

"I capture the essence of rocks ... (they) are eternal and embody wisdom."



Pam Brittain

In order to break the rules, you need to know them. Through spontaneity and colour, Pamela Brittain challenges the convention of form in her abstract expressionist drawings and paintings.

There's a certainly a touch of Degas in Pamela's WA Ballet Series, as the subjects of her drawings fluidly perform for the viewer. Ethereal in their charcoal and ink pastels, their feet never seem to touch the ground.

"I apply minimal energetic lines to express the rhythm, shape and movement in my impressionistic drawings," Pamela says.

Comprising of 30 works, the series was her most challenging yet but proved incredibly successful, with an exhibit at the Gala Highway to China, WA Ballet 2006. As part of the Gala, the works were also used in promotional material to promote WA Ballet's trip to China.

Just like her dancers, Pamela has had a lifetime of movement; born in Malaysia, schooled in Perth, she completed art studies in Perth (Claremont School of Art), Perugia (Academy De Belle Arte) and the UK (Byam Shaw School of Art Kensington), enjoyed a five year jaunt in Dubai, and has spent time restoring Newtown House in Vasse. Taking her teaching as seriously as her paintings and drawings, she achieved a Graduate Diploma in Education in Visual Arts at Edith Cowan University and has taught at the Claremont School of Art, Merredin Senior High School and the gifted and talented visual arts programme at Applecross Senior High School.

The influences of her Perugian adventures are evident in her fluid figurative forms and impressionist technique. Playing form off against formlessness, and through a process of layering colours and textures, her most prominent mode of expression is through colour. Displaying a newfound style she describes as 'abstract expressionism', her Gascoyne Series passionately bleeds vivid reds and blues; while her Karijini Series swirls in ochres and turquoise. Meanwhile, reverting back to the softer touch she used for her ballerinas, the blues and greys of the Meelup Series evoke a gentleness.



"My work has evolved from impression to expression and finally a combination of both aspects of myself," she explains.

Pamela moved to the Margaret River region in 2000, saying she was drawn to the area for its diverse geographical landscape; from "the wind-blown trees to the tall forests standing strong; the waters so pristine and calm to the wild and powerful seas evoking a strong sense of emotion. The area is saturated in colours, beauty and history."

Drawing upon a lifetime of experience, she has established her own art classes in Dunsborough, teaching drawing and painting to children and adults at all levels. Animated in her technique, it

was only natural for her to develop her own colour theory and she shares this in her teachings to help her students open themselves up to expression.

As the region continues to inspire, she's currently working on a new series of the Margaret River region. Although she still plans on running workshops in the South West, including a collaboration with Mile End Glamping, she is unlikely to remain stationary – especially given the art tours she occasionally hosts in exotic locations including Italy, the Pilbara and New Zealand.

When her art isn't being widely exhibited publicly and in private collections, Pamela's work can viewed at her studio by appointment. Visit pamelabrittain.wordpress.com