

'SELBY WARREN: AUSTRALIAN BUSH ARTIST AND TRIBE OF ONE'

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Philosophy

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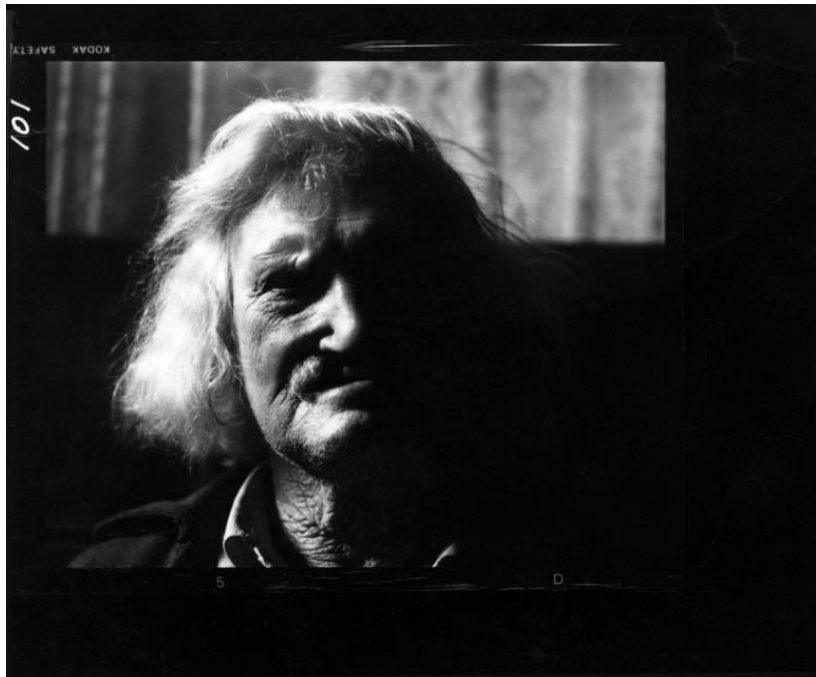
**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
THESIS**

**SELBY WARREN : AUSTRALIAN BUSH ARTIST
AND TRIBE OF ONE**

**by
Roger Shelley**

2017

This volume is presented as a record of the work undertaken for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Sydney.



Selby Warren aged 85, Contact print, 1972, photographer unknown

'... then retired tooking (sic) up painting'.

- Selby Warren: 'This is a summary of my life', c. 1977

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My sincere thanks to the several others who have helped in many ways.

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Note: Both in this List and throughout the thesis I have provided the corresponding *Catalogue Raisonné* number in square brackets - for example [SW213] - following the captions of Figures illustrating works by Selby Warren. The *Catalogue Raisonné* (Appendix A) contains an illustration and information on all currently known paintings and drawings by Selby Warren.

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Abstract

In this thesis I have looked at the life and works of the Australian self-taught artist, Selby Warren, who was born in 1887 and spent his whole life in rural New South Wales near the small, inland city of Bathurst. Warren was typical of many self-taught artists in that he was completely untrained in art, unaware of the artworld and, having worked as a labourer, only began painting in earnest after semi-retiring at the age of seventy-six. Almost a decade later he was discovered by an art lecturer who introduced him to a city dealer and gallery owner and his work was exhibited in commercial galleries in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. During this brief (three year) period he was reasonably well known in art circles but this soon ended and he spent the remaining years of his life in his home town of Trunkey Creek. He died in 1979 aged 91.

Warren exemplified the experiences shared by many self-taught artists both in Australia and overseas. I consider the events involved in the growth of interest in self-taught art and the ensuing influences it (and related phenomena like primitivism and primitive art) had on approaches to modern art movements from the turn of the twentieth-century until about 1980 in Europe, America and Australia. George Melly's idea of the 'tribe of one' ¹ and how it relates to artists like Warren and his ilk is explored.

An analysis of Warren's paintings and those of his Australian, European and American contemporaries is provided in a response to the view that it is the sometimes unusual *lives* rather than the *output* of self-taught artists that is too often used in the discussion of a unique, but not uncommon, art form.

*

Comprehensive primary research has been undertaken in investigating Warren and his art as almost no published material exists on him. Similarly the preparation of the detailed *Catalogue Raisonné* (Appendix A) involved wide-ranging primary research as very few of Warren's works have been illustrated in publications or online.

Introduction

The Australian Selby Warren (1887-1979) was a quintessential example of a self-taught artist. In several respects his personal background and experiences were quite similar to those of other twentieth-century self-taught artists in Australia, as well as in Europe and America. By focusing on Warren and his contemporaries, I will demonstrate the uniqueness of the phenomenon of self-taught art and the means by which this distinctive form of expression was elevated to a perceived importance within the art world that it had not previously enjoyed. I will examine how the interest thus produced was harnessed by the cultural elites to serve their various causes. The obvious and not-so-obvious common features of self-taught art, I believe, need to be recognised as a bond underpinning an artform that is actually a succession of more or less unique and hard to define practices. While the images made by self-taught artists may be complex in both composition and in the representation of their subject matter they can remain simplistic in style due to the technical limitations of the artists themselves, (discussed in Chapter 3.3).

Many of the early self-taught artists to be studied and characterised as such (or by one of several other names such as: naïve, primitive, psychotic, vernacular, visionary, *brut* or untutored) by the artworld ² were institutionalised, often in asylums for the insane. When he wrote: 'these artists derive everything...from their own depths, and not from the conventions of classical or fashionable art' ³ Jean Dubuffet, who coined the name *art brut* for their art, was talking mostly about artworks he had seen produced by mental patients. However, many artists, described by experts as being marginalised, were not institutionalised but were under-educated, poor and worked in manual jobs before

turning full-time to a form of artistic expression which they had taught themselves. Their lives, by failing to meet the common understanding of what an artist's life 'should' look like, were often regarded as unusual sometimes leading to them being relegated to the side-lines of 'normal' society by members of their neighbourhoods and this marginalisation of their lifestyles was transferred to their art. They sometimes lived on the 'outside' of their communities and because of this their art was, up to a point, considered to be outside the 'normal' artworld. ⁴ But an artist like Warren, along with many other self-taught artists, was not an 'outsider' or 'marginalised' in this way and in Chapter 4.5 I consider how real marginalisation/'outsiderness' is conferred by the culture of the artworld into which art of self-taught artists like Warren's is taken and commodified. Unlike the stereotypical self-taught artist, Warren did not experience any psychological illness that we know of, nor was he moved by the spiritual. His art, though simple in form, was produced by a functional member of society and represented an adult's view of the world. Warren believed his art communicated his memories of a time and world that had passed; memories and experiences he *needed* to articulate as best he could.

Self-taught artists were usually quite unaware of their fellow self-taught artists and, for that matter, of any artists or of the art world they occupied. However, they appear to have shared a number of general characteristics of approach, methodologically, technically and conceptually, which I discuss in depth in Chapter 3. Warren, like his peers, was completely untrained in art and was oblivious to the professional art scene. Like other Australian and overseas self-taught painters he was discovered by a member of the artworld and again like most of his kind had not sought to be discovered.

Discovery came as a surprise to him though he seems to have quickly adapted to his brief time on the public stage. Before looking closely at the phenomenon of self-taught art in general, I will present a biography of Warren (Chapter 1.1) based on primary material, including a tape he made in 1977 which commences with him saying 'This is the story of my life'. Here, as in the other limited source material, Warren at no time mentions his art or of his experiences once discovered as an artist. The apparent lack of importance he seems to have placed on his art is not unusual amongst his kind and is discussed in Chapter 1.5.

After considering Warren's life and the environment in which he lived, in Chapter 1.2 and 1.3 I look at his discovery and promotion in 1971 by a local art lecturer, Garth Dixon (1924-2015). In addition, a correspondence conducted between Warren and the Sydney art dealer and gallery owner, Rudy Komon (1908-1982) is investigated (Chapter 1.4). Dixon had introduced Warren to Komon realising that the gallerist would be interested in exhibiting the elderly artist, who was 85 when first shown in 1972. The correspondence between artist and gallerist provides an insight into the naivety of Warren and his lack of any understanding of the Sydney art-market of the 1970s. This is followed by a discussion on the influence of the art establishment on Warren and his kind (Chapter 1.5).

The 'differences' noted about self-taught artists is often explained in terms of their lifestyles rather than their art. Many of them who were to some extent isolated within their communities lead what were considered unusual lives. Though Warren was an active member of the community in his small New South Wales country town of Trunkey

Creek, he was locally considered an oddity because, after retiring from work, he painted rather than do what his fellow retirees did: fish, hunt and just relax at the local pub. But when he became known outside his community with exhibitions in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, the media of the day dwelt on his lifestyle and not his art. What reporters, and by extension, their readers, found interesting was that he was old, uneducated and had spent his life undertaking unskilled labouring jobs on the land before concentrating on his painting. Only one or two articles talk about his art in any depth at all.

Warren's paintings are extraordinary and deserving of particular attention in their own right. In Chapter 2 (2.1 to 2.9) I look closely at his themes, particular paintings and sketches and, also, the often bizarre handmade frames with which he decorated many of his paintings. In this way, I attempt to shift the balance more directly towards what can be learnt from the actual works themselves, rather than privileging biography.

Self-taught artists are unique in the artworld in that they belong to what the English jazz musician, writer, critic and lecturer, George Melly called a 'tribe of one'.⁵ I believe the concept contains within it a sound basis for understanding what self-taught artists are about and how they differ from establishment artists, something which several commentators on this kind of art and its producers have found difficult to clarify.⁶ The applying of the tribe of one concept to artists like Warren is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.1 and elsewhere in the thesis. Discussion of other relevant elements affecting perceptions of self-taught art including Primitivism, memory painting and folklore are considered along with an explanation of why self-taught artists painted the way they did using the often vernacular materials they chose.

It is important that social, cultural, historical and political issues are explored, since together they help delineate and explain both similarities and differences in the character and reception of self-taught art in different geographical regions. In examining self-taught art I consider its emergence, which occurred particularly from the turn of the twentieth century in Europe (Chapter 4.1, 4.2 and 4.5) and the United States of America (Chapter 4.1, 4.3 and 4.5), and from the 1950s in Australia (Chapter 4.1, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.7), and why the reception in each region was different. The ways in which this art was regarded and used by modernist artists in Europe, America and Australia, and the success they had in achieving their aims in part through channelling the work of self-taught artists is analysed. I discuss in some detail in Chapter 4.6 the idea of a 'cultural cringe' which, though not unique to Australia, had a particular impact in that country which, in part, led to the later embracing of self-taught art there. I discuss also a type of art in Australia revealed to the artworld in the 1970s: Aboriginal Art. This 'new' yet ancient art had an impact on Australia's international cultural standing which remains to this day and also, I propose, was, though unplanned, instrumental in the demise of continuing interest in self-taught art in Australia (Chapter 4.8).

In Chapter 5, I compare Warren with his self-taught artist contemporaries both in Australia and overseas, looking at similarities and differences, many of which are due to the approaches to culture in Australia, Europe and the United States of America.

Appendices are included which contain primary source material referred to and quoted in the text. One of these (Appendix A) is a *Catalogue Raisonné* of all Warren's known works which I compiled.

Throughout this thesis I talk of self-taught artists in the past tense as I am referring mostly to the period spanning roughly 90 years from the late 19th century to about 1980. I contend that self-taught art in Australia and elsewhere post-1980 is often represented by artists who are purporting to be self-taught or outsider - they are in a way *faux* self-taught artists. By saying this I am not denigrating the quality of their work but am suggesting that they are not self-taught artists of the kind I am referring to and whose works I define in Chapter 3.1 as:

'the product of a direct need by often uncomplicated people to express themselves in paintings which are unconstrained by the norms or expectations of society or its art world.' I continue: 'These artists directly communicate their creative spirits and, seemingly neither influenced by humility nor pride, they produce works that are authentic representations of the artist's singular reality.'

Present day artists, by the very act of personally claiming they are 'self-taught' or 'outsider', demonstrate they are neither, much in the way an individual declaring himself to be an 'eccentric' cannot truly be one: whether someone is a 'self-taught' artist or an 'eccentric' is something necessarily decided by others, not the claimant.

The 'innocence', said to have been expressed by self-taught artists producing their work in the early 20th century and before 1980,⁷ has been lost to a degree by today's self-taught artists due in part to the recent development of communications which have permeated society to such an extent that it seems improbable that anyone can be thought of as being innocent or unaware of the external influences evident in everyday life and art.⁸

Chapter 1

1.1 Selby Warren - a life

Today when people who are aware of him think about Warren he is remembered as a well-regarded self-taught Australian artist who experienced a brief period of acknowledgement (though not quite 'fame') in the early 1970s. Warren produced remarkable paintings of an exceptional quality which reveal a visually-influenced inner self and its need of expression. The subjects of his works illustrate elements of his life as a bushman ⁹ in rural New South Wales and offer his reflections on events, places and people of interest to him.

Almost nothing was known of Warren's life apart from information contained in a few articles written in the print media in the early 1970s and in the memories of those remaining who actually knew him. To learn about his life and times and, to an extent, his attitudes has involved painstaking primary research including finding and talking with the few people still living who knew Warren. These include his last remaining child, Alan Warren, who still lives in the little settlement of Trunkey Creek where Warren and his family lived from 1927. It also included, until his death in 2015, the man who discovered him in 1971, Garth Dixon¹⁰ and Ron Dunsire, Dixon's then fellow art teacher in Bathurst, and Warren's daughter-in-law, Audrey Warren. A granddaughter of Warren's, Teresa Kudinoff, was visited in Melbourne and the Sydney gallery owner, Ray Hughes, who had met him in 1972 when Warren attended the opening of his first exhibition organised by Rudy Komon (1908-1982). Apart from Alan, no one remains in Trunkey Creek who knew Warren.

Warren was, foremost, an uneducated working man who undertook any manual, labouring jobs available to him and so, like all the other ordinary working men in country towns around Australia, he would normally not have been remembered at all. It is only because he was an artist, and his work became known, that we know (or are interested in) him. Because of his background details of his life are scant. Even after he was discovered there is little biographical 'chatter' to be found about Warren.

Being only semi-literate, Warren did not keep a personal diary and wrote and received few letters apart from a correspondence he maintained with Komon over the period in which his work was being exhibited by the gallerist. He was helped in writing these letters by his daughter, Joyce, and occasionally his wife, Alma. As was the case for most people of his generation and especially those living in the bush, almost nothing of his life was set down in writing. On a personal level, he was boisterously vocal, reciting bush ballads and poems and rowdily singing bush songs in his local pub, The Black Stump. In old age Warren started visually recording events from his life, things he had done, seen and been told about. These visual expressions can, I believe, be looked at as a type of *diary* analogous to written text. They reflect the comfort Warren had in expressing himself through pictures and the difficulties he experienced with writing. His own painted expressions of his life are far more descriptive than any of his written or spoken words. As the artist and *art brut* theorist, Jean Dubuffet (1901-1985) claimed in 1952: 'painting is a far more immediate language than that of written words and at the same time it is charged with far more meaning'.¹¹ This seems especially pertinent to Warren.

In 1977, with the help of his then adult son, Alan, Warren used a basic cassette recorder to make some tape recordings of himself and four cassettes survive. One tape contains Warren's 'life story', another two are of 'yarns' relating to adventures he had. The fourth tape contains music and songs performed by Warren which demonstrate the self-confidence he possessed, if lack of musical ability. (See Appendices F, G, H for full transcripts of tapes 1, 2 and 3). The tapes are quite brief, the longest being of about 25 minutes duration.

Like his parents before him, Warren eked out a basic existence undertaking hard, peripatetic work to feed his family. Resembling numerous other self-taught artists across the world, he approached his art-making using whatever was on hand. Despite there being almost no biographical detail of his life Warren's personal history was rich in suggestive detail, as evidenced in his artworks. For that reason, the tapes recounting his life and related stories important to him, are valuable because they provide a version of his life that Warren himself wished told.¹²

There was no discussion on the subject matter or content of his works let alone any mention of why or how he painted. Alan Warren recalls that his father would sometimes talk about a painting he was working on and ask Alan's opinion of it.¹³ Otherwise art just wasn't discussed. While this might seem unusual for someone now remembered for his paintings, it is important to consider this approach in the context of the sort of life Warren led during his 91 years. Though a consummate painter, he knew almost nothing of art or artists and had no knowledge of the art world itself before his discovery. His experiences after his introduction to, and brief involvement in, the art scene portrayed

him more as an oddity than as an accepted member of that scene. Like Henri Rousseau (1844-1910) in Paris a century before, Warren chose not to comment on his art, the one activity in his life that alone led to him becoming quite well known to the Australian artworld and public for a short period. Otherwise, he would likely have remained anonymous to all but his own community around Trunkey Creek. In Chapter 4 I discuss the approach taken by many self-taught artists towards being *considered* an artist. Warren regarded himself as simply a working man and to him that meant hard physical work and not being an artist. Warren didn't consider artists to be 'workers'. He couldn't conceive of the 'job' of artist, let alone being able to do it full-time. The artworld was something quite separate from the reality of life as he knew it. Until his art was discovered in 1971 Warren had no idea of how he might show his work outside his family and a few other people in his neighbourhood. Whether he actually wanted to share his art beyond this close circle is unknown but once he was told his work was special and worth showing at a Sydney gallery, Warren embraced the opportunity.¹⁴ He didn't seem to approach it as an opportunity to gain acceptance as an artist, something he would have considered both unlikely and unimportant. Even in his correspondence with the gallerist, Rudy Komon, he doesn't talk about his art as such, only about how many pictures he needs to paint for showing and how much he earns from sales. To him art as a public commodity was not a vocation but an (unexpected) opportunity to make money.¹⁵ When sales through exhibitions arranged by Komon and Dixon came to an end in 1973, Warren responded by opening a 'gallery' of his own in Trunkey Creek from which he sold paintings to travellers passing through the township. Yet, like his painting, he makes no mention of the gallery in the tape recording. It seems to have been to some extent inconsequential in Warren's mind though he does mention it in

correspondence with Komon of 6 January 1974 (see Chapter 1.4 below). Komon was part of a world quite foreign to Warren, a world that had inserted itself into his 'normal' life in 1971. To him it was an 'add on' rather than an integral part of his being; something he needed to express yet still on the periphery of his tangible day-to-day reality. This is not to suggest that Warren was dismissive of his art. More, perhaps, that in recording his life he was telling people what he thought they would want to know about him. By the time he decided to make the tape, when he was already in his late 80s, he may well have thought it was self-evident that he was an artist – what more could he say about that? Whereas the life he had lived was something that few knew anything about. Not being a reader of books, which might have provided some guidance, Warren's ideas of what a biography or autobiography consisted of appear to have been simply a collection of anecdotes about one's life. His art was fundamentally anecdotal: tapes, like art, were vehicles for recording stories. So why talk about art any more than talk about making a tape recording? I think it is for this reason that Warren appears less concerned about his art than his many other jobs when recounting his life's adventures. Art was something he did seriously after he had ceased full time work which, through the luck of meeting a member of the artworld, gave his final years a purpose he had never anticipated.

In addition to the cassette tapes, two handwritten pages by Warren titled 'This is a Summary of my life' are held by Alan Warren (Fig. 1).

This is a Summary of
my life.
from my School Day I started
Shearing at 12. blades was all
the go. about 94. this was the year
of the big Strike
Shore for Jacky Dent at Hoimes
Station. Started machine
shearing for otway falkner at
Widgee War 2,500 Stud Rams
at Two for one grade 3 mile a doant
chozue 300 3 mid through up the showay
wan Cow Cokking, went broke
Went rabbit trapping on glaidell
joined up in Australia light Hoss
got Discharge went to Jifford
in Sussy England got a job on
a small farm.
Came back to a ussay. got a job
Tramway. Show Harours, for Mrs
Span Cow llay. Went into
Cattle Dealing. went broke
Sold out. Came to Jeantay
Came to Jeantay in 1926

got married in 1927, took up land
on the Karrah went sheep farm-
ing for 12 years, went broke.
Came back to Jeantay town & built
a home for wife & four children.
worked around Jeantay, distric-
doing hod jobs. joined the A.M.F. in
1939. Stayed in the army got discharge
1943. went to work Railway 5 yrs.
Came back to Jeantay. Started
new home in present home.
Went away to do shearing in
The Karrah district in 1953
myself & 2 sons stayed away for
12 months. meet my present
wife Alma Green got married
in November 1953. Came back to
Jeantay in 1954, took mail
Contract, ~~for~~ run it for 9 years
then retired taking up painting

Fig. 1. Selby Warren, handwritten *This is a Summary of my life*. Property of Alan Warren

The following transcript of these two pages is presented in order firstly to illustrate, in his own words, what Warren considered worth recording concerning the life he had led. The original document contains the words: 'then retired taking up painting' which is the only found recorded mention of his art made by Warren (apart from in a few of his letters to Komon). Secondly, the transcript demonstrates that Warren's education was scant ¹⁶ and he experienced difficulties expressing himself in writing as evidenced from the writing, spelling and grammar displayed in the hand-written 'summary'.

'This is a summary of my life.

from my School Day I started shearing at 12. blades was all the go about 94.

This was the year of the big Strike. ¹⁷ Shore for Jacky Dent at Ho.... Station.

Started machine shearing for otway Falkner at Widgee War 2,500 Stud Rams at

two for one made quite a desnt Cheque 60 quid ¹⁸ through up the shearing wen
cow cocking went broke.

Went rabbit trapping on glenidell Joined up in Australian light horse got
Discharge Went to gildford in Surrey England got a job on a small farm. Came
back to aussey. got a job training Show Horses for Mrs Stan Crellan Went into
Cattle Dealing. Went broke sold out. Came to Trunkey in 1926 got married in
1927. took up land on the Currah went sheep farming for 12 years. Went broke.
Come back to Trunkey town & built a home for wife & four Children. worked
around Trunkey districe doing hod Jobs. Joined the A.M.F. in 1939. Stayed in the
army got discharge 1943. Went to work Railway 5 year. Came back to Trunkey.
Started new home in present home. Went away to do fencing in the Narrawa
district in 1953 myself & two sons stayed away for 12 months. Meet my present
wife Alma Green got married in November 1953. Come back to Trunkey in 1954.
took mail contract. run it for 9 years then retired tooking up painting'

Despite his lack of schooling, Warren appears not to have been intellectually defensive
and incurious as can be the case with some people who have missed out on a
comprehensive education.

Both his written 'Summary' and especially the audio tapes provide an insight into the
sort of life Warren led and also into his attitude towards the difficulties such a life
caused him and his family. Warren was born into a poor, uneducated family which
scraped together a living as best it could. Hardship continued for him and his own
children and, despite what must have been a number of disappointments, his pragmatic

approach apparently overcame a temptation to complain. Warren's attitude is well summed up in the common Australian phrase 'she'll be right, mate' which reflects a general optimism (or, occasionally, resignation,) when a problem is being faced no matter its magnitude.

As autobiographies go, Warren's recorded 'life story' is not a structured history of a life but a grouping of reminiscences. Tapes 2 and 3 continue in a similar, loosely connected vein and tell of seemingly unrelated events he experienced. The yarn was part of his normal style of talking and his recorded reminiscences are unlike the 'traditional' approach to an autobiography in that they are really an all-encompassing history of his society rather than particularly about him. He is recounting stories that not just he but a whole community had experienced.

Warren commences the recording with the words: 'This is the life history of Selby Warren. Now...uh...90 years of age...'.¹⁹ Selby Edward Elijah Warren was born on 30 November 1887, the ninth of eleven children. His birthplace was the town of Young (see Appendix B)²⁰ which lies about 360 kilometres (224 miles) from Sydney. Young was originally known as Lambing Flat, a name still used for the town at the time of Warren's birth even though it had been renamed Young in late 1861. Lambing Flat is remembered today as the centre of anti-Chinese riots on its goldfields. European diggers were incensed by the Chinese and their apparent wasting of water when extracting gold. The most serious riot occurred in July 1861 when about a thousand Europeans attacked the Chinese miners. About 250 Chinese were seriously injured and it was to help erase the memory of this infamous event that led to the name Lambing Flat

being changed to Young, after the then Governor of the colony of New South Wales, Sir John Young (1807-1876).²¹ By 1887 Young was still the sort of place it had been when called Lambing Flat with many of buildings constructed of wood, tree-bark and corrugated iron.²² A few more substantial buildings existed though, one of them a seminary, St. Joseph's House. Warren completed a picture of it in coloured pencil and crayon in about 1968, *St Joseph House Young* (Fig. 2), the only known subject in Young that he painted.²³

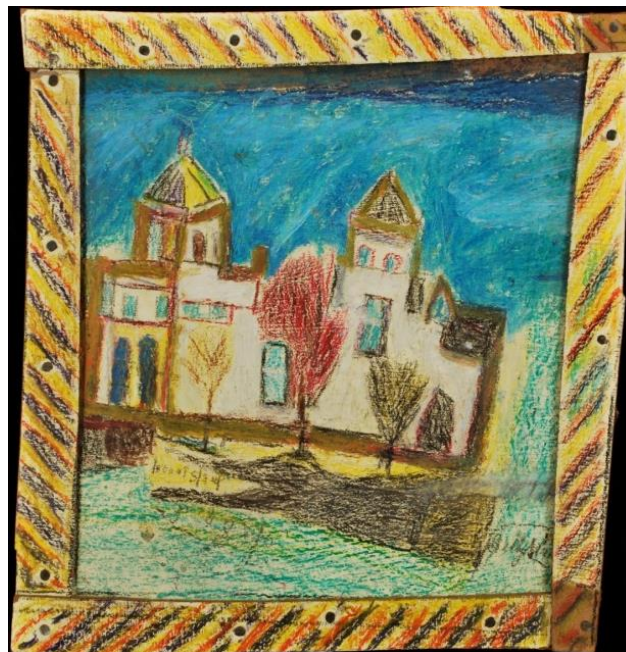


Fig. 2. Selby Warren, *St Joseph House Young*, c. 1968 [SW092]

Warren was born at a midwife's home in Young and with his mother, Louise, remained in the town for twelve months before returning to the family home on Diamond Creek close to Binda.²⁴ Binda, which is on the road between the large centres of Bathurst and Goulburn in New South Wales, is closer to both those towns than to Young and it is possible Young was chosen because the Warrens had friends living there.²⁵ The

Warrens had earlier lived in the township of Bigga, also on the Bathurst to Goulburn road about 38 km (24 miles) south of Binda.

By the time he was about nine years of age Warren started general labouring work on properties and in shearing sheds, usually with his father, Edward, who was a casual labourer and shearer. A notable incident occurred at this time. As Warren tells it, he and his father were labouring near Mudgee in the mid-West of New South Wales '....up on a place called Badger's Station, on Marthaguy and we was workin' there...., when the Governors broke out, Joe and Jimmy Governor. They was...ah...they was on the Breelong Creek. There was a black's camp there....' The 'Breelong Blacks' as they became known, led by Jimmy Governor and including his brother Joe and Jacky Underwood, attacked John Mawbey and his family on their large property called 'Breelong' through which the Breelong Creek flowed. Governor had sometimes worked for the Mawbeys as did his wife, Ethel, who Warren describes as 'a gin' (that is an aboriginal woman). Ethel was employed as a washerwoman on the property when she was apparently insulted by Mrs Mawbey or a governess, Ellen Kerz, and, as Warren recounts, 'she cried to Jimmy about it.... So one mornin' they went down with a tommyhawk each (Jimmy and his brother, Joe) and they killed all the Mawbeys, except one little weeny fella that crawled under the bed.' Jimmy Governor was captured in late 1900 after a period of several months in which he and others of his tribe had murdered nine adults and children, including the Mawbeys, maimed a number of others and raped a teenage girl. Governor was hanged in 1901. Jimmy Governor's wife was in fact European and Warren's description of her as a 'black gin' is incorrect. Governor, himself was red-headed and of mixed-race. The Australian novelist Thomas Keneally's book *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* ²⁶ is based

on the story of Jimmy Governor and provides a sympathetic view of the reasons driving his homicidal actions. Warren's account of the episode is somewhat colourful and less conciliatory concerning the Governor's actions. His version would have been based on hearsay which in turn fed on the often sensational contemporary reporting of events.²⁷

The Age newspaper in Melbourne, for example, reported as follows on 25 July 1900:

'Sydney, Tuesday: The whole of the Great West is up in arms, owing to the shocking outrages that have been committed by aborigines. Nobody feels safe, and all are wondering who will be the next to fall victims to the blacks....There is a large sprinkling of blacks in the district every man of whom is distrusted...'²⁸

In 1968 Warren painted *The Breealong Blacks* (Fig. 3), which was his version of the event showing a European man being attacked by four weapon-wielding aborigines. Presumably these figures represent John Mawbey, Jimmy Governor, Joe Governor, Jacky Underwood and another aborigine and the picture has written on the back: 'Jimmy. Jacky'.



Fig.3. Selby Warren, *The Breealong Blacks*, c. 1968 [SW002]

Warren continued working with his father until 1905 when, at eighteen years of age, he and his younger brother, Sandy (Alexander, born in 1892), teamed up and left home. They travelled together around the district working in manual jobs on and off for four years. Warren continued this pattern of irregular, basic manual work for most of the rest of his working life.

Warren mentions living at that time 'down on the Fish River where Ben Hall and Ben (sic) Gardiner used to camp out occasionally, down at Fogg's Hut'. The bushrangers Ben Hall (1837-1865) and Frank Gardiner (real name Francis Christie, 1829-1903) did indeed camp at Fogg's Hut near Bigga and Gardiner was briefly captured there by troopers in 1861 though escaped. Hall was killed in 1865 and Gardiner left Australia for America in 1875 where he lived until his death in 1903 probably in San Francisco. Bushrangers²⁹ were active before Warren's birth, yet these two and other bushrangers feature in several of his paintings (see Chapter 2.2) and played an important part in Australian bush society. Bushrangers were celebrities at the turn of the century and were generally well liked by the people of the bush. Their exploits were retold and became part of the folklore of the bush. Warren claimed to have had a family connection with Ben Hall and often recounted the story of his father's meeting with Ben Hall at Tuena, a goldmining settlement and the next town from Trunkey Creek on the road south to Goulburn.

Whether apocryphal or not, the story has been recounted by father to son for four generations of the Warren family with Warren's surviving son, Alan, telling the story to the author in 2010.³⁰ It is worth recording here as it demonstrates the near veneration in which bushrangers were (and, to an extent, continue to be) held by ordinary bush folk

in Australia. It also speaks to Warren's motivation and methodologies in his artmaking. The influence on him of family stories and of other tales he was told, whether completely true or not, was profound as he grew up in a basic and unpretentious bush environment. These narratives both entertained and, I think, can be seen as having provided a form of guidance to their audiences. Though not morality tales many of these yarns did afford the listener approaches to navigating some of the unexpected or complicated aspects of their lives. Warren's paintings were anecdotal and expressed his versions of the stories he had absorbed over a lifetime. As memory paintings they encompassed exaggeration in the unrepressed retelling of events just as did his vocal yarn-telling in the local pub.³¹

The Warren family story about Ben Hall is that Warren's father, Edward, when twelve or thirteen years of age (in about 1863), was minding a small herd of cattle in the hills above Tuena, which was not very far from Bigga,³² where the Warrens lived at the time. He was approached by a well-presented young man wearing a trooper's jacket and riding a handsome horse. The rider asked the young Edward if he would go down to the Tuena general store and buy him a bullet mould while he minded the cattle. The trusting Edward was given some money for the purchase by the stranger and rode off down the hill to the store. Upon arriving he was asked by the owner what size bullet mould he wanted. Not knowing, Edward bought two moulds and returned to the stranger who had looked after his cattle as promised. Thanking Edward the man gave him the mould he didn't require and, as he turned on his horse to leave flipped a gold half-sovereign coin to Edward saying 'you don't know who I am do you son?' Edward replied 'no sir' and as he trotted off the stranger said 'I'm Ben Hall'.

When he returned home Edward told his father of the meeting and gave him the coin and bullet mould. Despite their poverty, rather than return or sell the mould or spend the half-sovereign both items were kept by the family and are in Alan Warren's possession today. That the two relics of the meeting have remained with the family adds some veracity to the story. As important, I believe, is that retaining these two items demonstrates the awe in which Ben Hall was held by the Warrens and other ordinary people of the time. For more than 150 years four generations of the Warren family have, chosen to keep the gold coin and a bullet mould (Fig. 4), despite their financial value, because they believe them to be connected to the bushranger Ben Hall.



Fig. 4. Left: Gold Half-Sovereign, Sydney Mint, dated 1856. Right: Lead bullet mould (wooden handles have been lost), c.1860. Both supposedly given to Warren's father by the bushranger, Ben Hall. Photographs: author.

In Warren's taped rendition of his life story we are told that he and his brother, Sandy, returned home and '....a few years after, when we got older, I decided then that I'd go shearin'. He kept to itinerant shearing for about twenty years, initially with blades and later with mechanical shears.

A major event impacting directly on Warren and other shearers and with bush society generally had its genesis with the 1891 Shearers' Strike. Centred around Barcaldine in

Queensland during an economic depression in the 1890s shearers went on strike in response to pastoralists' reaction to falling wool prices by installing mechanised shearing and reducing shearers' wages. The strike spread to New South Wales and, with the accompanying economic woes, directly affected Warren's father and other family members. The eventual failure of the strike broke worker militancy but led to the formation of a labour political movement representing the interests of working people. Though Warren was only four years old when the Shearers' Strike began, its effect on life in the bush had an enduring impact across the eastern states of colonial Australia. Wool was Australia's major export and fluctuations in prices caused by drought and human interventions had a direct impact on shearers and their families for many decades. The political consequence of the founding of the Australian Labor Party also played a part in Warren's life. Warren and many others directly or indirectly affected by the long term aftermath of the Shearer's Strike supported the Australian Labor Party.³³ Just as the 'renegade' bushrangers struck a chord with country people, so too did a political movement which stood up for workers and displayed an anti-establishment approach to 'the bosses' and authority in general.

Warren had first taken up blade shearing at about the age of twelve and became adept as a shearer. But later, when working with Sandy, he found the constant travel lost its appeal and so the two brothers chose rabbiting as their next venture. As Warren says 'there was thousands of rabbits. It was no trouble to get...ah...get your hundred pair of rabbits. In fact, I caught a hundred and three pair of rabbits in one night and I got seven pence a pair for them'. He adds with his general lack of modesty 'I think I became one of the greatest rabbiters in New South Wales at that period'. Rabbiting was

important in Warren's life and a poem he wrote on the subject is quoted in full in an article on him which appeared in *The Western Advocate* dated 31 December 1971.³⁴

The long poem which, though never written down by Warren, had been memorised by him and includes the following lines which display Warren's growing disillusionment with the work of rabbit trapping:

I've heard the rabbits squealing, and the rattle of the trap;

I've trapped along the river banks, and upon the rolling plain;

I've trapped among the gilgai holes,³⁵ but never will again.

I hope the buyers don't sleep sound – their hens refuse to lay,

Through cutting of the prices and trapper's daily pay.

Some people say it's easy work – I'll deny that with a curse,

There is not any harder by gum – there can't be worse'.

Rabbit plagues were common in eastern Australia from the 1870s. Rabbits were caught in traps or poisoned in their thousands before the introduction of the myxomatosis virus in 1950.³⁶ Warren spent several years on and off as a rabbitier, being paid under a government eradication scheme by the number of rabbit pelts he collected. He used traps and 'thistle bait', a dangerous homemade concoction of strychnine and black thistle root, to kill the animals.³⁷

After a couple of years, Warren stopped rabbiting: '.... it faded out, like all other things that was fairly good, and I decided then that there was no more rabbits worthwhile.... I decided then to go onto the railway and work on the railway for a few years. I worked on the duplication between Galong and Wagga'. In addition to the track duplication to Wagga a branch line was constructed from Galong to the town of Boorowa and Warren worked on this for more than three years. He notes in his taped 'life story' that Boorowa

was 'a great old town' and that 'if you wasn't a Roman Catholic....there was no time for you in Boorowa'. Local pastoralists were assigned ex-convicts and ticket-of-leave men to work their properties in the mid-1800s. A majority of them were Irish political prisoners or others who escaped the potato famines in Ireland. As they worked out their penal terms they set up businesses and took up land. They were Roman Catholics and their influence on the township was profound. Today a tourist walk around the township called the Shamrock Trail takes the visitor past chapels and churches and many other properties owned by the Roman Catholic Church. One of these had been Webb and Crego's Dynamite Store which was held up by Ben Hall in 1863, about the year he is said to have met Warren's father, Edward, at Tuena.³⁸

When he worked on the Boorowa railway line Warren describes a not unusual sight in country towns of the early 1900s: 'And there used to be a mail coach them times, run through Boorowa, and it was run on the same principles as the old Cobb & Co coach. They had three horses and a man up on top to hold 'em and he was a capable man with the reins. And when they got everything ready with the coach post office, a policeman would be standin' there watchin' the crowd. It was quite a moment in the town when the coach came in and the coach left and he'd say "All aboard!", crack the whip and away'd go the horses and it was sixteen mile to the railway and those horses used to pretty near go at a hand gallop all the way to the railway line. That's where the post office was and that's where they sort the mails'.



Fig. 5. Selby Warren, *On the Road. Cob (sic) & Co*, (detail), [SW305]

Warren was here describing a form of transport which had been commonplace in his childhood but had disappeared from country roads around Australia by the time he made the tape. At the end of the First World War, most mail coaches and their like were steadily replaced by rail and trucks. Warren painted several pictures of coaches and other forms of early horse- or ox-drawn transport which, like many others of his subjects, represented times past that remained vivid in his memories.



Fig. 6. Selby Warren, *On the Road to Nowhere*, (detail), [SW103]

The paintings, *On the Road Cob & Co*, (Fig. 5) and *On the Road to Nowhere*, (Fig. 6), provide examples of his recollections of early transport he had known as a child and young man. *On the Road Cob & Co* is of a Cobb and Co coach. Warren painted several

pictures of such coaches and often included them to illustrate a poem or ballad in which they were mentioned. They invariably have the misspelled 'Cob and Co' painted on the coaches (the correct spelling was 'Cobb'). This painting may well refer to a poem or ballad though the full title written on the work is undecipherable. The strange rendition of the coach's four wheels displays the difficulties Warren, and many other self-taught artists, had with linear perspective which is discussed further in Chapter 3. *On the Road to Nowhere* shows at left a two-wheeled cart drawn by a single horse and to the right a 'hack bus' pulled by two-horses transporting several people and the driver.

When his railway work ended Warren returned to rabbiting: 'Well, from there I decided then to get more of a permanent job. I went down onto a place called Geurie down below Wellington and I got in there with two or three chaps that I knew and they was not doin' too bad catchin' rabbits. I palled up ³⁹ with them and I sent word to me brother (Sandy) then to come and join me'. This 'permanent job' didn't last long. Warren continues: 'That was in 1914 when the war broke out, so I decided to join up and we went down to Warren.... We went into camp at Liverpool and they was calling for men for the Light Horse. I was a good horseman so I thought, I said to me mates I said "I think I'll join up in the Light Horse".... Well, they wanted men to take transports and tents across to...ah...to the Middle East where they had a camp at Tel-El-Kebir in Cairo. And I went with a couple of transports over and back, and that, and...ah...but I never went overseas, only with those transports. I never was in the firing line or anything like that.'

Despite his claim to have joined the Light Horse Brigade, no military records can be found confirming that the then twenty-seven-year-old Warren enlisted in any Australian Infantry Force in 1914. Civilians were, however, involved in taking remounts to the Light Horse in Egypt and Warren may have been engaged in this role due to his high level horsemanship. In the handwritten 'Summary of My Life' discussed above Warren states: "Joined up in Australia light horse got Discharge Went to Guildford in Surrey England got a job on a small farm. Came back to Aussey". It is quite possible that Warren was discharged overseas from civilian-military duties and sent to Guildford working for a few months as a farm labourer prior to his return to Australia but again this cannot be verified.

A further uncertainty of the Warren family's veracity relating to the First World War is the supposed death of Warren's brother Jack (John Alexander, born 1881) in action in France. Records do exist of Jack's enlistment and service overseas ⁴⁰ but none of his death. However, a John Alexander Warren born 1881 appears in records as someone who was arrested in 1918 in New South Wales for 'theft of boots and cloth', in 1923 for 'carnal knowledge of a fourteen year old girl' and in 1924 for 'failing to support children'. This Jack Warren spent several years in prison with hard labour for his crimes. Perhaps the family story of Jack's death was invented to protect the family name or because the family rejected him due to his unsociable activities. Similarly it is possible that his brother Selby's story of transporting horses and equipment to Egypt for the Light Horse Brigade during the War was a fiction but his son, Alan, is convinced his father went to war in 1914 and leaves the question of his involvement an open one. A letter dated 4 January 1943 (Fig. 7) in reply to a letter Warren must have written to the Minister for Air

enquiring about rates of allowances paid to members of the forces, addresses Warren as 'N.39183, Trooper S. E. E. Warren, Brookvale Light Horse, Brookvale; N.S.W.' - a trooper with the Australian Light Horse – the very regiment he claimed to have joined in 1914. This 1943 letter does not otherwise assist in clarifying the ambiguities surrounding Warren's military service.

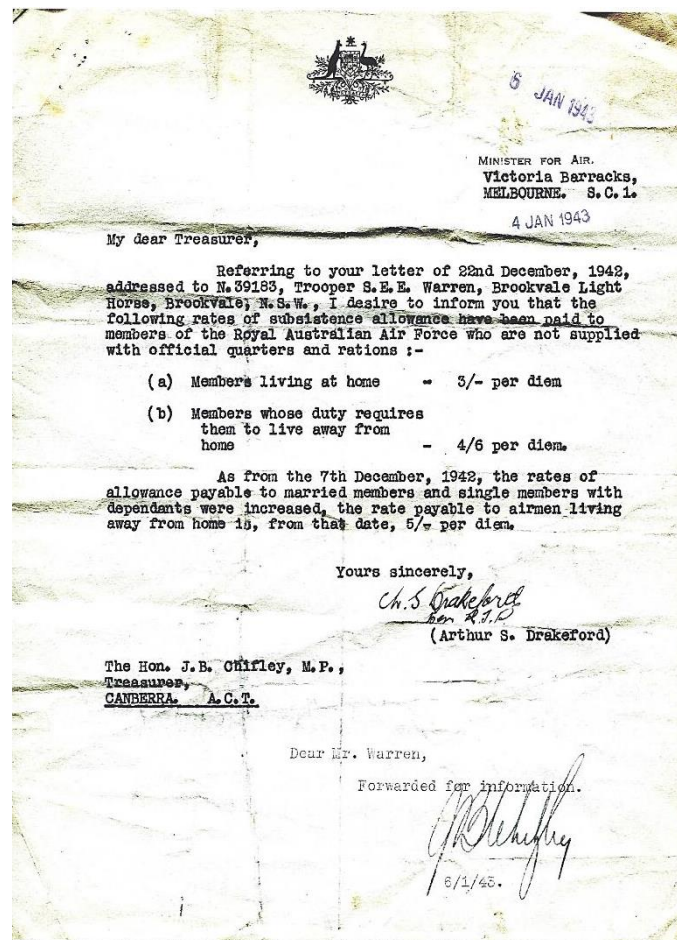


Fig. 7. Letter dated 4 January 1943 concerning Warren from the Minister for Air.

Property of the Warren family

Despite the uncertainty Warren painted several pictures of subjects relating to the First World War. For example *Missing in Action* (Fig. 8) (which has written on the back '1914 War 4th August) was most likely based on a later magazine illustration relating to the

War rather than on anything Warren had experienced himself. *Grave of the Unknown Soldier* (Fig. 9) is the earliest known painting by Warren and one which his son, Alan, advises 'he always had up on the wall'. It may be involved with his recollections of ANZAC Day celebrations ⁴¹ held on the 25th of April in his own township of Trunkey Creek or in a nearby larger centre like Blayney or Bathurst. *Rose of No-man's Land* (Fig. 10) is a portrait of a forbidding-looking uniformed and masculine First World War nursing sister. Like *Missing in Action* It was probably based on a picture he saw of the subject in a newspaper or magazine article.



Fig. 8. Selby Warren, *Missing in Action*, c. 1970 [SW159]

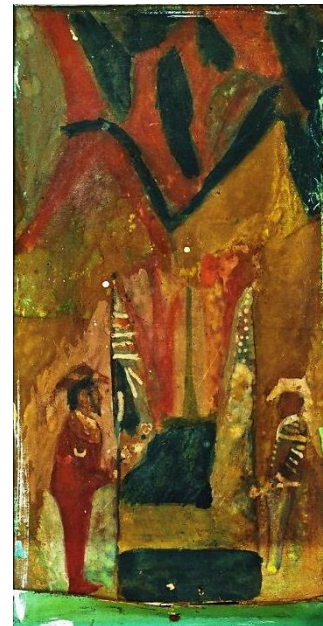


Fig. 9. Selby Warren, *Grave of the Unknown Soldier*, 1960 [SW001]



Fig. 10. Selby Warren, *Rose of No-Man's Land*, c. 1971 [SW283]

After the War, Warren took up a parcel of land at McAllister, near Crookwell in New South Wales. At this stage he had almost no money and was apparently not granted land under the Soldier Settlement Scheme introduced after The First World War ⁴² (which supports the view that he was a considered to be a civilian during the War). The land may have been Commonwealth land that could be leased for a peppercorn rent after the War. When his brother Sandy married in 1918 Warren transferred the lease to him.

Having handed over his property in McAllister, Warren reports that he 'was startin' to grow feathers that didn't belong to me for some reason ⁴³ so I went away. I was a single man at the time. I went to a little place called Trunkey Creek.... And the rabbits and the drought and the Depression years set in. I sold wool for ten pence a pound. And I was married. I got married to a very fine lady who lived in Trunkey, I was very lucky to get such a good woman. Well, I settled down and I'm still at Trunkey Creek and today I've got two very fine men and two very fine women that...I...ah...that they still live

around and I see them every day, the two of them. And I intend to stay here for the rest of me life'. The two of his children Warren mentions seeing every day lived in Trunkey Creek being his daughter, Joyce, and son, Alan. Joyce lived in *Alma House* which had been the old Assayer's Office in the gold rush days. Warren painted several pictures of it (see Fig. 11, for example). This picture, like *Saint Joseph House Young*, (Fig. 2), is set in a decorated homemade frame of a kind Warren used on numerous of his paintings, especially those completed before he received contemporary art materials from Dixon in 1971.

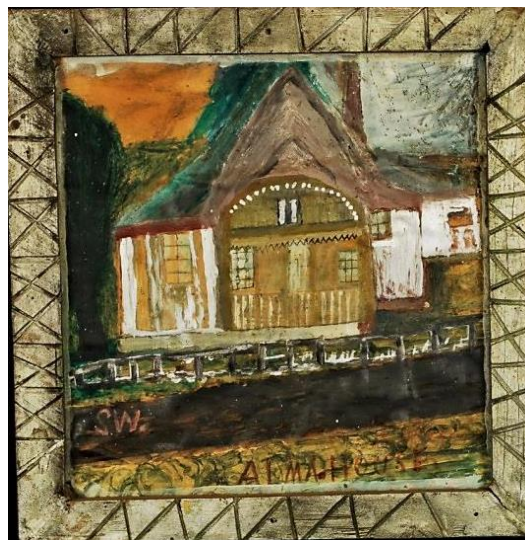


Fig.11. Selby Warren, *Alma House Trunkey Creek*, c. 1969 [SW081]

Joyce died in 2000. Her brother, Alan, the youngest of the siblings, is now in his late 70s and still lives in the village. Warren's other daughter and son lived in the district near Crookwell: Thelma died in 2006 and Keith in 2009.

Warren first came to Trunkey Creek in 1926 where he leased acreage near Curragh, about 16 km southwest of the township near the Abercrombie River. Both the 1930 and 1936 Electoral Rolls list Warren as 'grazier, "The Curragh", Trunkey Creek'. He married his

first wife, Jessie in 1927 (her name is spelt 'Jessie' on the marriage certificate and 'Jessy' on her gravestone. Her son, Alan, confirmed to me that the spelling on the gravestone was a mistake made by his father when ordering the stone). Though based in Trunkey Creek he travelled around mid-Western New South Wales working. Warren joined the Army's Volunteer Defence Corps on 4 June 1942 and was with the unit for a period of eleven months. ⁴⁴

After this short stint Warren worked at the Bathurst Munitions Factory, one of several small satellite factories of the Lithgow Small Arms Factory. The Bathurst factory was closed in December 1945 so Warren re-joined the railways this time based in Bathurst. He cycled there from Trunkey Creek staying with friends in Bathurst during the week and returning home each weekend. ⁴⁵

Warren and Jessie had five children though the first, Thora, who was born in 1927 lived only eleven days. The poverty of the Warren family is reflected in the grave marker Warren handmade for the baby using a piece of slate from a child's school slate-board (Fig. 12). Either intentionally or not, Warren's choice of material is incredibly poetic and poignant. Jessie Warren died on 12 May 1950 and the slate, though initially propped at the head of a now unmarked grave, was attached to Jessie's professionally made headstone.

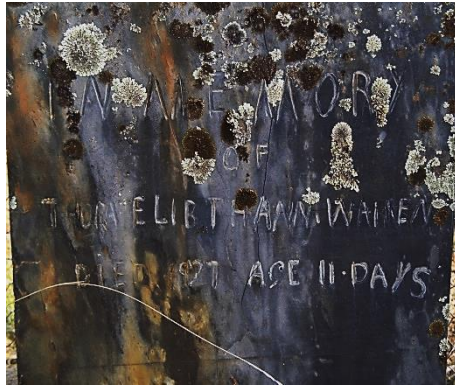


Fig. 12. Thora Warren's grave marker. The following words were roughly scratched into the slate by her father: 'IN MEMORY OF THORA ELIBTH ANN WARREN DIED 1927 AGE 11 DAYS'. Photograph by the author.

After Jessie's death Warren met Alma Sarah Green (1912-1983) two years later while working as a fencer for a George Kensit who owned the property 'Woodford' at Narrawa. Warren and Alma married in November 1953, in the first wedding to be held in a new church at Narrawa.⁴⁶ Alma was twenty-five years younger than Warren and they had no children together.⁴⁷ The couple returned to Trunkey Creek in 1954 and Warren built his home, 'Hill 90', at this time. He remained based in the village until his death in 1979. Alma lived on at Hill 90 until she died in 1983 and soon afterwards the house was sold by the family.

1.2 The discovery of Selby Warren

It was at Warren's home, Hill 90, that, in June 1971, Garth Dixon, a lecturer in Art at Bathurst's Mitchell College,⁴⁸ first saw the artist's paintings. Warren's discovery as an artist by Dixon mirrors the experience of other self-taught artists around the world. Though the specific details of each 'discovery narrative' differ, in general, all seem to have in common being 'found' by someone associated with the professional artworld who was able to recognise the merit of the artist's work and who had appropriate connections able to promote that work (and its producer).

In early 2011 the author recorded Dixon's recollections of his discovery of Warren in 1971 (see Appendix I). After transcribing the conversation a copy was given to Warren's son, Alan, who said Dixon's version of the events are 'pretty right'⁴⁹ though Alan, who was thirty-two at the time, was away from Trunkey Creek working and so heard of his father's first meeting with Dixon months after the event. Subsequent research has shown Dixon's account of the events was embellished here and there and his son, Peter Dixon, has advised the author that his father did sometimes 'improve' stories he told.

Dixon's story is that he and a friend, Karl Schaerf, were returning to Bathurst from a fishing trip when they stopped off at The Black Stump Hotel in Trunkey Creek. They noticed a painting behind the bar, (possibly *The Black Stump Hotel*, Fig. 13⁵⁰) and enquired who the artist was. Dixon later visited Warren at 'Hill 90', which is about 500 metres from the pub, and was amazed to find it full of his paintings.



Fig. 13. Selby Warren, *The Black Stump Hotel*, c. 1968 [SW126]



Fig. 14. The Black Stump Hotel, 2015.
Photograph by author

Warren's Trunkey Creek contemporaries viewed the fact that he spent much of his time creating art as a strange and peculiar thing for him to be doing. Upon asking the publican the identity of the person who had painted the picture in the hotel he was told 'It was done by a silly old bugger who lives halfway up the hill'.⁵¹ Others added comments including: 'when he does come in (to the hotel), there's always a lot of fun, arguments and all that. You never know what he's up to... he's very secretive... won't let people into his place. They only want to make fun of his pictures', and, 'He spends all day doing kids' things ⁵² like painting, carving sticks to look like people, making jewellery with copper wire and pebbles out of the river'. Another view was, 'Tells you one thing one day, something else the next. Nobody understands him'. The publican also lamented that 'He doesn't drink much,' but added 'He's always happy...sings real well...writes his own poetry and plays an old violin'. Dixon summarised the experience: 'Two things were clear: Selby aroused strong emotions and all the patrons of the Black Stump agreed that nobody liked his pictures'.

Something not mentioned by Warren in his taped memoir was his orofacial cleft (hare-lip). Dixon naturally noticed this as soon as they met and described Warren on their first meeting as 'a snowy haired man of less than average height. His face was disfigured by a severely obvious hare lip'. A photograph of Warren by Dixon clearly shows his condition (Fig. 15). As a son of a poor bush labourer this was not something his parents could have afforded to have medically rectified and Warren himself had other priorities for the limited money he made during his lifetime.

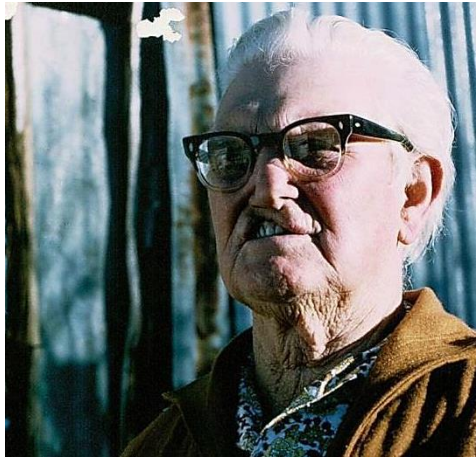


Fig. 15. Photograph of Warren taken by Garth Dixon in 1971

Upon arriving at Warren's house Dixon was 'overwhelmed by the sight. Every space was filled with pictures, from floor to ceiling, three or four deep and even *on* a ceiling'. Warren had been painting in volume since semi-retirement in 1963. So the large number of works which 'overwhelmed' Dixon were painted during the eight year period up to June 1971. Before 1963 Warren had painted only a few works which were probably also amongst the collection crowding the house.

As an artworld insider, Dixon's involvement with Warren was essential in the recognition the artist received and, appreciating the quality of his work, Dixon soon organised for an important contact of his, the Sydney gallerist Rudy Komon,⁵³ to visit and view Warren's works. After seeing his paintings and despite his gallery being booked out for the following two years, Komon wanted to exhibit Warren as soon as possible, in part because the ever pragmatic Komon thought that at eighty-four years of age Warren might die before his work could be shown.⁵⁴ Exhibitions followed in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane and, for a while, Warren was pursued by the media and artworld members alike. As Dixon recalls: 'Selby's success at the Rudy Komon exhibition was remarkable. He attracted wide media attention. He had been shown at one of Sydney's most

prestigious galleries, appeared on national television and had given numerous interviews. Selby was interesting to the public as much for his personality as for his art. He was as comfortable performing before any interviewer, with or without a camera, as he was holding forth at the bar of the Black Stump'. Dixon added: 'Here was an archetypal Australian bushman recalling the stagecoach and bushranging days - a strong, personality telling his story with originality, and a good deal of humour'.

Warren was asked in an interview what he most liked about painting. He answered 'the publicity'. What might be considered a flippant reply was, I believe, more a statement of Warren's enjoyment of the positive *attention* he was receiving from the print media and members of the artworld, which was completely new to him. His belief in his art and in himself was being noticed and Warren seemed to enjoy the unexpected experience.

Komon, rarely missing an opportunity to publicise himself and his artists, recognised that Warren and the village of Trunkey Creek might be appealing subjects for a Film Australia project, and contacted veteran documentary maker Malcolm Otton (1917 - ?) who expressed an interest and turned up in Trunkey to meet Warren and to discuss the project with Dixon. Unfortunately the proposed Warren documentary was cancelled by Film Australia before any footage was taken due to budgetary constraints. Interestingly, Otton, once he had retired from film production, began painting in a 'naïve' style reminiscent of Warren's paintings which obviously had impressed him and encouraged his interest in painting.

As is invariably the case in a close-knit community like Trunkey Creek's the activity around Warren's home led to much speculation as to what he was up to. Warren was a

non-conservative in a particularly conservative society and had always been an obvious subject for the gossip that all small communities thrive on. In his long life he may have trodden on a few toes, which could account for some of the stories circulating about him. Rumours hinted at Warren having something of a 'wild past' and research uncovered the fact that Warren attended at least four court appearances: three concerning bankruptcies, and another for stealing and 'negligently branding' 10 sheep.⁵⁵ Warren's son, Alan, has said that he is also aware of 'quite a few other things' but would prefer to keep them to himself presumably to protect his father's memory.

As the first Komon exhibition approached, the Trunkey Creek locals, though excited that one of their own was gaining attention, still couldn't understand how anyone might find Warren's artwork interesting. As Dixon recalled 'the loyal patrons of the Black Stump differed widely in their assessment of Warren. They were united however in their conviction that the promotion of Selby was a huge conspiracy saying that it was a crying shame that those city blokes had made fun of an old bloke of eighty-five'. The perception expressed by his fellow Trunkey Creek residents of how Warren was being treated by Sydney art professionals has parallels with some views held on Picasso's 1908 dinner for the 'primitive' artist, Henri Rousseau. Picasso and the poet Guillaume Apollinaire (1880-1918) arranged a gathering of Parisian modernists to celebrate Rousseau. Amongst the dozens attending the 'Rousseau Banquet' were artists like Georges Braque (1882-1963), Juan Gris (1887-1927) and Marie Laurencin; Picasso and Rousseau's art dealer, Wilhelm Uhde (1874-1947) and Picasso's well-to-do American friends Gertrude Stein (1874-1946), her brother Leo (1872-1947) and Alice B. Toklas (1877-1967). Even the owner of the *Lapin Agile*, a favourite watering hole of the

modernists, Frédéric Gerard, attended with his infamously flatulent donkey companion, Lola. While Apollinaire and Rousseau took the event seriously many of the attendees considered Rousseau to be something of a joke, a view perhaps reinforced late in the night when he said to Picasso: "Actually, you and I are the two greatest painters; you in the Egyptian style, I in the modern genre."⁵⁶ Many of those partying called Rousseau 'le Douanier' (the Customs Officer) a derisive description of his job as a toll collector which stuck, and Stein and Toklas alleged⁵⁷ that the whole event was set up to mock Rousseau, who was too simple to get the joke.⁵⁸ Whether or not the 'Rousseau Banquet' was an unkind attempt to make fun of an aging (Rousseau was 64 at the time) and unusual artist is uncertain. Picasso, if he played along with the mockery, was in reality fascinated by Rousseau's work and, along with Matisse, owned works by him. That work proved to have a major impact on avant-garde art in the early 20th century. Warren's influence on Australian professional art in the 1970s did not even vaguely compete in scope with Rousseau's influence on the modernists and the feting of Warren by members of the Sydney art establishment, whilst nowhere near as effusive as that offered to Rousseau by Picasso, raised the same sorts of uncertainties as to the agenda behind such largesse. These uncertainties were particularly felt by Warren's Trunkey Creek cronies who, though quite willing to make fun of him themselves, took umbrage at the interest shown towards one of their own by a group of city folk who were considered by them to be outsiders and, therefore, dubious.

In February 1972 Warren had stated in an interview: "I've lived in the bush all me life. I've seen things that don't happen in Australia any more So when I took up painting I was able to put it all down".⁵⁹ This statement is, I think, significant in our understanding

of the artist. He had seen and experienced events over a period of more than eighty years which had, for reasons he didn't understand, become of interest to an artworld of which he had no knowledge. Members of that world had sought out people like Warren, who had recorded these earlier Australian times in paint, because they were seeking a connection with that simple, uncluttered past. Their interest in an earlier time in Australia was based partly on the modernist views of the time but also because a distinctly Australian culture was being actively sought, one untarnished by external influences (see Chapter 4). Works by an artist like Warren showed a time when 'things that don't happen in Australia any more' were commonplace. Warren recorded such events in an unpretentious and uninfluenced way. His paintings, along with those of other Australian self-taught artists, were just the sort the art establishment was looking for and so, for a brief time, Warren and his kind became a centre of their attention.

1.3 Warren on the public stage

Once his work was shown, Warren certainly gave every indication that he enjoyed the ensuing attention. He grew his hair down to his shoulders 'because he thought that was what artists did'.⁶⁰ In a television interview he gave during his first Sydney exhibition Warren said: 'Well, I didn't realise until somebody came that knew something about the game, in the form of a man called Mr. Dixon or Professor Dixon, and he said, "this is the greatest I ever looked at". He said, "it's wonderful". He said, "it's fantastic". So that started me on the, ah, art business - and here I am'.⁶¹

Within his Trunkey Creek community Warren was treated as an oddity; and tough old bush men like him just weren't expected to spend their spare time painting pictures.

The prevailing attitude was that such a pastime was more appropriate for women or children.⁶² Warren's art-making was the brunt of jokes and horseplay by the locals. Yet, as his paintings were being exhibited in Sydney in 1972, those same locals were concerned that Warren was being taken advantage of by city-slickers⁶³ and defended both him and his work whenever strangers came to the township. (Even today the Trunkey Creek locals are generally wary of strangers from the city who they view with a suspicious caution).⁶⁴ Despite their hesitancy about whether Warren was being used by Dixon and Komon, a contingent of Trunkey Creek residents showed their support by travelling down to Sydney for the opening of the first exhibition at the Komon Gallery in Sydney's trendy suburb of Woollahra in 1972.⁶⁵ One of them, observing the crowd making its way up the hill at sundown to the opening at the gallery, remarked: 'Look at them, will ya? Just like a mob o' chooks goin' in for a feed o' pollard.'⁶⁶

Warren believed his paintings would continue to be exhibited by Komon indefinitely and had difficulty understanding why they were shown only three times at exhibitions during 1972 and 1973. He neither understood the gallery scene nor the art market. Komon had in his stable some of the pre-eminent and established Australian artists of the time, including John Olsen (1928-), Fred Williams (1927-1982), Clifton Pugh (1924-1990), John Brack (1920-1999), Leonard French (1928-) and Robert Dickerson (1924-2015), who were individually demanding, commanded much higher prices and sold better than Warren.⁶⁷ With no appreciation of the time lag (and effort) involved in planning and presenting shows, Warren's expectation was that exhibitions would occur every few months and was disillusioned when these didn't materialise.⁶⁸

Warren's exhibitions in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane ⁶⁹ received a lot of press and media attention, much of which was orchestrated by the well-connected Komon. Warren was interviewed on ABC television's nightly news program, 'This Day Tonight' and also twice on ABC Radio in Sydney and Melbourne. One of those programs, now lost, saw Dr. C. ('Nugget') Coombes, later head of the Australian Treasury and then Chairman of the Australian Council for the Arts, interviewing Warren.⁷⁰ Printed media coverage in the cities first appeared in *The Sydney Morning Herald* (24 February 1972). Under the heading 'Patience Rewarded' in the Entertainment and Arts columns, the *Herald's* art critic, Donald Brook, wrote:

'At the Rudy Komon Gallery there is a pleasant octogenarian naive painter called Selby Warren, who demonstrates very clearly how conventional are many of the devices of figurative representation, and how odd it can be when different conventions are invoked without stylistic *restraint* by a person who has not looked or thought much about other people's art. I can't help thinking that the appreciation of work like this has a patronising tinge to it; that it is the aesthetic equivalent to the social insensitivity of finding slums quaint'.⁷¹

On the same day and in the same paper, Lenore Nicklin wrote an article on Warren which describes his appearance, dwells on his age and makes rather condescending comments about his lack of sophistication: 'Wearing shiny new city shoes and with his wallet firmly attached to his shirt pocket by a large safety pin...'⁷² Three days later Kerry McGlynn wrote about Warren in an article, titled 'Critics Go Wild About Grandpa' which is in the same vein as Nicklin's piece stating, for example: 'For a start Mr Warren is 85. And his wife is such a good cook he never goes short of a feed'.⁷³

Another newspaper article, 'Artist Sells Out', stated 'within 10 days, all available paintings had been sold'.⁷⁴ This might be where a myth commenced that all works on show at the Rudy Komon Gallery did sell. In reality, of the eighty-seven paintings hanging in the exhibition, about fifty sold with the remainder being kept by Komon for future showings. Komon, as part of his media campaign backing Warren, probably told the press that all works had sold in support of his reputation as the pre-eminent Sydney gallerist. The women's magazine, *The Australian Women's Weekly* published a full page article on Warren by Valerie Carr.⁷⁵ It was illustrated with two full colour pictures, one of Warren working on a painting and another of him, his wife Alma and one of their cows. The article provides quite a lot of information on Warren's life though hardly mentions his art. It is a pleasant article on what must have been a fascinating subject for its readers.

The Melbourne Age published an article on his Melbourne exhibition which opened on 7 August 1972. It is titled 'For Grandpa Moses Life's Now an Art' which well sums up the content of the commentator Phillip McCarthy's cringe-worthy piece.⁷⁶ The following day, a review of Warren's exhibition by the art critic, Alan McCulloch was published. Titled 'Everything or Perhaps Nothing' it begins rather grandly: 'Art is for recall, for pleasure, for design, for form and for fun; art is for everything and art is for nothing at all'. On Warren's paintings he comments; 'they traverse the pages of primary art history as well as indulging personal reminiscence and a taste for prosody after the manner of the true primitive'.⁷⁷

The Melbourne Sun also published two articles, both on 9 August 1972. One, by art critic Jeffrey Makin, describes Warren's painting: 'It's a try at narrative realism and, in

falling short, leaves us with an awkward, unsophisticated utterance that's long on grit and short on technique'. He then describes one of Warren's works, *Kangaroo and Emu Land*, : 'It's blunt, jerky, ignorant of perspective and incoherent, but it more than compensates for these social embarrassments with its honesty...a beautiful painting'.⁷⁸ The second article by Keith Dunstan, 'A Place in the Sun' reverts to the type of article concentrating on Warren's age and appearance rather than his art.⁷⁹

Warren's third, and as it turned out final, exhibition organised by Komon was held at the Reid Gallery in Brisbane in March 1973. However, there appears to have been little or no media coverage of the exhibition.⁸⁰

Regional newspapers printed several articles on Warren the first being on 31 December 1971, two months before the Sydney exhibition though after it had been arranged. The article dwells on Warren rather than his paintings.⁸¹ Further articles in similar style, and also not providing the names of the writers, followed in the *Goulburn Evening Post* of 22 February, the *Western Advocate* again on 24 February, 10 August and on 29 November 1972. The 29 November article was about a luncheon organised by Komon in Trunkey Creek to honour Warren: 'Forty guests from as far afield as Sydney, Goulburn, Bathurst and Lightning Ridge gathered at the home of primitive artist Selby Warren at Trunkey Creek on Saturday...' (Compared with the 'Rousseau Banquet' of 1908, the lunch for Warren was a staid affair⁸²). Apart from a few articles after his exhibitions, for example one appearing in the 'Western Advocate' about Warren opening his own gallery in Trunkey Creek,⁸³ almost no mention of Warren had appeared in the press for forty years

before the exhibition of his work held at the Bathurst Regional Art Gallery in early 2014 (see Appendix C).

Most of the media pieces on Warren said little about his paintings but a lot about him. In its way, this approach is understandable as Warren, with his age and his appearance which included him not only sporting long white hair but also having a noticeable cleft lip combined with the story that he had only begun painting when seventy-four years of age, presented a fascinating ready-made 'human interest' subject for any journalist. The public for whom they were writing were more interested in Warren the man than Warren the artist. This was probably reinforced by the sort of art he produced. As Jeffrey Makin wrote in the *Melbourne Sun* ⁸⁴ self-taught art was considered 'blunt, jerky, ignorant of perspective and incoherent' by many preferring their painted bush scenes to be pleasant, realistic and easily understood landscapes. It is also easier to describe a character like Warren than try to explain his art. A similar approach was taken by writers in Europe and America when commenting on self-taught artists. Usually they present us with more about the lives of painters like Alfred Wallis or Bill Traylor than about the aesthetics of the works they produced; their lives are engrossing while their art is difficult to explain. However, much of the media coverage of Warren and his paintings also reflect general attitudes held in the Australia of the 1970s. Not only had the local artworld been seeking to discover or, perhaps, revive a genuine and uniquely Australian culture which they believed was exposed to some degree by self-taught artists (or, as they were then called 'primitive' or 'naïve' artists), but Australia in general had been undergoing momentous social changes. These included, in 1961 the introduction of the contraceptive pill, ⁸⁵ in 1966 the Wave Hill Walk Off which saw aboriginals walk away from their jobs on a major

British-owned cattle station in the Northern Territory in 1974 which led to the passing of the first legislation allowing indigenous Australians to claim land title ⁸⁶ and, also in 1966, the abolition of the White Australia Policy through the establishment of the Migration Act 1966 which recognised equality between British, European and Non-European migrants to Australia for first time. ⁸⁷ In addition decimal currency was introduced which represented a break from the British system of pounds, shillings and pence which had been used in Australia until 1966. ⁸⁸ In 1967, over one hundred and ninety years after white settlement, legislation was passed recognising Aboriginals as Australian citizens. The Australian expatriate feminist Germaine Greer's influential book, 'The Female Eunuch' was published in 1970 and was a major influence on the feminist movement internationally as well as in Australia. ⁸⁹ These and other changes in Australia were followed and expanded with the election in 1972 of a socially reformist Labor government led by Gough Whitlam which remained in power until 1975. ⁹⁰

Despite being a time of such obvious change the 'new order' developed during the 1960s and 1970s was not embraced by most Australians for many years. The media coverage of Warren at the time of his exhibitions in 1972 and 1973 reflects this reality. Apart from reviews by a few art critics who commented on his paintings, many of the articles are on Warren himself and not his art. However, the not yet transformed social mores of the time are displayed in comments like that by the journalist Kerry McGlynn that: 'For a start Warren is 85. And his wife is such a good cook he never goes short of a feed.' ⁹¹ While unhelpful in any attempt to gain an understanding of Warren's art, and, by today's standards, demonstrating a rather condescending approach, the statement, does in fact sound like something Warren might have said about his wife, Alma which

could mean that McGlynn was simply repeating something said to him by his subject.⁹² But other statements made by journalists mentioning, for example, Warren's 'shiny new city shoes' and wallet 'attached to his shirt pocket by a large safety pin', were almost contemptuous in tone.⁹³ Warren was an artist who was considered an oddity by most who met him in the cities. It is as if sophisticated city dwellers are amused by a bush artist whose art they don't appreciate and so dwell on the unusual aspects of the man who has created that work. However, it needs to be remembered that his fellow Trunkey Creek residents also regarded him as 'different'.

The media's approach might also demonstrate that in general terms Warren's art was not taken seriously by most of those who were sent to comment on it. As mentioned elsewhere in this thesis, Warren's brief emergence into the limelight was at the tail end of interest in self-taught art in Australia, which had reached its peak in the 1960s, and it might be that the lack of much serious discussion of his art in the media reflects this. I believe it shows more that Australia's journalists were writing for an audience who they recognised would find Warren's life and his attitudes of more interest than his art and pandered to this rather than provide that audience with information and opinions which might have sparked interest in the art as well as the man.

Perhaps the type of media coverage Warren's exhibitions received reflects more on Australian culture in the early 1970s than on Warren's art. Self-taught art was at the time of very limited interest to a few in the artworld and public, not only in Australia but overseas as well. It was on the periphery of the main art world and so the lack of serious criticism of Warren's work from journalists could have been anticipated. Komon,

being the canny publicist he was, would have milked whatever he could out of any media coverage available while Warren, though he probably had no inkling of the importance of good reviews to a gallery owner, played his part by dealing with his questioners with a natural, unforced aplomb.

Running parallel to the exhibitions a relationship between Warren and Komon developed. It was displayed in a series of letters between them which began in 1972 and continued until 1977. In considering them I believe a characteristic of each man is exposed. In Warren's case we have a credulous individual who openly displayed his complete lack of knowledge and understanding of the artworld into which he had been drawn and which Komon represented. With Komon we have a sophisticated businessman who, though understanding in his approach to the old artist, was at heart a dealer who depended on sales not only to make a living but also to maintain his preeminent position within the art scene. With the collaboration of Garth Dixon, Komon sometimes frustrated and irritated Warren whose main interest was in making money for himself rather than developing a presence in the artworld. Warren seems to have been unable to understand the intricacies of operating a commercial gallery and was probably sometimes hurt by Komon's limited interest in him.⁹⁴

1.4 The correspondence between Warren and Komon ⁹⁵

From the period of Warren's exhibitions in 1972 and 1973, Warren and Komon communicated by letter and about fifty of these are available as part of the Komon papers held by the National Library in Canberra.⁹⁶ Warren rarely chose writing as a means of communication but had to respond when Komon wrote to him concerning

preparations for the exhibitions. Several of the Warren letters were written on his behalf by his daughter, Joyce, and one or two by his wife, Alma. Most from the Komon Gallery were written by Komon's business partner and gallery manager, Gwen Frolich. The letters by Warren or his family are handwritten originals and those from Komon are carbon copies of typed originals. It appears that a few letters from both sources are missing from the collection. However, the available letters provide an insight into Warren's approach to, what was for him, a completely new experience and of Komon's friendly, yet sometimes distant and businesslike, attitude towards Warren. His reaction to the unexpected experience of having his art supported and promoted seems to have been one of expectation and insouciant excitement. His art, which he believed had never been taken seriously, was suddenly the subject of real interest in his paintings which, until then, he had just stacked around his home (and placed one or two paintings in The Black Stump Hotel).

Komon does not seem to have taken advantage of Warren but simply recognised talent that he knew was popular particularly amongst many established artists of the time as well as some of the public. The opportunities he recognised seem to me to have been threefold: he was able to meet the expectations of both his clientele as well as his stable of artists; was able to assist an unsophisticated (and gullible) self-taught artist get his work before an appreciative audience, something Warren had been unable to achieve for himself; and, he was able to profit from the exercise.

As a successful gallery operator with a good understanding of the art market,⁹⁷ and an effective businessman, Komon saw in Warren another individualistic artist of the kind he

called 'primitive' and had earlier represented including, amongst others, major figures in the field like Sam Byrne (1883-1978), 'Pro' Hart (1928-2006), Henri Bastin (1896-1979), Charles Callins (1887-1982) and Matilda Lister (1889-1965). Komon was generous towards his artists and assisted Warren with framing, freight, travel to the shows and accommodation and dinners during them. He made a fairly small amount of money from the sale of Warren's works and bought several of his paintings for himself.⁹⁸ Warren painted many pictures in anticipation of ongoing exhibitions. Warren's expectations placed great store on Komon continuing to represent him and to sell his pictures. In his letters Warren often asks Komon when further exhibitions will take place. Komon's responses are non-committal. After the three shows in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, from February 1972 to April 1973, Komon seems to have lost his interest in Warren. He represented far more profitable artists yet he and Gwen Frolich did continue a sporadic correspondence with Warren until 1977 by which time Warren was unwell and had stopped painting. By then both Komon and Frolich were also becoming older and slowing down.

Komon recognised something of which Warren had no inkling: that interest in self-taught art in Australia was diminishing amongst members of both the artworld and the public. Had Komon attempted to explain this to Warren it would have proven very difficult for Warren to understand since he had been told only positive things about his art by Komon, Dixon and Dixon's fellow Bathurst-based academic, Ron Dunsire. Also, Komon probably only became aware of the changes in interest in self-taught art over the period he was working with Warren.

With the demise of city exhibitions, Warren was pleased to accept other offers of shows. Ron Dunsire became Director of the Bathurst Civic Centre Gallery in 1973 and he hung 40 paintings by Warren in a joint exhibition at the gallery in October that year. Later that year Warren opened his own gallery in a tin shed in Trunkey Creek and invited Komon to its opening exhibition in April 1974. Komon didn't attend but did, however, arrange for a few of Warren's paintings to be included in a show at the Benalla Art Gallery in 1977. These were from the works Komon had purchased in 1972 for his own collection.

Despite sometimes seeming frustrated by the slow responses from the Komon Gallery and finding it hard to understand or accept that regular sales of his work would not follow the initial exhibitions Warren appears to have retained an unswerving faith in Komon and was grateful for the exposure he received through the efforts of the gallerist, Dixon and Dunsire. Warren was a straightforward and blunt sort of man. He may well have sometimes irritated Komon and Frolich but their approach was a practical one and Warren was undoubtedly less difficult to deal with than several of the professional artists they represented.

Warren expected more from Komon than he could (or would) provide and this may have led to some feelings of disappointment by the artist. It is worth remembering that as well as making "the artists feel they weren't alone, not out there somewhere like a shag on a rock",⁹⁹ "Rudy played with people".¹⁰⁰ He fell out with some of his artists (for example, John Olsen) and, despite appearances, his gallery often experienced financial difficulties and taxation problems.¹⁰¹ So it is understandable that both Komon and

Frolich were very busy and needed to pursue the more profitable aspects of their business. If Warren initially had unrealistic expectations (which had been bolstered by Komon and Dixon), in the end he was a realist and accepted that the experience he had enjoyed would come to an end.

Warren's last hand-written letter to Komon (Fig. 16) reads like a communication between friends, though it is tinged with the naivety Warren demonstrated throughout his relationship with Komon and Dixon, both of whom, though supportive of Warren, did have agendas of their own concerning his art.¹⁰² Warren says:

'Dear Rudy & gwen And how glad I am to hear from you both Yes my health as not been very good been sick for 9 month flue and arthurites but I am (*unclear*) no I don't pant as my eye sight as beaten me so I only sit around. The gallery is still opened and is visited by lots of folks from evey whear. I only to open week ends I only hope you could see it lots of new pantings done by me. garf Dixon as gone to London to pant I had a letter from him he renting a flat above (*unclear*) his son paying \$40 per week. He would sooner be back at Trunkey with a fishing Rod. Ron dunsire is still at Bathurst. he built a home in Millthorpe. I don't see him very often. His girl (*unclear*) won a Schollership to study at Bathurst she is a very Bright girl. Rudy I still remember how we enjoyed the times we d in melbourn We had a hell of a good time Alma is still spinning wool She as done a grate jobs the Art world as slipped quite a bit thear was a chap now lives oppsite your gallyry bought a panting from me his name was Cummings He was a very intesting person Dear Rudy please excuse me as I am very weake and

cannot see very well. Come see my gallery and you will enjoy a day or two with me and my family. your Ever lasting friend Selby'

Neither this nor two later letters (one written by Joyce dated '9.8.77' and the last by Alma written on '31.8.77') received a reply from Komon or Frolich.

Dear Rudy & Joyce
and I had glad to
to hear from you both 22/2/77
my my health is not been very good
been better for 7 months I've 2 asthma
but I'm enjoying me I don't want
to my eye. I'd like to see you
only if you want. The gallery is still
open and is visited by lots of
people from Edgware. I only go
to the open days and I only have
you can be if lots of new paintings
done by the gallery on your
in London. The first I had a letter
from him the morning I had about
before his son says he's to work
on. I would soon be back at home
with a lovely new Road and
is still at Bathurst. He still a
home in the town. I don't see
very often. His girl Romy was a
great girl to see at Bathurst.
She is a very bright girl.
Rudy still remember how we
enjoyed the time we spent in
London.

We had a hell of a good time
Alma is still enjoying Wood. She is done
a great job. The club was 29 as I liked
I with a bit. There was a good show
open. I've got a gallery bought a painting
- the no more War. I'm sorry.
He was a very interesting person.
Dear Rudy. Please excuse me as I am
very busy and cannot see very well
but I'll go to your gallery and see
you. I'll go for a day or two with
you and the family.
your Everlasting
Friend Selby

Fig. 16. The last letter written by Warren to Komon. Dated '22/2/77'

In looking briefly at some of the letters I have chosen a few that provide some insight into the attitudes of both Warren and the Rudy Komon Gallery. In an early letter dated 1 December 1971, Komon states he is enthusiastic about Warren's art and "looks forward to selecting paintings with Garth Dixon" for an exhibition scheduled to open on 23 February 1972. It is interesting to note that throughout their relationship Komon depends on himself, Dixon, Ron Dunsire (an art teacher colleague of Dixon's at the Mitchell College in Bathurst), and not on Warren to select which paintings are suitable for exhibiting.

Following the Sydney exhibition, Warren wrote to Komon on 14 March concerning the sale of his paintings and enquires 'I wish to know what to do with further paintings. Will you be taking them for further shows or am I to sell them'. Komon's response was immediate (dated 17 March 1972) saying: 'Keep painting but do not sell them. I would rather you hold them for another show'. This indicates that Komon saw value in retaining control over the selling of Warren's work.

Warren wrote on 7 May: 'Now this is what I need to know. Will you be requiring me to retain my paintings for further shows. An when do you think you could bring it about. Ore would you be prepared to select some for the gallery'. Warren adds 'P.S. I do not think thear are much youse panting a lot of pantings if you cannot handle them'.¹⁰³

Warren's tone appears somewhat frustrated and his 'threat' in the P.S. to paint less seems to have had the desired effect as on 21 May 1972 Alma writes to Gwen Frolich saying they are happy with the planned show in Melbourne from 7 to 19 August that year. A list of fifty-three paintings for the Melbourne exhibition, selected by Dixon and Dunsire, was sent by Warren to Komon on 10 July. Three days later (13 July) Warren thanks Komon for a cheque for the sale of paintings in Sydney and says he is hoping to visit the opening of his Melbourne show. 'Only problem is no transport so could (the gallery) provide me with some meanes'.

On 25 July 1972 Warren advises Frolich: "Well Gwin¹⁰⁴ this is how I am going to Melbourn. Me, Alan and Bryan¹⁰⁵ will catch a trane at Goulburn Saturday night. We will get to Melbourn 11am Sunday. Alma don't like me gone by myself. Please explain to Rudy all-so let me know whear the gallery is the street number and some whear we can

stay....' Komon wrote to Warren two days after the opening (9 August): "It was good to see you in Melbourne and I hope that you had a good return trip". On 6 September 1972 Warren writes: 'Just a note to find out how things went in melbourn and how it panned out financially and what prospect thear are for a brisbane Excibision....So you will kindly let me know what is doing on the ART FRONT'. Komon responds 3 days later that Georges Gallery in Melbourne had sold 12 paintings. The remaining paintings would be sent to the Reid Gallery in Brisbane but an exhibition there would not be until the next year (1973). Komon advised his gallery only has exhibitions every 2 years, the Brisbane exhibition would be in 1973 and further ones in Sydney and Melbourne not until 1974. 'Got your letter', Warren advises on 5 November. He thanks Komon for his remarks about holding exhibitions and the timing. 'I will be looking forward to going to Brisbane next year and hope to have quite a good lot of pantings of a very good standard.'

