



'After the Fire' Marni Stuart

Wildflowering by Design

Touring Exhibition

Curated by Dr Sue Davis & Dr Lisa Chandler

Media and Articles
from tour



Queensland
Government

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Wondai Regional Art Gallery president Elaine Madill, with December exhibiting artist Robyn Dower and her friend Liz Barratt at a previous exhibition opening night. 318330 Picture: FILE

A fresh look

Art galleries across the Burnett have decked their halls for their final exhibitions of the year. Here's what to expect in the Burnett region's art galleries in December:

Wondai's Wildflowering by Design

Wondai Regional Art Gallery will host the 'Wildflowering by Design' exhibition over the next two months.

The touring exhibition presents works by Queensland artists who work across the art and design spectrum, who were challenged to take a fresh look at the state's botanical and wildflower heritage.

This is the latest in the series of 'Wild/flower Women' exhibitions. Varying iterations of these exhibitions, with numerous artists, have shown previously at Caloundra, Noosa, Gympie, Bundaberg and Hervey Bay regional galleries.

The Wild/flower Women series of exhibitions are inspired by an appreciation of native wildflowers, the places where they grow and the stories of those who helped ensure they were protected. These include Queensland artists/environmentalists such as Kathleen McArthur (1915-2000), who specialised in painting Queensland wildflowers, and was also one of the founding members of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland along with her friend, the poet Judith Wright.

The exhibition is curated by Dr Susan Davis (OAM) and Dr Lisa Chandler from the Sunshine Coast. Artists featured are from Brisbane to the Bundaberg region including: Rose Barrowcliffe, Nai Nai Bird, Renata Buziak, Donna Davis, Joolie Gibbs, Anne Harris, Nicole Jakins, Shelley Pisani, Edith Rewa, Cara Ann Simpson, Marni Stuart, Emma Thorp.

Work by South Burnett artists including

Robyn Dower, Wendy Olsen, Tess Elliott and Maureen Addenbrooke will also contribute to a local component of the show.

The community are invited to attend the official exhibition opening on Friday, 1 December at 6pm. A \$5 entry includes a hot and cold supper and punch.

The exhibition will remain in the Wondai Regional Art Gallery until Saturday, 27 January and on display seven days a week, 10am to 3pm (closed Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day).

Mount Perry Treasure Trove

Mount Perry Arts Group Inc. is holding their people's Treasure Trove Sale exhibition opening this Saturday, 2 December at 2pm.

The sale will feature a wonderful range of unique, preloved items and curios. Come along and hunt for treasurers, find a bargain.

It will continue during the gallery's open hours from 9am to 2pm every Tuesday to Thursday until 21 December and then again from 9 to 11 January 2024.

Kingaroy's Christmas Pop Up Shop

From mosaics and textiles to woodworks and pottery, find the perfect, unique Christmas gift at the Kingaroy Regional Art Gallery. The Christmas Pop Up Shop features creative gifts and will be open from now until 23 December.

Gayndah's love letters

Gayndah Art Gallery will continue to showcase their 'Love Letters' exhibition until 16 December. It is an exhibition showcasing collaborative work between artists in the North Burnett and regional and metropolitan NSW. The works were developed through a letter exchange.



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Women And Wildflowers At Wondai



(https://southburnett.com.au/news2/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/20231201wondai00.jpg)

Curator Dr Sue Davis AM was perfectly camouflaged, wearing the same design as one of the featured wall hangings

December 7, 2023

Wondai Regional Art Gallery is hosting a special travelling exhibition which features “wildflowering” by some of Queensland’s top women artists.

“Wildflowering By Design” is part of a series of “Wild/flower Women” exhibitions which have toured galleries in Caloundra, Noosa, Gympie, Bundaberg and Hervey Bay.

The Wondai exhibition has been curated by Dr Susan Davis OAM and Dr Lisa Chandler, from the Sunshine Coast, and features works by Rose Barrowcliffe, Nai Nai Bird, Renata Buziak, Donna Davis, Joolie Gibbs, Anne Harris, Nicole Jakins, Shelley Pisani, Edith Rewa, Cara Ann Simpson, Marni Stuart and Emma Thorp.

They have been joined by local artists including Robyn Dower, Wendy Olsen, Tess Elliott and Maureen Addenbrooke.

The artworks – which include fabric designs, paintings and sculptures – are all imbued with a love of native wildflowers and the places they grow.

The artists have been inspired by the stories of environmentalists such as the late Kathleen McArthur, who specialised in painting wildflowers.

Kathleen was a co-founder – alongside Judith Wright, David Fleay and Brian Clouston – of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland in 1962.

The Wondai exhibition was formally opened by Cr Kathy Duff last Friday night after a Welcome to Country by Uncle Eric Law AM.

The evening also featured musical performances by students from Wondai P-9 State School, who also have works on display in Kidz Korner.

The exhibitions will remain on show until 3:00pm on Saturday, January 27.

The gallery is open seven days a week, from 10:00am to 3:00pm, but will be closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year’s Day.



