

Articles

John Dahlsen a Sulman finalist

Byron Bay artist John Dahlsen's latest paintings have been given the seal of approval by the Art Gallery of NSW, with his painting *Light Blue Purge Painting 2006*, pictured, having been selected as a finalist in the Sulman Award, currently showing alongside the Archibald and the Wynne prizes.

Dahlsen won the Wynne prize in 2000.

During the latter part of 2005 and into 2006, Dahlsen has been creating a new body of work, a series of paintings on canvas and Belgian linen, based on the subject matter of plastic 'purges'.

Dahlsen said of the new work: 'The direction in this work which also incorporates sculpture and assemblage, is a natural evolution for me and further consolidates my



return to painting, which was my main medium for 17 years, prior to working for over eight years with found objects, based upon environmental themes.'

Having only just returned

from Europe, Dahlsen noted, 'Through my ongoing association with Austrade, I was introduced to gallery directors in Berlin, Frankfurt and Amsterdam and the response to my new work has been

amazing, with many projects in discussion and under way. Having such positive response really makes the transition so much easier, from being the artist who for a while exclusively worked with beach found objects into being a painter again.'

Dahlsen exhibited two artworks in the recent exhibition at the Lismore Regional Gallery 'Oceans 11', a group exhibition of north coast artists responding to the theme of the ocean and living near the ocean.

He is also again on show at the Lismore Regional Gallery with the exhibition 'Collections Northern Rivers', which opened on April 28 and continues to May 31.

The Archibald, Sulman and Wynne prizes will be on exhibition at the Art Gallery of NSW in Sydney until May 28.

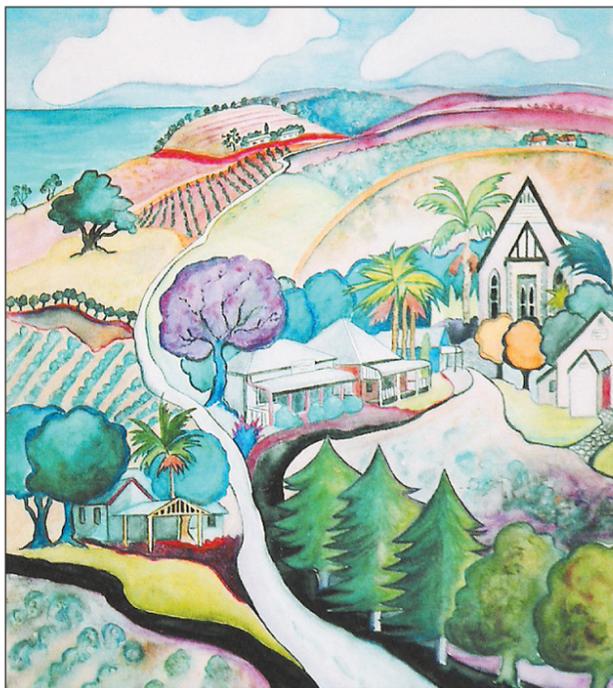
A new gallery for Newrybar

Christine Willmot

A recent addition to the North Coast art gallery scene is Nurybah gallery, the name being the aboriginal (Bundjalung) spelling of Newrybar. 'Nury' is thought to refer to the vines which were plentiful in that area of the Big Scrub, and were stripped and made into fishing nets.

The fishing theme is coincidentally relevant to some of the unusual offerings of this gallery, which is a restored wooden house nestled on a ridge above the Pacific Highway with views to the east. The permanent collection is a rich treasure trove of Asian art, especially that of Burma.

The director of the gallery, David Bennie, set the gallery up in February this year. He loves Asian art and plans to build the collection further, with the assistance of Chris Campbell, a local musician and psychotherapist, whose pieces, collected over years of travel, form the basis of the



material. They are getting ready for the arrival of a complete fishing boat in all its decorative glory. The gallery looks set to become a leader in the area for unusual Asian antique art. David also hopes to extend the veran-

dah, put in a teahouse and incorporate musical events and other small happenings to make use of the fantasy ambience created by the art works and to accompany the changing exhibitions.

Against the backdrop of

the unusual Asian pieces are, currently, the paintings of two local artists, Jocelyn Carmel and Anna Niblic Heggie, and their exhibitions will run till May 5. Jocelyn's water colours on canvas of some of the local villages, including Newrybar itself (pictured), are compact birdseye views in a whimsical naïve style using a palette of luminous pastels. Anna Niblic's oeuvre is very different - powerful, subtly surrealist faces based on the cold stares of mannequins. They capture a stillness of a moment in time and take us to the place of mystery and intrigue that the 'plastic enigma' - the mannequin - inhabits. They also challenge our thinking about idealised female beauty.

The gallery, at 16 Old Pacific Highway, Newrybar, with its current exhibition which finishes on Friday May 5, is well worth a visit and it is open from 10am to 3pm Sunday to Tuesday.

Sculptor's mermaid near completion



It began 25 years ago, and now it's almost over. Artist/sculptor John Virgona from Hastings Point has put the other love of his life up for sale. Weighing in at 1.2 tonnes and around four metres long, his mermaid sculpture entitled *Serenus Pacificus* is close to completion. Adorned with flowing

hair and beautifully figured face and body, the piece of art has been a constant companion for the artist for a quarter of a century.

