

FRANCES KEEVIL GALLERY

DAVID MACKAY

David Mackay was born in Sydney but spend much of his childhood and early adult life in Papua New Guinea. His professional career began at the age of 15, when he was commissioned to illustrate a book on New Guinea orchids during school holidays. He continued to work as an illustrator for some 20 years at the National Botanic Gardens of Papua New Guinea and the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney. He has also worked as a guest artist at Kew Gardens in London, the University of California at Berkley and the Linnean Herbarium in London. In 1995 he left the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney - and a career in illustration - to explore the more creative side of natural-history art.

He completed a Bachelor of Science degree (biology major) at the University of Sydney, graduating with first class honours, and gained private tuition in art techniques from the accomplished wildlife/landscape artist, William T Cooper AO. A combination of art and science is intrinsic to David's work. A statement by the renaissance artist, Albrecht Dürer, resonates strongly with David: 'Be guided by nature' he said. 'Do not depart from it, thinking that you can do better yourself. You will be misguided, for truly art is hidden in nature and he who can draw it out possesses it'.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

David is fascinated with the small but beautiful details that are so often overlooked by all of us as we rush on in our busy lives. His work has been likened to the Japanese tea ceremony, in which the simple process of preparing a cup of tea is formalised and focused on so that we can appreciate, enjoy and even revere the small details that most of us normally aren't even aware of. "Great things can be seen if we slow down to focus on small details. In a world in which increasing speed and complexity are promoted as not only necessary but desirable, slowing down to look at the smaller, beautiful details can provide a calming and enlightening effect similar to that obtained through Zen contemplation."

EXHIBITIONS

- 2012 'Masters and Moore', Maiden Theatre, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney; opens 30 March 2012
'Botanicals: Environmental Expressions in Art - the Alisa and Isaac Sutton Collection', a travelling exhibition of selected works by 40 artists from around the world; next in the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum in Wisconsin USA (June 23 to Aug 26, 2012), with negotiations under way to have the exhibition travel to Israel and Australia.
'Plants in Peril', an exhibition of selected works by over 20 artists from around the world in the Link Gallery, London to April 2012
- 2011 'Losing Paradise?... incorporating 'Plants in Peril'', Shirley Sherwood Gallery, London
(Solo show) 'Around the Next Bend', Gallery 126, Armidale NSW
'The Eternal Order in Nature', Domain House, Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne
- 2010-11 "Botanicals: Environmental Expressions in Art: The Alisa and Isaac M. Sutton Collection", the Arthur and Janet Ross Gallery, New York
- 2010 'New Treasures from the Florilegium Collection of The Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney', Red Box Gallery, Sydney
"ONE TWO SIX presents Gallery Artists". Gallery 126, Armidale NSW
- 2009-10 "Botanicals - Environmental Expressions in Art". Hunt Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, USA.
- 2009 "A Class Production - Paintings, drawings and sculptures inspired by botany", Gallery 126, Armidale NSW
"2009 Botanical Art Exhibition". Banking Chamber, Dartnall Advisers, Moss Vale NSW
"A Brush with Nature", Fernbrook Gallery, Kurrajong Heights, NSW
"Botanica - Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney.
- 2008-09 "Down Under - Contemporary Botanical Artists from Australia and New Zealand",
The Shirley Sherwood Gallery, Kew Gardens, London.
- 2008 "Treasures of Botanical Art", (opened by Sir David Attenborough) The Shirley Sherwood Gallery,
Kew Gardens, London.
"Botanica - The Art of the Plant", Lion Gate Lodge, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney.

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Gallery hours: Mon to Fri 10 - 5 Sat 10 - 4 Sun 11 - 4

