



ARTISTS
WHO HAVE AN
INTELLECTUAL
DISABILITY



Get your diaries out! – There are a number of great art workshops open to artists who have an intellectual disability coming up this year and we've also set the dates for the 2013 As We Are Art Award!

March 2013

Image: Artists and their family and friends eagerly awaiting the announcement of the 2012 As We Are Art Award winners

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Bigger and Better?!

After such a successful year for As We Are in 2012, it's hard to imagine how this year could be bigger and better! But I trust that As We Are will continue to deliver its great initiatives, including a Disability and the Arts Forum and the annual Art Award, as well as cultivate new ones including the Children and Youth As We Are.

In this month's newsletter you will hear from As We Are Curator, Louise Lodge on all the successes and challenges of last year's exhibition, and Kate Leslie, Artist and Nulsen Arts Worker, who has recently come on board to research and develop an As We Are initiative for Western Australian children and youth who have an intellectual disability.

As We Are artists John Verjans and Jackie Anderson and their art practice are also profiled. John a successful painter, and Jacque making her mark in clay.

If you have an idea for an article, know of an artist we could feature or perhaps have an art event or exhibition coming up, our readers would love to hear all about it, so please do get in contact. Remember this is your newsletter too!

Looking forward to an inspired and fun-filled creative year,

Susie

As We Are 2013 is proudly sponsored by:





Curator's Corner

As We Are Curator, Louise Lodge, shares some of the challenges and successes of curating the 2012 As We Are Art Award

Image: Curator, Louise Lodge, hanging works in the 2012 As We Are Art Award

It was a great challenge to curate the 2012 As We Art Award and very satisfying to see the exhibition so well appreciated. Each year the event is different and last year the changes were well and truly different to the previous exhibitions.

The new venue, the Central Park Building Foyer, is a great space to hold an exhibition and so central to city workers and visitors. When a venue is new it is often difficult at the planning stage to visualize the end result, but it came together really well. We also had to deal with the logistics of receiving the art work at a different venue, in this case the Blue Gum Community Centre in Brentwood, then transporting the art work to the Central Park Building Foyer. This required more planning and much more time from the team of workers.

The work we received was varied as is often the case with both two-dimensional and three-dimensional pieces. There were also variations in sizes to deal with. Placing all these different entries in a way that enhances all the individual pieces requires a good eye. There really isn't any overall hard and fast rule to hanging an exhibition so that each work shows. At the end of the day visual decisions have to be made on what looks right and I believe we made the right decisions.

What I did discover was that the

Central Park Building Foyer has spaces that are more exposed to the public and workers and this only became apparent to me once the exhibition was up and running. Next year I will be able to utilise this aspect to suit the venue more.

I would like to express my gratitude to the team of workers: Susie, Patti, Kate, Kathy, Michelle, Ben, Sarah, Adam, Allan and Christine, for all their effort in making the event a success.

It was encouraging to see new people entering their work and advice on presentation being taken on board. It was particularly encouraging to see so many sales, more than any previous exhibition. Taking part in the exhibition enhances the whole experience of making art so I encourage people with disabilities, their support workers and supervisors to continue to put the event in their calendars for this year and to work towards the next exhibition in November.

Jus to finish off I would like to add a word of advice for anyone submitting work later this year. Please make sure you attach a suitable hanging fixture to the back of your work if it is two-dimensional. If this part of the presentation is overlooked and we have to work on it when hanging the exhibition it slows us down considerably.

2013 AS WE ARE ART AWARD

KEY DATES & LOCATIONS

Entry forms due: 5.00pm,
Friday 11th October 2013
(please note late entries will not be accepted)

Delivery of art work: 10.00am – 12.00pm, Monday 4th November, Blue Gum Community Centre (33-35 Moolyean Road, Brentwood)

Exhibition Opening and Award Presentation Night: 6.00 – 8.00pm, Saturday 9th November, Central Park Building Foyer (152-158 St Georges Terrace, Perth)

Exhibition opening dates: Sunday 10th November to Friday 22nd November, Central Park Building Foyer (152-158 St Georges Terrace, Perth)

Collection of art work: 4.00 – 6.00pm, Friday 22nd November, Central Park Building Foyer (152-158 St Georges Terrace, Perth)

As We Are's Children & Youth Initiative

As part of As We Are's broader vision, and in response to community interest, As We Are is currently exploring art opportunities for Western Australian children and youth who have an intellectual disability.

As We Are recognises the importance and need for such an initiative, and sees it as a great precursor to our successful annual As We Are Art Award for artists aged 18 years and over.

In August of 2012 As We Are hosted a workshop at Perth City

Farm, and invited a range of interested stakeholders with diverse knowledge and experience in this area to brainstorm and discuss this possibility.