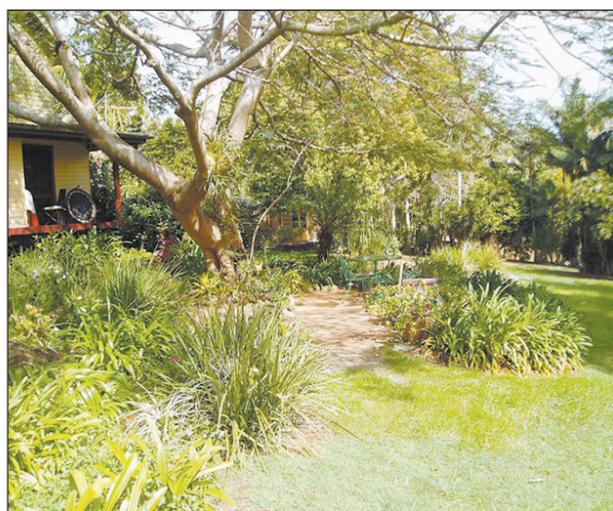
'She's been with me everywhere I have been, since inception,' he told *The Echo*. 'I've always travelled with her - from Spain, France, Holland and around Aus-

tralia. I even had a specially made trailer for her.'

As an artist, he has been active for over 30 years ago, predominately based around the Gold Coast. Both his painting and sculpture style is self described as 'Symbolic Mysticism', where he employs special material that is both water and heat resistant.

Friends have called the mermaid 'a legacy of the insane', and John seemed ready to acknowledge that it has been an unusual relationship. Virgona hopes to sell the sculpture privately and those interested in this or any of his other work can phone him on 6676 0782.

Open garden at Tyagarah



What better way to spend the Mothers Day weekend of May 13-14 than visiting a beautiful subtropical garden at Tyagarah? 'Gail and Tony's garden' is located at Lot 10 Pacific Hwy, Fox Lane, Tyagarah.

An avenue of mature Royal Cuban Palms and a windbreak of dracaenas set the mood for this sub tropical garden. Mature trees form a canopy under which plants are chosen for their coloured foliage. Hibiscus, grevilleas, salvias, and bromeliads bloom among coloured foliage of iresine, coleus and maranta.

Sweeping lawns surround beds planted with sub-tropical plantings. Attractive use has been made of plants with

interesting leaf shapes including gingers, ferns and orchids. Inviting cool, shady areas are contrasted with pockets of colour.

To get to the garden take the Mullumbimby exit (Gulgan Road); turn left at Fox's Lane and immediately left again. Follow the yellow and green AOGS signs.

The garden is opening as part of Australia's Open Garden Scheme, a non-profit organisation promoting the knowledge and pleasure of gardens and gardening. Each year the Scheme opens the finest and most exciting private gardens across Australia to the garden loving public.

For weekly updates of open gardens phone 1902 261 026 (83c per minute).

CHESS by Ian Rogers

In one of the biggest upsets in recent years, the 2006 Doeberl Cup, held over Easter in Canberra, has been won by Melbourne's Igor Goldenberg.

The 44th Doeberl Cup - Australia's premier Grand Prix tournament - featured a record field of 228 competitors, including more than half of Australia's team for the 2006 Olympiad in Turin next month. Goldenberg had been an unsuccessful candidate for the team - ranked tenth of the ten candidates - with one selector opining that it was inappropriate for a player of Goldenberg's strength even to apply for selection. Yet at the Doeberl Cup, Goldenberg exhibited the sort of form which made him one of Australia's most respected players in the 1990s, before his layoff of almost a decade.

Goldenberg started the event with 4/4 before crossing swords with both of Australia's grandmasters on a fateful Sunday. After drawing with Darryl Johansen in round five he then defeated the writer, Ian Rogers, in an epic struggle. A last round draw with another Olympian, Zhao Zong Yuan, enabled two other Victorians, Johansen and the tournament's surprise packet, Dusan Stojic, to catch Goldenberg, but he took the coveted cup on tiebreak.

Goldenberg appeared as surprised as anyone else by his victory in his Doeberl Cup debut and wished the Olympic team luck in Turin. With only three weeks to go before the opening ceremony, a reversal of form and fortune will be necessary

if Australia is to perform to expectations.

The 2006 tournament also saw a title going to a Byron Shire player, *Echo* publisher David Lovejoy winning the inaugural Fischerbooks Seniors section. In the critical game of this event, Lovejoy outplayed second place-getter Phil Viner.

Canberra Doeberl Cup Seniors

White: D Lovejoy

Black: P Viner

Opening: Ruy Lopez

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nd4 4.Nxd4 exd4 5.Bc4 Nf6 6.d3 More circumspect than 6.e5 d5 7.Bb3 Bg4! 8.f3 Ne4!! which led to a spectacular victory for Black in a famous 19th century game Anderssen-Lange. 6... d5 7.exd5 Nxd5 8.0-0 Be7 9.Re1 Be6 10.c3 If White wants to play for an advantage then 10.Rxe6!? fxe6 11.Qh5+ g6 12.Qe5 was necessary but this seemed too speculative to Lovejoy. 10...dxc3 11.bxc3 c6 12.Bb2 0-0 13.Nd2 Qc7 14.Qf3 Rad8 15.Rad1 Qd7 16.h3 b5 17.Bb3 Rfe8 18.Ne4 a5? Missing White's threat. After 18...f5 Black should be fine. 19.c4! Nf6 An ugly necessity but 19...Nb6 loses to 20.Qg3! g6 21.Qe5. 20.Nxf6+ Bxf6 21.Bxf6 gxf6 22.Qxf6 Qd4?! Only 22...Qe7 keeps the game alive. The rest is a massacre. 23.Re5! bxc4 24.dxc4 Qxd1+ 25.Bxd1 Rxd1+ 26.Kh2 Kf8 27.Rh5 Rc8 28.Rxh7 Ke8 29.Qf3 Rdd8 30.Qc3 Ra8 31.Qe5 Ke7 32.f4 Kd7 33.Qc5 1-0

