

**OPENING THE OPTOMEYES 2012 ART EXHIBITION
BY
THE HONOURABLE PETER UNDERWOOD AC & MRS FRANCES
UNDERWOOD
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
HOBART – THURSDAY 4th OCTOBER 2012**

Good evening everybody. I have opened this Art Exhibition every year since I was appointed Governor of Tasmania in April 2008 and tonight I see some faces that have been at every exhibition since then and also some new ones. To the regular supporters of this exhibition and to the new supporters I say you are all very welcome. To those who only popped in for a free drink I want to explain to you that the end object of tonight's proceedings is to raise money for the Hobart City Mission, a worthy benevolent society of which I have had the honour of being patron since I took up office five years ago, and that there is no such thing as a free drink. Only when you leave here with a work of art under your arm that you had no intention of buying when you walked in, will you realise that each glass of red that you consumed has cost you more than \$100.

Established in 1852 the Hobart City Mission is Australia's oldest City Mission. Indeed, this year is the 160th anniversary of the foundation of the Mission. It is an ecumenical Christian organisation with a vision to improve the lives of those in need or who are marginalised, by providing them with advocacy, training, mentoring, housing, financial and emotional support with the aim of enabling them to participate in community life to the best of their ability. Most

importantly, it fulfils its work in a way which avoids paternalism and preserves the self-respect and dignity of each person it helps.

Some of the programmes that the Mission operates are funded by the Government, but for many the Mission is reliant upon fund raising, so when you wake up tomorrow morning and the effects of the several glasses of red have worn off, you will look at your newly acquired work of art and experience a warm glow secure in the knowledge that one half of the purchase price you paid for it will go to help the needy in Hobart.

This year there are over 100 Tasmanian artists who have agreed to submit a total of 285 works of art in this exhibition. As usual there is an eclectic mix of photographs, paintings, drawings and contemporary work ranging from Sally Pearce's Triptych of three cheery emus to Breon Martin's metal on metal contemporary work. Some of the names you will all recognise such as Tom Samek, Roger Murphy, Max Angus, Richard Bacon and Joan Humble. But some of the works have been submitted by emerging artists whose names will no doubt soon be familiar to us all. To all those artists who have so generously agreed to half of the purchase price to the City Mission I say thank you very much. And to the other corporate sponsors such as TDT Ten and The Mercury, and of course the long term major sponsor of this event - the Mission's biggest fund raising event - Optomeyes I also say thank you very much for your generous

support of the Mission's good work. We really have some very good corporate citizens in Tasmania.

Now I realise that some of you may not have a lot of experience in acquiring works of art and are probably looking to me for a little guidance on how to choose an appropriate work. I was asked to do this at another exhibition that I opened and afterwards the organisers told me that many of those present were very grateful for the helpful advice that I gave them so I thought I would share it with you. I like to think that I get around the art world a bit as did Sir Les Patterson, although actually I don't - but I like to think I do. However, I did come across a trendy exhibition catalog when I was in my doctor's waiting room and found this passage in it:

'The artist, through the materiality of the paint, mediates the transition and spatial flux between oceanic, landscape and cosmic space. Heavily applied, the painterly viscosity brings a three-dimensionality to the work into which the viewer can visually dive.'¹

Now I sure that you will find that helpful as you look around or take part in the auction that is shortly to be held, and when you show off your chosen piece to your friends over a latte do not hesitate to

¹ <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/deepend/stories/2007/1814788.htm>. Accessed 25th March 2011

tell them the following which appeared a few pages over in the same trendy catalogue

“I am finding it interesting how the internal dynamic of the biomorphic forms verges on codifying the accessibility of the work.”

I hope that has been some use to you and if you think I can be of any further help advising you this evening don't hesitate to ask, but if the worst comes to worst - apply the well tried principle: “if you like it - buy it”. You will not only be doing yourself a favour, you will be helping a great cause.

Now let the buying begin. I declare the 2012 Optomeyes Eyes Exhibition open.