

## ART OF THE JAPANESE GARDEN: FROM TRADITION TO MODERNITY

**MARIE CONTE-HELM (UK)**

This lecture introduces some of Japan's most famous gardens and provides a context for understanding the principles of Japanese garden design as it has evolved through the ages. The Japanese love of nature and the changing seasons has manifested itself in paintings and in the intimate and grand-scale gardens surrounding aristocratic palaces and Buddhist temples, as well as Zen-inspired dry landscape gardens with strikingly symbolic content. The lecture also draws upon wider examples to illustrate the distinctive qualities that the Japanese have brought to garden design, an approach successfully adapted to modern domestic settings and to Japanese gardens abroad.



**Monday 28 September 2026**

**6:00 to 7:00pm**

## LEE MILLER'S WAR

**ANTONY PENROSE (UK)**

Lee Miller is thought to have been the only woman combat photographer with the allied infantry in Europe during the Second World War. This lecture presents her war photojournalism from shortly after D-Day in Normandy, through the Siege of St Malo, the liberation of Paris, fighting across Germany, the liberation of Buchenwald and Dachau to the flames leaping from Hitler's Berghof near Berchtesgaden, which signalled the end of the war and the post war traumas of Austria and Hungary. The story is told through extensive use of Lee Miller's own words, set to her photographs.



**Monday 2 November 2026**

**6:00 to 7:00pm**

## CREATURES AND CONCERTOS

**PIETER DE VRIES (AUSTRALIA)**

Pieter shares his techniques for capturing extraordinary images for David Attenborough and National Geographic. His talk also features an exquisite performance of Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* - "Spring". In this segment of his documentary, "Four", he captures the essence of Japan's Cherry Blossom love story, offering a visually stunning musical experience.



*Part of festival event in conjunction with Coffs Harbour Music Society and City of Coffs Harbour.*

**Sunday 22 November 2026**

**11:00am to 12:30pm**

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## 2026 SPECIAL EVENTS

### HOW TO LOOK SLOWLY: IMPRESSIONISM AND POST-IMPRESSIONISM WITH JOANNE RHYMER

ArtsNational Coffs Coast and Yarrila Art Museum (YAM) offer an in-depth workshop in the art of looking slowly at key artworks from the past and present to improve visual analysis skills. *Separate ticketing required.*

**Sunday 24 May 2026**

**10:30am to 12:30pm**

### CREATURES AND CONCERTOS SPRING FESTIVAL

ArtsNational Coffs Coast, Coffs Harbour Music Society and City of Coffs Harbour offer a day of talks, film and music. A highlight will be Piet de Vries' talk *Creatures and Concertos* with a performance by Nomad String Quartet featuring Vivaldi's Spring concerto. More information closer to the date.

**Sunday 22 Nov 2026 Lecture 11.00am to 12.30pm**

**Venue: Yarrila Place, Coffs Harbour**



### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

ArtsNational Coffs Coast arts talks are held on Gumbaynggirr Country. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.



**ARTSNATIONAL  
Coffs Coast**

Annual Membership \$185  
Guests \$35 per talk  
Bookings essential

For more information  
about our Arts Talks 2026  
**scan** or visit

**[www.artsnationalcoffscoast.au](http://www.artsnationalcoffscoast.au)**

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**ARTSNATIONAL**

**Coffs Coast**  
Gumbaynggirr Country



## ARTS TALKS 2026



## WE ARE ALL CREATIVE: THINKING, MAKING AND SHARING THROUGH ART PLUS LOCAL ARTIST Q&A

### GILL NICOL (AUSTRALIA)

Gill will draw upon her 30 years of experience of working with art and creativity with all kinds of people, from early learning through to people with dementia.

Her talk covers:

- thinking creatively and thinking for creativity
- tapping into your own creativity
- how the process of creating art engages both the body and the mind and supports our wellbeing and much more!

**Sunday 22 February 2026**

**2:30 to 4:00pm**



Photo: Anna Kuceira

## THE BRILLIANCE OF BRUNEL – THE MAN WHO BUILT THE MODERN WORLD

### IAN SWANKIE (UK)

British people and visitors to the UK still find themselves amongst the infrastructure created by Isambard Kingdom Brunel in the 19th century. He changed the face of the British landscape with his ground-breaking projects including railways, bridges, tunnels, ships, and grand buildings such as the magnificent Paddington Station. He merged art with engineering and science and was a pioneer and a revolutionary. And he was brilliant. We'll look at the man, his background, his work, and his legacy.

