

Image of Leon Holmes
painting, by Judith Rieger

#PADU2025

**Plein Air
DOWN
UNDER**



PEEL REGION
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

23-30 SEPT 25

Outdoor Painting Festival Weekend 27 – 29 SEPT 2025

**Come and paint
or come and
watch!**

Feature Artists



Leon Holmes,
AUS



Michele Usibelli,
USA



Aaron Schuerr,
USA

- **Free have-a-go art activities for all ages**
- **Watch the artists paint**
- **Free painting demonstrations**
- **Awards, exhibitions and art sales**
- **Insta photo competition**

**Festival
Program
at a glance**



#Pleinairdownunder



pleinairdownunder.com

Festival times and locations at a glance, everyone welcome!

FESTIVAL DAY ONE | SAT 27 Sept | Mandurah

Presented by



8.30am onwards

Watch the artists painting around Mandurah

11.00am - 3.00pm

Young Painters Zone Mandjar Square

Free art activities for all the family

Painting Demonstration, Workshop & Theatre Presentation

6.00 – 8.00pm *(inside)*

Mandurah Performing Arts Centre, 9 Ormsby Terrace

FESTIVAL DAY TWO | SUN 28 Sept | Pinjarra

10.00am – 4.00pm

Edenvale Heritage Precinct, George Street, Pinjarra

6.00pm onwards

Sharky's at Dolphin Quay Marina, Mandurah

FESTIVAL DAY THREE | MON 29 Sept | Mandurah

10.00am – 1.00pm

Mandurah Performing Arts Centre,
9 Ormsby Terrace *(outside)*

1.30 – 3.00pm

Mandurah Performing Arts Centre,
9 Ormsby Terrace *(inside)*



Scan the QR Code
for the full timetable of
events and free activities

A message from **Rhys Williams, Member for Mandurah**



Rhys Williams,
Member for Mandurah

Kaya. Wandju.

Mandurah's stunning landscape once again becomes a living canvas for Plein Air Down Under 2025. This festival celebrates the vibrant connection between art, community, and the natural world. We're honoured to welcome local, national, and international artists, whose work brings our city's beauty to life.

A heartfelt thank you to the volunteers, sponsors, and artists who make this event possible. We invite everyone to experience the creative energy, workshops, and live painting that define this unique festival.

Welcome to Mandurah and Plein Air Down Under 2025.

A message from **Mayor Caroline Knight**



Mayor Caroline Knight

A warm welcome to Mandurah for the 2025 Plein Air Down Under outdoor painting festival.

With Mandurah's immense natural beauty found throughout coastlines, wetlands, bushland, and urban landscapes, you'll be spoilt for choice when putting paint to canvas.

We're proud to have a strong, talented, and thriving artistic community in Mandurah, who share stories and foster meaningful connections to people and place.

We welcome all Plein Air artists from near and far into the fold as they discover Mandurah's hidden gems and bring them to life through art.

Thanks to the organisers, sponsors, and volunteers for your efforts towards this year's Plein Air Down Under event.

We are excited to see many masterpieces being created this year, celebrating Mandurah and telling unique stories as part of Australia's biggest outdoor painting festival.

Welcome to Plein Air Down Under 2025

Australia's premier outdoor painting festival is a vibrant celebration of art in the open air. Now in its seventh year, Plein Air Down Under continues to attract artists from far and wide; here to paint the spectacular landscapes of Mandurah and the wider Peel region.

There is something powerful and authentic about painting en plein air as artists capture light, atmosphere, and a fleeting moment as it unfolds. This festival honours that experience, encouraging artists of all ages and skill levels to immerse themselves in the landscape.

This year we welcome internationally acclaimed Feature Artists Michele Usibelli (USA), Aaron Schuerr (USA), and Leon Holmes (AUS). Their artwork, along with thirteen other award-winning artists, can be viewed in the Spirit of the Landscape exhibition at the Mandurah Performing Arts Centre until 12 October.

On Monday 29 September, don't miss the Two-Hour Quick Draw. This high energy competition results in spontaneous and dynamic artwork, available for immediate purchase.

Whether you are painting, watching, learning, or simply strolling among the easels, you are part of something special.

Our heartfelt thanks go to our generous sponsors, passionate volunteers, Steering Committee and the Mandurah Plein Air Artists for making this festival a joyous experience for everyone.

Most of all, thank you to the artists— your curiosity, generosity and love of outdoor painting are the heart and soul of this festival.