(<https://southburnett.com.au/news2/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/20231201wondai01.jpg>)

Artist Nikita Law with her father, Wakka Wakka Elder Uncle Eric Law AM, who welcomed visitors to the gallery



(<https://southburnett.com.au/news2/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/20231201wondai02.jpg>)

Some of the Wondai State School students with works on display ... from left, April Quirke (Year 2/3), Lillian Olsen (Year 4/5), Gemma Quirke (Year 1/2) and Eboni Quirke (Year 5/6)



(<https://southburnett.com.au/news2/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/20231201wondai03.jpg>)

Artist Nicole Jakins, from Glenwood, with some of her nature-inspired sculptures



(<https://southburnett.com.au/news2/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/20231201wondai05.jpg>)

Artist Edith Rewa Barrett, from Brisbane, with her work, "Wallum Shimmer"



(<https://southburnett.com.au/news2/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/20231201wondai06.jpg>)

Joolie Gibbs, from Gympie, in front of her massive work, Impermanence, which takes up the back wall of the main gallery ... the work, made on 300GSM paper, has been crafted with hand-made inks made from bunya pines, mangroves, eucalyptus, bark, resin, iron and bleach.



(<https://southburnett.com.au/news2/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/20231201wondai07.jpg>)

Wendy Olsen, from Tingooora, was one of the South Burnett artists who also had works on display



(<https://southburnett.com.au/news2/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/20231201wondai08.jpg>)

Neil Hutton provided the musical accompaniment on opening night



(<https://southburnett.com.au/news2/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/20231201wondai09.jpg>)

Cr Kathy Duff, who opened the exhibition, with artist Renata Buziak, from Brisbane



(<https://southburnett.com.au/news2/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/20231201wondai10.jpg>)

The Wondai State School band performed a number of pieces under the guidance of instrumental music teacher Alisha Thurston



Gemma Kennedy, Dancing Queens (Flying Duck Orchids), 2024, Mixed media, 200 x 76 cm each.

Wildflowering *by Design*

Zela Bissett caught up with Dr Sue Davis one of the curator's for the touring exhibition 'Wildflowering by Design' on now at Gympie Regional Gallery

ZELA: Sue I have followed your fascination with the wild flowers of the wallum ever since I read your research into Kathleen MacArthur, an artist who brought the beauty of the coastal heathlands to a wider audience back in the 1960s. Kathleen's paintings of the wildflowers of the wallum helped in the campaign to have the Great Sandy National Park declared. Is Kathleen still a big inspiration for you?

SUE: I do continue to draw inspiration from the likes of Kathleen McArthur and those creative women, who because of their love of the flowers, plants and environment were driven to become conservationists and activists.

ZELA: It seems like poetic justice that you now take groups to walk in the wallum and respond artistically to its beauty. Do you see this in some ways as carrying on Kathleen's legacy of helping others appreciate the wallum heathlands?

SUE: I feel like I am part of an ongoing legacy, of those who have cared for Country. This of course begins well before Kathleen McArthur and Judith Wright, beginning with the First Nations Custodians and women who walked this land. For them, knowledge of the plants and seasons, what grew when, what was fruiting when and so on was essential knowledge. For us it seems like an interesting past-time, but we are all part of this biosphere, and it helps for us all to have more understanding of what 'belonged here', and respect for the ecosystems and cycles of the lands on which we live.

ZELA: I have visited earlier Wild/flower Women exhibitions in Noosa, Caloundra and Bundaberg and took part in the

Gympie Living - 2

Gympie iteration in 2020. Can you tell us about some of the other places have you taken the show and how people have responded?

SUE: After the Gympie exhibition I was invited to do an International Women's Day talk at Bundaberg while the Vera Scarth-Johnson exhibition was on. From there we were invited to generate a new version of the exhibition that included Bundaberg and Wide Bay artists. The further inspiration for that one was that our show was going to be on at the same time as the Florence Broadhurst exhibition. We therefore decided to also embrace the art into design aspect, the idea of revisiting 'florals' as part of an Australian design culture. 'Wildflowering by Design' then became the opening exhibition for the Hervey Bay Regional Gallery and we were privileged to be able to include a Butchulla and Indigenous women's component for that show. The response has been terrific and we have loved grounding the exhibition in walks and working with some artists in each community, hence I proposed a touring exhibition and sought out other galleries to visit with the show. After a successful funding application for Touring Queensland funds (with Arts Queensland) that dream became a reality. So far the show has toured to Wondai, Warwick and Bribie Island Seaside Museum, and this year after Gympie we head to Redlands, Miles and back to the Sunshine Coast.

ZELA: I noted when visiting the Bundaberg Wild/flower Women exhibition that there was also an active wildflower artist-activist in that region, Vera Scarth-Johnson with a nature reserve named after her. I also read the biography of Ellis Rowan, the so-called "flower Hunter" who braved every danger to paint flowers. Do you see a special relationship between women and flowers/botanical art?

