

## **ARTIST STATEMENTS**

**2020/2021**

### **Jane Guthleben**

Jane Guthleben is a painter with a fascination for Dutch still life painting and how to reimagine it in an Australian context. Through floral arrangements, studies of birds and flowers, and groupings of ornaments, she aims to build on Dutch traditions with antipodean subject matter. Her recent series of paintings have focused on first European contact with Australia, and the earliest recordings of its flora and fauna.

Guthleben's large arrangements are works of fiction, designed on a computer where she can construct elaborate formal compositions. These would be almost impossible to create in the studio due to scarcity and longevity of cut flowers, difficulty in obtaining them and constructing the arrangements. Birds come to roost, as if to claim the foliage. Some of Guthleben's arrangements are region specific, including flora endemic to certain geographic areas.

The residency in Mt Wilson is an opportunity to consider the history of the area and the unique flora that has borne witness to it. Guthleben looks forward to walking the many trails in the mountains, while observing and recording its flora and landscape, and retracing the footsteps of development there.

Guthleben has a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) from the University of New South Wales. She has been a finalist in numerous prizes including recently the Archibald Prize, Portia Geach, Mosman Art Prize, Archibald Prize Salon des Refuses and the Ravenswood Art Prize.

### **Jody Graham**

I am a multidiscipline artist from Sydney, my artwork commemorates loss and memory.

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> of October 2019, a hot, windy, stormy day brewed in the Blue Mountains. A bolt of lightning made ground at Gosper Mountain setting the Wollemi National Park on fire. The epicentre of a mega blaze that swept through the Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury, Hunter Valley, Cudgegong, and Central Coast local government areas.

During my residency I want to connect with people from Mt Wilson, Mt Irvine, Bell, Mt Tomah, Bilpin and surrounding communities to hear about their experience dealing with the mega blaze. My purpose is to conserve valuable stories and contribute creatively to the Australian bushfire history.

### **Leah Bullen**

Leah Bullen completed a Bachelor of Visual Arts, Honours (2005) and a Doctor of Philosophy (2019) at the School of Art & Design at the Australian National University in Canberra.

Her art practice explores how painted images provide a distinctive interpretation of embodied experience through their visual, material and sensory qualities. Using a combination of drawing, collage, painting and printing techniques, her studio processes operate as a physical re-enactment of memories and the experience of place, created through a combination of compositional experimentation and imaginative remembrance.

Thematically, her practice explores various locations that recreate and curate the natural world, such as gardens. The garden acts as a model through which she explores how we visualise, experience and consume the spectacle of nature more broadly within contemporary culture during an era of environmental uncertainty.

## **Julie Thorndyke**

Julie Thorndyke is writer of poetry and fiction for children and adults. Her books include *Mrs Rickaby's Lullaby* (novel), and picture books *Waiting for the Night* and *Watching through the Day*. After graduating from the University of Sydney Master of Creative Writing program Julie has published widely in journals and anthologies, and her short stories have won multiple prizes, including a shortlisting for the 2019 Marjorie Barnard Award. Julie was the recipient of the Society of Women Writers NSW Inaugural Writer's Grant 2019. Two collections of her tanka poetry were published by Ginninderra Press. She has been editor of *Eucalypt: a tanka journal* since 2017.

### Residency at the Old School:

Time spent in a new landscape is always productive for me. Writing haiku, haibun and tanka engages me with the natural world. A close focus on flora and fauna brings vitality to my poetry.

A sense of place also offers the beginning of a story, as I explore a real setting through the eyes of a fictional character. I am drawn irresistibly to historic buildings. The Old School is a perfect place to allow my imagination to wander through space and time.

During my residency, I hope to write fresh poems as well as edit my work in progress, including children's stories and my second novel. I'd love to offer a tanka workshop and poetry reading including other poets from *Eucalypt: a tanka journal*.