



# Liverpool Art Society Inc

Est. 1997

Newsletter

*Beautiful Giant Bird of Paradise – Series 2*  
by John (Wen Hen) Wang

MAR-APR 2024  
Vol. 28 Issue 2



# Liverpool Art Society Inc.

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MAR | APR 2024  
Vol. 28 Issue 2

## INSIDE

From the President **2**

Howard Arkley – At Home  
Exhibition @ Yellamundie –  
Liverpool City Library  
& Art Gallery!!! **3**

Mount Omei –  
Modern Art Gallery **4**

14<sup>th</sup> March DEMO with  
Fangmin (Jack) Wu **7**

LAS Diary & Reminders **8**

Reminder  
Membership Fees  
Due by  
end of March

COVER:  
Beautiful Giant Bird of Paradise  
– Series 2  
by John Wang  
Winner of the 2023 John Mula  
Memorial Art Award

BACK COVER:  
Background image  
'We Wouldn't Be if it wasn't  
for BEES' by Jennifer Phillips.  
Acrylic on Canvas sold at the  
25<sup>th</sup> Annual Exhibition 2023



LAS is now in full swing again and it's great to see all the regulars plus a few new members joining our weekly/monthly groups. 2024 is a leap year, Olympics Year, Election Year and Year of the Wood Dragon.... And it's going to be a fabulously exciting year for LAS. Preparations for the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Exhibition, (which is scheduled for late in the year) are already underway.

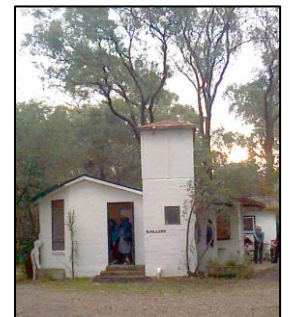
Our first Demo guest artist is Fangmin (Jack) Wu, the Overall Winner of last year's 25<sup>th</sup> Annual LAS Exhibition @ CPAC. Fangmin was also awarded second place in the Oil | Encaustic Painting category for his landscape 'The Tree of Time' (pictured right). and he will be painting a landscape in oil, in is award-winning painterly style for us on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March, details page 7.



The Tree of Time, Fangmin WU, oil

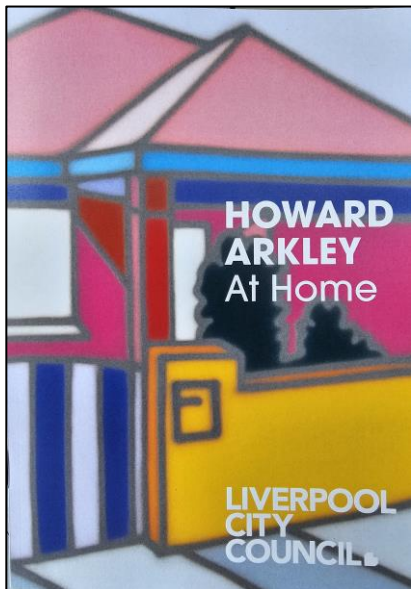
The Demo will be followed by our General Meeting, and I would encourage you to attend, as there will be lots to discuss and an exciting new small initiative, with the possibility of providing LAS artists with a opportunity to have their artwork displayed as 'Artist of the Month' explained...not so much in a gallery, but... more when I have more to report, Hopefully at the March General meeting. LAS artists with a body of work, who have been continued members, who respond and engage with LAS in some form (reading and sending feedback to newsletters for instance) will be in with a chance of being offered 'artist of the month' wall. A little 'tongue in cheek' but hey we are trying to get members involved or at least hear that you are interested. Moving right along...

Many of you, especially the seasoned members will be aware of *Mount Omei – Modern Art Gallery* in Casula (pictured right), its history, and the ongoing plight of the small gallery...but for those who may not know you can read about it on pages 4 to 6. On Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> February several LAS artists were invited to participate in a pop-up exhibition in celebrate of what would have been the 115<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Alice Klaphake the artist who founded and operated Mount Omei – Modern Art Gallery back in the mid 1970's and beyond; the invitation was extended by her son Van Klaphake. Given I could only make it to the tail end of the pop-up exhibition (had an exhibition launch at Penrith Gallery I had to attend) I only managed to take a couple of images, so I do need to thank Van Klaphake and Lorraine Maggs for most of the images I used in the collage on page 6 which aren't captioned but most of you will recognize either the LAS artist or their work. The part of the exhibition I did get to was taken up with catching up with some LAS friends and meeting a few new ones. For a small gallery it truly was a lovely exhibition and such an enjoyable social atmosphere.



