



**Drawing on the inspiration of nature, Preston’s artistic community is launching a new event – Art . . . Naturally – and we’re all invited to explore the beautiful textile works they’ve produced. *By GABI MILLS. Images by BIANCA TURRI.***

**L**iving in such a gorgeous part of a world, it’s no surprise perhaps that Preston River Valley resident Fiona Richardson wanted to introduce the wider world to her special piece of the Bunbury

Geographe region. “A group of Lowden and Yabberup residents hit upon the idea of an art event to help promote Preston River Valley, specifically textile fine art, as it’s an area of art that receives little exposure,” says Fiona.

“We wanted to also showcase local artists in their studios, and this was received with great enthusiasm. We are very lucky to have a collection of talented artists working in different media,” she says.

The exhibition and the associated competition, which is open to all textile artists in the Bunbury Geographe region, has a theme – For The Love of Nature – and includes 2D flat wall works, 3D sculptural works and wearable art.

“We live in a beautiful part of the south west, with forests of jarrah and marri right on our doorstep, and the community of Preston River Valley itself is a strong one, supporting one another in our ventures,” says Fiona.

The competition entries will be judged by a highly regarded Noongar artist, Sandra Hill.

“Sandra lives and works in Balingup, and was awarded a creative development fellowship from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander board of the Australian council of the Arts,” says Fiona. “Sandra’s work is in high demand with many of her works held in major collections. Jan Hart, a renowned artist working in the Ferguson Valley will also judge competition entries.”

The exhibition itself will be curated by Georgina Richardson, a graduate of Curtin University with a degree in Fine Arts, majoring in textiles and illustration.

“Georgina’s year of study at WAAPA in the costume department continues to inspire her work,” says Fiona. “Her mixed media approach enables her to produce work that pushes the boundaries





**TEXTURALLY RICH** // Left, the work of Janelle Barnes, an artist who works in mixed media. Framed work, a 2-D fine textile piece by Georgina Richardson. Above, a fibre wall hanging work by Jenny Doherty from her Ferguson Valley studio.

between fashion and art.”

There’s a sense of excitement in the community about the forthcoming event, bringing together as it does some fascinating works under one roof in the hamlet of Yabberup-Lowden.

“We are proud to be able to hold our exhibition in the Yabberup Hall, a heritage-listed building that’s been at the heart of the community for the last 122 years,” says Fiona. “The hall is a focal point for many community events throughout the year so it’s fitting that it will house this important artistic event to which all are invited.”

Supported by the Donnybrook-Balingup shire, the exhibition and artisan trail will be an effective drawcard for the Preston River Valley.

“I feel privileged to work on this project with all the very talented artists and talented, generous volunteers who are donating their time and talents,” says Fiona. “I see this event providing enjoyment for our region, evolving and growing for many years to come.”

**Art . . . Naturally, Yabberup Hall, Preston River Valley, November 3 and 4. Visit [facebook.com/imaginegwnp](https://facebook.com/imaginegwnp) or [imaginegwnp.com/events](https://imaginegwnp.com/events)**

## MEET THE ARTISTS

### Cynthia Dix

Cynthia is a practising artist, painter, print maker, ceramicist and glass artist. Her own sculptures are dotted throughout her garden on the 100-acre property by the Preston River, where she lives and works. Cynthia will welcome you along with glass-maker and mentor fellow artist, Heather Smedley. Together they will present a stunning array of affordable gifts, ceramics, prints, cards and paintings.

**Rainbow Downs, 2654 Donnybrook-Boyup Brook Road, Mumballup. Visit [cynthiaspictures.com](https://cynthiaspictures.com)**

### Janelle Barnes

Janelle is passionate about art, creating works using different media including ceramics, textiles, table ware, clothing, hand-printed fabrics, pottery and mosaics. She will have an array of beautiful local produce to purchase as cooking is another passion. “I love living in the Preston River Valley as it offers me abundant produce and inspiration,” says Janelle.

**Yabberup Studio, Donnybrook-Boyup Brook Road, Yabberup. Visit [facebook.com/YabberupStudio/](https://facebook.com/YabberupStudio/)**

### Jan Atherton

Jan and Colin Atherton are opening up their stunning large farm garden to visitors, with all proceeds from the \$6 entry going to Leukaemia Cancer Research. With over 275 roses featured throughout the garden, including floribundas and stunning climbers, visitors are invited to meander throughout this lush and inviting garden with areas to sit and enjoy the relaxing atmosphere. Browse market stalls, buy some plants, enjoy live music or taste local wine. Note: no dogs are allowed.

**Fernbank, 492 Donnybrook-Boyup Brook Road**

### Sally Young

Sally Young’s work is all about raw material opulence, uniqueness and quality. A renowned artist, Sally works with locally-sourced merino wool, making one-of-a-kind, handmade, ready to wear art. She also makes resin jewellery, and her straw bale studio which is on the upper tributary of the Preston River among the jarrah and marri trees, is made from 80 percent recycled materials.

**Sally Young Designs, Lot 1157 Donnybrook-Boyup Brook Road, Mumballup. Visit [facebook.com/sallyyoungdesigns](https://facebook.com/sallyyoungdesigns)**

### Marilyn Dreaver

A studio potter for over 30 years, Marilyn Dreaver loves wood-firing and salt glazing, creating one-off pieces and domestic ware. **BG**

**Studio 500, 500 Sandhill’s Road, Brookhampton**



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