SUE: There is a long history of women working with flowers

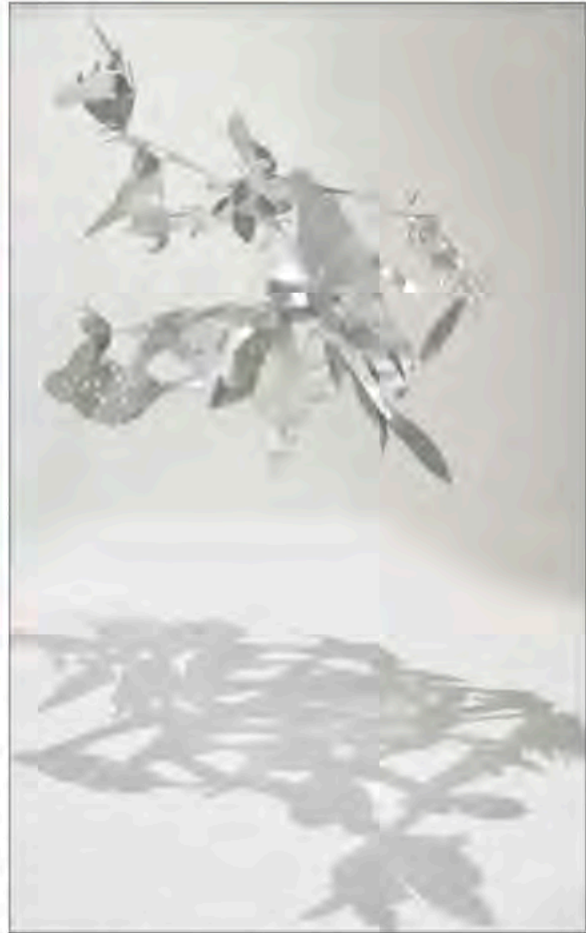


Exhibition curators Dr Lisa Chandler and Dr Sue Davis

and botanicals. Historically women artists were often not able to access the classes which featured human bodies and anatomy and so flowers were subjects they could access. Flowers have also been much more a part of many women's lives – growing food, harvesting, bringing them into the domestic space, using them as symbols and expressions of emotion. When you mention Ellis Rowan, the botanical connection was actually something that was used to denigrate her. There is a story about her winning a major art prize in Melbourne, and some notable male artists complaining that she didn't deserve it, as she was 'just a flower painter'. With our exhibitions the focus has not only been on the wildflowers, but also learning about the plants of place, the history and the people who have documented them and taken action to protect them.

ZELA: Can you tell us about the special features of the Wildflower Women exhibition at Gympie Regional Gallery?

SUE: A key feature was the staging of a Wildflowering Artist Retreat at Cooloola in September 2024. We knew from the 2020 show how important it was for the artists to experience seeing the wildflowers in season and the Cooloola region is very special wildflower country. We were successful with a RADF application and that helped fund a process where we invited local artists to apply to be involved. Those artists have now created a body of new works just for the Gympie show. The artists are: Trish Callaghan, Miriam Innes, Gemma Kennedy, Dr Janet Lee, Prue McLeod, Lyn Nothdurft & Julie Pratt. Their work ranges from traditional botanical painting to contemporary ephemeral sculpture, ceramics and photography. We are also pleased to have local artist Joolie Gibbs as part of the touring exhibition. As her stunning 4m wallum based work was shown here in 2020, she has created a brand new work for this show and it is also stunning.



Miriam Innes, What Casts Beneath, 2024, Aluminium, light, floor sheet, 150 x 250 cm.

ZELA: Thanks Sue for talking with me and carrying on the work of helping everyone love our native wild flowers!

'Wildflowering by Design' is showing at Gympie Regional Gallery until March 8. The exhibition is curated by Dr Susan Davis and Dr Lisa Chandler.

Artists featured: Rose Barrowcliffe, Nai Nai Bird, Renata Buziak, Donna Davis, Joolie Gibbs, Anne Harris, Nicole Jakins, Shelley Pisani, Edith Rewa, Cara Ann Simpson, Marni Stuart and Emma Thorp.

Local artists: Trish Callaghan, Miriam Innes, Gemma Kennedy, Dr Janet Lee, Prue McLeod, Lyn Nothdurft & Julie Pratt.

This project was made possible by funding from the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland. It is also supported through the Regional Arts Development Fund which is a partnership between the Queensland Government and Gympie Regional Council to support local arts and culture in regional Queensland.

For more information see: <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/mcarthur-kathleen-rennie-33448>
<https://www.wildflowerwomen.net/wbdgympie.html>

Wildflowering by Design open soon at Redland Art Gallery

Redland Bayside News



— Gathering wildflowers on Russell Island, Queensland, 1924, 28042 Fischer Family Photographs, State Library of Queensland. Visit: slq.qld.gov.au/media/30654

AN image from 1924 featuring girls and women on Canaipa/Russell Island holding armfuls of wildflowers was one source of inspiration for Redland artists preparing for an exhibition at Redland Art Gallery.

A century later, that "Gathering wildflowers on Russell Island" image both intrigued and inspired the artists as they embarked on a Canaipa-based artist retreat in July.

Were the flowers that grew so prolifically in the 1920s still growing on the island today? Could they still be found on other islands in the Bay?

The answers and the artist responses can now be seen at Redland Art Gallery from April 6.

A series of new Redland-inspired work forms the local component of the Wildflowering by Design exhibition.

The touring exhibition presents works by Queensland artists who work across the art and design spectrum.

In each location, the curators have worked with the local gallery artists to explore local ecologies and wildflowers, taking a fresh look at the botanical and wildflower heritage in the particular region.

One of the curators, Sue Davis, is from the Sunshine Coast and says of planning for the Redland exhibition,

“Many artists and creatives have made their homes on various Moreton Bay Islands.

“Therefore in planning for the Redland edition of ‘Wildflowering by Design’ we turned to them, and to collectives we knew who have previously worked in the environmental art field.

“This included artists from ‘Canaipa Mudlines’ and ‘Canaipa Connections’.

“We were also fortunate to involve senior Quandamooka artist Sonja Carmichael, who was able to join us for our ‘Canaipa Wildflowering Retreat’.”

