



THE CRAFTY ARTIST

Newsletter of the
Ballina Arts & Crafts Centre Inc.
MARCH 2026

PRESIDENTS REPORT

Although the weather is still very hot and dry, the light has noticeably changed in the past couple of weeks. The shadows are longer and the light has become more golden. The cooler mornings have also been appreciated.

Over the past month, I was able to go to Grafton and see the different exhibition spaces in the [Grafton Regional Gallery](#). It is a beautiful gallery with an ever changing group of artists.

This time the photographic exhibition by [Tamara Dean](#), **Leave Only Footprints**, is truly beautiful. It spans over 11 bodies of work that explore rites of passage, ritual and motherhood. It is underpinned by her longing to protect nature. The whole exhibition incorporates photography, installation and the moving picture to create an environment that engages the senses. One has a sense of peace and quiet whilst contemplating the works.



Image: Tamara Dean, The keeper, 2010, from the series This too shall pass. Courtesy of the artist and Michael Reid Gallery (Sydney + Berlin).

It is great that more people are hearing of BACCI and are wanting to join us. We are always very happy to welcome new members.

We are also pleased when some members propose to help in any of the tasks that make the workload lighter for all.

At our last meeting Christine Jones offered her help in updating BACCI's website and Andrew Watson offered to help in the administrative part of our Autumn exhibition in May.

A big thank you to these two task masters.

If you have not sent in your artist profile or if you feel you need to update it, please send it to Rosie (ballinaartsandcraftscentre@gmail.com) as soon as possible. It is also good to include a couple of photos of examples of your work.

At our next meeting in April, we will be having our AGM, and we hope to have the attendance of a large group.

I look forward to your goodwill in making BACCI a strong dynamic group for 2026.

Cheers to a great year full of creativity.
Françoise

WHAT'S COMING UP?

March 2026 monthly meeting:

Date: Tuesday, 3 March 2026
Time: 5.00pm for 5.30pm start
Show & Tell: Françoise Sauvere
Location: Boardroom
Cherry Street Sports Club
Cnr Cherry & Bentinck Streets
Ballina

Throughout 2026:

AGM: Tuesday, 7 April 2026
Autum show: Saturday, 9 and Sunday 10 May
(Exhibition co-ordinator needed)
NRRG show: Thursday, 20 August to Friday,
11 October 2026
Spring show: Saturday, 21 and
Sunday 22 November 2026

Lessons from Artistic Rejection

What I've Learned from a Lifetime of Rejection as an Artist

Throughout my years as an artist, I've faced rejection more times than I can count. The familiar "Dear Lesley" letter has become almost a rite of passage:

"Thank you for your application to exhibit. This year we've had an overwhelming number of submissions, and the selection process has been very competitive. However, please consider applying again next year."

Most galleries and exhibitions don't provide feedback, leaving many questions unanswered. However, over time I've gleaned valuable lessons from these rejections—insights that now guide me before I submit my work.

1. *Is This the Right Gallery for My Work?*

A traditional gallery is unlikely to accept my abstract landscapes. Understanding a gallery's aesthetic, audience, and curatorial style can save you from disappointment. Research each gallery thoroughly making sure your style aligns with theirs is essential to avoid unnecessary let-downs.

2. *Presentation Matters*

Your work should be impeccably presented. Quality framing is essential—if unframed, the piece must be neat, clean, and equipped with a complete hanging system. Use high-quality canvases—no warped or cheap materials that undermine your work's value. Some galleries have specific preferences; for example, one local gallery rejects black frames, while another requires canvas edges to be white. These details reflect both the gallery's professionalism and your respect as an artist.

3. *Keep Your Résumé Concise and Accurate*

Include your exhibition history, awards, and notable achievements. Keep it professional, current, and easy to read. A clear and honest résumé helps curators quickly understand your background and credibility.

4. *Maintain a Strong Online Presence*

Your Facebook, Instagram, and website should showcase your best work and be regularly updated. Galleries often research artists online before making decisions, so ensure your digital footprint is polished and representative of your practice.

5. *Study the Gallery or Exhibition*

Review past selections, attend openings, and introduce yourself politely—being present helps you understand the gallery's culture without being pushy. This approach allows you to build genuine relationships and gain insights into what the gallery values.

6. *Respect the Theme*

If the exhibition theme is "Still Life," don't be surprised if your landscape is rejected. Curators seek cohesion in their shows. Always ensure your submission fits the specified theme to increase your chances of acceptance.

7. *Write a Strong Story About Your Work*

Your artist's statement should be written in the third person. For example: "Lesley's work is predominantly abstract landscape watercolours, influenced by Japanese woodblock prints." A clear and engaging statement helps curators and audiences connect with your practice.