On 26 January 1973 Frolich wrote to Warren enclosing the final cheque 'for your paintings which Rudy purchased for the exhibition in our gallery'. She continued: 'I have to explain to you that this was exceptional because he liked your pictures. Usually, we show the work for sale and then deduct our commission from the sales made. This commission is 33-1/3% of the selling price. The artist is responsible for delivering the paintings to the gallery, framed and ready for exhibition and we pay the return freight on any unsold work'. This 'reality check' from Frolich possibly follows a letter (or other communication) from Warren which is no longer extant. Dixon has advised the author that Komon spent quite a lot of money framing and freighting Warren's paintings prior to the exhibitions. The letter continues 'The unsold paintings (from the Melbourne show)

have all been sent to Brisbane and there will be an exhibition from 18th March to 6th April there is no need for you to go. It is not usual for the artist to be there'.

Frolich wrote to Warren after the Reid Gallery exhibition opening: 'The Brisbane show is going very well and they've had a few sales already. The Brisbane art critic, Dr. Gertrude Langker, was very impressed and couldn't believe you have only been painting for a few years'. It was true that Warren had only begun painting in earnest in 1963 but had always sketched and painted. He had not been in a position to concentrate on his art until he semi-retired from the workforce.

On 27 April 1973 Warren (via Joyce) asked how the Brisbane exhibition went and how many paintings were sold. Frolich replied three days later: 'We hold \$587 for you from the Melbourne and Brisbane shows. We have already sent \$1,500 since last June and know you can only earn a certain amount each year.¹⁰⁶ Should we hold this until 1 July? All unsold paintings are to come back to us from Brisbane and then we have to make some more plans but there will be no exhibition in Sydney before next year". Though it is not directly mentioned in the continuing correspondence, from the end of the Brisbane exhibition, there appears to be a cooling of the relationship between Warren and the Rudy Komon Gallery.

Warren responded to Frolich on 3 May 1973: 'OK send payments after July'. He advised that he was thinking of holding an exhibition in Bathurst as Ron Dunsire was now the Director of the Civic Centre Gallery 'which is quite a large gallery Could have 100 paintings' and would like Komon's opinion on the plan. A handwritten note on the letter

presumably refers to a phone call by Frolich to Warren: 'Good idea. We'd like to come up for the show.'

In his next letter to Komon, dated 12 July 1973), without previous mention of the idea Warren offers to sell all his paintings to Komon: 'Seeing you were so good to give me 3 exhibitions I feel I should offer you the privilege of taking over the rest of my paintings at a price satisfactory to us both. As I am now getting into years where I don't think I will carry on much further with painting. I have about 200 very good paintings'. Warren was 86 years old at this time. It appears Komon must have rejected Warren's offer though no letter confirming this is in the National Library collection.

On 5 October 1973 Warren wrote: 'I will be having an Exhibition of paintings on 28th this will be a Sunday October 28 at 8 PM the opening. I am showing 40 paintings.....Ron Dunsire will be in charge of the show. I have not seen Garth Dixon for quite a long time. I will send out invitations 15th October you will kindly let me know how every thing is going as I sincerely wish to carry on with the Rudy Komon gallery". On 6 January 1974 Warren wrote wishing 'all the best for the new year' and to ask what the prospects were for an exhibition 'for 74 as I would like to have a show after Easter. If such can be arranged'. He advises he has bought a large building in Trunkey 'where I will keep lots of paintings for future shows'. This was the corrugated iron shed in which he set up his own gallery. Whether he actually bought it is uncertain as in Trunkey Creek empty sheds or other basic properties were often simply moved into by a local who took over paying rates and for utilities for period they occupied the structure.¹⁰⁷ It seems that the response concerning further exhibitions was not positive as Warren wrote on 14 February

1974: '.... (I) quite understand how you are with so many Exhibition. You have helped me and this is what counts. My gallery is very nice plenty of room. I have hung 100 paintings in it it close to the road all so ¹⁰⁸ near the black Stump. I know you and guin will like it it provided with a small shop all so a sitting room. I intend to install a tea room and Top lighting and power for cooking. (Steak). I will send you an invitation to open this gallery for me. For Ever your Mate Selby Warren (yong boy)'.

Warren signed off as 'young boy' in several of his letters to Komon. Dixon explained to me that the epithet was used by Warren as a joke against himself concerning his age. ¹⁰⁹



Fig. 17. Selby Warren in his Trunkey Creek Gallery, 1974. Photograph: C. J. Lewis

On 25 March 1974 Warren wrote saying he was holding an exhibition at his Trunkey Creek gallery on Saturday 13 April 1974 from 2 to 10pm. 'I am looking forward to you attending if possible'. Neither Komon nor Frolich did attend. That Warren would expect them to travel from Sydney to Trunkey Creek shows his lack of comprehension of the artworld and, also, the limited extent of Komon's commitment to Warren. Warren seems

to have been impressed by Komon who represented to him a strange yet enticing foreign world which he simply did not understand. He also regarded Komon as a friend (indicated by him signing off his letter of 17 February 1974 and quoted above: 'For Ever your Mate....'). Komon's feelings towards Warren are less obvious from the correspondence. He was a cultured European and possibly considered Warren interesting and likeable but not a friend, rather Warren's dealer. However, many art dealers who specialise in self-taught art have had a close relationship with their artists and would attend activities having no direct bearing on the business of selling their art – people like Wilhelm Uhde (1874-1947), Edith Gregor Halpert (1900-1970), Sidney Janis (1896-1989) or in the current time Henry Boxer and Randall Morris come to mind. It probably comes down to personality type.

A rather irritable letter from Warren dated 12 May 1975 stated: 'I have not got back my paintings that your secretay promised to forward to me. I do relize you have quite a lot of commitments to attend to but the pantings are of a certen value to me. I would be prepared to pay trane freight to Newbridge. Providing you put them on the TRANE'

On 3 June 1975 Frolich replied: "Please forgive me for not returning your work as promised. I can only say there has been too much work to be done and time has got away from me. Both Rudy and I have not been well'.

A 20 month gap occurred before the next letter from Warren dated 22 February 1977 which was the last letter Warren wrote in his own hand. Joyce Warren wrote on her father's behalf on 9 August 1977: 'Received you letter of 5 August about the very exciting news concerning the book of *Australian Naïve Painters*. We were very glad the

paintings were well received at Benalla Art Gallery. My health is stable at the moment considering I have been in and out of hospital and have had a lot of ups and downs in the last 12 months. We have had many letters and cards from Garth and are waiting very much for his return around Christmas time. I would be most grateful if you would send me a copy of book". A hard to read handwritten note by Warren is at the bottom of the page: 'I cannot wate to see it and I do hop you will save (?) all the money for your trouble and everyone hear if looking for ward to seeing you Th for you...' (indecipherable). The book Warren refers to is *Australian Naïve Painters* by Bianca McCullough and the entry on Warren reads:

'Selby Warren was born in 1887 in Bathurst in New South Wales. He worked at various occupations in the country, becoming adept in the skills of the shearer, rabbitier, miner and cutter of railway sleepers. It was this latter named occupation that gave him the inspiration and the detail for his most famous work, 'The Sleeper Cutters', which now hangs in the Australian National Gallery in Canberra. Selby Warren is now regarded as one of the grand old men of Australian naïve art. He was promoted in his early days by Rudy Komon'.¹¹⁰

Two paintings by Warren, *Coach Ride* (Fig. 18) and *Miners Camp* (Fig. 19) are reproduced in the book where it is stated they are from the 'Collection of Rudy Komon Gallery, Sydney' but their current whereabouts is unknown.

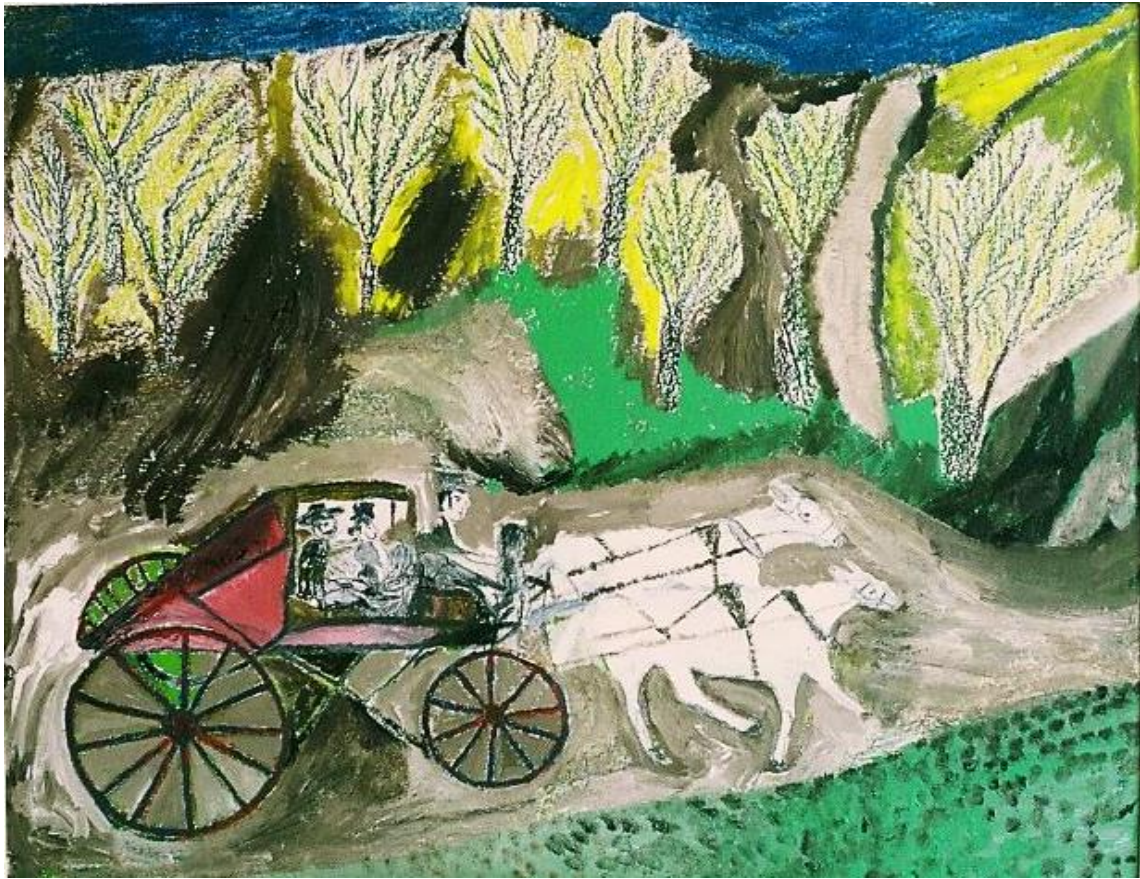


Fig. 18. Selby Warren, *Coach Ride*, c. 1972 [SW214]

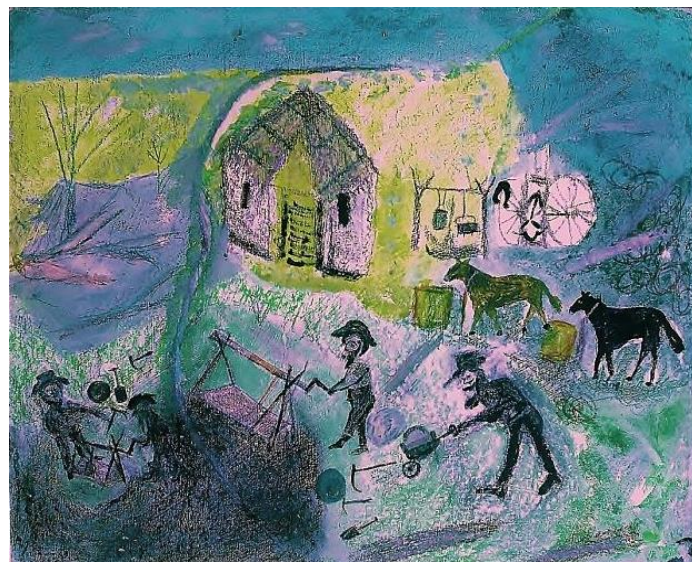


Fig. 19. Selby Warren, *Miners Camp*, 1970 [SW201]

McCullough's book was the first, and remains the only, fairly comprehensive work specifically on self-taught artists in Australia. Her entry on Warren appears to be directly

based on the article on Warren by Valerie Carr published in *The Australian Women's Weekly* in 1972,¹¹¹ and contains the same incorrect information concerning Warren's birthplace – he was born at Lambing Flat (now Young) which is 180 kilometres from Bathurst. She is wrong too about the painting *The Sleeper Cutters'* (Fig. 21) which was not hung in the Australian National Gallery.¹¹² It was, in fact, sold in 1972 at the Georges Gallery exhibition to a Melbourne collector, John Reid, who still owns the painting. It is undoubtedly one of Warren's most impressive works.

The final letter is from Alma and dated 31 August 1977: 'Selby was very pleased with the book thank you very much for all you have done it has made Selby very happy. Things are not well here we put Selby back in Bathurst hospital yesterday. He is failing his heart is giving out. Some times he knows what day it is and other times he does not. He has not been well since March he has not done anything since then. Love and all good wishes to you both from Selby and Alma Warren'.



Fig. 20. Left: The Warren Gallery in Trunkey Creek, 1974.
Photograph by C. J. Lewis.



Right: The tin shed which housed the gallery as it is today.
Photograph: author

Warren lived on for another 2 years spending the latter part of that time in nursing homes in Katoomba (briefly) and then in Bathurst where he died on 22 September 1979

ten weeks before his ninety-second birthday. The gallery he had opened in Trunkey Creek closed in 1983 after 9 years. The building (tin shed) remains today much as it was though is used by the present owner, Jeff Long, to store old machinery and junk.

1.5 The influence of the art establishment on Warren and his kind

When Warren was first given encouragement by Dixon and then Komon it was something new to him. Undoubtedly he was both pleased to receive praise concerning his artistic efforts and displayed the usual response of 'the prideful craftsman and the ego of the self-conscious artist'.¹¹³ Whether this impacted positively on his art is uncertain. Before being enthusiastically introduced into a world he knew nothing of, had he any ambitions to enter it? What evidence we have suggests not, though had he harboured such ambitions, Warren lacked the wherewithal to achieve entry and acceptance in an artworld he neither understood nor in which he had any contacts who might have assisted him. But once there he embraced this new experience for as long as it might last, which in his case, was a short period of about 4 years. It is, of course, hypothetical to ask whether his art would have been better without external influences placed upon it but Dixon was a man who, according to his son Peter, 'ruined' a few self-taught artists who resided near Bathurst in the 1960s and 1970s.¹¹⁴ Though aware that providing artists materials to Warren might in some ways change his work, Dixon believed that 'if there was a risk it was worth taking' so that 'the durability and quality' of Warren's output could be 'maintained'.¹¹⁵

The impact of artworld figure 'interference' on Warren's work can be seen in two paintings of sleeper cutters.¹¹⁶ Dixon had seen the impressive work by Warren entitled

Sleeper Cutters (Fig. 21) which was sold at the Komon exhibition in Melbourne. Having hoped to have acquired it himself, Dixon asked Warren to paint him another version of the work. This was a request of a kind Warren had never before received. He had certainly painted two or three works of particular subjects (for example *The Black Stump Hotel* or the *Whitlams*) but these had been made on his own volition and not at the request of someone else. Warren agreed to paint a second picture about sleeper cutters and presented Dixon with a finished picture a few weeks later. It is not a good painting and appears rushed and poorly envisioned. *Sleeper Cutter Camp* (Fig. 22) is a revision of the original work and the title yet the quality is not there. Compared with the rich, vibrant colours used in Fig. 21 those in Fig. 22 are insipid. The human figures and horses are stiff and awkward and the quality of the detail is lacking. Even the composition and balance are uncharacteristically uneven, something that very rarely occurs in Warren's work.



Fig. 21. Selby Warren, *Sleeper Cutters*, 1971 [SW223]

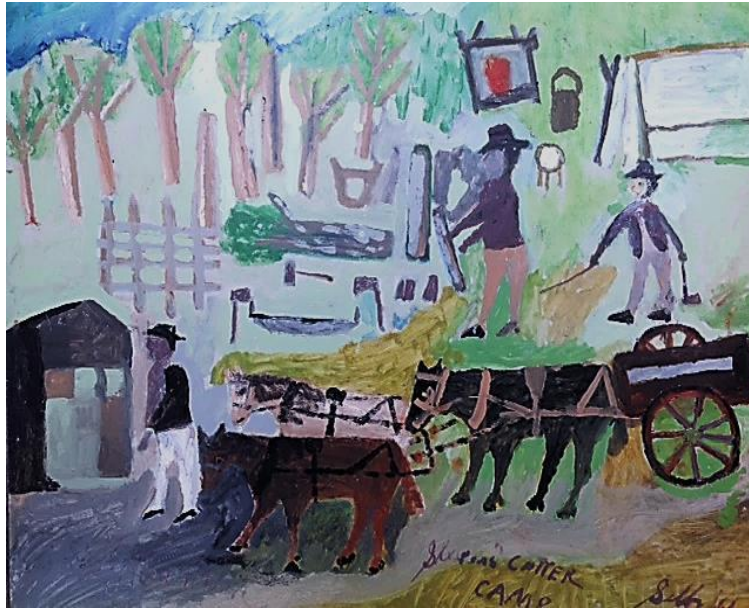


Fig. 22. Selby Warren, *Sleeper Cutter Camp*, 1973, Commissioned work [SW422]

The external influences on a self-taught artist like Warren, which invariably accompanied an introduction to the professional artworld, have sometimes not been positive for the continuing quality of an artist's work. While many of those promoting self-taught artists have done so with good intentions I think they have often impacted negatively upon them. This deleterious effect can be quite subtle in the way it impacts on an artist one example being the well-known American, Bill Traylor (1854-1949) who in Spring, 1939 was noticed by a white artist, Charles Shannon (1915-1996), better remembered today for discovering Traylor rather than for his academic-style artworks. Shannon gave Traylor art materials (though Traylor would not accept drawing paper preferring scraps of cardboard and paper he retrieved from the streets), food and other assistance and, in the process, acquired a collection of between twelve and fifteen hundred works by the artist all made during 1939 and 1942. Shannon arranged a couple of early shows of Traylor's art but, due to a lack of popular interest, Shannon stored his collection until 1979 when he again introduced it to the artworld, and, following a successful exhibition in 1982, Traylor became recognised initially as a very important self-taught artist and, nowadays,

a major American artist. Traylor had spent the years of the Second World War (1939-1945) producing little or no art. Shannon was shocked by Traylor's poor physical condition when they reconnected in 1946 and when Traylor again began producing his art.¹¹⁷

Shannon, by now an art teacher, considered the pictures Traylor produced after 1945 to be of a poor quality and saved none of them. It is worth remembering that at this time Shannon had stored his collection of earlier Traylor works because they were unpopular (which, I think, might be interpreted as 'difficult to sell') and did not circulate them in any number until thirty years after Traylor's death.¹¹⁸ I feel Shannon's completely subjective and arbitrary view of the quality of Traylor's output in his last few years demonstrates an unacceptable interference by someone who obviously considered his opinions (and how he might benefit from them) to be more important than the art itself.¹¹⁹

Another artist who was impacted by members of the artworld was Mary T. Smith (1905-1995) see *Jesus' Supper* (Fig. 23). She was one of a number of black southern U.S.A. artists who, from the late 1960s through the 1970s, were part of a cultural phenomenon: the 'yard show'. These were artistic environments set up outside in the yards of houses or factories. People who were experiencing a post-Jim Crow South and involved in their African-American belief systems wanted to share with others the art they had been producing 'behind closed doors'.¹²⁰ Amongst the many who moved outside, including Mary T. Smith, were Sam Doyle (1906-1985), Eldren M. Bailey (1903-1987), Joe Light (1934-2005) - see *Bird on Man's Head*, (Fig. 24), Nellie May Rowe (1900-1982) and Purvis Young (1943-2010) – though Young was different in that he was urban and in Florida rather than from the deep South like the others.¹²¹ All were self-taught and all became

known after they were discovered by members of the artworld of various sorts. These artists, like Traylor who knew nothing of fame, were generally treated with little respect by the artworld many of them, including Smith, dying in poverty. Yet they were resilient, refusing to be disheartened. They exhibited the paradoxical results of their desire to please.¹²²



Fig. 23. Mary T. Smith, *Jesus' Supper*, 1986



Fig. 24. Joe Light, *Bird on Man's Head*, 1993

This 'desire to please' was also apparent in Warren's attitudes first to Dixon and Dunsire and then to Komon. Perhaps it is an indicator of his uncertainty of how to relate to people who praised his art but who he couldn't really understand.

*

In this chapter I have introduced the Australian self-taught artist, Selby Warren: as much as is known of his life, including how he was discovered by a member of the local artworld, and how he dealt with the ensuing attention. I compare Warren's experiences with a few similar examples overseas to demonstrate that a parallel pattern concerning self-taught artists occurs wherever they live. I have also analysed correspondence

between Warren and the establishment art dealer, Rudy Komon, who exhibited his work and how Warren became, in some ways, beholden to Komon and point out the frustrations he sometimes felt with the uneven relationship. Komon, along with Dixon, were the most influential figures in Warren's artistic endeavours though others such as Ray Hughes were important in their less open but strong support. Unfortunately, due to him being in ill-health when I met with him on a few occasions Hughes was unable to provide much information on his involvement. He did, however, retain excellent examples by Warren in his personal collection, and some of his works on permanent display in his apartment until it became necessary for him to move into sheltered accommodation in late 2016. ¹²³

In the next chapter I will examine at Warren's artistic output and how, as the product of a self-taught painter, the type of life he led in Trunkey Creek, a small rural town in New South Wales, influenced his paintings and drawings. As part of this I will discuss the way Warren presented some of his paintings in a variety of decorated handmade frames, another, apparently inexplicable,¹²⁴ similarity with numbers of other self-taught artists in Australia and abroad.

Chapter 2

2.1 Warren's paintings

Self-taught artists are sometimes defined more by their basic, unassuming lives than their art (see Chapter 3). I intend to discuss Warren's paintings as works of art more than as reflections of his lifestyle though, of course, they each influenced the other. The environment in which Warren lived and the events in his life directly informed his paintings many of which, I believe, were anecdotal being based on recollections not only coloured by time but also on retold stories of events.

In expressing themselves self-taught artists often display technical limitations, particularly in draftsmanship (see Chapter 3.1). In the case of Warren such limitations do not seem to have restricted his output, nor do they lessen the impression his pictures make on the observer. His paintings strike the viewer with their exceptional compositional balance and startling colour. Even the smallest or simplest of them is a resolved composition. Warren rarely reworked a painting. His sense of composition seems to have been innate. Some of his works were roughly sketched in pencil before colour was applied but most appear to have been painted directly onto the base. This suggests that Warren imagined his works as a whole before commencing them or at least as they progressed towards completion. He occasionally painted over a small area of a work with the final addition adding to the work's balance. Warren's use of colour, like many other self-taught artists, was extraordinary. He painted large 'walls' of usually bright colour sometimes representing an object but also placed to balance the composition. The colours in these slabs are often realistic in that they might represent a hillside or area of water but in a number of cases the slab of colour seems unrelated to the subject matter yet assists in

creating a harmonious, completed whole. Such abstract use of colour is not unusual in self-taught art despite the painters usually believing that their works were realistic representations of a subject.

In attempting to understand a self-taught artist like Warren it is important to accept that he was content to paint for himself and seemed to accept that he would probably not be publicly recognised as a painter let alone ever be famous. Why, for example, did Warren paint a view of the little township he lived in, Trunkey Creek, which he did not anticipate showing to or sharing with the other residents, even those whose houses he represented in the work (see *Trunkey Creek*, Fig. 26)? What drove him to paint a picture of a bushranger being chased by three troopers (*Frank Gardner*, Fig. 30)? And what inspired him to paint a picture titled 'Brother Ben' which is his own rendition of a poem popular at the time (*Brother Ben*, Fig. 39), or even portraits of an Australian Prime Minister and his wife (Figs. 42 and 43), if he wasn't producing them for an audience?

To answer these questions and try to understand what motivated an artist like Warren to spend many hours producing works which were seemingly created for simple self-satisfaction, his paintings offer some clues. In Garth Dixon's view it is probable that Warren would have liked his paintings to be considered as serious works by others.¹²⁵ The reality was, though, that until his discovery by Dixon they simply weren't and Warren, being a pragmatist, apparently accepted the situation as it was. From discussions he had with Warren, Dixon believed the artist was trying to realistically represent his subjects in paint. Not only was he attempting realism but he believed his works achieved it.¹²⁶ Warren considered himself a good artist. The fact that his fellow Trunkey Creek residents failed to recognise the quality of his output nor even accept it

might have disappointed him but Warren had self-belief and, as a proud man, may have thought that his neighbours, were just unable to appreciate good art. A large number of self-taught artists have been convinced of their own importance these ranging from the naïf, Henri Rosseau (1844-1910) and other European marginalised artists like Adolf Wölfli (1864-1930) and Aloise Corbaz (1886-1964), to Americans such as William Hawkins (1895-1990) and Eugene von Bruenchenhein (1910-1983), as well as Australian artists like Sam Byrne (1883-1978) and Warren. Each of them was quite vocal in proclaiming the merit of their art and of themselves as artists.¹²⁷ It seems their view of the world led to them seeing their works as successfully representing a subject they had set out to record in paint and, as a child might, seemed happy to tell anyone of that success.¹²⁸

It isn't known how many paintings Warren created in his lifetime but it certainly exceeded four hundred. A number of these were sold at the three exhibitions of his work organised by Dixon and Komon. Others were sold from the gallery Warren himself set up in Trunkey Creek in 1974 and some others were occasionally given away by the artist. The current known extant works amount to some 420 items (see Appendix A). When Warren died in 1979 the 270 or so paintings which were still in his possession went to his wife Alma, and, after her death four years later, were divided amongst his children, Joyce, Thelma, Keith and Alan. About fifty paintings are still held by Thelma's daughter, Teresa. These include what remained of Joyce's share. Approximately two-hundred that had belonged to both Alan and Keith are now in the hands of two private collectors in Sydney and some others are held in smaller private collections.

2.2 Warren's major themes

Warren's paintings were of a variety of subjects and may be loosely separated into the following eight themes which cover Warren's *oeuvre* :

- *Historical* – including bushrangers, aborigines, early events
- *Men at work* – some early, others 'contemporary' types of work
- *Poems and ballads* – Warren painted his interpretations of popular poems and ballads which he recited and sang whenever given the opportunity
- *Transport* – both 'old' (coaches, buggies, bullock wagons) and 'new' (cars, trucks)
- *Animals and nature* – horses, birds, dogs and, occasionally, lions and 'exotic' beasts
- *Places* – both historical and contemporary, a few of overseas locations
- *People* – historical figures, people he knew and people he noticed (politicians, sportsmen and women, media personalities)
- *Abstracts* – some paintings that were purely abstract and others that are painted in a way that could be interpreted as 'abstract'.

Though the majority of these were of Australian subjects those few that were not specifically reflect the popularity of the British countryside and villages amongst Australians, both then and now.¹²⁹ *Kellarn Wistishire* (Fig. 25) depicts an English village and was probably inspired by an illustration Warren saw in the popular press or a magazine. A major source of coloured and black and white photographs seen regularly by Warren was *The Australian Women's Weekly*, a magazine avidly read by his wife, Alma.¹³⁰ As well as local stories it often contained illustrated articles on Britain. That Warren's parents were of French and English stock and his first wife, Jessie Howard

(1895-1950), was of Scottish lineage is also relevant.¹³¹ Warren would have listened to his and Jessie's parents talking about their European ancestry. To paint scenes of England and Scotland was likely a reflection of his earlier memories jogged by a contemporary illustration he had seen in print media.



Fig. 25. Selby Warren, *Kellam Wistishire*, (possibly Wiltshire or Worcestershire), 1969 [SW167]

Of the more than 400 pictures Warren painted covering a broad range of subjects I have chosen a few that represent the major themes he painted.

2.3 *Trunkey Creek* (Fig. 26)

Trunkey Creek was home to Warren and his family for more than fifty years and it was there in 1971 that Warren was discovered. He painted his pictures in Trunkey Creek and many of their subjects were in and around the village. His painting *Trunkey Creek* (Fig. 26) was completed in 1972 after he had been discovered by Dixon (Chapter 2) and had been provided with artist materials, which Warren seemed to have mastered within a

short time. This painting provides an insight into the village itself, but also into Warren's approach to recording his memories in paint.

The subject is the centre part of the village of Trunkey Creek and may represent Warren's recollection of how it looked some years before he painted it. This is supported by the colour of The Black Stump Hotel (the blue/green building at the right of the picture) which was painted in bright colours before the 1960s but was its current off-white colour by the time the painting was completed. It is feasible, though, that Warren might have chosen hues he found attractive or that he simply used colours he had to hand. He might also have selected bright orange for the two houses to give all structures a similar weighting in the composition.



Fig. 26. Selby Warren, *Trunkey Creek*, 1972 [SW062]

The buildings represented in the painting are, from left to right, the general store, the Strickland's house, the post office/house and The Black Stump Hotel. The view has been greatly compressed from left to right with the buildings being smaller and much closer

together than they are in reality. This was probably done in practical terms so that the image fitted the piece of board on which it is painted. More importantly, it created the compositional balance notable in all of Warren's paintings. A photograph of the same area of the village taken in 1937 (Fig. 27) shows the correct proportions (though the post office 4. is shrouded by smoke from a burn-off on the viewer's side of the road).



Fig. 27. Above: Photograph of Trunkey Creek, 1937, photographer unknown

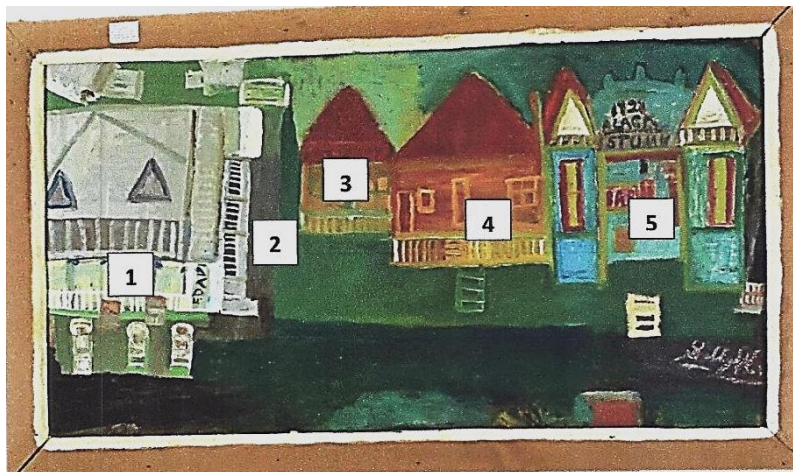


Fig 27 Below: Selby Warren, *Trunkey Creek*, 1972

Legend: 1: General Store 2: Road 3: Strickland House 4: Post Office 5: The Black Stump Hotel

If the road (2), which still lies between the general store and the Strickland place, is shown at all in the painting it is only a narrow slash of dark grey along the edge of the store. In fact, the road may not appear in the painting at all as a driveway lies beside

the store and leads to a shed which is shown in the painting. The areas of land between the road on both the general store and Strickland house sides are also missing from the painting. The distance between the general store and the Strickland house is, in fact, about two hundred metres (less than one eighth of a mile).

Warren has painted the general store from an aerial perspective whereas all other structures are presented in a flat, front-on portrait mode. It is uncertain whether this was done to show the size of the store or, more likely, to provide its bulk to balance the rest of the composition. Of the other buildings portrayed The Black Stump Hotel is a larger one than the store but perhaps the store was more important in Warren's view.

The use of colour is fascinating. The roof and walls of the general store are presented mostly in greys with pale blue and green. In contrast the two houses are garishly orange with ochre and green and The Black Stump is mostly a bright turquoise with blue and orange and some ochre and white. The roadway which, at the time, was an unsurfaced dirt one is painted in translucent dark grey over a brownish-green base with a solid, darker area in front of the petrol pumps in front of the store.

Warren displays a compositional balance which, at first glance, appears to be achieved almost by accident. But, in fact, it is attained by careful placement of the buildings, colour and the use of an aerial view of the store - its bulk and paler colour scheme weighs perfectly against the brightly presented Black Stump and post office. In the painting the duller coloured Strickland property is set further back from the road than it is in reality. The house is actually immediately next door to the post office, not up the

hill from it as represented by Warren yet, being situated where it is in the painting, it balances with the petrol pumps extending onto the road in front of the Store. Had Warren included the vacant land and road between the Store and the other buildings the painting would have lost its compact completeness. This compactness reflects, I believe, an intuitiveness in Warren's art. He seems to have known how to make a composition work and would modify objects to fit his vision of how a painting *should* look and would include elements he thought were important. He might have been heard asking 'why show boring bits'?

The steps leading down to the road from the Black stump are highlighted in solid off-white which matches the two off-white triangles of the pub's roof with the front of the store and its petrol pumps. Other stairs in front of the post office are shown by little more than a few white strokes over the green just as the picket fences in front of both houses and their windows and doors are simple pale outlines. However, the left picket fence in front of the Post Office is a solid white to match the whites on the pub and the Store. A square block of the same colour used for the two houses and outlined in the pale grey used for the roof of the Store and the turquoise of the pub is placed strategically at the bottom of the painting. Warren often incorporated squares of colour assisting in achieving balance. His intuitive ability to balance all his works is expressed in part by his use of this device. The painting is in a frame painted a very 1960s brown and is saved by the addition of an off-white rim close to the painting which highlights the off-white in the painting itself.

By 1900 The Black Stump (at that time called the Commercial Hotel) was the last remaining of six hotels that graced Trunkey Creek in its heyday. It was originally a timber structure like the Australian Hotel (Fig. 45), and in 1928 it was destroyed by fire, being replaced by the current brick building. While the sign on the front of the existing building reads:

'The Black Stump Hotel

1928

Trunkey Creek'

the name 'Commercial Hotel' was retained until 1957 when its then owner, George Bright, renamed it 'The Black Stump Hotel' (Fig. 28) believing this name to be more expressive of the Australian bush than the original.¹³² The new name was added to the building in 1958 with '1928' included to date the building.

Now the old mining township of Trunkey, south of Blayney, is about to leap to fame. Recently, Mr. and Mrs. George Bright, from the South Coast, bought the Commercial Hotel at Trunkey. Recently the Licensing Magistrate at Blayney Court approved a change in name. Trunkey now is the only place in Australia with a hotel called "The Black Stump."

Fig. 28. Article mentioning the hotel name change. 'Western Herald', Bourke, 2 August 1957.

Warren painted several pictures¹³³ of the hotel, all of them dating well after the name change. The pub itself is of different colours in these paintings and it had, in fact, been painted a variety of colours during its existence. One local commented that it was a startling 'nipple pink' for several years and that 'it could've been blue once'¹³⁴.

The house immediately to the left of the Black Stump was operated as the village post office for many years by a Reg Williams. He eventually sold the property to Don Ridley

who continued running the post office there until the mid-1960s when he moved out and set up a smaller post office next to his new home across the road. The village post office finally closed in 1992 when the township's houses were given numbers and a delivery service provided from Bathurst.¹³⁵



Fig. 29. *The Australia Hotel, Trunkey Creek, 1872* Holtermann Collection, National Library of Australia

The general store was built on the foundations of the Australian Hotel (Fig. 29) which, like the Commercial Hotel forty-nine years later, suffered a fire though, unlike the Commercial Hotel, it was not completely destroyed and several elements of the remains were re-used by the McKenzies, who had operated it as the hotel. The new building, completed in 1879 using bricks left over from the construction of the Trunkey Creek police station, was opened as a general store, not a pub. The McKenzies, a prominent family in the district, eventually sold the store to Fred Davies who ran it from 1921 until his death in 1984. In the *Trunkey Creek* painting Warren has included part of Fred Davies' name, written as 'F.Davi' on the front right side of the store. Davies, like Warren, was one of Trunkey Creek's true larrikin¹³⁶ characters and the two men were good friends.

Warren's son remembers Fred Davies' store well. Its interior consisted of a very large room with shelving about 3 metres high all around it, the old long bar from its pre 1879 days as the 'Australian Hotel' was used as a counter and hooks were fitted to the ceiling and from these hung an amazing variety of objects ranging from saddles, clothing, whips and lanterns to meat and other foodstuff.¹³⁷ The old pub's cellar was and is near the centre of the store and contained perishables and other items. It was accessed by lifting a large, heavy trapdoor which is still extant.

Undoubtedly three of the structures in the painting were of particular importance in Warren's, and the village's, life. These were the general store, the post office and, of course, the Black Stump Hotel. General stores in country settlements provided a wide range of goods and services. They sold food, newspapers (often up to a week old), clothing, all manner of household equipment, appliances and farm equipment (including guns and ammunition), stock feed and fuel (petrol, kerosene). Davies, though regarded as something of an eccentric, was generally well liked in the town. The post office provided a vital service to the community not only by managing the mail but also the telegraph and, later, telephone service. The Black Stump was more than a place to have a drink or simple meal. It was the township's social hub and provided a centre for people to get together and discuss their world with other locals and travellers passing through. Dartboards and, later, a pool table offered entertainment as did Selby Warren who was well known for his loud singing and yarn telling. It was here that he must at some time agreed to have one of his paintings displayed, though it was apparently stuck behind bottles on a shelf behind the bar. But it was noticed by the Bathurst-based art teacher who 'discovered' Warren.

2.4 *Frank Gardner* (Fig. 30)

Frank Gardiner (1829-1903) was a bushranger who operated in the Bathurst district before Warren's birth in 1887. The bushrangers, and in New South Wales in particular Gardiner and his friend, Ben Hall, were regarded as heroes by many of the ordinary country people. In the Bathurst area, as elsewhere in the bush, bushrangers fascinated the locals because of what they saw to be their free life styles and contempt for the authority.¹³⁸

Like most of his generation, Warren was steeped in the stories and ballads about bushrangers. One of his most effective paintings is titled '*Frank Gardner*' though the correct spelling is 'Gardiner'. Warren wrote down words as he pronounced or heard them and often placed prominent misspelt words on paintings as the title or, as in this case, naming the two main characters. He has also and added the comments 'Good Boy' under 'Frank Gardner' and 'missed again' beside 'Sir Fred'. Whether the words 'good boy' are Warren's comment on Frank Gardiner or they refer to Gardiner's horse escaping the troopers is unknown.



Fig. 30. Selby Warren, *Frank Gardner (sic)*, [SW004]

Warren's first wife, Jessie Howard, proudly told of how her parents and other relatives had 'looked after' Frank Gardiner and his gang on several occasions.¹³⁹ They often took them in, fed and protected them against the government troopers who were considered lackeys of city upper-class bureaucrats who had no understanding of the bush and the conditions it imposed on its inhabitants. The Australian lack of respect for authority of any kind, which grew from its convict past, was reinforced by the actions of the troopers who often carried out their duties in a violent, arrogant and devious way. The exploits of the bushrangers were glorified in conversations, songs and poems and the men themselves were celebrities in the true meaning of the word. Some bushrangers, though, were less glorified than others because of their brutality or, in one case, race. An example of the former is John Fuller (1830-1865) known as 'Mad Dog Morgan'. He was a murderous, unpleasant individual and generally feared by the settlers he lived

amongst. Others, like the evocatively named 'Sam Poo', real name Li Hang Chiak, (?-1865), being a Chinese, was more or less ignored by the populace.

Though the bushranger era had more or less ended by 1880 the fact that Warren painted many pictures of their exploits reflects a great interest, if not obsession, that bushrangers held for Warren and many others of his generation. Warren was steeped in stories and ballads about them. They represented the free spirit and rebelliousness against authority which greatly appealed to Warren and his contemporaries in the Australian bush.

Frank Gardner depicts four horsemen at full gallop. Three are troopers all wearing red tunics and the leading figure is Frank Gardiner in a black jacket and white pants. The horses are all portrayed in a similar stance which is unnatural but reflects how galloping horses were usually painted by artists up to the time of Eadweard Muybridge.¹⁴⁰ In 1878 Muybridge took time-lapse photographs of a horse in full gallop (Fig. 31). In none of these photographs does the horse's forelegs stick straight forward in parallel, though the hind legs are moving forward, just as Warren has represented them in his painting.

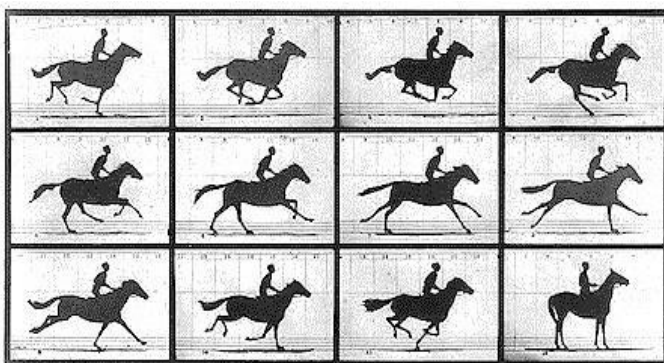


Fig. 31. Eadweard Muybridge, *The Horse in Motion*, 1878



Fig. 32. Sporting print, c. 1880

Warren was painting the horses' forelegs in the manner reflected in Figure 32. Prints like this hunting scene were common at the time and a local from Trunkey Creek advises one hung on a wall in the Black Stump pub.¹⁴¹ However, Warren's positioning of galloping horses' front legs is where the problem arises. An excellent horseman himself, it is very unlikely that he ever heard of, let alone saw Muybridge's work and so painted his horses as he believed they moved and based on how he noted others represented them (as in Fig. 32).¹⁴²

While the four horses in *Frank Gardner* appear to be exerting themselves, Frank Gardiner, and to a lesser extent his pursuers, appear quite relaxed in their saddles. 'Sir Fred'(erick Pottinger), with a rifle in his hands, has 'missed again' written beneath his image supporting the droll view of him held by many. Sir Frederick Pottinger (1831-1865) was a hapless leader of his troop. Having inherited his titles and then squandered his father's fortune in England Pottinger moved to Australia in 1856 at the age of twenty-five and following unsuccessful forays into business he joined the police force as a trooper. In 1860 his titles of 'Baron' and 'Sir' became public and, purely on this basis, he was quickly promoted, becoming Inspector of Police for the Western District in 1862. His major assignment was to capture Gardiner and his gang but he failed in this and died at the age of 34 after accidentally shooting himself.¹⁴³ The colours employed in *Frank Gardner*, while not dissimilar to those in *Trunkey Creek*, are used differently to create the effect of movement and action. Gardiner's horse and figure are placed in a halo of lighter colours which immediately draws the viewer's attention to them. Sir Fred is the next most 'isolated' figure and the two supporting troopers are less obvious. Pottinger's horse emerges from the darker background surrounding the two troopers.

The uneven ground over which the horses gallop is represented by patches of different colours ranging from pale greenish-grey and a light green to darker blues and browns and, to the right of the painting, near blacks. Despite the four figures lacking any perspective the picture succeeds. Warren's pale green-tinged cream frame repeats colours in the painting and is an integral part of the work's stability.

Warren painted many pictures of bushrangers in action or sites relating to them (Figs. 33 to 36).



Fig. 33. Selby Warren, *Eugowra Robbery*, c. 1970 [SW074]



Fig. 34. Selby Warren, *Ben Hall House*, c. 1970 [SW070]

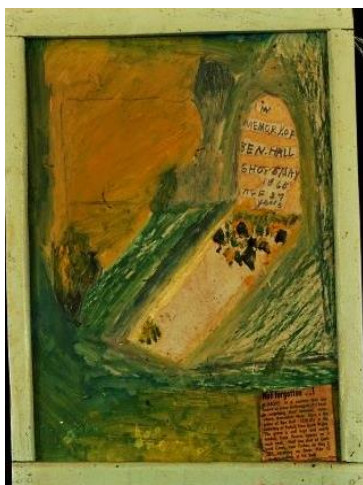


Fig. 35. Selby Warren, *Ben Hall's Grave* – with newspaper clipping concerning the restoration of the gravesite. c. 1968 [SW087]



Fig. 36. Selby Warren, *Bale (sic) Up*, c. 1972 [SW327]

Bushrangers have been the subject of many Australian artists, most famously Sidney Nolan.¹⁴⁴ Bushrangers were an iconic subject that exemplified elements of the Australian bush and its history. Nolan's two sets of works featuring Ned Kelly (1854-1880) are his best known paintings and were instrumental in his rise to fame. Kelly is the most famous, and mythologised Australian bushranger due in part to his wearing homemade metal armour which included a distinctive helmet. The Kelly paintings (examples are provided in Figs. 37 and 38) are based on events in Kelly's life and were painted as a series.



Fig. 37. Sidney Nolan, *Death of Sergeant Kennedy at Stringybark Creek*, 1946



Fig. 38. Sidney Nolan, *Glenrowan*, 1946

Nolan, a Victorian, chose Kelly, a Victorian bushranger while Warren, being a New South Welshman, chose local bushrangers like Gardiner and Hall for his paintings. However, unlike Nolan and other establishment artists, he made no attempt to paint a continuing story of his subjects. His bushranger pictures were painted when the mood took him. Nolan's Kelly paintings are 'naïve' in style. He appears to have emulated this style to reflect the work of self-taught artists whose simplicity of approach to their expression he admired and whose work matched their subjects. Though Warren hadn't been discovered at the time Nolan painted his Kelly series, the similarities in subject and style are noteworthy. Nolan affected a way of painting which was actually Warren's natural

method. Here Nolan, who had been trained as an artist and influenced by the artworld, developed this style self-consciously with a particular expressive end in mind. He could, and did, change his style to suit his subject matter. Warren was untrained and unaware of the artworld and its attendant influences, and was unable to move beyond his natural style. He had appeared as a more or less fully formed artist and, like many of his kind, believed it unnecessary to attempt to change his style (and was technically incapable of altering it had he wished to).

The bushranger, Frank Gardiner and his pursuer, Frederick Pottinger both appear in Warren's painting though other members of Gardiner's gang such as Ben Hall do not. Hall, the 'gentleman bushranger', was of particular interest to the Warren family and others in the Bathurst area where he was active. Numerous ballads and poems were written about Hall who was shot dead¹⁴⁵ at the age of only twenty-seven, a month after Pottinger had died:

His name it was Ben Hall, a man of high renown,

Who was hunted from his station, and like a dog shot down.¹⁴⁶

2.5 Brother Ben (Fig. 39)

Warren's enjoyment of telling yarns, reciting poems and singing ballads was all part of the folklore tradition existing in Trunkey Creek and similar country towns for generations. His liking for them spread to his painting and he completed several works based upon poems or ballads. Painting a version of the ballads, songs and poems Warren both performed and had taught his children when they were young, was his way of setting down in paint something of great importance to him. These pictures were a record in a

tangible form of not only words he loved but also of memories of his younger days and of times past. As a balladeer Warren often sang (usually uninvited) at the Black Stump Hotel and the songs he most liked were bush ballads. He wrote poetry of a kind, which he enjoyed reciting to pub patrons along with poems by known authors. He played a violin excruciatingly, according to his son, Alan, and also played a guitar and the bones (which entails clicking two chicken bones together). Possibly the clicking of the bones was the most melodic of all his musical pursuits.¹⁴⁷ (Such a picture of Warren supports the view that he might have liked to be able to impress people with his art, as he believed he did with his vocalising and playing of instruments. He just didn't know how to successfully get his pictures in front of people).

The stories told in the ballads and songs reinforced the view held, particularly in the cities, of the Australian bush, that it represented the true spirit of Australia and that those living in the bush were the 'real Australians'. The people so labelled were generally conservative and nationalistic and believed in the image they portrayed. Warren, though left-leaning in his politics, was a true believer in the worth and importance of Australia, despite his experience of the country being mostly restricted to a small area of New South Wales.

A painting representing a favourite poem of Warren's is *Brother Ben*, a dramatic and evocative work. Otherwise titled *The Stockman's Tale (Brother Ben and I)* the anonymous poem has twenty four-line verses.¹⁴⁸ It tells of a group of drovers sitting around a campfire who listen to a story told by a stockman: Ned, who is narrating the story, is camping with his brother Ben, and another stockman after a tiring day driving cattle.

The stock has been settled for the night and the men are relaxing around a fire. As they start drinking Ben refuses, saying:

But Ned! I have not touched a drop these three long years' he said

'And you know how crazed I go when the stuff goes to my head'.

Nonsense man the night is cold you need only have one glass

'One, one only one' the chorus chimed, as around the grog they passed.

The alcohol flows and Ben, maddened by the drink, rides off into the bush where he crashes into a tree and is killed. His brother Ned, forever full of remorse, never touches alcohol again. The story had particular resonance with Warren as one of his brothers, Louis, like Ben in the poem, was killed when his horse bolted and hit a tree.¹⁴⁹

The painting shows the settled cattle and, presumably, Ned tending to his horse in the left foreground. From the centre to the right of the composition is Brother Ben madly galloping off into the rugged hills which are dark and ominous and almost overwhelm the painting.



Fig. 39. Selby Warren, *Brother Ben*, 1968 [SW118]

The proportions of the animals are interesting. Two very large bulls are at the top of the picture. They are twice the size of other animals and Ned and Ben in the foreground. One large bull stands at an angle and other horses to the centre left are also painted at an angle. Warren often painted the subjects he thought most important larger than others in a painting. Here these animals may be large to balance the composition as well as to add drama by re-iterating Ben's angled ride into the threatening bush.

The painting is also an insight into the care and handling of cattle in scrubby, rough bushland something Warren was well aware of in his work as a bushman. The cattle appear to be free to roam and feed but three horses, presumably belonging to the other horsemen, are carefully lined up and tethered to what appears to be a log lying on the ground.

Despite almost half the painting consisting of the dark hills on the right, the composition is beautifully balanced with strategically placed patches of dark and light colours which provide stability. The frame is handmade and painted silver. The silver paint seems to have been added after framing and is carelessly applied having spread onto the painting itself around the inside frame edge. The work is on paper without any backing. The large bull at the top of the painting is cut off halfway up its body. Warren would make a frame and adjust a picture to fit it which could well be the case in this instance.

Another ballad that Warren painted was *The Orphan Boy and his Dog* (Fig. 40) again a sad tale of the bush, this one by Laurie Allen.¹⁵⁰ It is the tale of an orphan and his dog who seek shelter and a piece of bread at a rich man's house but it is refused. The orphan boy cries to no avail that he will freeze to death and, after a bitterly cold night, both the boy and his dog are found dead at the front door by the owner.



Fig. 40. Selby Warren, *The Orphan Boy and His Dog*, 1972 [SW062]

In Warren's rendition the figures of the orphan boy and his dog are small and sit at the middle of the composition. The rich man's house is brightly coloured and is surrounded by swathes of vivid colour representing the landscape. The 'feel' of the painting is not one of sadness and gloom despite the ballad it illustrates containing no lightness at all. As an interpretation of the ballad's intent which is a strong statement on poverty, privilege and indifference, the picture could be considered a failure. But as a work of art it is a painting of both beauty and strength.

It is uncertain whether the house depicted in this painting was one at Trunkey Creek. It has been suggested that it might represent a large house once owned by a successful sheep farmer on the outskirts of the village. The house was burned down in the 1980s. Warren and the sheep farmer did not get on particularly well as Warren considered the farmer to be 'stuck up'.¹⁵¹ By setting his version of the sad tale of the *The Orphan Boy and his Dog* at the premises of someone he disliked, Warren may have been adding an extra dimension to the picture. If this was the case, the question again arises as to what he hoped to achieve if he did not show it to the sheep farmer or, at least, other people in the village who might have had similar feelings towards him and thus share the satire.

Common to much of Warren's work, and that of many vernacular artists, is the employment of aerial perspective. With this work, the viewer is looking down on the structures which Warren has somewhat unsuccessfully attempted to present in perspective. The house seems to consist of a main building on the right and a smaller red-roofed one to its left. The orphan boy and his dog sit on a deck or veranda between these two buildings. The boy is sitting outside the door of the smaller of the

two structures. To the left of the main house a shed or barn, its entrance depicted in a peculiar way which was used by Warren in several of his pictures (see *Farm*, Fig. 41) to (unsuccessfully) convey an impression of perspective.



Fig. 41. Selby Warren, *Farm*, 1972 (detail) [SW212]

Warren's instinctive sensibility to balance the painting is very evident in this work with patches of pale colour harmonising with the darker greens and reds. He chooses a yellowish patch in the foreground as the place to write the painting's title. His signature to the right of the title is just discernible but has been painted over in a green wash which complements the dark green of the shed's roof. The pale bluish-grey frame doesn't do the painting justice. It is roughly painted and might have been of greater effect had it been dark in tone. The painting is on paper which is stuck to the frame back with red electrical tape. It has no backing and is particularly fragile.

Warren's paintings might be seen as fragments of a diary. Perhaps, like a diarist keeping his thoughts to himself, Warren initially considered his paintings to be private. But, also, like a diarist whose work is unexpectedly published and becomes popular, he was happy

to accept the recognition (and money) conferred on him from exhibitions when they finally arrived.

2.6 *Mr G Whitlam Aus PM* (Fig. 42), and *Mrs M Whitlam* (Fig. 43)

While the subjects for the majority of Warren's paintings were from his own past he also painted places and people that were contemporary to him. They, too, formed part of a record of his life which he found worth documenting in the medium he knew best – paint.

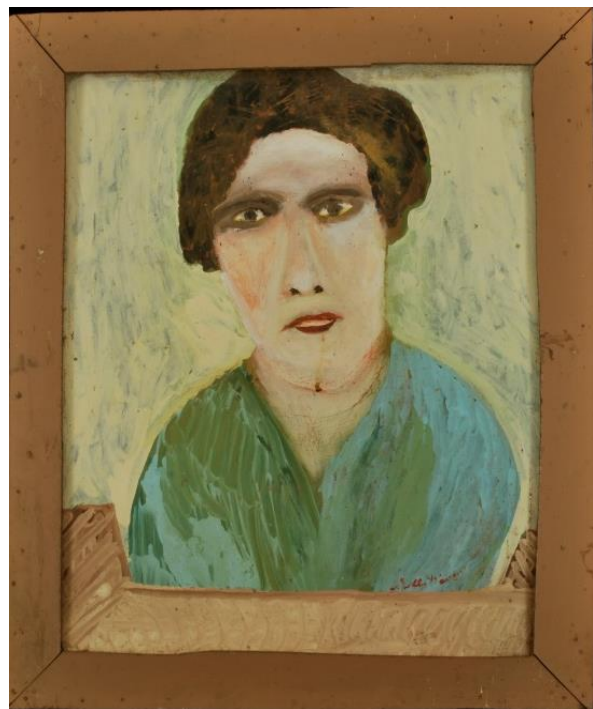
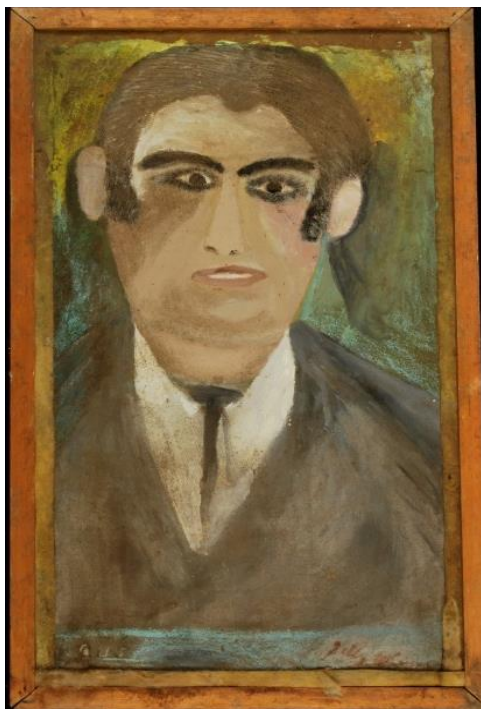


Fig. 42. Selby Warren, *Mr G Whitlam Aus PM*, 1972 [SW066]

Fig. 43. Selby Warren, *Mrs M Whitlam*, 1972 [SW101]

Warren painted many portraits and his subjects were historical figures, family members, acquaintances, sports men and women and television presenters and performers – basically anyone who interested him. He also painted politicians. These were not only Australians but also people like the US President, L. B. Johnson, who visited Australia in October 1966.

Warren was a committed Australian Labor Party (ALP) supporter. As mentioned, his father had been affected by the shearer's strike of the 1890s, which is credited with being the movement leading to the creation of the ALP, and Warren himself struggled through the Great Depression of the 1930s when unemployment reached thirty percent of the workforce in New South Wales. He believed in the union movement and its support of working people's rights and conditions of employment. So it is not surprising that he would paint portraits of Gough Whitlam, a famous, social-reformist ALP Prime Minister of Australia, and of Margaret Whitlam, his wife. However, although Warren also painted portraits of another iconic Labor Prime Minister, Ben Chifley (1885-1951), who came from Bathurst, he also portrayed conservative Prime Ministers and politicians as well and seems to have based his subject choices more on an individual's popularity or newsworthiness than for any ideologically driven reasons.

The above portraits of the Whitlams (Figs. 42 and 43) were painted in 1972, the year Gough Whitlam became Prime Minister of Australia after 23 years of conservative rule. Despite his time in office being short (1972-1975), Whitlam is regarded as a towering figure in Australian politics who changed Australian society with numerous social reforms.¹⁵² In what was a politically polarized society Whitlam was either loved or hated by supporters and opponents. He was removed from office by the Whitlam appointed Governor-General, Sir John Kerr, after a number of scandals beset members of his ministry. When Whitlam came to power in 1972 he displaced the conservative Prime Minister, Sir William (Billy) McMahon (1908-1988). In the following cartoon (Fig. 44) McMahon is relegated to the 'Out Box' on Whitlam's desk. Warren painted a portrait of

Billy McMahon (Fig. 79) who had noticeably prominent ears, which bears a recognisable likeness to the cartoonist's rendering of him.



Fig. 44. Left: Michael Atchison, *Out with the old*, 1972, 'Adelaide Advertiser'.



Right: Selby Warren, *Billy McMahon*, 1972 [SW109]

Warren painted both the Whitlams at least once more. The second known portraits of them (Figs. 45 and 46) were probably painted a year later than the first.

The picture of *Margaret Whitlam* (Fig. 45) is interesting in that she appears to be placed behind a table or desk with books in each foreground corner. However, this is uncertain as Warren often placed 'boxes' of colour in the foreground of paintings to complete the balance of the work.¹⁵³ The picture is in a handmade frame with additional small pieces



Fig. 45. Selby Warren, *Margaret Whitlam*, 1973 [SW204]



Fig. 46. Selby Warren, *Gough Whitlam*, 1973 [SW293]

of wood across each corner to hold the frame together. The portrait *Gough Whitlam* (Fig. 46) has him standing at what is probably a lectern though again, caution must be taken in explaining the objects and shapes surrounding the subjects of Warren's works. In the two earlier paintings, (figs. 42 and 43), Margaret Whitlam again has odd little balancing 'additions' painted in each of the foreground lower corners, which might represent a desk-top. The frames are handmade though stabilising small pieces of wood holding the frames together are actually on the back of the frames in these cases.

Warren's portraits of contemporary figures, whether politicians, friends or celebrities, considerably vary in size. Quite a few are small, being about the size of an A4 piece of paper. However, the above Whitlam portraits are all comparatively large measuring on average about 65-70 x 75-80 cm (unframed). All his portraits, no matter the size, were important to Warren. During his television interview, at the opening of his first Sydney exhibition (August 1972), he said he 'didn't really want sell'm' because he liked 'havin'm around'. Warren was by no means unique in his portraiture. Many other self-taught

artists, both in Australia and overseas, have painted their heroes or people who interested them.

2.7 *Piebald Pony*, (Fig. 47)

'I was a good horseman', stated Warren in his recorded memoir. A large number of his paintings include one or more horses, whether or not they are the picture's main subject.



Fig. 47. Selby Warren, *Piebald Pony*, c. 1967 [SW032]

Warren painted numerous pictures of animals, especially birds and dogs. However, he painted more horses than any other animal and *Piebald Pony* (Fig. 47) is, I think, unique amongst his extant paintings of animals.¹⁵⁴ Being made about five years before he was discovered, it is an extraordinary example of self-taught art created by Warren well

before he received 'proper' art materials from Dixon in 1971. *Piebald Pony* is painted on rough and thick brown paper using poster paints, house paint, crayon and pencil. The picture has been framed by nailing it to four pieces of wood. The side pieces have been left as found and the two strips at both the top and bottom of the painting have been decorated with paint at the top and printing, which is not decipherable, and some paint on the bottom piece. The printing on the painting possibly names the pony or its owner and would include Warren's signature (which he sometimes applies in large script two or more times to his works).

Warren, as he claimed, was a very good horseman and, according to his son Alan, had a strong affection for the many horses he owned during his lifetime. As previously noted, despite his undoubted knowledge of horses he usually painted their gait incorrectly,¹⁵⁵ though in *Piebald Pony* he is more accurate. This is quite inconsequential to the representation of the pony which is powerful and demands the viewer's attention. The painting contains many of the elements that make others of his pictures so impressive. The pony itself is crafted with authority. Paint is confidently applied using homemade brushes. The strength and vigour of the young horse is evident. This is shown by the posture of the animal with its forelegs striking out. It appears to be cantering and about to break into a gallop. The pony's mane is long and luxurious and is represented by long, thin strokes of coloured pencil and whitish paint over the black and white neck. The tail has been represented in the same way. A discordant note is the young horse's eye which is anatomically in the wrong place and a little too human in appearance to be convincing.

The palette used by Warren in this painting is limited to five colours: black, brown, white, green and khaki. The black contains brown tinges and the white is often discoloured by the darker colours and takes on a yellowish hue, though it is a clearer white in places such as the pony's chest, nose and parts in the mane as well as in the lines towards the left of the picture. The background bush is dramatically indicated with slashes of colour surrounding the pony. These swathes of paint are mostly off-white and, combined with the green and khaki base of the background, suggests movement. Saplings and smaller twigs and grasses are painted in black, brown and green. The painted pieces of wood making up the top and bottom of the frame are decorated with smudged dappled green and off-white. The pony's ears protrude above the upper stripe indicating they were probably repainted, or perhaps added, after the paint of the top stripe had dried.

The painting is compact in form and the dappled stripes at the top and bottom of the composition pull the painting together and the manner in which Warren leaves the lower two-thirds of the bottom wooden frame unpainted stabilises the picture. It is unknown whether the *Piebald Pony* portrays a horse that Warren owned or was of someone else's animal. The painting was available to be sold by the Komon Gallery in 1972 and had been photographed a year earlier. If it had been of another person's pony the fact that Warren had the painting in his possession when discovered by Dixon indicates that it was not given to that person, and probably not shown to him or her.¹⁵⁶

Piebald Pony is an especially striking painting. As mentioned, Warren painted many pictures of horses over a number of years. The later examples demonstrate a change in the way he painted, especially after receiving art materials. While it is often stated that artists like Warren appear on the scene 'fully formed' and often don't change their 'style'

of painting over many years, Warren did adapt to using the new materials and some of his paintings completed after 1971 appear freer in the way he applied acrylic paints in particular. Some examples of other horse paintings are provided as Figs. 83, 84 and 85. The dates of these works progress from 1968 to 1972 to 1973 and appear to support my contention that Warren's technique was modified a little over a few years reflecting his mastery of new materials.

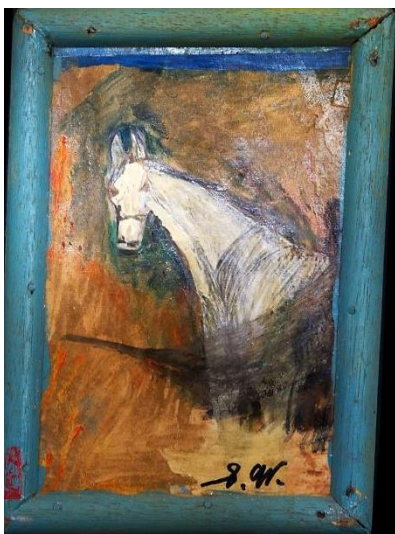


Fig. 48. Selby Warren, *Grey Colt*, 1968 [SW040]

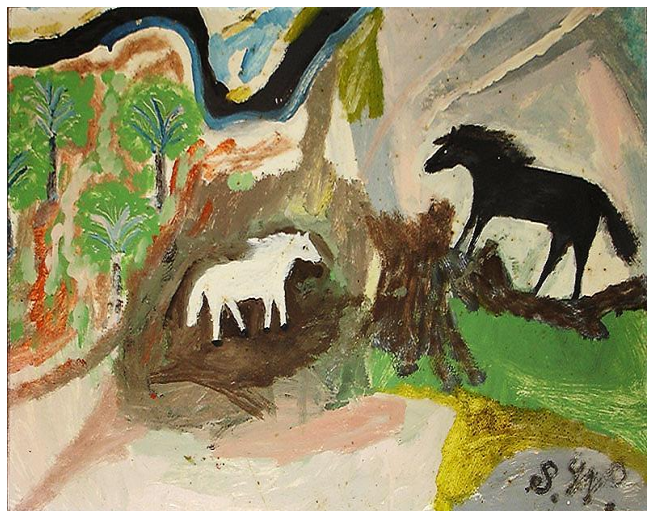


Fig. 49. Selby Warren, *Two Thoroughbreds*, 1972 [SW042]



Fig. 50. Selby Warren, *Gunsynd*, 1973 [SW039]

Grey Colt (Fig. 48) was painted a year or two after *Piebald Pony* (Fig. 47) and like it, before the discovery of Warren. It is not as ambitious as *Piebald Pony* and uses pencil and water colour only. Its small size (32 x 14 cm or 12 x 5 inches including the frame) has somewhat restricted the artist but is nonetheless similar in certain respects to *Piebald Pony*. The horse itself has real character and, in turning its head to gaze at the viewer, appears alert and interested. The use of pencil line shading on the horse's shoulder and the sweeping lines across the chest area provides movement in an otherwise static pose. Two years later, and after he had been using 'proper' materials for at least a year, *Two Thoroughbreds* (Fig. 49) demonstrates a different method of painting. While the wonderful slabs and slashes of colour continue, the acrylic paint is applied more loosely than with the two previously discussed works. Trees and what is probably a river snaking across the top left of the painting are simply rendered yet are very effective in producing what is almost an idyll.

Gunsynd (Fig. 50) was a famous race horse. Known colloquially as the 'Goondiwindi Grey,' after the town of his birth, Goondiwindi in country New South Wales, Gunsynd raced from 1969 to 1973, winning all but one of his races. This picture, made in 1973, is drawn using oil pastels a then relatively new medium that Warren seems to have been comfortable using. Unlike his acrylic and oil paintings he here creates blocks of colour by covering areas of the paper with solid oil pastel. The sweeping lines used to convey a feeling of movement are absent but Warren has used strokes of oil pastel and, with the blocks of colour, these achieve a feeling of urgency, particularly around the forequarters, as the horse gallops forward.

Any review of a small selection of paintings by an artist who produced hundreds of works is restricted in its attempt to analyse the artist's output. I have considered a few of Warren's paintings (and the themes they represent) and have attempted to discuss works that are representative of his *oeuvre*. As mentioned, his ability with various materials does change a little with his later works,¹⁵⁷ being freer in appearance yet less complex in execution. Whether this does demonstrate any progress in Warren's art can't be confirmed. A stated distinction of self-taught artists is that they appear 'fully formed' when first discovered and uniquely continue making their art in the same style over their often short productive period. Bernard L. Herman writes of the American artist Thornton Dial (1928-2016): 'his....arrival on the art scene fully-formed....'¹⁵⁸ It may be assumed that if Warren's manner of painting becomes less detailed and more fluid as he aged it could well be due to increasing physical infirmity as well as his adoption of accepted art materials which were easier to use than the house paints and other found ingredients he earlier depended upon in creating his work.

Warren often painted a world that had passed and so memory and myth were important elements in their content. While he seems to have been content that they were, for him at least, realistic representations of not only the past but also of current subjects Warren did also try his hand at 'abstracts'. It is assumed he saw pictures of abstract art in magazines, newspapers and television. He also visited the then Civic Art Gallery in Bathurst at least once in the late 1960s¹⁵⁹ and may have seen one or two examples of abstraction there. The abstracts he completed were done sporadically, so it cannot be suggested he entered into some sort of 'abstraction phase'. He just seemed to have occasionally painted an abstract.



Fig. 51. Selby Warren, *Abstract*, 1970 [SW115]



Fig. 52. Selby Warren, *Abstract 'Warren'*, c. 1972 [SW095]



Fig. 53. Selby Warren, *Abstract*, 1969 [SW007]

Warren's abstracts appear somewhat stolid in appearance and 'clunky' in execution. He also painted figurative works like *Flight* (Fig. 54) and *Sydney Opera House* (Fig. 55) which were more abstract in presentation than others of his work.

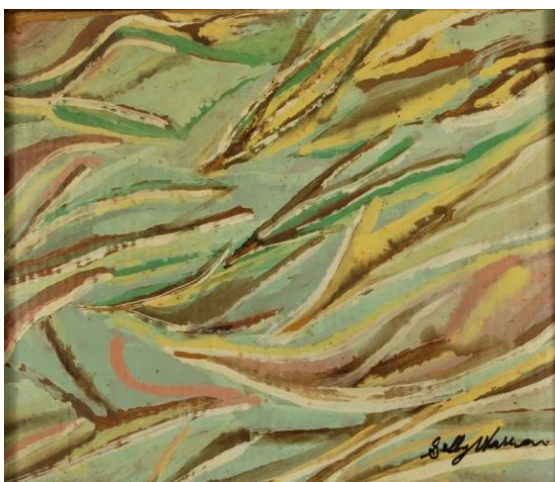


Fig. 54. Selby Warren, *Flight*, 1969 [SW067]



Fig. 55. Selby Warren, *Sydney Opera House*, 1972 [SW079]

2.8 Warren's sketches

Warren's sketchbooks offer further insight into his artwork and contain a few renditions of odd subjects which are difficult to interpret. The pictures are mostly completed works, though some are not. A few are of flowers and insects (a butterfly, moth and cicada) and some are of birds. They appear to be drawn from memory rather than life but almost nothing can be taken for granted when considering the output of an artist like Warren.

Warren made most of his sketches in exercise books and old diaries which he recycled year after year. The works are generally freer in style than most of his painted works and are made using coloured pencils, crayons, felt-nib pens, ballpoint pens, watercolour, acrylic and house paint. His later sketches are in sketch books and incorporate felt-nibbed marker pens which he first used after being given them by Dixon in 1971.



Fig 56. Selby Warren, *Bathurst Park* c. 1966 [SW336]



Fig. 57. Selby Warren, *Farm Shed*, c. 1970 [SW379]

Many of the sketches are rough drawings but quite a few are finished works, especially the earlier examples which, like many of his paintings, incorporate a variety of mediums in a single work. *Bathurst Park* Fig. 56 is such a picture. It uses a combination of ballpoint pen, coloured pencil, watercolour and crayon and represents a carillon tower in a Bathurst park. The manner in which the parked cars are represented on their sides displays Warren's inability to indicate perspective. Yet the small white and blue structure at the left of the grassed area appears correct in its perspective. In execution, if not in subject-matter, *Bathurst Park* is reminiscent of the work of another self-taught artist, the Cornishman Alfred Wallis (1855-1942) (see Chapter 5.3). *Farm Shed* (Fig. 57) again demonstrates problems he experienced representing perspective with the farm house showing three walls and three planes of the roof. An ungainly addition is placed at the front of the dwelling whereas the rendition of both a tree and fence in the foreground are finely rendered.

The subject matter in the sketches ranges widely and includes an odd naked man, possibly sitting in a bath or puddle apparently displaying his genitals, (Fig. 58), and a neither erotic nor explicit drawing entitled *Native Making Love* (Fig. 59). *Native Making Love* depicts two androgynous figures, neither of which appears at all amorously inclined. Just what Warren was attempting to portray and whether he was making a comment on aboriginal behaviour is unclear.



Fig. 58. Selby Warren, *Naked Man*, 1971 [SW370]



Fig. 59. Selby Warren, *Native Making Love*, 1967 [SW383]

A sketchbook containing several works using predominantly felt-nib marker pens such as in *Boys in Shop* (Fig. 60) also has two works which are, for Warren, most unusual in his use of colour.



Fig. 60. Selby Warren, *Boys in Shop*, 1973 [SW125]

Probably created in 1973, one represents a *Man in Profile* (Fig. 61) and the other a man wearing a hat and apparently sitting atop or between two pillars: *Man on Red Pillars* (Fig.

62). Both use a highly effective white wash that softens the otherwise bright colours that show through from underneath. Whether these works are examples of Warren experimenting with methods of applying acrylic paint is unknown but they are unique amongst his works.



Fig. 61. Selby Warren *Man in Profile*, c. 1973 [SW331]



Fig. 62. Selby Warren, *Man on Red Pillars*, c. 1973 [SW329]

There are about forty extant pictures in sketchbooks. Interestingly, none of them appear to be preparatory drawings for paintings though some are of similar subjects. The two sketches *Horse Sketch* (Figs. 63) and *The Orphan Boy and His Dog* (Fig. 65) are of subjects Warren painted in larger works but neither could be considered a preparatory sketch though the portrait of the horse has similarities, particularly in the way Warren has the animal's heads and placed a sweep of lines over the chest of both horses:



Fig. 63. Selby Warren, *Horse Sketch*, c. 1966 [SW346]



Fig. 64. Selby Warren, *Grey Colt*, 1968 [SW040]

The sketch *he Orphan Boy and His Dog* has no resemblance to the 1972 painting *The Orphan Boy and His Dog* :



Fig. 65. Selby Warren, *The Orphan Boy and His Dog*, Sketch c. 1969 [SW365]

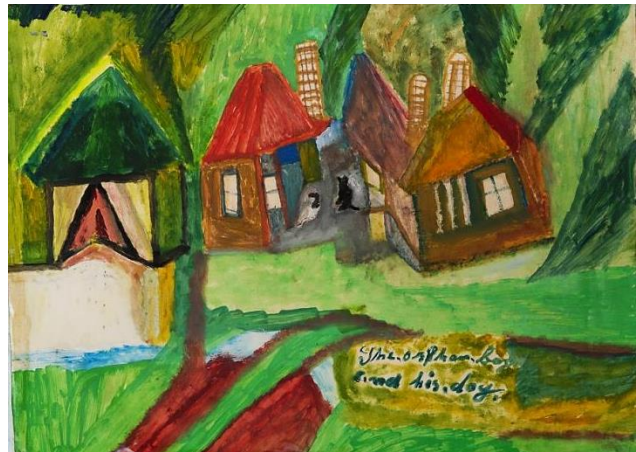


Fig. 66. Selby Warren, *The Orphan Boy and His Dog*, 1972 [SW111]

The sketches which are rarely titled are often powerful and impressive works, despite their diminutive sizes. Amongst them is the watercolour, *The Drovers Wife* (Fig. 67), which must have been a portrait of some rather irritable individual known to Warren. Her prickly expression and stance are depicted superbly.



Fig. 67. Selby Warren, *The Drovers Wife*, Sketch c. 1969 [SW334]

Bird in Flight (Fig. 68) is a later, felt-nib marker drawing. It is a vivid representation of flight and demonstrates Warren's knowledge of wildlife. The composition of the drawing with the bird's body off-centre adds drama to the subject. The five Australian animals represented in *Animals* (Fig. 69) while lacking intensity, provide an interesting pattern and use of colour. The static figures are in marked contrast to the vigour of the flying bird (Fig. 68).



Fig. 68. Selby Warren, *Bird in Flight*, c. 1973 [SW404]



Fig. 69. Selby Warren, *Animals*, Sketch c. 1971 [SW398]

The two 1973 sketches shown at *House* (Fig. 70) and *Performers* (Fig. 71) in crayon and felt-nib pen, are from the same sketchbook as the softer-coloured drawings *Man in Profile* (Fig. 61) and *Man on Red Pillars* (Fig. 62). Both are brightly coloured, particularly the house (Fig. 70) which is almost garish. As usual for Warren the perspective of the lines on the yellow roof is technically incorrect though at least in this instance we are shown only two walls of the building rather than his usual three. The subject matter of *Performers* (Fig. 71) is open to interpretation, with a female balancing precariously or dancing on what may be a plank. She holds a stick while an odd green-clothed man sits on a chair with his arms crossed over his lower abdomen as though protecting himself. An oddly-shaped piece of furniture, possibly a padded stool, is placed in the right foreground on what might be another plank.



Fig. 70 Selby Warren, *House*, 1973 [SW409]



Fig. 71. Selby Warren, *Performers* (?), 1973 [SW330]

2.9 Handmade artworks by Warren

In addition to his paintings and sketches, Warren made roughly finished dolls and toys for his children and grandchildren as well as jewellery fashioned out of wire and pebbles. None of the toys or jewellery survives. Warren made a few small sculptures from clay,

the only known piece remaining being *Painted unfired clay head* (Fig. 72). He also made musical instruments from tins, wood and wire such as *A 'guitar' or 'violin'* (Fig. 73) and rugged pieces of furniture, some of which are still owned by his son, Alan.¹⁶⁰ An example of Warren's carpentry is discussed in Chapter 4.5 below.

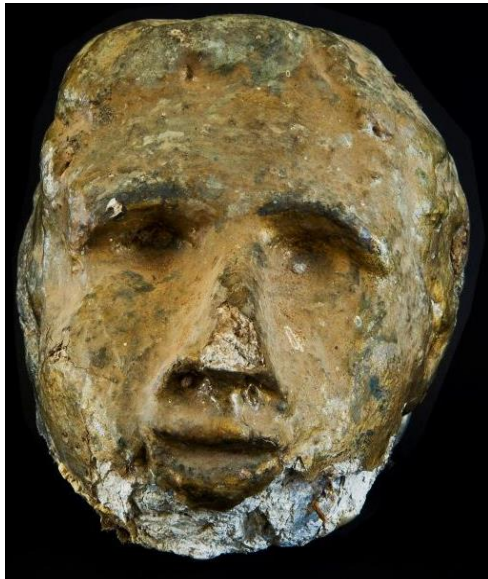


Fig. 72. Left: Selby Warren, Painted unfired clay head. c. 1970

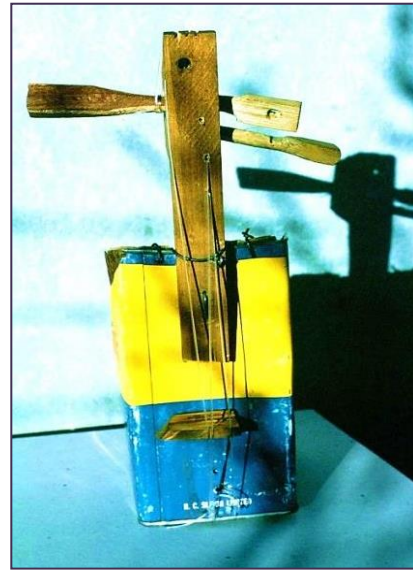


Fig. 73. A 'guitar' or 'violin' handmade by Warren using an oil tin, wood and fencing wire. c. 1965

A *bricoleur* approach to making a variety of objects is not unusual for self-taught artists. Most were people used to fashioning items from readily available materials they found. Their attitude was a 'make-do and mend' one and, while many of the objects they handmade were not aesthetically pleasing to the eye, they were functional. This approach was often based on the practical fact that a lack of money made it impossible for them to purchase manufactured objects so they had to make their own versions of what they needed. What is of particular interest regarding self-taught artists is that they often used the tinkering skills they possessed to make jewellery and other things as a part of their desire to produce work that was an articulation of the need they felt to

express themselves and not items of practical use. In many cases, like the Portuguese self-taught wood sculptor, Jose dos Santos (1904-1996), the American fibre sculptor, Judith Scott (1943-2005), the Indian sculpture-garden creator, Nek Chand Saini (1924-2015) or the American stone mason, William Edmondson (1874-1951), various forms of sculpture and constructs became the major method of expression for artists. Others fabricated extraordinary buildings or decorated large natural forms – *bricoleurs* such as the French rock carver, Adolphe Julien Fouré (1839-1910), his fellow Frenchman and builder of Le palais idéal, Ferdinand Cheval (1836-1924), the Swiss creator of his 'visionary counterworld', Bruno Weber (1931-2011) and the American 'Salvation Mountain' builder, Leonard Knight (1931-2014). For others, like Warren painting was the preferred form of expression. In Australia larger scale self-made artworks such as sculptures and buildings were not produced. Warren's hand-building his own home was not a form of artistic, *bricoleur* expression but rather a house for him and his family to occupy. It did, though, display his do-it-yourself, make-do attitude towards life which, in the case of his home, was driven by financial more than artistic needs. In Warren's case a further use of *bricolage* was exhibited with the frames he made for many of his pictures and these remarkable embellishments to his paintings merit particular attention.

2.10 Warren's frames

Several of the frames Warren fitted to his works might be considered works of art in their own right and are deserving of separate study. A Warren frame is sometimes so integral to a work that it is difficult to imagine it without it. In Warren's view a frame was a vital part of a painting as a whole. They finished a work ¹⁶¹ and he made and decorated frames to complete his paintings. He seems to have believed that the frame

was an essential component of making a 'picture' a 'work of art'. Warren was poor and before his discovery by Dixon was using any medium he could lay his hands on to paint his pictures. Ready-made frames were too expensive for him so he created his own from whatever was available as he believed an unframed picture wasn't finished. Also, Warren seems to have really enjoyed 'improving' his pictures by placing them in a frame of some sort and later, when he had access to some factory-made frames he continued making his own as well. Warren does not appear to have been attempting to make professional-looking frames. For his earliest frames the timber he used was often completely untreated and looks very much like kindling wood he has simply sawn into appropriate lengths to create something approximating a frame – see Parrot (Fig. 74). With the work *Winston Churchill* (Fig. 75) rough pieces of wood have been nailed onto an old, apparently unused, artists palette on which has been attached the portrait.



Fig. 74. Selby Warren, *Parrot*, 1965 [SW010]
Note - part of the cardboard cereal box on which the painting was made protruding above the left top of the frame.



Fig. 75. Selby Warren, *Winston Churchill*, 1966 [SW050]

Warren also used discarded objects, such as decorative mirror frames, into which he could fit a picture. *Man* (Fig. 76) shows such use of a mirror frame though Warren could not resist further 'improving' the existing frame by adding white paint. His portrait of the famous Australian artist William Dobell, *W. Dobell* (Fig. 77) is mounted in what appears to have been a wardrobe fixture of some sort.

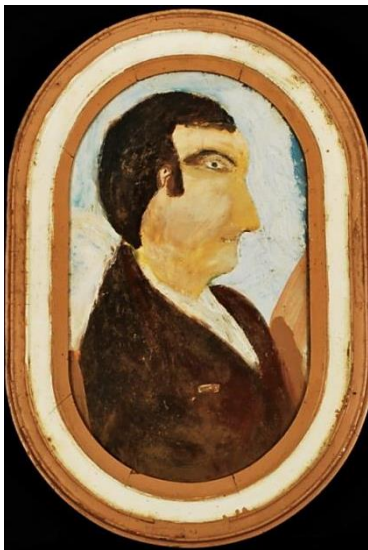


Fig. 76. Selby Warren, *Man*, c. 1969 [SW065]



Fig. 77. Selby Warren, *W. Dobell*, 1966 [SW 177]

Fitting a picture into a found frame.

He edged paintings with plastic electrical tape (invariably bright red) as with *Man, Dog, Car* (Fig. 78) or sometimes pasted feathers, grasses, pebbles or twigs around a painting's edge as with *Fire Dance* (Fig. 99).



Fig. 78. Selby Warren, *Man, Dog, Car*. 1969 [SW113]. Use of electrical tape to frame a painting

Warren painted directly onto glass objects ¹⁶² like the rear windows of old soft-top cars so that the metal glass surround served to frame the picture (Fig. 79).