This is the latest in the series of Wild/flower Women exhibitions.

Varying iterations of these exhibitions, with numerous artists, have shown previously at Wondai, Warwick, Bribie Island Seaside Museum and Gympie.

The exhibition is curated by Dr Davis and Dr Lisa Chandler from the Sunshine Coast.

Artists featured come from Brisbane to the Bundaberg region including Rose Barrowcliffe, Nai Nai Bird, Renata Buziak, Donna Davis, Joolie Gibbs, Anne Harris, Nicole Jakins, Shelley Pisani, Edith Rewa, Cara Ann Simpson, Marni Stuart and Emma Thorp.

Work by Redland artists for the local component of the show include Tricia Dobson, Sharon Jewell, Maria Cleary, Sonja Carmichael, Jen Conde, Siobhan Demeester, Sara Za Enback, Beverly Jensen, Julie Menzies, Jenny Sanzaro-Nishimura, Meg Spratt and Sandy Ward.

The community are invited to attend the official exhibition opening on Sunday, April 6 at 10am.

Free entry –to book for the opening visit artgallery.redland.qld.gov.au/programs/public-programs.

The exhibition will show at Redland Art Gallery until June 3.

REAL PEOPLE – REAL STORY!

BY JAN NARY



Photo: Supplied.

A stage show in production has stumbled into a happy serendipity, where unexpected pieces click together. Raymond Noonan, who is directing Ray Lawler's Australian theatre classic *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, had asked a museum volunteer about photocopying a script and they got to chatting. On hearing the name of the production the volunteer, Judith Ryan, disclosed that she was familiar with the play.

Her late grandmother, actor Eve Wynne, was managing Magnolia Court, a Melbourne boarding house popular with visiting actors. Lawler, who was an emerging playwright and in the process of writing *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, was a regular visitor. He decided to enter the play in a competition and Eve, a mother hen for many of her residents, offered to type up the reams of handwritten script for him. The play was entered,

shared first prize and immediately went into production and touring, becoming an iconic contribution to Australian theatre.

Eve and Ray followed their individual careers but Ray, remembering Eve's organisational skills, hired her as a household manager when he was based in Copenhagen. He presented her with a first publication copy of the play with the inscription, "Dear Eve, without whose encouragement I feel there wouldn't have been any summer, or seventeenth doll either. Love and thanks, Ray."

Eve's career continued in Australia in TV series and commercials. Judith remembers the celebrity status that her grandmother retained.

"She was a beautiful woman, always immaculately dressed. We weren't allowed to sit on her lap for fear we'd leave finger marks on her beautiful clothes."

Judith will give a floor talk about her grandmother at the two matinee performances of *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* at Redlands Coast Museum in June. For more information go to <https://www.redlandmuseum.org.au/whats-on/events/> or call 3286 3494.

WILDFLOWERING BY DESIGN COMES TO REDLAND ART GALLERY



Wildflowering by Design

Until 3 June 2025

Redland Art Gallery, Cleveland

ADMISSION FREE

artgallery.redland.qld.gov.au



"When we do know our own flowers we find the love for them within us and very often the song to express it already in our poetry. And perhaps only then is there that aching desire to see them preserved from meaningless destruction." Kathleen McArthur 1953.

Kathleen McArthur and her contemporaries, poets Judith Wright and activist Oodgeroo Noonuccal, were three women who used their artistry to inspire a popular love for our native flowers and plants. *Wildflowering by Design* is a celebration of the ongoing work of artistic women in creating a consciousness of native flora through a wide range of media. The touring exhibition is supplemented by work from local artists in the region it visits. For the Redlands exhibition, local Redlands artists shared a RADF-supported four-day retreat on Canaipa (Russell Island) with the curators and exhibiting artists of the Wildflower/Women collective.

The pieces produced for the exhibition include printmaking, weaving, fabric, cyanotype, photo-media biochrome, tapestry, digital images, handmade ink, paper, natural fibres and dyes, stoneware, clay, modelling compound, earthenware, leather, metals, pencil and acrylic – a range nearly as wide as the selection of native flowers.

Tricia Dobson, an initiator of the retreat, says that the enthusiasm generated could see a local wildflower art exhibition being established in the future. Tricia chose to make a pottery piece for her contribution.

"The artists stretched and challenged themselves to do something special outside their usual practice. I hadn't done any pottery for many years, but I had made a vase- which I realised didn't look right without any flowers in it – so I made a bunch of pottery wildflowers. There were a lot of broken pieces in the process, and my five-year-old grandson remarked, 'Grandma, you're really not very good at making things, are you?'"

Tricia says that she loved the process of learning and observing flowers in the bush, creating individual pieces and collaborating on others. "We made a cyanotype together that was so big we had to make it on the side of the road – that got us some funny looks!"

Sara Za Enback, from Sweden's Arctic Circle, says that it took her a while after coming to Queensland to even notice native Australian flowers.

"Unlike the stereotypical look of petals in a circle, which you come to expect, Australian wildflowers look so wonderfully different. My boyfriend – now my husband – bought me a bunch of Australian flowers and I thought they were very strange. It's nice now to be able to look with different eyes and actually see and appreciate the flowers that surround me – and I see them everywhere."

Sara had started a wildflower art project called *Island Whispers*, through an RPAC Passages development program, so *Wildflowering by Design* was a natural fit for her work. Sara wanted to push boundaries and try something new; recycled frames, canvases, and flower-patterned fabric appealed, with drawings of native flower images dominating the cultivated garden varieties.