**Monday 23 March 2026**

**6:00 to 7:00pm**



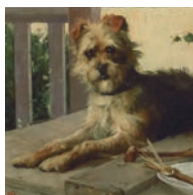
## DOGS IN ART

### STEVEN MILLER (AUSTRALIA)

Steven Miller has published widely on art and his popular 'Dogs in Australian Art' is now into its third expanded edition. From colonial works through to contemporary installations, in this lecture he will show how dogs have truly been 'the best friend' to artists, not only as subjects, but also as companions and champions. As the artist Norman Lindsay confided to the poet Hugh MacRae, 'one can lose most human beings with less disturbance than a dog'.

**Monday 27 April 2026**

**6:00 - 7:00pm**



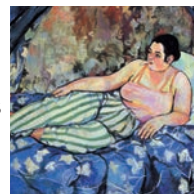
## NEW VISIONS: PARIS AND IMPRESSIONISM

### JOANNE RHYMER (UK)

During Napoleon III's reign (1852–1870), Paris underwent an extraordinary transformation under Baron Haussmann's direction. Several medieval neighbourhoods were cleared making way for wide boulevards, elegant apartment blocks, parks, and monumental public buildings that reshaped the city's landscape and social fabric. This dynamic environment inspired the Impressionists, who were keen to capture the fleeting sensations of the modern capital. Discover how the radical techniques of artists like Manet, Renoir, and Caillebotte, along with a special focus on the women artists Morisot, Valadon and Cassatt, reflect the attractions and complexities of modern Parisian society.

**Monday 25 May 2026**

**6:00 to 7:00pm**



## HOW TO LOOK SLOWLY: IMPRESSIONISM AND POST-IMPRESSIONISM

An additional workshop will be held in conjunction with Yarrila Art Museum (YAM).

**Sunday 24 May 10:30am to 12:30pm**



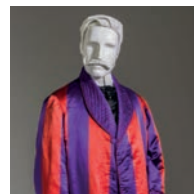
## REIGNING MEN: FASHION IN MENSWEAR 1715 TO PRESENT

### PROFESSOR PETER MCNEILL (AUSTRALIA)

Peter McNeil will walk you through the largest exhibition of men's fashion yet assembled, curated by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 2015 (then travelling to St Louis Museum of Art 2016; Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney 2018). Men didn't 'fade to grey' over 300 years, but frequently burst forth in vibrant colour, striking cuts and even body modification. Chart the rise of wool versus silk for the rich. See the dramatic appearance of French Revolutionary dress. Discover military corsets and calf-plumpers for men. Learn how the new fashion for cigarette smoking led to new clothes. See male pleasure in dressing, across time and place. Learn how much of the collection was created lovingly by a Swiss collector over 30 years. Expect to be surprised!

**Monday 22 June 2026**

**6:00 to 7:00pm**



## IS THIS REAL LIFE? HOW WRITERS AND ARTISTS HAVE CHALLENGED OUR PERCEPTIONS OF REALITY

### MARY SHARP (UK)

When Lucy goes through the wardrobe into Narnia, when Harry Potter opens his letter and when Nemo takes the red pill, they all discover that the worlds they thought they knew are only part of the truth. From Plato onwards, writers and artists have been inspired to push beyond the everyday and to create other worlds that inspire our imaginations. This lecture explores what these stories tell us about how we view our lives and what it is that we most desire.

**Monday 27 July 2026**

**6:00 to 7:00pm**



## A PHOTOGRAPHIC ODYSSEY: SHACKLETON'S ENDURANCE EXPEDITION CAPTURED ON CAMERA

### MARK COTTE (UK)

On Ernest Shackleton's third Antarctic expedition in 1914, his ship, the Endurance, was trapped, eventually crushed in pack ice. After five months on the ice, the ship's company rowed to remote Elephant Island. Shackleton then sailed with five companions over 800 miles to South Georgia, returning over three months later to rescue his stranded crew. Australian Frank Hurley was the expedition's official photographer. His images capture with great artistry the amazing landscapes within which this remarkable human drama unfolded. This lecture illustrates Hurley's great talent behind the lens, in the first flush of human contact when the Antarctic remained essentially 'terra incognita'.

**Monday 31 August 2026**

**6:00 to 7:00pm**



### ARTSNATIONAL Coffs Coast

Our arts talks are mostly on Mondays from 6.00-7.00pm, followed by a light supper and conversation.

Venue: **St John Paul College Theatre**  
**421 Hogbin Drive, Coffs Harbour**

Visit: [www.artsnationalcoffscoast.au](http://www.artsnationalcoffscoast.au)