



Community Spirits

By Christiane Niess



Women's &
Children's Hospital
Foundation

Christiane was born and brought up in Germany, studying biology and molecular biology in Paris, France and at the University of Witten-Herdecke, Germany. After working for several companies in medical research management, she moved to Adelaide in 2005 and became the manager of the Research Secretariat at the University of Adelaide. After visiting a resin art exhibition in Broome in 2015, Christiane was intrigued and compelled to try her hand at this exciting new painting technique, becoming hooked and has since confidently found her own style working with resin.

Christiane's work is often abstract, drawing inspiration from her surroundings in the Adelaide Hills where her studio is set high up overlooking the bush and the city lights.

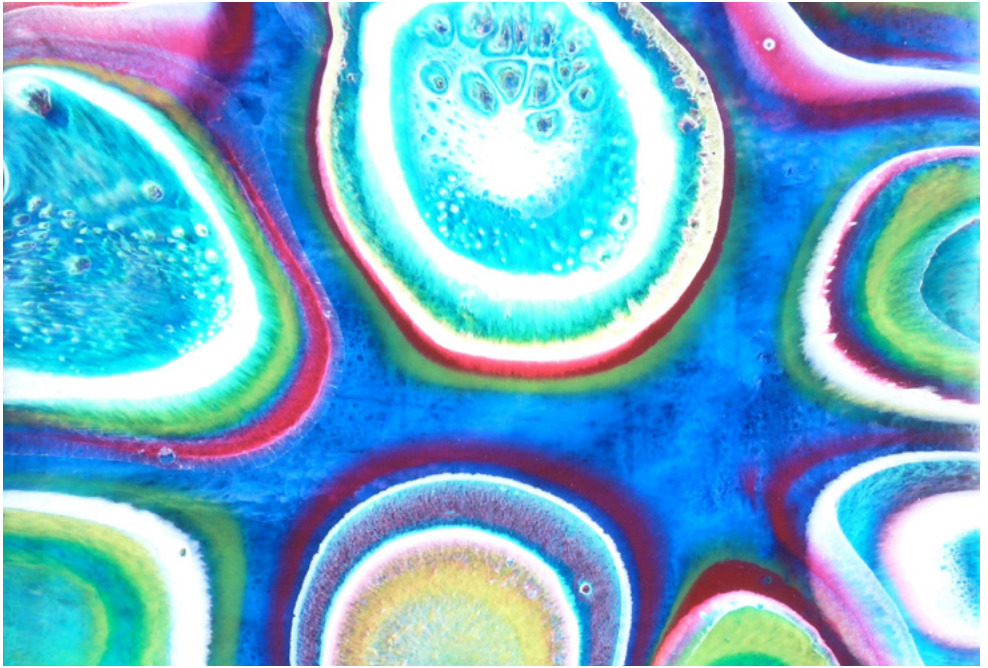
In particular, the colours, contours and ever-changing light influence Christiane's work; as well as the sky, sea, flora and fauna, including Australian birdlife *'living at one with nature, rather than imposing upon it, are constant sources of inspiration'*. These inspirations encourage Christiane to experiment with the epoxy resin and coloured mediums. The technique is labour intensive, and the materials can be unforgiving, however Christiane finds it possible to produce works of great depth, intricacy and with glass-like finishes which would be difficult to create using other techniques. Epoxy resin has a natural flow and you have limited control as colours combine as they wish, making each work unique.

This body of work *Community Spirits* celebrates Christiane's love of Adelaide's community ethic from feeling extremely welcomed by inclusive neighbours, who genuinely look out for each other, to volunteer organisations such as CFS Brigades, wildlife protection and conservation groups, to the strong communities in local hospitals. Christiane understands why living in Adelaide brings such a real sense of belonging.

'It is often difficult to reflect such tangible features in abstract art, but I hope that gallery visitors will be able to see elements within the pieces of this exhibition.'

Christiane hopes they bring as much joy to the viewer as she has in making them!

To learn more about Christiane's art practice visit www.christianeniess.com



Above image: detail of *Treasures II*

Below image: detail of *Good neighbours*



The Women's & Children's Hospital Foundation (WCH Foundation) raises funds in support of the Women's and Children's Hospital in Adelaide, South Australia. The WCH Foundation is committed to ensuring that mums, children and their families have access to the very best in medical care, hospital facilities and support services at a time when they need it the most.

The WCH Foundation has developed a number of Arts in Health programs to integrate art into the life of the Hospital to improve people's health and wellbeing. We try to make the environment more 'child-friendly', making it look better and helping to make the time spent in hospital 'feel better'.

The Arts in Health program delivers a range of activities throughout the hospital across art forms such as: Visual Arts, Digital Media, Music and Performing Arts, Public Art, Literature and the Therapeutic Arts (Play Therapy, Art Therapy and Music Therapy). From providing pencils and colouring books in waiting areas, to managing Gallery spaces and art displays in the Hospital, collaborating with Hospital School on book week activities and working closely with the Play Therapy Team, the Arts in Health program delivers smiles and fun throughout the Hospital.

The WCH Foundation's Gallery program coordinates five galleries in the Hospital, providing a space away from the stresses of treatment to distract, entertain and inspire, improving the visual environment. The artworks displayed in the exhibition spaces come from a range of sources – internally from hospital staff, patients (women & children) and their families, through specific Arts in Health activities and externally from local artists and art collectives.

This exhibition was planned and exhibited on the lands of the Kurna People, we pay our respects to the Kurna Elders past and present and to the Elders of the lands this brochure reaches.

Cover image: detail of *Conversation*



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