"It was an experiment but it worked quite well – lots of layers, some of them hidden. My method is experiment, explore, play – when I try to control too much it doesn't work, I'm not trying for super-realistic images, I like the quirky stuff!"

***Wildflowering by Design* has 'quirky' by the truckload, and it's an inspirational collection of interpretations of our beautiful bush plants. See the exhibition at Redland Art Gallery until June 3.**

REVIEW VISUAL ART

Just wild about the flora: the women who captured native blooms ... for the inside

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The work of local women artists, Wildflowering by Design, is now on at Redland Art Gallery.

Kathleen McArthur was a luminary Queensland-based artist and writer whose pioneering legacy, along with that of friend and fellow environmental trailblazer poet Judith Wright, are celebrated in an exhibition of “wild flowering women” at Redland Art Gallery.

The exhibition *Wildflowering by Design* notes the importance, functional role and aesthetic qualities of Australian wildflowers. Exhibition curators Sue Davis and Lisa Chandler dubbed McArthur (1915-2000) and Wright (1915-2000) “wild flowering women” because “they loved wildflowers and the wilds of nature, and were also fiery, ‘wild’ and difficult in ensuring those environments were protected”.

Since 2016, exhibitions of “wild/flower” women have been staged across South-East Queensland with artists including Indigenous custodians whose guidance stimulated a new group of “wild” environmental crusaders.

Wildflowering by Design is an extension of this original concept in its integration of local artists at each venue.

The exhibition at Redland Art Gallery gathered local artists at the Canaipa Wildflowering Retreat on Russell Island, in July 2024, where they engaged with the island’s ecology, opening their eyes to previously imperceptible native flora.

‘Now that I am a wild/flower woman my eyes are trained to see the hidden sanctuary provided by nature’s design’

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REVIEW

A murderous game is afoot in this classic whodunnit

Artist Siobhan Demeester describes the opening of her mind, along with her eyes, during this process, writing: “I loved the simplicity of the small white flower. Before the wildflowering retreat I would never have noticed this special delicate gem ... Now that I am a wild/flower woman my eyes are trained to see the hidden sanctuary provided by nature’s design.”



Wildflowering by Design artists gathered at Redland Art Gallery.

In each of these artistic responses the unique qualities of Australian flora are traced and extended – with wallum, acacia, ungaire reeds, Xanthorrhoea, banksia and swamp orchids found on Quandamooka Country – from artists including Demeester, Sonja Carmichael, Beverley Jensen, Sharon Jewell and Meg Spratt.

Work by artists included in the original exhibition – Kathleen McArthur, Renata Buziak, Rose Barrowcliffe, Donna Davis and Nicole Jakins – profile critically endangered flora, bunya, mangroves and other species from South-East Queensland.

Buziak fuses art with science in a series of colourful biochromes that are immersive in scale, “portraits of life’s vast cycles of death and renewal” from the Granite Belt.



Nicole Jakins' *A Landscape Redefined*, 2023. Courtesy of the artist.

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Jakins' sculptural works are stoneware forms that hybridise animals with plants, the unity of fauna with flora from her memories of “birds stirring in amongst the understory of grevillea, olax and ferns”. Some of these works draw on dyes and materials from nature.

Joolie Gibbs makes inks from botanicals, imbuing her work with impermanence that parallels the cycle of life and speaks to the meditative quality of spending time in nature.

Redland Art Gallery has recorded blockbuster audiences (in Cleveland terms). For Redland City Mayor Jos Mitchell, *Wildflowering by Design* “highlights the power of art to deepen our connection with the environment—whether through the delicate beauty of wildflowers or the resilience of life in urban spaces ... and celebrate creativity, culture and our deep relationship with the land”.

Its themes have been sympathetically paired with a solo exhibition by LeAnne Vincent, who is clearly a wild/flower woman. Her exhibition, *Inhabited: Anthromes of Queensland*, responds to the “emotional anxiety” induced by the absorption of her childhood landscapes (in northern NSW) by the Pacific Motorway. Vincent now lives in Ipswich where she produces anthromes (anthropogenic biomes) as circular layered and printed fabrics, printed with motifs that combine the natural with the human-made, stitched to evoke the layering and intermeshing of these responses in our urban lives.



LeAnne Vincent's *Into the Fray*, 2024. Courtesy of the artist.

Vincent's *Into the Fray* (2024) uses shadows of tree roots, feathers, leaves, snake skin, a gecko and flowers with patterns of netting, plastic bottles, saws and blades, overlaid in a form that evokes a thought bubble into our distracted urban melee.

Vincent created it “immersed in the uncomfortable sounds of excavators, jack hammers and saws invading my studio from the construction site next door; this work also speaks of my own perceived powerlessness”.

“I became fascinated with how small fauna—like insects and reptiles—survive in human-altered landscapes,” Vincent writes. “I hope to encourage people to look closer and consider how our actions shape these environments.”

Both exhibitions draw attention to the intricate aesthetic and environmental qualities of our unique flora, and elevate a delicate aesthetic to celebrate the often unseen beauty that may exist close by outside – no matter where you live.

