

one  
*Brush Stroke*  
at a time

FOR BALMAIN ARTIST  
BRONWYN WOODLEY-GRAHAM,  
ART IS A LABOUR OF LOVE  
THAT'S FINALLY BEGUN TO  
FLOURISH.

BY REBECCA FLOOD



Bronwyn Woodley-Graham in her studio with her dog, Rembrandt, who is her constant companion when she is working.

Like so many artists, Bronwyn Woodley-Graham had a dream of becoming a respected artist. However life as an artist wasn't always easy for the Balmain resident, taking artistic jobs that weren't necessarily her dream of full-time painting. Nevertheless after a few sign writing jobs and stints as a graphic artist, it all came together for her in unexpected proportions. Out from behind the canvas Bronwyn has been exhibiting her artwork both in Australia and overseas. Due to arrive in America later this year, she was spotted by a Massachusetts art gallery owner, not long after appearing in Australia's prestigious Archibald Prize line-up, in which she presented a portrait of local actor and café owner, Steve Bisley.

"I had an exhibition with the MLC gallery, and the owner of a Massachusetts gallery was there, he liked my work and basically asked if I would go over there," she said, "and of course I said yes, great!"

Bronwyn's work will be on show in the Massachusetts town of North Adams, just outside of Boston at the Kolok Art Gallery. She will then move on to London early next year to form part of a group exhibition featuring Australian women artists at the Beverly Knowles Gallery. While Bronwyn said she had high hopes of achieve-

ment, she didn't expect such a quick succession of success.

"With the Archibald, you kind of hope you get hung, but you don't expect to get hung," she openly admitted. "If it was hung it would've been lovely, but if not that's okay. When this came along, it was unbelievable; I'm very excited about it." Tapping in to her artistic ability early on in life, Bronwyn's relationship with the canvas started with a desire to paint. "I've been an artist in some form or other throughout my whole life, but I started to really want to paint full-time about seven years ago," she said. "My grandfather was an artist, he was a very good one, and I feel I related to him especially since I loved portraits, I started out with Art Express and then did graphic art." Going on to the Charlie Sheards Studio School in Sydney, Bronwyn started to learn about the serious, untold nature of art. Studying there for four years, she believes she learnt many of the traditional painting skills which today are often ignored.

"One thing with art, here and universally across the world, a lot of people have lost the basic skills of art. It's like a trade in a lot of ways," she said. "Hundreds of years ago, painters would take on an apprentice, and the apprentice would master the art."

"I spent four years really learning about my craft. There are a lot of really good artists in Australian, but the craft of art, and those skills have been lost over the centuries."

As wise as she is talented, Bronwyn has been taking it one brush stroke at a time working towards her international future, "having my work exhibited overseas is really good, I've just got to get to work now, as if it was any other day," she said. "I've got to get painting. Being layered brush strokes, it's a lot of work, I have my work cut out for me."