Barb Thoms

**Co-Founder, Mandurah Plein Air Artists Inc
Co-Founder, Plein Air Down Under**




Safe Harbor - Michele Usibelli



Rock & Rubble - Leon Holmes



Morning in the Marina - Michele Usibelli



Spirit of the Landscape

Art Exhibition

This year features spectacular artworks by 16 award-winning plein air artists from around Australia and beyond.

The exhibition celebrates the diverse landscapes, communities and topographies that inspire their work.

Among the featured artists are renowned international talents Michele Usibelli (USA), Aaron Schuerr (USA) and Leon Holmes (Australia).

Exhibition dates:

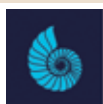
**6 September to
12 October 2025**

ALCOA MANDURAH ART GALLERY,
Mandurah Performing Arts Centre
9 Ormsby Terrace, Mandurah.

Other exhibiting artists include:

Andy Dolphin, Bob Saxon,
Deborah Zibah, Gordon Alexander,
James Walker, Jo Wesley, John Bullock,
Leanne Pearson, Linda MacAulay,
Merv Lindsay, Samuel Swadling,
Val Brooks and Vicki Lee.

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presented by



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MANDURAH
ART GALLERY



MANDURAH
PERFORMING
ARTS CENTRE

YOU CAN STILL REGISTER TO PAINT AT PLEIN AIR DOWN UNDER

and be eligible for over \$13,000 in awards, exhibitions and selling opportunities.



**Register for the
full event 23 - 30
September**

\$120.50 for adults;
\$10 aged 18 and under.

Quick Draw

(Monday only):
\$20 for adults,
\$10 aged 18
and under.



Feature Artists



Presenting

Michele Usibelli

Feature Artist & Masterclass facilitator

Michele Usibelli (USA) began her artistic journey rooted in the Russian Impressionist tradition, focusing on light and colour through expressive loose brush strokes. Her work spans genres from still life, landscapes to cityscapes and figurative pieces.

Working primarily in oils, Michele also explores acrylics, gouache and watercolour.

Michele's Masterclasses filled quickly but she will be demonstrating her techniques and encouraging creative licence during her theatre presentation, see below.



First Cast - Michele Usibelli



Ears Looking at You - Michele Usibelli



The Ranch House - Michele Usibelli

SPECIAL EVENT

From Reference Photo to Final Painting,
Making a Painting Your Own

presented by
the Mandurah
Arts Festival

**Saturday 27 September,
3 - 5pm, Mandurah
Performing Arts Centre,
Fishtrap Theatre**



To register,
Scan the QR Code
everyone welcome





Presenting

Aaron Schuerr

Feature Artist & Masterclass facilitator

Aaron Schuerr (USA) is an internationally recognised plein air artist who works in pastels and oils.

Aaron has embarked on solo plein air painting treks across the Grand Canyon, over the Beartooth Mountains, and deep into the alpine wilderness areas of Montana and Colorado.

He also makes regular trips to the coast, painting and teaching workshops in Maui and along the California coast.



Afternoon Glaire - Aaron Schuerr



Mountain Rest - Aaron Schuerr

Aaron was awarded Best Pastel for the 2022 Plein Air Salon and has won numerous awards for the Laguna Beach Plein Air Painting Invitational, including The Seascape Award in 2023.

He has been interviewed on The Kelly Clarkson Show about his plein air paintings and frequently contributes to a range of publications including Western Art and Architecture and PleinAir magazine.

Aaron will be doing a live pastel demonstration, see below.

SPECIAL EVENT Live Pastel Demonstration

Saturday 27 September, 1 – 2.30pm
Mandurah Performing Arts Centre,
Fishtrap Theatre

To register,
Scan the QR Code
everyone welcome





Presenting

Leon Holmes

Feature Artist & Masterclass facilitator

Leon Holmes is an international award-winning artist, lecturer and ambassador who is one of the most successful professionals of his trade – Plein Air Oil Painting.

His artworks can reflect landscapes, seascapes and portraits, but can also contain an abstract value. Leon regularly exhibits and teaches internationally in the USA, Netherlands, UK, Greece and Poland.



Tender Reflections - Leon Holmes



Washout - Leon Holmes



Quokka Views - Leon Holmes

FREE EVENT

Oil Painting
Demonstrations,
en plein air

Mandurah

Saturday 27 September,
11.30am

Pinjarra

Sunday 28 September,
2.30pm



*Designed by the artist
for the artist*



Many years of experience and thought have come into play when Leon Holmes designed his range of outdoor painting equipment. His handmade pochade boxes come in 3 sizes, are very light weight and can be set up in under 30 seconds. His innovative Swag Apron is designed to roll into a handy bag to carry the rest of your essential gear. These products are everything you need for a great outdoor painting experience.



