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IN DEFENCE OF THE NORTH:
The Narrative of Place and the Art of Becoming
Northern Queensland 1971-1981

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Statement of Contribution of Others

Nature of Assistance	Contribution	Names, Title and Affiliations of Co-contributors
Data	Interview content	Dorothy Forbes Coral Risley Simon McConnell Lorraine Gray-McConnell Ralph Martin Genevieve Gall Jim Gall Dr David Cilento Dr Jim Forbes Rosemary Macfarlane Jim Macfarlane Nicholas Cilento Matthew Jamieson Dr Arthur O'Neill Dr Anneke Silver William Yaxley Dr David Bleakley Anne Chamberlain Dr Carmel Daveson Dr Greg Holz

Abstract

This study elaborates on the story of the arts in Northern Queensland between 1971 and 1981 through the lens of locality. I argue that the experience of the north, characterised through the distinctive features impacting on artists, directors, patrons and art groups in Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville, and Cairns, distinguishes the visual arts during this time.

While mostly romanticised representations of the tropics by visiting landscape artists are recognised in the broader Australian canon, this thesis instead focuses on artists and art groups whose careers were sustained by living in the north despite the constraints of the region. Through the examination of case studies, a decade of output by artists, directors, patrons, and art groups has been analysed, mapped, and catalogued, evidencing a more complex story of the arts in Northern Queensland. Artists Clem Forbes (1938-1997) and Tom Risley (1947-2010) drew their inspiration from the environments, both urban and natural, that would realise both symbolic and figurative representations of the people and places of the north. The commercial galleries Up Top, Rockhampton; Bakehouse Art Gallery, Mackay; Martin Gallery, Townsville; and the Trinity Gallery, Cairns, evidence the role of artists, directors, art groups and patrons in establishing art spaces, educational opportunities, and cultural programs. These galleries acted as cultural ‘hubs’, creating an informal infrastructure throughout Northern Queensland, which was critical in connecting developing artists to the influence and mentoring of professional artists and directors within and beyond the region.

In providing a more nuanced understanding of locality, this thesis demonstrates the way in which artists in Northern Queensland expanded their sphere of influence, connecting them to rather than disconnecting them from the broader Australian arts narrative.

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List of Abbreviations

Australia Council	The Australia Council for the Arts became known as the Australia Council from 1975 under Prime Minister Gough Whitlam
CA	Community Arts
CAE	College of Advanced Education
CAS	Contemporary Art Society, Queensland Branch
CQ	Central Queensland
CTC	Central Technical College
CQU	Central Queensland University
FNQ	Far North Queensland
JCU	James Cook University
LAC	Local Arts Council (branch of the QAC)
NQ	Northern Queensland
	Queensland Arts Council (Queensland Division, Arts Council of Australia). (Note: the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts [CEMA] would later become the Arts Council of Australia). The Queensland Division, Arts Council of Australia became the Queensland Arts Council [QAC] in 1961.
QAC	
QAG	Queensland Art Gallery
QAGS	Queensland Art Gallery Society
QCA	Queensland College of Art
Qld	Queensland
	Queensland National Art Gallery (later to become QAG) 'National' was dropped from the title of the QNAG in May 1959, becoming the Queensland Art Gallery [QAG].
QNAG	
QIT	Queensland Institute of Technology
QUT	Queensland University of Technology (formerly QIT)
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TAS	Townsville Art Society
UQ	University of Queensland

Chapter 1: In Defence of the North and the Art of Becoming

1.1 Preface

In 1959, Melbourne-based academic Bernard Smith (1916-2011), along with emerging figurative and landscape artists, Charles Blackman (1928-2018), Arthur Boyd (1920-1999), David Boyd (1924-2011), John Brack (1920-1999), Bob Dickerson (1924-2015), John Perceval (1923-2000), and Clifton Pugh (1924-1990), signed ‘The Antipodean Manifesto’ to accompany the *Antipodean* exhibition held at the Victorian Art Society. They argued ‘in defence of the image’, by stating ‘that we have both a right and a duty to draw upon our experience both of society and nature in Australia for the materials of our art’.¹ During this time the metropolitan centres of Sydney and Melbourne, even more than Brisbane, led the discourse on contemporary art specific to figurative, non-figurative, and abstract subject matter, and style. Concepts of isolation, provincialism, and regionalism, however, dominated the discussion of the arts in the north. This study, while recognising Smith as a champion of Australian Figurative Modernism, seeks to further defend the image and imagery of Australian art, by recognising the contribution of Northern Queensland.

In 1966, Ron Kenny (1925-1987), an academic, artist and influential member of the Townsville Art Society, raised the question, ‘is there a North Queensland school of painting?’

Have the artists created from the landscape, the people, and their own imaginations, a characteristic idiom? Somehow, it seems that the answer is no. No particular painting or painter immediately springs to mind when the words North Queensland are heard.²

¹ Charles Blackman, Arthur Boyd, David Boyd, John Brack, Bob Dickerson, John Perceval, Clifton Pugh, and Bernard Smith, “‘The Antipodean Manifesto’ (1959),” republished in *Antipodean Perspective: Selected Writings of Bernard Smith*, ed. Rex Butler and Sheridan Palmer (Clayton, VIC: Monash University Publishing, 2018), 54–57.

² Ron Kenny, “Is There a North Queensland School of Painting,” *LiNQ (Literature in North Queensland)*, no. 5 (1966).

This was despite artists such as Ray Croke (1922-2015), Russel Drysdale (1918-1981), Arthur Evan Read (1911-1978), Douglas Annand (1903-1976) and John Coburn (1925-2006) depicting the Northern Queensland subject matter in their works, as well as Sidney Nolan (1917-1992) who painted his North Queensland series in 1947. In asking why this was the case, Kenny suggested that while artists such as Arthur Boyd, Albert Tucker (1914-1999), Drysdale and Nolan were associated with what he called an ‘identifiable locale’, this was not necessarily the case for North Queensland. A contributing factor, Kenny argued, was geography. Critical emphasis weighed heavily on viewpoints that derived from metropolitan and international perspectives, on notions of the exotic and the unfamiliar, and on the dominance of the dry, outback landscape, over a familiarity with ‘the life of a non-urban region’. Perhaps because of this, Kenny continued, ‘there are still regional or group viewpoints’ which at that time had not developed in North Queensland.³

Ross Searle’s 1991 publication *Artist in the Tropics: 200 Years of Art in North Queensland*,⁴ for the Perc Tucker Regional Art Gallery, Townsville, sought to address this. Searle categorically stated that there had been ‘little cohesive focus for the visual arts outside Brisbane.’⁵ *Artists in the Tropics* curated artists’ responses to the North Queensland tropical environment, landscape, and lifestyle from the period of white exploration and early settlement, until the late 1980s, with the goal, as stated by Searle, to ‘introduce the general public to an unknown artistic heritage, thereby creating a sense of tradition’.⁶ While regional galleries have curatorially sought to create a narrative of the arts in Northern Queensland chronologically, biographically, or thematically, through the attribution of concepts such as isolation,

³ Kenny, “North Queensland School of Painting.”

⁴ Ross Searle, *Artist in the Tropics: 200 Years of Art in North Queensland* (Townsville, QLD: Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, 1991), exhibition catalogue.

⁵ Searle, *Artist in the Tropics*, 10.

⁶ Searle, *Artist in the Tropics*, 10.

colonialism, and exotic notions of the tropics, the challenge set by both Kenny and Searle remains. What is it that characterises and distinguishes the arts in Northern Queensland? And where is this told from the perspective of the North?

My own autobiography is critical to this study through my context as a child (born 1967) who grew up in Northern Queensland as the daughter of the artist Clem Forbes (1938-1997) who lived and worked in Mackay from 1964 to 1996, and Dorothy Forbes (b. 1934) director of the Bakehouse Gallery, Mackay, from 1972 to 1979. Through the family connection to artists, patrons and groups in Northern Queensland, including the family of case-study artist Tom Risley (1947-2010), my own lived experience has informed the design of this study. This project is therefore ethnographic in its approach, making use of qualitative research methods designed to both collect and verify the oral histories of the patrons in the study, including my own. This process has contributed to the rich data produced, providing the ‘regional viewpoints’ which Kenny argued were missing in the discussion of the arts in North Queensland, and documenting the heritage Searle sought to recognise.

Finally, by cataloguing the artists, art works and art groups living and working in Northern Queensland 1971-1981—characterised as distinctive of the region—a more detailed and nuanced history can be realised. In this way Northern Queensland’s contribution to the broader Australian arts narrative can be further considered.

1.2 Introduction

This thesis is structured around two themes: Northern Queensland as a *narrative of place*, explored through the analysis of geographic, environmental, socio-cultural, economic and political factors specific to the development of the arts in Northern Queensland; and *the art of becoming* as explored through the case studies of artists Clem Forbes and Tom Risley.

The first theme examines the infrastructure of the arts in Northern Queensland from 1971 to 1981. This theme is explored through the mostly informal professional networks and artist groups focussed on the provision of exhibiting space and education opportunities, and the establishment of cultural programs and events. At the centre of this activity were the small commercial galleries in Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville, and Cairns, established prior to the purpose-built Regional Art Galleries, which acted as cultural hubs connecting artists, directors, patrons, and the general public. These galleries provided exposure and advice for artists, further connecting them to the capital cities primarily in the south—in particular, Sydney and Melbourne—and in some cases internationally. In addition, art societies throughout Northern Queensland would provide exhibition opportunities, inaugurate annual art prizes and advocate for the establishment of Regional Art Galleries. The Brisbane-based Queensland Arts Council, supported by local branches throughout Queensland, would provide funding opportunities, workshops and touring programs that would have a reach throughout the north. The Australian Federal government supported the expansion of the Commonwealth Art Advisory Board and from 1972, the Australia Council for the Arts (renamed the Australia Council by the Whitlam Government in 1975), thus bringing about a significant increase in financial and organisational support for the arts in Australia. Further to this, the Visual Arts Board introduced grants for prominent painters and sculptors. In contrast, argued art historian Bernard Smith, state support for artists ‘waned’.⁷ Workshops were delivered by the Queensland Board of Adult Education and Technical Colleges, employing professional artists as tutors and teachers. The atelier model evidenced the use of studio space that gave artists the freedom and independence to practise, where few formal arts education courses were in place, using methods and materials that, it will be argued, were distinctive to their context. Artist

⁷ Bernard Smith and Terry Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990 with the Three Additional Chapters on Australian Painting since 1970* by Terry Smith, 3rd ed. (Melbourne, VIC: Oxford University Press, 1992), 454–55.

studios were critical in connecting developing artists with their more mature or professional peers, often through mentoring relationships. In addition, the delivery of art classes by professional artists from studios provided both financial stability for the artists and the opportunity for patrons and students to be educated in the arts. Ultimately it was the high value placed on what was understood as *contemporary* to the cultural life of the region that was the common thread that drew these groups together. This was specific to an understanding firstly of Australian Modernism and later of Non-Figurative, Abstract and Experimental styles and methods. It is further argued that the contemporary representation of strongly 'local' subject matter, specific to the landscape, environment, and people, sustained a shared understanding of the value of the arts, artists and artworks, in the creation of an ethos specific to the north.

The second theme analyses the exhibition outputs of two visual artists, Clem Forbes and Tom Risley, working in Northern Queensland during the scope of this study. Clem Forbes began his career as an artist in Brisbane, influenced by the discourse on Modernism evident in Brisbane's independent commercial art galleries and artist studios. Central Queensland would feature heavily in Forbes's works after he moved to Mackay in 1964, with the dry and remote landscapes typical of the Central and Western Queensland mining towns and cattle farms represented in his early paintings. Shifting to the use of mixed media by 1971 would allow Forbes to depict the translucency of the environment he saw in the rainforests, wetlands and canefields of the Mackay Hinterland region. He would also become fascinated with the brigalow country and its Bottle Trees, typical of the landscape connecting Mackay and Rockhampton. Forbes would therefore realise the heterogeneous landscape of Northern Queensland through a prolific body of work. His reach was as an educator, through his studio and exhibition output in the north, his contribution to the arts and culture in Northern Queensland and through major exhibitions in the metropolitan centres to the south.

Tom Risley lived and worked in Tolga in the Atherton Tablelands to the south-east of Cairns, moving to Herberton in the Atherton Tablelands, where he would be based after 1984. Risley's physicality as an artist was through his experimentation with materials drawn from the rural, coastal, and urban environments of the Far North. It was Risley's period of experimentation in Tolga throughout the 1970s that was formative in his development as a mature artist. Risley's shift during this time, to the use of material drawn from a more 'urban' landscape, saw him working primarily with steel and paint. His large sculptural pieces reflected the impact on his output, of contemporary European and American influences, demonstrating at the same time a distinct relationship to the Northern environment through form, shape and the placement of objects. Risley, in seeking to engage in the arts community beyond the region where he lived and worked, would go on to produce a diverse and extensive body of work that would have a national and international reach throughout his career.

The relationships that both artists established with artists and each other, and with art dealers, would broaden their impact beyond the place where they lived.

It is argued in this thesis that the contribution to contemporary Australian art by these artists is particular to their experience of Northern Queensland.

1.3 Thesis overview

1.3.1 Chapter Two: *Queensland 1881-1981—Locating Northern Queensland*

Chapter Two locates Northern Queensland geographically and historically. It is argued that the understanding of Queensland's early history sets the context for the development of the arts specific to its economic, political and cultural development. Further, the understanding of the environment will facilitate an understanding of the landscape evidenced in the works of the artists in this study. For example, a government policy that was primarily utilitarian in its objectives impacted on arts infrastructure throughout Queensland, where

Brisbane was prioritised—albeit in a limited way—while emphasis in the north was consistently placed on pastoral development, agriculture and mining. Queensland’s early economic history was also impacted by periods of droughts and flooding as well as ‘boom and bust’ cycles. Educational goals were therefore achieved through the Technical Colleges and after 1974 through the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) model. The understanding of the Northern Queensland landscape is broadened in this discussion to include both rural and urban environments. Queensland’s flora and fauna extends well beyond the tropical rainforests, to include brigalow, river systems, coastal and western landscapes, and the mining and farming communities of the Far North, North, and Central Queensland regions. Further, in acknowledging that the towns of Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns were first established as ports, their innate purpose of connecting the northern regions to the south becomes apparent. This also explains their disconnection. In acting as autonomous centres competing for political and economic importance, the port towns of Northern Queensland would advocate that their geographic and economic difference from Brisbane in particular separated them ideologically and politically from the south. In seeking to redress this, arts development became a secondary consideration to the mining, pastoral, agricultural, transportation and industrial decisions made from the capital that sought to both support and pacify the north. It is argued that the cultural pursuits of artists, art groups and patrons during the scope of this study were therefore reactive to the historical lack of formal arts infrastructure and funding consistent throughout Queensland’s economic and political history.

1.3.2 Chapter Three: *Collected Literature*

Chapter Three reviews the theoretical, visual and archival literature, categorised as art history; art criticism; art documentation by art dealers, gallery directors, and curators, academic studies; monographs and the archives and ephemera specific to the artists themselves. The review includes references to artist, location, methodology and the reproduction of images

(Plates) in the text. While evaluating existing literature in this field, the review identifies gaps in Australia's art history specific to the arts and artists living and working in Northern Queensland during the scope of this study. Despite art historian Bernard Smith's recognising the Far North in his 1960 survey⁸ as central to the discussion of Australian art, Australia's art history has largely relied on the understanding of historicism, with the emphasis on the Heidelberg school as the critical starting point. While Australian art histories have sought to include Queensland, the viewpoint has been dominated by Sydney and Melbourne perspectives. Queensland is conceptualised as a destination by artists and curators visiting and documenting the north, or as a deficit model, in its lack of 'progress' in comparison to its southern counterparts. The cultural legacy of arts organisations and artist groups working in Northern Queensland is limited to curatorial surveys, and the contribution of Clem Forbes is largely omitted. Tom Risley, as a sculptor of national importance, is included, though his early work as an artist working in Herberton in Northern Queensland prior to 1980 is only superficially evidenced.

1.3.3 Chapter Four: *Research Framework*

Chapter Four outlines the research design for the project in the use of historical, comparative, ethnographic and case-study research strategies supporting the collection, interpretation, and analysis of data inclusive of the lived histories of artists, gallery directors and arts patrons who were living and working *in situ* throughout the scope of this study. Social Constructionist Grounded Theory is utilised due to the design of my research questions framed around socio-cultural, political, economic, geographic, and environmental factors, to answer the question of *what* happened and *why*. Flexibility in the research strategies allowed the research questions to be reviewed and revised throughout, supporting the development of ideas and theory. The ethnographic approach recognises my own context as researcher in growing up in the

⁸ Bernard Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, 2nd ed. (Sydney, NSW: Harper & Row, 1985).

environment specific to this study. In acting as gatekeeper, I was able to gain access to the field, and the use of semi-structured and in-depth interviews and the understanding of reflexivity specific to this approach allowed me to collect data through to saturation. The research design was therefore developed to support the multifaceted description of the artistic life that was to be found in Northern Queensland between 1971 and 1981.

1.3.4 Chapter Five: *The Narrative of Place*

Chapter Five outlines the findings of the study, making use of content analysis methodology. This supports the multifaceted description of the cultural life of Northern Queensland. It is described as an informal network driven by artists, patrons and groups specific to cultural programmes and events, spaces and education. Geographic patterns reveal groupings of artists, art groups and commercial galleries specific to each region. Shared understandings of the value of the arts by artists, directors, patrons, and art groups in the study focus on notions of excellence as understood by national and international trends, subject matter specific to the environment, and style and method as relevant to contemporary arts practices. Case studies of commercial art galleries in Northern Queensland between 1971 and 1981 further demonstrate their promotion of the visual arts in the region, and their acting as cultural hubs that would support artists and patrons, while advocating for arts infrastructure as critical to the cultural life of the north. Rockhampton's 'Gallery Up Top', Mackay's 'Bakehouse Art Gallery', Townsville's 'Martin Gallery', and the 'Trinity' and 'Heritage' Galleries in Cairns consistently exhibited Australian, Queensland, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Pacific art as well as supporting and exhibiting the work of artists from the region. While the activities of these galleries and associated groups were not connected, commonalities in output and cultural ideology are evidenced, as well as the critical role they played in establishing and sustaining engagement in the arts in the north prior to the formal establishment of Regional Art Galleries.

This chapter is supported by modelling mapping cultural activities, and a catalogue of exhibitions held throughout the scope of this study.

1.3.5 Chapter 6: *The Art of Becoming*

Chapter Six examines the exhibition output of artists Clem Forbes and Tom Risley. It is the exhibition timeline of these artists that has defined the scope of this study. Clem Forbes held a major exhibition of works in the Whitsunday Hotel in Mackay in 1971. This exhibition demonstrated both his engagement with Australian Modernism through technique and style, and subject matter that was strongly representational of the Queensland landscape. Major exhibitions held in Mackay (1971; 1977); Sydney (1972) and Brisbane (1974; 1975) demonstrate the artistic development of the artist, as well as evidencing the representation of Northern Queensland in the subject matter. Tom Risley's development as an artist in Tolga, Northern Queensland, is demonstrated through exhibitions held by the Mareeba, Atherton and Cairns Art Society, prizes (1977, 1978, 1980), the Eacham Shire Commission, Atherton (1980), the Australian Sculpture Triennial, Melbourne (1981), and Risley's first solo exhibition, 'Fabrications' in Townsville, (1981). These exhibitions evidence the development of both Forbes and Risley in seeking to represent the environment of Northern Queensland using techniques and style that were strongly influenced by contemporary methods and materials. It is demonstrated that their complex and rich engagement in the Northern Queensland environment supported these artists in making a unique contribution to the arts in Australia.

1.3.6 Chapter 7: *In Defence of the North*

The two themes characterising Queensland's art history as a narrative of place, and artistic development achieved by artists while living and working in Northern Queensland is evidenced in the case studies, explained through Queensland's geographic, environmental, social, cultural, economic and political context as understood to be different to that of the rest of Australia. The challenges characterised as typical of Queensland, in the drive for education structures, cultural

programmes and art spaces, were resolved by art groups in Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns that would exhibit, educate and promote artists, with the small commercial art galleries acting as cultural hubs. Clem Forbes would realise the heterogeneous landscape of Northern Queensland through a prolific body of work, leaving a legacy of works in public and private collections primarily in Northern Queensland. Further, his contribution to the arts and culture Northern Queensland is evidenced. Risley's reach as an artist was through his representation of Northern Queensland of the rural, coastal, and urban environments through works and materials, through his engagement in the contemporary arts landscape beyond Northern Queensland and in his inclusion in national and international collections. The truth of both these artists, however, is in their practice as distinct to their experience of Northern Queensland. In this way, Searle's argument, that 'redirecting the flow of information from the regions back to the urban centres will support Australia in having a sufficiently broad base on which to form ideas of what truly constitutes its national identity', is consistent with the findings of this study.⁹

⁹ Searle, *Artists in the Tropics*, 10.

Chapter 2: Queensland 1881-1981 - An Historical Overview

2.1 Introduction

On the whole the history of Australian art has been written from the cities of Sydney and Melbourne based on the state and national collections...¹⁰

This chapter outlines the development of the visual arts in Queensland specific to infrastructure, with a narrow focus on exhibiting art spaces, art education, cultural programmes and events. Further, the influence of Brisbane in particular, will be demonstrated as relevant to the development of subject matter, style and technique by the artists in this study.

Queensland's cultural, economic, and political history frames the historical timeline. It was in 1881 that the first formal art classes were established in Brisbane, and by 1951 existing arts infrastructure in Queensland included the Schools of Art, the Technical Education model, and the Queensland (National) Art Gallery. Modernism as a style became evident after the 1920s, embedded in practice by 1951, while the focus on Contemporary and Experimental art styles becoming dominant by 1981.

The geographic and environmental landscape of Queensland, as evidenced in the case studies, is identified and defined, further differentiating the Northern Queensland regions. It will be understood that this landscape is distinctive of Northern Queensland, as interrogated by the artists in the case studies.

By contextualising Queensland's art history within this historical and geographic framework, a broader understanding of Queensland's art history, inclusive of Northern Queensland, supports the research questions: *what* happened and *why*.

¹⁰ Searle, *Artist in the Tropics*, 10.

2.2 Locating Northern Queensland

Matthew Fox, in his 1923 historical overview of Queensland, provides a comprehensive review of the state of Queensland from the perspective of Moreton Bay after 1839. Fox locates the early settlement and commercial development of Queensland in and around the regions of Ipswich, Toowoomba, Boonah and Esk, with the ‘free settlement’ regions defined after 1842 as South Western Queensland, South Eastern Queensland, Central Queensland and Northern Queensland.¹¹ These regions generated economic wealth through the mining, pastoral and agricultural industries. While I have attempted to place these towns geographically within their colonial and post settlement boundaries, it is clear that the geographic areas that define the north, including Central, Northern and Far Northern Queensland have shifted with Queensland’s economic and political circumstances. I have categorised the four geographic areas in this study as Central; Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday; North; and Far North regions of Queensland, all located to the north of Brisbane.¹² The major population centres are located along the east coast of Queensland, traditionally identified as port towns connecting the north to Brisbane and to centres further south. Figure 1.

¹¹ Matthew J. Fox, *The History of Queensland: Its People and Industries: An Historical and Commercial Review Descriptive and Biographical Facts, Figures and Illustrations, an Epitome of Progress*, vol. 1 (Brisbane, QLD: States Publishing Company, 1923), 5.

¹² The geographic boundaries for the regions are defined by the Queensland Government. Queensland Government, “Opportunities in the Regions,” Trade and Investment Queensland, accessed June 1, 2022, <https://www.tiq.qld.gov.au/international-business/invest-in-queensland/regions>.

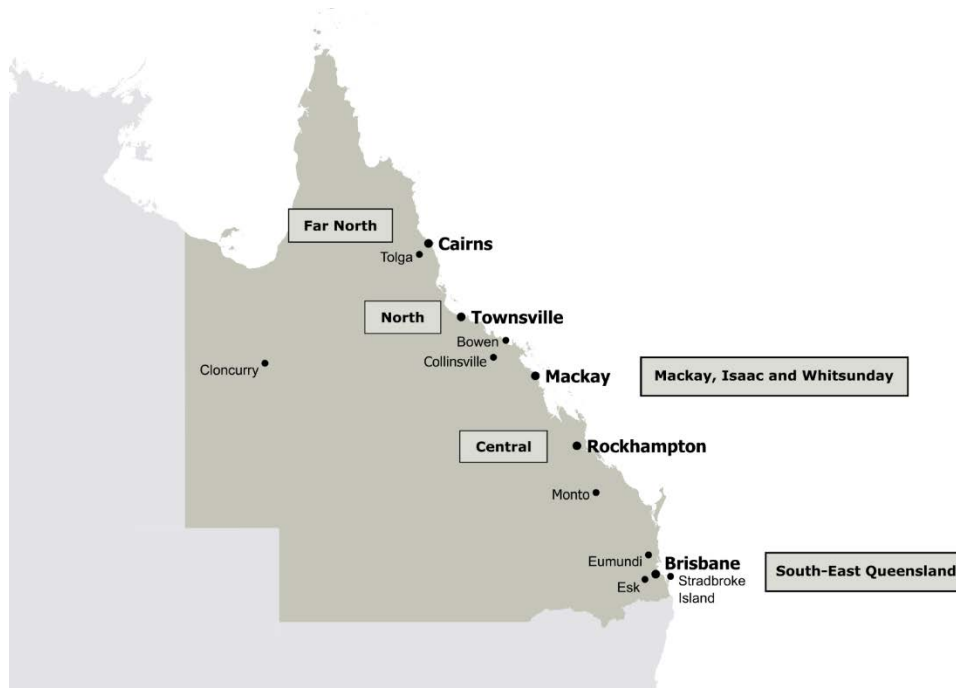


Figure 1: Northern Queensland Regions included in the study. Source: Open Data Queensland.

Rockhampton, established along the Fitzroy River, is described as the capital town of Central Queensland, attributing much of its early development after 1850 to the discovery of gold. Homesteads in the surrounding districts would later support sheep and cattle farming.

Northern Queensland, including the Mackay, Townsville and Cairns districts, is described as

the whole watershed of all the Gulf rivers ... and all the principal waters of the Burdekin...The North takes in most of the sugar country of Queensland, including Mackay, Proserpine, the Burdekin, Herbert, Johnstone, Russell, and Mulgrave River areas.¹³

The geographic features relevant to the works in this study include creek, river, coastal, island and forest eco-systems. The forest areas include evergreen and semi-deciduous rainforests, and the Melaleuca woodlands. These landscapes are further characterised by the

¹³ Matthew J. Fox, *The History of Queensland: Its People and Industries: An Historical and Commercial Review Descriptive and Biographical Facts, Figures and Illustrations, an Epitome of Progress*, vol. 3 (Brisbane, QLD: States Publishing Company, 1923), 316.

Strangler Fig, Fern, Eucalyptus, Paperbark, Tea Tree,¹⁴ Balga and the Queensland Bottle Tree. The Brigalow Belt, understood as open forests and woodlands, covers more than a fifth of the Queensland landscape, extending from Townsville south to the border with New South Wales. The Marlborough Plains subregion runs from south of Sarina and north of Rockhampton.¹⁵ The disappearance of the Brigalow region was a particular concern to Clem Forbes.¹⁶ Historically, large areas of the brigalow were cleared to support agriculture and to reduce the spread of ‘Prickly pear’, with approximately one-third of the brigalow scrub removed by the end of World War 2. Later, under the Fitzroy Basin Brigalow State Government Land Development Scheme, the brigalow would be further reduced to support cattle farming around Rockhampton and the Fitzroy River.¹⁷ In addition, Forbes would depict introduced plants typical of Northern Queensland, including the Chinese (Chonky) apple, and Monstera species as well as the sugarcane fields and cattle dams of Northern Queensland.¹⁸ Tom Risley would make use of red cedar, sandstone, soapstone and timber, including driftwood, for his early works, and also reference the physical, organic and man-made landscapes of the Far North in his works. Risley’s father, Noel (1919-1980), whom Risley identified as an early influence, made use of natural materials, such as pumice and coral, found in the Far North including the Bedarra Island group, Cape York, and Restoration Island.¹⁹ Figure 2.

¹⁴ The ‘Tea Tree’ has at times been spelled by the artist Clem Forbes as ‘Ti Tree’.

¹⁵ State of Queensland, *Biodiversity Assessment, Conservation and Biodiversity Strategy* (QLD: Department of Environment and Science, 2018).

¹⁶ Dorothy Forbes, interview by Celie Forbes (topic: Clem Forbes Bakehouse Art Gallery), February 10, 2019.

¹⁷ Tony Barker and Ian Byford, comps., *Harvests and Heartache: Images and Stories of Queensland’s Agricultural Past* (Brisbane: Queensland Department of Primary Industries, 1988), 126.

¹⁸ Works evidenced in the collections of the patrons in the study. Dorothy Forbes, personal archive, 1967–1997. Genevieve Gall and Jim Gall, personal archive, 1971–1982. Lorraine Gray-McConnell and Margaret Lane, Clem Forbes Project, documentation of art works, personal archive.

¹⁹ Jane Cornwall (sister of Tom Risley), interview by Celie Forbes, May 12, 2022.

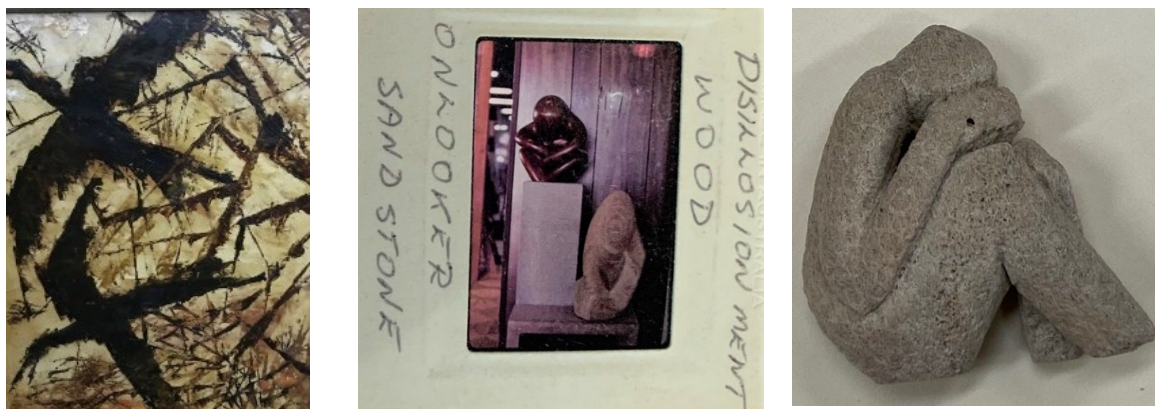


Figure 2: Clem Forbes, *Crows Caught in Chonky Apple Tree*, 1966. 90x62.5 cm, oil on board. Estate of Dr David Cilento. Tom Risley: *Disillusionment*, wood, c 1978. Tom Risley: *Onlooker*, sandstone, c 1978. Image: Photographic slide. Coral Risley Archive. Noel Risley. *Figure*, coral. c1960s. JCU Special Collections.

2.3 Queensland: An Overview

Distance was both a blessing and a curse for the provision of arts training in the North. The justification for Queensland government spending decisions has its beginnings in Queensland's economic wealth coming as it did from the pastoral, mining, agricultural and horticultural opportunities considered to be abundant throughout Queensland from the early days of the colony, as well as during the land booms after 1850. Queensland's economy from the 1880s was to a large extent decentralised, ensuring the importance of regional and rural centres in decision-making about government expenditure.²⁰ This decision-making focussed on developing infrastructure that would support and service a state impacted by periods of 'boom and bust'. For most of the period 1918 to 1944, the Queensland Government was run by the Labor Party, which emphasised rural policies supporting primary and commercial industries. Connecting the state through port, harbour, and railway infrastructure to the north and west of Brisbane would be prioritised over the cultural development of the state, where a focus on skill building would underpin the education model. The development and settlement of Northern Queensland owes much to the discovery of gold in Mount Morgan and Charters

²⁰ William J. Hatherell, *The Third Metropolis: Imagining Brisbane through Art and Literature, 1940–1970* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2007), 17–19.

Towers, bringing about an influx of immigration. The geographic distance from the metropolitan centres of Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, however, foreshadowed the impact of isolation, prioritising the development of transport and skill infrastructures throughout Queensland over cultural pursuits. Regional centres developed around the port towns of Rockhampton, Mackay, Bowen, Townsville and Cairns. Travel by boat along the coast was the most expedient form of transport prior to the completion of the rail network, making the port and harbour infrastructure critical to the economic development of the state. The justification for Brisbane as the capital of Queensland therefore arose from its geographic location in Moreton Bay and on the Brisbane River, connecting the north of Australia, politically, economically and geographically, to the south. The competing importance of the port towns, with their associated economic wealth, was the catalyst for a push for separation of the north from the colony of Queensland, which was seen to be dominated by Brisbane. This notion of independence born from isolation firmly established a legacy of northern ‘hostility’ towards the south and Brisbane in particular.²¹ In addition, the influence of ideologies such as utilitarianism, social Darwinism and anti-intellectualism set up the context for political divisions throughout Queensland lasting into the early part of the twentieth century.²² As a result, political decision-making would lean towards developing the infrastructure, such as rail networks and technical colleges, above all else.

²¹ Eddie Clarke, *Technical and Further Education in Queensland: A History 1860–1990* (Brisbane, QLD: Department of Education, 1992), 3.

²² Clarke, *Technical and Further Education*, 3.

2.4 Brisbane: A View from the south

Relevant studies on the history of the visual arts in Brisbane include Lahey (1959);²³ Anderson (1987);²⁴ Fridemanis (1989);²⁵ Cooke, (1995);²⁶ Richards (2006);²⁷ Hatherell (2007),²⁸ and Hamilton, (2014).²⁹

In its early history, Brisbane sought to emulate existing European infrastructure that would both educate and culturally sustain the community. This was evidenced primarily in the establishment of the School of Arts and Brisbane Technical College that would centralise Brisbane's cultural development. This model was later transposed throughout Queensland.³⁰ William Moore's 1934 survey provides an early perspective on Australian art, strongly privileging the narrative of the Australian landscape through the lens of the Heidelberg School. While recognising the work of Queensland artists, Moore linked their subject matter and the developing art institutions to the notion of an Australian, rather than a Queensland, school of art. From the earliest histories, therefore, Queensland was typically marginalised from the discourse of Australian art. The discussion of what constitutes the Queensland landscape, however, is a theme that emerges throughout this study. The actions of artists and art groups in Brisbane are most relevant to this study. Their focus on experimental, abstract and contemporary art reflected arts practice in Sydney, Melbourne and overseas, and was

²³ Vida Lahey, *Art in Queensland, 1859–1959* (Brisbane, QLD: Jacaranda Press, 1959).

²⁴ Michele Elizabeth Anderson, "Barjai, Miya Studio and Young Brisbane Artists of the 1940s: Towards a Radical Practice" (honours thesis, The University of Queensland, 1987).

²⁵ Helen Fridemanis, "Contemporary Art Society, Queensland Branch, 1961–1973: A Study of the Post-War Emergence and Dissemination of Aesthetic Modernism in Brisbane" (master's thesis, The University of Queensland, 1989).

²⁶ Glenn R. Cooke, *A Time Remembered: Art in Brisbane 1950 to 1975* (South Brisbane: Queensland Art Gallery, 1995), exhibition catalogue.

²⁷ Michael John Richards, *Grow the Arts Reap the Harvest: Queensland's Arts Councils and How the Arts Build Stronger Communities* (Teneriffe, QLD: Post Pressed, 2006).

²⁸ Hatherell, *Third Metropolis*.

²⁹ Judith Hamilton, "Creating a Scene: The Role of Artists' Groups in the Development of Brisbane's Art World 1940–1970" (PhD thesis, The University of Queensland, 2014).

³⁰ Clarke, *Technical and Further Education*, 8.

distinctly separate from the more traditional arts establishment in Brisbane. The impact of these artists and art groups was therefore through the informal art spaces, education opportunities, cultural events, and exhibition outputs of the commercial galleries, which were prolific in spite of a lack of arts infrastructure and funding. It will be shown that their further impact was their reach throughout Northern Queensland.

2.4.1 Education

The relevance of the formal teaching of drawing, landscape (through oils and watercolour), still-life, and sculpture (modelling) to the arts in Brisbane and throughout Queensland as delivered by ‘art masters’ is a consistent theme throughout this study. The South Kensington and Slade Schools of Art as well as to the Victorian Arts Society, Sydney Charm School, Max Meldrum (1875-1955), George Bell (1878-1966) and Kimon Nicolaides (1892-1938) are identified as early influences on artists’ style and technique. While the University of Queensland [UQ] was established in 1909, it was the Technical Colleges that set the stage for art education through the frameworks delivered by the Department of Public Instruction, Queensland (1876-1957)³¹ and the Board of Education, Queensland (1944-1987).³² The limited access to formal Fine Arts training and the dominance of conservative and commercial approaches to art training throughout Queensland until 1971, to some extent explains the prevalence of the admittedly ‘self-taught’ modern and contemporary artists in this study.

Formal art training had its foundations in the School of Arts, Ann Street, Brisbane. Drawing classes were taught by Joseph Clarke (1844–1890), who trained at the South

³¹ Queensland Government, “Department of Public Instruction,” Queensland State Archives Agency, ID A32, 1957, accessed January 6, 2022, <https://www.archivessearch.qld.gov.au/agencies/A32>.

³² Queensland Government, “Board of Adult Education,” Queensland State Archives Agency, ID A334, 1987, accessed January 6, 2022, <https://www.archivessearch.qld.gov.au/agencies/A334>.

Kensington School of Art³³ and was appointed Drawing Master in 1881, and Richard Godfrey Rivers (1858-1925), who trained at London's Slade School of Art and was appointed Art Master from 1891.

The development of the technical colleges from 1901 reflected the political ideology of the Labor Party, which challenged the elitist notion of education, seeing secondary education as 'the prerogative of the rich', and more readily accepting 'the practicality and usefulness of technical education'.³⁴ Technical colleges were established throughout Queensland, including Rockhampton, Townsville, Mackay and Cairns, building on liberal notions. They provided the model to deliver art training, albeit with a focus on commercial art, through art classes.

The style of art education at the Brisbane Central Technical College [CTC] was strongly influenced by the South Kensington School as an 'artisan' model as delivered by Clarke, who advocated for subjects such as freehand drawing to be a part of the technical college model.³⁵ Rivers and, from 1915, Frederick J Martyn Roberts (1871-1963), were formative in establishing a Queensland landscape genre where 'a difference in outlook and technique gradually became evident in the work of our local artists'.³⁶ In 1939 Cyril G. Gibbs, a Ballarat trained commercial artist, was appointed as Supervisor of the Arts, remaining in the role until 1971. Gibbs' extraordinarily extended period as Supervisor of the Arts during Brisbane's evolution as a cultural centre led to the call for change by artists and art groups; Brisbane making the argument that art education had become static through Gibbs' emphasis on a commercial art training model.³⁷ Non-Diploma classes however, focussed on fine arts

³³ The South Kensington School of Art would later become known as the Royal College of Art, London.

³⁴ Clarke, *Technical and Further Education*, 12–20.

³⁵ Clarke, *Technical and Further Education*, 8.

³⁶ Lahey, *Art in Queensland*, 6.

³⁷ Lahey, *Art in Queensland*, 40.

through tutors such as Melville Haysom (1900-1967) and Arthur Evan Read. Art classes were taught by Roy Churcher (1933-2014), William Robinson (b.1936) and Mervyn Moriarty (1937-2021) who would also deliver evening life drawing classes.³⁸

The University of Queensland (UQ), Brisbane, founded in 1910 shared its Government House location and funding with the CTC, moving to the suburb of St. Lucia in 1926.³⁹ The goal of establishing campuses external to St Lucia, including Griffith and Townsville, was later pursued to accommodate students throughout the state. Involvement by residents of Northern Queensland in tertiary education was limited however; it was reported to parliament in 1963 that metropolitan dwellers were two-and-a-half times more likely to go to university than country dwellers.⁴⁰

Arts subjects offered at UQ were held in ‘much lower public esteem’ with the Arts Department, structured variously throughout its history, including Classics and Philosophy.⁴¹ Clem Forbes would develop a deep understanding of aesthetics and literature through his friendship with Arthur O’Neill, who studied at UQ from 1955 to 1958.⁴² Artists in this study are included in *40 years and counting: UQ Art Museum*.⁴³ Artists, patrons and art groups in

³⁸ In 1973 the Queensland College of Art [QCA] separated from the CTC, moving to Seven Hills in Brisbane where the Bachelor of Fine Arts and Design was offered (in 1985) as the first degree course available at a TAFE in Queensland. Brisbane artist John Rigby (1922–2012) was appointed Officer in Charge of Fine Art from 1974 to 1984. The Queensland Institute of Technology [QIT] was established in Brisbane in 1965 and QIT Capricornia (Rockhampton); and QIT Darling Downs (Toowoomba) in 1967. The three institutes, together with the Queensland Agricultural College and the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, became recognised as Colleges of Advanced Education (CAEs). Merv Moriarty, Roy Churcher (Instructor in Art Subjects, 1962–1971), William Robinson and Tom Risley (1983–1986) taught at the Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Education.

³⁹ Malcolm I. Thomis, *A Place of Light and Learning: The University of Queensland’s First Seventy-Five Years* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1985), 126, 70.

⁴⁰ Thomis, *Place of Light and Learning*, 300.

⁴¹ Nancy Underhill introduced Art History courses, including Australian Art, from 1971, and Art History became an independent faculty in 1978. Underhill was the inaugural Director of the University Art Museum established in the Forgan Smith Tower Block in 1973, later moving to Mayne Hall in 2004 under the directorship of Ross Searle.

⁴² Arthur O’Neill, interview by Celie Forbes (topic: Clem Forbes: Case Study), November 10, 2018.

⁴³ Nancy Underhill et al., *40 Years and Counting: UQ Art Museum* (Brisbane, QLD: UQ Art Museum, 2016).

this study have links to the University of Queensland.⁴⁴ Other influences on approach and technique in this study include the Meldrum and Bell schools⁴⁵; Clem Forbes's early portraiture was developed through his study of the Max Meldrum style and method. **Figure 3** Artists associated with the Sydney Charm School, such as figurative landscape artist, Russel Drysdale, who painted Northern Queensland, and Margaret Olley (1923-2011), a Brisbane artist, were seen as the 'avant-garde of their day'.⁴⁶ Jon Molvig (1923-1970), John Rigby (1922-2012), who would later mentor Clem Forbes,⁴⁷ and John Coburn, later working in Far North Queensland, all trained at the Strathfield annexe of the East Sydney Technical College, New South Wales, as World War 2 veterans under the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme.⁴⁸ Cooke, however, argues that until the Second World War 'Queensland's art practice was very conservative', with the influence of artists such as Lahey and Macqueen representative of a simplified modern style.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ These include Sir Raphael Cilento (1893–1985), who was chair of Tropical and Social Medicine at UQ during from 1937 to 1946. Cilento's wife, Lady (Phyllis) Cilento, and children – Margaret Cilento, Ruth (Smut) Cilento, Diane Cilento and David Cilento – are referenced in this study. David Cilento and Nicholas Cilento (David's son) are patrons in this study. The work of Clem Forbes is held in the Cilento Collection, David Cilento Collection and Nicholas Cilento Collection, and at Karnak, Mossman, the late Diane Cilento's theatre. Raphael Cilento was also associated with the Qld Heritage group and Karl Langer. Gertrude Langer established the Vacation Schools at The University of Queensland, supporting artists such as Roy Churcher, Merv Moriarty and Stanislaus Rapotec. Not only was Clem Forbes a friend of Arthur O'Neil, his brother Jim Forbes studied medicine at UQ with Wilfred Broad, Dorothy Forbes's cousin, and 'Danny' Tufui. These relationships further established links to patrons of Clem Forbes in this study.

⁴⁵ Cooke, *A Time Remembered*, 34.

⁴⁶ Daniel Thomas, cited in Mervyn Horton, *Present Day Art in Australia* (Sydney, NSW: Ure Smith, 1969), 10.

⁴⁷ Dorothy Forbes, interview, February 10, 2019.

⁴⁸ Betty Churcher, *Molvig: The Lost Antipodean* (Ringwood, VIC: Penguin Books, 1984), 15.

⁴⁹ Cooke, *A Time Remembered*, 34.

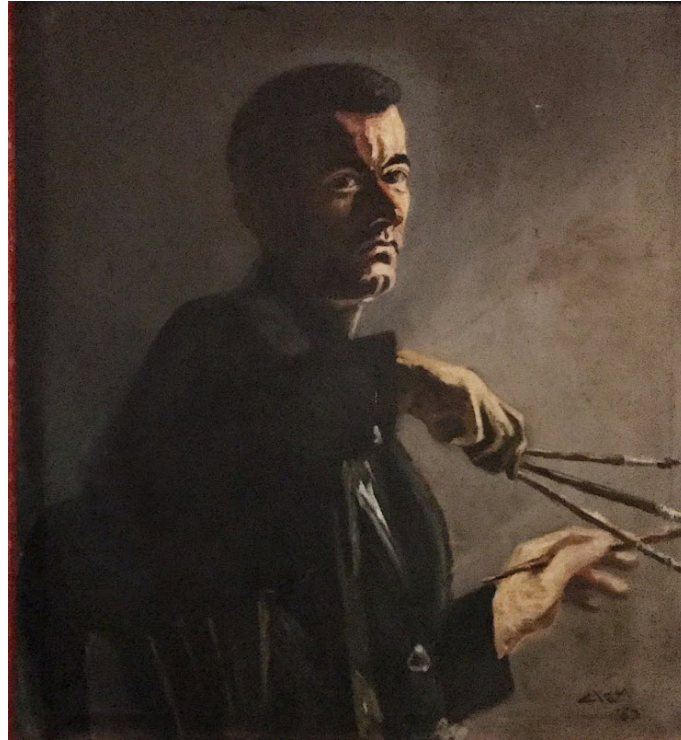


Figure 3: Clem Forbes: *Self Portrait*, 1963, oil on canvas, 94x78cm. Tracey Dunn collection.

The artist studio-teacher model would facilitate a more contemporary approach to arts practice in Brisbane, connecting artists to students outside of the CAE model. The teaching of more ‘creative’ styles and techniques would go on to influence the practice of artists in Northern Queensland. The St Mary’s studio at Kangaroo Point, became ‘a site for inspirational teaching for some 20 years.’⁵⁰ Artists who taught at the studio included Margaret Cilento (1953-1954), John Rigby (1954), Mervyn Moriarty (1955-57), Jon Molvig, and Betty and Roy Churcher (1957-1965). The teaching of drawing, as outlined by Kimon Nicolaides in *The Natural Way to Draw*,⁵¹ would have a lasting impact on art teaching through the challenge to traditional drawing techniques as delivered by the CTC. Molvig, on taking over from John Rigby at St Mary’s Studio in 1955, would make use of Nicolaides’ ‘free’ drawing

⁵⁰ Glenn R. Cooke, “Those Who Started, Those Who Stayed, Those Who Departed, Those Who Strayed: Art Training in Brisbane to 1991,” in *Brisbane: Training, Teaching and Turmoil: Tertiary Education 1825–2018*, ed. Barry Shaw and William James Metcalf (Kelvin Grove, QLD: Brisbane History Group, Boolarong Press, 2018), 24.

⁵¹ Kimon Nicolaides, *The Natural Way to Draw: A Working Plan for Art Study* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1941).

techniques. Dorothy Forbes was introduced to Nicolaides through life drawing sessions at a New Farm studio c1954 run by artists including John Rigby.⁵² Clem Forbes would utilise this method in his drawing classes in Mackay from 1972.⁵³ Margaret Cilento's contemporary approach was influenced by her study at the Subjects of the Artist School in New York, as the recipient of the Wattle League 1947 Travelling Scholarship. Cilento would influence Clem Forbes' study of technique and, in particular, the use of pastel.⁵⁴ **Figure 4**

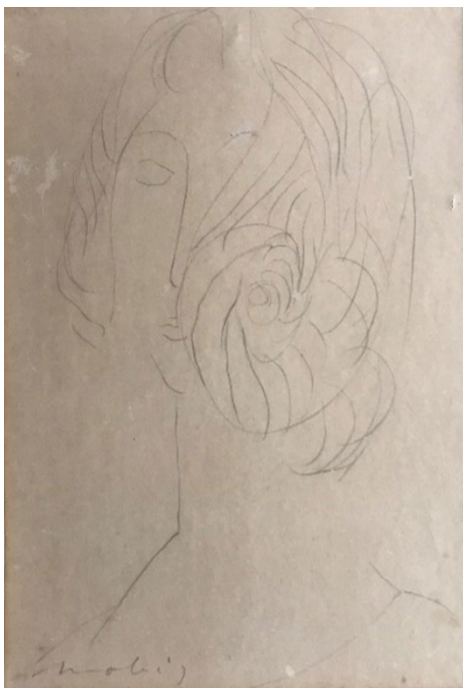


Figure 4: Jon Molvig: *Untitled*, pencil on paper, 40x30cm c 1955. Dorothy Forbes Collection. Margaret Cilento: *Portrait of Julie Cilento* (nee Forbes), coloured pencil/pastel on paper, 40x30cm, 1968. Nicholas Cilento Collection.

Roy Churcher, who had studied at the Slade School in London, was influential through the teaching of a free and abstract style of painting. His students included artists Irene Amos (1927-2012), Alison Coaldrake (b. 1927), Beverley Budgen (b. 1937) and Rona Van

⁵² Dorothy Forbes, interview by Celie Forbes (topic: reflections on Brisbane in the 1950s), November 15, 2019.

⁵³ Bettina MacAulay, *Clem Forbes: Image Maker* (Mackay, QLD: Artspace Mackay, 2004), 25, exhibition catalogue.

⁵⁴ David Cilento, interview by Celie Forbes, March 17, 2019. David Cilento, married to Juliana Forbes (1934–1995), was Clem's brother-in-law. Margaret Cilento was the sister of David Cilento.

Erp (no date), exhibited as the St Mary's Studio 'Wednesday Group'.⁵⁵ These artists, including Roy Churcher, are referenced as exhibiting in the Northern Queensland commercial galleries in the following chapters. Roy Churcher was later influential in establishing the Contemporary Art Society (CAS), active from 1961 to 1971, driving, with Ray Hughes, the establishment of the Institute of Modern Art.⁵⁶ Hughes would become Risley's dealer from 1981. In addition, Gertrude Langer (1908-1984), through her presidency of the Queensland Arts Council (QAC) from 1961 and her public lecture program,⁵⁷ as member and president of the Queensland Art Gallery Society (QAGS), and critic for the Brisbane newspaper, the *Courier Mail*, would have a significant impact on art and culture in Northern Queensland. Gertrude Langer reviewed the work of Clem Forbes and Tom Risley, and Ray Hughes represented Tom Risley for over 20 years.

2.4.2 Cultural programs and events

Cultural activities throughout Queensland created the conditions for artists to exhibit, access prizes and align with artist groups and societies, further generating public interest in the arts throughout Northern Queensland. Relevant to this study are Cooke (1988),⁵⁸ and Hamilton (2020).⁵⁹

The Royal Queensland Art Society (RQAS)⁶⁰, formed in 1886, focussed in particular on the establishment of a Queensland National Art Gallery (QNAG), and supported exhibitions and education constituting a Queensland style of painting. In opening the RQAS

⁵⁵ Cooke, *A Time Remembered*, 76–77.

⁵⁶ See Fridemanis, *Artists and Aspects*, 1991, and Cooke, *A Time Remembered*.

⁵⁷ Langer's lecture notes are found in Gertrude Langer, Gertrude Langer Papers, UQFL157, 1890–1984, Fryer Library, The University of Queensland.

⁵⁸ Keith Bradbury and Glenn R. Cooke, *Thorns & Petals: 100 Years of the Royal Queensland Art Society* (Brisbane, Royal Queensland Art Society, 1988).

⁵⁹ Judith Hamilton, *Glory Days: Brisbane's Art World to 1970* (Tingalpa, QLD: Boolarong Press, 2020).

⁶⁰ The Queensland Art Society became the Royal Queensland Art Society in 1926.

Robert Campbell (1902-1972) exhibition of watercolours in 1934, for example, Sir Donald Cameron commented on Campbell's time on Dunk Island and Magnetic Island and in Townsville, stating, 'I have often wondered why Queensland artists do not go more often to Northern Queensland for subjects for their pictures'⁶¹ an opinion shared by the *Courier Mail's* reviewer who asked 'why more painters don't access the area ... so fertile in subjects for the brush and so prolific in inspiration'.⁶² Artists Kenneth Macqueen (1897-1960) and William Grant (1876-1951) would later work in 'the modern style'⁶³ and were prominent in painting the Queensland landscape as an expression of nationalism'.⁶⁴ Caroline Barker (1894-1988) would educate artists including Margaret Cilento,⁶⁵ later travelling north to judge art prizes including the Mackay Caltex Art Prize in 1971, for which Clem Forbes was awarded first prize.⁶⁶

Brisbane contemporary art groups which influenced artists in this study included The Half Dozen Group of Artists, Queensland (established in 1941), the Royal Queensland Art Society's Younger Artists Group [YAG], the Miya Studio (formed out of the YAG), established as a creative and revolutionary artist cooperative,⁶⁷ the Barjai art and literary magazine (connected to the Miya Studio), which formed connections to Australian Modernists such as Arthur Boyd, and the Lyceum Club (active in Brisbane from 1919) which would also act as a meeting place for artists including Charles Blackman and Sidney Nolan.

⁶¹ "Scope for Art in the North Mr. R. Campbell's Exhibition Opened," *Courier Mail* (Brisbane, QLD), August 22, 1934.

⁶² "Art of Robert Campbell Pictures of the North," *Courier Mail* (Brisbane, QLD), August 21, 1934.

⁶³ Bradbury and Cooke, *Thorns & Petals*, 50.

⁶⁴ Bradbury and Cooke, *Thorns & Petals*, 54.

⁶⁵ Hamilton, *Glory Days*, 37.

⁶⁶ Clem Forbes to John Cooper, letter, in John Cooper, Box 7, John Cooper Papers, UQFL60, Fryer Library, The University of Queensland.

⁶⁷ Anderson, "Barjai, Miya Studio."

The Queensland Art Gallery Society (QAGS)⁶⁸ was formed in 1951 under the directorship of Robert Haines; and the Society of Sculptors, Queensland, was formed in 1970 with sculptor Leonard Shillam (1915-2005) as the first president, supporting travelling exhibitions to Northern Queensland including the Martin Gallery, Townsville, and the Bakehouse Art Gallery, Mackay. The RQAS and Half Dozen group were instrumental in identifying the need for Australian and overseas scholarships. Scholarships won by artists Margaret Cilento (Wattle League Scholarship, 1947); Betty Cameron (Churcher) (RQAS 1951), Leonard Shillam (Queensland Art Fund travelling grant, 1938)⁶⁹ and John Rigby (Italian Government Travelling Art Scholarship, Sydney, 1955), would influence education and exhibition programs throughout Queensland. John Rigby later had a professional, personal and mentoring relationship with Clem Forbes and the Sculpture Society would send touring exhibitions to the commercial galleries in this study including the Bakehouse Art Gallery.

The Queensland Division of the Arts Council of Australia, later to become the Queensland Arts Council (QAC)], formed in 1950, sought to highlight the importance of the arts to Australian culture; provide exhibition opportunities for artists; and broaden public access to the arts.⁷⁰ In 1964 Gertrude Langer, as president, introduced the Queensland touring program and vacation schools ensuring their reach throughout the state. Local branches (LAC) relevant to this study were grouped as Central (including Rockhampton and Mackay) and Northern (including Townsville and Cairns).⁷¹ The Vacation Schools, held at UQ from

⁶⁸ It was also referred to as the National Gallery Society of Queensland or the Queensland National Gallery Society. 'National' was dropped for the title in 1960 after the QNAG changed to the QAG in 1959.

⁶⁹ Lahey, *Art in Queensland*, 47–49.

⁷⁰ The Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts [CEMA] was formed by Dorothy Helmrich in 1943 to tour performance programs to regional areas. The Queensland Division was formed in 1944 under the presidency of Dr JV Duhig. CEMA was renamed the Arts Council of Australia in 1947. The Queensland Division of CEMA would instigate the annual exhibition, 'Artists of Fame and Promise'. In 1961 Karl and Gertrude Langer oversaw the transition of the organisation, renamed the Queensland Arts Council. Richards, *Grow the Arts*, 45.

⁷¹ Richards, *Grow the Arts*, 111.

1962, focussed specifically on supporting arts practice.⁷² Teachers included John Rigby, Stanislaus Rapotec (1913-1997)⁷³, Roy Churcher and Mervyn Moriarty, who would also travel to Northern Queensland.⁷⁴ The LACs supported regional centres through annual touring programmes and project funding. From 1968 ‘On demand’ workshops, facilitated through the LACs as aligned to the QAC Vacation Schools, brought artists such as Moriarty, Rigby and Rapotec to Northern Queensland to deliver workshops. Rapotec’s presence in Northern Queensland in 1971, where he would meet Clem and Dorothy Forbes, has critical relevance to this study. Figure 5



Figure 5: Newspaper Advertisement: “Weekend Painting Course to be conducted by Famous Artist Stanislav Rapotec”, *Daily Mercury*, Mackay, 8 July, 1971. 30.

Access to art prizes was essential to artists in this study. Cooke argues that ‘the institution of the art prize burgeoned in Australia during the 1960s to a degree unknown in

⁷² Philipp Strobl, “‘But the Main Thing Is I had the Knowledge’: Gertrude Langer, Cultural Translation and the Emerging Art Sector in Post-War Queensland (Australia),” *Australian and New Zealand of Art* 18, no. 1 (2018): 27.

⁷³ References to Stanislaus Rapotec include ‘Stanislav’ and ‘Stan’ Rapotec, and in correspondence, ‘Rappy’.

⁷⁴ Gertrude Langer, Box 63, Gertrude Langer Papers, UQFL157, 1890–1984, Fryer Library, The University of Queensland.

Europe'.⁷⁵ Prizes referenced in this study include the QAG Trustee Prizes, including the H. C. Richards Memorial Prize for Painting, the biennial L. J. Harvey drawing prize, and the Memorial Prizes for Painting⁷⁶. Works specific to the Queensland landscape were selected for the H. C. Richards Prize 'with the intention of fostering a Northern school of art.'⁷⁷ Forbes was selected for hanging for the QAG L. J. Harvey Memorial Prize for Drawing in 1973, and the Memorial Prize for painting in 1973, 1975, and 1977.⁷⁸

Prizes referenced outside the QAG include the Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland prizes, the Caltex Centenary Art Competition, Finney's Centenary Art Prize, (later becoming the David Jones Art Prize), Redcliffe Centenary Art Prize and the Gold Coast City Art Prize (organised in part by John Cooper to further establish an art collection for the city).⁷⁹ Finney's was significant in being open only to Queenslanders. Margaret Olley was awarded for *Susan With Flowers* (Judge: Laurie Thomas). Dorothy McGuinness's (later Dorothy Forbes) 1963 work, *Portrait of Young Man*, a portrait of Clem Forbes, influenced by the Modernist style of Amedeo Modigliani (1884-1920), was selected for hanging in the exhibition. Figure 6 Dorothy Forbes recalled that Gertrude Langer's focus, in discussing the prize, was on the importance of contemporary art.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ Cooke, *A Time Remembered*, 85.

⁷⁶ Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, "Art Prize Exhibitions in Brisbane, 1950–1975," accessed November 19, 2022, <https://qag.trimagiccc.com.au/>.

⁷⁷ Cooke, *A Time Remembered*, 87.

⁷⁸ QAGOMA, "Art Prize Exhibitions in Brisbane, 1950–1975."

⁷⁹ Cooke, *A Time Remembered*, 90–91.

⁸⁰ Dorothy Forbes, interview.



Figure 6: Dorothy McGuinness (Forbes): *Portrait of a Young Man*, oil on canvas, 76.5x60.5cm, 1963. [Selected for hanging in *Finney's Centenary Art Competition*, 1963.] Dorothy Forbes Collection.

