Frank Werther

1922 – 2010

Frank Werther was born in Berlin in 1922 and attended secondary school in Paris. He migrated to Australia in 1939.

He attended the National Gallery Art School in Melbourne where he studied painting under the tutelage of Roland Wakelin and Murray Griffin. He graduated in 1953. He also studied etching at RMIT with Udo Sellbach in the early 70s. He participated in his first group exhibition *The Dunmoochin Group* in1958 at the Victorian Artists Society together with William Degan and Clifton Pugh.

Frank Werther was founder of the Dunmoochin Artists' Society together with Clifton Pugh in 1954. He, with his wife Lee, established their own painting school in the late 60s. Classes were initially conducted in a famous old coach house in Chrystobel Crescent, Hawthorn that had previously housed painters Charles Blackman, Gil Jamieson and Fred Williams. The school was moved to Werther's large mud brick studio in Cottlesbridge in the mid 70s where he continued to work and teach until 2009.

His first solo exhibition was held in 1960 at the Victorian Artists Society and he subsequently held solo exhibitions in Melbourne (Argus Gallery, 1963, Leveson Street Gallery, 1966 and 1968, Miriam Gallery, 1975, Clive Parry Galleries, 1977, Gallery de Tastes, 1978, Eltham Gallery, 1980, Niagara Galleries, 1989, Flinders Lane Gallery, 1992, Eltham Community Gallery, 2001, The Barn Gallery, Montsalvat, 2006), in Sydney, (Arts Council Gallery, 1970) in Adelaide, Canberra, Wollongong and Townsville, (Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, 1983).

Frank Werther's work has been included in many group exhibition: for example, Adelaide Festival of Arts Special Exhibition, National Gallery of South Australia, 1962, Pameran Seni Lukis Australia, National Art Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Travelling exhibition of Australian paintings to Malaysia, 1963, the Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, 1962, 1963 and 1967, Wine Makers Art Prize Exhibition, 1963, Gallagher Portrait Competition, 1965, Tasmanian Art Gallery Exhibitions, Hobart and Launceston, 1965 and 1966, The Geelong Print Prize, Geelong Art Gallery, 1967, The Martin Smith Memorial Exhibition, Georges Gallery, Melbourne, 1968, Captain Cook Bi-centenary Exhibition Melbourne, Print Council of Australia Travelling Exhibition, 1971, Selected works from the Michell Endowment, NGV, 1978-79, and Werther School of Paintings, Span Galleries, 1998.

Frank Werther painted many portraits over his long painting career including those of Sir Ninian Stephen, John Olsen, Dr Moss Cass, Bruce Arthur, Judy Jacques, Dr Ian Turner, Peter Laycock, John Cash, Clifton Pugh and Charles Reddington.

Special Assignments have included a Comalco sponsorship to paint at Weipa in North West Queensland in 1981 and he was guest lecturer at TAFE Townsville in

1980 and 1983.

Special Commissions have included stained glass window designs for Drs. H and M Lovegrove, tapestry designs woven in North Queensland by Bruce Arthur and Deanna Conti and in Victoria by Barbara Duggleby.

Prizes
E T Cato Prize 1958, Portland Prize 1961

Public Collections
Australian National Gallery, Canberra
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Art Gallery of South Australia
Deakin University
La Trobe University
Bendigo Campus La Trobe University Art Collection
Monash University
University of Melbourne
Townsville Regional Art Gallery
Artbank
I.C.I. Collection
Nillumbik Art Collection
Pacific Dunlop Australia Limited Collection

Works are also held in many private collections in Australia and in overseas collections in England, USA, (including Sears Roebuck Collection), Europe and Japan.

Selected Bibliography
Art and Australia 1970 and 1989,
Artists & Galleries of Australia And New Zealand Vols. 1 & 2, Max Germaine
The Encyclopaedia of Australian Art, 1984 and 1994 editions, Alan McCulloch and Susan McCulloch
Directory of Australian Printmakers, Print Council of Australia.