

MEDIA REVIEWS – LUKE SHELLEY

Centralian Advocate

FRI 25 JUL 2008, 'Terra Firma' solo exhibition,

Journey of a young artist

By Daniel Burdon

An exhibition tracing the steps of a young artist's journey from the New South Wales coast to the Central Australian desert goes on show at Watch This Space gallery tonight at 6pm.

Watch This Space will also play host to a night of inspiration during the third event in the gallery's Four Spaces series from 7.30pm.

When Sydney artist Luke Shelley took on a 2000km journey to the Red Centre, he discovered arid environments he had never seen before, and collected pieces for his exhibition: Terra Firma.

Luke's works involve watercolours and charcoal and he uses unique methods to give his paper more depth and earthiness.

He said: "what I did for a lot of these pieces was expose the paper in the environment to capture the subtle tones that are native to that environment.

"One of the pieces I left under a flowering gum, and the sap and pollen stained the paper, giving it natural warmth."

After Luke's exhibition opening, the public is welcome to join artists and writers involved in "what's this Art thing about anyway?" from 7.30pm at J-Birds Place.

Gallery administrator Jade Bitar said the event, a collaboration between Watch This Space and NT Writers Centre, will display six "deeply personal" artworks.

Ms Bitar said: "It's about questioning and challenging the contemporary gallery environment, which consists of these indicators that dictate the meaning of the piece (like titles, catalogues and wall descriptions)."

Artists and writers involved are Lucy Kenneth, Henry Smith, Suzi Lyon, Julie Taylor, Luke Shelley, Sally Mumford, Maryanne Butler, Michael Giacometti, Kieran Finnane, Mardijah Simpson and Meg Mooney. The event will be repeated during the Alice Desert Festival.

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New talents emerge in show

By TERRY COLLINS

LUKE Shelley has been drawing for as long as he can remember.

"I was always the kid drawing in the back of his schoolbooks," Shelley, 24, of Terrigal said.

"Then, when I was in year 2, my teacher contacted my parents and told them I had a talent.

"I've been doing artwork ever since."

After completing a fine arts degree at the National Art School where he concentrated on printmaking, Shelley found himself turning more and more to sketching as a medium and made good use of water colours. He is one of nine emerging artists featured in a new exhibition at Gosford Regional Gallery which opened last night and runs until May 12. Curator Tim Braham said the nine were chosen from scores of artists aged 18-30 who were invited to submit their work from all over NSW.

"The resulting display of nine mini exhibitions is diverse, contemporary and thought provoking, representing a range of art forms and approaches," Braham said.

"Each finalist received prize money of \$500 and is in the running to win the first prize of \$2500."

Shelley said the work he had entered for exhibition was a visual exploration of the changing environment from coast to outback inspired by a recent trip to Alice Springs.

"This exhibition is great exposure for young artists," Braham said.

"It has attracted a high calibre of work and will be wonderful for networking as far as future involvement at the gallery is concerned," he said. The first prize winner was due to be announced last night by Gosford Mayor Chris Holstein after entries were judged by Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation general manager Dolla Merrilees.

People are invited to a special youth art forum at 6.30pm on May 12 when the artists will speak about their work and contribute to a discussion about developing an artistic career.

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Artists set to emerge

By JOHN SIMPSON

FISH and synthetic hair are just some of the materials used in an exhibition for up-and-coming artists at Gosford Regional Gallery, East Gosford. Davistown resident Luke Shelley is among nine young artists from across NSW whose works will be featured in the exhibition, called Emerging, to open tomorrow. His etching installation entitled Process of Discovery will appear alongside works consisting of sculpture, paintings, drawings, photography and digital media. Shelley, 22, said his marine-inspired piece incorporated preserved fish skin and crustaceans, driftwood, seashells and a Japanese print-making process known as gyotaku. He said the process involved rubbing a fish with inks and red oxide and taking an impression of it using special paper. "It's print-making processes combined with collections of natural materials, the concept being the process of discovery of a marine environment," he said. Curator Tim Braham said this would be the third time the gallery had presented the biennial exhibition for artists aged 18-30. "We target that age group because it helps ensure they continue their career," he said. "This is one of the highest calibre competitions outside Sydney for young artists." Shelley will give a talk about his installation at the gallery on May 19 from 2pm.

NOELLA LOPEZ GALLERY 2014