8. *Be Consistent and Thoughtful with Pricing*

Avoid pricing your artwork differently across galleries. Customers and galleries notice inconsistencies, which can devalue your work and annoy gallery staff. Be mindful of your customer base; few people can afford a \$20,000 painting, but a \$1,000 one may be more acceptable.

Conclusion

Rejection is simply part of the artist's journey. It is not a reflection of your talent. Often, it just means you are not the right fit at the time. Embrace rejection as a learning opportunity that strengthens your practice and sharpens your approach.

***Cheers
Lesley Ryan***

ARTISTS PROFILE

Barry Magnay – Photography

My first camera was a Kodak Instamatic, a Christmas present in 1962. In 1965 I bought an Agfa bellows 35mm at a second hand shop in Sydney. I entered the world of the SLR cameras in 1967 with the purchase of a new Yashica j7. 1990 saw the next update when it was replaced with a Pentax P30.

Photography, for me has been a great hobby and something I thoroughly enjoy. Over the years I have been invited to photograph Birthday Party's, Anniversaries, Special Functions and Weddings.

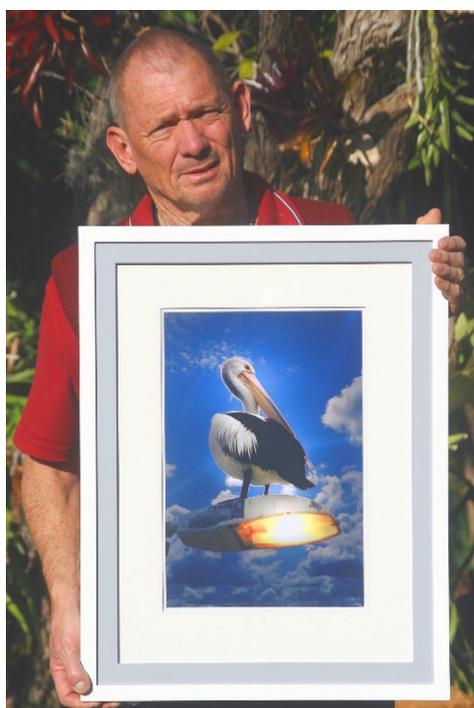
It was on our trip around Australia in 2000 - 2001 that I started to take my photography seriously. The Australian landscape is truly inspirational.

My introduction, in 2003, to Digital was with a Canon 300D SLR, a far different camera to the film cameras I'd been using.

I was then invited to photograph horses both on and off the Racetrack, a very interesting year or so.

I joined BACCI in 2007, they were raising money for the Gallery, and my time with BACCI has been both rewarding and inspirational as we strive to improve from one exhibition to the next.

Apart from the Australian landscape, the pelican is my favourite subject.



CREATIVE ARTISANS GALLERY NEWS

Featured artist(s) for March 2026 are:

Deb McFarlane – Weaving Place, Colour and Calm



On Ballina Island in the heart of the Northern Rivers, Deb McFarlane weaves landscapes not with paint, but with thread.

A Freeform Tapestry Weaver working on a traditional frame loom, Deb embraces an intuitive process with few rules — no patterns to follow, no stitches to count. Instead, colour, texture and form unfold slowly and organically, guided by instinct and a deep connection to place.

Each work begins with an inspirational photograph, often captured within the surrounding region. The sweeping coastline, winding waterways, lush rainforests and rolling hinterland of the Northern Rivers become her visual language. From there, Deb translates her interpretation directly onto the loom, building depth and movement by layering fibres of varying textures and thicknesses.

Sustainability is woven into her practice. She predominantly works with recycled and reclaimed yarns — sourced from op shops, gifted materials, unravelled garments, and treasured finds — alongside natural fibres collected on beach and bush walks. It is a process of transformation, where discarded materials are given new life and meaning.