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- 2007 The inaugural Southern Highlands Botanical Art Exhibition, organised through the Gardens Historical Society.
"Botanica - The Art of the Plant", Lion Gate Lodge, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney.
- 2006 "The Masters Exhibition", Maiden Theatre, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney
Margaret Flockton Award Exhibition, Red Box Gallery, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney
"A Passion for Plants - Contemporary Botanical Masterworks", at Seiji Togo Memorial Sompō
Japan Museum of Art, Tokyo, Japan
"With an Eye for Detail", The Forest Gallery, South Durras, NSW
- 2005 (Solo show) "Tree and Leaf", Gallery 126, Armidale, NSW
"Artburst", Fernbrook Gallery, Kurrajong Heights, NSW
"Botanica - The Art of the Plant", Lion Gate Lodge, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney
- 2004 "Celebration", Hervey Bay Regional Botanic Gardens, Qld
"Exploring Collectors - Two Centuries of Botanical Discovery", Red Box Gallery, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney
"Botanica 2004 - The art of the plant", Lion Gate Lodge, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney
- 2003 Finalist in "The Waterhouse" exhibition of natural history art, South Australian Museum
"A Passion for Plants: Art from the Shirley Sherwood Collection", Smithsonian Institution, USA
"Botanica 2003 - The art of the plant", Lion Gate Lodge, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney
(Solo show) "'Snowgum' triptych and other recent works", private showing, Armidale, NSW, Australia
- 2002 - 03 "Contemporary Botanical Art", Denver Art Museum, USA
"Botanica 2002 - The art of the plant", Lion Gate Lodge, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney
- 2001 - 02 "The 10th International Exhibition of Botanical Art and Illustration", The Hunt Institute of Botanical Documentation,
Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, USA
- 2001 "Botanical Artists of the World II", Tryon Gallery, London
"Botanica 2001 - The art of the plant", Lion Gate Lodge, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney
- 2000 "The State of the Waratah", Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney during the 2000 Olympics
"Botanica 2000", Lion Gate Lodge, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney
- 1999 (Solo show) "Botanical Reflections", The Stables Gallery, Armidale, NSW
"Botanica - The art of the plant", Lion Gate Lodge, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney
- 1998 "Nova Anglica - The web of our endeavours", New England Regional Art Museum, Armidale, NSW
- 1997 Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney 10th Annual Art Exhibition, Lion Gate Lodge,
Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney
- 1996 "The Richness of Botanical Art", Urrbrae House, Waite Institute, Adelaide, South Australia
- 1995 "Garden Reflections", Lion Gate Lodge, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney
- 1994 "The Origin and Evolution of Monsoon Forests", an exhibition of botanical art held in conjunction with
an international botanical conference held at Kuranda, North Queensland, Australia.
- 1991 "From Macquarie to Molecules - 175 years of botany and horticulture at the Royal Botanic Gardens,
Sydney", Maiden Theatre, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney.
- 1990 "Flowers and Nature - Bruguel to van Gogh", Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia.
(Gave demonstrations in botanical art as part of the exhibition.)
- 1989 "Science and Art", University of Sydney. (Works by Leonardo da Vinci and me were hung together for
a comparison of past and present botanical art in the service of science.)
- 1983 "Drawn from Life - The development of Botanical Illustration of Australian Plants", Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney

PUBLIC & PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

The Shirley Sherwood Collection at Kew Gardens, London
Hunt Institute of Botanical Documentation, Pittsburgh, USA
National Capital Botanic Gardens, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea
The Australian National Cultural Collection
Artbank - The National Collection of Australian Art, Australia.
The City of Sydney Art Collection
Botanical Gardens Trust, Sydney.
Hervey Bay Regional Gallery, Queensland.
Environment Australia, Australian Federal Government, Canberra.
University of New England, NSW.
Northern Territory Herbarium, Northern Territory Government
Numerous private collections in Australia, USA, Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, Holland, Singapore, South Africa
and elsewhere.

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PUBLICATIONS

David's work is described in various publications, including:

- 'Treasures of Botanical Art' (Shirley Sherwood and Martyn Rix, 2008),
- 'Art of the quince and other botanicals' in Look Magazine (B Watson, 2002).
- 'A Passion for Plants - Contemporary Botanical Masterworks' (Shirley Sherwood, 2000),
- 'Australia: 300 Years of Botanical Illustrations' (Helen Hewsen, 1999),
- 'Drawn from Life - the Development of Botanical Illustration of Australian Plants' (Ed Wilson, 1983)

David has illustrated well over 150 scientific reference books and papers; over 5000 of his drawings and paintings have been published. He has also authored or co-authored over 30 publications on art and botany.

MEDIA COVERAGE

- New England Focus magazine, September 2011. Armidale, NSW, Australia
- The Armidale Independent newspaper, September 7th 2011. Armidale NSW Australia
- The Melbourne Saturday Age, July 23rd 2011. Melbourne, VIC Australia
- Television appearance (in my studio) on Prime News, November 1st, 2006
- The Armidale Express newspaper, Nov 30, 2005. Armidale, NSW, Australia
- The Armidale Independent newspaper, Oct 28, 1999. Armidale, NSW, Australia
- Television appearance on the Today program, Channel 7, September 1995