Available at : www.leonholmesart.com.au

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FOCUS ON LEARNING

Plein Air Down Under is more than a festival weekend, it is also an opportunity for professional development with Masterclasses, Workshops, Demonstrations and Presentations.



URBAN SKETCHING

with Andy Dolphin

Friday 26 September 2025, 9am to 3pm

An Urban Sketch can stand alone as an artwork, be used in a visual travel journal or as a plein air colour study for a larger painting. Andy will guide students through analysing a scene, perspective and simplifying shapes.

Location: Mandurah Performing Arts Centre, Dance Studio and plein air

FUN OUTSIDE WITH WATERCOLOUR

with Gordon Alexander

Friday 26 September 2025, 9am – 3pm

Includes classic watercolour techniques and some fun plein air exercises to simplify the scene and play with values, edges, colour and composition. Explore the pitfalls and solutions of using watercolour outdoors.

Location: Mandurah, en plein air (TBA)

PLAYFUL EXPLORATION IN COMPOSITION, ALL MEDIUMS

with Aaron Schuerr (USA)

Wednesday 24 September 2025, 9am – 4pm

This workshop is all about discovery and experimenting with different compositions to find an approach that feels exciting and personal, with a focus on colour harmony and design.

Location: Ravenswood Hotel, plein air

TAKING ACRYLICS OUTSIDE

with Linda MacAulay (Victoria)

Saturday 27 September 2025, 1 – 5pm

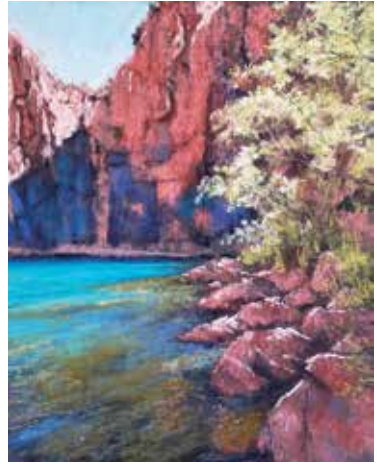
Linda teaches using an easy to follow, step by step process suitable for beginners or those with some painting experience. Make your own stay-wet palette and learn how to use acrylics on the go.

Location: Mandurah Performing Arts Centre, Dance Studio and plein air

Free Feature Artist Demo Zone Timetable

Visit the Bendigo Bank Information
Marquee for exact locations.

**Sunday 28 September,
Edenvale Heritage
Precinct, Pinjarra**



Python Pool - Val Brooks

11.00am Aaron Schuerr (USA) Pastel Demonstration

1.00pm Michele Usibelli (USA) Gouache Demonstration

2.30pm Leon Holmes (Aus) Oil Painting Demonstration

**The Shire of Murray is proud to
support local events.**

Pinjarra lies at the heart of the Murray Region, and thrives on arts,
culture, and heritage.

MANDURAH *Arts* FESTIVAL

12 SEP — 12 OCT 2025

PERFORMANCES | EXHIBITIONS |
INTERACTIVE | WORKSHOPS | EVENTS

DOWNLOAD THE
EVENT PROGRAM



CITY OF
MANDURAH

2025 Awards and Prizes

The 2025 Plein Air Down Under Painting Festival has over \$13,000 in prizes and awards spread over multiple categories.