Wildflowering by Design and *Inhabited: Anthromes of Queensland* continue at Redland Art Gallery, Cleveland, until June 3.

artgallery.redland.qld.gov.au/exhibitions/exhibitions-2025/wildflowering-by-design

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Redland Art Gallery, *Wildflowering by Design*

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Wildflowering exhibitions sprout connection among artists

Published on 16 July 2025

Bursting with colour and inspired by the untamed beauty of the Western Downs landscape, 'Wildflowering on the Western Downs is a vibrant new exhibition blooming into life at Dogwood Crossing from 26 July to 13 September.



Curated by Dr Sue Davis and Dr. Lisa Chandler, there will be works by artists from across Queensland in the John Mullins Memorial Gallery, while the Curved Wall' space will shine a spotlight on the talents of local Western Downs artists.

Council Spokesperson for Community and Cultural Development Cr Peter Saxelby said support from the Queensland Government and the Regional Arts Development Fund has been vital in helping Council nurture local talent and deliver unique cultural experiences.

"Exhibitions like Wildflowering provide platforms for artists to push boundaries, reflect on beauty and provoke meaningful conversations," Cr Saxelby said.

"These exhibitions capture the Western Downs and Queensland botanical heritage through fresh eyes, exploring materiality, handcrafting, and the digital realm.

"The touring exhibition features work from across South-East Queensland with award-winning artists such as Renata Buziak, Donna Davis, Joolie Gibbs, Nicole Jakins, Cara Ann Simpson and Emma Thorp.

"It is complemented by works from local artists across various disciplines.

'Wildflowering on the Western Downs' explores the intersection of art, design, and nature, with inspiration from the Gurulmundi Wildflower Circuit in the Gurulmundi state forest.

"Local artists were selected to partake in a two-day retreat where a series of workshops explored botanical inks, sun printing and pattern making.

"The immersive retreat and workshop allowed artists to experiment with different media and materials, as well as extend their network with other like-minded creatives.

"This weekend of professional development was a fantastic opportunity for local artists to learn techniques from industry professionals and as a result their work will be showcased at the Dogwood Crossing for 49 days."

Local artist Meg Noack described the two-day retreat as a deeply rewarding experience, providing an opportunity to connect creatively and forge strong bonds with fellow artists.

"Being an artist can be a solitary occupation, and the retreat helped me to discover a 'whole new world' of folk who appreciated nature and love being an artist," Meg said.

"The whole experience provided an opportunity to test ideas, media and colour and see how they were tackled the same tasks."

Fellow local artist Eileen Parker said the retreat experience sparked a whole new direction in her art-making work.

"Drawing with botanical ink inspired me to dye my exhibition piece using eucalyptus leaves from Possum Park and the Bunya Mountains, creating a sense of origin and connection," Eileen said.

Meg and Eileen's vibrant creations will be proudly showcased at the Wildflowering on the Western Downs exhibition at Dogwood Crossing from 26 July to 13 September.

Western Downs Artists include Michelle Black, Helen Dennis, Cindy Grimes, Patricia Hinz, Leigh Nicholson, Meg Noack, Eileen Parker, Christopher Rigg and Kath Truscott.

To learn more about these exciting exhibitions visit www.dogwoodcrossing.com, (<http://www.dogwoodcrossing.com>,/) or email dogwood.crossing@wdrc.qld.gov.au (<mailto:dogwood.crossing@wdrc.qld.gov.au>).

This project is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland. It was supported through the Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF), a partnership between the Queensland Government and Western Downs Regional Council to support local arts and cultural regional Queensland.

Tagged as:

Media Release

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Wildflowering By Design

Interview with Dr. Sue Davis Photos provided by Dr. Sue Davis

Driving along the Leichhardt Highway from Miles to Wandoan, you may have seen the "Wildflower Road" sign near Gurulmundi – a reminder of the region's spectacular spring display.

Miles and Gurulmundi are renowned for their breathtaking wildflowers, offering a visual experience that draws locals and visitors alike.

In August 2024, Dr Sue Davis, Dr Lisa Chandler, and Joolie Gibbs led 11 local artists on the "Western Downs Wildflowering Artist Retreat" at Possum Park. This initiative was proudly supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland and the Regional Arts Development Fund, in partnership with Western Downs Regional Council (WDRC).

Over two days, artists from Miles, Tara, Chinchilla, Dalby, the Bunya Mountains, and Hannaford immersed themselves in the surrounding countryside, searching for native wildflowers and learning about the region's unique flora. Thanks to Boobook Explore and Indigenous Chinchilla local Richard Turnbull, the group gained deeper insight into the ecological and cultural significance of the landscape.



Miles Wildflowering Retreat August 2024

The retreat was inspired by the Wild/flower Women project – an ongoing initiative led by Dr Sue Davis that encourages greater awareness and appreciation of wildflowers while exploring diverse artistic techniques and storytelling.

The weekend fostered vibrant creative exchanges and fresh perspectives, ultimately leading to a small exhibition on the curved wall at Dogwood Crossing in Miles in support of the touring exhibition "Wildflowers by Design". The exhibitions officially opened on Saturday, 26 July 2025, and were warmly received by the local community.

To learn more about the story behind Wild/flower Women and the upcoming Wildflowers by Design exhibition, I asked Dr. Sue Davis a few questions:

What or who inspired you to start the Wild/flower Women project and why did you choose the name Wild/flower Women?