Since the exhibition at Mount Omei – Modern Art Gallery I have done a little research, asked a lot of questions and read all the material I could lay my hands on, about the Mount Omei – Modern Art Gallery, the Klaphake family, and in particular Alice Klaphake.... So interesting, I hope you find it as interesting as *moi*. This is our local art history and Alice Klaphake and the artists she surrounded herself with were truly impressive... *who's - who* of local accomplished Australian artists.

ChrIs 😊



## Howard Arkley - At Home

3 December – 25 March 2024

Yellamundie – Liverpool City Library and Art Gallery  
52 Scott Street, Liverpool NSW 2170

Yellamundie Open Hours  
Monday to Friday: 9:00am - 8:00pm  
Saturday: 9:00am - 4:00pm  
Sunday: 12:00pm - 4:00pm

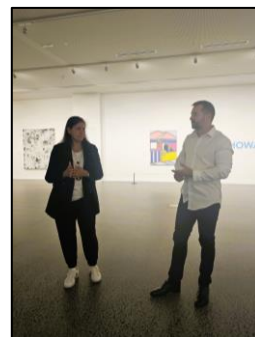
Presented by Sims Veldekis in association with Kalli Rolfe Contemporary Art

Inaugural Exhibition at the impressive new Yellamundie – Liverpool Civic Place Library and Art Gallery, curated by Litsa Veldekis and Adam Sims of Sims Veldekis. Litsa was the exhibition judge at the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Liverpool Art Society Exhibition at Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre in 2023.

A must-see exhibition and great opportunity to look around the brand new Yellamundie Art Gallery.



Had to include a couple of images of the new art gallery... such a great space!



Litsa Veldekis & Adam Sims of Sims Veldekis .. curators of the Howard Arkley – At Home the inaugural exhibition @ Yellamundie-- Liverpool Civic Place Library & Art Gallery



Left to Right: Litsa Veldekis, Charlie Wells, Anne Picalovski, Jenny Phillips, Trish Thrift, Milena Mijatovic, Vera Pavlisova

On Friday 9th February Litsa Veldekis and Adam Sims of Sims Veldekis held a curator's talk for LAS members. A good turn out and a great opportunity to learn about the artist Howard Arkley, and a great catch-up with members while enjoying a cup of tea or coffee and some delicious cakes and pastries. Thank you so much Litsa and Adam.



Left to Right: Lorraine Maggs, Agnar Niazi & Di Hallinan



Left to Right background: Julio Pena, Vera Pavlisova, Lesley Richman, Trish Thrift, Milena Mijatovic, George Caldwell, Charlie Wells, Anne Picalovski, Jenny Phillips, Di Hallinan.  
Front Centre to right: Litsa Veldekis, Luke Letourneau, Charishma Kaliyanda MP & Adam Sims (facing away...deep in discussion)

Delighted that Charishma Kaliyanda MP and two of her Office staff could join us in-between a couple of scheduled meetings.

Great to catch up with Luke Letourneau, Curatorial and Collections Lead at Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, and local artist Rhonda Dee also. Such an enjoyable couple of hours in every respect.



Left to Right: Luke Letourneau, Charishma Kaliyanda MP, Chris Hunter, Liam (Charishma's staff member), Lesley Richman, Adam Sims, Anna Tierney (behind Adam, out of shot), Julio Pena (seated).

# MOUNT OMEI

Since 2016 artists and friends have rallied in support of Mount Omei and Van Klaphake.... Van has been served [yet another] notice to leave the property and is deeply concerned about the future of Mount Omei. Alice Klaphake's son, author, sculptor and botanist, Van Klaphake has continued to live at Mount Omei, as the property has long been known, and which has been his home since 1949.

In 2016 Kery Coulter wrote an article in support of Mount Omei, which is just as accurate today:

.... The Gallery (originally known as "The Modern Art Gallery") first opened in 1976 by Van's mother, Alice Klaphake. Often referred to as "Alice's Wonderland", the gallery was originally built as a science laboratory by Van's father, Dr Wolf Klaphake in 1946 and operated as a laboratory until his death in 1968.