Prizes supported by touring exhibitions gave Queensland artists opportunities to be exhibited, and especially to be exposed to Melbourne and Sydney critics and patrons. Queensland artists regarded the NSW Art Gallery's Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Prizes and the Blake Prize for religious art particularly highly. The Australian Women's Weekly Prize was awarded to John Rigby in 1958, the Rowney Drawing Prize in 1959 to Charles Blackman, the John McCaughey memorial prize by the National Gallery of Victoria to Montville artist Gil Jamieson (1934-1992) in 1965, and the Archibald Prize to Jon Molvig in 1966. These artists would exhibit in the commercial galleries in this study. Figure 7

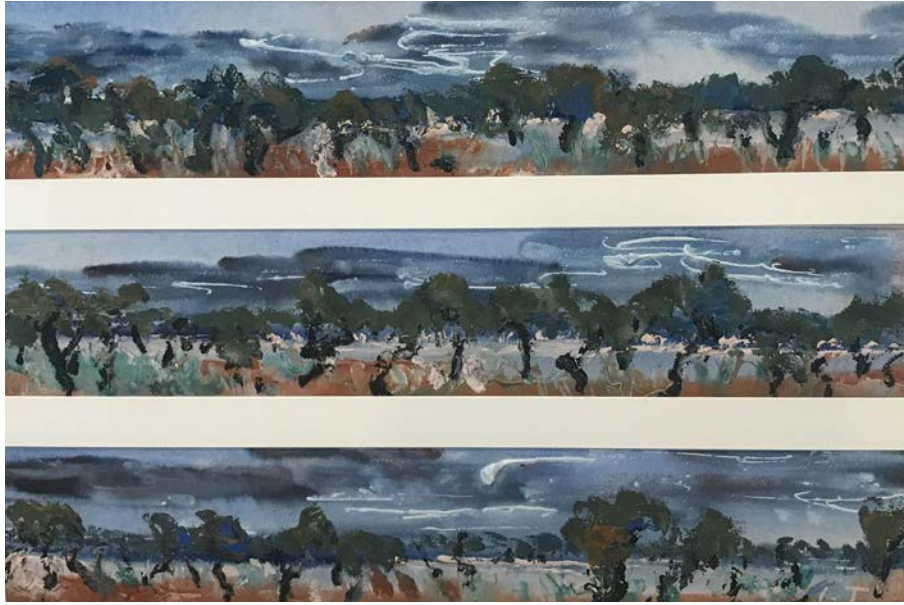


Figure 7: Gil Jamieson: *Untitled (Northern Queensland landscape)*, gouache on paper, 20x70cm (measurement for individual works - framed as a triptych), 1978. Jim and Genevieve Gall Collection. [Purchased Bakehouse Art Gallery *Exhibition of Small Paintings*, 20 May, 1978]

2.4.3 Art spaces

The demand for an appropriate space for national, state and regional collections is a consistent theme throughout this study. Establishing a (Queensland) National Art Gallery was considered critical to Queensland's cultural development. Lahey points to this period as a 'retardation of development',⁸¹ and later Australian art historian Bernard Smith similarly condemned Brisbane as 'provincial even by Australian standards, where the Art Gallery of Queensland, in its impoverished and out of date condition', 'could not be compared favourably with many of the active little galleries in Victorian country towns'.⁸² Australian artists and patrons would also challenge the curatorial perspective of the QAG, as stated by Gertrude Langer in 1969,

The Queensland gallery has missed opportunities by not recognising early the genius of Australian painters, who now are in demand the world over...we are living in an

⁸¹ Lahey, *Art in Queensland*, 10–14.

⁸² Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 406.

exciting period of Australian painting. What a tragedy if the gallery is unable to determine what is worthwhile and what is worthless.⁸³

Tours to regional centres of the 'National Collection' in 1906, 1907, 1909, 1947 and 1951, as well as the 1945 exhibition of 'French and British Contemporary Art', are referenced as important in supporting the 'cause for modernism'⁸⁴ as discussed in this study. The QAG touring programme, including the 1951 Jubilee Art train, was significant in its reach to regional centres including Northern Queensland.⁸⁵ Clem Forbes recalled visiting the Art train in Esk, and the impact of seeing artist William Dobell's (1899-1970), *The Cypriot*.⁸⁶ QAG directors Robert Campbell (1949); Robert Haines (1951); Laurie Thomas (1961); James Wieneke (1967); and Raoul Mellish (1974), are referenced in this study.

2.4.4 Commercial galleries

Possibly the most important development for the visual arts in Queensland was the emergence of commercial galleries with an explicit focus on Queensland and Australian artists. This change informed the development of commercial galleries in Northern Queensland after 1971. In particular, the small galleries that emerged around Queen Street, George Street and Spring Hill during the 1950s and into the 1960s became a cultural hub where both established and young artists would exhibit and gather. At the time it was common for a dealer to commit to a stable of artists with the commitment of the artist for exclusivity. It was this model that would be reflected in the case studies of commercial art galleries in this study. John Cooper (1912-1987) opened the Moreton Gallery in Edward Street Brisbane in 1944, with James Wieneke (1906-1981) who would go on to become the director of the QAG, taking over in 1951. The

⁸³ "No Faith in Trustees of Art Gallery," *Courier Mail* (Brisbane, QLD), June 13, 1969, in John Cooper, Box 20, John Cooper Papers, UQFL60, Fryer Library, The University of Queensland.

⁸⁴ Cooke, *A Time Remembered*, 34.

⁸⁵ "Keen Interest in Jubilee Art Train," *Queensland Times* (Ipswich), September 1, 1951, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article118226130>.

⁸⁶ MacAulay, *Clem Forbes*, 11.

commercial galleries in this study had ongoing relationships with Cooper as an art dealer, and Clem Forbes sought exhibition opportunities in Brisbane through Cooper. Further, Cooper's importance is evident through the history of exhibiting the work of artists Lionel Lindsay (1874-1961), Laurence Hope (1927-2016), Margaret Cilento, Norman Lindsay (1879-1969) and Sidney Nolan. Nolan worked in and exhibited for the Moreton Gallery in February 1948, leading to the inclusion of prints in Northern Queensland galleries at a later date. In Brisbane, Nolan was supported by 'the Brisbane crowd' who 'presented as lively, eccentric and very busy being into modernity'.⁸⁷ Concurrently, The Marodian Gallery opened in 1950 in Upper Edward Street, Brisbane, moving to the basement of the Brisbane Arcade in 1952, and by 1954 had again moved, this time to Cintra Road in Bowen Hills, and Finney's Art Gallery was open from 1946 to 1954. Under the directorship of Brian Johnstone (1920-1988) and Marjorie Johnstone (1911-1993) the Johnstone Gallery would become an important Brisbane gallery for Australian artists, including Bob Dickerson, Ray Crooke, Gordon Shepherdson (1934-2019), Len and Kath Shillam, John Rigby, Jon Molvig (prior to his relationship with the Rudy Komon gallery) and Sidney Nolan. Jon Molvig's exhibition at the Johnstone Gallery (28 April-15 May 1959), was specific to the imagery representative of Central Australia. These artists would also exhibit in the commercial galleries in this study.

The Ray Hughes Gallery and Philip Bacon Gallery become prominent into the 1970s. In addition, the Young Australian, Verlie Just, Reid and Kennigo Street Galleries, in particular, had prolific exhibition outputs and supported Northern Queensland artists.

The Kennigo Street Gallery, whose director Ruth Cilento (Smout), sister of artist Margaret Cilento, was a practising doctor, sculptor, and patron, exhibited artists such as Irene Amos, and Jon Molvig's drawing exhibition in 1966. Ruth Cilento also established an annexe

⁸⁷ Nancy Underhill, *Sidney Nolan: A life* (Sydney, NSW: NewSouth, 2015), 182.

for younger, local artists.⁸⁸ Figure 8 Clem Forbes exhibited as an emerging artist in the annexe in 1967.⁸⁹



Figure 8: “New City Art Gallery”, *Courier-Mail*, Brisbane, 24 February, 1966. (Dorothy Forbes Archive).

Ray Hughes (1946-2017), director of the Ray Hughes Gallery, (which had its foundations in Gallery 1-Eleven established at 111 Musgrave Road, Red Hill, in 1968 with Ruth Smout),⁹⁰ represented a stable of artists including William Yaxley (b. 1943), Tom

⁸⁸ Cooke, *A Time Remembered*, 49.
⁸⁹ Cooke, *A Time Remembered*, 114.
⁹⁰ Cooke, *A Time Remembered*, 114.

Risley, Roy Churcher, Sam Fullbrook (1922-2004), Joe Furlonger (b. 1952), David Rose (1936-2006) and Davida Allen (b. 1951). Philip Bacon (b. 1947), at the opening of the Philip Bacon Gallery in 1974, stated that he was ‘filling in the gap’ left by the closing of the Johnstone Gallery in 1972, exhibiting artists such as Charles Blackman and Bob Dickerson.⁹¹ Artists in this study exhibited or were held on consignment in these galleries; and the commercial galleries in the north would access stock and exhibitions from these dealers. In Sydney and Melbourne, the Rudy Komon, Bonython, Holdsworth, Munster and Ray Hughes (Sydney) galleries are relevant to this study. Celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the Johnstone Gallery in 1971, Brian Johnstone stated,

In the last 20 years [Australia] has produced a splendid group of artists whose work is now internationally known. Queensland has given a large number of these major painters tremendous assistance in their early careers.⁹²

2.4.5 Conclusions: The impact of the South

Laurence Collison (1925-1986), as chairman of the Miya Studio in the foreword to its 1946 exhibition, articulated the frustration of artists by the end of the 1940s: blaming the ‘antiquated teaching methods’, lack ‘of sound constructive and destructive criticism’, and the artists themselves as ‘imitators of the out-worn Australian Impressionist tradition’.⁹³ Collectively, these sentiments established the context for the approach to the arts throughout Queensland in the ensuing decades. By the 1960s, Brisbane’s engagement in the visual arts was evidenced by artist studios, commercial galleries, and the prevalence of art prizes promoting non-traditional approaches and Queensland subject matter. The work of art

⁹¹ Archives of exhibitions are found in John Cooper, Box 28, John Cooper Papers, UQFL60, Fryer Library, The University of Queensland.

⁹² David Rowbotham, “Courtyard Art Showing at Gallery,” *Courier Mail* (Brisbane, QLD), May 29, 1971, in John Cooper, Box 28, John Cooper Papers, UQFL60, Fryer Library, The University of Queensland. The exhibition opened on 26 May 1971.

⁹³ *Miya Studio Catalogue of Second Annual Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings*, September 1946, in Gertrude Langer, Box 35, Gertrude Langer Papers, UQFL157, 1890–1984, Fryer Library, The University of Queensland.

societies, including the QAS, CAS and IMA, further emphasised Abstract, Colour-field and Experimental (including Naïve, Primitive or ‘Innocent’) subject matter, style and techniques. In addition, Gertrude Langer’s influence as critic, and as President of the QAC, had considerable impact throughout Queensland. It is evident that the Brisbane art groups, commercial galleries and artists had raised a challenge to the conservative arts infrastructure on which art in Queensland was founded. In moving away from the Australian School and Kensington Model of art, to an emphasis on subject matter, style and technique understood as ‘modern’ and ‘contemporary’, Brisbane, it is argued, became in part the blueprint for the arts practices that emerged in Northern Queensland after 1971, which explains the approaches to method and style by artists Clem Forbes and Tom Risley, described variously as *experimental* and *self-taught*, and foregrounds the emergence of the commercial art galleries in this study.

2.5 Northern Queensland: A view from the north

Evidenced in this section are the multiple activities designed to support public engagement in the arts in Northern Queensland that contextualise the findings in the following chapters. The needs for education, cultural programmes and art spaces were again the motivating factors contextualising the actions of artists, patrons, art groups and curators relevant to this study. The Schools of Arts had consistently played a critical role in creating cultural opportunities, evolving into the TAFE model that would provide art training throughout Northern Queensland. Institutions including the Townsville College of TAFE, and Capricornia QIT delivered fine art training, including adult education. The Board of Education supported cultural activities from the 1940s, engaging the public in education programmes including fine art lectures and painting workshops. The political goals of Art Societies were consistent in challenging traditional approaches to the arts as advocated by what were seen as conservative government bodies and institutions. While the QAG had a short-lived but successful touring programme, it was the impact of the LACs as connected to the QAC, that

would have a reach throughout Queensland from the 1960s. By 1971 the Art Societies and commercial galleries in Northern Queensland were acting as cultural hubs linking artists and patrons throughout the north and further south, to Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne, through exhibition programmes. Whilst the galleries and Art Societies acted independently, their activities combined to create an informal infrastructure that would drive and sustain the cultural narrative in Northern Queensland throughout the scope of this study.

2.5.1 Education

Technical Colleges were established, beginning with the Rockhampton Technical College in 1890, Mackay in 1892, Townsville in 1889, and Cairns in 1899. The technical education syllabus from 1919 included freehand drawing and painting. Increasingly relevant at this time was the support of rural programs and repatriation opportunities for returned soldiers. These programs offered commercial, vocational, and teaching courses inclusive of arts education.⁹⁴

The Board of Adult Education, established in 1944, was controlled by the Department of Public Instruction (known as the Department of Education after 1957) including the Far North, North, North-West, Mackay, Rockhampton, Wide Bay-Burnett, Moreton and Toowoomba districts. One role of the board was to provide opportunities for adults throughout Queensland to access lecture courses, study circles and discussion groups with appropriate facilities.⁹⁵ For example the Townsville district reported that enrolments for art classes on indoor and outdoor sketching and painting, conducted by Mr. J. Philip [sic] Samuel, ‘were so heavy that enrolments for the classes had to be closed within a week and individual members had to be discouraged from attending more than one series of the classes.’⁹⁶ Samuel (1879-1962) and his daughter Sylvia, a classical dancer and actress (1914-

⁹⁴ Clarke, *Technical and Further Education*.

⁹⁵ Queensland Government, “Board of Adult Education.”

⁹⁶ “Adult Education,” *Townsville Daily Bulletin* (QLD), December 2, 1950, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/63173912>.

1967), in particular, were prolific in the delivery of these study tours along the Queensland coast, and are of further relevance to this study due to Clem Forbes's crediting his early tuition including water-colour techniques, to Samuel.⁹⁷ Samuel delivered art lectures, workshops and art classes for the Queensland Adult Education Board from 1949 to 1954⁹⁸ before settling in the Sunshine Coast, becoming the instructor for the Nambour Art Study Group in 1951.⁹⁹ It was reported the group had the goal of achieving 'a pictorial record of the Australian scene in its many forms. Their watercolours range from scenes depicting the forbidding beauty of the inland to landscapes of the lush dairy lands of Queensland.'¹⁰⁰ An example of Samuel's watercolour representation of the Mackay region is shown in Figure 9.



Figure 9: James Phillips Samuel: *Eimeo* (Mackay), watercolour on paper 28x19cm, 1950. SLQ Collection SLQ 33253

⁹⁷ MacAulay, *Clem Forbes*, 11.

⁹⁸ SLQ One Search, "‘Eimeo’ Watercolour" (Administrative/Biographical history section of a listing in search results for "James Phillips Samuel"), State Library Queensland, accessed January 8, 2022, http://onesearch.slq.qld.gov.au/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=slq_alma21296851720002061&context=L&vid=SLQ&lang=en_US&search_scope=S_LQ_PCI_EBSCO&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=all&query=creator,exact,James%20Phillips%20Samuel.

⁹⁹ "Leaders in Art Study Group," *Nambour Chronicle* (QLD), July 20, 1951, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/78729177?searchTerm=leaders%20in%20art%20study%20group>.

¹⁰⁰ "Leaders in Art Study Group," *Nambour Chronicle* (QLD).

The University model became a focus for education after 1951, and in 1958 the University of Queensland proposed ‘a Multiple Regional University Centre in Townsville’, where secondary, technical, and the lower years of university education could be given. ... with the opportunity of existing later in its own right.’¹⁰¹ This was realised in 1961, becoming University College of Townsville and later James Cook University of North Queensland (JCU) in 1970, with a campus established in Cairns in 1987. In 1967, the Queensland Institute of Technology (QIT), Capricornia (Rockhampton) was also established. In 1983 the Diploma course in art and design was offered at Townsville TAFE, moving to JCU in 1993. Townsville artists and academics in this study include Ron Kenny, Anneke Silver (b. 1937), and Ron McBurnie (b. 1957) who all established careers in Townsville. The University culture was supported by the graduate groups and QU Women’s association;¹⁰² and JCU¹⁰³, QUT and Central Queensland University (CQU) have established art collections evidencing work of artists from the region including Clem Forbes (Figure 10) and Tom Risley (Figure 11).



¹⁰¹ Thomis, *Place of Light and Learning*, 300.

¹⁰² Genevieve Gall and Jim Gall (patrons), interview by Celie Forbes, February 27, 2021.

¹⁰³ Queensland Art Gallery, *Fairweather* (South Brisbane: Queensland Art Gallery, 1994).

Figure 10: Clem Forbes: *Rainforest*, oil on board, 103x85 cm, 1975. Contributed by Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited (engraved on plaque) acquired by Bill Lacey (retired Professor) JCU Special Collections, Art 85 Ref.



Figure 11: Tom Risley: *Chair*, timber, pumice, paint, bolts, washers and nuts, 1992. QUT Art Collection, <https://blogs.qut.edu.au/library/2020/09/01/art-at-qut-library/>

Professional artists would become educators in Northern Queensland. Mervyn Moriarty established the Flying Arts School in 1971.¹⁰⁴ Clem Forbes delivered workshops for the Adult Education Board from 1971 and established art classes for adults and children at the Bakehouse Art Gallery from 1972, while Tom Risley worked as a tutor in the south at QUT (Kelvin Grove).

2.5.2 Cultural programs and events

Another group relevant to this study is the Dunk Island group, including Bedarra and Timana in Northern Queensland, active from the 1940s into 1950s. Artists, including Noel Wood (1912-2001), Roy Dalgarno (1910-2001), Deanna Conti, (no date of birth available) Yvonne Cohen (1912-2004), and Valerie Cohen (Albiston 1911-2008), comprised 'one of Australia's first island-based artistic communities', with Noel Wood one of the 'first artists in Australia

¹⁰⁴ Marilyn Irene England, "From River Banks to Shearing Sheds: Thirty Years with Flying Arts 1971–2001" (master's thesis, The University of Queensland, 2007).

to establish a national profile from a regional base'.¹⁰⁵ Tom Risley's father Noel would consider these artists as his peers, working within this community.¹⁰⁶ Arthur Evan Read (1911-1978) lived and worked in Northern Queensland including Innisfail from the 1940s, exhibiting at the Moreton and Johnstone galleries. Clem Forbes referenced Read as an early influence on his choice to live and work in the north.¹⁰⁷ Ray Croke (1922-2015) settled permanently in Cairns from 1976.¹⁰⁸ These artists exhibited in the commercial galleries in the Northern Queensland case studies. Read, Croke and Noel Risley are held in the collections of patrons in this study. Figure 12



Figure 12: Ray Croke: *Untitled*, woodcut, 24x32cm, 1973. Exhibited 1975, Bakehouse Art Gallery. Celie Forbes Collection.

¹⁰⁵ Shane Fitzgerald, *To the Islands: Exploring Works Created by Artists on Dunk, Bedarra, and Timana Islands between the 1930s and 1990s*, with contributions by Ross Searle, Glenn R. Cooke, Anneke Silver, and Cathy Stocky (Townsville, QLD: Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, 2013), 11, exhibition catalogue.

¹⁰⁶ Jane Cornwall (sister of Tom Risley), interview by Celie Forbes, May 12, 2022.

¹⁰⁷ Dorothy Forbes, interview by Celie Forbes, April 18, 2019.

¹⁰⁸ Sue Smith, *North of Capricorn: The Art of Ray Croke*, with an essay by James Gleeson and contributions by Russell Drysdale, George Johnston, and Daryl Lindsay (Townsville, QLD: Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, 1997), 28, exhibition catalogue.

By 1951 there is evidence in North Queensland of a strong engagement in cultural activities in the north sponsored by the Adult Education movement.

Practically every North Queensland centre has a story on somewhat similar lines [to that of Townsville] to report... there is a general re-awakening of interest in cultural activities. Fortunately, the general public is beginning to realise that the soul of a nation is partly fashioned by its peoples' cultural endeavours.¹⁰⁹

In addition, regional and country town agricultural exhibitions were a place of cultural gathering and art prizes were awarded, giving opportunities for works to be displayed and judged.

Regional art societies flourished throughout Queensland. The Cairns Art Society was formed in 1931 'to promote and foster interest in art and, where possible, help the individual artist achieve his aims'. Active after 1947 the society worked to support prizes and exhibitions, including contributing towards 1976 City of Cairns Centenary Art Purchase. The annual art society exhibition supported artists through 'Purchase Awards' selected by judges. Judges included Irene Amos (1974), Anneke Silver (1975), Raoul Mellish (1979), Ron Kenny (1982) and Clem Forbes (1983).¹¹⁰

In 1957, however, the RQAS however, expressed concern over the impact of distance from Brisbane, considering it 'neglect', and by 1959 it looked to separate from Brisbane and align with small art groups in Northern and Western Queensland—Mareeba, Townsville, Cairns, Mackay and Mount Isa. The Rockhampton Art Fellowship formed in 1949 seeking affiliation with RQAS, and in 1950 liaising with State galleries looking to borrow works. In 1976 former Mayor Pilbeam and the Art Acquisition Committee made plans to access the

¹⁰⁹ "Cultural Progress Has Been Rapid in North Queensland," *Townsville Daily Bulletin* (QLD), April 10, 1950. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/63469047>.

¹¹⁰ Cairns Art Society, *Art in North Queensland: Selected Works from the Cairns City Collection* (Cairns, QLD: Cairns Art Society, 1987).

Australian Contemporary Art Acquisition Program (Australia Council for the Arts, 1973),¹¹¹ with the goal of positioning Rockhampton nationally rather than locally, resulting in a rich collection of works for the Rockhampton Art Gallery collection.¹¹² In 1982 Mackay established the Mackay/Pioneer Cultural Advisory committee to access Visual Arts Board funding to support a regional collection, with Clem Forbes, Dorothy Forbes, Simon McConnell and Lorraine Gray-McConnell acting in an advisory capacity regarding acquisition proposals.¹¹³

The Townsville Art Society (TAS), transitioning in 1962 from the Townsville Art Group, was formed to create opportunities for Townsville artists to exhibit, lobbying the Townsville City Council in 1969 for what would become the Perc Tucker Regional Gallery in 1980. In addition, the Townsville Art Society supported the demand for art courses through the TAFE.¹¹⁴ Ron Kenny (1925-1997) was active as President of the Townsville Art Society with Helene Marsh and Carol Kenchington as office bearers.¹¹⁵ Anneke Silver stated that ‘Ron’s contributions to the development of art appreciation and infrastructure in Townsville cannot be overestimated’. Kenny was a practising artist, supported loan exhibitions and was active in

¹¹¹ Note that the Australia Council for the Arts, later known as the Australia Council, was a Federal Government initiative, established from 1967 by Australian Prime Minister Harold Holt and 1968 by Prime Minister John Gorton. Grants were distributed through the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust. From 1975 it became known as the Australia Council under Prime Minister Gough Whitlam. This is not to be confused with the Arts Council of Australia whose Queensland Division [QAC] lobbied for state funding.

¹¹² Rockhampton Art Gallery, *Cream: Four Decades of Australian Art* (Rockhampton, QLD: Rockhampton Art Gallery, 2014), exhibition catalogue.

¹¹³ S. Outridge and L Gray-McConnell, “Recommendations to Mackay/Pioneer Advisory Committee on the Visual Arts Board Art Acquisition Scheme” (unpublished manuscript, June 1982), in Genevieve Gall and Jim Gall, personal archive, 1971–1982.

¹¹⁴ Townsville Art Society, “History of the Townsville Art Society,” accessed January 17, 2022, <http://www.townsvilleartsocietyinc.org.au/history>.

¹¹⁵ Essay by Anneke Silver, in Anneke Silver, *Images of an Era: The Martin Gallery*, with added commentary by Shane Fitzgerald and preface by Ralph Martin (Townsville, QLD: Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, 2016), 20, exhibition catalogue.

establishing the James Cook University Art Collection.¹¹⁶ His work, *The Bay* (1968) is held in the James Cook University Special Collection.¹¹⁷

The Mackay Art Society was also active, supporting exhibitions and the establishment of a regional art gallery, prizes and collection. The Mackay Art Society hosted an annual *Artists and Art* competition, judged, for example, by John Rigby in 1978. The Mackay Tourist Festival also hosted the Caltex Art Prize. The Art Society actively campaigned for a regional art gallery and collection, and in 1972 the work *O'Neill's Place* by Clem Forbes, the winning entry in the Mackay Caltex Art Prize, was purchased by the Mackay Art Society (President Col Bailey) for the Mackay City Council for this purpose.¹¹⁸

The creation of the Caltex Art Prize by the Rockhampton Rotary Club in 1965 presented the opportunity for a concerted development of art in the North and Central regions of Queensland.¹¹⁹ The Rotary Club of Rockhampton and the Rockhampton City Council continued to support art competitions. In addition, prizes throughout Central and Northern Queensland, such as the Art Society prizes, became critical in supporting young artists with financial and exhibition opportunities. For example, Tom Risley, Ian Smith (b. 1950) and John Coburn were exhibited in the 1976 Cairns Art Society exhibition.¹²⁰ Clem Forbes won the Non-Traditional Art Prize in Cairns in 1967 and took second place in the Cloncurry Ernest Henry Memorial Art Contest in 1973. Tom Risley won both the Mareeba Art Prize, 1977

¹¹⁶ Silver, *Images of an Era*, 20.

¹¹⁷ Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, *50 Treasures: Celebrating 50 Years of James Cook University* (Townsville, QLD: Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, 2020), exhibition catalogue.

¹¹⁸ "Art Work for City," *Daily Mercury* (Mackay, QLD), 1972.

¹¹⁹ Bradbury and Cooke, *Thorns & Petals*, 175-76.

¹²⁰ Cairns Art Society, *Art in North Queensland*.

(Judge Clem Forbes), Cairns Art Society Prize 1980 (Judge: Michael Shannon) for *Printed Circuit*, and the Atherton Annual District Art Exhibition (Judge Clem Forbes) in 1981.¹²¹

While the focus on the visual arts was strongly privileged by art societies, artist groups and through the work of the LACs, advocacy for locally based cultural pursuits also came to the fore. Community Arts (CA) as a movement was active from the 1970s, established to ‘democratise the arts by providing access to people otherwise excluded by economic, social or geographic disadvantage’.¹²² Patron Dr Carmel Daveson, active in the Mackay Regional Council was strongly focussed on community development, believing in ‘facilitating the voices of people’ through council advocacy. She understood the influence on the community of the art classes delivered by Forbes, describing the patrons of the Bakehouse Art Gallery as a like-minded group with shared understandings and education consistent with the value of contemporary art and ‘high art’.¹²³

Research-evidenced theatre, dance and music groups were also plentiful at this time and had a cross-over of patrons and cultural programs. Active theatre groups included Kudos Theatre Company, Musical Comedy Players, and Young Theatre (Mackay), Little Theatre (Rockhampton), Little Theatre (Townsville) and Little Theatre (Cairns).¹²⁴ The New Moon Theatre Company, active throughout Northern Queensland from 1982, was proposed in 1979.¹²⁵ Clem Forbes had a long relationship with the theatre including the creation of backdrops and exhibitions to support productions.¹²⁶ Figure 13

¹²¹ “Art with Feeling,” *Atherton Tableland Times* (QLD), May 26, 1981.

¹²² Richards, *Grow the Arts*, 76.

¹²³ Carmel Daveson (patron), interview by Celie Forbes, August 19, 2019.

¹²⁴ The Elizabethan Theatre Trust was a federal initiative established in 1954 that supported touring programmes.

¹²⁵ Justin Macdonnell, *Pleasure Tested for the Tropics: The Story of New Moon Theatre Company* (Redland Bay, QLD: Connor Court, 2022), 10.

¹²⁶ From the 1980s Forbes also held exhibitions for Athena Theatre Company.



Figure 13: Clem Forbes: *Backdrop for the Mackay Comedy Players' production of Fiddler on the Roof*, Theatre Royal, Mackay, 1975. Dorothy Forbes Archive.

Communication was further facilitated through the broadsheet newspapers such as *The Courier Mail* (Qld) and *The Australian* (National) which would carry specialist features on the arts. Industry publications such as *Art + Australia* held exhibition listings and details of dealers, and specialist features in magazines such as *The Bulletin* further shared understandings of Australian cultural programs and events.¹²⁷ In addition, art book collections were held in the Schools of Arts and regional libraries. Artists, directors, and patrons were also active in establishing private art reference collections.¹²⁸

2.5.3 Art spaces

From 1894 the Schools of Arts in regional towns were seen as ‘bastions of culture, providing not only libraries, but also venues for educational lectures’¹²⁹ and as in Brisbane, playing a

¹²⁷ For example, the 21 September 1974 edition of *The Bulletin* (Sydney, NSW) included a survey of the Holdsworth Galleries and a listing for the Bakehouse Art Gallery (<https://nla.gov.au:443/tarkine/nla.obj-1340003058>).

¹²⁸ Clem and Dorothy Forbes, for example, had an extensive library of art reference books and copies of *Art + Australia* (Ure-Smith). The Mackay Regional Council holds an extensive collection of artist books and prints.

¹²⁹ Clarke, *Technical and Further Education*, 17–18.

role in the establishment of Technical Colleges. Regional galleries, however, came late to the north. The Rockhampton Art Gallery officially opened in 1967 in the auditorium of the Rockhampton City Hall. Director Glenn C Webb wrote that ‘an agreement was completed between the City of Rockhampton and the Queensland Art Gallery for the establishment here of the Queensland Art Gallery, City of Rockhampton Branch, for which a Director from the south was appointed to advance activities, administration and public interest’.¹³⁰ Clem Forbes exhibited in 1971, after which *Northern Landscape* was acquired for the permanent collection. Figure 14



Figure 14: Clem Forbes: *Northern Landscape*, oil on composition board, 64x89cm, 1971. Rockhampton Museum of Art Collection.

In 1978 the Rockhampton Art Gallery relocated to its own building in Victoria Parade on the Fitzroy River, moving again to a purpose-built space renamed the Rockhampton Museum of

¹³⁰ Rockhampton Art Gallery, Rockhampton Art Gallery File, FGF97, 1971–, Fryer Library, The University of Queensland.

Art in 2022. The Gallery's permanent collection includes Australian artists Sidney Nolan, Arthur Boyd and Russell Drysdale.

The Perc Tucker Regional Gallery opened in 1981. Perc Tucker's wife, Isabel Tucker, presented the Clem Forbes work *Range* (1975) to mark the opening of the gallery.¹³¹ Figure 15.



Figure 15: Clem Forbes: *Range*, oil on paper, 53.5x73.7cm, 1975. City of Townsville Art Collection. [Gift of the Tucker family 1975] Accession Number 1975.0001.000

The opening exhibition *Nine Queensland Artists* was curated in partnership with the Ray Hughes Gallery, and included artists Bill Yaxley, William Robinson, and Davida Allen.¹³²

The Cairns Regional Gallery opened in 1995, and Artspace Mackay opened in 2003. Prior to this, the Mackay Regional Council established an art collection, including works by Clem

¹³¹ Clem Forbes is already represented in the gallery with an earlier work presented at the opening by Mrs Perc Tucker. "Painting goes to Townsville", *Daily Mercury* (Mackay, QLD), n.d., ca. 1984, in Dorothy Forbes, personal archive, 1967–1997. (Note: *Bright Forest* was purchased in 1985. Accession number 1985.0001.000.)

¹³² Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, *Journey through Images: 40 Years of Perc Tucker Regional Gallery* (Townsville, QLD: Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, 2021).

Forbes, and the Mackay City Library, opened in 1980, was designed to include an exhibition space. Works by Clem Forbes and Tom Risley are held in the collections of these regional galleries. Figure 16



Figure 16: Tom Risley: *Still Life*, mixed media, 208x168cm, 1995. Cairns Regional Gallery collection.

2.5.4 Commercial Galleries

Prior to the establishment of regional galleries, commercial galleries operated in Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns, exhibiting works of the artists in this study.

Rockhampton's Gallery Up Top, opened by Norma Deane and Kevin Langston in 1970 as an exhibition and community space, was purchased in 1971 by Lal Lanyon (1916-2005), who established it as an important gallery throughout the 1970s, exhibiting artists including Bill Yaxley, Gil Jamieson, Gordon Shepherdson and Clem Forbes.¹³³ The Bakehouse Art Gallery (Director Dorothy Forbes) was opened by Dorothy Forbes and Clem Forbes in 1972. The gallery exhibited works by Australian artists including Ray Crooke, Robert Dickerson, John Rigby, Gil Jamieson and Clem Forbes, as well as print works by

¹³³ Simon McConnell and Lorraine Gray-McConnell (patrons), interview by Celie Forbes, November 29, 2020.

artists such as Sidney Nolan, and John Olsen, and hosted cultural events and art classes. The Martin Gallery (Director Ralph Martin) also opened in 1972, exhibiting artists from Northern Queensland, while making connections to galleries and artists in the south.¹³⁴ In Cairns, the Trinity Gallery (Directors Jim Macfarlane and Rosemary Macfarlane) opened in 1974, and the Australian Heritage Gallery (Director Jim Macfarlane) was established in 1976 as the result of Macfarlane's proposal to the Aboriginal Arts Board of the Australia Council. Managed through the Australia Council Subsidiary company, Aboriginal Arts and Crafts Pty Ltd, the Australian Heritage Gallery's goal was to establish an Aboriginal Art Gallery for Cape York traditional Arts and Crafts in Cairns, and to foster a 'world-wide respect and interest in Aboriginal and Torres Strait artists and craftsmen'.¹³⁵ This concept 'came principally from Percy Trezise (1923-2005) who was aware of the work of that Board to set up galleries in each location'.¹³⁶ Both the Trinity and Australian Heritage galleries exhibited the work of Cape York, Far North, Northern and Australian artists, including Robert Dickerson, Ray Crooke, Clem Forbes, Heinz Steinmann (b 1943), Percy Trezise and Goobalathaldin (Dick Roughsey 1920-1985). The Australian Heritage Gallery supported a pottery workshop/studio for Thancoupie (Thancoupie Gloria Fletcher [Thanakupi], 1937-2011) and acted as her agent.¹³⁷

2.5.5 Conclusions: The impact of the north

The Schools of Arts and Technical Colleges throughout Northern Queensland provided the early infrastructure for arts education programs, with the Adult Education Board focussed on developing free, relevant and accessible opportunities for the general public to engage in artistic pursuits. After the 1950s the secondary and tertiary education models would drive arts

¹³⁴ Silver, *Images of an Era*.

¹³⁵ "Staff Changes at Heritage Gallery", *Cairns Post* (QLD), October 4, 1977, 4.

¹³⁶ Rosemary Macfarlane, email message to author, January 14, 2022.

¹³⁷ Macfarlane, email message.

education with a renewed energy,¹³⁸ with art courses included in the teacher education programme. It was the activities of the Technical Colleges, as well as the QAG, LACs and Art Societies, that resulted in the movement of professional artists throughout Queensland, providing public exposure to rich cultural practices, reflected in the delivery of workshops emphasising a contemporary approach to drawing and painting techniques. The commercial galleries in this study, established after 1971, had links to Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne dealers. It is demonstrated that the activities specific to education, cultural programmes, and art spaces were in place by 1970, informing the context for the activities of the artists, patrons and gallery directors in this study.

2.6 Historical Overview: Conclusions

Much of the existing history of art in Northern Queensland is fractured, resulting in the challenge of compiling a cultural history of Queensland where the story of the arts has not been told as a unified narrative. This chapter has therefore sought to redress this, necessarily providing a context for the following chapters. It is found that what unifies the history of the arts in Queensland is the need for art spaces, education, cultural programs and events as motivating factors for activities and actions. In addition, this chapter emphasizes understanding the subject matter, in its focus on the depiction of a Queensland landscape; on style specific to ideas of Modernism and Contemporary art; and on technique supported by non-traditional methods. Understanding the geographic and political divisions throughout Queensland is found to be critical. Government policy would seek to manage the vast challenges to transport and infrastructure by emphasizing funding to support transport, agriculture, mining, and farming development rather than cultural pursuits. It is also evidenced that the economic wealth of the port towns along the eastern coast, supported their

¹³⁸ The evolution of the Schools of Art in Queensland in Richards, *Grow the Arts*, 40.

becoming centres in their own right, maintaining not only their own identity and cultural goals, but also their independence from the south and from each other. The historical disconnect from Brisbane would see cultural development aligned with the artistic hierarchies further south, particularly those of Sydney and Melbourne, rather than of Brisbane. Brisbane's cultural history however, is shown to have a reach throughout Northern Queensland, reflected in the education, cultural experiences and exhibition programmes of artists, patrons and curators in this study. This included the actions of the QAC, in providing touring programmes and supporting professional artists as teachers throughout the state, and the relationship of artists and directors to their Brisbane colleagues. The history of arts education in Queensland is also a significant finding as it impacted on the artists in this study. Clem Forbes and Tom Risley were self-taught. This is not to say, however, that they were not educated. From 1881 it has been shown that formal art training opportunities were aligned to the utilitarian values of government bodies, as delivered through the TAFE and Board of Education models, focussing on traditional methods and style with a commercial intent. Until the 1970s alternative Art education and experiences critical to the artists in this study came instead from the informal infrastructure, including Adult Education art classes and workshops, artist studios, professional artists working as teachers as well as mentors, and the exhibition outputs of commercial art galleries and art societies which were strongly focussed on the value of Modernism and Contemporary art. This history has therefore sought to historically contextualise the findings in the case studies in the following chapters.

Chapter 3: Surveying the Literature

3.1 Introduction

This literature review seeks to focus on the limited documentation and literature on the arts in Northern Queensland through the following thematic categories: art as history; art as criticism; art trends as documented by art dealers, gallery directors, curators, universities and government funding bodies; academic studies; monographs; and records of the ephemera specific to the artists themselves. The review will evaluate the existing literature whilst looking to identify gaps specific to the arts and artists working and living in Northern Queensland. It will compare and evaluate the way in which *the north* as a geographic and cultural location has been conceptualised, and identify the inclusion or omission of Northern Queensland in the literature. Further to this, differing methodologies are discussed. In this review, reference to the inclusion of plates is understood to indicate the value and importance that the author of the work places on the artist in question.

The review has been carried out chronologically, within the thematic groupings. The search strategy includes seminal art history texts; bibliographies; newspaper and journal searches; major surveys by national, state and regional galleries; author methodologies; academic material from James Cook University, University of Queensland, Griffith University, and Queensland University of Technology; and archives held in the Queensland State Library, University of Queensland Fryer Library, and the Central Queensland and James Cook University collections. Where literature is included beyond these categories, it is with the purpose of establishing the cultural, political, geographic, environmental, and economic factors contributing to, and impacting on, the development of the arts in the context of this project.

Further, while non-western and Indigenous perspectives are recognised as contributing to understandings of landscape, the focus in this study, specific to the momentum created by the artists, directors, and art groups in the case studies, is discussed in relation to time and place, as evidenced in the historiography proceeding from the literature.¹³⁹

3.2 Historical Surveys

The first studies seeking to document the history of western art in Australia were through the lens of exploration, colonisation, isolation and mythology. Early in Australia's colonial history, artists visited Queensland for topographic and ethnographic purposes, and later for inspiration consistent with the developing Australian school of art. Identifying Queensland through its geography therefore became important.¹⁴⁰

William Moore's *The Story of Australian Art From the Earliest Known Art of the Continent to the Art of To-Day* (1934) provides an early national perspective on Australian art. Moore, a journalist and art critic, made use of material 'mainly obtained from original sources', writing in a style he hoped would be 'entertaining as a narrative'.¹⁴¹ Whilst recognising that 'art from the continent goes back to a remote period' his chronology begins with the development of the 'Australian School'¹⁴² dating this from the return of artist Tom Roberts (1856-1931) from London to Melbourne in 1885. In this way Moore's narrative of Australian art is told from Melbourne. Isaac Walter Jenner (1836-1901) painting in this style, however, in Brisbane, is recognised as one of the leading landscape painters, and 'William Bustard (1894-1973), after Vida Lahey (1882-1968), the leading artist in Queensland, claims

¹³⁹ For a discussion on relationality see Rex Butler's lecture, "Post-Colonialism: Australian Art History and Revisionism; The Case of Augustus Earle," in Rex Butler, *A Secret History of Australian Art*, 101–12 (St Leonards, NSW: Craftsman House Fine Art, 2002).

¹⁴⁰ See Celie Forbes and Stephen Naylor, "Taking Northern Queensland into Account: Another View of Australian Art," *Limina* 27, no. 2 (2022).

¹⁴¹ William Moore, *The Story of Australian Art from the Earliest Known Art of the Continent to the Art of To-Day in Two Volumes* (Sydney, NSW: Angus and Robertson, 1934), xiii.

¹⁴² Moore, *Story of Australian Art*, xxi.

first attention.’¹⁴³ References to Queensland landscape works include *Nudgee Waterhole, Queensland* (1932) by Miles Evergood (1871-1939) and *Evans Farm* (1929) by Kenneth Macqueen. *Under the Jacaranda* (1903) by R. Godfrey Rivers (1858-1925), on display in the ‘Brisbane Gallery’, is described as a ‘typical outdoor subject’.¹⁴⁴ Queensland art institutions and artists, through their subject matter, have therefore been linked by Moore, to the notion of an Australian, rather than a Queensland, school of art.

Herbert Badham, a Sydney based realist painter wrote *A Study of Australian Art* in 1949. While he states that his approach is ‘merely to lay the evidence before the ordinary reader so that he can, with an unprejudiced mind, form his own opinions without interference from the author’,¹⁴⁵ he identifies artists whose work and actions have a broader significance. He refers to Isaac Walter Jenner as the ‘founder of Queensland art’,¹⁴⁶ to Vida Lahey, who ‘has done much for the cause of art in Queensland’,¹⁴⁷ and to Conrad Martens (1801-1878), who made several visits between 1840 and 1860, gifting the ‘earliest view of the settlement’¹⁴⁸ to the state of Queensland. Kenneth Macqueen is identified as living in Queensland ‘whence come most of his subjects’. The plate *Glasshouse Mountains* (1948) is included in the text.¹⁴⁹ Badham criticises the Queensland government for its failure to ‘preserve or collate pioneer art’, arguing that ‘private bequests shield the community from cultural sterility’.¹⁵⁰ Badham’s criticism of the lack of infrastructure specific to the arts in Queensland is a theme that continues throughout the literature in this review.

¹⁴³ Moore, *Story of Australian Art*, 112.

¹⁴⁴ Moore, *Story of Australian Art*, 208.

¹⁴⁵ Herbert E. Badham, *A Study of Australian Art* (Sydney, NSW: Currawong, 1949).

¹⁴⁶ Badham, *Study of Australian Art*, 217.

¹⁴⁷ Badham, *Study of Australian Art*, 109.

¹⁴⁸ Badham, *Study of Australian Art*, 29.

¹⁴⁹ Badham, *Study of Australian Art*, Plate 62.

¹⁵⁰ Badham, *Study of Australian Art*, 217.

While both Moore's and Badham's histories are valuable as almost anecdotal sketches of artists, institutions and social trends emerging in Queensland, they also reflect, as art critic Terry Smith argues, 'a still dominant social view which restricts the scope of art primarily to a professional practice serving a limited audience',¹⁵¹ and in so doing, they promote, through the emphasis on the development of the Heidelberg School as central to a distinctly Australian school, a national approach to art history.

Art historian Bernard Smith acknowledged Moore's *Story of Australian Art* as a 'fine piece of initial research', finding it however, to be 'unsatisfactory' as a history.¹⁵² Smith's *European Vision and the South Pacific* was published in 1960, but the second edition proves useful, through his preface, in clarifying his approach to art history. Smith refers to the *traditional art history approach* described as the evaluation of a *masterpiece* such as the landscape painting, according to the criteria of style, iconography and role of the artist in society. The *historical approach*, however, is the evaluation of art for the purpose of documentation, by considering its scientific and topographical value and through the notion of the *picturesque*. In so doing, Smith moves the discussion of the artworks away from the *European gloss* of the landscape genre and a reimagined *grand tour* that serves as a *distraction*, towards evaluating landscape-painting through the sciences such as biology, geology and ethnology, and further, to identify the broader cultural trends specific to the sociological economic and intellectual factors of the time.¹⁵³ By arguing that the *historical approach* was to understand that Europeans 'were culture bound when confronted by the new world',¹⁵⁴ Smith is able to challenge existing stereotypes such as the *noble savage*, the *exotic*

¹⁵¹ Terry Smith, "Writing the History of Australian Art: Its Past, Present and Possible Future," *Journal of Art Historiography* 4 (2011): 1.

¹⁵² Bernard Smith, *Place, Taste and Tradition: A Study of Art Since 1788* (Sydney, NSW: Ure Smith, 1945), 15.

¹⁵³ Smith, *European Vision*, x.

¹⁵⁴ Smith, *European Vision*, vii.

and *the fatal impact* of Europe on Island societies, instead replacing it with a theme of *appropriation* through the representation of place as belonging to the naturalist, pastoral and pictorial traditions of art history. The scope of this survey is 1768-1850 and its geographic focus is on the islands of the Pacific and the coastline of Australia— with little reference to the landscape beyond this.

In addition to Smith's analytical work on the South Pacific, his *Australian Painting 1788-1990* (1992) covers the colonial period through to the beginnings of Australian Modernism and elaborates on the theme of location specific to this study. Consistent with his discussion in *European Vision and the South Pacific*, he looks to the earlier artists as topographers, distinguishing these artists during this period as 'birds of passage' in their visits to Australia, and makes note of the pastoral frontier artists painting in the time 1821-1851 beyond the Sydney, Hobart and Launceston settlements, and into New South Wales. He refers to Brisbane in 1824 for example, as one of the settlements providing stimulus for 'amateur and professional artists to recapitulate the graphic interests of Sydney's first artists, each settlement recording its local fauna and flora [sic], its native peoples and its own progress'.¹⁵⁵ Referring to Conrad Martens' move to the Darling Downs in the 1850s allows Smith to compare his style with the style of John Glover (1767-1849), in his organisation of the pictorial elements of a painting to emphasise 'openness, flatness and bigness',¹⁵⁶ but considers Martens to be more 'at home' with the Blue Mountains and the shores of Sydney Harbour. Arthur Streeton (1863-1943) is referred to as travelling throughout Australia, 'visiting one tourist resort after another painting for his one-man shows',¹⁵⁷ including the Barron Gorge in Far North Queensland. Smith also refers to Sidney Nolan's time in Queensland in 1947 when he spent a year 'roaming,' as well

¹⁵⁵ Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 42.

¹⁵⁶ Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 40.

¹⁵⁷ Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 196.

as living for a time on Fraser Island [K'gari], where he painted 'out-back and tropical landscapes', and the Mrs Fraser series. This 'nomadic' year in Queensland is used to reference somewhat briefly Nolan's use of imagery representative of Australian local history. In addition, he refers to the commission Nolan received from the Queensland newspaper, the *Courier Mail*, in 1952 to complete drawings of Central Queensland in drought.¹⁵⁸ Queensland in this context therefore, is discussed only as a source of pictorial inspiration for artists.

Smith clearly draws a distinction around this differentiation in Australian artistic output specific to location and culture.

It needs to be stressed that the emergence of one group dedicated to experiment, to internationalism, to a metropolitan-type culture and another group seeking national identity through art are both based upon real-life situations. The one based upon a young, urbanised and – in Riesman's phrase – other directed, ...highly mobile elite group, the other upon older, suburban and rural groups, the members of which expect to live out their lives in Australia, draw some cultural sustenance and a sense of identity from its legends and history and make, at most, one visit overseas during a lifetime. The emergence of these two kinds of art, reflecting two kinds of life, both lived above the level of sheer visual illiteracy testifies both to the growth of civilisation in Australia and to stratification of the artistic culture grounded in different living conditions and different cultural aspirations'.¹⁵⁹

Another theme explored throughout Smith's study is the notion of Australia as transitioning from *provincial* to *metropolitan* in its response to the arts. Here the idea of Brisbane as a developing metropolitan centre is implicit through references to Nolan's exhibiting work at the Johnstone Gallery in 1954, and to the contribution of London-trained artist and teacher Roy Churcher and critic Dr Gertrude Langer, as well as a recognition of the eastern influence on the work of artist Ian Fairweather (1891-1974).

In Queensland, then, in a community more philistine than most, a number of talented painters have sought to keep in direct touch with daily life – without a complicated aesthetic to explain it. Here, too, a kind of Merioola neo-romanticism typical of Sydney in the later 1940s has been given new life and a certain vigour by being applied to

¹⁵⁸ Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 282–98.

¹⁵⁹ Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 352.

subjects' characteristic of the tropics. It is to be seen, at its best, in the decorative figure-and-landscape subjects of Margaret Olley and Ray Crooke.¹⁶⁰

Further, Smith argues that artists Jon Molvig, Andrew Sibley (1933-2015), Gordon Shepherdson, and Sam Fullbrook (1922-2004) emerge as important to the 'late flowering' of figurative expressionists in Queensland during the 1960s.¹⁶¹

For Smith, however, the overall theme of transition relies on location as specific to Sydney and Melbourne. Charles Blackman for example, is strongly aligned to the Melbourne *Antipodean* group and John Coburn represents the Sydney school of Abstraction. Coburn, born in Ingham, Queensland, is referred to as a Sydney painter.¹⁶² Smith makes use of Coburn's reference to landscape he 'knew as a child...blackened tree trunks after a bushfire, a flight of screeching pink galahs over a dry creek bed...' through the lens of tonal abstract expressionism, and the *School of Paris* as having a latent 'but potent presence in his work'. Smith argues that a 'new kind of artist has emerged during the 1960s to fill the resultant cultural vacuum', referencing Ray Crooke as having 'created a new visual image of the tropical north', Gil Jamieson, born in Monto Queensland, 'who has sought to capture the spirit of the Queensland outback' and Pro Hart (1928-2006) who 'paints incidents and scenes related to the Broken Hill district'.¹⁶³ Smith alludes to the impact of location as distance from the metropolitan centres, and of attitudes, where 'the potential audience for a folk-type art and a folk-type culture is to be clearly distinguished from the metropolitan avant-garde'.¹⁶⁴ While Smith dedicates time to discussing the post-war development of a regional¹⁶⁵ Australian

¹⁶⁰ Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 410.

¹⁶¹ Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 406.

¹⁶² Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 316.

¹⁶³ Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 363.

¹⁶⁴ Smith and Smith, 348–49.

¹⁶⁵ Note: Here the reader understands 'Australia' as being a region distanced from Britain.

identity through the creation of a ‘national mythos’¹⁶⁶—exemplified in Nolan’s ‘exotic subject-matter’,¹⁶⁷ Albert Tucker’s concern with ‘the heroic tradition’,¹⁶⁸ ‘the strange creatures and tough heroes’¹⁶⁹ painted by Russell Drysdale, Nolan and Arthur Boyd and, further back, in the Heidelberg School of Australian History Painting, through its ‘depiction of subjects redolent with local history’;¹⁷⁰ —artists working outside of this ‘metropolitan-type culture’¹⁷¹ are in contrast, described by Smith as developing a form of *folk art*.¹⁷² This is evidenced by the ‘great deal of pictorial activity’ seen in the work submitted to ‘suburban and rural art prizes which attract a great deal of popular art’.¹⁷³ He continues by making the distinction that folk art is not a ‘contemporary expression of international aesthetic values’ but is instead a ‘means of achieving a sense of community and national identity through music, poetry, and painting’.¹⁷⁴

Smith moves on to identify the shift in cultural attitudes to the arts in the 1970s as dependent on factors including changes to government and institutional infrastructure attributed to the increase in patronage, corporate sponsorship of exhibitions, and the funding of regional art galleries. He identifies the emergence of art dealers such as Rudy Komon (1908-1982) as an influential group whom he describes as *taste-makers*.¹⁷⁵ By this time, Smith argues, art had

¹⁶⁶ Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 374.

¹⁶⁷ Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 345.

¹⁶⁸ Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 373.

¹⁶⁹ Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 322.

¹⁷⁰ Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 85.

¹⁷¹ Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 352.

¹⁷² Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 348.

¹⁷³ Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 350.

¹⁷⁴ Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 348.

¹⁷⁵ Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 343.

become a symbol of culture and status as well as the means toward regional and national self-identification.¹⁷⁶ As a result, Smith argues, the arts in the 1970s had become an industry.

Representative of this broadening appreciation for the arts in society were the many anthology style art books that became available to the public at this time, providing pictorial overviews of the history of Australian art. Critic Terry Smith however, is critical of ‘the popular, publisher-concocted picture books which process Australian art ... into digestible instances of the artist as hero; the bush as beautiful; and both artist and landscape as distinctively Australian.’¹⁷⁷ He elaborates:

The landscape remains the definitive subject, and the form it was supposedly given by the “Heidelberg School” painters remains its distinctively Australian form. Most of the texts do not reach too far beyond this constantly reiterated theme. When they do it is to elaborate anecdotes about the lives and feelings of certain artists, especially the youthful Streeton. The modernist moments in Australian art are conscripted into this framework as modernisations of the landscape (Drysdale) or as new ways of living as an artist (Whiteley). Often, however, this is an awkward process, so it is left to the “serious” studies and the more expensive texts...¹⁷⁸

Laurie Thomas’ *200 years of Australian Painting (1971)*¹⁷⁹ is effective in showcasing a broader range of artists than identified in Smith’s *Australian Painting 1788-1990*. Artists Albert Tucker, Russell Drysdale, Sidney Nolan, Jon Molvig, Ian Fairweather and Charles Blackman are aligned to Queensland.

Artist and author of *National life and landscape: Australian painting 1900-1940* (1990), Ian Burn (1939-1993), differs in his methodology, however, by focusing on technique and style. Burn describes works using the criteria of colour, tonal structure, harmony, technique, composition and brushstrokes. For example, Burn refers to painter and art teacher

¹⁷⁶ Smith and Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, 342.

¹⁷⁷ Smith, “Writing the History of Australian Art,” 20.

¹⁷⁸ Smith, 21.

¹⁷⁹ Laurie Thomas, *200 Years of Australian Painting* (Sydney, NSW: Bay Books, 1971).

Max Meldrum as influential in his approach to the image, the emphasis on observation, and, regarding technique, the emphasis on tone, form, and colour. Whilst Meldrum's scientific technique was criticised by Bernard Smith as 'somewhat flawed in its reasoning',¹⁸⁰ Burn however, looks to correct this through the elaboration on his quite considerable influence on Australian artists and their approach to Australian Modernism.¹⁸¹ Clem Forbes studied the Meldrum technique and has been recognised as using his methods.¹⁸²

In *A Story of Australian Painting* (1994), critic and author Mary Eagle has collated works from the ICI (Imperial Chemical Industries) Collection of Australia. The works are grouped chronologically, with discussion on subject, style, artist and social context. Eagle challenges the typical understandings of landscape by arguing that 'early views of the landscape showed it as prime real estate'.¹⁸³ Ian Fairweather (Plate)¹⁸⁴ is included in this collection as well as a photographic image of Fairweather working in his Bribie Island studio.¹⁸⁵

Christopher Allen in *Art in Australia from Colonization to Postmodernism* (1997), states in the preface that the book is an attempt to 'chart the way that art has imagined the place called Australia and the relation of the new European population to this place'.¹⁸⁶ He has organised the chapters according to these themes whilst maintaining the chronology within the text. His methodology supports references to existing scholars and critics. The

¹⁸⁰ Smith, *Place, Taste and Tradition*, 148.

¹⁸¹ Ian Burn, *National Life and Landscape: Australian Painting 1900–1940* (Sydney, NSW: Bay Books, 1990), 148.

¹⁸² MacAulay, *Clem Forbes*, 11.

¹⁸³ Mary Eagle and John Jones, *A Story of Australian Painting* (Sydney, NSW: Pan Macmillan, 1994), 277–79.

¹⁸⁴ The number of plates reproduced is referenced in this chapter as an indication of the importance the writer gives to the artists.

¹⁸⁵ Eagle and Jones, *Story of Australian Painting*, 57.

¹⁸⁶ Christopher Allen, *Art in Australia from Colonization to Postmodernism*, World of Art (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997), 8.

historical survey includes references to Nolan's Fraser Island works (two colour Plates), Fairweather (colour Plate) and Coburn (colour Plate). Interestingly, these artists are referenced in the chapter titled 'escape routes', used as a metaphor by Allen to describe the move away from both the avant-garde movements and Terry Smith's (1974) concern with the *provincialism problem*.¹⁸⁷

Andrew Sayers' *Australian Art, Oxford History of Art (2001)*, differs in approach by considering the context of the works rather than looking through an historical lens, selecting works created by artists living in Australia. He argues, 'there has been an over emphasis on works made outside Australia ... which has created a distorted view of the nature of Australian art in Australia'.¹⁸⁸ Kenneth Macquenn is referenced in the text, and Ian Fairweather is included with a plate, and the artist is described as the 'most significant abstract painter in Australia during this decade...[who was] out of circulation—living on Bribie Island off the coast of Australia'.¹⁸⁹ Russell Drysdale is recognised in the text as shaping 'distinctly Australian themes', realising Queensland 'pockets of human melancholy set against a featureless horizon'.¹⁹⁰

Art historian and critic, John McDonald, in his introduction to *The Art of Australia Volume: 1 Exploration to Federation (2008)* makes clear his intention to 'break the myth that the Heidelberg school were the only artists to see Australia', by examining previous histories of Australian art, and creating a broader narrative. His methodology includes research further supported by his role as the art critic of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, which exposed him to the scarcity of works exhibited in Australia. McDonald identifies 'the intense Sydney-Melbourne rivalry that existed in the turn of the century' as impacting on the other states of

¹⁸⁷ Terry Smith, "The Provincialism Problem," *Artforum* 8, no. 1 (1974).

¹⁸⁸ Andrew Sayers, *Australian Art*. Oxford History of Art. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 5–6.

¹⁸⁹ Sayers, *Australian Art*, 174.

¹⁹⁰ Sayers, *Australian Art*, 170.

Australia, which become ‘feeder stations for these two hungry parts of the continent’,¹⁹¹ arguing it was only in Sydney and Melbourne that artists could hope to find a market for their work. Isaac Walter Jenner and Richard Godfrey Rivers are identified as artists in Queensland defying this trend. Works by both artists from the collection of the Philip Bacon Galleries are included, and the author credits Rivers with the foundation of the Queensland National Art Gallery.¹⁹²

Sasha Grishin sought to take a ‘fresh look’ at the topic of Australian art in his 2015 survey, *Australian Art: a History*. His methodology in creating a shortlist of artists was to survey art practitioners, curators, and art academics. His process was to identify and consult a ‘council of twenty elders’ to critique key sections of his text. He refers to the process as a ‘tribal culture’ in the arts, making use of the ‘digital community’.¹⁹³ In addition, Grishin identified a list of 80 artists as representative of a broad range of geographic, socio-economic, and artistic categories, allowing for further recommendations from selected artists. This ‘collaborative strategy’ included consultation with curators, bureaucrats, and art dealers, thus adopting a ‘broad church approach’—one that works through ‘polyvalence and diversity rather than adhering to some sort of orthodoxy’.¹⁹⁴ Grishin argues the methodology broadens representation in the overall survey, including that of Queensland. For example, Richard Daintree’s (1832-1878) *Bush travellers in Queensland* (Plate), is included because of its challenge to the existing Queensland discourse, portraying instead the outback as ‘civilised, tame, and hospitable to European visitors’.¹⁹⁵ Lewis J Harvey (1871-1949) is recognised as an

¹⁹¹ John McDonald, *The Art of Australia Volume 1: Exploration to Federation* (Sydney, NSW: Macmillan, 2008), 616.

¹⁹² McDonald, *The Art of Australia Volume 1*, 617–23.

¹⁹³ Sasha Grishin, *Australian Art: A History* (Carlton, VIC: Miegunyah Press, 2015), ix.

¹⁹⁴ Grishin, *Australian Art: A History*, ix–x.

¹⁹⁵ Grishin, *Australian Art: A History*, 113.

influential teacher at the Brisbane Technical College (1902), whose students were Daphne Mayo (1895-1982) and Lloyd Rees (1895-1988). Bessie Gibson (1868-1961), Kenneth Macquoen, (full page Plate) and William Dobell's work in New Guinea are included. Four plates are committed to Ian Fairweather, with Grishin arguing that, 'Fairweather is a curious example of an artist who lived essentially on the periphery of the main art scene in Australia but who had a profound impact on the developments in Sydney and Melbourne'.¹⁹⁶ Grishin identifies Jon Molvig (Plate) and his connection to Brisbane artist John Rigby, stating that Molvig 'was essentially a solitary artist whose bold experiments with figurative expressionism found little context in Brisbane'.¹⁹⁷ The discussion on William Robinson who 'simply lives landscape', is specific to his location in Springbrook, Queensland (full page colour Plate).¹⁹⁸ Andrew Sibley is referenced as defending his regional status, stating 'the only great artists have been provincial artists: people who paint about what they know—not what other artists pretend to know'.¹⁹⁹ A 'changing of the guard' between 1960 and 1970 is discussed, acknowledging the shift in art history ideologies from the nationalist conservatives 'who believed in academic values and in the creation in Australia of a pastoral utopia following English lines', to the 'young Turks' who were critics and art administrators with university training.