At the workshop participants discussed a number of matters including current WA children and youth art initiatives, the idea of running inclusive workshops in the metropolitan region for children and youth, the possibility of a Children and Youth Art Award, similar to the annual As We Are Art Award, and possible challenges and barriers to

this initiative.

As We Are is currently planning to pilot a series of visual art workshops for children and youth in the coming year.

If you or anyone you know from your local school or community who may be interested in participating in this exciting new initiative, or perhaps you have some suggestions or would like to partner with us, please contact As We Are's newest staff member, the delightful Kate Leslie on children@asweare.com.au

John Verjans' Art Journey



Image: John Verjans' with two of his art works at his recent exhibition

John Verjans' art journey started with a one-year 'Art For Disability' TAFE course at Leederville. Once John showed his strong interest and potential in art, specific goals were identified for his creativity. John's first art exhibition was held at his family home in his courtyard. Its success, and some art tutoring resulted in many more pieces being produced. This led to John entering two paintings in the 2012 As We Are Art Award where he won the

Aurenda Art Award for his painting, *Mystic Mountain*.

Last November John's family organised an art exhibition at their local church: Saints John & Paul Church, Willetton. They invited three of John's Advocacy friends to also display some of their various art work. The exhibition which ran on a Wednesday afternoon proved to be very successful. John said he was happy that so many people came to

see the different work. John had 74 paintings on display which represented work over 3 years. He was thrilled to sell 59 pieces. John looks forward to continuing to develop his skills in art from his own unique perspective.

* * *

Many thanks to John Verjans, Sue Verjans and Alison Brokenshire, John's art tutor, for contributing this article and images.



Images supplied by Mentally Healthy WA

What does it mean to be mentally healthy?

By Rob Donovan, Mentally Healthy WA

It means that most of the time you feel good about yourself, good about what you do, and good about others.

You enjoy the simple things in life, feel fairly optimistic about the future, and are interested in what's going on in the world.

Being mentally healthy also means you are able to cope with the normal problems and tragedies that occur in life—usually with a little help from friends or relatives when things get really tough.

Good friends make the good times better and the bad times tolerable.

In this day and age when there is much to feel depressed about, it is more important than ever to do things to keep ourselves mentally healthy so we can enjoy life and cope with the demands and pressures of everyday living.

Most of the things we do to keep physically healthy are also good for our mental health like being physically active, eating a healthy diet, avoiding drugs and using alcohol in moderation.



But we can do much more for our mental health—and it's as easy as A-B-C

Act: keep mentally, physically and socially active: take a walk, say g'day, read a book, do a crossword, dance, play cards, stop for a chat

Belong: join a book club, take a cooking class, be more involved in groups you are already a member of, go along to community events

Commit: take up a cause, help a neighbour, learn something new, set yourself a challenge, and help out at the school or meals on wheels

Being active, having a sense of belonging, and having a purpose in life all contribute to good mental health.

To find out more go to www.actbelongcommit.org.au or phone (08) 9266 4648.

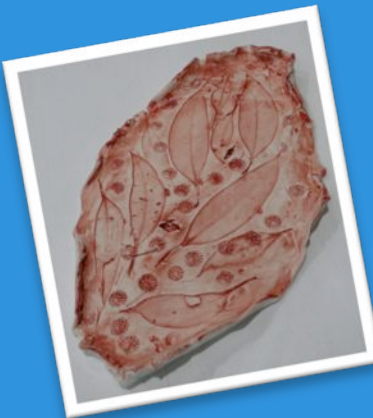
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Many thanks to Sarah Graham, Health Promotions Officer, at Mentally Healthy WA for her support with this article and 2012 sponsorship.

Artist Profile: Jackie Anderson



Jackie's 2009 As We Are Art Award entry, *Endangered*



Inspired by Nature, clay, 22w x 33h cm



Flowers, clay, 15w x 26h cm

Artist Jackie Anderson has been an entrant in the annual As We Are Art Award since its inception in 2002. Today she works out of the Maida Vale Studio with her art mentor Tricia Coffey.

By Tricia Coffey

When Jackie, a longtime Artist of merit, first began making art she created paintings; over time however Jackie's skills as a two-dimensional artist decreased due to the fine motor skills required. Jackie made the shift into producing clay works, and since then has not looked back!

Jackie has produced some wonderful pieces of pottery at the Maida Vale Studio this last year.