Alice originally sold the property to the NSW Government to become part of Georges River Cultural Corridor and is well connected to the Casula Powerhouse where an amphitheatre was constructed as testament to her contribution to modern art in the region. Mentored by John Olsen, Alice gave exposure to many well recognized artists such as Elisabeth Cummings, Karl Plate, Rober G (Bob) Baker and Lorraine Maggs who exhibited at the very first exhibition in 1976. The Modern Art Gallery was frequented by Lloyd Rees, Margo Lewers and Gough Whitlam and is now being assessed for heritage value by National Parks\*.

Van Klaphake, [now in his 70's], has been asked to leave the property and is deeply concerned regarding the future of Mount Omei. "We always envisaged that it would become an artist's precinct and continue to support emerging artists in the region. I've written to the Minister, but I've still been asked to vacate the property, even though I've lived here since I was 2 years old. I'm concerned the property is earmarked for demolition." Kery Coulter

\*As to the matter of National Parks assessing the heritage value of Mount Omei:

Section 3.5.8 of the 2016 Plan of Management (PoM) for Leacock Regional Park required National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) to 'Conduct a heritage assessment of the Mount Omei residence and associated buildings. If found to be of significance, prepare a heritage action statement to guide future management and works (refer to Section 5:1).

Geoff Ashley of *Ashley Built Heritage*, Newtown completed the first bit required by the PoM, but according to Geoff, "NPWS have not done anything more, that I am aware of, apart from including information from my report in database and evicting Van" who is referred to in the Statement of Significance.

Geoff kindly sent me his report and it's such an interesting read, especially the history behind Mount Omei and of course Alice Klaphake, the artists in her life



Join us for a celebratory exhibition  
**Alice's Wonderland**  
2-6pm Sat 3 Feb 2024  
Mount Omei Modern Art Gallery  
opposite no. 45 Leacocks Lane Casula

Featuring local artists  
FRED Braat - LORRAINE Maggs - JOE Briffa  
PAMELA Rodoreda - SVETLANA Panov  
CHRIS Hunter - DI Hallinan - CHARLIE Wells

This exhibition marks Alice Klaphake's 115<sup>th</sup> birthday and honours her enduring contribution to Western Sydney arts

Flyer from last February's pop-up Celebratory Exhibition @ Mt Omei (Alices 115<sup>th</sup> Birthday) featuring seven LAS Artists & local sculpture Fred Braat.

and the Klaphake men: husband Wolf and son Van Klaphake.

The following are extracts from Geoff Ashley's report:

## Historical Overview

**Aboriginal County** - The site of Mount Omei is located within the traditional country of the Dharug people. The Georges River was the natural boundary between the lands of the Tharawal people in the east and south and the Dharug people to the west and north. As such, the subject site, and Leacock Regional Park generally, is located within an area which formed a point of contact between Aboriginal people.

**Wolf Klaphake** - Born in 1900 in Zeitz Germany. In 1923 he graduated with from Leipzig University and moved to Berlin where he worked as a chemist. In 1935 Klaphake migrated to Australia with his wife Maria and worked as a consultant chemist and then for Industrial Microbiological that was apparently set up to fund his research and exploit his inventions. While Wolf expressed strong opposition to the National Socialist (Nazi) government in Germany it appears that his decision to emigrate to Australia was strongly associated with his work on an invention that condensed water from the atmosphere using cool surfaces to condense water vapour. Klaphake then worked on a process for the development of fermenting of household garbage. However, this was stopped when he was interned as an 'enemy alien' in three different internment camps (Orange, Tatura, and Loveday) from 1940 until August 1944. During this period Maria Klaphake joined Wolf at Tatura camp between 1942 and 1943. Wolf suffered severe depression and health problems during his period as an internee and Maria Klaphake, sadly, later died on 2 March 1945 from complications arising from an infection.

Wolf was a very intelligent, thoughtful, and inventive person. He understood fifteen languages including Chinese.

In November 1945 Wolf married Alice Wilton and in September 1946 he was naturalised. In c1947 he and Alice moved to Casula and established Mount Omei (named after Mount Omei in China (meaning Raised Eyebrow in Chinese). Van Klaphake was born on 7 January 1947 and Zita Klaphake on 18 June 1949. Wolf Klaphake died in the later part of 1967.