Max Germaine's *Artists and Galleries of Australia and New Zealand* was one of the first comprehensive biographical listings of living Australian and New Zealand artists and galleries. The first edition, published in 1979, identified the criteria for inclusion as artists whose works were in collections of public galleries; whose works received favourable comment by critics in commercial gallery exhibitions; who have gained prizes or awards;

¹⁹⁶ Grishin, *Australian Art: A History*, 361.

¹⁹⁷ Grishin, *Australian Art: A History*, 368.

¹⁹⁸ Grishin, *Australian Art: A History*, 439.

¹⁹⁹ Grishin, *Australian Art: A History*, 410.

who pioneer or participate in 'interesting art projects, or are leading art personalities or administrators'.²⁰⁰ The first edition included entries on Clem Forbes, the Bakehouse Art Gallery (Director Dorothy Forbes) and the Martin Gallery (Director Ralph Martin).

3.3 Art Criticism

In *Place, Taste and Tradition A Study of Art since 1788* (1945), Bernard Smith's concern is with 'the nature of tendencies in Australian art rather than with the aesthetic qualities of the work created'.²⁰¹ He looks, instead, towards social, geographic and environmental factors or *pre-conditions* as impacting on the development of what he is looking to see as distinctly Australian art. Whilst he argues that it occurs through the assimilation of European styles and traditions on the *local* landscape,²⁰² any criticism or comment reflects 'dominant European tendencies'.²⁰³ The only exception to the focus on the work of Sydney and Melbourne art and artists is the reference to Donald Friend's (1914-1989) drawings of 'North Queensland natives [as] marked by an integrity and humanism that contrasts sharply with the trite intellectual slickness of his other work'.²⁰⁴ Kenneth Macquoen is discussed as a 'painter of the transition'. While the artist is applauded for 'his harmony of subject and treatment; simplicity of pictorial construction to express the formal simplicity of a landscape parcelled into fields for pasture and cultivation,' no specific reference is made to his being an artist living and painting in Queensland.²⁰⁵ Also worth noting is the political impact on the development of the arts in his

²⁰⁰ Max Germaine, *Artists and Galleries of Australia and New Zealand* (Sydney, NSW: Lansdowne Editions, 1979), preface.

²⁰¹ Smith, *Place, Taste and Tradition*, 14.

²⁰² Smith, *Place, Taste and Tradition*, 21.

²⁰³ Smith, *Place, Taste and Tradition*, 100.

²⁰⁴ Smith, *Place, Taste and Tradition*, 189.

²⁰⁵ Smith, *Place, Taste and Tradition*, 183.

acknowledgement of State patronage and the founding of galleries and schools, impeded, he argues, by ‘official philistinism...prevailing in Australian legislatures’.²⁰⁶

Peter Beilharz in *Imagining the Antipodes* (1997) defends the importance of the work of Bernard Smith in reflecting on the narrative of place. ‘Place matters as a motif’, states Beilharz, qualifying Smith’s use of *place* as a means of interrogation and also of assertion specific to topics inclusive of concepts of space, culture, context, taste, high, low, forms of judgement, tradition, frame, grids and ways of seeing.²⁰⁷ Beilharz refers to Smith’s understanding of art as a tradition resting on assimilation, and, further, links Smith’s understandings with those of the critic Pierre Bourdieu, where art is necessarily formed by its institutions—such as galleries—and the social institutions of class and the authorised culture which, in turn, form them.²⁰⁸ Beilharz therefore proves useful in focussing in on Smith’s claim that art and identity are not the result of factors specific to geography, but arise from the negotiation of traditions and locations. ‘They come of culture, of cultivation, of activity and shifting pressure and not of the soil’.²⁰⁹

Robert Hughes, in *The Art of Australia* (1966), also acknowledges Smith as the first study to ‘look at the underlying patterns and causes of Australian cultural developments’ however, he opposes Smith’s methodology, arguing that ‘the history of paintings is made of painting, not words’.²¹⁰ Hughes challenges his own earlier notion that Australian art is ‘art of isolation’, stating that it is ‘critically useless to see Australian artists as lone wolves’.²¹¹ Brisbane, regardless, represents to Hughes the ‘familiar Australian problem of isolation...more remote from contemporary currents of Australian—let alone overseas—art

²⁰⁶ Smith, *Place, Taste and Tradition*, 77.

²⁰⁷ Peter Beilharz, *Imagining the Antipodes* (Oakleigh, VIC: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 23.

²⁰⁸ Beilharz, *Imagining the Antipodes*, 42.

²⁰⁹ Beilharz, *Imagining the Antipodes*, 55.

²¹⁰ Robert Hughes, *The Art of Australia* (Ringwood, VIC: Penguin Books, 1966), 20–21.

²¹¹ Hughes, *Art of Australia*, 21.

than any other city except—presumably—Darwin’. Brisbane, the ‘hot tropical town on stilts’, is identified as home to two figurative groups—the *decorative figuratives*, including artists Margaret Olley, Ray Crooke and the ‘more interesting’ Jon Molvig,²¹² and the *non-figuratives*, including Bronwyn Yeates (1923-2000), Roy Churcher and Ian Fairweather. Hughes describes the problem of location for artists specific to the decision to leave or stay, arguing, ‘it is pointless to speak of isolated cultural pockets where regional styles may develop in nostalgically admired purity’, identifying at the same time artists ‘afflicted with a sense of inferiority’.²¹³ Again, Hughes challenges his own contentions in acknowledging the argument that ‘you can’t begin to grow up until you leave the place’.²¹⁴

Terry Smith elaborates on this conflict, recognising it as ‘*the provincialism problem*’ arguing that ‘geographic isolation is only one measure of cultural distancing from metropolitan centres’, and further, ‘the provincial artist, then, sees his commitment to art in terms of *styles* of art of competing notions of art’s *history*—all determined in the metropolitan centre’.²¹⁵

Artist and critic James Gleeson (1915-2008), in his survey of *Modern Painters 1931-1970*, establishes the precedent that ‘distance and isolation—the parents of parochialism—are fast losing their potency’.²¹⁶ In his discussion of Modernism, he identifies the problems facing artists in the move away from impressionism towards figurative and non-figurative styles, using the metaphor of the chameleon to describe the climate of change and adaptation at this time.²¹⁷ Fairweather, Molvig, Ray Crooke and John Coburn are included in this text.

²¹² Hughes, *Art of Australia*, 212–13.

²¹³ Hughes, *Art of Australia*, 313.

²¹⁴ Hughes, *Art of Australia*, 315.

²¹⁵ Smith, “The Provincialism Problem.”

²¹⁶ James Gleeson, *Modern Painters 1931–1970* (Dee Why West, NSW: Lansdowne Press, 1971), 8.

²¹⁷ Gleeson, *Modern Painters*, 11.

Terry Smith in *Transformations in Australian Art: The Nineteenth Century – Landscape, Colony and Nation* (2002) is again concerned with art and nationality, arguing against the possibility of a *single history* revisiting again the art history narratives specific to Sydney and Melbourne.²¹⁸

In *Illusions of Identity The Art of Nation* (1993), Anne-Marie Willis looks to focus on a cultural understanding of Australian art, where ‘visual imagery becomes enmeshed in processes of the construction of national identity’.²¹⁹

The work of Rex Butler (2002, 2004, 2005, 2018) examines these issues through a critical and ideological lens. Sheridan Palmer’s 2018 biography of Bernard Smith refers to art historian Rex Butler as an art historian who ‘considered [Bernard Smith] the pioneering figure in art historiographical discourse and especially as the originator of ‘the great Australian idea’.²²⁰ The relevance of Butler’s work to the scope of this project is therefore through the notion of *appropriation* and *revisionism* as an ideological means of challenging the categories within art history to go beyond the constraints of chronology and style. Butler argues, however, in *A Secret History of Australian Art* (2002), that his methodology is in engaging ‘not merely with readings of works of art but with works of art themselves’.²²¹

Nicholas and Losche, as editors of *Double Vision Art Histories and Colonial Histories in the Pacific* (1999),²²² localises Smith’s focus on the Pacific (1969), by including in his discussion of cross-cultural studies, the artists Gordon Bennet (1955-2015) and Fiona Foley

²¹⁸ Terry Smith, *Transformations in Australian Art: The Nineteenth Century – Landscape, Colony and Nation* (Sydney, NSW: Craftsman House, 2002), 11.

²¹⁹ Anne-Marie Willis, *Illusions of Identity: The Art of Nation* (Sydney: Hale and Iremonger, 1993), 9.

²²⁰ Sheridan Palmer, *Hegel’s Owl: The Life of Bernard Smith* (Sydney, NSW: Power Publications, 2016), 324.

²²¹ Butler, *Secret History of Australian Art*, 7.

²²² Thomas Nicholas and Diane Losche, eds., *Double Vision Art Histories and Colonial Histories in the Pacific* (Melbourne, VIC: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

(b. 1964). Paul Taylor in *Anything Goes. Art in Australia 1970-1980* (1984)²²³ offers a critical history of Australian art through the selection of essays across all fields, as Taylor signposts in the introduction.

3.4 National and State Galleries

The exhibition, *Tropical Visions* (1987: Queensland Art Gallery), curated by artist and teacher John Millington (1942-2018), is identified by Victoria-based landscape artist and academic, Jeffrey Makin (b.1943), in the foreword to the catalogue, as the ‘first time that such a broad overview of Queensland art has been attempted’.²²⁴ Makin refers to the ‘Townsville School’ as Anne Lord (b. 1953), Anneke Silver (b. 1937), Robert Preston (1938-1985) and Ron McBurnie (b. 1957), ‘whose work has a completely different sense of light and feel to it, than that of the Brisbane metropolitan school’.²²⁵ Millington’s methodology was to choose artists of differing ages and genders, and to give ‘as complete a coverage geographically as possible’, qualifying the tropical theme as a response to ‘environment, colour and light’.²²⁶ Anneke Silver is acknowledged for acting as ‘liaison officer’ for the North Queensland artists. The introduction refers to the ‘outstanding quality of work now coming from Townsville, due in no small way to the high standard of that city’s art college’.²²⁷ Millington argues that regional artists were becoming ‘less the self-taught, home-grown product and more the city art school graduate who has opted to explore his or her art in the non-urban environment’, further elaborating that ‘these people are not drop-outs or failures from the city’.²²⁸ Millington recognises that the exhibition is less a study and more a *sampling* of the artists

²²³ Paul Taylor, *Anything Goes. Art in Australia 1970–1980* (Melbourne, VIC: Art and Text, 1984).

²²⁴ John Millington, *Tropical Visions* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1987).

²²⁵ Millington, *Tropical Visions*, 11.

²²⁶ Millington, *Tropical Visions*, 9.

²²⁷ Millington, *Tropical Visions*, 11.

²²⁸ Millington, *Tropical Visions*, 11–12.

responding to the 'regional environment'.²²⁹ As such, six of the twenty-five artists included in the book are from Northern Queensland.

The Queensland Art Gallery anthology *Brought to Light: Australian Art, 1850-1965* (1988) 'seeks to create a dialogue around works from the collection.'²³⁰ Reviewer Sue Smith (1988) comments,

Some of the writers on Queensland artists especially have a problem with tone: their essays seem kind of scolding and cringing, taking the artists to task as if they were embarrassed by their provinciality. But what is the point in doing a book on the Queensland Art Gallery and being ashamed of the state's own art? In a sense, all art is regional, so you might as well get right into it!²³¹

The Art Gallery of South Australia's *Creating Australia, 200 years of art 1788-1988* (1988) was a bicentennial touring exhibition distinctive due to the incorporation of paintings, sculptures, prints, drawings, photographs, ceramics, silver and furniture. The coordinating curator, Ron Radford's methodology included Australia wide fieldwork and the inclusion of contemporary artists outside the Melbourne and Sydney mainstream. The University of Queensland Art Museum, Anthology Museum and Queensland Art Gallery are acknowledged as providing assistance to the exhibition and book. Tom Risley's (1947-2010) work *Cape Direction chair* (1986) is included in the exhibition.²³²

The Face of Australia: The Land & the People: The Past & The Present (1988) was a similar exhibition for the Australian Bicentennial. The preface states that the works 'are an example of the scope in regional collections, the cultural wealth of this county and the notion

²²⁹ Millington, *Tropical Visions*, 11.

²³⁰ Lynne Seear and Julie Ewington, eds., *Brought to Light: Australian Art, 1850-1965, from the Queensland Art Gallery collection* (South Brisbane: Queensland Art Gallery, 1988).

²³¹ Sue Smith, Review of *Brought to Light: Australian Art, 1850-1965, from the Queensland Art Gallery Collection*, ed. Lynne Seear and Julie Ewington, *Grafico Topico* (1988), <http://www.grafico-qld.com/content/brought-light-australian-art-1850-1965>.

²³² Daniel Thomas, *Creating Australia, 200 Years of Art 1788-1988* (Sydney, NSW: International Cultural Corporation of Australia, Art Gallery Board of South Australia, 1988).

that culture embraces the space in which we explore and helps us understand the circumstances in which we live'.²³³ Curator David Hansen's methodology was to include contributions from Australian regional galleries as representative of art collections, rather than of place. Works by Fairweather, William Robinson, and Vincent Brown (1901-2001), from the collections of the Brisbane College of Advanced Education, The University of Queensland, Ipswich City Council Art Gallery, the Brisbane City Hall Art Gallery and Museum, and Griffith University are included. No works from regional galleries in Northern Queensland were represented.

Federation: Australian Art and Society 1901-2001 curated by John McDonald for the National Gallery of Australia (2000) was an exhibition again seeking to curate a *story* of Australian art for the 100 year anniversary of Australian federation, grouped thematically as: From Gallipoli to Homebush Bay; Beginnings; The Land; Cities and Suburbs; Boom and Bust; Patriotic Duty At Ease; Encounters; and Designing the Australian Experience. McDonald's methodology was again informed by his biography as critic and researcher.²³⁴ The only two Queensland artists represented were Jon Molvig and William Robinson.

The Royal Academy of Art's 2013 exhibition in London, *Australia*, in contrast, sought to emphasise landscape. Ian Fairweather is represented in this exhibition. John McDonald's review for the *Sydney Morning Herald* argued that it was a poor representation of Australian artists, condemning the exhibition as 'provincial'.²³⁵

²³³ David Hansen, *The Face of Australia: The Land & the People, the Past & the Present* (Sydney, NSW: Fine Arts Press, 1988).

²³⁴ John McDonald, *Federation: Australian Art and Society 1901-2001* (Canberra, ACT: National Gallery of Australia, 2000).

²³⁵ John McDonald, "Australia's London art spectacular is a 'clumsy embarrassment'," *Sydney Morning Herald* (NSW), September 19, 2013, <https://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/art-and-design/australias-london-art-spectacular-is-a-clumsy-embarrassment-20130918-2tztt.html>.

The evolution of curated exhibitions specific to Queensland is evidenced in the chapter written by Gerald Vaughan on “The Cross-Cultural Art Museum in Australia”, included in *The Cambridge Companion to Australian Art* (2001). Vaughan refers to the role of the Queensland Art Gallery in profiling the Asia Pacific region through the establishment in 1998 of the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (APT).

‘A new approach to exhibiting the contemporary visual cultures of Asia and Oceania (spearheaded by the Queensland Art Gallery’s respected and popular Asia Pacific Triennial exhibitions from 1993) has been increasingly adopted by Australia’s main public art museums’.²³⁶

In 2004 the University of Queensland Art Museum, under the directorship of Ross Searle, refocussed on Queensland artists,²³⁷ and the Queensland Art Gallery and the Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA) has renewed its Australian art collection, displaying figures such as Arthur Streeton, Tom Roberts, Margaret Olley and Kenneth Macquoen as artists who represent Queensland or the Queensland landscape.²³⁸

3.5 Regional Galleries

Ross Searle’s exhibition *Artists in the Tropics* (1991) at the Perc Tucker Gallery, Townsville is discussed as the first historical analysis of artistic activity in North Queensland. The exhibition sought to provide an overview of the artists’ response to the tropical environment, landscape, and lifestyle from the period of white exploration and early settlement until the late 1980s, as well as showing the way in which the artists responded to the region. The study included works made by European artists in response to visiting the north from 1770 through to the 1980s. The geographic scope of Searle’s study is defined as *north-east* Queensland

²³⁶ Jaynie Anderson, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Australian Art* (Melbourne, VIC: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 262.

²³⁷ “New Gallery Provides Opportunity to See the Collection,” *UQ News* (Brisbane, QLD), July 6, 2004, <https://www.uq.edu.au/news/article/2004/07/new-gallery-provides-opportunity-see-collection>.

²³⁸ Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, “Australian Art Collection,” accessed August 13, 2018, <https://www.qagoma.qld.gov.au/whats-on/exhibitions/australian-collection>.

further identified by the Far Northern Statistical Divisions of Queensland. This area includes Cairns and Townsville, the Hinterlands bordered by Charters Towers and Torres Strait and including the Atherton tableland, as the major population centres of north Queensland. Mackay however, is not included in this boundary and is therefore excluded from Searle's survey. The Great Barrier Reef is noted as an 'exotic image of north Queensland [which] exercised a tremendous influence on the minds of artists and designers.'²³⁹

Through his research process, Searle sought to understand the way artists responded to the natural environment and to explain certain 'underlying patterns and causes from the somewhat fragmentary cultural and artistic development of north Queensland'.²⁴⁰ The methodology was through the location, recording and selection of relevant works in private and public collections, collaboration with Australian public galleries and museums, communication with commercial galleries and private collectors, evaluation of documentation and biographical information on artists, interviews with artists and relevant others, and research through literature review reference lists, monographs on artists, periodicals and exhibition catalogues, primary materials, manuscripts and letters. The chapters of the text are organised chronologically, across themes of exploration; early settlement; picturesque subject matter, and the *exotic*.

Artists are identified either as *visiting*, such as Donald Friend, Arthur Streeton and Douglas Annand, and artists working in the region for longer periods of time, including Valerie Albiston, Yvonne Cohen, Noel Wood, Ray Crooke and Robert Campbell. Anneke Silver (2 Plates), Robert Preston (b. 1942), Margaret Wilson (b.1939), James Brown (b.1953), Anne Lord (b.1953), and Ron McBurnie (b.1957) are noted as artists who brought a knowledge of European history to Northern Queensland. Ray Crooke is acknowledged as the

²³⁹ Searle, *Artists in the Tropics*, 45.

²⁴⁰ Searle, *Artists in the Tropics*, 10.

‘quintessential interpreter of the landscape of north Queensland’ (2 Plates), and John Coburn’s symbolic representation of the north is discussed (Plate). Tom Risley’s achievements are recognised as ‘paradoxical’²⁴¹ for an untrained artist living in the relative seclusion of North Queensland, with credit attributed to the artist as a ‘second generation artist who has developed in an isolated region without the usual support systems’.²⁴² Searle acknowledges the impact of the modern movement which ‘gave artists the freedom to explore more abstract concerns of line, colour and mass’.²⁴³ The Townsville College of TAFE’s accreditation as an art college in 1978 is noted as providing professional opportunities for artists in the region.

Searle’s postscript acknowledges the debate in the arts over *regionalism* and the challenge to the *historicist* view that the arts of the regional centres are somehow inferior to the arts of the major cities, and that the book and exhibition was ‘timely’ in its examination from a ‘non-metropolitan region’.²⁴⁴

Curator Gavin Wilson’s *Escape Artists* (1998), was the first major exhibition initiative for Cairns Regional Gallery since its opening in 1995. In the foreword, Director Alice-Anne McRobbie defines the area as ‘geographically remote from the mainstream political and artistic centres’, referring to the defining characteristics of ‘allure, mythology, culture and seductiveness’, whilst acknowledging the ‘regions defiance of simple definition’. She refers to colour, light, the landscape, people and the indigenous culture as characteristic, while the exhibition coordinator, Peter Denham, refers to the life, colour, pattern and texture of the area

²⁴¹ Searle, *Artists in the Tropics*, 55.

²⁴² Searle, *Artists in the Tropics*, 56.

²⁴³ Searle, *Artists in the Tropics*, 35.

²⁴⁴ Searle, *Artists in the Tropics*, 58.

as ‘unique’.²⁴⁵ Wilson’s methodology is identified as a process of research through books, catalogues, interviews, articles and unpublished papers, and seeking the assistance of artists, collectors, galleries and lending institutions, as well as through the prior research, in particular, of Searle’s (1991) *Artists of the Tropics*. A map is included, defining the tropics as ‘the hottest region of the earth’, located between the Tropic of Cancer in the north, and the Tropic of Capricorn in the south, followed by geographic distinctions around the wet and dry tropics. Fraser Island [K’gari], the Glasshouse Mountains, Bribie Island, Brisbane and Lord Howe Island are identified below this line. North of the Tropic of Capricorn includes Townsville through to Cooktown, as well as Darwin, Kakadu, the Kimberley, Broome, and Horn, Thursday and Melville Island. In defining his thematic connection to the tropics, Wilson elaborates in a somewhat romantic style on the theme of escape. In this context, he argues it is a ‘spirit of exploration and adventure’, a ‘journey of the mind, a quest for psychic renewal [where] to escape is to free oneself’, further defining the artists’ behaviour as ‘engaging in the exotic or other’.²⁴⁶ *Escape* is qualified both through the historical context—the actuality of early convicts, settlers seeking freedom from penal settlements in Brisbane—as well as the notion of escaping life, which, for an artist, is the search for freedom from the critical constraints of the arts world. Wilson seeks to identify the artists as modernists through his description of the images as possessing ‘a type of synergy’, through object, subject, world outside, individual, and the artists themselves.²⁴⁷

Whilst Wilson gives a brief overview of the historical context, the survey’s greater focus is on the narrative of the artists, through the inclusion of reflections and personal accounts. Artists were selected on the basis of experience, understood as a physical or

²⁴⁵ Gavin Wilson, *Escape Artists: Modernists in the Tropics* (Cairns, QLD: Cairns Regional Gallery, 1998).

²⁴⁶ Wilson, *Escape Artists*, 11.

²⁴⁷ Wilson, *Escape Artists*, 12.

metaphorical escape; as permanently relocating to the tropics, or through ‘periodic encounters’.²⁴⁸ He identifies Paul Gauguin (1848-1903) as the *prototype* for this type of artist. Continuing this romanticised argument, Wilson argues that ‘the genuine escape artist is a curious, questing being in constant search of new stimuli [where] the essential ingredients for success, apart from talent, are strength and a degree of bravery’.²⁴⁹ The 22 artists represented in the survey include Sidney Nolan, Brett Whiteley (1939-1992), Donald Friend, and artists connected to the *Dunk Island* group: Ray Crooke, Russell Drysdale, Margaret Olley, John Bell (b.1938), John Firth-Smith (b.1943), Frank Hodgkinson (1919-2001), Tony Tuckson (1921-1973), Bruce Goold (b.1948), Fred Williams (1927-1982), John Olsen (b. 1928), Lawrence Daws (b.1927) and Ian Fairweather. Almost all artists have four works included in the exhibition, with considerable representation of Russell Drysdale (24 Plates), Ian Fairweather (8 Plates), Ray Crooke (7 Plates) and Donald Friend (12 Plates). Historical photographs of the locations and artists are also included. This book supported the touring exhibition to Rockhampton City Gallery (1998), Brisbane City Gallery (1999), Mosman Regional Gallery, Sydney (1999), Ballarat Fine Art Gallery (1999), and the Perc Tucker Regional Gallery (1999).

Continuing the tropical theme, *Utopia Tropicae: The Spirit of the North* in 2018²⁵⁰ was curated by Jonathan McBurnie for the Perc Tucker Gallery. A Tom Risley work, *White Picture* (1989) was included in the survey.

As the first director of Artspace Mackay, Robert Heather, in the preface to Gavin Wilson’s *Beneath the Monsoon: Visions North of Capricorn* (2003) argues that the exhibition

²⁴⁸ Wilson, *Escape Artists*, 12.

²⁴⁹ Wilson, *Escape Artists*, 17.

²⁵⁰ Jonathan McBurnie and Lucy Belle Tesoriero, *Utopia Tropicae: The Spirit of the North* (Townsville, QLD: Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, 2018).

is 'probably the first major exhibition to cover the contemporary art of this area on such a scale and scope'²⁵¹ where artists see 'location as an opportunity to explore their arts practice within a different cultural framework to those of artists in southern cities'.²⁵² Heather refers to the landscape, environment, people, and heritage as the source for subject matter. Wilson's geographic scope for this exhibition includes Rockhampton and the area to its north, with the defining characteristic as the 'atmosphere that prevails in regions north of Capricorn, along with the impact of living from year to year in this extraordinary environment...that shape the character of the place',²⁵³ further defining the north-west monsoon as specific to Australia's tropic region. Wilson's methodology is to draw from a range of media, selecting artists that have lived in the region or have strong associations with the location. An essay entitled 'Mackay Connection' by Cathy Knezevic recognises the work of Clem Forbes (3 Plates).²⁵⁴ An image of Tom Risley is represented with 3 works and an image of Risley working in his studio in Herberton is included.

Tom Risley: Further Concern with Still Life and Composition was held at the Auckland City Art Gallery in 1989. Director Daniel Thomas described Risley, in a somewhat romantic statement, as influenced by the materials of an urban landscape.

He has lived in big-city Brisbane among disused shipping and dumped motor cars. He knows the present-day rustic folk arts of carved motor-tyre swans, and suspended car-door signs, announcing the roadside entrances to Queensland homes. In Cairns he knew the drum-beat of sheet-metal hammering in boys' classes in manual trades; he has not been to any art school. He knows that for country folk anywhere, not only in his native North Queensland, creative ingenuity and improvisation in repairing and in cost-free construction of things have always been a natural part of life.²⁵⁵

²⁵¹ Gavin Wilson, *Beneath the Monsoon: Visions North of Capricorn* (Mackay, QLD: Artspace Mackay, Mackay City Council, 2003), 50.

²⁵² Wilson, *Beneath the Monsoon*, 5.

²⁵³ Wilson, *Beneath the Monsoon*, 7.

²⁵⁴ Wilson, *Beneath the Monsoon*, 41–43.

²⁵⁵ Daniel Thomas, *Tom Risley: Further Concern with Still Life and Composition* (Auckland, New Zealand: Auckland City Art Gallery, 1990), exhibition catalogue.

The Queensland Art Gallery held a mid-career survey of Tom Risley's work in 1992. *The Indigenous Object and the Urban Offcast*, was curated by QAG director Doug Hall who referenced the 'colloquial environment in which the sculptor's local environment plays a crucial role'.²⁵⁶ The survey references Risley's *Fabrications* exhibition in the Martin Gallery in 1981 as well as the influence of his father, Noel Risley, in his developmental period. Particular mention is made of the use of materials specific to the North Queensland environment as referencing Risley's non-figurative development.

Cairns Regional Gallery held a Tom Risley exhibition in 2005 as part of its ten year anniversary program, recognising Risley as an artist of the region whose 'innovative and prolific practice has captured the imagination of local, national and international audiences through his ability to breathe new life into the flotsam and jetsam cast off by reef and rainforest, and the urban landscape.'²⁵⁷ The retrospective, *Tom Risley: Last and Recent Works* was held at KickArts Contemporary Arts space in Cairns in 2012, with a focus on still life, three-dimensional works and glass works. An extensive bibliography was included with the survey dated from 1981, with a reference to Risley's 1980 Eacham Shire commission.²⁵⁸

MacAulay's retrospective *Clem Forbes: Image Maker* (2004) held at Artspace Mackay is the first major survey on the artist. Robert Heather, director of Artspace Mackay, acknowledged the legacy of this artist specific to studio output, teaching, and in his engagement in the arts community through the establishment of the commercial art gallery, The Bakehouse.²⁵⁹ Further to this, Heather recognised the donation of *Rainforest* in 1978 to

²⁵⁶ Queensland Art Gallery, *Tom Risley: The Indigenous Object & the Urban Offcast* (South Brisbane: Queensland Art Gallery, 1992).

²⁵⁷ Steven Tonkin, *Tom Risley* (Cairns, QLD: Cairns Regional Gallery, 2005), director's foreword, exhibition catalogue.

²⁵⁸ KickArts Contemporary Arts, *Tom Risley: Last and Recent Works*, (Cairns, QLD: KickArts Contemporary Arts, 2012).

²⁵⁹ MacAulay, *Clem Forbes*, 5.

the Mackay City Council by the Mackay art community as the foundation for a regional art gallery. MacAulay's methodology made use of interviews with family, collectors, artists and patrons. The methodology included consulting the 'Clem Forbes Project' (1998), an initiative of the Mackay City Council and Queensland Government, led by patrons Lorraine Gray-McConnell and Margaret Lane.²⁶⁰ This project resulted in the documentation and photographic recording of over 300 works by Clem Forbes painted between 1962-1997, held in private collections throughout Queensland.²⁶¹ *Clem Forbes: Image Maker* establishes an overview of the artist's life, media; contribution to the arts and community in Mackay; teaching role, and exhibition history, thus documenting the career of this artist as a permanent resident of Mackay between 1964 and 1997. What the survey and preceding project demonstrates is the considerable studio output of the artist during this time. MacAulay has grouped the works thematically as environment: land and sky (brigalow and rural life; rainforest; birds and butterflies; cane farms and cane fields; horses and animals); marine (fish and marine life, fishing villages and islands); architecture; theatre, music and the circus; people (early portraits, family, self-portraits and other figures, children); still life, and religious and spiritual themes. Forbes's relationships with sculptor Tom Risley and John Rigby²⁶² are identified, as well as his correspondence with Stanislaus Rapotec.²⁶³ The retrospective is successful in providing an overview of an extensive body of work, with little opportunity within its context to deepen the study.

Further regional exhibitions, the majority being from Townsville and Rockhampton, have focussed on the work of artists in Northern Queensland. Individual exhibitions included,

²⁶⁰ "The Clem Forbes Project aims to locate and document the work of Mackay Artist Clem Forbes who died in 1997. It is hoped this will be the first stage in preparing a major retrospective." Lorraine Gray-McConnell and Margaret Lane, Clem Forbes Project, documentation of art works, personal archive, 1998.

²⁶¹ Documentation and visual images, in McConnell and Lane, Clem Forbes Project, personal archive, 1998.

²⁶² MacAulay, *Clem Forbes*, 31.

²⁶³ MacAulay, *Clem Forbes*, 52.

John Coburn A Survey 1980 to 1997 (1997);²⁶⁴ Ray Croke (Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, 1997)²⁶⁵; Gil Jamieson (Rockhampton Art Gallery, 1997)²⁶⁶; while group exhibitions comprised *Blighted Paradise* (Rockhampton Art Gallery, 2001)²⁶⁷; MacAulay's (2009) *Twelve Degrees of Latitude: Regional Gallery and University Art Collections in Queensland: An Exhibition for the Sesquicentenary of Queensland: Touring Exhibition 2009-2011*,²⁶⁸ Shane Fitzgerald and Ross Searle's *To the islands: exploring works created by artists on Dunk, Bedarra, and Timana Islands between the 1930s and 1990s* (Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, 2003),²⁶⁹ Ross Searle's (2013) collaboration with the James Cook University Special Collection, Bill Yaxley (Rockhampton Art Gallery, 2016)²⁷⁰ and *Celebrating Townsville - the City's Visual History Drawn from the James Cook University Art Collection*.²⁷¹

3.6 Commercial Galleries

Daniel Thomas, in the introduction to *Present Day Art in Australia* (1969), notes the move away from art societies since the 1950s through the 'arrival of dealers' galleries in some numbers', [as a] 'change from standards policed by the artists themselves to the low standards of the mass market'.²⁷² Pro Hart is the example given as an artist 'who might have had no

²⁶⁴ John Coburn, *John Coburn: A Survey 1980–1997*, 1997, exhibition, Ipswich Regional Art Gallery, QLD.

²⁶⁵ Smith et al., *North of Capricorn*.

²⁶⁶ Gil Jamieson, *Gil Jamieson: Life on the Land*, with contributions by Phil Brown, Bettina McAulay, and Matthew Jamieson (Rockhampton, QLD: Rockhampton Regional Art Gallery, 1997), exhibition catalogue.

²⁶⁷ Lisa Loader, *Blighted Paradise: Colonial Visions of Northern Australia* (Rockhampton, QLD: Rockhampton Art Gallery, 2001), exhibition catalogue.

²⁶⁸ Bettina MacAulay and Brett Adlington, *Twelve Degrees of Latitude: Regional Gallery and University Art Collections in Queensland* (Fortitude Valley, QLD: Museum and Gallery Services Queensland, 2009), exhibition catalogue.

²⁶⁹ Fitzgerald, *To the Islands*.

²⁷⁰ William Yaxley, *The Adventures of William Yaxley*, ed. Diana Warnes, Phil Brown, and Glenn Barkley (Rockhampton, QLD: Rockhampton Art Gallery, 2016), exhibition catalogue.

²⁷¹ Ross Searle, curator, *Celebrating Townsville: The City's Visual History Drawn from the James Cook University Art Collection* (Townsville, QLD: James Cook University Library Special Collections, 2016), exhibition catalogue.

²⁷² Horton, *Present Day Art in Australia*.

fame before the rise of the dealer.²⁷³ Art dealers regularly referenced within the scope of the literature are Philip Bacon, Ray Hughes, Kym Bonython, Rudy Komon and Brian and Marjorie Johnstone. Glenn Cooke's *A Time Remembered: Art in Brisbane 1950-1975* (1995) is an extensive survey of this era including a comprehensive list of exhibitions in commercial galleries during the scope of the study. Clem Forbes is noted for example, exhibited with Irene Amos in the Kennigo Street Gallery in 1967.²⁷⁴

Commercial art dealer Kym Bonython's publications (1970, 1976, 1980) collated the works of modern Australian painters during the 1970s. Ross Luck, in the introduction to the 1970 text refers to the impact of 'internationalism',²⁷⁵ noting the influence of those who Bernard Smith classified as the *taste-makers*, by stating, 'art is a matter of selection and rejection; it is a matter of individual and social decisions. What is selected and what is rejected may well govern the successful evolvement of Australian art over the next vital decade'.²⁷⁶ Of the 109 artists represented with biographical notes and colour plates in the 1970 text, the following are referenced as being either born in or working in Queensland: John Aland (1937-2005), Brisbane; John Coburn, Ingham; Geoff De Groen (b.1938), Brisbane; Ian Fairweather 'living on island off the Queensland coast';²⁷⁷ Kevin (Pro) Hart, Broken Hill; Gil Jamieson, Monto; Nevil Matthews (1930-2013), Ayr; Jon Molvig, living in Brisbane; John Peart (1945-2013), Brisbane; Lloyd Rees, born in Yeronga Queensland; and Ray Crooke as 'painting among the islands off Northern Queensland'.²⁷⁸

²⁷³ Horton, *Present Day Art in Australia*.

²⁷⁴ Cooke, *A Time Remembered*, 114.

²⁷⁵ Kym Bonython, *Modern Australian Painting, 1960/1970* (Adelaide, SA: Rigby, 1970).

²⁷⁶ Bonython, *Modern Australian Painting, 1960/1970*, 10.

²⁷⁷ Bonython, *Modern Australian Painting, 1960/1970*, 16.

²⁷⁸ Bonython, *Modern Australian Painting, 1960/1970*, 105.

Bonython's 1976 survey collates the work of 114 artists working in Australia. Included in are Coburn, Virginia Cuppidge (b. 1945); Crooke, who 'became familiar with Queensland';²⁷⁹ Gil Jamieson; Nevil Matthews (b 1930); Andrew Nott (b.1946), noted as winning an art prize in Townsville, John Peart, living in the US, Lloyd Rees and David Rose (1936-2006) as represented in the Queensland State Gallery. Elwyn Lynn (1917-1997), Sydney based artist, critic and curator, commented in the introduction, that "too little is written about how this century has expanded the uses of painting in art. Painting has had the most responsive reaction to the dynamic that has dominated this century: the force of the contemporary."²⁸⁰ Biographical notes and colour plates are included on all artists. Clem Forbes exhibited in the exhibition *Four Queensland Artists* at the Bonython Gallery in 1972.²⁸¹

The contribution of the Johnstone Gallery in Brisbane is the focus of the study by Simon Elliot and Louise Martin-Chew,²⁸² and through UQ Art Museum's exhibition *Remembering Brian and Marjorie Johnstone's Galleries* (2014), and in Judith Hamilton's 2015 study, *Creating a Scene: The Role of Artists' Groups in the Development of Brisbane's Art World 1940-1970*.²⁸³

Images of an era: the Martin Gallery (Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, 2016) documents, through an exhibition of images, photographs and accompanying text, exhibitions held at the Martin Gallery, Townsville, between 1972 and 1988. Shane Fitzgerald, as curator of the exhibition, 'sought to document the exhibition but also the rich cultural life of the north

²⁷⁹ Kym Bonython, *Modern Australian painting, 1970/1975* (Adelaide, SA: Rigby, 1976), 88.

²⁸⁰ Bonython, *Modern Australian painting, 1970/1975*, 8.

²⁸¹ MacAulay, *Clem Forbes*, 47.

²⁸² Glenn R. Cooke, ed., *Art Off Centre: Placing Queensland Art* (South Brisbane: Queensland Studies Centre, Griffith University, 1997).

²⁸³ Hamilton, "Creating a Scene."

engaging in the arts at a regional, state, national and international level'.²⁸⁴ Painters included in the book and specific to the scope of this review are Anne Willis, Irene Amos, Mary Norrie (1917-2005), Beverly Budgen, John Rigby, Robert Preston, John Coburn, Anneke Silver, Ron McBurnie, Pamela Dolinska (1930-1990) and Clem Forbes. Forbes is referenced as having eight exhibitions at the Martin Gallery.²⁸⁵ Fitzgerald's text is successful as an overview, providing a sample of the exhibitions and artists exhibiting at this gallery. The *Martin Gallery* archives are held in the James Cook University Special Collections.²⁸⁶ Not included in *Images of an Era* is the Tom Risley exhibition, *Fabrications* (13 November-4 December 1981). Risley, in the *Fabrications* catalogue, refers to the exhibition as his first move away from his figurative sculptures and into his use of steel. He also thanks Clem Forbes 'for making available his work to augment my own'.²⁸⁷ The sculpture *Letter to Clem Forbes* (November 1980) is included in the exhibition.

Fitzgerald in his introduction to *Images of an era: The Martin Gallery* makes reference to the Rockhampton commercial art gallery *Gallery Up Top* (Director Lal Lanyon), as having a 'reputation and appeal that would extend far beyond the regional idiom in which it was based',²⁸⁸ exhibiting artists such as Arthur Boyd, Fred Williams and Gordon Shepherdson. Artists Gil Jamieson, William Yaxley and Clem Forbes were also represented by Lanyon.²⁸⁹ Similarly, the *Trinity Gallery* (Directors Jim and Rosemary Macfarlane) in Cairns and the *Bakehouse Art Gallery* in Mackay (Director Dorothy Forbes) were exhibiting the works of regional, state and national artists.²⁹⁰ Both Wilson (2002) and MacAulay (2004)

²⁸⁴ Silver, *Images of an Era*, 19.

²⁸⁵ Silver, *Images of an Era*, 88.

²⁸⁶ Ralph Martin Archive, James Cook University Special Collections.

²⁸⁷ *Fabrications*, exhibition catalogue, Ralph Martin Archive, James Cook University Special Collections.

²⁸⁸ Silver, *Images of an Era*, 8.

²⁸⁹ Phil Brown, "Our Man Up There," in *Griffith Review 9: Up North – Myths, Threats & Enchantment*, ed. Julianne Schultz (ABC Books, 2005), <https://griffithreview.com/articles/our-man-up-there/>.

²⁹⁰ Cooper, John Cooper Papers.

acknowledge the *Bakehouse Art Gallery* as being formative in contributing to the cultural development of the region. Further, Forbes is credited as ‘a major driving force behind the visual arts in Mackay but passed away before his dream that the Mackay region would have its own regional gallery was realised’.²⁹¹

3.7 Monographs: Individual Artists

Published in 1969, *Present Day Art in Australia*²⁹² acts primarily as a *resumé* of modern artists with biographical details, portrait image and artists’ statements. Edited by Mervyn Horton, it includes artists John Coburn, Geoffrey De Groen, Gil Jamieson and Ian Fairweather. *Australian painters of the 70s (1975)*²⁹³ has a similar objective. Artists include John Coburn, Ray Croke, and Margaret Olley.

The 1961 book *Nolan* is important in its elaboration of the artist’s time in Queensland as formative in developing the iconography and imagery representative of Queensland which was later to also become iconic of Nolan’s style. Clark’s approach to the text is through the lens of the Australian art historian, and English author MacInnes looks to understand Nolan’s work as representative of a somewhat distant and exotic Australian mythology. His description of the Queensland landscape Nolan was working with in 1947 has relevance to the notion of location as an artistic narrative.

Queensland seemed to contain the most old fashioned, untouched and 'colonial' parts of Australia and Nolan's travels in this state produced the paintings known as the 'Outback' series: mining or agricultural hotels, small townships, the 'swaggies' or wandering tramps, abandoned mineshafts and the hap-hazard litter of rusting agricultural machinery left in the landscape, the contrast between a man-made dereliction and the exotic beauty of the birds and the blazing blue skies, all came together in this series and were again portrayed in terms slightly reminiscent of folk art...Nearer the coast of Queensland, the landscape shifts from the arid plains, and

²⁹¹ Jaime Newborn, “Art of Glass Plus More Clem Forbes,” *Daily Mercury* (Mackay, QLD), May 4, 2011.

²⁹² Horton, *Present Day Art in Australia*.

²⁹³ Mervyn Horton, *Australian painters of the 70’s* (Dee Why West, NSW: Ure Smith, 1975).

vast distances of the cattle stations inland and the outback townships to the north, into a lush tropical belt of rain forests and billabongs...²⁹⁴

MacInnes refers to the exhibition of Nolan's Mrs Fraser pictures in Brisbane in 1948, in the same year as the Kelly series was exhibited in Melbourne for the first time.²⁹⁵ The Brisbane exhibition at the Moreton Gallery (Director: John Cooper) was however, described by the *Courier Mail* critic as 'monstrous daubings',²⁹⁶ once again evidencing the traditional perceptions of landscape and figurative painting in Brisbane at this time.

Additional studies on individual artists in the scope of this project include Jon Molvig (1984),²⁹⁷ *Jon Molvig: Maverick* (2019)²⁹⁸ and *Jon Molvig: The Tree of Man Paintings* (2022);²⁹⁹ John Rigby (2003);³⁰⁰ William Robinson (2011),³⁰¹ and Ian Fairweather (1994)³⁰².

The Queensland Art Gallery's retrospectives on Fairweather (1994) and Charles Blackman (2015) are important in the emphasis, in both works, on time spent in Queensland. The sketchbook *Rainforest Charles Blackman* (1988)³⁰³ documents the artist's studies of the rainforests of North Queensland. Monographs on individual artists by the University of Queensland's *Focus On* series, specific to this time, include Charles Blackman (1967)³⁰⁴ and

²⁹⁴ Kenneth Clark, Colin MacInnes, and Bryan Robertson, *Nolan* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1961), 44.

²⁹⁵ Clark, MacInnes, and Robertson, *Nolan*, 44.

²⁹⁶ "Shock Tactics' Shock," *Courier Mail* (Brisbane, QLD), February 18, 1948.

²⁹⁷ Churcher, *Molvig: The Lost Antipodean*.

²⁹⁸ Jon Molvig, *Jon Molvig: Maverick*, with foreword by Christopher Saines and contributions by Michael Hawker, Samantha Littley, Michele Helmrich, Glenn R. Cooke, and Bruce Heiser (South Brisbane: Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, 2019), exhibition catalogue.

²⁹⁹ Bruce Heiser, *Jon Molvig: The Tree of Man Paintings* (Brisbane, QLD: Koro Press, AndAlso Books, 2022).

³⁰⁰ John Millington and Mark Rigby, *John Rigby: Art and Life* (Caringbah, NSW: Playright Publishing, 2003).

³⁰¹ Queensland University of Technology Art Museum, *William Robinson: The Transfigured Landscape*, (Brisbane: Queensland University of Technology/Piper Press, 2011).

³⁰² Queensland Art Gallery, *Fairweather*.

³⁰³ Charles Blackman, *Rainforest*, with text by Al Alvarez (South Melbourne, VIC: Macmillan, 1988).

³⁰⁴ Thomas Shapcott, *Focus on Charles Blackman*, Artists in Queensland (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1967).

Ray Crooke (1971).³⁰⁵ *The Art of Charles Blackman* by Queensland poet Thomas Shapcott (b.1935) further elaborates on the artist's time in Queensland including North Queensland. The Plate, *Boats—Surfers Paradise* (1974), is included in the text.³⁰⁶

3.8 Academic Studies

The academic work in this field has included Szulakowska (1998);³⁰⁷ England (2007);³⁰⁸ Fridemanis (1989)³⁰⁹ and Cheshire and Daniel (2016).³¹⁰ Meyer (2015) focusses on the 'painted vision of the tropics as a space desirable and strange, redolent of fear and longing, bewilderment and comfort' in discussing the representation of the tropics through the lens of the painter.³¹¹ Relevant to methodology in researching the arts in central and north Queensland, Szulakowska refers to the challenges where 'the resources are more dispersed'. With reference to Townsville, she notes that 'much knowledge of the region's art remains as a vulnerable oral history which is extremely difficult to access by scholars.'³¹²

3.9 Literature: Conclusions

The review of the literature has identified gaps in the knowledge specific to the arts in north Queensland. In all texts geographic location is non-specific, identified through use of maps, environmental characteristics and features, themes, population centres and even the feel, light, atmosphere and emotion of place. This has also been characterised as the *tropics*. In this way

³⁰⁵ Rosemary Dobson, *Focus on Ray Crooke*, Artists in Queensland (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1971).

³⁰⁶ Thomas Shapcott, *The Art of Charles Blackman* (London: Deutsch, 1989).

³⁰⁷ Urszula Szulakowska, *Experimental Art in Queensland, 1975–1995: An Introductory Study* (Nathan: Queensland Studies Centre, Faculty of Arts, Griffith University, 1998).

³⁰⁸ England, "From River Banks to Shearing Sheds."

³⁰⁹ Fridemanis, "Contemporary Art Society."

³¹⁰ Barbara Cheshire and Ryan Daniel, "Spirituality in Place: Capturing the Essence of North Queensland through Painting," *eTropic: Electronic Journal of Studies in the Tropics* 15, no. 1 (2016).

³¹¹ Angela Mary Meyer, "Painting in the Tropics" (PhD thesis, James Cook University, 2015), <http://researchonline.jcu.edu.au/32077/>.

³¹² Szulakowska, *Experimental Art in Queensland*, iii–iv.

the Tweed Region, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast including the Glasshouse Mountains and Fraser Island, Brisbane and Bribie Island as well as Broome, the Kimberley, Kakadu, Melville Island and Arnhem Land have been included within the concept of *north*. There is very little reference to Central Queensland including Rockhampton and Mackay as a location specific to the north however, North-East Queensland, Far North, *deep north* and the *wet and dry tropics* has been defined. The north has also been described as ‘beyond the Brisbane Line’.³¹³

Consistently the understanding of the arts in Northern Queensland is through the lens of the environment and the concept of isolation; through the notion of the *exotic*; and in supporting the perception of, and later challenge to the north, as being both provincial and/or regional. The north is also seen as geographically and conceptually distant from the metropolitan centres including Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. Artists *belonging* to this area are identified as both European and non-European, visiting, working for extended periods of time, or as *local* artists. Artists consistently identified with South-East Queensland across the scope of the literature include Isaac Walter Jenner, Richard Godfrey Rivers, Kenneth Macqueen, Vida Lahey, Margaret Olley, Ian Fairweather, Jon Molvig, John Rigby, Gordon Shepherdson and William Robinson. Gil Jamieson, William Yaxley and Clem Forbes are identified with Central Queensland; Anneke Silver with Townsville; Merv Moriarty with rural, regional, and remote locations throughout Queensland; and Ray Croke, John Coburn, and Tom Risley with the Far North.

The link between artists, commercial galleries and institutions in Queensland and those of the southern centres is made explicit. Across all the literature it is argued that Queensland was late in developing an organised approach to the arts, recognising the resulting impact on artistic and cultural practices throughout the state as negative Methodologies vary,

³¹³ Julianne Schultz, ed., “Beyond the Brisbane Line”, in *Griffith Review 9: Up North – Myth, Threats & Enchantment* (ABC Books, 2005), <https://griffithreview.com/articles/beyond-the-brisbane-line/>.

but rely on the relationship of the art historian, writer or curator to dealers, regional galleries, university collections, the artists themselves, and on the agreement with, or challenge to, art as a history as evidenced in pre-existing texts. The exception to methodologies in the context of this study is the 1998 'Clem Forbes Project'³¹⁴ which allowed for the documentation of over 300 works held in private collections. The literature has made use of sources specific to the scope of this study including private and published archives, state and regional gallery collections and records of exhibitions in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and later, Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville, and Cairns. Academic studies completed by UQ; QUT and Griffith University specific to the history of Brisbane, and of JCU on the arts in the north as well as the collections held by UQ, QUT, JCU and CQU have been acknowledged. The exhibition output of the Cairns Regional Gallery, Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, and Rockhampton Art Gallery has also been recognised. It follows therefore that the relatively late opening of a regional gallery in Mackay (Artspace Mackay, 2002), the absence of a university or art college in Mackay outside of campus locations, as well as the closing of the commercial gallery, the Bakehouse Art Gallery in 1978, could have contributed to the omission of the artistic and cultural contribution of Mackay in particular, in the histories of the arts in Northern Queensland prior to 2002.

Almost all authors have included the disclaimer that the study completed was not conclusive nor representative of all artists of the region, and further, that any work in the field completed to date was fragmented—giving rise to the opportunity for further research in the field. Whilst the work of Searle (1991), and MacAulay (2004) is significant to this topic there has however, been a gap in the conversation for almost 20 years.

³¹⁴ Gray-McConnell and Lane, Clem Forbes Project, personal archive.

Chapter 4: Research Model

4.1 Introduction

The literature review has found limited studies specific to Northern Queensland, with a trend in chronological or thematic histories specific to *what happened* and *when*. As such, existing studies have told some, but not all, of the story of the arts in Northern Queensland. By asking the question *why* I have identified the strengths and limitations of existing art history methods. Firstly, art history is often written as a form of linear *historicism* where ‘adequate understanding of any phenomenon and its value can best be gained by considering it in terms of its place within a process of development or evolution’.³¹⁵ Tobin & Kincheloe (2006) argue however, that social history ‘does not occur in a theoretical vacuum but examines the social contours of history in a kind of *praxis* (action) analysis and narration’.³¹⁶ The investigation into causal or narrative links may however, answer the deeper questions around *who* did what, *why* and *how*. Further, as *social history* research, the relationship between people and events may link to, but may not necessarily be concurrent with, historical trends.³¹⁷ In this way, the concern of historiography in ‘delineating the development of different theoretical and methodological approaches to art and its histories’,³¹⁸ is considered in the research design. Approaching this project from this perspective supports not just the collection of information, but its *interpretation* and *analysis*.³¹⁹

³¹⁵ Donald Preziosi, *Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 575.

³¹⁶ Bruce L. Berg and Howard Lune, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, 8th ed. (Boston, MA: Pearson, 2012), 305.

³¹⁷ Preziosi, *Art of Art History*, 577.

³¹⁸ Preziosi, *Art of Art History*, 576.

³¹⁹ Berg and Lune, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 307.

4.2 Research Model

The research model supports the aim of the project, by systematically capturing a multifaceted description of the artistic life to be found in Northern Queensland 1971-1981, drawing together *multiple threads*,³²⁰ inclusive of the lived histories of artists, gallery directors and arts patrons who were *in situ* throughout the scope of this study. The model is made up three elements: Theoretical Foundations; Research Strategy and Research Design. Table 1

<i>Theoretical Foundations</i>	
<i>Ontology</i>	<i>Constructionism</i> <i>Relativism</i>
<i>Paradigms</i>	<i>Phenomenology</i> <i>Symbolic Interactionism</i> <i>Hermeneutics</i>
<i>Epistemology</i>	<i>Interpretivist</i> <i>Subjectivist</i>
<i>Research Strategy</i>	
<i>Type of research</i>	<i>Basic Social Research</i> <i>Qualitative</i> <i>Flexible design</i>
<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Constructionist Grounded Theory</i> <i>Ethnography</i> <i>Case-studies</i>
<i>Research Design</i>	
<i>Methods</i>	<p><i>Data Collection</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Strategic/snowball sampling</i> • <i>Questionnaire</i> • <i>In-depth, semi-structured interviews</i> • <i>Visual Ethnographic Methods</i> • <i>Document Analysis</i> <p><i>Data Analysis</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Content Analysis</i> • <i>Clustering</i> • <i>Initial (open) through to focussed coding</i> • <i>Analytical memo writing & notetaking</i>

Table 1: Research Model

³²⁰ Judith Hamilton, "A Provincial Art World: Brisbane Between 1940 and 1970", *Journal of Language, Literature and Culture* 61, no. 3 (2014).

4.2.1 Theoretical foundations

*I assume that people make their worlds but do not make them as they please. Rather, worlds are constructed under particular historical and social conditions that shape our views, actions and collective practices.*³²¹

The understanding of ‘the way people make sense of their world and how they construct their everyday life’,³²² informs the research design. The *ethnographic, interpretive* researcher engages with the participant’s view of the world to support the explanation of the causes of social action.³²³ The work of Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) as applied by Schutz (1899-1959), emphasises the ‘importance of studying social life in its natural setting and describing it as seen and experienced by those involved’.³²⁴ This is further realised through the concept of *verstehen* [George Mead (1863-1931) and Max Weber (1864-1920)] where ‘people are active, conscious beings, aware of what is going on in a social situation and capable of making choices about how to act’.³²⁵ Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) specific to the development of *hermeneutics* as a method of understanding cultural sciences through the authors as a *lived experience* of culture, sees ‘the texts humans write, the speech they utter, the art they create and the actions they perform [as] expressions of meaning’.³²⁶ The *post structuralist* approach that all texts have the potential to convey multiple meanings as opposed to a single objective reading supports the approach to texts in this study including art works, commercial exhibitions, interviews and unpublished manuscripts.

³²¹ James A. Holstein and Jaber F. Gubrium, *Handbook of Constructionist Research* (New York: Guilford Publications, 2007), 409.

³²² S. Sarantakos, *Social Research*, 4th ed. (Basingstoke, England: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 44.

³²³ Patrick McNeill and Steve Chapman, *Research Methods*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2005), 19.

³²⁴ McNeill and Chapman, *Research Methods*, 20.

³²⁵ McNeill and Chapman, *Research Methods*, 18.

³²⁶ Michael Crotty, *The Foundations of Social Research. Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998), 94.

The *interpretive orientation* aligns with the philosophical suppositions about understanding social life and lived experience.³²⁷ The *interpretivist* understands the world of human experience through the constructionist, phenomenological, symbolic interactionist, hermeneutic, and ethnographic perspectives. The purpose of an *interpretive* explanation is to support the researcher in answering the *why* and *how* questions in this study, as ‘expressed in terms of socially constructed meanings and subjective world views’.³²⁸ Further, the interpretivist orientation allows the researcher to treat social action and human activity as text. In this way, human action can be seen as a collection of symbols to be interpreted, allowing the transcription of interviews and observational data into written text, leading to analysis according to patterns as suggestive of meaning. The strategies that support the interpretivist paradigm are embedded in qualitative methodologies, including ethnography and grounded theory, where the examination of ideological mind-sets, themes, topics, symbols and similar phenomena are found to be *grounded* in the data.³²⁹

Positionality, and the *reflexive practices* of the researcher are considered within the design of this study. *Relativist* epistemology, where all knowledge is seen to be a product of its social context specific to time, place and group, has been considered. The autobiography of the researcher is particularly relevant. My own context is acknowledged, including family background, life experiences, personal memories of events, and relationship to the participants in the study, including my father, Clem Forbes. Atkinson argues, however, that even when we are ‘inevitably and inextricably implicated in what we study...we can be

³²⁷ Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2018), 344.

³²⁸ W. Lawrence Neuman, *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, 7th ed., Pearson New International Edition (Harlow, UK: Pearson Education, 2014), 84.

³²⁹ Berg and Lune, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 351.

conscious [and] self-aware of what we are doing.³³⁰ *Reflexivity* is therefore an important trait of the ethnographic researcher in being cognisant of both the advantages and limitations the researcher brings to the research. In this way, the use of the *grounded theory* methodology has supported the research design through the intentional reflexivity of the researcher in recognising ‘the multiple realities, positions and standpoints—and how they shift during the researcher and research participants.’³³¹ Charmaz’s (2006) argument for the use of *grounded theory* to consciously construct theoretical explanations (perhaps collaboratively with participants), further informs the research design.³³²

Cultural practices are defined within the research framework as ‘human meaning-making’,³³³ and can be examined through ethnographic methodology to show identity and cultural significance. The analysis of data takes into consideration ‘the work process, the social connection of cultural practices of the everyday, and the ‘symbolic realm’.³³⁴ Further, the ‘views’ held by participants in the study can be examined through this lens. Michael Richards, in his research project on the history of the Queensland Arts Council network,³³⁵ explored this as the attitudes to the arts as findings of his study.

There are generally two views. On one hand there is a common perception in Australia that *the arts* refers to a narrow range of traditional aesthetic forms such as painting, classical music, opera and theatre which interests a relatively narrow and elite section of society and is of little interest to most Australians...on the other hand, there is a growing view that rejects such a clear distinction between the ‘high arts’ and popular culture. This view considers *the arts* to describe a much broader range of activities that combines the aesthetic and symbolic characteristics of those traditional forms...according to this view *the arts* are integral to the lives we all live everyday...³³⁶

³³⁰ Karen O’Reilly, *Ethnographic Methods*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2012), 26–27.

³³¹ Denzin and Lincoln, *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 417.

³³² O’Reilly, *Ethnographic Methods*, 204.

³³³ Paul Willis, *The Ethnographic Imagination* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2000), xiv.

³³⁴ Willis, *Ethnographic Imagination*, xiii–xvi.

³³⁵ Richards, *Grow the Arts*.

³³⁶ Richards, *Grow the Arts*.

The 'Four Faces of the Pyramid of Exclusivity' model visualises this as a hierarchy of practices or activities, where 'those at the peak claim exclusivity and regard the body of the pyramid below them with disdain'.³³⁷ Figure 17

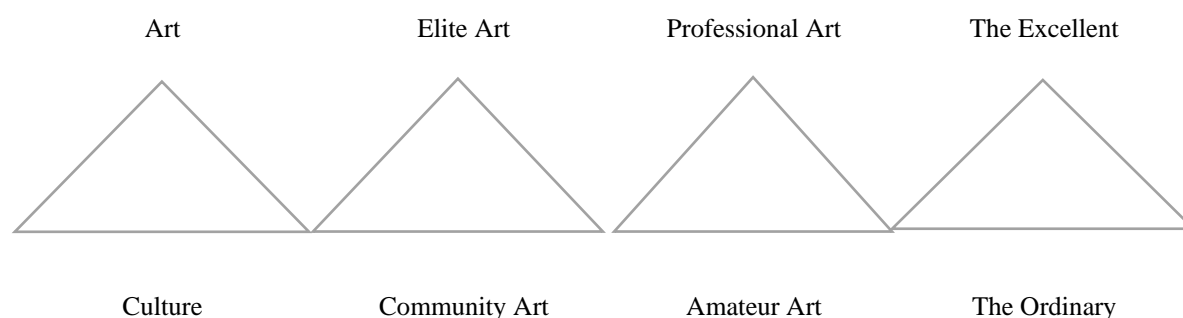


Figure 17: 'Four Faces of the Pyramid of Exclusivity' Model, Richards 2006.

The model, which seeks to explain perceptions of *the arts* as synonymous with ideas of *exclusivity*, supports the researcher with a means of interpreting some but not all of the assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs discussed by the participants within this study. While this study is not arts-based research in its design,³³⁸ the understanding that 'the arts play a key role in the way people make sense of their worlds and surroundings,'³³⁹ can be applied to the examination of art works in this study.

It is ascertained that the research is founded in constructionism, phenomenology, hermeneutics and has an interpretivist orientation. The understanding specific to cultural practices, the lived experiences of the participants, the autobiography of the researcher and the

³³⁷ Richards, *Grow the Arts*, 18.

