

# BECKWORTH ALUMNI - WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



## ANGELA LEA

Years at Ballarat Grammar: 1980 - 1987

### What Art and Design subject(s) did you study when you attended Ballarat Grammar?

In my junior years I studied everything from ceramics, metalwork, needlework, printmaking, woodwork, photography, graphics (my Mum Lyn Lea was my teacher!!) and my all-time favourite subject was Painting and Drawing. My painting and drawing teacher and the long-time head of the Art Department, Bob Braszell was a truly exceptional teacher.

### What did you enjoy about these subjects?

I loved playing with different creative media and the teaching nurtured my interest, particularly in relation to painting. With paint I had the ability to express my direct and passionate personality, by exploring whatever subjects and scale took my fancy. I was a bit of a loner in my school days, however I felt that my emerging artwork was a great way to connect. I received feedback from those who viewed my work, that confirmed they 'got' who I was through my painting. I also enjoyed expressing myself in a no-need to justify, uninhibited fashion.

### What skills do you believe you gained from studying these subjects?

With relation to painting, I developed the 'eye', compositional understanding and visualisation skills required to be a creative. Initially I learnt to 'see', working on photorealistic painting which was the basis of my compositional understanding. I then delved into materials and techniques. I discovered that rapid drying acrylic paint worked well for me in a rapidly applied style that successfully expressed what I wanted to say. Mr Braszell also taught me Art History and he inspired me to deep dive into my research, seek understanding as to an artist's motivation and intent and be open to influence by those I discovered along the way.

### What did you create in your Art and Design subject(s) which you are most proud of?

My biggest Year 12 painting was a triptych depicting galloping horses ('Alogo Triptych' - alogo is Greek for horse) of 1.50m x 3m. It was very energetic informed by my understanding of how horses move (I loved to gallop then, as I do now!). It was at this stage that Mr Braszell encouraged me to reference the techniques of the man who was to become one of my key artistic mentors - Anthony Syndicas. I have reproduced the subject on another triptych, commissioned in 2006 and as a diptych when I was at art school studying painting at the University of Ballarat. Mr Braszell had given me an article on Anthony's creations, and I still have it. I referenced Anthony's work for many years, even copying some of his paintings numerous times. We eventually met and became friends.

### What were your biggest achievements in Art and Design when you were at Ballarat Grammar?

I was awarded the Year 12 Prize for Art and selected to exhibit in what is now known as Top Arts (shown at the NGV).

### What was one of the most valuable things you learnt during your time in the Beckworth?

To be myself and be disciplined in getting the job done. Being open, honest, vulnerable, and thus true to my own character in my expression requires true self confidence and that has been my motivation throughout life.

### What do you do now?

I run my own business Horse Fix - massaging horses and giving riding lessons. The success of my vocation allows me to work part time and thus have time for my painting and my other great passion of riding my horses. I have done a big commission straight on to a wall in an equestrian property lecture room because of my horse world contacts. You can see a condensed version of 17 hours of painting by looking up Avoca Park Commission on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/8qAoetZ6JJQ>)

### What are your major achievements since leaving Ballarat Grammar?

In 2006 I embarked on a successful, major solo show 'goingOUT' held at 'The Artery' gallery in Fitzroy. I completed 23 big paintings and many smaller prints and studies.

### Would you suggest studying an Art and Design subject in Year 12?

As art was my favourite subject at school it was a no brainer to continue studying it at senior level. However, if art is not your thing, don't do it, particularly if you believe in the myth that it is an easy cop out. Art is just like any subject you must apply yourself diligently and conscientiously if you want to do well.



1980 - 1987

ARTIST