**Alice Klaphake** - Born 3 February 1909 in Kalgoorlie, WA. When Alice was three, her family, including her two sisters and two brothers, moved to Perth. Alice contracted acute scarlet fever in Perth. However, far from being a bad experience, Alice remembered being catapulted by her illness 'into an atmosphere which was so different from my dreary, unhappy home ... I prayed it would never end'. Alice became interested in the stage.

At age 16 Alice's family left for Victoria, but Alice stayed behind in Western Australia to teach part-time and in 1926 qualified as a teacher of elocution and drama. Alice met Trevor Wilton who was a Theosophist and attended many meetings of the Society. Wilton often lectured and had a wide knowledge of the occult. Although interested in his ideas, Alice's first love was drama and after her marriage, Alice was accepted into the Melbourne Repertory Company.

However, Alice left the stage to have her first child and with the Depression looming Alice was fortunate that Trevor had a secure job. After her second child was born, Trevor was transferred to Sydney, with Alice and the family following in 1933. Although she travelled extensively over the next few decades, traversing the globe three times, Sydney was to remain her home.

**At Minto with Lenore Rays and Tom Bass** - By the late 1930s Alice was living in Minto in southwestern Sydney. Although she may have moved there with her husband Trevor Wilton, by the time she met Lenore Rays there in the late 1930s she was divorced and looking after her two children.

Lenore Rays had met sculptor Tom Bass at art school, had married in 1941 and lived at Minto. Alice lived at Minto 'on a beautiful spot, on Ben Lomond Road with her two children'. Lenore remembered that Alice wanted to be a painter but initially introduced her to modern early 20th century poetry and during the Second World War she and Alice would write poetry and sit on the verandah and read poetry together. Lenore also said that there were several other artists in the Minto area such as Bob Baker and Fonika [Verwoorn-] Booth who became friends of Alice and later exhibited at her Modern Art Gallery.

**Alice and Wolf meet** - According to Van Klaphake, at some stage Alice and her sister [Mary or Patricia] were running a cafe near what later became the El-Alamein Fountain area of Kings Cross, and this is where Wolf met Alice, presumably in early 1945 and after Wolf was released from internee camps in August 1944. Alice and Wolf were married in November 1945 and presumably moved to live in Minto, as this is where Van Klaphake said his parents (Alice & Wolf) were travelling from when they saw the land that would become Mount Omei.

**Alice and Art - Friendship with Margo Lewers** - Sculptor Gerald Lewers and his artist wife Margo bought a cottage beside the Nepean River at Emu Plains near Penrith in the late 1940s. Margo was a launcher of abstract artist[s]. After impressionism and expressionism, we had abstract

art and that really bamboozled everybody. Now, of course, nobody even thinks about the difference.

Although it is not clear when Alice and Margo met it was probably through Lenore Rays, but Alice and Margo became lifelong friends with Margo a key influence on Alice. Margo Lewers later exhibited at Alice's Modern Art Gallery. Lewers became a highly acclaimed artist and won the Liverpool Art Prize. A retrospective exhibition of Lewers was held at the National Trust of Australia's SH Urwin Gallery in 2002.

The Lewers home near Penrith on the Nepean River has now been transformed into The Penrith Regional Gallery through the Lewers Bequest and is a major regional gallery, house museum and popular cafe.

**Alice as an artist** - Through these decades, Alice maintained an interest in the theatre, but in the 1950s, it was painting and sculpture that became more of a focus of her life. Alice had a latent interest in painting: she had always made exquisite handmade Christmas cards, was interested in the arts generally through her poetry and, from the late 1930s, through friendships with artist such as Lenore Rays and Margo Lewers and their sculptor husbands Tom Bass and Gerald Lewers.

Margo Lewers introduced Alice to John Olsen and persuaded her to take up painting classes with him. John Olsen is a famous abstract modernist who painted the large mural Five Bells at the Sydney Opera House. Apparently, John Olsen was very impressed by her painting skills and insisted she was a natural.

Alice also joined a group of women (including her friend Margaret Whitlam) in a Workers Educational Association study group on modern art. Alice was a Modernist in her thinking and an abstractionist in her painting. Artist Greg Frawley had described Alice as a 'texture artist'.

Van Klaphake said that Alice started painting at 55 years old, that is in 1961. An article in the Australian Women's Weekly quotes Alice as saying that she first received a commission for a mural for a hotel in Terrigal 'after which commissions started pouring in and Alice's hobby became a full-time occupation'. In 1975 Alice won the Camden Art Prize. According to the Women's Weekly article Alice was hung in 'collections in England, Greece, and the United States'.

