

# artwise

**A**rtwise a Lismore based artists initiative catering for the needs of artists with varying intellectual and physical challenges - has changed its name! We have succeeded after twelve months, in becoming officially incorpo-rated.

We are now known as *Growth Through Art Artwise Lismore Inc.* although the compic sign at the doorway still proudly announces simply Artwise. We are hoping that finally achieving the status of an incor-porated Association will enable us to attract funding that will ensure our survival.

On Thursdays you can find us in what is affectionately known as the dungeons of the Conservatorium campus. However, we are busy negotiating with a group of local artists about a move into shared studio space. Visitors are welcome in our open studio environment where disadvantaged artists and artists work together accessing as many mediums and materials as possible.

We are experts at operating on a shoestring budget - \$8,000 over five years for a program that has touched the lives of 200 local artists.

This year the juggling act has become really difficult - we scrape the last drops of paint from the can and try to think how to mix green from the remaining red & blue paint.

This situation provides many challenges as the aim of the group is to provide access to quality materials and a wide range of techniques & art experiences.

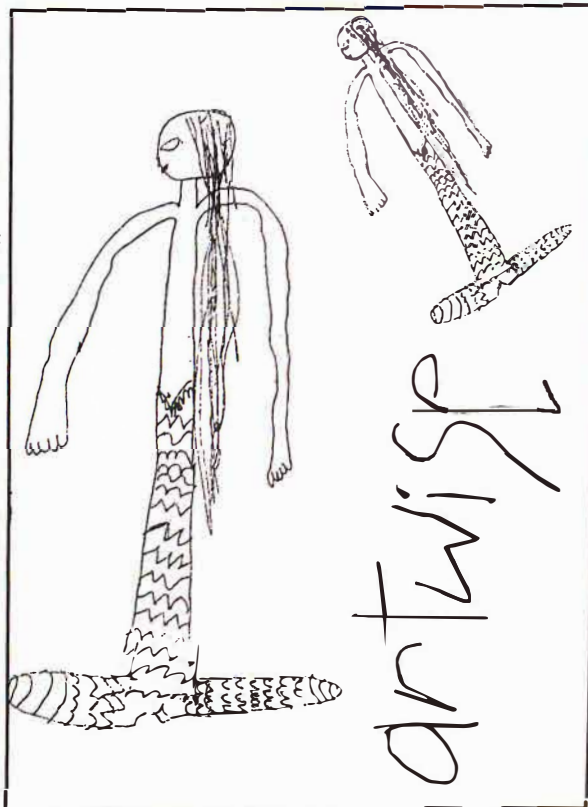
The paperchase for the illusive art funding is fairly dismal with departments honing submissions down to a couple of pages

with no letters of support included and seemingly little understanding of the issues faced by grassroots arts organisations or the disadvantages suffered by this group of artists.

The classic too hard basket looms large & we try not to drive ourselves mad. A small amount of money could enable one artist to overcome the double tyranny of geographic isolation & institutionalisation, to access the artistic support offered to her over the last four years by Artwise.

We desperately need to break the barriers keeping ours and similar groups resource poor and our volunteers in danger of burnout. Burn the too -hard basket and recreate a strong platform as vibrant as our palette and lobby for the very real changes we discussed when we came together in Brisbane at the last DADAA Conference.

Meanwhile back at the studio we are stretching the last shreds of our canvas and preparing exhibition pieces for an Artwise exhibition at Lismore's newest artists' run gallery "The Chocolate Factory".





We have taken on an exciting brokerage role for Macushla through the new D.O.C.S. Post School Options Funding. As a founding member, Macushla has asked us to create options for her which allow her to explore her creativity; ie. with individual ceramics tuition, at the Stonecutters' Studio in the stimulating melting pot environment of practicing regional artists & plans a small solo exhibition in June.

Drama, massage, performance, dance, art, computer graphics circus skills and music - doors have opened for her to develop these new skills. Showcasing her talents, interests and abilities is certainly easier given the removal of financial disadvantage allowing her the chance to seek out courses and tutors.

This young woman who has a keenly developed sense of theatre stunned us all recently when she treated us to a 20th birthday performance of her mermaid piece. The performance will be recreated soon for LINC TV - community television. She has also been invited to perform locally.

If ever government departments needed proof of the immediate returns on the money invested in nurturing the talents of this group of artists it was captured in the spotlight of the Mermaid Cafe.

Anyway, for now its back the mad chase around town to find a printer so this can reach you all with love and creativity from Artwise.



The Australia Council the Federal Government's arts funding and advisory body, has commissioned a study of the arts and disability.

Researchers Juliet London and Des Walsh will be examining a range of issues, including the employment of people with a disability in the arts, the role of people with a disability as performers or artists and people with a disability as audience members.

The key aims of the project are to:

- evaluate barriers to access to the arts for people with a disability as audience members, artist/performers and employees/arts workers
- examine the emergence of "disability arts" as a distinct area of arts activity
- analyse the implications for arts organisations of the 1992 Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act
- examine the ways in which people with a disability are reflected in or represented through the arts
- investigate the need for arts funders to provide stringent guidelines on arts and disability
- develop a framework for policy on arts and disability

For further information about the project or to provide ideas & information, please write to:

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