Fig. 79. Paintings directly onto the glass of 1930s soft-top car rear windows [SW007] and [SW008] respectively 177]

On at least one occasion he painted a portrait directly onto a glass window pane and roughly sawed off the rest of the window so that the painting appeared framed; *Portrait* (Figs. 80 and 81).

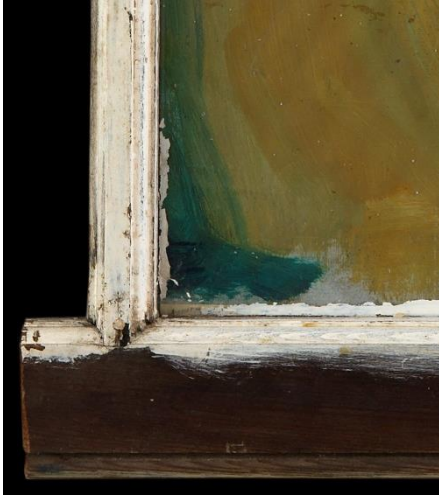


Fig. 80. Painting on a window glass pane with frame sawn to produce the effect of it being a picture-frame, then roughly decorated with white enamel paint. Detail of Fig. 82.

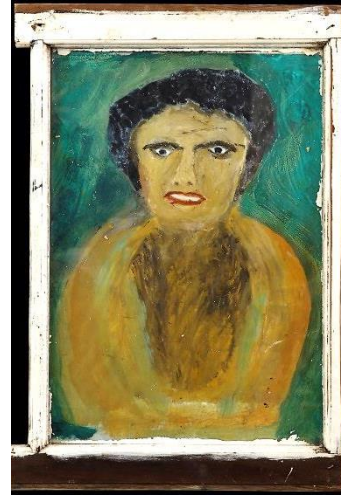


Fig. 81. Selby Warren, *Portrait*, c. 1970 [SW102]

When painting on a sheet of tin, sometimes a found or pilfered road sign or advertising sign, Warren would leave a strip of the metal unpainted around the picture's edge so giving the appearance of a frame. *Death of an Alien* (Fig. 82) was painted onto a discarded metal sign and the whitish background of the original metal has been left unpainted above and below the picture.¹⁶³

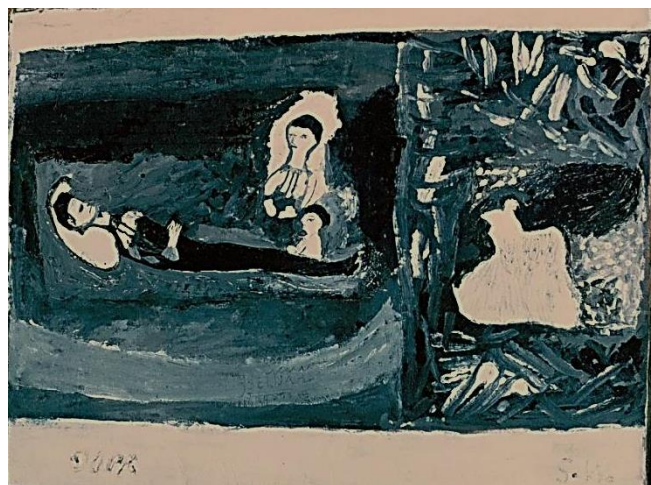


Fig. 82. Selby Warren, *Death of an Alien*, c. 1971 [SW191]

Warren also sometimes 'framed' the flat tin with his ubiquitous red electrical tape which had the added benefit of covering the sharp metal edges. In the 1960s he often used unexpected metal objects as a support, including discarded cooking pans with the rims left unpainted to frame the picture: *My Dogs* (Fig. 83).



Fig. 83. Selby Warren, *My Dogs*, 1964, painted on a metal pie dish [SW026]

In addition to metal, Warren painted on old board often from dilapidated buildings around Trunkey Creek. On one occasion he framed a painting by sticking cooking dough around the edge directly onto the board. He then painted the dough. However, as the dough aged it fell away from the board leaving as much of the board exposed as was covered, see *On the Road to Goulburn* (Fig. 84)



Fig.84. Left: Detail of the painting (right) framed using cooking dough stuck to a sheet of board.

Right: Selby Warren, *On the Road to Goulburn* 1910,, 1968 ¹⁶⁴ [SW224]

On another work, Warren nailed strips of corrugated cardboard (from a cardboard box) directly onto a painting to frame it. Strangely he also edged the actual picture with thin strips of wood (Fig. 85)



Fig. 85. Detail of a plain cardboard-framed painting with timber edging around painting itself

Warren's handmade wooden frames vary from simple to complex. His most basic frames were made using four pieces of wood nailed together at each corner (Fig. 86) and then often painted, though occasionally left plain. When he painted the frames, the colour (and paint) was usually one he had used in the painting. He used any pieces of wood

available including the slats from the back of a chair: *Mother and Child* (Fig. 87) Warren has repeated the line of the white-painted bent wood by over-painting white lines around the lower part of the picture and aboriginal-style decoration indicating that he added these after framing to better balance the final composition.



Fig. 86. Simple wooden frame (detail)



Fig. 87, Selby Warren, *Mother and Child*, [SW057]

Quite a few of Warren's wooden frames, though quite basic in construction, are decorated either by carving (Figs. 88 and 89), painting (Figs. 90, 91) or adding additional items such as feathers, mica, sand or anything else he felt added to their impact. Some frames he used were manufactured and he was probably given these or found them. They too have decoration added, sometimes a thick and uneven stripe, often pale on a darker painted frame (Fig. 92).



Fig. 88



Fig. 89



Fig. 90



Fig. 91



Fig. 92

In addition to these fairly uncomplicated decorations, Warren sometimes surpassed himself with remarkable carved and painted frames which are often almost as impressive as the paintings they contain and, in one or two cases are, I believe, better (eg. Fig. 95).



Fig. 93. Selby Warren, *Wild horse Yard*, 1965 [SW221]



Fig. 94. Detail of the frame shown in Fig 93.

Warren's painting, *Wild Horse Yard* (Fig. 93) is unlike most of his works in the limited palette it employs. But the painting, combined with its remarkable carved and painted frame is a *tour de force*. The detail shown at Fig. 94 reveals the rough saw-cut carving which occurs on the right and left pieces of wood making up the frame. They are

painted in same green paint used liberally in the picture. The top and bottom pieces of wood that complete the frame are flat and painted in the ochre and brown which are the other dominant colours of the composition. All the paint used both for the painting and the frame is Ripolin ¹⁶⁵ and the overall effect is masculine and stunning.

Decorative additions to Warren's frames are sometimes quite fine and delicate (Figs. 95, 96 and 97), sometimes blotchy and almost careless (Fig. 98) yet the style of decoration invariably suits the painting. An example is the dark feathers glued to the turquoise-blue frame in *Fire Dance*, Fig. 99 which pick up the colours of the rather poor quality colour-pencil picture itself.



Fig. 95. Selby Warren, *Portrait*, 1970 [SW157]



Fig. 96. Decorated frame (detail)



Fig. 97. Decorated frame (detail)



Fig. 98. Selby Warren, *Trapeze Artists*, 1968 [SW423]



Fig. 99. Selby Warren, *Fire Dance*, c. 1970 [SW052]

More complex frames used several pieces of timber which were sometimes attached one on top of another to so that the corners of the frame meet or were added to the inner sides to properly surround and hold the painting. *Fire Dance*, Fig. 99, is an example of such a frame. Almost as interesting as the frame itself is its reverse, with pieces of wood added rather haphazardly for reinforcement (Fig. 100). This painting was made well before Warren visited Sydney to attend his first exhibition at Rudy Komon's Gallery and would most likely have been based on his memories of Sydney's Harbour Bridge which he would have seen when at the Victoria Barracks in Sydney during the Second World War.



Fig. 100. Selby Warren, *Sydney Harbour Bridge*, 1967 [SW222]



Fig.101. Reverse of Fig. 99.

Warren was not gentle in the way he handled his paintings. He would usually nail them directly to the frame or nail the frame onto the picture. He would also cut his pictures so that they would fit into a found frame. In one example (Fig. 102), where some of the removed pieces were kept, we can see how he approached the task of fitting a painting of a stag into a small manufactured frame (Fig. 103). Warren has even cut off the last two letters of his signature on the right hand side of the painting.



Fig. 102. Pieces of Fig.103 removed to fit in a found frame



Fig.103. Selby Warren, *Stag*, c. 1971 [SW281]

Warren also nailed his handmade frames over his signature on numerous occasions perhaps demonstrating he believed framing a painting was of more importance than letting a viewer know who the artist was.

A number of his paintings which are now unframed, have had frames at some time as the pictures show damage where a frame has been removed, or may have fallen off. It would seem that Warren would roughly detach a work from its frame and often re-use the frame for another painting: *Uncle Bill and Sebastian* (Fig. 104).

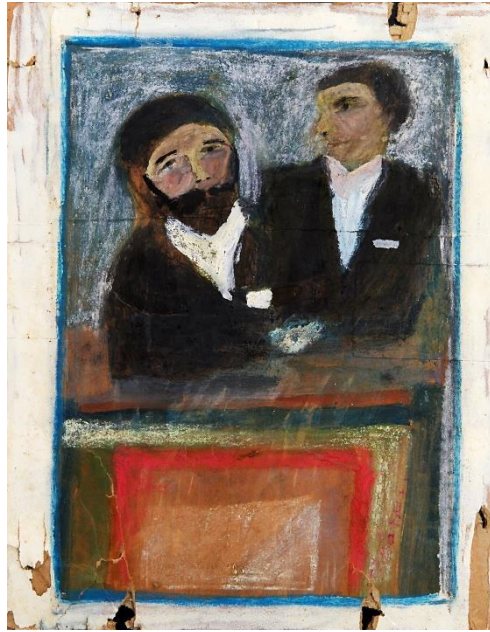


Fig.104. Selby Warren, *Uncle Bill and Sebastian*, 1970. [SW106].

Note damage where an attached frame has been torn away.

After his discovery by Dixon in 1971 Warren seems to have put less effort into framing his works. He would sometimes make frames for his later paintings but these were invariably less decorative. It is possible Dixon suggested to Warren that plain wooden frames were acceptable to the artworld into which he had introduced Warren.¹⁶⁶ Even having plain wooden frames on his works did not stop Warren from painting the frames rather than leaving them untreated. This was usually done using a single colour. Several of his early-1970s paintings have the frames painted in a pale brown, a colour popular at the time amongst home decorators. The number of frames in this colour suggest he had a can of the paint and used it regularly when painting a frame (*Palm Beach Sydney*, Fig. 105). As can be imagined, use of such a definite colour is more successful on some paintings than on others.

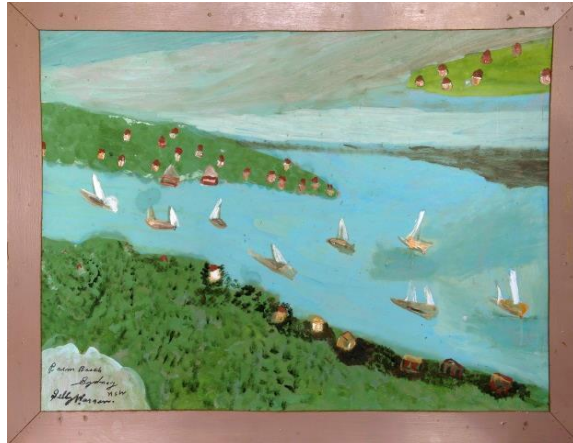


Fig.105 Selby Warren, *Palm Beach Sydney*, 1973 [SW117]

The frames Warren constructed, though sometimes bizarre, all served a purpose which, in his view, enhanced a painting or, at the least, 'finished' it.

Warren was not unique in the way he made and decorated his early frames. Other self-taught artists similarly embellished their paintings. The well-known American artist, William Hawkins (Figs. 106 and 107), usually painted a decorative border around his large paintings.



Fig. 106. William Hawkins, *Coral Lion*, 1989

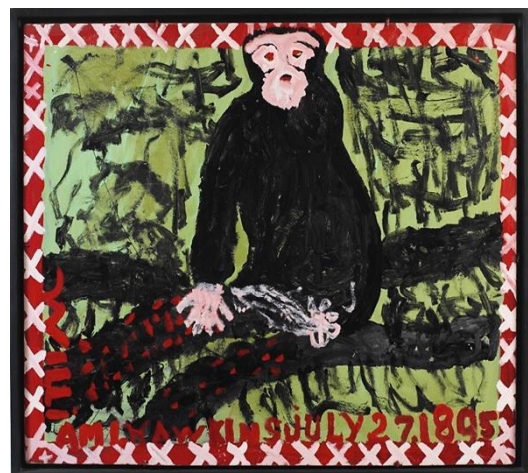


Fig. 107. William Hawkins, *Monkey on a Limb*, n.d.

Another African American self-taught artist who made wooden frames similar to some by Warren and also added decorations was Purvis Young (1943-2010) (Figs. 108 and 109).



Fig. 108. Purvis Young, *Untitled*, n.d.



Fig. 109. Purvis Young, *Warriors in the Stars*, n.d.

Like Warren, several self-taught artists believed that framing a painting was an important element of the work as a whole and many of them, again like Warren, moved to using manufactured frames as they became more popular and absorbed the expectations of the marketplace.¹⁶⁷

Once discovered and producing paintings to meet the demands of three exhibitions in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, Warren made fewer his own frames and instead used ready-made ones. The few handmade ones he did use were of lesser complexity and interest losing that additional expression of Warren's elemental skills that was so obvious in the earlier frames. His change in frames was similar to the effect that receiving professional art materials from Dixon had on his paintings. Warren produced his most notable paintings, which were usually completed by adding handmade decorative frames,

before his art was encouraged by Dixon and Komon.¹⁶⁸ Despite my belief that the quality lessened in some ways this is a subjective view.

*

In this chapter I have discussed Warren's major themes and his paintings and drawings as artworks rather than only as representations of his lifestyle. I have also considered the frames Warren made for many of his works and how this was similar to the approach adopted by a number of other self-taught painters towards enhancing their works.

I will next examine the concept of 'the tribe of one', an unusual and, I believe important, phenomenon initially described by the British jazz musician, writer and modern art enthusiast George Melly more than 35 years ago. Warren and other self-taught artists are all members of this tribe which, I argue, uniquely separates them from other artists whether of the establishment or of other non-establishment defined types (tribal and naïve for example). I will then address the directly related question: why self-taught artists paint the way they do? I will discuss the sorts of materials used by Warren and others of his 'tribe' and then will look closely at the influence of memory and folklore on their works.

Chapter 3

3.1 The 'tribe of one' phenomenon

Warren was by no means unique in his experiences as a self-taught artist. These artists, whether in Australia, Europe or America, mostly received no formal art training (or, at most, very little) and were unaware of the artworld. They usually worked in unskilled, jobs and often were uneducated. Many spent much of their lives in humble rural or urban environments and, with regard to their art and sometimes their lifestyles were isolated from their communities to varying extents by choice or circumstance. The majority of these autodidacts took up art-making after finishing their working lives and so often appeared on the scene in older age. They were invariably discovered by a member of the artworld, sometimes by recognised artists, dealers or art aficionados of one kind or another who promoted them in varying ways, often gave them art materials and provided them with the opportunity to have their works shown. Like Warren their art often displayed technical limitations which seemed not to concern them at all and, again like him, what they did and how they did it was enough to satisfy them. They did not entertain thoughts of developing or 'improving' their artistic skills but accepted the abilities they held.

In 1981 George Melly published his book *A Tribe of One, Great Naïve Painters of the British Isles*.¹⁶⁹ In it he wrote: 'The naïve painter is a solitary primitive, a tribe of one' a term which for me succinctly sums up the position that self-taught artists occupy in their societies. Despite being large in number and functioning in a variety of societies, they pursue their vocation individually and are unknown to each other. While it is accepted that a 'tribe' is generally thought to be a collective identity exhibiting through its

collective behaviour a common cultural identity,¹⁷⁰ self-taught artists, alone in their artistic pursuit and not part of a communal endeavour are, instead, a tribe of one.¹⁷¹ Melly's use of the word 'tribe' in the context of his phrase appears based on the idea that tribes are made up of 'primitive' people more than 'a collective identity'. Though producing an art identifiably 'naïve' in genre, their singularity in producing that art places them in a unique position dissimilar to other groupings of artists. They create an art which, though displaying some similarities to the work of others of their kind, is disconnected from it. The element that Melly sees as loosely linking the art is its primitivism so the 'tribal' aspect of what he calls 'naïve' art is the art itself rather than the individuals who produce it. They remain unaware of each other and of each other's art. The artists themselves are not a tribe or grouping of like artists but a scattering of singular people whose paintings are recognisably similar in their 'primitive style' and subject matter. In addition, each one seems to have a complete worldview and cosmology, like any society, and yet they are the only ones who are part of it: dispersed yet a tribe of one person.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) defines the word 'tribe' as 'a social division in a traditional society consisting of families or communities linked by social, economic, religious or blood ties, with a common culture and dialect.'¹⁷² In applying this definition to self-taught artists it is the cohesion implied in the OED's definition which self-taught artists lack on a practical level. Melly turns the dictionary definition on its head and explains his 'tribe of one' in a way that underlines the complexity involved in characterising these artists.

To me this curious phenomenon, occurring in diverse societies, is a manifestation of a compulsion felt by many self-taught artists to spontaneously express themselves. This supports the belief that a particular level of artistic ability is innate in us all including, of course, self-taught artists. As Colin Rhodes states: 'artmaking for most people.....is a spontaneous impulse.'¹⁷³ Some individuals put this urge to practical use and are able to develop it to become accepted as mainstream artists, whereas others, unable to do so, either through opportunity or talent, remain content with limited technical achievements. Self-taught artists, who fit into this last category seem unaware that their artistic endeavours might be considered technically limited and persist in producing work. Unlike many professional artists, self-taught artists almost never deliberately seek the approval of the artworld and continue creating whether or not 'discovered' by its members. Numerous self-taught artists, including well-known people like Alfred Wallis (1855-1942), Bill Traylor (1854-1949) and Grandma Moses (1860-1961), as well as Warren himself, produced art for years before being noticed and promoted by an art professional, and the compulsion they had to paint was unaffected by their discoveries.

The unexpected arrival of such a singular artist in a society is unusual and considered as such by the rest of that society. In a way the appearance of a lone self-taught artist might be likened to a bird flying over rugged terrain and dropping a seed¹⁷⁴ from which a single flower sprouts, growing alone in an otherwise barren landscape.¹⁷⁵ Such a 'flower', unless discovered by someone with appropriate connections in the artworld, might exist almost unnoticed until it has wilted and returned to the soil. But it does grow whether noticed or not.

Warren was an exemplar of the 'tribe of one' concept. He lived in the small rural town of Trunkey Creek in New South Wales, Australia. His contemporaries in Trunkey Creek, though generally supportive of him as a member of that community, were bemused by his interest in making art. In what was a conservative, male-dominated society with almost no cultural interests, having one of their own spend his time painting pictures was inexplicable and Warren was made aware that his art was frowned upon. Yet he was not excluded from society and so was an isolate only with regard to his artistic activities. Trunkey Creek's residents rallied behind Warren as one of their own after his discovery by Dixon in 1971 when they became concerned that he might be taken advantage of by 'slick', city people of a kind generally distrusted in the bush.

Warren was one of eleven children, with almost no formal schooling. His knowledge of art and artists was negligible and he had no understanding of the art market. When discovered he was given contemporary art materials by Dixon but before this he used whatever was available. Warren was a great recycler, painting on butcher's paper, cardboard from boxes, discarded wood, tin, glass and any other surfaces that would hold paint. He even made paint brushes out of his wife's and his own hair. He created his own frames and decorated them with whatever he felt worth attaching. Warren 'made do' with his art and with anything else he was crafting.

To varying degrees many other self-taught artists in Australia matched Warren's experiences with their art and all of them were discovered by members of the artworld in advance of being presented by them into the art scene. Well known Australian self-taught artists who came to public attention in the early late 1950s and exhibited in the

1960s, a few years ahead of Warren's appearance, included Sam Byrne (1883-1978), Charles Callins (1887-1982), Matilda Lister (1889-1965) and Irvine Homer (1919-1980). They were all discovered by artworld insiders who promoted them into their world. These artist's backgrounds varied yet they were each related in their singularity and idiosyncratic methods and world views.

Warren was discovered later than most and towards the end of the period of interest in self-taught art in Australia, which lasted from the 1950s to about 1980, with the peak in the 1960s (see Chapters 1.2 and 4.7). Warren had sketched and painted a few works before he retired from physical work and concentrated on his art in 1963. Before Dixon came across him (see Chapter 3) and he was propelled into the gallery scene by the Sydney art dealer, Rudy Komon, Warren had worked in isolation for eight years, expressing in paint and other materials his memories and experiences. Though of the same vintage as Byrne, Callins, Lister and Homer his discovery several years after them places Warren in a unique position. In a way the earlier group of self-taught artists developed into part of a community (or tribe) of their own, and a few of them came to know of each other, especially in Broken Hill which became known as a centre for self-taught artists.¹⁷⁶ They became thought of as a group of home grown 'naïve' artists of interest to modernists in the 1960s, a time of profound change in attitudes towards cultural influences in Australia (which is discussed in detail in Chapter 4). By 'missing the boat' of the 1960s and appearing in galleries a decade later, Warren has not been seen as part of that 1960s 'community' of self-taught artists. The few books written on self-taught art in Australia were mostly published in the early 1970s before Warren was discovered or exhibited, which meant that he does not appear in any early editions of

them. But historically he belongs with the better known artists of the 1960s. His works are superb examples of self-taught art and, arguably, outshine most of those of the 1960s group. Yet, because of timing, he was considered separately and independently.

Self-taught artists in Europe and America had very similar experiences to those in Australia though they initially gained attention many years earlier than was the case in the Antipodes. Yet all were part of a community of one kind or another. Just as professional artists are part of an artworld community, so institutionalised *brut* artists such as Adolf Wölfli or Aloïse Corbaz were inevitably part of a community – one that was centred on asylums in which they lived for most of their lives. Other self-taught artists who, like Warren, were not institutionalised, such as John Serl (1894-1993), Horace Pippin (1888-1946), Minnie Evans (1892-1987) and Louis Vivin (1861-1936) were all accepted as members of their own communities. But as *artists* they belonged to a separate community a 'community' that was, in fact, the 'tribe of one'. With self-taught artists being thought of as members of a tribe of one they are singular and are difficult to place into the equivalent of a 'movement'. When defining art movements like the German Expressionists or the Impressionists the individual members of the movements are considered like-minded people with comparable objectives behind the art they produce. Self-taught artists are different having their artistic endeavours encapsulated in the distinctive idea of a tribe of one. Their very insularity from each other is part of what defines them.

At this point I wish to address what I call 'self-taught' art in this thesis.¹⁷⁷ This type of art has attracted a wide variety of names since the start of the twentieth century and

before considering some of those names and why they have been suggested, we need to attempt to understand what I mean by 'self-taught' *art* and who we are talking about as self-taught *artists*. To explain my view of 'self-taught' art I've gone back to the early 1900s and Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944). Kandinsky, being both an artist and a theorist avoids a problem summed up by Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863) in his statement: 'most writing on art is by people who are not artists: thus all the misconceptions...'¹⁷⁸ Kandinsky, with other artists, was at the time investigating meaning in art and society and his theorising was highly influential on the development of modernist art in the twentieth-century. In his *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*¹⁷⁹ he describes how he realised 'the sensations of colours on the palette' could be 'spiritual experiences'. Kandinsky himself was influenced by the work of the German philosopher of a century earlier, Freidrich Hegel (1770-1831) who had first raised the issue of spiritual experience in his 1807 work *Phenomenology of Mind*.¹⁸⁰ A year after he published *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, Kandinsky and Franz Marc (1880-1916) released their *Blaue Reiter Almanac*.¹⁸¹ In the essay 'On the Question of Form' which appears in the *Blaue Reiter Almanac*, Kandinsky expands on the concept of spiritual experience which he calls 'the creative *spirit*'.¹⁸² His concern is with the inner life which relates to art as it is created by people who innately possess the inner spiritual experience that Kandinsky sees as a necessary attribute of an artist and his art. For Kandinsky this inner life equates to human 'spirit', and a factor that assists in understanding what self-taught artists produce is, I believe, that their works expose that inner spirit of the artist - sometimes more obviously than is the case with professional, trained artists. Though in his essay Kandinsky is talking about art in general, the self-taught painter, because of the circumstances we will discuss when considering what lifestyle factors influenced them in

producing their art, is less likely to attempt to cover up any technical weaknesses in their work than a trained artist might. In fact, almost the opposite is the case with self-taught artists who generally consider their own works not only good but complete - whether or not others might see that their works contain technical imperfections. Also, a good part of what motivated Kandinsky and his cohort was defiance of convention - his pursuit of 'unrestrained freedom' ¹⁸³ an idea which is directly, yet unknowingly, expressed in their paintings by self-taught artists. The works are not constrained by any obvious social (or other) norms. They are simply the expressions of people who have a desire to paint, and 'it is not form (matter) that is generally most important, but content (spirit)'. ¹⁸⁴ In the *Blaue Reiter Almanac* Kandinsky uses as an example, Schönberg who, though a professional composer, was self-taught as a painter.

With specific regard to self-taught artists, Kandinsky says 'if a man without academic training, free of objective artistic knowledge, paints something, he never produces an empty sham'. ¹⁸⁵ He discusses child art and, writing of the self-taught artist says 'the artist, whose whole life is similar in many ways to that of a child, can often realise the inner sound of things, more easily than anyone else'.¹⁸⁶ Kandinsky believes the expression of the 'inner sound' is the root of 'the new total *realism*. In rendering the shell of an object simply and completely, one has already separated an object from its practical meaning and peeled forth its interior sounds'. He contends that 'Henri Rousseau....may be considered the father of this realism' by revealing 'the new possibilities of simplicity'. ¹⁸⁷ This view corresponds with Rousseau's claims about himself at the banquet arranged in his honour by Apollinaire and Picasso.

My thoughts on the *art* that self-taught painters produced are described as follows:

Self-taught art is the product of a direct need by often uncomplicated people to express themselves in paintings which are unconstrained by the norms or expectations of society or its art world. These artists directly communicate their creative spirits and, seemingly neither influenced by humility nor pride, they produce works that are authentic representations of the artist's singular reality.

Kandinsky's co-editor of *Der Blaue Reiter Almanac*, the artist Franz Marc, could well have been describing self-taught artists when he wrote: 'Like everything genuine, its inner life guarantees its truth. All works of art created by truthful minds without regard for the work's conventional exterior remain genuine for all times'.¹⁸⁸ He adds 'the....isolation of the rare, genuine artist is absolutely unavoidable...'.¹⁸⁹ Isolation is a factor in the way many self-taught artists live and it is their lifestyles that I will now address:

What is it about self-taught artists' lives that might persuade an art world insider to consider them to be separate and outside that world? Several shared factors are apparent concerning them¹⁹⁰ and, as already mentioned, they include having no formal training in art, often only beginning to produce artworks when elderly after ceasing lifelong work in generally manual and unskilled jobs. Most were poorly educated with many being illiterate or semi-literate and they were often marginalised or isolated within their sometimes rural communities, like Trunkey Creek in Australia where Warren lived or West Chester, Pennsylvania in the USA where Horace Pippin spent much of his life. Almost all self-taught artists display technical limitations, a feature I will return to in Chapter 3.3 below. The art they made and reasons for making it was often neither understood nor appreciated by their fellow citizens. A recurring feature is their being

isolated from the art establishment and a lack of any awareness of fellow artists. Some kept to themselves and so were self-isolated within a community; others, like Warren, were socially active members of their neighbourhoods (in all but their art), while others were truly isolated, being institutionalised.

Not only were self-taught artists not trained in art but often didn't consider their creations to be 'art'. To their minds, art was produced by a type of professional worker doing a job which was foreign to them – 'artists' were a special category of person whereas these self-taught artists regarded themselves as labourers, miners, taxi drivers – whatever 'real' job they had undertaken throughout their lives. As Gary Fine says in his book on self-taught art: 'most self-taught artists are passive in establishing their reputations' and are 'spoken on behalf of rather than for themselves'.¹⁹¹ This was certainly the case for all but a very few self-taught artists: they neither promoted themselves into the art establishment nor meddled with the efforts of their discoverers in marketing them.¹⁹² Lucienne Peiry writes 'incapable, by definition, of revealing its existence, Art Brut¹⁹³ demanded the presence of a third party in order to be discovered: only an individual possessing comprehensive knowledge of the art world was capable of assessing the break with official culture to which its works testified.'¹⁹⁴

We can now look at the names chosen by artworld insiders to describe the field, including 'primitive', 'naïve', 'vernacular', 'visionary', '*art brut*', 'outsider' and numerous others in addition to 'self-taught'. Charles Russell states: 'no one name serves to define this art'¹⁹⁵ though I would contend that 'self-taught' is a workable compromise. In Europe the most common name used these days is 'outsider art' which was the

anglicised title given to Roger Cardinal's 1972 book on *art brut*.¹⁹⁶ A term widely used in America is 'folk art' and, though it has now expanded in meaning to become an umbrella term¹⁹⁷ for 'self-taught', 'outsider' and other related labels. The New York based art historian and curator Holger Cahill (1887-1960), to whom we will return, was an early and highly influential promoter of the art itself and of the term 'folk art', a definition of an art he considered made by the 'common man'.¹⁹⁸

Like all the other descriptors used for this art, the term 'self-taught' can be disputed¹⁹⁹ as several artists who are accepted by the art establishment and who did not paint in a particularly 'naïve' style, received little or no formal art training and so can rightly be called 'self-taught'. These include, amongst many, people such as Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) and Francis Bacon (1909-1992). 'Self-taught' can be ambiguous and does not automatically relegate artists and their works to a place that is outside the 'norm' (which is, after all, determined by people who consider themselves to be 'inside') however, as I have mentioned, in the context of this work I use 'self-taught' to describe the sort of art also called 'outsider' or 'naïve'. I agree with Roger Cardinal who has stated of the term 'self-taught art': 'it is an acceptable term that explains itself neatly' (and adds that he has used it when wanting to 'avoid a controversial terminology').²⁰⁰

Whatever term is chosen in naming it, understanding self-taught art is not really made any easier by its having a name, though, of all the terms, self-taught art provides in its very name a basic element in defining what a self-taught artist is. The similarities that may exist in the works they produce are, I think, understandable as the creations of technically limited artists seem to plateau at a more or less analogous level; one thinks,

for example, how alike the art of children of a similar age can be.²⁰¹ Self-taught artists may often be ignored or dismissed because their art appears overly simplistic or child-like. Yet they themselves regard their work as being at the very least adequate for representing their view of the world. That to them a limited technical ability does not require improvement is an aspect of their art that stands them apart from mainstream artists who tend to strive to develop their capabilities over time.

In the early twentieth century an interest in what was then called 'naïve' and 'primitive' art became evident amongst members of the artworld.²⁰² Undoubtedly artists had been producing similar types of 'naïve' artwork for centuries but had received little or no serious consideration before the development of an artworld as such in the eighteenth century.²⁰³ This is not to dismiss forms of 'naïve' or 'folk' art such as *Images Épinal* which were popular in the 18th and 19th centuries and which were published in France in the 19th century (Fig. 110). Whilst undoubtedly 'primitive' in style, I do not categorise these as self-taught art as they were reproduced in quantity for commercial purposes.

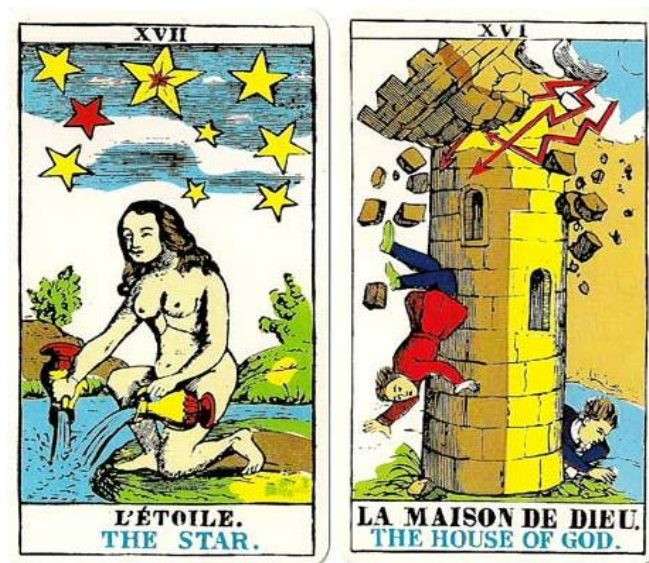


Fig. 110. Épinol tarot cards published by Pellerin et Cie, France, 1830

Another form of 'naïve'-styled art, particularly popular in the mid-18th Europe, was reverse glass painting or *Hinterglasmalerei* as it was called in Germany. It consisted of painting an image, often sacral, in reverse on a piece of glass and then being viewed from the unpainted side (Fig. 111). In *The Blaue Reiter Almanac* many 'Bavarian mirror paintings' (or *Hinterglasmalerei*) have been chosen in illustrations supporting their theories by Kandinsky and Marc.



Fig. 111. *Hinterglasmalerei*, artist unknown, Germany mid-18th century

Reverse glass painting was produced in the Middle Ages and continued with varying degrees of popularity through to the 20th century. Reverse glass painting was generally produced for a specific practical purpose and so should not be thought of as self-taught art of the type which is the subject of this thesis. It is more akin to the mass-produced and formulaic naïve art produced in large quantities in Eastern and other parts of Europe of the type illustrated by *Generalic* (Fig. 112).



Fig. 112. Drvosjece, *Generalic*, 1959. Croatia Museum of Naïve Art

Having said that, Selby Warren painted several pictures on the reverse side of glass (see, for example, Fig. 53 above). He did this in the late 1960s and early 1970s in rural Australia but appears to have done so simply because glass was available to him to paint on.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, self-taught artists who received attention from doctors, dealers, artists and academics were first revealed in Europe and, later, America,²⁰⁴ and artists from those places are today regarded to be among the most important of their kind. They include people who spent much of their lives in psychiatric institutions such as Adolf Wölfli (1864-1930), Aloïse Corbaz (1886-1964), Martín Ramírez (1885-1960) and Dwight MacKintosh (1906-1999) as well as non-institutionalised individuals like Madge Gill (1882-1961), Gaston Chaissac (1910-1964), Henry Darger (1892-1973) and Bill Traylor (1884-1947). Numerous other artists have now joined this pantheon with several gaining matching fame in current art circles. The French philosopher, Christian Delacampagne in his book *Outsiders* (1989)²⁰⁵ discusses his idea that there was a Golden Age of *art brut* which came to an end in the mid-1960s. Roger Cardinal says in discussion with Laurent Danchin that Delacampagne 'makes a good case for seeing a number of powerful artists

of more recent vintage as in a distinctly different situation from that of the classic Outsiders of yesteryear: we can no longer speak of art without antecedents and immune from cultural influence as we once did. We are no longer in the age of Heinrich Anton Müller....or Aloïse Corbaz'.²⁰⁶ The concept of a 'Golden' or classic period of outsider or self-taught art is a reasonable one which does describe the early period when the works considered by people such as Prinzhorn, Uhde, Dubuffet, Cahill, Barr²⁰⁷ and other pioneer interpreters of the art of the marginalised were first seriously presented to the artworld. An aspect of separating art of a Golden Age from one of distinctly different artists of more recent vintage is that subjectivity by experts must be employed in deciding who fits into either category. In December 1998 Cardinal and a colleague, John Beardsley curated an exhibition they titled 'Classic Outsider Art from Europe' which they restricted to artists from the period 1890 to 1950, the period defined for his 'Golden Age of Art Brut' by Delacampagne.²⁰⁸ Danchin's thoughts on whether these artists 'belong to the raw or the tame side' of the genre suggests he sees a similar distinction occurring in the art of the marginalised.²⁰⁹

Still, something more specific needs to be found to explain how self-taught artists, whose works can appear similar in style and subject-matter, emerge in various societies. They are not like protagonists of art movements that often spawn followers who, though not directly involved with a movement's original 'founders', ape their styles (as well as philosophies). Self-taught artists are not part of any movement or group. Twentieth century mainstream modernist artists attempted to free up their art by emulating the way self-taught artists seemed able to express themselves. But no one became a true self-taught artist because of this. There was no self-taught art movement to imitate and

those who singularly painted their views of their world remain unaware of European or American or other self-taught artists and so not mimic their way of producing art. The exceptional and early case of Henri Rousseau (1844-1910), whose work influenced artists throughout the Western world including an Australian modernist like Sidney Nolan in the 1940s, had no impact at all on another Australian artist like Selby Warren whose self-taught pictures were inspired by his internal need for expression and not the works of a foreigner.²¹⁰ Some cultures seem particularly adept in absorbing external influences and then appropriating them – examples might be represented by ‘Australian Surrealism’, ‘South African Impressionism’ or ‘Canadian Pop Art’. This sort of influence could be tracked as it spread from its source and, in physically distant countries delays in its adoption were, to a marked extent, caused by the slowness of communications before the advent of mass air travel. Books and articles on art were shipped from Europe, and travellers too journeyed by sea. The lag experienced in the introduction of a new art movement or fashion into a place like Australia was often a few years. But a dissemination of self-taught art did not derive from a foreign source. As examples, Australia, South Africa and Canada each had their own artists who were singular and operating on the margins of the local cultures. It was the developing *interest* in this type of artist by the arbiters of taste in Europe and America, rather than the art itself, that led cultural leaders in remote colonies to look at their own examples of self-taught art and then use it for their own purposes.²¹¹

To adopt influences in art is, of course, not a new occurrence and is not limited to countries like Australia. Dubuffet complained of artists copying each other: ‘everyone in

Paris, New York, and most other capitals is doing the exact same painting' ²¹² and is echoed in a quip often attributed to Picasso: 'good artists copy; great artists steal'. ²¹³

Though artistically insular, self-taught artists, who are sometimes regarded as 'different' or 'irregular' ²¹⁴ due more to their unusual lifestyles ²¹⁵ than for their art, are expressing themselves through their works in ways similar to those used by recognised and accepted artists but without any sort of agenda behind their expressiveness. (An 'agenda' in such cases might be the manifesto of a group of like-minded people or just a desire to have a painting accepted by a gallery). That self-taught artists do not develop or alter their painting style in the way a professional artist usually does over a lifetime should not impede them being considered artists – many authors write in a very similar style throughout their careers without attracting criticism. However, a number of artworld personalities comment disparagingly on the static state of an art that does not change (or 'progress' in their parlance) over the period in which it is produced. ²¹⁶ It is thus consigned to being a somehow less important form of expression much in the way music can be, with popular 'folk' (and by extension vernacular/popular) music considered by some a lesser form of expression than is 'high' (classical) music. Similarly, 'popular' fiction is often regarded as less sophisticated or of lower cultural value than 'serious' literature.²¹⁷

When considering self-taught art difficulties can arise with fitting some artists into the meaning represented by a chosen name. Of all the designations used, one of the more descriptive is that invented by Jean Dubuffet (1901-1985), *art brut* (and its later anglicised version, 'outsider art'). Dubuffet, a seminal figure central to the story of self-

taught art, is returned to in some detail below in Chapter 4. *Art brut* translates into English more or less as 'raw art' and not 'outsider art' however, part of the elegance of the French word '*brut*' is its multivalency. It allowed Dubuffet to suggest a type of art 'uncooked' by the academic 'recipes' of fine art. In using the name *art brut*, Dubuffet was talking about art made by marginal creators – not only the mentally ill, but also prisoners, visionaries and isolated artists – those 'individuals who resist society's conventions in all aspects of life'.²¹⁸ In his book on *art brut* Cardinal presents Dubuffet's early and rather doctrinaire description of *art brut* as deriving 'from three broad types of artist: schizophrenics, mediums and innocents these three types being simply different manifestations of the one "type".'²¹⁹ Cardinal dismisses naïve painters as individuals who take up painting 'first as a hobby' and folk artists as being 'subservient to traditions both aesthetic and social'; and prisoner artists as lacking the 'psychic distancing from the outer world of those that are shut up in mental institutions'. Of children's art he claims 'children do not create spontaneously once they realize the interest shown in their work' and primitive art, he contends, is 'bound by strict traditions and professional skills'.²²⁰ Cardinal later modified his definitions to be less concrete, just as Dubuffet had done when he came to realise 'the illusory nature of his claim' that *art brut* artists were 'devoid of any artistic culture' leading to 'his theories later (being) more nuanced'.²²¹ Despite this refashioning of its meaning a basic tenet of *art brut* remained - it was at least in part dealing with the art of the insane.

Art brut, like all the other names used in trying to define this art, is also criticised. The sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, described it as 'a sort of "natural art" which only exists as such by an "arbitrary" decree of the most refined'. He, rightly I think, believed the works

described by Dubuffet 'only appear to an "eye" produced by the field of art...one invested with the history of this field' in other words: '*art brut* can only be recognised by someone who knows what it is not'.²²² Dubuffet would disagree with this as his definitions of *art brut* were quite prescriptive, as evidenced in the following which he wrote in 1949:

'By this [*art brut*] we mean pieces of work executed by people untouched by artistic culture, in which therefore mimicry, contrary to what happens in intellectuals, plays little or no part, so that their authors draw everything (subjects, choice of materials employed, means of transposition, rhythms, ways of writing, etc.) from their own depths and not from clichés of classical art or art that is fashionable. Here we are witnessing an artistic operation that is completely pure, raw, reinvented in all its phases by its author, based solely on his own impulses. Art, therefore, in which is manifested the sole function of invention, and not those, constantly seen in cultural art, of the chameleon and the monkey.'²²³

This definition relates as much to the art produced as it does to how the artists live. Several artists, however, do not really meet this definition despite being embraced into the *art brut* world. An example is Oswald Tschirtner (1920-2009) who was committed to a psychiatric hospital in 1946 having fought for Germany in the Stalingrad Campaign (July 1942-February 1943), probably the bloodiest battle of World War II. He was encouraged to draw by his psychiatrist, Dr Leo Navratil, but never did so spontaneously having to be asked to make a drawing and told precisely what its subject should be. This contradicts the 'requirement' that *art brut* be spontaneous and is without outside encouragement. Yet his works are often presented as important examples of this kind of art (see *Das Gesicht*, Fig. 113). The *art brut* expert, Michel Thévoz, unconvincingly

attempts to explain the inconsistency by suggesting '...we must take into consideration that Tschirtner loathed any initiative'.²²⁴

Another well-regarded artist accepted as part of the *art brut* coterie was Paul Goesch (1885-1940)²²⁵ who graduated as an architect in Berlin. He became the Chief Architect in Kulm but developed a tendency to isolate himself and devoted more and more time to planning, imagining and drawing cities. He was eventually placed in an asylum where he remained until his death at the hands of the Nazis in 1940. Goesch (*Buildings*, Fig. 114) was not self-taught and had spent many years as a successful architect before he was considered to have lost his mind yet was lauded as a true representative of *art brut*. Presumably this had something to do with the romantic notion that madness is somehow freeing or a way of profoundly unlearning – a kind of radical forgetting. A third example of someone who does not fit the definition was the Swiss-born Louis Soutter (1871-1942).²²⁶ He had a successful career, initially in Parisien ateliers and then in America where, in 1900, he became Director of the Fine Arts Department of the Colorado College at Colorado Springs where he also taught art. After a few years, Soutter unexpectedly left his family and job and returned to Switzerland where he lived as a vagrant.²²⁷ In 1923, aged only fifty-two, he was confined to a geriatric home where he remained, although, with the support of his architect cousin, Le Corbusier and others, he sometimes left the home to stay with friends. Soutter's painting had been academic in style but he abandoned this and drew meticulous but odd pictures (*Le Fil de l'idée-Nues*, Fig. 115) in secret exercise books which he kept to himself and hoarded. In 1937 he became blind but continued drawing bold figures by finger-painting in ink (*Prêtresses druids*, Fig. 116). Having been an art teacher and a member of the art establishment

Soutter was not self-taught by any definition yet, like the others, was accepted as an exemplar of *art brut* apparently because of the bizarre behaviour he exhibited after leaving the United States.

It can be seen, then, that the definition that the artists *brut* do not meet was in reality set up by Dubuffet the artworld *insider*. The obvious similarity shared by Tschirtner, Goesch and Soutter was that they were all at some time institutionalised. This fact seems to have overridden other requisites for being accepted as an *art brut* or outsider artist.

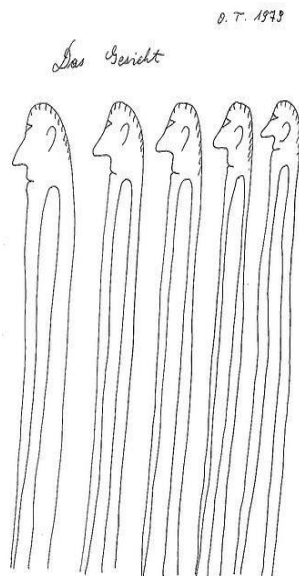


Fig. 113. Oswald Tschirtner, *Das Gesicht*, 1979



Fig. 114. Paul Goesch, *Buildings*, c. 1925



Fig. 115. Louis Soutter, *Le Fil de Ildée-Nues*, 1930



Fig. 116. Louis Soutter, *Prêtresses, druids*, 1942

It was, at first, the work undertaken in mental institutions by doctors who were already interested in and influenced by art (especially Expressionism) ²²⁸ that influenced the development of the theories concerning *art brut*. Just how truly spontaneous some of the art produced in mental institutions was is uncertain as patients producing the art were mostly given materials and encouraged to draw and paint by their doctors, though it should be remembered that several institutionalised artists started to paint and draw without prompting, apparently because they wanted to. Unlike Tschirtner many, such as Wölfli, Martinez and Aloïse, were not at all reticent about producing large quantities of big works, but despite their being among Delcampagne's classical outsiders, whether or not this output can be called 'spontaneous' and lacking any earlier influences or training seems questionable. Those few artists who were quickly recognised as having special talents ²²⁹ were sometimes first requested to express themselves in art as a form of rehabilitation or therapy. Even though they may have developed spontaneity in the way they worked, their pictures were not always an expression of innate need for expression.

Interestingly, Americans have often criticised the term 'outsider' because of its implications of control: 'Outside' of what? According to whom? It is generally accepted that the term correctly conveys geographic, social or mental isolation experienced by its makers, but incorrectly conveys the idea that people can be entirely innocent of a common culture. The concept of the 'outsider' may say as much about the values of a category-creating culture as it does about its supposed subject. The American cultural historian, Eugene Metcalfe, crystallises this view: 'To begin to understand outsider art, we must view it not as the solely aesthetic creation of individual eccentrics disconnected

from culture, but as the symbolic product of a complex and ambiguous relationship between more- or less-powerful social groups....the epistemology utilised to define and study outsider art....has little place for the views or values of those who it represents as outsiders.’²³⁰ Others have joined the fray including Jennifer Borum whose article *Term Warfare*²³¹ believes names like folk, outsider and self-taught have come to define the people who ‘use’ them rather than defining the artworks and artists; she is referring to collectors and museums who claim to define artists and art as ‘outsider’, who have used the terms to serve a marketing agenda. She writes ‘European outsider art and American folk art have come to be used interchangeably’ which is where the issue lies. She follows Sidney Janis’ (1896-1989) lead in defining self-taught art saying it implies ‘simply to be a maverick in one’s art making, to function outside the prescribed traditions of art’. Borum firmly believes that ‘self-taught art’ should be the umbrella of terms, because people relate to the art and the artist; more art and artists can be included under the term because the criteria are limitless; and it can eventually be included in the realm of the history of art.²³² Another investigation into appropriate terminology is by Grace E. Dufty²³³ who, though depending heavily on Borum’s work, reaches the conclusion that ‘in order to appreciate outsider art, folk art and self-taught art, it is necessary to realize that each term has its own criteria making them individual and so not necessarily always like any other art form’²³⁴ which seems to contradict her overall view that the various terms can’t be defined. Lyle Rexer in his *How to Look at Outsider Art* says that: ‘In the end, everyone who cares about self-taught (outsider, folk) art must have the confidence to make his or her own judgments and stand up to “expert opinion” which is often nothing more than personal taste, prejudice, or disguised economic self-interest’.²³⁵

The preference Americans seem to have for the term 'folk art' over 'outsider art' is no more odd than people initially preferring 'outsider' to 'art brut' or 'naïve' art with each of the terms having its strengths and weaknesses. However, despite its popularity few designations have proved as volatile as the category of 'folk art' in America. Some American Modernists chose to define 'folk' and 'popular' art as mutually exclusive categories with popular art being considered tainted by commerce and mechanisation. Folk art was believed to represent everything that was pure, an elusive but much cherished ideal - the surviving evidence of a pre-industrial Eden.²³⁶ This is reminiscent of Australian Modernists who, in the mid-twentieth century, regarded 'naïve' or 'primitive' art, as they called it, as representing an earlier, unspoilt Australia which they wanted to tap into. But 'folk art' in America fails to live up to the idealised standards set for it. It has not been historically anti-commercial, with many self-taught artists earning income from their work, as have Warren and his cohorts in Australia. It is not 'pure' in so far as being without influence. Traditional folk crafts were tightly bound by inherited forms, with even more independent painters eagerly copying one another, and popular prints. A truly self-taught artist like Selby Warren was not aware of other artists like him so did not copy their work, though he did on occasion refer to prints and photographs for inspiration (although these were not of works by other self-taught artists). In America industrialisation saw many previously handmade cultural objects replaced by machine made ones. As mentioned elsewhere, Australia's society developed after the industrial revolution and, although handmade objects were made, these generally reflected an inability of their makers to afford factory produced equivalents rather than a desire to culturally express themselves.

'Folk art' in its traditional form reflected an age-old socio-economic divide between the peasantry and aristocracy in Europe. There the Renaissance craftsmanship of the medieval guild system was replaced by a two-tiered structure under which 'high' artists, serving the ruling elite, were elevated to a realm separate from the humbler creators who catered to the masses.²³⁷ Such class distinctions were generally absent in the supposedly egalitarian society of America. Appreciation of folk art, which began in the nineteenth century in both Europe and America was initially based on an anthropological interest in the ruination of the rural past by the relentless tide of industrialisation. Folk art gained its art-historical legitimacy from the early twentieth-century Modernists who saw it as an aesthetic escape from hidebound tradition.²³⁸

In 1979 the two Englishmen, Roger Cardinal, then Professor of Literary and Visual Studies at the University of Kent in Canterbury and an authority on Surrealism as well as *art brut*, and Victor Musgrave, a writer and art dealer who was also a member of Dubuffet's *Compagnie de l'art brut*, together curated an exhibition of works by self-taught artists held by the Arts Council of Britain at the Hayward Gallery in London. Cardinal's publishing of his English language book on *art brut*, (titled 'Outsider Art') seven years earlier had seen the new English-language name stick and the Hayward Gallery show was entitled 'Outsiders, An Art Without Precedent or Tradition'. To support such an exhibition was considered such a daring venture that the then Director of Art of The Arts Council, Joanna Drew, wrote in her foreword to the catalogue: 'The Arts Council does not normally invoke the cautionary note that "the views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily of the editors" adding 'we cannot be expected to accept entirely claims of artistic and spiritual dominance made on their (i.e. outsiders)

behalf.' She then writes of Cardinal and Musgrave: 'There is a sense in which the selectors of this exhibition are explorer-ethnographers discovering artists whose culture is wholly alien'.²³⁹ Both Cardinal and Musgrave would, I think, have found such an approach from the Director amusing if also a little concerning. However, the show was a success, in part, perhaps, because of its notoriety. The exhibition title was clever and can be interpreted as implying that if people who were considered experts were unaware of something, then it probably did not exist. However, in his essay, *Singular Visions* in the exhibition's catalogue,²⁴⁰ Cardinal suggests that every artist being exhibited in the show was, though 'without precedent or tradition', 'related' by shared qualities of 'lack', so not dissimilar in some respects to the concept of the tribe of one. Cardinal goes so far as to say: 'In the end, there is really no such thing as Outsider Art, no more than there is such a thing as the General Public. There is only the ferment of individuality, that is: the contrary of anonymity and generalisation.'²⁴¹

Despite 'outsiders' being considered by Drew in 1979 to be of a culture 'wholly alien' the fact is that this type of art had been attracting attention since the cusp of the 20th century when the works of Henri Rousseau had fascinated a number of artists and the serious investigation into the artistic creativity of mental patients became influential soon afterwards. The First World War had a major impact on the development of culture with many questions being raised as to how such a tribal catastrophe had come to pass in a sophisticated, modern Europe. A series of modernist art movements which interrogated the traditional approaches to art and society had arisen just before the war and developed further after it. The art of the insane was seen as being free from the external influences – the society - that 'spoilt' traditional art. That cogent champion of these

untainted artists, Dubuffet, had published his first works on the subject of *art brut* in the mid-1940s, about thirty years before Cardinal wrote his book on the subject. So when Cardinal and Musgrave named their 1979 exhibition 'Outsiders, An Art Without Precedent or Traditions' they were well aware that their 'outsiders' had been receiving close attention from established cultural figures for about eighty years. But as some experts still considered their work to be 'alien' then the tribe of one analogy in that title seems quite appropriate.

Henri Rousseau was, in some respects, the starting point of the history of self-taught art which commenced in earnest in the early 1900s. Despite wanting to become an academic artist, he instead became the archetypal naïve artist and was anointed as such by the artworld though he would never accept that his paintings were 'naïve'. Both as an artist and as a man Rousseau was mocked by many and was called *Le Douanier* which was a jibe about his job as a toll collector which, as well as confirming that he was not working as an artist, was the name for a Customs Officer, a rank he never achieved. Rousseau's identity as an artist outside the accepted norm defined him ²⁴² yet his work was highly influential well beyond his death. While his paintings confounded the critics, they earned the admiration of modern writers like Guillaume Apollinaire (1880-1918) ²⁴³ and artists like Pablo Picasso and Wassily Kandinsky for whom his work revealed 'the new possibilities of simplicity'.²⁴⁴ They, and many others, saw in Rousseau's work a model for the sincerity and directness to which they aspired in their own work, by drawing inspiration from African tribal masks and other 'primitive' and traditional art forms. Rousseau's best-known works are lush jungle scenes, inspired not by any firsthand experiences of such locales (he is thought to have never left France), but by

frequent trips to the Paris gardens and zoo.²⁴⁵ He depicted an exotic fantasy world which engrossed many city dwellers. Though considered by many (if not by himself) the 'father of naïve art', Rousseau did not meet Dubuffet's *art brut* criteria which demanded spontaneous creation, having been taught being an *art brut* taboo.²⁴⁶ Rousseau apparently worked laboriously on his paintings which were far from being spontaneous.²⁴⁷ Also, he was sane, contrary to most of the artists described as producing *art brut* by Dubuffet. Throughout the seventeen-odd years Rousseau spent as an artist (from about 1893 until his death in 1910) he was convinced of his abilities and was vocal in sharing his views on both his own talents and those of his contemporaries. The certainty he espoused about the quality of his work was considered delusional by some critics. As mentioned, the majority of self-taught artists were satisfied with their capacities to picture their subjects and, like Rousseau, considered themselves to be good artists, no matter how technically limited they might appear to be to others. They were rarely advised to 'improve' their technique by those who discovered them because their simple, child-like paintings they exhibited was what their discoverers found attractive. Rousseau cannot be classified as an *art brut* artist because he was neither insular nor unaware of the artworld of which he so much wished to be a respected member. His was a naïve-yet-knowing²⁴⁸ type of work - his technical abilities, though complex, were such that he was incapable of producing his desired academic style. Other artists have been like Rousseau in producing work that was made in this naïve-yet-knowing manner. One such artist is John Kane (1860-1934) whose style and technique is reminiscent of Rousseau's. He left his birthplace in Scotland at the age of 19 and settled in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania where he began painting in the early twentieth century. He is best known for his many landscapes and self-portraits. Kane was self-taught but quite aware of the

art scene and its market even being caught out for painting over photographs for financial gain.²⁴⁹ Another artist, who does not meet the expectations laid down by Dubuffet for *art brut* artists, is the American, John Serl (1894-1993). While his self-taught style of painting is less compelling than Rousseau's, he presents, with adequate but limited technical skill, remembered and imagined times from his early life. Serl was brought up in a travelling vaudeville troupe and spent much of his working life in the entertainment industry in various roles. In 1949 at the age of 55 he left that life and began painting, using a variety of media including plywood and pigments made from plants and earth. Most of his subjects interwove daily realities with a subjective view of contemporary life. Serl was not rejected by his community, but like Kane, Warren, and many other self-taught artists, was driven to express himself despite this leading to him being regarded as peculiar by his community.²⁵⁰

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Interest in tribal and other 'primitive' types of art played a major part in the developing modernist art movements in the early 20th century. As is discussed in 3.2 below, the word 'primitive' was applied to self-taught art by some experts but in parallel to this there developed a new art '-ism' : primitivism, which needs to be explained in relation to the concept of the tribe of one as well as why self-taught artists painted the way they did (see 3.3).

3.2 Self-taught 'primitive' painters and Primitivism

In the early 20th century when self-taught art became of increasing interest to the artworld, several cultural critics chose to call it 'Primitive' art.²⁵¹ An example of this use of the word has already been given in Chapter 3.1 above with Melly writing: 'The naïve

painter is a solitary primitive, a tribe of one'. The word 'primitive', as Melly uses it, refers to non-European people belonging to preliterate, non-industrial societies and includes the art they produce. Because of the great number of pre-industrial societies their art ranges from what may be regarded as the 'sophisticated' like Ajanta Cave murals, European pre-historic cave art and early Christian art from Ethiopia to that sometimes considered less complex tribal art of peoples in Africa, Australasia and the Pacific Islands. All of these, and the many more, were categorised as being 'primitive' by Westerners (colonisers, traders, ethnographers, anthropologists and artworld figures) who used the distinctions they drew for a variety of reasons most, I think, to support the colonialist assumption of Western superiority. The art historian and philologist Thomas McEvilley (1939-2013) explains: 'In the Modernist period, when whites saw history as exclusively their own, African, Indian, Chinese, and Amerindian societies were regarded by white Westerners as ahistorical because they weren't dominated by the need to feel that they were evolving....Colonialism was justified as a means to drag the supposedly ahistorical into history - at which point non-European peoples were supposed to gradually become like Europeans....The otherness ²⁵² of the non-white would supposedly go away by being assimilated....But this whitening of the world was not to be. Instead, the white Westerner has been revealed as just another Other, with no special claim to being the self against which all are delineated or the standard to which it is the destiny of all to assimilate.' ²⁵³

Sally Price in her *Primitive Art in Civilised Places*²⁵⁴ explores the cultural arrogance implicit in Westerners' appropriation of non-Western art. The fact that Westerners designate something as 'art' means that it is art for Westerners, but often says nothing about what it is in itself or for other people. ²⁵⁵ I think when something is arrogated it is

important that the beliefs 'other people' may hold in that art are at the least acknowledged.

Non-Western art, however, is not the only recipient of the 'primitive' label. For many years pre-Renaissance art, especially of the Italian and Netherlandish schools, was referred to as 'primitive'.²⁵⁶ The art historian E. H. Gombrich, in his *The Preference for the Primitive: Episodes in the History of Western Taste and Art*, describes the fundamental role of the much earlier Classical times in defining the boundaries of primitivism.²⁵⁷ Cicero's *The Orator (De Oratore)* and other texts are referred to by Gombrich in support his view that primitivism in the arts, being a strategy rather than a mindset, relates to style or technology when considering artworks.²⁵⁸ Like others of his time Gombrich's ideas on the primitive and primitivism were influenced to an extent by the 1935 book *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity*, by George Boas and Arthur Lovejoy,²⁵⁹ which, though concerned specifically with Graeco-Roman literature was also applicable to other periods and cultural products.

Gombrich also suggests that 'in the terminology of modern market research, what I call the 'preference for the "primitive" would probably be described as a matter of consumer choice. It is the consumer of art...who prefers one kind of style or of art over others'.²⁶⁰ He asks why the repeating vogue occurs in the West for the hieratic, the wild and the exotic - the 'primitive' and states that neither Thucydides, Fra Angelico, the sculptor of the Delphi statues nor anyone one else producing their works sees themselves as 'primitive'. It is others, later or somewhere else, who regarded them as such.

In mentioning 'untutored art' Gombrich recounts the experience, when living in Germany with his parents, of the family cook, Elise, giving him a drawing she had done. It was child-like in presentation and he could not 'see any harm in calling this image "primitive" as long as we do not call the artist so'.²⁶¹ In this statement we find Gombrich addressing (probably unwittingly) the problem of labelling self-taught artists themselves rather than their works as 'primitive' which brings us to problems with calling self-taught art 'primitive' and begs the question: what are we actually describing when we talk about primitive art in the context of self-taught art? Part of the problem is the common tendency 'to conflate the words "primitive" and "primitivism" where both are used as descriptive nouns alluding to "primitive" states or to simple technologies'.²⁶² In artistic terms 'primitiveness' designates the technical sophistication of self-taught artists and not things such as tribal beliefs or cultures.²⁶³ Despite these difficulties, supposedly 'primitive' works of art, in their various forms, have long had a special appeal in Western culture. The term 'primitivism' which emerged in the mid-20th century, is generally about Western interpretations of 'primitive' societies and attitudes towards those 'other' cultures considered to be relatively 'primitive'. 'Nostalgia for a simpler and (usually) spiritually healthier cultural past lies at the heart of primitivism.....a belief that something can be done to remedy the perceived state of oversophistication'.²⁶⁴

In his seminal book on the subject, *Primitivism in Modern Art*, Robert Goldwater stresses a common characteristic of primitivism in modern art, namely the search for 'simplicity'.²⁶⁵ Primitivism is less an aesthetic movement than a sensibility or cultural attitude that has informed diverse aspects of modern art. It refers to modern art that alludes to specific stylistic elements of tribal objects and other non-Western art forms.

As Thomas McEvilley explains in his essay, *Doctor, Lawyer, Indian Chief*, reviewing the Museum of Modern Art's 1984 important exhibition *'Primitivism' in Twentieth Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern* : 'In the context of Modern Art "primitivism"....designates Modern work that alludes to tribal objects or in some way incorporates or expresses their influence. "Primitivist", in other words, describes some Modern artworks, not primitive works themselves. "Primitive" in turn, designates the actual tribal objects'.²⁶⁶ Keeping this in mind, at the heart of Modernism was 'a myth of history designed to justify colonialism through an idea of progress. The West, as self-appointed vanguard, was to lead the rest of the world, forcefully if necessary, toward a hypothetical utopian future'. The passing of Modernism, then, means the passing 'of the mentality of the colonial era and especially of the view of history that was its cover-story. "Post-Modern", "post-historical" and "post-colonialist", therefore, are more or less synonymous terms'.²⁶⁷

In his 1994 book, *Primitivism and Modern Art*, (echoing, to an extent, McEvilley), Colin Rhodes says, that: 'Primitivism should not be confused with the primitive....Primitivism is marked by layers of difference in the ideas of modern artists about the primitive and the uses to which these thoughts were put....by artists who, for many reasons, felt impelled to look outside the conventions set by their own culture'.²⁶⁸ He adds 'in modernist painting and sculpture we must look for evidence of primitivism in the objects themselves; that is in works of art'.²⁶⁹ In a way this echoes a feature of self-taught art: often more attention is given by commentators to the lifestyles of the self-taught artists than to their art. With primitivism there is a tendency to look at the 'primitive' influences on the artists in defining them more than on their output.

With roots in late-19th-century Romanticism's fascination with foreign civilizations and distant lands Primitivism also designates the 'primitive' as a myth of paradise lost for late-19th- and 20th-century culture. Behind this captivation with the 'other' was a belief in the intrinsic goodness of all humankind, a conviction inspired by French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau's 18th-century notion of the Noble Savage which attributes a superior virtue to primitive people whose uncomplicated lives and belief-systems seemed to contain a 'purity' about them which it was felt had been lost by convoluted Western societies. ²⁷⁰ At the same time, however, industrialized Western culture evoked the 'primitive' as a sign on which to map what it had socially and psychologically repressed: desire and sexual abandon. The problematic nature of primitivism can be illustrated by the example of Paul Gauguin, who spurned his own culture to join that of an 'uncivilized' yet more 'ingenuous' people. Although he claimed he sought spiritual inspiration in Tahiti, he showed a more earthy preoccupation with Tahitian women, often depicting them nude. This eroticising of the 'primitive' was also displayed in Pablo Picasso's proto-Cubist paintings and in the work of the German Expressionist group *Die Brücke*. 'Expressionists discovered in themselves a kinship with agrarian peoples. It was easy to idealise such peoples around 1910-11, during Germany's rapid urbanisation, or again around 1919-20 after a dehumanising, mechanised war. In city studios artists re-created the imagined environment of tribal life. And in the countryside the life style of peasants was appreciated for its own sake. Some artists even "went native" during summer vacations, living in the nude with their models and practicing a sexual camaraderie that paraphrased - so they thought - the supposed instinctual freedom of tribal life.' ²⁷¹

The influence of tribal fetishes on modern painters and sculptors, such as Constantin Brancusi (1876-1957), Alberto Giacometti (1901-1966), Henri Matisse, and Picasso, is undeniable, yet recent attempts to locate affinities between the primitive and the Modern have been perceived as suspect because they evince a certain ethnocentrism.²⁷² That primitive art often looks like modernist art is interpreted as validating the modern by showing that its values are universal. However, a counterview that primitivism actually invalidates modernism by showing it to be derivative and subject to external causation is, I think, just as convincing a view.²⁷³ What the idea of Primitivism does lay bare is the way our cultural institutions relate to foreign cultures, revealing it as an 'ethnocentric subjectivity inflated to co-opt such cultures and their objects into itself'.²⁷⁴

While fascination with primitive art expanded amongst modernists, a separate movement, *Japonisme*,²⁷⁵ that had begun in the early 1870s, reflected the aesthetics and fashions of Japan in the West. A broad interest in Japanese culture had a major impact on 19th century Impressionists and especially post-Impressionists artists like Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890). *Japonisme's* influence continued into the 20th century but *alongside* that engendered by the art of 'primitive' societies. The Japanese, whilst regarded as 'different', were not seen to be 'backward' in the way tribal societies were. In a 1888 letter to his brother, Theo, Vincent van Gogh described them as 'these simple Japanese....who live in nature as though they themselves were flowers.'²⁷⁶ by which I think he was expressing the view of his time: that the Japanese, though 'others', were more understandable, more sophisticated than 'primitive' people to whose artworks van Gogh was less attracted (unlike his sometime-friend Paul

Gauguin). Van Gogh wrote in the same letter to Theo: 'In a way all my work is founded on Japanese art....'.²⁷⁷

The *Japonisme* movement illustrates how the art of different 'other' and distant peoples can be treated with inconsistency by the art establishment. The attitude towards the Japanese and their culture was different (and so avoided the 'ethnocentrism' tag applied to other very foreign societies). Perhaps when a subject becomes *fashionable* it receives special treatment. Further, as Colin Rhodes states: it is not impossible for two cultures to look at each other....and for each to regard the other as the more primitive. The perception of Japan towards Europe and vice-versa in the nineteenth century is a case in point'.²⁷⁸ While this doesn't explain *why* 'primitive' art from some places was viewed differently to that of an equally alien society in Asia, it does demonstrate an ambiguity which similarly impacted views on self-taught artists when they have been considered 'primitives'.

Shelly Errington argues²⁷⁹ that primitive art was 'invented as a new type of art object at the beginning of the twentieth century but that now, a century later, it has died.' She explains her view: 'the construction of the primitive in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (and the kinds of objects chosen to exemplify it) must be understood as a product of discourses of progress—from the nineteenth-century European narrative of technological progress, to the twentieth-century narrative of modernism, to the late-20th and early-21st-century narrative of the triumph of the free market.'²⁸⁰ Of course primitive art was not 'invented' in the early 20th-century nor has it since 'died' but Errington is inferring that interest in (and the interpreting in non-ethnographic terms of)

the art of 'primitives' became of particular significance to modernist artworld figures in the early 20th century and later waned, as did modernism. It was 'discovered' along with those producing it as Europeans grew aware of different, sometimes less 'sophisticated' societies in 'exotic' environments around the world, rather than 'invented' by artists and those involved in their world. It was seen as an expression of a way of life that appealed to and fascinated them in their searching for less conventional paths to follow.

The concept of primitive art is one of the more controversial topics in the artworld at least in part because it evokes thoughts of colonial superiority, of Western cultural supremacy, and looking at artworks from other cultures as intrinsically inferior. But because of the remarkable influence primitive art has had on Western artists in the 20th and 21st century giving birth to a plethora of new movements and ways of expression, it cannot be overlooked, nor viewed as inferior. Self-taught art, itself initially considered in style to be a sort of 'primitive' art, though an art markedly different in its origins and reasons for being produced, was also assigned significance by modern artists in the early 20th-century and remained, in some respects, as a lesser but parallel influence for close to a century. If thought of by some to be similar to the work of less 'sophisticated' non-Occidental cultures, but lacking the social and cultural drivers which lead 'primitives' to produce their art, the question arises, why did self-taught artists paint in the way they did?

3.3 Why did they paint that way? 'Style' and self-taught art

As is the case with professional artists, works by individual self-taught artists are recognisably different from each other. A picture by Bill Traylor is immediately

identifiable as by him just as one by Aloïse Corbaz is distinctively hers. The same is true of most of their kind – Darger, Hawkins, Tolliver, Moses, Warren. However, there are quirks to their paintings which are hard to explain. Why, for example, do so many self-taught artists have similar problems with linear perspective? What causes many of them to write their names or their work's subject-matter in large letters on the painting surfaces? Why don't they seem able (or willing) to 'learn from their mistakes', as might be asked by a member of the artworld, and develop their pictures the way a trained artist would? Answers to such questions help us in understanding that tribe of which each self-taught artist was a part.



Fig. 117. Sidney Nolan, *Steve Hart Dressed as a Girl*, 1947



Fig. 118. Selby Warren, *Ellen Jool*, c. 1968 [SW382]

Steve Hart Dressed as a Girl (Fig. 117) is a painting by Sidney Nolan of the cross-dressing member of the Kelly gang, and *Ellen Jool* (Fig. 118) is one by Selby Warren. They were painted over twenty years apart, Nolan's in 1947 and Warren's in about 1968. Similarities in style are evident. The major differences are in the approaches of the two artists in representing a person on horseback in 'naïve' style. Nolan was attempting to

return to basic first principles (being influenced in part by European naïve artists like Henri Rousseau, again artists of whom Warren was unaware). Like many of the great, recognised artists of the twentieth century, Nolan was trying to 'unlearn' the lessons of his training.²⁸¹ Warren, on the other hand, was actually in that 'unlearned' place; painting *from* those basic first principles. Being untrained 'there was nothing to unlearn, nothing to hamper his urge to communicate directly through images'.²⁸² Nolan's Ned Kelly series of paintings created an imaginative reconstruction from an earlier time and, by doing so, he contributed to a national art and a mythology. His approach to image-making was sourced in part from Rousseau, European folk art and American primitive art ²⁸³ (which was being re-badged as 'folk art' by Holger Cahill (1887-1960) and Edith Halpert (1900-1970) in the 1930s and 1940s in New York, although the name 'self-taught art' has nowadays become a popular term used by many Americans). The desire to get back to a simpler style of expression from a simpler time was a continuing influence and led to many artists to looking back at the innocence and primitivism they admired in children's art.

The idea of childhood as the time of innocence and freedom was an early eighteenth-century invention stemming from the philosophical ideas of thinkers like Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712- 1778). In his book, *The Elements of Drawing* (1857) ²⁸⁴ John Ruskin echoed J-J. Rousseau in suggesting artists try to recover what he called 'the innocence of the eye' to represent nature 'with the freshness and vitality of a child or of a blind person suddenly restored sight'. ²⁸⁵ Seven years later, Charles Baudelaire continued the theme when he wrote 'a child sees everything in a state of newness'. He goes on: 'nothing is more like what we call inspiration than the joy the child feels in drinking in

shape and colour....Genius is no more than childhood recaptured at will, childhood equipped now with man's physical means to express itself, and with the analytical mind that enables it to bring order into the sum of experience involuntarily amassed'.²⁸⁶ This simplicity of a child's approach to shape and colour was something many artists attempted to capture, 'Monet and Cézanne, for instance, sought to convey a structured idea in paint of the sensory excitement of first sight. In 1904 Cézanne told Émile Bernard: "I would like to be a child" '.²⁸⁷

Amongst artists, serious interest in children's art developed, along with their fascination with primitive art, in the first decades of the twentieth century as they attempted to purify art of its decadence by looking to primitive cultures which, 'in the condescending language of the time' were considered 'to be cultural throwbacks to the "childhood of man"; primitive art was often compared with the crude artwork done by children, who were sometimes praised as homegrown noble savages'.²⁸⁸ However, it is important to draw a definite distinction between children's art and the art of primitive adults as set out by the ethnologist, Leonard Adam, in 1949: 'The primitiveness of children's art is a transitory phenomenon in the life of the individual, a mere stage in his development, and in complete contrast to the primitiveness conditioned by an entire culture of which it forms part'.²⁸⁹

Many of the century's greatest artists – Kandinsky, Dubuffet, Klee, Matisse and Picasso - had collections of children's art which they studied and imitated. They proposed children's art was as important as that of the insane when considering untrained expression through art. As Ourania Kouvou²⁹⁰ writes: 'the influences of child art were

particularly pronounced on the members of the two organizations of expressionist artists, the "The Bridge" and "Blue Rider" ²⁹¹ in Germany. (In the "Blue Rider" journal, children's drawings figured among works by Van Gogh, Gauguin and Medieval artists). The artists of these two groups favoured the flatness of pictorial space, simplification and distortion of forms and the use of primary contrasting colours'. ²⁹² She continues: 'the attractions of child art as a model for avant-garde art in the early 20th century goes with two factors: first, the enormous increase in interest from the late 19th century in the child and in child art across Europe. As we have seen, this led to the development of the romantic notion of the child as the innocent, first artist. Second, the return to fundamentals as far as art production is concerned'. While Kouvou concentrates on children's art the points she makes might also be said of self-taught art. ²⁹³

Elements of self-taught art have always been likened to the simplicity and innocence of children's painting. Its charm and interest is in part due to its audience's appreciation of that very simplicity and unclutteredness. The fact that the work is often quite inexpert in the way it presents its subject(s) is overlooked, just as a child's work might be, as it is the untutored aspects of the work that most appeal. Also, like the work of children, it is appreciated due to the honesty of representation – it *is* what it is supposed to be because that is how the artist sees it, whether or not it is immediately recognisable to the viewer.

Whether realism, by which I mean in this context mimetic representation, may or may not be our preferred style of art it seems to be accepted that children are attempting to present realism in their art. ²⁹⁴ Generally we do not expect children to have mastered

their attempts to be realistic in their representations at an early age, though we do seem to hope that appropriate training will lead them to a more 'acceptable' ability as they mature. Many do and, though mimetic representation has not been seen as either the desired standard or measure of quality by the art world for years, a few do go on to become recognised artists. But we appreciate their initial untrained manner of seeing and representing even if we then proceed to work at altering it in a way that meets society's norms of how a particular object is expected to appear. Adults who continue to paint in a simplistic, untutored manner tend to either choose to paint in this way or do so because they are not capable of painting in a more sophisticated way. These latter artists are often untrained and have little or no knowledge of the established artworld while the former are usually trained and possess a knowledge of the mainstream but choose to paint in a naïve style for their own reasons, sometimes commercial. An example of such an artist was the very popular and successful British artist, L. S. (Laurence Stephen) Lowry (1887-1976), who, though best known for his naïve-styled industrial town scenes, was a technically competent portraitist and had spent more than 15 years, from 1905 to the mid-1920s, attending various art schools including the Manchester Academy of Fine Art and the Salford Royal Technical College: ²⁹⁵



Fig 119. L. S. Lowry, *Self Portrait*, 1925



Fig. 120. L. S. Lowry, *Going to the Match*, 1953

If we compare these two Lowry examples (Figs. 119 and 120) with works by a truly self-taught painter such as Selby Warren (Figs. 121 and 122) the differences are conspicuous:

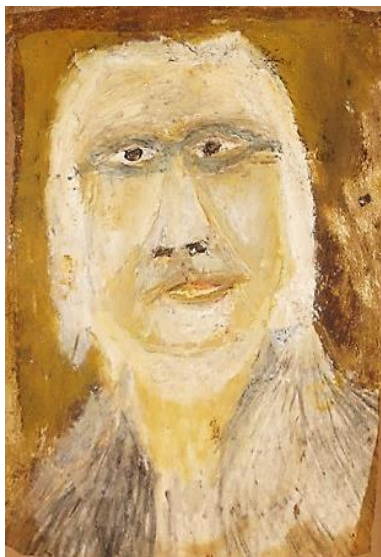


Fig. 121. Selby Warren, *Self Portrait*, 1972 [SW162]

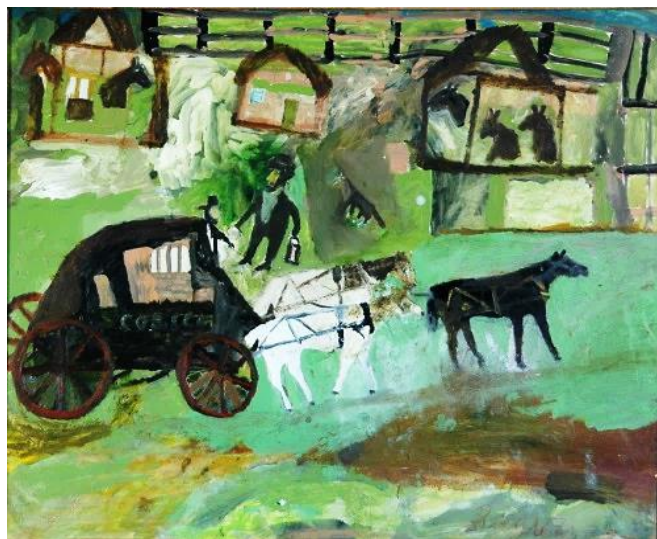


Fig. 122. Selby Warren, *The Lights of Cobb & Co*, 1968 [SW122]

Whether the more technically competent works by Lowry are 'better' than those of Warren is, really, a matter of personal preference though some amateur critics repeat that hackneyed and uninformed phrase, 'my child could do that' particularly of the Warren paintings, though also of the Lowry naïve-style work (Fig. 120). The cliché 'a

child could have done that' which is sometimes levelled at modern art, (and at self-taught art),²⁹⁶ while still used today, seemed not to upset Expressionists, Cubists and others of the avant-garde, who, as Jonathan Fineberg shows in *The Innocent Eye* (1997), far from being offended by the comparison, in reply regularly chose to exhibit their works alongside children's art.²⁹⁷

Self-taught artists often appear to accept that they have reached a plateau in their abilities and so do not perceive a need to develop their style further. Like a young child who is quite happy with the drawing they have made whether or not the subject is recognisable to an adult, the self-taught artist sees his representation of a subject as quite acceptable and not needing further explanation. That many self-taught artists, Selby Warren amongst them, write or print on the picture itself a title or description of what it is about does not reflect a desire by the artist to explain the work. While it is understandable to think this might be done to assist people in recognising the subject matter of the pictures or to remind the artists themselves what it was they have recorded in paint, self-taught painters do not seem to feel any pressing need to explain themselves. A written description of the subject-matter may be an integral part of the painting which is a vehicle for saying something both holistically and literally. Writing on a picture may demonstrate it is considered by its producer to be a work of art. It might also be a means for them to demonstrate an ability to write. Warren, like many other self-taught painters, was at best semi-literate. A work incorporating words presents an image replete with content which is part of the artist's urge to communicate their interior monologue.

Self-taught art is of course also compared with art other than that created by children, particularly modernist and Expressionist, some of which might be considered relatively 'primitive' in style and to have been influenced by primitive or tribal non-European art. In looking at various artworks we can often see some similarities in the works of a self-taught artist like Warren to those of an accepted mainstream artist. This is particularly so with artists from modernist movements like the Fauves and Expressionists. An initial reaction to recognising such a similarity is to question whether the self-taught artist was in some way influenced by the mainstream artist's work. While some self-taught artists, Warren amongst them, had undoubtedly seen reproductions of mainstream art very little evidence exists suggesting were *influenced* by it. Warren appears not to have been inspired by modern, medieval or any other form of art. This was particularly so with work by modernists, especially given their lack of general exposure in Australia during Warren's lifetime. However, there is no doubt that numerous recognised twentieth century artists, in their several movements, were influenced by art of the kind Warren produced and by other work then classified as 'primitive'. While Warren painted the way he did because it was the only way he could, those influenced by his kind of art perhaps experienced the frustration suggested by E .H. Gombrich when he wrote: 'the more you prefer the primitive, the less you can become primitive' ²⁹⁸

Charles Russell states, 'The history of Modernism is the history of appropriations.' ²⁹⁹ Russell lists artists and a little of what they appropriated; Van Gogh: Hokusai and Hiroshige; Gauguin: Egypt, China, the folk tradition of Brittany, islander art; Matisse and Derain: African sculpture; Picasso: early Catalan decoration, African and Oceanic art. To this list might be added the Expressionists who also were influenced by both non-

European art (including Aztec and Indian) and folk art.³⁰⁰ They were likewise inspired by El Greco (1541-1614), Goya (1746-1828), Van Gogh (1853-1890), Gauguin (1848-1903) and, like so many modernists of many -isms, the 'father of naïve art', Henri Rousseau. The enthusiasm by these modernist artists for 'anonymous' primitive art supported the belief that it represented a whole, organic and socially integrated form of art production.³⁰¹ Modern artists were consciously attempting to return to basic first principles, encapsulated in a cartoon by David Sipress (Fig. 123). Like many of the great, recognised artists of the twentieth century, they were trying to 'unlearn' the lessons of their formal training.³⁰² As Picasso told his friend the art historian and critic, Herbert Read (1893-1968), when viewing an exhibition of children's art in 1956: 'When I was the age of these children, I could draw like Raphael. It took me many years to learn how to draw like these children'.³⁰³ The commonly held view is that 'in "high" art, simplicity is an achievement; in "primitive" art, it is thought to be a given.'³⁰⁴ The modernists prized above all the directness of tribal or folk art and of the works of the marginalised because they seemed innocent of the mixed motives that limited the creative daring of their European and American counterparts. Twentieth century art assumed that true originality, unblemished by original sin, was the birthright of the uncomplicated, whereas late-nineteenth century art seemed to take for granted that to be cultured was to be corrupted.³⁰⁵



I just wish I could loosen up like you.

Fig. 123. David Sipress, *New Yorker Magazine* (Vol. XC, No. 43, New York: Jan. 12, 2015, Conde Nast Publications,) p.52

While these attitudes towards marginalised and tribal art and the attempts by professional artists to capture the simplicity they represented are widely discussed in the artworld, a different ingredient in the mix has been provided by Colin Rhodes in an essay on the German Expressionist, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner.³⁰⁶ It contends that Kirchner along with some other modernists were, like marginalised artists (and children), limited in the technical abilities they possessed. As Robert Hughes maintains, their 'images are pushed, with difficulty, through a very limited technique'.³⁰⁷

As examples, the following two paintings by Warren, *Bathurst Council Building* (Fig. 124) and Kirchner, *Brandenburger Tor* (Fig. 125) show strong similarities in style, particularly in how each has represented the sky using hatching, and both demonstrate some limitations in the technical skills of the artists.

