
Janet Leith



Artist & Teacher

The Blue Studio

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Artist Bio

Janet Leith is a Contemporary Visual Artist and Art Educator based in North East Victoria, working from the Blue Studio in the centre of Wangaratta.

Janet works predominately in oils on canvas and linen, developing semi abstract expressive landscapes overlaid with images of figures. Her fascination with figurative art and portraiture began as a teenager and she has always strived to capture that special essence of the person.

The inspirations for her work come from her observations of the everyday, from the interactions and actions of life, from personal experience and captured moments recreated by a blending of her experiences.

Janet's more recent work explores the merging of her realistic, insightful portraits with colors and textures in a unique mastery of form, line, tone and light. This current process requires the development of many layers of oil paint before adding the figurative work or portrait as the final layer of paint using black outlines and developing skin tones and details.

She also loves the art of drawing whether of objects, figures, decorative patterns or journals. From detailed work with biro, pencils, gouaches and watercolour to experimenting with and pushing the boundaries of a variety of printmaking techniques and working on wood, Janet enjoys the challenge of developing and mastering techniques and mediums in her art making.

Janet completed her Bachelor of Education (Art & Crafts) at Melbourne State College and in her artistic career she has travelled extensively, living in Paris for 6 months studying and developing her art. In addition she worked overseas with artists such as Zandra Rhodes, Robert Maclean and J.C. Villalonga, the Spanish master who she worked as an apprentice in his studio for 6 weeks. It was here that she learnt to draw and paint hands and was influenced by Villalonga's use of line and pattern within the figure.

She continues to split her time between her studio practice & adult classes at the Blue Studio, NEA Benalla and teaching Yr.12 Studio Art at Galen College in Wangaratta. Janet has organised international tours to France, England & Italy for both her adult and senior school students and continues to run workshops on a regular basis at the Benalla Art Gallery.

Janet has been a Finalist in the Gallipoli Art Prize Sydney, the Hume Bank Acquisitive Contemporary Art Award Wodonga and NEA Portrait Prize Benalla. Selected three times for The Hidden Faces Victorian Salon Des Refuses in Melbourne, Janet has also won First Prize at the St. Bernard's Art Show & the Acquisitive Oil Painting Prize at the King Valley Art Show, along with other Highly Commended and People Choice awards.