

Lyndal Gerlach

# Visually Vocal

by Tiffany Jones

The art of Lyndal Gerlach has a lot to say, as does Lyndal herself. Deliciously opinionated, clued-in and arty, Lyndal uses her work to verbalise her ideas on art trends, music, commercialism and the world around her.

If you go to one of Lyndal Gerlach's art exhibitions, or you come across one of her works at a show, it's likely you'll be discussing it for some time afterwards. And the words 'creative', 'opinionated' and 'clever' are certain to be mentioned in the conversation, whether you are talking about the work or the woman herself. The rebel in Lyndal loves giving people something to talk about.

"I rarely create without something to say, and if it needs to be said, it needs to be said urgently, and to the near exclusion of everything else," Lyndal says. "The idea incubates in me for a while and then bursts into creation. However I'm not prolific and hope nothing I do is taken on face value," she adds.

"The natural expression of an artist needs to be unbridled and unfettered," she continues. "My 'rebel within' stirs when I see commercial stylistic repetition being encouraged. Good art needs to move and provoke the viewer in some way."

So what does Lyndal need to tell the world so urgently? A whole host of things, it seems... Lyndal uses her work to verbalise her ideas on art, music, commercialism, environmental issues and just about anything that strikes her as important.

Perhaps the fact that she painted her first major work, 'Man With his Neck Drowned', on the linen closet door at the age of two in response to a TV news item, should serve as an indication as to the workings of her now-adult mind.



*Masque for Lady Nothing -  
Everyday Apparel (dedicated  
to Phillip Houghton), oil on  
linen, (610mm x 920mm)*

14 Artist's Palette

"I consume the world around me. There is inspiration everywhere, especially in nature, the built environment, music, science, words and people," she enthuses. "Music has the same language of tones, colour and rhythm as art, so I enjoy artistic collaborations with musicians. I have worked with Australian classical guitarist and composer Phillip Houghton and the Sydney Guitar Trio. Many of my fine art works have appeared on musical artists CD covers.

"Art history is also an influence," she continues, "as a study of the statement 'Art reflects society' has created in me a need to look at biographies and beliefs throughout art history, which has of course led me to try and better understand the different creative techniques. Master artists, especially Carravaggio and Klee, the Bauhaus movement, colour field theorists and the impressionists have all been influential. I am particularly fascinated by abstract expressionism, and I occasionally unleash into it."

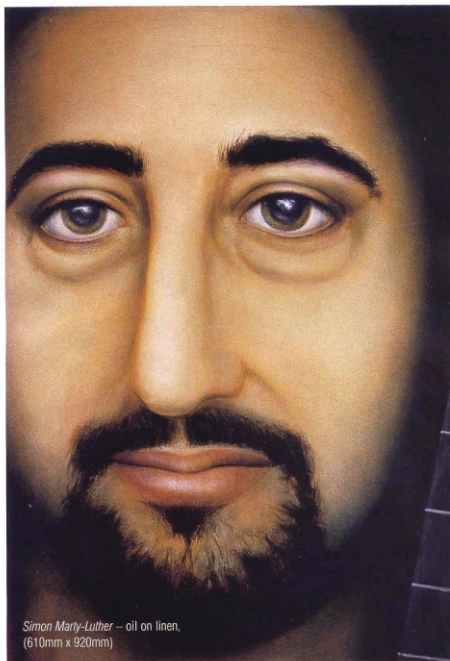


*Saturday Sunday - oil on linen,  
(610mm x 920mm)*



*One Strike, Feather, Match - pastel on paper*

Artist's Palette 15



Simon Marty-Luther – oil on linen,  
(610mm x 920mm)



Artist's Hand – oil on linen,  
(610mm x 920mm)

These influences can be seen in abstract works such as 'One Strike, Feather, Match', and 'Onomatopoeia (music by Nigel Westlake)', as well as more detailed pieces such as 'Masque for Lady Nothing – Everyday Apparel (dedicated to Philip Houghton)'. The piece 'Leonardo What Happened?' is an example of her work that directly enters into a dialogue with the artistic masters of old.