³³⁸ Barone and Eisner argue that arts-based research is heuristic in the way it provides visible images of subtle and complex interactions. Tom Barone Jr. and Elliot W. Eisner, *Arts Based Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2011).

³³⁹ Rachael B. Lawrence, cited in Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 6th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2016), 20.

challenge to objectivity through the lens of the post-structuralism as a heuristic inquiry, is considered in the research strategy. As such, the research model looks to more than one method to design the solution. This is because it can be argued that ‘no single method can grasp the subtle variations in ongoing human experience’. Consequently, ‘qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected interpretive methods, always seeking better ways to make more understandable the world of experiences that have been studied,’³⁴⁰ seen, specific to arts research, as ‘methodological pluralism’.³⁴¹

4.2.2 Research Strategy

The understanding that ‘the narrative historian tends to remain with the story of human actions and events, though he does note variables and contradictions’,³⁴² supports the research strategy as basic social research, qualitative, and flexible in design. This ‘basic research design’ is shown in Figure 18.

Case-study methodology is utilised to explain the causal relationship of the geographic, environmental, social, cultural, economic, and political factors as impacting on the artists, patrons, and art groups in the study, to broader events in Northern Qld between 1971-1981. The collection, interpretation, and calibration of multiple sources of data includes in-depth interviews, artefacts, and archives. *Gaining entry*³⁴³ to the field is supported by pre-existing relationships and/or connection to the participants. Figure 19, Analysis of case study data will support the development of theory and models. The case studies are as follows:

³⁴⁰ Denzin and Lincoln, *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 17.

³⁴¹ Barone and Eisner, *Arts Based Research*, 4.

³⁴² Georg G. Iggers and Harold Talbot Parker, *International Handbook of Historical Studies: Contemporary Research and Theory* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979), 427.

³⁴³ Berg and Lune, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 213.

Major Case Studies: Artists

1. Clem Forbes (1938-1997). (Visual artist), Mackay
2. Tom Risley (1947-2010). (Sculptor), Atherton.

Minor Case Studies: Commercial Art Galleries

1. Gallery Up Top, Rockhampton (established 1969/1970). Director: Lal Lanyon
2. Bakehouse Art Gallery, Mackay (established 1972). Director: Dorothy Forbes
3. Martin Gallery, Townsville (established 1972-). Director: Ralph Martin
4. Trinity Gallery, Cairns (established 1974). Directors: Jim and Rosemary Macfarlane

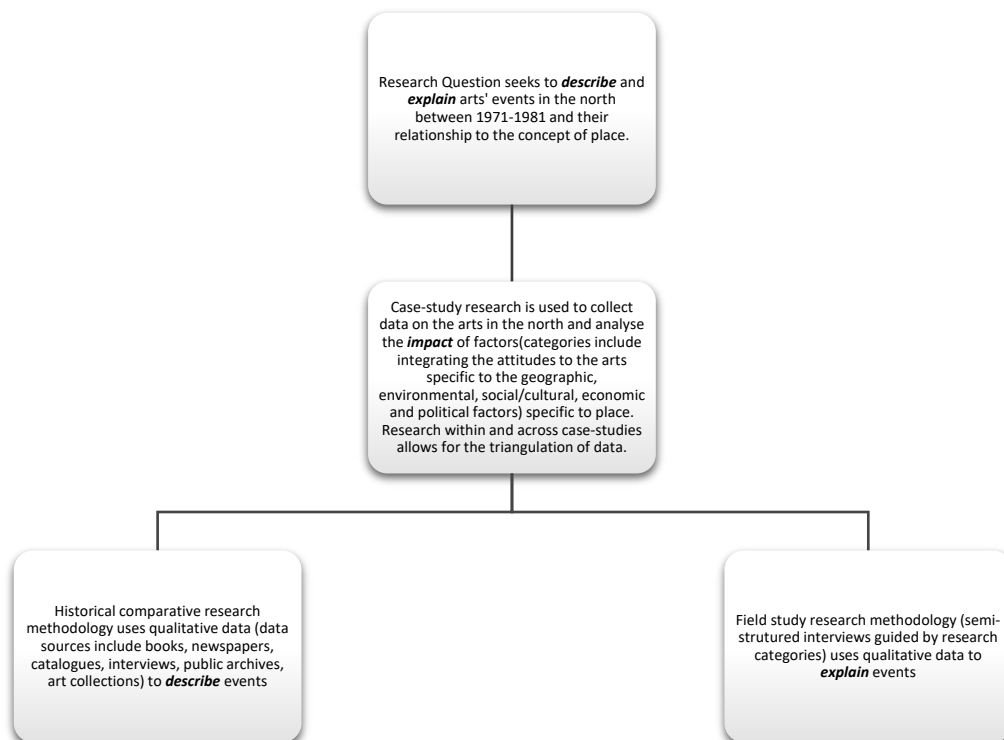


Figure 18: Basic Research Design



Figure 19: Left: The author is pictured second from right, with director Dorothy Forbes (far right) at the Bakehouse Art Gallery, Victoria Street, Mackay. 1977. Image. *Daily Mercury*, Mackay. Dorothy Forbes Archive. Right: The author (far right) with Tracey Risley, (Tom Risley’s daughter), Mackay, 1981. Coral Risley Archive.

Grounded Theory supports the researcher in engaging with the *why* questions in the research. Glaser and Strauss (1967) argue that ‘grounded theory blends the strength of both inductive and deductive reasoning’.³⁴⁴ The constructivist grounded theorist ‘acknowledges the standpoints and starting points of the researcher, the influence of the research situation, controversies about the representation of research participants and it emphasises engaging in reflexivity’.³⁴⁵ This allows the researcher flexibility in reviewing and revising the question throughout. Further, the incorporation of *social constructionist grounded theory* (Charmaz 2008) is deliberate in challenging notions that research design should be free of preconceived contentions.³⁴⁶ Assumptions are as follows: Reality is multiple, processual, and constructed under particular conditions; the research process emerges from interaction; it takes into account the researcher’s positionality, as well as that of the research participants; the researcher and researched co-construct the data; researchers are part of the research situation, and their positions, privileges, perspectives, and interactions affect it.³⁴⁷

The research strategy is represented below, demonstrating the way in which the multiple layers of the research question are considered through the incorporation of ethnographic and *constructionist* grounded theory methods. Figure 20

³⁴⁴ Berg and Lune, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 358.

³⁴⁵ Denzin and Lincoln, *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 416.

³⁴⁶ Charmaz refers to the ‘nuanced analysis that acknowledges and analyses positionality and partiality’ as a strength of the method. Kathy Charmaz, “Constructionism and the Grounded Theory Method,” in *Handbook of Constructionist Research*, ed. J. A. Holstein and J. F. Gubrium (New York: Guildford Press, 2008), 408–9.

³⁴⁷ Charmaz, “Constructionism,” 402.

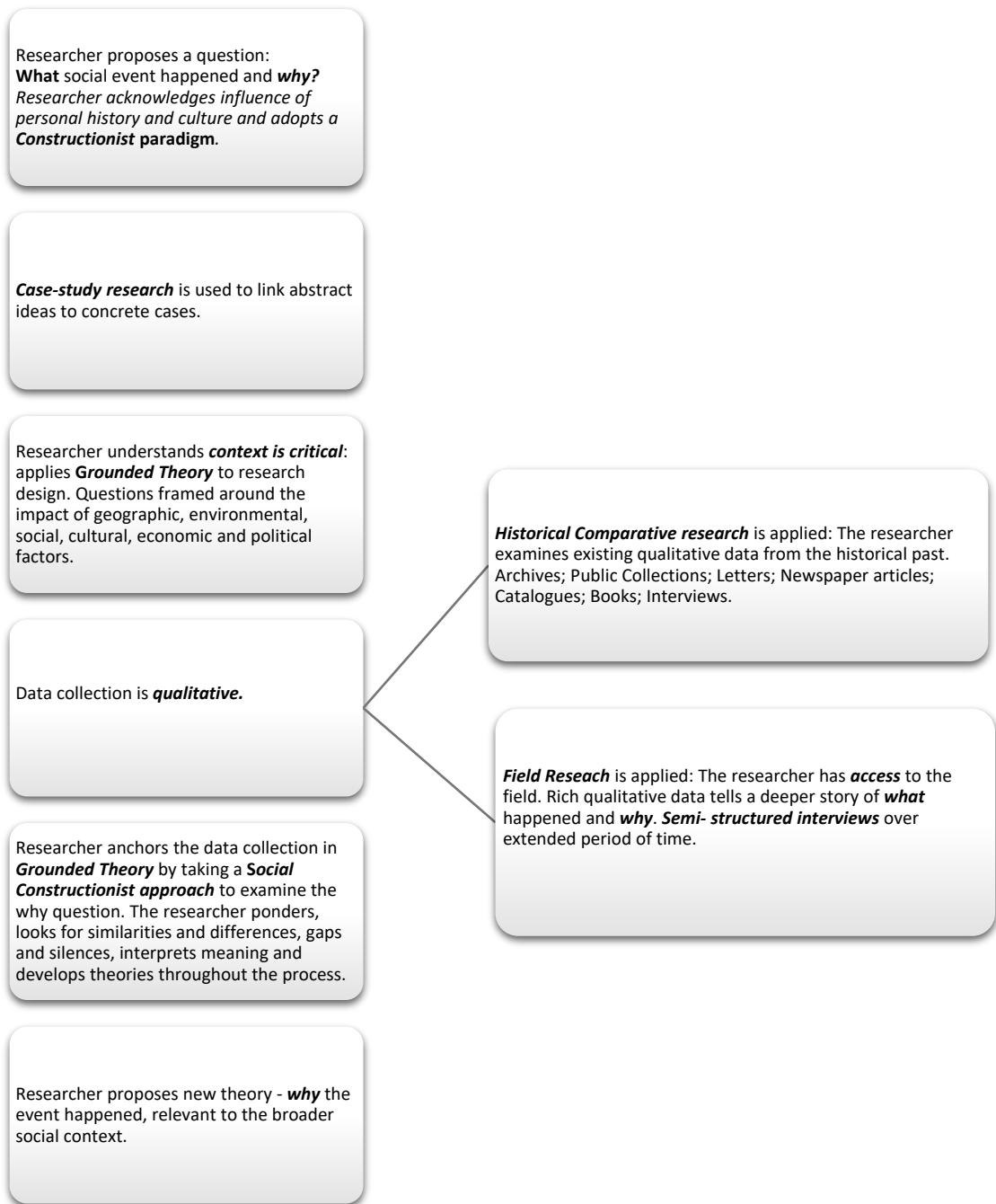


Figure 20: Research Strategy

4.2.3 Research Design

Methods in the research design are understood as ‘the instruments employed in the collection and analysis of data’.³⁴⁸ Grounded Theory ‘is a method, technique or research design and the outcome of the research’³⁴⁹ and it supports the ethnographic and case-study approach to the research.

Data collection methods included strategic sampling, questionnaires, interview data, visual ethnographic methods and documents—including literature, personal and public archives, journals, letters, follow-up emails, observations, artefacts, statistics, art collections, photos, news reports, historical documents, personal documents, and official records, which support the interpretative qualitative approach to data collection. Data analysis methods included the use of clustering, open coding through to focussed coding methods, analytical notetaking, and memo writing.

Interviews resulted from a participant invitation process including a structured invitation email, outline of the project, consent form and questionnaire. The participants were asked to return the consent form prior to the interview with the questionnaire (if completed). Interviews took place in person, by telephone, through *Zoom* or email conversations. The project received JCU ethics approval.³⁵⁰

The sample using a mix of availability and snowball sampling includes artists working during the period. The *purposive sample*³⁵¹ is specific to the ethnographic nature of the project. The groupings were organised as follows, in four categories. (See Appendix A for participant list)

³⁴⁸ Sarantakos, *Social Research*, 29.

³⁴⁹ Sarantakos, *Social Research*, 133.

³⁵⁰ Ethics approval H7402 – In Defence of the North: The Narrative of Place and the Art of Becoming. North Queensland 1971–1981.

³⁵¹ Berg and Lune, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 53.

- Artists and or family of artists living and producing work in Northern Queensland 1971-1981
- Art Gallery Directors working in Northern Queensland 1971-1981
- Curators documenting the work of artists in Northern Queensland
- Arts Patrons living in North Queensland 1971-1981

Methods support the continued sampling through to *saturation*. Some proposed participants could not be contacted across the time frame of the study. A questionnaire was designed to support the gathering of data, further acting as a ‘prompt’ prior to the interview, provoking an initial response or as an alternative method of collecting data if an interview could not be arranged. The questionnaire was also used to guide the interview, to prompt interviewees to support claims and clarify information. (Appendix B) The relationship between the questionnaire and research design categories is shown in Table 2.

The questionnaire, included in the initial email invitation, was deliberate in offering the participant the opportunity to contribute additional data; to submit written responses if an interview was declined; and for the participants to reflect on the context prior to the interview. All participants chose to be interviewed, however not all submitted the questionnaire. Participants reflected that the questionnaire allowed them to think more complexly about the questions. Some participants deepened or clarified questionnaire responses throughout the interview process. This resulted in data that would not have emerged through the questionnaire responses or structured interview alone.

Category	Questionnaire
Geographic	1. Do you believe the following regions to be a part of what Australians understand as ‘the North’?
Environmental	2. The representation of the following images/concepts about the North were depicted in the works you produced/purchased/exhibited at this time? 3. The representation of the following environmental features of the North were depicted in the works you produced/curated/purchased at this time:

	4. The works you have produced, curated, collected during your time in the North, relied on an understanding of the environment and geography specific to North Queensland to give them meaning to the viewer (agree/disagree)
Social/Cultural	5. Australian stylistic influences evident in the works produced/curated/purchased at this time? Artists that belong to the 'Australian canon'?
Economic	6. Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement (income, sales, investment value) on economic impact of economic sustainability of artists. 7. What do you believe to be the measure of success for an artist working/living in the North at that time?
Political	8. Did you access support from any of the following individuals/groups or organisations at that time?
All categories	9. What do you consider to be the 'benefits' to society that resulted from artists being located in a Northern regional centre at that time? 10. What do you consider to be the disadvantages to artists living and working in the North at this time? 11. Success relied on which listed factors. 12. Recognising the contribution of the artists/galleries/patrons in the North during this time is a benefit to the Australian cultural narrative by which listed factors?

Table 2: Questionnaire design-alignment to categories

The use of *pre-determined questions* gave the interview a guided structure and were used as *transition cues*.³⁵² The relationship between the categories and questions is shown in the Interview schedule. Table 3

³⁵² Berg and Lune, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 119.

Category	Interview Schedule
Overall theme	I want to develop, through semi-structured interviews, understandings of how artists worked in, and thus responded to, the North.
Geographic: location	<i>At what time were you living and/or working in North Queensland? What made you move to that location?</i>
Environmental: Northern Queensland	<i>In what way was the geographic location important to these works? Did you make/exhibit/purchase these works because they represented the images/style or narrative of North Queensland? Do you think the works rely on an understanding of North Queensland to give them meaning to the viewer? If yes, can you give specific examples of works in your collection? In other collections? If no, what were the representations in these works?</i>
Social: Society	<i>What social groups were you involved in specific to the arts? How did you meet? Describe your experiences with the arts at this time. What cultural experiences did you participate in? What infrastructure existed to support artists and galleries at this time? Eg Private and Regional Art Galleries, funding to artists, documentation, and public purchases of local artists. What were the cultural 'benefits' to society in having an artist working in this place at this time? Eg besides economic influences, why did you choose a career in the Arts in this place, at this time?</i>
Cultural: Artworks – Exhibited/purchased	<i>What sorts of images were depicted in the work? Give details. Was the narrative or stories important to these works? Give details. What were the stylistic influences on the work? Give details. Can you tell me what you 'like' about the works in your collection?</i>
Economic: Financial impacts	<i>Were there economic impacts on your choice to live/work in North Queensland at this time? What were the financial costs to you as an artist working in the North at this time? OR What do you think were the financial costs to artists you knew or exhibited? Can you refer to the cost of making and/or exhibiting works? Give details. Eg. Cost to run an Art Gallery, exhibition costs including framing and hanging, rental of space, cost of materials. What were your financial considerations when choosing to purchase original art works? Was it, in your opinion, an economic benefit or cost to artists working in this area?</i>
Political: Infrastructure	<i>Can you describe any 'benefits' that would result from an artist being located in a Northern regional centre? Eg documenting the architecture, people, landscape. bringing an arts profile to the region. Developing an identity different to other areas.</i>
Other	<i>Is there anything else you would like to comment on?</i>

Table 3: Interview Schedule

While the interview schedule underpinned the goals of the interview, the informal relationship with the interviewee allowed the freedom to move through topics, creating opportunities for clarification.³⁵³ The sequencing, phrasing, language, and style of discussion varied specific to context. Age, background, education and relationship determined the flow of the interview. Many of the participants were elderly, and raised concerns that they may not remember what I was asking of them, and so it was important to put them at ease and to support them with prompts and wording of the questions that could support reflection through comfortable pauses. The interview therefore began with casual chat. For example, some sharing of personal history and *catch-up* talk created a rapport and shared understanding of the goal of the project and the participant's relevance to the project. General contextual questions were followed by probing questions as the interview progressed. I noted that participants who had an academic background understood the constraints of a research project, and were consciously disciplined in their responses. In concluding the interview, I gave a reflection or summary to elicit any final thoughts from the participants or to revisit responses skimmed over or bypassed earlier in the interview.

In many cases the participants followed up with email reflections and further references, or provided documents or photographic images. The interviews in most cases included the participants discussing art works in their own collections, and where relevant, I would share images of works that were being discussed. It was also important to 'let people talk' and for the interviewer to *echo* as a strategy to ensure there was a shared understanding of responses.³⁵⁴

³⁵³ Gubrium and Holstein (2003), cited in Berg and Lune, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 113. The semi-structured interview method 'can reflect an awareness that individuals understand the world in varying ways'.

³⁵⁴ Berg and Lune, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 149.

The expectation was shared that the interview would take place in one to two hours; however, many interviews were extended due to the depth and detail of conversations. Due to geographic limitations, one interview was conducted over the telephone, one by emails and questionnaire, and one as a *Zoom* interview. These interviews also utilised the semi-structured style; however, these interviews had a more distinct structure given the time constraints, and references to works in collections were made but did not allow for detailed discussion. Berg and Lune's 'ten commandments of interviewing' proved effective.³⁵⁵ Reflexivity came into play by analysing responses throughout to formulate and ask additional questions.

Outside of the process-driven details of the interview, the interviews conducted in this study owe reference to the dramaturgical style. The discourse present in the staging of the interview, in this case specific to the arts, was considered in creating an appropriate climate for the interview. For example, interviews in this study (excluding the 3 interviews conducted using zoom, mobile phone, or email) were undertaken either at the Queensland Art Gallery, Rockhampton Regional Art Gallery, Perc Tucker Regional Gallery or at the homes of the participants where their private art collections were exhibited. The choice of setting therefore was purposeful, often included sharing a beverage or light meal, establishing the reciprocity of the interviewer's relationship to the participant.

Visual data, including photos and art works, support understandings in this study and can be analysed to learn about the group or time.³⁵⁶ Mey and Dietrich (2017) have outlined a framework to realize a visual grounded theory methodology (VGTM) which supports the exploration of *grounded theory methods* that can be applied to visual data through procedural steps including contextualisation, inventory, segmentation, memo writing,

³⁵⁵ Berg and Lune, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 151. These 'ten commandments' are described as the focus on warming up; keeping the subject on track; memorising questions; being natural and aware; having appropriate appearance; interviewing in an appropriate place; deepening questions and being respectful; being appreciative; allowing the subject to feel comfortable to follow up or continue to be engaged in the field of study.

³⁵⁶ Sarah Pink (2007), cited in O'Reilly, *Ethnographic Methods*.

coding, and the formation of categories. In this way relevant works in collections will be analysed and included in this study to support data analysis and findings.³⁵⁷

Data sources included photographic, archival, journals, artefacts, media, images, email responses, and personal archives and collections.

Primary resources have been shared by participants including personal documents, diaries, journals, personal letters and chronological lists of events. Private archival material was supplied by Coral Risley (Tom Risley Archives); Dorothy Forbes (Clem Forbes, Bakehouse Art Gallery Archives); Lorraine Gray-McConnell (1998 Clem Forbes Project with Margaret Lane) and Genevieve Gall (Bakehouse Art Gallery, Gallery Up Top, University Women's Group, Art Society Officer archives). The value of these documents cannot be overestimated in providing evidence to substantiate claims and to manage issues of memory, conscious or unconscious bias and subjectivity. Where interview data was unavailable, I sought to verify findings through historical research methods. The following archives were utilised:

- *James Cook University Special Collection (Ralph Martin Archive; Noel Risley Archive)*
- *The Fryer Library, University of Queensland (John Cooper;³⁵⁸ Johnstone Gallery; Ray Hughes Gallery; Queensland Branch of the Australia Council)*
- *The State Library of Queensland [Daily Mercury, Mackay, Cairns Post, Morning Bulletin (Rockhampton); Tableland Times (Atherton); Townsville Bulletin; Courier Mail (Brisbane)]; Johnstone Gallery; Ray Hughes Gallery]*

³⁵⁷ Günter Mey and Marc Dietrich, "From Text to Image – Shaping a Visual Grounded Theory Methodology," *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung* 42, no. 4 (162) (2017): 292–94.

³⁵⁸ The John Cooper Collection includes correspondence with Lal Lanyon (Director, Gallery Up Top); Dorothy Forbes (Director, Bakehouse Art Gallery); Rockhampton Regional Art Gallery; Ralph Martin (Martin Gallery); Jim and Rosemary Macfarlane (Trinity Gallery Cairns); and artist Clem Forbes.

- *Trove Online*³⁵⁹
- *The Cairns Historical Society*³⁶⁰
- *Rockhampton Library*³⁶¹
- *Mackay Regional Library*
- *The National Gallery of Australia*³⁶²
- National Library of Australia (*Holdsworth Galleries; Young Australia Gallery*)
- *QAGOMA Library*³⁶³

Regional and State Gallery Collections holding the works of Clem Forbes and Tom Risley include Rockhampton Art Gallery (*Rockhampton Museum of Art*); *Artspace Mackay*, *Perc Tucker Regional Gallery*, Townsville; *Cairns Art Gallery*; James Cook University; Central Queensland University; Queensland University of Technology; Queensland Art Gallery and The National Gallery of Australia. Tom Risley works are held in all major Australian State collections.

The private collections of participants including Dorothy Forbes; Coral Risley; Simon McConnell and Lorraine Gray-McConnell, Anne Chamberlain; Greg Holtz; Carmel Daveson; David Blakeley; Jim and Genevieve Gall; Jim and Rosemary Macfarlane; David Cilento (estate); Nicholas Cilento; William Yaxley and Matthew Jamieson. A full list of data sets is listed in Appendix C.

³⁵⁹ Magazine articles and library holdings.

³⁶⁰ Photographic images of the Trinity and Heritage Galleries, Cairns.

³⁶¹ Gallery Up Top.

³⁶² Images of works in NGA collection and records of commercial galleries.

³⁶³ Exhibition catalogues.

4.2.4 Content Analysis

Content analysis is undertaken via a systematic collation of literature, interview data, correspondence, scrapbooks, records and image libraries, commercial gallery records, anecdotes from within the art industry. The methodology allows for the ‘deconstruction’ (Gobo 2008)³⁶⁴ of the data as open coding to be undertaken throughout the data collection process supporting inductive and deductive process across multiple data sets. The triangulation of this data supports the validity and representativeness of the data.³⁶⁵ The research design makes use of the Stage Model of Qualitative Content Analysis.³⁶⁶ Figure 21

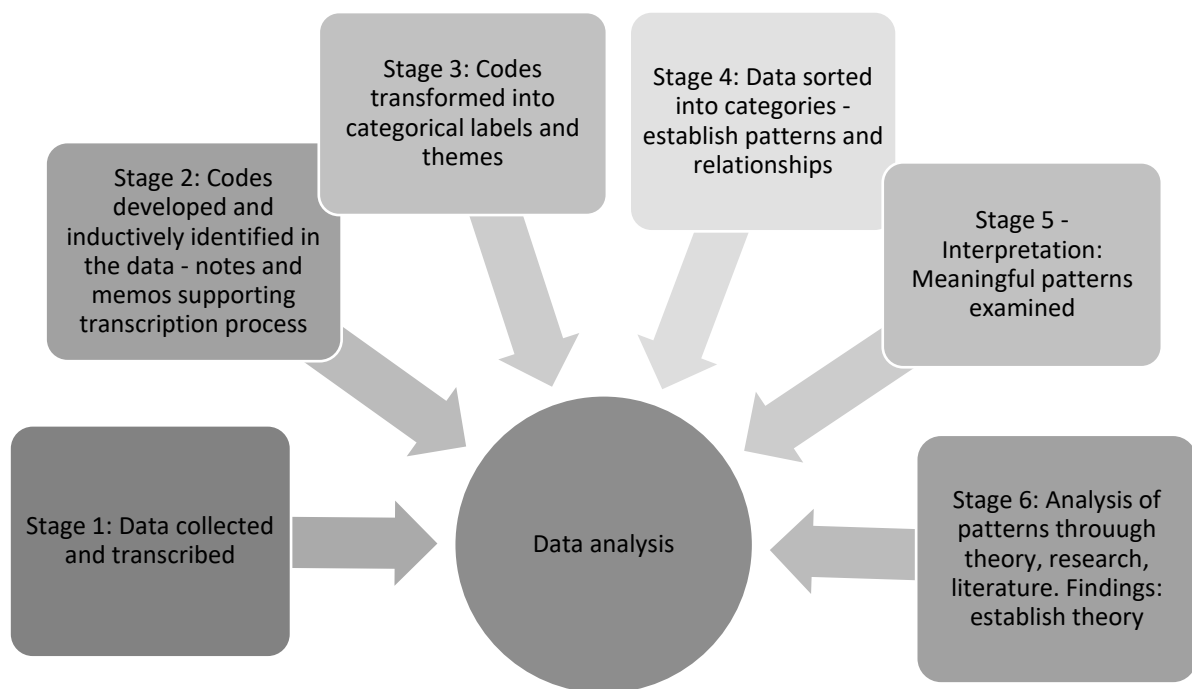


Figure 21: Stage Model of Qualitative Content Analysis

The inductive process of identifying themes and patterns in the data is underpinned by deductive reasoning through immersion in the field and lived experience. *Initial* (open)

³⁶⁴ Giampietro Gobo, *Doing Ethnography* (Sage, 2008), 227.

³⁶⁵ David Silverman, *Interpreting Qualitative Data: A Guide to the Principles of Qualitative Research*, 4th ed. (London: Sage, 2011), 369.

³⁶⁶ Berg and Lune, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 352.

coding through to focussed coding was used to identify patterns and categories and to develop relationships and comparisons. The *initial* stage of coding supported me in overviewing the data, where focussed coding was used to group or *cluster* the open codes. *Clustering*, as a device for analysis, was also be seen as creative work in the design of diagrams modelling relationships, patterns, and causal links. The research design categories acted as *buckets* or *baskets* into which segments of text were organised. The process allowed for the continual revision and review of the data, further supported by notetaking and memo-making. The ‘softened’ approach allowed for theory building as patterns emerged in the data.³⁶⁷ Figure 22

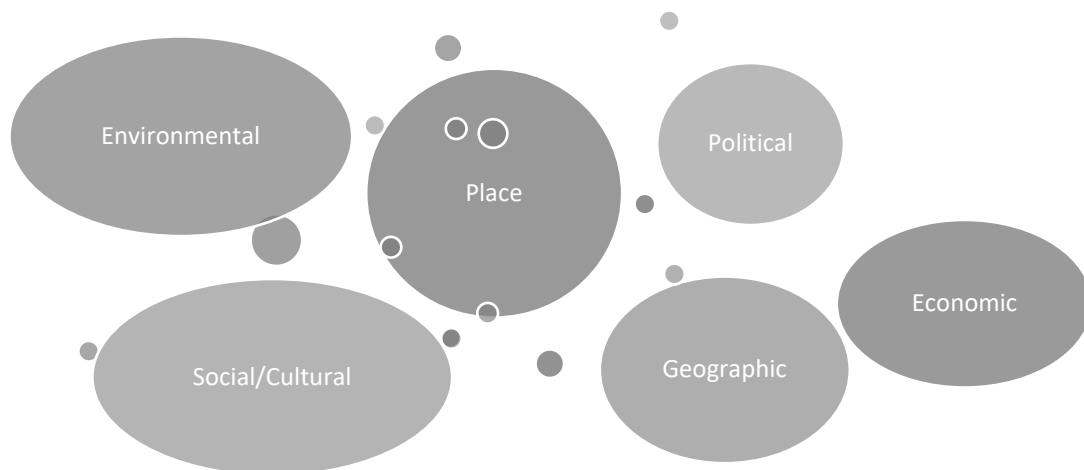


Figure 22: Clustering

³⁶⁷ As described by Charmaz in Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 19.

4.3 Research Model: Conclusions

The research model supported the collection of sufficient data that was meaningful and rich, through a process that allowed for reflexivity, scrutiny, and engagement in the world of the participants. The *social constructionist grounded theory* methods allowed for flexibility in looking for varying perspectives on the topic, reflexivity in the interview process and, where necessary, in returning to the participant through to saturation. In recognising the limitation of data ‘achieved at the price of its reliability and representativeness’,³⁶⁸ I have made use of mixed (historical, case-study and field study) methods to support calibration and validation. Sociological constructs (Strauss 1990) are observed through coding to reveal broader understandings of the data, supporting the development of conceptual models which explain the way people operated in the setting, how they understood art and accounted for events; and to describe and explain the resulting actions taken.

³⁶⁸ McNeill and Chapman, *Research Methods*, 21.

5.1 Introduction

Case-study, ethnographic and *constructionist* grounded theory methods were applied to the analysis of data inclusive of the collected literature, interview data, correspondence, image libraries, commercial gallery records and anecdotes from within the art industry. The content analysis, following the ‘Stage Model of Qualitative Content Analysis’,³⁶⁹ revealed findings explaining the multifaceted description of the cultural life that was to be found in Northern Queensland between 1971 and 1981. This is described as an informal infrastructure, with commercial galleries acting as cultural hubs supporting a cross-fertilisation of artists and ideas. Modelling shows the relationship in the data, explaining the way artists in the case studies worked in, responded to, and contributed to the art and culture of Northern Queensland during the scope of this study.

5.2 Stages of content analysis

5.2.1 Stage 1 & 2: Data Collected and Transcribed; Codes developed—inductively identified.

The research model made use of a questionnaire, in-depth, strategic and snowball sampling, semi-structured interviews, visual ethnographic methods, and document analysis.³⁷⁰ Initial or open coding was used to identify patterns, categories and to develop relationships and

³⁶⁹ Figure 21, in Chapter 4. Stage 1: Data collected and transcribed; Stage 2: Codes developed and inductively identified in the data – notes and memos supporting the transcription process; Stage 3: Codes transformed into categorical labels and themes; Stage 4: Data stored into categories – establish patterns and relationships; Stage 5: Interpretation: meaningful patterns examined; Stage 6: Analysis of patterns through theory, research, literature. Findings: establish theory.

³⁷⁰ See Appendix B for a list of data sets.

comparisons in the data. Notes and memos were used to support the transcription process.

This is summarised in Table 4.

Factor	Notes and memos on concepts emerging through literature and transcription process
Geographic	<p>Art history is written from the south</p> <p>Provincialism; Metropolitan trends; Desire to align to Europe/UK/Sydney/Melbourne curatorial trends; Necessity to leave the north.</p> <p>Boundaries – north = Northern. Definitions of North Queensland boundaries to describe central, north, far north vary. These include Qld Arts Council during scope of period has boundaries. Electoral boundaries of time. Historical boundaries (Fox history), Qld Arts funding boundaries, https://www.qhatlas.com.au/ (2022).</p> <p>Qld connected by port towns, agricultural heritage – (Brisbane, Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville, [Bowen], Cairns are port towns) connection the rural towns to the bigger towns and then to the south.</p> <p>Patrons are in north/regional for professional reasons - returning to south/Brisbane. Medical, Engineering, DPI, University</p> <p>Townsville with university/technical college exception. Sustains longer term artists/professionals through teaching.</p> <p>All regional centres distinct and separate.</p> <p>Distance travelled to connect to Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne.</p> <p>North understands/engages in arts from south through commercial galleries.</p> <p>Artists travel south for representation. Yaxley/Risley to Hughes (Brisbane); Jamieson to Komon (Sydney/Melbourne); Forbes to Holdsworth & Brisbane galleries (Sydney/Brisbane).</p> <p>All artists return to north after varying periods of time.</p> <p>Artists travel to north west (west of Mackay) for imagery</p> <p>Artists travel far north (of Cairns) – for imagery</p>
Environmental	<p>Fascination/love of the landscape of the north by artists and patrons consistent throughout – distinct understanding of an otherness – different and not the same to the south.</p> <p>Have to be in the north to understand the imagery in the paintings – being there and recognising it has increased the value to the patron/viewer.</p> <p>Landscape is Northern Queensland people: farmers/miners.</p> <p>Landscape is Northern Queensland: houses.</p> <p>Landscape is Northern stories/mythology.</p> <p>Distinct regions are categorised environmentally.</p> <p>North is rainforest/ti-tree, central as brigalow, north/west as dry/ drought/flood.</p> <p>Stradbroke Island (swamps, ti-tree, wallum country, houses) formative Forbes 1965-1971</p> <p>Risley immersed in north through role with CSIRO-Cairns.</p> <p>Risley lives in Atherton tablelands. Studio space is farmhouse. Travels to Far North for materials. Environmental loss—Brigalow (Forbes).</p>

	<p>Colours thematically represent landscape. Brown, green, ochre, black, pinks, blues.</p> <p>Experimentation with materials to produce translucency of landscape—Forbes.</p> <p>Experimentation with materials available in north to challenge understandings of landscape- (steel, stone, wood)—Risley</p>
Social/Cultural	<p>Concept of high arts are artists engaging in Australian Modernism, international, European.</p> <p>Notion of elitism – commercial galleries had ‘good art’, ‘integrity’ in what was on walls.</p> <p>commercial galleries as cultural hubs – patrons gather/commonality in understanding of value of works/dialogue.</p> <p>education of artist – dominance of Sydney/London/European schools. Qld reliant of atelier and artist studio for contact with professional artists/experimental or modern techniques</p> <p>education of patron; concepts of contemporary/non-traditional as high value.</p> <p>Art education in Qld through technical colleges and board of teacher education. Central Techn College traditional. Art training evolves in 1970s through TAFE system. Professional artists find jobs as teachers in TAFE/colleges.</p> <p>Artists leave to seek art training in Sydney, Melbourne or London or are ‘self-taught’.</p> <p>Media/technique is linked to concept of progressive.</p> <p>Figurative/non-figurative schools/debate equating to modernism/contemporary.</p> <p>Art societies create culture of arts – have a ‘contemporary’ agenda. Look to support artists and to create prize/exhibition opportunities throughout Northern centres.</p> <p>Qld Arts Council – touring programme and vacation schools - Cross cultural – theatre/ballet</p> <p>No Regional Galleries</p> <p>State Gallery not building collection of Qld artists.</p> <p>Brisbane galleries exhibiting Australian artists but not Queensland artists.</p> <p>Modernism – artists Rigby, Molvig as influential.</p> <p>Rapotec; Rigby as mentor to Forbes; Forbes; Hughes as mentor to Risley.</p> <p>Mentors connect to galleries – Forbes to Holdsworth; Risley to Hughes</p>
Economic	<p>Sustainability of artist as full time/professional impacted by pricing decisions, sales, representation in galleries, commissions. Dealer profile supporting sales, availability of exhibition space. Representation in collections supports prices/sales, prizes, scholarships, residencies, teaching create income.</p> <p>Cost of exhibiting in south – freight.</p> <p>Cost of exhibiting – materials and framing.</p> <p>Professional artists as teachers – adult education/arts council/private</p> <p>Access to funding – scholarship (prizes); Qld Arts Council; Visual Arts Board</p>
Political	<p>Government value placed on the arts = policy/infrastructure/influencers</p> <p>Curatorial trends/perspectives of critics</p> <p>Qld has a history of utilitarian policies – art spaces not prioritised again infrastructure to support industry throughout state.</p> <p>Prizes bring visibility and representation in galleries incl collections.</p> <p>Lobbying role of art societies in seeking funding for spaces/collections/prizes</p>

Table 4: Notes and Memos—patterns emerge through transcription.

5.2.2 Stages 3 & 4: Codes transformed to establish patterns & relationships.

Geographic, economic, social/cultural, environmental, and political factors were expanded to include the dominant themes, becoming sub-categories. The diagram was created to conceptualise themes, links, and importance. Figure 23

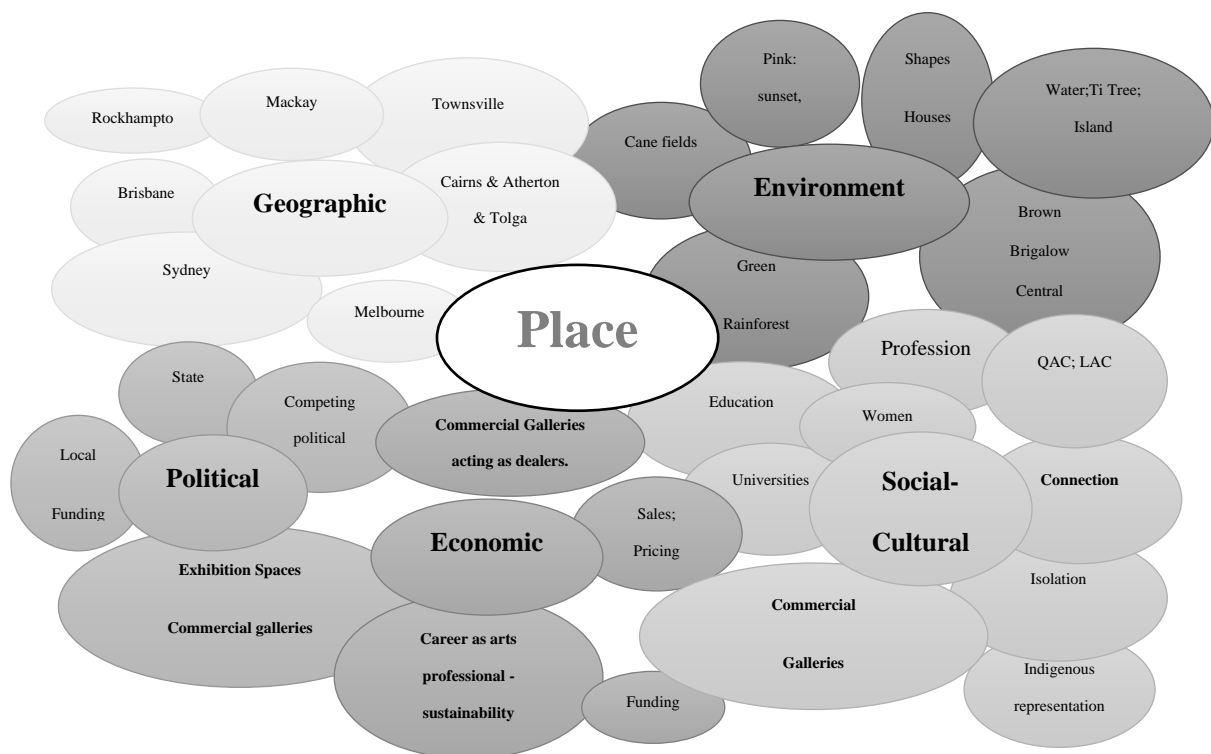


Figure 23: Clustering revealing sub-categories.

Clustering further revealed a geographic pattern through alignment of artist/patron/art group to regional areas described as Far North, North and Central Queensland. Artists, commercial galleries, societies, and institutions in each area could be placed within these categories and regions. A geographic model was created to align these groupings. Figure 24 Regional characteristics are summarised in Figure 25.

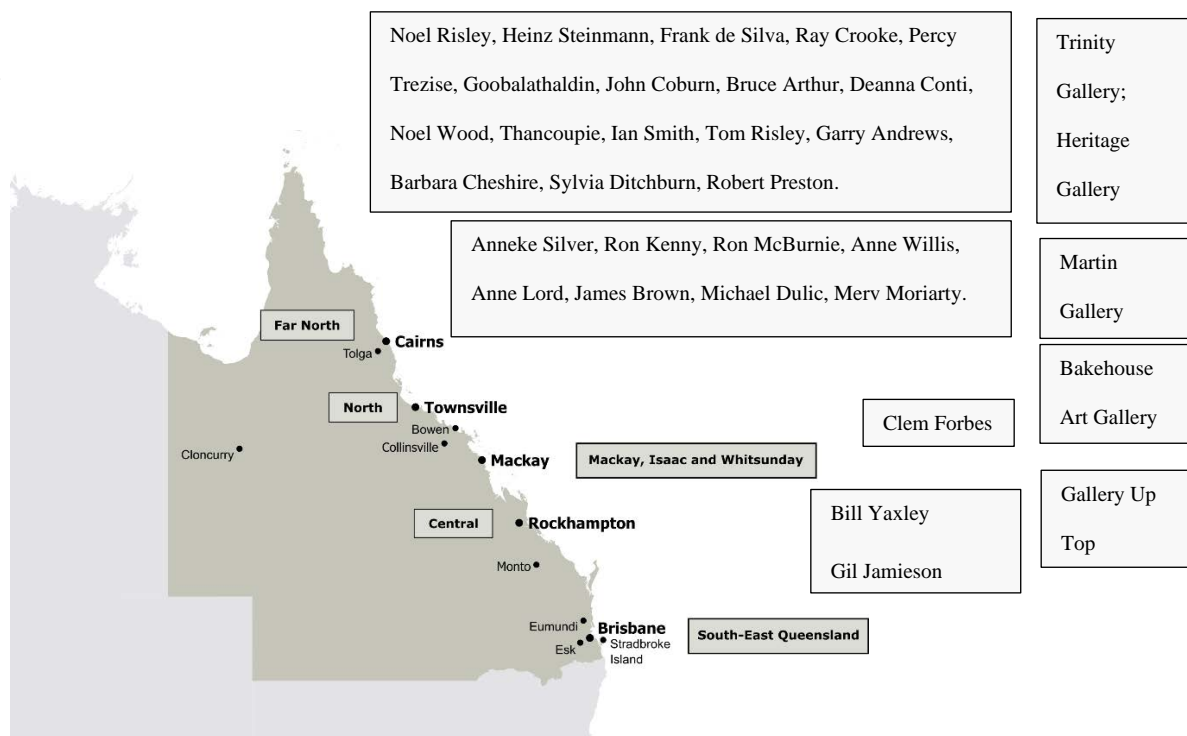


Figure 24: Geographic Model aligning region, artist, and commercial gallery.

Region	Regional Centre	Artist	Characteristics: style, genre, understandings	Supporting Infrastructure
Far North Queensland	Cairns	Tom Risley, Heinz Steinman, Frank de Silva, Ray Crooke, Bob Preston, Percy Trezise, Goobalathaldin, John Coburn, Bruce Arthur, Deanna Conti, Thancoupie, Sylvia Ditchburn, Ian Smith, Noel Risley	Contemporary Experimental Picturesque Rainforest/Island Polynesian imagery Iconography Indigenous artists/imagery Artists drawn to the north for way of life Isolation. Local materials. Gallery tourism. (commercial opportunities)	Trinity Gallery Heritage Gallery Cairns Art Society Representation through southern dealer
North	Townsville	Anneke Silver, Ron Kenny, Ron McBurnie, Anne Willis, Anne Lord, James Brown, Jim Cox, Bette Hayes, Betty Pugh, Harold Kesteven, Eddie Mabo, Cyril Beale, Dennis	Abstract Non-figurative Dry/ochre Printmaking International community-drawn in by the university, education focus -reduced notion of isolation.	Martin Gallery Strand studio 'Camp Magnetic'-artist community Townsville Art Society Technical College/JCU as

		Hardy, Peter Lawson, Ernie Oates, Doris Watson, Paddy Moreton, Gay Woodworth, Barbara Douglas, June Power, Maxine Smith, Gail Mabo, Michael Dulic, Jane Hawkins, Merv Moriarty, Jo Forster, Shirley Macnamarra, Morea Grossvner, Richard Lane	Art training through recognised institutions Patrons within arts communities	conceptual input bringing new ideas in on a yearly basis (Silver interview) Representation through university/collectio ns
Central	CQ: Mackay/ Rockhampt on/ Monto	Clem Forbes Gil Jamieson, Bill Yaxley, Lal Lanyon – Biloela, Emu Park studio	Figurative Non-traditional Rainforest, Canefields, Ti Tree Swamps, Reef, Brigalow, mining, farming, western Qld, mythos, Fraser Coast, influence of Indigenous; South Sea Islander/PNG style/imagery. Primary industry way of life- pastoral/agricultural. Patrons are professionals who have moved to the north-incl Medical, Engineering fields. Patronage from mining industry (eg Caltex) support art prizes, commissions Self-taught aligns to concept of progressive & non- traditional	Bakehouse Art Gallery Gallery Up Top Technical college/CQU Mackay Art Society Rockhampton Art Society Rockhampton Art Gallery Mackay LAC Representation through southern dealers

Figure 25: Sub-categories described specific to region.

5.2.3 Stage 5: Interpretation: Meaningful patterns examined.

The geographic data revealed concepts of identity as both northern and/or regional; isolation; and location, as impacting on artist and patron actions.

Table 5

Category	Theme	Scope: Patterns & Relationships established	Interpretation: Patterns examined
Geographic	Northern identity	Artist located in north	Identity and narrative created in and of the north. Contextual/conceptual understandings of the north as either far north-tropical, or central-dry -Mackay, excluded outside of conceptual understanding of the north (considered to be significantly south of Cairns/Townsville). Central region: dry landscape considered in some ways inconsistent with Mackay Hinterland (Rockhampton considered typical of 'Central Qld). Mackay a gap in definition of north as defined curatorially and geographically (not environmentally).
	Isolation	Artist in nth is isolated from metropolitan centres to the sth	Artist remaining in the north-practice distinct to the north. At risk of becoming invisible to the south (understood as Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne).
	Location	Artist relocates to the south to access dealer/peer/critical acknowledgement	Artist becomes aligned to the curatorial trends in the south
	Regional Identity	Regional Centres	Far North (Cairns); North (Townsville, Mackay); Central (Mackay, Rockhampton): distinct characteristics. Artist groups/relationships are created through focus on sustaining/encouraging practice of artists living and working in the region. Art Societies/Branches (QAC) form- focus on art spaces, exhibiting opportunities for artists, development of regional collections, art prizes, supporting developing artists, pulling professional artists to the nth as educators/judges. Independent of the south incl Brisbane.

Table 5: Summary of geographic category, sub-category, theme & scope.

Environmental factors revealed a focus on the representation of landscape; an understanding of Northern Queensland mythology specific to people and place; and the impact on artist practice through method, style and material. Mackay was identified as both tropical—rainforest and wetland environments, and dry—Brigalow country. Table 6

Category	Theme	Scope: Patterns & Relationships established	Interpretation: Patterns examined
Environmental	Landscape	Representation of Northern landscapes	Unique understanding of the landscape of the north – rainforest, Brigalow, Ti-tree
	Mythos	Northern Qld representation of people and place (mythos)	Unique understanding of ‘Northern Queensland’– landscape, goldmines, agricultural development of region, folk legends, women, Indigenous history.
	Artist practice	Artist in the field	Practices unique to the north through materials, methods, understanding of environment. Artist has access to the field. Influence of Aboriginal art.

Table 6: Summary of environmental category, sub-category, theme & scope.

Social and cultural factors revealed a focus on concepts of ‘high art’; contemporary and modernist styles; the prevalence of commercial art galleries as centralising arts activities and creating informal networks; art societies and the LAC in driving arts agendas; the role of professional artists as mentors and the importance of prizes and education models to artists.

Table 7

Category	Theme	Scope: Patterns & Relationships established	Interpretation: Patterns examined
Social/Cultural	High Art	Concept of artistic value	Patrons-shared understanding of value of work as aligned to Australian and international arts narrative. Driven by an educated middle class group professionals/tertiary ed.
	Cultural Hubs	Commercial galleries centralise cultural activities. Informal networks	Commercial galleries in regional centres prior to regional galleries—leaders of arts—provide commercial opportunities. Networks align to galleries incl touring exhibitions, art classes, studio practice, visiting artists. Dealer acts as advisor/mentor.
	Prizes	Prizes: exposure to /financial reward.	Exhibition opportunities. Artists receive recognition and inclusion in public collections. Prizes draw artists to the north & south. Prof artists as judges =critical /recognition.
	Art Societies	Art societies in all centres drive cultural activities.	Art societies in all centres have active memberships drawing artists and exhibition opportunities to the north. Support public collections & scholarships.
	Peers	Artist influenced by peers	Forbes: Rapotec, Rigby, Molvig: School of Modernism. Abstract techniques. Risley: Forbes—links to Hughes. Contemporary narrative.
	Queensland Arts Council	Vacation Schools Touring Program	Presidency of Gertrude Langer, UQ vacation schools/regional workshops—tutoring by professional artists across the state. QAC touring program through regional centres-music, theatre, exhibitions.
	Education	Self-Taught Board of Education Technical Colleges	Artists access art education in Sydney, Melbourne, and London. CTC (Brisbane) criticised as traditional/out of date. Artist educated through private tutoring, workshops, atelier model & peer mentoring. Ed Board provides workshops delivered by professional artists. Technical colleges emerge providing art diplomas. Self-taught artist is valued if defended as progressive, aligned to curatorial trends
	Modernism	Concept of 'progressive'	Concepts of progressive, non-traditional, contemporary, modernism—critical to value.
	Nthn Qld School of Art	Artists characterised by practice & environment	Artists grouped by method, subject matter, and style-environment of Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton

Table 7: Summary of social/cultural themes, scope & interpretation.

Economic factors revealed the perception of the artist as a professional reliant on pricing decisions—usually determined by the dealer. The impact of costs on the artist, including framing and freight, as well as the need for economic support through education, grants and funding, was considerable. Table 8

Category	Theme	Scope: Patterns & Relationships established	Interpretation: Patterns examined
Economic	Professional status	Full time practice	Artist income at risk
	Pricing	Low price, increase sales	Higher price reflects perceptions of quality but decreases sales
	Dealer	Commission	Dealer (at the time) takes a minimum of 10% commission in addition to a fee for expenses including freight and framing. Dealer with artist negotiates prices, responds to sales history. Artist carries risk of financial loss. Viability of exhibiting in commercial galleries debated.
	Exhibiting costs to artist	Framing, freight, catalogue, invitation, materials, catering	Artist carries costs—Significant impact on profit for artist
	Other Income	Teaching opportunities through workshops incl TAFE/ University/Adult Education Board/Board Teacher Education/ private art classes/vacation schools	Status as professional artist is sustainable through income generated by teaching.

Table 8: Summary of economic themes, scope & interpretation.

The political impact of the QAC, VAB and Regional Councils in supporting the arts through funding models was considerable, as was the desire for space to house Regional Art Collections. The high value placed on recognition in the south, particularly Sydney and Melbourne, is a dominant theme. Table 9

Category	Theme	Scope: Patterns & Relationships established	Interpretation: Patterns examined
Political	Visual Art Board; Australia Council for the Arts; Regional Councils	Funding	Funding for exhibiting, residency, and exhibition programs. Access to artist grants Representation in collections
	Space	Regional art galleries State Gallery	Utilitarian policies mean Queensland does not politically prioritise funding for cultural spaces. Gallery collection policies priorities international and Australian established artists—Queensland artists less represented in collections
	Artist role in society	Artist as represented by the art dealer	Artist as expert—challenges public perceptions Artist as outsider. Art dealer leads curatorial decisions. Successful artist as leader in teaching roles/judge/presence on advisory committees/boards/organisations
	South	Dominance of south in arts narrative	Artists/patrons seek affirmation through lens of representation in the south. Considered critical to career to exhibit in the south. Brisbane is overlooked – success through representation in Sydney and/or Melbourne

Table 9: Summary of political: themes, scope & interpretation.

In analysing the causal links between the factors, it was found that high value was placed on representations of the environment recognisable as Northern Queensland through the artist’s delivery through subject matter, style and methods. Geographic factors consistently revealed cultural isolation and physical distance from the south as having an impact on the artist success. Social and cultural understandings of high art specific to elitism, the value of education, and the alignment with cultural influences in the south and overseas were consistent pressures. Political factors specifically affecting funding and infrastructure was also influential. All factors intersected through the economic category, which determined the sustainability of practices in Northern Queensland, thus further determining actions taken by patrons and artists. This is modelled in Figure 26.

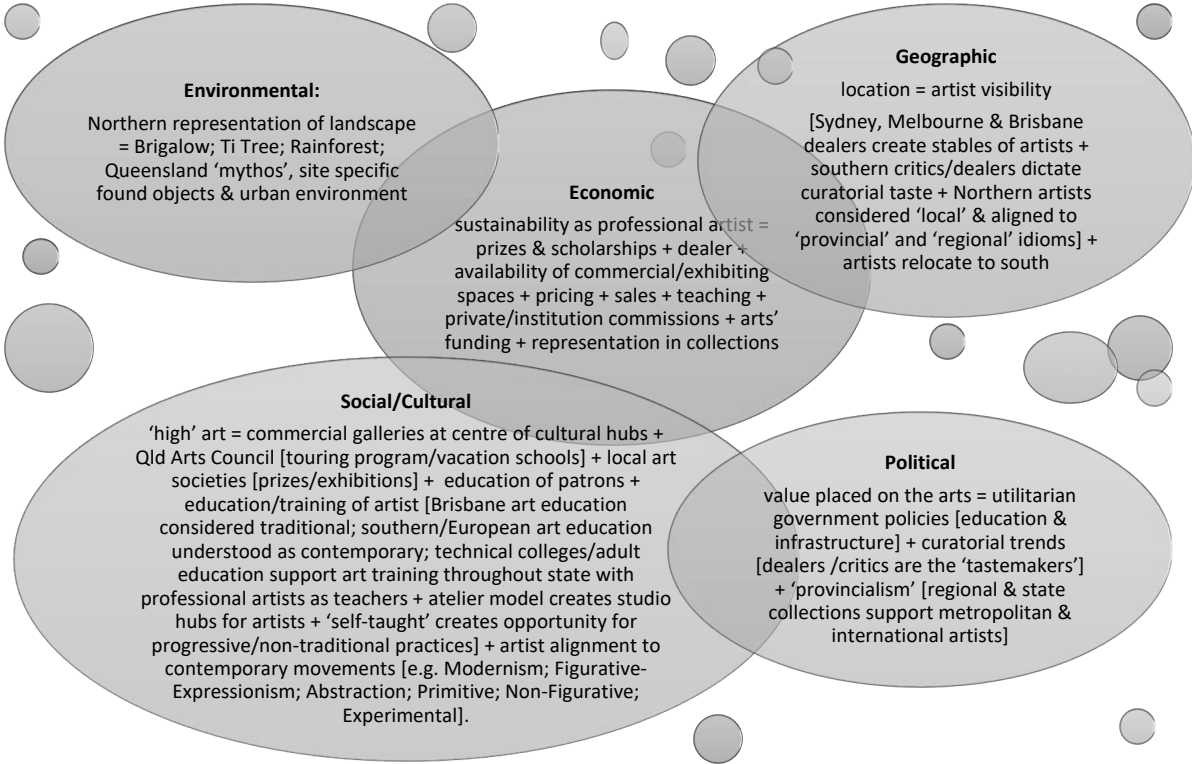


Figure 26: Conceptualisation of causality between factors impacting on the arts in the north.

5.2.4 Stage 6: Findings: Multifaceted description of cultural life

*Maybe they were forging networks in an informal way that wasn't informed by the art system that drives so much of Sydney and Melbourne in terms of taste making and art making'*³⁷¹

*It has always been the case. It is the educated middle class that drives the art scene.*³⁷²

Analysis of patterns has established a deeper understanding of the way people operated in the setting, how they understood art, how they accounted for events, and the actions taken as a result. Artists and patrons in Northern Queensland had a common goal in engaging with the contemporary arts agenda, centralised around art spaces, cultural programmes, events, and education, as the drivers for actions. A dominant theme was the lack of formal infrastructure throughout Northern Queensland. Informal networks were evident through multiple independent practices intersecting with each other, led by an arts community of mostly educated, professional and middle-class patrons, with a common goal of developing the visual arts agenda throughout Northern Queensland. Agencies supporting cultural programmes included art societies, LACs, and Australia Council for the Arts. Regional councils, art societies, and private organisations such as Caltex Australia supported the sponsorship of art prizes, providing exhibiting opportunities for Queensland artists, while bringing professionals to the region. Regional councils supported the development of art collections, often through the lobbying actions of the arts community and agencies. Organisations including JCU, CQU, UQ, TAFE and the Adult Education Board instigated public education programmes, employing professional artists as teachers, and further establishing art collections which included artists living and working in the region.³⁷³

³⁷¹ Ross Searle (curator and director), interview by Celie Forbes, March 6, 2021.

³⁷² Sue Smith (Curator, CQU Collection), interview by Celie Forbes, July 25, 2019.

³⁷³ Patron Genevieve Gall stated that 'another accolade must go to the Adult Education Board, a Government Project, which brought serious cultural experiences to the country'. Genevieve Gall, response to questionnaire, February 14, 2021.

Commercial art galleries acted independently, however a shared vision of creating a space for Australian contemporary artists to be seen by the public was evident. Exhibition programmes were inclusive of local, regional, national, and Asia Pacific artists (including First Nations, Indonesian and PNG artists), sculptors, ceramicists, and artisans. Exhibiting costs, including freight and framing, contributed to the financial burden of galleries and artists.³⁷⁴ Distance from the south is therefore seen as impacting on arts practice in Northern Queensland. This informal infrastructure is conceptualised in Figure 28.

Environmental and cultural factors drew artists to the north, dictated by the landscape and cultural opportunity. Geographic, cultural, and political factors, such as isolation and critical recognition, dictated by the Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne art communities, drew artists and patrons to the south. Figure 27.

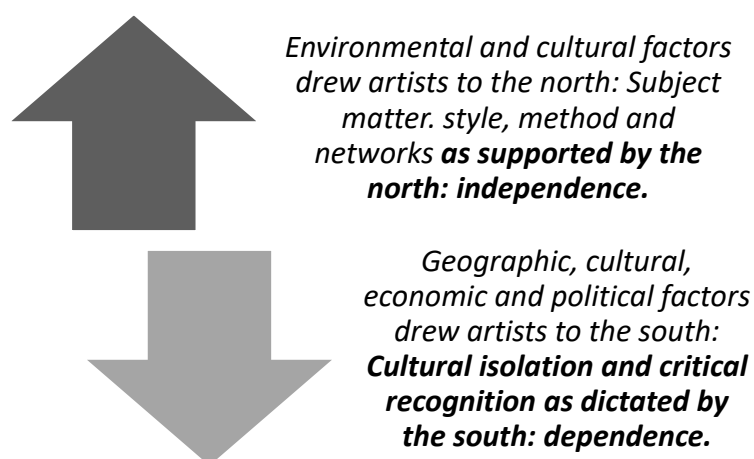


Figure 27: Conceptualisation of factors impacting on artists in the study.

³⁷⁴ Several collections (Cooper, John Cooper Papers; Forbes, personal archive; Holdsworth Galleries, files relating to Clem Forbes) include references to freight and framing expenses. For example, an invoice that listed sales for Clem Forbes's works in 1983 (1 February) came to \$1620. After the commission and framing were deducted, the remuneration to Forbes was \$155. Freight and materials were not reflected in the invoice but would have reduced the earnings from this sale even further. Holdsworth Galleries, files relating to Clem Forbes, Records of the Holdsworth Galleries, 1969–1996, MS9153, National Library of Australia, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-299845733>.

