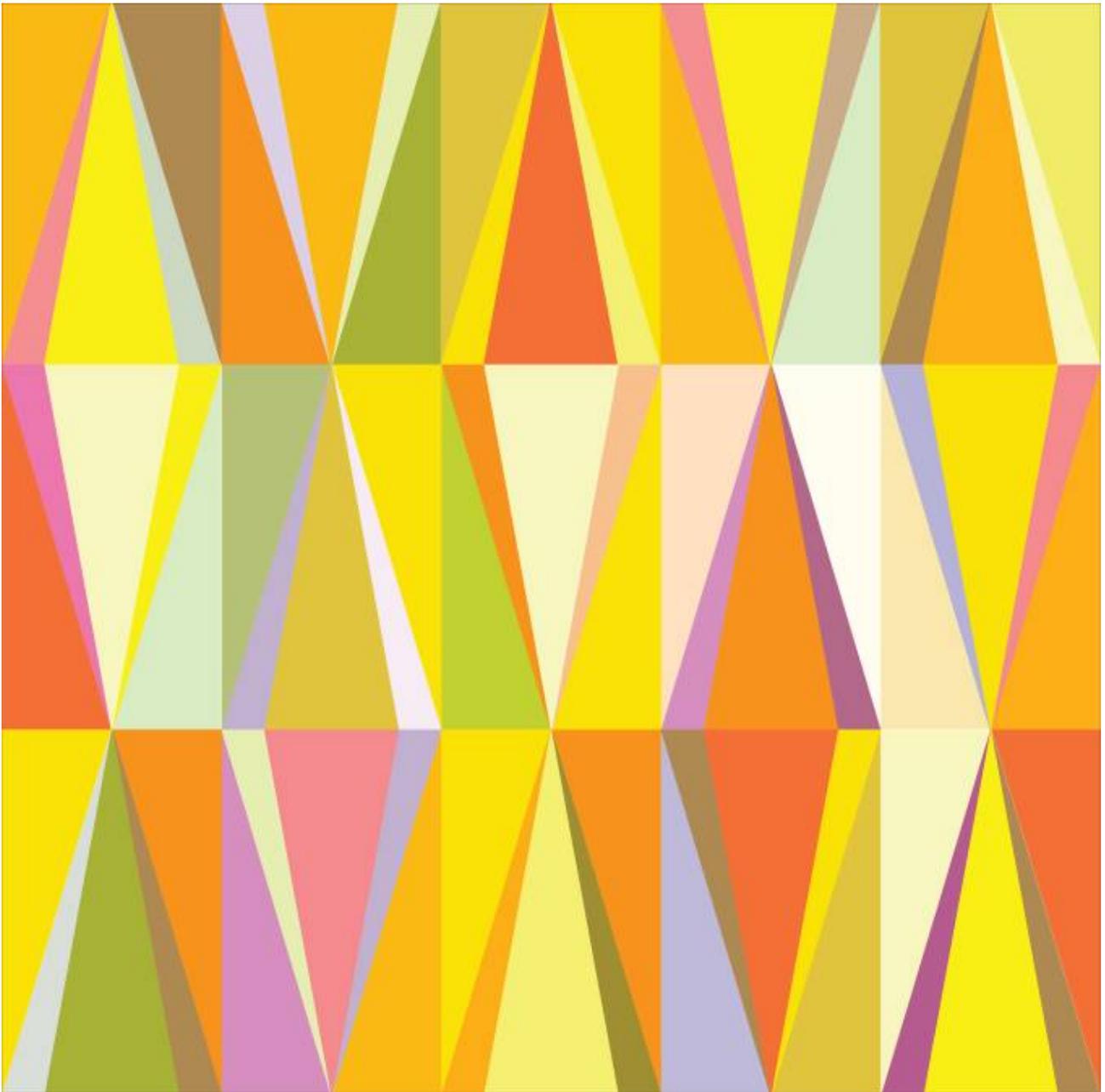


# **Lime Flamingo Collective's OutsideIn/ InsideOut at Belco Arts is a response to the lockdown**

• **Sasha Grishin**

**Music, Theatre & Arts**



Jodie Cunningham, Wattle and Yam Daisy. Picture: Supplied

**Lime Flamingo Collective: *OutsideIn/InsideOut*.**  
**Belconnen Arts Centre, 118 Emu Bank, Belconnen. Until**  
**March 21, 2021.**

Is 2020 really over? To the optimist, we are already seeing the year rapidly disappearing in the rear-view mirror as we are racing away into a vaccine-protected future; to the pessimist, 2020 was simply a prelude to real disaster that is about to unfold.

Members of the Canberra arts community experienced the bushfires and the COVID lockdown differently. Some were almost wiped out and went into deep hibernation, for others it was largely business as usual. The secluded life in the studio continued with its normal rhythm punctuated with fewer art gallery openings and with fewer opportunities to socialise. Art production continued unabated.

The unlikely named Lime Flamingo Collective is not really a collective but a network for emerging Canberra artists, an umbrella for organising a group exhibition. The nine members of the group that have come together for this exhibition at the Belconnen Arts Centre are Lesley Andersen, Jenny Blake, Jodie Cunningham, Sarah Earle, Roger Hancock, Gillian Jackson, Diane McWhirter, Angella Price and Jo Walters.

What they have in common in this exhibition is that they are all reflecting on the year that was. Where they differ is in their levels of technical and conceptual accomplishment.

Most of the artists in this exhibition, in response to the lockdown, headed for the bush with solitary walks recharging the physical, sensory and spiritual batteries.

Cunningham took her wildflower discoveries in the bush into 40-centimetre square geometric abstract paintings that cleverly worked the palette of the flowers into the rhythmic geometry derived from the urban centre of the nation's capital. Her *Wattle and Yam Daisy* and *Kangaroo Grass*, both from the Canberra turnaround wildflowers series, are among the most effective paintings. The geometric patterning is sufficiently subtle to allow the colour scheme to have an inner luminosity.

Earle found refuge at the Pinnacle Nature Reserve and carried the subtle modulations that she observed in colour and tone of the surrounding countryside and the distant hills into a series of

roundels a metre in diameter.

The paintings are strongest when she is exploring the less figurative aspects of her sense impressions, as in *Recalibrate* and *Ripple effects*, and are less successful when conventional literal elements of the landscape are allowed to prevail.

Blake's inventive collages in her *Rocky Times* series employ wallpaper that has been cut out into boulder shapes and then stacked together, respecting the gravitational qualities of real rocks supporting one another in space. On occasion, her rock piles start to hint at humanoid shapes and that gives her unlikely constructions a somewhat different connotation.

Anderson's strange and quirky series of acrylic paintings seem to tug in the direction of printmaking and textiles. In a painting such as *#tangled* there is a very effective layering of shapes where great delicacy is combined with free-floating forms that seem to pulsate in space. Her *#knots and crosses* structurally has a greater complexity, but perhaps is less effective in its overall resolution.

Jackson's obsession in this exhibition is with banksia pods, not only for their amazing shapes suggestive of all sorts of associations with animals and people, but also for their function as propagators of the species.

In her banksia series, Jackson has discovered a new rhythm, pattern and life force in this frequently overlooked element in the Australian bush.

The Lime Flamingos in this exhibition have come out to show off some of their incredible plumage observed while locked down in 2020.