Describing herself as "a bit of an amateur sociologist", Lyndal also reveals her fascination with sociology in works such as 'Psychology of Violence' – an artwork delving into the reasons behind violence (such as fear, political and religious motives and deeply rooted needs), and behaviours and temperaments associated with it.

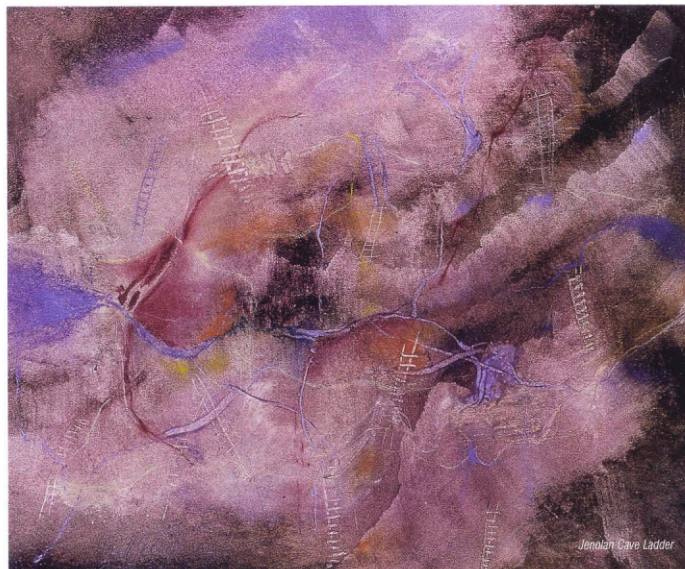
There is also a meditative and introspective side to Lyndal's work, with pieces from her 'My Inner Room' series such as 'Still Life', 'Artist's Hand' and 'Simon Marty-Luther' revealing a much subtler form of questioning.

"I will often change media and methods to achieve the idea's worldly birth," she explains. "Artists need to be able to explore and express in whatever medium suits the idea or feeling. I've worked in oils, acrylics, silver, graphite, pastels, ceramics, plastics, wire, pen, watercolours and words.

"Being fascinated and eternally driven to work with tone, shape and lines, nothing excites me more than a good passage of light or a fabulously expressive line, even if it is in isolation of the subject matter," she continues. "At times subject matter alone fascinates me and I couldn't care less about the technique."

Having trained as both a graphic designer and an art teacher, Lyndal has wandered through several art-related professions, and several non art-related professions in her lifetime, but says she couldn't travel too far from her creative path without being pulled violently back.

"I have also achieved in sport as a national and state champion in archery," she relates, "but was prevented from going further in competition through a back injury. Both the injury and the



Jenolan Cave Ladder

“Art is an evolutionary practice, not a finite product, and I have a long way to go yet.”

archery taught me a lot about creativity, visualisation, persistence and most of all, being an individual.”

Now working as a visual concept designer, Lyndal has exhibited at the Ivan Dougherty Gallery and other venues, been selected in the Faber Castell Drawing Prize and other competitions and had her work in a variety of magazines.

However, Lyndal's insatiable appetite for challenge and progress keeps her from being made stagnant by these successes.

"I am constantly challenging the rules of composition to give the viewer a feeling, a dynamic visual and intellectual challenge," she says. "I am yet to achieve a painting that I am truly satisfied with. Art is an evolutionary practice, not a finite product, and I have a long way to go yet."

This urge for improvement also extends to the art world itself, with Lyndal feeling quite strongly about issues such as copyright that affect the commercial artist.

"Visual concept work has made me aware of copyright issues within art, and the need to reform the current workings of the system," she comments. "Many artists, including myself, have been used commercially without permission. Artists need to make a decent living and copyright registration is expensive.

"Perhaps a system such as APRA needs to be considered, where a percentage of every resale goes back to the artist," she suggests. "On this note, it would be advisable that the artist's name and date be clearly 'embedded' into the artwork. Artists need to keep a written register of every work, and learn their rights."

Lyndal's long term goal is to explore art on her own terms, and have it provide an income without constant pressure. "But life has responsibilities, and this is not an ideal world, is it?" she adds. In her voice is just the right mix of angst, realism and insurgent feeling that will most likely result in another fabulous painting, or two! ■

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