**Barbara Romalis and the Wedderburn Group** - In addition to connections with Margo and Gerald Lewers at Penrith, Alice made connections with the artists who established themselves at Wedderburn near Campbelltown on lands donated by Barbara and Nick Romalis. Barbara and Alice were friends and Barbara Romalis said: We saw a lot of Alice and I had a pottery exhibition alongside some paintings, I think, of hers, when she developed her gallery at Casula. We were right behind her all the way.

She was a fantastic operator. Romalis remembered the good times that were had around Alice's gallery and its openings: "We used to have fun times together. We went

to lots of parties there and dancing and music and lovely food and all the rest of it that goes with that life". Lorraine Maggs remembers a long table set in the garden

behind the house where groups invited by Alice would have lunches. Alice had a strong interest in psychic matters and often read the palms of her visitors.

Join us for a weekend of music and art to  
**SAVE MOUNT OMEI**  
Modern Art Gallery  
opposite no. 45 Leacocks Lane Casula  
2pm-7pm Sat 2 March and  
11am-3pm Sun 3 March 2024  
MUSIC by OLD FOLK and NICK GRIFFITH  
Featuring local artists  
SOPHIA fleming - IZZY farragher  
DAVEY hilton - FRED braat  
VAN Klaphake and MORE!  
Visit Western Sydney's historic Modern Art Gallery  
before it's too late!

The Mount Omei Arts Precinct Action Group invites you to a weekend of art and music to save the Mount Omei - Modern Art Gallery in Leacock Regional Park. Mount Omei is, and should remain a heritage Artspace and Reserve for the people of NSW. Van Klaphake is a member of Liverpool Art Society (LAS) and LAS supports the preservation of Mount Omei as an artist's community space and art gallery.



You may wish to You check out & perhaps joint the Fiends of Mt Omei Modern Art Gallery Facebook Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/801799061990824/members>

# 14<sup>th</sup> MARCH DEMO

Guest Artist: **Fangmin (Jack) Wu**

Fangmin Wu is an Australian artist based in Sydney. Born in China and immigrated to Australia in 1990, painting and drawing was his passion from an early age. He engaged in printmaking during his early life and has won numerous art prizes.

He won his second art prize in a provincial youth art competition in 1981 and was selected to be included in "A Great Biographic Dictionary of Contemporary Chinese Artists".

He began his solo art exhibition since 1997 after he graduated from the Sydney College of Arts with an Honours Degree in Visual Arts.

Fangmin's artistic creation is extensive, his artmaking is reactionary to current international events and a reflection on social issues. In his landscape paintings, the Australian countryside, farms, and villages are often the source of inspiration for his works.

**He hopes that his landscape paintings are more than a simple reproduction of nature - they should be works with passion and personality and bring a new perspective to the viewer.** Adopting a style that blends realism with expressionism, working with oils, acrylics, and mixed mediums. Fangmin's works have been widely collected, both privately and public, notably by the NSW Nepean Public Hospital and Australian National Gallery.

Liverpool Art Society (LAS)  
DEMO

Guest Artist: **Fangmin (Jack) Wu**

The Overall winner of the  
25th Annual LAS Exhibiton in 2023  
will be demonstrating an OIL LANDSCAPE  
in his winner painterly style -  
a blend of realism and expressionism.

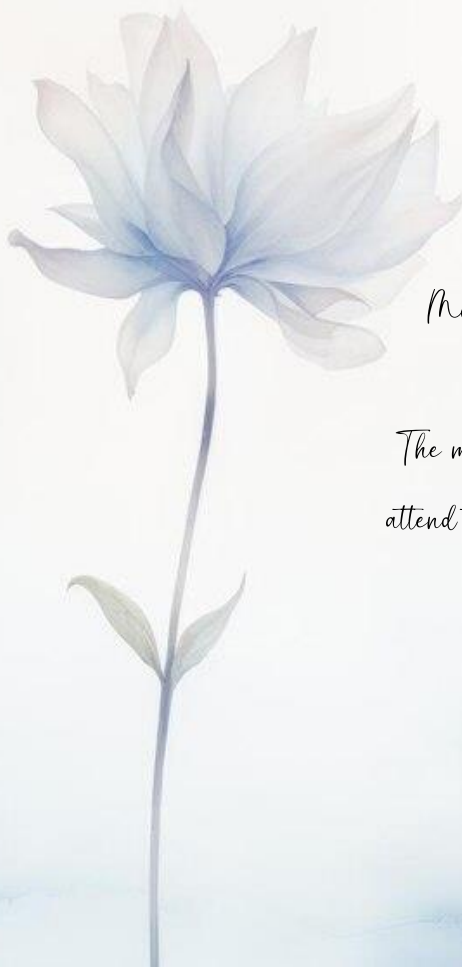
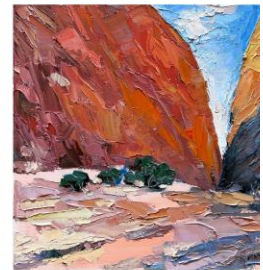
10am - 12 noon Thursday 14 March 2024  
@ Chipping Norton Community Centre (NCC)

