

## Colours and patterns of the coast inspire new series of paintings

***Vicki Stavrou: Coastal Muse opens at Tweed Regional Gallery***

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**Thursday, 14 November 2019**

***Coastal Muse* features a series of bold and semiabstracted paintings of the Northern Rivers, Central Coast and Lord Howe Island by regional artist Vicki Stavrou. The exhibition is on display at Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre from Friday 22 November until Sunday 16 February 2020.**

Throughout her life, Vicki Stavrou has been drawn to the primal energy of the coast and the ever-changing colours of the sea. In this series of new and recent paintings, Stavrou pays homage to the joy of coastal living; instilling the viewer with the peacefulness and pleasure of these wild areas.

Painting predominantly *en plein air* (in the open air), the artist positions herself under cliff faces and on rocky outcrops, conveying the tranquillity and abstract feel of these areas. Adopting a refined colour palette with warm tones of sand and pastel pink skies, Stavrou said: "I am predominantly a fan of colour so most of my work focuses heavily on producing exciting and harmonious colourscapes to give the viewer a sense of the magic of these coastal areas. If I feel excited about the colours, I hope others will too. And within the colourscape I produce shapes and gestures to express what I feel at the initial moment of laying down the colours – letting the painting unfold and take me on a journey."

In the development of the exhibition, Stavrou visited a variety of coastal regions including Brunswick Heads, Lennox Head, Bangalow's hills, Evans Head, Norah Head, Chinaman's Beach and Lord Howe Island. For Stavrou, each place is unique with a large variety of natural architecture, lending itself to textural and colour explorations to convey the qualities of these coastal areas.

"The lovely diversity within these areas is plentiful and a thrill to visit, especially the abundance of natural elements at Lord Howe Island, a heritage listed island off the coast of NSW. And just around the corner at Wategos, it is surprisingly secluded. Beyond the main beach area there is a kaleidoscope of magical rock formations on the hot sand that tumble towards the sea, making for a quick painting/drawing session before the incoming tide," she said.

Tweed Regional Gallery Director Susi Muddiman OAM said: "Vicki is a talented painter and colourist who has a magical ability to portray a feeling of joy and seemingly endless summers. We are proud to be presenting Vicki's work, which comes to the Gallery through the Community Access Exhibitions Program which caters to artists who are residents of Tweed, Kyogle, Lismore, Ballina, Byron Bay, the Scenic Rim or Gold Coast City shires."

**All are welcome to attend the Official Opening celebrations on Friday 29 November at 6pm with guest speaker Christian Morrow, artist and co-owner of Pack Gallery, Bangalow.**

**-ends-**

**Image credit:**

Vicki Stavrou, *Lennox Heads* 2019, acrylic on board, 30 x 30cm. Image courtesy the artist.

Vicki Stavrou, *Passing Ship at Nora Head* 2019, acrylic on wood panel, 50 x 50cm. Image courtesy the artist.

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The Gallery and Café is open from Wednesday to Sunday 10am – 5pm.