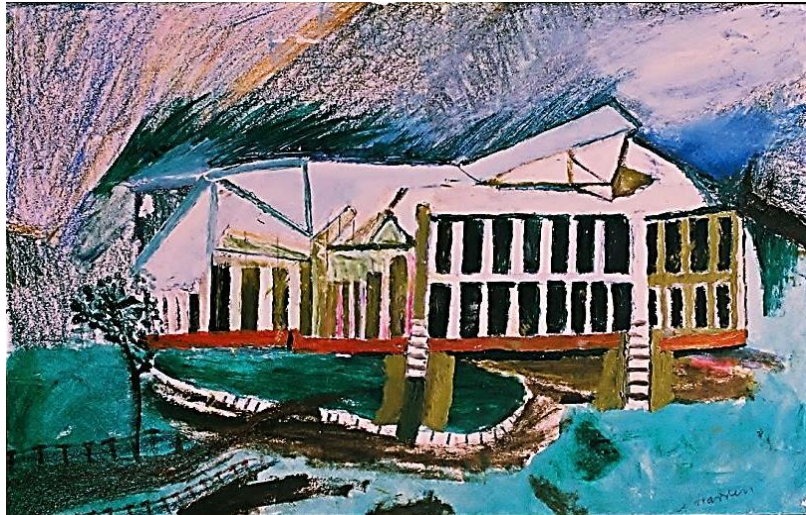


Fig. 124. Selby Warren, *Bathurst Council Building*, 1973 [SW219]

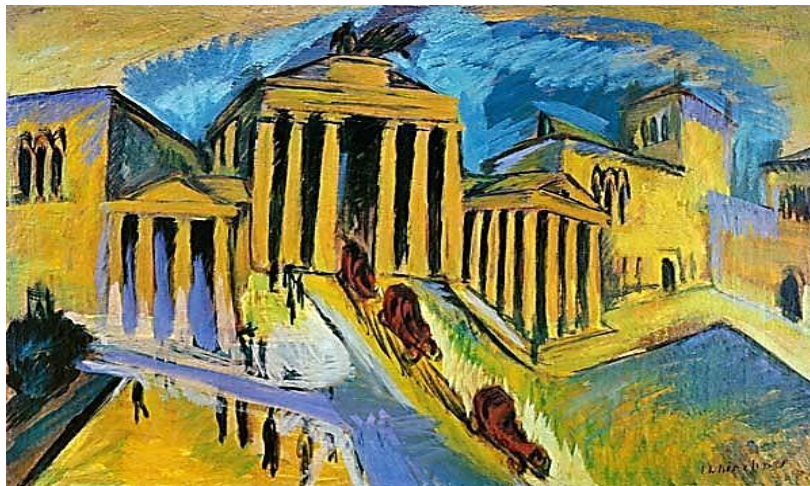


Fig. 125. Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, *Brandenburger Tor*, 1915

In his essay on Kirchner, Rhodes states the patchiness evident in the quality of Kirchner's output 'was often a direct result of tensions and a mismatch between conceptual desires and his capability to give them form'.³⁰⁸ This mismatch, he argues, is connected to Kirchner's background and the quality of the artistic training he received. Most of the *Die Brücke* founders (Fritz Bleyl, Erich Heckel, Kirchner and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff) had studied architecture and 'had....no training as artists....the creation of the association (that is, *Die Brücke*) was precisely the result of the wish to work jointly in a studio....to learn the trade they had chosen'.³⁰⁹ Rhodes suggests this working together, offering support

to one another, was a matter of *necessity* rather than simply of a 'wish'.³¹⁰ A trained artist who joined the *Die Brücke* group, Max Pechstein (1881-1955), apparently assisted the others with their technical knowledge. Also, perhaps by uniting themselves into a 'movement' with a manifesto to explain why they painted the way they did, they were able to disguise their technical weaknesses from their critics and, possibly, from each other.

In that the founding *Die Brücke* members had little or no formal training in art, it can be claimed that they were essentially self-taught.³¹¹ In the literature we often find artists who disavow or attempt to 'undo' the traditional art school training they undertook when younger. The academic stance of *Die Brücke* members, though consistent with the modernist project, involved no rejection of actual academic training as they were autodidactic.³¹² If Kirchner and other *Die Brücke* members were self-taught then how does their art relate to the self-taught tradition of art? The self-taught artists usually had no contact with the professional artworld as individuals. They kept to themselves and almost never had any contact with fellow naïfs. While they may have painted in the same genre they were not part of any group or movement as such and were unaware of others who might be considered by artworld figures as painting in a similar way. In fact, it is by way of members of the recognised artworld *nominating* them as artists of a genre they labelled self-taught that the self-taught artists are accepted as such today. This 'recognition' (perhaps 'labelling' would be a more appropriate word) did not generally occur until after the First World War³¹³ when the work of self-taught artists, as contemporaries of the Expressionist generation, 'entered the modernist discourse only in

Expressionism's wake and, importantly by means of justifications phrased in the theoretical language of Expressionism.'³¹⁴

Self-taught painters only rarely considered themselves to be artists. As individuals, often not commencing to produce art until late in life and then working in isolation, these people tended to describe themselves through the work they had undertaken during their working years. They called themselves 'postman' or 'labourer' or 'armer's wife and grandmother', 'miner', almost anything but 'artist'. That label was applied to them by the establishment. A few then appropriated the label though most continued to regard 'artist' as a specific profession of which they were not a member. This reflects 'the working-class world view that equates personal identity with designated job of work'.³¹⁵ The great percentage of self-taught artists were of poorly educated 'working-class' backgrounds and this attitude to work is understandable. However, when told that they were 'artists' by someone they saw as being authoritative, several embraced their new identity, one, of course, being Henri Rousseau with his contention that he and Pablo Picasso were 'the two great painters of this era....'. In Australia a few self-taught artists like the retired Broken Hill miners Sam Byrne (1883-1978) and 'Pro' Hart (1928-2006) took on the mantle of being an artist once discovered. In Byrne's case at the age of 70 when he was shown in several city galleries including that of Rudy Komon in Sydney and enjoyed the attention he received. But he did continue to refer to himself as a miner during his period of critical acceptance. Selby Warren's main response to being called an artist, as mentioned earlier, was to grow his hair to shoulder length. Otherwise he considered himself a bushman.³¹⁶

Whether or not they assumed the label of 'artist', and most didn't, self-taught artists were similar in how they often appeared fully formed as artists in that they tended not to modify their style over the years - the style they first demonstrated seemed to meet their creative needs and allowed them to communicate pictorially without feeling a need to further develop their means of communication. This represented a major difference between them and a majority of established artists who work to continually improve their means of expression over time, whether or not they are initially technically competent. Kirchner (and his fellow *Die Brücke* artists) was no different. He continued to search for style throughout his period as an artist and sought references from a variety of sources including non-European (Indian, Pacific Islander, African, etc.). He and his friends together continued their self-training as artists from the time they got together in 1904.³¹⁷ A crucial difference between self-taught men like them and self-taught artists was they were educated, widely read and well-connected, elements that were almost invariably lacking in the lives of the self-taught painter. Another trait of artists like Kirchner was that they were always aware of their position in the artworld and often jostled to improve it. This was of little or no interest to the vast majority of self-taught artists who were unaware of any structure in the artworld. Rhodes' contention that the stylistic differences of Kirchner's work to 'academic' art is likely due to his inability to produce academic type work as he had not learned the necessary technical skills ³¹⁸ is an attractive one in understanding the limitations to the technical skills often demonstrated by self-taught painters. It is their willingness to accept (or be unaware of) their limitations that sets them apart from the mainstream.

The argument that the technical skills of some artists are restricted due to limited training or the situation in which they find themselves, can be spread well beyond German Expressionists and self-taught painters to other groupings or genres of art. It could also refer to some art students who hope for early mainstream success but possess limited technical abilities and because of that fail in gaining success. They might choose to further develop their skills, as was the case with the *Die Brücke* friends, they might move on to other endeavours less demanding of particular skillsets than art, or they might just be fortunate. But few will simply keep on painting whether recognised or not, as would a self-taught artist. Impatience didn't seem to be something that impacted on self-taught artists probably because they were not dissatisfied with their work accepting it as it was, producing their work outside of both the academy and that nexus of production and consumption which comprises the mainstream artworld in Europe, America and Australia. A 'lack of ability' is a charge laid at the feet of both modern art and self-taught art by their critics who, as mentioned above, sometimes go so far as to using that old chestnut of comparing unusual art to that of children or other untrained artists – thus intimating incompetence. Neither Expressionists nor self-taught artists were incompetent: they just expressed themselves in a way that was different.

The modernists produced bright and exciting works that shocked and irritated the establishment. Paintings by the Fauves like Matisse and Derain, Expressionists like Kirchner and Marc and the many others who dropped in and out of movements (Vlaminck and Braque), created an art of odd shapes and vibrant colours which impacted on the viewer in ways rarely experienced before. While self-taught artists also often painted in startling colours they did so, not as a statement of rebellion intended to

surprise, but as a means of expression which, most appear to have considered, provided realistic versions of their subjects. They seemed quite unperturbed by using a palette of the kind an avant-garde painter might especially plan for an effect it could achieve. Warren certainly appears to have had no qualms about using unexpected colours. His paintings were, in his eyes, true representations of the subjects he painted yet often the colours he used were far from realistic. He just expressed himself in a colourful way and he used colour to add particular effect and balance to many of his works as in: *The Lights of Cob & Co* (Fig. 126), *Deer and Dog* (Fig. 127), *Harbour Bridge* (Fig. 128) and *Abstract* (Fig. 129).

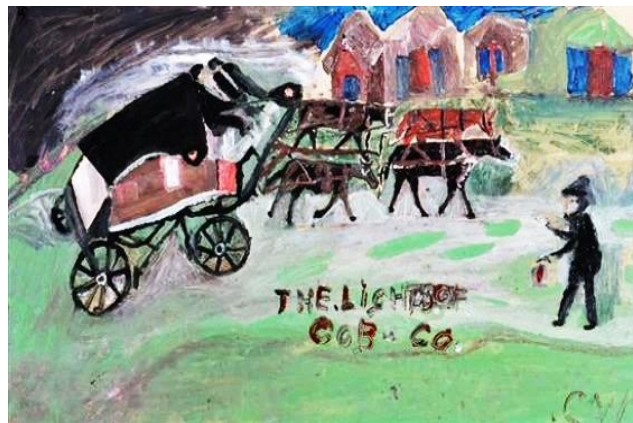


Fig. 126. Selby Warren, *The Lights of Cob & Co*, (2) c., 1972 [SW121]



Fig.127. Selby Warren, *Deer and Dog*, c. 1972 [SW071]



Fig.128. Selby Warren, *Harbour Bridge*, 1972 [SW284]



Fig. 129. Selby Warren, *Abstract*, 1972 [SW115]

As Roger Cardinal put it in 1979: 'Outsiders (self-taught artists) create their works in a spirit of indifference towards, if not plain ignorance of the public world of art. Instinctive and independent, they appear to tackle the business of making art as if it had never existed before they came along.'³¹⁹ Warren's *Dog Man* (Fig. 130) and the 13th century *Wolf-headed men from 'Livre des merveilles du monde'* (Fig. 131), though of unusual subject-matter, do not demonstrate that Warren was aware of and influenced by the earlier 13th century work but that some ideas can cross the centuries. While the medieval illustration probably referred to a significant story, its layers of meaning known



Fig.130. Selby Warren, *Dog Man*, 1970 [SW138]



Fig.131. *Wolf-headed Men* from '*Livre des merveilles du monde*', 13th century

to its 13th century audience, Warren's dog-headed man was surely painted in fun with no hidden intellectual messages or symbolic intent.

It is reasonable to assume that any 'style' displayed by self-taught artists is due in part to their general limitations in the technical skills of draftsmanship and painting. Whilst it is possible that they can change a little over a period in the way in which they paint is a reflection of them becoming more adept in using art materials rather than changing in any planned or even conscious way. Unlike professional artists who, through guidance, study, emulation and trial and error progress from one style to another and usually do this in a cognisant manner. Self-taught artists are limited to very little change which is due to the facts that their skills are restricted and because they have not approached art as a vocation. Almost invariably they come to art late in life whether this is due to age, illness or another limiting event. Most have not taken up art at this stage of their lives with any ambition to be recognised or even noticed as artists, and the few that have, including Rousseau, have been treated as oddities by the establishment.

I suggest that when self-taught artists appear to have a similar style of painting they have reached an 'end-point' in their abilities at about the same level and have neither the wish nor the wherewithal to get beyond that end-point. Those who break through this 'barrier' are soon transported by the artworld from the self-taught (or 'outsider') connotation to the mainstream - as an example of such an artist Thornton Dial comes to mind: *Don't matter how raggly the flag. It still got to tie us together* (Fig. 132) and *The Tiger Cat* (Fig. 133). Denizens of the artworld make their pronouncements on who is 'in' and who is 'out' of their world. They sort those who are capable of moving forward from a generally static form of art, no matter how extraordinary it might be. By doing so they are not only recognising a demonstration of a noticeable difference in technical abilities but also a differentiation in the expressionistic virtuosity of individual artists.



Fig. 132. Thornton Dial, *Don't matter how raggly the flag. It still got to tie us together*, 2003



Fig. 133. Thornton Dial, *The Tiger Cat*, 1987

The question heading this chapter, 'Why did they paint that way?', is answered, at least in part, when it is recognised that self-taught artists were often limited by their technical abilities and were satisfied with that level of development. Not only were they accepting of their skill levels but showed no particular desire to work at improving them which

suggests that they either did not recognise that their abilities were restricted or chose to ignore the fact. Either way, the narrative content and its expression were more important to them than the final appearance of their work. Again it seemed to fall to the artworld experts who discovered them, to include their technical limitations as one of the attributes used in classifying these marginalised artists.

3.4 The materials self-taught artists used

Self-taught artists use a wide variety of materials in producing their works. Many of the most famous of the early artists who Dubuffet called *art brut* were given colour pencils and paper by their doctors in the mental institutions where they were being treated. Crayons were also used by many of them. Pens were handled with caution due to the sharp nibs which might be misused by inmates. Water colour paints were also popular. A number of non-institutionalised self-taught artists used similar materials and also oil paints. These included Rousseau and others supported by Wilhelm Uhde like Seraphine Louis and Louis Vivin.

While many of these artists were provided with art materials by either their discoverers, others made do with what they had on hand. Warren was initially one of these, using the most basic of materials ranging from mud to house paint and wire to pebbles - what most of us would consider rubbish. He was a true *bricoleur*. The question of how being provided with commercial art materials impacted on the work of such artists is a complex one and I think in Warren's case the use of new materials in some of his later works do seem to possess less spontaneity than was apparent in his earlier work, but not to the extent that the quality of his pictures deteriorated. Dixon gave him art paper,

acrylic paints, oils, oil pastels, pastels, felt nib pens, professional brushes and a small desk-top easel. Using them, Warren gained a broader palette and slicker way of applying his colours but still mixed the different mediums and reverted to house paint when it suited him. Warren obviously did not feel constrained by having 'proper' materials available to him but seems to have added the new materials to those found materials he had previously used. Because he received the art materials free from Dixon he tended to use them more regularly as time passed.³²⁰ Also it seems likely that Warren would take the easy path and use what he was given not just because it was free but because it was recommended to him by Dixon who he regarded an art expert.

In his 2014 presentation, *Candide. Or How the Artworld Dines Out*, Colin Rhodes makes the salient point that, 'the "look" of self-taught (he uses the word 'outsider') art is socially and economically determined' based on most of its exponents being poor and more knowledgeable about vernacular means of decoration which 'has always affected their approach to making'.³²¹ What self-taught artists use for their work is based on necessity. Contemporary artworld art, on the other hand, often uses similar types of materials as a matter of artistic choice. Poor materials are employed purposefully with 'the very materiality of the work being part of its content *intentionally*'.³²² Likewise, because self-taught artists are autodidacts their level of understanding of the conventions of representation is usually low which can make their images appear ungainly and naïve. People who practice or are fond of expressivist art often react favourably to self-taught art whereas those preferring conceptualism or mimetic art tend not to – 'one tends towards the vernacular, the other to high culture'.³²³ Dubuffet, many of whose paintings, for example *The Blue Bird* (Fig. 133), were made using

vernacular materials and influences, summed up the expressivist art lovers' view in his 1945 *Notes for the Well-Read* when he wrote: 'To each his own.... I like the embryonic, the ill-fashioned, the imperfect, the mixed. I prefer raw diamonds.....with all their defects.'³²⁴



Fig. 134. Jean Dubuffet, *The Blue Bird*, 1949

The physical materials used by self-taught artists, like the pictures they produce, have been appropriated by members of the contemporary artworld. This has been done to achieve particular effects, a demonstration, perhaps, that the appropriators are aware of the simple lives and work of self-taught artists and see in them 'ungainly and naïve' elements that attract artworld sophisticates and show them a way to reject orthodoxy. If that is so, I think the self-taught artists providing such models would neither understand nor care what is adopted from their work by others. They produce their art to record their memories and experiences and use materials they can access to achieve this. Looking into their world from our vantage points we cannot be truly aware of the thinking that has gone into producing this unique art, nor why a particular material has been chosen. As Dubuffet said: 'Western culture dotes on analysis'³²⁵ and we find it difficult sometimes to accept a simple truth which might not meet our more complicated

expectations. In this case the decision to choose a particular material for use in a painting might be no more meaningful than 'it was there'. When a member of the artworld offers a self-taught artist more refined materials to work with it is quite likely that the gift is seen as unimportant by the artist. Considering someone like Warren as an example, there is no record of him having wanted or attempting to obtain professional art materials. He appeared content to use whatever was available before he was given materials by Dixon and, once he received them, simply used them as they were there to be used.³²⁶

3.5 The importance of memory and folklore to self-taught artists

As the artist David Hockney says: 'we see with memory'.³²⁷ A notable aspect of self-taught artists is, I believe, that the majority of them are memory painters. In this current context I mean by 'memory painter' artists who record in paint their memories of places and events: they document things that happened, particular places and people from the past. Their versions are, in a very real way, *memorialising* those locations, individuals and incidents. The work of some self-taught painters is visually less obviously based on memory than others but even the most unrecognisable subject matter probably came to the artist's mind because of something they remembered from their pasts: examples are institutionalised artists like Wölfli, Tschirtner, August Natterer (1868-1933), Ramírez, Friedrich Schröder-Sonnenstern (1892-1982) and Louis Soutter (particularly his later finger paintings). Schröder-Sonnenstern's art represented his 'passions, fears and scatological obsessions'³²⁸ and Natterer's pictures 'are intended as a record of the hallucinations he experienced'³²⁹ when interned in a mental institution in 1907. Despite their renditions of unusual or unexpected subjects these artists were influenced to

varying degrees by memories. In his search for an art that lay completely outside cultural influences Dubuffet believed institutionalised artists like these fitted the category yet it proved an impossibility as 'no one can create from a position oblivious to the world around'.³³⁰

Despite being located in Australia and with no knowledge of the artists Warren painted in a similar way to Rousseau, Kane, Serl, Horace Pippin (1885-1946) and Anna Mary Robertson 'Grandma' Moses (1860-1861), rather than to many of the institutionalised *art brut* self-taught artists. Painters like Warren, through their memory paintings, often transferred oral folklore into pictorial form. Folklore, in its traditional oral form, is a shared tradition-based creation of a cultural community.³³¹ Painters who had been part of community where oral folklore was customary, whether self-taught or trained, often translated those stories into their visual work. It was a time when computers, the internet, emails, Facebook, Twitter and mobile phones did not exist; 'live' coverage of events on radio and television was many years away and, when it arrived, the telephone was often unreliable operating through manned exchanges and shared lines.³³² As media and communications systems became part of everyday life, oral folklore was replaced by pre-packaged stories and up-to-the-minute news, both of which left little room for amendment through retelling.³³³ Despite this a number of (usually elderly) people, who in the 'modernised' environment they found themselves in, could no longer adapt the folklore they once learned and so stored away in their memories the feelings of identity that had been provided by their old folklore traditions. Artists like Warren lived in communities steeped in stories retold so many times they took on a reality of their own which became accepted as real (or close enough to it) by the community at

large. Theirs were not 'history paintings' as defined by art historians: large pictures which have a serious narrative or include examples of actions which are intended to have didactic overtones.³³⁴ Robert Hughes, writing in 1970 stated:

'Neither myth nor history is a vital part of Australian awareness....The country is too amiably pragmatic for that, and too little exposed to the conflict of ideologies, cultures dreams and fanaticisms which is the seedbed of great historical painting. One cannot imagine an Australian equivalent of David's *Death of Marat*....or Goya's *Second of May*. The experiences that produce such paintings do not exist there. Neither does the genius.'³³⁵

This is not to suggest that true 'history paintings' were not produced in Australia, a well-known example of such a work being the large *Opening of the First Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia by HRH The Duke of Cornwall and York (later King George V), May 9, 1901* painted in 1903 by Tom Roberts (1856-1931). I disagree with Hughes that myth is not 'a vital part of Australian awareness' (see Chapter 4) but agree with the substance of his view that, *at the time of his writing in 1970* Australians still deferred to Britain and would likely ignore any 'experiences that produce such paintings' had they occurred in the 200 years of European presence in the country. His 'neither does the genius' statement reflects an assessment of Australia's cultural maturity summed up by the concept of the 'cultural cringe' which is discussed in Chapter 4.6 below.

Even if the term 'history painting' is used to mean representing accurate descriptions of actual events, self-taught artists were often reinterpreting an oral folk tradition rather than recording an actual event.³³⁶ In many respects memory painting encapsulates the

notion of an oral folk tradition. However, as self-taught artists remained individuals and did not approach their art as a group, whether or not their work consciously represented to them a folklore tradition, cannot be easily determined.

In old age Selby Warren produced memory paintings of things he had done, seen and been told about throughout his long life. I believe that in his way he was setting down aspects of his life in paint, memorialising places, events and people who impacted on or impressed him in some way. His paintings were like a visual diary though did not follow any chronology or other sequence that might be expected of a diary. As discussed, many of Warren's pictures are anecdotal, similar to those of Grandma Moses. They are approximations of his memories not only because those memories were, to an extent, clouded by time but also because those memories, like folklore, altered in his memory as time passed.

Warren, like others of his kind, did not recognise himself as a particular 'type' of artist, in fact he might not have initially (or really at any time) thought of himself as an artist at all. He was discovered by someone from the artworld who couldn't help but be outside of his subject matter. What actually drove Warren in his artistic life, which appears to have been just one element of his complete being - no more all-encompassing than his work life or family life - cannot be known by students of self-taught art and its producers. The artworld makes its pronouncements on self-taught art based on knowledge and understanding of art in general and *its* producers. A difficulty is that because of their uniqueness, marginal artists don't fit into any definable category of artist. Their art seems a difficult concept for the artworld to come to terms with, not

because self-taught art is either especially sophisticated or hard to understand but, as Colin Rhodes believes, is ' "difficult...." because logic says it probably shouldn't exist'.³³⁷ Whether it should exist or not was irrelevant to the artists themselves. Theories concerning art were of no interest to them. It was not what their discoverers thought about them but more their memories that led them to make their pictures.

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Having to this point in this thesis concentrated on Warren, his life, his paintings and influences on him both before and following his discovery, in Chapter 4 a broader look at self-taught art in Europe, America and Australia will be undertaken. Each has demonstrated different attitudes towards the art due in part to historical and cultural factors in these three regions. Australia's unique Aboriginal art scene is also considered as part of the cultural shift being experienced in Australia from the 1960s to about 1980.

A comparison between Warren's works and those of his Australian and overseas self-taught contemporaries is provided which reveals the extent to which self-taught art influenced the international artworld and how it varied in Europe, America and Australia.

Chapter 4

4.1 Approaches to self-taught art in Europe, America and Australia

In this chapter I intend to look at the history of how and why self-taught art became of interest to some in the artworld in Europe, America and Australia in the 20th century. It is worth keeping in mind that the majority of academics, gallerists, dealers and recognised mainstream artists - who were considered the arbiters of taste in those countries – were uninterested in self-taught art. It was always, and remains, a minority interest within cultural circles with the few who attempted to address the imbalance in awareness of the art, particularly in the mid-twentieth century, being firmly constrained by elements of the establishment. Such was the experience, for example, of the well regarded Director of New York's Museum of Modern Art, Alfred H. Barr Jnr. (1902-1981).

In Western Europe, the unprecedented expansion of colonialism in the 18th and 19th centuries led to the discovery of cultures new to the imperialists. The newly found cultures, partly because they were easily dominated by the new arrivals, were considered less advanced and labelled 'primitive' (or 'savage') by their conquerors. This, along with European Enlightenment thinking, led to the development of the concepts of Primitivism. As well as the new overseas colonies the West itself had 'long believed that it contains its own primitives – peasant populations, children and the insane.'³³⁸ The art of primitives, certainly those from the new colonies and also from the European examples, was considered unsophisticated and, sometimes raw, which added to the ideas of Primitivism. There was no organised art movement categorised as Primitives, with the term relating to a variety of artists and how they reacted to the ideas of the primitive. These reactions were tied in with the modernist movements in Europe before the First

World War and influenced a range of artists including Expressionists, Fauves, and Symbolists through to Art Nouveau, and others. The art of the 'European primitives' taken with that of tribal works led to self-taught artists being included as influences.

Self-taught artists who, because of their isolated circumstances produced an art regarded as uncontaminated by traditional cultures. The modernists planned to reform or dismantle traditional culture and saw both primitive and self-taught art as providing an example of what a new culture might represent. Mark A. Signorelli and Nikos A. Salingaros in their essay *The Tyranny of Artistic Modernism*³³⁹ explain that: 'arguably the dominant impetus behind the advent of modernism was the rejection of tradition. Whether heard in Ezra Pound's admonition to "make it new," or the credo of the Bauhaus to "start from zero," the desire to break free from what the modernists regarded as the confining strictures of the West's artistic legacy was obviously an overriding goal and motive of the movement'. They continue: 'Yet common now to the practice of all these arts are certain primal impulses which may be said to form the core of the modernist aesthetic — a hostility and defiance towards all traditional standards of excellence, discovered over millennia of craftsmanship and reflection; a notion of the artist's freedom as absolute, and entirely divorced from the ends of his art;....a refusal to apply the category of beauty to either the creation or the estimation of artwork'.

After the First World War new groups of artists escalated the urgency for the restructuring of what they considered a failed system, and the inclusion of self-taught artists into the various elements of modernism spread from Europe to America and, a little later, to places further afield including Australia.³⁴⁰ Each region approached the art

of the marginalised differently and from the perspective of differing agendas. While self-taught art has been 'annexed' to modernism, it has hardly been included – except as a minor footnote – in its 'approved' histories 'and this, despite the fact that more than anything else, [self-taught art] is quintessentially the child of modernity.'³⁴¹ Even so it was modernism, with its anti-academic secession movements, that provided the historical configuration in which it became possible to coin that paradoxical term 'outsider art' – an art outside art.³⁴² The debate on marginal art swirls around and may never be resolved but one thing seems ineluctable – self-taught artists do seem to be the constant companions of the avant-garde. The ambiguous gesture of recognising the significance of these self-taught artists, making their work known, and propagating it but at the same time locating it 'outside' the circle of 'official' art cannot be ignored.³⁴³

4.2 Europe

In this section I will address the historical development of awareness of self-taught art in Europe, where interest in it began before expanding to America and then Australia.

The audacity of the simplicity proffered by various untrained artists, even though it was unintentional, fascinated their trained contemporaries. The breadth of interest in 'marginal' arts by mainstream artists was instrumental in the more general recognition of those marginal forms in their own right a little later in the twentieth-century. While modernists were fascinated by artmaking 'others' including, tribal, non-European, folk or peasant artists and children, the art of the insane also attracted limited but growing interest. Though it was essentially a twentieth century phenomenon creative work by asylum inmates had been undertaken since the founding of mental institutions³⁴⁴ which

had existed from medieval times and continued through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. But, as John M. MacGregor states, 'the discovery of the art of the insane began with a paradox: the insane artist was perceived as an object of interest and curiosity long before his art' ³⁴⁵ (similar to self-taught artists' lives often being of greater interest than their artworks). The works produced by untrained patients were first considered to have no value and so were rarely kept. Occasionally exceptions were made but of patients who had previous training in art, for example Jonathan Martin (1782-1838), a prolific inmate of London's Bethlem Royal Hospital, though the exploits leading to his incarceration (arson and attempted murder) were of greater popular interest than his Hogarthian drawings. ³⁴⁶ The few records we have of that time were made by doctors and from artists who depicted inmates sometimes drawing on asylum walls.³⁴⁷ It wasn't until the early twentieth century that related books began to appear (for example, Dr Paul Meunier's *Art by the Mad*, published in France in 1907) and exhibitions concerning psychotic art were held (like that of 1913 held at the Bethlem Royal Hospital).³⁴⁸

In the 1920s two psychiatrists, Dr. Hans Prinzhorn at the Psychiatric Clinic attached to Heidelberg University, Germany and Dr. Walther Morgenthaler from Waldau Asylum near Bern in Switzerland separately tried to access the innate creative depths of their mental patients by studying the art some produced. Their similar interests, which were influenced by the current views on Expressionism, concentrated on how self-expression interrelated with the mental health of their patients and vice versa. Morgenthaler, who had arrived at Waldau in 1907 particularly encouraged one of his patients who made art, Adolf Wölfli (1864-1930), about whom he wrote a biographical monograph in 1921.³⁴⁹

(Because of his unique pictures and writings as well as the interest aroused by the book, Wölfli has since been acknowledged as one of the greatest early *art brut* artists).³⁵⁰

Prinzhorn, who had studied art history as well as medicine, greatly expanded a collection of art by the mentally ill initially developed at the Heidelberg facility by the influential psychiatrist, Dr. Emil Kraepelin (1856-1926).³⁵¹ In early 1922 Prinzhorn's heavily illustrated book, *Artistry of the Mentally Ill*³⁵² appeared and, while some medical colleagues were reserved in their reactions, many in the art scene were enthusiastic about the book. The work became highly influential in defining 'the artistry of the mentally ill as different from, but on a par with, the work of professional artists.'³⁵³ Paul Klee kept a copy in his studio and Max Ernst (1891-1976) took a copy to Paris for the poet, Paul Eluard (1895-1952), when he left Germany for France late in 1922. The book became something of a bible for Parisian Surrealists whose saw in it examples of a form of expression which was not influenced by the world to which they were seeking to establish a viable alternative.³⁵⁴

Shortly after its publication the Swiss writer Paul Burdy sent a copy of Prinzhorn's book to his friend in France, Jean Dubuffet.³⁵⁵ It was to be more than 20 years before Dubuffet published his first work on *art brut* which was his name for the type of art he was actively seeking and collecting. In 1945, he and a friend, the editor Jean Paulhan, had visited Swiss asylums where he bought works by Wolfli, Aloïse Corbaz, August Natterer (1868-1933) and Heinrich Anton Muller (1865-1930) for his growing collection of *art brut* which, beginning with children's art, he had begun in the late 1930s. As Paulhan wrote of Dubuffet soon after their trip: 'He is pursued by the idea of a direct

and untutored art - an *art brut*, he says - which he thinks to find among the insane and imprisoned. If he heard that in some place a bear had begun to paint he would dash there immediately'.³⁵⁶

Dubuffet became the preeminent champion of *art brut*.³⁵⁷ His interests lay with the products of marginalised individuals rather than with the art of the officially approved representatives of an overly sophisticated western culture. Dubuffet gravitated towards art makers who he saw as socially and physically resistant to mainstream culture and preeminent amongst them were those who were classified as being mentally ill.³⁵⁸ Dubuffet wrote in 1945: 'a girl belting out a song while sweeping the stairs moves me more than a complex cantata....I love the little....the embryonic, the badly made, the imperfect....'³⁵⁹ And as Peiry notes, 'Dubuffet's words from 1945 testify to his aim: to sweep out established artistic values'.³⁶⁰ His initial concentration on the art of the insane became less dominant over time. While initially accepting the views espoused by clinical psychiatry, he began to realise that the phenomenon that interested him superseded the psychotic or even the socially displaced artist. Dubuffet eventually came to the conclusion that a 'true artist is almost as rare among the mentally ill as among normal people'.³⁶¹ Having for many years 'demoted' the works of those who did not meet his criteria for *brut* artists into an 'annex collection' in 1982 he eventually added a further type of art to that represented by *art brut* which he called *Neuve Invention* which could include artists who he thought were less culturally isolated and more accepting of official art production.³⁶² Dubuffet published numerous polemical articles on his developing theories. However, despite his expanding the orbit dealt with by Prinzhorn it is interesting to note that nearly all of the large number of works Dubuffet collected were by mentally ill artists. Dubuffet's much expanded collection was sent in 1951 to a

friend of his in America the artist, Alfonso Ossorio (1916-1990) following the dissolution of the Compagnie de l'Art Brut. It remained in Long Island near New York for a decade where it was displayed though without really achieving the hoped for effect of influencing the local avant-garde. The collection was returned to France in 1962 and Dubuffet donated it to the City of Lausanne in 1971. At the time, it comprised 5000 works by 133 creators. The Collection de l'Art Brut opened to the public in 1976.

The main proponents of interest in *art brut* were the Surrealists and other modernist artists of the time (Dubuffet included) who, following the Second World War, despaired of civilisation as it had appeared after the First World War, and referred to its margins for hope of inspiration. They wanted to reform art, to break with the traditional past and experiment with new forms of expression. The belief that the mentally ill were working out of personal necessity in producing art that was a pure, spontaneous and 'automatic' was of great interest and inspiration to them. In 1947 the first post-war *Exposition Internationale du Surrealisme* held in Paris contained numerous works by the mentally ill.

³⁶³ Interest in art by mentally ill people is part of Surrealist discourse throughout, especially in the centrality of mental health to Surrealism which goes back to surrealism's very beginnings in the 1920s.

Art brut attracted criticism not only from the establishment but also from its 'own'. André Breton (1896-1966), the somewhat dictatorial self-appointed leader of the Surrealists, for example, fell out with Dubuffet due to his irritation with Dubuffet's increasing monopoly over psychotic art, which had long been the province of the Surrealists. Breton, despite claiming Dubuffet as the heir to Surrealism, also considered

him too prescriptive: 'The organic fusion he proposed to effect between the art of certain autodidacts and that of the mentally ill has revealed itself to be inconsistent and illusionary.'³⁶⁴ Dubuffet, of course, was outspoken and raised a number of hackles with his strident proselytising on behalf of his wide-ranging anti-cultural critique as exemplified in statements like: 'our culture is an ill-fitting coat – or at least one that no longer fits us' and 'cultural art in its entirety appears to be the game of a futile society, a fallacious parade'.³⁶⁵

Within the artworld the move of marginal artists from the borders of society towards its major cultural institutions increased. A centre for mental health research which also exhibited marginal art, the Sainte-Anne Hospital in Paris³⁶⁶, had been visited, and sometimes attended as patients,³⁶⁷ by mostly Surrealists including Breton, Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968) and Alberto Giacometti (1901-1966), before the Second World War. They observed the inmates and attended lectures on their art by the psychiatrist, Dr. Gaston Ferdiere (1909-1990). It created a climate of acceptance of both mentally ill creators and the artists like Dubuffet who advocated them. In 1950 an influential exhibition entitled the International Exhibition of Psychopathological Art was held at the Hospital. It followed an earlier show there of artworks by patients from the Sainte-Anne and other French asylums 1946. The 1950 exhibition 'might be seen as a prelude to the popularisation and institutionalisation of Outsider Art which picked up speed in the 1960s'.³⁶⁸

Other works were published on *art brut* including Roger Cardinal's 1972 book on the subject, *Outsider Art*. To an extent, the term 'outsider art' misses the thrust of Dubuffet's

elevation of 'people uncontaminated by artistic culture'; Dubuffet aspired not to make 'outsiders' respectable so much as to destroy the complacency of 'insiders'.³⁶⁹

In 1975 Michel Thévoz published his book *Art Brut*³⁷⁰ and with his involvement Dubuffet's collection of *art brut*, which had up to then experienced a somewhat nomadic existence, found its permanent home at the Chateau de Beaulieu in Lausanne in 1976. Thévoz was appointed its first Director, remaining in the job until 2011. Prescriptive boundaries, initially set by Dubuffet and defended by Cardinal in his 1972 book, began to blur both in Europe and the United Kingdom. The concept of outsider art expanded from concentrating on the insane, mediums and spiritualists to encompass numerous categories including self-taught, isolates, eccentrics, prisoners and others considered socially marginalised.

Self-taught art was an element amongst the several influences that assisted in the development of modernism in Europe. It was also taken up in the United States but from a different slant. We will now look at how self-taught art was incorporated into its sphere of interest by the artworld there.

4.3 America

The United States followed another path in the study of art produced by those outside the mainstream. Probably the most obvious difference is that in America it was not psychotic art that was the major influence, as it had been in Europe, but more the sort of art Dubuffet would have relegated to his *Neuve Invention* category. While influenced by European ideas, the terms '*Art Brut*' and 'Outsider Art' are not as widely used in America

as in Europe. There they fall under the broad umbrella of Folk Art. The term 'folk art' as used in America is, though, an imprecise label perhaps better understood by what it is not ('fine' or 'academic' art) than what it actually is. Terms to describe it include, though are by no means limited to, 'amateur', 'naïve', 'outsider', 'primitive', 'vernacular', 'self-taught', 'unsophisticated' and 'provincial' of which none is completely satisfactory and, to an extent, could be considered patronising.³⁷¹ However, like the term 'outsider' in Europe, use of the name 'folk art' has stuck in America.³⁷² Museums are devoted to folk art and universities have faculties specialising in folklore.³⁷³ The catalogue of books published particularly in the United States on folk art and its many sub-categories is large comprising many hundreds of works.³⁷⁴

Paradoxically a taste for what was seen as the 'latest thing' in art, bold colours and abstract forms, fuelled the market for folk art in America and, from the 1920s, modern painters and their patrons looked afresh at folk art being drawn to its similarities in the way it used exuberant colour and non-traditional design. Folk art was reappraised by dealers especially Holger Cahill and Otto Kallir (1907-1999) responding to a potential new market which began to shift the emphasis from 'folk' to 'art'.³⁷⁵ The number of American modernists who started collecting naïve art at the beginning of the 1920s included Marsden Hartley (1877-1943), Yasso Kuniyoshi (1893-1953), Bernard Karfiol (1886-1952), Niles Spencer (1893-1952), William Zorach (1887-1966) and Robert Laurent (1890-1970). All of these were members of the Ogunquit School of Painting and Sculpture which had been set up in 1913 in Maine, in the USA's north east, by the folk art collector and teacher, Hamilton Easter Field (1873-1922). Modernists in America, as

in Europe and later Australia, were attracted to the abstract nature of self-taught paintings and crafts.³⁷⁶

In 1924 an exhibition entitled 'Early American Art' was organised by Henry Schnackenberg (1892-1970) at the Whitney Studio Club in New York.³⁷⁷ Though modest, the exhibition was noteworthy as the forty-five pieces on show were defined as works of 'fine art' by virtue of their gallery setting.³⁷⁸ A year later another show, 'Early American Portraits and Landscapes', was put on in the city by the dealer, F. Valentine Dudensing (1892-1967), with the majority of works for both shows being lent by the Ogunquit artist Laurent who inherited Field's collection in 1925. Laurent rented out a cottage he had in Maine to the artist Samuel Halpert (1884-1930) and his wife, Edith Gregor Halpert, a New York gallery owner, for the summers of 1926 and 1927 and the Halperts introduced their friend, Holger Cahill,³⁷⁹ to Laurent. The Halperts and Cahill were highly excited by the folk art in Laurent's homes and became enthusiastic collectors and promoters of the genre. The linear qualities, simplified forms and use of primary colours along with the lack of perspective made these early nineteenth century works seem quite contemporary.³⁸⁰ Up until the 1930s what would be automatically called 'folk art' today was more often called 'early American' or 'primitive' art. Cahill and Edith Halpert seemed to have made a considered decision to shift that terminology to 'folk art'. Both were champions of modern art and had absorbed the European avant-gardist's idea that folk art was a kind of primitive art. Cahill and Halpert both seemed not to have distinguished between the two.³⁸¹ Halpert started showing folk art in an American Folk Art Gallery which she and Cahill opened in 1931 in the upstairs area of her contemporary New York art gallery, Downtown Gallery. Halpert wrote that she had

chosen her folk art stock 'not for its antiquity or historical associations but because of its relationship to the aesthetics of contemporary art'³⁸² reinforcing the shift in terminology.

A pioneering exhibition was curated by Cahill and Halpert in 1932 which brought widespread attention to folk art. Titled 'American Folk Art – the Art of the Common Man in America, 1750-1900' it was held at New York's Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) and popularised use of the term 'folk art'.³⁸³ It was held only two years after MOMA's opening and had the full involvement of the Museum's first Director, Alfred H. Barr Jnr. (1902-1981). The exhibition and its use in its title of the phrase 'the Art of the Common Man in America' appealed to American's sense of patriotism as it presented uncomplicated folk art as an 'honest and straight forward expression of the spirit of the people'.³⁸⁴ The idea of the common man is a recurring theme in modernism from Camille Pissarro (1830-1903) to Asger Jorn (1914-1973), the Danish founder of the avant-garde COBRA.³⁸⁵ It was also a term valorised by Dubuffet.³⁸⁶ The Harvard Society for Contemporary Art had held an exhibition of folk art two years earlier presenting it as art 'springing from the common man'³⁸⁷ as well as because of its abstracted nature. Part of the popularity of the phrase was that it also situates this art as specifically American in identity – at a time when American art was very much handmaiden to Europe.

Barr, who was appointed Director of MOMA in 1929 at the age of twenty-seven held that post until 1943 and then continued as Advisory Director to 1968. Barr was a forward-looking art historian with strong interests in modern art, particularly American. He identified self-taught art along with Surrealism and modernism as the three most important areas of art in the 1930s and was instrumental in the expansion of interest in

Folk (or Outsider) Art in America.³⁸⁸ Barr put on the first American blockbuster of Van Gogh's works in 1935 and continued throughout his tenure to mount successful, sometimes risky, shows on often contentious art which had lasting influences on the public's acceptance of modern art.

The Great Depression of 1929, which continued for a decade until the outbreak of the Second World War, saw a growing emphasis on democratic ideals and the 'dignity of the common, working man'.³⁸⁹ Cahill continued to arrange exhibitions which supported the nationalistic fervour of the times. Cahill also went on to lead the extraordinary Index of American Design scheme, a government funded Federal Art Project during the Depression. It was the largest of New Deal art programs employing hundreds of artists who produced (or 'rendered'- the word used in describing their work by the project) over seventeen thousand watercolours of early American folk art objects between 1935 and 1941.³⁹⁰

In 1937 Barr mounted the first solo exhibition of an African American artist, William Edmondson (1874-1951) and a year later, and six years after the 'American Folk Art – the Art of the Common Man in America, 1750-1900' exhibition, MOMA mounted the first exhibition by a public institution to show the work of specifically outsider artists. Called 'Masters of Popular Painting: Modern Primitives of Europe and America' it included European works by nine artists, amongst them Camille Bombois (1883-1970), Dominique-Paul Peyronnet (1872-1943), Seraphine Louis (1864-1934), Louis Vivin and Henri Rousseau. The Americans represented included Emile Branchard (1881-1938), Robert Cauchon (1915/16-1969), John Kane, Horace Pippin and Edward Hicks (1780-1849). In an introduction to the American section of the catalogue Holger Cahill wrote: 'Folk and

popular art is significant for us because, in our fear that contemporary civilization has almost abandoned its form-creating function in favour of the sterile mathematics of machine-form, we are startled and reassured to find this rich creativeness still alive in the unpretentious activities and avocations of the common man....in this art we find qualities sadly lacking in the internationalized academicism bequeathed to us by the nineteenth century – an academicism which raised the banner of its anaemic and philistine conception of form as the standard and ideal of universal art'. In the same introduction he calls the 'modern primitives' on show 'masters of reality....in harmony with the best contemporary practice'.³⁹¹

Barr's visionary approach to all kinds of modern American art led to major disagreements with the MOMA Board, and his decision to hold an exhibition of the works of Morris Hirschfield (1872-1946) led to his being dismissed from his position as Director though he remained on MOMA's staff as an Advisory Director working alongside his replacement, René d'Harnoncourt (1901-1968), until 1968.³⁹²

The link between folk art and self-taught and popular art which accompanied the broadening of meanings was anticipated just before and during the Second World War with Cahill publishing in 1938 'Masters of Popular Painting: Modern Primitives of Europe and America' in conjunction with a Museum of Modern Art exhibition. In 1942 the gallerist and art dealer, Sidney Janis, published his influential work, *They Taught Themselves*.³⁹³ The bond between self-taught and popular art was confirmed in 1970 when the author and collector, Herbert ('Bert') W. Hemphill Jr. (1929-1998) organised the exhibition, 'Twentieth-Century Folk Art and Artists' at New York's Museum of American

Folk Art of which Hemphill was the first curator from 1966. He 'expanded the notion of folk art beyond traditional utilitarian and communal expressions' ³⁹⁴

While Hemphill's exhibition featured artists already celebrated by Cahill, Barr and Janis, less 'traditional', current self-taught artists were included. Works by Morris Hirschfield,³⁹⁵ William Edmondson and 'Grandma' Moses were there, but Hemphill added more recent 'discoveries' like Sister Gertrude Morgan (1900-1980) and Joseph Yoakum (1889-1972), as well as a lot of material by anonymous artists.³⁹⁶ The terms often used in America for the works of these artists were 'folk art' and, more recently, 'self-taught' art.

Hemphill followed up over the next few years with equally eclectic shows. His personal collection started with the familiar forms of folk art such as whirligigs, trade signs and decoys, but soon gravitated more towards the idiosyncratic works of isolated artists like Howard Finster (1916-2001), Martín Ramírez (1895-1963), Henry Darger and Mose Tolliver (1925-2006) who were as different as artists as they were as characters. It is possible these artists better fitted with the broadened European 'outsider' designation than the 'folk' art one as earlier described by Cahill in America ³⁹⁷ though Americans were generally not as keen on the alienating sorts of work that attracted Dubuffet.

By the 1940s in far off Australia a growing but low-key interest in the works of homegrown self-taught artists was perceptible to those involved in the cultural scene there. With some poking and prodding from people who sought change, culture in Australia was evolving into a less conservative and, it was hoped, particularly 'Austalian' form. As in Europe and America, self-taught art had a small but influential part to play.

4.4 Australia

Australia, unlike America, remained tied to Britain and lived out a 'cultural cringe' (see Chapter 4.6 below) which, in the mid-20th century, generally regarded anything from overseas as superior to locally produced works.



Fig. 135. Artist unknown, *Liberty and Washington*. 1810

In America, following its independence, there was a definite move to eliminate British influences. An example of these efforts to move on from British influences is provided in the painting, *Liberty and Washington*, (Fig. 135). Painted less than 20 years after the War of Independence, it is full of simple symbolism which embodies the newly felt (and promoted) independence. A bust of the heroic victor over the British and first President of the United States, George Washington, is being crowned with a wreath while the British crown is trodden underfoot by Liberty; the virtuous Liberty carries the flag of the new Republic and the American eagle soars above. On the stone plinth beneath the Washington bust are the words: 'First in War, First in Peace, & First in the Hearts of His

Countrymen'. In Australia a distinct 'Australianness' was sought in looking for a national culture but not at the expense of British culture. Australians felt less hostile towards Britain. No war had been fought for independence between the two countries and never seemed likely. When the Federation of the independent colonial states was being discussed some anti-British sentiment was expressed, though in cartoons rather than jingoistic paintings like *Liberty and Washington*. The majority of these satirical cartoons appeared in 'The Bulletin' magazine. An example published on page 10 of the 21 January 1888 issue of the magazine is titled '*The Same Old Tune (And a Bad One at That)*'; Fig. 136 and shows a convict in 1788 dancing to the tune of a Colonial Trooper playing a tin whistle, and in 1888 a bushman, representing New South Wales, dancing to the tune of a corpulent John Bull (Britain) playing a concertina in the background. Both the convict and the bushman are shackled to their belts but also, metaphorically, to their colonial master, Britain. Federation became a reality in 1901, thirteen years after this cartoon.

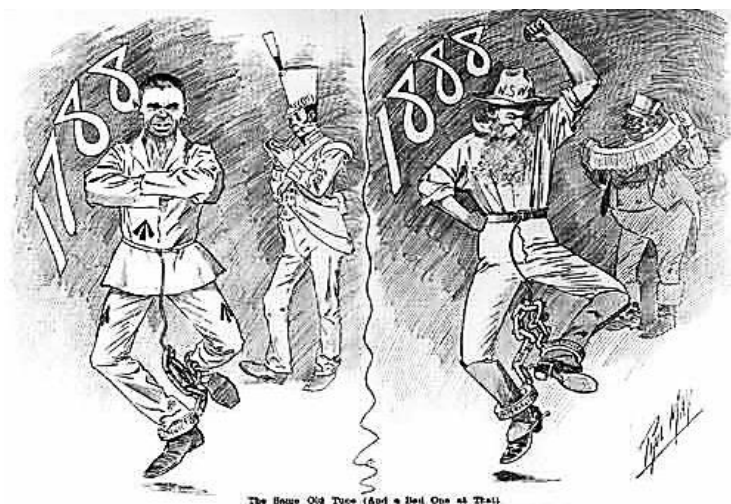


Fig. 136. '*The Same Old Tune (and a Bad One at That)*' (signature indistinct), *The Bulletin Magazine*, 21 Jan. 1888, p.10.

Courtesy National Library of Australia, Canberra

The inferiority that many Australians of the time seemed to feel was in part reinforced by a colonial experience of defeat. Australia's heroes were, in the main, anti-heroes: the defeated or the dead – the bushranger Ned Kelly; Les Darcy (1895-1817) a boxer;³⁹⁸ explorers Burke and Wills who both died trying to traverse Australia from south to north in 1860; Phar Lap, a champion race horse at the time of the Great Depression that, like Darcy, died in America (in 1932); and Gallipoli. Australians developed a habit of 'knocking' (ie. disparaging and denigrating) success and the unknown which encouraged a negative attitude towards ideas and social achievement. They seemed to fall somewhere between the ideas of British superiority and American patriotic self-righteousness. Rejecting ideas as 'bullshit', many twentieth century Australians, though mainly urbanised, lived spiritually through the myths of the bush.³⁹⁹

A tangential element in the developing art scene was the improvement in colour printing technology. In Sydney, Ure Smith published twenty-nine art books in a period of eight years from 1916 when Smith had launched the journal, *Art in Australia* which became 'the main force in the development of the art of this country'.⁴⁰⁰ The journal and the art books of this time were predominately dedicated to conventional and traditional art. Landscape was particularly popular and in the 1920s its regional character was stressed rather than it being presented, as was later the case, as a *national* metaphor for the 'real' Australia. The post-World War 1 landscapes often didn't contain people and pictured a pastoral utopia conveying the apparent emotional need of urban people for a vast, empty land (in contrast to the industrial/urban utopia pictured in European and American art of the time).⁴⁰¹ The lack of people in the paintings indicated a renewed claim to the 'bush ethos' by the urban populace.⁴⁰² Likewise, the heroic story of the

Anzacs 'bridged the gap between pioneering past and urban present by giving to the people of the city the right to the qualities of the outback'.⁴⁰³

By the end of the Second World War there emerged in the arts in Europe and the United States of America a radical and innovative modernism which was transplanted to Australia and had a major impact on local artists there. However, it occurred a generation later in Australia than it did in Europe and America.

Australian modernist artists, like the Angry Penguins, a group of poets and painters, mostly returning from time spent in Europe, began attempts to modernise the conservative art establishment which was something of a closed shop. The Angry Penguins and others were heavily influenced by European Expressionism and Surrealism and sought to transpose this new imagery onto an Australian setting. Part of the outcome was a desire to discover an authentic Australian cultural tradition and this led to a limited but growing interest in self-taught artists, particularly in the late 1950s until about 1980. Australians did not turn to the artistic efforts of the psychotic and institutionalised as had been the case in Europe, but, like the Americans, looked to artists who, though often insular, were generally accepted within their communities if with some reservations. Nor did they, before the 1970s, turn their attention to Australian indigenous visual culture.

Sidney Nolan, one of the Australian artists who settled in England in the 1960s, was influenced, among other things by the *naïf*, Henri Rousseau, and like others such as Albert Tucker, tended to paint in an uncomplicated and faux-naïve style, which can be

seen in many of his paintings of the time. The work of several Australians of that period might almost be considered an attempt to produce the European-style 'folk art' Australia never had. Others looked to the bush and its self-taught painters for inspiration in developing an identifiably Australian cultural narrative. These artists were seen as being simple, pure and without artifice which was considered an important model ⁴⁰⁴ for modern artists throwing off the shackles of tradition. Self-taught artists represented an Australia, no matter how mythical, of tough bush men struggling to conquer an alien land. They characterised a 'true' Australia built around a cultural base that needed to be revitalised. All of these self-taught artists were discovered or assisted by members of the established artworld who brought them to the attention of professional artists and then the public.

Australia on the whole seemed generally uninterested in self-taught art as an artform in its own right. It was certainly looked to as the expression of a simpler and unsophisticated time in Australia to be referred to by modernists involved in not only revising the staid, traditional approach to culture experienced up until the 1930s and 1940s but also in redefining that culture so that it reflected a truly Australian one. Australian self-taught artists became of interest to the Australian art establishment after they noticed that interest was being shown in overseas self-taught art and a number of private galleries sporadically showed self-taught art. Yet the growth of interest in Australian self-taught art and its producers in the mid-twentieth century lagged behind the equivalent interest overseas. Australia did not have a Cahill or a Barr, nor a Cardinal or a Musgrave to push for and develop an acceptance of self-taught art as a viable element of the local art scene.

Exhibitions of self-taught art were held in a few Australian public galleries but no permanent galleries of self-taught (or naïve or folk art) like those in Europe and America were developed. Some smaller public galleries like the Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery in Victoria and the Broken Hill Regional Gallery in Western New South Wales acquired one or two works by self-taught artists for their collections and have, over the years, mounted travelling exhibitions of self-taught art. The Swan Hill Gallery has, to an extent, specialised in self-taught art though also displays numerous other works. Others have not.

Due to its comparatively small population size Australia lacks both the number and kind of private art collectors seen in Europe and America. Several people in the country have built impressive collections but not of the scale seen elsewhere. Influential families involved in the media, retail and resources industries amongst others developed collections but not of self-taught art. Those who did collect that type of art did so on a comparatively small scale with none approaching the sorts of collections left by Prinzhorn or Dubuffet in Europe and Janis or Petullo in America, parts of whose collections eventually wound up in public museums like the Collection dé l'Art Brut in Lausanne or the American Folk Art Museum in New York. Several other galleries that specialise in self-taught art exist across Europe and America but there are none in Australia.

It is easy to think of previous generations holding the same views then as are held today. However, Australian society in the 1940s and 1950s – over sixty years ago – consisted of 'people (who) were not mesmerised – as they later would be – by "celebrity". They

looked to rank, status, privilege and what those things embodied' ⁴⁰⁵ in other words, high society. So it took change in the style of galleries where modern art was exhibited before such views altered. During the period spanning the 1940s to about 1980 when interest in self-taught art was at its zenith in Australia, several private dealers and galleries began including a few self-taught artists in their exhibitions. Prominent amongst these were Rudy Komon, Kim Bonython, Ray Hughes and Gallery 'A'. The works of self-taught artists were sometimes incorporated as part of their galleries offerings within the modernist art framework. However, although some did occasionally hold one-man/woman shows by self-taught artist none limited themselves to exhibiting self-taught art. Looking at the experience of Selby Warren and Rudy Komon the exhibitions held were not especially successful from a commercial point of view missing the wave of popularity by a decade. Only a little over half of the paintings offered for sale at Komon's three Warren exhibitions were sold. A list of the sales (in the Rudy Komon Gallery papers held by the National Library of Australia) shows that the sold paintings went to a variety of people who, as members of the general public, probably bought them because they liked them rather than because they recognised them as works reflecting any importance within the artworld. The sales list shows that the few paintings acquired by artists, which included the successful John Olsen and Fred Williams, were actually given to them by Warren who met them through Komon. Quite a few of the unsold pictures were bought by Komon himself and later wound up in the Ray Hughes collection when he purchased Komon's stock soon after the latter's death in 1982.

4.5 Comparing attitudes to self-taught art in Europe, America and Australia

In this section I will consider the different approaches shown towards self-taught art in Europe, America and Australia. Why, for example, were Australian self-taught artists recognised for a comparatively short period and then generally ignored? What was different about Australia compared with Europe and particularly with America where these artists have continued to be studied, exhibited and promoted as notable figures in American art history?

An important factor was timing. Australia was for the most part settled as a penal colony partly due to Britain losing its colonies in America in 1783. While some American colonies were established by people claiming to be suffering religious persecution in Britain, a few others had been set up as penal colonies. More than 50,000 British convicts were shipped from Britain to America up to its independence from Britain in 1783. America was no longer willing to accept British criminals and, with the numbers of them growing in England, it was decided to dump them in British slave ports on the West Coast of Africa. They were shipped there on vessels that were then used to transport slaves to America. Tropical diseases, especially malaria, devastated both the convicts and their guards in Africa to such an extent the experiment was ended and Australia, claimed for Britain in 1770, was chosen as a suitable alternative, with an initial penal settlement being founded in New South Wales in 1788.⁴⁰⁶

The late 1780s represented the end of what is called the Age of Reason (or the Enlightenment) which had dominated thought in Europe and Britain from the early 1600s. It embraced the notion that humanity could be improved through rational change including education and science. It culminated in the French Revolution of 1789

which intended to throw out the old authorities to remake society along rational lines. But its limits were shown when noble ambitions of improving society actually devolved in September 1793 into the bloody 'Reign of Terror' led by Maximilien Robespierre (1758-1794). After the execution of the Dauphin, Louis XVI (1754-1793), in September 1793 and his wife, Marie Antoinette (1755-1793) a month later, Robespierre installed the Jacobins, of whom he was a leader, as rulers of France and set about executing many thousands of his opponents. He was accused of dictatorship and guillotined in July 1794 aged thirty-six. His death brought a 'Reign of Terror' to an end and finished the push for democracy in France.⁴⁰⁷ The Age of Enlightenment was over. In the early 19th century Romanticism, which concentrated on the primacy of the individual, rose to replace the Enlightenment. Enlightenment thinking had been paramount and highly influential during the settlement of America.

The native Americans had, at least initially, been considered as noble savages and garnered a level of cautious respect. By the time Australia was settled attitudes had changed. Australia's aboriginal people were generally seen as being uncivilised and beyond redemption even by some missionaries. The American natives had Chiefs with whom treaties could be fashioned.⁴⁰⁸ The Australian aboriginals were thought to lack recognisable leaders, laws or government. The concept of *terra nullius* (land belonging to no-one) was used in Australia (as elsewhere) by the British to justify taking aboriginal lands and no treaties with them were ever signed by the colonial governments.

Another important aspect of the new settlements in Australia was that they were established and developed during the Industrial Revolution in England which continued

over a period of about seventy years from its commencement in 1780. In America, which was first settled about two centuries before the industrial changes in England, there was a need to produce goods locally and this led to the wide development of manufacturing and also of what became recognised as folk art just as had occurred in Europe. In post-Industrial Revolution Australia the great majority of goods required by the new settlements were imported from England and there was very little local manufacturing. Australia did not develop an equivalent folk art culture and the items that were produced, like bush furniture and quilts, were often made because imported goods weren't affordable. Of course some items were decorative and made for show but not in the way or quantity that they were in other countries where folk art expanded beyond the traditional utilitarian and communal expression it represented.

Australian 'folk artists' often seem to have been more practical than artisanal in what they produced. The elegant high chair shown as Fig. 137 was made in about 1870 by a Shaker craftsman in America. The other high chair, Fig. 138, made from scrap timber, was constructed by Selby Warren for a grandchild in 1970 and, though functionally practical, lacks any of the finesse evident in its American predecessor.⁴⁰⁹



Fig. 137. Maker unknown, Shaker, *High Chair*, 1870



Fig. 138. Selby Warren, *High Chair*, 1970

While the Shaker chair too is functional, and like Warren's high chair has no additions or frills that might be considered decorative, it is carefully made and is attractively designed. Warren's chair is made from a butter box nailed to wooden slats for legs and with similar bits of wood used as stretchers and the foot rest. The chair, though solid and heavy, is not particularly stable and wobbles because the legs are not quite the same length. Warren's son assured me, though, that it was used as a high chair. This piece of handmade furniture exemplifies Warren's *bricoleur* outlook: the chair did what it was meant to do, so why put any extra effort into it? Unlike his hand-fashioned, if sometimes inelegant, frames for his pictures which he felt added a finishing touch to the overall impression of a work, to Warren a chair was just a chair and didn't warrant additional decoration. A grandchild needed a high chair so he made one from pieces of wood that were available at the time and felt no need to even paint the finished item. Warren was not alone in hand-making items of furniture. From the early 1800s until the mid-20th century (or in Warren's case the 1970s!) people, particularly those located in

remote settlements, who could not afford or access professionally manufactured furniture made their own. Usually called 'bush furniture', these objects are often very basic and, like Warren's high chair, were made for functional use rather than for comfort or decorative effect (see Figs. 139 and 140). It must be said, though, that few appear quite as basic as Warren's high chair.



Fig. 139. *Handmade wooden cupboard*,
c. 1940 Photograph: Peter Kabaila.



Fig. 140. *Handmade 'Jimmy Possum'*⁴¹⁰
chair, NSW c 1895

A few other examples of Warren's handiwork are still held by his son. None of them are well-finished nor are they adorned in any non-utilitarian way except for the kangaroo hide sheath he crafted for a self-made knife (the blade of which was made from a plough tooth) (Fig. 141):



Fig. 141. Selby Warren, *Handmade knife and kangaroo skin sheath*, c. 1960

The differences between the Shaker high chair and Warren's (Figs. 137 and 138) appear obvious but, I believe, represent far more than just the difference between good and poor quality pieces of furniture. The American craftsman had undoubtedly received training in furniture making and would have developed his abilities over time until he was able to make his graceful high chair. He was probably a professional furniture maker. Warren, on the other hand, was untrained as a carpenter, just as he was untrained as an artist. The high chair he made in 1970 would, I think, be much the same quality as one he might have made for his own children forty-odd years earlier. Just like his artwork, Warren was satisfied with what he constructed and saw no reason to develop his abilities. His high chair met a need, why do it differently? Of course, Warren cannot be held up as representing all Australian bush furniture makers. The work of some was quite refined in style and manufacture but his approach was not uncommon amongst quite a few who were untrained and turned their hands to making furniture. The same is true of the *bricoleur* methods employed by people in Europe and America. The self-taught African American wood whittler and carver Leroy Person (1907-1985) created pieces of furniture, as shown as Fig. 142, reminiscent of Warren's chair in their construction techniques (though to my eye even Person's work seems to possess somewhat more refinement and control about it than Warren's high chair, Fig. 138).



Fig. 142. Leroy Person, *Fish cleaning table*, c. 1980. Souls Grown Deep Foundation

In general folk art is more sophisticated in Europe and America than in Australia due, in part, to the long period over which they had been making their decorated wares. Australian craftsmen and women in did not seem to extend far into the area of decoration for decoration's sake making instead basic utilitarian wares. The need for such simple products had, to an extent, been superseded in Europe and America by the Industrial Revolution (1760s to the 1830s) which was yet to impact on Australia in its early settlement period.

A further difference is that Australia was a nation more or less coincidental with the invention of the camera. Picture making in its earlier forms was about creating a likeness, particularly in portraiture. In Europe and America portraits were made of the rich and powerful by highly competent artists but as ordinary people became more upwardly mobile, they too sought portraits of themselves and records of their lives. In 18th century America limners, who were itinerant painters often with limited formal training, travelled around painting pictures for this new class of aspirational clients.

By the mid-1800s, when Australians were expanding into the bush, the camera was becoming the preferred method of recording events. While early settlers were painted many more were photographed and cumbersome cameras were carried around the countryside and used to record the people and the life they lived there. The early portraits painted in America were amongst the works accepted as folk art and recognised as being of artistic significance by people like Holger Cahill. In Australia there were fewer such portraits (and no equivalents to Holger Cahill).

America was settled from the early 17th century at the beginning of the Age of Enlightenment in Europe. Colonies were formed throughout the century and beyond. When the east coast colonials began to expand west it was with 'a sense of mission to redeem the Old World by high example....generated by the potentialities of a new earth for building a new heaven' ⁴¹¹ - a 'Manifest Destiny'.⁴¹² The American settlers had a mission and the idea of, and belief in, American Exceptionalism began to take hold. The territories discovered by the pioneers were thought of as being 'God's country' and the native American encountered as 'God's children' (until they attempted to stop settlement of their lands when they quickly morphed, in the minds of the new settlers, into 'savages'). With government support they were basically involved in a land grab yet described their newly acquired acreage in terms verging on the devout, '....the silent, sacred fields....' as the poet-troubadour, Bob Dylan, has described it. ⁴¹³



Fig. 143. John Gast, *American Progress*, 1872.

John Gast's painting, *American Progress* (Fig. 143), the essence of manifest destiny, is an allegorical representation of the modernisation of the new west. Here Columbia, a personification of America, leads civilization westward with Native Americans and wildlife being driven before European American prospectors, followed by farmers and then settlers. She brings light from the East into the darkness of the West, stringing telegraph wire as she sweeps west; she holds a school book as well (it is not a Bible). The different stages of economic activity of the pioneers are highlighted and, especially, the evolving forms of transportation. ⁴¹⁴

The beliefs of the American poet, essayist and philosopher, Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), were highly influential in the history of American culture. After studying at Harvard he entered the ministry but left his pastorate and travelled to England in 1832

where he got to know both Thomas Carlyle and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Emerson remained friends with Carlyle for the rest of his life. Carlyle, whose attacks on the hypocrisies of materialism and democracy, particularly influenced Emerson in formulating his own philosophy of transcendentalism which proposed that everything in our world, even a drop of dew, is a microcosm of the world. His philosophy relied on intuition as the only way to comprehend reality and believed in the 'divine sufficiency of the individual'.⁴¹⁵ This latter statement became a bedrock of those opening up America whose conviction that the United States was destined through divine sanction to stretch from coast to coast helped fuel the voracious settlement of the west, Native American removal and the war with Mexico to acquire its territories.⁴¹⁶

Another American poet, who admired Emerson's works, Walt Whitman (1819-1892) further drove America's belief in itself. He is considered one of America's most significant poets. Whitman's self-published book, *Leaves of Grass*, first appeared in 1855 but, along with his other works, failed to garner popular attention from his American readership in his lifetime. This was considered to be due to the openness in how he dealt with sex by exalting the body, which was interpreted as having homosexual overtones, how he praised independence of thought and action, materialism, his self-presentation as a rough working man and his stylistic innovations:

'To the States or any one of them, or any city of the States,

Resist much, obey little

Once unquestioning obedience, once fully enslaved,

Once fully enslaved, no nation, state, city of this earth, ever afterward resumes its liberty.'⁴¹⁷

The book did a lot better in Europe while Whitman was alive. It was particularly popular in Germany where *Die Brücke* artists explicitly acknowledged its influence on them. As William Pinfold notes: 'the Brücke artists – and Kirchner in particular – imbued their figures with a positive and sexual energy, influenced as much by the writings of Walt Whitman as by any artistic source'.⁴¹⁸

American art of the 1950s through to the 1980s was internationalised and works including those of Abstract Expressionists like Jackson Pollock (1912-1956), Mark Rothko (1903-1970), Willem de Kooning (1904-1997) and Franz Kline (1910-1962) were sold to Europe as peculiarly American art. These invariably white artists, many themselves migrants from Europe, eclipsed other art like Native and African American art. In Europe and elsewhere the Abstract Expressionists, who were regarded as the first authentic American avant-gardists, and artists of following movements, are accepted as representatives of American culture and America itself developed into the major cultural hub it is today.

In Australia there was also a move from the Eastern seaboard to the Western plains but rather than couching this in the language of the Enlightenment or of transcendental philosophy, Australia's most popular and influential poets of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries wrote bush ballads. Rather than expounding a nationalist philosophical view, their works mostly reiterated and developed a version of the country man which became the basic ingredient of the country's search for a truly national identity in the first half of the twentieth century. Amongst the most popular bush poets were Andrew Barton 'Banjo' Paterson (1864-1941) and Henry Lawson (1867-1922).⁴¹⁹

Their works were widely read and taught in schools and cemented in the minds of most Australians the myth of the bush. Both poets lived and worked in Sydney despite their works concentrating on life in the bush.

It is important to remember that in Australia the majority of those being sent to settle the new areas were uninterested convicts who had no say in their destinies. These convicts were not heading towards a 'new world' full of potential but, rather, a hard life of labouring for others. As mentioned, a few American colonies were founded as penal settlements but most were not whereas all the settlements in Australia were established as prisons, save Adelaide and Melbourne which were free colonies. Their convict inhabitants were considered to be lower class and most demonstrated a deep distrust of authority, an attitude still embedded in the Australian psyche. The so-called 'convict stain' has continued to an extent throughout Australia's history. Convicts were sent to Australia because their homeland didn't want them and the British colonial officials who governed them were themselves generally held in low esteem by their political masters in London. It is little wonder that an open interest in culture was rarely displayed in the early years of the country, an attitude that, in the view of the Australian modernists of that time, continued into the 20th century as reflected in the struggle to deal with the prevalent 'cultural cringe' (see Chapter 4.6).

Whether it was caused by a resentment of British authority or was due to a feeling of general inferiority over the domination of Australian society by all things British, Australian's developed this 'cultural cringe' ⁴²⁰ which influenced their attitudes towards

culture. Many Australians believed that any homegrown culture was inferior to those of other countries, at first Britain and, from about 1945, the United States.

4.6 The 'cultural cringe', the Australian psyche and the development of artistic practices in Australia

When Australian art critic Robert Hughes (1938-2012) wrote that in the 1950s and '60s Australians 'lived in that peculiar womb of non-history below the equator'⁴²¹ he was describing a broadly held view of the time that Australia not only lacked a long term European history but was a place devoid of culture, as defined by Western values. As well as generally lacking in culture, it was felt that what little European-influenced culture did exist in Australia was of a kind inferior to the 'real thing'.

People who were concerned by this perceived lack of culture and history left Australia to settle elsewhere, in Britain, other parts of Europe or the USA. This exodus of talent began in the 1950s and continued through the 1960s. Large numbers of talented people left Australia either permanently⁴²² or for extended periods. Some of the better known painters who left were Sidney Nolan (1917-1992), Arthur Boyd (1920-1997), Albert Tucker (1914-1999), Justin O'Brien (1917-1996) and Jeffrey Smart (1921-2013), and writers Robert Hughes, Clive James (1939-), Germaine Greer (1939-) and Barry Humphries (1934-). Entertainers and academics alike also moved overseas.

Why this early talent drain overseas? As Robert Hughes recalled: "The fact is," one painter said to me in 1966, "you can't begin to grow up until you've left the place." Brutal though this statement may be, it represents, fairly accurately, the way many

Australian artists (felt) about the environment which they (had) inherited.'⁴²³ Before the 1930s Australia was in most respects still living in its colonial past.⁴²⁴ Many Australians regarded Britain as the 'home country' and the majority of the population was of British descent as mass migration from other European countries wouldn't begin until after the Second World War (1945 onwards). Despite its often distinctive accent, Australian society was 'British' in style. Up to this time Australians had fought under the British rather than Australian flag⁴²⁵ and Australian passports stated the holders were 'British Subjects'. The defeat of Australians as part of the British Empire forces at Gallipoli in 1915 hadn't yet been fully rewritten into the mythology that it was *the* 'nation-defining event' which saw Australia 'come of age'.⁴²⁶ Australia's official national anthem was 'God Save the King' and 'Waltzing Matilda', if popularly almost as an alternative national anthem, was actually a popular bush ballad about a sheep thief who suicided rather than face arrest by his British colonial masters. Even important legal decisions affecting Australia were still made by the House of Lords in London (continuing until 1986). As Justice Michael Kirby notes (of Australia and New Zealand): 'Only now, in the past decade or so, has the obedient, dependent attitude of courts in the former antipodean colonies begun to fade.'⁴²⁷ For all intents and purposes Australia remained a colony of Britain in its attitudes until the Second World War, in that it was believed to lack a national self-confidence like for example, that displayed by the United States of America which gained its independence through war rather than concession.⁴²⁸ Australia still has the British flag as part of its own flag and the Queen of England is also Queen of Australia and head of state.

Australia's sense of national identity was, in the first half of the twentieth century, different in several respects to its earlier incarnations. Before 1914 Australia had no voice in shaping its own foreign policy. This was wholly decided by Britain. Australia was simply a part of an empire. After the First World War, through its claim to national status, Australia assumed a place in the mainstream of international affairs outside of imperial boundaries. At the political level a national identity of sorts was secured.⁴²⁹

At a cultural level progress was slower. Until the 1920s there was little public consciousness of a specifically Australian art though an art industry of sorts had been developing from the 1910s, but it was one which had transferred the values of the British system (recognised roles, practices, organisation and institutional forms) partly under the guidance of the domestic Impressionist, Tom Roberts (1856–1931).⁴³⁰ Dealers were promoting and selling local work and state galleries and institutions were buying and commissioning art. Though prices for Australian art were low in comparison with the works of contemporary European artists, the art market continued a steady expansion until the Great Depression of 1929 and remained more or less inactive until after the Second World War.

'In the late fifties and early sixties, the flatness and conformity of Australian society would have appalled a European radical. And the artists, instead of being exacerbated, were drugged by it. It seemed then that radicalism was dead in Australia.'⁴³¹ Australian artists were, rather, generally producing 'an antipodean echo of English neo-romanticism.'⁴³² In this environment it was natural for most Australians to be nostalgic for all things British, though American culture was also a growing fascination for the Australian populace. Australian artists of the period up to the Second World War

generally reflected these attitudes with their sense of an artistic identity being culturally European. When they settled in England they remained handmaidens to European art and were absorbed into the local art scene.

Another fundamental and practical reason for leaving Australia and heading for the UK was the size of the two nation's populations. In 1960 Australia's population totalled only 10.3 million while Britain's was 52.4 million.⁴³³ Apart from the more developed social and cultural differences supported by the mass of a large population Britain was, for 1960s artists, a drawcard to a dense audience compared with a sparse Australian one. Additionally, after overseas travel became comparatively cheap and quick in the 1970s, when air travel supplanted long sea voyages, the notion of needing to go away was a less permanent one. Success had kept people in Britain but with easy travel this changed. When a later generation of artists, like Brett Whitley (1939-1992) and Martin Sharp (1942-2013), travelled abroad to gain international exposure they did so as a temporary expedient and returned to Australia.

The 1930s and '40s were times of political crisis in most of the world. The devastating worldwide economic depression saw the rise of leaders like Hitler and Stalin and then total war. It was a time of ideological crusades and cynical opportunism⁴³⁴ with people becoming aggressively nationalistic at the behest of their governments. In Australia that 'nationalism' was directed towards Britain more than it was to Australia itself. The official view was expressed by Australia's conservative, Anglophile Prime Minister of the time, Robert G. Menzies (1894-1978), when he said that he (and by extension the Australian populace) was 'British to the boot heels'.⁴³⁵

The end of the War in 1945 saw the emergence in the arts of a radical and innovative modernism and the impact on Australian artists was profound. Richard Haese wrote in 1988 that 'changes in art related directly to an undermining of deeper social and political structures that resulted from the shattering for many of the certainties of the Australian and British past.' He contends there were two main threads to the story of Australian modernism: 'the discovery of a European modernist tradition and its transplantation' and 'the rediscovery and re-examination of an authentic Australian cultural tradition.'⁴³⁶ (It is the second of these 'threads' that in part leads to the interest that developed in Australia in self-taught art from the mid-40s to the 1980s with its peak being in the late 1960s to the late 1970s to which we will return below).

Several artists joined a modernist literary and artistic movement, The Angry Penguins⁴³⁷ and usually met just out of Melbourne at *Heide* the home of the art patrons John (1901-1981) and Sunday (1905-1981) Reed. The core group of these artists consisted of Sidney Nolan, Albert Tucker, Arthur Boyd, John Perceval (1923-2000), Danila Vassilieff (1897-1958) and Joy Hester (1920-1960). As Nolan recalled in 1980: 'There's a coherence about the (Penguins) period which is, I can only say due to the war'.⁴³⁸ The Penguins created striking modern images that conveyed the upheaval of the era. They attempted to modernise the conservative art establishment in 1940s Australia and were heavily influenced by early European Expressionism and Surrealism and 'sought to transpose this imagery onto an Australian setting'.⁴³⁹

Nolan painted his first Ned Kelly series in 1946-47 (and Tucker his *Images of Modern Evil* paintings in 1943-48). Nolan's Kelly paintings, when first exhibited in Melbourne in 1948

were ignored, but after their showing in Paris, organised by John Reed with the support of the Musee d'Art Moderne a year later (1949), they created considerable interest.⁴⁴⁰ The series was to become not only the most iconic, recognisable and popular of Australian paintings of the time but was subsumed as representative of the search for the 'real' Australia, one which was individualistic and not obviously dependent on overseas influences. Yet, having finished the early Kelly paintings, Nolan departed Australia to live in England in 1953 (as it turned out he settled there permanently). Tucker also went overseas. He painted his own Ned Kelly series - not in Australia but in Rome.⁴⁴¹ As Traudi Allen says: 'as far as the Penguins were concerned, the luminosity of American and British influences had not dimmed....there is an Englishness about their lives and careers....their extended stays overseas indicate that for them something was missing at home.'⁴⁴² Despite the Australianness of his Kelly images, Nolan was, perhaps, 'painting to English tastes and ideals.'⁴⁴³ It is worth remembering that Nolan was propelled into international recognition in the UK by that most British of art establishment figures, Kenneth Clark (1903-1983), later Sir Kenneth Clark and then Lord Clark.⁴⁴⁴ The international appreciation Nolan gained from Clark's support certainly also assisted with his fame in Australia.⁴⁴⁵

Despite this difficulty in separating from the ties to Britain that were so deeply rooted in the psyche of Australian culture and society, and even if it were true that some of their art was aimed at 'English tastes and ideals', it did not deter the Penguins and next generation of artists from seeking to understand and demonstrate what it truly meant to be Australian. The myth of the Australian bush as a harsh environment populated by hard-working, heroic people was at the centre of their nostalgia for an earlier, simpler

and *real* Australia – and this 'real' Australia was in part recorded for them by Australia's self-taught artists.

Looking to the past for inspiration was not new in art. In the second half of 19th century in Europe several progressive artists turned away from academic 'high' art and sought putatively simpler ways of life that it was believed to be found in the countryside rather than in urban environments. They looked to rural folk art which represented to them something 'simple, pure and without artifice.'⁴⁴⁶ In search of art forms that embodied this simplicity, several French artists moved to the country in search of the simple life, Pont Aven in Brittany being especially popular. The rural peasants there were seen as 'figure(s) of great moral worth, uncorrupted by the sophistication and materialism of the modern world'.⁴⁴⁷ Paul Gauguin (1848-1903), who spent time in Pont Aven, sought an even more primitive experience and went to Martinique and later Tahiti and the Marquesas Islands.⁴⁴⁸ Many artists of the first half of the 20th century (Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, Amedeo Modigliani (1884-1920), et al) who were influenced by 'negro art' also sought simplicity in European folk art. Children's art too was of particular interest at the time, especially to Symbolists who were looking for authentic modes of expression at the end of the 19th century. Klee, Miro, Kandinsky and Dubuffet were amongst those who regarded children as somehow simpler, purer exemplars of humanity and whose art displayed an awareness adults could learn from.

In the 1930s Herbert Read wrote: 'We can learn more of the essential nature of art from its earliest manifestations....than from its intellectual elaboration in great periods of culture'. Art was intuitive and sensory and '....there had been a deliberate attempt to

reach back to the naivety and fresh simplicity of the childlike outlook.’⁴⁴⁹ Australian artists, like their overseas compatriots, were interested in ‘naïve’ or ‘primitive’ work in the first half of the 20th century. In talking about his first Kelly paintings, Nolan said that ‘the main ingredients of the series were Kelly’s own words, and Rousseau, and sunlight’.⁴⁵⁰ Nolan was not only impressed by the work of Henri Rousseau but also by the naïve art of Europe generally. The overwhelming style of the Kelly paintings is of an uncomplicated, naïve execution and ‘Nolan’s admiration of Rousseau shows how determined he was to be a modern painter’⁴⁵¹ (and, as Traudi Allen, referring not to Rousseau but to the various ‘-isms’,⁴⁵² rather caustically notes: ‘...as long as Australian artists quoted European modernists they were regarded as legitimate Australian modernists’).⁴⁵³

In 1942 the journal ‘Art in Australia’ published works by ‘primitives’ entitled ‘Untutored Painters’.⁴⁵⁴ The ‘article’, just three pages of black and white reproductions without a commentary, while demonstrating that the magazine’s editor was aware of the overseas interest in self-taught art, apparently garnered little local interest. The works appearing were by Morris Hirschfield, Henri Rousseau, Edward Hicks, Louis Vivin and Dominique-Paul Peyronnet, all well-known French or American artists.⁴⁵⁵ None was Australian which might be explained in that no Australian self-taught artists had yet been ‘discovered’ by a member of the local artworld.

