then proceeds to steal most of the show with his ceramic stalactites, and the photographs of a light environment which he built where hanging rope and string is lit by neon to create the effect of furry strings of light. Mr Danko has also transformed a little lane into a displaced zebra crossing with the aid of a pot of white paint.

If you can't remember if you had works in this exhibition, you will find a complete catalogue listing all exhibiting students on the Friends of SASA website at www.friendsasa.com

Even if you didn't participate in this exhibition, the SASA History Project is very keen to find images of works that were produced at Stanley Street, particularly during the 1960s. So please, have a look through your photo albums and other memorabilia to see if you can find material (including pics of people, along with their names) that you can let us have so that we can copy or scan and add to the SASA archives. In the event that images provided are selected for use in a publication we will seek your formal permission to do so.

To let us know what you have and are willing to contribute, you can email us on friends@friendsasa.com

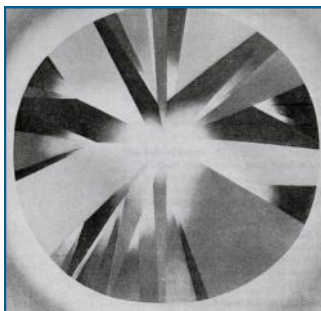
Or, you can post a letter to: SASA History Project, School of Art, Architecture and Design, University of South Australia, GPO Box 2471, Adelaide SA 5001.

Drs Pamela Zeplin & Jenny Aland, SASA History Project.

Works from Outlook 71
At right: AGSA Director, John Baily with unidentified person (do you know who?); Top left of page Outlook 71 catalogue cover (design by John Copeland).



More works from Outlook 71: At left: Untitled painting by Louise Feneley; below left: Untitled painting by Kim Polomka (image courtesy of artist); below: view of ceramic works (possibly Aleks Danko's 'ceramic stalactites?'). All other images from SASA Prospectuses 1971 and 1972.



Lost Tribe Sighted!...by John Neylon

This Article by John Neylon first appeared in *The Adelaide Review*, September, 2009.



John Neylon with *The Adelaide Review*, at the 2009 AGM of the Friends of SASA.



Above: Entrance to the South Australian School of Art, Exhibition Building, North Terrace, 1963. At right: Max Lyle with sculpture students, Exhibition Building, North Terrace, 1963. Photographs courtesy Allan Sierp collection

Before the Exhibition Building on North Terrace was demolished in the early 1960s it had hosted the Adelaide Jubilee International Exhibition, the assembly of troops heading to the Boer War, concerts (Dame Nellie Melba and Clara Butt performed there), a reception for sailors of the Japanese Fleet, a skating rink, and in its twilight years the South Australian School of Art. But this chequered history was likely lost on the paint splattered art students who graced the place. The crumbling edifice (it was there the day a complete plaster ceiling gave way) had an ambience which reflected the ateliers and academies of 19th century Paris and London. The sign over the entry portal simple said 'School of Art'. That was enough. It said everything.

Suddenly this glorious old rabbit warren was no more and what became known simply as 'Stanley Street' (in Lower North Adelaide) was born and acted as SASA's home into the 1970s before the School was relocated to the Underdale Campus as part of the South Australian College of Advanced Education (1970s and 1980s) and during the 1990s as part of the University of South Australia. From 2005 the wheel had turned full circle and the School returned to the city, from which its legions of fans maintained it should never have left, to be relocated at the City West Campus of the University of South Australia.

SASA's lost tribe perambulations over the last 40 odd years may seem an unremarkable slice of local history but for ex-students and staff associated with the wrench from the city womb to an outer wilderness, feelings will always run deep. It wasn't the relocation *per se* but a sense that the 'Art School' had been high-jacked by bureaucrats and forced to renounce its bohemian roots. Within weeks of setting up shop in Stanley Street it was obvious that that place was run by the cleaners. The building looked like a low-rent Bauhaus invasion of leafy suburbia. But despite this a larrikin spirit re-established itself in time to catch the late 60s – early 70s waves of political activism and conceptual enquiry. Halcyon days.

