**Art Guide Q&A2022**

**Can you just introduce us generally to the exhibition in terms of its mediums and materials, themes, ideas, questions posed, inspirations and so on?**

**Drawing is central to my work .The scale varies considerably from the intimacy of the small copper etchings , up to mixed media drawings that are over two metres or more. The mediums range from a simple application of willow charcoal on paper to the use of an assortment of materials including pastel, acrylic paint, collaged etching proofs & inks.**

**Thematically portraiture is the constant focus. The works in this exhibition are intensive & obsessive observations of ordinary men & women in their later years. Many of them evolve over a long period of time & as such mimic the same checks, adjustments & redirections as the lives of the sitters. They are also a reflection of my own ageing process & as such pose many of those larger questions about the nature of mortality & one’s life.**

**Can you give an idea of your reasons for moving towards double portraits, as distinct from the single portraits of Drawn to Print and other works?**

**Essentially it is about setting myself a new pictorial & compositional challenge. The dynamic of working with two sitters as opposed to the one subject**

**creates more scope for a psychological examination & interaction between the personalities in the drawings & mixed media works.**

**Can you expand on how the creative process is different when painting double portraits, to single portraits? And offer some reflections on the different emotional resonance?**

**I believe when working alone with a single model the relationship with me as the artist is totally different compared to me working with two sitters. Generally when the artist works with a single sitter the conversational exchange is between artist & sitter, but when working with two sitters in the studio, who are often engaged in a conversation with one another this allows me to step back somewhat & become mostly the observer.**

**I understand that COVID-19 meant you could not use your regular sitters, and that you used your partner and yourself as the figures for these new works. Can you offer some thoughts on this unique process, and any insights this gave you into your practice?**

 **I believe it is not that common for a (male) artist to express the closeness & intimacy of a relationship in a substantial body of drawings, paintings & prints.**

**While I have made works of my partner the artist Suzanne Archer extending back to the early 1980’s this is the first time I have made work that includes both of us in such personal poses.**

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**What distinguishes these works from previous series is the familiarity & unique insights that are generated by a relationship that extends back more than three decades. I was also able to ask more of Suzanne in terms of poses & in this respect there is a collaborative exchange taking place.**

**Initially with the use of the self-timer on the camera, photographs were taken that explored the various compositional arrangements available to me in terms of locating the relationship between us. These photographs then became an important reference when I had to construct the drawings of myself at a separate time mostly with the use of mirrors. I came to understand that in terms of portraiture this close collaboration with my partner who was also a practising artist proved an eye opener.**

**Can you identify any particular influences or inspirations for the new works, be they paintings, or works from other mediums/art forms?**

**I think one gets to a stage in a long career where the inspirations for new works come about as a direct result of one’s own accumulative investigations that have proceeded the current work.**

**As a young artist trying to discover a ‘voice’, influences drawn from other paintings or works from other art forms are appropriate, but as a mature artist**

**one hopes the work stands apart. It is left to the viewer to ponder what references & connections are to be drawn from the work**

**What were some of the biggest creative challenges to putting together this exhibition?**

**As the works evolved over a period of four years the biggest challenge was how to exhibit such a diverse body of work & what to leave out. As there were also a number of works that were conceived as sets & were pinned directly to the wall it became important to give each work plenty of breathing space.**

**Can I also just confirm where you live and work?**

**Wedderburn NSW**

**Please do add anything else you deem important about the show.**

**This show was originally presented at the Grafton Regional Gallery in Dec 2021/Feb 2022. The forthcoming exhibition at the Hawkesbury Regional Gallery in August 2022 has allowed me to spend more time extending & developing the series. The larger exhibition space at Hawkesbury will give me the opportunity to present some of the new work alongside the works originally shown at Grafton.**