Two years later, in a 1944 issue of *Angry Penguins*, work by an artist called ‘Henry Dearing’ (1867-1944) was reproduced (see Fig. 144). Dearing was supposedly an artist discovered by Albert Tucker who wrote in the accompanying *Angry Penguins* article:

'...with the natural artist problems of style and technique matter little, the sustained intensity of his vision solves them for him'.⁴⁵⁶ It is in fact quite possible that Dearing was a hoax by Tucker and Nolan. It followed the infamous Ern Malley literary hoax of only a few months earlier which had appeared in *Angry Penguins*. The writers James McAulley and Harold Stewart invented Malley and wrote poems apparently by him which fooled both the establishment and modernists in 1943. Nancy Underhill, in her essay, 'What? Yet Another Hoax?'⁴⁵⁷ convincingly presents her view that inventing Dearing was Tucker and Nolan's 'primitive' art response to the Malley literary hoax. As to why the hoax was created, Underhill suggests that 'support of "primitive" or unschooled art was an essential element of sophisticated modernity. Most modernists believed unskilled art simulated one's spontaneous imagination and that individuals and the world would benefit with a rebalance towards fresh, child-like innocence'⁴⁵⁸

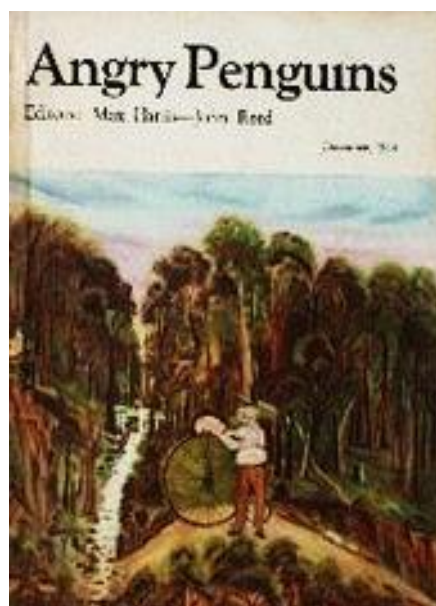


Fig.144. A Deering painting on the cover of 'Angry Penguins' No. 7, 1944

In Australia an additional element existed. Here self-taught art was seen as not only 'simple, pure and without artifice' and an important model for modern artists, but its producers, as well as their art, were also seen as representing an Australia, no matter how mythical, on which was based the 'rediscovery and re-examination of an authentic Australian cultural tradition' mentioned above. Self-taught artists like Warren, Byrne and others represented the image of the Australian bushman. With the cessation of convict transportation, the gold rushes of the 1850s and the influx of free settlers, a view of the 'born colonist' emerged. Always male, he was regarded as a hardy type, adaptable, independent, sport loving and resolute. He was egalitarian and valued mateship highly above any respect to authority. The anti-authoritarian character of the 'Australian Type' was perpetuated by images of bushranging, the persistent eulogising of Ben Hall and Ned Kelly, the independence, resolve and uprisings on the gold digging fields and the unionists of the late 19th century.⁴⁵⁹ Prior to World War One, Australia was an anxious Anglophile and sycophantic nation. As a relatively new nation, Australians felt insecure about their cultural heritage and their relationship with the British Empire and the rest of Europe.⁴⁶⁰ Australians' involvement in the Great War was their principal confrontation with a European history and modernity.⁴⁶¹ Gallipoli was an extension and confirmation of Australia's presence in the international community. Chroniclers of the First World War did not invent a mythology of the Anzac; rather they expanded upon earlier notions and imagery of the Australian bush legend.⁴⁶²

Australian nationalism and the search for identity promoted the 'standard' Australian bushman image (though the Australian author, Patrick White (1912-1999), provides a variation on this type in *The Tree of Man* when he portrays his central character, the

pioneering figure Stan Parker, as a stoic yet vulnerable man who simultaneously belongs yet is alien in the bush.)⁴⁶³ The bush became a symbol for national life and became seen as the basis of Australian greatness and achievement - the ANZAC soldier was a fusion of the bush characteristics and the military. The irony is that the much greater part of the population lived in the cities and urban areas and that the reality of bush life was often far removed from the romanticised images portrayed in art and writing. Two previously mentioned city-dwelling writers particularly supported the legend of the bush in *The Bulletin* an influential political and literary magazine first published in Sydney in 1880.⁴⁶⁴ Works by Henry Lawson and Andrew Barton ('Banjo') Paterson appeared regularly in 'The Bulletin' from 1892. Each typified a different view of the bush: Paterson wrote of its wildness, beauty, its characters and its instilling of mateship; Lawson of its struggle and cruelty. Their images cemented the myth into the minds of the majority of Australians, both those in the cities and those in the bush. Warren was influenced by the bush myths as much as anyone else and, perhaps, lived out the part of the bushman as he understood it without being particularly aware that he was doing so.

By comparison, in Europe and America 'folk art', 'primitive art', children's art and art of the marginalised (lunatics, prisoners and others who had initially been gathered under the labels 'art brut' and 'outsiders') were seen as representing the purest forms of art yet were *not* employed to help define a culture as was the case in Australia. ('Folk' artists, though, were seen as embodying desirable aspects of local and national culture that had supposedly been lost in the process of urbanisation).⁴⁶⁵ There, cultures were already accepted as fully formed (if open to attack by modernists). As we have seen, with the impacts of depression and war subsiding and the changes in international influence and

power shifting away from Europe and towards the United States, Australians looked seriously at their place in the world. The dependence on all things British and the overall acceptance that something from overseas was automatically 'better' than a local equivalent slowly changed in the national psyche, with a recognition and acceptance that Australians were, to some extent, free of their colonial past and could stand alone on the international cultural stage.⁴⁶⁶

Following in the footsteps of the 1940s modernist poets and artists, the Angry Penguins, seven artists (Arthur and David Boyd, Clifton Pugh, John Brack, Robert Dickerson, Charles Blackman and John Perceval) and an art historian, Dr. Bernard Smith, formed a stridently anti-abstract group in early 1959 they called the Antipodeans. In the catalogue of their only group exhibition, held at the Victorian Artists' Society Gallery in August that year, Smith set down the group's manifesto writing with insight:

'We live in a young country still making its myths. The emergence of myth is a continuous social activity. In the growth and transformation of its myths a society forms its own sense of identity. In this process the artist may play a creative and liberating role. The ways in which a society images its own feelings and attitudes in myth provides him with one of the deepest sources of art.'⁴⁶⁷

While the Angry Penguins in the 1940s, the Antipodeans in late 1950s, and other groupings of artists were forging new approaches to Australian art, several unknown and unheralded artists were working away completely unaware of the ructions occurring amongst their city-based fellows. These artists often painted scenes of a lifestyle long

past: things they had witnessed, or had been told about. They were Australia's self-taught artists and they too were, in a modest way, influential in the changes taking place in Australian culture in the 1960s to 1980s.

Australia's earliest days as a European society saw it consisting of a majority of prisoners dispossessed of their freedom and their homeland and sent to a very harsh and foreign place. Even their keepers, the early militia and bureaucracy⁴⁶⁸ were dispossessed people – their advantage being the option of eventually returning to Britain should they so choose. Later migrants to Australia, from large numbers of working class British and then Italian and Greek workers and European refugees, came to Australia to seek a better life and, in their own ways, were also dispossessed.⁴⁶⁹ Australia was understandably slow in developing a vernacular culture. People coming here either under duress or because of difficult circumstances in their home countries were unlikely to have culture at the forefront of their thinking. If they considered it at all it was most likely the culture of their home countries. Adapting and surviving took priority and culture was not of particular importance in many working class lives. However, this was very much an attitude of the times and, in fact, since the 1980s interest in cultural activities, particularly amongst younger generation Australians, has been vigorously pursued. While the interest in self-taught artists reached its zenith in the late 1960s and remained for about a decade-and-a-half, earlier examples had been seen. As mentioned above, Sidney Nolan gave Rousseau as a major influence on the 1946-7 Ned Kelly series and Albert Tucker had presented Harold Deering as an important discovery in 1944.

In Europe and America folk and 'primitive' artists were (and are) accepted as artists whose work ran in parallel with the changing art movements. They might have influenced some of those movements but continued as a separate, accepted art form. Not so in Australia where the work of self-taught artists was used by modernist movements to exemplify a past which *proved* the country had a culture of its own. Our self-taught painters were regarded by most as oddities which is reflected by the fact that their periods of wider recognition from the 1960s to the 1980s were short lived.

Self-taught artists were paraded almost as mascots of the late-modernist's crusade to connect with the past – to them they were emblematic of the construction of Australia's cultural past foundation. In Russell Ward's words, the artworld was '...celebrating the noble bushman as the true Australian.'⁴⁷⁰ Meaning that the self-taught artists were being considered historical even though they were discovered as present-day figures; living evidence of a more specifically Australian past.

Allied to the bushman was a unique symbol of 'Australian-ness', the larrikin. Larrikinism played a key role in what it meant to be Australian from the 1860s until the 1980s. Initially larrikins were flashily dressed members of often violent street gangs, particularly in Melbourne and Sydney. The name was considered a term of abuse. By about the 1920s the meaning changed. Australian soldiers during the First World War declared an affinity with larrikins and the word 'larrikin' was now used to describe someone who refused to stand on ceremony, was sceptical and irreverent, who mocked pomposity and who openly resented authority – all traits noted in the conduct of Australian troops by their British leaders during the war. By the mid-twentieth century larrikinism was a

widely recognised concept with the word being used to describe people who were likable rogues, often from the bush, who chose not to fit in with the norms of society. To call someone a larrikin 'was to excuse their bad behaviour, their disrespect for social niceties and their facility for using bad language and crude slang.'⁴⁷¹ The word was no longer considered one of abuse. This change was due in part to the general acceptance of the myth of the Australian bushman. His image fitted with the notion of the larrikin – he had the same sort of characteristics, he had gone to fight in the wars and disliked all forms of authority: he was a 'real Australian'. This mythologising of the 'larrikin' as a quintessentially Australian figure has stuck and the word is still used sometimes to affectionately describe certain high profile people, invariably male, (sportsmen, politicians and businessmen) who behave with a certain 'informality' which places them a little out of the mainstream.

At about the time artists like Warren were being shown in galleries in Eastern Australia the first Barry McKenzie film ('The Adventures of Barry McKenzie', 1972) was released, larrikinism was a widely recognised concept with the word being used to describe people who were likable rogues, often from the bush, who chose not to fit in with the norms of society. The film was an offshoot of a comic strip character (Fig. 53) by an Australian expatriate comedian Barry Humphries and a popular British political cartoonist, Nicholas Garland. The idea for the comic was first suggested to Garland by his close friend, the English comedian Peter Cook, so might be considered a caustic commentary on how the British viewed 'colonial' visitors in their country rather than the perceived view that it represented a look at his countrymen by an expatriate. The comic strip appeared in the English satirical magazine *Private Eye* from 1964 to 1974.⁴⁷²

'Bazza' McKenzie became the 1970's most popular icon of Australia's newborn 'radical nationalism'. The character was a bush-bred but city dwelling youth set loose on London. Bazza was a rude, gormless and vulgar larrikin. The first film was followed in 1974 by 'Barry McKenzie Holds His Own' (the innuendo was intended) and both were the first to be funded by the newly created Australian Film Development Corporation. The 1974 film even contained a cameo appearance by Australia's then Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, '...clearly Whitlam's version of the new nationalism was brash and confident enough to embrace the eccentricities and vulgarities of this theatrical Australian abroad.'

⁴⁷³ Bazza's mocking Strine ⁴⁷⁴ was something of a slap in the face to the British Empire in the same way 'Crocodile Dundee' (1986) was later placed as the Ocker Australian ⁴⁷⁵ in New York. Both McKenzie and Dundee are figures embodying the 'mythical Australian' and larrikin. ⁴⁷⁶

At 85 years of age in 1972 Warren was occupied with (what for him was the totally unfamiliar) preparing for the first exhibition of his work being held in August at the Rudy Komon Gallery in Sydney. Whether others of the self-taught artists who came to prominence at about this time knew about Barry McKenzie and his influence is unknown but they probably didn't. They were, in some respects, the very type of people the Barry McKenzie figure was based upon. Unlike the McKenzie character, who was an urban dweller, the majority of self-taught artists lived in fairly isolated communities and were often reticent about their art within those communities, so isolating themselves anyway.

Some of Australia's self-taught artists were thought of as larrikins by the public because of the rough, bush existences they had led. Selby Warren was certainly considered one

in his township of Trunkey Creek because of his sometimes loud and outlandish behaviour at the local pub and his recognised talent for telling tall stories about bush life, including his own. However, the very people the character of Bazza McKenzie was broadly based upon were influenced by two much earlier archetypal larrikins, 'The Sentimental Bloke' and 'Ginger Mick'⁴⁷⁷ created by the poet, C. J. Dennis (1876-1938), during World War I. *The Songs of a Sentimental Bloke* was the first of Dennis's 'verse novels' and was an enormous and immediate success introducing the Sentimental Bloke, Doreen and Ginger Mick. Illustrated by Hal Gye, who presented larrikin-cherubs with worker's caps and cigarettes (see Fig. 144), it was first published in 1915 by Angus & Robertson in Sydney, with an introduction by the poet, Henry Lawson. A pocket edition 'for the trenches' was issued in 1916 and proved 'extremely popular with Australian troops in Europe.'⁴⁷⁸

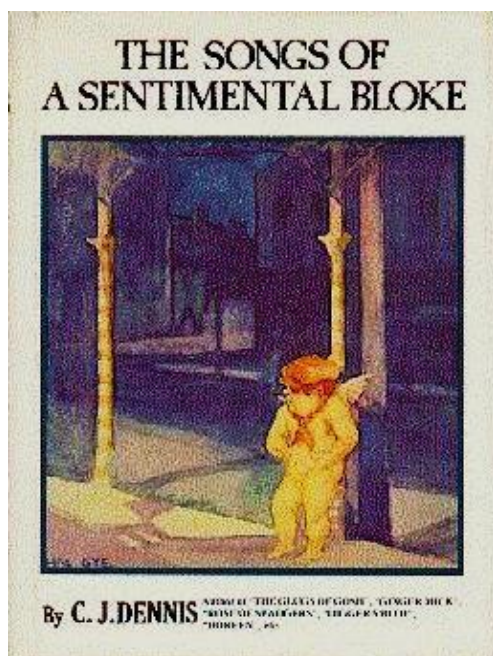


Fig. 145. Cover of the first edition of *The Songs of a Sentimental Bloke* by C. J. Dennis. 1915

The Moods of Ginger Mick (Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1916) appeared soon afterwards during the early years of the First World War when Australian nationalism was

at its peak. Ginger Mick was a likeable rogue who, before he answered the 'call to arms to defend democracy', sold fresh rabbits in the streets of Melbourne. It is unlikely that Warren or any others of the self-taught artists of his time would not have been aware of the two characters whereas, in discussions with Warren's son, Alan,⁴⁷⁹ it appears that Warren neither saw the Barry McKenzie films nor was aware of them.

As the urge to develop a uniquely Australian culture began to fade by 1980, so did the significance of the larrikin. As migrants arrived in Australia over the decades, they introduced new stories, traditions and perspectives to Australian culture. The traditional concepts of an Australia as a white British colony, or a land of struggling bush-dwellers, no longer seemed to fit with the diverse new reality of society. After 1967, when indigenous peoples were finally acknowledged as the original owners of the land, their values added to the construction of a true Australian identity. Before 1945, many people, including Australians themselves, considered Australia to be nothing more than a British colony; a nation whose national identity was relatively indistinct from the British with its culture, social values and attitudes largely dictated by British culture. Following the Second World War, however, there has been a drift towards American, rather than British culture. Eventually, many British cultural legacies have given way to new American ideals.

As Australian society adapted to changing cultural influences across the decades, whether they be British, American, Asian, European or Indigenous, the national identity evolved in response. The cultural cringe had dissipated. To understand some of the influences on the changing cultural scene in Australia, and the impact on those changes

which involved self-taught art, it is necessary to have an appreciation of the artworld in Australia in the early to mid-twentieth century. In their attempts to define a truly national culture Australian modernists, like their contemporaries in Europe and America, looked to 'primitive' art and to self-taught artists who they saw as representing the simplicity of a time memorialised in their art.

4.7 Self-taught art and the Australian art scene in the mid-twentieth century

The simple representations of earlier, simpler times in Australia produced by self-taught artists provided the artworld elite of the mid-twentieth century a vision of Australia they wished to recapture and use as a basis for a new, truly Australian culture that was not derived from or inspired by foreign influences. As discussed in Chapter 4.6, Australia at the time in fact deferred to overseas influences in most of what it did, including the arts. It was into this environment of cultural change that the work of Australian self-taught artists was introduced. Their art was appreciated for its simple portrayal of a different Australia in which a less complex and untarnished culture existed. No matter how mythical this earlier Australia might in fact have been, it was grasped at as representing at least part of a model of what a new, uniquely Australian culture could be.

As discussed in Chapter 1, Warren's brief emergence from obscurity, which lasted just under four years (1971-1974), occurred late in this period of interest in self-taught artists which, in Australia, had begun in the late 1940s and ended by 1980. Several years before Warren appeared in the public gaze several galleries like Komon's, Kim Bonython's and Gallery A all showed Australian self-taught artists, though only very occasionally. The artists they exhibited included Sam Byrne, James Fardoulis (1900-

1975), Charles Callins, Irvine Homer and Pro Hart, amongst others.⁴⁸⁰ Warren was painting contemporaneously with these artists but, because he had not yet been discovered, remained unknown. By the time he did come to notice, because of his naivety about the market, Warren was unaware that the public's interest in the type of art he produced was fading. Dixon and Komon, who were encouraging Warren in the early 1970s, were no doubt aware that the level of interest in self-taught art which had developed over the preceding thirty-odd years was diminishing. Both had been promoting self-taught art for a long time, Komon through his gallery and Dixon by connecting with artists in the Bathurst region.⁴⁸¹ Thinking of the impact on sales of his work they probably wouldn't have told Warren of the lessening interest in his type of art though, had they done so, it is unlikely he would have cared as he had no understanding of the complexities of the gallery scene. His approach would likely have been one of expecting the art experts to look after that side of things with his job being to provide pictures to sell.

Due to his comparatively 'late' arrival on the scene it could be argued that Warren was personally less influential in setting the scene for cultural change than those exhibited before him during the 1960s. These 'earlier' self-taught artists (Byrne, Fardoulys, Lister, Hart) were the ones known when cultural redefinition was at its peak and it is they who have, in most cases, remained better known than Warren is today. However, the art Warren produced was representative of the bush and the life it encompassed – and was exactly what the cultural warriors of the time had been seeking. Also Warren, being completely self-taught, demonstrated a characteristic simplicity in his work that was held to reflect a time of individualistic innocence; a representation of the 'true' Australian

spirit. It was this spirit that the artworld wanted to capture and express in its own works. So, trained professional artists, in their attempts to express a natural Australian cultural foundation by emulating this simplicity gave Warren's work some serious consideration even if it was a bit late in the day. By the mid-1970s the embrace of self-taught art as part of the move towards an independent Australian culture had, in the minds of some in the Australian artworld,⁴⁸² achieved about as much as it could and the art as well as its producers became of less consequence to them. As interest in self-taught art dwindled it was, in some ways, superseded in the cognizance of the Australian art scene by an Australian art form that had existed for countless years but was new to the art market: contemporary Aboriginal art.⁴⁸³ Aboriginal artists are not strictly speaking self-taught. They go through a period of apprenticeship with a senior artist from whom they learn skills and stories. Aboriginal art was not substituted for self-taught art in the development of a uniquely Australian culture but became a centre of attention for the artworld at about the same time self-taught art became of almost no interest to it. Fascination with Aboriginal art quickly spread beyond Australia, becoming an international art phenomenon.

4.8 Aboriginal art

Before it was promoted in the late 1970s, Australian Aboriginal art had been studied by ethnographers and other academics as 'the oldest ongoing tradition of art in the world':⁴⁸⁴ a true 'primitive' art. But rather than being constrained by definitions of the 'primitive', the new forms of Aboriginal art were promoted as being at once contemporary *and* traditional. Aboriginal art, like self-taught art beforehand, was eventually brought to popular attention by members of the white art establishment but

the art was by no means new. The indigenous people of Australia had been decorating their bodies and drawing patterns in sand with culturally significant symbols for many generations. In some places they painted pictures in ochre on bark and on cave walls or under overhanging sandstone outcrops. These included what to non-Aboriginals are considered, mystical spirit figures. They also pecked out on stone representations of animals and people.

The Anthropologists who studied and wrote academic books and papers about the varied forms of Aboriginal art had done so for many years though it remained little exposed to everyday Australians. In the 1940s a University of Western Australia husband and wife team of anthropologists, Catherine and Ronald Berndt, gave the Yirrkala peoples of Arnhem Land crayons, pencils and butchers paper onto which twenty-seven artists seamlessly translated into three hundred and sixty-five drawings their inherited clan designs in the new medium (see *Port of Macassar*, Fig. 145), being used to painting on bark using ochre.⁴⁸⁵ Apart from decorated bark, stones and shells, Aboriginal art was not traditionally created on portable surfaces, save, of course, body decorations. The use of crayons by the Yirrkala artist was at the instigation of the anthropologists but was, in its way, the beginning of a tendency toward utilising mediums new to traditional Aboriginal image-making and the broader dissemination of these new cultural artifacts.

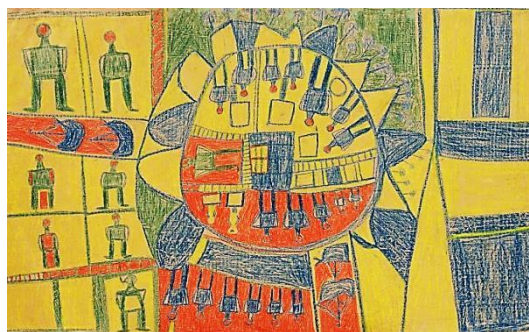


Fig. 146. Mungurra Yunupingu, *Port of Macassar*, 1947

This sort of transference of an indigenous art form into a European medium had been done in America by Native Americans (Fig. 147) who had used European pens, inks and paints to record some of their activities as drawings and decorations on buffalo hides and paper more than a hundred years earlier than the Berndts' work with the Yirrkala. The works, separated by time and distance, are similar in style if not subject matter.



Fig. 147. Native American painted buffalo hide robe, early 19th century. Photograph, The Reading Public Museum, Reading, Philadelphia 2012

Two Aboriginal artists in the late 1800s had drawn pictures of their tribes' sacred scenes and ceremonies to help non-Indigenous people better understand and respect Aborigines and their way of life. Their drawings were in a style very similar to works produced by white colonial artists of the time. These artists were Tommy McCrae (1835-1901) and William Barak (1824-1903). Both men were westernised, wearing European clothing and were accepted, to an extent, by white society as interesting artists.⁴⁸⁶

Many years later, another Aboriginal artist to gain wide recognition amongst European Australians was Albert Namatjira (1902-1959). Namatjira, a member of the Central Australian Aranda tribe, painted competent and pretty European-style watercolours and became very popular, being shown in galleries around Australia and overseas. He had

been discovered and given watercolour lessons by the Australian artist and gallery owner, Rex Batterbee. Namatjira's was not traditional Aboriginal art and represented a European style of landscape painting favoured by Batterbee and is not of the kind generally thought of as 'Aboriginal art' today.⁴⁸⁷

It was not until the 1970s and '80s that the Papunya peoples⁴⁸⁸ of the Central and Western Desert in Australia's Northern Territory created a body of work that transformed understanding of Aboriginal art. Europeans, fascinated by the traditional art produced by Aborigines, with whom they were often working as teachers, missionaries or in other oversighting roles, gave the artists board, canvas, paints and other materials and a major 'new' art movement commenced. The early works produced for the market were often renditions in acrylic paint of body markings and sand pictures as in the early (c. 1972) work of a Papunya artist, Johnny Tjupurrula, *Mala (Rufous Hare Wallaby) Dreaming*, Fig. 148.

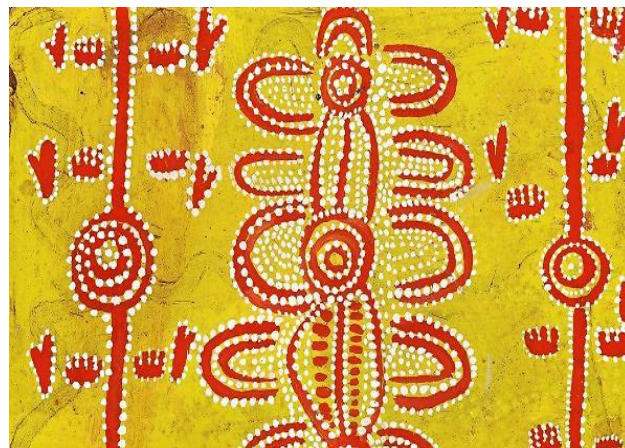


Fig. 148. Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula, *Mala (Rufous Hare Wallaby) Dreaming*, Papunya School, c. 1972

In the years since the 1970s Aboriginal art being produced has matured and become less formal in appearance. The artists, possibly influenced by contemporary European art and

overseas buyers, are now painting freer-styled pictures which, though representing the traditional attachment to the land, are produced by artists of abstract sensibilities. ⁴⁸⁹

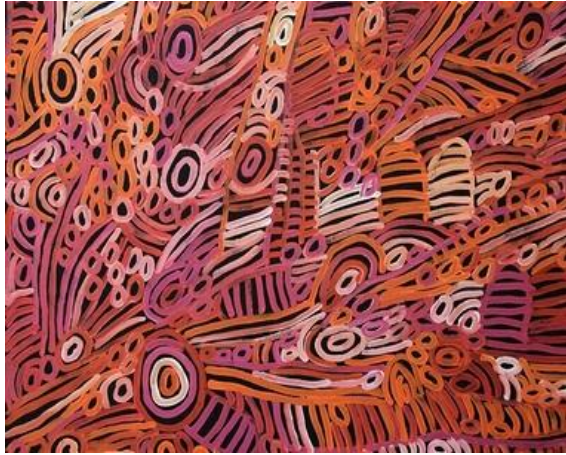


Fig. 149. Charmaine Pwerle, *Awelye*, 2011



Fig. 150. Ngarra, *Mandewa Headdress*, 2002-2004

The art has developed and changed in the hands of superb and celebrated artists (see *Awelye*, Fig. 148 and *Mandewa Headdress*, Fig. 149). This exciting and truly non-derivative art form ⁴⁹⁰ seemed to have suddenly appeared and soon swept away what interest remained in old, white self-taught artists with their limited scope and outdated images of the bush. The growth of interest in Aboriginal art was, however, a separate event running parallel to the demise of self-taught art. ⁴⁹¹ Unlike self-taught art, which offered insight into earlier, European settlement in Australia, Aboriginal art was rooted in spiritual beliefs and traditions that had been passed on from generation to generation within tribal contexts. An old, white bush artist, for example, was recording in his works a past that was recognisable to modern European artists of the mid-twentieth century. What the Aboriginal artists were producing was foreign to the Europeans and could not be directly connected to their own culture's past. ⁴⁹² Despite this, the art of the deserts and other centres gained great popularity and quickly became an international phenomenon, something never achieved by modern and contemporary Australian settler

art let alone by Australian self-taught art which remained solidly local in its rather limited impact.

However, this rise of interest in Aboriginal art at the apparent expense of self-taught art should not be over-emphasised. It seems to have been coincidental and was not planned in some way by any group of dealers. Interest in self-taught art was lessening, at least in part, due to the reasons for its rise to some prominence during the 1960s and 1970s. Professional artists, seeking contact with a past that had disappeared, turned to self-taught artists who, through their simple works, displayed that past. Their paintings were examined and emulated by established artists in their search for a genuine Australian culture which they saw as represented by the uncluttered life of the bush. By about 1980, this search for identity had faded and Australia's cultural warriors of the time sensed that their quest had been successful and a truly national culture was being expressed through the arts.⁴⁹³

Aboriginal artists, though producing works that were difficult for Europeans to feel a direct connection with, were soon recognised as producing a truly genuine Australian art and the genre has now come to be claimed as *the* peculiarly Australian art, particularly in overseas markets.⁴⁹⁴ A few Aboriginal artists painted in a 'naïve' way similar to European self-taught painters; they were producing untutored attempts at realism. One of these was Ian W. Abdullah (1946-2011). His works (see *Speed Boats Racing Up the River Murray*, Fig. 151), with their carefully printed explanations on them, were figurative and, like Warren before him, recorded the life he witnessed or heard about in a manner immediately recognisable by European viewers.⁴⁹⁵ Another was Ginger Riley (1937-2002)

which, though containing more obvious symbolism than Abdullah's works, are mostly figurative representations of the land and the animals he knew. Many of his paintings include representations of totemic creatures, particularly the sea eagle which was Riley's own totem animal which is seen perched on a hilltop overlooking the ocean and framed by two red serpents at the top of his painting, *The Limmen Bight River – my mother's country*, Fig. 152 ⁴⁹⁶

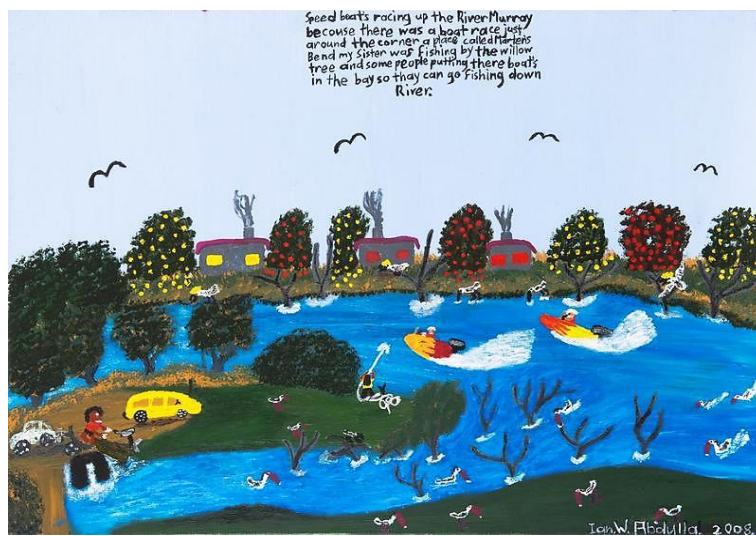


Fig. 151. Ian W. Abdullah, *Speed Boats Racing up the River Murray*, 2008



Fig.152. Ginger Riley, *The Limmen Bight River – my mother's country*, 1993

Another artist who produced works similar in some respects to European self-taught painters was, Ngarra (c. 1920-2008) from the Central Kimberley region of Western Australia ⁴⁹⁷ As well as using acrylics, he worked in felt nib marker pens (Textas) and produced extraordinary pictures (Figs. 153 and 155) which as well as being beautiful are interesting in their subject matter and style which is reminiscent of works as disparate as those of Bill Traylor (Fig. 154) in America and of the Asafo tribe in West Africa (Fig. 156). Ngarra had no knowledge at all of either and the parallels displayed, while inadvertent, might possibly demonstrate the results of limited technical skill, having a similar impact on painters over diverse and distant regions who happened to present analogous subject matter. When he was about 77 years old, Ngarra, who until then had been a drover ⁴⁹⁸, like all aboriginal and non-indigenous self-taught artists was discovered by a European who was interested in art. His 'Texta drawings' present numerous, unexpected similarities in subject-matter and style between Ngarra's works and those of artists and cultures of which he was completely unaware are illustrated in Figs. 153 to 156. I think they are unique in aboriginal art and, for me, reinforce the idea of the tribe of one phenomenon discussed in detail above (Chapter 3.1).



Fig 153. Ngarra, *Untitled*, 1997



Fig. 154. Bill Traylor, *Untitled*, n.d.



Fig. 155. Ngarra, *Horseman*, 1998



Fig. 156. *Fante Asafo Flag*, Ghana, pre-1957

*

After years struggling with the 'cultural cringe', which saw Australians looking to overseas art movements and other influences for inspiration (see Chapter 4.1 above), in contemporary/traditional Aboriginal painting they found an art that spoke 'Australianness' to them and a worldwide audience. This uniquely Australian art had not been promoted as part of the earlier search for a true Australian cultural identity but gains an acceptance that other attempts to do so (by the likes of Tom Roberts, Margaret Preston, the Angry Penguins and self-taught art) had failed to achieve. It appears to have happened without specific guidance or manipulation by the artworld, but rather because of the outstanding quality and newness of Aboriginal art and the broad interest it engendered. The fact that this art, though appreciated by many Australians is generally misunderstood by them, seems unimportant to the world at large. Aboriginal art is recognised as distinctly Australian where other, more derivative modern art has not been.

Chapter 5

5.1 Warren and his self-taught contemporaries

When we look at the works of self-taught artists a similarity in the way they represent their subjects is often apparent. This is despite one of the main tenets stated of self-taught artists is that they lack a 'style', are self-taught, insular and individualistic (almost to an extreme) and have little or no contact with, or knowledge of, other art or its producers. This is certainly true of someone like Selby Warren, yet his style is reminiscent of several of the well-known artists of his kind in Australia and overseas and in this chapter I will compare works by him and some of his contemporaries to demonstrate that, while each artist is unique in the way he or she represents their memories of the past, like Warren they are each a member of a tribe of one despite being separated by distance and any knowledge of each other. There appears to exist a loose singularity in their approaches to expressing themselves even though each is independent of, or isolated within, the tribe.

5.2 Australian contemporaries

It is interesting to compare Warren's experience and painting style with other Australian self-taught artists who were his contemporaries yet completely unknown to him (and him to them). Of several possible artists ⁴⁹⁹ I have selected just four, Sam Byrne (1883-1978), Charles Callins (1887-1982), Matilda Lister (1889-1965) and Irvine Homer (1919-1980). Each of these self-taught artists mostly represented the Australian bush in their works, other than Callins, who painted numerous seascapes as well as some landscapes, Like Warren, all of these artists were 'discovered' and supported by members of the recognised art establishment: Sam Byrne by a Broken Hill ⁵⁰⁰ art teacher, May Harding,

and later the artist, Leonard French; Charles Callins by the art historian, Dr. Gertrude Langer, and then the Johnstone Gallery in Brisbane and, later, Gallery A in Sydney. Matilda Lister was helped by her artist neighbour in Hill End, Donald Friend and by Russell Drysdale who, along with Margaret Olley, David Strachan and Jeffrey Smart, amongst many others, all painted in the township at various times with Friend,⁵⁰¹ (she was also promoted by Garth Dixon, Warren's 'discoverer'). Irvine Homer was initially assisted by the painter, William Dobell and then by Gil Docking, Director of the Newcastle Art Gallery, and a friend of Dobell's.⁵⁰²

Sam Byrne's paintings are mostly of Broken Hill where he worked as a miner until retiring in 1949 and taking up painting when in his late sixties. Comparing the following paintings by Byrne *Driving Rabbits into an Unused Mine* (Fig. 157) and Warren *Rabbit Hunt* (Fig. 158), though they were both created in about 1969 the two paintings are very



Fig. 157. Sam Byrne, *Driving Rabbits into an Unused Mine*, c. 1969



Fig.158. Selby Warren, *Rabbit Hunt*, c. 1969 [SW028]

different in both style and execution. Byrne's painting is more controlled and less spontaneous than Warren's work. Byrne painted in oils on prepared board (masonite), materials that were suggested to him as appropriate by his teacher, May Harding.⁵⁰³ Warren's work is on cardboard and uses acrylic and water colours. It was painted before he was given art materials by Garth Dixon. Both pictures represent an earlier time than when painted. Rabbit plagues often devastated the bush and these pictures are of a particularly serious plague in the late 1920s and 1930s. At this time Byrne was an employee in Broken Hill and Warren was a rabbit trapper amongst other manual jobs. These are memory paintings of experiences both men had in their 40s. Both works display the vibrant colours used by many vernacular artists. Warren's painting is far more Expressionistic in style than that by Byrne which is more formulaic with numerous rabbits painted as if by template and horses and riders being almost identical. I am aware of only one rather insipid painting by Warren where it might appear he has

Painted four horses and riders (*Cowboys*, Fig. 159) using some form of template though this cannot be verified.



Fig.159. Selby Warren, *Cowboys*, 1971 [SW304]

Charles Callins had been a printer in Northern Queensland for much of his working life. Born in the same year as Warren (1887) he began painting after retiring in 1947. He had spent a lot of his spare time sailing and fishing and the bulk of his works are of the sea and coast (*Green Island and the Barrier Reef*, Fig. 160).



Fig.160. Charles Callins, *Green Island and the Barrier Reef*, c. 1972

However, *Captured Reef Reflections from Cyclone Ted* (Fig. 161), is of an unusual subject and style for Callins.



Fig.161. Charles Callins, *Captured Reef Reflections from Cyclone Ted*, 1977

Cyclone Ted struck the Northern Queensland coast in January 1977 causing two deaths and considerable damage.⁵⁰⁴ Unlike many of his seascapes, which have repetitive, busy waves, Callins' Cyclone Ted painting is uncluttered and beautifully simple in structure. Unlike many vernacular paintings which tend to fill every centimetre of the painted surface this work is almost minimalist in its sparseness. Callins lived in Cairns at the time of the cyclone and chose to paint reflections caused by the event rather than any drama or mayhem that ensued. Whilst it is possible that the painting may indicate some foreboding of things to come to those experienced with cyclonic weather, it appears as a serene scene to the untutored eye. The application of thin almost translucent, pale paint is not dissimilar to 19th century Japanese woodblocks in its effect. In the right hand lower corner is a small square house which is similar in type to several painted by Warren. Callins has painted at least four views of the roof in a way that means the artist

is seeing the house from the street simultaneously with an aerial view, not unlike a house painted by Warren with what we see as impossible perspective (*House*, Fig. 162). However, when looking at such perspective we believe it is 'incorrect' because we normally think in terms of *linear* perspective. In an attempt to address this dilemma the artist David Hockney writes:

'Byzantine painters and medieval artists....had what we would now call reverse perspective...(which) will show both left and right sides (of an object)...Medieval artists often used *isometric* perspective, as did Chinese, Japanese, Persian and Italian ones. The idea that those artists didn't get perspective right is ridiculous. There's no such thing as "right" perspective. In isometric perspective the lines don't meet at a vanishing point; everything remains parallel. You could say that isometric perspective is more real, since that is closer to how we actually see. Because we have two eyes, which are constantly moving, perspectives are constantly shifting.'⁵⁰⁵

This may well be a valid explanation for 'Medieval, Chinese, Japanese, Persian and Italian artists' but I don't think should be used in attempting to elucidate self-taught artists' attempts at perspective (of any kind). Warren and numerous other self-taught painters did not attempt to adopt various types of perspective or the theories relating to them. He and they tried to get it looking 'right' yet failed.



Fig.162. Selby Warren, *House*, 1968 [SW288]

It appears that Warren (and Callins) were attempting to demonstrate linear perspective but were not successful because they also included the sides of the building and its roof. If anything the perspective was working in reverse. Though seemingly illogical, with sufficiently small shapes such as a cubic die it is possible to view four sides at the same time. The combined visual perception from two viewpoints, one for each eye, presents the observer with a simultaneous view of four faces of the cubic die (Fig. 163), a paradoxical picture (on the right) that cannot be produced, for example, by conventional photography : ⁵⁰⁶

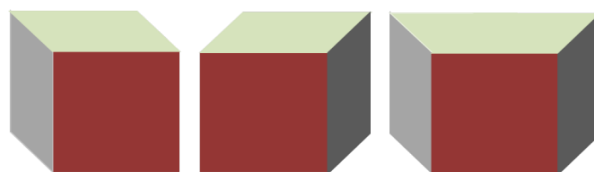


Fig. 163. Cubic Dies

Warren and Callins were unaware of this paradox. Like painters prior to Bruno Brunelleschi's rediscovery of linear perspective in about 1420 and Leon Battista Alberti's writing down of the rules of linear perspective 15 years later for the use of artists, self-taught painters' occasional attempts at perspective are often bizarre. Like so-called

'primitive' early Italian painters before Alberti, Warren, for example, tended to represent more important objects in larger scale than lesser ones.



Fig.164. Selby Warren, *Boolock Team, Tuena Gold Rush*, 1973 [SW100]



Fig.165. Pablo Picasso, *Reservoir at Horta*, 1909 (detail)

Warren's *Boolock Team, Tuena Gold Rush*, (Fig. 164) has the bullock driver out of proportion with the bullock team. The driver, in fact, represents a nephew of Warren's and the picture was painted for him, thus his prominence. (Note also the perspective of the right-hand roof is incorrect). Warren was also unaware of Cubism in which artists sometimes purposefully ignored perspective, as in Picasso's *Reservoir at Horta* (detail) (Fig. 165). Ignoring perspective was something Warren and his kind had never learned *not* to do.

Warren's painting *Wild Horse Yard* (Fig. 166), though it too has broad striped elements across it, is quite different to Callins' painting. Though it is impossible to ignore the remarkable handmade frame, the picture itself is far less ephemeral than Callins' with heavier brushstrokes and thicker paint. Yet it has a certain delicacy to it in part due to the feature of a small pot plant balanced on the lower fence which draws the viewer's eye. Both paintings have palettes limited to only three or four colours though Warren's

are richer and more earthy suiting its subject and Callins' are softer, echoing the 'reflections' of the painting's title.



Fig. 166. Selby Warren, *Wild Horse Yard*, 1965 [SW221]

The third comparison is with Matilda Lister, the only daughter of William Lister Lister,⁵⁰⁷ in his time a well-regarded *plein air* school landscape painter who lived from 1859 to 1943. Despite her artistic pedigree it seems Matilda chose not to follow her father's profession and did not begin painting in earnest until, in her later years, she was encouraged by the artist Donald Friend and his coterie of artist acquaintances, after he bought a cottage next door to hers in 1947 in the small mining village of Hill End, near Bathurst.⁵⁰⁸ Lister's paintings were mainly of the gold mining days though she also painted religious subjects, some of which she unsuccessfully entered in the Blake Prize for Religious Art at Sydney's Art Gallery of New South Wales in the late 1950s.⁵⁰⁹

Of the four artists mentioned here in relation to Warren's work Lister's and Byrne's are probably the most like Warren's in style if not in quality.

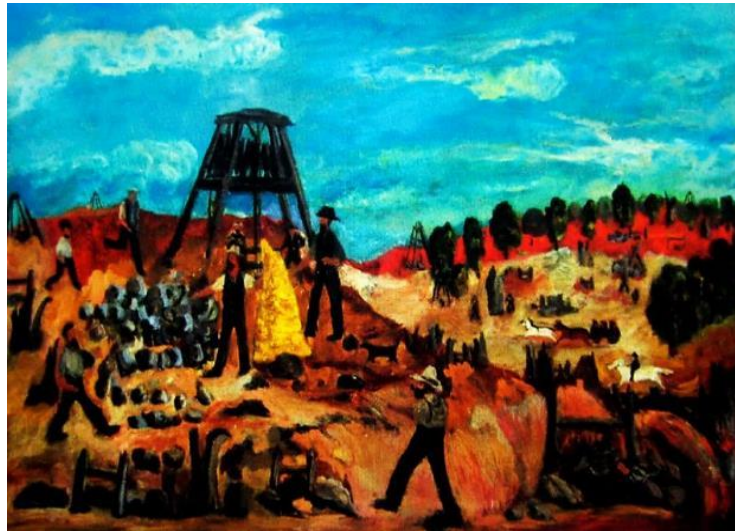


Fig.167. Matilda Lister, *Finding the Holtermann Nugget* c. 1955

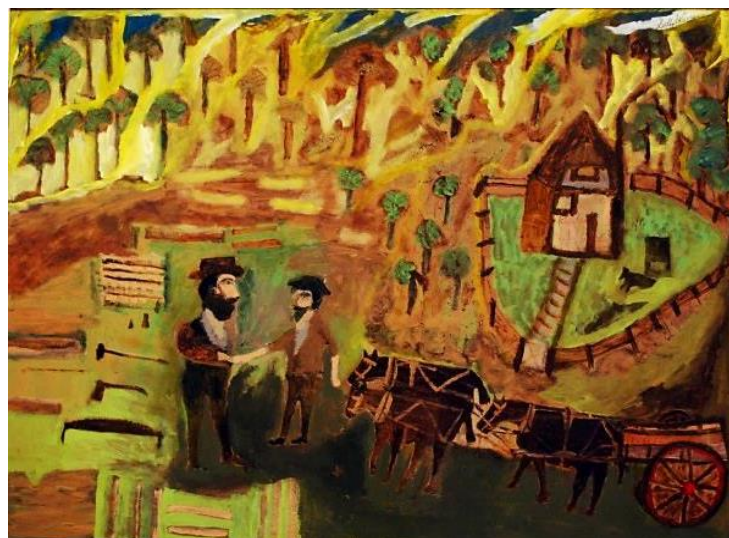


Fig.168. Selby Warren, *The Sleeper Cutters*, c. 1970 [SW223]

Lister's work, *Finding the Holtermann Nugget* (Fig. 167) is full of activity. Miners are running towards the huge golden nugget which is being held by a man in the left centre of the composition. In the background are a rider on a white horse and a dray pulled by white and brown horses and other miners presumably rushing to the nugget. Lister

obviously had no problems with perspective unlike many other self-taught artists, including Warren. The picture is well balanced and brightly coloured.

Warren's *The Sleeper Cutters* (Fig. 168) has less action in it with the main figures and horses stationary. Even the dog near its kennel is lying down. The tools of the sleeper cutter's trade are carefully laid out on the left of the painting. Yet the scene is vibrant and animated due to the smoke and snatches of blue sky above the trees at the top of the painting. As is usual with Warren's work the balance is perfect and his use of colour extraordinary. His brushstrokes are more assured than Lister's though, unlike her, his perspective is out with the horses being far smaller than the two men. (Warren often made the most important parts of a composition proportionally larger than necessary to emphasise them. This was by no means a unique method of drawing attention to the message of a picture. Early Italian and other painters of the Middle Ages often used the same approach.

Irvine Homer, the last of the artists being compared, was a little different to Warren and the others. He commenced painting for medical reasons. An epileptic and always a sickly person, in his 30s he developed an incurable form of degenerative arthritis. A doctor recommended he take up painting as a recuperative pastime. Homer did so and initially decorated plates and small boxes after seeing an article in the 'Australian Women's Weekly' on Eastern European folk art. An early customer was the artist William Dobell (1899-1970) who encouraged Homer to paint on board in oils.⁵¹⁰ Like Warren, Homer had spent most of his working life undertaking manual jobs in the bush and he too was poorly educated. He settled in Newcastle for many years⁵¹¹ but near the end

of his life moved to Broken Hill where he died in 1980 being, at 61, the youngest to die of the long-living artists being discussed here. Again like Warren, Homer painted memories of his often hard life growing up in the country. ⁵¹²



Fig.169. Irvine Homer, *Bush Scene*, c. 1970



Fig. 170. Selby Warren, *Hut and Trees*, c. 1966 [SW099]

The paintings *Bush Scene* (Fig. 169) and *Hut and Trees* (Fig. 170) both represent a dry paddock, fences and small houses and/or sheds and out-buildings. An out of proportion, massive gumtree in the left foreground dominates Homer's *Bush Scene*. The

painting style, in thin oil on board, is almost wistful with its gentle brushstrokes, only the yellowness of the land reminding the viewer of the barrenness of the landscape. A river or lake in the lower foreground reflects the main, red building and the fence posts. The composition is not particularly well balanced but the overall effect is engaging.

Warren's painting, *Hut and Trees* is very different. The three compact trees in the foreground do not overwhelm with the oddly represented shed ⁵¹³ on the right being as important to the composition. The style of painting is much stronger than Homer's partly due, I think, to the work being in oil pastel and crayon on a sheet of tin, its sharp edges 'framed' by red ducting tape (which, in fact, matches the red on the structure on the far right of the painting). Warren's is the more compelling and, probably, more successful work, certainly not as pretty as Homer's but more adventurous in style and intent. Both paintings represent memories of things seen by the artists in earlier times. By 1970 Homer, aged fifty-one, was wheel-chair bound and living in suburban Newcastle ⁵¹⁴. He had been out of the bush for about twenty years which might explain the wistful way in which he records these memories as reflected in this work. Warren, in 1966 was seventy-nine years old and had only a year or so earlier semi-retired from a life of hard manual work to concentrate on painting. Perhaps his memories were of recent experiences and are presented in a harsher, raw style, more in tune with reality.

The four artists discussed in relation to Warren all came to art later in life and did not regard art as a means of making a living. Byrne took to painting after retiring from a long period of employment. Painting became something to fill in the spare time he now had and, as he would have received some sort of pension from his employer, his life

would have been financially comfortable. Callins having retired from a full time job, saved a woman who fell off a boat and decided to record the event in a drawing. He enjoyed the experience of making art and turned to full-time painting. Homer, with his physical frailties, took up painting as a form of rehabilitation and received disability pensions throughout his life. Lister had inherited money from her successful father⁵¹⁵ and seems to have taken up painting as a pastime when groups of modern artists descended on Hill End from the city. Whether her decision to paint was in deference to her late father, Lister Lister cannot be confirmed. ⁵¹⁶

Warren did receive a government old-age pension when he turned 70 but had never worked for any length of time in steady or regularly paid employment throughout his life. So when he turned to painting as a major pastime after his semi-retirement, it was a less explicable choice than the other four artists. Lacking the wherewithal to show or sell his paintings, he nevertheless persisted. While the others took up painting in any quantity when discovered Warren had painted large numbers works before Dixon first met him. Byrne, Callins, Homer and Lister company pensions or enough money to cover the costs of living while, during his most prolific period of art making, Warren needed to spend the several years working concurrently on a part time mail run delivering the post to settlements along the Bathurst to Crookwell road. ⁵¹⁷

While all five artists benefitted financially to a greater or lesser degree after their discoveries by members of the artworld, Warren was found by Dixon later than the others and by this time (the 1970s) self-taught art had become frequently emulated and hence often a seemingly contrived, parochial idiom which was becoming less fashionable

with critics and curators.⁵¹⁸ Warren, though lauded by the press when exhibited, was at the tail end of anything approaching broad interest in self-taught art in Australia and, because of this, made less money from his work than others, especially Callins and Byrne.

5.3 International contemporaries

As mentioned earlier, interest in self-taught art came to public attention earlier in Europe and America than it did in Australia. It has also been of continuing interest overseas whereas in Australia the appreciation of self-taught art had diminished by the 1980s and is today almost non-existent. All the arguments over definitions, the values expressed and the meanings of self-taught art occurred in Europe and America before being taken up in Australia. While the art of the insane has been investigated in institutions in Australia, the depth of inquiry and interest did not lead to local medical practitioners involving themselves in the sort of work Hans Prinzhorn or Walter Morgenthaler⁵¹⁹ had undertaken in Europe. Nor did professional artists or art historians develop concepts like *art brut* or Expressionism or Surrealism. These findings and philosophies were, though, before long influencing Australian modernist artists and their local artworld.

In looking at Warren's work in comparison with overseas self-taught artists I have again tried to relate works of analogous subjects or images that appear to reflect a similar 'style' in the way life is represented. Warren was neither mentally unstable nor in any way a visionary. He was not isolated at a social level from his community, though his art making did perplex his fellow Trunkey Creek residents. Due to this fact the overseas self-taught artists I have chosen to discuss in relation to him are not *art brut* or 'outsider artists' as they have been defined by experts like Jean Dubuffet or Roger Cardinal, but

are generally the elderly people who have taken to their art late following a life of usually unskilled manual work. Like Warren, they were discovered by people involved in some way in the artworld, often artists. Of the large number of available candidates, four self-taught painters will be considered, the Irish fisherman, James Dixon (1887-1970), Alfred Wallis (1855-1942) also a fisherman though from Cornwall, England, the American, Clementine Hunter (1866/7-1988) a plantation worker in Louisiana and William Hawkins (1895-1990) a jack-of-all-trades from Kentucky and later, Columbus, Ohio.

James Dixon was born on the small island of Tory off the coast of Ireland. He lived there his whole life. Tory Island had a population (which hasn't altered much over the years) of about one hundred and fifty though was visited by people in summer attracted by its beauty. One visitor was the English artist Derek Hill and he discovered the sixty-three years old Dixon there in 1958. According to local legend Hill was painting on the island surrounded by locals watching him at work, amongst them Dixon who said to Hill 'I could do that'. Hill gave Dixon paints and brushes and was impressed with the painting Dixon produced. The pair became lasting friends and Hill promoted Dixon's work.⁵²⁰



Fig. 171. James Dixon, *West End Village, Tory Island*, 1965

Dixon's *West End Village, Tory Island* (Fig. 171) is vibrant and full of movement in spite of it being a painting of a town with little obvious activity on the coast of Tory Island. The action comes from a choppy, rich blue ocean of white tipped waves breaking along the shoreline and a windy greyish cloud filled sky. The lack of perspective and bending landmass adds to the feeling of vigorous energy. The individual white cottages in profile along the top arc of land, being of similar size to the front-facing row of homes facing the shoreline and the viewer, give the composition a dynamism which is beguiling. As with all of his pictures, Dixon has left a roughly unpainted panel, in this case at the bottom left, in which is written the painting's title and his signature.

The *West End Village* is strongly composed with the title panel being important, like the yellow roofs at the lower right, and the strip of dark grey cloud above a hint of bright blue sky at the upper right, in balancing the painting as a whole.

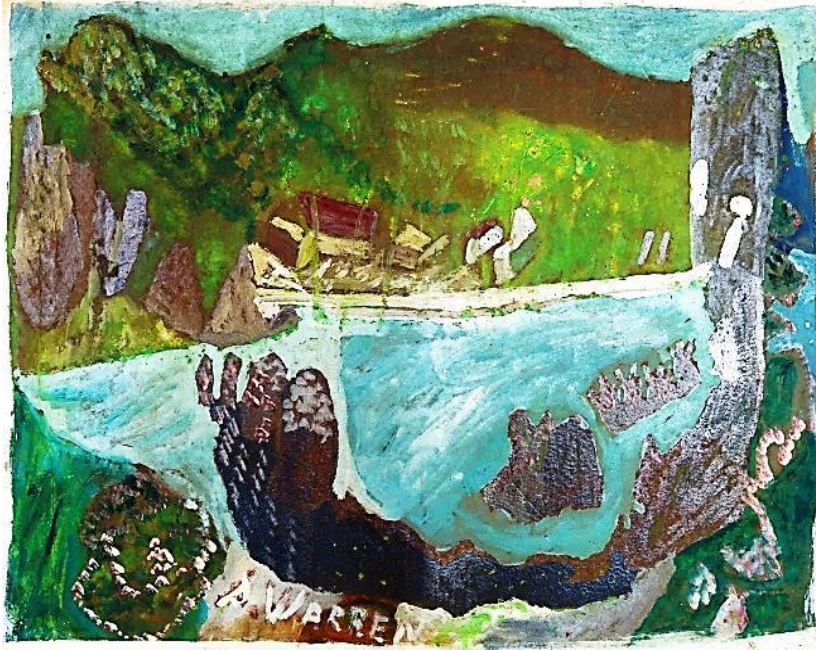


Fig 172. Selby Warren, *Village by the Lake*, c. 1970 [SW132]

Village by the Lake (Fig. 172) by Warren is a very different type of work. The subject, while being of a small village located by water, is quite unlike Dixon's painting. Warren's picture is of a calm, sunlit scene of rolling hills, red roofed buildings in a small bay on the far side of the lake. The lake, like the ocean in Dixon's work, is a major feature of the painting. In *Village by the Lake* it is comparatively calm although it does have some feeling of movement about it due to Warren's use of white strokes of paint over the pale greenish blue of the water. But while the ocean dominates the foreground of Dixon's work, Warren's painting has the front of the picture dominated by what appears to be a rocky landmass. This brown feature which possibly represents a headland of dark rocks jutting into the water, commences near the right top of the scene and swoops down and across to end in a strange glove-like brown shape dappled with white. This way of representing a rock or ground feature is not unique to this painting. Another work by Warren, entitled *Lake Peder Tasmane* (sic) (Fig. 173) (he means 'Lake Pedder,

Tasmania⁵²¹) also contains a similar shape to the right of the composition though in this painting it appears more akin to a decorated foot than a glove.



Fig. 173. Selby Warren, *Lake Peder Tasmane* (sic), c. 1972 [SW059]

While the shape undoubtedly represented a feature that Warren understood, its actual meaning is uncertain to the viewer and adds a puzzling quality to the interpretation of both *Village by the Lake* and *Lake Peder, Tasmane*. However, whether or not it is immediately recognisable, the large object, which I will call a rock formation, dominating Warren's *Village by the Lake* is integral to the complex composition which depends on all the elements to succeed. The painting, unlike Dixon's straightforward depiction of the ocean, land with buildings and sky, Warren's work has several areas which draw the viewer's eye to them. As well as the dominating rock formation, other islands of rock are located in the lake itself. The rock formation is edged by greenery at the front left and right of the painting with what may be more water at the lower centre. On the right fringe of the picture, the coastline continues making it possible that the lake is enclosed by that shoreline and the swath of rock formation. At a stretch, the sky might also

actually be distant water which would convert the hills on which the red roofed structures are located, into a peninsular or even an island. The white dots that sprinkle parts of the painting foreground might represent birds of some sort. The uncertainty surrounding elements of this painting is unusual as the majority of works by Warren are straight forward representations of recognisable subjects. To attempt to interpret *Village by the Lake* is probably to read more into the work than its creator intended. It is likely that when he was painting the picture its content was quite clear to Warren. If the viewer has difficulties in interpreting what he intended it reflects an inability by the viewer to recognise something that Warren considered a realistic rendition of his subject.

The English self-taught artist Alfred Wallis settled in St. Ives, Cornwall in 1890 where he set up a marine scrap merchant business. He claimed to have started work as a fisherman when he was nine years old (interestingly the same age that Warren claimed he commenced working as a shearer's roustabout). Wallis stated that he began painting soon after his wife died in 1922 when he was aged sixty-seven. Six years later Wallis was discovered by the artists, Ben Nicholson and Christopher Wood, who were attracted by the naivety of his work which seemed to support the primitive style they were both working in at the time.⁵²² His early paintings were made using left-over marine paint. Wallis, like others of his kind including Warren, appears to have had no understanding of linear perspective and tended to paint the most important subjects largest in size no matter where they might appear in a composition. Many of his paintings are of ships and the sea though he also painted landscapes and, less often, townscapes. He rarely included people in any of his works.

Despite Nicholson and Wood introducing him to Jim Ede (1895-1990) ⁵²³ a curator of the Tate in London, who promoted Wallis' art in London, he sold few paintings and for very low prices while alive and continued to live in poverty until he died in 1942 in a workhouse aged eighty-seven. Despite this the work of 'this irascible eccentric affected a generation of British artists' ⁵²⁴ centred on Nicholson, Wood and Ede and their large circle of modernists.

The subjects of many of Dixon's paintings are reminiscent of the works of Wallis who was born a generation earlier than Dixon ⁵²⁵ though Wallis uses a far more limited palette than Dixon with most of his paintings being in bright brown, black, grey, a smudgy white and a usually strong but sometimes dull green.

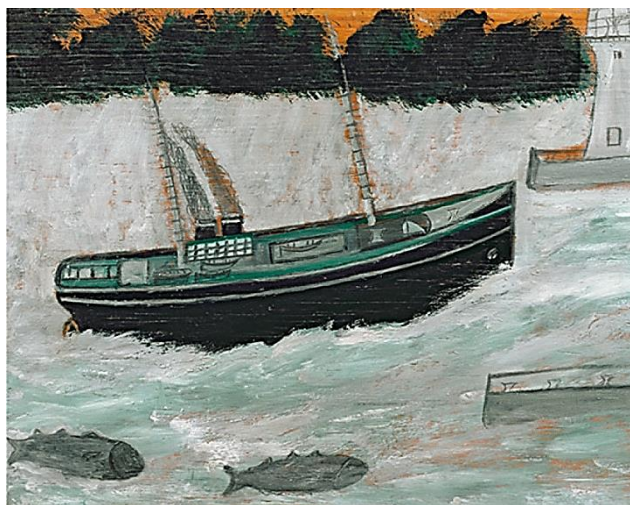


Fig. 174 Alfred Wallis, *Leaving Port*, n.d

Fig. 174, *Leaving Port*, is a typical Wallis painting of a ship at sea. It uses Wallis' usual limited range of colours. *Landscape With a House and Trees* (Fig. 175) is more unusual painting for Wallis though incorporates water and a small sailing boat. But it also

contains the the dominant house, fence, a small cottage and trees which overwhelm three other objects in the composition (just as the steamship and fish do in Fig. 174).



Fig. 175. Alfred Wallis, *Landscape With a House and Trees*, n.d.

Wallis' *Landscape With a House and Trees* was probably painted in the 1930s though this cannot be verified. It appears almost monochromatic, the dull green grass and dark grey, black-edged trees, top half of the house, its roof and that of the cottage, would give the picture a rather forbidding appearance were it not for the dramatic white fence⁵²⁶ that cuts the composition in two and the muddier white house and pale greyish brown river that alleviate any 'heaviness' of the work as a whole. Wallis painted his picture on a misshapen piece of paper and has used the shape to advantage in balancing the work. Even the way the house and cottage lean to the right at the same angle as the miniature yacht's mast and the tiny lighthouse or warning beacon with its red-hatched top on the wall beside it, adds to the overall composition.

Wallis' paintings support the contention discussed elsewhere in this work that, like other vernacular artists, the technical abilities of these artists is limited but of little concern to them unlike some professional artist who, recognising these as shortcomings will usually work to overcome their limitations. ⁵²⁷

Compared with Wallis' *Landscape With a House and Trees*, Warren's painting, *Come by Chance* (Fig. 176) ⁵²⁸ is bright and sunny. This hand-framed picture was painted some forty years after Wallis' work. The two paintings, though of similar subjects – a house,



Fig.176. Selby Warren, *Come by Chance*, c. 1970 [SW255]

a white fence and a waterway or river – are quite different. The blue-white sky matches the river and the landmass between is overlaid yellow and green with a darker shade at

the right top where it is met by a darker blue. The farm house, like the dwelling in Wallis' painting, is white and comprises of two parts with the larger central cottage being outlined in red. It is awkwardly placed in front of the single story building (left centre) and demonstrates the lack of success Warren, like Wallis, had with attempting linear perspective. The black roof of the house echoes the black foreground at the base of the picture which appears to represent ground or rocks on the viewer's side of the river. This white speckled mass is similar in appearance to the odd rocky elements in Figs. 23 and 24 discussed above. In Warren's picture the white fence is far less dominant than that in Wallis' *Landscape With a House and Trees* and, while in that painting a solid pathway leads to the front door of the imposing house, Warren suggests a pathway with eight stones that are reminiscent of footsteps. To the right of the cottage what looks like a railway track, though is probably a leaning solid wall or fence, disappears behind the structure. The sombre colours used by Wallis in his painting are quite the opposite of Warren's bright display.

Having looked at Warren's work in comparison with two European vernacular artists, Dixon and Wallis, two Americans will now be considered.



Fig. 177. Clementine Hunter, *Funeral Procession*, 1950

Clementine Hunter, born in 1886 on a plantation near Louisiana spent most of her life picking cotton in the Melrose district and then working there as a plantation cook. A long-time quilter, she did not start painting until the mid-1930s after meeting a New Orleans artist, Alberta Kinsey, when she visited Melrose which had become a centre for artists at the time. Hunter's paintings were soon discovered by two artists, Francois Mignon and James Register, who worked to advance her career in art. Despite popular success, Hunter made limited money from her paintings for which prices were low. However, it was enough to improve her life as she explained, 'painting's been a gift from God. It's helped me buy an electric icebox, stove, freezer, radio, television, and a bathroom. And I have a secondhand car'.⁵²⁹

Hunter's flat style, displayed in her painting, *Funeral Procession* (Fig. 177) is influenced by her quilt making with each painted subject appearing independent of the other, like an applied piece of cloth. With the bright white church at the right top of the picture, a pathway sweeps in an anticlockwise fashion to the bottom right and along it are the

celebrant with his back to the flower-covered coffin being carried by two small figures and accompanied by a mourner carrying a bunch of yellow flowers. Four women, all hatted and with flowers stand on a knoll watching and below them a couple oversight two boys playing around what might be a pond. The colours are stark and bright orange, yellow, red, blue, green, black and white. The celebrant seems to be holding a white umbrella and as the most important figure is twice or more the size of everyone else. A dark green tree appears to hover above the ground above the coffin, though might be standing on a pale cloudy backdrop. Hunter, who was illiterate, has 'signed' the work with 'C H' at the bottom right. Though very different in style to Warren her use of patches of colour reminds the viewer of some of his paintings.

While of a completely dissimilar subject, Warren's *Bareback Riding on the One Tree Plain* (Fig. 178) consists of several figures, a building and a dominant tree, as does Hunter's *Funeral Procession*. Apart from the obvious disparity in subject matter, an immediately noticeable difference is in the action represented by Warren compared with the stiff inertia displayed in Hunter's painting. Warren's work also demonstrates a different approach applying the paint. His method is more textured than Hunter's.



Fig. 178. Selby Warren, *Bareback Riding on the One Tree Plain*, 1969 [SW152]

Warren's painting, like Hunter's, represents an event or a version of similar incidents of which both artists were aware and had undoubtedly witnessed. Hunter would have attended several funerals when working on plantations and Warren, as an experienced horseman, had often experienced bareback riding, though possibly not on the One Tree Plain which is located in the Riverina area of New South Wales and a substantial distance from the region around Trunkey Creek. The settlement on the One Tree Plain was never anything much more than a pub, The One Tree Inn, originally built in 1862 was replaced after a fire in 1903 with a nearly identical structure which appears in Warren's picture. The hotel ceased trading in 1942 but has been retained as an historic building.⁵³⁰

An interesting aspect of the subject is that three riders are Aboriginals and the large central figure holding a stock whip and wearing black boots is white. Three horses are being ridden bareback. Two much smaller horses are shown on the left and the right

foreground of the composition their diminutive sizes indicating that to Warren they were less important than the ridden mounts.

One Tree Plain is known for its flat landscape. Warren has painted the 'one tree' at the bottom right but, for his own purposes, has added a large, green hill up behind the hotel. Compared with Hunter's picture, Warren's is full of activity and is painted in his usual rather rough manner which contrasts greatly with Hunter's carefully placed figures and objects in *Funeral Procession*. Both works, though so different in subject matter and painting style, are well composed.

Another African American self-taught artist, William Hawkins,⁵³¹ as the majority of his paintings loudly declare in large print along their bottom edge, was born in Kentucky in 1895. He moved to Columbus, Ohio when he was twenty-six and said he had painted from the 1930s, selling his pictures at local street stalls and fairs. Hawkins came to prominence in the 1970s and from then painted relentlessly until his death at 94 in 1990. While later managed by the New York gallery, Ricco Maresca, Hawkins was almost unique in apparently not being discovered by a specific member of the artworld. He claimed, as he became better known, 'I paint to sell'⁵³² and considered his relationship to the market an important part of his art making. He was a self-publicist *extraordinaire* and very self-assured, stating in the 1980s 'I am the greatest painter in the world'.⁵³³ Other self-taught artists like Warren, though less openly conceited in their self-assessments, were usually quite convinced of the significance of their works.

A large number of Hawkins paintings are of animals of every variety. They include dinosaurs, a Tasmanian Tiger and other exotic creatures as well as dogs, buffaloes,

moose, bulls, alligators, elephants and others. Like Warren, he was particularly interested in horses and *Horse With a Yellow Tail* (Fig. 179) also titled *Rearing Stud Horse* is, like many of Hawkins' works, based on a print of another artist's work in this case *Whistlejacket* (Fig. 180) by the British painter, George Stubbs (1724-1806).

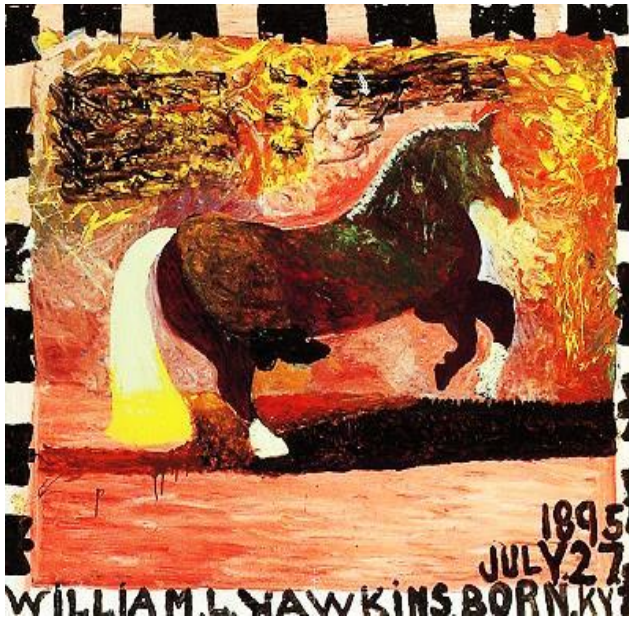


Fig. 179. William Hawkins, *Horse With a Yellow Tail*, n.d.



Fig. 180, George Stubbs, *Whistlejacket*, 1762

An eye-catching difference in Hawkins' rendition of Stubbs' painting is the prominent genitalia he has added ⁵³⁴ which are anatomically more human than equine in appearance. *Horse With a Yellow Tail* is bordered with a black and white pattern painted around the edges. This method of 'framing' a painting was often used by Hawkins and is reminiscent of several of Warren's works. His visceral brushwork is also very like that of Warren. Discussion of a Warren horse painting is provided at Chapter 2.6 under the heading '*Piebald Pony* (Fig. 47)'.

Houses in Columbus, (Fig. 178) is a painting by Hawkins in which he uses a subdued, limited palette of brown, green, black and white similar to the colours he used in a few other works such as *View of Columbus* (Fig. 181).

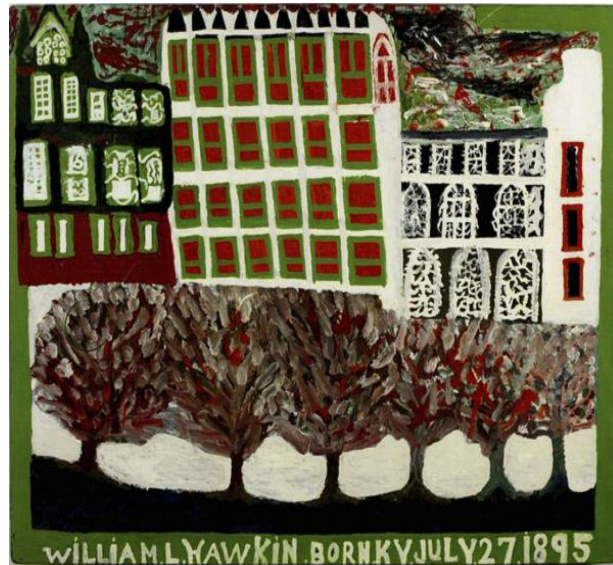


Fig. 181. William Hawkins, *View of Columbus*, n.d.

Fig. 182, *Houses in Columbus*, is, strangely, reminiscent of Wallis' work *Landscape With House and Trees* discussed above. Though his customary carefully printed name and birthdate is across the bottom, it is written in the same green as much of the painting and so is less conspicuous than usual. Also, the work is not 'framed' in a decorative pattern around the edges of the painting as are the majority of his works. The subject-matter of Columbus's buildings and city-scapes is one frequently painted by Hawkins, but usually in his more exuberant, brightly coloured manner which is missing from this work.



Fig. 182. William Hawkins, *Houses in Columbus*, n.d.

Houses in Columbus is particularly interesting as it is both an aerial view, showing paths and streets from above while also representing buildings and trees in frontal view. This sort of picture is common amongst self-taught artists but not so for Hawkins who almost invariably paints his subjects front-on. The bright white road that passes horizontally across near the centre of the picture separates the busy upper half with what looks like parkland and trees below it. The buildings in the top left third of the work are all painted in brown with black windows and doors. The streets or alleyways upon which the buildings are located are mostly painted in the dull green that is the second dominant colour with brown. In places the streets are edged with or are coloured white drawing the viewer's eye to them. The lower parkland is dappled in brown and black with the occasional white and green and immediately above the central white road and to the right of the painting, a feature of speckled white on black lies before what appear to be black plots. Above these is a band of larger brown plots and in the right top corner an odd black with white area. A patchy band of green lies along the top of the picture and balances the less distinctive green lettering and trees at the bottom edge. (A

painting that is reminiscent of Hawkins' *Houses in Columbus* is Warren's *Wild Horse Yard* (see Fig. 175 above). While the subjects are completely different, like Hawkins' work Warren limits himself to a restricted pallet of dominantly brown, green and ochre).

Warren's 1970 work, *Village*, (Fig. 183), like Hawkins' picture, combines aerial and frontal views of a group of dwellings placed along a white road which is in the lower centre of the painting. The road is less distinctive than Hawkins' road and tinged with deep pink and a very pastel green. It is in two parts which have between them a dark patch of ground which Warren has dabbed with white and brown. What appears to be a black road cuts across the lower right corner and plots of vacant land and, perhaps, buildings fronting it are painted in soft brown and white.

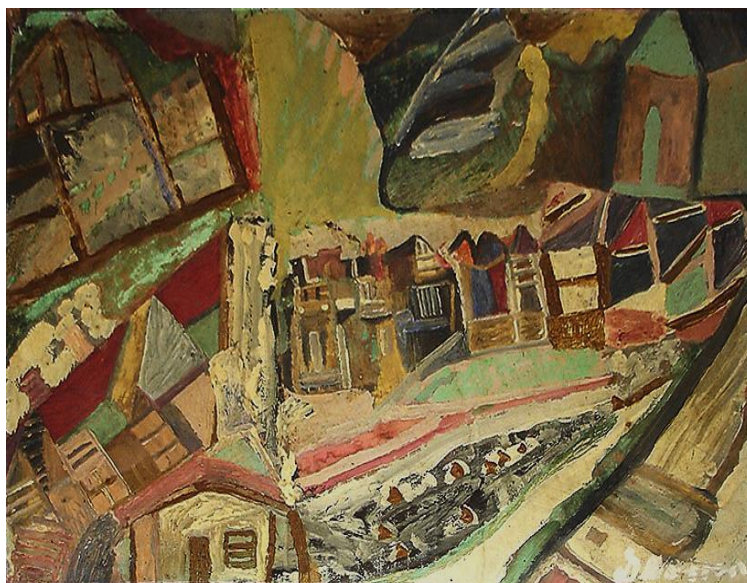


Fig.183. Selby Warren, *Village*, c. 1970. [SW137]

Warren's houses are multi-coloured in red, blue, pale yellow-brown, darker brown, apple green, black and white; quite a difference to Hawkins' single brown with black features. They are placed at odd angles to one another and the central buildings are dwarfed by

several larger structures painted above to the left and right of the picture. Again, Warren displays a lack of ability with linear perspective though this doesn't detract from the strength of the painting. Between the two large buildings placed at the left and right top of the picture is what appears to be countryside with a sizeable patch of yellowish grass with dark features to its right.

In comparing the works of self-taught artists which represent a similar subject it can be seen that their methods of visualising on paper or board vary considerably and their styles of painting are often as different as they are as individuals. But their reasons for producing their art seem to come from an analogous need to express themselves. Though quite different in final appearance, both the representations of lions by Traylor and Warren *Lion* (Fig. 184) and *Jungle King* (Fig. 185) respectively) are successful in their



Fig. 184. Bill Traylor, *Lion*, n.d.



Fig. 185. Selby Warren, *Jungle King*, c. 1973 [SW142]

individual ways, just as might be representations of the same subjects by different professional artists. A belief or feeling that one work is 'better' than another can only really be based on the viewer's taste or preferred style.⁵³⁵

If there are obvious differences in the styles of self-taught artists there are less variations in their attitudes to their art. Whether excessively self-assured like William Hawkins, or far less so like Alfred Wallis, each of these artists seemed to have a strong belief in their art and did not self-deprecate. Most were surprised when 'real' artists took an interest in their work and in them as people but were pleased to gain a recognition they believed well deserved. All of the artists mentioned in this section, whether Australian or from other countries were, to a greater or lesser degree, isolated within their communities because of their artmaking. But they were not social outcasts and were part of a community's day-to-day social life. To this extent at least, they were quite different to those institutionalised artists described as producing *art brut* by Jean Dubuffet in the 1940s.

Self-taught artists, unlike their professional counterparts, earned their livings outside of the artworld, usually in basic, manual jobs, whether that entailed straightforward labouring or was working with scrap like Wallis or running a 'flophouse'⁵³⁶ like Hawkins, and regarded 'artists' to be of a profession to which they did not belong. They might have felt that by being of interest to an artworld figure they were occupying the fringes of that world, but rarely described themselves as artists. Most, if in any way interested, would have been bemused by the way artworld professionals discussed, dissected, and defined their art. If called 'intuitive', 'naïve' or 'self-taught', it is unlikely they would have recognised themselves as such. Nor would they have described themselves as such; they were working people who had turned to art because they felt an urge to paint.

That self-taught artists display what artworld experts term limitations in technical painterly skills and that the artists themselves feel no need to improve on those skills doesn't necessarily consign them to being amateurish but, if anything, supports a view that they are 'outside' the norm or at the margins. As the Australian professional artist, Albert Tucker, wrote of self-taught artists in 1944:

'Unsophisticated artists who have not had the advantage, or should I say disadvantage, of training in some socially endorsed art style, are often termed 'primitive'. Far better to call him the natural artist, the man who accepts his own vision of the world with a simple unquestioning faith and paints it because he wants to, the best of all reasons.'⁵³⁷

The self-taught artists discussed here, despite their individuality, are most certainly 'natural artists'.⁵³⁸ Yet, unlike recognised artists who philosophise about the meaning of their art or have others doing it on their behalf, there is no contemporary insight into Warren's art or that of many other self-taught artists around the world. This is in part a by-product of their often limited education and literacy, combined with the sort of societies they lived in. It is also, I believe, because they did not consider themselves first and foremost to be artists or able to operate in the world artists inhabited.

I am not convinced, though, that most self-taught artists, whether in Europe, America or Australia wanted to be a part of an artworld quite foreign to them. I believe that, just as the art establishment experts relegated them to the 'outside' and described their 'otherness', many self-taught artists, if they thought of them at all, considered the 'experts' to be from a world outside the one they had experienced as the norm all their

lives. When one of these experts unexpectedly showed an interest in them and their work they were pleased to reap any rewards but only rarely did any of them attempt to become personally absorbed into the artworld.⁵³⁹ I believe this was partly due to them not understanding what that world really consisted of and also because self-taught artists simply were not interested in it or the sort of people representing the artworld. As Colin Rhodes has said: 'They are a mixture of practitioners who share eccentric perceptions in relation to dominant culture that are communicated through the medium of visual art, where those perceptions are *lived* and *embodied*, rather than the result of active adoption of some critical position.'⁵⁴⁰

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In this chapter I have compared attitudes towards self-taught art in Europe, America and Australia and the historical and cultural events that led to the diversity of attitudes. Particular emphasis has been placed on the Australian British-dominated cultural experience of the 1950s and 60s through the changes that took place up until about 1980. Australia's aboriginal art, which became popular in the 1970s is also discussed. Selby Warren's work is looked at alongside paintings by Australian and international contemporaries demonstrating, I think, that in many ways Melly's idea of a self-taught 'tribe of one' is valid and that Warren is a typical exemplar of that tribe.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Self-taught art is a phenomenon which has fascinated many, and perturbed some, over the past 120 years. In this thesis I have attempted to look into the world of the self-taught artist using as my central example the extraordinary Australian, Selby Warren. By discussing his life and comparing it and his art with that of similar artists from Europe, America and other Australian painters I have provided reasons for their becoming artists and the experiences they underwent when revealed to the gaze of both art experts and the public.

I have looked at reasons why self-taught artists have tended to paint in a recognisably similar way and yet remained separated, both from their fellow self-taught artists and their societies. Because this singularity I believe that each individually comprises his or her 'tribe of one', as described by George Melly. This odd and unique position can have no impact on them but assists those of us who are interested in them, looking from the outside, to better understand how they might fit into an artworld we have invented and from which they are excluded. Despite the world of self-taught art having, over the years, morphed to some extent, into the mainstream with the very things that made it different being tested, the definitions of this art are being loosened, I believe, for the good. But how loose can definitions become without removing the art from its own special place in art history? The idea of a tribe of one, nebulous though it might be, provides that special place from which these artists cannot be easily extricated. Part of what makes self-taught art different relates to the difficulties some people seem to have in relating to it, let alone naming it. It isn't a 'movement' nor is it an 'ism' and when

someone like Zbigniew Herbert (1924-1998) claims 'an undoubted achievement of the avant-garde trends in contemporary art is the abolition of the humiliating boundary between "academic" and "primitive" art' (by which in this case he meant naïve or self-taught art)⁵⁴¹ he is, I think, being overly optimistic. Self-taught artists seem to me to be independent not only of each other but of the artworld which seeks to define and pigeon-hole them, along with all art, into explainable categories. As mentioned earlier in the thesis, Dubuffet stated 'I like best the art that doesn't know its name' ⁵⁴² (having earlier given the very art he was talking about a name: '*art brut*').

I have attempted to demonstrate throughout this work that amongst the several accepted terms used to describe this art, the term 'self-taught art' is a workable one which, despite its shortcomings, can be used without great controversy to describe a particular yet remarkable sort of art. If a universally accepted name has been hard to agree upon, the actual art created by self-taught artists has itself raised difficulties. Because it has been hard to define, artworld people have tended to emphasise the lives of the artists themselves more than their art. As Cardinal has said 'my great regret about the term "Outsider Art" is that it seems to refer us to the *person* rather than the manner and content of that person's artistic inspiration. This has placed an undue emphasis on the work's origins in circumstances which, while they are relevant to our understanding, are not the primary reason for our interest in the art.'⁵⁴³ Commonly, the lifestyle of an artist living on the margins of 'normal' society has been reflected onto the art they produce which becomes 'outside' the norm because the producer is living in a way considered outside the norm. His art is 'marginalised' because he is in some way marginalised. This might be understandable if it weren't for the numerous artists who

have lived unconventional lives yet been accepted into the establishment without much hesitation. This suggests that it is possibly less the lifestyle than the ability (and interest) of self-taught artists in gaining recognition as artists. If someone, even though living in an unusual way, pursues art and is accepted by the art establishment, then he will not be considered marginalised but an 'artist'. However, as discussed, 'artist' is a job considered by most self-taught artists to be something quite divorced from their own often unskilled and manual working lives which they had undertaken before taking up art, often late in life. These singularly independent 'tribe members' are not only often disinterested in the notion of being an artist, but don't accept that they are living the life of an artist even when art becomes their main pastime.

Warren, like so many of his fellow self-taught artists, found that recognition came to him rather than him seeking it. The fact that once discovered these artists often embraced the attention they received is more a display of human nature at play than an indicator that fame was what they had always sought. In a world managed by dealers and galleries who expect their artists to play by a set of commercial rules, self-taught artists can be problematic. While not all professional artists truly understand the art market, self-taught artists were particularly uninformed about it and often seemed disinterested in it. They usually depended on their artworld 'managers' for handling the sales of their works and tended to produce artworks to meet any demands their minders made. Self-taught artists generally lacked a sales imperative, at least before they were passed on by their discoverers to the commercial side of the art business. It is also worth keeping in mind that because self-taught artists valued their (artistic) products in non-art terms - charging what you can get on the spur of the moment for something you have made -

they often demonstrated the 'if I can get a few bucks for it, why not?' approach which reflects the often working class attitudes held by these artists.

Warren lived through a transitional era; he was amongst the last Australians who would remember a country that was more agrarian than industrial, with more dirt roads than sealed highways.⁵⁴⁴ Away in the cities, divorced from the shifting days and seasons, artworld experts saw only the big changes rather than the little ones Warren always lived with.⁵⁴⁵ In recording in paint those past and present times for himself he was doing something which was unusual for a man of his background and lifestyle. In a male-dominated society his painting was considered an oddity by his fellow residents. Had he not been discovered by Garth Dixon in 1971 he would most likely have continued painting without any outside recognition at all and have continued to have been made fun of by the locals.

The reality is that until the work of self-taught artists became of interest to members of the artworld, they remained ignored. We will never know how many people like Warren have produced works of art and been snubbed by the establishment, but it must be in the thousands around the world. Despite many art historians describing Henri Rousseau as the 'father' of self-taught (or naïve) art there must have been many self-taught artists in Europe producing their works for centuries beforehand who were and remain unknown. Interest in the art form in art circles didn't gain hold until the last quarter of the nineteenth century and so earlier self-taught artists (like many since, it is presumed,) have always been unknown.