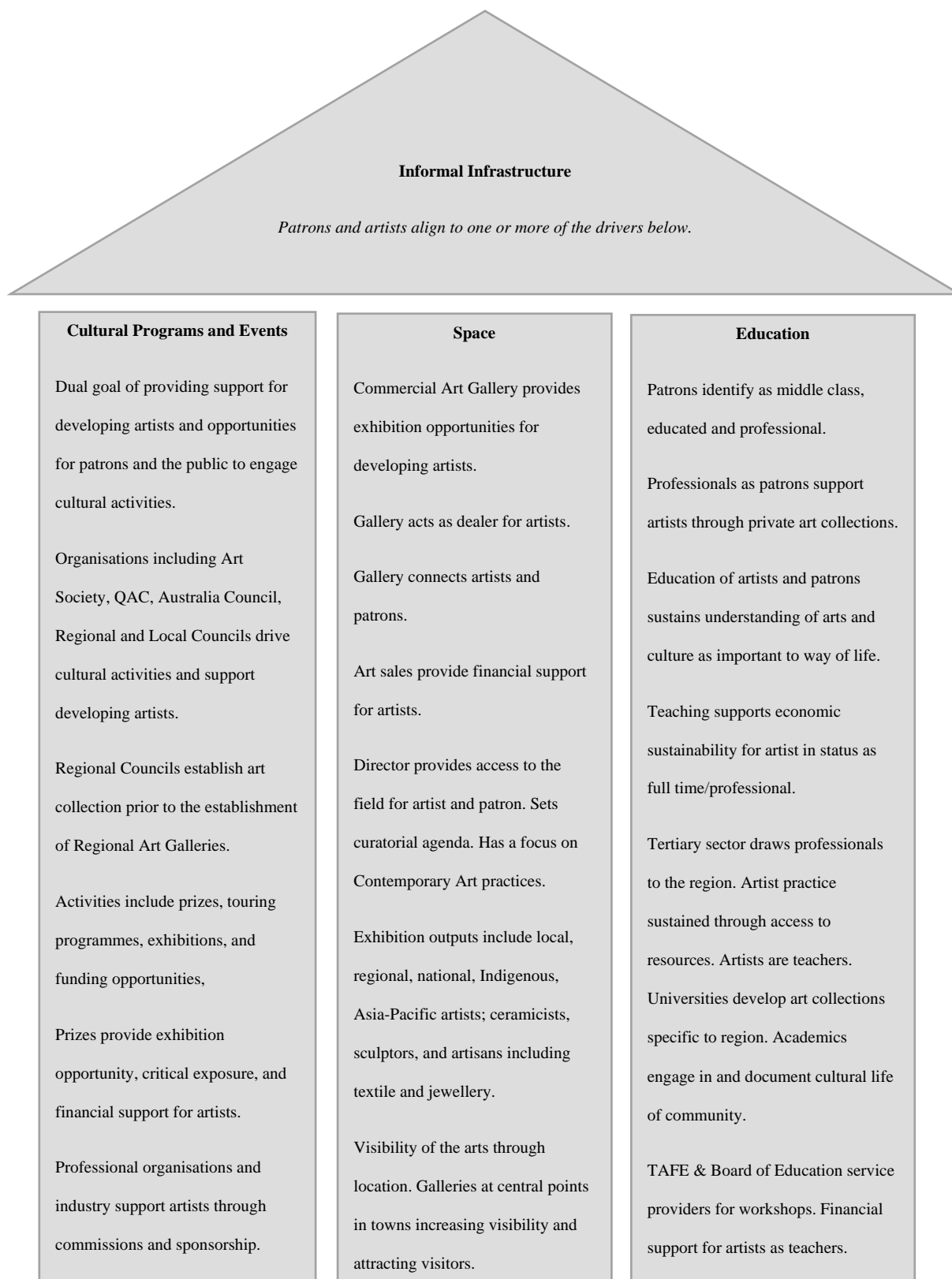


Figure 28: Conceptualisation of multifaceted description of cultural life.

Artists, directors, patrons, and art groups in the study were found to have shared beliefs on the value of the arts to the intellectual life of the individual and community; the understanding of the landscape and environment of Northern Queensland as heterogenous and distinct from the rest of Australia; and the reliance on arts networks located in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne as critical to the developing artist and confidence of the patrons. The model, adapted from Richards (2006), reflects understandings of the visual arts by artists, patrons, directors, and curators in the study, grouped as high and low importance. Figure 29



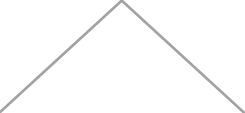

High Importance			
Art 'High' Arts including Visual Arts. Includes Theatre; Ballet; Music. State, National and International including touring programs. Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Europe. Understandings of modern, contemporary. Representation of landscape as distinct/unique to the north, valued in the North [less value in the South]. Visible in exhibition programmes.	Elite Art Dealers, Directors, and curators provide access through curatorial decisions. Access to artworks available through dealers, and Commercial Galleries Quality reflected in pricing decisions. Stables include artists from the south, and artists represented by southern dealers. Value reflected as metropolitan	Professional Art The professional artist. Represented by Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne dealers. Visible in industry journals and published in monographs. Held in collections. Visible through relationships with artists as peers, mentors. The professional artist as educator.	The Excellent Artist recognition identified in collections, surveys, prizes, funding, QAC, Australia Council, art journals, universities. Connected to the South or international. Understood through artist practice: subject matter, style and method.
			
Cultural activities Accessibility and identifiable themes: Dance, murals, music, local theatre productions	Community Art Women, local, children, church, music, Activities separate from commercial and regional galleries	Amateur Art Untrained Craft/Hobby art Local No dealer Training from private classes as delivered by art professional	The Ordinary Local as provincial Amateur Untrained
Lesser importance			

Figure 29:Modelling of values of artists, directors, patrons, art groups. Elaboration of Richards 2006.

5.2.5 Findings: Conclusions

Looking back, this was a period when North Queensland was struggling to get on the map, for both art and artists. Travel and remoteness were part of the reason, but as affluence and discussion and local support emerged, helped on by greater media coverage, the recognition of Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, and Mackay as regional art centres became more evident and advanced. Rockhampton had led the way with an Art Gallery. It was also a time without the noise and chatter of the present day. There was a sort of pioneering feel that it was time to make the arts count, not just the visual, but music as well.³⁷⁵

Ultimately the development of the arts in Northern Queensland was realised through the economic viability of living and working in the arts in the north, while being sustained by a belief in the arts and its importance to society. This was shown to have a significant impact on artists, directors and patrons. Modern and contemporary art had high value as an intellectual driver. A passion for the environment as characteristic of the north was consistent. While these cultural and environmental factors gave artists the motivation and independence to work in the north, geographic, economic, political, and cultural factors created a dependence on the south.

The commonalities in geography and environment, specific to the Far North, North and Central regions have been grouped in this study as Northern Queensland. This was interpreted by artists in subject matter particular to geography, environment, people, and place. While the North and Far North have traditionally been perceived as the wet tropics north of Cairns, understandings in this study of the Northern Queensland environment were more diverse. The landscape of the Far North, including Cairns and the Atherton Tableland was interpreted as tropical, farmlands, urban and made up of small townships, as seen in the work of Tom Risley and Clem Forbes. The landscape of the North, including Townsville and the Burdekin region, is understood to be diverse, as represented by artists including Anneke

³⁷⁵ Genevieve Gall, response to questionnaire, February 14, 2021.

Silver and Clem Forbes. Participants in the study understood there was a distinct change to the landscape both north of Sarina and south of Mackay. The Sarina Range was identified as the geographic location marking the transition from the dry landscape around the Rockhampton region to the wet tropics of the north, as distinguished by the environment of the Mackay Hinterland including the Pioneer Valley and Eungella National Park. This understanding of the wet tropics by participants also includes the Melaleuca (Ti-Tree and Paperbark) forest areas found around Mackay. The coastal regions north of Mackay, around areas such as Bowen, were also included. This landscape is interpreted by Clem Forbes. The Fitzroy region, including the brigalow country, mining, pastoral, and farming regions, represents the landscape of Central Queensland. Queensland's history of 'boom and bust' cycles gives rise to imagery reflecting the impact of either drought or floods on the people and lifestyle of Northern Queensland, as is represented by artists Clem Forbes, Bill Yaxley and Gil Jamieson. Tom Risley further understood this industrial development through methodology and symbolic representation.

Methods were influenced by the environment, education and the practice of professional artists acting as mentors. A consistent belief was that living in Northern Queensland provided artists with the freedom to develop as artists, distinguishing them from artists in metropolitan centres.

Conceptual modelling demonstrates the impacts on artists of living and working in the north and the informal infrastructure and networks in place, connecting Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville, and Cairns. This has been described in this study as a Northern Queensland School of Art.

3 Case Studies: Commercial Art Galleries: Northern Queensland 1971-1981

*This was the 70s—things were happening. It was an incredible period—especially for the arts.*³⁷⁶

*There was a movement for each of those centres to put their name to what they stood for in the arts.*³⁷⁷

Analysis of the data revealed trends that were not visible at the start of the project.³⁷⁸ In seeking to explain *why* and *how* artists worked in, responded, and contributed to the arts in Northern Queensland, the influence of small commercial galleries along the east coast of Queensland to the north of Brisbane became evident. Gallery Up Top, Rockhampton; The Bakehouse Art Gallery, Mackay; the Martin Gallery, Townsville, and the Trinity and Heritage Galleries, Cairns, are therefore included as four minor case-studies, explaining the way the galleries acted as cultural hubs for the artists, patrons and directors prior to the establishment of regional art galleries. Although they operated independently, in effect these commercial galleries would connect artists, art galleries and art dealers along the east coast of Queensland to each other, as well as to Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne.³⁷⁹ Australian artists were increasingly represented in the exhibition histories of these Northern Queensland galleries, as further evidenced in the collections of the patrons in the study.

The model of the northern commercial galleries, it is also argued, has similarities to the Brisbane commercial galleries established between 1965-1975, such as the Moreton, Grand Central, Johnstone, Kennigo Street and Young Australian Galleries (Chapter 2). These

³⁷⁶ McConnell and Gray-McConnell, interview.

³⁷⁷ Gall and Gall, interview.

³⁷⁸ This was supported through the grounded theory research methodology, where the reflexivity of the research allowed me to 'recognise the multiple realities, positions and standpoints and how they shift specific to the researcher and research participants'. Denzin and Lincoln, *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 417.

³⁷⁹ See Chapter 2. Regional art galleries came late to Queensland by national standards, with the first purpose-built space opening in Rockhampton in 1979. Artspace Mackay opened in 2003, the Perc Tucker Regional Gallery in Townsville in 1980, and the Cairns Regional Art Gallery in 1995.

galleries were centrally located in spaces that were typical of ‘Queensland’, becoming a centre for cultural activities including artist studio space, art classes and workshops. The curatorial decisions of directors reflected a strong focus on Australian artists. Stock was sourced from galleries in south, including Sydney and Melbourne, evidencing an alignment to the Holdsworth, Philip Bacon, Eight Bells, Rudy Komon, and Bonython galleries. Galleries also exhibited Brisbane and Northern Queensland artists. Exhibitions also included ceramics, tapestry, macrame, leather, copper, jewellery, and crafts represented as Fine Arts, as well as the work of Asia-Pacific artists.³⁸⁰ Prices were balanced to support sales and reflect professional status of artist. Exhibitions would in addition create social opportunities where opening nights included attendance of exhibiting artists.

5.3.1 The Gallery Up Top Central Queensland Design Centre. 248 Quay Street, Rockhampton. Director. Lal Lanyon Established 1970

The idea that the north is a cultural desert is not true...these places have more of a cultural life than has been documented.³⁸¹

Every time we went to Rocky, we would go and see Lal.³⁸²

Gallery Up Top³⁸³ was co-founded and co-directed by Norma Hempenstall and Kevin Langford in 1969. Located in the historic ‘Avonleigh’ building, 248 Quay Street,

³⁸⁰ Asia-Pacific included an emphasis on First Nations, Indonesian, New Guinea and Japanese works, including Ceramics, Printmaking and Jewellery.

³⁸¹ Phil Brown, interview by Celie Forbes (topic: Gallery Up Top), April 18, 2019.

³⁸² McConnell and Gray-McConnell, interview.

³⁸³ The gallery name has been presented as ‘Gallery Up Top’ and ‘Gallery Uptop’ in different publications. The original title in the document supplied by Norma Hempenstall is ‘Gallery Up Top’. Lanyon’s gallery name has had mixed punctuations and spelling, as reflected by the date, document, newspaper article or photographic image. Lanyon used ‘THE GALLERY UPTOP’ as the graphic and letterhead and ‘Uptop’ in correspondence, as held in the archives of participants in this study. Phil Brown records it as ‘Gallery Up Top’ in the *Morning Bulletin* (Sydney, NSW) in 1980 (Figure 26), which is what I have followed. Further, Hempenstall and Langford could not confirm the exact opening year as 1969 or 1970. The Rockhampton Regional Library has records of the ‘Avonleigh’ building used as a gallery in 1969. Langford and William Yaxley also referenced the gallery’s origins in East Street; however, the earliest images (published here), have the address as 248 Quay Street during the scope of this study. The details in this thesis are therefore recorded as noted in the source.

Rockhampton overlooking the Fitzroy River. Figure 30 The apartment was restored as an exhibition space initially for New Guinea artifacts, pottery, and handicrafts, evolving into a space for fine arts. The intention was also to establish a meeting place for interested patrons, and give exposure to artists from Rockhampton, Townsville, Brisbane, and Sydney.

Exhibitions typically opened on a Saturday night, rotating monthly. The most important aspect in the establishment of the Gallery Up Top, Hempenstall wrote

was that it was not a commercial venture, but a project for shared enjoyment and pleasure, with the hope that an interest in art would be stimulated in an ever-widening circle of visitors. It was a hobby, and this meant that while exhibitions could be arranged of the work of promising local artists, we were not seeking to pander to the taste of the masses, because we were not dependent on Gallery returns for a living, and so we could maintain a standard that satisfied us.³⁸⁴



Figure 30: *Gallery Up Top*, c1970. [Persons in image unidentified]. Photograph: Kevin Langford. Reprinted with permission of Rockhampton Regional Council and Kevin Langford.

Artist Bill Yaxley exhibited in Gallery Up Top initially through artist Brenda Lewis' (1924-2010) connection to Kevin Langford.³⁸⁵ Lal Lanyon (1916-2005), a practising artist with a studio in Zilzie, Emu Park, to the south of Yeppoon referenced Gallery Up Top in

³⁸⁴ Norma Hempenstall, quoted from an article included in correspondence between Kevin Langford and the author. Kevin Langford, email message to author, September 14, 2021.

³⁸⁵ William (Bill) Yaxley (artist), interview by Celie Forbes, July 2, 2019.

correspondence with Brisbane gallerist John Cooper, writing ‘the new little Gallery Uptop [sic] is lively and popular. They are bringing in good articles – jewellery, pottery etc. and so far doing well’.³⁸⁶ The gallery’s success motivated Hempenstall and Langford to hand the gallery over to Lanyon in 1971, with the Gallery Up Top Central Queensland Design Centre becoming a full time commercial gallery. Originating from Victoria, Lal Lanyon had a strong focus on international art and design, with established links to gallerist John Cooper in Brisbane, experience both as director with the Biloela Art Gallery and through her relationship with recognised artist Gil Jamieson, living in Monto. Jamieson and artist Sam Fullbrook were established in the Sydney and Melbourne art world.³⁸⁷

Lanyon held to the policy of an artist stable, representing Queensland artists Gil Jamieson and Bill Yaxley.³⁸⁸ Patron Lorraine Gray-McConnell recalls Lal Lanyon’s reference to artists Jamieson, Yaxley and Gordon Shepherdson, as her ‘three great men’. Gray-McConnell also reflected that Lanyon ‘had a really good eye for ceramics’.³⁸⁹ Clem Forbes exhibited at the gallery, holding a solo exhibition of brigalow paintings in 1978. Figure 32

Jamieson exhibited consistently at Gallery Up Top throughout 1973-1980.³⁹⁰ Figure 31 Arts writer and journalist Phil Brown, arts editor for Rockhampton’s Morning Bulletin 1980-1981, wrote that openings at Gallery Up Top, were

part of my cultural life in Rockhampton. This gallery, an oasis of art and something of a salon, was run by Lal Lanyon, a gracious woman, Gil Jameson's art dealer in that part of the world’, further recalling ‘Yaxley's gorgeous naïve miniatures shared the

³⁸⁶ Lal Lanyon to John Cooper, letter, n.d., Box 8, Cooper, John Cooper Papers.

³⁸⁷ Lal Lanyon to John Cooper, letter, Cooper, John Cooper Papers.

³⁸⁸ Yaxley, interview.

³⁸⁹ McConnell and Gray-McConnell, interview. Gray-McConnell also recalls seeing a Gil Jamieson portrait of Lanyon which she felt depicted Lanyon as ‘regal’.

³⁹⁰ Philip Bacon Galleries, *Gil Jamieson: Paintings 1960–1990* (New Farm, QLD, 1990).

wall space with some of Gil's [Jamieson's] gouaches, poems in paint composed *en plein air* in the wilds of Northern Australia.³⁹¹



Figure 31: Phil Brown, “Subtle, sensitive art compelling viewing”, *Morning Bulletin*, Rockhampton, 22nd August, 1980. (SLQ Newspaper collection)

Patrons from Mackay and Rockhampton understood Gallery Up Top as an important gallery in the Central Queensland region recognising it as one that sold works of recognised Australian and international artists.³⁹² Figure 32 Patrons would purchase works from artists represented by Up Top or through Lanyon’s role as dealer for galleries in the south, when travelling to, or through Rockhampton on their way north or south.³⁹³ While Lanyon’s clear focus on the visual arts was critical in creating a commercial venue for artists who would

³⁹¹ Brown, “Our Man Up There.”

³⁹² Another important gallery in Rockhampton was Gallery 111, located in 111 East Street. Directors were Mary Wilson and Patricia Gray. Dorothy Forbes stated they introduced Clem Forbes to Bill Yaxley at Byfield. Clem Forbes exhibited at Gallery 111 in 1984 and 1985. Dorothy Forbes also exhibited at Gallery 111. Dorothy Forbes, interview by Celie Forbes, April 18, 2019.

³⁹³ Dorothy Forbes, interview. Gall and Gall, interview. McConnell and Gray-McConnell, interview. Patrons in Townsville and Cairns (Anneke Silver, Coral Risley, Ralph Martin, Rosemary Macfarlane), however, had little or no relationship with the gallery.

interpret what was distinct about the Central Queensland landscape, Brown further recognised the broader role of the local galleries, and Rockhampton’s Gallery Up Top, as important cultural hubs that focussed the cultural life of the community.³⁹⁴ Exhibition history available at the time of this study is recorded in the Appendix E1.

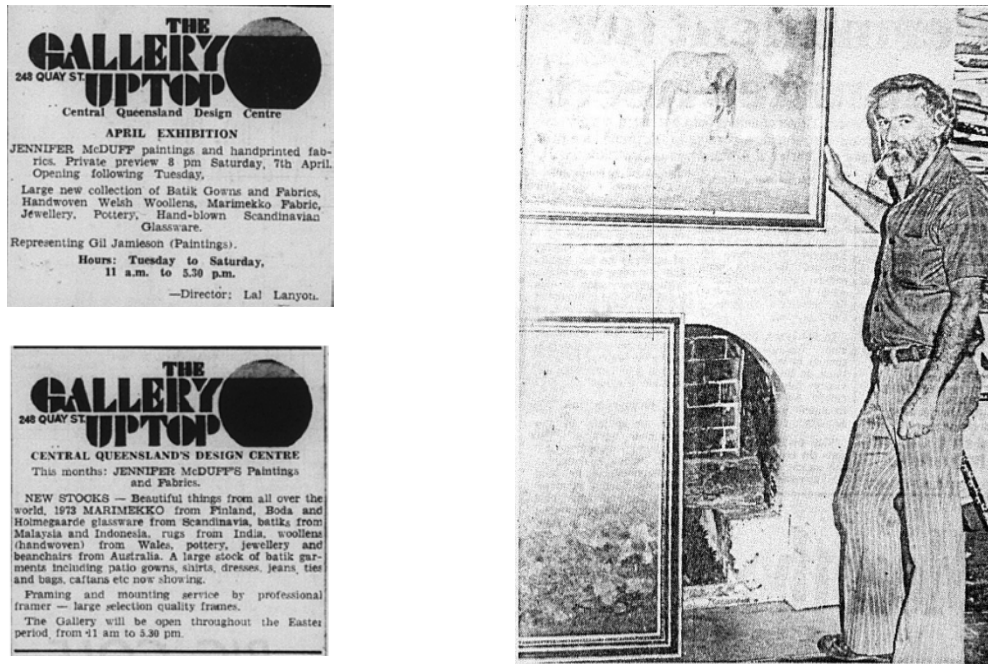


Figure 32: Left: *Morning Bulletin*, Rockhampton: 7 April 1973 (above); 19 April, 1973 (below). Right: Clem Forbes photographed with work at Gallery Up Top. *Morning Bulletin*, 12 December, 1978. (SLQ newspaper collection).

5.3.2 The Bakehouse Art Gallery. 133 Victoria Street, Mackay. Director Dorothy Forbes Established 1972

*The gallery was not just paintings—it was the whole art spectrum. That’s what we wanted.*³⁹⁵

³⁹⁴ Brown, interview. Brown further recognised the value placed on music, ballet, theatre, poetry, and literature in the region.

³⁹⁵ Dorothy Forbes, interview , February 10, 2019.

The Bakehouse Art Gallery was co-founded in 1972 by Dorothy Forbes and Clem Forbes. Dorothy Forbes, as director, established an exhibiting programme of paintings, pottery, and sculpture, expanding to printmaking, jewellery, textiles and crafts through the eight years the gallery was located in Victoria Street. Moving to Mackay from Brisbane with Clem Forbes in 1964, Dorothy Forbes brought with her a strong focus on the studio and commercial gallery model experienced in Brisbane during the 1950s.³⁹⁶ Figure 33

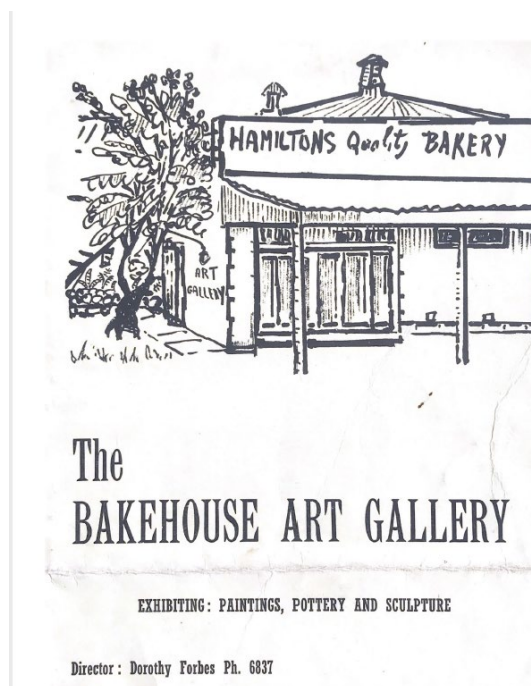


Figure 33: Catalogue, The Bakehouse Art Gallery, 1972. Dorothy Forbes archive.

On meeting artist Stanislaus Rapotec in Mackay in 1971, Dorothy Forbes was influenced by him both to curate a solo exhibition of Clem Forbes works—later held in September at the Whitsunday Hotel—and to establish a commercial art gallery, which she opened with an exhibition of Clem Forbes’s works in May 1972. Figure 34 Housed in the historic Hamilton’s Bakehouse, the gallery space was redesigned by Clem Forbes.

³⁹⁶ Dorothy Forbes referred to an ‘excellent little gallery in Upper Edward Street’ selling Carl McConnell pottery. It was this gallery that she first considered taking over in Brisbane. Dorothy Forbes refers to the design of the ‘Forbes Gallery’, later established with Clem Forbes in 1980 in their home in George Street, Mackay, as being influenced by the design of the Johnstone Gallery, Bowen Hills. Forbes, interview, February 10, 2019.

It was a family home—one of the first design built houses in Mackay. The bakery was underneath—a big open space not working as a bakery, with the oven space used for storage. Walls all around. It was a really excellent gallery except it was huge [and] we had to fill it... [the owner] acknowledged it was a great thing that we were doing [in establishing a gallery in Mackay] and he gave it to us for free.³⁹⁷



Figure 34: Photo: Dorothy Forbes seated in exhibition space of the Bakehouse Art Gallery, Mackay. c 1975. Dorothy Forbes Archive.

The gallery was distinctive of the town, reflecting the architecture of similar small galleries in Brisbane through the use of the courtyard space and high fence to ‘give relief from the shopfronts in Victoria Street.’³⁹⁸ After the restoration of the upstairs gallery rooms including the roof space in 1977 the gallery would also become the studio for artist Clem Forbes.³⁹⁹ The use of the space was deliberate. Clem Forbes, commenting on the 1973 exhibition of Townsville contemporary artist Anne Willis at the Bakehouse Art Gallery stated, “Mackay is most fortunate to exhibit Anne Willis: no other centre in the north has the kind of space her work requires”.⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁷ Dorothy Forbes, interview by Celie Forbes, February 2, 2019.

³⁹⁸ “Bakehouse Art Gallery Fourth Birthday,” *Daily Mercury* (Mackay, QLD), June 15, 1976, 11, in Forbes, personal archive.

³⁹⁹ Dorothy Forbes stated the move upstairs was because the major downstairs space became a bakery lease. Forbes also stated that at that point they began paying rent for the premises. Dorothy Forbes, interview by Celie Forbes, February 10, 2019.

⁴⁰⁰ “Art Show Colourful,” *Daily Mercury* (Mackay, QLD), February 2, 1973, in Forbes, personal archive.

Dorothy Forbes's policy was to rotate exhibitions on a fortnightly basis. While supporting artists in the region and acting as a dealer for Clem Forbes, she was ensuring that she would exhibit artists of a national standard with an emphasis on Queensland artists.

Figure 35

Because we were already immersed in the arts the intention was to establish an awareness in people of the art form as art. Our concept was to bring up the good artists from the south so that the people of Mackay could look at them. So we were establishing a collection philosophy. And the opportunity was there for patrons to buy them, which in many cases they did.⁴⁰¹



Figure 35: Art Show [Clem and Dorothy Forbes in image], *Daily Mercury*, Mackay, 5 September 1977. [Coburn painting and Ray Crook print visible in the image]. Dorothy Forbes Archive.

Artworks were accessed through consignment from dealers such as John Cooper (Eight Bells Gallery, Gold Coast); Ray Hughes (Gallery 111 and Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane) and Gisella Scheinberg (Holdsworth Galleries, Sydney), or through personal invitation. Dorothy Forbes reflected she would make contact with artists she understood to be of a high standard and importance, requesting an exhibition.⁴⁰² Figure 36

⁴⁰¹ Dorothy Forbes, interview, February 10, 2019.

⁴⁰² Dorothy Forbes, interview, February 10, 2019.



Figure 36: “A Pleasing Landscape” [Patron Lorraine Gray-McConnell on right], *Daily Mercury*, Mackay, 16 April 1975. [note: Joy Littleford exhibited craft works in the Bakehouse Art Gallery]. “Art on display” [Patrons Jim and Genevieve Gall (on right)]. *Daily Mercury*, Mackay, 22 May 1978. Dorothy Forbes Archive.

Forbes also held contact lists for Australian artists and galleries, and retained art gallery and art prize catalogues. She subscribed to, advertised in and sought representation in the industry magazine ‘Art And Australia’ (published by Sam Ure Smith from 1963) and relevant national publications,⁴⁰³ and collected media articles, as well as building a substantial library of artist monographs and art history texts published at the time.⁴⁰⁴ The gallery hosted the Mackay folk club, youth theatre and orchestra groups, ran workshops and established children’s art classes, taught by Clem Forbes. The Crafts Council of Australia listed the Bakehouse (along with Gallery Up Top, Martin Gallery and Trinity Gallery) in the 1975 Visitor information

⁴⁰³ “Art in Australia 32 Page Special Liftout Survey,” *Bulletin* (Sydney, NSW), September 21, 1974, <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-1340003058/view?sectionId=nla.obj-1627854996&partId=nla.obj-1340645291#page/n71/mode/1up>.

⁴⁰⁴ Patron Lorraine Gray-McConnell stated that Dorothy Forbes had ‘what is called a database now’. McConnell and Gray-McConnell, interview.

publication with the Bakehouse hosting the Craft Association of Queensland.⁴⁰⁵ The gallery had a strong association with ceramics, supported the Pioneer Potters, housed a potter in residence, with a studio space and kiln, and hosted travelling exhibitions as organised by the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council and the Mackay LAC.⁴⁰⁶ Figure 37

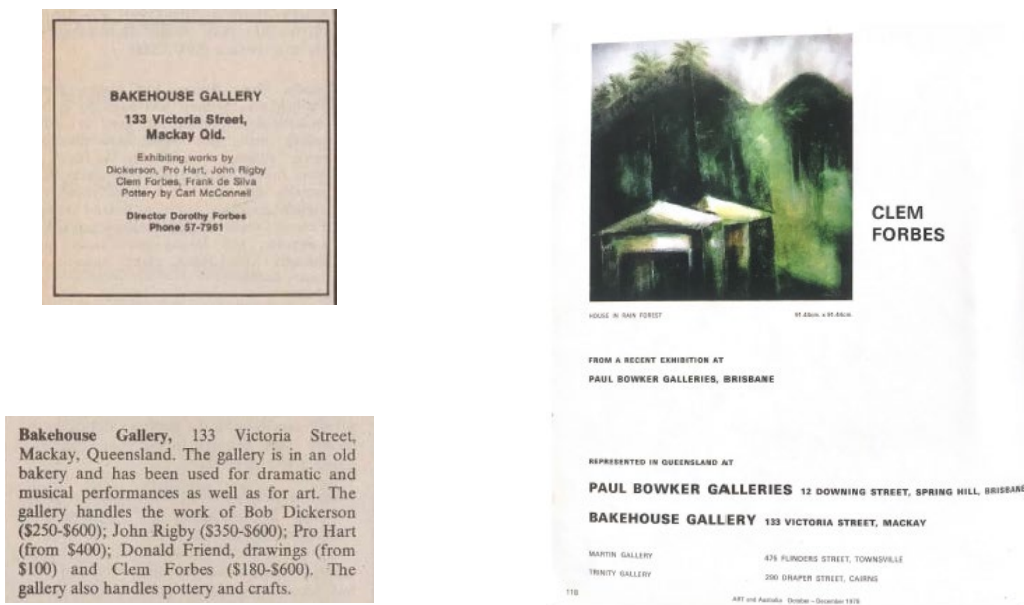


Figure 37: Advertisements on left: "Art in Australia 32 Page Special Liftout Survey", *The Bulletin*, 21st September 1974. 56, 64. Advertisement on right: "Clem Forbes from a Recent Exhibition at Paul Bowker Galleries, Brisbane", *Art and Australia* 13 February, 1975. 118.

Patrons of the gallery were middle class, tertiary educated and professional, articulating a strong commitment to the arts. Dorothy Forbes also referred to the patrons, organisers and artists involved with the QAC as 'our people'.⁴⁰⁷ Participant Anne Chamberlain commented that we 'found our Mackay family after walking into the Bakehouse

⁴⁰⁵ "Visitor Information," *Crafts Council of Australia* no. 3, June 1975, in Forbes, personal archive.

⁴⁰⁶ Forbes, personal archive.

⁴⁰⁷ Dorothy Forbes, interview, 2019.

Gallery one day... I felt Mackay had no heart that I could centre on until that moment. That was it.⁴⁰⁸

Access, as collectors, to the work of Australian contemporary artists is reflected in the collections which patrons in this study acquired through the Bakehouse Art Gallery. These include the works of John Rigby, Brett Whiteley, Sidney Nolan, Bob Dickerson, Bill Yaxley, William Robinson, Clem Forbes, Carl McConnell, Phillip McConnell, Ian Currie (b 1941), Rick Woods, Cooch Memmott, Connie Hoedt (1936-2014), Kevin Grealy, Arthur Rosser, Carol Rosser, Gil Jamieson, Pam Dolinska, Alun Leach Jones, Anneke Silver, Robert Preston, John Coburn, David Boyd, Pro Hart, Ray Crooke, David Rose, Arthur Boyd, George Baldessin, Frank De Silva and Jon Molvig. Patron Lorraine Gray-McConnell reflected on exhibition turnover and openings:

I remember they were getting all sorts of interesting stuff. Whiteley prints... Yaxley, Brenda Lewis, Rigby. Merv Moriarty came, and he did an artist talk around all the things hanging in the gallery to a small group of us. I remember Rigby being up there, and Dickerson. The exhibition was in the Bakehouse, and we all gathered in George Street afterwards...socially...as opposed to visiting the gallery as we would do anyway.⁴⁰⁹

Findings further revealed an overlap with theatre, drama, dance, and music programmes active in Mackay at the time, described by one patron as the ‘backbone’ of the arts in Mackay prior to the opening of the gallery.⁴¹⁰ Patrons were also active in the Mackay Art Society, LAC, Community Arts and professional communities, and were council members and officers for the Mackay and Pioneer Councils. Participants reflected that the

⁴⁰⁸ Anne Chamberlain, email message to author, April 10, 2020.

⁴⁰⁹ McConnell and Gray-McConnell, interview. (Note: Merv Moriarty had an exhibition of drawings [nudes] in 1978; Bob Dickerson exhibited in 1975. Forbes, personal archive. 68 George Street was the residential home of Clem and Dorothy Forbes, later to become the Forbes Gallery.)

⁴¹⁰ Gall and Gall, interview.

cultural direction of Mackay into the 1980s and 1990s was consistent with the values and actions of the patrons in the decade prior. Genevieve Gall stated of the gallery,

It created an opening and a blossoming...and all of a sudden people were talking about what good art should be...There was a movement for each of those centres [Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns] to put their name to what they stood for in the arts...so would that have happened [in Mackay] without Clem and Dorothy? I don't think so. It enabled like-minded people to get together and talk about things. I think it was because of the gallery.⁴¹¹

In 1979, financial constraints meant that the Bakehouse Gallery was no longer viable. Dorothy and Clem Forbes moved the gallery to their home in George Street, which became the Forbes Gallery, a studio and exhibition space for artist Clem Forbes. The Bakehouse Art Gallery exhibition history, available at the time of this study, is listed in Appendix E2.

5.3.3 Martin Gallery Townsville 475 Flinders Street Townsville. Director. Ralph Martin Established 1972

*Ralph especially went along east coast and collected important artist works—to be exhibited there was a bit of an honour.*⁴¹²

*Townsville then, the de facto capital of Far North Queensland and closer to Port Moresby than Brisbane, was a 3 storey 3 generations little city with a strong sense of its own identity...a city several years away from achieving a town gallery or a performing arts centre but in common with other Northern centres had an Arts Society which held annual exhibitions drawing on local art identities or southern art experts for their judge... One of our pleasures was attending the exhibitions at the Martin Gallery with the inspirational Ralph Martin...*⁴¹³

The Martin Gallery was opened by Ralph Martin in the July 1972. Martin, a pharmacist, established the gallery in the back of his pharmacy, later expanding the premises to include

⁴¹¹ Gall and Gall, interview.

⁴¹² Anneke Silver (artist), interview by Celie Forbes, July 9, 2019.

⁴¹³ Rosemary Macfarlane, email communication with author, April 10, 2020.

both spaces in 1980 as an independent gallery.⁴¹⁴ The Brisbane model was once again influential in the format of the Martin Gallery. Martin referenced contemporary Brisbane artist Irene Amos as his ‘mentor’ who connected him to artists (in particular, women artists), potters and silversmiths. Amos introduced Martin to the Grand Central Gallery in Brisbane, managed by Philip Bacon who, according to Martin, ‘had the best show in town’.⁴¹⁵ Martin maintained connections with Brisbane and Gold Coast galleries including John Cooper, to support exhibition turnover,⁴¹⁶ connecting to galleries further south including the Holdsworth and Rudy Komon. Martin would travel south to collect works including the Ray Hughes, Reid and Verlie Just Galleries, also stopping in Mackay at the Bakehouse and later Forbes Gallery.

Figure 38



Figure 38: Photograph: Clem Forbes as photographed by Ralph Martin. *Island Series*, Mackay, c1985. JCU Special Collection. Martin Archive.

Artists featured in the opening exhibition of the Martin Gallery in 1972 included Anne Willis, James Thomson (nd), Ron Kenny, Anneke Silver and Mervyn Moriarty. Exhibiting artists throughout the history of the Martin Gallery include Irene Amos, Brian Hatch (b 1934),

⁴¹⁴ The history of the gallery was the subject of the exhibition *Images of an Era* (2016) at the Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, and as such, exhibition works and essays are included in the publication. The Martin Gallery archive is held in the JCU Special Collections.

⁴¹⁵ Ralph Martin (Martin Gallery), interview by Celie Forbes, October 6, 2018.

⁴¹⁶ Cooper, Box 8, John Cooper Papers.

who sold ‘very well’,⁴¹⁷ Ron McBurnie, Anne Lord, Sylvia Ditchburn (b. 1943), Ben Trupperbaumer (b. 1948), James Brown (b. 1953), Deanna Conti, Robert Preston, Noel Risley, and potters including Thancoupie, Ros Jones (no date available), Connie Hoedt and Ian Currie. Martin rotated stock regularly (often fortnightly) and had more than 173 major exhibitions at the gallery from 1972 through to its closure in 1988. Clem Forbes exhibited consistently from 1973. From 1980 Forbes’s pastel works were particularly successful, with Martin stating they ‘walked out the door’.⁴¹⁸ Figure 39 Tom Risley’s first solo exhibition *Fabrications* was held at the Martin Gallery in 1981. Figure 40



Figure 39: Photograph: Ralph Martin, Martin Gallery, c 1978. Photograph: Martin Gallery, exhibition opening c 1980. Martin Gallery Archive. JCU Special Collections.

⁴¹⁷ Martin, interview, October 6, 2018.

⁴¹⁸ Martin, interview, October 6, 2018.

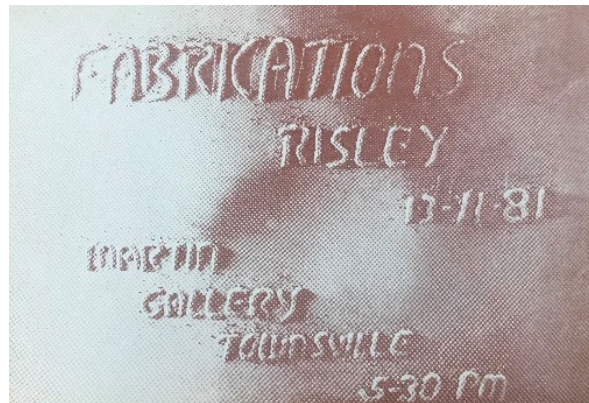
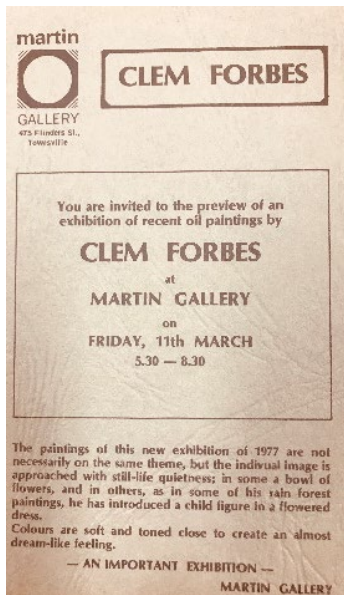


Figure 40: Martin Gallery, Clem Forbes exhibition invitation, 1977; Martin Gallery, Tom Risley exhibition invitation, 1981. Martin Gallery Archive. JCU Special Collections.

Martin stated that there were several major collectors in Townsville who would purchase works, consistent with the understanding of patrons in this study as educated middle class with a focus on collecting contemporary art.⁴¹⁹

It was this focus on progressive, experimental, and contemporary art practice during the 1970s, supported by a thriving arts community, that informed the exhibition programming at the Martin Gallery. What is particular to Townsville was the influence of Ron Kenny and the Townsville Art Society and the focus on abstraction, European Modernism and artists aligned with the Brisbane CAS.⁴²⁰ The Visual Art courses at the Townsville CAE and TAFE delivered by artists Anneke Silver, Robert Preston and Ron McBurnie meant, Silver argued, that artists and community were ‘in continual contact with ideas from everywhere’, challenging the concept of isolation. ‘I don't think we ever identified with being isolated. I think we thought we were another centre, which in many ways we were.’⁴²¹ Works by

⁴¹⁹ Martin, interview, October 6, 2018.

⁴²⁰ Anneke Silver in Silver, *Images of an Era*, 27.

⁴²¹ Silver, interview, October 6, 2018.

Townsville artists of this time are understood as ‘distinct historically and thematically from those in Brisbane [constituting] a unique contribution to Australian art history’.⁴²² Due to competing commitments, the Martin gallery closed in 1988.⁴²³ The Martin Gallery exhibition history, available at the time of this study, is listed in Appendix E3.

*5.3.4 Trinity Gallery, 290 Draper Street (later 339 Sheridan Street), Cairns. 1974-1978
Directors. Jim and Rosemary Macfarlane. Established 1974.*

The Trinity Gallery was opened in 1974 by Jim and Rosemary Macfarlane. The Macfarlanes, in Townsville from 1972 due to Jim Macfarlane’s army posting, chose to stay in North Queensland rather than return to Sydney.⁴²⁴ ‘Following our hearts, and in part inspired by Ralph’s [Martin’s] example, we decided to settle in Cairns and open a gallery.’⁴²⁵

Rosemary Macfarlane described Cairns in 1974 as

a weatherboard and modern brick frontier town [half the size of Townsville] with sugar cane, timber, and tourism for support. A town where the Pacific Highway ended and only Cooktown and Cape York lay beyond. Still a decade away from boasting a city gallery, Cairns did have a handsome Civic Arts Centre and an active Arts Society as did neighbouring Innisfail, Atherton, and Mareeba.⁴²⁶

The Trinity Gallery, like the other galleries in this study, made use of the spaces typical of the architecture of the town, opening in a high-set Queenslander. Figure 41

⁴²² Szulakowska, *Experimental Art in Queensland*, 100.

⁴²³ Martin, interview, October 6, 2018.

⁴²⁴ Ralph Martin recalls Jim Macfarlane purchasing works from the Martin Gallery for the Townsville Mess. Ralph Martin (Martin Gallery), interview by Celie Forbes, March 23, 2018.

⁴²⁵ Macfarlane, email communication, April 10, 2020.

⁴²⁶ Macfarlane, email communication, April 10, 2020.



Figure 41: Photograph: Trinity Gallery and Australian Heritage Gallery, 339 Sheridan Street, Cairns. 1977. Photograph courtesy of the Cairns Historical Society.

The goal, stated Rosemary Macfarlane, was to ‘exhibit local artists in addition to artists from around Australia in a professional space’.⁴²⁷ Ralph Martin recalls a mentoring relationship with Jim Macfarlane in establishing the gallery, and in particular his interest in Aboriginal art. Dorothy Forbes also recalls a visit by the Macfarlanes to the Bakehouse.⁴²⁸ It was with Martin’s support that the Macfarlanes established connections to Townsville and southern based artists and introductions to galleries in the south including John Cooper’s Eight Bells Gallery, Grand Central and Young Australian Gallery in Brisbane and the Mavis Chapman Gallery in Sydney. Again, patrons and artists in the study understood the Trinity Gallery as an important gallery along the east coast ‘route’,⁴²⁹ with the Macfarlanes further recognising the value of tourism in bringing in clientele to the gallery. This Trinity Gallery exhibited the work artists distinctive of the Cairns region. Exhibitions were rotated every three weeks. Artists exhibited included Percy Trezise and Goobalathaldin, Ray Croke, Noel Risley, Anneke Silver, Sylvia Ditchburn, Clem Forbes, Irene Amos, Anne Willis, Heinz

⁴²⁷ Macfarlane, email communication.

⁴²⁸ Dorothy Forbes, interview, 18 April, 2019.

⁴²⁹ As referenced by Simon in his interview with the author. McConnell and Gray-McConnell, interview.

Steinman (b 1943), Liz and Terry Brophy (nd), Alison Coaldrake, Bev Crunden (nd), Eula Jensen (nd), David Preston and Roger Quinn (nd). Figure 42

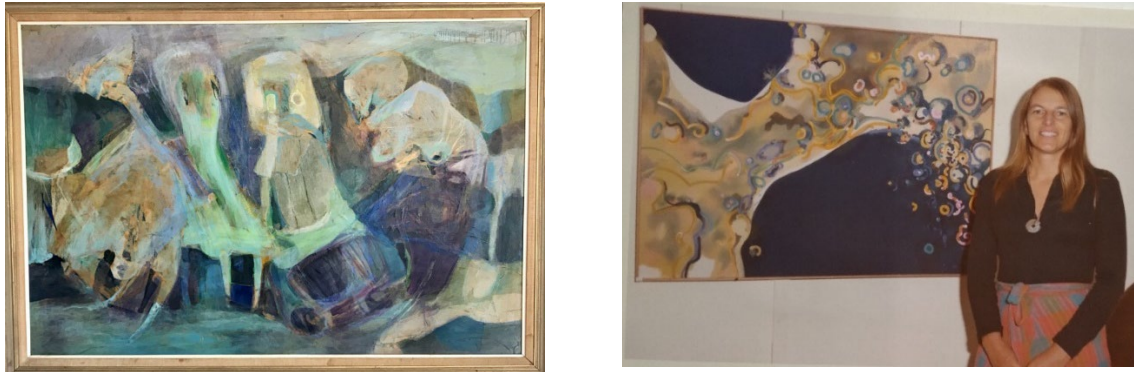


Figure 42: Left: Irene Amos, no date. c 1970s. Macfarlane Collection. Right: Anneke Silver in front of her work [title unreferenced] at the Trinity Gallery, Cairns, c 1974. Images: Macfarlane personal archive.

Specific to the Trinity was the further initiative of Jim Macfarlane (in consultation with Percy Trezise) to ‘position an Aboriginal art gallery for Cape York traditional arts and crafts in Cairns’ in 1976.⁴³⁰ The Australian Heritage Gallery was opened through the newly formed Federal Government Indigenous Aboriginal Arts Board, under the Whitlam Government’s Australia Council, of which Goobalathaldin (Dick Roughsey) was the chair (1973-1976). Macfarlane’s charter was to ‘establish a gallery and quickly prepare the way for an Indigenous manager.

This was a Federal Government initiative to expose the value and tradition of Indigenous work to the Australian and international world. In addition the aim was to bring a livelihood to worthy crafts people and lift their work into a gallery and out of the souvenir and craft shop level where it had to compete with gaudy factory imitation with no respect for copyright. The gallery stopped exploitation of these artists and paid professional reward. It was responsible for the collection and distribution of wholesale pieces destined to world museums and collections via the Company’s head office.⁴³¹

⁴³⁰ Macfarlane, email communication, January 14, 2022.

⁴³¹ Macfarlane, email communication, January 14, 2022.

The Trinity Gallery was relocated to Sheridan Street to be housed with the Australian Heritage Gallery, further establishing a pottery gallery, and acting as agent for potter Thancoupie. Figure 43



Figure 43: Thancoupie on left, with Jim (holding Thancoupie work), and Rosemary Macfarlane at Australian Heritage Gallery. *Cairns Post*, 21 November, 1977. SLQ newspaper collection.

Jim Macfarlane described the exhibition of works by Chuck Kehoe, Noel Risley, Goobalathaldin, Heinz Steinman and Percy Trezise at the Heritage Gallery, opened by author Xavier Herbert (1901-1984) in September 1977 as ‘one of the most important exhibitions of art to be presented in North Queensland. The work of these five artists is significant in terms of Australian art.’⁴³² Herbert stated he was ‘astonished and staggered’ by the quality of the artists’ work’ at the Trinity Gallery.⁴³³ Figure 44

⁴³² “Xavier Herbert to Open Art Exhibition”, *Cairns Post* (QLD), September 15, 1977, Noel Risley Archive, James Cook University Special Collections.

⁴³³ “Author ‘Astonished’ by Quality of Art”, *Cairns Post* (QLD), September 16, 1977.



Figure 44: Left: Exhibition Catalogue, 15 September, 1977. Noel Risley Archive. CU Special Collections. Newspaper article: Xavier Herbert, pictured with Goobalathaldin, Percy Trezise and Heinz Steinmann at the Trinity Gallery, Cairns Post, 17 September, 1977. SLQ Newspaper Collection.

At the end of 1977 the Macfarlanes would leave Cairns, with the galleries remaining under the umbrella of the Aboriginal Arts and Crafts Pty Ltd, the commercial arm of the Aboriginal Arts Board.⁴³⁴ Reliant on government benevolence and ‘an enormous time and energy commitment’, the Heritage Gallery would, however, close within a few years.⁴³⁵ The Trinity Gallery and Australian Heritage Gallery exhibition history, available at the time of this study, is listed in Appendix E4.

5.3.5 Commercial art gallery case-studies: conclusions

Exceptional people who are driven to do exceptional things— whether they are artists or curators or [are running small] commercial galleries—can make an impact—but they certainly have to be dogged about it. Determined and absolutely, doggedly dedicated to doing it.⁴³⁶

⁴³⁴ “Staff Changes at Heritage Gallery”, *Cairns Post* (QLD), October 4, 1977, 4.

⁴³⁵ Macfarlane, email communication, January 14, 2022.

⁴³⁶ Smith, interview.

*...they kept I would say, the North Queensland formative artists very busy, and also gave them the opportunity to exhibit and be seen.*⁴³⁷

The case-studies support the findings that the small commercial galleries along the east-coast of Queensland tell a story of the cultural history of Northern Queensland, evidencing the impact of informal networks of artists, patrons, and groups in driving the arts narrative in the absence of formalised infrastructure, regional galleries and organised funding bodies. The galleries acted as hubs, creating opportunities for the general community to be exposed to the arts; for artists to have exhibition opportunities and be seen in proximity to recognised Australian artists, and for patrons and groups to progress initiatives that would evidence a highly sophisticated understanding of the importance of the arts locally, within the region and throughout Queensland. Ultimately, it was these groups that would argue for local artists' work to be recognised as significant and unique to Australian art history. The case studies also demonstrate, however, the risk to the arts in the region, of relying on artists and artworkers to sustain their input without financial, political, or economic support.

5.4 Content Analysis: Conclusions

*Prior to the sixties according to Ross Searle, the Northern region had lacked a contemporary art world particular to itself since those artists who made their name by the depiction of Northern Qld ... did not contribute to the development of a permanent artistic infrastructure.*⁴³⁸

Three clear themes emerged in the content analysis. Firstly, that geography reflected distinct understandings of the north and south, relevant to arts practice and decision making. Regions in Northern Queensland were found to align to distinct artistic practices, with conceptual modelling aligning artists through style, method and subject matter. Secondly, artists were found to interpret the landscape in a way specific to the environment, geography and culture

⁴³⁷ Anneke Silver, in reference to the Bakehouse Art Gallery, Martin Gallery, and Trinity Gallery. Siler, interview.

⁴³⁸ Szulakowska, *Experimental Art in Queensland*, 100.

of the Far North, North and Central regions, grouped in this study as Northern Queensland. Finally, it was found that multiple agencies, including artists, patrons, directors, and art groups, formed an informal arts network, which became the infrastructure that supported artists and patrons throughout Northern Queensland, as well as acting to progress the cultural direction of the town. Modelling reflects actions grouped as cultural programmes and events, spaces and education. Patrons, artists, curators and directors in the study were found to have shared beliefs around the value of the arts to the intellectual life of the individual and community; the understanding of the landscape and environment of Northern Queensland as heterogenous and distinct from the rest of Australia; and the reliance on arts networks located in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne as critical to the developing artist and the confidence of the patrons. This is reflected in the adapted model of understandings grouped as high and low importance.

Findings further revealed that it was the commercial art galleries, art societies, LACs, art groups and education initiatives that became the intersecting point for the actions of the arts community; with artists, patrons and art groups (including music and theatre) as the driving forces. This is interpreted as an informal infrastructure reflecting the networks that drove cultural development across Northern Queensland. This is described through the commercial art gallery case studies.

Interpreting the findings as specific to the regions of the north supports the characterisation of a Northern Queensland School of Art. While Kenny argued that there was no unified understanding of arts practice specific to Northern Queensland due to competing discourses on art, vocal from the south through arts trends and tastes, the multifaceted description of the arts in Northern Queensland in this study points to distinct practices that, while independent of each other, were informally connected and unique to place. Impacts on artists in this study are reflected in modelling demonstrating the factors that both sustained

and threatened artists living and working in the north. The findings are further described through the artist case studies in the following chapter.

Chapter 6: Case Studies: The Art of Becoming

6.1 Introduction

In explaining why Clem Forbes and Tom Risley are artists representative of Northern Queensland one must answer the question, *what does it mean to become an artist either from or of the north?* The ontology of becoming in the case of this study is informed by the notion of perpetual change as a process.⁴³⁹ The process of change is evidenced by the creation of works examined through the lens of subject matter, method, and style. The collected data demonstrates the causality of the process of becoming artists of the north through the lens of geographic, environmental, economic, political, and social/cultural factors impacting on these artists.

Artist Clem Forbes was born in 1938 in Bowen in the Whitsunday region. He was represented by the Bakehouse Art Gallery, Mackay; Martin Gallery, Townsville; Holdsworth Galleries, Sydney; and Brisbane galleries including The Young Australian Gallery. He is represented in public and private collections including the Mackay, Rockhampton, and Townsville regional art collections, Mackay Entertainment Centre; Burdekin Theatre, Ayr; James Cook University Central Queensland University, Queensland University of Technology, the University of Queensland, the National Gallery of Australia print collection and Artbank (Australian Government). [See Appendix F: Biography: Clem Forbes].

Forbes would not however, have been identified as an artist from Mackay or even the north until 1970—his developmental period occurred when he was in Eumundi, Brisbane, and on Stradbroke Island, with the imagery of the Glasshouse Mountains in the south appearing in both his early and final works. In between, however, Forbes was immersed in the environment of the Mackay region, working in Collinsville in the Whitsunday Shire from

⁴³⁹ Ted Honderich, *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

1961, before settling in Mackay in 1964. Forbes would travel west to Dysart and Clermont where the dry and remote landscape typical of the mining towns of western Queensland would appear in his early painting; to the south through the brigalow country connecting Mackay to Rockhampton; and most significantly, throughout the Mackay Hinterland region, becoming mesmerised by its rainforests, wetlands, and cane fields. It was in his time in Mackay that Forbes became an artist, as recognised by the method and style he mastered, as well as his prolific representation of its landscape and its people as the subject matter of his works.

Tom Risley was born in Rockhampton in 1947, moving to Cairns with his family as a young boy where his father, Noel Risley, would become a recognised sculptor. While working for the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Tom Risley lived in Tolga in the Atherton Tablelands to the southwest of Cairns in Far North Queensland.⁴⁴⁰ His early work was directly informed by the figurative objects created by his father, and later, by the lines in the landscape and the materials drawn from both the urban and natural environment. Risley's physicality as an artist was of the north despite his moving away from this area during the peak of his career. Risley's techniques, materials, and sculptural approach were therefore strongly drawn from the Far North. While residencies in Brisbane, Sydney, New Zealand, New York, and Italy resulted in his works being represented in state, national and international collections, it is Risley's early career that allowed him to emerge as a sculptor of national importance. (see Appendix G: Biography Tom Risley).

The artists Forbes and Risley are linked in this study. As a young sculptor working in Atherton, Risley saw Clem Forbes as a mentor; there Forbes would champion Risley's work. The resulting friendship saw Forbes and Risley engage in conversations about the arts in both

⁴⁴⁰ Louise Martin-Chew, "Tom Risley 1947–2010: [Obituary]," *Art Monthly Australia*, no. 234 (2010), <http://arar12337.staging-iis7.partnerconsole.net/artnotes.asp?aID=29&issueNumber=234>.

Herberton and Mackay.⁴⁴¹ Forbes would exhibit with Risley in his first exhibition at the Martin Gallery in Townsville in 1981.⁴⁴² It was in this year, however, that Risley made the choice to become a full time practising artist, moving to Brisbane to engage with peers, and, through exposure under the dealer Ray Hughes' mentoring of Queensland artists, seek critical recognition beyond what he saw as the limitations of Northern Queensland.⁴⁴³

This study examines firstly the critical decisions Forbes and Risley made in their journeys as artists. Both artists understood that to mature as an artist you 'needed to be around like-minded people,' whose practice had developed beyond their immediate region.⁴⁴⁴ They would, however, adopt different strategies in making their work available to the public. Clem Forbes sustained his practice in the north through representations in galleries, exhibitions, and tuition. Risley, while basing himself in Herberton from 1984, gained, through Hughes, access to the critique of artists, dealers, and curators in the south.⁴⁴⁵

Beyond their relationships and career pathway, both artists are discussed in this chapter in terms of subject matter, method, and style within the context of place. Place is contextualised here through the lens of *locality*. While one understanding of landscape painting is in the ability to create a *copy* of nature, it is the artist's *interpretation* of the landscape that is understood as having the greater value.⁴⁴⁶ This approach to landscape is

⁴⁴¹ Coral Risley, interview by Celie Forbes (topic: Tom Risley, Clem Forbes), July 11, 2019.

⁴⁴² Risley acknowledged 'Clem Forbes for making available his work to augment my own'. Tom Risley, *Tom Risley, Fabrications*, November 13, 1981 – December 4, 1981, exhibition, Martin Gallery, Townsville, QLD. Ralph Martin, Martin Gallery Archive, James Cook University Special Collections, Eddie Koiki Mabo Library, James Cook University.

⁴⁴³ Martin-Chew, "Tom Risley 1947–2010: [Obituary]."

⁴⁴⁴ Risley, interview.

⁴⁴⁵ Risley had a studio in Kangaroo Point from 1982 to 1984. While awards, residencies and commissions took Risley to various cities – including Japan, Auckland, Murano (Italy) and New York – Herberton remained Risley's base throughout his life. Risley, interview.

⁴⁴⁶ See James Gleeson's essay in Smith et al., *North of Capricorn*, 19.

understood as ‘contemporary’.⁴⁴⁷ In the case of Forbes and Risley, it is argued that the artists’ *locality* informed their transition as contemporary practising artists.

Finally, understandings of the arts infrastructure found in the north, including the role of education, cultural programmes, and events, are evidenced through the biography of artists and the narrow selection of exhibitions.

This chapter concludes that the case studies deepen understandings of the way artists worked in the north, giving recognition to the contribution of artists and groups in Northern Queensland during the scope of this study.

6.2 Clem Forbes: 1971-1977 Translucency

6.2.1 Introduction

*People universally are enchanted by the tropics with its birds and rainforest, blue-green water, dreamy nights, fiery sunsets and lazy endings to the hot day. For the past 25 years I have been under this spell also and my paintings are the result of it. These paintings are of ongoing themes. I have used the pastel medium to express these colours and the oil pictures to express the wet, shiny dampness. At times I have imagined I would break from painting my environment, but as time goes by this hasn’t happened and the tropical images have become stronger than ever.*⁴⁴⁸

Northern Queensland would feature heavily in Forbes’ works as a developing young artist after settling permanently in Mackay with his wife Dorothy in 1964. The dry and remote landscapes typical of the mining towns of western Queensland, including Collinsville, Clermont, and Nebo, as well as his memories of the Merinda farmers on cattle farms, were realised in his early paintings; however it was the Mackay Hinterland, and in particular the rainforest, wetlands, cane fields and brigalow that became repeated themes throughout his career. Forbes was able to transition to being a full time professional artist in 1976, achieving financial independence—unusual for an artist at that time—through studio exhibitions, his

⁴⁴⁷ ‘Contemporary’ includes notions of ‘experimental’.

⁴⁴⁸ Clem Forbes, artist statement, exhibition catalogue, Eungella Coach House, 1994, in Forbes, personal archive.

continued exhibiting relationship with galleries including the Holdsworth Galleries (Sydney), Young Australian Gallery (Brisbane), Bakehouse and Forbes Galleries (Mackay), Munster Gallery (Melbourne), Martin Gallery (Townsville), Trinity Gallery (Mackay) and Gallery Up Top (Rockhampton); through sustained teaching practice, and the patronage of collectors. The case-study will focus on the following exhibitions:

1971 Hotel Whitsunday, Mackay. 22 September 1971

1973 Holdsworth Galleries, Sydney. 10 April 1973.

1974 Young Australia Gallery, Brisbane. 21 June 1974

1975 Paul Bowker Galleries, Brisbane. 25 July 1975

1977 Bakehouse Art Gallery, Mackay. 14 December 1977

6.2.2 *Biography and Influences*

In describing the north in 1988, Forbes intuitively recorded in correspondence, the images, atmosphere and mythos of Queensland that had found their place in his works throughout his career.