The South Australian School of Art celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2006 and a new organisation, Friends of South Australian School of Art has been established to support SASA in its ongoing work. Foundation membership is already running close to 150, drawn from a base of ex-students, teachers and academics, institutions and key figures within the wider South Australian art community. Jack Condous,

President of Friends of SASA sees this as a real strength, the fact that the members have a unified base of shared experience yet in the diversity of their professional lives bring a wealth of skills and perspectives to the table. With Dr H R (Kym) Bonython as Patron, a regular newsletter, members' social calendar, significant corporate sponsorship and a curated *First of the Friends* exhibition (Kerry Packer Civic Gallery, Hawke Building City West Campus, UniSA, 8 September – 2 October) all is off to a flying start. A focus for many members is the SASA History Project which has a full history of SASA in its sights. But right now the project is concentrating on what many members regard as heartland history, the Stanley Street 60s – 70s era. As History Project convener Dr Pamela Zeplin explains, "This was prior to SASA's relocation to Underdale campus as part of Torrens College of Advanced Education. It's also dealing with the recent past. Most people from this period are living and contributing actively to the visual arts both within South Australia and elsewhere. They regard their Stanley Street studies and experiences as pivotal to their creative lives and work and are responding enthusiastically to an invitation to submit recollections associated with student and lecturing years." The History Project is a hungry beast so if you have something to unburden within the limitations of public libel jump onto the History Project on the Friends of SASA site: www.friendsasa.com (and join while you're at it) to find out the who/what/where bits of posting your recollections. And images are gold!!



Those incriminating SASA Ball exposés won't hold up unless you have the snaps to prove that X really did deck Y and Z really did wear that outfit. I hope Friends SASA has a lawyer or two in the back up team. It could get messy. We can only hope. We don't want SASA burying its glorious bohemian roots too deeply.

‘Out and About’ with the Friends of SASA



Judy Condous, Pat and John Michell, Lord Mayor Harbison, Jack Condous, Dr Kym Bonython at the Mayoral event held to celebrate supporters of the SALA Festival.
Photo courtesy Town Hall photographer.



Friends and guests at the 2009 AGM. *Anti-clockwise from top:* Pamela Karran with Italian Consul to SA, Tommasio Coniglio; Jack Condous thanking outgoing Secretary to Friends SASA, Ruth Flaherty; Janne Lloyd-Jones and John Neylon.
Photo: Courtesy Gerry Colella.



Speakers, sponsors, members and guests at the opening of the 'First of the Friends' exhibition. *Clockwise from top left:* (1) Hon Jane Lomax-Smith MP, Jack Condous, Elizabeth Ho, Director Hawke Centre. (2) John O'Connell, Yvonne East, Chris Waples and Naomi McCann. (3) Mr and Dr Dianne Haddad-Ferraro. *Photos 1-3 courtesy Rosey Boehm.* (4) Brian Budgen, Margie Lilliwite, Wendy Michell, Julie Corfe, David Kerr. (5) Group at Exhibition Opening. *Photos 4 & 5 courtesy Gerry Colella.*

Three generations at SASA

Three generations of the Michell family: Pat and Wendy Michell and Phoebe Taylor, have had a long association with the South Australian School of Art.

Pat Michell (nee Catcheside), attended SASA at the Exhibition Building, North Terrace from January 1952 to December 1954. She subsequently spent two years (1955-56) at the Adelaide Museum as an illustrator for the ethnologist Charles Mountford. Pat was a committee member of the Craft Association (Council) from 1972-75. She also established *Woolgatherers* in 1976 and has been involved in illustrating books for Basketry SA, as well as other associations. She became a Fellow of RSASA in 1978. Since 1988 Pat has been the artistic director of Hand Spinners and Weavers Guild. In 1992 she was made Honorary Patron of the Lace maker's



L to R: Pat Michell, Wendy Michell and Phoebe Taylor. *Photograph courtesy Gerry Colella.*

Guild, and she has won International awards for her group projects.

Wendy Michell was the youngest of the students who began in 1975, majoring in painting, and amongst the last to study at SASA in the Stanley Street facility when it closed in 1978 ... it was the end of an era.

After achieving a Graduate Diploma in Aboriginal Education in the Northern Territory, and teaching at primary level until 1983, she returned to SA to become involved in the art community of Roundspace Studio in Adelaide, and was one of the foundation members and secretary of Art Zone Gallery in Hindley Street until 1989. She became a Fellow of RSASA in 1987. In rural Yankalilla for 15 years, Wendy was involved in various youth and community groups facilitating murals and art projects, and SALA open studios. Presently she is joyfully painting caste creatures at Art Lab for the SA Museum Biodiversity exhibition opening next year.

Phoebe Taylor is in her second year at SASA, majoring in glass blowing and drawing ... and she loves it!!

The following excerpts are taken from a **Friends of SASA Event: 'Geoff on the Couch'** where former lecturer at SASA, Geoffrey Wilson (**G**) was interviewed by Winnie Pelz (**W**) in March, 2009. In these particular excerpts Geoff reflects on life at the Stanley Street campus [demolished 2006] during the 1960s.