It was when modernist artists in Europe, disgusted by the political and social mayhem resulting from the First World War, looked to primitive or tribal art and, to an extent, self-taught art for inspiration, that the investigating and promoting of these previously ignored artists commenced. Their simple and uncomplicated vision of the world was seen by the modernists as picturing some of the changes they sought - a simpler way of living. After the War the art became a fascination of several of the cultural elite including Jean Dubuffet who slowly refined his theories concerning *art brut* which were influential in developing broader awareness of the work of self-taught artists. The interest in self-taught art moved to America at about the same time and was there employed in the development of the belief in American exceptionalism as well as expanding the theories of established modernist artists in their search for a new form of expression which had some of its roots in the works of non-academic craftsmen and artists. Later, curiosity in this singular art spread to Australia where it was used, as in America, but with an additional emphasis on dealing with a 'cultural cringe' of an intensity not experienced elsewhere. In Europe national cultures had evolved over centuries with several 'breakouts' from the norm along the way. These included numerous new art movements which succeeded to a greater or lesser degree in influencing a steady development of the cultures we see there today. In America, not only had a change in attitude occurred towards British and by extension European culture following America gaining independence from Britain but later a particularly American modernism developed which turned in part to local self-taught art for inspiration as European modernists had towards their own 'naive' artists.

In Australia where non-aboriginal mainstream art has invariably derived from foreign example, modernists in the first decades of the twentieth century absorbed and replicated what they saw was in vogue in Europe and America. They too expressed the desire to escape the strictures of the establishment. Australian artists and the establishment that nurtured them remained yoked to Britain, but also felt the stirrings of nationalism and, in moving into a free but uncertain future, began trying to develop a truly 'Australian culture', something that had not before been widely experienced in the country. In breaking away from a formal cultural past, rather than seeking only the new, modernists looked back to artists like Warren and his cohort of self-taught artists who they felt represented an Australian past that, though mythical, was both recognisable, understood and comforting. The nonconformists were nostalgic for a past they had never actually experienced.

When it was eventually thought that a national culture had begun to be evident in Australia the sort of art produced by self-taught artists lost its attraction to the cultural establishment which moved on followed by the majority of people and has remained that way. By contrast in America a limited enthusiasm for self-taught art has survived. If, initially, it had caught the interest and curiosity of artists it soon gained the attention of the dealers and historians who promoted it making the public aware and worthy of admiring and collecting.

Roger Cardinal's view that 'despite the efforts of a small group of enthusiasts, the impact of Art Brut in Europe has scarcely touched the wider public',⁵⁴⁶ is certainly also true of Australia. Compared to Australia, Europe has a vibrant interest in self-taught art with

several public and numerous private galleries specialising in or, at least regularly showing, self-taught art. This is not the case in Australia. It is uncertain whether in future interest in true self-taught art will revive in Australia. There are people who are interested in the art but very few who nowadays actually support or promote it.⁵⁴⁷ I think the reasons for this relate in part to the youth of white Australia. The country seems intent on making a name for itself in the world and has followed a very materialistic path in gaining recognition. This is not a 'fault' of Australia as much as a reflection of the way success is currently measured in material terms in the Western world. New artists strive to be managed by a dealer or gallery who can achieve good sales for them and so directly elevate them to a stature within the art market based on money. But what of artists who are uninterested in self-promotion, who often don't even consider themselves to be artists? In an art market that prides itself on achieving spectacular sales and sponsoring the 'latest thing', a self-taught artist is unlikely to gain much traction. Current art movements, unlike the modernists of a century ago, are not seeking inspiration from the simplicity of art produced by tribal artists or self-taught and marginalised artists. Nor, as was the case for a while in Australia, are they using such inspiration as a basis for defining a national culture. The world seems to have reached a stage where major cultural revolutions are *passee*. A global-market is dominant. Concepts like 'art for art's sake' seem quaint and have been subsumed by a voracious appetite for financial success which provides the artist (and the dealer) with a celebrity of a kind quite foreign to pre-1980s self-taught artists. A real difference between today's 'celebrity artists' and the self-taught artists I have discussed in this thesis is that the 'celebrity artist' seeks recognition and works doggedly to gain it, something almost no self-taught artists are known to have done.

Recent articles in the art press ⁵⁴⁸ have stated that interest in self-taught art in America is growing and suggest sales will increase in coming years. In an article entitled *Outsider Art Goes Mainstream*, James Tarmy contends that: 'many outsider artists have acquired a dedicated following of dealers and collectors, and artwork by these artists has begun to sell for five and six figures....the movement's backers are treading an increasingly uneasy line between highlighting artworks' uniqueness and easing the genre into the mainstream art market'. The article goes on to suggest 'there are multiple possible reasons for the genre's popularity: the unique history of many self-taught artists; the booming contemporary art market generally; and the (not insignificant) fact that much of the art looks uncannily like modern and contemporary art that sells for millions'. James Fuentes, owner of an influential Lower East Side gallery believes that as opposed, for instance, to 'the blithe cynicism of Richard Prince's "Instagram Paintings" ', or the: 'we-know-this-is-all-a-joke snideness of Damien Hirst,' the secret of self-taught art's success is that in contrast to 'the hyper-ironic art' produced by artists in the traditional art world, self-taught art is 'a fucking breath of fresh air'. ⁵⁴⁹ Perhaps self-taught art also provides an antidote of sorts to the view stated by Thomas McEvilley more than 20 years ago that there is: 'a general loss of faith in the importance of art and a suspicion that what happens in art history has no real importance for anything except the market' ⁵⁵⁰ or does the described growth of interest in self-taught art simply support his proposition?

If the market for self-taught art is actually improving in the United States I think the same will not necessarily follow in Australia. If it does, it will only occur a few years hence when the artworld there 'catches up' with the overseas trend. So it is unlikely self-taught art will be resurrected in Australia in the near future or become a chapter in the

history of the country's art, not because Australians are uncultured but because the market today is a very different one to that of last century and because the artworld itself has changed course. Whether the interest in self-taught art in Europe and America would be as developed today to the extent that it was in the time of, for example Dubuffet and Cahill, is uncertain. Australia looked to these people and foreign modernist artists for guidance and inspiration and so also looked at marginal artists after curiosity in them overseas became apparent. Perhaps a revival in interest abroad by a latter-day Dubuffet or Cahill might lead to an inquisitiveness in self-taught art re-emerging in Australia. Until then, Selby Warren (Fig. 186) and his Australian cohorts will have to remain in the shadows : on the margins.



Fig. 186. *Selby Warren at work in his home, Trunkey Creek, 1972*. Photograph: 'The Australian Women's Weekly', © 1972

'I believe a painting should be beautiful and it should tell a story.
How does that go with you?'

- Selby Warren in a 1972 television interview

Endnotes

Abstract

¹ George Melly, *A Tribe of One. Great Naive Painters of the British Isles* (Yeovil, Somerset: Oxford Illustrated Press Ltd, 1981)

Introduction

² Colin Rhodes in his paper, *Candide. Or How the Artworld Dines Out* (unpublished keynote paper, *Contemporary Outsider Art: the global context* University of Melbourne, 23-26 October 2014) defines 'artworld' as referring to the 'professional art world, and especially to those dominant conditions of production, circulation, display, reflection and critique that constitute a recognisable.... system'. He adds 'Professional artists are under pressure to be framed within recognisable artworld discourses' whereas 'Outsider artists, by definition, are not part of that artworld matrix'. My use of the term 'artworld' throughout this thesis reflects Rhodes' meaning of the word.

³ Jean Dubuffet, *Art Brut in Preference to the Cultural Arts* (1949), trans. Paul Foss and Allen S. Weiss, *Art and Text* 27 (December–February 1988): p.31–33. Dubuffet was also referring to children's art in this quotation.

⁴ In recognising this, and to find a name for such dubious cases, Dubuffet himself used the label *Neuve Invention* for their works. See Jean Dubuffet, *Catalogue de la Collection de l'Art Brut* (Paris : Galerie Jeanne Bucher, 1971)

⁵ George Melly, *Ibid.*

⁶ Several recognised experts in the field of self-taught art, and the plethora of other names used to describe it, including the likes of Jean Dubuffet (1901-1985), Roger Cardinal (1940-), Laurent Danchin (1946-2017) and Michel Thévoz (1936-) all alerted their readers to the difficulties surrounding the defining of this art.

⁷ A good history of early self-taught (*art brut* /outsider) is provided by Lucienne Peiry in her *Art Brut: the Origins of Outsider Art* (Paris: Flammarion, 2001).

⁸ An interesting history of the development and influence of communications in Australia up to 2007 is provided in the article *History of Communications in Australia* (Canberra: Communications Research Unit, of the then Department of Communications, Information, Technology and the Arts, October 2007) at:

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/1301.0Feature%20Article432001> Retrieved January 2017.

Chapter 1

1.1 Selby Warren – a life

⁹ The word 'bush' is used in Australia (and elsewhere, South Africa for example) to refer to rural undeveloped land and country areas. In Australia the bush has an iconic status and features strongly in any debate about national identity, Many Australian myths and legends have emanated from the bush evoking themes of struggle and survival of white settlers. A 'bushman' was a 'white' person who lived in the bush and the name did not refer to aboriginal Australians. See: *The Australian Bush* (no author provided):

<http://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/austn-bush>. Retrieved November 2014.

¹⁰ Initially I was told by Alan Warren that Garth Dixon was 'long dead' but was eventually able to locate him in Canberra where he lived until his death in 2015. I met with him on many occasions and through him met his son, Peter, and daughters, Christine and Shelley, who all met Warren when they were children.

¹¹ Jean Dubuffet, *Anticultural Positions* a talk presented at the Arts Club of Chicago in 1952 published in Marc Glimcher (ed), *Jean Dubuffet, Towards an Alternative Reality* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1987) p.131

¹² Apart from a brief television interview (see Appendix D below) and a few interviews by journalists all undertaken around the time of 3 exhibitions of his work in 1972/3 (see Chapter 2 below) no one seems to have requested Warren to record his memoirs. His son, Alan Warren, advised the author in 2013 that it was his father's idea to tape the recordings. Warren obviously thought it was worth trying to set down his story himself.

¹³ In conversation with the author in 2010.

¹⁴ Warren was a self-assured and self-confident man who reacted positively to the flattery he received when discovered.

¹⁵ This attitude towards Warren's paintings continues through his few remaining relatives who are more interested in the financial value of his artwork than in any aesthetic worth it may possess.

¹⁶ Warren attended a Half-Time School at Diamond Creek for a period of only three weeks in c. 1894. The school shack was about 5 km (3 miles) from the Warren home. His teacher, Peter Mullen, rode between two Half-Time Schools: Diamond Creek and Kentgrove. Information provided by Nita Knox and Alan Warren to the author, 2013.

¹⁷ As Warren writes, a shearers strike occurred during 1894 in New South Wales (a hangover of the 1891 strike in Queensland). Warren, who was born in 1887, would have been seven years old and not twelve as stated. However, he may have been stressing the use of blade sheers at the time of the strike which were phased out during the 1890s.

¹⁸ Falkiner managed Widgiewa Station, a vast conglomeration of family estates. Falkiner's sheep were reputed to be very large, robust animals, hence the premium rate of pay for shearing the rams. Information provided by Nita Knox and Alan Warren to the author, 2013. The term 'quid' is Australian slang for the pre-decimal currency unit of one pound.

¹⁹ Note that all further quotes of Warren's recorded life story are from Tape 1 the full transcript of which is provided as Appendix E.

²⁰ Several of the towns mentioned in this text are shown on the map in Appendix B. The *schematic* map of the Bathurst/Trunkey Creek area, which is not to scale, is provided purely as a rough indication of where the various towns are located in relation to Bathurst, Trunkey Creek and each other. Examples of the distances between some of the towns are: Trunkey Creek to Dubbo: 217km; Trunkey Creek to Wagga Wagga: 309km; Trunkey Creek to Forbes: 164; Bigga to Young: 181; Bathurst to Sydney: 200km; Bathurst to Trunkey Creek: 57km; Bathurst to Goulburn: 184km.

²¹ Information on the Lambing Flat riots is provided in: 'Lambing flat riots' (no author provided. National Museum of Australia) Retrieved 5 November 2015 at: www.nma.gov.au/collections/collection_interactives/endurance_scroll/harvest_of_endurance_html_version/exploring_the_scroll/lambing_flat_riots. The attempt to erase the memory of the riots was unsuccessful and today the Lambing Flat Chinese Festival is held in Young around Easter time each year. For details on Sir John Young see: <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/young-sir-john-4905>.

²² The use of corrugated iron in Australia commenced in the early 1840s about a decade after its being patented in England in 1829. It was used throughout the British Empire, including Australia, as a cheap and portable building material and numerous old homes and sheds constructed of it can be found in rural areas like Trunkey Creek. Corrugated iron is widely still used in Australia for building sheds and industrial buildings as well as gracing the roofs of many houses in both the country and suburbs. See: Ken Turner, 'A

Corrugated Icon ('The Tool Chest', 2001): www.enticott.com.au/enticotts/Enticott%20Corrugated%20Iron.pdf. Retrieved 28 October 2015.

²³ St Joseph's House was built as part of a Roman Catholic Church complex in the early 1900s but was demolished in 1985 and replaced by a nursing home. Warren might have visited Young in the late 1960s and seen the building or might have seen a photograph of the place on which he based the work. Information provided to the author by the Lambing Flat (Young) Folk Museum, 2013.

²⁴ To remain for such a long period near the midwife and local doctors was not unusual in rural New South Wales in the 1800s. Information provided to the author by Joyce Simpson of the Young Historical Society Inc. and The Lambing Flat Folk Museum, 2014.

²⁵ Binda is 146 km (91 miles) from Young, 124 km (77 miles) from Bathurst and 66 km (41 miles) from Goulburn. Warren's son, Alan, thinks it likely his grandparents new people living in Young.

²⁶ Thomas Keneally, *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1972). The book was made into a film of the same name by the director Fred Schepisi in 1978.

²⁷ Warren's parents were barely literate and, like many others of their kind, would not have read newspapers. Their versions of events would often have entailed retelling stories they had heard as part of the oral folklore tradition of the time.

²⁸ Reproduced as part of its 150th anniversary by *The Age* newspaper at www.150.theage.com.au/view_bnestofarticle.asp?straction=update&inttype=1&intid=639. Retrieved 23 March, 2010.

²⁹ Bushranging – living off the land and being supported by or stealing from free settlers – was either a result of the lack of supplies in the early settlements or chosen as a preferred way of life by escaped convicts. Australia's bushranging period spanned nearly 100 years, from 1790 to the 1880. While many bushrangers were praised as 'Robin Hood'-type figures; some were, in reality, brutal and others harassed the gold escorts and diggers returning from the goldfields. The popularity of bushrangers and their ethos of 'fight before surrender' was commemorated in bush songs and folklore. See: '*Early Australian Bushrangers*' no author provided. National Museum of Australia, 2015) <http://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/early-austn-bushrangers> Retrieved May 2015.

³⁰ Warren's son, Alan, recounted the story of his grandfather's meeting with Ben Hall to the author and the basic veracity of the tale is evidenced by Alan Warren having in his possession both the bullet mould and gold coin which are central to the story. However, it has probably been modified over the years of its retelling by father to son. Alan openly states that his father, Selby Warren, 'didn't let the truth get in the way of a good story'.

³¹ Warren's discoverer, Garth Dixon, told the author that Warren was not unusual in the way he retold and embellished stories as it was 'just how they all communicated at that time'. Interestingly, Dixon's son, Peter, said much the same of his father in conversation with the author after the latter's death in 2015.

³² Tuena is about 30 kilometres (18 miles) from Bigga.

³³ See: '*The Great Shearer's Strike of 1891*' (no author provided) at: www.australianworkersheritagecentre.com.au/10_pdf/shearers_strike.pdf. Retrieved 25 October 2015. Note the spelling of labour as 'labor' due to an early official's inability to spell when registering the name. The misspelled name remains the official title of the Australian Labor Party to this day.

³⁴ 'Veteran Bush Artist's Work Sought by Galleries', name of author not provided; appearing in '*The Western Advocate*', 31 December 1971, page 4

³⁵ The aboriginal word 'gilgai' refers to little water holes that appear following rain and it is in this context the word is used in Warren's poem. See: 'Gilgai Wetlands'. No author. Conceptual Model Case Study, State Government of Queensland,

2013)<http://wetlandinfo.ehp.qld.gov.au/resources/static/pdf/resources/tools/conceptual-model-case-studies/cs-gilgai-12-04-13.pdf>. Retrieved 19 May 2016. Gilgai is also the name of a small town northwest of Armidale, NSW, near which several of these water holes regularly appear.

³⁶ Rabbits were introduced to Australia in 1859 by a wealthy Victorian grazier keen on the sport of hunting. Hunters, however, could not keep up with the extraordinary rate at which the animals multiplied and soon millions of rabbits were damaging the environment and competing with Australia's livestock for feed. The initial release by the government of the myxomatosis virus led to a dramatic reduction of Australia's rabbit population.

See: <http://www.csiropedia.csiro.au/display/CSIROPedia/Myxomatosis+to+control+rabbits>. Retrieved 28 October 2015.

³⁷ Information from Warren's son, Alan, in conversation with the author, 2010. As mentioned above Warren was disfigured by a hare lip and told his son he was worried that the strychnine might somehow get into his body via the disfigurement.

³⁸ *Towns and Villages of the Southern Tablelands of NSW – Boorowa* (no author) www.argylecounty.com.au/towns/boorowa.html Retrieved 4 May 2016

³⁹ 'Palled up' means made a pal or friend of someone and, in this context, joined up in an informal partnership.

⁴⁰ See: www.naa.gov.au/collection/explore/service-records/army-wwi.aspx National Archives of Australia, no author provided.

⁴¹ ANZAC (Australian and New Zealand Army Corp) Day celebrates the landing in 1914 of Australian and New Zealand troops at Gallipoli in Turkey during World War 1.

⁴² The implementation of a Soldier Settlement Scheme for Australia's repatriated World War 1 soldiers was designed as a mechanism to create employment opportunities for returned servicemen, open up new land to agriculture and to grow the economic wealth of Australia. See: '*Repat and Rabbits – WW1 Soldier Settlement Scheme*' (Australian Capital Territory Government Archives, 2015. No author provided): www.archives.act.gov.au/repatandrabbits. Retrieved, 28 October 2015.

⁴³ I have been unable to find any explanation of, or reference to, Warren's colourful phrase: 'Startin to grow feathers that didn't belong to me for some reason' but it appears to relate to being marked out in a negative way and acquiring a bad reputation (undeserved in Warren's view). Perhaps the phrase is related in some way to being tarred and feathered.

⁴⁴ Warren lowered his age by eight years to join the Volunteer Defence Corps (the Australian equivalent of the British Home Guard or 'Dads Army') and was discharged on 25 May 1943 when this was discovered. He was initially based at Victoria Barracks in Paddington, Sydney and his son, Alan, recalls being told by Warren that he spent time at Eden on the NSW south coast watching for enemy shipping and passing his time opening oysters in rock pools with his bayonet. Discussion between Alan Warren and author, October 2015.

⁴⁵ Information provided to author by Alan Warren 2012

⁴⁶ Much information on Warren's personal life has been provided to the author by Alan Warren and particularly his partner, Nita Knox. Unfortunately sources are not provided making verification difficult. Nita Knox is an avid researcher and avid user of the website, www.ancestry.com, from which much of the

information she has on the Warren family has been gathered. Unfortunately she has not kept a record of retrieval dates.

⁴⁷ Warren's granddaughter, Teresa Kudinoff, told the author in 2014 that Alma 'worked herself to the bone for Selby and his children with very little thanks'. Teresa did not suggest that Alma was in any way mistreated but does believe the marriage was very much one of convenience for Warren after his first wife and mother of their children, Jessie, died. Her attitude probably reflects her mother's views of her new step-mother

1.2 The discovery of Selby Warren

⁴⁸ In 1989 Mitchell College became part of the Charles Sturt University. See www.csu.edu.au/about-us, 2014. Retrieved October 2014.

⁴⁹ Alan Warren in discussion with the author in 2011.

⁵⁰In 2013 when in his 90s, Dixon, though unsure, thought he recalled the subject of the painting being The Black Stump Hotel itself and described a 'green handmade frame decorated with triangular markings' which does exist on the painting shown as Fig. 28. However, his younger companion that evening, Karl Schaerf, told the author in 2014 that he remembers it 'being of animals, perhaps horses' and that the picture was hanging on a wall rather than propped behind the bar. There is no doubt that Dixon sometimes 'improved' a story for effect, and these events all took place 45 years ago and memories fade.

Unita Knox, a long term resident of Trunkey Creek and the partner of Warren's son, Alan, told the author in October 2015 that she remembers an unframed painting behind the bar in 1969 picturing a naked lady apparently bathing and seen through a mullion window frame. She thinks it may have been by Warren. She also recalls a small painting by Warren of parrots, in fact juvenile Crimson Rosellas (Nita is particularly interested in birds). It too was unframed. It is difficult to be certain which painting Dixon saw two years later. All three remembered paintings vary considerably as to subject matter.

⁵¹ All quotations are from the full transcript provided as Appendix H.

⁵² It is interesting that 'painting, carving sticks to look like people, making jewellery...'are regarded as proper for children but not the grown-up world (presumably of proper, useful work).

⁵³ Komon had earlier been instrumental in developing the Broken Hill self-taught artist Sam Byrne's career. See Chapter 5.

⁵⁴ Dixon in conversation with the author, 2011.

⁵⁵ These offences are listed at: '*Sydney Morning Herald*' 1842-1954 (Trove, National Library of Australia): www.trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/17045080?searchTerm=Selby%20Warren&searchLimits. Retrieved July 2013

⁵⁶ It remains uncertain who first recorded this often quoted statement by Rousseau to Picasso. It is often quoted (an example being Caws, Mary Ann, *Pablo Picasso* (London: Reaktion Books, 2005) p. 57) but is invariably unreferenced. Interestingly, in her 1933 *Autobiography of Alice B Toklas* (London: Penguin, 2001) p. 63-66, Gertrude Stein, who was present at the banquet, provides a detailed account of the of the whole event even providing details of the menu. She, her brother and Toklas took a very drunk Rousseau home by taxi from the party. But *no* mention of the speech made by Rousseau to Picasso is mentioned. See the *Autobiography* at: Project Gutenberg of Australia eBook online edition, eBook No.: 0608711.txt, Date first posted: November 2006. Retrieved 18 January 2017

⁵⁷ Stein, G, *Ibid.* p.66

⁵⁸ An entertaining description of the 'Rousseau Banquet' is provided by Tony Perrotet in his 2008 article '*Partying with Pablo*' – see: <http://thesmartset.com/article07080801/>. Retrieved November, 2016. See also:

McCully, Marilyn, *'A Picasso Anthology: Documents, Criticism, Reminiscences'*, (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press,., 2008)

⁵⁹ Valerie Carr, *ibid*, p.8

1.3 Warren on the public stage

⁶⁰ Email to author from Teresa Kudinoff (a granddaughter of Warren) dated 20 July 2014 - *Ibid*

⁶¹ The interview was undertaken by a journalist, Paul Murphy, and was broadcast in black and white as a short segment (3.75 minutes) on the current affairs program 'This Day Tonight' on 14 August 1972 (Australian Broadcasting Corporation [ABC], Sydney © 2009). In the interview Warren appears completely at ease in front of cameras and to be enjoying the experience of showing his paintings to the presenter. His son, Alan, has advised the author (in conversations in 2010) that Warren often exaggerated stories for effect. In saying that he 'didn't realise until somebody came that knew something about the game' (ie. the art business) he was talking about exhibiting and selling paintings and not implying that he had not been involved in producing art before 1972. A transcript of the '*This Day Tonight*' interview is provided in the Appendices below. Dixon was not a professor but headed the Art Department at the then Mitchell College, Bathurst.

⁶² For discussion of the perceived place of women in Australian art, particularly in the non-metropolitan areas, see Ann Toy, *Hearth and Home* (Catalogue. Historic Houses Trust, Sydney, 1988) and Kay Schaffer, *Women and the Bush: Forces of Desire in the Australian Cultural Tradition* (Cambridge and Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1988). Folk art of the kind found in Europe and America did not flourish in Australia where the majority of such work was produced by women and, though often decorative, was generally utilitarian in function.

⁶³ Information on his discovery and experiences once exhibited provided to the author by Dixon and Dixon's son, Peter, a retired art teacher in Canberra, 2010 to 2014.

⁶⁴ Small country communities like the one at Trunkey Creek are often conservative and fearful of change of the sort thought to be represented by people from the large cities.

⁶⁵ Woollahra in 1972 was as different a place to Trunkey Creek as can be imagined. It was inhabited by affluent, well-educated people who considered themselves to be cultured and sophisticated. Trunkey was a tiny bush town of poorly educated, working class people who showed no interest in the arts. (Both places remain much the same today). Komon's gallery was, in fact, located at the eastern end of Paddington Street in Paddington, the suburb adjoining Woollahra. However, Woollahra was and is regarded by some as a more salubrious address than Paddington and would explain why the status-conscious Komon used Woollahra as his address.

⁶⁶ As recalled by Garth Dixon in conversation with the author, 2010. The quotation roughly translates as: 'Look at them won't you? Just like a flock of chickens going in for a feed of bran.'

⁶⁷ Warren paintings were offered by Komon from \$80 to \$250 with most selling at the lower end of that range.

⁶⁸ Warren painted many pictures in anticipation of ongoing exhibitions. He became quite dependent on the sale of his paintings and put great store in Rudy Komon continuing to sell them. Correspondence between Warren and Komon, is provided and discussed in detail in this thesis. An interesting insight into Rudy Komon and his gallery is contained in Robert Raymond (ed.), *52 Views of Rudy Komon* (Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales, 1999) in which fifty-two associates (including artists and clients) recall their experiences with him.

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- ⁶⁹ The first exhibition, was held at Komon's Sydney gallery in February 1972. The second was in Melbourne at the George's Gallery in August that year. In March 1973 a third exhibition was held, this time at the Reid Gallery in Brisbane. The George's and Reid galleries were associated with Komon who organised all three shows.
- ⁷⁰ The ABC has been unable to locate a copy of the interview which, they say, would have lasted only a minute or two.
- ⁷¹ Brook, Donald, 'Patience Rewarded' in *The Sydney Morning Herald* newspaper, 24 February 1972, p.11.
- ⁷² Nicklin, Lenore, *Ibid*, p.7
- ⁷³ McGlynn, Kerry, *The Daily Telegraph*, Sydney 27 February 1972
- ⁷⁴ No author, *Sydney Sun*, 9 August 1972
- ⁷⁵ Carr, Valerie, 'One-Man Art Show at 85', *The Australian Women's Weekly*, 8 March 1972, p. 8
- ⁷⁶ McCarthy, Phillip, 'For Grandpa Moses Life's Now an Art', *The Melbourne Age* newspaper, 8 August 1972
- ⁷⁷ McCulloch, Alan, 'Everything or Perhaps Nothing', *The Melbourne Herald*, 9 August 1972. Use of the word 'prosody' in this context is to my mind problematic.
- ⁷⁸ Makin, Jeffrey, 'Art From the Bush', *The Melbourne Sun* newspaper, 9 August 1972
- ⁷⁹ Dunstan, Keith, 'A Place in the Sun', *The Melbourne Sun*, 9 August 1972
- ⁸⁰ Warren's exhibition in Brisbane attracted no new coverage but only a reprint of an article first appearing in the Melbourne press.
- ⁸¹ No author, 'Veteran Bush Artist's Work Sought by Galleries', *Western Advocate* newspaper, Bathurst
- ⁸² Warren's son, Alan, who recalls setting up a large tent to house the guests, told me that 'everyone behaved themselves pretty well'. Alan Warren still has the tent involved though it hasn't been used since.
- ⁸³ No author, 'Country Gallery', *Western Advocate* newspaper, Bathurst, 25 January 1974
- ⁸⁴ Makin, Jeffrey, *Ibid*.
- ⁸⁵ See: 'The Pill: 1961 Introduction of the oral contraceptive pill' (National Museum of Australia) (http://www.nma.gov.au/online_features/defining_moments/featured/the_pill. Retrieved 12 May 2016
- ⁸⁶ See: 'The Wave Hill Walk-off' (National Museum of Australia) (http://www.nma.gov.au/online_features/defining_moments/featured/wave_hill_walk-off. Retrieved 12 May 2016
- ⁸⁷ See: 'The White Australia Policy' (National Museum of Australia): (http://www.nma.gov.au/online_features/defining_moments/featured/end_of_the_white_australia_policy. Retrieved 12 May 2016
- ⁸⁸ See: 'The Introduction of Decimal Currency' (National Museum of Australia): (http://www.nma.gov.au/online_features/defining_moments/featured/decimal_currency. Retrieved 12 May 2016
- ⁸⁹ See: 'Germaine Greer and the Female Eunuch' (No author provided. State Library of Victoria, n.d.): (<http://ergo.slv.vic.gov.au/explore-history/fight-rights/womens-rights/germaine-greer-female-eunuch>. Retrieved 12 May 2016.
- ⁹⁰ See: 'Australia's Prime Ministers: Gough Whitlam' (No author provided. National Archives of Australia): (<http://primeministers.naa.gov.au/primeministers/whitlam/in-office.aspx>. Retrieved 12 May 2016.
- ⁹¹ McGlynn, Kerry, *The Daily Telegraph*, *Ibid*.
- ⁹² It has a 'folksy' feel to it, perhaps analogous to the American 'Uncle Remus' type.
- ⁹³ See Lenore Nicklin, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *Ibid*.
- ⁹⁴ These comments are based, in part, on discussions with Garth Dixon whose attitude towards Komon was one of deference. Conversations during 2009-2014

1.4 The correspondence between Warren and Komon

⁹⁵ Rudy Komon arrived in Sydney from Vienna in 1950 as a refugee and initially sold second-hand furniture and then antiques before opening his gallery in 1959 in the then unfashionable suburb of Paddington. Like a number of European gallerists of the time he experienced the intolerance of the Sydney Establishment and was regularly on the receiving end of malicious comments about foreign art dealers. 'He was the visible target of Patrick White's mean caricature of a slimy art dealer in in the novel *The Vivisector*' – Christopher Heathcote, *Inside the Art Market. Australia's Galleries A History: 1956-1976* (Melbourne: Thames and Hudson Australia, 2016) p. 71 quoting White's novel, p.460-462. Despite early difficulties the Rudy Komon Gallery became highly influential in the modern art scene in Australia.

⁹⁶ Rudy Komon Art Gallery Records, National library of Australia, NLA-MS8327. Relevant documents cover the period December 1971 to August 1977.

⁹⁷ Despite his eventual success as a gallerist Komon was, as Christopher Heathcote states, 'reputed to have been afflicted with the visual equivalent of a tin-ear, and had trouble picking a fine picture' despite which Komon thrived, in great part due to the able assistance of his manager, Gwen Frolich, who had a 'good eye' (Heatcote, *Ibid*, p.70).

⁹⁸ After Komon's death Ray Hughes purchased the Komon gallery's stock and still has several of Warren's works in what is now his collection.

⁹⁹ Robert Raymond (ed,) *52 Views of Rudy Komon* *Ibid*, p.17

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 39

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, 183

¹⁰² Komon, as a dealer, wanted to make money from the sale of paintings - Robert Raymond (ed,)' *52 Views of Rudy Komon*, *Ibid*. p.17

¹⁰² *Ibid*, 39

Warren and the other artists he represented. Dixon probably received a small percentage of the sales achieved though would not confirm (or deny) this. Both men seemed genuinely pleased to be able to assist Warren and, by doing so, gained the advantage of demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of the art market to their contemporaries in the artworld.

¹⁰³ This post script translates as 'I do not think there is much use painting a lot of paintings if you cannot handle them'.

¹⁰⁴ 'Gwin' is Gwen (Frolich)

¹⁰⁵ 'Bryan' was Bryan Noyes, Alan Warren's stepson, who travelled with his father and grandfather to Melbourne.

¹⁰⁶ Warren received a government old age pension which permitted a very limited additional income for recipients without reducing the pension amount.

¹⁰⁷ Jeff Long, the current owner of the tin shed that had been used by Warren as his gallery, advised the author in 2010 that he 'understood' Warren did not own the shed. However, Warren's son, Alan, confirmed ownership by his father,

¹⁰⁸ 'all so' is 'also'

¹⁰⁹ Garth Dixon in conversation with the author, June 2011. The use of odd nicknames is common in Australia. Many, like the one used by Warren, use a word that has the opposite meaning to reality, for example a red-haired person is sometimes called 'blue' and a stout individual may attract the nickname 'slim'.

¹¹⁰ McCullough, Bianca. *'Australian Naive Painters'* (Melbourne: Hill of Content, 1977) p. 76. Bianca McCullough's entry on Warren is reproduced in later editions of McCulloch, Alan et al, *Encyclopedia of Australian Art* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1966), on p. 608

¹¹¹ Carr, Valerie, 'One-Man Art Show at 85' *The Australian Women's Weekly*, 8 March 1972, p.8

¹¹² Author in conversation with Dr Christine Dixon, Chief Curator, Australian Art, National Gallery of Australia, August 2013. (Christine Dixon is the daughter of Garth Dixon who discovered Warren in 1971). No record is held of the painting being either acquired or deaccessioned.

1.5 The influence of the art establishment on Warren and his kind

¹¹³ Robert Storr, *'Rock of Ages Cleft for Me'* on William Edmondson in Kaspar König and Falk Wolf, *The Shadow of the Avant-Garde, Rousseau and the Forgotten Masters* (Ostfildern : Hatje Cantz, , Germany, 2015) p.263

¹¹⁴ Conversation between Peter Dixon and the author after Garth Dixon's death in 2015. Peter advised that Matilda Lister from Hill End was another artist 'badly influenced' by his father.

¹¹⁵ Stated by Dixon in conversation with the author, August, 2011. Use of the word 'maintained' is interesting. It would appear that Dixon and the gallerist, Rudy Komon, initially believed they were onto a good thing (while it lasted) and wanted to assist Warren in continuing his production of art. When asked, Dixon would neither confirm nor deny that he received a commission for those works sold by Komon. But it is quite possible he did and, if so, might have had a commercial interest in promoting Warren's work and the quantity of it produced. Dixon's son, Peter, a Canberra-based art teacher told the author in a 2015 conversation that his father "'ruined" a few naïve painters by giving them materials and trying to represent them'. Another such artist was Matilda Lister (1889-1965) who lived at Hill End, like Trunkey Creek, an old mining village, and like Trunkey Creek, not far from Bathurst where Dixon lived. Having discussed this with Dixon I have no doubt that any assistance he gave artists was done with good will and his son's statement was a light-hearted one though probably contains an element of truth.

¹¹⁶ A sleeper cutter cut down hardwood trees and then shaped the timber into sleepers upon which train tracks were laid. Wooden railway sleepers were widely replaced by reinforced concrete after 1945 though had been first used in Europe in the late 1880s. Today plastic-based sleepers are common.

¹¹⁷ Information on Bill Traylor and his relationship with Charles Shannon is based on: Sobel, Mechal, *Painting a Hidden Life: the Art of Bill Traylor* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 2009) esp. p. 187-194

¹¹⁸ Traylor 'died in a dreadful black facility for the ill' in 1949. Mechal Sobel, *Bill Traylor's Hidden Call for Retribution* in Kasper König and Falk Wolf (eds.), *ibid*, p. 61

¹¹⁹ Sobel, Mechal, *'Painting a Hidden Life...'* *Ibid*.

¹²⁰ See Arnett, William, *'Souls Grown Deep; African-American Vernacular Art of the South' Vols 1 and 2* (Burlington, USA: Tinwood, 2001)

¹²¹ William Arnett, *'Her Name is Someone'* (n.d) at <http://www.soulsgrowndeep.org/artist/mary-t-smith> Retrieved 10 December 2016

¹²² See Bill Nichols, *Blurred Boundaries: Questions of Meaning in Contemporary Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995)

¹²³ Another Sydney-based collector with interest in self-taught art with a few works by Warren in his collection is Peter Fay. In a meeting with him no new information on the artist was offered.

¹²⁴ An explanation of this and other similarities experienced by self-taught artists in general is provided in Chapter 3.

Chapter 2

2.1 Warren's paintings and drawings

¹²⁵ Garth Dixon in conversation with the author October 2010. Dixon believes that Warren had told him he thought his paintings were 'good' and that locals in Trunkey Creek 'didn't understand' his paintings.

¹²⁶ Garth Dixon in conversation with the author February 2011.

¹²⁷ See Frances Morris & Christopher Green (eds) *Henri Rousseau: Jungles in Paris* (London: National Gallery of Art, 2005); Terzie Zemankova, *Adolf Wolfi, Creator of the Universe* (Art Publishers Incorp, 2012); John Maizels, *Raw Creation, Outsider Art and Beyond*, (London: Phaidon, 1996); Ross Moore, *Sam Byrne, Folk Painter of the Silver City* (Ringwood, Victoria: Viking), 1985.

¹²⁸ See: Rhoda Fleming, *Analysing Children's Art*, (Palo Alto, California : Mayfield Publishing Company, 1970) p. 246

2.2 Warren's major themes

¹²⁹ As late as the 1970s England was nostalgically referred to as 'Mother England' and Britain as 'the old' or 'home', country by many in Australia. Between 1949 and 1999 the majority of immigrants to Australia were of British stock. See Kate Walsh, *The Changing Face of Australia: a Century of Immigration 1901-2000* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2001), and 'Fact Sheet 2 – Key Facts in Immigration', Department of Immigration and Citizenship (Australia), Canberra, 2008.

¹³⁰ Teresa Kudinoff , Warren's granddaughter, in conversation with the author, July 2014.

¹³¹ Though both his parents were born in country New South Wales in the Bathurst region, Warren's grandparents were from England on his father's side and France and Scotland (the Isle of Skye) on his mother's side. Both of Jessie Howard's grandparents were from Scotland. Information provided to the author by Unita Knox, a Trunkey Creek resident and close friend of Alan, Selby Warren's son.

2.3 Trunkey Creek

¹³² Unita Knox, long time Trunkey Creek resident in conversation with the author, August 2014. The phrase 'black stump' in Australia refers to an imaginary point beyond which the bush is considered remote, thus the commonly used descriptive phrase 'beyond the black stump'. To name a pub 'The Black Stump' was to signify that it was a truly 'bush' pub and very Australian.

¹³³ See *Catalogue Raisonné* (Appendix A) pictures: [SW081}, [SW130]

¹³⁴ Unita Knox, *ibid.*, July 2014

¹³⁵ Information provided by Sylvia Kilby of the Bathurst Historical Society Incorporated, by letter to the author dated 15 October 2013.

¹³⁶ A discussion on the figure of the 'larrikin' in Australian culture is provided in Chapter 4.5

¹³⁷ Today the shelving, bar and hooks remain *in situ*.

2.4 Frank Gardner

¹³⁸ Bushrangers have entered into Australian folklore as the romantic subjects of stories and bush songs, but the reality was often less attractive. It was a risky, sometimes wretched life of poverty, scavenge, evasion and pursuit. Once a bushranger was declared an outlaw, it was legal for anyone to shoot them on sight. Facing the prospect of hanging when captured, most cornered bushrangers preferred to fight to the death rather than surrender. See: *Bushrangers of New South Wales. The stories and songs of the bushrangers shine a light on Australia's early attitudes to crime, family, race and justice*, No author, State Library of New South Wales at: <http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/stories/bushrangers-new-south-wales>. Retrieved 10 August 2013.

¹³⁹ Author advised of this by Alan Warren, son of Jessie Howard and Warren, July 2014.

¹⁴⁰ See Hans Christian Adam (ed), *Eadweard Muybridge, the Human and Animal Locomotion Photographs* (Koln: Taschen GmbH, 2010)

¹⁴¹ Unita Knox in conversation with the author, 2014

¹⁴² Here appears an interesting case of the artist following established pictorial convention. Not everything, it seems, just bubbled up from somewhere inside.

¹⁴³ See P.A. Seth, *A Dictionary of Australian Biography* Vol. 5, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1974); available at: www.adb.anu.edu.au

¹⁴⁴ See T.G. Rosenthal, *Sidney Nolan* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2002); and, Sir Sidney Nolan; Murray Bail; Andrew Sayers *Sidney Nolan's Ned Kelly: The Ned Kelly Paintings in the National Gallery of Australia*, (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2002).

¹⁴⁵ More than 40 bullets were removed from the body of Ben Hall who was unarmed when killed. See Nick Bleszynski, *You'll Never Take Me Alive: Life and Times of Ben Hall, Bushranger*, (Sydney: ABC Books, 2008).

¹⁴⁶ Words from 'The Ballad of Ben Hall' author unknown though written soon after his death. See Bill Wannan, *The Australians: Yarns, Ballads and Legends of the Australian Tradition* (Melbourne: Penguin, 1954).

2.5 Brother Ben

¹⁴⁷ Alan Warren in discussions with the author 2009-2014

¹⁴⁸ See full version at *Australian Bush Poetry, Verse and Music* – www.bushverse.com/smf/index .

¹⁴⁹ Alan Warren in conversation with the author, 2012. There is no suggestion that Warren's brother, Louis, was drunk at the time of his accident.

¹⁵⁰ *Australian Bush Poetry, Verse and Music*, *ibid*.

¹⁵¹ An unsolicited comment made to the author at the opening of the Bathurst Regional Art Gallery retrospective exhibition on 31 January 2014 by a Trunkey Creek resident who said he 'knew the story behind that picture' and proceeded to tell it. The veracity of the story cannot be confirmed and Alan Warren said 'that's a new one to me'.

2.6 Mr G Whitlam Aus PM and Mrs M Whitlam

¹⁵² Gough Whitlam, who died aged 98 in October 2014, though Prime Minister for less than 3 years, brought in major reforms to arts and public galleries funding as well as such changes as recognising China, getting Australia out of the debilitating Vietnam war, implementing free healthcare and free university education, abolishing the death penalty, recognising aboriginal land rights and numerous other initiatives.

¹⁵³ These 'boxes' might represent an object such as a gate or fence though, in several of the examples, they are hard to explain and may be simply blocks of colour placed strategically to properly balance the composition.

2.7 Piebald Pony

¹⁵⁴ The image we have of *Piebald Pony* (Fig. 69) is from a photograph of 1971 by Dixon's associate, Ron Dunsire which, along with an additional forty-odd 35mm slides, were taken by him prior to the first Warren exhibition at the Komon Gallery. Dixon also took approximately fifty slides of other works to be exhibited. The quality of the photographs by Dunsire is quite good whereas Dixon's are poor with several being overexposed. The slides were converted to digital images with Dunsire's approval. A number of the photographed paintings were sold at the Sydney exhibition, *Piebald Pony* being one of them. Its current whereabouts is unknown. The painting's dimensions are not known but the materials used in making it were noted by Dunsire and this information, along with free use of the slides, was provided to the author in 2010. The Dixon slides were found by his son, Peter, after Dixon's death in February 2015. Peter Dixon provided them to the author for his use (and digitising) in June 2015.

¹⁵⁵ See discussion on this point and the images of Eadweard Muybridge above: '*Painting 2* - Frank Gardner (Fig. 101)' above.

¹⁵⁶ While horses were usually owned by men in places like Trunkey Creek in the 1960s, Warren's son, Alan, advised the author in 2011 that his father had been asked to teach the daughters of a 'property-owning lady in the district' to ride in the 1950s.

¹⁵⁷ A discussion on the art materials used by self-taught artists is to be found in Chapter 3.4 - 'Why did they paint that way?'

¹⁵⁸ Bernard L. Herman, *Thornton Dial: Thoughts on Paper* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011) p. 61. Others who have made this point include Roger Cardinal in several works including in Gail Andrews Trechsel (Ed), *Pictured in My Mind: Contemporary American Self-Taught Art from the Collection of Kurt Gitter and Alice Rae Yeten* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1995) p. 72, Lucienne Peiry, *Art Brut, the Origin of Outsider Art* (Paris and London: Flammarion, 1997 & 2001) p. 14, Colin Rhodes, *Outsider Art, Spontaneous Alternatives* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000), Laurent Danchin, *Outsider and Folk Art, the Chicago Collections* (Paris: Halle Saint Pierre,) p 62 and Jane Kallir, *Outsider Art at a Crossroads* (Raw Vision Magazine, 2003) amongst a number of others.

¹⁵⁹ Information from Warren's son, Alan, in discussion with the author August, 2014.

2.8 Warren's sketches

¹⁶⁰ Warren's son, Alan, advised the author that his father 'made a lot of stuff' some of which was sold in his 'gallery' in Trunkey Creek. Apart from the sculpture (Fig. 73) and some pieces of furniture, eg. *High Chair* (Fig. 137), none appear to have survived. Discussion between Alan Warren and the author, January 2014

2.10 Warren's frames

¹⁶¹ Alan Warren advised the author that his father didn't like leaving pictures unframed as he felt they were unfinished. Alan Warren in conversation with the author, August 2010.

¹⁶² Warren seems to have been demonstrating his *bricoleur* approach to making use of anything available and not showing he was aware of 'glass painting' (*Hinterglasmalerei*)

¹⁶³ *Death of an Alien* (Fig. 82) is reproduced from a photographic slide taken by Garth Dixon in 1972 and the quality is poor. Sadly no explanation of the subject matter is available.

¹⁶⁴ This painting is copied from a '*Western Advocate*' newspaper photograph of 1910 taken when Warren and a friend took on a bet to walk from a dancehall in Crookwell to Goulburn. A copy of the retouched photograph (Fig. 187) is owned by Warren's daughter-in-law, Audrey, and is reproduced with her permission:



Fig. 187. Warren, aged 23, is pictured on the right.

¹⁶⁵ Ripolin was a Dutch brand of ready-mixed enamel house and marine paint. From the turn of the 20th century it was used by numerous artists, including Picasso and, later, Nolan, and was so well known that the

brand name became synonymous with enamel paints (like 'biro' for a ballpoint pen or 'hoover' for a vacuum cleaner) and was included in a French dictionary as such in 1907. For this reason the name 'ripolin' is used in describing paints actually manufactured by other companies; for example, in Nolan's studio there were more Dulux and Dynamel paints than actual Ripolin, however those names are never mentioned as the medium used. See: Paula Dredge, *Sidney Nolan's adventures in paint— an analytical study of the artist's use of commercial paints in the 1940s and '50s'* (Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales and Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation, The University of Melbourne, AICCM Bulletin, Volume 34, 2014). p.2.

As the head of Harvard's Centre for Modern and Contemporary Artists' Materials, Carol Mancusi-Ungaro has quipped, 'Postwar artists didn't go to the art-supply store; they went to the hardware store'. Quoted in Ben Lerner, *The Custodians, how the Whitney is transforming the art of museum restoration*' (New York :New Yorker Magazine, January 11, 2016,) p.53.

¹⁶⁶ Whether or not this occurred is not verified.

¹⁶⁷ Maude Wahlman, *African American Vernacular Art - Souls Grown Deep Series* (New York: Tinwood Books, Perseus Press Group, 2001) p. 142

¹⁶⁸ Warren's post-discovery paintings are often very good but seem to lack a spontaneity present in his early works. His 'style' changed to an extent with the use of normal materials but not because of any increase in technical skills. The acrylic paints, oil pastels and marker pens were easier to apply than house paints though lost something in the impact they imparted.

Chapter 3

3.1 The 'tribe of one' phenomenon

¹⁶⁹ George Melly, Ibid

¹⁷⁰ Oliva, Achille Bonito, *'Art Tribes'* (Rome and New York: Skira, 2002) p. 11 and 12

¹⁷¹ 'The New Yorker' magazine's senior art critic, Peter Schjeldahl, uses the similar phrases 'the outsider *is a culture of one*' (in *Mystery Train*, on Martín Ramírez, in 'The New Yorker', January 29, 2007) and ' "Outsider" artists like Henry Darger, are folk cultures of one ' reviewing a folk art exhibition, in *Folks*, 'The New Yorker' of January 14, 2002. Schjeldahl does not acknowledge any debt to Melly and might have arrived at the same concept as Melly's 'tribe of one' independently, though more than twenty years later.

¹⁷² *The Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

¹⁷³ Colin Rhodes, 'The Center and the Outsider' in Donald Mitchell et al, *Right Here, Right Now* (Oakland: Creative Growth Art Center, 2004) p. 26

¹⁷⁴ Of course a problem with this metaphor is raised by the question: where did the seed dropped by the bird first come from?

¹⁷⁵ Concept suggested by Professor Colin Rhodes in conversation with the author, August 2013.

¹⁷⁶ Several self-taught artists living in Broken Hill, including Sam Byrne, Pro Hart, Henri Basin and Irvine Homer, knew of each other and their works were very occasionally exhibited together but otherwise they remained independent unlike, for example, the Pitmen Painters of Northern England. Broken Hill became known as an art centre and other groupings such as the 'Brushmen of the Bush' developed there but did not gain the attention given the earlier 'group'.

¹⁷⁷ According to Lisa Stone in, *It's a Picture Already: the Anthony Petullo Collection*, in Margaret Andera and Lisa Stone *Accidental Genius - Art from the Anthony Petullo Collection* (New York and Munich: Milwaukee Art Museum, Del Monico Books-Prestel, 2012) p. 31-2, the term 'self-taught' was introduced by the New York art dealer Sidney Janis in his book *They Taught Themselves, American Primitive Painters in the*

Twentieth Century (New York: Dial, 1942): 'all artists are, to some extent, self-taught – all good artists rely on internal wellsprings of individuality and intuition'.

¹⁷⁸ Quoted from Eugène Delacroix, '*Mein Tagebuch*' (Berlin: Bibliothek ausgewählter Kunstschriftsteller No. 2, , 1903) p. 200 and appearing in Kandinsky, Wassily and Marc ,Franz (eds), *The Blaue Reiter Almanac* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1974) p. 81

¹⁷⁹ Wassily Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (English trans. Wittenborn, New York: Schultz, 1947, Originally published as *Über das Geistige in der Kunst*,. Munich: Piper-Verlag, 1912) p. 46

¹⁸⁰ G. W. Freidrich Hegel, *Phenomenolgy of Mind*' (New York: Harper & Row, 1967)

¹⁸¹ Ibid

¹⁸² Ibid, p. 147

¹⁸³ Ibid, p. 176

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, p.153

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 176

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 178

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, p. 178

¹⁸⁸ Franz Marc, in his essay *Two Pictures*, Ibid , p.67.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 68

¹⁹⁰ A number of works set out the commonality of background of self-taught or naïve artists including experts on the subject such as Roger Cardinal, '*Inner Worlds Outside*' (Dublin: Irish Museum of Modern Art, 2006) Colin Rhodes, *Outsider Art: Spontaneous Alternatives* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2000), Lucienne Peiry, *Art Brut. The Origins of Outsider Art*' (Paris: Flammarion, 2001) and Charles Russell (ed.) '*Self-taught Art: The Culture and Aesthetics of American Vernacular Art* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2001)

¹⁹¹ See: Gary Fine *Everyday Genius, Self-Taught Art and the Culture of Authenticity*' (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004) pages 6 and 278 respectively.

¹⁹² In the unusual cases where an artist did 'interfere', like that of Mary T. Smith (1904-1995), they often found themselves belittled and their later work regarded as inferior.

¹⁹³ A discussion on *art brut* is provided in Chapter 4.

¹⁹⁴ Lucienne Peiry, *Art Brut. The Origins of Outsider Art* (Paris: Flammarion, 2001) p.12

¹⁹⁵ Charles Russell, *Groundwaters- a Century of Art by Self-taught and Outsider Artists* (London and New York : Prestel, 2011) p.284

¹⁹⁶ Roger Cardinal, *Outsider Art* (New York: Praeger, 1972)

¹⁹⁷ Jenifer Penrose Borum in her article, *Term Warfare* (Raw Vision : International Journal of Intuitive and Visionary Art 8, Winter 1993/94, pages 24 – 31) firmly believes that self-taught art should be considered the umbrella of terms because people relate to the art and artist; more art and artists can be included under the term because the criteria is limitless; and because of all this, it can eventually be included in the realm of the history of art. I agree with her view and, for this and for the other reasons provided, have used the term 'self-taught' rather than one of the other descriptors for this kind of art.

¹⁹⁸ See: www.nypl.org/sites/default/files/archivalcollections/pdf/cahill.pdf. 22 boxes of Cahill's papers, 1907-1983, are held by The New York Public Library, Humanities and Social Services Library Manuscripts and Archives Division. Retrieved 18 December 2015.

¹⁹⁹ In his article *Folks* (The New Yorker, January 14, 2002) Peter Schjeldahl says: 'The terms "folk" and "outsider" – never mind the spineless euphemism "self-taught" - are hard to use without condescension, affirming a superior knowingness. The stereotypical folk-art fancier is both conservative and patronizing. Folk

art can be to art as pets are to the animal kingdom'. He obviously dislikes the name 'self-taught' but fails to offer a workable alternative.

²⁰⁰ In discussion with Laurent Danchin in 1998, see Laurent Danchin and Martine Lusardy, *Outsider and Folk Art: the Chicago Collections* (Paris: Halle Saint Pierre, 1998), p. 22. Cardinal's 1998 view is at variance with his more rigid support of Dubuffet's views which appear in his book *Outsider Art* published 26 years earlier.

²⁰¹ Detailed discussion on children's art is provided in: Jonathan Fineberg (Ed), *Discovering Child Art: Essays in Childhood, Primitivism and Modernism* (Princeton New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1998)

²⁰² The term 'artworld' was coined by the American philosopher and art critic Arthur Danto (1924-2013) in his 1964 essay 'The Artworld' in which he explained the word refers to 'the cultural context'. See 'The Journal of Philosophy', Vol. 61, Issue 19, Oct. 2015, 1964, p.571-584, at

<http://faculty.georgetown.edu/irvinem/visualarts/Danto-Artworld.pdf>. Retrieved 26 May 2016. He also reintroduced it in his introductory essay to the AFAM catalog *Self-taught Artists of the 20th Century* (1998)

²⁰³ Prior to the evolving of a recognisable 'artworld' in the 18th century its predecessors consisted of academies and guilds rather than anything that might be considered a grouping of artists and their sponsors. See: Carl Goldstein, *Towards a Definition of Academic Art* (The Art Bulletin Vol.57 No.1 (March 1975, College of Art Association) p 102-109.

²⁰⁴ See Chapter 2.

²⁰⁵ Christian Delacampagne, *Outsiders: fous, naïfs et voyants dans la peinture modern: 1880-1960* (Stuttgart-Fellbach : Axel Menges, 1989)

²⁰⁶ See 'An International Perspective , an interview with Roger Cardinal by Laurent Danchin' in Laurent Danchin and Martine Lusardy, *Outsider and Folk Art: the Chicago Collections* (Paris: Halle Saint Pierre, 1998) p. 21

²⁰⁷ Each of these pioneers is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

²⁰⁸ The exhibition was held at the Katonah Museum, New York State and is mentioned by Cardinal in his talk with Danchin, *ibid.* p. 21

²⁰⁹ Laurent Danchin, *Outsider and folk art from the Chicago collections: a singular vision of America* in Laurent Danchin and Martine Lusardy, *Outsider and Folk Art: the Chicago Collections* (Paris: Halle Saint Pierre, 1998) p. 8

²¹⁰ See : Maurice Tuchman and Carol S. Eliel (Eds), *Parallel Visions, Modern Artists and Outsider Art* (Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Princeton University Press, 1992)

²¹¹ For discussion and sources on the centre/periphery phenomenon in modernism two books that I find particularly interesting are: Kristine Styles and Peter Selz, *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art, a Sourcebook of Artists' Writings* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2012) and Peter Selz, *Beyond the Mainstream, Essays on Modern and Contemporary Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

²¹² Jean Dubuffet, '*Honneur aux valeurs sauvages*' (1951) '*Prospectus vet tous écrits suivants*' Vol. 1 (Paris: Gallimard, 1967) p. 213

²¹³ There appears no evidence that Picasso made this statement and the poet T.S. Eliot wrote in his '*The Sacred Wood, Essays on Poetry and Criticism*' (New York,: Alfred A. Knopf, 1921) p. 59 'immature poets imitate, mature poets steal' which is the likely source of similar statements about the other arts.

²¹⁴ Dubuffet uses the name 'irregulars' in describing *brut* artists. I believe it is a useful term which could apply as well to the type of works he later labelled *Neuve Invention*. See: Jean Dubuffet, *Art Brut Preferred to the Cultural Arts* introduction to a catalogue of an exhibition held at the Droin Gallery, Paris in October 1949. Published in Marc Glimcher (ed) *Jean Dubuffet, Towards an Alternative Reality*, *ibid.* p.101

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- ²¹⁵ 'The concepts of outsider art and the art of the self-taught are problematic for their emphasizing artists' biographies, not their art'. – Daniel Baumann, *Martín Who? Distribution, Music and the Art of Martín Ramírez*, in Brooke Davis Anderson, et al, *'Martín Ramírez'*, (New York: American Folk Art Museum, 2007) p.53-59.
- ²¹⁶ Peter Schjeldahl describes this view held 'by sophisticates' as a 'common critical deprecation of outsider artists as hermetic obsessives, *like birds fated to repeat their single songs*' though does not believe this view to be true of Adolf Wolfli in his article on the artist *The Far Side* in 'The New Yorker', May 5, 2003.
- ²¹⁷ Categorising literature is as fraught as categorising art. Who decides what is 'popular' and what is 'serious'? How should an extremely popular playwright like William Shakespeare (1564-1616) be labelled? He was writing and presenting his plays as entertainments for the masses in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, yet few experts today would categorise his work as other than 'serious' literature. Shakespeare's company put on other, established 'popular' plays as well as Shakespeare's work.
- ²¹⁸ Jean Dubuffet, *La Compagnie de l'Art Brut* in *Prospectus et tous écrits suivants*, and *Place a L'incivisme* Vol. 1 (Paris : Gallimard, 1967) p.167-8 and 455.
- ²¹⁹ Roger Cardinal, *Outsider Art* (New York: Praeger, 1972) p.35
- ²²⁰ Ibid, pages 35 and 36.
- ²²¹ Lucienne Peiry, Ibid, p. 91 quoting from Jean Dubuffet in *Prospectus et vous écrits suivants* Vol 1 (Paris: Gallimard, 1967) p.217
- ²²² Pierre Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art* trans. Susan Emanuel (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996) p.245-6, quoted by Lucienne Peiry, *Art Brut, the Origins of Outsider Art*' (Paris: Flammarion, 1997 and 2006) p.11. Peiry states at p. 265 '(Bourdieu) is one of a number of intellectuals who takes issue with Dubuffet'.
- ²²³ Jean Dubuffet *L'art brut préféré aux arts culturels* (Paris: Galerie René Drouin, 1949) introduction p. iv
- ²²⁴ Michel Thevoz, *Oswald Tschirtner* in Gerard A Schreiner (ed), *European Outsiders, an Exhibition of Art Brut Dedicated to Jean Dubuffet* (New York: Rosa Esman Gallery, 1986) p. 181
- ²²⁵ Ibid, Roger Cardinal, 'Paul Goesch', p. 146
- ²²⁶ Ibid, Michel Thevoz, 'Louis Soutter', p. 65-67.
- ²²⁷ Those like Soutter who walk out of a 'normal' life play to the romantic notion that madness is a kind of radical social forgetting of, or liberation from, education and convention. Research, including by the English neurologist, Oliver Sacks, has demonstrated that numerous causes lead to people deserting a successful life not necessarily madness, See Oliver Sacks, *An Anthropologist on Mars* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1995).
- ²²⁸ See Colin Rhodes, *Outsider Art, Spontaneous Alternatives* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2000,) p. 8
- ²²⁹ It is obvious that not all self-taught artists are 'good' but then neither are all mainstream cultural artists. Of any so-called 'normal' population between 3% and 5% possess some degree of artistic talent. This is the same proportion found amongst people in schools, gaols, asylums and any other institutions or groupings. Of the 3% to 5% displaying some talent in art far fewer will ever develop to be recognised as artists, important or otherwise, in any culture (See: Jean-Louis Ferrier, *Outsider Art*(Paris: Terrail, 1998) p.18). Equally in tribal art where traditional forms and techniques are handed down from parent to child, thus making it a conservative art, an equally small percentage of artists is noticeably talented (See: Roger Cardinal and Victor Musgrave, *Outsiders, an Art Without Precedent or Tradition* (London: Hayward Gallery, 1979) p.12)
- ²³⁰ Eugene M. Metcalf, *From Domination to Desire: Insiders and Outside Art* in Michael D. Hall; Eugene M. Metcalf, *The Artist Outsider, Creativity and the Boundaries of Culture* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994) p. 215 & 221
- ²³¹ See: Jennifer Penrose Borum, *Term Warfare* (Raw Vision: International Journal of Intuitive and Visionary Art No. 8, Winter 1993/94) p 24-31.

²³² Ibid, p.24 and 30

²³³ See: Grace E. Duffy, *Outsider, Folk and Self-Taught Art: the Interchangeable Terminologies Used in Museums* (Thesis: Masters in Museum Studies, University of the Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 2009)

²³⁴ Ibid. p. 61

²³⁵ Lyle Rexer, *How to Look at Outsider Art* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2005) p. 173

²³⁶ Jane Kallir, *Rethinking Grandma Moses* in Jane Kallir (edit), *Grandma Moses in the 21st Century*, (Alexandria, Virginia: Art Services International, 2001) 14

²³⁷ Kallir, *ibid.* pp. 14-16

²³⁸ Kallir, *ibid.*, p.17

²³⁹ *Outsiders: an Art Without Precedent or Tradition*, *Ibid.*, p. 7

²⁴⁰ *Ibid*

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 36

²⁴² See: Gary Fine, *Everyday Genius – Self-Taught Art and the Culture of Authenticity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004) p.7

²⁴³ Appollinaire was a staunch supporter of Rousseau in the last years of the artist's life and wrote a poem in his praise which was engraved on Rousseau's grave in 1912. See <http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/exhibition/henri-rousseau-jungles-paris/henri-rousseau-jungles-paris-artistic-2>

²⁴⁴ Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc, *Blaue Reiter Almanac* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1974) p. 174.

Kandinsky believed in artists possessing an 'inner sound' which was an inner creative spirit of the kind he saw in Rousseau.

²⁴⁵ See: Gabriella Belli and Guy Cogeval, *Henri Rousseau, Archaic Naivety* (Milan: Ore Cultura Sri Acc, 2015) published in parallel to an exhibition of the same title at the Palazzo Ducale, Venice September-November 2015.

²⁴⁶ Rhodes, *ibid.*, p.29

²⁴⁷ See: Martha Bayles, *Henri Rosseau Revisited* (appeared first in 'Weekly Standard' , Dec 2006) reproduced at: http://www.artsjournal.com/popcorn/2006/12/henri_rousseau_revisited.html. Retrieved November 2015

²⁴⁸ The phrase 'naïve-yet-knowing' is attributed to Gustave Courbet (1819-1877) and I have used it in an attempt to describe the almost dichotomous position seen in some self-taught artists.

²⁴⁹ See: Galerie St. Etienne, *John Kane (1860-1934)* at <http://www.gseart.com/Artists-Gallery/Kane-John/Kane-John-Biography.php>. Retrieved 22 June 2016. Kane followed the great 18th and 19th century tradition of the itinerant artist limner. He looks eccentric in his own time because he is working in a post-photography context.

²⁵⁰ Lynda Roscoe Hartigan, *The Hemphill Folk Art Collection in the National Museum of American Art* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990)

3.2 Self-taught 'primitive' painters and Primitivism

²⁵¹ The use of 'primitive' in relation to self-taught art still remains in use to this day. As an example a 2015 book by Edwin Mullens on the English artist Alfred Wallis is titled *Alfred Wallis: Cornish Primitive Painter* (London: Unicorn Press, 2015). However, 'primitive' has, for the most part, been replaced by other names like Outsider, or Self-taught.

²⁵² The concept of *otherness* was first used by the German philosopher Georg Hegel (1770-1831) who argued that it is a fundamental part of being self-aware. As a result psychoanalysts like Sigmund Freud embraced it and used it to formulate theories about self-consciousness. Today, otherness is used by theorists to signify ways in which members of dominant groups derive a sense of self through defining

smaller groups as different or other to them. See: William Desmond, *Art, Origins, Otherness: Between Philosophy and Art* (New York: State University of New York, 2003).

The scholar, Thomas McEvelley, in his *Art and Otherness: Crisis in Cultural Identity* (New York: Documentext, McPherson and Company, 1995), p.147 and 150, explains: 'The self is created by its apprehension of an other. The other is created by its distinction from a self. They create each other and sustain each other's existence. Each makes the other what it is....the self can never reach the other and can never do without it'.

²⁵³ Thomas McEvelley, *Ibid.* p. 131-132'

²⁵⁴ Sally Price, *Primitive Art in Civilised Places* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002) p. 6

²⁵⁵ McEvelley, *Ibid.*, p.164

²⁵⁶ Ian Chilvers (ed), *The Oxford Dictionary of Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 3rd Edition, 2004) p. 565. For many the term 'primitive art' meant early Italian and other European art. As Arthur Clutton-Brock stated in a 1911 article: 'the word primitive....makes us think at once of early Italians' ('The "primitive" tendency in modern art', *The Burlington Magazine*, 19 (100) p. 226-227)

²⁵⁷ Gombrich, E H, *A Preference for the Primitive: Episodes in the History of Western Taste and Art* (London, Phaidon Press, 2002), p. 23

²⁵⁸ See: Rhodes, Colin, 'Primitivism: The Primordium Lost and Found and Reinvented' in Zijlmans, K ; van Damme, W, *World Art Studies V: Exploring Concepts and Approaches* (Amsterdam, Vliz, 2008) p.388

²⁵⁹ Lovejoy, Athur O; Boas, George, *Primitivism and related ideas in Antiquity*' (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University, 1997 – reprint of 1935 book)

²⁶⁰ Gombrich, *Ibid.* p. 43

²⁶¹ Gombrich, *Ibid.*, p. 275

²⁶² Rhodes, *Ibid.* p. 386

²⁶³ The name 'primitive' to describe self-taught art, I think, reflected a view that the 'style' of self-taught art was considered 'undeveloped' and 'simplistic'. Though it didn't necessarily look like the art of primitive, unsophisticated tribes it was different enough to established views of what art 'should' look like to necessitate a designation echoing its untutored appearance.

²⁶⁴ Rhodes, *Ibid.*, p. 387

²⁶⁵ Robert Goldwater, *Primitivism in Modern Art* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1938 and 1986) Ch. 3

²⁶⁶ McEvelley, *Ibid.* p. 33

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.* p. 85-86

²⁶⁸ Colin Rhodes, *Primitivism and Modern Art* (Thames and Hudson, London, 1994) pp. 8, 9 and 11

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 111

²⁷⁰ Based on an article *Primitivism* (no author provided) published at:

www.guggenheim.org/artwork/movement/primitivism. Retrieved 22 Dec. 2016

²⁷¹ Donald E. Gordon, *German Expressionism* in William Rubin (ed), '*Primitivism*' in *20th Century Art*' Vol II (New York: Museum of Modern Art, distributed by New York Graphic Society, Vols. I & II, 1984)

²⁷² Hilton Kramer, 'The "Primitivism" Conundrum', ('New Criterion' December 1984) at:

www.newcriterion.com/articles.cfm/The--Primitivism--conundrum-6806. Retrieved Dec. 2016

²⁷³ Thomas McEvelley, *Ibid.* p. 36

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.* p.52

²⁷⁵ From the French word *Japonisme* first used by Jules Claretie in his book *L'Art français* in 1872

²⁷⁶ See: Leo Jansen, Hans Luitjen and Nienke Bakker (eds) *Vincent van Gogh, the Letters: the Complete Illustrated and Annotated Edition* (New York and London: Van Gogh Museum Amsterdam, 2009) electronic edition at <http://vangoghletters.org/vg/> Letter from Vincent van Gogh to his brother Theo van Gogh, Arles September 1888.

²⁷⁷ Interestingly, these sentiments were not those of a young van Gogh, when he was developing his later immediately recognisable style, but were written when he was 34, just two years before his death in 1890. His copies of Japanese woodblocks were made at about the same time, an example being his copy in oil (1887) of an Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1853) woodblock print: Fig. 188. (i), (ii) and (iii).



Fig. 188. (i) Utagawa Hiroshige *Plum Tree Teahouse at Kameido*, 1857
 (ii) Vincent van Gogh, *Flowering Plum Tree (after Hiroshige)*, 1887
 (iii) Vincent van Gogh, Tracing of Fig. (i) used by him to paint his copy (ii), *Flowering Plum Tree*, of 1887
 All works copyright the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam

²⁷⁸ Rhodes, Colin, *Primitivism: The Primordium Lost and Found and Reinvented*, Ibid. p. 386.

²⁷⁹ Shelly Errington, *The Death of Authentic Primitive Art, and Other Tales of Progress* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 1998). Here she is writing about primitive art and not 'primitivism'.

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

3.3 Why did they paint that way? 'Style' and self-taught art

²⁸¹ See Anne Grey, *Art and the Environment: New Visions from Old* in Deryck Schreuder & Stuart Ward, *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Australia's Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) pp. 129-130.

Also, Ian Burn, et al *The Necessity of Australian Art* (Sydney: Power Publications, 1988), p. 26

²⁸² Colin Rhodes *Trunkey Creek Insider: Outsider Art* in *Selby Warren: Trunkey's Tribe of One* (Exhibition catalogue, Bathurst : Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, 2014) p. 13.

²⁸³ *Australia's Empire*, ibid. p.129.

²⁸⁴ John Ruskin, *The Elements of Drawing* (London: Smith, Elder and Co, 1857) available as an e-book at: www.gutenberg.org/files/30325/30325-h/30325-h.htm

²⁸⁵ Christopher Turner, *Through the Eyes of a Child – Art Toys* (Tate Etc. issue 19: Summer 2010, London May 2010), p.1, at: www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/articles/through-eyes-child/

²⁸⁶ Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life*, in *Baudelaire: Selected Writings on Art and Artists*, trans. P. E. Charvet (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, , 1972) p. 398 – quoted in Robert Storr, *Rock of Ages Cleft for Me* on the work of William Edmondson in Kaspar König & Falk Wolf (eds) *The Shadow of the Avant-Garde*, ibid, p. 261.

²⁸⁷ Christopher Turner, *ibid*, p.2

²⁸⁸ *Ibid*, p. 3

²⁸⁹ Leonard Adam, *Primitive Art* (Hammondsworth: Pelican, 1949) p. 79

²⁹⁰ Professor Kouvou of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens specialises in art history and children's art.

²⁹¹ Kandinsky writes 'the child is indifferent to practical meanings since he looks at everything with fresh eyes...' in *Blaue Reiter Almanac*, *ibid*. p.174

²⁹² Ourania Kouvou, *About Child Art: an examination of the historical identity of an influential art educational practice* (Paper presented at the European Conference on Educational Research, University College of Dublin, 7-10 September 2005) at <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/143833.htm> retrieved 20 October 2016.

²⁹³ Kouvou, *ibid*, makes no mention self-taught art in her paper though her reasons for interest in child art by modernist artists are much the same as those given for modernists' interest in the work of self-taught artists at about the same time which raises the question of whether one came first or were they of interest to the artworld simultaneously?

²⁹⁴ See: Rhoda Kellogg, *Analysing Children's Art* (Palo Alto, Calif.: Mayfield Publishing Co. 1970) p.136

²⁹⁵ See T.J. Clarke & Anne M. Wagner, *Lowry and the Painting of Modern Life* (London: Tate Publishing, 2013).

²⁹⁶ An interesting discussion around this topic is provided in Joshua Guetzkow, *How the Arts Impact Communities*, Working Paper Series 20, Taking the Measure of Culture Conference, June 7-8, 2002, Princeton University Center for Arts and Cultural Studies, Princeton University. See: <https://www.princeton.edu/~artspol/workpap/WP20%20-%20Guetzkow.pdf>. Retrieved 25 May 2016.

²⁹⁷ Jonathan Fineberg, *The Innocent Eye, Children's art and the Modern Artist* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997). Fineberg's book presents material from the collections of children's art made by artists like Klee, Kandinsky, Picasso and Miro.

²⁹⁸ Gombrich, *Ibid*, p. 297

²⁹⁹ Charles Russell, *ibid*. 61

³⁰⁰ Ludwig Meidner complained in an article in *Kunst und Künstler* (xii, Cologne, 1914) 299 ff:

'...all kinds of primitive races have impressed some of the young German painters and nothing seems more important to them than Bushmen painting and Aztec sculpture....But let's be honest....we are not negroes.....or of the early Middle Ages!....Are those crude and shabby figures we see in all the exhibits really an expression of the complicated spirit of modern times?'. Reproduced in Jill Lloyd, *German Expressionism: Primitivism and Modernity* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991) p.85

³⁰¹ Jill Lloyd, *ibid*, p.81

³⁰² See: Colin Rhodes *Primitivism and Modern Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994) p. 32 and *Trunkey Creek Insider: Outsider Art in Selby Warren, Trunkey's Tribe of One* exhibition catalogue (Bathurst: Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, 2014) p. 13

³⁰³ *Ibid*, p.5

³⁰⁴ Robert Storr, *ibid*, p.261.

³⁰⁵ Robert Storr, *ibid*, p. 261.

³⁰⁶ Colin Rhodes, *Difficult Kirchner – alternative traditions, visual tensions, autodidactism* in Christian Weikop (ed.), *New Perspectives on Brucke Expressionism – Bridging History* (Farnham UK & Burlington USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2011) pp. 125-142

³⁰⁷ Robert Hughes, *The Art of Australia*, Ibid. p.240. In making this statement, Hughes was, in fact, speaking of the abilities of the Australian artist, John Dickerson (1924-2015), a self-taught but establishment artist.

³⁰⁸ Colin Rhodes, *ibid*, p. 125

³⁰⁹ Javier Arnaldo, *Brucke Before Brucke* in J. Arnaldo & M. M. Moeller (eds.), *El Nacimiento del Expressionismo Aleman* (Madrid: Fundacion Coleccion Thyssen-Bornemisza, 2005) p. 373

³¹⁰ Colin Rhodes, *ibid*, p.128

³¹¹ The American artist Alison Weld states 'it is a truism that all artists are self-taught'. This cannot be taken seriously in a context of art history or theory. Even students who are dismissive of the training they receive do, in fact, absorb *something* from their teachers which is by definition not 'self-taught'. See Alison Weld, *The Aesthetic Language of Self-Taught Art* in Charles Russell (ed), *Self-Taught Art, the Culture and Aesthetics of American Vernacular Art* (Jackson,: University Press of Mississippi, 2001) p. 166

³¹² Colin Rhodes, *ibid*, p.126

³¹³ Henri Rousseau is an exception gaining early popularity amongst the avant-garde in 1890s Paris.

³¹⁴ Colin Rhodes, *ibid*, p.133. This is not to suggest that before Expressionism self-taught art did not exist, only that it was after Expressionism that the artworld took notice of it.

³¹⁵ Colin Rhodes, *ibid*, p.133

³¹⁶ That is a manual worker undertaking a variety of basic level jobs in a rural setting.

³¹⁷ Colin Rhodes, *ibid*, p. 137

³¹⁸ Colin Rhodes, *ibid*, p. 126. Kirchner's architectural studies would have provided him technical drafting skills but not artistic ones. He attended some informal art classes but depended on his drafting training.

³¹⁹ Roger Cardinal and Victor Musgrave, *Outsiders....*, *ibid*, p.21

³²⁰ Advised of this by Garth Dixon in conversation October 2014.

3.4 The materials self-taught artists use(d)

³²¹ Colin Rhodes, *Candide. Or how the Artworld Dines Out*, *ibid*, p.10

³²² *Ibid*.

³²³ *Ibid*, p.10-11.

³²⁴ Jean Dubuffet, *Notes for the Well Read* in Marc Glimcher *Jean Dubuffet, Towards an Alternative Reality*, *ibid*, p.86

³²⁵ Jean Dubuffet, *Anticultural Positions* -speech to the Arts Club of Chicago, 1952 reproduced in Marc Glimcher *Jean Dubuffet: Towards an Alternative Reality*, *Ibid*, p.128

³²⁶ Information provided by Dixon in conversations with the author during 2014.

3.5 The importance of memory and folklore to self-taught artists

³²⁷ David Hockney and Martin Gayford, *A History of Pictures from the Cave to the Computer Screen*, (London: Thames and Hudson 2016), p. 78

³²⁸ Roger Cardinal in *Outsiders: an art without precedent or tradition* (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1979) p.126

³²⁹ *Ibid*, p.106

³³⁰ Rhodes, *Ibid*, p.14. To counter criticisms of his stance concerning *art brut* Dubuffet invented a new category, *Neuve Invention* (Fresh Invention) where works that straddled 'the boundary between Art Brut and mainstream art might be placed,' *Ibid*, p.14

³³¹ Lauri Harvilahti, *Folklore and Oral Tradition* ('Oral Tradition' journal, Issue 18/2, Helsinki, 2003) pp 200-202. Professional artists also often represent traditional themes in their work but usually not with themselves

being a part of an oral tradition. Their interpretation of a story is just that and not a furthering of folklore which continues to pass from generation to generation.

³³² A phrase I like is 'distraction deprivation', one that describes how people today are constantly distracted by communications devices: the converse of the pre-computer age when the population was less 'time poor' and so deprived of the distractions offered by modern communications technology. I heard the phrase in a talk on youth and mobile communications given by Dr. S. Mouseheart on ABC Radio National in August 2016.

³³³ This may, of course change with the appearance in political circles in the USA and Australia in late 2016 and 2017 of the concepts of 'post-truth' and 'alternative facts'.

³³⁴ In this sense the word 'history' relates to the Italian *istoria*, meaning narrative or story, and not necessarily to the accurate or documentary description of actual events rather than memories. See: National Gallery London: (no author provided, n.d.): www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/glossary/history-painting. Retrieved 28 October 2015.

³³⁵ Robert Hughes, *The Art of Australia*, Ibid. p.250

³³⁶ Undoubtedly self-taught artists did sometimes paint actual, historic events, but as mentioned above, such works are better called 'memory paintings'.

³³⁷ Colin Rhodes, *Candide. Or How the Artworld Dines Out*, *ibid.*, p. 7

Chapter 4

4.1 Approaches to self-taught art in Europe, America and Australia

³³⁸ Colin Rhodes, *Primitivism and Modern Art*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994) p. 7

³³⁹ The authors echo the views of the conservative philosopher, Roger Scruton who states in his book *Modern Culture* (London: Bloomsbury Academic Press, 2006) p. 85: 'The first effect of Modernism was to make high culture difficult: to surround beauty with a wall of erudition'. Scruton strongly supports what he calls 'high culture' over anything approaching the *avante-garde*

³⁴⁰ Margaret Preston's essay, *The Lost Art of Federation: Australia's Quest for Modernism* (Art Journal No. 28, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1988) is an insightful examination of the emergence of Modernism in Australia.

³⁴¹ Jon Thompson in Catherine Marshall (ed.) *Art Unsolved: the Musgrove Kinley Outsider Art Collection* (Dublin: Irish Museum of Modern Art, 1998) p. 8-13

³⁴² Wolf and Konig, *ibid*, p.17

³⁴³ *Ibid*, p.16

4.2 Europe

³⁴⁴ Colin Rhodes, *Outsider art: Spontaneous Alternatives* (London : Thames and Hudson, 2000) p. 48

³⁴⁵ See John M. MacGregor, *The Discovery of the Art of the Insane* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989) p. 45

³⁴⁶ MacGregor, *ibid*, p. 49-66

³⁴⁷ Rhodes, *ibid*, p. 48

³⁴⁸ Rhodes, *ibid*, p. 53

³⁴⁹ Walter Morgenthaler, *Madness and Art: the Life and Works of Adolf Wolfli* trans. by Aaron Esman (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992)

³⁵⁰ Recent (2015) auction prices for some of Wolfli's works have been within the range of 50,000 to 100,000 Swiss Francs. See www.artsy.net/artist/adolf-wolfli. Retrieved 23 July 2015

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- ³⁵¹ See: *Brought to Life: Exploring the History of Medicine: Emil Kraepelin 1856-1926* (London: Science Museum, No date): <http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/broughttolife/people/emilkraepelin>. Kraepelin first described the two forms of mental disorder now called *bipolar disorder* and *schizophrenia*.
- ³⁵² Hans Prinzhorn, *Artistry of the Mentally Ill, a Contribution to the Psychology and Psychopathology of Configuration* (English translation of 1922 edition, New York: Springer-Verlag, 1972)
- ³⁵³ John Beardsley, *Imagining the Outsider* in Annie Carlano (ed.), *Vernacular Visionaries: International Outsider Art* (The Museum of International Folk Art & Yale University Press, 2003) 12.
- ³⁵⁴ Mary Ann Caws, *Surrealism, Themes and Movements* (London: Phaidon, 2004) intro.
- ³⁵⁵ See: *Peripheral Visions, the Limits of Modernism* in Catherine Marshall (ed) *Art Unsolved: The Musgrave Kinley Outsider Art collection* (London, Dublin: Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Lund Humphries Publishers, 1998) p.9. At the time he received the book Dubuffet had moved away from painting and was working in his family's wine company. He briefly took up painting again in the 1930s but returned to the wine business until 1942 when he became a full-time artist at the age of forty-one.
- ³⁵⁶ Quoted in Daniel Baumann, *The Reception of Adolf Wolfli's Work 1921-1966* in Elka Spoerri (ed.) *Adolf Wolfli: Draughtsman, Writer, Poet, Composer* (Ithica,: Cornell Univ Press, 1997) 213.
- ³⁵⁷ By the mid-1940s Dubuffet considered himself first and foremost an artist and his interest in and writings on *art brut* was to him secondary to his own art. It is possible that those of us interested in *art brut* and outsider art may place more emphasis on Dubuffet's pronouncements on *art brut* than he did.
- ³⁵⁸ Lynne Cooke, *Orthodoxies Undermined* in Ann Percy and Carta Zimmerman (eds), *Great and Mighty Things, Outsider Art from the Jill and Sheldon Bonovitz Collection* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2013) p. 204.
- ³⁵⁹ Jean Dubuffet, *Make Way for Incivism* (Art and Text 27, December 1987-February 1988) p. 36
- ³⁶⁰ Jean Dubuffet, *Note pour les fins- lettres (1945), Prospectus et tous ecrits suivant* Vol. 1, (Paris: Gallimard, 1967) p. 88.
- ³⁶¹ Jean Dubuffet, *Art Brut in Preference to the Cultural Arts*, trans. by Paul Foss and Allen S. Weiss (Art and Text 27, December 1987 to February, 1988) p. 33 . See also: Peter Schjeldahl, *Outside In, Jean Dubuffet's campaign for art brut* (The New Yorker Magazine, December 14, 2015, New York) p. 85
- ³⁶² See David Maclagan, *Outsider Art: from the Margins to the Marketplace* (London: Reaktion Books, 2009) p.70
- ³⁶³ Lynne Cooke, *ibid*, p.205
- ³⁶⁴ Andre Breton letter of 20 September 1951 quoted in Jean Dubuffet, *Prospectus et tous ecrits suivants* Vol 1, (Paris: Gallimard, 1967).
- ³⁶⁵ Jean Dubuffet, *Art Brut in Preference to the Cultural Arts* *ibid*. p.36
- ³⁶⁶ The originally 17th century hospital remains today the major psychiatric hospital in Paris. It was an early initiator (1930s on) of using painting and other creative activities in addressing aspects of mental illness. See: Jane Kallir *Self-Taught Art: Brut or Naïve?* (New York: Galerie St. Etienne, 2000) and: http://www.petulloartcollection.org/history/article.cfm?n_id=14. Retrieved 17 August 2016
- ³⁶⁷ One quite prominent Surrealist poet and actor who had been admitted to the hospital was Antonin Artaud (1896-1948).
- ³⁶⁸ Annie Carlano, *Vernacular Visionaries: International Outsider Art* (New Haven : Yale University Press, in association with the Museum of International Folk Art, New Mexico, 2003) p. 13
- ³⁶⁹ Schjeldahl, *ibid*, p.85
- ³⁷⁰ Michel Thevoz, *Art Brut* (Geneva & Paris: Skira, 1975 & 1995)

4.3 America

³⁷¹ Laura Beresford, *Folk Art from the American Museum in Britain* (London,: Scala Publishers Ltd, 2011) p.9

³⁷² Laura Beresford (ibid, p.15) contends that divisions of rank have pervaded many areas including museum acquisition policies, class being a crucial difference in explaining why the folk art tradition has been sidelined in Britain. Institutions in the UK, and especially national museums in England, have few examples of British folk art in their collections. Unlike in America, British folk art pieces continue to be assessed primarily as historical artifacts documenting life lived in the past, with the emphasis still very much on the 'folk' part of the term. The same might be said of Australian museums though class might not be as important a reason as simply limited interest.