*The tropics can be marvellous sometimes ... The lorikeets have increased their calls and sound excited to warn of the coming storm. A crow sounds its solitary call and the last of the workers walk home past the evening houses. The noise of the trees rubbing against the roof groans and screeches like an old windmill... Evening always has its own brand of melancholy – changing from day to day from tragedy to tragedy... The old storm came back to remind me of my childhood past. There are ghosts in the wind, voices of children...playing in the evening in the cool wind at the last time of day.*⁴⁴⁹

In early media sources, however, Forbes was described as a more recent resident of Mackay, both because he had come from Brisbane, and because he had lived in and

⁴⁴⁹ Letter to Dorothy Forbes, n.d., ca. 1988, in Forbes, personal archive.

represented places throughout Queensland.⁴⁵⁰ The landscape of Clem Forbes' youth and early adulthood can therefore be understood as the biography of his work. Clem Forbes grew up in small towns across Queensland. Born in Bowen in 1938, Forbes grew up in Merinda, 10km to the west of Bowen in Northern Queensland, where his parents were proprietors of the Merinda Hotel. This childhood was formative. Often in drought, and certainly isolated, the view beyond the railway line outside the Merinda Hotel, of its landscape and people, particularly women, featured in early paintings, as well as the mountains that frame Bowen, the rocky beaches and inlets of Horseshoe Bay, along the coast, and the churches visited as a child of a devout Catholic family. This locality informed the repeated motifs evident in works throughout his career. Figures 45-48.

⁴⁵⁰ Artist profile in newspaper clipping, *Daily Mercury* (Mackay, QLD), 1969, in Forbes personal archive.



Figure 45: Photograph: Clem Forbes: *Bowen River in drought*, 1964. Dorothy Forbes Archive.



Figure 46: Clem Forbes: *Merinda Farmers [series]*, acrylic on board, 1971. Nicholas Cilento Collection. Photograph: Mike Cilento. [cropped]

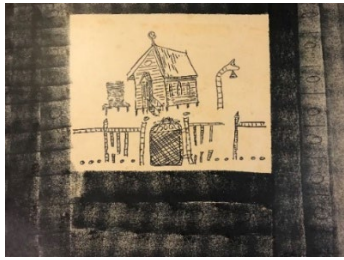


Figure 47: Clem Forbes: *Gates to no-where (Merinda Church)*. Pen and charcoal on paper, c 1970. [Dorothy Forbes recalls the Forbes family retained the church bell]. McConnell/Gray-McConnell Collection.



Figure 48: Clem Forbes: *The Last part of the day (series)*, pastel on paper, 1983. Dorothy Forbes Collection. (Reproduced in Petersen & Torre. *North of Capricorn: An Anthology of Prose*. Townsville, Qld: Foundation for Australian Literary Studies

By 1948 the Forbes family had moved to Esk, 100 km to the west of Brisbane, to manage the Esk Commercial Hotel. Forbes' father also had the liquor licence for the Esk races, and it is here that Forbes developed a love of horses that stayed with him throughout his life. Figure 49. His mother's being an accomplished pianist and violinist meant that his family become immersed in the culture of this small town.



Figure 49: Clem Forbes: *Esk Races*, 1971. David Cilento collection.

As a boy in Esk, Forbes visited the Queensland Art Gallery's Jubilee Art Train in 1951, and recalls the impact of seeing Dobell's 'The Cypriot' as formative in his desire to become an artist.⁴⁵¹ Once again the Forbes family move, this time to run the Commercial Hotel in Eumundi, 100 km north of Brisbane, a small town in the Noosa Hinterland; and finally, it is to Amity Point, a small fishing village on the northern end of Stradbroke Island in Moreton Bay that the family move in 1956 to run the Elkhorn Lodge, where Forbes would find himself immersed in the diversity of its landscape, further looking out to Moreton Bay and over to the Glasshouse Mountains.⁴⁵² Figure 51-Figure 56

In Brisbane, Forbes began to focus intensely on becoming an artist, his early works not only including scenes of Stradbroke Island, but of the Brisbane River and surrounding regions such as Dayboro. While living in Northern Queensland from 1961, Clem Forbes would explore the mining regions of Collinsville, travel through the brigalow country to the west and south, and in stark contrast, immerse himself in the lushness found in the Pioneer Valley to the west of Mackay and its rainforests, wetlands, and cane fields. This narrative of Queensland life—that of towns in drought, folklore, legends, explorers, mining towns, small town churches, rural farms, farmers, and the Queenslanders that house them, coastal bays, rainforests, horses, bottle trees and the topology of Stradbroke Island, as well as the theme of isolation, particularly of women—is represented in a prolific body of work. It is the visual realisation of this *Queensland* landscape, achieved while living and working in Mackay, that transforms Forbes as an artist, through the focus on this subject matter and imagery, as well as the development of methods in depicting it. Figure 50

⁴⁵¹ MacAulay, *Clem Forbes*, 11.

⁴⁵² Sophia Forbes (daughter of Clem Forbes), interview by Celie Forbes, April 22, 2019.



Figure 50: Clem Forbes: *Untitled [Women in the Canefields/Doll series]*, pastel on paper, 1991. Dorothy Forbes Collection. [Works from this series are held in the CQU collection]. Clem Forbes: *Glasshouse*, pastel and charcoal on paper, 75x55cm, 1997. Artspace Mackay Collection. Image. Artspace Mackay



Figure 51: Clem Forbes on Wallum Creek, Stradbroke Island. nd. c 1963. (Photo Dorothy Forbes. Dorothy Forbes Archive)



Figure 52: Clem Forbes: *Flowering Swamp. [Amity Swamp, Wallum Country. Stradbroke Island]*, gouache on paper, 1966. Estate of Mary McGuinness. [The Wallum country works were exhibited at the Kennigo Street Gallery, in 1967].



Figure 53: Clem Forbes (far right) with Dorothy McGuinness [Forbes], Stradbroke Island, 1962-1963. Dorothy Forbes Archive.

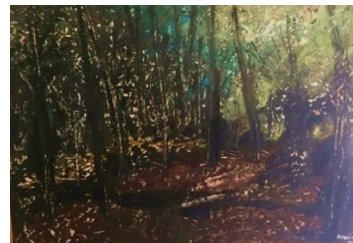


Figure 54: Clem Forbes: *Untitled [Balga Plant]*, gouache and acrylic on board, c 1968. Nick Cilento Collection



Figure 55: Clem Forbes: *Untitled. [Parsons, Finnegan and Pamphlett series showing Moreton Bay, with Glasshouse Mountains]*, 1971.



Figure 56: Clem Forbes: *Untitled. Mixed media on card*, 1975. Dorothy Forbes Collection.

Forbes would develop as an artist through early private art lessons, interaction with peers, self-study, and through intense and sustained studio practice. While the expectation was that Forbes would attend Marist College, Ashgrove in Brisbane as a boarder, where his brother Jim also attended, Forbes' discontent meant that at the age of 14 he would leave school.⁴⁵³ Forbes did however maintain a strong passion for art. At the suggestion of his father, he began working as a copywriter for the Nambour newspaper, a job that did not appeal to him and was therefore not sustained.⁴⁵⁴ Biographies reference Forbes attending art classes at this time, including private lessons in watercolour, oil, sculpture, and stained glass from James Phillips Samuel.⁴⁵⁵ As referenced in Chapter 2, Samuel delivered tuition throughout Queensland for the Board of Education. Active in Nambour as a teacher and lecturer, Samuel completed his training at the Royal College of Art in London, was a member of the Victorian Artists' Society, and was employed as Art Master at the Bendigo and Melbourne Technical College from 1922-1949. It was Samuel's style therefore, that was typical of the Kensington School model.⁴⁵⁶ These beginnings saw Forbes focussing in particular on traditional watercolour techniques.⁴⁵⁷ In addition, biographies reference Forbes attending the CTC for painting tuition around this time.⁴⁵⁸ Non-diploma art courses at the CTC during the 1950s

⁴⁵³ Through the connections to Marist College, Forbes would develop friendships with Arthur O'Neill, Dan Tufui and Wilfred Broad, as referenced in this study.

⁴⁵⁴ Dorothy Forbes, interview, February 10, 2019.

⁴⁵⁵ MacAulay also refers to training in sculpture and stained glass. p 11. The Rockhampton Art Gallery Forbes bio (1971, exhibition, in Forbes, personal archive) refers to Forbes also studying oil painting.

⁴⁵⁶ "Victorian Artists' Society," *Age* (Melbourne, VIC), May 25, 1929, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/205017866?searchTerm=%22victorian%20artists%27%20society%22%20samuel> 8/3/2022.

⁴⁵⁷ DF papers included certificates for art prizes awarded to Forbes by Samuel (and his daughter Sylvia) at this time, including the Great North Coast Show (1954). Forbes retained a Samuel watercolour in his art collection.

⁴⁵⁸ Forbes's 24 June 1980 biography for the Forbes Gallery exhibition of pastels refers to Forbes attending the Brisbane Technical College in 1950 for painting. This date may be inaccurate, though it is possible he could have attended in 1950 while he was in Esk, in 1952 while in Boarding School at Marist College Ashgrove, or in 1952–1953 when he was looking to further his art training and living in Eumundi. Attendance at the CTC (no dates) is also referenced in the 1965 Rockhampton Art Gallery exhibition, as well as the 1971, 1973 and 1974 solo exhibitions in this study. Forbes, personal archive. Arthur Evan Read and Melville Haysom delivered non-diploma art courses at the CTC at this time. Forbes always referred to Evan Read as an artist he respected due to his living in and painting Northern Queensland. Dorothy Forbes, interview.

were delivered by Melville Haysom whose classes would focus on draftsmanship, painting technique and colour. Attendance at these classes would therefore expose Forbes to Haysom's traditional approach to landscape painting and technique in the early stages of his practice.

Figure 57-Figure 59

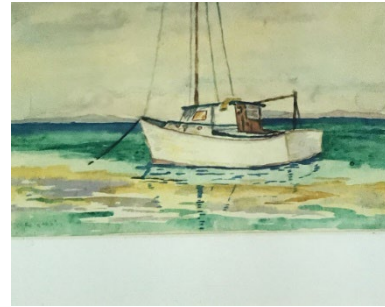


Figure 57:Above: J P Samuel: *Sorrento Vic.* Dry point Etching nd [1938]. Melbourne University Collection. Below: James Phillips Samuel. *Untitled* [Poinciana Tree. Possibly Mapleton, Qld], watercolour on paper, c 1954. Clem Forbes Estate.

Figure 58: Above: Clem Forbes: *Untitled*. [possibly Amity Point], watercolour on paper, 22x14 cm. nd. c 1956. Dunn Collection. Clem Forbes: *Untitled* [possibly Amity Point], watercolour on paper, 21 x 13 cm. 1956. Dunn Collection



Figure 59: Clem Forbes: *Boats in the bay*, gouache on paper, 1980. McConnell/Gray-McConnell collection.

Forbes was diagnosed with tuberculosis in 1954 aged 16, and consequently spent over two years in the South Brisbane Auxiliary Hospital.⁴⁵⁹ Correspondence with his parents during this time shows his focus on drawing, painting, reading art texts and classical literature. In many ways this was the beginning of his consciously educating himself as an artist.⁴⁶⁰ The South Brisbane Auxiliary Hospital would also offer craft workshops in which he would participate..⁴⁶¹ Most significant, however, was meeting Bev Barnes, a fellow patient⁴⁶² who would mentor Forbes, sharing with him Meldrum's *The Science of Appearances*, a methodology Forbes would study closely at this time.⁴⁶³ Forbes' early portraiture, including commissions, demonstrates the Max Meldrum method and, it could be argued, the earlier influence of William Dobell, in subject matter, tonal technique and style.⁴⁶⁴



Figure 60: Clem Forbes: *Danny Tufui*, oil on canvas, 1961. Clem Forbes Estate.⁴⁶⁵

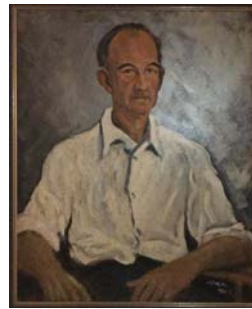


Figure 61: Clem Forbes: *Tom Forbes (father)*, oil on canvas, 1963. Tracey Dunn Collection.

⁴⁵⁹ From 1945 a national campaign to reduce deaths from tuberculosis supported free diagnostic chest x-rays and treatment in hospital. Patients were given an allowance while in hospital. As a young man, Forbes found his time in hospital to be particularly challenging. Dorothy Forbes, interview, 2019.

⁴⁶⁰ Dorothy Forbes referenced several times the influence of Forbes's sister Julie at this time, who was proactive in encouraging Forbes to read extensively, to write and to paint. She was active in securing early portrait commissions for Forbes. Dorothy Forbes, interview.

⁴⁶¹ Clem Forbes to Molly Forbes, letter, 1955, Dorothy Forbes personal archive.

⁴⁶² Archives and correspondence held by Dorothy Forbes – evidence that Barnes would become a lifelong friend and patron.

⁴⁶³ Max Meldrum and Russell Ralph Foreman, *The Science of Appearances* (Sydney, NSW: Shepherd Press, 1950).

⁴⁶⁴ See *Portrait of Leneen Forde*, 1963, cited in MacAulay, *Clem Forbes*, 10.

⁴⁶⁵ Taniela Hoko'ila 'Dan' Tufui (1933–2016) attended Marist College Ashgrove (1954) and the University of Queensland. He sustained friendships with Arthur O'Neill, Jim Forbes and Clem Forbes, with whom he would visit Amity Point, Stradbroke Island. O'Neil, interview. Tufui became Lord Tufui of Talaheu and the Chief Secretary to the Government of Tonga and Secretary to Cabinet. Marist College Ashgrove, "Notable Ashgrovians," accessed November 26, 2022, <https://www.marash.qld.edu.au/about-mca/notable-ashgrovians/>.

Barnes, a dental technician, gave Forbes an apprenticeship on his discharge from hospital. This developed the technical and practical skills including fine motor skills that would benefit Forbes later as an artist who would become prolific in multiple media, including printmaking. While living and working in Brisbane from 1957, Forbes spent considerable time on Stradbroke Island, where his parents had moved to run Elkorn Lodge at Amity Point. It was the landscape of Stradbroke Island that concentrated Forbes's practice as an artist who would paint only the environment he was immersed in. Dr Arthur O'Neill recalls Forbes working on watercolours, particularly of the coastline and Ti-Tree swamp areas at Amity Point,⁴⁶⁶ and Dr David Cilento also recalled experimentation with sculpture including the melting of lead fishing sinkers to use for materials.⁴⁶⁷

Self-study, or study alone without assistance from a teacher, became a lifetime practice for Forbes. This includes the notion of an intellectual approach to the arts. Forbes established a friendship with Arthur O'Neill through his brother Jim, both studying at the University of Queensland, and it was this academic world that Forbes aligned to. Between 1957 and 1958 Forbes spent his time in Brisbane interrogating the ideas and texts O'Neill was studying for his Bachelor of Arts degree. As discussed in Chapter 2, Art History was not taught at this time, instead the focus was on philosophy and literature. It was the almost continual discussion of the course materials with O'Neill that was critical to Forbes's intellectual life, and it is at this time that the notion of aesthetics and an understanding of art as a concept as well as a practice, evolves and takes hold. Evidence of the use of Walt Whitman and AD Hope's poetry as a conceptual device for example, is seen in the *Three Figures with Poetry* (2010). Figure 62. Forbes's understanding of aesthetics and art history

⁴⁶⁶ O'Neill, interview.

⁴⁶⁷ David Cilento, Interview. The Cilento family has a further connection to Stradbroke Island, independent of Forbes. Cilento (married to Julie Forbes) also ran a medical practice in the office of Forbes's Elkorn Lodge. Peter Ludlow, "Year: 2019," Moreton Bay History, Accessed November 22, 2022. <https://peterlud.wordpress.com/2019/0>.

informed his cultural life as an artist, and with Dorothy Forbes, he established an extensive personal art and literature library. Later through the Bakehouse and Forbes galleries, Forbes's role included educating and advising the arts community in Mackay and the Northern Queensland region.⁴⁶⁸



Figure 62: Clem Forbes: *Three figures with poetry*, mixed media, 70x90cm, c 1985. Mackay Regional Council Collection (image accessed online).

From 1957 to 1963 Brisbane also provided a greater opportunity in the exposure to artists who had established private studio or atelier practices as an alternative to the CTC, such as Roy Churcher, John Rigby and Jon Molvig.⁴⁶⁹ On meeting Dorothy McGuinness [Forbes] in 1963, Clem Forbes was introduced to the Nicolaidis drawing techniques she practised through her attendance at studio drawing sessions in Brisbane during the 1950s.⁴⁷⁰

⁴⁶⁸ Gall and Gall, interview.

⁴⁶⁹ Dorothy Forbes, interview, February 10, 2019.

⁴⁷⁰ Nicolaidis, *Natural Way to Draw*.

Forbes would spend time studying the [Queensland] National Gallery collection.⁴⁷¹ In addition, his patronage of Brisbane commercial galleries would bring him into contact with Australian Modernism, informing his move away from portraiture in his approach to landscape through a contemporary lens.⁴⁷²

The study of printmaking was another an important milestone for Forbes. Forbes attended the Bauhinia Creative Arts Workshop (16-20 August) 1976 at the Creative Arts Department of the Rockhampton CIAE, delivered by CIAE tutor, artist, and printmaker Peter Indans (1947-2011). Forbes would go on to refine his skills as a printmaker by installing a printing press in his home studio. He would make use of the medium to reassess his focus on the brigalow landscape. Figure 63



Figure 63: Clem Forbes: *Lost Image*, etching and aquatint, printed in brown ink, from multiple plates, 30cmx22.6cm (plate mark), 1977. National Gallery of Australia Print Collection.

⁴⁷¹ At that time this was housed in the Queensland Museum (Gregory Terrace, Brisbane). Arthur O’Neil recalls attending the collection and galleries with Forbes. O’Neill, interview.

⁴⁷² Dorothy Forbes would also encourage Forbes in this style, as realised in her own work. For example, Dorothy Forbes (nee McGuinness) was selected for hanging in the Finney (also known as the David Jones) prize in 1963, with *Portrait of Young Artist*—a portrait of Clem Forbes, as referenced in Chapter 2—judged by critic Gertrude Langer. Dorothy Forbes, interview, February 10, 2019.

The influence of peers and artists acting as mentors to Forbes had a critical impact his development as an artist. As discussed, Julie Forbes continually encouraged Forbes to write, read widely and paint, and her marriage to Dr David Cilento began a lifetime relationship with the Cilento family as patrons of the arts. This was not only in their link to Stradbroke Island, but through the influence particularly of Sir Raphael and Lady Cilento, on the heritage, environment and patronage of the arts and culture in Queensland.⁴⁷³ It was Sir Raphael Cilento who caught Forbes's imagination through the history of Queensland and stories that held an element of folklore. His telling for example, of the story of the 'ticket of leave' convicts, Parsons, Pamphlett and Finnegan who were rescued by the Quandamooka people and taken to Stradbroke Island inspired the 1971 series of paintings further fuelling Forbes's lifelong interest in Australian mythology.⁴⁷⁴ Lady Cilento opened Forbes's first solo exhibition in Mackay and became a patron, including his works in her collection.⁴⁷⁵ David Cilento referred to the influence on Forbes of Margaret Cilento as an artist and in particular her skill in the use of pastels.⁴⁷⁶ Dr Ruth Smout (Cilento) opened the Kennigo Street Gallery in Spring Hill, Brisbane, in 1966 where Forbes would exhibit in 1966 and 1967.⁴⁷⁷ Dianne Cilento included the work of Clem Forbes in her collection at Karnak, and Forbes would give her a work on her marriage to Anthony Shaffer.⁴⁷⁸ David Cilento continued to collect the work of Forbes and supported and celebrated his career as an artist throughout his life.⁴⁷⁹

⁴⁷³ From 1953 to 1968 Raphael Cilento was President of the Royal Historical Society, Queensland, and from 1966 to 1970 was President of the National Trust of Queensland.

⁴⁷⁴ Dorothy Forbes, interview, February 10, 2019.

⁴⁷⁵ Whitsunday exhibition sales notes, opening exhibition, in Forbes, personal archive.

⁴⁷⁶ David Cilento refers, in particular, to the influence of Margaret through her use of pastel, skills which she learned while studying art in New York (this is also referenced in Chapter 2). Cilento also refers to his time living in New York with Diane and their time visiting major New York art galleries and museums. David Cilento, interview.

⁴⁷⁷ Cooke, *A Time Remembered*, 112–14.

⁴⁷⁸ Nicholas Cilento (David Cilento's son), interview by Celie Forbes (topic: Cilento Collection), July 18, 2020.

⁴⁷⁹ David Cilento, interview.

The impact of Stanislaus Rapotec as an influence and catalyst should not be underestimated. Rapotec, in Brisbane as a painting tutor for Gertrude Langer's vacation schools, ran a painting school in Mackay in August 1971, at the invitation of the LAC.⁴⁸⁰ It was through this that Rapotec was invited to meet Clem and Dorothy Forbes.⁴⁸¹ Rapotec's excitement with Forbes's technique, in particular, resulted in his taking a selection of works to promote to the directors of the Bonython and Holdsworth Galleries in Sydney on his return in September of 1971.⁴⁸² Forbes and Rapotec would also 'swap' works.⁴⁸³ On the recommendation of Rapotec, Forbes was included in a mixed exhibition at the Bonython Gallery in 1971,⁴⁸⁴ and in 1972 he also introduced the work of Forbes to the Holdsworth Galleries. Gisella Scheinberg, as its director, became Forbes's Sydney dealer, a relationship that was sustained until 1996.⁴⁸⁵ Significantly, Rapotec acknowledged the experimental technique in the use of polyvinyl acetate, oil and varnish to create a layered and translucent surface to the painting, which allowed Forbes to draw onto the wet surface to create marks representative of the northern landscape. This critical feedback from Rapotec, an artist Forbes respected and admired, on the techniques Forbes was developing in the north in response to

⁴⁸⁰ As reported in the *Daily Mercury*, 'A three day painting school, conducted by well known artist Stanislaus Rapotec and organised by the Mackay Branch of the Arts Council of Australia, began in Mackay yesterday. Mackay branch of the Arts Council will sponsor two district residents to a School of Creative Arts at the Queensland University from August 9-19'. "Painting School Begins", *Daily Mercury* (Mackay, QLD), July 17, 1971, State Library of Queensland Newspaper Collection.

⁴⁸¹ "Artist Staging Exhibition," *Daily Mercury* (Mackay, QLD), September 28, 1971, Dorothy Forbes personal archive.

⁴⁸² "Dear Mr. Forbes, – just a few lines to tell you that we firmly arrived from our long, long holiday in Queensland. We enjoyed it a LOT! I attended business 'with Bonython Gallery' straight away ... I decided to wait and not to approach anybody else till I get his answer! O.K.?" Stan Rapotec to Clem Forbes, letter, September 5, 1971, Dorothy Forbes personal archive.

⁴⁸³ "4 Paintings. Swap. Stan Rapotec Syd." Clem Forbes's notebook, 1972, Dorothy Forbes personal archive.

⁴⁸⁴ Dorothy Forbes's personal archive include the following references: Clem Forbes's notebook 1971 lists "Wind in the trees (Summer Winds) 100 (x3) Bonython Exhib". "I paid for the other ... for frames for five paintings hanging in the Bonython Gallery." Stan Rapotec to Clem Forbes, letter, Dec, 1971. "It was a large mixed exhibition and I saw your paintings there and they looked marvellous! Rappy says he will write you in a few days time". Bowie Wilson to Clem Forbes, December 21, 1971.

⁴⁸⁵ Gisella Scheinberg to Clem Forbes, letter, February 5, 1973, in Holdsworth Galleries, Box 55, files relating to the exhibition and sale of artworks, Clem Forbes and Bakehouse Art Gallery.

the landscape of this region, encouraged him to refine the techniques that would identify him as contemporary. Figure 64.



Figure 64: Typical of the works shared with Rapotec was Clem Forbes: *Brigalow*, 1970. (Dorothy Forbes, interview, February 10, 2019). Dorothy Forbes collection.

Forbes's relationship with John Rigby was also formative. After they met in Brisbane, Rigby, an older and established artist, became an early mentor for Forbes, encouraging him to seek recognition through dealers in the Brisbane art world and to pursue art prizes as another means of recognition.⁴⁸⁶ Rigby's work was also represented by the Bakehouse Gallery where he would attend exhibitions, and Forbes held Rigby's works in his own private art collection. As a friend, Rigby spent time on Stradbroke Island staying with Clem Forbes at Amity Point where Rigby would work *en plein air*. Figure 65, Figure 66

⁴⁸⁶ Dorothy Forbes, interview, February 10, 2019.



Figure 65: Polaroid photograph of John Rigby working on a painting of the Forbes Fishing Village at Amity Point, Stradbroke Island. [Rigby's *Stradbroke Island* works were exhibited at the Verlie Just Town Gallery, Brisbane]. Photograph by Clem Forbes. [Note: A pastel work of the same subject matter is held in Dorothy Forbes Collection.]



Figure 66: Polaroid photograph of John Rigby drawing on Stradbroke Island (possibly Brown Lake) with Forbes children from left: Andrew, Celie (author) and Lucy, c1976. Photograph by Clem Forbes.

Transition 1968-1971

In 1969 Forbes stated that his belief that “full time painting... would only be a great worry. Very few full-time painters could remain purists and retain their sincerity. There was a tendency to lean towards what they thought the public wanted.”⁴⁸⁷ By this time however, Forbes had developed significantly as an artist already, having produced an extensive body of work, sustained by sales and exhibition outputs. (see Appendix F1 for sample list of private sales). At the Kennigo Street Gallery in Brisbane, Forbes was included in the group exhibition, *Four Young Artists* in 1966,⁴⁸⁸ and held a solo exhibition, *Clem Forbes*, in 1967.⁴⁸⁹ The 1967 exhibition would have exposed Forbes to the work of Irene Amos who,

⁴⁸⁷ “For Mackay Artist Countryside Features in His Work,” *Daily Mercury* (Mackay, QLD), March 3, 1969, Dorothy Forbes personal archive.

⁴⁸⁸ Exhibition ephemera held in Dorothy Forbes’s personal archive.

⁴⁸⁹ Cooke, *A Time Remembered*, 114.

through the influence of Bronwyn Yeates and Stanislau Rapotec, had developed a ‘particular expressionist/constructive technique in the style of Vieira da Silva’.⁴⁹⁰ Figure 67



Figure 67: From left: Kennigo Street Gallery Exhibition Invitation, 1967. Simon Forbes (left) and Matthew Forbes Clem Forbes with Forbes work, George Street, Mackay. c 1968. “Art Prize”, *Daily Mercury*, Mackay, 17 April, 1972. (SLQ Newspaper Collection), Dorothy Forbes Archive.

1967 was an important milestone for Forbes, with his work *The Crow and the Hides* being awarded the *Cairns Art Society Non-Traditional art prize*, (Judge James Wieneke, Director Queensland Art Gallery 1967-1974). Figure 68



Figure 68: Clem Forbes: *The Crow and the Hides*, acrylic on composite board, 95.2x66.0cm 1967. Clem Forbes Estate.

⁴⁹⁰ Cooke, *A Time Remembered*, 77.

Forbes continued to work part-time as an artist in his home studio in George Street, Mackay. In 1968, *LoTok Playing in the Jungle* and *Girl and Possum* were selected for the *David Jones art prize*, exhibited in the Franz Beak Gow (formerly Kennigo Street) Gallery,⁴⁹¹In 1972, *Blair Athol Township* (Clermont, Queensland) was exhibited in the *Redcliffe Art Contest*,⁴⁹² and Forbes was awarded first prize for the Mackay Art Society and Rockhampton Art Society Caltex sponsored art prizes. Figure 67 In 1972, *Northern Landscape* (Figure 14), was purchased for the Rockhampton Art Gallery permanent collection and *O'Neill's Place* was presented to the Mackay Regional Council by the Mackay Art Society. Figure 69



Figure 69: Clem Forbes: *O'Neill's Place*, 65.25x87.5cm, 1972. Collection of the Mackay Regional Council.

Dorothy Forbes understood these paintings as his move away from the traditional approach to landscape, for three reasons. Firstly, that Forbes had shifted or removed the horizon line within the composition of the work, secondly, through the understanding of

⁴⁹¹ Newspaper clippings and correspondence, Dorothy Forbes personal archive. See also collections held in Rockhampton Art Museum and Artspace Mackay.

⁴⁹² QAGOMA, "Research Library," *Art Prizes and Exhibitions 1950–1975*, accessed June 11, 2022.

mark-making and the use of colour, particularly ochre, and thirdly, through his experimentation and mastery of media and technique, developed after his move to Mackay.⁴⁹³ Dorothy Forbes argued that from this point Forbes was becoming a conceptual artist in leaving the traditional approach to landscape behind in Brisbane.⁴⁹⁴ It is this transition that is represented in the Whitsunday and Holdsworth exhibitions.

The move from Brisbane to Mackay is therefore understood as critical in his work. What Forbes saw in Mackay, in the rainforest area of the Eungella Range, was ‘lushness’, which was understood in stark contrast to the dry country of Central and Western Queensland and the brigalow country to the south. Dorothy Forbes referenced the repeated motifs as distinctive of the landscape of the Mackay region in her exhibition notes provided to the Holdsworth Gallery in 1982.

Having spent much of his life in the dryer coastal inland areas, he was immediately excited when in the 1960s he first encountered the rainforest areas here. He set about recording artistically the lush wet coolness of the forest and its trees and clear pools. The Eungella Range rainforest – which is the rainforest he paints – is less dense and primitive than the Far North Atherton Tableland forests. There are more fern trees than palms and the tall thin trees abound ...[with] orchids. The strangler fig however, does destroy many trees— when dead however, they still stand—white—held up by the strangler vine.⁴⁹⁵

Forbes did not work ‘*en plein air*’. He was a studio artist, working from memory and later from polaroid images he had taken of the Queensland landscapes that would serve as inspiration. Figure 70

⁴⁹³ Dorothy Forbes, interview, February 10, 2019.

⁴⁹⁴ Dorothy Forbes, interview, February 10, 2019.

⁴⁹⁵ Holdsworth Galleries, files relating to Clem Forbes, 1982, page 19 of 25.

Dorothy Forbes stated therefore that, ‘the technique developed was therefore totally relevant to the subject’.⁴⁹⁶ He would achieve this through the materials and methods that allowed him to create layers that could emulate the depth, breadth and transparency. Dorothy Forbes stated that ‘the development then was authority - authority over the landscape as he saw it and authority over his method – the way of describing it.’⁴⁹⁷



Figure 70: From left: George Street artist studio, with Clem Forbes, Sophia (left) and Lucy Forbes, 1976; Forbes working in George Street studio, by then the Forbes Gallery, 1981. Clem Forbes: polaroid image of a Strangler Fig. Dorothy Forbes Archive.

Stan Rapotec, in correspondence with Clem Forbes in September of 1971, after his return to Sydney where he would present Forbes to the dealers Bonython and Scheinberg,⁴⁹⁸ referred to the technique, looking for clarification specific to process and stages.⁴⁹⁹ Rapotec summarised the technique as explained by Forbes, as

There is a coat of P.V.A – or P.V.A white paint firstly put down and that you painted on top of such a surface with a sort of mixed media (oil and P.V.A) – That is the way you explained it to me if I remember it well. I only forget the procedure of painting after the preparation of the cardboard with P.V.A or P.V.A white. – Do you paint firstly with P.V.A and then oil on top (wet on wet) – or, oil firstly and then P.V.A on top – or, you simply mix the two and paint with the mixture? Would you kindly explain it to me once more so I can pacify them re cardboard/oil.

⁴⁹⁶ Dorothy Forbes, interview by Celie Forbes, March 1, 2022.

⁴⁹⁷ Dorothy Forbes, interview, April 18, 2019.

⁴⁹⁸ Appendix 27a is an example of a work that is typical of this technique and period.

⁴⁹⁹ Stan Rapotec to Clem Forbes, letter, September 5, 1971, Dorothy Forbes personal archives.

In understanding Rapotec's summary of the process it is necessary to again factor in the north. The use of PVA as a base to seal the board or cardboard was a practice used not only for longevity but as a technique to create the representation of depth and colour in the Northern Queensland landscape. It was critical that the first layer of PVA, sometimes white, sometimes mixed with colour was dry—sealing the surface—before making use of any oil applied across the whole surface with a variety of tools. It was critical for the artist to work quickly and confidently with regard to the mark making that was scraped through the drying upper layer to reference the subject matter; and certainly the climate of Mackay would speed this drying time. Later works evidence Forbes's development of the process in the use of varnish, applied as an additional surface, allowing the work to be fine sanded, washed, and paint reapplied. Forbes used these techniques to create a translucency in appearance that would emulate the sense of the rainforest and wetlands.⁵⁰⁰ This was a repeated and somewhat experimental method that resulted in a style that was as much abstract as it was figurative. Exhibition outputs show that by 1974 Forbes had a sophisticated control of this method, further evidenced in the works, *Range* (1975) held in the City of Townsville Collection, presented by Mrs Tucker at the opening of the Perc Tucker Gallery, Figure 71, and *Morning Light* (1977) acquired by the Mackay Regional Council in 1980. Figure 72 In writing to Gisella Scheinberg, director of the Holdsworth Galleries in Sydney in 1978, Dorothy Forbes stated, 'what Stan Rapotec said at the time still I think applies—that his technique is faultless'.⁵⁰¹

⁵⁰⁰ Dorothy Forbes, interview by Celie Forbes, March 2, 2022. Simon McConnell (patron), interview by Celie Forbes (topic: Clem Forbes's techniques), March 23, 2022.

⁵⁰¹ Holdsworth Files. NLA DF to GS. 16.2.1978



Figure 71: Clem Forbes: *Range*, oil on paper, 53.5x73.7 cm, 1975, City of Townsville Collection. [Gift of the Perc Tucker family, (1981)]

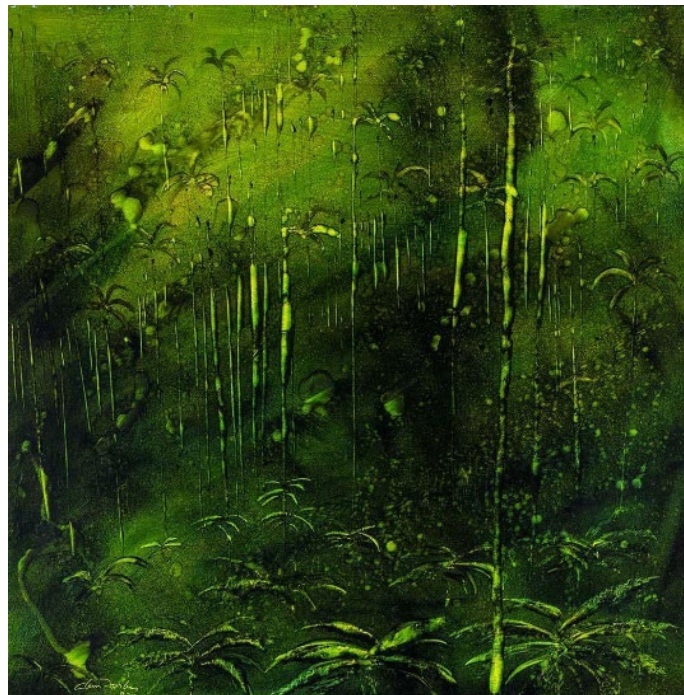


Figure 72: Clem Forbes: *Morning Light*, oil on board, 119x 133.5cm, 1977. Mackay Regional Council Collection. [Donated by the Queensland Arts Council, Mackay Branch 1980].

6.2.3 Exhibition 1: Whitsunday Showcase 29th September 1971. Ochre

The 1971 Whitsunday exhibition, supported by the Mackay Branch of the Arts Council of Australia,⁵⁰² which included 44 works painted in ‘mixed media on pasteboard’ was distinct in its showcasing of themes and motifs that would characterise Forbes’s representation of the landscape throughout his career.⁵⁰³ Figure 73 Lady Cilento, in agreeing to open the exhibition, wrote that she had ‘tremendous respect for Clem’s work and appreciate what he is trying to say’,⁵⁰⁴ describing Forbes as an ‘interpreter of the north’ at the exhibition opening.⁵⁰⁵ Figure 74 and Figure 75. In media coverage, Forbes was described as having ‘travelled much in Queensland and studied the variations of the landscape and it is these variations which are projected within his paintings’ with Clem Forbes commenting on ‘the placing of the objects within the scene, which conveyed the thought behind the work’.⁵⁰⁶ See Appendix F.3 for full catalogue listing.



Figure 73: Clem Forbes ‘70-’71, Exhibition Catalogue, Whitsunday Hotel, Mackay 29th September, 1971. Dorothy Forbes Archive

⁵⁰² “Artist Staging Exhibition,” *Daily Mercury* (Mackay, QLD), September 28, 1971, Dorothy Forbes personal archive.

⁵⁰³ *Clem Forbes 70–71*, exhibition catalogue, Dorothy Forbes personal archive.

⁵⁰⁴ Phyllis Cilento to Dorothy Forbes, letter, September 15, 1971, Dorothy Forbes personal archive.

⁵⁰⁵ “Artist Interprets North,” *Daily Mercury* (Mackay, QLD), September 30, 1971, Dorothy Forbes personal archive.

⁵⁰⁶ “Artist Staging Exhibition,” *Daily Mercury* (Mackay, QLD), September 28, 1971, Dorothy Forbes personal archive.



Figure 74: Clem Forbes: *Homestead and Bottle Tree* [detail], 1971. David Cilento estate; Right. *Untitled* [Houses in Northern Landscape] 38.5x59 cm, 1970. Mackay Regional Council Collection. [Donated by the Artspace Mackay Foundation 2020].



Figure 75: Clem Forbes: *Untitled* [Central Qld Series], 90x45, mixed media, 1970. Clem Forbes Estate.

6.2.4 Exhibition 2: Holdsworth Galleries, Sydney: *Lost images. Technique. Medium. Subject.*

Mark-making

There are three things that obsess me and each one incorporates the other at some stage. Rainforest paintings, Lasseter (legend) paintings, brigalow paintings. The brigalow is the scrub from Mackay to Rockhampton and is being cut down at an alarming rate and the bottle tree is dying. I have watched this stupidity for ten years and the brigalow paintings are something of a requiem to me. I guess everyone knows the story of Harry Lasseter, but I have been around gold mining towns quite a lot in the north and the Australian gold story has always been for me an obsession and is right through my paintings. Lasseter has become for me the soul of this but before this I painted the legend of Tom Coolon. Mt Coolon is 150 miles west of Mackay. Ghost town now.⁵⁰⁷

⁵⁰⁷ Clem Forbes to Gisella Scheinberg, letter, March 3, 1973, in Holdsworth Galleries, files relating to Clem Forbes.



Figure 76: Holdsworth Galleries Exhibition Catalogue, 1973. Dorothy Forbes Archive. Right. Clem Forbes: *Untitled*. [Northern Landscape Series]. 90x45cm, c 1973. Clem Forbes Estate.

The Clem Forbes 1973 solo exhibition at the Holdsworth Gallery included more than 70 works on the themes of the Brigalow, Queensland landscapes and Australian mythology. It is here that a narrative around the Australian art school, understood through the lens of artists such as Nolan, Drysdale and Tucker is apparent. What differentiates Forbes however, is the strength of the Queensland representation, as well as the painting techniques, in particular the use of PVA, oil and varnish by Forbes after 1967. As a result, the *Lasseter* series formed the foundation of a major exhibition, becoming somewhat of a homage to Northern Queensland.

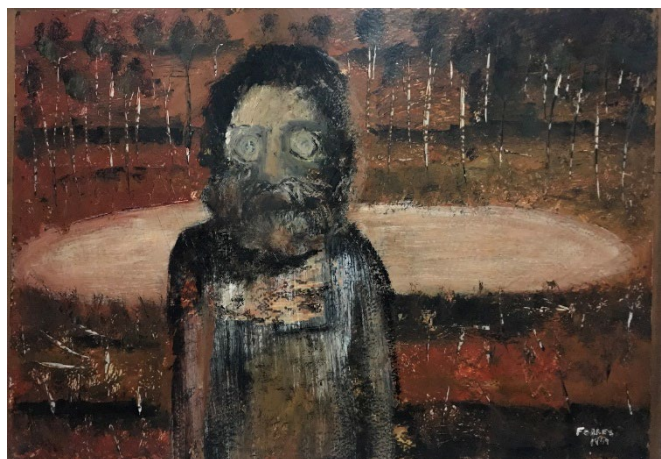
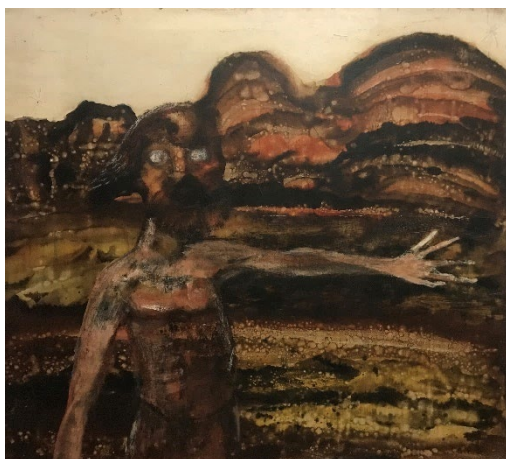


Figure 77: Examples of works from the *Lasseter* Series. Clem Forbes: *Lost Spirit*, 1971; Clem Forbes: *Sandy Blight*, 1969. Clem Forbes Estate.

Dorothy Forbes stated of these works that Forbes was strongly influenced by Aboriginal painting in the way he sought to make use of colour, particularly ochre, and through mark-making.⁵⁰⁸ This exhibition was given the title *Paintings of Australian rainforest and Aboriginal Legends* by the Holdsworth Galleries. Dorothy Forbes challenged the title for its failure to fully explain what Forbes was conceptualising in this series.⁵⁰⁹ This title however, is somewhat explained historically in the approach taken by Australian artists to Australian culture from the 1940s, when they were ‘beginning to appreciate the aesthetic and cultural significance of Aboriginal art’.⁵¹⁰ Jon Molvig for example, made reference to an ‘Australian attitude towards the country and the people’.⁵¹¹ Forbes had seen Jon Molvig’s Central Australian series at the Johnstone Gallery, which exhibited works such as *Burnt landscape no.1 (After the fire)* (1953),⁵¹² and was familiar with this style, typical of Australian modernism, as represented by Arthur Boyd’s *Bride* series (c1957);⁵¹³ Albert Tucker’s works such as *Explorer* (1958);⁵¹⁴ and the *Burke and Wills* and *Leichardt* series’; Ray Crooke’s *Three Studies for Palmer River* (1970), and *Death of a Mining Town* (1964);⁵¹⁵ Rigby’s landscapes, such as *Bracken Pool* (1963) and *Aboriginal Girls* (1966);⁵¹⁶ Margaret Olley’s portraits, including *Susan with Flowers*;⁵¹⁷ Nolan’s *Camel Driver*; Russell Drysdale’s *The*

⁵⁰⁸ Dorothy Forbes, interview, 2019.

⁵⁰⁹ Dorothy Forbes, interview, 2019.

⁵¹⁰ Molvig, *Jon Molvig: Maverick*, 15.

⁵¹¹ Molvig, *Jon Molvig: Maverick*, 14.

⁵¹² Molvig, *Jon Molvig: Maverick*, 15.

⁵¹³ Arthur Boyd, *Arthur Boyd: Brides*, November 29, 2014 – March 9, 2015, exhibition, Heide Museum of Art, VIC, <https://www.heide.com.au/exhibitions/arthur-boyd-brides>.

⁵¹⁴ Christopher Uhl, *Australian Art Library Albert Tucker* (Melbourne, VIC: Lansdowne, 1969), plate 27.

⁵¹⁵ Dobson, *Focus on Ray Crooke*, 49.

⁵¹⁶ Millington and Rigby, *John Rigby: Art and Life*.

⁵¹⁷ Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, “Susan with Flowers: A Contemplative Work by Margaret Olley,” *QAGOMA Blog*, September 1, 2019, <https://blog.qagoma.qld.gov.au/susan-with-flowers-a-contemplative-work-by-margaret-olley/>.

Bore Keeper's Camp, (exhibited at the Johnstone Gallery in 1971)⁵¹⁸; and Gil Jamieson's depiction of the people of Monto and the remote landscape of Central Queensland. These works talk to similar Australian themes while making use of subject matter, colours, patterns, motifs and symbols that are evocative of the Australian landscape and people and typical of the Australian modernist painters. Figure 78



Figure 78: John Rigby, *Waterhole*, oil on board, 90x60cm, c 1965. Clem Forbes Estate. [Note: in this work Rigby also embedded a textured (sandy) surface into the painted background]

In this way Forbes is reflecting on and responding to the contemporary Australian landscape artists, while formulating his own response. As Forbes stated,

just being aware of the works of the Australians enables me to follow their school, without following any one of them...Drysdale has wide opening landscapes, looking back on small figures. I seem compelled to look closer, to walk right up to a tree or the jungle. Albert Tucker has bolder, starker angles.⁵¹⁹

The works in the Holdsworth exhibition evidence Forbes's use of black, white and ochre to define and delineate the landscape, creating a depth and vastness to the works as well as evoking narratives of its people. The subjects from this period were inspired by his time

⁵¹⁸ Nancy Underhill and Louise Martin-Chew, *Remembering Brian and Marjorie Johnstone's Galleries* (Brisbane: The University of Queensland Art Museum, 2014), 24, 48.

⁵¹⁹ "Countryside Features in His Work," *Daily Mercury* (Mackay, QLD), March 31, 1969, Dorothy Forbes personal archive.

from 1964 spent in travelling through Western Queensland, through his fascination with stories, defined in this study as ‘mythos’, such as the Lasseter’s lost gold,⁵²⁰ the story of Finnegan, Pamphlett and Parsons, and of Tom Coolon; placing them in the landscape he would see on his travels to Clermont, to mining towns such as Dysart and Nebo and the Moreton Bay coastline. These became for him the themes and motifs typical of Queensland. Forbes however, would further realise this influence as mark-making, achieving his own distinct style. Figure 79 See Appendix F.4 for full catalogue listing.



Figure 79: Clem Forbes: *Bottle Tree*, 1972. Clem Forbes Estate. Clem Forbes: *Brigalow and Homestead*, 1972. McConnell/Gray-McConnell Collection.

Forbes was reviewed in Sydney as,

having the ability to recreate through the use of high keyed greens, blues and strident orange the mood of the tropics, and drawing the whites back into the painted areas like a monoprint, he captures intense light and vitality in the tree and land forms.⁵²¹

Gisella Scheinberg, director of the Holdsworth Galleries, in describing reactions to the 1973 exhibition at the Holdsworth Galleries wrote to Forbes that,

⁵²⁰ Forbes read *Lasseter’s Last Ride* by Ion Idriess in December 1967. Dorothy Forbes, interview, 2019.

⁵²¹ Ruth Faerber, “Raw and Beautiful,” *Australian Jewish Times*, April 19, 1973.

most of the public have told me that they compare your work with Nolan, but the funny thing is that those paintings sold are your original work and people do not compare them with other artists.⁵²²

By 1974 a transition is evident in the intense focus on the rainforest and wetlands, characterised in particular by the use of the colour green, and Forbes would not revisit the painted ochre landscapes that defined his early works. It is however the works from the Whitsunday and Holdsworth exhibitions which were talked of by patrons as the most contemporary, misunderstood by early observers, but prized in private collections. Patron Simon McConnell reflected on this period.

Clem was painting the local environment and interpreting it, and a limited number of people recognised and responded to that interpretation. This was very modern art. It was not what people expected a painting to be, therefore only a limited number of people recognised that image and interpretation... The artist is always ahead. The artist is seeing what you, later on, recognise.⁵²³

6.2.5 Exhibition 3: Young Australian Galleries, Brisbane: Concept of Rainforest. Green. Transparency.

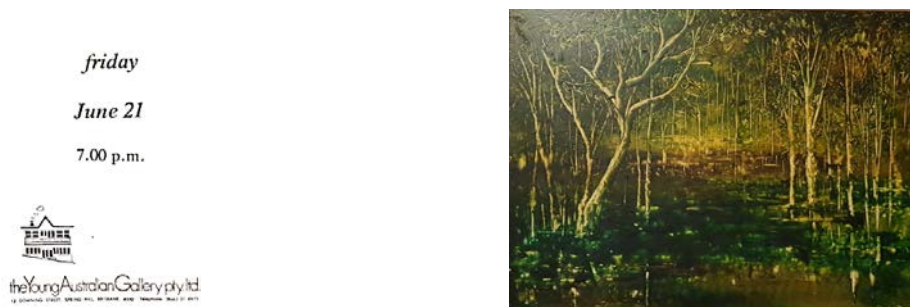


Figure 80: Young Australia Gallery. Clem Forbes Exhibition Catalogue. 1974. Dorothy Forbes Archive. Clem Forbes: *Ti Tree Swamp*, 90x60cm. Oil on composition board, 1974. Tom and Gail Canniffe Collection.

⁵²² Gisella Scheinberg to Clem Forbes, letter, April 26, 1973, in Holdsworth Galleries, files relating to Clem Forbes.

⁵²³ McConnell, interview.

The 1974 Brisbane exhibition at the Young Australian Gallery (Figure 80) is, however, a showing that emphasised Northern Queensland flora including Scribble gums, Ti-Tree, Melaleuca and paperbark swamps typical of the Mackay region. This imagery is strongly local. In moving from the dry and stark landscapes of western and central Queensland to the wet and tropical landscape north of Mackay, this exhibition represents a significant shift in subject matter and demonstrates mastery of style and method. Figure 81 See Appendix F.5 for full catalogue listing.



Figure 81: Clem Forbes: *Ti Tree Swamp (in the wet)* [*Melaleuca series*], synthetic polymer paint on paper, 101.7x64.0cm, 1974. McConnell/Gray-McConnell Collection.

6.2.6 Exhibition 4: Paul Bowker Galleries, Brisbane: Elements of rainforest. Layering.

The following year, the 1975 exhibition at the Paul Bowker Galleries (formerly the Young Australian Gallery) focussed closely on the rainforest works typical of the Eungella Ranges and Netherdale locality of the Pioneer Valley to the west of Mackay including the canefields.

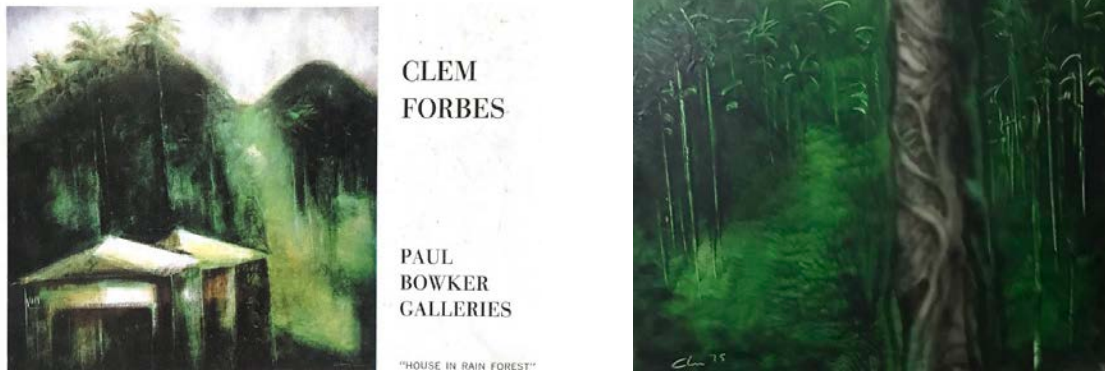


Figure 82: Exhibition catalogue. Dorothy Forbes Archive. Clem Forbes: *Strangler Fig*, oil on board, 36x 30cm, 1975. Celie Forbes Collection.

The use again of the oil, PVA and varnish materials allowed the repeated brush and drawing strokes to mark out the mountains and its trees. The sometimes-airbrushed layers create a sense of the mist of the mountains and mark in the shape of the houses and strangler figs, together representing the complexity of light and depth evident in the mountain ranges. Figure 84 This series was the result of Forbes spending considerable time immersed in the rainforests of the Mackay Hinterland including the nursery at Netherdale owned by patrons Simon McConnell and Lorraine Gray-McConnell. As stated, Forbes was an observer, using images from memory or photographs once he returned to his studio. Figure 83 See Appendix F.6 for sample catalogue listing.

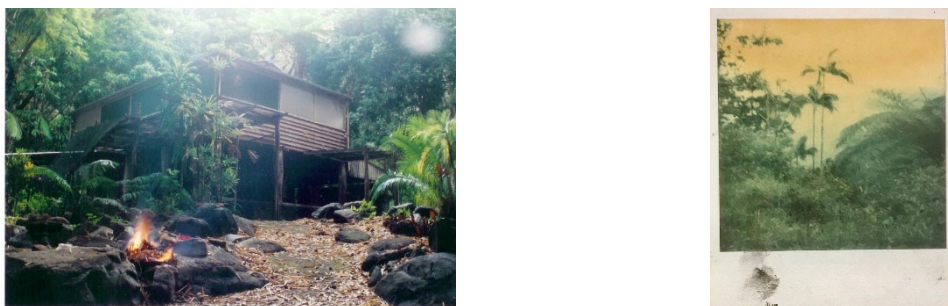


Figure 83: Left: McConnell Nursery, Netherdale. c 1975. Image by Damien Carty. McConnell/Gray-McConnell archive. Polaroid photograph of Pioneer Valley with paint markings from artist studio, c 1970. Dorothy Forbes Archive.

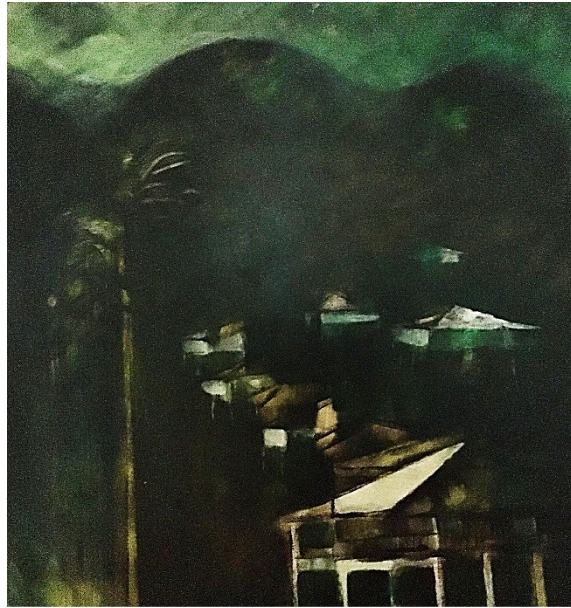


Figure 84: Clem Forbes: *Rainforest Town no.2*, mixed media. 90x 90cm, 1975. Lucy Forbes Collection.

6.2.7 Exhibition 5: Bakehouse Art Gallery, Mackay: 1977. Return to the Brigalow

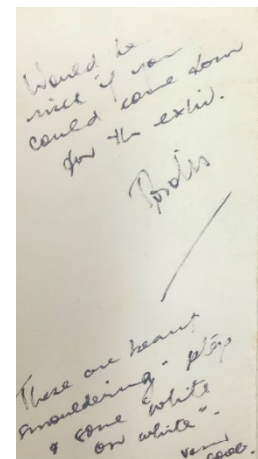


Figure 85: Invitation 14 December 1977. Text by Dorothy Forbes to Ralph Martin. JCU Special Collections. Martin Gallery Archive.

The 1977 Bakehouse Art Gallery exhibition evidences a return to the Brigalow theme, this time through the medium of drypoint etching, gouache and oil painted on board. The technique of introducing white to the painting (seldom used after 1967) moves the works from the cool colours of the green rainforest to the soft pinks and browns of the ‘smouldering’ brigalow landscape, found for example, in the Connors Range to the northwest of

Rockhampton. Dorothy Forbes argues that it is the rainforest and brigalow landscapes exhibited at the Bakehouse Art Gallery until its closure in 1979, that evidence Forbes's work at his most sophisticated.⁵²⁴ At this time Forbes is also recorded as being represented by the Barry Stern Galleries, a gallery that sold works as representative of Australian Modernism. *Brigalow* (mixed media) was selected for hanging in the Queensland Art Gallery Trustees' Prize for painting, 1975, and *Brigalow* (ink drawing) was selected for the Queensland Art Gallery, J. Harvey Prize at the exhibition in 1977. Figures 86, 87 See Appendix F.7 for sample exhibition listing.

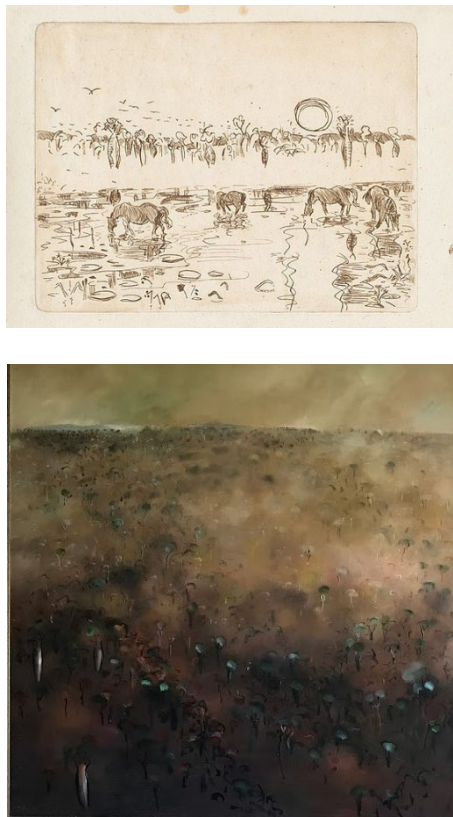


Figure 86: Clem Forbes: *Untitled* [Brigalow landscape with horses], drypoint etching, c1977. National Gallery of Australia Centre for Australian Art Australian Prints and Printmaking [https://www.printsandprintmaking.gov.au/works/41858/images/24676/Clem Forbes](https://www.printsandprintmaking.gov.au/works/41858/images/24676/Clem%20Forbes). Clem Forbes: *Brigalow Country* [Brigalow Landscape], oil on board. 74 x 74.0cm, 1977. David Bleakley Collection.

⁵²⁴ Dorothy Forbes, interview, February 10, 2019.

In 1978 Forbes held a major exhibition, at the Munster Arms Gallery in Melbourne, of works including the *Lucy in the Garden* series—subject matter depicting his children represented against a background dominated by monstera, and evidencing the introduction of airbrush in his methods. By 1980, however, Forbes was making almost exclusive use of pastels, with exhibitions held at the Forbes Gallery Mackay (1980); Martin Gallery, Townsville (1981), and Holdsworth Galleries, (1981). The works would generate high sales due to the popularity of the translucent rainforest imagery made possible through the layered application of pastels. Forbes by now had further reduced the rainforest to a series of motifs including the blue and green images of the Ulysses butterfly, kingfisher, fern tree and lorikeets and Queenslander houses, generating high sales that would give Forbes a degree of financial independence.⁵²⁵ In 1980 the Forbes Gallery was established in George Street, Mackay, becoming a studio gallery exclusively for exhibitions of Clem Forbes.



Figure 87: Clem Forbes: *Rainforest [series]*, 90x90cm, oil on composite board, 1977. Anne Chamberlain Collection.

⁵²⁵ Gisella Scheinberg stated in correspondence to Clem Forbes, March 3, 1981, “We received today four pastels ... I hope we sell these paintings as quick as we sold the previous ones.” Holdsworth Galleries, files relating to Clem Forbes.

6.2.8 Conclusions. Clem Forbes

It would be enough to see him as an image maker but the greater value, his greater obsession, was to raise the human spirit, to see oneself as part of the landscape, and as part of the memory, that fortifies a culture.⁵²⁶

By 1982 Forbes, having firmly established himself an artist as identified by the themes, motifs and imagery of Northern Queensland, had chosen to stay in the north, making 'its environment and the people of that environment, his special concern'.⁵²⁷ With this identity comes understandings of 'locality' specific to the conceptualisation of subject matter including the disappearing landscape, rainforest and brigalow ecosystems, and the recording of rural life in the isolated homesteads and small country towns. As an artist he is recognised through techniques making use of 'mixed media' that were at times experimental, which he practised and mastered while living in Mackay. These techniques were demonstrated in works that were exhibited in Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, and included in private and public collections.

Forbes's sustained practice also supports understandings of 'self-taught' as more the norm than the exception among contemporary Queensland artists of the time, and the importance of other artists as mentors as critical to development. What is significant is that Forbes established and was represented in the Bakehouse and Forbes galleries as a deliberate strategy both to create his own exhibition opportunities, and to engage with artists he considered relevant to Australian art and therefore to his own practice. In addition, he was also able to successfully sustain practice as a professional artist from 1976, supported solely by sales and teaching, something few artists of the time would achieve. His output and private

⁵²⁶ Dorothy Forbes, guest speaker at exhibition opening for *Clem Forbes: Image Maker*, July 16, 2004.