I was inspired by the work of pioneering artists and environmentalists such as Kathleen McArthur and Judith Wright, who because of their love of the flowers, plants and environment were driven to become conservationists and activists. They loved the 'wild' and often had to be bold and 'wild' to get their message across. Actually, while the first exhibition was called 'Wild/flower Women' our work now isn't restricted to women only. I've also registered the name 'Wild/flower Lover' and the local artist EOI was open to all. In fact we have our first male artist exhibiting with Christopher Riggs from Chinchilla.

Is there a special relationship between women and flowers or botanical art?

There is a long history of women working with flowers and botanicals. Historically women artists were often not able to access the classes which featured human bodies and anatomy and so flowers were subjects they could



access. Flowers have also been much more a part of many women's lives – growing food, harvesting, bringing them into the domestic space, using them as symbols and expressions of emotion. With our exhibitions the focus has not only been on the wildflowers and plants of place, but also the history and people who documented them and took action to protect them. For example we have loved learning about 'wild/flower women' of this region, such as Grace Lithgow, Dorothy Gordon and Sylvia Seiler.

How did your collaboration with WDRC begin?

The response to an earlier exhibition had been terrific, hence I proposed a touring exhibition and sought out other galleries to visit with the show. The Western Downs team was keen to take the show given the significance of Gurulmundi and the wildflower heritage of the region.

Visit the John Mullins Memorial Art Gallery at Dogwood Crossing to see the exhibitions with your own eyes. The exhibitions will be available until 13th September 2025.



Miles Retreat organisers & curators Lisa, WDRC worker Amy and Claudia with Joolie and Sue



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Spring 2025 A Blooming Legacy at Caloundra Regional Gallery

Image source: Contributed

Posted Sep, 2025 • By Jodie Cameron • 0 comments

Jodie Cameron discovers the latest exhibition blossoming at Caloundra Regional Gallery this spring.

Whoever said Western Australia is the best place to witness wildflower season, clearly hasn't seen the Sunshine Coast transform from July through to September – the bushlands bursting with dazzling violet, gold, pink and white. I am mesmerised by their spectacular colours calling us to connect, and seek out the hidden wonder tucked within the incredible wallum reserves in the region – known only to those who take the time to look.



Dr Sue Davis and Dr Lisa Chandler have been closely looking at and appreciating our local landscape for decades. Educators, curators, artists and self-declared wild/flower women, their latest project **Wildflowering by Design** will be in full bloom at the **Caloundra Regional Gallery** from 17 October to 30 November.

Celebrating native wildflowers, women, and their deep connection to place, this immersive exhibition features stunning work by contemporary female artists from across Queensland. It explores botanical illustrations, textile designs, digital installations and more, alongside a series of guided wildflower walks, workshops, and hands-on art experiences for all ages.

“It’s about celebrating women’s memory, identity, conservation, design and place – these flowers tell stories, and so do the women who paint them, protect them, and walk amongst them,” Dr Davis smiled. “The focus is on intergenerational knowledge, history and design innovation – they all play an important role in raising awareness.”

Featured artists include Rose Barrowcliffe, Nai Nai Bird, Renata Buziak, Donna Davis, Joolie Gibbs, Anne Harris, Nicole Jakins, Shelley Pisani, Edith Rewa, Cara Ann Simpson, Marni Stuart and Emma Thorp. While local creatives Zartisha Davis, Chloe Watego, Fiona Harding, Fuschia Darling, Grace Smith, Jasmine Veronique, Libby Derham, Megan Ruby Lee, Nicole Voevodin-Cash, Rosie Lloyd-Giblett, and Suzanne Breeze will also showcase textiles and patternmaking produced at design workshops at the University of the Sunshine Coast’s Maker Space.

“It’s about interpretation and how an artist is responding to this wildflower landscape, seeing their practice in a new light, and how it can touch people in different ways,” Dr Chandler adds. “By learning what grew here, and what still grows, the artists join First Nations custodians of the land in passing down those traditions and knowledge to future generations.”

At the heart of the exhibition is the extraordinary legacy of Kathleen McArthur – a beloved Sunshine Coast artist, writer, and environmental activist who was a pioneering force in the modern conservation movement. Kathleen also co-founded the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland, using her delicate wildflower watercolours as a persuasive tool for campaigning to protect the coast’s fragile ecosystems.

“Kathleen McArthur and Judith Wright were artists, so they’d always looked closely and carefully and responded through their art forms,” Dr Davis says. “But they became activists after they fell in love with the wildflowers and saw their environments being destroyed.”



It was a dusty bookshop discovery of Kathleen's books and writings that sparked Dr Davis's own wildflower wanderings, and the more she learned the more she wanted to protect and share their joy and beauty with others.

"Those books weren't just field guides – they were stories of resistance and remembrance," Dr Davis says. "Now the legacy of these wild/flower women is reimagined, from delicate botanical illustrations to bold digital installations, new artists honour the wildness of nature and the women who walk within it. Exploring the relationship between gender, environment and place, the HERstory of flowers has long been linked with women.

"Flowers were often subject matter for female artists in earlier times when their access to training was limited. The link to the feminine also comes with flowers often used for decorative purposes, celebration and commemoration. We wanted to both honour some of those histories but unsettle them as well.

"We still have built-in assumptions and prejudices around flowers, but the notion of a wild/flower woman tends to go hand-in-hand with a certain strength," Dr Chandler explained.

With support from local councils, artists, and communities, Wildflowering by Design has been an evolving passion project – and now, a touring art exhibition – with its final stop in Caloundra. From hats crafted using 1920s sunhat patterns and locally designed textiles, to postcards, fabric swatches and artworks you can wear, the project bridges art, storytelling, fashion and everyday life.