³⁷³ A complaint by many Americans in the field is that this art is relegated to university folklore departments rather than being treated as art. It is extremely rare even today to find a graduate student allowed to pursue a PhD in folk/outsider/self-taught art in art history departments in the USA.

³⁷⁴ By comparison, in Australia six books have been published specifically on vernacular art or artists. Three of these are general works on 'naïve' or 'primitive' art (B. McCullough's *Australian Naïve Painters of 1977*, G. Lehmann's *Australian Primitive Painting*, 1977 and S. Warner, 'Australian Naïve Art', 1994); two are on specific artists (R. Moore, 'Sam Byrne', 1985 and G. Fry, 'Pro Hart, Life and Legacy' 2014); one is an exhibition catalogue (G.R. Cooke et al, *James Fardoulis, a Queensland Naïve Artist*, 2010). Full details of these works are provided in the Bibliography. A small number of exhibition catalogues, some providing limited information, others short essays, have been published and a few mentions of naïve art and/or artists appear in reference works and magazines. Otherwise the subject is, to all extents and purposes, ignored.

³⁷⁵ Jane Kallir, *Self-Taught Art: Brut or Naïve?* (New York: Galerie St. Etienne, 2000) and other essays on the Galerie St. Etienne website: www.gseart.com/. Jane Kallir, a director of the gallery is the granddaughter of its founder, Otto Kallir (1894-1978), an Austrian art dealer who left Europe for New York in 1939 and was a major player in introducing European Expressionism to America.

³⁷⁶ Judith A. Barter & Monica Obniski, *For Kith and Kin – the Folk Art Collection at the Art Institute of Chicago* (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago 2012) p.18-19

³⁷⁷ Later to become the Whitney Museum of Art

³⁷⁸ Laura Beresford, Ibid, p.12

³⁷⁹ The Icelandic Cahill, whose birth name was Sveinn Kristjan Bjarnarsson, was a highly respected collector and curator with particular expertise in folk art. He and Edith Halpert (with whom he had a long term affair) worked together on exhibitions of folk art until their friendship waned. See Barter & Obniski, ibid, p.18 An excellent resource on Cahill's work is provided at the Smithsonian Archives of American Art site which holds his papers. See: <http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/holger-cahill-papers-6730>

³⁸⁰ Barter & Obniski, ibid, p. 19. The artworks collected by Laurent and others included portraits done to order by itinerant artists (limners), wind vanes, carousel horses and cigar store Indians these latter two being produced *en masse* in workshops and small factories. Interest in the less formal works of vernacular artists produced by African American artists from the southern states and other marginalised artists had not yet gained traction with the establishment.

³⁸¹ Elizabeth Stilling, *A Kind of Archaeology, Collecting American Folk Art 1876-1976* (Amherst & Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011) p. 9-10

³⁸² Edith G. Halpert, *Folk Art in America now has a Gallery of its Own* ('Art Digest' 6/1, 1 October 1931) 3.

³⁸³ See Laura Beresford, ibid, p.10 and John Beardsley, *Imagining the Outsider* in Annie Carlano (ed) *Vernacular Visionaries, International Outsider Art* (New Haven and London: The Museum of International Folk

Art and Yale University Press, 2003) p. 13. 'Folk art' was a label probably first used in print by the German art critic Alois Riegl in his work *Volkskunst Hausfleiss und Hausindustrie* (Berlin, 1894) and appeared in America in *Early American Folk Potters* published in Hartford, Connecticut in 1918. It is worth remembering the 1932 MOMA exhibition was held sixteen years before Jean Dubuffet first used the name 'art brut' in print in *Fasicules de l'art brut* (1947) and then in the catalogue of an exhibition in 1949 at Galerie Ren, Drouin, *L'art brut prefere aux arts culturels* (outsider art in preference to cultural arts) and forty years before Roger Cardinal published his book on *art brut* titled *Outsider Art*. An ongoing discussion on what to call self-taught naïve art – 'outsider art', 'naïve art', 'primitive art', 'vernacular art' and so on - continues to this day amongst academics and others in the United States as elsewhere in the world.

³⁸⁴ Laura Beresford, *ibid*, p.10

³⁸⁵ COBRA was a Scandinavian group of avante-garde artists and operated from 1948-1951. The name was coined by Christean Dotremont (1922-1979) and represented the initials of cities the involved artists were located (Copenhagen, Brussels).

³⁸⁶ See, for example, Jean Dubuffet, *The Common Man* (Montreal: Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1969)

³⁸⁷ Bater & Obniski, *ibid*, p.20

³⁸⁸ See: Alice Goldfarb Marquis, *Alfred H. Barr, Missionary of the Modern* (New York: Contemporary Books, 1989). MOMA holds Barr's papers at: www.moma.org/learn/resources/archives/EAD/Barrf

³⁸⁹ Barter & Obinski, *ibid*, p.20

³⁹⁰ See 'Introduction' by Holger Cahill in Irwin Christensen, *The Index of American Desig* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1950 and 1959). This and similar projects under the New Deal maintained the skills of the unemployed, in this case artists, and was considered worthwhile to meet 'the public need for pictorial information on American design and craftsmanship' (Cahill, *ibid*, p.5).

³⁹¹ Quoted from Barr's press release (no. 38423-18) concerning the 1938 MoMA exhibition issued on 27 April 1938 and provided at:

www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press_archives/446/releases/MOMA_1938_0026_1938-04-22_38422-18.pdf?2010. Retrieved 18 August 2016.

³⁹² See: Alice Goldfarb Marquis, *ibid*.

³⁹³ Sidney Janis, *They Taught Themselves* (New York: Dial Press, 1942). Janis' interest in self-taught art was matched by his involvement with modern art. He acted as dealer for luminaries including Jackson Pollock and Andy Warhol.

³⁹⁴ Brooke Davis Anderson & Stacy C. Hollander, *American Anthem: Masterworks from the American Folk Art Museum* (New York: American Folk Art Museum, 2002) p.15.

³⁹⁵ Hirschfield painted only 77 paintings in his 9 years career as an artist which he commenced after retiring from a successful garments business.

³⁹⁶ John Beardsley, *ibid*, p. 14

³⁹⁷ John Beardsley, *ibid*, p. 14

4.4 Australia

³⁹⁸ Darcy lost only four fights in his brief career never being knocked out. He died of pneumonia in the US after travelling there to fight but had his bouts cancelled because his reason for leaving Australia was, supposedly, to avoid conscription in Australia,. See W. G. McMinn, *Darcy, James Leslie (Les) (1895-1917); Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Canberra: National centre of Biography, Australian National University, 1981, revised 2014)

³⁹⁹ See Stephen Alomes, *A Nation at Last, the Changing Face of Australian Nationalism* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1988) pp. 214, 216 & 218

⁴⁰⁰ Warren Moore *The Story of Australian Art* Vol. 2 (Sydney, 1934) p. 44

⁴⁰¹ The ideal of a pastoral way of life in Australia was not so much a reaction against the 'progressive' (ie. industrial) forces within society, as it was a reflection of Australia's historical relationship with Britain and the manner in which Australia, as part of the Empire, was locked into the development of the form of capitalism at that empire's centre. In contrast to Europe, Australia was heavily urbanised by the late 19th century which had developed prior to industrialisation and in advance of rural settlement whereas urbanisation in England and Europe occurred *with* industrialisation. The early port cities of Australia have always maintained their importance as the commercial and administrative centres of Australia. Again, unlike England, Europe and the US, the greatest industrialisation in Australia took place *after* World War II. See A. Grey, *ibid*

⁴⁰² Burn, *ibid*, page 24

⁴⁰³ Heather Radi: 1920-1929 in F.K. Crowley ed. *A New History of Australia* (Melbourne, 1974), p.395. The ANZAC myth claims that the majority of young men enlisting were from the country though the opposite is true, reflecting the relative populations in regional Australia and the cities.

⁴⁰⁴ The artists that inspired the modernist movement in Australia included late 19th century works as well as the more naïve self-taught works that were anointed by the artworld as worthy of consideration from the late 1930s onwards. These earlier works included portraits similar in style to those produced by limners in America before photography became popular and some of the folk craft made before machine-made goods were readily available or affordable.

⁴⁰⁵ Christopher Heathcote, *Inside the Art Market, Australia's Galleries a History: 1956-1976* (Melbourne: Thames and Hudson Australia, 2016) p. 53

4.5 Comparing attitudes to self-taught art in Europe, America and Australia

⁴⁰⁶ See: Emma Christopher, *A Merciless Place: The Lost Story of Britain's Convict Disaster in Africa and How it Led to the Settlement of Australia* (London and Melbourne: Allen & Unwin, 2010)

⁴⁰⁷ See: <http://bastille-day.com/history/the-terror>. Retrieved 31 January 2016

⁴⁰⁸ Though treaties were made between the government and American native tribes, these were shown to be ineffective as the acquisition of land by the new settlers was given precedence.

⁴⁰⁹ Warren made a number of boxes and pieces of furniture using vernacular materials. The comparison between Shaker furniture and the sort of stuff made by poor and untrained individuals 'making do' with what was available to them is, in fact, unfair. As discussed on pages 219 and 220 of the thesis the Shaker chair-maker was obviously trained - something Warren wasn't. It is also likely that similar objects to Warren's chair were made by his American equivalents. A detailed discussion of 'make-do' folk craftsmen is provided by Michael Owen Jones in his *The Handmade Object and its Maker* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975)

⁴¹⁰ In Tasmania, the name 'Jimmy Possum' is used to refer both to a type of chair and to a particular or apocryphal chair maker working in the north of the state in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is probable that the name 'Jimmy Possum' represents a number of bush craftsmen working in the area at that time, rather than any single individual. The chair is essentially a vernacular version of the well-known British Windsor chair. – Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, 2014. See: <http://static.tmag.tas.gov.au/decorativeart/objects/furniture/P1991.75/index.html>

⁴¹¹ Frederick Merk, Lois Bannister Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History: a Reinterpretation* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1963, 1983) vi (intro.)

⁴¹² The term 'manifest destiny' originated in the 1840s and was first used in print by John L. Sullivan in an article on the annexation of Texas in 'The United States Magazine and Democratic Review' of July-August 1845. 'Manifest Destiny' expressed the belief that it was Anglo-Saxon Americans' providential mission to expand their civilization and institutions across the breadth of North America. This expansion would involve not merely territorial aggrandisement but also the progress of liberty and individual economic opportunity. See: Eric Foner; John A. Garraty, (Eds) *The Reader's Companion to American History* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, 1991) at: <http://www.history.com/topics/manifest-destiny>. Retrieved 31 January 2016.

⁴¹³ From 2016 Nobel Prize for Literature winner Bob Dylan's, *Workingman's Blues*, Jack Frost Productions for Sony BMG Music Entertainment, 2006.

⁴¹⁴ See Martha A. Sandweiss, American Social History Project for Media & Learning, City University of New York, 2012. http://picturinghistory.gc.cuny.edu/item.php?item_id=180. Retrieved 2 October 2015

⁴¹⁵ See *Ralph Waldo Emerson: The Academy of American Poets* – www.poets.org/poetsorg/poet/ralph-waldo-emerson, downloaded 30/08/2015

⁴¹⁶ See www.u-s-history.com. Downloaded 18 October 2015

⁴¹⁷ Walt Whitman, *To the States*, 1854. Whitman feels that one of the essential features of a free, democratic society is its diversity of opinions.

⁴¹⁸ See: <http://williampinfold.com/a-cure-for-culture-die-brucke-at-moritzburg/>. Retrieved 24 May 2016

⁴¹⁹ Lawson was more political than Paterson being particularly interested in conditions of working men both in country and urban areas.

⁴²⁰ The descriptor, 'Cultural Cringe', was first used in discussing Australia's then cultural scene by an Australian schoolmaster, Arthur Angell Phillips, in his article *The Cultural Cringe* published in the literary magazine, *Meanjin* in 1950. See A.A. Phillips, *The Cultural Cringe* (Melbourne: *Meanjin* Vol. 9, No. 4, Summer Issue, 1950,) p. 299-302. See also Chapter 4.6 below.

4.6 The 'cultural cringe', the Australian psyche and the development of artistic practices in Australia

⁴²¹ Robert Hughes: *Goya* (London: Harvill Press 2003), p. 6

⁴²² By 1961 Sidney Nolan and his wife, Cynthia, 'rarely thought about living in Australia'. Cynthia was adamant she 'would never return' and, apart from occasional visits, didn't. B. Adams: *Sidney Nolan: Such is Life* (Sydney: Random House, 1992), p.151

⁴²³ Robert Hughes, *The Art of Australia* (Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books Australia, 1966 and 1970) p .315

⁴²⁴ Boris Johnson, British politician, commented in an interview on ABC Radio National on 22 August 2013, '...there seemed to be a hankering for a British past, a hint of tugging the forelock at the colonial master'.

⁴²⁵ The current Australian flag came into being in 1903 following the federation of the Australian states two years earlier. It was selected from 30,000 entries in a public competition but was not given Royal assent and thus adopted as the definitive Australian flag until 1954 (*Flags Act 1953; Act No. 1 of 1954*).

⁴²⁶ Hoffenberg, Peter H, *Landscape, Memory and the Australian War Experience, 1915-18*, *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 36, no.1, 2001, p. 128.

⁴²⁷ Michael D. Kirby, *Reforming Thoughts from Across the Tasman* in G Palmer (ed), *Reflections on the New Zealand Law Commission: Papers from the Twentieth Anniversary Seminar* (Wellington: LexisNexis, 2007) p. 14.

⁴²⁸ Amanda Foreman, *The British View the War of 1812 Quite Differently than Americans Do* (Smithsonian Magazine, July 2014) at : <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/british-view-war-1812-quite-differently-americans-do-180951852/>

⁴²⁹ Ian Burn, et al, *Ibid*, p.13

⁴³⁰ *Ibid*, p.13

⁴³¹ Robert Hughes, *Ibid*. p.307

⁴³² *Ibid*. p. 170

⁴³³ See: Glenn Stevens, Governor Reserve Bank of Australia, *The United Kingdom and Australia: Shared History, Shared Outlook* (Sydney: Speech to the Australian British Chamber of Commerce, 2013) at: <http://www.rba.gov.au/speeches/2013/sp-gov-181013.html>. Retrieved October 2016.

⁴³⁴ Richard Haese, *Rebels and Precursors – the Revolutionary Years of Australian Art* (Ringwood: Penguin, 1988), p.2

⁴³⁵ 'Menziez belonged to a generation for whom to be Australian was to automatically be British' – A.W. Martin: *Robert Gordon Menziez* (in *The Australian Dictionary of Biography* Vol. 15, MUP, 2000). See also Frank Bongiorno: *British to their Boot Heels Too: Britishness and Australian Radicalism* - Reese Memorial Lecture, published by the Menziez Centre for Australian Studies, London 2006. See also David Goldsworthy: *Losing the Blanket: Australia and the End of Britain's Empire* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2002), p. 143

⁴³⁶ Richard Haese: *Ibid*, p.5 & 7. Haese suggests that an 'authentic Australian cultural tradition' had previously existed but somehow been lost when he says it was 'rediscovered and re-examined' after 1945. I believe this was, in fact, a movement which sought a *new* cultural tradition rather than seeking to rediscover one which had existed previously. However, it undoubtedly looked to the past as inspiration.

⁴³⁷ The group was named after 'Angry Penguins' a quarterly journal published from 1940-46, first in Adelaide and later in Melbourne (at *Heide*, the Reed's home). The name came from a phrase in a poem by the journal's editor, Max Harris: 'as drunks, the angry penguins of the night'. Writers belonging to the group included the poets Geoffrey Dutton, D B Kerr and P G Pfeiffer and Max Harris himself. Whilst influential the journal was financially unsuccessful and published only 10 small editions. Its demise was due in part to the Ern Malley literary hoax that lost the journal the confidence of its readership. (Two writers, James McAuley and Harold Stewart wrote several 'silly' poems in a day and these were published as serious, surrealist poems in 'Angry Penguins' and heavily praised by Max Harris and others. Their authors quickly exposed the scam and Harris, his magazine and followers were 'exposed' for being duped and trumpeting fashion rather than quality. 'Modern' poetry in Australia initially took some years to recover though some critics have since praised the poems as important surrealist works). See: Michael Heywood, *The Ern Malley Affair* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1993). p. 37

⁴³⁸ L. Hunter interview with Sidney Nolan, sound recording, National Library of Australia, 1980.

⁴³⁹ Maria E. Kubik: *Looking Behind Kelly's Helmet* (Perth: Art Gallery of Western Australia, AICCM Bulletin, Vol. 30, 2007), p. 6

⁴⁴⁰ Robert Hughes, *The Art of Australia* (Ringwood Victoria: Penguin Books Australia, , 1966 and 1970) p.222.

⁴⁴¹ Christopher Uhl: *Albert Tucker* (Melbourne: Lansdowne, 1969) p. 62

⁴⁴² Traudi Allen: *Homesickness: Nationalism in Australian Visual Culture* (South Yarra, Victoria: Pallgrave MacMillan, 2008) p. 82-3

⁴⁴³ Traudi Allen; *ibid*, p. 83

⁴⁴⁴ See: <https://dictionaryofarthistorians.org/clarkk.htm>. Retrieved 20 May 2016

⁴⁴⁵ Tom Rosenthal: *Sidney Nolan* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2002) p. 17

⁴⁴⁶ Colin Rhodes: *Primitivism and Modern Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1994) p.23

⁴⁴⁷ Gill Perry: *Primitivism and the 'Modern'* in C. Harrison, et al: *Primitivism, Cubism, Abstraction*(London, 1993) quoted in C. Rhodes, *ibid*, p.32

⁴⁴⁸ On arriving in Tahiti in June 1891, Gauguin complained 'it was all over – nothing but civilised people left....it was the Tahiti of times past that I loved'. Quoted in D Guerin: *The Writings of a Savage: Paul Gauguin*' (New York, 1990) p.40. In the paintings he sent home from Tahiti 'Gauguin's representation of Tahiti....consisted of an attempt to reconstruct imaginatively a lost time before the European discovery of the island'- C. Rhodes, *ibid*, p.72. So Gauguin, like many artist who were later influenced by him, also sought an earlier time to represent in his paintings.

⁴⁴⁹ H. Read: *Art Now* (London, 2nd edit. 1936) p.45-6

⁴⁵⁰ Interview with Colin MacInnes quoted in K. Clark, et al *Sidney Nolan* (London: Thames and Hudson, , 1961) p.30. Nolan was also influenced by European symbolist poets (Verlaine, Rimbaud) as well as Australian myth and landscape – see Stephen Alomes, *When London Calls; the Expatriation of Australian Artists to Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) p.87

⁴⁵¹ *A New Home for Ned Kelly* in Anne Gray (ed): *Australian Art in the National Gallery of Australia* (Canberra: NGA, 2002) p. 4

⁴⁵² By '-isms' Allen (*ibid*) is referring to various art movements like surrealism, cubism.

⁴⁵³ T. Allen: *ibid*, p.85

⁴⁵⁴ 'Art in Australia', 5th issue, 1942, p. 44-46.

⁴⁵⁵ The artists appearing in this Australian magazine were amongst those who had appeared in Barr's 1938 MOMA exhibition, 'Masters of Popular Painting: Primitives of Europe and America'. As mentioned elsewhere in this thesis, Australia's culture was at this time a highly derivative one exemplified in this case by the editor of 'Art and Australia' not attempting to move beyond the parameters set by Barr's exhibition 4 years earlier.

⁴⁵⁶ A. Tucker: 'Paintings by H D, an unknown Australian primitive' ('Angry Penguins' No. 7, December 1944) p.23-26. Harold Deering (or Dearing) was one of several names used by 'Professor' Alfred Tipper (1867-1944), a showman, cyclist and self-taught artist. Tucker, a young modernist, found Deering's five remaining works in a shop window and introduced them to the Penguins. Deering died 8 months before Tucker's article appeared in 'Angry Penguins'. Alfred Henry Tipper was said to be a showman who also supposedly went by the names 'Henry Dearing' 'Harold Deering', simply 'H.D'. and 'Professor Tipper'

⁴⁵⁷ Nancy Underhill, 'What? Yet Another Hoax?' in *Albert Tucker and the Mystery of H.D.* (Melbourne: Heide Museum of Modern Art, 2014) exhibition catalogue.

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p. 4

⁴⁵⁹ Sara Cousins, *Contemporary Australia – National Identity* at: http://www.abc.net.au/ra/australia/pdf/national_id.pdf Retrieved December 2016

⁴⁶⁰ Inglis, K.S, *The Anzac Tradition Meanjin*, vol. 24, 1965, p. 29.

⁴⁶¹ Hoffenberg, Peter H, *Landscape, Memory and the Australian War Experience, 1915-18*, *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 36, no.1, 2001, p. 128.

⁴⁶² *Ibid*. p. 116

⁴⁶³ Patrick White, *The Tree of Man*(London: Eyre and Spottiswood, 1956)

⁴⁶⁴ *The Bulletin* continued to be published until 2008.

⁴⁶⁵ In Britain the clearest example is probably the Arts and Crafts Movement of the late 19th century or the Folk Revival.

⁴⁶⁶ It might be argued that Australia has moved out of the arms of Britain into those of America and that today many of our 'brightest and best' head to the US more than to Europe. But our actors and artists in

the US remain vocally Australian and are plauded as such by their hosts; and they regularly come home. Conversely, the 1960s exodus to Britain saw Australians absorbed into a preferred culture by their own choice with many settling permanently in England.

⁴⁶⁷ Bernard Smith et al, *Antipodeans* (Melbourne: Victorian Artists' Society, 1959) exhibition catalogue essay (and manifesto). See also: <http://nga.gov.au/exhibitions/antipodeans/index.htm> Retrieved December 2016.

⁴⁶⁸ Australia was not considered by the early governors and their militias a necessarily career-enhancing place to be sent to by London. Initially it was a gaol and those sent to manage and develop it were not the best Britain had to offer.

⁴⁶⁹ A problem with mass migration is that a majority of people leaving one country for another are doing so to improve their lot – only a few successful people permanently leave the place in which they enjoy that success.

⁴⁷⁰ Russel Ward: *The Australian Legend* (Melbourne: Oxford Univ. Press, 1988) p. 191

⁴⁷¹ Melissa Bellanta: *Larrikins, a History* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2012) p. 18

⁴⁷² Retrieved from www.lambiek.net/artists/nicholas.garland, 1 June 2015

⁴⁷³ Anne Pender: *The Mythical Australian: Barry Humphries, Gough Whitlam and the New Nationalism* (*Australian Journal of Politics and History* Vol. 51, No. 1, 2005)

⁴⁷⁴ 'Strine' is an invented word representing 'Australian' as broad-accented Australians, including Bazza McKenzie, pronounced the language they spoke. A similar pronunciation: 'Ostraya' for 'Australia'.

⁴⁷⁵ 'Ocker' is a word first used in the 1960s. It is a derisive nickname for a person who presents an exaggerated Australian nationalism. It also describes a rough and uncultivated Australian male, often aggressively Australian in speech and manner. See: http://andc.anu.edu.au/australian-words/meanings-origins?field_alphabet_value=201. Retrieved 13 November 2015.

⁴⁷⁶ Anne Pender: *ibid.* The popularity of such Australian types in Britain could demonstrate that their extreme identities best functioned for some there against the mirror of a colonial-imperial standard; a cultural-tinge in reverse, perhaps.

⁴⁷⁷ C. J. Dennis, a popular poet gained fame with *The Songs of a Sentimental Bloke* published by Angus and Robertson in 1915. Twelve of the fourteen poems making up the 'songs' had been previously published in *The Bulletin* from 1909. The book was published in more than 78 editions around the world before 1977. It was followed by *The Moods of Ginger Mick* also published by A & R in 1916 with a then record-breaking, for a poetry book, first-run of 40,000 copies. Dennis published several books of verse and remained popular after his death in 1938.

⁴⁷⁸ See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* at: <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/dennis-clarence-michael-james-5957>

⁴⁷⁹ Discussion between author and Alan Warren September 2010

4.7 Self-taught art and the Australian art scene in the mid-twentieth century

⁴⁸⁰ Both Hart and Byrne were painting in Broken Hill which was a centre for naïve art similar, in some respects, to the environment of the Ashington Group (known as the Pitmen Painters) of Northern England – see Lee Hall, *Pitmen Painters* (London: Faber and Faber, 2010). A number of self-taught artists and dealers were drawn to Broken Hill which they would visit as something of an artist colony. Callins and Fardoulys painted in Queensland and, like Warren, were independently discovered by members of the artworld.

⁴⁸¹ Dixon's son, Peter, advised the author in 2014 that his father had offered his interest and support to several marginal artists in the Bathurst region though most were not exhibited. Before Warren, Dixon's biggest 'success' was Matilda Lister who, Peter Dixon said, 'was ruined' by his father.

⁴⁸² What was known as the 'cultural cringe' was changing by the 1970s. A distinctive Australian culture was developing, even if it remained derivative in some respects (more of a cultural creep than cringe). The election of the social reformist Whitlam government in 1972 was a catalyst in Australians breaking away from the old British cultural overlay.

⁴⁸³ When first brought to the public's attention Aboriginal art, though technically self-taught, was a form of traditional or 'tribal' art representing a tradition of art making many centuries old. The form of this art was handed on from one producer to another and did not represent isolated individual artistic expression. Despite them having produced superb works for many centuries only in the early 1970s were aboriginals given modern art materials and encouraged to produce numerous works which were marketed by non-aboriginal dealers. The quality of this work has varied considerably though, due to the highly politicised nature of it and its producers, almost no negative evaluation of the art is tolerated in Australia. For detailed discussion on aboriginal art, its meaning and commercial development and promotion see Vivien Johnson, *Once Upon a Time in Papunya* (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 2010); Howard Morphy, *Becoming Art, Exploring Cross-Cultural Categories* (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 2008); Fred R. Meyers, *Painting Culture, The Making of an Aboriginal High Art* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002). For an insider's view see Adrian Newstead, *The Dealer is the Devil* (Blackheath NSW: Brabdy & Schlesinger, 2014). For information on an early (1946-1947), anthropological investigation into specifically Arnhem Land art and its extraordinary outcome, see: Cara Pinchbeck (ed), *Yirrkala Drawings* (Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales, 2013).

4.8 Aboriginal art

⁴⁸⁴ See: <http://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/austn-indigenous-art>. Retrieved January 2014

⁴⁸⁵ Cara Pinchbeck (ed), *Yirrkala Drawings*, (Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales, 2013) p 14-15

⁴⁸⁶ Information on both artists is provided on the website of the State Library of Victoria at: <http://ergo.slv.vic.gov.au/explore-history/fight-rights/indigenous-rights/artist-tommy-mcrae> and <http://ergo.slv.vic.gov.au/explore-history/fight-rights/indigenous-rights/artist-william-barak>

⁴⁸⁷ See: Sylvia Kleinert, 'The Australian Dictionary of Biography', (Canberra, 2000) at: <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/namatjira-albert-elea-11217>.

⁴⁸⁸ One of the most useful works on the 'discovery' and development of Papunya artists is Vivien Johnson's *Once Upon a Time in Papunya* (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 2010) and her revisit: *Streets of Papunya, the Re-invention of Papunya Painting* (Sydney: New South Books, 2015)

⁴⁸⁹ Judith Ryan, *Ginger Riley*, (Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, exhibition catalogue, 1997) p. 92

⁴⁹⁰ European art in Australia was to a notable extent derivative of overseas art from the first European settlements until the 1970s.

⁴⁹¹ Aboriginal art is to a degree self-taught. Despite many definitions of 'tribal art' being vague and unsatisfactory, it was a traditional art of an indigenous people from a tribal society which was based on beliefs and symbols passed through generations. While some artists might have simply started painting the majority of tribal art was guided in style and content by one generation to the next. For this reason I have chosen, for the purposes of this work, to not include Aboriginal art in the explanation I have provided elsewhere for self-taught art.

⁴⁹² The very people represented in a self-taught bush artist's work had usually treated Aboriginals badly in their acquisition of land once populated by those Aboriginals. At best the Aboriginals were looked upon as a nuisance and at worst a problem needing to be eradicated.

⁴⁹³ The cultural elite's acceptance that an 'Australian culture' had in fact fully developed was ambitious. Australian, like other culture, continues to evolve. However, much European-made art in Australia has been influenced to some degree by overseas styles and influences which have been emulated and absorbed.

⁴⁹⁴ Upon visiting the Museum of Modern Art in New York one will find a room full of magnificent Papunya Aboriginal art. No other notable Australian art appears anywhere in the museum.

⁴⁹⁵ See Stephen Fox, Ian W. Abdullah, Janet Maughn, *Ian W. Abdullah. Elvis Has Left the Building* (Adelaide: SALA Series, Wakefield Press, 2003) introduction.

⁴⁹⁶ See: Judith Ryan, *Ginger Riley Munduwalawala: A Seeing Artist* at www.artlink.com.au/articles/2558/ginger-riley-munduwalawala-a-seeing-artist/. Retrieved 21 November 2015.

⁴⁹⁷ See: Nick Tapper (Ed), *Ngarra the Texta Drawings* (Coolbinia, WA: Mossenson Art Foundation, 2015)

⁴⁹⁸ In Australia a 'drover' is an experienced stockman, a mover of cattle or sheep, the equivalent of a cowboy in the USA.

Chapter 5

5.1 Warren and his self-taught contemporaries

5.2 Australian contemporaries

⁴⁹⁹ In her book, *Australian Naïve Painters*, (Melbourne: Hill of Content, 1977) Bianca McCullough lists thirty-three naïve painters including Warren. Of these she considers five to be 'border line cases' which include artists like Pro Hart who, though to some extent trained in art, appear 'naïve' in style.

⁵⁰⁰ Broken Hill, in far Western New South Wales, has been a centre for vernacular artists for many years. In 1973 a group of five local artists formed a group called 'Brushmen of the Bush' which successfully exhibited together in Australia, Britain and America, raising money for charities. Unlike, for example, the Pitmen Painters of Ashington, Northern England, the Brushmen never painted together which probably explains the divergence of styles amongst them. The Brushmen were active until 1989 and most of the artists who belonged to the group have since died. Byrne was not a member of the group. See:

<http://www.brokenhillaustralia.com.au/about-broken-hill/local-factbook/brushmen-of-the-bush/>. Retrieved 12 May 2015. For the Pitmen Painters see: <http://www.ashingtongroup.co.uk/home.html>. Retrieved 12 May 2015.

⁵⁰¹ Gavin Wilson, *The Artists of Hill End: Art, Life and Landscape*, (Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales, 1995).

⁵⁰² Information taken from McCullough, *ibid*; biographies available on Design and Art Australia website, www.daa.org.au Retrieved 13 June 2015; Gavin Wilson, *ibid*.

⁵⁰³ Ross Moore, *Sam Byrne: Folk Painter of the Silver City* (Ringwood Vic.: Viking/Penguin, 1985) p.13

⁵⁰⁴ See Emergency Management Australia website: www.ema.gov.au of 2007

⁵⁰⁵ Hockney and Gayford, *Ibid*. p 85 and 88

⁵⁰⁶ See Theodor Pavlopoulos: 'Reverse Perspective in Christian Iconography' in his book *The Peacock's Tale: Essays in Mathematics and Culture* (<https://pavlopoulos.wordpress.com>, 2011)

⁵⁰⁷ Why Lister used his surname twice is unknown. His daughter used only 'Lister' not 'Lister Lister'.

⁵⁰⁸ Warren's home township of Trunkey Creek is almost 60 kilometres south of Bathurst whereas Hill End is 85 kms north of the city.

⁵⁰⁹ McCullough, *ibid*, p. 54

⁵¹⁰ Geoffrey Lehmann *Australian Primitive Painters*, (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1977) p.1-9.

⁵¹¹ Dobell was born in Newcastle and after spells away from the area later settled nearby in Wangi Wangi. He died there in 1970, some years before Homer moved to Western NSW.

⁵¹² Lehmann, *ibid.*, p. 11

⁵¹³ This work is a further example of the difficulties Warren experienced with linear perspective.

⁵¹⁴ Lehmann, *ibid.*, p. 13

⁵¹⁵ Wilson, *ibid.* p. 88

⁵¹⁶ Very little written material exists on Matilda Lister.

⁵¹⁷ Transcript of recordings made by Warren in 1974.

⁵¹⁸ Julian Bull, writing on Irvine Homer, for *Design and Art Australia* Online – www.daa.org.au, 2009 revised 2011.

⁵¹⁹ The early 20th century work of these two medical specialists is discussed in Chapter 4.

⁵²⁰ See: *The Anthony Petullo Collection of Self-Taught and Outsider Art. Learn About the Artists: James Dixon 1887-1970, Irish*, www.petulloartcollection.org/the_collection/about_the_artists/artist.cfm?a_id=21. Retrieved 31 October 2015. It was assumed by Hill that Dixon commenced painting after their initial meeting but Dixon had, in fact, given a few works to a regular visitor, Wallace Clark, in the early 1950s. Dixon's early works were painted using left over boat paint and brushes made with hair from his donkey's tail.

⁵²¹ Lake Pedder, a natural lake in the state of Tasmania, was the subject of much local and international protest when, in the early 1970s, it was planned to flood the lake and construct three dams. The work was eventually undertaken. See: www.lakepedder.org/history/. Retrieved, 31 October 2015

⁵²² See: Tate, *'Art and Artists' Alfred Wallis; 1855-1942*; www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/alfred-wallis-577. Retrieved 1 November 2015.

⁵²³ Jim Eade's home in Cambridge became Kettle's Yard Gallery which has works by Nicholson, Wood and Wallis, amongst many others. See: www.kettlesyard.co.uk/collection/the-house/. Retrieved 1 November 2015

⁵²⁴ Matthew Gale, *Alfred Wallis* (London: Tate Publishing, 2014) p. 6

⁵²⁵ Dixon and Warren were both born in 1887, thirty-two years after Wallis, with Warren outliving Dixon by nine years.

⁵²⁶ It is possible, if unlikely, that the white 'fence' could be a viaduct of some kind due to the bulk of it as represented by Wallis.

⁵²⁷ See Colin Rhodes, *Difficult Kirchner – alternative traditions, visual tensions, autodidactism* in Christian Weikop (ed.), *New Perspectives on Brucke Expressionism – Bridging History* (Farnham UK & Burlington USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2011) pp. 125-142, discussed elsewhere in this work.

⁵²⁸ 'Come By Chance' is a poem written by the Australian poet Andrew Barton (Banjo) Paterson in 1894:

*'But my languid mood forsook me, when I found a name that took me,
Quite by chance I came across it — 'Come-by-Chance' was what I read;
No location was assigned it, not a thing to help one find it,
Just an N which stood for northward, and the rest was all unsaid.'*

in: *The Man from Snowy River and Other Verses* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1896 and 1912). Paterson, though a city-dweller, wrote poetry about the bush and was very popular amongst people living in the countryside as well as in the cities. Warren was particularly keen on Paterson's poems.

⁵²⁹ Quoted in Shelby R. Gilley, *Painting by Heart: The Life and Art of Clementine Hunter*, (Baton Rouge: S. & Emma Press, 2000), p. 76. Though mentioning God in this quote and painting many religion-inspired works, Hunter was not considered a 'visionary' artist but more a 'memory' painter. Many of her works were of revised memories of things she had seen or been told about, including through oral folklore.

⁵³⁰ See article on 'Hay, NSW' and the under heading *Things to see, One Tree Hotel* in *'The Sydney Morning Herald'* of 8 February 2004, available at :

www.smh.com.au/news/New-South-Wales/Hay/2005/02/17/1108500193747.html. Retrieved 2 November 2015

⁵³¹ Detailed information on Hawkins is provided in the article *William Hawkins and the Art of Astonishment* by Joanne Cubbs and Eugene W. Metcalf which was published in 1997 in the catalogue for the American Folk Art Museum's exhibition of Hawkins' work and reproduced on the Ricco Maresca Gallery, New York site: www.riccomaresca.com/portfolio/william-hawkins-folk-art/. Retrieved 3 November 2015

⁵³² Quoted in Cubbs and Metcalfe, *ibid.*

⁵³³ *Ibid.*

⁵³⁴ Probably explaining the alternative title of the painting: *Rearing Stud Horse*.

⁵³⁵ In addition to 'belief' and 'feeling' taste and style, a viewer is also often influenced by what is said of different artists by the art establishment which, to an extent, sets down what is 'tasteful' or 'good' and what is not. The two lion pictures are very different but both are attractive with Traylor's work having his usual carefully ruled oblong body to which are attached legs, tail and a head which, in this case, is reminiscent of a long-haired, walrus-moustached, startled man, and Warren's appearing realistic and fierce and probably based directly on a photograph.

⁵³⁶ Hawkins claimed he 'managed' a 'flophouse' (ie. brothel) amongst numerous other jobs in his long life. See Cubbs and Metcalfe, *ibid.*

⁵³⁷ Albert Tucker, *Paintings by H D, an Unknown Australian primitive* ('Angry Penguins' No. 7, December 1944) p. 23-26. H.D. was a self-taught artist Tucker discovered in the early 1940s. His use of the word 'primitive' in describing self-taught painters is a reflection of the times. Australia was then behind Europe and America in their understanding of overseas cultural trends and use of the attending jargon.

⁵³⁸ See Chapters 5 and 6 below for further discussion.

⁵³⁹ Undoubtedly some artists who have been considered by the artworld to be 'outsiders' – H. Rousseau comes to mind – have desperately wanted to be accepted as members of the recognised art scene. However, the majority do not.

⁵⁴⁰ Colin Rhodes, *Candide. Or How the Artworld Dines Out*, *Ibid.* p. 8. It might be pointed out though that descriptors like 'eccentric perceptions' reflect the views of the artworld rather than the artists being described.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

⁵⁴¹ Zbigniew Herbert *The Gordian Knot* in *The Gordian Knot and Other Scattered Writings* (Warsaw, 2001) quoted in Falk Wolf and Kaspar Konig, *ibid.*, p.38

⁵⁴² Posthumously attributed to Dubuffet by Alan Magee in *Dubuffet: Paintings, Sculpture, Graphics* (New York: Forum Gallery, 2004). Though often quoted I have been unable to locate this phrase in any work by Dubuffet.

⁵⁴³ Cardinal in discussion with Danchin, *ibid.*, p.22

⁵⁴⁴ The road from Bathurst to Trunkey Creek was not sealed until the early 1980s. Advice from Sylvia Kilby, Bathurst Historical Society, in a letter to the author dated 15 October 2013. Several sections of the road, as it continues from Trunkey Creek to Goulburn, remain unsealed in 2015.

⁵⁴⁵ James Rebanks, *The Shepherd's Life* (New York: Flatiron, 2015)

⁵⁴⁶ Cardinal in conversation with Danchin, *ibid.*, p.25

⁵⁴⁷ Australia has the Australian Collection of Outsider Art, established by Philip Hammial and the faux-outsider, Anthony Mannix, the Self Taught and Outsider Art Research Collection (STOARC) at Sydney University which, as well as exhibiting self-taught art produces the academic journal, 'Elsewhere', Some non-specialist regional galleries and a few private galleries sometimes show self-taught art, but not regularly. Several self-taught artists, many of whom, like Mannix, were purporting to be 'outsiders,' were exhibited at the Halle Saint Pierre gallery in Paris at an exhibition called 'Australian Outsiders' in 2006/2007, but the Australian version of the show was not particularly successful according to the Orange Regional Art Gallery's Director, Alan Sisley. The Selby Warren retrospective exhibition at the Bathurst Regional Art Gallery in 2014 though successful only occupied one third of the gallery.

⁵⁴³ See the *New York Times* (<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/01/t-magazine/outsider-art-essay-christine-smallwood.html>), *Huffington Post* (<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/news/outsider-art-fair/>) extolling the value of outsider art in comparison with contemporary art. The media seems to become particularly interested in Outsider art at the time of the annual Outsider Art Fairs held annually in New York.

⁵⁴⁴ James Tarmy, *Outsider Art Goes Mainstream* at: www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-01-08/outsider-art-goes-mainstream, 9 January 2016. Retrieved 1 September 2016

⁵⁴⁵ Thomas McEvelley, *Ibid.* p.128

Appendix A

Selby Warren – *Catalogue Raisonné*







Explanation:

Painting Number: a series of numbers allocated to each work sequentially.








Image of the Work: the images vary in quality and clarity due to their origins. Some photographs were taken in 1971 and 1972, others recently. Some were taken by professional photographers, others on a basic digital camera or smart phone. One or two images are scans of poor quality reproductions appearing in old catalogues or from the backgrounds of photographs of Warren taken more than 40 years ago.









Details: The **Titles** are given as written on the painting. No corrections to spelling errors have been made. Where a title is unknown a descriptor by the author has been provided. The **Year** provided is either written on the work or, where uncertain, is provided as Circa ('c.') a likely date or presented as 'Unknown'. The **Medium** is correct except for paintings which have not been physically examined. Where it is impossible to ascertain the word 'Unknown' is given. The **Size** is shown in centimetres with the longest side first. **Location** provides the painting's verified current whereabouts. Where the location is unknown this is indicated. **Provenance** is provided where known and any other information is provided under the heading **Note**.









The following pictures are from photographs of Warren's works taken by both Garth Dixon and Ron Dunsire at Hill 90 in Trunkey Creek in 1971 and 1972. Details of the works were not provided by either photographer: SW180; SW182-SW185; SW187-SW203; SW205-SW219.





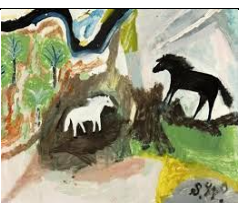



Painting Number	Image of the work	Details
SW001		<p>Title: Grave of the unknown soldier Year: c. 1950 Medium: Water colour; paper Size: 41 x 27 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW002		<p>Title: Breealong Blacks Year: c.1965 Medium: Crayon and water colour; board Size: 38 x 25 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW003		<p>Title: Around the Boree Log Year: 1965 Medium: Poster paint and pencil; paper Size: 67 x 52 Location: Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney Provenance: Komon Gallery, Sydney</p>
SW004		<p>Title: Frank Gardner Year: 1964/5 Medium: Enamel, water colour; board Size: 105 x 80 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW005		<p>Title: Dam Sinking Year: c. 1965 Medium: Poster paint, pencil; board Size: 51.5 x 38 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW006		<p>Title: Phar Lap's Sister Year: 1966 Medium: Poster paint; board Size: 43 x 43 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>



SW007		<p>Title: Abstract Year: 1965 Medium: Enamel; glass (car window) Size: 53 x 18 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW008		<p>Title: Family (?) Year: c. 1966 Medium: Enamel; glass (car rear window) Size: c. 53 x 18 Location: Unknown</p>
SW009		<p>Title: Unknown Year: c. 1965 Medium: Unknown; Size: Unknown Location: Unknown Note: A photograph taken by Garth Dixon in 1971. Any details of the works he may have made no longer survives. This note is relevant to the following paintings: SW009 to SW015.</p>
SW010		<p>Title: Parrot Year: c. 1965 Medium: Poster paint; cardboard Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW011		<p>Title: Unknown Year: c. 1965 Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW012		<p>Title: Unknown Year: c. 1965 Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW013		<p>Title: Goanna Year: c. 1965 Medium: Enamel, sand; board Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW014		<p>Title: Native Women Year: c. 1966 Medium: Poster paint; cardboard Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>









SW015		<p>Title: Along the Wallaby Track Year: c. 1966 Medium: Poster paint, sand; board Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW016		<p>Title: Stag and Does Year: c.1970 Medium: Acrylic, enamel; board Size: 96 x 73 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery Provenance: Audrey Warren</p>
SW017		<p>Title: Koalas Year: c.1967 Medium: Enamel, grass; board Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW018		<p>Title: Unknown Year: c. 1967 Medium: Enamel, dirt, mica; board Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW019		<p>Title: Air Rock Year: c.1968 Medium: Enamel; glass Size: 50 x 36 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW020		<p>Title: Ayres Rock Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 71.5 x 64.5 Location: Collection of Patrick Hartigan, Sydney</p>
SW021		<p>Title: Ayres Rock Year: Unknown Medium: Poster paint; board Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>





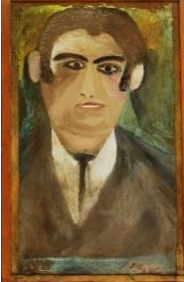


SW022		<p>Title: White Emu the Rock Year: c. 1968 Medium: Enamel, poster paint; board Size: 41 x 33 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW023		<p>Title: My Dogs Year: v.1966 Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: 32 x 27 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW024		<p>Title: Names of dogs listed but indecipherable Year: 1969 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 69 x 63 Location: Collection of Patrick Hartigan, Sydney</p>
SW025		<p>Title: Half-breed Dog Year: c. 1970 Medium: Poster Paint; paper Size: 57.5 x 48 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery Provenance: Audrey Warren</p>
SW026		<p>Title: Dogs Year: 1964 Medium: Acrylic; tin dish Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW027		<p>Title: White Hope 1922 Year: 1970 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW028		<p>Title: Rabbit Hunt Year: 1971 Medium: Oil' acrylic; cardboard Size: 63 x 51 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW029		<p>Title: Man from Snowy River Year: 1972 Medium: Oil; cardboard Size: 56 x 45 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>








SW030		Title: Man From Snowy River Year: c. 1971 Medium: Oil, acrylic; board Size: 66.5 x 53 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery
SW031		Title: Man From Snowy River Year: 1974 Medium: Poster paint; paper Size: 56 x 43 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery
SW032		Title: Piebald Pony Year: c.1967 Medium: Enamel, poster paint, crayon, pencil; brown paper Size: Unknown Location: Unknown
SW033		Title: Furey Year: 1971 Medium: Enamel, oil; board Size: 65 x 59.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery
SW034		Title: Toney Turn Hondo Grattan Year: 1973 Medium: Oil; board Size: 41 x 37 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery
SW035		Title: Horse and Five Children Year: 1972 Medium: Crayon, pencil, acrylic; board Size: 39.5 x 34 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery
SW036		Title: Two Horses Year: c. 1971 Medium: Acrylic; cardboard Size: 54 x 38.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery
SW037		Title: Breaking a Brumby Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 49 x 34 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery








SW038		<p>Title: The Selector's Wife Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 56 x 45 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW039		<p>Title: Gunsynd Year: 1973 Medium: Oil pastel; paper Size: 44 x 31 Location: Private collection, Sydney</p>
SW 040		<p>Title: Grey Colt Year: 1970 Medium: Pencil, oil, enamel; paper Size: 32 x 14 Location: Sarah Shelley, London Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW041		<p>Title: Black and White Stallions Year: c. 1968 Medium: Enamel; tin Size: 78 x 55 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW042		<p>Title: Stallions Year: c. 1970 Medium: Enamel; card Size: 67.5 x 49.5 Location: Teresa Kudinoff, Melbourne</p>
SW043		<p>Title: Horses and Ducks Year: c. 1971 Medium: Poster paint; card Size: 76.5 x 51 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW044		<p>Title: Baby on White Horse Year: c. 1970 Medium: Colour pencil; board Size: 38.5 x 32.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW045		<p>Title: Over the Fence Year: c. 1970 Medium: Crayon; cardboard Size: 50 x 31 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>






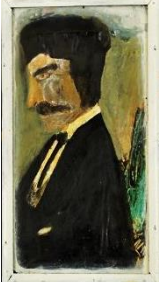
SW046		<p>Title: Horse Year: c. 1971 Medium: Acrylic; cardboard Size: 51 x 40 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW047		<p>Title: Buckjump Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW048		<p>Title: Stick on Jacky Year: 1970 Medium: Enamel, acrylic; board Size: 63.5 x 40.5 Location: Bathurst Regional Art Gallery Provenance: Gwen Frolich Bequest</p>
SW049		<p>Title: Ned Kelly's Sister Kate, Glenrowan Year: c. 1967 Medium: Poster paint; card Size: 56 x 45 Location: Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney Provenance: Komon Gallery, Sydney</p>
SW050		<p>Title: Winston Churchill Year: c. 1967 Medium: Poster paint; wood Size: 43 x 26 Location: Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney Provenance: Komon Gallery, Sydney</p>
SW051		<p>Title: Clancy's Gone a Drovin and We Don't Know Where He Are Year: c. 1968 Medium: Poster paint, pencil; cardboard Size: 44 x 35 Location: Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney Provenance: Komon Gallery, Sydney</p>
SW052		<p>Title: Fire Dance Year: c. 1968 Medium: Watercolour, pencil; paper Size: 43 x 43 Location: Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney Provenance: Komon Gallery, Sydney</p>
SW053		<p>Title: Landscape Year: c. 1968 Medium: Poster paint, dirt; board Size: 38 x 23 Location: Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney Provenance: Komon Gallery, Sydney</p>






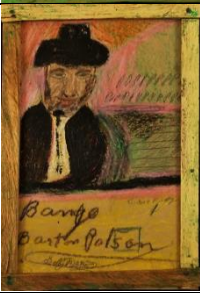

SW054		<p>Title: Airs Rock Year: c. 1968 Medium: Acrylic; wood Size: 40 x 39 Location: Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney Provenance: Komon Gallery, Sydney</p>
SW 055		<p>Title: Blue Lake Year: c. 1967 Medium: Acrylic; tin Size: 54 x 50 Location: Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney Provenance: Komon Gallery, Sydney</p>
SW056		<p>Title: Storker Year: c. 1969 Medium: Acrylic; tin Size: 62 x 41 Location: Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney Provenance: Komon Gallery, Sydney</p>
SW057		<p>Title: Mother and child Year: c. 1968 Medium: Acrylic, Enamel; cardboard Size: 30 x 26 Location: Dixon family collection, Canberra</p>
SW058		<p>Title: Follow the Sun Year: 1967 Medium: Acrylic, enamel Size: 40 x 32 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW059		<p>Title: Lake Peder Tasmane Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: 48 x 31 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW060		<p>Title: My Fine Feathered Friends Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 76 x 40 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW061		<p>Title: Landscape Year: c.1971 Medium: Oil; board Size: 92.5 x68 Location: : Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>





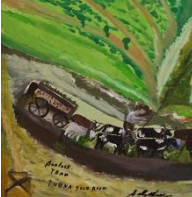
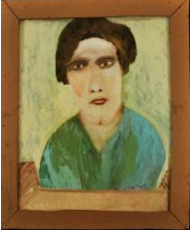

SW062		<p>Title: Trunkey Creek Year: 1972 Medium: Oil, pencil; board Size: 123 x 68 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW063		<p>Title: Feeding Time, Sleeper cutters Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; cardboard Size: 115 x 85 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW064		<p>Title: River, Black Clouds Year: 1972 Medium: Oil; board Size: 75.5 x 57.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW065		<p>Title: Portrait Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 64 x 43 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW066		<p>Title: Gough Whitlam Year: 1972 Medium: acrylic, oil; paper & board Size: 82 x 49.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW067		<p>Title: Flight Year: 1972 Medium: Oil; board Size: 52 x 43 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW068		<p>Title: Big Cave Year: 1971 Medium: Oil; board Size: 68 x 59.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>









SW069		<p>Title: Man in Black Hat Year: 1971 Medium: Oil; card Size: 61 x 52 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW070		<p>Title: Ben Hall's Home Year: 1969 Medium: Poster paint, pencil; board Size: 49 x 39.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW071		<p>Title: Dog, Deer, Wineglass Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: 61 x 46 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW072		<p>Title: Two Swans Year: c. 1969 Medium: Acrylic, crayon; card Size: 68.5 x 54 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW073		<p>Title: Aborigines Year: c. 1967 Medium: Poster paint; paper Size: 64 x 41 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW074		<p>Title: Ulguara Gold Gardner and Ben Hall Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 92 x 62.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW075		<p>Title: Landscape Year: 1971 Medium: Oil; board Size: 61 x 46 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>









SW076		<p>Title: Cutting Trees Near the River Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic, enamel; board Size: 62 x 59 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW077		<p>Title: Part of Australia Year: c. 1970 Medium: Watercolour, pencil; paper Size: 59 x 44.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW078		<p>Title: After the Bath Year: 1973 Medium: Oil; board Size: 66.5 x 45 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW079		<p>Title: Sydney Opera House Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 56 x 37.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW080		<p>Title: Boomerang Joe Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 56 x 52.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW081		<p>Title: Alma house Year: c. 1969 Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: 54 x 53 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW082		<p>Title: Man on Yellow Horse Year: 1970 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 56 x 42 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>

SW083		<p>Title: Evon Gullgong Year: 1973 Medium: Oil; board Size: 59 x 45.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW084		<p>Title: Red House & Tanker Year: 1972 Medium: Oil; board Size: 54 x 30 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW085		<p>Title: Low Level Bridge ? Creek NSW Year: 1971 Medium: Oil; board Size: 49 x 37.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW086		<p>Title: Ben Chifley Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 53.5 x 39 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW087		<p>Title: Ben Hall's Grave Year: c. 1970 Medium: Pencil, acrylic, newspaper; paper Size: 36 x 31.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW088		<p>Title: Henry Lawson Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic, enamel; card Size: 44.5 x 28.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>




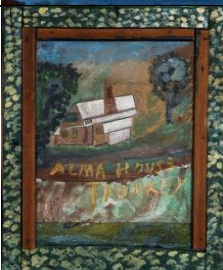



SW089		<p>Title: The Three Sisters Year: c. 1968 Medium: Poster paint; Size: 51 x 33 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW090		<p>Title: Three Sisters Year: 1970 Medium: Watercolour; paper Size: 26 x 18 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW091		<p>Title: Undersea Coral Year: C. 1970 Medium: Poster paint, enamel; cardboard Size: 44.5 x 35 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW092		<p>Title: St Joseph's House Young Year: c. 1971 Medium: Colour pencil, crayon, card Size: 45.5 x 45 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW093		<p>Title: Red Dress Rowing Boat Year: 1970 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 51 x 38 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW094		<p>Title: Banjo Barton Patson Year: C. 1970 Medium: Crayon, colour pencil; card Size: 40.5 x 26 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW095		<p>Title: 'Warren' sign Year: 1973 Medium: Chalk, crayon; cane-board Size: 45 x 27 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>









SW096			<p>Title: Prize Bull Year: c. 1970 Medium: Colour pencil; crayon; board Size: 32 x 36 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW097			<p>Title: Aborigine Rock Carving Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic, charcoal; card Size: 70 x 50.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW098			<p>Title: Pontius Pilate Year: 1971 Medium: Crayon, oil pastel, pencil Size: 69 x 46 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW099			<p>Title: Hut and Trees Year: 1969 Medium: Crayon, enamel; tin Size: 75 x 35.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW100			<p>Title: Boolock Team Tuena Gold Rush Year: 1973 Medium: Oil, acrylic; board Size: 97 x 67 Location: University of Sydney, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW101			<p>Title: Margaret Whitlam Year: 1972 Medium: Oil; board Size: 78 x 69 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW102			<p>Title: Portrait Year: c.1971 Medium: Oil; glass Size: 61 x 41 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>









SW103		<p>Title: The Road to Anywhere Year: 1970 Medium: Acrylic, enamel; board Size: 131 x 50 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW104		<p>Title: Berrima Hotel ? Year: 1972 Medium: Oil; board Size: 60 x 46 Location: Dixon family collection, Canberra</p>
SW105		<p>Title: Berrima Hotel Year: 1970 Medium: Poster paint; paper Size: 61 x 48 Location: Private collection, Sydney</p>
SW106		<p>Title: Uncle Bill and Sebastian Year: 1971 Medium: Oil pastel; cardboard Size: 33 x 26 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW107		<p>Title: Farm Year: 1972 Medium: Oil; board Size: 40 x 31 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW108		<p>Title: Robert Helpmann Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic, crayon; card Size: 24 x 15 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW109		<p>Title: Billy McMahon Year: 1972 Medium: Oil; board Size: 30 x 20 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW110		<p>Title: Still Life Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; paper Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>









SW111		<p>Title: The Orphan Boy and His Dog Year: 1973 Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: 72 x 56 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW112		<p>Title: Portrait Year: 1970 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 26 x 17 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW113		<p>Title: Man, car, dog Year: 1970 Medium: Acrylic, pencil; paper Size: 41 x 29 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW114		<p>Title: First Contact Year: 1969 Medium: Crayon, enamel, pencil poster paint; board Size: 72 x 41 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW115		<p>Title: Abstract Year: 1970 Medium: Acrylic, crayon, pencil; board Size: 61 x 49 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW116		<p>Title: Kangaroo Hunt Year: c. 1969 Medium: Poster paint; paper Size: 85 x 72 Location: Private collection, Sydney</p>
SW117		<p>Title: Palm Beach Year: 1973 Medium: Oil; board Size: 140 x135 Location: Collection Berenice Shelley, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW118		<p>Title: Brother Ben Year: 1969 Medium: Enamel, poster paint; paper Size: 102 x 62 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>



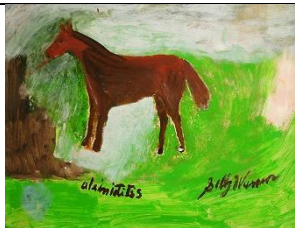



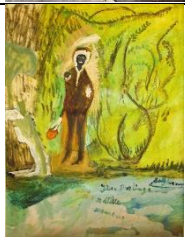
SW119		<p>Title: Traveller Year: 1971 Medium: Enamel, acrylic; board Size: 82 x 70 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW120		<p>Title: The Lights of Cob and Co Year: 1969 Medium: Acrylic, pencil; card Size: 65 x 52 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW121		<p>Title: The Lights of Cob and Co Year: c. 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW122		<p>Title: The Lights of Cob and Co Year: c. 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 70 x 54 Location: Unknown</p>
SW123		<p>Title: The Lights of Cob and Co Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 67 x 50 Location: Collection Teresa Kudinoff, Melbourne</p>
SW124		<p>Title: Australia in 2000 Year: 1972 Medium: Oil, acrylic; board Size: 60 x 41 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW125		<p>Title: Buildings Year: 1973 Medium: Oil; board Size: 63 x 40 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW126		<p>Title: The Black Stump Hotel Year: 1966 Medium: Poster paint; paper Size: 54 x 50 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>


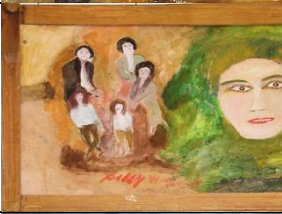






SW127		<p>Title: The Black Stump Hotel Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 47 x 36 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW128		<p>Title: Black Stump and Lockup Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW129		<p>Title: Still Life Year: 1973 Medium: Oil; board Size: 52 x 48 Location: Private collection, Sydney Note: Originally a work by Peter Dixon reworked by Warren. Dixon claims the reworked version is an improvement on his original.</p>
SW130		<p>Title: Alma House Trunkey Year: 1971 Medium: oil, enamel; paper Size: 44 x 32 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW131		<p>Title: Bushfire Year: 1968 Medium: Acrylic, pencil; board Size: 54 x 35 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW132		<p>Title: Village by the Lake Year: 1971 Medium: Size: 45 x 33 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW133		<p>Title: Bushranger Year: 1972 Medium: Oil; board Size: 38 x 15 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>






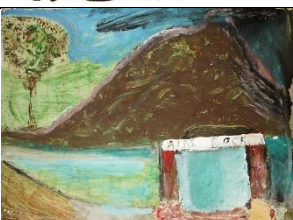

SW134		<p>Title: Fishing Boy Year: c. 1970 Medium: Watercolour; board Size: 32 x 23 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW135		<p>Title: Man Year: c. 1971 Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: 34 x 22 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW136		<p>Title: Loch Noo Scotland Year: c. 1971 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 39.5 x 20 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW137		<p>Title: Village Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 47 x 37 Location: Private collection, Sydney</p>
SW138		<p>Title: Dogman Year: 1973 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 40 x 34 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW 139		<p>Title: Fords Wheat Stack 1916 Year: c. 1970 Medium: Poster paint, pencil; card Size: 51 x 38 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW140		<p>Title: Festival City Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: 42 x 37.5 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW141		<p>Title: Man Year: 1970 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 68 x 49 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>






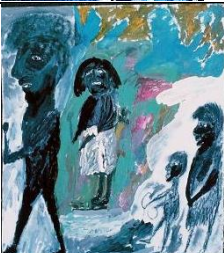
SW142		<p>Title: King Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 49 x 28 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW143		<p>Title: Weston's farm Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 48.5 x 34.5 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW144		<p>Title: Graduate Year: c. 1971 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 48.5 x 32.5 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW145		<p>Title: Men on Road Year: c. 1971 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 76.5 x 52 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW146		<p>Title: The City of Shingles Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 50.5 x 38 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW147		<p>Title: Chicken Inn Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 81 x 35 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW148		<p>Title: Farm Year: 1972 Medium: Felt-nib pen; paper Size: 57 x 43 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW149		<p>Title: Prince Charles Year: 1971 Medium: Crayon, acrylic; card Size: 63 x 47 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>


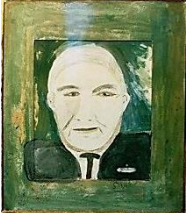
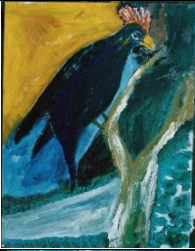




SW150			<p>Title: Old Man of Stone Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 46.5 x 33.5 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW151			<p>Title: Parrot Year: c. 1970 Medium: Colour pencil, poster paint; paper Size: 32 x 25 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW152			<p>Title: Bareback Riding on the One-Tree Plain Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 100.5 x 87 Location: Private collection, Sydney</p>
SW153			<p>Title: Landscape Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 59 x 48 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW154			<p>Title: Palmtrees Year: c. 1971 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 74 x 45 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW155			<p>Title: Parrots Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: 61 x 45.5 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW156			<p>Title: Youths and Car Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 89 x 45 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW157			<p>Title: Portrait Year: 1974 Medium: Acrylic, pencil; canvas-board Size: 18 x 16 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>








SW158		<p>Title: Aborigine Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 37 x 27 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW159		<p>Title: Missing in Action 1914 War 4 August Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic, enamel; card Size: 56 x 45 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW160		<p>Title: Alimiotite's Horse Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: 31 x 25 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW161		<p>Title: Grasstrees Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: 29.5 x 23 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW162		<p>Title: Self Portrait Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic, pencil; card Size: 24 x 17.5 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW163		<p>Title: Portrait Year: c. 1971 Medium: Acrylic; paper on board Size: 29 x 24 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW164		<p>Title: Native Woman with Child Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 61.5 x 47 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>








SW165			<p>Title: African Parrots Year: 1973 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 59.5 x 47.5 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW166			<p>Title: Family Portrait Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 56 x 41 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW167			<p>Title: Kellarn Wistishire Year: 1973 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 64 x 47 Location: Private collection, Sydney</p>
SW168			<p>Title: Farmhouse Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: 61 x 46 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW169			<p>Title: Thoroughbreds Year: c. 1971 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 80 x 62 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW170			<p>Title: Smiling Dog Year: c. 1972 Medium: Enamel; board Size: 46 x 45 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW171			<p>Title: Out of the Past Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: 64 x 51 Location: Private collection, Melbourne</p>
SW172			<p>Title: Alice ? Year: c. 1971 Medium: Acrylic, enamel; board Size: 53.5 x 42 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>






SW173		<p>Title: ? (after Davida allen) Year: 1973 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 50.5 x 38 Location: Unknown</p>
SW174		<p>Title: Farms Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 58.5 x 51.5 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW175		<p>Title: Trout Lake Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 51.5 x 46.5 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW176		<p>Title: Yellow Water Scare Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; paper on board Size: 59 x 47.5 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW177		<p>Title: William Dobell Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 37 x 28 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW178		<p>Title: Air Rock Year: 1970 Medium: Acrylic, plaster; board Size: 58 x 44 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW179		<p>Title: The Village Year: 1973 Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: 45 x 35 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>

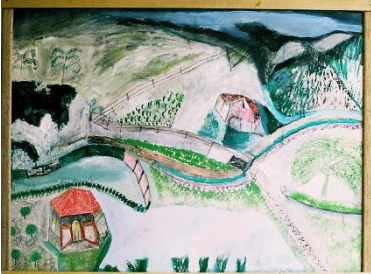





SW180		<p>Title: Coach in Town Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic, pencil; paper Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW181		<p>Title: Biddie (?) with Candle Year: c. 1969 Medium: Poster paint; paper Size: 63 x 50 Location: Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney</p>
SW182		<p>Title: Portrait of a Girl Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW183		<p>Title: Ben Chifley Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW184		<p>Title: Flowers Year: Unknown Medium: Acrylic, pencil Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW185		<p>Title: Native Family Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>








SW186		<p>Title: Blue Lake Year: Unknown Medium: Enamel; tin Size: 54 x 40 Location: Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney Provenance: Rudy Komon Gallery</p>
SW187		<p>Title: Bob Menzies Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW188		<p>Title: Exotic Bird Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW189		<p>Title: Flying Charms Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW190		<p>Title: Cave Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW191		<p>Title: Death of an Alien Year: c. 1971 Medium: Unknown; painted on tin Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW192		<p>Title: Bom. Bar. Abercrombie Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>









SW193			<p>Title: Finding Gold Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW194			<p>Title: Lakeside Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW195			<p>Title: Cob and Co Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW196			<p>Title: Unknown Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW197			<p>Title: Coach and Town Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW198			<p>Title: Budgies Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW199			<p>Title: Laocoon and Sons 1506 Mona Lisa Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown Note: These images are probably the result of Warren seeing reproductions of the subjects in printed media. The work is the only one known that suggests Warren had knowledge of the classical artworks here portrayed.</p>









SW200		<p>Title: Dancer ? Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW201		<p>Title: Miners Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW202		<p>Title: Portrait Year: Unknown Medium: Poster paint, crayon; paper Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW203		<p>Title: Horses by River Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW204		<p>Title: Mrs M. Whitlam Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 70 x 45 Location: Private collection, Sydney: Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW205		<p>Title: Dog on the Tuckerbox Gundagai Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW206		<p>Title: Abercrombie River Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>







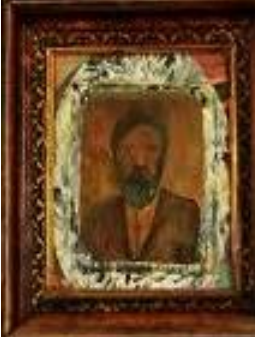

SW207		<p>Title: Landscape Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW208		<p>Title: The Beatles Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown Note: Overpainted newspaper photographs</p>
SW209		<p>Title: House Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW210		<p>Title: Portrait Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW211		<p>Title :Native Camp Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>





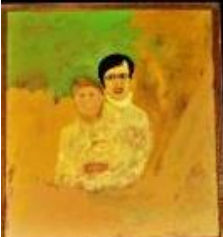
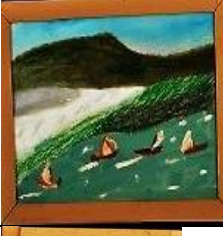

SW212		<p>Title: Farm Year: c. 1972 Medium: Acrylic, felt-nibbed pen, pencil; paper Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW213		<p>Title: Bullocks Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW214		<p>Title : Coach Ride Year: 1972 Medium: Colour pencil, crayon, acrylic; paper Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW215		<p>Title: Blue Crane and Parrot Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW216		<p>Title: Rosellas Year: C. 1973 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW217		<p>Title: House Year: Unknown Medium: Oil; card Size: Unknown Location: Unknown Note: Possibly overpainting of a printed picture</p>








SW218		<p>Title: Cattle Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW219		<p>Title: Bathurst Council Building Year: 1972 Medium: Water colour, colour pencil, acrylic; Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW220		<p>Title: Black Roos Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 59.5 x 45 Location: Unknown</p>
SW221		<p>Title: The Wild Horse Yard Year: 1970 Medium: Enamel Paint; board Size: 63 x 51 Location: Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney</p>
SW222		<p>Title: Sydney Harbour Bridge Year: 1969 Medium: Poster paint; card Size: 69 x 39 Location: Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney</p>
SW223		<p>Title: Sleeper Cutters Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 121 x 90 Location: Reid Family Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW224		<p>Title: On the Road to Goulburn 1910 Year: c. 1967 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>

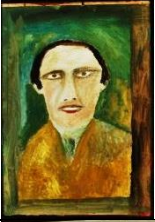







SW225		<p>Title: Crooked Tree Creek Year: c. 1969 Medium: Acrylic; nylon fabric (petticoat) Size: 60.5 x 46.5 Location: Collection Patrick Hartigan, Sydney</p>
SW226		<p>Title: Four Swans Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 73.5 x 61 Location: Collection Patrick Hartigan, Sydney</p>
SW227		<p>Title: Convict Building Caloola Bathurst Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 68.5 x 58 Location: Collection Patrick Hartigan, Sydney</p>
SW228		<p>Title: Age 27 Portrait of Man Year: c. 1972 Medium: Acrylic; enamel; paper Size: 86 x 60 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW229		<p>Title: Trout in the Abercrombie Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic, pencil; card Size: 100.5 x 76.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW230		<p>Title: Triangles Year: c. 1971 Medium: Acrylic, enamel, pencil; board Size: 92 x 86.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW231		<p>Title: Dugong Year: c. 1971 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 87 x 51 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW232		<p>Title: Trunkey Girls Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 78.5 x 58.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>




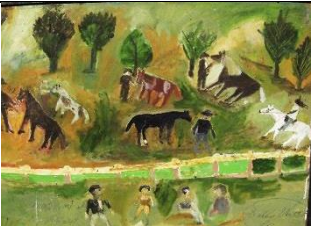

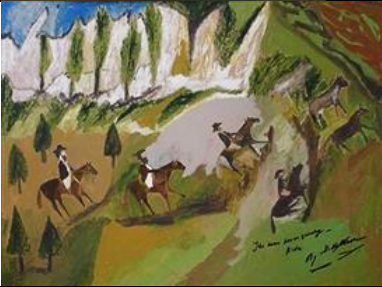

SW233		<p>Title: Church Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 79 x 51 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW234		<p>Title: Woman Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 47.5 x 47.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW235		<p>Title: Big Black Bird Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 62 x 48 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW236		<p>Title: White Building Year: c. 1972 Medium: Acrylic, crayon; card Size: 60 x 39 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW237		<p>Title: Greeting the Sun Year: 1970 Medium: Poster paint; card Size: 64 x 51 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW238		<p>Title: Pines Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 65 x 59 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW239		<p>Title: Parrot Year: c. 1969 Medium: Watercolour; paper Size: 53 x 41 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW240		<p>Title: Ben Hall's House Year: c. 1971 Medium: Oil; board Size: 71.5 x 45.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>







SW241			<p>Title: Landscape Year: 1972 Medium: Enamel, acrylic; cane-board Size: 92.5 x 56.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW242			<p>Title: Landscape Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 61 x 46 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW243			<p>Title: Blak Hut Gallery Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic, enamel, glitter; board Size: 55 x 38 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW244			<p>Title: House With Yellow Roof Year: c. 1971 Medium: Acrylic, pencil; card Size: 64 x 53 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW245			<p>Title: L.B.J. Year: 197 Medium: Oil, acrylic; board Size: 63 x 53 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW246			<p>Title: Bark Roof Hut Year: 1970 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 64 x 53 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW247			<p>Title: Portrait Year: c. 1972 Medium: Acrylic, enamel; paper Size: 57 x 49.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery Note: The portrait is pasted over a landscape.</p>
SW248			<p>Title: Rock Fishing Year: 1972 Medium: acrylic, crayon; board Size: 58 x 45 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>

SW249		<p>Title: Emu, Gumtree, Kangaroo Year: 1970 Medium: Crayon; acrylic; card Size: 54 x 40 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW250		<p>Title: Golden Eagle Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; Size: 55.5 x 40 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW251		<p>Title: Animals in the Bush Year: 1973 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 60 x 47.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW252		<p>Title: Regnal Sprigg Year: c. 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 53 x 49 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW253		<p>Title: Father and Son Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 42.5 x 42.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW254		<p>Title: Black Mounon (sic) Year: 1973 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 57.5 x 47 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW255		<p>Title: Come by Chance Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic, enamel; board Size: 45 x 31.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>







SW256		<p>Title: Haaf Net Fishing Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic' crayon; board Size: 52 x 32 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW257		<p>Title: The Darling River Year: c.1970 Medium: Oil; card Size: 55 x 42 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery Note: Although the title 'The Darling River' is painted on the picture, the subject appears to be the Sydney Harbour Bridge</p>
SW258		<p>Title: Raffty Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 44 x 30 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW259		<p>Title: Krmile Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 35.5 x 26 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW260		<p>Title: Man Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 32 x 23 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW261		<p>Title: Eagle Year: c. 1972 Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: 40.5 x 30.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW262		<p>Title: Black Cockatoo Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic, pencil; card Size: 47.5 x 36.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>









SW263		<p>Title: Man Year: c.1971 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 54.5 x 39 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW264		<p>Title: Nat King Cole Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic, pencil; card Size: 35 x 27.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW265		<p>Title: Man with Mustache Year: c. 1972 Medium: Acrylic, pencil; card Size: 40.5 x 30.5 Location: : Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW266		<p>Title: Bill Peach Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic, pencil; card Size: 36.5 x 26.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW267		<p>Title: Young Man Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 27.5 x 21 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW268		<p>Title: Man With Glasses Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 37.5 x 27.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW269		<p>Title: Man with Moustache Year: 1973 Medium: Acrylic, enamel; board Size: 30 x 25.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW270		<p>Title: :Bridge Year: 1973 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 35.5 x 30 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>





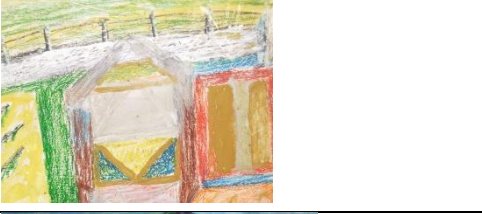


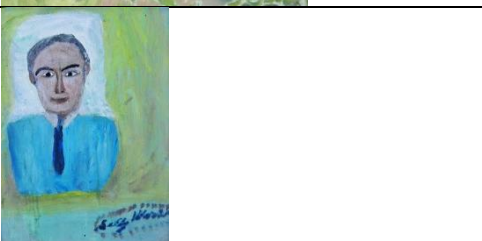
SW271		<p>Title: Ram (Name indecipherable) Year: 1970 Medium: Poster paint; paper Size: 34 x 34 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW272		<p>Title: Silver Lake Year: 1974 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: 71 x 38.5 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW273		<p>Title: At the Races Year: c. 1970 Medium: Colour pencil, acrylic, crayon; board Size: 87 x 55 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW274		<p>Title: The Crookwell Show Year: c. 1970 Medium: Poster paint, enamel, colour pencil; card Size: 78 x 63 Location: Private collection, Sydney</p>
SW275		<p>Title: Times Gone Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 85 x 70 Location: Private collection, Melbourne</p>
SW27		<p>Title: Man From Snowy River Year: 1973 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW277		<p>Title: Lava Flow Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 58 x 45 Location: Collection of Jason MacCarthur, Broken Hill</p>








SW278		<p>Title: Abercrombie Camp Year: c. 1969 Medium: Colour pencil, crayon, watercolour; board Size: 64 x 40 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW279		<p>Title: Native Camp Year: 1968 Medium: Pencil, crayon, enamel, cardboard Size: 32 x 30 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW280		<p>Title: Three Beatles Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic, enamel; glass Size: Unknown Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW281		<p>Title: Stag Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 18 x 14 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW282		<p>Title: Portrait Year: c. 1969 Medium: Watercolour, pencil; card Size: 32 x 21 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW283		<p>Title: Rose of No Man's Land Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic, enamel; board Size: 62 x 53 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>







SW284		<p>Title: Harbour Bridge Year: 1972 Medium: Oil; paper Size: 29 x 21 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW285		<p>Title: Shark Fishing Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 69 x 46 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW286		<p>Title: Figures Year: c. 1972 Medium: Acrylic; book cover Size: 26 x 22 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW287		<p>Title: Farm Year: c. 1971 Medium: Watercolour; paper Size: 24 x 22 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW288		<p>Title: Farm House Year: c. 1971 Medium: Watercolour; paper Size: 24 x 22 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW289		<p>Title: Farm scene Year: c. 1971 Medium: Watercolour; paper Size: 24 x 22 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW290		<p>Title: SW Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>







SW291		<p>Title: The New chum Year: 1969 Medium: Colour pencil; paper Size: 34.5 x 34 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW292		<p>Title: Year: Medium: Size: Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW293		<p>Title: Goff Whitlam PM Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW294		<p>Title: Kangaroo and Emu Land Seen (sic) Year: 1971 Medium: Pencil, watercolour, acrylic; board Size: 99.5 x 74 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW295		<p>Title: Howard Year: c. 1970 Medium: Pencil, acrylic; board Size: 32 x 27 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW296		<p>Title: Black Jack Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; card Size: Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>








SW297		<p>Title: Portrait Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic, enamel; cardboard Size: 43 x 32 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW298		<p>Title: Ross Symonds Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: 47 x 34 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW299		<p>Title: Peacock Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 49 x 40 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW300		<p>Title: Carr Property Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic, pencil; cardboard Size: 53 x 39 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW301		<p>Title: Golden Eagle Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic, enamel; cardboard Size: 50 x 36 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW302		<p>Title: Hillside Year: c. 1971 Medium: Acrylic, poster paint; cardboard Size: 41 x 34 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW303		<p>Title: Lake land Year: 1970 Medium: Acrylic; cardboard Size: 56 x 38 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>
SW304		<p>Title: Cowboys Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 61 x 60 Location: Private collection, Sydney Provenance: Alan Warren</p>




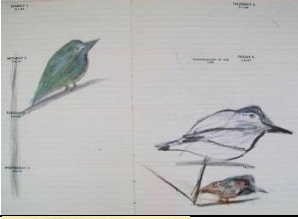

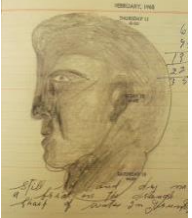

SW305		<p>Title: On the Road Cob and Co Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 130 x 60 Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne</p>
SW306		<p>Title: (Indecipherable) Year: c. 1969 Medium: Acrylic, oil, pencil; Cardboard Size: 110 x 48 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW307		<p>Title: The Fire Queen Crossing Swamp * Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; cardboard Size: 121 x 64 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery Note: * Based on a poem by Will Ogilvie</p>
SW308		<p>Title: Farmyard Year: 1971 Medium: Colour pencil; paper Size: 44 x 44 Location: Private collection, Sydney</p>
SW309		<p>Title: Farmhouse Year: 1971 Medium: Colour pencil, poster paint; cardboard Size: 42 x 40 Location: Private collection, Sydney</p>
SW310		<p>Title: Emus on the Run Year: 1969 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 39 x 31 Location: Alan Warren Collection, Trunkey Creek</p>
SW311		<p>Title: Aborigine and Government Man Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 52 x 33 Location: Unknown</p>
SW313		<p>Title: Ross Symonds Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 56 x 46 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>

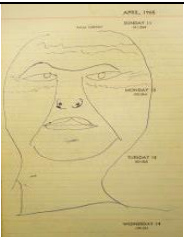


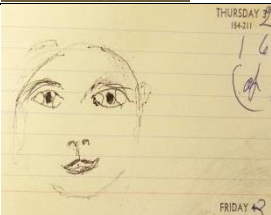


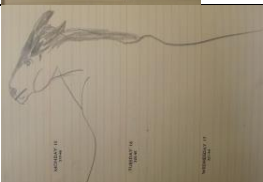

SW314		<p>Title: Tree Year: c. 1971 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 54 x 38 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW315		<p>Title: Aboriginal Coat of Arms Year: 1972 Medium: Oil, acrylic; board Size: 70 x 49 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW316		<p>Title: Birds and Horse Year: c. 1970 Medium: Oil, crayon; cardboard Size: 68 x 35 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW317		<p>Title: Horse Year: C. 19769 Medium: Enamel; tin Size: 37 x 34 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW318		<p>Title: Cat and Dog in a Basket Year: c. 1969 Medium: Acrylic, pencil; card Size: 41 x 30 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW319		<p>Title: Tiger in Net Year: c. 1972 Medium: Watercolour; paper Size: 34 x 22 Location: Private collection, Sydney, via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>
SW320		<p>Title: Horse Year: c. 1970 Medium: Colour pencil, crayon; paper Size: 38 x 29 Location: Unknown</p>


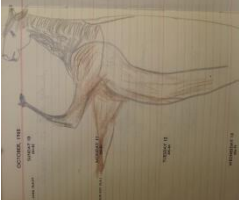





SW321		<p>Title: Unknown Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW322		<p>Title: Bushranger House Year: 1968 Medium: Poster paint; board Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW323		<p>Title: Trees Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW324		<p>Title: Unknown Year: Unknown Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown</p>
SW325		<p>Title: Untitled Year: See Note below Medium: Felt-nib marker pen; paper Size: See Note below Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne Note: Pictures SW325 to SW331 were all drawn in a 30.5 x 22.5cm sketchbook in 1973/74. Only one, SW 327, is titled.</p>
SW326		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Felt-nib marker pen; paper Size: Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne Note: See Note SW325.</p>


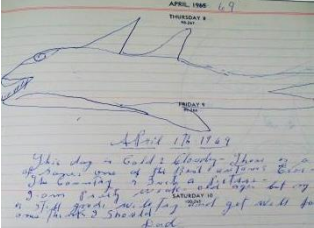




SW327		<p>Title: Bale Up Year: Medium: Felt-nib marker pen; paper Size: Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne Note: See Note SW325.</p>
SW328		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne Note: See Note SW325.</p>
SW329		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne Note: See Note SW325.</p>
SW330		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Felt-nib marker pen; paper Size: Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne Note: See Note SW325.</p>
SW331		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: Location: Teresa Kudinoff Collection, Melbourne Note: See Note SW325.</p>
SW332		<p>Title: Bushranger Year: Medium: Colour pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: Pictures SW332 to SW358 and SW364 to SW371 appear in a 1965 diary which measures 25.5 x 20 cm. The diary was reused over seven years. One drawing is on a page dated 1972 but the others are earlier with some appearing to date back to c. 1965/6.</p>







SW333			<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Pencil, watercolour; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW334			<p>Title: Drovers Wife Year: Medium: Pencil, watercolour; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW335			<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Pencil, watercolour; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW336			<p>Title: Brisbane City Hall (L) Bathurst Clock Tower (R) Year: Medium: Colour pencil, enamel; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW337			<p>Title: Trunkey Year: Medium: Colour pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW338			<p>Title: Horse Year: Medium: Pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW339			<p>Title: The Rolling Stones Year: Medium: Colour pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>


SW340		<p>Title: Horses Year: Medium: Pencil, watercolour; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW341		<p>Title: Winston Churchill Stamp Year: Medium: Enamel, crayon, ink; paper Size: Location: Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW342		<p>Title: Year: Medium: Colour pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW343		<p>Title: Starlings Year: Medium: Colour pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW344		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW345		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW346		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Pencil, water colour; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>


SW347		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW348		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW349		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW350		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW351		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW352		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Colour pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW353		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW354		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Pencil, ink; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>







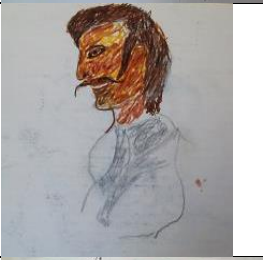

SW355			<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW356			<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Colour pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW357			<p>Title: Fallery Skiing Champ Year: Medium: Pencil, enamel, crayon; paper Size: Location: Note: See Note at SW332. 'Midget' Farrelly was a surfing champion</p>
SW358			<p>Title: Year: Medium: Colour pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332 This drawing may have been done by Warren's grandson.</p>
SW359			<p>Title: Untitled (Cicada) Year: Medium: Enamel, acrylic, pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332. Date July 1972 is written beneath the picture followed by Warren's signature.</p>
SW360			<p>Title: Untitled (Butterfly) Year: Medium: Enamel, acrylic, pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW361			<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Colour pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>

SW362		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Colour pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW363		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Colour pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW364		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Colour pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW365		<p>Title: Orphan Boy and His dog Year: Medium: Colour pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW366		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW332</p>
SW367		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Oil crayon, crayon; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: Pictures SW367 to SW375 appear in a 112 page, 23 x 17.5 cm school exercise book. On the cover Warren has completed a student details panel as follows: ' Name: Selby E. Warren, School: Art, Subject: Panting, Class: 1th' . As well as the drawings, the book contains poems transcribed by Warren' s daughter, Joyce, and notes on the weather and livestock. One page lists buyers and what they paid for some paintings. None of the drawings is titled. They were made in 1971/72.</p>


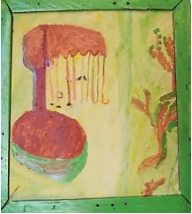





SW374			<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Ball point pen, crayon; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note referring to SW367.</p>
SW375			<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note referring to SW367.</p>
SW376			<p>Title: Untitled Year :See Note below Medium: Oil pastel; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: Pictures SW376 to SW381 from a 24 x 18 cm sketchbook from which most pages have been removed. No indication of the year they were produced is provided though they probably are from 1971. Only one, SW373, is titled.</p>
SW378			<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Oil paste, pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW376</p>
SW379			<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Colour pencil, pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW376</p>
SW380			<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Colour pencil, pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW376</p>



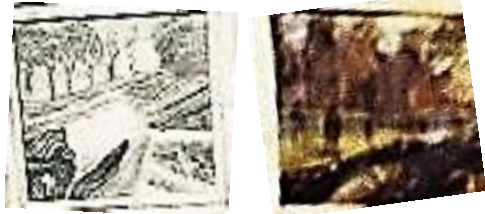
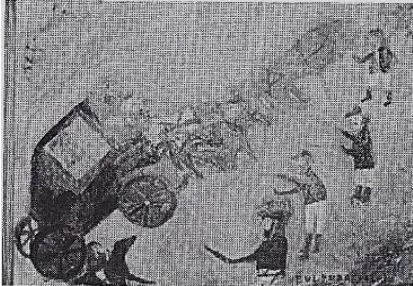


SW381		<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Colour pencil; paper Size: Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW376</p>
SW382		<p>Title: Ellen Jool Tuena Year: c. 1971 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 26 x 22 Location: Private collection, Sydney</p>
SW383		<p>Title: Native Making Love Year: c. 1970 Medium: Colour pencil, pencil; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: Pictures from SW383 to SW411 were drawn in a 37 x 27 sketchbook from 1970 to 1973.</p>
SW384		<p>Title: Horse Year: Medium: Colour pencil, crayon; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW385		<p>Title: Mongrel Grey Year: Medium: Colour pencil, crayon; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW386		<p>Title: House Year: Medium: Colour pencil, crayon; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW387		<p>Title: Man From Snowy River Year: Medium: Colour pencil, crayon; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383</p>

SW388			<p>Title: Flying Alien Year: Medium: Colour pencil, crayon; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW389			<p>Title: Portrait Year: Medium: Colour pencil, felt-nib pen; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW390			<p>Title: Horse Year: Medium: Colour pencil, crayon; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW391			<p>Title: Wagon Year: Medium: Colour pencil, crayon; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW392			<p>Title: Title indecipherable Year: Medium: Felt-nib pen; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW393			<p>Title: Title indecipherable Year: Medium: Felt-nib pen; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383</p>

SW394			<p>Title: Harvest Year: Medium: Felt-nib pen; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW395			<p>Title: Untitled Year: Medium: Felt-nib pen; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW396			<p>Title: House Year: Medium: Felt-nib pen; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW397			<p>Title: Worksite Year: Medium: Felt-nib pen; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW398			<p>Title: Wildlife Year: Medium: Felt-nib pen; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW399			<p>Title: Horse Year: Medium: Felt-nib pen, pencil; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383 Additional drawings by Warren's grandchild</p>
SW400			<p>Title: Spiv Year: Medium: Felt-nib pen, pencil; paper Size: 37 x 27 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW401			<p>Title: Horse Year: Medium: Felt-nib pen; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383</p>

SW402			<p>Title: Man and Snake</p> <p>Year: Medium: Felt-nib pen, pencil; paper</p> <p>Size: 37 x 27</p> <p>Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek</p> <p>Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW403			<p>Title: Birds</p> <p>Year: Medium: Felt-nib pen; paper</p> <p>Size: 37 x 27</p> <p>Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek</p> <p>Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW404			<p>Title: Eagle</p> <p>Year: Medium: Felt-nib pen; paper</p> <p>Size: 37 x 27</p> <p>Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek</p> <p>Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW405			<p>Title: Farm</p> <p>Year: Medium: Pencil; paper</p> <p>Size: 37 x 27</p> <p>Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek</p> <p>Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW406			<p>Title: Farm</p> <p>Year: Medium: Pencil; paper</p> <p>Size: 37 x 27</p> <p>Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek</p> <p>Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW407			<p>Title: Building</p> <p>Year: Medium: Felt-nib pen; paper</p> <p>Size: 37 x 27</p> <p>Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek</p> <p>Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW408			<p>Title: Trunkey House</p> <p>Year: Medium: Felt-nib pen; paper</p> <p>Size: 37 x 27</p> <p>Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek</p> <p>Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW409			<p>Title: Trunkey House</p> <p>Year: Medium: Felt-nib pen; paper</p> <p>Size: 37 x 27</p> <p>Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek</p> <p>Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW410			<p>Title: Flying Bird and Parrot</p> <p>Year: Medium: Felt-nib pen; paper</p> <p>Size: 37 x 27</p> <p>Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek</p> <p>Note: See Note at SW383</p>

SW411		<p>Title: Black Duck Year: Medium: Felt-nib pen; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: See Note at SW383</p>
SW412		<p>Title: Merry-go-round swing Year: Unknown Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 37 x 34 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek</p>
SW413		<p>Title: 'The Girl that Loved Ned Kelly' is written on the back Year: Unknown Medium: Watercolour; board Size: 38 x 31 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek Note: Yeend King (UK) print overpainted with watercolour. Matt board painted with white enamel.</p>
SW414		<p>Title: Abstract Year: 1971 Medium: Acrylic, pastel; card Size: 29 x 29 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek</p>
SW415		<p>Title: Three Horses Year: c. 1971 Medium: Enamel; tin Size: Unknown Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek</p>
SW416		<p>Title: Parrot Year: c. 1971 Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: 37 x 34 Location: Alan Warren, Trunkey Creek</p>
SW417		<p>Title: Kangaroo against Tree Year: c. 1970 Medium: Acrylic; paper Size: 64 x 40 Location: Private collection, Sydney</p>

SW418		<p>Title: Self-portrait Year: 1972 Medium: Colour pencil, pencil; paper Size: 37 x 27 Location: Private collection, Sydney</p>
SW419		<p>Title: Unknown Year: 1972 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: Unknown Location: Unknown Note: Picture scanned from 1972 photograph of Warren painting the work (See Fig. 182 main text). His hand is to the left of the picture and holds a paintbrush.</p>
SW420		<p>Title: Unknown Year: c. 1972 Medium: Unknown Size: Unknown Location: Unknown Note: Both pictures of works scanned from backgrounds of photographs taken 1972 (L) (See Fig. 16 main text) and 1974 (R) (See Fig. 182 main text).</p>
SW421		<p>Title: Eulogarah (Gold) Rocks Year: c. 1971 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 71 x 56 Location: Collection of Sue and Murray Walker, Melbourne Note: Picture scanned from 1983/4 catalogue illustration. The correct spelling of the painting's title is 'Eugowra'.</p>
SW422		<p>Title: Sleeper Cutter Camp Year: 1973 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 62 x 50 Location: Dixon family collection, Canberra Note: The only verified commissioned work produced by Warren</p>
SW423		<p>Title: Trapeze Artists Year: 1968 Medium: Acrylic; board Size: 41 x 40 Location: Private collection, Sydney via Joseph Lebovic Gallery</p>

Appendix B

Map of Australia, New South Wales and the Bathurst region

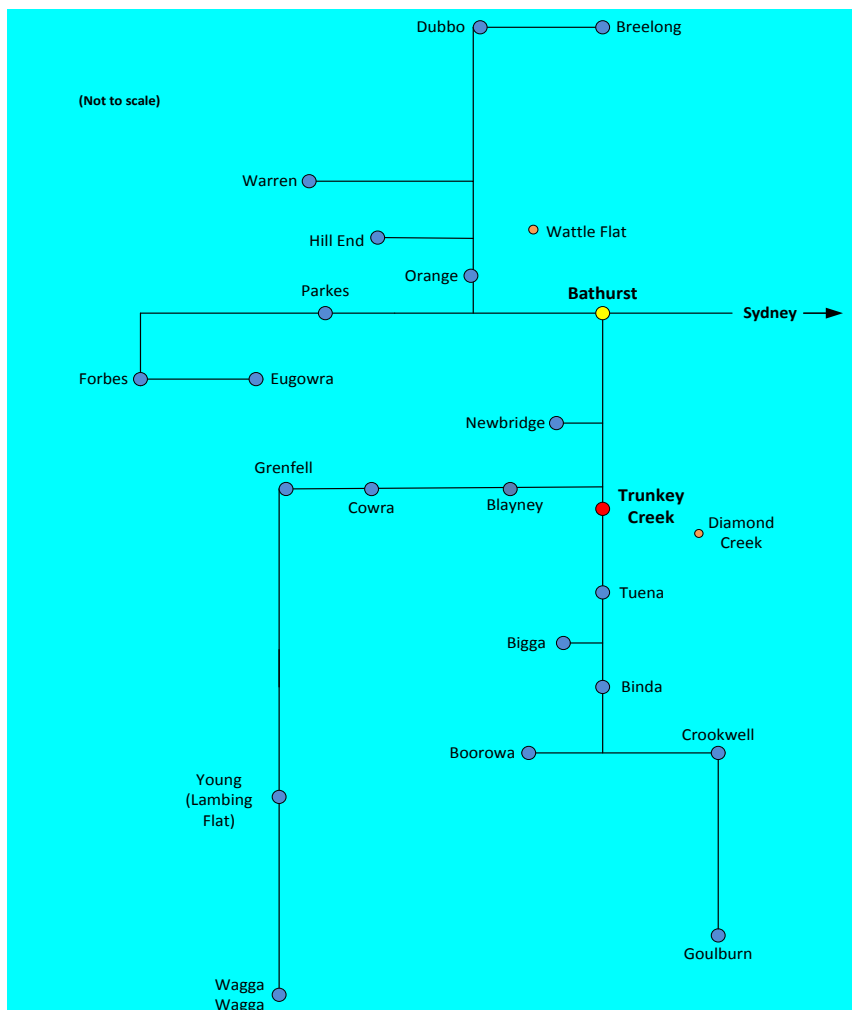


Left: Location of New South Wales within Australia



Left: Bathurst area in relation to Sydney.

