

Maureen Hansen

From Life: Brisbane Light



Exhibition Catalogue
8 May – 1 June 2019



Autumn Backyard Toowoomba 2018
Gouache on paper, 41 x 30 cm (#MH8290)



Ponytail Tops 2019
Oil on canvas, 51 x 41 cm (#MH8397)



Brisbane Backyard 2018, Gouache on paper, 56 x 75 cm (#MH7186)



Petrie Terrace Street Lights 2015
Oil on Belgian linen, 71 x 42 cm (#MH8391)

Maureen Hansen
From Life: Brisbane Light 2019

In the 33 years I have lived and painted in Brisbane, it has grown from a large country town to a city. As an Artist, I look for hours at the changing light of my subject, working directly from observation. My paintings journal the developing skyline and suburban outlook of the Queensland capital.

In 1988 I won the Mark Dutney Art Award in Bundaberg with a painting of the Centenary Pool. I paint the iconic subjects being swallowed up by new development such as Brisbane Polo Club, RACQ building, St. Brigids Cathedral Red Hill. The Northside begged to be painted and the experience of looking made me seek to paint what was vanishing from our city.

It's not just Brisbane it's the fresh, rangy open feeling of the sunshine state. The 1990's saw a cultural camaraderie between Artists and Musicians: this was a time where my twin and I could exhibit at Doggett St. and leave to sing as the Sirlion Sisters with C.O.W. or Miami with Custard at Rics or Queens Arms. Sydney and Melbourne could be more difficult to break into, here we supported one another.

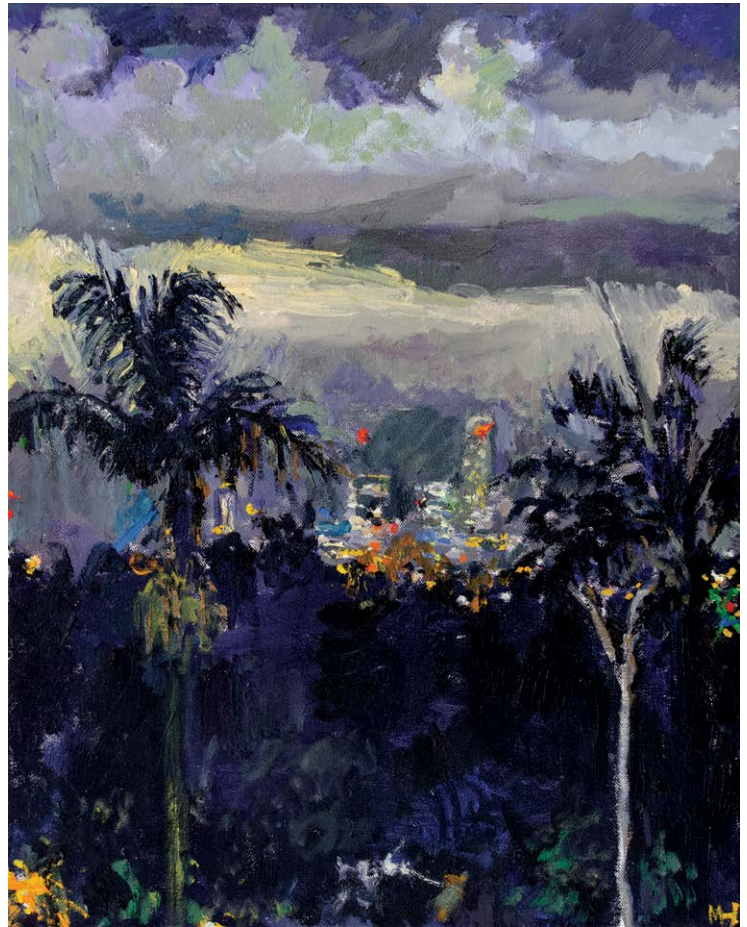
There was space for a grass roots Brisbane Arts and Music culture to take hold and drive our place to a new image of what it means to be Australian. The energetic collective of artists in Brisbane would be forever changed by the presence and mental acumen of Ray Hughes and his Gallery on Enoggera Terrace Red Hill. At the age of 24 I was one of the youngest artists to be exhibiting with the gallery, Ray selected me to show with him after seeing my work at the Queensland Art Gallery (Melville Haysom Scholarship). Ray talked about bringing Australian Artists to the world and creating an art that talked about what was unique to the life and location of the Artist.

Many important senior Australian Artists such as William Robinson, Jo Furlonger, Davida Allen and Ian Smith may never have developed in the way they did without being in Ray's stable of artists. He encouraged local expressionism in favour of slick international exhibitions – which could be found in all the major galleries around the world. Ray brought out the bravado of individual ideas in Australian Art.

Colour evokes memory. It is tempting for people to quickly describe my paintings as nostalgic, or retro. It is important to realize I am not painting what we were. I am painting what we are now.. directly from life. I am mapping the identity of contemporary Australia. I select my compositions very carefully and create filmic vignettes of landscape or still life.

As the skyscrapers rise, the topographic nature of Brisbane's ancient volcanoes deliver a range of hills to view the next crest. "Grange view of caldera" is an example of taking a distant landmark and making it more intimate by painting it on a postcard size format. The vastness of Brisbane's urban sprawl creates pockets of possibility for painting. The bend in the river deposits landmarks in unexpected places as seen in my large river painting at the top of city hall: Eleanor Schonell Bridge looks like goal posts in front of Mt Gravatt.

From Life: Brisbane Light is the result of 3 decades of observation of colour in the capital. The exhibition features 38 paintings in oil, gouache and mixed media.



Night From Everton Park 2017
Oil on canvas, 51 x 41 cm (#MH8281)



Pumpkin, Glass, Growth 2018
Oil on canvas, 36 x 46 cm (#MH8329)



Grange View Caldera 2019
Oil on Belgian linen, 25 x 53 cm (#MH8294)



Tomato Red Lilies & Plums 2018
Oil on canvas, 91.5 x 61 cm (#MH8288)



White Persian Chrysanthemums 2017
Oil on canvas, 77 x 57 cm (#MH8284)

cover: *Day Brisbane City 2017*, Oil on canvas, 35 x 89 cm (#MH8279)

Woolloongabba Art Gallery

613 Stanley Street Woolloongabba Qld 4102 Australia +61 7 3891 5551 ~ email@wag.com.au