⁵²⁷ Burdekin Mural programme, 1982, Dorothy Forbes personal archive.

sales were extensive as evidenced in the number of works held in private collections.⁵²⁸ As a result, Forbes's long-term strategy to sustain his practice was to focus on the markets to be found in the north, and to set prices that encouraged public demand rather than matching dealership expectations. Forbes's continued influence was through his work as an educator, judge, and mentor to emerging artists. Figure 88 His constant regeneration as an artist, as evidenced in the themes, style and methods of the exhibition case studies, ensured that he leaves behind a prolific body of work that, through the use of repeated motifs, demonstrates unique understandings of the Northern Queensland landscape.



Figure 88: Clem Forbes guest judge for the Innisfail Art Society. Article: “Andrews Scoops the Pool At Art Show”, *Advocate*, Innisfail. 20 August, 1982. Dorothy Forbes Archive.

⁵²⁸ The *Clem Forbes Project 1997* created the first documentation of works by Forbes held in private collections. Gray-McConnell and Lane, Clem Forbes Project, personal archive. See Appendix F for listing 1966–1981.

6.3 Tom Risley: 1977-1981 Circuit Breaker

6.3.1 Introduction

*Risley has spent most of his life in Far North Queensland...The regional environment has enriched his work, as evident in his early pieces employing 'found objects' depicting the wildlife of the coast... While the subject matter may be regional, the processes that drive his practice have important art historical precedents*⁵²⁹

Tom Risley was prolific as a sculptor, represented from 1982 by the Ray Hughes Gallery and Andrew Baker Art Dealer.⁵³⁰ He lived and worked in Tolga in the Atherton Tablelands to the south-west of Cairns, moving to Herberton where he would be based from 1984. Studies of Risley include Smith (1986),⁵³¹ Thomas (1990),⁵³² Rainbird 1990,⁵³³ The Queensland Art Gallery (1992),⁵³⁴ Tonkin (2005),⁵³⁵ KickArts (2012),⁵³⁶ and Joyce (2017).⁵³⁷

Risley references the influence of his father, artist Noel Risley, who exhibited at the Trinity Gallery and was immersed in the avant-garde lifestyle of artists living and working in the remote regions of Far North Queensland. From 1977 Tom Risley formed a friendship with Clem Forbes, who acted as a critical friend to the developing sculptor. Risley was able to transition to full time practice after 1982 through support from the Visual Arts Board Australia, commissions, inclusion in collections, teaching, and residencies. This case study examines his transition as an artist practising in the Far North, understood through his

⁵²⁹ Tonkin, *Tom Risley*, 6.

⁵³⁰ See Appendix G for biography.

⁵³¹ Ian Smith, "Artist's Choice No. 27. Tom Risley: Drums," *Art and Australia* 23, no. 4 (Winter 1986).

⁵³² Thomas, *Further Concern with Still Life and Composition*.

⁵³³ Stephen Rainbird, "The Art and Environment of Tom Risley," *Art and Australia* 28, no. 1 (1990).

⁵³⁴ Queensland Art Gallery, *Tom Risley: The Indigenous Object & the Urban Offcast*.

⁵³⁵ Tonkin, *Tom Risley*.

⁵³⁶ KickArts Contemporary Arts, *Tom Risley: Last and Recent Works*.

⁵³⁷ Renée Elizabeth Joyce, "The Butterfly Pin: The Phenomenon of Object-Based Collecting in Australian Contemporary Artistic Practice" (PhD thesis, James Cook University, 2017), <https://researchonline.jcu.edu.au/53131/1/53131-joyce-2017-thesis.pdf>.

personal drive to seek critical recognition beyond the limitations of location. He would achieve this by 1982, through his relationship with Brisbane art dealer Ray Hughes, whose alignment to the Contemporary Art Society and his focus on contemporary artists in his stable would provide Risley with the opportunities he sought.

While biographies reference Risley's work from his first exhibition in 1981 at the Ralph Martin Gallery, it is his development up to this point that is the focus of this study. Risley's period of experimentation in Tolga throughout the 1970s is discussed in this study as formative in his development as a mature artist. This body of work predates the exhibitions and studies of his use of coastal 'found objects'. Instead, this study examines the period of experimentation from 1977 to 1981. In 1977 Risley was sculpting small figurative pieces in wood and soapstone, a style he would leave behind in his transition to working with large pieces of steel and industrial materials. This intense period, which resulted in Risley's first solo exhibition at the Martin Gallery, Townsville, and representation in the First Melbourne Sculpture Triennial in 1981, is understood as critical to Risley's development as an Australian contemporary sculptor.

The case study will focus on the following prizes, exhibitions, and commissions:

- 1977 Mareeba Art Prize
- 1980 Cairns Art Society Prize
- 1980 Eacham Shire Council Commission
- 1981 First Melbourne Sculpture Triennial
- 1981 Fabrications (Martin Gallery, Townsville)

6.3.2 *Biography and influences*

Yeah, I don't think I started off with all sorts of philosophies, I sort of had the early period where I carved stone and wood in a figurative sense, like Dad did, but then I started welding. I think that was the big break for me and I was heavily influenced by artists like David Smith the American sort of modernist and Anthony Caro, the British

*sculptor who took away the base in sculpture. All sorts of artists and I think I got them totally out of order, I found pop art before I found sort of, God knows, surrealism or something. It was... being a self-taught artist ... but I think that is a wonderful way to go...*⁵³⁸

Though he was a self-taught artist, Tom Risley acknowledged the use of the trade skills gained at Trinity Bay State High School, his training as an electrician and his work for Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation [CSIRO] in rainforest ecology research, as critical to his practice. In his 1981 artist statement for the Melbourne Triennial Exhibition, Risley stated

while these two pursuits do not constitute formal training in art they are I feel the basis of all art, i.e., tradesmanship, craftsmanship and nature – which is everything on this earth in one form or another. It is also a sad fact of life that I, like most sculptors, must earn my living outside the studio or workshop.⁵³⁹

Risley's father Noel Risley (1919-1980), a figurative sculptor, was an early influence.⁵⁴⁰

Noel Risley was immersed in the arts community of the Far North, sustaining friendships with artists such as Ray Croke, Heinz Steinmann, Percy Trezise, and artists associated with Timara Island including Deanna Conti and Noel Wood. His exhibition history includes the Trinity Gallery, Cairns and the Martin Gallery, Townsville.⁵⁴¹ His sculptures carved from the coral, pumice and red cedar found in the coastal environments of the Far North were typical of his work.⁵⁴² Figure 89

⁵³⁸ State Library of Queensland, "Tom Risley, 2009, 10085/53," Storylines – Q150 Digital Stories, December 22, 2009, <http://hdl.handle.net/10462/eadarc/7474>.

⁵³⁹ Thomas G. McCullough, *The First Australian Sculpture Triennial: 28 Feb. – 12 Apr. 1981: At Preston Institute of Technology and La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria* (Melbourne, VIC: First Australian Sculpture Triennial Committee, 1981), 152.

⁵⁴⁰ Queensland Art Gallery, *Tom Risley: The Indigenous Object & the Urban Offcast*.

⁵⁴¹ Jane Cornwall (sister of Tom Risley), interview by Celie Forbes (topic: Noel Risley), April 6, 2022.

⁵⁴² Examples of these sculptures are found in the Noel Risley Archive, James Cook University Special Collections.

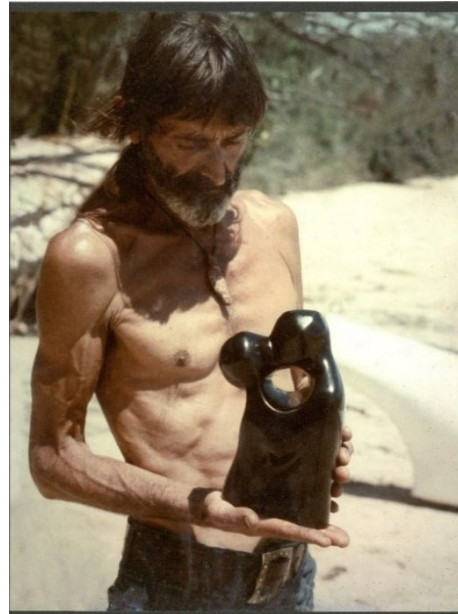
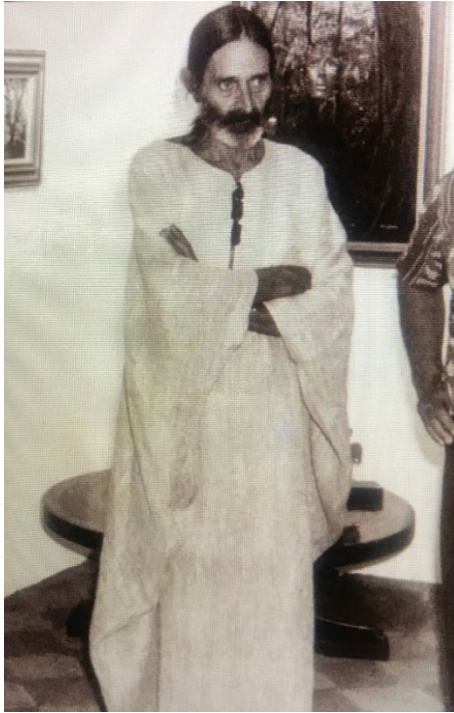


Figure 89: Left: Noel Risley at an exhibition of his works c 1976 [Gallery not identified]; Noel Risley on Restoration Island c 1970 with stained timber sculpture *Lovers*. Noel Risley Archive. JCU Special Collections.

His father, Risley stated

developed in me a spiritual association with nature which has, in recent years, been enhanced by a scientific understanding. To my father I owe a great debt for breaking down barriers. He enabled me to grow up with a balanced view of the world.⁵⁴³

Included in the 1981 Melbourne Sculpture Triennial, *Homage to my Father*, is a large welded steel work evocative of Noel Risley's figurative sculptures. Risley saw the sculpture as 'a slight deviation toward the figurative image, to accommodate what were his [father's] great humane qualities.'⁵⁴⁴ Risley however, would move away from this early style by 1978, becoming 'disenchanted with my (till then) figurative work in natural materials.'⁵⁴⁵ It was Tom Risley's intense desire to engage intellectually with the work he was completing, beyond the

⁵⁴³ McCullough, *First Australian Sculpture Triennial*.

⁵⁴⁴ McCullough, *First Australian Sculpture Triennial*, 152.

⁵⁴⁵ Risley, *Tom Risley, Fabrications*. See the difference.

aesthetics of the object, that drove him into a period of experimentation.⁵⁴⁶ Risley would acknowledge the influence of American sculptor David Smith (1906-1965) and of Anthony Caro (1924-2013) in his transition to the use of paint and metal, as opposed to working in stone and wood, which indicated for him an association with craft.⁵⁴⁷ Figure 90



Figure 90: Tom Risley: figures in wood, soapstone and steel, Tolga Studio, c 1977. Photographs (including slide capture) Tom Risley. Coral Risley Archives.

From 1977 Risley's friendship with Clem Forbes would be sustained, through this developmental time, by the intense discussion of art, something Risley craved. Coral Risley reflects that they 'really had a connection... Clem was like his mentor for so long through those really early days. He had a big influence on Tom [in] finding someone to talk to about art'⁵⁴⁸ Figure 91

⁵⁴⁶ Risley, interview.

⁵⁴⁷ Risley, Artist statement, *Tom Risley, Fabrications*.

⁵⁴⁸ Risley, interview.



Figure 91: Clem Forbes and Tom Risley at Forbes Gallery, George Street, Mackay, 1981. Coral Risley private archive. [Note: image quality is due to the quality of the original].

Risley's work *Letter to Clem Forbes*, included in the *Fabrications* exhibition in 1981 at the Martin Gallery, demonstrates this relationship. Forbes's experience of commercial galleries in Brisbane, the practices of contemporary artists exhibiting in Brisbane commercial art galleries—further evidenced in Clem and Dorothy's private art collection, art library and the exhibition programme of the Bakehouse Art Gallery—no doubt informed the conversations with Risley during this time. Forbes had an existing relationship with Ruth Smout (Cilento), director of the Kennigo Street Gallery, who was also a practicing sculptor. The Bakehouse Art Gallery had exhibited the work of Dixie Lambert, Len and Kathleen Shillam (1916-2002), and the Brisbane Society of Sculptors, exhibiting in particular their work in metal. Clem and Dorothy Forbes held a print of sculptor and artist George Baldessin (1939-1978) in their private collection, and monographs of artists such as David Smith were also included in the Forbes library.⁵⁴⁹ Smith's works such as *The Letter* (1950), informed further understandings of Minimalism as a style through the symbolic use of shape, and, *Australia* (c 1963), the symbolic representation of landscape.⁵⁵⁰ Coral Risley reflected on

⁵⁴⁹ David Smith and Garnett McCoy, *David Smith* (London: Allen Lane, 1973).

⁵⁵⁰ Smith and McCoy, *David Smith*, 124–27.

Letter to Clem Forbes. “It was all about the rainforest. He was talking to Clem through that”.⁵⁵¹ A further interpretation is that the work represented a mutual understanding of the contexts of both artists through Forbes’s rainforest motifs and the transition to the influence of contemporary media, methods and style that was the intense focus for Risley at this time.

Figure 92



Figure 92: Polaroid image of Dorothy Forbes with Dixie Lambert Sculpture (steel) and Clem Forbes painting *Strangler Fig*, at the Bakehouse Art Gallery, Mackay. 1977[Note: quality of image due to original]. Right: Tom Risley: *Letter to Clem Forbes*, steel, 180x15 x55cm, 1980. Jeff Risley Collection. Image Coral Risley Archive.⁵⁵²

The influence on Risley of art dealer Ray Hughes, however, was defining. Aligned to the Queensland Branch of the Contemporary Art Society, Hughes would exhibit emerging contemporary Queensland artists experimenting with abstraction.⁵⁵³ Ruth Smout (Cilento) collaborated on the establishment of 111 Musgrave Road, (Red Hill Brisbane) as a gallery space in 1969. This was later leased to Ray Hughes and Ian Reece, as Gallery One Eleven. Strongly influenced by Roy Churcher, Ray Hughes would engage in Brisbane’s contemporary

⁵⁵¹ Risley, interview.

⁵⁵² Note: Clem Forbes’s notebook includes the reference ‘Tom Risley Metal Frame’ (no date). This may further suggest discussions on technique. Forbes, personal archive.

⁵⁵³ Helen Fridemanis, *Artists and Aspects of the Contemporary Art Society, Queensland Branch* (Brisbane, QLD: Boolarong Publications, 1991), 56.

art scene, establishing the Ray Hughes Gallery upstairs at Musgrave Road before independently moving to Enoggera Terrace, (Red Hill, Brisbane), in 1972.⁵⁵⁴ Hughes was connected to Clem Forbes through Cilento and later to the Bakehouse, and similarly the Martin Gallery, through works on consignment. Dorothy Forbes recalled discussions with Risley regarding Ray Hughes as a dealer who was focussed on promoting contemporary art.⁵⁵⁵ Coral Risley stated ‘when he [Tom] met Ray Hughes, his whole world opened up’.⁵⁵⁶ Exhibitions at the Hughes gallery continued in 1985 after Hughes’s move to Sydney, through to 2005 when Risley would be included in major exhibitions including the 1988, 1990, 1992, 1994 Venice exhibitions.⁵⁵⁷ The works in the following exhibitions, in addition, exemplify the extent of artistic output from 1977 to 1981, summarised in some ways by the Fabrications exhibition listing (Appendix G.1), in the period of Risley’s intense focus on development as an artist whilst still working full time in Atherton.

6.3.3 Transition: Circuit Breaker

*He loved process.*⁵⁵⁸

*...I like the fact that he doesn’t hide the origins of the original object.*⁵⁵⁹

The works in the following exhibitions evidence Risley’s intellectual transition in seeking to emulate ‘creative thought’ through the ‘physical object’.⁵⁶⁰ During a developmental period while he was living in Tolga, on a property providing space to experiment with industrial materials, Risley was able to concentrate his practice as an experimental artist intensely

⁵⁵⁴ Fridemanis, *Artists and Aspects*, 15.

⁵⁵⁵ Dorothy Forbes, interview, February 10, 2019.

⁵⁵⁶ Risley, interview.

⁵⁵⁷ Tom Risley Biography supplied by Coral Risley. See Appendix G.

⁵⁵⁸ Risley, interview.

⁵⁵⁹ Andrea May Churcher, Director Cairns Art Gallery, in “Public Works. Tom Risley, ‘*Still Life*’ (1995), Cairns Regional Gallery Collection,” *Weekend Australian* (NSW), October 5–6, 2013, 10.

⁵⁶⁰ McCullough, *First Australian Sculpture Triennial*, 152.

interested in both found objects and manufactured materials. An example of this is *Cement Blocks*, which would win the Cairns Art Society Prize in 1982. It was *Printed Circuit* (1978) however, that became Risley’s ‘circuit breaker’ in his decision to move away from his earlier style into a more considered approach to materials, form, colour, and the environment. Risley’s collection of local materials, sourced through later trips in the Far North, and his practice in transforming them to sculptural objects is much discussed biographically, as in the studies referenced. The focus of this case study however, is on his works in steel, a medium that could be manipulated into different forms, his use of colour within that format, particularly the use of industrial reds and blues, and on his understanding of line and shape—all principles of painting as much as sculpture—that, it is argued, form the backbone of his practice as evidenced throughout his career.⁵⁶¹ Figure 94

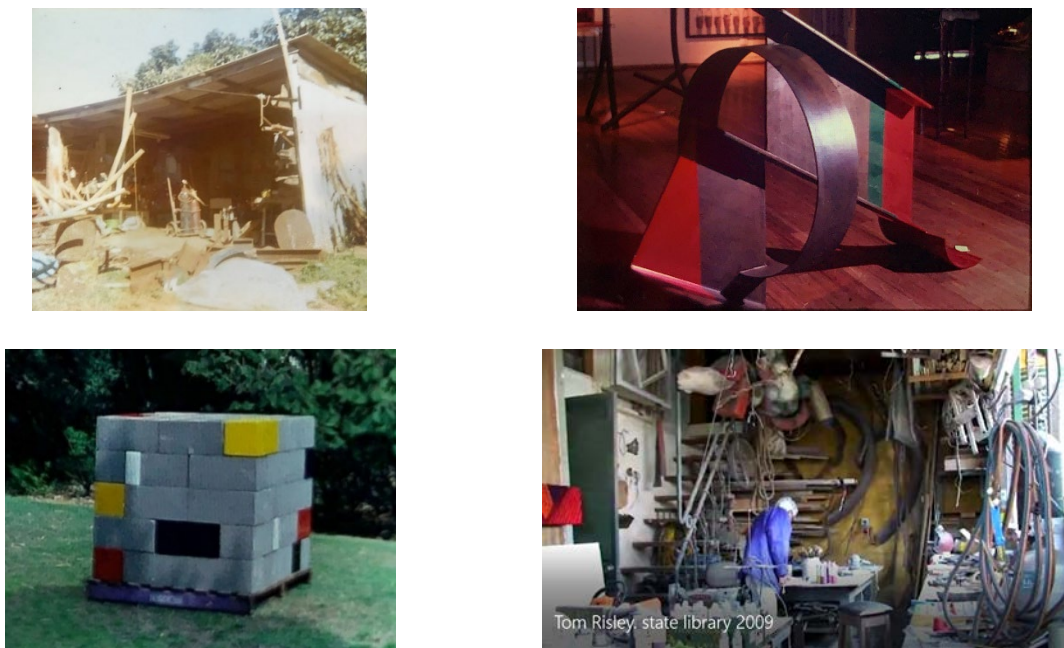


Figure 93: Clockwise from top: Tolga workshop. c 1977; Tom Risley: *Untitled*, steel plates and strips, 1978. Tolga. Tom Risley: *Cement Blocks*, c 1979. Images from Coral Risley Archive; Tom Risley in his Herberton workshop, 2009. Q150 Digital Stories. 2009 SLQ.

⁵⁶¹ Risley refers to ‘the sculptural qualities of twenty layers of paint’. State Library of Queensland, “Tom Risley, 2009, 10085/53,” Storylines – Q150 Digital Stories, December 22, 2009.



Figure 94: Tom Risley: *Still Life*, mixed media, 60 x 80cm, 2005. Cairns Art Gallery Collection. Photograph: Cairns Art Gallery.

6.3.4 Exhibition 1: Mareeba Art Society

Tom Risley's early exhibition opportunities came through the Art Society prizes. In 1976 the works *Trauma*, and *Communicative Moments*, works in beech and sandstone, were exhibited in the Cairns Centenary Art Exhibition.⁵⁶² These were examples of early figurative works that Risley referenced as influenced by his father. The sculptures clearly evidence Risley's technical skill and understanding of the figure as realised in the form, texture and shape of the materials he was using, which were primarily stone and wood. As judge of the 1977 Mareeba Art Society exhibition, Clem Forbes awarded the sculpture prize to Tom Risley's *Untitled*, a work which Forbes purchased for his own collection. Figure 95 While these works were aesthetically pleasing and skilfully carved, Risley would find after that date that continuing to work in this method and style, resulting in 'round and smooth' objects, was a process that no longer gave him an intellectual challenge.⁵⁶³ These works marked the end of Risley's period

⁵⁶² *Cairns Centenary Art Exhibition*, exhibition catalogue, in Forbes, personal archive.

⁵⁶³ Risley, interview.

in working in this way, a style to which he would not return throughout his career, signalling instead his transition in style that would be signposted by *Printed Circuit*.



Figure 95: Tom Risley: *Untitled (figure)*, soapstone, 13 x 14 x 8.5cm, 1977. Mareeba Art (Sculpture) Prize 1977. Judge: Clem Forbes. Dorothy Forbes collection.

6.3.5 Exhibition 2: Cairns Art Society

Printed Circuit was for me a break from the influence of my father.⁵⁶⁴

Printed Circuit is a work referencing Risley's technical background through the engineered approach to sculpture and the fabricated environment it evoked, which was later awarded the Cairns Art Society Sculpture Prize in 1980.⁵⁶⁵ Figure 96 Coral Risley references the symbolic significance of this work as a 'circuit breaker' in the deliberate allusion to Risley's trade background to break with the figurative tradition relied on in earlier works. This work is therefore formative. Risley makes use of the shapes of found objects, colour that references both the industrial, environmental, and Indigenous understandings of the land, and use of shapes that are deliberately industrial, and remind the viewer of common everyday objects. This format is relevant to later works including the 1982 'Australian Still Life' exhibition at the Ray Hughes

⁵⁶⁴ Risley, Tom Risley, *Fabrications*.

⁵⁶⁵ Risley, interview.

Gallery, which was revisited later in his 'Still Life' works c 1995. As such, this work became hugely relevant to Risley, prior to his transition to large steel works, and also in the reference to both human objects and the land through colour and shape, something that has become characteristic to his work. Andrea May Churcher, in describing his works, has relevance here.

He was really interested in form, materials and the environment, finding objects that you could then transform back into objects that had the human trace.⁵⁶⁶



Figure 96: Tom Risley (front left) moving *Printed Circuit*, c 1978. Tolga. Tom Risley: *Printed Circuit*. Cairns TAFE. Coral Risley archive. (note: quality of images due to original photographs)

6.3.6 Exhibition 3: (Commission): Eacham Shire Council (Malanda Shire Offices) 1980

*One of the highlights of my career to date was the large commission undertaken for the Eacham shire council at Malanda in 1980. I will always be indebted to the council to enable me to bring to fruition a proposal that would otherwise have been denied a physical presence. The work will remain a tribute to their liberal thinking and support for the arts in a society where these qualities are largely absent.*⁵⁶⁷

The 1979 *Malanda Fountain* commission for the Eacham Shire Council, funded by the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council, would see Risley making use of welded steel on a scale and volume he had not worked with previously. The abstract sculpture, evocative of 'a flame

⁵⁶⁶ Churcher, in "Public Works," *Weekend Australian* (Sydney, NSW).

⁵⁶⁷ Risley, *Tom Risley, Fabrications*.

on a misty Tableland evening’ was positioned outside the Eacham Shire offices.⁵⁶⁸ Risley referenced his work with steel in the 1980 ‘Fabrications’ (Martin Gallery) catalogue.

I prefer to work with steel because it is the medium of our time. Unlike the sculpture of Smith and Caro, my work is concerned with the volume of the pieces in the arrangement and the inherent manufacturing of the pieces giving them a welded and fabricated quality directly related to an engineering workshop product as distinct from Caro who prefers steel mill stock products generally unaltered as a basis for most of his sculpture.

Doug Hall, director of the Queensland Art Gallery from 1987-2007, described the *Malanda Fountain* as ‘a large and impressive work in its visual strength, its denial of materials to override ideas and in its ability to express strong abstract principles drawn from nature.’⁵⁶⁹



Figure 97: Tom Risley: *Malanda Fountain*, five welded steel plates, 500cmx500cm. Eacham Shire Council Offices, 1980. Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council Funding. Photo of Tom Risley on right. Coral Risley Archive.

Clem Forbes made reference to the commission, as judge for the 1981 Atherton Art Society Prize, complimenting the Eacham Shire Council on ‘its courage and wisdom in having one of Tom’s works on display outside their Shire Office.’⁵⁷⁰ Due to a change in council however, the fountain would be relocated to the Malanda Environment Centre and

⁵⁶⁸ Lianne Gibson and Joanna Besley, *Monumental Queensland: Signposts on a Cultural Landscape*, (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2004), 90.

⁵⁶⁹ Queensland Art Gallery, *Tom Risley: The Indigenous Object & the Urban Offcast*, 8.

⁵⁷⁰ “Art with Feeling,” *Atherton Tableland Times* (QLD), May 26, 1981, in Forbes, personal archives.

later stored, being replaced by a fibreglass draft horse and sled created by Vivien Plant. Risley is recorded as stating, 'It's like dogs that bark at things they don't understand'.⁵⁷¹ The work was relocated to Herberton in 2010, following the advocacy of local groups, where its relationship to the landscape, through line, shape and evocative use of colour, continues to be critically relevant. While his use of materials in *Malanda Fountain* was almost one-dimensional, Risley's development as a sculptor would be in his move to a three-dimensional approach to sculpture, through, in particular, the opportunities presented by steel.



Figure 98: Tom Risley: *Malanda Fountain*. 1980, in its current location outside the Mining Museum in Herberton, QLD. Photograph, Celie Forbes.

6.3.7 *Exhibition 4: First Melbourne Sculpture Triennial 1981*

*This triennial was organised by Tom McCullough as a result of his conflict with the Mildura Council and some townspeople over the (to them) radical nature of exhibits and exhibitors ...One aspect of the triennial as a survey of Australian, N.Z. and Canadian sculpture that was obvious, is the continual need of sculptors to challenge mediocrity in all its forms.*⁵⁷²

⁵⁷¹ Quote from *Courier Mail* (Brisbane, QLD), July 5, 1999, cited in Gibson and Besley, *Monumental Queensland*, 61.

⁵⁷² Risley, *Tom Risley, Fabrications*.

In 1981, Risley was invited to exhibit three pieces in the First Australian Sculpture Triennial at La Trobe University in Melbourne, marking another milestone in his career.⁵⁷³ The triennial would place Risley in an international context, moving him out of the narrow field he had become increasingly frustrated with.⁵⁷⁴ The works exhibited, *O*; *Homage to my Father*, and *Glyph IV*, (see figures 99-101) evidence Risley's symbolic relationship with the Australian environment. This he understood as 'the spiritual essence of Australia which cannot be divided from Aboriginal culture and beliefs which are, as in most cultures, largely dependent on symbols.'⁵⁷⁵



Figure 99: Tom Risley: *O*, steel strip, 150x110x550cm, 1980. Coral Risley collection. Photograph, Celie Forbes. [Doug Hall (Director QAG 1992) stated that *O* 'evoked a sense of beginning that invites associations with nature, not unlike an embryonic seed form, sprouting into its new existence.⁵⁷⁶]

⁵⁷³ McCullough, *First Australian Sculpture Triennial*, 152.

⁵⁷⁴ Risley, interview.

⁵⁷⁵ McCullough, *First Australian Sculpture Triennial*.

⁵⁷⁶ Queensland Art Gallery, *Tom Risley: The Indigenous Object & the Urban Offcast*, 8.

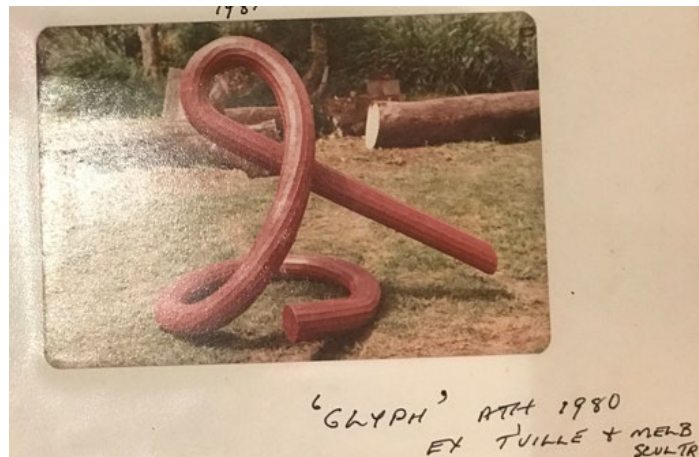


Figure 100: Tom Risley: *Glyph IV*, 1980. Photograph Coral Risley Archive.

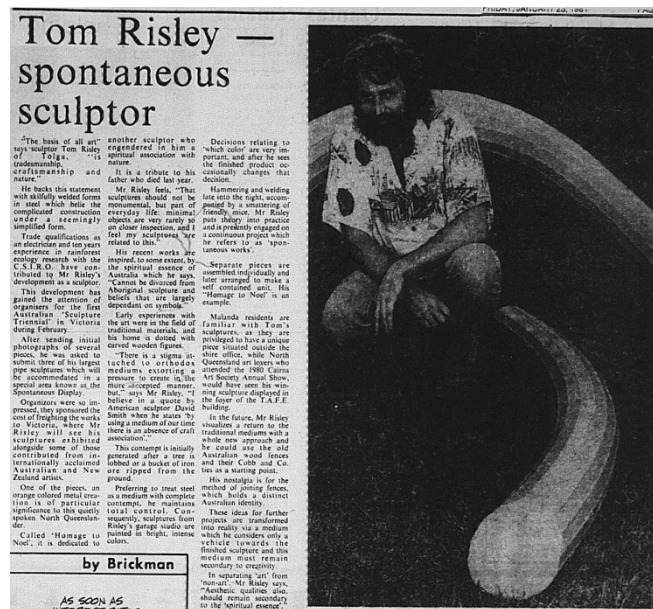


Figure 101: "Tom Risley, Spontaneous Sculptor", *Cairns Post*, 23 January, 1981. SLQ newspaper Collection.

A further impact of Risley's inclusion in the Triennial is in signposting the way in which Risley would move forward in his career as an artist. Sanders (2009) in her thesis work on the Mildura Sculpture Triennials identified this change. While this predates Risley, it is formative in explaining the different career paths the artists in this study would take.

The increasing professionalism of many of the core triennial artists was not based on

involvement in or consecration by the commercial market, but through a new economy made possible via government patronage. This is evident in their employment within the new tertiary art training systems, their status as lecturers, their recognition through Australia Council grants and residencies, inclusion in international biennales, their inclusion in the survey exhibitions of contemporary art at state galleries as well as their participation in various new art organisation boards and committees. The rapidity of the development in Australia of a parallel economic structure for artists, and most specifically for sculptors and related professionals, is remarkable.⁵⁷⁷

It is these factors that are evident in Risley's career after 1981. Risley was awarded Visual Arts Board Grants in 1982, 1985, 1991 and 1993, received the Stanalite Travelling Fellowship in 1996, and *Totem* was gifted to the New Parliament House in Canberra by the Queensland Government. Risley taught at Brisbane's College of Advanced Education [QUT] from 1983-1986, was on the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council from 1988-2002 and was included in Australian exhibitions including Australian Perspecta (NSW Art Gallery, 1985), Adelaide Biennale of Australian Art (Art Gallery of South Australia, 1989), Australian Sculpture Triennials (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th), and Twenty Australian Artists (1990), with residencies including Auckland City Art Gallery, New Zealand (1990).

6.3.8 Exhibition 5: Martin Gallery: Fabrications 1981

*I paint my sculpture because the colour involved adds another dimension to it in relation to highlighting textures and symbolic association. I treat steel as a functional medium and sometimes with contempt but never hide the fact that it is steel.*⁵⁷⁸

The 1981 "Fabrications" exhibition of works primarily in steel, at the Martin Gallery in Townsville, was Risley's first solo exhibition and the culmination of this developmental period. The period, Risley stated, 'was one of introspection and soul searching as to the validity of the

⁵⁷⁷ Anne Sanders, "The Mildura Sculpture Triennials 1961 – 1978: An Interpretative History" (PhD thesis, Australian National University, 2009), 4.

⁵⁷⁸ Risley, *Tom Risley, Fabrications*.

object as art but came through convinced that I can still make a worthwhile contribution in this area.⁵⁷⁹

The included work *Eclipse* further represented this understanding of the Northern environment in its use of form, shape and through placement of objects, a clear shift from the more two-dimensional steel pieces evident in the Malanda fountain, with works such as *Sliced Steel* demonstrating both his mastery of steel and reference to his contemporary influences. Forbes stated of *Eclipse*, that it ‘was of such a high standard it could compete with honour at any of the larger art exhibitions.’⁵⁸⁰ Figures 102-104



Figure 102: *Fabrications* Exhibition Catalogue. Martin Gallery Archive. JCU Special Collections; ‘NQ Sculptor opens exhibition in city’, *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 14 November, 1981.1. [Image in the article includes Clem Forbes works].

⁵⁷⁹ Risley, Tom Risley, *Fabrications*.

⁵⁸⁰ “Art with Feeling,” *Atherton Tableland Times* (QLD), May 26, 1981, in Forbes, personal archive.



Figure 103: Tom Risley: *Eclipse*. welded steel strip/rolled plate 150 x 240 x 120cm, 1980. Coral Risley collection. Image Coral Risley archive.

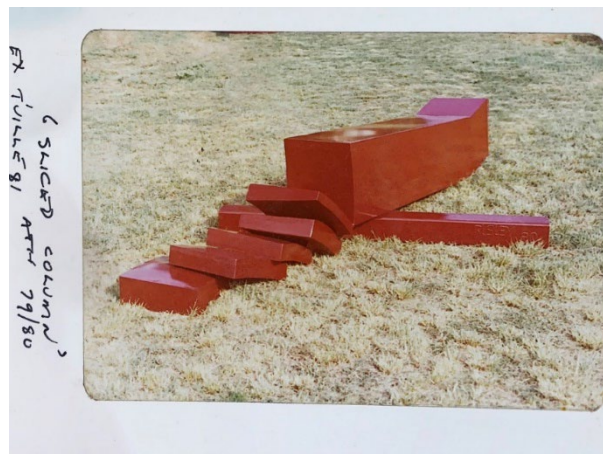


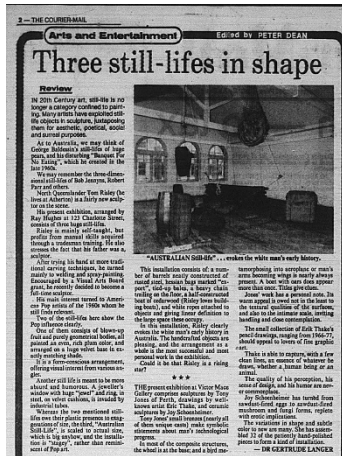
Figure 104: Tom Risley: *Sliced Column*, welded steel plate, 50x250x140cm, 1980. Image: Coral Risley archive.

Risley's exhibition, 'Australian Still Life', in 1982 at the Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane, was the first in his relationship with the director, Hughes.⁵⁸¹ Figure 105 In reviewing the

⁵⁸¹ Ray Hughes Gallery, Ray Hughes Gallery Ephemera, 1969–1992.

exhibition, Gertrude Langer noted the influence of American Pop art, elaborating however, that Risley,

clearly evokes the white man's early history in Australia. The handcrafted objects are pleasing and the arrangement as a whole is the most successful and most personal work in the exhibition. Could it be that Risley is a rising star?⁵⁸²



TOM RISLEY
Another Aspect of Still
Life & Composition

IAN SMITH
Pastels, Watercolour and
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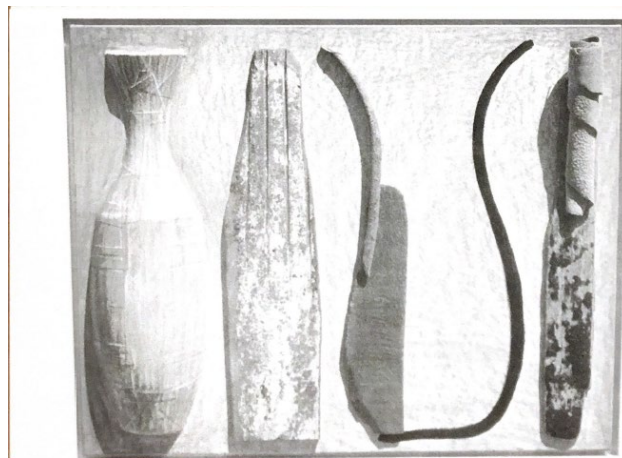


Figure 105: Langer, Gertrude, "Three Still-Lives in Shape" *Courier Mail*, Brisbane, 29 October, 1982. Langer, Gertrude, "He Turns Rubbish into Art" *Courier Mail*, Brisbane, 11 October, 1983. SLQ Newspaper collection. Right: Tom Risley *Another Aspect of Still Life and Composition*, at Ray Hughes Gallery, c 1991. Ray Hughes Gallery Collection. Box 1. SLQ.

⁵⁸² Gertrude Langer, "Three Still-Lives in Shape," *Courier Mail* (Brisbane, QLD), October 29, 1982.

The “Fabrications” exhibition is therefore critically significant. The culmination of an intense experimental period, it demonstrates that Risley had been able to transform his practice from that of an artist working in small carved objects to an artist who would create sculptures that spoke to an international audience, while remaining throughout his career intensely grounded in Northern Queensland. Figure 106 See Appendix G.1 for catalogue listing.



Figure 106: Tom Risley: *Still life [series]* Tolga, 1981 (prior to exhibition in *Australian Still Life* at the Ray Hughes Gallery, 1982). Coral Risley archive. Tom Risley, *Still life*, c 1994. Coral Risley Collection. Photograph, Celie Forbes.

6.3.9 Conclusions: Tom Risley

North Australia and the lifestyle of its people – the exotic being eroded by encroaching drabness. It is more rust than rustic; and differs, in its dense humidity, from the outback or inland desert already much represented in Australian art...⁵⁸³

Artist Ian Smith, born in Cairns, makes reference to Risley’s technique as a successful challenge to traditional representations of the Northern Queensland landscape. Achieving this was not accidental, but rather the result of a deliberate shift in practice evidenced in his studio work from 1978, and, symbolically, in the realisation of the 1979 ‘circuit breaker’, *Printed Circuit*, with his works in steel evidencing a dramatic control of the industrial materials that he understood as the language of contemporary sculpture. Risley’s ‘still life’ (1982) and

⁵⁸³ Smith, “Artist’s Choice No. 27.”

‘collage’ works (1983) exhibited at the Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane, would demonstrate again the use of ‘man-fabricated’⁵⁸⁴ objects marking Risley’s renewed direction as a self-taught artist. It is through Risley’s relationship with Ray Hughes that he would gain the critical exposure he sought beyond regional representation, and the association would facilitate further professional relationships with artists. In Queensland this included artists William Robinson, Bill Yaxley and Ian Smith, and exhibition opportunities with contemporaries such as John Wood (b 1944), Peter Cole (b 1947), Stephen Killick (b 1947) and Giuseppe Romeo (b 1958). (See Figure 105) Terry Smith, in considering the sense of Risley’s work as exhibited in the 3rd Australian Sculpture Triennial in 1987 described as interesting ‘the urge to render equivocal our reading of materials,’⁵⁸⁵ and by 1990, Australian critic Daniel Thomas understood Risley as ‘...an artists whose work is intensely regional in content (tropical North Queensland rustic, not metropolitan)...’.⁵⁸⁶ Tomkin, as Senior Curator of Cairns Regional Gallery in 2005, acknowledged also that ‘while the subject may be regional, the processes that drive his practice have important art historical precedents.’⁵⁸⁷ Risley, therefore, in placing himself in an international context was able to reframe perceptions of regionalism and clichés of the north, while remaining true to his locality, something few artists from Northern Queensland have been able to achieve. Figure 107

⁵⁸⁴ See Figure 105. Gertrude Langer, “He Turns Rubbish into Art,” *Courier Mail* (Brisbane, QLD), October 11, 1983.

⁵⁸⁵ Terry Smith, “Sculpture Blossoms in Triennial Showing,” *Times on Sunday* (Sydney, NSW), September 20, 1987, <https://acca.melbourne/exhibition/3rd-australian-sculpture-triennial/>.

⁵⁸⁶ Thomas, *Further Concern with Still Life and Composition*.

⁵⁸⁷ Tomkin, *Tom Risley*, 6.



Figure 107: Tom Risley in Mackay. c 1982. Photo Jane Cornwall. Jane Cornwall archive; Tom Risley travelling south, c 1982. Coral Risley archive.

6.4 The Art of Becoming: Conclusions

Throughout their careers both Forbes and Risley drew materials and inspiration from the environment, both urban and natural, that would realise both symbolic and figurative representations of the people and places of the north. They would both ultimately benefit from the influence and mentoring of other artists and the support of cultural programs and exhibition opportunities throughout their development as artists. In remaining true to their locality, both artists would seek to expand their spheres of influence beyond the constraints of the region.

Chapter 7: Conclusion: In defence of the north.

*I always feel a sadness when I look around those old deserted homesteads and small towns out around Winton and Longreach. You know you will come across an old house that's (sic), the stumps are still there and the old tanks and the enamelware. So in a sense you are telling a story of people that live up here in the bush in far north Queensland and that includes the outback areas as well.*⁵⁸⁸

Four major findings have emerged that synthesise the outcomes of this study: the significance of trained artists in contributing to and sustaining the cultural life of the north, further realised through the creation of a Queensland 'ethos' specific to landscape; the cross fertilisation of ideas throughout Northern Queensland, enacted through informal networks centred around the port towns of Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns; the critical importance of galleries and dealers, in mentoring, promoting and connecting artists throughout the regions prior to the establishment of Regional Galleries; and the role of patrons who consciously established Australian art collections while becoming the advocates of the arts at this time.

7.1 The role of trained artists in sustaining the cultural life of the north.

The *art of becoming* is visualised and conceptualised through the art and experiences of artists as distinctive of Northern Queensland. The body of work evidenced in this study constitutes a contribution to Australian art history contextualised by the experience of artists living and working in Northern Queensland from 1971-1981. The artists in the study are distinguished as individuals, explained through method, style and subject matter. Common to artists is the recognition of Northern Queensland as being individually distinct and locally contextualised specific to understandings of place as determined by geography and environment. This is evidenced in the case studies of artists Clem Forbes and Tom Risley.

Clem Forbes's development as a young artist in Brisbane was deliberate. Through his practice of traditional painting techniques and methods including those identified with the

⁵⁸⁸ Tom Risley, State Library of Queensland, "Tom Risley, 2009, 10085/53," Storylines – Q150 Digital Stories, December 22, 2009.

Kensington and Meldrum schools, he became a proficient artist by his early twenties. His later exposure however, to the Australian modernist painters exhibited by Brisbane commercial galleries including the Johnstone, Kennigo, Ray Hughes, Young Australian, Verlie Just and Philip Bacon Galleries, was formative. The methods, style and subject matter specific to the works of these artists, further championed by art dealers in the south including Kym Bonython, Rudy Komon and Gisella Scheinberg, informed his transition as an artist distinguished by his understanding of contemporary figurative art.

It was in Mackay that this transition was realised. Forbes's experimentation with abstract techniques, combined with his understanding and control of the painting medium, allowed him to represent the brigalow country, hinterland rainforests, river systems, coastal formations, and the cattle and cane farms of Northern Queensland. Further distinguished by colour, motif and imagery, it was these works that would become recognised as distinctive to the north.

Remaining in Mackay, Forbes sustained his practice as a full-time artist through intense studio output, consistent private sales, and art teaching. He undertook mural commissions including the Ayre Burdekin Theatre (1982) and Mackay Entertainment Centre (1988) and was represented by the Bakehouse, Forbes, Martin and Holdsworth Galleries throughout his career. Forbes remains the artist most identified with the Mackay Hinterland region.

Tom Risley began as an artist influenced by his father Noel Risley, who was recognised as a sculptor in the Far North, represented in the Trinity and Martin Galleries. While Risley had success with his small figurative sculptures carved in soapstone and wood, Risley's deliberate shift to working with manufactured materials after 1977 became the catalyst for his success throughout his career. His transition to steel after 1979, in particular

would reference contemporary understandings of sculpture, the language in which Risley wished to engage. Risley's relationship with Ray Hughes Gallery from 1982 would give him an international profile however, the understandings of his work never moved from his relationship with the environment of Northern Queensland.

Both artists were self-taught. As this discussed was both a necessity and an opportunity. The focus on the TAFE model throughout Queensland meant that training was utilitarian in nature. In addition, the traditional approach to art training by Brisbane's CTC up to the 1970s meant that artists would seek opportunities outside of the model, including private art practice and studio work. Art societies and groups such as the CAS were influential, and the impact of the QAG touring exhibitions and art prizes was understood as being very valuable, for financial support, recognition and exhibition opportunities. The work of the Adult Education Board in providing art workshops throughout the state and the reach of the QAC and the associated LACs is recognised as significant during this period. This is further realised through the role of Dr Gertrude Langer as the QAC President, in establishing the regional touring program and the University of Queensland Vacation Schools workshops delivered by professional artists. While artists from Brisbane would travel throughout the state, this study develops the concept of "northern artists" through examining the sustained contribution of the artists living in, contributing to, and representing the region. The value of professional artists as mentors is consistently recognised throughout this study. Forbes recognised artists John Rigby and Stanislaus Rapotec as his early mentors, while Tom Risley recognised the role of Noel Risley and Clem Forbes as his early mentors, and Ray Hughes's mentorship as having a significant impact on his career.

The truth of both these artists, it is argued, is in their practice distinctive of their experience of Northern Queensland. It is understood in this study that the space and the environment of Northern Queensland meant that both artists had both the space and freedom

to develop their practice. While this study recognises challenges understood to be typical of Queensland at the time, in the need for education structures, cultural programmes and art spaces, it evidences the ways in which these challenges were met and resolved by the artists while living and working in Northern Queensland. Clem Forbes would realise the heterogeneous landscape of Northern Queensland through a prolific body of work. His reach was as an educator, and also through his studio and exhibition output in the north, his major exhibitions in the metropolitan centres to the south, and his representation in Regional, University and public collections. This is further evidenced by the number of works held in private collections. Risley's physicality as an artist was expressed through his experimentation with materials drawn from the rural, coastal, and urban environments of the Far North. In engaging with the arts community beyond the region where he lived, Risley would go on to produce a diverse and extensive body of work that would have an international reach throughout his career as represented in National, State, Regional and public art collections and in particular through his exhibition output, as represented in general by the Ray Hughes Gallery, and notably in the Venice Biennale.

7.2 The role of informal networks in the cross fertilisation of ideas

Consistent amongst groups is the agreement on the importance of culture to the region, albeit focussed on the individual identity of the centre, and on the notion of *progress* in the region as specific to social, cultural, and political understandings of contemporary art. In the absence of formalised arts infrastructure, in this study the patrons, groups and commercial galleries are understood to have operated as informal networks that would mentor, promote and champion artists in Northern Queensland through the organisation of cultural programmes, events, and educational opportunities. This study recognises the commercial galleries as acting as *cultural hubs*, bringing together patrons throughout Northern Queensland. Their reach also included theatre and music. These activities connected the port towns of Rockhampton, Mackay,

Townsville and Cairns, linked through touring programs and exhibition opportunities provided by the commercial galleries, QAC and Board of Education. Artists in the study exhibited in multiple galleries along this network, and patrons understood the galleries as important in housing the works of non-traditional, modern and contemporary Australian artists.

The importance of art societies in establishing art prizes is found to be critical at this time. Art prizes in all towns, often sponsored by Regional Council and private industry - Caltex Oil in particular - provided exposure and credibility to artists. The support of professional artists and gallery directors as judges provided critical feedback to both the artist and public. More important than the financial rewards for the artist were the recognition, prestige and exhibition opportunities that came with selection. Further, art prizes informally connected artists with commercial dealers across Queensland and further south. It was found that artists from Brisbane, in particular, were also entrants in regional art prize competitions.

The change to this informal network was evidenced after 1980 in the establishment of formalised national, state and regional funding models.

7.3 The role of commercial galleries and dealers in mentoring, promoting and connecting artists.

The commercial galleries in this study are recognised as significant in the development of artists, in providing exhibition opportunities for artists in Northern Queensland. These included Gallery Up Top in Rockhampton (Director Lal Lanyon); The Bakehouse Art Gallery in Mackay (Director Dorothy Forbes), the Martin Gallery in Townsville; (Director Ralph Martin), and the Trinity Gallery in Cairns (Director Jim and Rosemary Macfarlane). The Heritage Gallery (Director Jim Macfarlane) in Cairns is also recognised as being significant as one of the first galleries to represent First Nation Artists from the Far North, managed

through the Australia Council Subsidiary company, Aboriginal Arts and Crafts Pty Ltd. While artists exhibited in all galleries, artists strongly associated with Northern Queensland included Gil Jamieson and Bill Yaxley in Rockhampton, Clem Forbes in Mackay, Anneke Silver and Clem Forbes in Townsville and Heinz Steinman, Goobalathaldin, Percy Trezise and Thancoupie in Cairns.

Common across the case studies is the experience of artists that engaging with or relocating to the metropolitan areas (understood as “the south”) was necessary to critical and economic success and artistic development. This was seen as impacting on the sustainability of the cultural spaces, programmes, and events in the north, as well as on understandings of what it meant to identify as an artist of the north. Ray Hughes, in particular, would be influential in supporting artists from Northern Queensland including Tom Risley, Ian Smith, Bill Yaxley and later, Davida Allen. Lal Lanyon exhibited and promoted Gil Jamieson consistently, and Forbes would maintain representation at the Holdsworth Gallery throughout his career.

All commercial galleries in the study, however, were closing through the 1980s, where the financial impact of the altruistic nature of the arts had taken its toll. The establishment of Regional Galleries and the RADF would bring with it a more structured approach to the arts in the north, and arts courses with education programmes formalised through the Rockhampton CAE, JCU and TAFE colleges. Many of the patrons in the study had also moved away, citing professional commitments.

Ultimately what was prevalent was that unerring belief of the dealers in this study, in their critical role in giving the public access to the arts despite the fact of isolation, and further, their intense commitment to sustaining a political cultural agenda as critical to the identity of the region.

7.4 The role of art patrons in supporting and promoting artists.

An overwhelming sense of the value of the arts and cultural experiences of this time is further evidenced in the final reflections of patrons in the study. It was recognised through the contextualisation of 1970s as an exciting, intellectually stimulating time, experienced through art exhibitions and engagement with practising professional artists, through the promotion of and participation in cultural events including dance, music and theatre, through advocating for community arts and civic spaces to house the arts through advisory and government roles, and through a sense of social cohesion in the local cultural community—something that the artists would not find after they had left. The sense of the value of the arts is further evidenced in the private art collections assembled through patronage of the commercial galleries in this study. Patrons such as Simon McConnell and Lorraine Gray-McConnell and the estate of Dr David Cilento, hold substantial collections of Clem Forbes's work; similarly, all of the patrons in this study evidence critically important artists of this time in their collections.⁵⁸⁹

7.5 Recommendations

Recommendations arising from this study include opportunities for further academic focus on Townsville as a distinct school, including the contribution of the Townsville Art Society and the work of Anneke Silver; on artist Gil Jamieson, specific to the Monto region, Western and Far North Queensland; on ceramics as an area of excellence across the four regional centres; on the impact of the QAC, through the vacation schools and touring arts programmes, and of art societies in the establishment of art prizes and exhibition history; on the Adult Education Board in the provision of informal art workshops throughout Queensland; on the alignment of the visual arts to theatre, dance and music in all regions; on the impact of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and South Sea Islander culture on the arts in Northern Queensland; on the

⁵⁸⁹ Acknowledgement is made of the collection of Dr Allan Cook OAM and Barbara Cook (even though they are not patrons interviewed in this study), as evidenced in Gray-McConnell and Lane, Clem Forbes Project, personal archive (1998).

establishment and impact of the Australian Heritage Gallery in Cairns, and, critically, on the emergence of a distinct trend showing the arts agendas in all areas and regions as driven by educated, focussed and dedicated women—this has been implicit in the narrative. Evidence also suggests sustained impact can be identified through the work of the families of artists and artworkers including Andy Forbes, Matthew Jamieson, Jonathan MacBurnie, and Nathan Shepherdson.

7.6 In Defence of the North

*To know a place is to be a place.*⁵⁹⁰

This study both maps and catalogues a decade of considerable output by artists, directors, patrons and art groups working between 1971 and 1981. Further, it presents the argument that there is critical relevance in recognising the work of artists as distinct to Northern Queensland, as demonstrating a more complex understanding of ‘locality’, in drawing out what is understood as the ‘north’ through a more nuanced understanding of landscape beyond the romanticised notions of the tropics, and in challenging the cult of the individual artist as the embodiment of cultural identity. Instead, this study suggests the notion of a Northern Queensland school of art as one made up of artists whose practice was sustained not only by a continued commitment to Northern Queensland, despite the challenges it presented, but through the multi-faceted lens of education, informal infrastructure, and cultural programs, as realised through the dedicated work of art councils, societies, groups, mentors, dealers and patrons. In this way a more complex story of the arts in Northern Queensland emerges, one that is responsive to national and international art movements whilst sustaining an ethos and identifiable locale specific to place, and one that is connected to rather than disconnected from the broader Australian contemporary arts narrative.

⁵⁹⁰ Nathan Shepherdson, “Light Is Not Dark until It’s Light until It’s Water,” in *Gordon Shepherdson: Ocean of Eyes*, by Gordon Shepherdson, with text by Bruce Heiser, Nathan Shepherdson, Louise Martin-Chew, and David Burnett (Cleveland, QLD: Redland Art Gallery, Redland City Council, 2023), exhibition catalogue.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Participant list

Group	Group	CaseStudy	Interviewee	Date
1	Artist	Forbes	Cilento, David Dr	17/03/2019
1	Artist	Forbes	Cilento, Nicholas	18/07/2020
1	Artist	Forbes	Forbes, Dorothy	10/02/2019
1	Artist	Forbes	Forbes, Dorothy	18/04/2019
1	Director	Gallery	Forbes, Dorothy; Sophia Forbes	22/04/2019
1	Artist	Forbes	Forbes, Jim Dr	25/07/2020
1	Artist	Forbes	Forbes, Matthew	31/03/2022
1	Artist	Risley	Jane Cornwell	6/04/2022
1	Curator	Gallery	Matthew Jamieson	14/03/2021
1	Artist	Forbes	O'Neill, Arthur Dr	10/11/2018
1	Artist	Risley	Risley, Coral	11/07/2019
1	Curator	Gallery	Silver, Anneke Dr	9/07/2022
1	Artist	Gallery	Yaxley, Bill	2/07/2019
2	Director	Gallery	Asimov, Bianca	3/07/2019
2	Director	Gallery	Heathwood, Tracey	5/07/2019
2	Director	Gallery	Macfarlane, Rosemary; Jim Macfarlane	26/07/2020
2	Director	Gallery	Martin, Ralph	6/10/2019
2	Director	Gallery	McBurnie, Jonathan	9/07/2019
3	Curator	Gallery	Brown, Phil	18/04/2019
3	Curator	Gallery	Searle, Ross	6/03/2021
3	Curator	Gallery	Smith, Sue	25/07/2019
4	Patron	Forbes	Bleakley, David Dr	19/03/2021
4	Patron	Forbes	Chamberlain, Anne	4/11/2020

4	Patron	Forbes	Daveson, Carmel Dr	19/08/2019
4	Patron	Forbes	Gall, Genevieve; Jim Gall	22/02/2021
4	Patron	Forbes	Holz, Greg Dr	4/11/2020
4	Patron	Forbes	McConnell, Simon; Lorraine Gray- McConnell	29/11/2020
4	Patron	Forbes	Walker-Gibbs, Bernadette Prof	2/02/2021

Appendix B: Questionnaire

Questionnaire:

This questionnaire seeks to gain insights from artists, curators, directors and patrons/collectors to assist in determining the contribution to the arts made by artists living in the North during the period of 1971-1981. Ethics Approval Number: H7402.

The use of this questionnaire will relate to general understandings of how artists worked in, and thus responded to, the North. This questionnaire, supported by a follow up interview, is entirely voluntary. It is designed for simple responses, however, there is opportunity for comments if you wish to clarify or provide additional information.

All questions are asking participants to reflect on the time period 1971-1981.

Questions: Please tick or provide an appropriate response

Name: _____

1. **Do you believe the following regions to be a part of what Australians understand as ‘the North’?**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Northern NSW					
Brisbane					
Stradbroke Island					
Brisbane					
Sunshine Coast/Noosa					
Gympie/Bundaberg					
Rockhampton					
Mackay					
Townsville					
Atherton/Herberton					
Cairns					
<i>Comment (if relevant):</i>					

2. *The representation of the following images/concepts about the North were depicted in the works you produced/purchased/exhibited at this time?*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<i>Landscape</i>					
<i>Architecture</i>					
<i>Events</i>					
<i>People</i>					
<i>Narratives</i>					
<i>Representation of place through colour, line, shape.</i>					
<i>Local narratives/values/attitudes/beliefs</i>					
<i>Other (if relevant):</i>					

3. *The representation of the following environmental features of the North were depicted in the works you produced/curated/purchased at this time:*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Ocean					
Beach					
Rainforest					
Regional Towns/Villages					
Bush					
Canefields					
Farmland					
Rivers/Creeks					
Reef					
Islands					
Mountains					
Brigalow					
Mangroves					
Ti Tree Swamps					
Forests eg Melaleuca					
<i>Other (if relevant):</i>					

4. *The works you have produced, curated, collected during your time in the North, relied on an understanding of the environment and geography specific to North Queensland to give them meaning to the viewer.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<i>Comment (if relevant):</i>					

5. *What, if any, were the Australian stylistic influences evident in the works produced/curated/purchased at this time: (Categories identified in Allen, Christopher. (1997). *Art in Australia: from colonization to postmodernism*. London: Thames and Hudson)*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<i>Early Colonial (from 1788)</i>					

<i>High Colonial</i>					
<i>Heidelberg School</i>					
<i>Post-Heidelberg</i>					
<i>Early Modernism</i>					
<i>Angry Penguins</i>					
<i>Post-War Modernism</i>					
<i>Abstraction</i>					
<i>Late Modernism</i>					
Other (if relevant):					

5. Below is a list of artists who had critical success or were a part of the Australian canon at the time. Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement as to their influence on your own work/engagement in the arts.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<i>John Glover</i>					
<i>Conrad Martens</i>					
<i>Tom Roberts</i>					
<i>Arthur Boyd</i>					
<i>William Dobell</i>					
<i>Russell Drysdale</i>					
<i>Bessie Gibson</i>					
<i>Joy Hester</i>					
<i>Grace Cossington Smith</i>					
<i>Sidney Nolan</i>					
<i>Margaret Preston</i>					
<i>Albert Tucker</i>					
<i>Charles Blackman</i>					
<i>Donald Friend</i>					
<i>Peter Booth</i>					
<i>John Brack</i>					
<i>Elwyn Lynn</i>					
<i>John Olsen</i>					
<i>Fred Williams</i>					
<i>Charles Blackman</i>					
<i>John Coburn</i>					
<i>Sam Fulbrook</i>					
<i>Margaret Olley</i>					
<i>John Perceval</i>					
<i>Brett Whiteley</i>					
<i>Fred Williams</i>					
<i>Ray Crooke</i>					
<i>Robert Dickerson</i>					
<i>Lloyd Rees</i>					
<i>Stan Rapotec</i>					
<i>Ian Fairweather</i>					
<i>Russell Drysdale</i>					
<i>Noel Wood</i>					
<i>Kenneth Macqueen</i>					
<i>Douglas Annand</i>					
<i>Judy Cassab</i>					
Other (if relevant):					

6. Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<i>It was economically sustainable to work in the arts in the North at this time.</i>					
<i>It was not economically sustainable to work as an artist in the North at this time.</i>					
<i>Artists relied on commercial sales to be economically viable at this time.</i>					
<i>Artists relied on other sources of income to sustain their practice at this time.</i>					
<i>Art works purchased were for investment at this time.</i>					
<i>Art works were purchased because they identified the viewer with the North.</i>					
<i>Art works were purchased because of artistic value/quality – eg technical skill/medium.</i>					
<i>Art works were purchased because of the imagery/representations.</i>					
<i>Art works were purchased for other reasons.</i>					
Comment (if relevant):					

7. What do you believe to be the measure of success for an artist working/living in the North at that time?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<i>Monetary value of work</i>					
<i>Artistic value of the work/quality of work (technical skill of the artist)</i>					
<i>Commercial Sales</i>					
<i>Representation in private collections</i>					
<i>Representation in regional art collections</i>					
<i>Representation in national art collections</i>					
<i>Representation in international art collections</i>					
<i>Representation in arts publications/journals</i>					

<i>Representation in curated exhibitions by government funded bodies</i>					
<i>Art Awards</i>					
<i>Press Coverage</i>					
<i>Audience engagement/responses</i>					
<i>Scope of representations in work specific to time and place</i>					
Comment (if relevant):					

8. Did you access support from any of the following individuals/groups or organisations at that time.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<i>Local Council</i>					
<i>Queensland Ministry for Education and Cultural Activities</i>					
<i>Australian Council for the Arts</i>					
<i>Royal Queensland Art Society</i>					
<i>Local Art Society</i>					
<i>Community groups/organisations eg Theatre/Dance/Music groups</i>					
<i>Education – universities</i>					
<i>Education - schools</i>					
<i>Regional Art Galleries – purchases for collections</i>					
<i>State Gallery – purchases for collections</i>					
<i>Commercial Art Galleries – commissions/exhibitions - Queensland</i>					
<i>Commercial Art Galleries – commissions/exhibitions - Interstate</i>					
<i>Retail Groups/Organisations</i>					
<i>Private patronage</i>					
<i>Commissions – Private</i>					
Comment (if relevant):					

9. What do you consider to be the 'benefits' to society that resulted from artists being located in a Northern regional centre at that time?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<i>Documenting the architecture, people, landscape.</i>					

<i>Bringing an arts profile to the region.</i>					
<i>Developing an identity different to other areas.</i>					
<i>Comment (if relevant):</i>					

10. What do you consider to be the disadvantages to artists living and working in the North at this time.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<i>Financial</i>					
<i>Cultural isolation</i>					
<i>Perceptions about the north – that it is different to/less important than artists working in Southern or metropolitan locations</i>					
<i>Comment (if relevant):</i>					

11. Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<i>The success of an artist working in North Queensland at that time relied on contemporary discourses about art.</i>					
<i>The success of an artist working in North Queensland at that time relied on having critical success in Southern metropolitan Centres. Eg Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne.</i>					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<i>The success of an artist working in the North at that time relied on support from government funding bodies.</i>					
<i>The success of an artist working in the North at that time relied on representation in galleries/collections separate to regional galleries in the North Queensland.</i>					
<i>Other:</i>					

12. Recognising the contribution of the artists/galleries/patrons in the North during this time is a benefit to the Australian cultural narrative by:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<i>Deepening the understanding of cultural issues at an international level</i>					
<i>Deepening the understanding of cultural issues at a national level</i>					
<i>Contributing to National/International prestige through arts events/exhibitions</i>					
<i>Allowing works to be seen within the context of national/international art contexts</i>					

<i>Documenting contributions to the arts in the North for posterity</i>					
<i>Recording in historical archives eg NGA archives.</i>					
Other:					

Is there anything else you would like to comment on?

