

Artist's Statement

JULIA PEDDIE: ART JAM

I have had a long break from public exhibiting due to a long recovery process from the Black Saturday bushfires (2009 Victoria), a decade of unstable housing and then had heart failure four years ago. I am blessed to have met my wonderful husband in that time. We live on an organic farm in Woombye, on the Sunshine Coast, Queensland. My last public exhibitions of significance were in the Bushfire Commission Gallery exhibition (2009) and Marysville Art Show (2011).

Having carted around my remaining paintings, etchings, sketchbooks and diaries for a decade (while moving 25 times) I lost them all in a shed fire in 2020. Three years later I am finally back in my studio, and have begun creating a new body of work *Fragments* with burnt pages from my diaries and sketchbooks from that shed fire.

I will be working on a second collection of fire fragments during the Live show and will be posting on my Facebook page (@JuliaPeddie) throughout the show. These will also be for sale (unframed).

While Queensland closed its air border during the worst of the hysteria of the last three years, we took three lovely long holidays to FNQ (Far North Queensland). The rainforest and powerful waterfalls have such healing powers. The colours and lushness re-ignited my inner artist. After our first trip I returned home to our Syntropic farm (@LighthouseRegenerativeFarm) and my semi-abstract style morphed into semi-figurative works. Imagined elemental beings jumped off the page, including the *Fun Guy*, *Mycellium Man* and the *Autumn Queen*. I exhibited these in my studio at our Equinox gathering in 2022 and sold several pieces.

During our last trip north I was determined to paint in acrylics, rather than coloured inks and gouache. I found this challenging and the colours flat. During this process I found the 'Spirit of the land' emerging through the paint. As an intuitive and imaginative painter, I entertained the notion that the aboriginal ancestors were lining up, wanting to be painted next. I am still wondering why, and if they have a message for me that I might have missed!

I am currently in a process of redefining my style. Having struggled with acrylics, I returned to oil painting - the colours are brilliant and so lovely to paint with, however my process of layering and 'pushing and pulling' highlights and shadows, is difficult with such a slow drying medium. I have completed just two new oil paintings *Grandmother Kelp* and *Luna eclipses Sol*.

I recently signed up with **Judy Woods Art** from New Zealand, and am thoroughly enjoying her tuition. Her process involves collage, acrylics, layering and mark making. It is so exciting to open yourself to a new process after 30 years! I have just begun using this process in my work, and will be demonstrating it during the Art Jam.

