

HAGAS Artist in the Spotlight: Trudy Brennan

Where were you born?

I was born in Glenelg Community Hospital, so I haven't settled far away! I grew up in Clovelly Park but spent a lot of time at my father's family farm at Melrose. I bought my first house in Port Noarlunga, and I currently live at Largs Bay. I've always enjoyed living near the sea.

What's your strongest memory of your childhood?

My maternal grandmother was an oil painter. As a child I absolutely loved staying weekends with her when she would set me up with a palette and board and we would paint with oils. The smell and texture of the paint was wonderful. I think my grandmother instilled a feeling that I could do anything I set my mind to. One of my paintings was selected at primary school to be presented to the Author Colin Thiele.



When and why did you join HAGAS?

I first started in HAGAS in 2020. When COVID hit my suddenly unemployed daughter persuaded my husband and I to buy her a pottery wheel for her birthday. We had done a short course at The Jam Factory, and she believed we could pick up the rest from the internet. It didn't take us long to discover we were both hopeless and looked around for somewhere to learn. Fortunately, we were able to get into HAGAS! The wheel now lives in my shed and daughter has moved on to other creative processes. I've enjoyed wheel throwing and Mixed Media classes at HAGAS and am currently loving hand-building. I would like to explore more sculptural work.

What jobs have you done other than being an artist?

I left Secondary School to work for an Accountant and at the same time commenced a Design Course at TAFE. However, the desire to travel was stronger and I spent a year travelling through Europe and Asia. I had obtained a job in the Commonwealth Public Service "just to make some money for a while." However, ended up working a total of 30 years there. This did however allow plenty of opportunities for travel and to explore more creative pursuits such as lead-lighting.

What's your medium and why do you do what you do?

Over the years I have dabbled with a few mediums. I have always been drawn to glass and enjoyed many years of lead-light work. A few years ago, I got to experience a day of glass blowing which was amazing. The medium I have found most satisfying has been oil painting, although since commencing working with clay I have rarely painted. I prefer to go wherever the creative urge takes me!

What art do you most identify with?

I would have to say impressionist painting; however, I have been deeply moved by sculpture (The Rodin Museum in Paris springs to mind).



What themes do you pursue?

A lot of my work seems to have a sea theme. I enjoy scuba diving and snorkelling, the marine life, colours of the sea seem to influence my work. I have recently completed a fun garden totem with sea creatures.

Describe a real-life situation that inspired you?

A friend at work retired and suggested I join her in an art class. So, in 2012 I commenced classes at Splashout Studios at Marino. For me, this was an inspiring and supportive environment where I learnt many skills working predominantly in oils. I continued there for about 8 years and also attended Adelaide Central School of Art studying Life Drawing.

What's the best advice you've been given?

If a job's worth doing, it's worth doing well. (I try my best.)