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End of Questionnaire

Appendix C: Data Sets

Data Set	Name	Description
Interviews	see participant list and interview schedule (table below)	Transcripts/recordings/visual images of works in collections. Memo notes
Unpublished Manuscripts	Dorothy Forbes	Scrapbooks, cuttings, ephemera, catalogues, correspondence, memo notes
	Geneveive and Jim Gall	Scrapbooks, cuttings, ephemera, catalogues, correspondence, memo notes
	Coral Risley	Scrapbooks, cuttings, ephemera, catalogues, correspondence, memo notes
	Clem Forbes Project 2002 (McConnell; Lane; MacAulay)	Scrapbooks, cuttings, ephemera, catalogues, correspondence, memo notes
Published Manuscripts	John Cooper Collection (Brisbane; Gold Coast)	Scrapbooks, cuttings, ephemera, catalogues, correspondence
	Holdsworth Galleries (Sydney)	Correspondence, exhibitions, catalogues, sales, photographs.
	Gertrude Langer (Brisbane) Files	Vacation schools, touring program (arts council), catalogues
	Ray Hughes (Brisbane, Sydney) scrapbook	scrapbook
	Gallery Files, Brisbane	Scrapbooks, cuttings, ephemera, catalogues, , memo notes
	James Wieneke clippings	Scrapbooks, cuttings, catalogues
	Ray Hughes; Gallery 1 Eleven clippings	scrapbook
	Martin Gallery, Townsville	Scrapbooks, cuttings, ephemera, catalogues, correspondence, images
	Noel Risley Collection	
	Rockhampton Library (Heritage Collection)	Photos, clippings, history
	Cairns Historical Society	photos
	Mackay Library (Heritage collection)	clippings
Art Collections: Private	Clem Forbes estate (Forbes family)	Scrapbooks, cuttings, ephemera, catalogues, correspondence, images
	David Cilento (estate)	Images of works in collection, , memo notes
	Simon McConnell; Lorraine Gray-McConnell	Images of works in collection

	Coral Risley	cuttings, catalogues, correspondence, images, media, images of works, memo notes
	Geneveive and Jim Gall	Catalogues, clippings, media, photos of works in collection
	David Bleakley	Images of works in collection
	Jim and Rosemary Macfarlane	Images of works in collection
	Participants: works in collection	Images of works in collection
Art Collections: Public	Queensland Art Gallery	Images of works in collection; blog; catalogues held in library
	QUT Collection	Catalogue/collection listing
	Rockhampton Art Gallery Collection	Images of works in collection
	Perc Tucker Regional Gallery Collection	Images of works in collection
	JCU Collection	Images of works in collection; catalogue listing
	Central Queensland University Collection	Images of works in collection
	Artspace Mackay; Mackay Regional Council	Images of works in collection - Forbes
	Cairns Regional Gallery Collection	Images of works in collection - Risley
Exhibitions: Published	Clem Forbes Image Maker	CF library
	Tom Risley:	Email images of works; catalogue
	Tom Risley: Umbrella Studio	catalogue
	Tom Risley:	Catalogue QAGOMA library
	Martin Gallery	CF library
	Beneath the Monsoon	CF library
	Escape artists	CF library
	UQ Survey of Qld artists	UQ library

Appendix D: Notetaking to support patterns.

Factor	Concepts emerging through literature and transcription process
Geographic	<p>Historicism – art history is written from the south.</p> <p>Provincialism</p> <p>Metropolitan trends</p> <p>Desire to align to Europe/UK/Sydney/Melbourne curatorial trends.</p> <p>Necessity to leave the north.</p> <p>Boundaries – north = Northern. Definitions of North Queensland boundaries to describe central, north, far north vary. These include Qld Arts Council during scope of period has boundaries. Electoral boundaries of time. Historical boundaries (Fox history), Qld Arts funding boundaries, https://www.qhatlas.com.au/ (2022).</p>

	<p>Qld connected by port towns, agricultural heritage – (Brisbane, Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville, [Bowen], Cairns are port towns) connection the rural towns to the bigger towns and then to the south.</p> <p>Patrons are in north/regional for professional reasons - returning to south/Brisbane). Medical, Engineering, DPI, University</p> <p>Townsville with university/technical college exception. Sustains longer term artists/professionals through teaching.</p> <p>All regional centres distinct and separate.</p> <p>Distance travelled to connect to Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne.</p> <p>North understands/engages in arts from south through commercial galleries.</p> <p>Artists travel south for representation. Yaxley/Risley to Hughes (Brisbane); Jamieson to Komon (Sydney/Melbourne); Forbes to Holdsworth & Brisbane galleries (Sydney/Brisbane). All artists return to north after varying periods of time.</p> <p>Artists travel to north west (west of Mackay) for imagery</p> <p>Artists travel far north (of Cairns) – for imagery.</p>
Environmental	<p>Fascination/love of the landscape of the north by artists and patrons consistent throughout – distinct understanding of an otherness – different and not the same to the south.</p> <p>Have to be in the north to understand the imagery in the paintings – being there and recognising it has increased the value to the patron/viewer.</p> <p>Landscape is Northern Queensland people: farmers/miners.</p> <p>Landscape is Northern Queensland: houses.</p> <p>Landscape is Northern stories/mythology.</p> <p>Distinct regions are categorised environmentally –</p> <p>North is rainforest/ti-tree, central as brigalow, north/west as dry/ drought/flood.</p> <p>Stradbroke Island (blackboys, swamps, ti-tree, wallum country, houses) formative for Forbes 1965-1971</p> <p>Risley immersed in north through role with CSIRO - Cairns</p> <p>Risley lives in Atherton tablelands. Studio space is farmhouse. Travels to far north for materials.</p> <p>Environmental loss – Brigalow.</p> <p>Colours thematically represent landscape. Brown, green, ochre, black, pinks, blues.</p> <p>Experimentation with materials to produce translucency of landscape- Forbes.</p> <p>Experimentation with materials available in north to challenge understandings of landscape – (steel, stone, wood) - Risley</p>
Social/Cultural	<p>Concept of high arts are artists engaging in Australian Modernism, international, European.</p> <p>Notion of elitism – commercial galleries had ‘good art’, ‘integrity’ in what was on walls;</p>

	<p>commercial galleries as cultural hubs – patrons gather/commonality in understanding of value of works/dialogue.</p> <p>education of artist – dominance of Sydney/London/European schools. Qld reliant of atelier and artist studio for contact with professional artists/experimental or modern techniques</p> <p>education of patron; concepts of contemporary/non-traditional as high value.</p> <p>Art education in Qld through technical colleges and board of teacher education. Central Techn College traditional. Art training evolves in 1970s through TAFE system. Professional artists find jobs as teachers in tafe/colleges.</p> <p>Artists leave to seek art training in Sydney, Melbourne or London or are ‘self-taught’.</p> <p>Media/technique is linked to concept of progressive.</p> <p>Figurative/non-figurative schools/debate equating to modernism/contemporary.</p> <p>Art societies create culture of arts – have a ‘contemporary’ agenda. Look to support artists and to create prize/exhibition opportunities throughout Northern centres.</p> <p>Qld Arts Council – touring programme and vacation schools.</p> <p>Cross cultural – theatre/ballet</p> <p>No Regional Galleries</p> <p>State Gallery not building collection of Qld artists.</p> <p>Brisbane galleries exhibiting Australian artists but not Queensland artists.</p> <p>Modernism – artists Rigby, Molvig as influential.</p> <p>Rapotec; Rigby as mentor to Forbes; Forbes; Hughes as mentor to Risley.</p> <p>Mentors connect to galleries – Forbes to Holdsworth; Risley to Hughes</p>
Economic	<p>Sustainability of artist as full time/professional impacted by pricing decisions, sales, representation in galleries, commissions, dealer profile supporting sales, availability of exhibition space</p> <p>representation in collections supports prices/sales, prizes, scholarships, residencies, teaching create income.</p> <p>Cost of exhibiting in south – freight.</p> <p>Cost of exhibiting – materials and framing.</p> <p>Professional artists as teachers – adult education/arts council/private</p> <p>Access to funding – scholarship (prizes); Qld Arts Council; Visual Arts Board</p>
Political	<p>Government value placed on the arts = policy/infrastructure/influencers</p> <p>Curatorial trends/perspectives of critics</p> <p>Qld has a history of utilitarian policies – art spaces not prioritised again infrastructure to support industry throughout state.</p> <p>Prizes bring visibility and representation in galleries incl collections.</p> <p>Lobbying role of art societies in seeking funding for spaces/collections/prizes</p>

Appendix E: Commercial Art Gallery Exhibition Timelines

E.1 Gallery Up Top

References to exhibitions through interviews and personal archives. List not extensive.

Date	Exhibition	Artist
24/10/1970	exhibition	Lal Lanyon
1/1/1971	exhibition	Bill Yaxley
1/1/1972	exhibition	Bill Yaxley
7/4/1973	exhibition	Jennifer McDurr
7/4/1973	representing	Gil Jamieson
19/4/1973	beautiful things	New Stocks
1/01/1974	exhibition	Gill Jamieson
2/01/1975	exhibition	Gill Jamieson
3/01/1976	exhibition	Gill Jamieson
4/01/1977	exhibition	Gill Jamieson
1/10/1977	mixed exhibition	Clem Forbes
1/01/1978	exhibition	Clem Forbes
5/01/1978	exhibition	Gil Jamieson
12/12/1978	exhibition	Clem Forbes
1/01/1979	Yaxley, Jamieson	Gil Jamieson
7/01/1979	exhibition	Gil Jamieson
1/1/1980	exhibition	Gil Jamieson
7/01/1980	exhibition	Gil Jamieson
10/7/1981	exhibition	Dianna Mills
6/01/1982	exhibition	Gil Jamieson

E.2 Bakehouse Art Gallery Mackay 1972-1979 (not complete)

Source: Dorothy Forbes papers; Jim and Geneveive Gall archives. Compiled through use of Dorothy Forbes and Jim and Geneveive Gall archives.

Date	Exhibition	Artists
29/9/1971	Whitsunday Exhibition	Clem Forbes. (curated by Dorothy Forbes and Clem Forbes)
25/05/1972	The Bakehouse Art Gallery Opening Exhibition of paintings, pottery and sculpture	Pro Hart, John Rigby, Frank De Silva, Clem Forbes, Joy Roggenkamp, Ann Clissold, Caroline Barker, Joyce Allen, Patrick Kilvington, Robin Judd, Ella Barrett, Daphne Kerr,

		Robyn Olsen, Ann Green, Loyal Greenwood, Philip McConnell, Gail Newton, Barry Fitzpatrick, Veda Fitzpatrick
30/08/1972	Sandra Ford, Robyn Olsen, Col Bailey	Sandra Ford, Robyn Olsen, Col Bailey
13/12/1972	A Home For Mackay's Folk	Folk Club Mackay
1973	Caltex Art Prize	(Judge: Dorothy Forbes)
18/02/1973	Exhibition of paintings	Anne Willis. Bill Yaxley
8/04/1973	The Mackay Art Society Caltex Art Prize.	Judge: Anne Willis
1/08/1973	August-September exhibition	Bill Reid, Val Raleigh, Eiril Lemm, Morris Lake, Olwen Jacklin, Dorothy Wood, Clem Forbes, Robyn Judd, Frank Rowland, Joan Smyth, Anneke Silver, Frank Rowland, Roy Churcher, Brian Hatch, Keith Courtney, Dana McCown, Veda Fitzpatrick, Hanna McLean
21/10/1973	Exhibition of local pottery	Andres and Barbara Slater and Doreen Jewson
13/06/1974	Children of the Tropics	Paintings by Anneke Silver and Pottery by Kevin Grealy
1/09/1974	Val Crunden	
1/12/1974	Christmas Exhibition	John Rigby, Val Massie, Roger Quinn
1975	Alun Leach-Jones Graphics	Touring exhibition organised by the Visual Arts Board Australia Council Townsville
16/04/1975	Exhibition Pro Hart	Pro Hart
6/09/1975	Dickerson	Robert Dickerson
8/11/1975	Alison Coaldrake	Alison Coaldrake; Joan Norman
06/1976	David Williamson	
28/08/1976	A small exhibition of Sculptural Pottery	Connie Hoedt
28/08/1976	Mary Norrie	
09/1976	John Guy	
6/11/1976	Pam Dolinska	
14/03/1977	Pro Hart Exhibition	Pro Hart
3/09/1977	Graphics	Prints by John Olsen, Brett Whiteley, Ray Crooke, David Boyd, Charles Blackman, John Coburn, Sidney Nolan, Clem Forbes, David Rankin Lloyd Rees, Peter Powditch, Keith Looby, Fred Cress, John Olsen, Jan Senbergs, Alun Leach Jones. Watercolours by Clem Forbes
6/11/1977	Selection of works	John Olsen, Sidney Nolan, David Rose

9/11/1977	Liz Brophy; Dixie Lambert	Paintings by Liz Brophy Sculpture by Dixie Lambert
14/12/1977	Clem Forbes	Clem Forbes
1978	Merv Moriarty	Merv Moriarty. Nudes
20/05/1978	An exhibition of small paintings including the work of Gil Jamieson	Gil Jamieson, Ray Crooke, James Gleeson, Kenneth Jack, Norman Robins, Paul Delprat, John Rigby, Clem Forbes, Bill Robinson, Anneke Silver, Pam Dolinska, Val Crunden
3/07/1978	Ray Crooke stock	Ray Crook
09/1978	David Bleakley	David Bleakley
09/1978	Val Crunden	
October. No Year	Nina and Jean Jacques Vascholde	
nd	Annual Exhibition and Pottery Competition	
	Edwina Thomas Jewellery	Edwina Thomas Jewellry
	Bakehouse Macrame	Joy Wright
	Pottery	Nina Jacques & Vascholde Jean Jacques Vascholde
	Ron Edwards: Paintings from book	Paintings of Ron Edwards from his new book "Yarn Spinners". Books on Aust Folk and bush lore. Book "Australian folk songs"
05/1980	Clem Forbes	(Forbes Gallery)
1981	Clem Forbes	(Forbes Gallery)

E.3 The Martin Gallery Exhibition Timeline. Compiled by JCU Special Collections. Martin Archive (not complete)

Date	Exhibition Title	Artists
19/07/1972	Opening Exhibition at the Martin Gallery	Kenny_Ron, Moriarty_Mervyn, Silver_Anneke, Thompson_Jim, Willis_Anne
1/01/1972	A Collection of Stoneware by Carol Rosser	Rosser_Carol
1/01/1972		Amos_Irene
1/01/1972	Batik Exhibition	Batik Exhibition
1/10/1972	Photography	Woodworth_Barry

1/11/1972	Exhibition of drawings and sketches by Ralph Power	Power_Ralph
1/12/1972	Christmas Exhibition of Paintings by Clem Forbes	Forbes_Clem
21/02/1973	An exhibition of pottery from the south coast. Potters: Reid, Lemm, Raleigh together with paintings by Anneke Silver and Jim Thomson	Reid; Lemm; Raleigh; Silver; Thomson
14/03/1973	Oil paintings by Arthury and Lillian Gunthorpe (Brisbane)	Gunthorpe_Arthur; Gunthorpe_Lillian
28/04/1973		Hatch_Brian
18/05/1973	exhibition of oil paintings	Lawson_Peter
23/05/1973	selection of paintings by Anne Willis	Willis_Anne
27/06/1973	paintings	Sulser_Fred
1/06/1973	selection of paintings	Hautaniemi_Seppo
1/09/1973	an exhibition of child studies	Silver_Anneke
17/10/1973	a selection of recent paintings and drawings	Amos_Irene
1/01/1974		Engris_Brian
8/02/1974	A selection of Paintings by David Preston	Preston_David
1/03/1974	The first exhibition of Brisbane artist Robyn Mountcastle	Mountcastle_Robyn
3/04/1974	Val Massie - Pottery, Paintings - Bruce Gardner	Massie_Val, Gardner_Bruce
3/05/1974	evocations	Willis_Anne
1/06/1974	handmade copperware	Bercki_Louis
5/06/1974	Northern Environment - An Interpretation	Crunden_Valerie
3/07/1974	Exhibition of paintings by John Underwood	Underwood_John
7/08/1974	Exhibition of Northern Landscape Paintings	Jensen_Eula
4/09/1974	Exhibition of Mixed media Paintings and Drawings	Budgen_Beverley
7/10/1974	The Anneke Silver Exhibition	Silver_Anneke
14/11/1972	An Invitation - Portrait of My Son	Nicholas_Mike
27/11/1974	Exhibition of Tapestries by Deanna Conti	Conti_Deanna
14/12/1974	An exhibition of oil paintings by Peter Lawson	Lawson_Peter
17/02/1975	A group showing of Traditional Artists	Nicholas; Angelo_Leith; Caswell-Maurie; Boyd_Max; Willes_Ken; Hardy_Dennis; Teskey_David; Preston
17/03/1975	Exhibition of recent paintings by Clem Forbes	Forbes_Clem
12/04/1975	Brian Hatch Exhibition 1975	Hatch_Brian
11/05/1975	Charles Ludlow Watercolourist	Ludlow_Charles

11/06/1975	Opening of Exhibition of Acrylics	Crunden_Valerie
13/07/1975	An Exhibition of Paintings and Prints	Norrie_Mary
27/08/1975	Exhibition of Traditional Oil Paintings	Hardy_Denis
25/09/1975	The 1975 Exhibition of Recent Work by Anne Willis	Willis_Anne
8/07/1975		Sulser_Fred
20/10/1975		Schlunke_David
6/11/1975	A Collection of Stoneware	Potiphar_Ivy; Potiphar_Reg
1/12/1975	Batik on display	Callahan_George
1/12/1975	Ceramics	Hoedt_Connie
1/12/1975	Mixed Paintings and Drawings from the South	
18/02/1976	An Exhibition of Paintings	Kenny Ron
10/03/1976	An exhibition of paintings	Heywood_Neville
7/04/1976	An Exhibition of Recent Work	Kindness_Irene
1/05/1976	Exhibition of FIGURE DRAWINGS by Anne Graham, Pam Dolinska, Pottery by Phillip McConnell, Nina Bierman, Val Massie, Ivy Potiphar, Cootch Memmott, Carol Rosser, Ian Currie	Graham_Anne; Dolinska_Pam; McConnell_Phillip; Bierman_Nina; Massie_Val; Potiphar_Ivy; Memmott_Cootch; Rosser_Carol; Currie_Ian
6/06/1976	The 1976 Exhibition by Valerie Crunden	Crunden_Valerie
4/08/1976	David Blackman	Blackman_David
17/09/1976	Mike Nichola	Nicholas_Mike
13/10/1976	Recent work	Blackman_David; Preston_Robert; Cox_Jim
1/11/1976	Aboriginal works	Goobalathaldin (Roughsey_Dick); Trezise_Percy
14/11/1976	Exhibition of Oriental rugs	Oriental Rugs; McConnell_Carl
3/11/1976		Endelmanis_Vita
19/07/1977	Paintings and Silk Screen Prints by one of Queensland's leading artists	Arrowsmith_Vida
7/10/1977	Brian Hatch Exhibition 1977	Hatch_Brian
25/11/1977	An exciting exhibition of Stoneware and Terracotta by Ivy and Reg Potiphar; Environmental Photography by Barry Woodworth	Potiphar_Ivy; Potiphar_Reg; Woodworth_Barry
14/12/1977	An Exhibition of Impressionist Landscapes of The Cooktown Area, Ravenswood and the North Australian Coast by Pavel Forman	Forman_Pavel
3/02/1978	An Exhibition of Ten Works by Desiderius Orban	Orban_Desiderius
17/03/1978	Exhibition of Recent Work by Brian Callen	Callen_Brian

14/04/1978	Exhibition of Recent Work by Jim Cox	Cox_Jim
12/05/1978	An Exhibition of Photographs by David Wilson	Wilson_David
2/06/1978	The Pacific Festival Exhibition, Colour Drawings by Irene Amos	Amos_Irene
14/07/1978	Exhibition of a new series of paintings by Anneke Silver	Silver_Anneke
11/08/1978	An exhibition of sculpture and paintings by John Deane and Irene Kindness	Deane_John; Kindness_Irene
15/09/1978	An Exhibition of Water Colours, Oils and Acrylics by Valerie Crunden	Crunden_Valerie
13/10/1978	Exhibition of recent work	Miller_Shirley
1/11/1978	Newspaper article "Original batiks in country colours" T'ville Bulletin?	Cooney_Gladys
1/12/1978	Newspaper article "Sydney potter uses unique NQ glazes" T'ville Bulletin?	Brown_Peter
9/03/1979	Recent work on canvas and paper	Hadley_Basil
1/04/1979	Townsville and Environs	Lawson_Peter
1/04/1979	Exhibition of Modern Tapestries by Deanna Conti, Woodcarving by Ben Trupperbaumer	Conti_Deanna; Trupperbaumer_Ben
29/06/1979	People and Places	Budgen_Beverley
13/02/1980	Opening Exhibition for 1980	Cassab_Judy; Gleghorn_Tom; Baker_Alain; Baker_Gary; Hart_Pro; Moriarty_Merv; James_Louis; Everingham_Rick; Budgen_Bev; Amos_Irene; Blayney_Peter; Graham_Anne; Nicolson_Max; Nicholas_Mike, Forbes_Clem
1/02/1980	Recent Bronze Sculptures	Engris_Brian
16/04/1980	A Mixed Exhibition at the Martin Gallery	Henshaw_John; Cartwright_John; Schneider_Phyllis; Everingham_Rick
25/05/1980	An exhibition of exciting pottery at the Martin Gallery	Hoedt_Connie
9/06/1980	An Exhibition of Pastels and Mixed Media Paintings	Oban_Desiderius
29/08/1980	An Exhibition of Glowing Pastels	Forbes_Clem
31/10/1980	Exhibition of Painting, Drawing and Prints	Andrews_Gary
31/10/1980	Exhibition of Raku fired Ceramics by Bruce Anderson	Anderson_Bruce

21/08/1981	Invitation states the theme of the exhibition is Gardens and Landscape. The paintings and screenprints are concerned with the subtleties of colours reacting to each other and to light and space.	Miller_Shirley
27/09/1981	Fragments - an exhibition of sculptural works by Jane McBurnie	McBurnie_Ron; McBurnie_Jane
13/11/1981	Fabrications	Risley_Tom
23/10/1981	James Brown, Anneke Silver	Brown_James; Silver_Anneke

E.4 The Trinity Gallery Exhibition Timeline. Source: Macfarlane Archives. Interview with the author and JCU Special Collections. Noel Risley archive (not complete)

Date	Exhibition style	Artists
nd	painter	Amos_Irene
nd	painter	Arrowsmith_Vede
nd	copper goblets	Berczi
1/01/1974	painter	Brophy_Liz
	painter	Brophy_Terry
	painter	Budgen_Bev
18/09/1974	printmaker; painter. Tahitian 1; Tahitian 2; Roatonga; Woman with Coral; Samoa	Crooke_Ray
	painter	Crunden_Valerie
	potter	Currie_Ian
	painter	Ditchburn_Sylvia
	painter	Edwards_Ron
	painter	Forbes_Clem
		Gelling_Rolfe
	sculpture	George_Ken
	potter	Harrison_Ray
	painter	Ivanyi_Bela
	painter	Jensen_Eula
	painter	Kemp_Ros
	painter	Lawson_Peter
29/07/1974	painting	Max_Boyd
	painter	Pickard
	painter	Preston_David

	painter	Quinn_Roger
	sculpture	Risley_Stephanie
	sculpture	Risley_Tom
	painter	Goobalathaldin (Dick Roughsey)
	painter	Silver_Anneke
	painter	Smith_Ian
5/12/1974	drawing sculpture	Noel Risley
29/01/1976	sculpture	Noel Risley
1976		Thancoupie_(Gloria_Fletcher)
	potter	Thompson_Peter
	painter	Trezise_Percy
	potter	Tucker_Kim
	painter	Willis_Ann
	painter	Zoypela_Ily
15/09/1977	The Australian Heritage Gallery	Chuck Kehoe; Noel Risley; Goobalathaldin; Heinz Steinman; Percy Trezise
1977	The Australian Heritage Gallery Northen Daydreams	Heinz Steinmann
1977	The Australian Heritage Gallery Artist in residence	Thancoupie

Appendix F: Biography: Clem Forbes⁵⁹¹

1938 Born Bowen, Queensland.

1976 Full time professional artist.

1997 Died Brisbane, Queensland.

Represented by:

Bakehouse Art Gallery, Mackay 1973-1979

Holdsworth Gallery, Sydney 1973-1996

⁵⁹¹ Biography compiled through exhibition catalogues and interviews with Dorothy Forbes, in addition to the source MacAulay, *Clem Forbes*. Also includes sample list of sales taken from Clem Forbes's notebook and papers, in Forbes, personal archive.

Martin Gallery, Townsville 1973-1988

Young Australian Gallery, Brisbane 1974-1975

Trinity Gallery, Cairns 1974-1977

Barry Stern Gallery, Sydney 1975-1981

Paul Bowker Galleries, Brisbane 1975-1977

Munster Arms Gallery, Melbourne 1976-1978

Forbes Gallery, Mackay 1981-1997

Gallery 111, Rockhampton 1984-1985

Works on consignment to:

Philip Bacon Galleries Brisbane

Bonython Gallery, Sydney

Exhibition Timeline

1963 Private Commission. Leneen Forde AC. Commissioned by Francis Gerard Forde.
Private Collection

1963 Practicing Artist while working full time. Private sales. (see sample list of private sales 1965-1971 below)

1966 Kennigo Street Gallery, Spring Hill, Brisbane (Group Exhibition: Four Young Painters). Director: Ruth Smout

1967 Cairns Annual Art Society Prize (Caltex Prize winner, Contemporary. Judge James Wieneke)

1967 Mackay Art Society Exhibition

- 1967 Kennigo Street Gallery, Spring Hill, Brisbane (Annexe solo exhibition with Irene Amos)
- 1968 Franz Beak-Gow Gallery (Formerly the Kennigo Street Gallery), Brisbane (David Jones Art Prize)
- 1968 Queensland Art Gallery, Fine Arts Pavilion, Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland, Brisbane
- 1968 Redcliffe Art Society Gallery, Brisbane (Redcliffe Art Contest)
- 1970 David Jones Annual Art Prize (formerly Finneys Art Prize), Brisbane
- 1971 Mackay Caltex Art Exhibition, Mackay. Art Prize. (First Prize, Judge Caroline Barker)
- 1971 Rockhampton Art Competition. (Judge John Cooper)
- 1971 Rockhampton Art Gallery, Gallery Two, Rockhampton
- 1971 Whitsunday Exhibition, Mackay (Solo exhibition)
- 1971 Rockhampton Art Gallery, Rockhampton (Purchase)
- 1971 Bonython Gallery, Sydney (Mixed exhibition)
- 1971 Redcliffe Art Society Contest, Brisbane
- 1972 Mackay Art Society Tourist Festival Caltex Art Competition (First Prize. Judge Glenn Webb – Director Rockhampton Art Gallery. Painting O’Neill’s Place’ presented by Mackay Art Society to Mackay Regional Council for Mackay City Art Collection).
- 1972 Bakehouse Art Gallery, Mackay (Opening Exhibition. Mixed exhibition including Roy Churcher and Anneke Silver) (Yearly exhibitions)

- 1972 Cairns Art Prize (Highly Commended. Judge Frank De Silva)
- 1972 Gold Coast City Art Prize
- 1972 Bonython Gallery, Sydney -Four Queensland Artists.
- 1972 Martin Gallery, Townsville – Christmas Exhibition of works by Clem Forbes.
- 1973 Holdsworth Galleries, Sydney (solo exhibition)
- 1973 Ruth Atherton Art Gallery, Brisbane (representation)
- 1973 Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane. L J Harvey Memorial Prize Selection. Judge David Thomas. Director Newcastle Art Gallery. Selection Exhibition
- 1973 Queensland Art Gallery. Queensland Art Gallery Trustees' Prize for painting in Memory of Edgar A. Ferguson. Selection Exhibition
- 1973 Cloncurry Ernest Henry Memorial Art Contest, Cloncurry Art Society (winner).
Represented in Cloncurry City Collection.
- 1974 Rockhampton Art Prize
- 1974 Young Australian Gallery, Spring Hill, Brisbane. Director Eileen Lorkin (solo exhibition)
- 1974 Trinity Gallery, Cairns
- 1975 Martin Gallery, Townsville. – exhibition of recent paintings by Clem Forbes.
- 1975 Paul Bowker Galleries, Brisbane
- 1975 Queensland Art Gallery. Trustees Prize Trustees' Prize for painting in Memory of Dr. B. B. Barrack, Queensland Art Gallery (selection)
- 1975 Trinity Gallery, Cairns

- 1975 Theatre Royal, Mackay. Mackay Musical Comedy Players. Set Production 'Fiddler on the Roof'.
- 1975 Barry Stern Galleries (representation from 1975)
- 1976 Queensland Art Gallery, (Ann Street) Brisbane. Trustees' Prize 1976 in memory of Harold de Vahl Rubin. Selection for hanging.
- 1976 Holdsworth Galleries, Sydney. An Exhibition by artists from Queensland. Including Gil Jamieson
- 1976 Munster Arms Gallery, Melbourne
- 1976 Paul Bowker Galleries, Brisbane
- 1976 Trinity Gallery, Cairns
- 1977 Martin Gallery, Townsville. - Exhibition of recent oil paintings by Clem Forbes
- 1977 Barry Stern Galleries, Sydney (representation)
- 1977 Bakehouse Art Gallery, Mackay (Brigalow)
- 1977 Bakehouse Art Gallery, Mackay (Graphics. Mixed exhibition including John Olsen, Brett Whiteley, Ray Croke, Charles Blackman, David Boyd, John Coburn, Sidney Nolan. Curator. Dorothy Forbes.
- 1977 Queensland Art Gallery, (Queensland Cultural Centre), L. J. Harvey Prize. Selection
- 1977 Paul Bowker Galleries
- 1977 Trinity Gallery, Cairns
- 1978 Munster Arms Gallery, Melbourne. (solo exhibition). Director Nicki Austin.

- 1978 Bakehouse Art Gallery-Exhibition of Small Paintings - Mixed exhibition of paintings including Ray Crooke, James Gleeson, John Rigby, Bill Robinson, Anneke Silver, Pam Dolinska, Gil Jamieson. Curator. Dorothy Forbes
- 1978 Gallery Up Top, Rockhampton. Director Lal Lanyon. (solo exhibition).
- 1978 Queensland College of Art, Brisbane. Ten Queensland Artists. (Queensland Festival of Arts)
- 1979 Athena Theatre Company, Mackay (1983; 1985; 1986; 1988; 1990)
- 1980 Martin Gallery, Townsville. Martin Gallery - Opening Exhibition for 1980 (group)
- 1980 Forbes Gallery. Pastels
- 1980 Martin Gallery, Townsville. Martin Gallery - An Exhibition of Glowing Pastels
- 1981 Forbes Gallery Mackay. - Paintings at the Piano.
- 1981 Martin Gallery, Townsville. Exhibition of large oils
- 1981 Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Townsville. Opening Exhibition. Presentation of work to Gallery by Mrs Tucker.
- 1981 Martin Gallery, Townsville. Exhibition with Tom Risley's Fabrications
- 1982 Burdekin Theatre, Ayre. Mural. Commission Burdekin Council
- 1984 Martin Gallery, Townsville. - A Recurring Image, Recent rainforest paintings by Clem Forbes
- 1984 Gallery 111, Rockhampton
- 1985 Perc Tucker, Townsville. Memorial Exhibition of Perc Tucker Memorial Collection 1982-1984

- 1985 Gallery 111, Rockhampton
- 1986 Martin Gallery, Townsville. Clem Forbes. A Collection of Pastels
- 1987 Martin Gallery, Townsville. Clem Forbes. An exhibition of recent work and paintings from earlier series
- 1988 Mackay Entertainment Centre. Bicentennial Mural.
- 1988 Martin Gallery, Townsville.
- 1989 Forbes Gallery, Mackay – Vibrant Tropical Colours.
- 2003 Artspace Mackay. Beneath the Monsoon: Visions North of Capricorn. Gavin Wilson
- 2004 Artspace Mackay. Retrospective. Clem Forbes Image Maker. Bettina MacAulay

Including

Forbes, Celie, and Stephen Naylor. "Taking Northern Queensland into Account: Another View of Australian Art." *Limina* 27, no. 2 (2022).

MacAulay, Bettina. Clem Forbes: Image Maker. Mackay, Queensland: Artspace Mackay, 2004.

Martin, Ralph, Shane Fitzgerald and Anneke Silver. Images of an Era: The Martin Gallery. Townsville, Queensland: Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, 2016.

Germaine, Max. Artists and Galleries of Australia and New Zealand / Max Germaine. Sydney: Lansdowne Editions, 1979.

Public Collections

Forbes is represented in public and private collections including the Mackay, Rockhampton, and Townsville regional art collections, Mackay Entertainment Centre; Burdekin Theatre,

Ayr; James Cook University Central Queensland University, Queensland University of Technology, the University of Queensland, the National Gallery of Australia print collection, Artbank (Australian Government), Cloncurry Art Society and the Australian Broadcast Commission.

Important Private Collections

Cilento Family (including the estate of Dr David Cilento and the estate of Lady Cilento)

Simon McConnell and Lorraine Gray-McConnell

Forbes Family (including the estate of Clem Forbes)

Dr Allan (OA) and Barbara Cook

Carmel Daveson AM (including the estate of Dr Alf Daveson)

Sir Zelman, and Lady Cowen

Tracey and Steve Dunn

F.1 Clem Forbes: Sample List of Private Sales 1965-1966

Date	Title
1965	The Lone Miner
	Red Bluff Pond
	Poor mans Shaft
	Goanna Rock Place
	Lake Elphinstone
	Tom Coolan (Mined resting)
	To The Gulf
	Tropic Waterfront
	Miner Resting
	Wallum Landscape
	Brumby Creek
	Burnt Pandanas
	Chonky Apple Trees no.1
1965	Black Boy Trees

Figures at Dusk
 Banksia Trees
 Caravan Range
 Palm Grove
 Peat Swamp Amity
 Western Children
 Black Boy Trees no.2
 Dry Flats
 Brolga Flats
 Miners Ghost
 The Claim Staker
 1966 The Lonely One
 Figures at Dusk
 Boy Cleaning fish
 Mooloolaba Boats
 The Musicians
 Pandanas Creek
 Wallum Country
 Dry Pandanas Creek
 Fern Gully
 Jungle Pool
 Amity Swamp
 Mooloolaba Boat & River
 Amity Pt Driftwood
 Wallum Country no.3
 Girl in a Jungle
 Territory Landscape
 1966 Flowering Swamp
 Amity Haze
 Pandanas in Cane Field
 Miners Ghosts
 Chonkey Apple Trees no.3
 Kangaroo Shooters
 Goanna
 Blue Lagoon
 Lotock in Jungle no.2
 Amity Lagoon
 Homestead & Bottle Tree
 Cattle Dam
 Anthills & Blackboy Trees

1966 Crows Caught in Chonkey Apple Trees
To The Gulf no.2
Lotock Playing in the Jungle
Amity Trees
Trees Mackay & Grass
The Claim Jumpers
Country Races
Laidley Landscape
Landscape
Egret in swap
Ravenswood Hotel

F.2 Clem Forbes: Sample List of Private Sales 1969-1971

1969 Wallum Creek
Dry Creek Nebo
Hills & Trees
Eungella Platypus Creek
n/a
Lasseter Returns
Portrait of Col Bailey
Laidley Landscape
The Incet
Wangaratta Dawn
Platypus Pool
Dam Flooded Grass & Birds
QLD Home & Trees
Mountain Trees Cooroy
Girl with a Possum
Dry Creek Nebo
Mountains
Mountains
Mountains
Mountains
Mountains
Mountains
Mountains
1970 Bottle Trees & House
Bushmen on a Hill
Cane Fire
Birds & Mountain
Ghost Town

- Ghost Town
- 1971 The Merinda Farmers
- 1971 The Water Diviner
- Colonial House No.1
- Cremorne Houses
- The Wager
- Jungle Pool
- The House on Caseys Dunes
- Landscape with a Mauve Sky
- Finch Hatton Gorge
- 1971 Dry Image Lake Elphinstone
- Railway Hotel Bush Children
- The Houses on Casey's Place
- Red Mountain
- House & Bottle Trees
- Clairmont Landscape
- Bottle Tree Landscape
- House on Casey's Place No.4
- Corrugated Landscape
- Horse & Rider on Beach
- Still Life With ...
- Portrait of Col Bailey & Wife
- Laidley Mountain
- Clairmont River & Flood Homes and Hotel
- 1971 Church at Merinda/Merinda Church
- Grasstree Country

F.3 Exhibition Listing: Whitsunday Exhibition 1971

1	Sanctuary	\$80
2	Eungella Creek	\$85
3	Grasstrees	\$85
4	Cattle Dam	\$90
5	Orange Landscape	\$70
6	Grasstree Gully	\$80
7	Estuary	\$70
8	The Green Pool	\$85
9	Small Boats Harbour	\$40
10	Little Bay	\$40
11	Oyster Lease	\$80
12	Houses By the Sea No.1	\$90

13	Houses By the Sea No.2	\$90
14	Mountain Range	\$80
15	Campbells Place	\$100
16	Houses in Seagull Street	\$100
17	The Jetty	\$80
18	Scribble Gums	\$140
19	Homestead with Bottle Trees	\$120
20	Picnic Races	\$150
21	Yamba Landscape	\$110
22	Platypus Pool	\$150
23	Town with a Church	\$150
24	Image of a Town	\$150
25	The Hill at Bowen	\$90
26	The American	\$130
27	Sandy Gully	\$200
28	The Plain Turkey	\$80
29	Sunday Landscape	\$100
30	Northern Grasslands	\$85
31	Elegy of a Town	\$100
32	Red Miles Away	\$250
33	The Blue Boat	\$100
34	Chicken Hawks	\$90
35	Nocturne	\$70
36	Trees In Summer	\$100
37	The Ancient Tree	\$150
38	Saltwater Creek	\$85
39	Binger's Store	\$90
40	The Bottle Tree	\$90
41	In A Rain Forest	\$80
42	Connors Range	\$90
43	Racecourse Painting	\$100
44	Flinders Beach	\$95
	Red Landscapes	
45	No. 1	\$50
46	No. 2	\$50
47	No. 3	\$50
	Drawings	
48	Post Office Hotel	\$35
49	Boarding House River Street	\$35
50	Shepherds Anvil Stores	\$35

F.4 Exhibition Listing: Holdsworth Gallery 1973 (Source. Records of the Holdsworth Galleries. Clem Forbes. 1971. NLA)

1	Ring Barked Trees (Triptych)	\$800
2	Farm and Rain Country (Triptych)	\$800
3	Brigalow Country (Triptych)	\$800
4	Brigalow After Rain (Triptych)	\$600
5	Ring Barked Trees (Double)	\$500
6	Sunday Landscape	\$200
7	Northern Landscape	\$200
8	The Morning Sky	\$240
9	Rain Forest Pool	\$300
10	Flowering Bush	\$360
11	The Ancient Tree	\$250
12	Brigalow Clearing	\$260
13	Tropical Farm 1	\$360
14	Station Homestead	\$260
15	Burning Brigalow	\$300
16	Green Morning	\$260
17	Melaleuca 1	\$240
18	Brigalow After Fire	\$300
19	Brigalow Morning	\$300
20	The Dying of the Light	\$240
21	Bottle Trees and Scrub	\$240
22	the Blue Falls	\$260
23	Brigalow Country after the Rain	\$300
24	Jungle Pool	\$260
25	Water Lily Pool	\$300
26	Pink Lagoon	\$300
27	Island Scrub	\$360
28	Remembered Place	\$300
29	Brigalow Country	\$240
30	Spring and Blue Creek	\$240
31	Scribble Gums	\$280
32	Melaleuca 2	\$240
33	Tropical Farm 2	\$260
34	First Morning	\$320
35	Stradbroke Island	\$360
36	Houses on Tribal Land	\$240

37	Homestead and Bottle Trees	\$260
38	Water Lillies	\$320
39	Lagoon with Bullrushes	\$280
40	Lagoon and Water Lillies	\$240
41	Leichhardt Range Trees	\$260
42	Bottle Trees	\$240
43	Merinda Lagoon	\$360
44	Flowering Green Lagoon	\$360
45	The Sacred Tree	\$260
46	Cleared Brigalow	\$240
47	Wet Sunlight	\$320
48	Bottle Trees Cleared Brigalow	\$240
49	Dawn	\$400
50	Tea Tree Swamp	\$240
51	Lasseter Imagines He Sees a Cassowary	\$240
52	Lasseter and the Elders	\$240
53	Evening's Mother	\$240
54	Emu in the Brigalow	\$240
55	Bone Pointed at Lasseter	\$240
56	Death of Harry Lasseter	\$240
57	Lasseter on Horseback	\$240
58	Lost	\$240
59	Ancient Wolf	\$240
60	Tribal Ceremony 1	\$240
61	Tribal Ceremony 2	\$240
62	Brigalow Painting 2	\$240
63	Lasseter Searching	\$240
64	Bolting Camel	\$240
65	Dusk	\$240
66	Lasseter Hounded by Sacker Stick	\$240
67	Bush and Native Bear	\$240
68	Lasseter Dreaming	\$240
69	Lasseter	\$240
70	Cockatoo	\$240
71	The Ant Totem	\$240
72	Wandering Camel	\$240

F.5 Exhibition Listing: Young Australian Gallery 1974. (Source: Dorothy Forbes archive. Correspondence with YAG)

1 Along the Range \$280

2	Sunday Town	\$260
3	Houses in Time	\$350
4	Brigalow Country	\$350
5	Lost Image	\$300
6	Stradbroke Lagoon	\$280
7	Girl	\$250
8	Range	\$260
9	Ti-Tree	\$300
10	Mountain Range	\$400
11	River Reeds	\$240
12	Melaleuca	\$220
13	Rainforest no.3	\$280
14	Merinda Lagoon	\$250
15	Cleared Brigalow no.1	\$250
16	Cleared Brigalow no.2	\$250
17	Brigalow	\$240
18	Rainforest (Triptych)	\$260
19	Island Bay	\$200
20	Palm Grove	\$250
21	Seraji 1	\$300
22	Seraji 2	\$300
23	Bush Creek	\$200
24	Ti-Tree Swamp	\$250
25	Rainforest no.4	\$280
26	Brown Lagoon	\$130
27	Eungella Pool	\$150
28	Water Lilly Pond	\$140
29	Willy Willy	\$130
30	Along the Creek	\$120
31	Green Mangroves	\$130
32	Paperbark Swamp	\$95
33	Island Lagoon	\$95
34	Burning Brigalow no.1	\$100
35	Rainforest no.1	\$100
36	Ringbarked Trees	\$100
37	Burning Brigalow no.2	\$100
38	Ti-Tree Creek	\$120
39	Rainforest no.2	\$120
40	Girl With Flowers	\$450
41	Girl In Rainforest	\$400

42	Rainforest (Triptych)	\$550
Uncatalogued	Ringbarked Trees	\$220
	Homestead with Bottle Tree	\$95
	Willy Willy no.3	\$130
	Ti-Tree Swamp	\$125

F.6 Exhibition Listing: Paul Bowker Galleries. Incomplete Records. Only source referenced in Dorothy Forbes archive (Clem Forbes notebook).

Brigalow	550
Smoking Brigalow	450
Smoking Brigalow	350

F.7 Exhibition Listing: Bakehouse Art Gallery. Incomplete Records. Only source referenced in Dorothy Forbes archive. (Clem Forbes notebook).

Moranbah Birds	500
Burning Bottle Tree	350
Landscape (Brigalow)	350
Landscape (Brigalow)	120
Forest Etching	75
Girl II Etching	75
Girl II Etching	75
Girl II Etching	75
Brigalow Town (etching)	75
Cattle Dam (etching)	120

F.8 Clem Forbes Project. Works held in Private Collections purchased 1966-1988. [as documented by Gray-McConnell; Lane, 1997]

1966	Swamp	Mackay
1967	Man on Horse Near Tree	Mackay
1967	Three Children	Brisbane
1967	Salt Water Flat	Mackay
1968	The Crocodile Shooter	Mackay
1968	Lasseter Returns	Mackay
1969	Brolga	Mackay
1970	Black Cockatoo	Mackay
1970	The Rider	Mackay
1970	Brigalow Country	Mackay
1970	Landscape	Mackay

1970	Lasseter's Lost Reef Legend	Mackay
1971	Sandy Gully	
1971	Merinda	Mackay
1971	Home amongst the Brigalow	Mackay
1971	Bookmaker and his Wife	Brisbane
1971	Floating Boat	Mackay
1971	Image of a Town	Mackay
1971	Houses by the Sea	Mackay
1972	Houses in Time	Mackay
1972	Rural Scene	Mackay
	no title. Bush scene of trees and erosion	
1972	of hill	Mackay
1972	Church	
1972	Waterlilies	Mackay
1973	The Dig Tree Lasseter's Reef	Mackay
1973	Houses in Brigalow	Mackay
1973	Sunday Landscape	Mackay
1973	Platypus Pool	
1973	Lasseter sets off	Mackay
1973	Rainforest Triptych	Mackay
1973	Bird in Tree	Mackay
1973	Melon Pools	
1973	Platypus Pool, Broken River.	Mackay
1973	Rural Scene	Mackay
1973	Rainforest	Mackay
1974	Rainforest	Mackay
1974	Portrait of Lorraine Gray-McConnell	Mackay
1974	Melaleuca Swamp	Mackay
1974	Rainforest	Mackay
1974	rainforest	Mackay
1974	Ti Tree Swamp	Mackay
1974	Ti Tree Swamp	Mackay
1974	Houses windmill fence	Mackay
1974	Ti Tree Swamp	Mackay
1974	Melaleuca	Mackay
1974	Banksias	Mackay
1975	Brigalow	Mackay
1975	Mist on the hill at Eungella	Mackay
1975	Sophia in the Garden	Mackay
1975	Rainforest pool	Brisbane

1975	Rainforest town	Brisbane
1975	Strangler fig	Mackay
1975	Rainforest and Strangler fig	Mackay
1975	Green pool Eungella	Brisbane
1975	Brigalow	Brisbane
1975	untitled	Mackay
1976	Rainforest and river	Mackay
1976	Rainforest	Mackay
1976	Forest palms Eungella rainforest	Mackay
1976	Rainforest mists	Mackay
1976	House in Canefield	Mackay
1976	untitled. Canefield house tree dark skies	Mackay
1976	Horizon and trees	Mackay
1976	Portrait of Simon McConnell	Mackay
1976	House at Netherdale	Mackay
1976	Eungella rainforest	Mackay
1976	Forest Eungella plateau	Mackay
1977	Brigalow hillside after fire	Mackay
1977	Rainforest reflections	Mackay
1977	Northern image	Mackay
1977	Still life	Mackay
1977	Brigalow	
1977	Forest	Mackay
1977	Pink flowers	Mackay
1977	Golden flowers	Mackay
1977	Brigalow morning	Mackay
1977	Brigalow eucalyptus	Mackay
1977	Rainforest mist rainforest canopy	Mackay
1977	Pastel study vase of flowers	Mackay
1977	Melon pools with bottle tree	Mackay
1977	Brigalow waterlilies Pool	
1977	Rainforest (little gem)	Mackay
1977	Horses drinking	Mackay
1977	Rainforest	Taringa
1977	Rainforest and strangler fig	Mackay
1977	Morning	Mackay
1977	Mother and Child	Mackay
1977	Brigalow	Mackay
1978	Brigalow	Mackay
1978	Moranbah landscape	Mackay

1978	Brigalow	Mackay
1978	Lagoon and pink cloud	Mackay
1978	Homestead and bottle trees	Mackay
1979	Fire in the Brigalow	Mackay
1979	Brigalow and eucalyptus	Mackay
1979	Poinciana and frangipanni	Mackay
	Clowns A Man for all Seasons (author note - possibly this an error and is "A 1979 Servant of Two Masters") x 2	Mackay
1979	Untitled clowns	Mackay
1979	Clowns	Mackay
1979	Nude	Mackay
1979	Reflections and forest pools	Mackay
1979	Nebo Brigalow	Mackay
1979	Brigalow country	Mackay
1980	untitled. Houses with hill background	
1980	House in rainforest	Mackay
1980	Rainbow lorikeets	Mackay
1980	untitled. Poincianas and frangipanni Eimeo	
1980	Galahs drinking	Mackay
1980	rainforest parrots	Mackay
1980	Eungella	Mackay
1980	Clowning lorikeets	Mackay
1980	Lorikeets in rainforest	Mackay
1980	untitled Poinciana tree, rainforest, house	Mackay
1981	Rainforest pool and parrots	Mackay
1981	Rainforest with pink waterfall	Mackay
1981	Boats, jetty, houses	Mackay
1981	Rainforest fish	Mackay
1981	Lucy at the piano. Minuet Haydn	Taringa
1981	Tropical bay 2/5	
1981	Butterfly and rainforest	Mackay
1981	Pink garden and frangipani	Mackay
1981	Bottle trees boab trees	Mackay

Appendix G: Biography: Tom Risley⁵⁹²

1947 - Born Rockhampton, Queensland.

1981 Full time professional artist.

2010 Died in Herberton, Far North Queensland.

Individual Exhibitions

1981 Fabrications - Martin Gallery, Townsville

1982 Sculpture - Ray Hughes Gallery - Downtown at 123 Charlotte Street, Brisbane

1983 Collage - Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane

1984 Installation with 16m³ of Foam - College Gallery - BCAE Kelvin Grove Campus,
Brisbane

1985 Car Bonnet Cut-outs - Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney

1986 Recycled Queenslanders - Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane

1987 Furniture - Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane

1987 Collage, Bas Relief - Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney

1988 Sculpture-Works from Central Western Queensland the North - Ray Hughes Gallery,
Brisbane

1989 Chairs - Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney

1989 Still Life and other Compositional Considerations - Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane

⁵⁹² Notes supplied by Coral Risley. These can be found at Coral Risley, "Tom Risley," 2018, accessed May 13, 2023, <http://www.tomrisleyartist.com/index>.

- 1990 Further Concern with Still Life and Composition - Auckland City Art Gallery, New Zealand
- 1990 Drawings - Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 1991 Another Aspect of Still Life and Composition - Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 1991 Chairs - Townsville Regional Art Gallery, Queensland
- 1991 Chairs - Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Queensland
- 1992 Still Life - Another Option - Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 1992 The Indigenous Object and the Urban Offcast - Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane
- 1993 Paintings and Drawings of Still Life - Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 1994 982 trasparenze d'Artea Venezia, Zitelle - Cultural Centre, Venice, Italy
- 1994 Still Life - About Drawing - Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 1996 Painterly Concerns - Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 1997 Stories About Things - Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 1998 The Oceania Suite and Landscapes - Cairns Regional Gallery, Queensland
- 1998 Queensland Landscapes - Ray Hughes Gallery, Queensland
- 2000 Still Life and Landscapes - Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 2004 Stories About Landscapes - Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 2005 Tom Risley - Cairns Regional Gallery, Queensland
- 2005 Flags - Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 2007 Family Crests - Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane

2007 Tablets - Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane

2008 Tom Risley: 8 Still Lifes 1982 - 2008: An Overview, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns, Queensland.

2009 Still Life with Paint, Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane.

2012 Last and Recent Works: KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns. Queensland.

2012 Last and Recent Works: Perc Tucker Gallery, Townsville

Including:

1990 Further Concerns With Still Life & Composition - Auckland City Art Gallery, New Zealand (15 Dec - 14 Feb)

1992 The Indigenous Object & The Urban Offcast - Survey Exhibition. QAG. Brisbane

1994 982 trasparenze D'arte Venezia - Zietelle Cultural Centre Venice (5 May - 9 May)

Selected Group Exhibitions

1981 Australian Sculpture Triennials - 1981,1984,1987,1990.

1982 Sculpture '82 - Commonwealth Games Festival Brisbane.

1984 Appositions - BCAE Kelvin Grove Campus, Brisbane.

1985 Trios Australiens - Peter Cole, Andrew Dunstone & Tom Risley Gallerie Boudoin Lebon, Paris.

The First Exhibition - Ray Hughes Gallery Sydney.

Queensland/Works - 1950-85, University of Queensland Art Museum Brisbane

Curated Nancy Underhill

Six New Directions - Queensland Art Gallery Brisbane.

- Australian Perspecta '85 - Art Gallery New South Wales, Sydney (Curated by Tony Bond)
- 1987 Painters & Sculptors-Diversity In Australian Art - Queensland Art Gallery Brisbane.
Travelling to Museum of Modern Art, Saitama, Japan (Curated by Michael Sournges)
- Contemporary Art In Australia-A Review; Museum Contemporary Art Brisbane (18 July Curated James Baker)
- Seven Queensland Artists - Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education
Toowoomba (8-30 Sept)
- A New Romance - University Drill Hall, Australian National University Canberra (12 Sep- 15Nov Curated by John McPhee)
- 1988 Artists For Another Biennale - Ray Hughes Gallery Sydney.
Gallery Maki - Tokyo Japan with Joe Furlonger & R J Morris.
- Seventeen Australian Artists - Galleria San Vidal Venice (Organised by Ray Hughes on Behalf of Richard Ellis Worldwide to coincide with the Venice Biennale)
- Creating Australia - The Great Australian Art Exhibition (Curated by Daniel Thomas)
Toured to all major galleries)
- The New Generation - Australian National Gallery, Canberra. (4 Jun - 17 Jul)
- 1989 Adelaide Biennale - Art Gallery South Australia Adelaide. (Curated by Mary Eagle)
- Delineations Exploring Drawing - Ivan Dougherty Gallery Sydney (Curated by Louise Pether)
- 1990 Twenty Australian Artists - Gallery San Vidal, Venice; Queensland Art Gallery Brisbane, Benalla Regional Art Gallery Victoria, Ray Hughes Gallery Sydney.

Into Space - The Language of Sculpture, Queensland Art Gallery, touring regional Queensland (Curated by D Burnett).

1991 Thinking Aloud - Drawing exhibition Ray Hughes Gallery Sydney.

1995 Australia Felix - Benalla Victoria.

1999 A Century Of Collecting - Ivan Dougherty Gallery Sydney

2000 Against the Grain - Australian Sculptural Furniture. Brisbane City gallery.

2001 Tokyo Designers Block - Tokyo

2002 Gallery Artists - Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney

2003 Beneath the Monsoon - Visions North of Capricorn. Mackay, Cairns & Townsville.
Curated by Gavin Wilson.

2005 'Project Show' - University Art Museum. U.Q. Brisbane.

2007 'Our Way' - Contemporary Art from Lockhart River. University Art Museum. U.Q.
Brisbane.

2007 The Eutick Memorial Still Life Award: Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery, NSW

2009 Twelve Degrees of Latitude: Regional Gallery & University Art Collections in Qld.
Travelling to Regional 7 university galleries, Qld.

2009 Reinventions: National Gallery Canberra, ACT.

Collections

National Gallery Australia

QLD Art Gallery

NSW Art Gallery

Nat. Gallery Vic

Art Gallery SA

Art Gallery WA

Metropolitan Museum of Art N.Y

Auckland City Art Gallery

Chartwell Collection N.Z.

Joseph Brown Collection Melb

Lavery Collection Sydney

Gold Coast City Gallery

Qld. State Library Brisbane

Perc Tucker Regional Gallery Townsville

Mt. Gambier Regional Gallery SA

Cairns Regional Art Gallery

James Baker Collection

Parliament House Canberra construction authority

Artbank Sydney

Brisbane College of Advanced Education

Centre of Contemporary Art

Ipswich Regional Gallery

Hamilton. New Zealand

Awards

1982, 1985, 1991, 1993 VACB Grants

1996 Stanalite Travelling Fellowship

Commissions

Totem QLD Government Gift to New Parliament House Canberra. Malanda Commission

Eacham Shire Council. FNQ.

G.1 Catalogue Listing Fabrications. Martin Gallery, Townsville. 13 November – 4 December,
1981⁵⁹³

1. *Lou Salome* March 1979

Georgetown sandstone

65x40x90cm

2. *Printed Circuit* April 1979

Timber/Plywood, Fibreglass/Polyester resin/pigment, Aluminium tube/sheet, chromed
steel, paint.

320x170x90cm

[exhibited at Administration Building, Walker Street, through the courtesy of the
Townsville City Council]

3. *O* April 1980

Welded steel strip

150x140x55cm

4. *Sliced Column* May 1980

⁵⁹³ Ralph Martin, Martin Gallery Archive, James Cook University Special Collections, Eddie Koiki Mabo Library, James Cook University.

Welded steel plate

50x250x140cm

5. *Glyph III* July 1980

Welded steel strip

150x190x200cm

6. *Glyph IV* September 1980

Welded steel strip

150x190x160cm

[exhibited at Administration Building, Walker Street]

7. *Eclipse* October 1980

Welded steel strip/rolled plate

150x240x120cm

8. *Letter to Clem Forbes* November 1980

Steel

180x155x55cm

9. *Homage to Noel* December 1980

Welded/guillotined/tapered steel strip

110x320x200cm

[exhibited at Administration Building, Walker Street]

10. *Still life III* June 1981

Welded steel strip/plate

120x335x150cms