A few of her more beautiful pieces have been nature inspired platters. These have been achieved by cutting a piece of clay in a rough oblong shape then rolling a piece of wood with bark attached over a slab of clay. Jackie then likes to tweak the edges, thus making it her own style. When it is fired Jackie selects her colour, this she chooses from a selection of painted samples tiles created early on to give her an idea of the finished product. Jacqui then glazes it with one colour a few times then when it is dry, she over paints it with another darker colour. This is then sponged back so that the colour just remains in the indentations. Jacqui finds the sponging hard, so here she requires assistance.

Jackie has also produced some interesting flowers. These are really easy for her as she just rolls out the stems by hand. We cut the flower shape using a saucer as a guide. She imprints the petals with a tool. We cut out a centrepiece, then she marks it with her particular sign. She then attaches the flower to its stem and then the centre to

the flower. Often these are quite off centre, but it all adds to the quirky nature of the flower. Jackie then tweaks the edges of the flower. When fired she chooses a colour and paints it.

Jackie needs assistance or guidance with these pieces in different areas, however it can be minimal. We are always on the look out for clay pieces that are interesting and easy to build. As she is unable to sign her work we have a seed, which she uses as her mark.

The other people at the studio are just great and Jackie is just one of the group. She seems to always enjoy her clay time. On the odd occasion she seems a little tired and her concentration wanes a little, but that happens to the best of us.

All in all though it's a great time we spend together in a fantastic place to create art, with wonderful people. Lots of laughter, chatting and fabulous pieces of art are created.

Jackie exhibited at the As We Are Art Award (see images left, middle and bottom) and Victoria Park Art Exhibitions in 2012, as well as Creative Connections. She sold a few of her pieces.

Jackie also attended a series of Clay Workshops, inspired by Storytelling. Here she would produce pieces of art that were derived from the Story Telling.

Upcoming Art Exhibitions and Events

Fusion Art Project – Art Workshop Program February – June 2013

Fusion Art Project is a great opportunity to get creative and learn new skills from practicing artists in a supportive and stimulating environment. The workshops are free for people with a disability and their support person. All skill levels and abilities welcome.

Workshops include: Experimental Drawing, Drawing for Kids and Teens, Sculpture for Kids and Teens, Sculpting Still Lives and Jewellery. Limited places and booking essential. For further information please visit www.fusionartproject.com or contact Ella McDonald on 9295 3991 or emcdonald@mundaringartscentre.com.au

Connecting Communities Exhibition and Workshops

This is an exciting exhibition where Artists with an Intellectual Disability can have a two-dimensional piece of art work given to a community artist who will do an interpretative piece in a medium of their choosing. Both pieces will be exhibited side by side at the Kalamunda Zig Zag Gallery 3rd December 2013. This exhibition will be celebrating International Day of People with Disability. The exhibition will run for two weeks. Art workshops will be held in Kalamunda for Artists with an Intellectual Disability during the month of July and also during the Connecting Communities Exhibition in December. Follow this space for more details.

For further information please contact Elizabeth Bishop on 0411 747 935.

YMCA HQ Gallery Looking for Artists to Exhibit in 2013

YMCA HQ Gallery is looking for artists to exhibit in 2013. The gallery is free to hire for artists under 26 who earn less than \$30,000 a year. Artists over 25 or who earn more than \$30,000 a year, can also hire the space for a nominal \$100 per week. The unique opportunity offers a chance to exhibit your work with: professional lighting, a hanging rail, weekend openings, publicity, and a Monday – Friday gallery attendant. If you are interested in exhibiting, download an application form by visiting <http://www.hq.org.au/Art/Art-Exhibitions.aspx> or email perth.gallery@ymca.org.au or call 9328 3221.

David Guhl – The Land Down Under Collection Studio Open Day: 21 March 2013

Multi-award winning Western Australian Artist David Guhl is having an open day of his art works at his Perth studio in celebration of 2013 World Down Syndrome Day.

This is your chance to view David's *The Land Down Under Collection* that he exhibited in New York last year at the DownrightART exhibition, as well as his 'works in progress' which will later be included in the Here & Now 13 Exhibition at the Lawrence Wilson Gallery. It is also your chance to purchase one of his paintings, but get in quick as David's works sell like hot cakes!



*Image: David Guhl (right) and Minister for Culture and the Arts, the Hon. John Day (left)
(Photo by Scott Collins)*

David will donate proceeds from sales on the day to Down Syndrome WA.

David's Studio Open Day is being held 10.30am – 6.00pm, Thursday 21st March 2013, 10 Prince Lane, Perth (Prince Lane runs between Wellington and Murray Streets, and is parallel to King Street). The studio is close to the Perth Train and Bus stations, with parking available at His Majesty's Carpark.

The open day is being held in conjunction with David's role as a Count Me In Ambassador, and is supported by the Disability Services Commission, Down Syndrome WA & DADA.

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