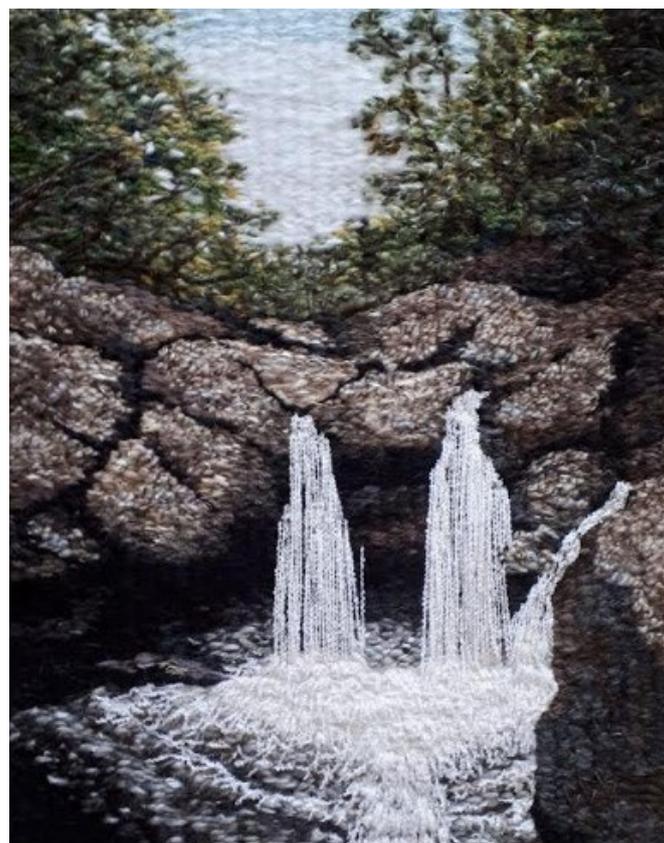
Her studio environment mirrors the tranquillity of her work. At a large circular marble table overlooking a Balinese-inspired tropical garden, complete with a gently flowing water feature, Deb lays out her extensive colour palette before beginning the slow rhythm of weaving. Nearby, a purpose-built craft room houses her carefully sorted yarn collection and looms, while an upstairs room has been converted into a private gallery for intimate viewings.

The process is unhurried. A small weaving can take four to six weeks; larger pieces may take several months. Each artwork may incorporate more than 100 different coloured yarns, carefully blended to create luminous surface textures and subtle movement. Most are framed under nonreflective glass to preserve and protect the natural fibres.

Over more than 25 years, Deb has quietly built a respected artistic career. Her achievements include winning the Textiles Section at the Byron Arts Classic, being named a finalist in the NSW Emerging Craft Artists Award at The Rocks, Sydney, and selection in three consecutive Border Art Prizes at Tweed Regional Gallery. She has also been highly commended in the Bellingen Art Prize, held two solo exhibitions, featured in DownUnder Textiles Magazine, and illustrated two children's books. Recently, she was awarded the People's Choice Award at the Ballina Arts & Craft Inc Exhibition.

Self-taught and deeply dedicated, Deb's practice is one of patience, observation, and intuition. Thread by thread, she captures not just scenery, but atmosphere — weaving the spirit of the Northern Rivers into every piece.

Cheers
Pauline Rutten



Creative Artisans Gallery Workshop:

The first CAG workshop has been organised (by Christine O'Leary), and more will be arranged for the future.

Christine is on the lookout for suitable venues, if anyone has any suggestions, please let me know.

Below are the details. Christine will also bring some flyers to the March meeting.

Date:	Saturday, 14 March 2026
Time:	9.30am to 1.30pm
Location:	Cherry Street Sports Club 68 Cherry Street, Ballina
Cost:	\$120
No of participants:	Limited to 6 people
Bookings:	Creative Artisans Gallery M 0435 941 591

Ballina Wave Magazine re 'Artist of the Month'

Ballina Wave have given a monthly space to a BACCI member, titled '*Artist of the Month.*'

Details needed for article are:

- 200 words about you and your work (and a mention of BACCI would be great)
- 2 x JPEG photos (these can be of you and your work or just your work)
- email your Ballina Wave artist profile (a word document) and your pictures to Rosie (ballinabacci@gmail.com) by the 1st of the month
- also email your document and pictures to Maria (mariaheaton@hotmail.com), she will post this on BACCI's [Facebook](#) page
- it would be great if all members could take advantage of this opportunity,



Please email your document and pictures to Rosie (ballinabacci@gmail.com)

Do you have anything to share, (eg art info, travel adventures, and/or photos)? If so, please contact Rosie about your story – you can either mail or email your story and photos, (remember to include your name) to:

The Secretary BACCI
PO Box 111
Ballina NSW 2478

OR

E ballinabacci@gmail.com

LEARN TO WEAVE WORKSHOP

beginners creative weaving



Learn to weave on a rigid heddle loom. Loom will be warped ready for you to start creating.

Weave at your own pace and walk away with a small scarf or wallhanging.



further details & bookings:
www.yarnaboutyarn.com

COUNTRY LIFE ART EXHIBITION

18th April - 30th May 2026

Art Exhibition with a Country Theme
presented by

CASSINO GALLERY

148 Barker Street, Casino

Celebrating Beef Week

with a diverse array of artworks - many available for sale.
Paintings, sculptures, drawings, photography and kids' art.