Schematic map of Bathurst, Trunkey Creek and surrounds showing several of the towns mentioned in the text:



Appendix C

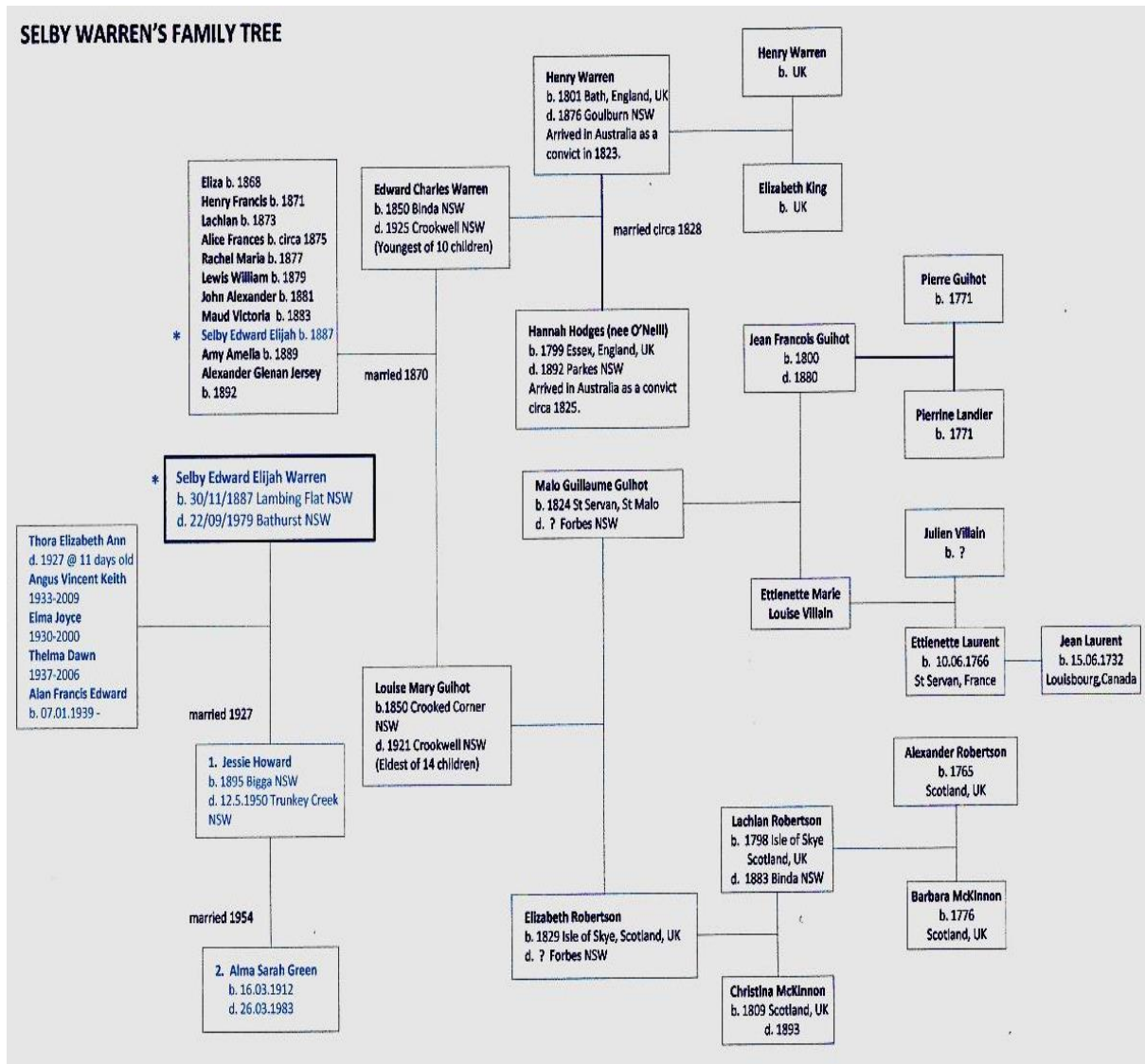


Fig. 189. Warren Family Tree. Selby Warren's family in **blue** at left. Researched by Unita Knox and prepared the author.

Selby Warren Timeline

- 1887 Born 30 November Lambing Flat (Young). Ninth of eleven siblings
- c.1895 Attended Half-Time School at Diamond Creek near Binda for 3 weeks only. Was mostly self-taught
- c.1898 First paid job as a roustabout in a Western NSW shearing shed with his father
- c.1889 Commenced blade shearing aged 12. Later moved to machine shearing

c.1900 – c.1910	Travelled countryside from job to job – shearing, cattle dealing, rabbit trapping
c.1910	Teamed up with younger brother, Sandy, rabbiting. Saved enough to buy first cart and two horses. Worked together on the Galong to Booroowa rail line duplication then more rabbiting in Wellington area.
1914 - 1918	Joined the Australian Light Horse and worked ferrying horses to Tel el-Kebir in Egypt. May have visited Guildford in the UK upon demobbing(?)
c.1918	Took up land at McAllister near Crookwell but transferred it to Sandy when Sandy married in 1918
1918 - 1925	Worked at a number of jobs around the region including training show ponies for a landowner, shearing, fencing, etc
1926	Settled in Trunkey Creek. Worked at Pine Ridge Mine. Took up land on the Curragh to run sheep
1927	Married Jessie Howard
1930 - 1938	Electoral Rolls for 1930 and 1936 list Selby Warren as ‘grazier, “The Curragh” Trunkey Creek’. Persevered with sheep farming on his holding of poor ground but the Depression years forced him into bankruptcy
1939	January: from a high point on The Curragh Warren saw smoke rising from an area known as Hell’s Hole. Warned the locals who were dismissive of the threat. The subsequent Black Friday Bushfire destroyed many dwellings in the area including Trunkey Creek School.
1940	Hand built his first home for his family in Trunkey Creek
1942	4 June: enlisted in the Volunteer Defence Force but discharged on 25 May 1943 probably because he had lowered his age by 8 years on enlistment papers
1943 - 1950	Worked at the Bathurst Munitions Factory (it closed in 1945). Worked on the railway in Bathurst cycling to and from Trunkey Creek on weekends. After the collapse of his first home Warren built a new one at ‘Hill 90’ with the assistance of a local builder
1950	12 May: wife, Jessie, died
Early 1950s	Warren and his two sons, Keith and Alan, went on the road seeking work. Worked on a number of local properties fencing, rabbiting and general labouring. Warren grew Queensland Blue and Triamble pumpkins in ripped up rabbit burrows and won prizes for them at the Crookwell Show. At this time met Alma Green.
1953	November: married Alma Green in the first wedding held at the new church in Narrawa.

-
- 1954 Returned permanently to Trunkey Creek. Took on mail run contract for the Colo and Curragh Roads and ran it for 9 years.
- 1963 Semi-retired and concentrated on his painting though continued occasional mail deliveries and other casual jobs.
- 1971 19 June: 'discovered' by Garth Dixon, art lecturer at the Mitchell College (now Charles Sturt University), Bathurst
- 1972 February: first public exhibition at the (Rudy) Komon Gallery, Woollahra, Sydney
August: second exhibition at the Georges Gallery, Melbourne
November: Trunkey Creek's biggest party in honour of Selby Warren held at Hill 90. Forty guests attended including Garth Dixon, Rudy Komon and John Olsen as well as most of the villagers.
- 1973 March: 3rd exhibition held at the Reid Gallery in Brisbane.
- 1974 August; Warren opened his own 'gallery' in Trunkey Creek. It was housed in a corrugated iron shed built earlier in part by his son, Alan, near the Black Stump on Trunkey Creek's main road. Komon was invited to the opening but didn't attend.
- 1975 Warren had a heart attack. His vision was failing and he found painting difficult.
- 1975 - 1979 Warren's health deteriorated and in 1979 he was moved first to a nursing home in Katoomba and then to one in Bathurst where he died on 22 September 1979. He was 91 years old.
- 1983 26 December: Alma Warren died. The Trunkey Creek gallery had been closed three months earlier.

Appendix D

Selby Warren Exhibitions

23 February to 8 March 1972

Rudy Komon Gallery, Sydney: 'Selby Warren'

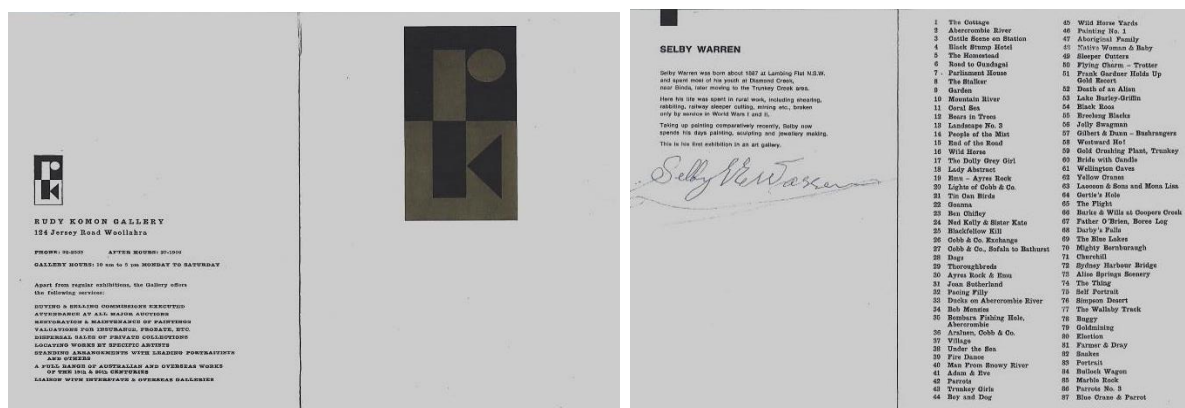


Fig. 190. Rudy Komon Gallery, Sydney, exhibition catalogue, February/March 1972

The catalogue lists eighty-seven works for sale. Despite Garth Dixon's statement that the show was a 'sell-out' more than half the listed paintings were re-exhibited five months later at the Georges Gallery in Melbourne in August 1972.

7 August to 19 August 1972

Georges Gallery, Melbourne: 'Selby Warren'

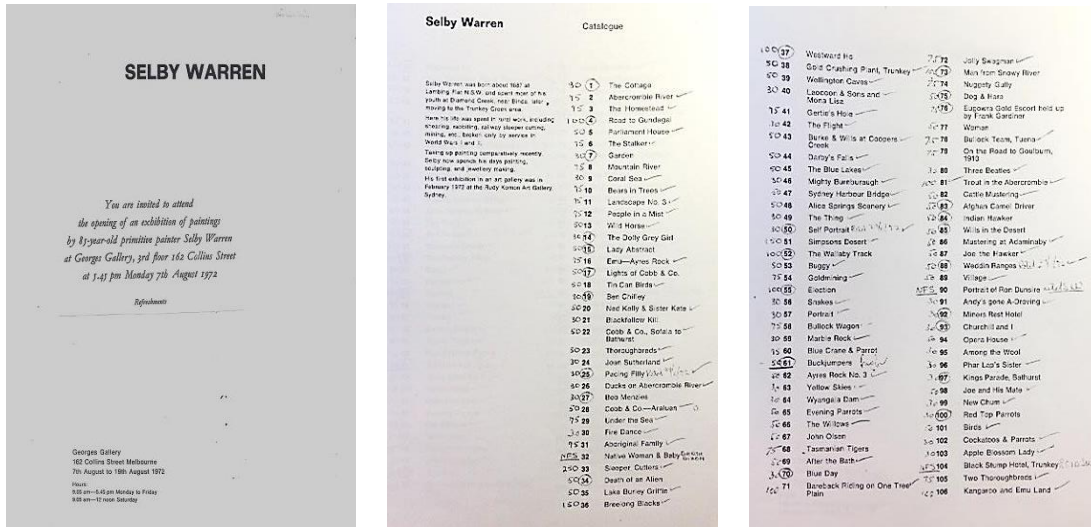


Fig. 191. Georges Gallery, Melbourne paintings list, August 1972

One hundred and six paintings were shown at this exhibition.

18 March to 6 April 1973

Reid Gallery, Brisbane: 'Selby Warren'.

Thirty paintings were exhibited.

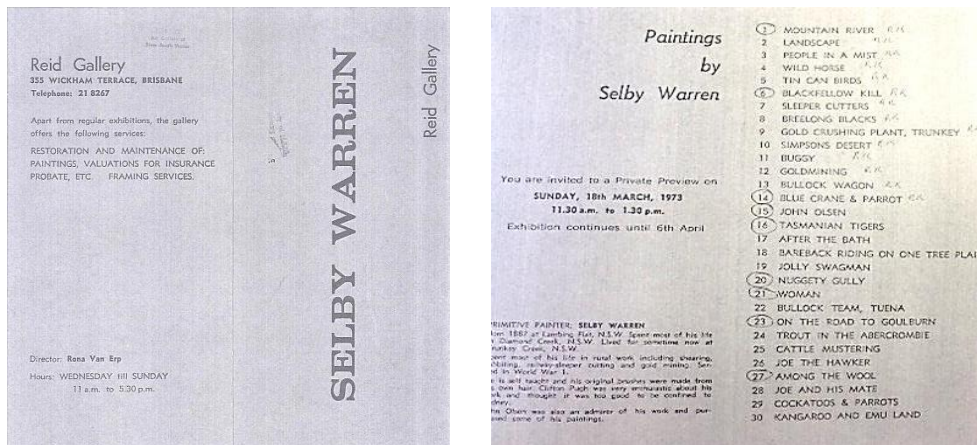


Fig. 192. Reid Gallery catalogue.

28 October 1973 to November 1973

Bathurst Civic Centre Gallery, Bathurst

An exhibition arranged by Ron Dunsire was held at the Bathurst Civic Centre Gallery at which forty paintings by Warren were exhibited. No other details of the show have been located but it is believed other artists were represented along with Warren.

13 April 1974

Warren held an 'exhibition' of his works at the gallery he had set up in *Trunkey Creek* in February 1974. He invited Rudy Komon and Gwen Frolich to the 'opening on 13 April from 2 to 10pm' but neither attended.



Fig. 193. The shed that housed Warren's gallery in Trunkey Creek today, author photograph, 2013

12 December 1975 to 31 January 1976

Benalla Art Gallery, Benalla:

'The Innocent Eye – an exhibition of works by naïve painters'

The exhibition included works by twenty-eight artists including three by Warren and one by American, 'Grandma' Moses. Several of the artists represented were of Eastern European origin.

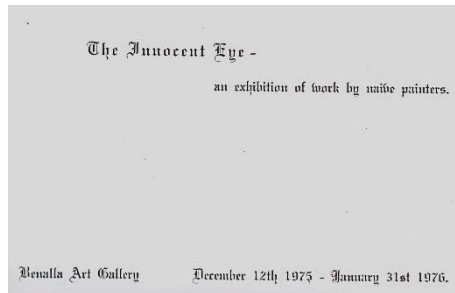


Fig. 194. 'The Innocent Eye' catalogue

18 November 1983 to 30 April 1984

'Wonderland – Some Naifs' - *Travelling exhibition* organised by Albury Regional Art Centre - Albury: 18 November to 7 December 1983; Wagga Wagga: 20 December 1983 to 22 January 1984; Griffith: 1 February to 29 February 1984; Goulburn: 6 March to 28 March 1984; Orange: 1 April to 30 April 1984)

The exhibition included works by twenty-two Australian artists, Warren amongst them (one work).

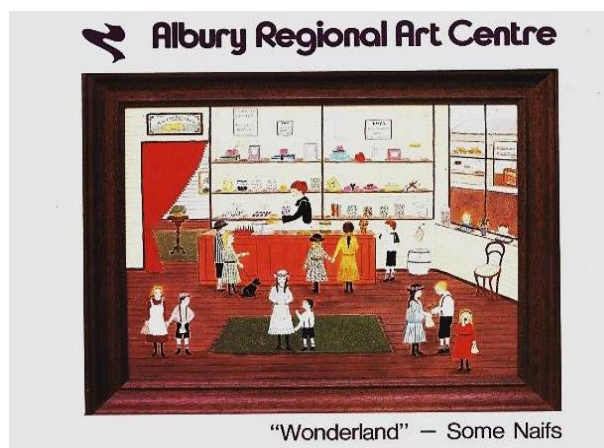


Fig. 195. 'Wonderland' – Some Naifs catalogue.

20 September to 10 October 1985

Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney.

'Three Innocent Artists' - included, with Warren were works by William Yaxley and the American, The Rev. Howard Finster.

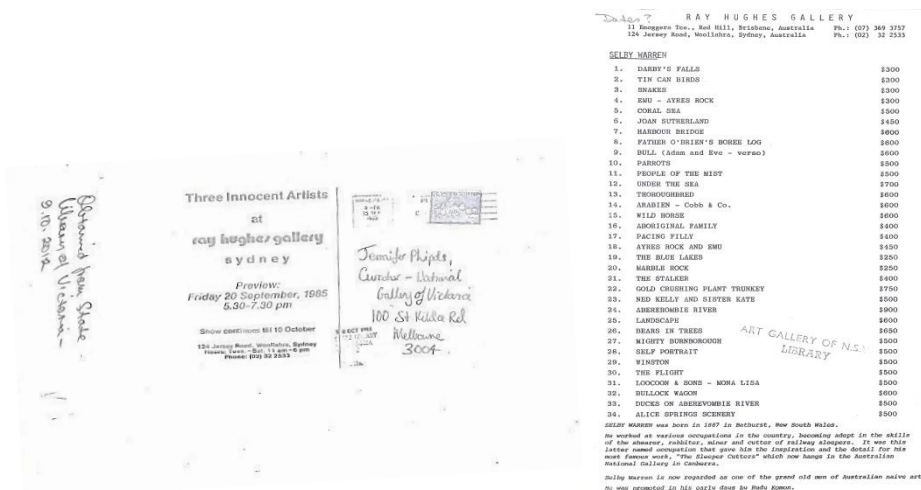


Fig. 196. Ray Hughes Gallery invitation and list of Warren paintings on offer.

Thirty-four paintings by Warren are listed. After acquiring the stock of the Rudy Komon Gallery in 1984, Hughes had several sales through which he attempted to clear some of the stock held by Komon; this was one such. The fact that Komon retained so many of Warren's pictures after the 1972 and 1973 sales he had organised in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane demonstrates he bought quite a number of Warren's works for his gallery.

4 December 2005 to 31 March 2006

'Raw and Compelling Australian Naïve Art – the continuing tradition.' *Travelling exhibition* organised by the Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery – Monash (University) Gallery of Art: 4 December 2004 to 23 January 2005; Coffs Harbour City Gallery: 11 February to 27 March 2005; Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery: 7 April to 1 May 2005; Castlemaine Art

Gallery and Historical Museum: 14 May to 26 June 2005; Wangaratta Exhibitions Gallery: 22 July to 14 August 2005; Orange Regional Gallery: 2 September to 2 October 2005; Tamworth Regional Gallery: 19 November 2005 to 5 February 2006; Broken Hill Regional Art gallery: 24 February to 31 March 2006)

Eighteen Australian artists were represented with four works by Warren.

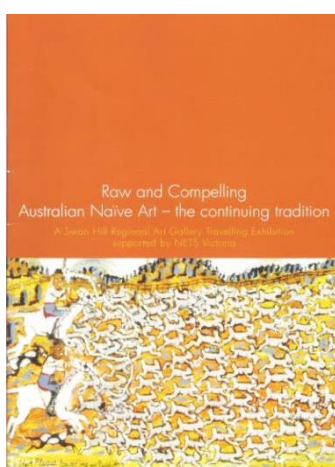


Fig. 197. 'Raw and Compelling' catalogue

This was a 'not for sale' exhibition.

11 May to 26 June 2011

Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery, Swan Hill.

'Selby Warren: Outsider'. Forty-three paintings by Warren were exhibited. They comprise the collection of Warren's work held by Warren's granddaughter, Teresa Kudinoff.

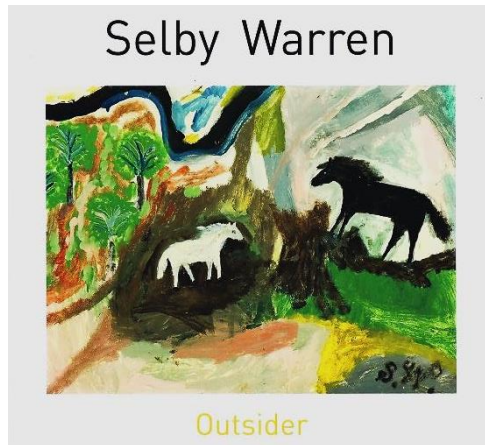


Fig. 198. 'Selby Warren: Outsider' catalogue

This was a 'not for sale' exhibition.

31 January to 16 March 2014

Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, Bathurst.

'Selby Warren: Trunkey's Tribe of One'. One hundred and twenty-four paintings by Warren were exhibited.

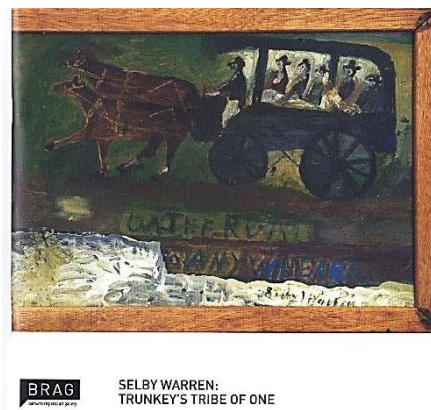


Fig. 199. 'Selby Warren: Trunkey's Tribe of One' catalogue

This was a 'not for sale' exhibition.

The Bathurst Regional Art Gallery (BRAG) exhibition, which I curated, presented more Warren works than had ever before been gathered together and was, up to that time, the most popular exhibition held by the gallery.



Fig. 200. The Bathurst Regional Art Gallery. Photograph: Bathurst Regional Council

Only a single one-man show of Warren's works had previously been held at a public gallery. It consisted of about forty paintings, was entitled 'Outsider' and held by the Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery in Victoria from 11 May to 26 June in 2011. The catalogue for this exhibition contained several works I had not seen before which I discovered were owned by Teresa Kudinoff, a granddaughter of Warren's. After contacting her, the paintings were made available for the BRAG exhibition.

Publicity for the exhibition needed to be organised. The gallery placed information on their website (www.bathurstart.com.au/exhibitions/current/172-exhibitions/315-selby-warren-trunkey-s-tribe-of-one.html) and the University of Sydney also posted a brief mention of the exhibition. 'Art Guide Australia' and 'Visual Arts Club' were approached and a journalist from 'Art Guide Australia' interviewed me and the resulting article was published online: <http://artguide.com.au/articles-page/show/selby-warren/>. A piece in

'Visual Arts Hub' also appeared: (<http://visual.artshub.com.au/news-article/news/visual-arts/gina-fairley/grandfather-of-%C3%AFve-painting-selby-warren-197887>).

It had been decided that the Warren exhibition would hang in three rooms of the gallery, those marked 'D', 'E' and 'F' shown at the bottom of the gallery floorplan Fig. 201.

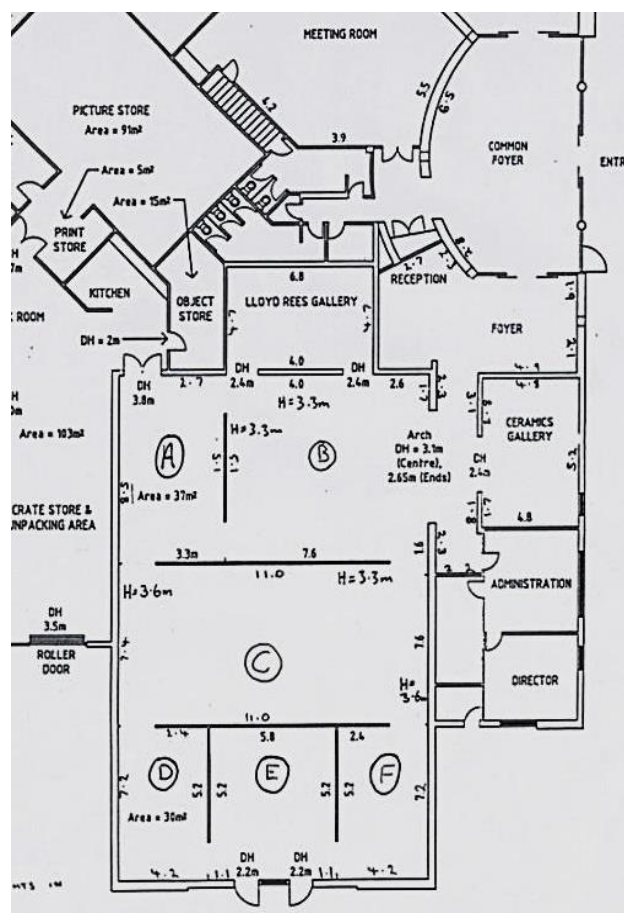


Fig. 201. Floorplan of the Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, (detail). BRAG.



Fig. 202. Curator unpacking pictures loaned for the exhibition, 6pm 29 January 2014, Photograph: BRAG



Fig. 203. A BRAG installer sorting paintings prior to hanging. Photograph: BRAG



Fig. 204. A work in progress, Photograph BRAG

Colin Rhodes and I were due to give a talk on Warren and his art and about a hundred attendees from Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne and from the local district were crammed into room 'E' of the exhibition (see Fig. 205).



Fig. 205. Professor Colin Rhodes (L) and author (R) presenting to some of the BRAG audience. Photograph BRAG

The official opening was held in the central gallery ('C' on the plan, Fig, 201), The opening addresses were given by the gallery Director, Richard Perram, and Dr. Gene Sherman, Chairman of the Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation, Sydney.

The following series of photographs are of the exhibition as a whole. One hundred and twenty-four paintings were hung and two sketchbooks and a small sculpture by Warren were also displayed.



Fig. 206



Fig. 207



Fig. 208

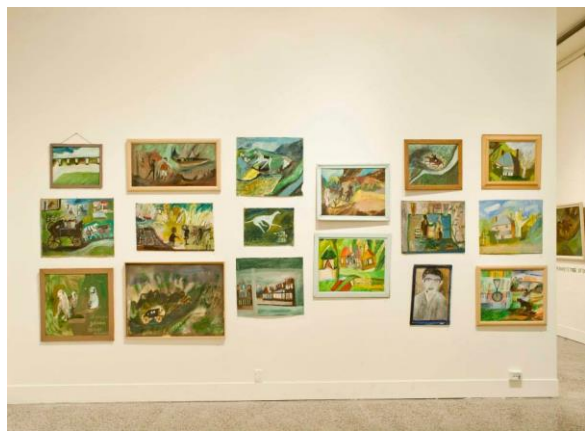


Fig. 209



Fig. 210



Fig. 211



Figs. 206 to 212. The exhibition. Photographs: BRAG

Fig. 212.

The exhibition was covered favourably by the local press and was mentioned on local radio stations several times. During the six weeks life of the show more than two thousand nine hundred visitors attended which was a record for an exhibition held at the gallery. Amongst them were groups of school children from several local schools. Alan Warren, Selby Warren's son, was often present at these visits and talked with them about his father. One group consisted of all the students of the tiny Trunkey Creek Public School (twelve students enrolled in 2015) and their visit received particular attention in the following article in Bathurst's 'Western Advocate' newspaper:

'Art hits home for Trunkey children (by Michelle Allen, 8 March 2014)



Fig. 213. LOCAL CONNECTION: Mick Warren, son of the late artist Selby Warren, watches the children from Trunkey Public School interact with his father's exhibition at Bathurst Regional Art Gallery. Photo: Zenio Lapka

It was somewhat ironic that the works of Trunkey Creek artist, the late Selby Warren, had the entire student population of Trunkey Public School enthralled by his creativity. Young eyes spent the afternoon peering at the paintings of Mr Warren, who was only discovered by the art world at the grand old age of 85.

The students this week made the pilgrimage to Bathurst Regional Art Gallery (BRAG) as part of the gallery's education week program. BRAG's education and public programs officer Emma Hill said the aim of the program is to give the kids experiences they can't get at school.

"Three to four times a year BRAG brings in kids from smaller public schools and gives them a tour and some hands-on activities or workshops," Ms Hill said.

"The response is always positive and the kids love it."

And this time around the visit was a touch more personal, as the Trunkey kids viewed works completed by one of their own. The late artist's son Mick Warren accompanied the group and said his dad would have been thrilled to know Trunkey kids had the opportunity to see his works.

"Dad would have been really taken with it; he loved kids."

Trunkey Public School principal Sharyn Cogdell said the students were excited by the exhibition Selby Warren: Trunkey's Tribe of One.

"Mick came to us about 12 months ago to say this exhibition was coming up and our art teacher Melody Bland thought it was a wonderful opportunity to study Selby's works with the kids for a term," Ms Cogdell said.

"So this visit is in context with their learning and it is also close to home. The kids have recognised houses, hills and buildings that Selby has featured. And two children still actually live in Selby's house."

Described as a naive artist, meaning he never received any formal training, Selby Warren will nonetheless continue to inspire the Trunkey kids.

"All Selby's artworks tell a story – whether it is a political statement, a local issue or events he lived through," Ms Cogdell said. And he used a variety of mediums on a variety of surfaces, which the children can relate to. Once they get back to class they will be motivated to create their own artwork and we will have a Selby-inspired exhibition of our own." '

Of all those involved in the show Warren's son, Mick Warren was the most appreciative. He told me that to attend an exhibition of his father's work which received such public interest and support was 'really great to see, mate'.⁵⁴⁸

After the exhibition had closed I received a report on it from BRAG. In a letter accompanying the report the gallery Director, Richard Perram, wrote:

'On behalf of Bathurst Regional art Gallery I write to thank you for curating the *Selby Warren: Trunkey's Tribe of One* exhibition.

The exhibition was a great success, with a record 2,923 people attending the exhibition and related programs. Visitor response was extremely positive.

Please find attached the Exhibition Report with visitor comments and press clippings.

Once again, thank you for making this exhibition possible. *Selby Warren: Trunkey's Tribe of One* greatly enhanced local audience awareness and appreciation of this remarkable artist'.

Amongst the comments by attendees provided with the Exhibition Report was one which reads: 'Thank you so much. Selby Warren is a National Treasure.'

Several other exhibitions of self-taught and Outsider Art held in Australia which did not necessarily include works by Warren included:

1986 – Inside Out: an exhibition of Outsider Art (Artspace, Sydney)

1999 – European Art brut (Ivan Dougherty Gallery, Paddington, NSW)

2003 – Home Sweet Home: Works from the Peter Fay Collection (National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, ACT)

2006 – Australian Outsiders (Orange and Hazelhurst Regional Galleries, NSW and Halle St. Pierre, Paris)

2007 – Bloodlines: Art and the Horse (Hawkesbury Regional art Gallery, NSW)

2008 – Without Borders: Outsider Art in an Antipodean Context (several Regional Galleries of Art, NSW)

2013 – Renegades – Outsider Art (Cairns Regional Art gallery, Qld)

A number of other exhibitions have been held, for example at the Callan Park Gallery at Sydney University, though most of these have been on a small scale.

Appendix E

Transcript of Interview of Selby Warren (SW) by Paul Murphy (PM)

on ABC TV 's 'This Day Tonight' – 14 August 1972

The interview took place at the Georges Gallery, Melbourne. The exhibition had opened there on 7 August 1972 and was the second Warren show organised by Komon. The transcript of the interview contains some of the few comments Warren made publicly on his paintings though none of these can be considered particularly insightful.



Fig. 214. Warren (L) and interviewer Paul Murphy (R) of ABC Television on the program, 'This Day Tonight', 14 August 1972. Photographed from computer screen by the author.

In the background as interview commences: SW: When I was a young man..... I dreamt.....

PM: Selby Warren has lived all his life in the bush working in shearing sheds, doing odd jobs around the farm, prospecting, driving bullock teams and

working on the railways. He didn't start painting 'til he was 74 because he'd never had the time and he didn't know he had the talent. Until an art teacher, who was passing through Trunkey Creek, spotted one of his pictures and told him he had real ability, Selby thought of his paintings as nothing more than something pretty to hang on the wall.

SW: Well, I didn't realise until somebody came that knew something about the game, in the form of a man called Mr Dixon or Professor Dixon, and he said, 'this is the greatest I ever looked at'. He said, 'it's wonderful'. He said, 'it's fantastic'. So that started me on the, ah, art business - and here I am.

PM: Selby Warren hadn't heard about oils until about 5 years ago. He uses them now as a sort of concession to his belated recognition. But before he was discovered, he used to paint on any surface he could find - an old bit of cardboard or a biscuit tin - with anything from charcoal and watercolours to house paint.

He paints from memory, from countless recollections of the days when he was a shearer, a roustabout or a bullocky and he still remembers some of the bush songs that he learnt more than 50 years ago.

SW sings:

'Well I am Australian cowboy, I am a station-hand

I'm handy with the ropin' pole, I'm handy with the brand

I can ride a rowdy colt and swing the axe all day

But there's no demand for a station-hand along the Castlereagh'.

PM: Although bush life, as he lived it, is the dominant influence on his work, Selby Warren has always been interested in politics and he's met many Australian political leaders from Billy Hughes on. On the railways he met the young Ben Chifley and painted this portrait of him years later. It's one of his favourites and he was reluctantly persuaded to put it up for sale.

SW: Oh, if it'd had to be bought from me, I doubt if I'd sell it.

PM: But it is for sale, is it?

SW: It is for sale but I don't quote prices. I leave it to the manager of the gallery.

PW: Give me a rough idea of what that would fetch.

SW: Oh, it'd be worth about eighty dollars.

PM: About eighty?

SW: Yeah.

PM: It's not just the politics of the past which interests him. He keeps up with day-to-day political events and contemporary political figures like the Prime Minister, William McMahon.

PM: Now, whose portrait is that on the extreme right of that picture?

SW: This here? Oh, that's....that's McMahon.

PM: Doesn't look quite like him to me.

SW: Oh no, well he was shocked a bit by Hawke, I think.

PM: That, that explains why the face is a bit white, does it?

SW: Yes, it does. He's one of the blokes who says 'I believe' all the time. But he don't believe in the working man getting anything.

PW: Critics are delighted but perplexed with the simple, almost childlike style that characterises Selby Warren's work. How, they ask, does a man of eighty-six account for the extreme simplicity of his art?

SW: I think simple things are more beautiful than things that's considered drastic, you know. That is to say you see enough hard things taking place in the world without putting them into paintings. I believe a painting should be beautiful and it should tell a story. How does that go with you?

Appendix F

Note: All three tapes (Appendices F, G and H) were transcribed from the original recordings by Unita Knox of Trunkey Creek and the author. Words in *italics* are unclear on the original tapes. The word(s) following in brackets with a question mark are possible alternatives.

*

Selby Warren Tape Recorded Tales # 1

Narrated by Selby Warren 1977

This is the life history of Selby Warren. Now...uh...90 years of age he was born at...uh...Lambing Flat, time it is eighty-seven...uh...eighteen hundred and eighty-seven. His father was a gold digger and his mother was a Miss Guihot. She was about the first white child born on the Lachlan and we followed the usual thing of mining and prospecting through the country. We travelled from one gold diggings to another and when I grew up to be a man...that was...oh I was only nine year old I was considered a man then, I used to take jobs workin'...different jobs. Sometimes it'd be roustaboutin', that's pickin' up wool in the shearing shed. Other times it would be ringbarkin' trees. And in the meantime when you wouldn't have any work to do you'd take a gold diggin' dish and a pick and shovel and go down into the rivers where there was a bit of gold and fossick for gold. Because at that time gold wasn't so plentiful.

Then after a certain time I...uh...I had a brother, he was five years younger than me so we sort of clobbered up together and went and left home altogether. We decided to try

our hand out in the West, being we lived at that time down on the Fish River where Ben Hall and Ben Gardiner used to camp out occasionally, down at Fogg's Hut. However, we went out into the West and things wasn't too good as far as work was concerned, especially for boys about eighteen and twelve year old. So we tramped the roads and cadged tucker one way and another

Well, we took a job of pickin' up sticks, they called it 'stick dodgin' at the time. It was up on a place called Badger's Station, on Marthaguy and we was workin' there, stick pickin' around...oh...it wasn't much of a job but we were gettin' tucker out of it.

That's when the Governors broke out, Joe and Jimmy Governor. They was...ah...they was on the Breelong Creek. There was a black's (sic) camp there and the king of the blacks then was Jacky Underwood. Anyway...ah...Jimmy Governor was married to a gin. We called 'em gins. They was black and they used to go down to Mawbey's, at least she used to, to wash for 'em, and the Mawbeys were very rich people and...ah...there was a governess there and...ah...they used to poke fun at her. Apparently on account of her being a black gin she wasn't fit to associate with. So she cried to Jimmy about it and old Jacky Underwood told Jimmy and Joe, his brother, ...he said "Yous go down and kill them!" So one mornin' they went down with a tommyhawk each and they killed all the Mawbeys, except one little weeny fella that crawled under the bed. Well that was nearly enough for us to get goin' as well. We never stayed. We got the few shillings that we had and everything was upset, the station was all concerned about the trouble and the police came from Wellington and Dubbo and they gathered up all the blacks along Breelong Creek and took 'em away, I think down to Dubbo. And that was the end of us as far as the Breelong Blacks was concerned.

So we decided to come back home and a few years after, when we got older, I decided then that I'd go shearin'. I followed the shearin' industries for...oh...I'd say twenty years. It was mostly blades you shore then...with, and...uh...machines hadn't come in vogue then. But...uh...I became a fairly good shearer with the blades as they call them. They were shears, we call 'em blades, and you had to grind your shears to keep them sharp and use an oilstone. And the man that turned the stone for you to grind your shears, well you'd have to turn round and turn the stone for him to grind his shears. Anyway those sort of things did happen in them times and the country hadn't improved very much and from there I wandered around different places.

I also had my brother with me most of the time and when I got sick of travellin' we'd...uh...we'd bought a tent and a lot of rabbit traps. They weren't very dear, the rabbit traps, and there was thousands of rabbits. It was no trouble to get...ah...get your hundred pair of rabbits. In fact, I caught a hundred and three pair of rabbits in one night and I got seven pence a pair for them. The price is different then to what it is today. And I think I became one of the greatest rabbiters in New South Wales at that period. But it faded out, like all other things that was fairly good, and I decided then that there was no more rabbits worthwhile.

I decided then to go onto the railway and work on the railway for a few years. I worked on the duplication between Galong and Wagga. I worked there for about six months and they decided then to take a branch line off from Galong to Boorowa.

Well, this Boorowa it was a great old town. They had one tradition there – if you wasn't a Roman Catholic, well you had no time...there was no time for you in Boorowa. And there used to be a mail coach them times, run through Boorowa, and it was run on the

same principles as the old Cobb & Co coach. They had three horses and a man up on top to hold 'em and he was a capable man with the reins. And when they got everything ready with the coach post office, a policeman would be standin' there watchin' the crowd. It was quite a moment in the town when the coach came in and the coach left and he'd say "All aboard!", crack the whip and away'd go the horses and it was sixteen mile to the railway and those horses used to pretty near go at a hand gallop all the way to the railway line. That's where the post office was and that's where they sort the mails.

Well, from there I decided then to get more of a permanent job. I went down onto a place called Geurie down below Wellington and I got in there with two or three chaps that I knew and they was not doin' too bad catchin' rabbits. I palled ⁵⁴⁸ up with them and I sent word to me brother then to come and join me. He lived at McAlister, he had a bit of a camp there, he and another bloke. So they turned up at this Geurie and he wasn't much of a rabbitier but he was a great fellow to help you out if you didn't do too much. But there was one thing that he was good with and that was his fists. He was only a young feller but it took a good man to beat him. Anyway, he got sick of being around...so I decided then to send him home. Well we chucked in a few bob together and bought him a ticket and we sent him back to where my mother lived in Crookwell.

And there was nothing else for me and the other three fellers then. That was in 1914 when the war broke out, so I decided to join up and we went down to Warren. There was a recruiting station at Warren and we joined the army, that was the Australian Military Force at that time, and from there we went into camp. We went into camp at Liverpool and they was calling for men for the Light Horse. I was a good horseman so I

thought, I said to me mates I said "I think I'll join up in the Light Horse". They said "Well you please yourself 'cause we're goin' overseas". Well, they wanted men to take transports and tents across to...ah...to the Middle East where they had a camp at Tel-El-Kebir in Cairo. And I went with a couple of transports over and back, and that, and...ah...but I never went overseas, only with those transports. I never was in the firing line or anything like that.

So when the war finished I settled down there on a bit of a cocky farm around Crookwell district and raised sheep, cows and pigs, lots of ordinary everyday stock. I had a few good horses in me time. I decided then that I was quite capable of goin' in for sport. So I acquired a couple of trotting horses and I had one beautiful mare called 'Highly Fashioned (?)', a dual gaited mare, I won a good many races with her. I had a beautiful brown horse I called 'Forbidden Jim' and I won a derby in Goulburn with him.

Well, then I got sick of that part of the country. I was startin' to grow feathers that didn't belong to me for some reason so I went away. I was a single man at the time. I went to a little place called Trunkey Creek. Well, ...that was me downfall goin' to Trunkey Creek. So when I got to Trunkey Creek I decided that I had six thousand acres of ground 'round the creek. I only had a few sheep on it, a few head of cattle and a few horses. And the rabbits and the drought and the Depression years set in. I sold wool for tenpence a pound. And I was married. I got married to a very fine lady who lived in Trunkey, I was very lucky to get such a good woman. Well, I settled down and I'm still at Trunkey Creek and today I've got two very fine men and two very fine women that...I...ah...that they still live around and I see them every day, the two of them. And I intend to stay here for the rest of me life. (*Tape ends*)

Appendix G

Selby Warren Tape Recorded Tales # 2

Narrated by Selby Warren 1977

Well, that reminds me of another time when me and me brother was travellin'. We left Condobolin and we had two bicycles. We were getting' more...you know...up to date in travellin'. So we came up to a place called Peak Hill and...uh...we pitched a bit of a tent, and at that particular time there was a circus in town and we went up to the circus tent. It was a Sunday mornin'. There was a lot of crowd around it, young people...of course we was only young then, kids you might say.

And there was a bloke he had a...what he contended was a magic fishin' pool. And he had water in this tank and it was spinning round and round, the water, and he had a lot of tin fish in it with loops on their sides like where their gills would be. And you chucked your line in and you waited till one of these here things hooked in your hook, and you had a fish caught then and the first fellow that got the fish out...he won the prize! And the prize was a couple of bullseyes - you know, bullseyes, they was lollies.

Anyway, that's where I seen the smallest horse. He was a very, very...a little bay horse, and he could...he could run under a greyhound's belly. That's how small he was!

We decided then, after a day or two, to go on to Dubbo and, ah...we started out...and...ah...we had a little terrier. We always took him, we had him for years this terrier. We just carried him on the bikes. And...ah...Sandy he was carryin' the little terrier. We called him Barnett. He had him on the front bars of the bike and there was a

good many dogs there and they raced down onto the road and attacked us. Sandy on the bike and the dog. And he started barkin' like mad. And Sandy, he went head over turkey on the side of the road and went in the gravel. Bikes one way...dogs another way. And great big stones flyin' after the dogs...and curses, the road was nearly crimson with the way he went crook on 'em. Very Good. He said to me, he said...he said, "I've got half a mind..." he said. "to go back there..." he said, "...and shoot all them dogs"...he said, "...that's if I had a gun." Of course we didn't have a gun. I said, well, I said, "The best thing we can do is go on a bit and make a fire and make a drink of tea." Very good, we did that.

When we got along the road about a mile or two we went onto the side of the road and boiled the billy. And we discovered, then, that we'd lost our money! Which consisted of a half-a-crown and three pennies. Well we didn't know where we had lost it. Could've been taken off us in the town, we wasn't too careful with that amount of money, but it was all we had. Well we didn't know whether to go back to the town and see if we could find it. It was getting' late and we thought we'd go on to Dubbo. It was all downhill from there to Dubbo. So we got on the old bikes and away we went.

And along the road we could notice that there was a great big track. And we wondered for a while what the track was. And it was a elephant! You wouldn't expect a elephant to be walkin' along the road! But that's what it was. And previous to that there'd been a circus, not the same circus. It was a *Rowney* Brothers Circus, and it always took the gear with it, pulled with an elephant and dragged great big things they called caravans now. We called them wagonettes, things like that. Well, when we got to Dubbo, we camped down, out of the town a piece. And ah against a big log. It was more

shelter than the tent we had. I decided then, I said, "We have to try and get some tucker somewhere". "Very good", he said. "You see what you can get." He said, "We got no money." He said, "I'm pretty hungry now."

Well, there was a house not far away. I went over to the house and I said to the woman, I said, "Could you give me a bit of tucker?" I said, "We've got nothing to eat." I said, "We lost our money." "Oh," she said. "You poor, unfortunate boy." I said, "There's another feller down there." "What?," she said. "Is he older than you?" "Oh no", I said, "he's younger ... five years younger than me." She said, "You ought to be arrested for bein' away from your mother." Anyway, I said, "We can't help bein' away from our mother." She said, "I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll give you a job." I said, "Good! Sold!" So she said, "See them trees out there?" I said, "I do." She said, "You dig round them trees." She said, "I'll give you something to eat".

So I took the shovel. It wasn't much of a job, I can tell you. Diggin' with a shovel. The ground was fairly hard but I waled into it. And when it come on about eleven o'clock, she come out and she said, "You better come and have something to eat now." I said, "Alright" I said, "what about me mate?" "Oh....", she said, "I don't know what to do." She said, "Food's very scarce."

I said, "Yes. But I couldn't eat anything if me brother doesn't have a bit of a feed." So she gave me a couple of dumplings.... and there were no meat. Two dumplings....four cold potatoes and... She said, "How are you off for matches?" "Oh...", I said, "We've got matches." I said, "That's the only thing we could afford!" "Oh!", she says.

And then there was a girl that came from school at that time. I suppose she came to get her dinner. I said, "What's that's girls name?" She said, "Her name's Kathleen." Well I often thought, ah ... what Kathleen grew up to be like. I knew it years after, it was a very beautiful name. They must have been Irish people for I knew a song called Kathleen Mavorneen. Anyway I took the dumplings down to Sandy. And Sandy said, he said, "Is that all the the stuff that she could give yer?" I said, well I said, "I was lucky to get that." And I said, "I didn't see much else there. There was a few spuds..." I said, "... and there was somethin' cookin' in a pot... but...", I said, "I wouldn't care to think what it was." I said, "It could've been a turkey for all I know." I said, "She never offered me any of it." "Well," he said, "Bugger 'em!" I thought, "Yes." I said, "that'll do," I said, "Bugger 'em two times!" Very good. We rolled up the things. We never waited to ... to eat the dumplings. We wasn't as we wasn't as hungry as all that.

When we got along the road a bit further we decided to go down to Ellengerah – old Wingy Gardiner's. Didn't worry about fifty miles to Wingy Gardiner's. We got down to as far as a place called Gin Gin Bridge and we camped. There was a lot of fowls about and ah they ah..... these fowls, you know, they had a habit of fallin' dead near your tent. And, of course, when they fell dead, you couldn't be arrested for cookin' a dead fowl. So we made pretty decent stews out of them fowls for a while. And from there went along with a chap, Monty Learmonth was his name, we called him a oh..... I don't know...he was a stealer. And at that time we had we had acquired a rifle. I don't know how we acquired it, but we had a rifle and ah.... he said to us, he said, "Would you lend me the rifle?" Sandy said, he said, "I wouldn't lend you nothing." He was a tough feller, my brother Sandy. He was startin' to grow up a bit then. And ah...

he said, "I wouldn't lend him a rifle." He said, "He'd most likely shoot some of them fowls with it." Well, I says, "It wouldn't matter much if they dropped dead near our camp." I said, "We could do with 'em. "Aaah", he said, "don't ...I don't think I'd like anything like that." He said, "Anyway, I'm sick of fowls." So we decided to go to the roll-call at Ellengerah.

That's a man called, we called him Wingy Gardiner. He was a he owned most of the stores in Wellington. Anyway, we went down to the roll-call. There was about five hundred blokes at the roll-call. He only wanted about forty shearers and about the same amount of roustabouts. So we turned up when the boss of the boards was callin' the roll and he looked at us and he said, "What about you fellers?" He said, "Youse got your name down?" We said, "What's that?" He thought they was goin' to perhaps arrest us. He said, "If you haven't got your names down it's no good of you waitin' here for a pen because we're full-handed." He said, "It's full, the roll-call." He said, "It's full." He said, "All the men's turned up." So we couldn't get a job there then so we decided to go further along the road.

Well, we went along the road, and the road led to a little town on the Marthaguy Creek called Collie and there was an old empty house near the other side of Collie. So we decided to go in there and camp. The weather wasn't too good you know. It looked like rain. They didn't mind you campin' in empty houses. Anyway, the people that owned it had gone. And we were there about a couple of hours, and a man turned up. A blackfeller turned up. He asked, he said, "You boys campin' 'ere?" We said, "Yes, we're campin' here 'cause it's goin' to rain." "Oh...", he said, ".... it's good camp."

He said... ah... Well I my trousers, at that time, were pretty raggedy lookin'. And he said to me, "I tell you what I'll do with you." He said, "I'll give you a pair of trousers to wear." I said, "Thank you very much." He said, "I'll fetch 'em tonight." Yeah I said, "Good." He said, "After dark I'll give you with 'em. " He said, "I can see in the dark", he said, "... as well as in the day." So anyway, he turned up with the trousers. It was pair of police trousers!! I looked at 'em. "Oh...", he said, "they're alright, they belonged to me." I said, "Yes?" "Oh yes", he said, "You put 'em on." So I put 'em on. The next mornin' there's a man come and goin' to Gilgandra with a load of pigs. He said, "That bloke might give youse a lift." I said, "He might so..." When he came along, he had two horses in the two horse dray. They called 'em a two horse dray because it was one that had shafts, you know, and they had one horse on the outrigger and he had it all roped in and he had oh.... *(Tape ends abruptly)*

Appendix H

Selby Warren Tape Recorded Tales # 3

Narrated by Selby Warren 1977

Well...um...this story reminds me of a few years after we was at Collie. We went down to a town called Grenfell and we knocked around there doin' a bit of grubbin', me and Sandy. Of course there weren't much money in it but we decided to do a bit of work round the town as well as out in the...on the cocky farms. Bloke by the name of Bennett on the place where we was workin'.

Anyway, we were in town one Saturday and ...ah...there was an old woman had a pub, Mrs Clare was her name. She was a very old woman and she wanted a groom and apparently there was some young fellers that lived in the town, they always got the job of groomin' at this hotel. Anyway she give it to Sandy, me brother, and he was there for a couple of days and some of the blokes heard of him being there. They said "We'll bloody soon shift him out of that. That job belongs to us". So two of 'em turned up one mornin' about ten o'clock and wanted to know what he was doin' down in the yard. Sandy says "It's no business of yours". They reckoned it was their business. Well he said "If you don't get out of my road..." he said "You'll bloody soon get what you're lookin' for". "Oh", he said, "Do you know that my name's Wally Jones and I'm one of the best fighters in Grenfell". Well he said "Take that!" see, and he said "Does your mate want any more, as well as you?" "No" he said, "That'll do but...", he said "...we'll meet you down at the...at the hall". He said, "We have fights down the hall". He said, "That's something you know nothing about". "Alright", he said, "I'll visit your hall one day".

So there was a deal of fighting going on around the town at the time. It was the time when the great big wheat farming was going on and there was Larry Walton, he was a boxer and Chook Noonan and occasionally there used to be a bloke come from Sydney. 'Cause the great Jack Johnson was out in Australia at that time and every Bill, Tom and Harry around the countryside thought he was their greatest ideal and they took a pattern off him, a good many of them. However it was a bloke by the name of Ike Jacobs, he came up to Grenfell. They used to have fights at this hall every Saturday, there was nothin' else much goin' on. Picture shows was...was out, we never knew nothing about them I don't think at that time.

Anyway, we turned up down at the hall. Course I went down. I wasn't much of a fighter but I was a bloke that didn't back down from anyone as the saying was. And...ah...anyway, this Jones, Hankerchief Jones was there. A lot of people called him Half-Sovereign Jones. He was a brother to this Wally Jones. And Ike Jacobs was there too. He was a bloke that was supposed to be a great fighter. And somebody said, oh...it was one of Jones's mates, "What about", ...uh...Fierce Alec they called Sandy Warren. "What about Fierce Alec puttin' the gloves on with Ike Jacobs? Give him a bit of a preliminary spar round". They chucked the gloves into the ring. Of course the ring was roped in like all other boxing rings and Sandy crawled through the ropes. No particular gear on or anything. Ike Jacobs comes in and he pulled the glove on for Sandy, or Fierce Alec as they called him and *Tiger Marks*, the old bloke, pulled the gloves on for Ike Jacobs and another chap jumped into the ring. He said "I'll referee this bit of a preliminary".

Anyway, Ike Jacobs he danced at the rail for a bit. Fierce Alec put his glove out like that, his left hand like that and the next thing Ike Jacobs was flattened on the ground, or on the floor. He said "That's fairly smart of you, Fierce Alec", he said, "I think", he said, "that Jones", he said, "would have a bloody job to beat you", he said, "let alone me beating you!". "Well", he said, 'do you want another one or two?' "Oh yes!" he said, "we'll carry on for a bit". An' after a bit he said, "Look..." he said, "this man..." he said, "...is too strong for me", he said "...and it's useless for me..." he said "...to try and box with him".

He said, "He's too long in the reach..." he said, "...and me done a lot of science as well". Very well. That ended the ah..., the ah... ended in goin' down and takin' the job off Fierce Alec at old Mother Clare's.

So, they tried to make cobbers with Fierce Alec after that but he was a pretty hard bloke to make friends with when he took a set on you. He... he decided that...that he would just finish up with the job and leave Grenfell for good. So he said to me, he said "Look Peglow", I was called Peglow at that time. He said, "You would", he said, "...would be better," he said, "...if you went and took a job", he said, "and I'll leave this job on. I don't like it..." he said "...there's too much drinking going on and rows". He said, "I don't like rows". "Oh..." I said. "...it doesn't matter". I said, "If you want to go", I said, "go we will go". So, away we went.

And the line was goin' then through to Boorowa. From Galong to Boorowa. So we went up there and we took a job. Ah, I took a job navyin', that was pick and shovel work. There was no ploughs or bulldozers in them times puttin' a railway line in. You just used a shovel if you was a shovelman, if you was a pickman well you picked. And he said to me he said, "I don't think" he said, "I can handle that shovel business", he said. He said.

"What about gettin' me a horse and dray?" I had no money to buy a horse and dray, wouldn't buy a *cock robin* let alone a horse and dray. So I seen a bloke and I asked him, I said, "Do you want a driver for a dray?" He said, "Yes". He said, "I've got a spare horse" he said "and a tip-dray. I'll...I'll need a driver". He said, "What's he like?" "Oh...", I said, "I think he'd be all right...ah...very good..." I said, "I'll be seeing him at dinner time". I said, "That bloke down there", I said, "if you go down to him he'll give you a job drivin' of a dray". An' he said, "Rightoh". Down he went.

Comes up with a stumpy-tailed horse and a tip-dray an' sittin' up on the cart. He said, "I got the *ten* out", he said. "I gotta look after the horse meself...; he said, " ...and feed it and do all that to it." I said, "Yes." I said, "Well it's your job." He said, "Alright." So out he went after dinner. The bloke said, You can't come in, only in your turn." He said, "Young feller," he said. He was only about... oh he might have been eighteen at the time. He said, "Alright." He said, "I don't care." He said, "I'll find me turn." And there was a lot of fill for, you know, for in the gullies. And out he went with the first load. Bloke said, "Back in here." He said, "Right". He backed in and he backed cart, horse and everything over the fill and down into the gully. He set his draught horse down on its guts, the cart layin' sideways in the... in... in the mud and dirt. And the bloke that was tippin' the dray at the back, he was down, he was further away with the tailboard in his hand and, ah... after a while, three or four other blokes came down. They got the horse out, got the cart out.

He admittedly, when he got up on the dray again, got the tailboard in it and didn't stop any further, he drove straight back down to where I was. He said, "I can't manage that job!" He said, "I tipped the ... I tipped the " He never swore. He said, "You know

Sel, he said, "You should've never got me a job like that." I said, "I didn't get you the job." Well, he said, "You seen the bloke and asked if he wants a driver." He said, "You know I've never drove a horse." He said, "You always drove the horses." I said, "I know I did."

However we ah.... I had bought the bag of chaff. He was only chargin' him five bob a week for the horse for the service but he had to feed him. Well, very good, we made a bunk out of the chaff and we told the bloke that he'd have to take the horse back and he said, "What about the rent for the horse?" "Well", he said, "I only drove him once. Then I tipped the cart over and the horse over." So he said, "I don't think...", he said, "we owe you anything", he said. "Anyway look...." he said, "If you've got any blokes that can fight...", he said, "I'll fight you for the five bob." The bloke said, he said, "We're not fightin' men." He said, "We heard about you." He said, "You've just come onto this job to take over." "Well", he said, "I'm not goin' to take over this bloody stumpy-tailed horse of yours and the dray." He said, "You can have it back."

Well, then, after that I stopped on the job until I got a few bob made. Wages wasn't much but me and another bloke was gettin' nine bob a day and we was jumpin' holes down to find the bottom to put in piles. That's for bridges to go across for the train to go across on the bridges. Actually there was things was had to be drove in ... piles was drove in with a monkey. And, ah.... I think I stayed about a fortnight on the job, and Sandy, he done the cookin'. That's to... that is to say he was supposed to do the cookin'. I think he was mostly out talkin' to the people around the tent. Well, I'd come back to get me dinner..... there wouldn't be any dinner. So I'd just snap up what I

could because you'd only had an hour before you had to catch the train to get out to the cuttings again.

Anyway, I got a few quid together and I asked him I said, "What about goin' back to Crookwell?" My mother lived in Crookwell. "Oh...", he said, "I'll never be able to find my way back there." He said, "I've never been on a train before. " I said, "Well" I said, "that's the only way to get back" I said, "It's too far to drive back to Crookwell from here". It was up near... on the Western Line, it was only a few mile up to where the train was then. Anyhow, I took him up and put him on the train. And he arrived back home. I, ah.... I got me a letter from home that said that he arrived back home and that seemed to be alright so I stayed another day or two and ah, I had a horse and sulky at that time. So I got me horse and sulky and I got the bit of money I had comin' to me and I packed up all me things and I went.

I decided to go and look for a job of shearin'. I went to a shed out at ... it was about ... ah ... they call it Ellengerah, not Ellengerah, it's like Ellengerah. Ellengrah it's a station way down the Macquarie. Anyway this person he said to me, he said, "What sort of a cook are ya?" I said, "Oh", I said, "I think I'm not a bad cook. I think I could cook." He said, "We're short of a cook." He said, "We want to start after dinner. Do you think..." he said, you could make a few... ah... scones?" I said, "I think I could." "Well", hr said, "Look, there's an oven out there." He said, "You put a fire in it." It was a brick oven. "Very good", I said, "I'll light a fire in it", I said. He said there was plenty of stuff in the ... in the shed there. I said, "Right." So I mixed up a lot of scones and, ah, prepared everything and went out {interruption} fire goin' in the oven. This old brick oven, it

would hold about two hundred scones I suppose., if you filled it up and immediately got
the fire goin' in it, out flew (*Tape ends abruptly*)

Appendix I

Garth Dixon's version of the discovery of Selby Warren; an interview of Garth Dixon

(GD) by Roger Shelley (RS)

RS: When did you first meet with Selby Warren?

GD: I first encountered one of Selby's paintings late one evening in the bar of the Black Stump Hotel at Trunkey Creek. I was on my way home after a successful day's trout fishing on the Abercrombie River with a couple of friends.

Dixon was, in fact, accompanied on this occasion by only one friend, Karl Schaerf.

The picture was tucked away upside down behind a row of old bottles and other assorted relics. Only a corner of the picture was visible in the dim light.

I asked the publican if I might have a look at the whole. He pulled it out from behind the bottles, dusted it down and said it was there only to prop up the bottles. Liking what I saw I asked him about the artist. "It was done by a silly old bugger who lives halfway up the hill."

Other drinkers, who were somewhat inebriated, helped fill in the portrait. "He spends all day doing kids' things like painting, carving sticks to look like people, making jewellery with copper wire and pebbles out of the river." "Tells you one thing one day, something else the next." "Nobody understands him." "He's always happy... sings real well...writes his own poetry and plays an old violin." "Always good for a debate." "He's the funniest bloke in Trunkey...always attracts a crowd".

"He doesn't drink much," the barman said. "But when he does come in, there's always a lot of fun, arguments and all that. You never know what he's up to... he's very secretive... won't let people into his place. They only want to make fun of his pictures."

Two things were clear: Selby aroused strong emotions and all the patrons of the Black Stump agreed that nobody liked his pictures.

RS: If this was after you'd been fishing I guess it was quite late by then?

GD: It was getting on towards 9 pm but I decided anyway to look him up.

Karl Schaerf, who was present at the pub that night remembers Dixon planning to visit Warren the next time he was in Trunkey Creek rather than the same night.

Following instructions I found my way to the house. Dogs were barking all around. I knocked at the back door and it was opened by a snowy haired man of less than average height. His face was disfigured by a severely obvious hare lip (Fig. 34). He looked me slowly up and down, and asked me what I wanted. I introduced myself and told him I was interested in his paintings.

"I don't usually let people in but since you're here I suppose you'd better come in."

I was overwhelmed by the sight. Every space was filled with pictures, from floor to ceiling, three or four deep and even *on* a ceiling. He saw that I was genuine and seemed overjoyed that someone appreciated his work. His gentle wife was largely overlooked for most of the evening but it was apparent that she was

sharing Selby's happiness. Never once did I hear her make a comment or judgment about Selby's pictures. I think they may have puzzled her a little.

RS: What was your first impression of Warren?

GD: Selby believed in himself and seemed confident and intellectually alive. I found him a warm, vibrant and highly sensitive person.

RS: What was your next move?

GD: I wanted other people to see his paintings.

RS: How did you handle that?

GD: Selby's paintings just had to be shown and as I knew Rudy Komon I thought he should be the first person to contact. I arranged to come back to take some photographs of Selby's work and then sent them off. Komon was impressed and said he'd be "up tomorrow." When he saw the pictures in situ he was even more impressed. His gallery was already booked two years ahead but he decided to show Selby immediately. Fred Williams and others had to give way to Selby Warren. Selby at eighty-four couldn't wait. Besides, another gallery might get him.

RS: How long was it before a show was mounted?

GD: So the pictures were selected, framed when necessary, and the exhibition mounted in quick time, about eight weeks. The nature of the materials Selby used were a bit of a problem. You know he used any portable surface as a

ground, his own hair as a brush, and any coloured medium as paint. And any other material that came to hand.

As mentioned by Dixon below, the first exhibition was held at Komon's Sydney gallery in February 1972.

RS: Before we get onto the exhibition, tell me a bit more about Selby, his home and the stuff you saw there.

GD: Selby's house, Hill 90, was hand built by him and a local builder, Gabriel ('Gab') Marmion, and together with the outbuilding, shed and cow bails, presented a unique spectacle. The dunny⁵⁴⁸ was propped up with a long bolted piece of 2 by 4 and the strange lean on the structure looked like something out of a stage set. The unusual carpentry and oddly angled construction of the house, along with the bric a brac, would have made an interesting supplement to the exhibition. It would have been hard to find a single right angle in the place. The bright colour scheme matched Selby's paintings, probably because he used the same colours and materials for both his artwork and interior and exterior decoration.

Another aspect of his identity was revealed in his collection of home-made musical instruments - not quite as well constructed as a Stradivari and more or less unplayable, but visually exciting despite that. Made from oil drums, fishing line, fencing wire and other found objects, they were sculptural works of art (Fig. 35). While they couldn't be tuned, some actually did produce a sound that some might consider musical.

Something you probably haven't heard was that Selby and the village of Trunkey Creek was an appealing subject for a Film Australia project, Rudy contacted veteran documentary maker Malcolm Otton who expressed an interest and four days later he turned up in Trunkey to discuss the project. He was just as enthusiastic as Rudy. But due to a cut in the Film Australia budget, the project was dropped. That was a real shame.

Malcom Otton was particularly interested in vernacular art and, in addition to his film work, painted pictures in that style. Unfortunately his proposed documentary on Warren was cancelled before any footage was taken.

RS: What about the exhibition?

GD: The comings and goings around Selby's place began to attract local curiosity and there was much speculation in the Black Stump as to what Selby was up to this time. As the opening of the exhibition approached, the rumour mill was grinding away in the pub. The upcoming exhibition was also generating interest further afield. Here was an archetypal Australian bushman recalling the stagecoach and bushranging days - a strong, personality telling his story with originality, and a good deal of humour. At 85 years old he had a spring in his step and a twinkle in his eye. Here was a modern Australian Grandpa Moses.

At Selby's one man exhibition at Rudy Komon's Gallery the art connoisseurs of Sydney found Selby irresistible. Far from overwhelmed, he handled the media

with great aplomb. Selby did not deal in self-deprecation. He gave dozens of interviews for press, radio and national television, including a segment with Paul Murphy on the ABC's *This Day Tonight*.⁵⁴⁸ The exhibition was a critical success. It came close to selling out.

RS: How did Selby get on in Sydney?

GD: Rudy Komon had a reputation for giving memorable dinner parties, especially for his good food and wine. Generously, he hosted a dinner at an up-market restaurant in honour of Selby, who was invited to bring relatives and friends.

Guests included artists and people who had helped with the show. Cleverly, Rudy seated John Olsen next to Selby. The pair established an immediate rapport. Their loud and infectious laughter and sheer good humour made for an unforgettable evening.

RS: What did the Trunkey locals think of it all?

GD: The citizens of Trunkey later honoured Selby with an outdoor lunch under marquees. Trunkey was proud of her famous son even though most were left wondering why.

The loyal patrons of the Black Stump differed widely in their assessment of Selby. They were united however in their conviction that the promotion of Selby was a huge conspiracy. Exactly what that conspiracy was or meant was a hot topic for debate.

Having been a regular patron of the Black Stump I was privy to a deal of the speculation, which ranged from the bizarre to the ridiculous. I was pressed to admit that somebody was trying to get at Selby and, by inference, I must somehow have been involved in the conspiracy. No one could possibly like his work. I countered that he had sold out, so somebody must like it.

They changed tack, saying that it was a crying shame that those city blokes had made fun of an old bloke of 85. This remained the favoured line. What I was getting out of it was never asked. Selby's success brought many visitors to Trunkey Creek. So many that one of the locals described the unaccustomed activities as a "second gold rush".

And Selby relished the spectacle. He found his fame fulfilling. He looked back on his successes and failures and talked frankly on any issue. He had led an interesting and hard life, had been prepared to take risks and "give anything a go", as he said. He spoke freely of his many business failures, "bankruptcies" or "went broke" he called them.

"Make things happen *for* you," he advised me, "don't let things happen *to* you." But as far as business was concerned, more things had happened *to* Selby than *for* him.

He would be remembered for his bush stories, songs and poetry as well as for his painting and drawing. In his long life he may have trodden on a few toes, which could account for some of the stories circulating about him. These stories hinted

at "a wild past" and a few dark corners. But no specifics were ever given, only qualifications such as "some say", "it could have been" and other "maybes".

Warren did have something of a 'wild past' with at least four court appearances: three over bankruptcies, and another for stealing and 'negligently branding' ten sheep.⁵⁴⁸ Alan Warren is also aware of 'a few other things' but preferred to keep them to himself.

As a non-conformist in a conformist society, Selby would be an obvious subject for the gossip that all small communities thrive on.

Selby's success at the Rudy Komon exhibition was remarkable. He attracted wide media attention.⁵⁴⁸ He had been shown at one of Sydney's most prestigious galleries, appeared on national television and had given numerous interviews. Selby was interesting to the public as much for his personality as for his art. He had overcome his very obvious disfiguration, the hare lip, and assumed a rare self-confidence. He was as comfortable performing before any interviewer, with or without a camera, as he was holding forth at the bar of the Black Stump.

Asked on one occasion by an interviewer what he liked most about his paintings, he answered: "the publicity".

Appendix J

Selby Warren's Funeral

The following was provided by Garth Dixon who wrote down his memory of Warren's funeral for the author in June 2011:

The day Selby was laid to rest was hot, dry and dusty. Outside the little church in Trunkey Creek groups of mourners stood in the heat, swatting at the flies and wiping their faces. The family sweated in unaccustomed formal clothing – the men in suits they had long outgrown, the women uncomfortable in stockings and tight dresses. A little apart stood friends and neighbours from the village and surrounds, and looking most out of place were the outsiders, the art lovers and other city folk who had come to Trunkey as a mark of respect for a man they had known for only a short time.

Inside the church there was no respite from the heat. As the assembly waited for the service to begin they listened, not to an organ but to the repeated sharp crack as the corrugated iron roof expanded and contracted. Finally the minister arrived. Robed in black and with a long white Father Christmas beard, gaunt red face with piercing blue eyes, he seemed like a character actor. In fact the whole event had a theatrical feel to it.

The minister began by expressing his sympathy to "Mrs Selby and all the members of the Selby family", and went on to explain (self-evidently!) that he'd never actually met Warren, "despite the proximity of his house to the church". When he had run out of preliminary remarks he reached for his prepared notes.

There followed a pantomime of patting his pockets and looking all around him, to no avail. He uttered a quick "Excuse me, please, I seem to have misplaced ..." and bolted out of the church. He returned a few minutes later, sweating profusely, clutching a piece of paper from which he proceeded to read a speech that bore little relation to the man known by his family, friends, neighbours or even the outsiders.

The little graveyard at Trunkey is a lonely, informal spot in the bush filled with cicadas and birdsong. Selby's grave among the gum trees had been hewn out of the iron-hard dried ground with an impressive neatness and precision. Instead of the usual rectangle it was in the shape of a coffin, When asked why it was shaped that way the blacksmith, Jimmy Radburn, said he had dug it pretty much by himself. Years before, he and Selby had made a pact: whoever went first would have his grave dug in the shape of a coffin by the other. The pact was honoured, in every sense of the word, by Radburn. Chatting with Radburn and enjoying his graveyard humour, Dixon pointed to a particular spot among the wattle trees a good way beyond the Protestant and Catholic sections, and observed that it would make a pleasant resting place. "That part's reserved for the suicides and the Chinese", explained Radburn.

After the graveyard service Dixon noticed that one of Selby's most unrelenting sparring partners in the Black Stump forum was conscientiously filling in the grave. Thinking a word of appreciation in order he went over to him saying "You and your mates deserve thanks for what you are doing for Selby". His expression

remained unaltered as he replied: "Don't worry mate, I'm enjoying every shovel full".

Later, at the wake in the Black Stump, conversation naturally turned to Selby and the old days. Talk of Selby's adventures lasted throughout the evening and well into the early hours. Amid the laughter and the quiet pauses it was easy to detect the warmth of the community towards their departed friend. His close family relations were acknowledged with respect. One thing the locals seemed agreed on was that he'd been taken for a ride over his paintings, "by them bastards in the city!"

All those present drank to Selby as a rare individual, a one-off out of a time long past. Dixon added that when he reflects on Selby's funeral the thought often comes to him what an interesting version of the theatricality of his own funeral Selby might have painted.



Fig. 215. Warren's grave, Trunkey Creek cemetery. Photograph, author, 2011

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Petullo Art Collection: www.petulloartcollection.com
Princeton University: www.princeton.edu
Smithsonian Institution: www.si.edu
Souls Grown Deep: www.soulsgrowndeep.org
State Library of New South Wales: www.sl.nsw.gov.au
State Library of Victoria: www.slv.vic.gov.au
Sydney Morning Herald: www.smh.com.au