"If we see wildflowers on our clothes, and in our homes – we value them more and that awareness can lead to protection," Dr Davis adds. "We hope to keep the legacy of the past alive encouraging new generations to be worthy custodians of our plants and place."

So whether you're a budding botanist, an art lover, or a wild/flower woman at heart, take the time to wander through the wallum and the Wildflowering by Design exhibition at Caloundra. Experience an intersection of colour, history and celebration from the wild/flower women themselves.

"Wildflowers remind us to pause, to look closely, and celebrate what's fleeting and fragile, and give back to this symbiotic relationship we all have with Mother Earth," Dr Davis says.

JOIN THE WILDFLOWER WANDERINGS!

Wildflowering by Design

17 October to 30 November



Caloundra Regional Gallery

Curator Talk & Launch

18 October

Curator Talk, 1-2pm; launch 2.30-4.30pm

Caloundra Regional Gallery

Wildflower Walk & Draw Events

Sunday 19 October, 9am to 11.30am

Saturday 25 October, 9am to 11.30am

Kathleen McArthur Conservation Park, Currimundi Lake

Saturday 1 November, 8.30am to 11am

Glass House Scientific Area 1

Tickets \$35 per person / \$28 concession

All materials provided or bring your own.

Suitable for 14+ or young participants accompanied by a paying adult.

For details on guided walks and to book tickets, visit the [website](#) to book.

This Unique Wilderness: Campaigns for Kathleen McArthur Exhibition

Until 7 December

Bankfoot House, Glasshouse Mountains

Transformations: Art of the Scott Sisters

Until 7 December, Landsborough Muesum

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About the Author / **Jodie Cameron**

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Jodie is a city-turned-country-turned-coastal chick. With a degree in Journalism & PR and a passion for pulling together events with flair. Her 15+ years' experience is diverse (including launching a macadamia nut farm)! In her spare time, she's beachside with her two tiny treasures and furry love Staffy x Red Cattle dog, Rudi.

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Wildflowers and women: where art and nature intertwine

A touring exhibition celebrating women artists and the resilience of native flora is open now and on show at Caloundra Regional Gallery.



Visitors are being greeted by a profusion of colour as wildflowers spill across canvases, textiles and digital designs in the latest exhibition at Caloundra Regional

Gallery.



The launch of the Wildflowering by Design exhibition

[Wildflowering by Design](#) celebrates the beauty and resilience of our native flora and women's connection to place.

Caloundra Regional Gallery Director Jo Duke said Wildflowering by Design had arrived in the region just in time for our wildflowering season.

"This exhibition is a great celebration for our region as there are so many local artists involved in the show," Ms Duke said.

"Wildflowering by Design is a touring exhibition and is the concept of curators Dr Sue Davis and Dr Lisa Chandler."



Meet the artists

Exhibition Curator Dr Sue Davis said Wildflowering by Design brought together a group of extraordinary Queensland artists who explored our botanical heritage through the lens of contemporary art and design.

“These artists, including many from the Sunshine Coast, extend the scope of what we understand as Australian environmental design culture, using hand-crafted techniques, digital innovation, and everything in between,” Curator Dr Sue Davis said.

“We’re proud to feature the work of Rose Barrowcliffe, Nai Nai Bird, Renata Buziak, Donna Davis, Joolie Gibbs, Anne Harris, Nicole Jakins, Shelley Pisani, Edith Rewa, Cara Ann Simpson, Marni Stuart, Emma Thorp, and many other talented artists from across South-East Queensland.”

The free exhibition runs until 30 November and includes a range of workshops from paper lanterns and drawing to watercolour and linocut, as well as a reader’s theatre performance.

The exhibition continues the region's long tradition of celebrating wildflowers and conservation, inspired by early advocates such as artist and environmentalist Kathleen McArthur.



Sunshine Coast Community Portfolio Councillor David Law said this was another example of how art helped showcase the region's remarkable ecological values.

"Throughout our history, we've been fortunate to have so many trailblazing women who advocated for our native flora, and our wildflowers in particular," Cr Law said.

"Their connection to place and commitment to sustainability embodies what it means to live in our Sunshine Coast Biosphere, where people and nature thrive in harmony.

"This exhibition continues their legacy and, through art and design, creates a deeper appreciation for the resilience and beauty of what grows here naturally."

This project has been made possible through the support of the Queensland Government via Arts Queensland, and the gallery is grateful for their continued investment in regional arts and culture.

Plan your visit

Wildflowering by Design is on display at Caloundra Regional Gallery until 30 November.

Register for workshops and the performance on the [Caloundra Regional Gallery website](#).

You'll find the gallery at 22 Omrah Avenue, Caloundra. It is open Tuesday to Friday, 10am–4pm, and weekends 10am–2pm and entry is free.

Plan your visit to Caloundra Regional Gallery →

[Community](#) [What's on](#)



14 NOV, 2025

Creative women showcase stunning wildflower works

Noosa Today, Noosa



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Wildflowering by Design is on display at Caloundra Regional Gallery Tuesday to Friday, 10am-4pm, and weekends 10am-2pm until 30 November.

Entry is free. Register for workshops and the performance at gallery.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au.



Curators Dr Sue Davis and Dr Lisa Chandler at the launch of the exhibition. (Supplied)