Kids' prizes courtesy of 

Opening Event:

Sat April 18th 2-4pm
Entry: \$10 pp, kids free
Incl nibbles and a drink

Gallery Hours: (During Exhibition)

Thursday, Friday, Sat 10am-3pm
Sunday 10am - 2pm
Gold coin donation



Image by
iStock



CASSINO GALLERY

cassinoartgallery@gmail.com
cassinogallery.org.au
facebook.com/cassinoartgallery



Painter artist at work

COUNTRY LIFE ART EXHIBITION

We're inviting artists of all ages, including school age children, to take part in our next exhibition

COUNTRY LIFE

held from April 18th to May 30th 2026 at
Cassino Gallery, 148 Barker Street Casino

This exhibition features a country theme and will add to the celebration of Beef Week. We are showcasing paintings, drawings, photos, sculptures and artworks in any medium.

Under our Youth Creative project and by courtesy of the Greater Bank, we are offering prizes to each of three age categories: kids age 5-8 years \$50, 9-12 years \$150 & 13-16 years \$200, a total of \$400 prize money.

Entries close April 4th. Entry forms can be requested from cassinoartgallery@gmail.com or downloaded from

www.cassinogallery.org.au

There are no exhibiting fees. Entries should be delivered to the gallery on 11th April between 10am and 2pm.

The final acceptance of all artworks submitted will be at the discretion of the Cassino Gallery. Artworks can be offered for sale with 20% commission of the sale price paid to Cassino Gallery for any work sold. No commission on sales of kids' art.

For enquiries: **Maree Beek 0439308620**



CASSINO GALLERY

cassinoartgallery@gmail.com
cassinogallery.org.au
facebook.com/cassinoartgallery



REGIONAL ARTS ROUNDUP

FROM REGIONAL ARTS NSW

Welcome to 2026

[Regional Arts NSW](https://regionalartsnsw.com.au) (<https://regionalartsnsw.com.au>) expect 2026 to be a huge year. We're coming up to our 80th anniversary and are so proud of what our organisation has achieved so far. We'll be celebrating this huge achievement and the regional artists we work with throughout the year, so stay tuned.

We also have the NSW Government's Regional Arts Strategy launch coming up, as well as the continuation of our RALLY regeneration program and continued delivery of the Regional Arts Fund grants and the Windmill Trust Scholarship.

Follow us on social media to stay in the loop!



RALLY ASSEMBLY

April 23-24 2026
WAYOUT Artspace, Kandos
FREE (register online)

[RANSW](#) and Cementia invite our community to the 2-day RALLY Assembly. This free event will be an opportunity to learn from experts, share practice and to generate new ideas that will contribute to our regional towns becoming vibrant and active places.

- 📅 23-24 April 2026
- 📍 WAYOUT Artspace, Kandos
- 🆓 FREE (registration required)



Mahico Open Air, a one-day outdoor community festival taking place on **Saturday 21 March at Lismore Turf Club**.

Mahico Open Air is rooted in community, culture, and connection, blending World, Latin American, Roots and electronic music with a strong focus on food, family, and shared experience. The day will feature curated markets, a thoughtful food offering (including Mercado Mahico Mexican), and relaxed grassy spaces where families can lay down a rug and feel at home.

Kids Zone (2–7pm)

We are placing a strong focus on families, with a dedicated Kids Zone offering a relaxed, playful space where children can explore, create and move within the rhythm of the festival. Activities include:

- Art, crafts, and creative play inside the Mahico cubby house
- Games, bubbles, and entertainment with Popcorn the Clown & friends
- Space for dancing and wiggling
- Pony rides (3–5pm, additional cost)

Entry to the festival is **free for children**, and the Kids Zone caters to a wide range of ages and interests.

Discount tickets

To ensure the event is welcoming and accessible, we have a limited number of discounted tickets available for single-parent families and for people with diverse abilities who may be experiencing financial barriers. If your service works with families or individuals who could benefit, I can provide a special code for ticket purchases.

We would appreciate completing the Mahico Accessibility and Inclusion survey. This will help us understand the needs and preferences of customers in making our event more welcoming for everyone!

<https://forms.gle/HuWCeuCBfebRG29h7>

Transport

We have also organised transport for those with limited access to vehicles, with two return trips along the following route:

Byron Bay Interchange – Ewingsdale Hall – Bangalow Coach Stop – Lismore Turf Club.

We would greatly appreciate your support in sharing the attached event posters through your networks — such as newsletters, noticeboards, customer communications, social media, or any other appropriate channels.

Many thanks

Eva Sanz

Mahico Team

+61 434 821 898

eva@mahico.com.au

mahico.com.au

[instagram.com/mahico_garden_fiesta](https://www.instagram.com/mahico_garden_fiesta)