



SIMON HARRIOTT

The evocative images produced by local painter Simon Harriott are of views that are familiar to anyone living or visiting the 2479 area. Scenes of meandering black and white cows nibbling grass on rolling hills; groves of trees, leaves maybe bright orange, gold or even pink; old style houses tucked away between fields and purple and blue hilled skylines, telegraph poles and roads threading through the scene... there's even some stylised 'people at the beach' paintings, though the majority would be landscapes.

Colour is clearly of major importance to him. "I use colour as a way to express what I feel," Simon explains. "This is drawn upon the landscape around here, and this comes out onto the canvas. The colour reflects the different times of the day, the 'good feeling' times."

The standard size of about 95 percent of Simon's work is 1.2 x 1.5m, so they make an impact in any room. Such a painting would take Simon possibly three sessions of five or six hours to complete, once he's clear about the idea and composition.

His work is sold through galleries in Mullumbimby, Currumbin, Byron Bay and Barebones in Bangalow, and hopefully through his newly developed website simonharriott.com. The Currumbin outlet, Way of Design Gallery, coordinates interior design, so many of his pieces find their way into new buildings in that area. Nadine Abensur, from Art Piece Gallery in Mullumbimby, has introduced them to corporate boardrooms in Brisbane, while others have found their way into homes in Germany, Canada, New Zealand, the US and the UK.

Since his student days, Simon has supported himself in a variety of ways, frequently waiting in local restaurants such as Fresca, though as he sells more art work, his external working hours decrease.

Simon, who's been painting for 20 years, trained at both the Sydney Institute of Technology, where he earned a Fine Arts Certificate, before receiving an Advanced Diploma of Fine Arts from Sydney's National Art School. Arriving at the Art School in 1993, he finally felt 'normal', among people just like him. He describes the course as very "hands-on and intensive". Students learned life drawing, portraiture, landscape, plus photography, print-making, sculpture, painting and theory.

For three years while he was a student, Simon was lucky enough to work as an assistant to leading Sydney art dealer, Tim Olsen, which taught him such important details as the best way to mount a painting, not to mention gaining an insight into "how it all happened" within the art scene. Drawn to Bangalow 10 years ago, since then Simon has been sharing studio space with four other artists at the Nimno Studios, on Hillary Hermann's rural property on the outskirts of Bangalow, where he spends five days a week painting.

Christobel Munson

BANGALOW'S HEARTBEAT

as seen in
Bangalo's
Heartbeat, May
2008