\$10 LAS Members  
\$15 Guests - most welcome

General Meeting 12:30pm - 2pm for Members Only.



*"... landscape paintings are more than a simple reproduction of nature - they should be works with passion and personality and bring a new perspective to the viewer". Fangmin Wu*



*It is with the greatest sadness that I share the news of the passing of  
Henry Fida, beloved husband of our Selma.*

*Henry had been unwell for quite a while and passed away on  
Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024. Selma and Henry were married for 56 years.*

*Dearest Selma*

*The members and friends of Liverpool Art Society and all the regular members who  
attend the Ceramics Groups which you have looked after for many years would like to  
extend our collective sincerest condolences.*

*Selma you are so highly regarded and loved by so man.*

*We are here for you when you need anything at all.*

*May your beloved Henry Rest in Peace.*

# LIVERPOOL ART SOCIETY CALENDAR

MAR | APR  
2024

President - Chris Hunter  
Vice President - Anne Picalovski  
Secretary - Chris Hunter  
Minute Secretary - Sue Drew  
Treasurer - Rod Harris

Committee Members:  
Di Hallinan Sue Drew Jenny Phillips  
Julio Pena Jane Huang

Social Coordinators:  
Jenny Phillips Anne Picalovski

**MARCH 2024**

Thursday <b>14</b>	DEMO – 10am – Midday Chipping Norton Community Centre
Thursday <b>14</b>	GENERAL MEETING 12:30pm – 2:00pm Chipping Norton Community Centre
Sunday <b>17</b>	LIFE DRAWING 10:30am – 1:30pm Artists' Studio CPAC
Tuesday <b>19</b>	LAS Social Luncheon 11:45am @ Moorebank Sports Club
Thursday <b>21</b>	BBQ Lunch @ Boatshed (\$5) During Mix Media lunch break

**APRIL 2024**

Tuesday <b>16</b>	LAS Social Luncheon 11:45am @ Moorebank Sports Club
Thursday <b>18</b>	BBQ Lunch @ Boatshed (\$5) During Mix Media lunch break
Sunday <b>21</b>	LIFE DRAWING 10:30am – 1:30pm Artists' Studio CPAC

## Membership Fees Due by end of March

Adult \$35 | Child/Youth \$10 | Family \$50

Full Time TAFE & Uni Students (with proof) \$20

Pensioner/Concession \$25

Watercolour | Acrylic Painting | Drawing

Sue Drew 0425 838 361  
Wednesdays 10:30am - 2pm  
@ The Chipping Norton Community Centre  
(Behind the Primary School)  
Members \$6 Guests \$9

Ceramics

Selma Fida 0417 434 446  
[clayhouse@bigpond.com](mailto:clayhouse@bigpond.com)  
Wednesdays & Saturdays 10am – 2pm  
The Clay House @Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre  
Member Only \$6

Mixed Media | Oil & Acrylic Painting | Drawing

Linda Ferlazzo 0418 283 150  
[ferlazzolinda@gmail.com](mailto:ferlazzolinda@gmail.com)  
Thursdays 10am – 2pm  
@ The Lakes Boatshed, Chipping Norton  
Members \$6 - Guests \$9

Life Drawing (Short & Long Poses)

Peter Thompson 0487 198 714 (*Text Please*)  
Pamela Rodoreda 9601 6078  
Third Sunday of the Month 10:30am – 1:30pm  
Artist's Studio - Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre  
Members \$20 - Guests \$30

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