W: So, tell us about your time when the school was on North Terrace [Exhibition Building—demolished 1963]

G: There was the Fine Art Department and Graphic Design Department. An earlier head was Paul Beadle, an English artist who had other English staff, especially in Graphic Design. So when I came in 1962, I think Dick [Richard] White was there, Meg Douglas, Charlie Reddington (a livewire American), and Doug Roberts, Helen Mac, yeah, that's about it ... and oh, one who started the same year with me was Max Lyle, and I think Franz Kempf. I can remember Max used to take a class at 4 o'clock and from the carpark, I could look down and see Max teaching rather earnestly and I thought 'this guy knows a lot!' He was also in his first year as a lecturer at the School.

W: So then the big shift occurred to Stanley Street.

G: Well, we only had the one year at the Exhibition Building and then we went over to Stanley Street. And Stanley Street really was a glorified secondary school. Of course it had good aspects, but it really didn't work as an art school. The old school ... everybody looked back on that with a lot of love. It had a casual air: it was falling down, but it felt right as an art school.

W: And there's a great nostalgia now around Stanley Street after it was pulled down. But you're right, as a building, it had bad air-conditioning, it used to get those cast shadows in the front studios, it really didn't work well. So, there's a widespread feeling that they were the golden years and somehow it's all associated with that campus. So, what contributed to that sense of these as the golden years?

G: Well, when you talked about the golden years it seemed rather an elaborate over-descriptive title and I always thought that the '60s at art school somehow were the best and the happiest. Only some things stay the same. But in 1962, if you want to talk about the golden age, the USA and the Soviet Union, mainly over Cuba, was

about to bring the world to a nuclear war. We were vaguely conscious of it. Then suddenly, Jackie Kennedy persuaded France to lend the Mona Lisa for three months to Washington. Then a year later, in 1963, her husband was assassinated.

I don't know why I wrote this down, but ... I think in 1963, I'm not sure, the Beatles were in town, ['64 actually] practically the whole

... Stanley Street really was a glorified secondary school. Of course it had good aspects, but it really didn't work as an art school. The old school ... everybody looked back on that with a lot of love. It had a casual air: it was falling down, but it felt right as an art school.

school went down. (**W:** 'Except me!') About that time, 1964, London was called the swinging city of Europe, Carnaby Street and Pop art was on the way. Now we knew something about it this mainly through the art magazines and maybe a lot of TV programs, but the students were picking up on that and things were beginning to happen and changes made. Then there was the new staff coming into the Art School: myself, Max Lyle, Franz Kempf, Charlie Reddington and others.



Geoff Wilson with Art Teaching students @ the Exhibition Building, North Terrace, 1963.

W: So the broad context was of a lot of social change at the time. How much did that contribute to the sort of energy that people talk about? Or were there other factors that really contributed?

G: Well, I think all these things added up ... I mean for instance, later Geoff Brown came, Barrie Goddard, Tony Bishop, Ian Chandler, Ivan Pedersen, Syd Ball. Now Syd Ball had won a big Sydney art prize, probably about '66, '67. It was a *Canto*, and heralded a new interest in hard-edged colour initiating from the USA. He had a great affect on the school.

Barbara Hanrahan came and did some part-time teaching along with Bob Boynes and Ian Chandler. And then we had two men from the States: Ken Hall and Tom Coates, in about '67, '68. And that happened, and then the Columbo Plan was on so we had a lot of Asian students, particularly in Graphic Design. Helen Mac [McIntosh] arranged evenings which we called Asian nights where the Asian students cooked food. And we had two or three of those things. And the staff formed a band. Des Bettany was playing mouth organ, Dave Dallwitz was on piano, Alb Smith playing the T-box base and singing. And I was playing a drum. It was a nice easy interchange between the staff and students.

W: Geoff, you're suggesting/painting a picture of a context, of social change. And certainly there was a lot of energy. And some terrific teachers. But we could probably say, we still live in times of social change. We still live with the same kind of energies that are happening in the community, the diversity of the community. And yet, there are many people who look back at that time and say it was so different. What was it that made it so different? Or, is it a bit of mythology.

Well, I should say it was a hard-working decade. All the staff had to deal with the art teachers, because they were the predominant group, many more than the fine arts. Most of the staff, including the fine art lecturers at one time would have been teaching art teaching students. I found the decade a sort of a happy one when I look back on it. We didn't have many arguments with the students. The students didn't have any rights in a sense. We marked their work and the results came out in the newspaper.

W: So what changed. Or did it change?

G: Well, about the end of the year, when '69 came, some students were conscripted to Vietnam. Everything began to change. We stayed in Stanley Street another ten years, then things in the '70s started to change. I took a year off in 1973 and I just went overseas and had a lot of fun. And when I came back in '74 ... I could see there was a new feeling in the air. To sum it up, perhaps in education generally there was a feeling about doing your own thing. For example, one could say to a student, 'Think of something to do or make and if you have problems, come and talk'. So the form of teaching that I had been used to was being changed, even abandoned.