Major Awards

**\$3,000 Ray White Mandurah
Acquisitional Award**

\$2,500 Open Category
presented by the City of Mandurah

\$1,000 Non-professional Category
presented by Mandurah Holiday Rentals

\$500 Open Category Runner-up
presented by Seashells Resort Mandurah

**\$350 in products, Non-Professional
Category Runner-up**
presented by Senior Art Supplies

Highly Commended x 2
presented by Senior Art Supplies

Highly Commended x 2
presented by Michael Harding Paints

**\$500 People's Choice Award,
Spirit of the Landscape Exhibition**
presented by Community Bank Halls Head

**\$500 People's Choice Award,
Festival Art Exhibition**
presented by Community Bank Halls Head

\$500 PADU Experience Peel Award

\$1,500 Pinjarra Acquisitional Award
presented by the Shire of Murray

\$50 Youth Award under 13
presented by Community Bank Halls Head

\$100 Youth Award aged 13 – 18
presented by Community Bank Halls Head

**\$150 Gillian-Kaye Peebles
Youth Award for Excellence**
presented by Gillian-Kaye Peebles

Quick Draw Awards

\$500 Best in Show
presented by Mandurah Caravan &
Tourist Park

\$350 in products, Best Oil Painting
presented by Michael Harding Paints

**\$350 in products,
Best Watercolour Painting**
presented by Michael Harding Paints

\$350 in products, Best Pastel Painting
presented by Senior Art Supplies

**\$350 in products,
Best Painting (other mediums)**
presented by Senior Art Supplies

\$50 Youth Award under 13
presented by Art & Craft World

\$100 Youth Award aged 13 – 18
presented by Art & Craft World



The Maclean NSW - Bob Saxon

DAY ONE

MANDURAH

Presented by



Painting Zones Mandurah



General painting 8.30 onwards

Around Mandurah's CBD, Cultural Precinct, new Eastern Foreshore, Marina and Venetian Canals.



Bendigo Bank Marquee and Festival hub.

Free parking (time limits may apply)



Activities

Saturday
27
September

Outside Mandurah Performing Arts Centre

From 8.30am onwards:

Sign in and board stamping for registered artists

- Artists Coffee cart, courtesy Ray White Mandurah
- Leon Holmes Products : shop open
- Watch artists painting around the CBD, Cultural Precinct, new Eastern Foreshore, Marina and Venetian Canals

11am - 3pm

Young Painters Zone: Free art activities all ages

- Ray White Mandurah children's art activity & face painting
- Junior Painting Activity presented by the Mandurah Arts Festival
- Bendigo Bank children's art activity
- Have-a-Go Watercolour Activity for grown-ups with Xanthe Turner
- Live music with Best Friends Duo

Inside Mandurah Performing Arts Centre, Fishtrap Theatre Workshops & Presentations

- **1pm** Pastel Painting Demonstration with Aaron Schuerr (USA)
- **3pm** From Reference Photo to Final Painting with Michele Usibelli (USA)

6pm onwards

- Bar open with food available for registered artists, with compliments Ray White Mandurah
- Meet the artists and watch the exhibition grow
- Spirit of the Landscape Exhibition, Alcoa Mandurah Art Gallery
- Ray White Mandurah Door prize

6.30pm

- Feature Artist Panel Discussion



Clouds over the Dune - Val Brooks

DAY TWO

PINJARRA

Painting Zones Pinjarra

General painting from 10.00am:

Artists will be painting along the Pinjarra Heritage Trail

Pick up a free map from the Bendigo Bank Marquee and follow the trail



General painting from 10am



Bendigo Bank Marquee
and Festival Hub

Heritage Trail Key

- 1 Edenvale Homestead
- 2 Gilmour's Garage
- 3 Copper Kettle
- 4 Mechanics' Hall
- 5 Trinity Church
- 6 Roads Board Office
- 7 Court House
- 8 Post Office
- 9 Suspension Bridge
- 10 Exchange Hotel
- 11 Taylor's Store
- 12 Miss Adam's House
- 13 Cantwell Park
- 14 The Weir
- 15 Traffic Bridge
- 16 St John's Churchyard
- 17 Old Rectory
- 18 Glebe Land
- 19 Murray River



FREE Activities

Sunday
28
September

From 10.00am: Bendigo Bank Information Marquee
Edenvale Heritage Precinct and Town Centre, Pinjarra

10.00am onwards

- Watch the artists painting along the Pinjarra Heritage Trail
- Have-a-Go watercolour activity for grown-ups with Xanthe Turner
- Children's art activity
- Live music with Best Friends Duo
- Peel Makers Markets
- Nu.Arts Collective at Liveringa Gallery
- Roger May Machinery Museum
- Pinjarra Patchwork and Quilters
- Murray Districts Historical Society
- Pinjarra Arts Hub Shop

11.00am Aaron Schuerr (USA)
Free Pastel Demonstration

1.00pm Michele Usibelli (USA)
Free Gouache
Demonstration

2.30pm Leon Holmes (Aus)
Free Oil Painting
Demonstration

From 6.00pm onwards
Artists meet at Sharky's -
Dolphin Quay Marina,
Mandurah



Surrender to the heat - Leon Holmes



Summer at the beach - Bob Saxon

DAY THREE MANDURAH

Painting Zones Mandurah



**Quick Draw two hour painting
Competition**

From 10am to 12pm



**Bendigo Bank Marquee
and Festival hub**



Activities

Monday
29
September

Mandjar Square, Ormsby Terrace

8.00am onwards

- Coffee van and breakfast van on site

8.30am – 9.30am

- Quick Draw
Registration and
board stamping
Bendigo Bank Marquee

10.00am -12 noon

- Two Hour Quick Draw
Painting Competition

12.15pm - 1.00pm:

- Quick Draw Judging,
Awards and Sales

Mandurah Performing Arts Centre

1.30pm

- Festival Art Exhibition Opens
- Major Awards Presentations
- Artwork sales
- Door prize by Mandurah
Performing Arts Centre



The Restless Sea - John Bullock



Coastal Abundance - Aaron Schuerr



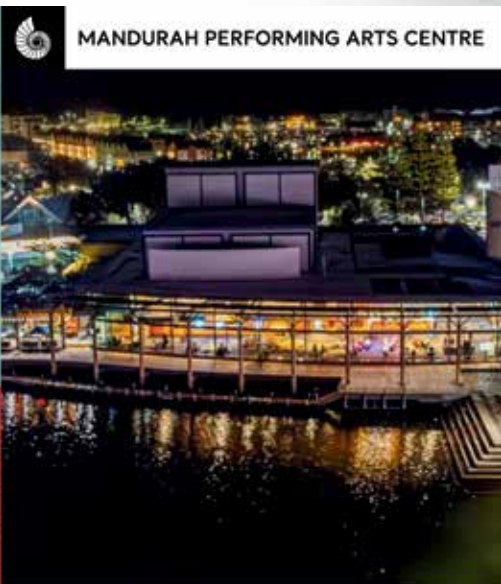
Betty's Boulders - Gordon Alexander

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Experience the wonder of live theatre, music, and the arts at Mandurah Performing Arts Centre. From captivating performances to unforgettable moments — there's something for everyone to enjoy.

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Mandurah Performing Arts Centre

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Meet the Judges

Experience Peel Paint Out Award:

Participating artists to vote

Ray White Mandurah Acquisitional Award:

Ray White Mandurah Team

Quick Draw Awards:

Leon Holmes, Michele Usibelli, Aaron Schuerr and Heloise Lorimer

Major Awards:

Michele Usibelli and Aaron Schuerr

Youth Awards

Gillian-Kaye Peebles and Xanthe Turner

Pinjarra Acquisitional Award:

Shire President, Shire of Murray

Feature Artists are exempt from all competitions and awards with the exception of the People's Choice Awards, judged by the general public.



The Big Tree - Jo Wesley



Insta Contest Winner 2024



Insta Photo Contest

Get creative!

- 1 Take a photo or video during any Plein Air Down Under activity between **23 & 30 September**
- 2 Follow us **@pleinairdownunder**
- 3 Post your photos and/or reels to your Instagram page by **2 Oct** with the hashtag **#PADU2025**

The organising committee's top 3 posts will open to a public poll on 6 October. The posts with the most votes wins a **\$200 voucher** from Terrace Art Framers.

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Mandurah Holiday Rentals

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Special thanks

Plein Air Down Under is a not-for-profit event made possible through our sponsors, dedicated volunteers, project coordinators and participants, and we extend our sincere thanks to all involved.

Festival Vision: Leon Holmes

Project Coordinators: Barb Thoms, Keryn Channing, Alan Pickering, Jackie Quantock, Sara Holmes, Vicki Lee and Xanthe Turner, with support from the Mandurah Plein Air Artists Inc.

Website Management: Alan Pickering

Exhibition Curator: Lotte Waters

Cover Image: Painting of Leon Holmes by Judith Rigger

Photography & Videography 2025: Overland Media

Festival Program: Darren Willans

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Gillian Kaye
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Plein Air Down Under Exhibition

Official
Opening, Awards
Presentations
and Sales

Everyone welcome

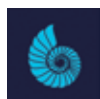
**29 Sept at
1.30pm**

A selection of artworks painted during the Plein Air Down Under festival including Major Award and Quick Draw winners

FOYER GALLERY

Mandurah Performing Arts Centre
9 Ormsby Terrace, Mandurah
29 September to 12 October 2025

Proudly
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by



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MANDURAH
PERFORMING
ARTS CENTRE



Golden Days - Michele Usibelli



Grazing on a Sunday afternoon - Andy Dolphin



Ephemeral Elements - Linda MacAulay

QUICK DRAW PAINTING COMPETITION

Monday 29 Sept

**Mandjar Square and
the Boardwalk Precinct,
Ormsby Terrace**

**Register
for the
Quick Draw**



This high energy two-hour competition is one of the highlights of Plein Air Down Under's three-day festival program. Together, artists and spectators are immersed in the creative process.

Smell the wet paint and get caught up in the excitement of watching art come to life before your eyes! Meet the artists and purchase an original artwork, direct from their easel.

Registration and Sign-in:

8.30am to 9.30am at the Bendigo Bank Marquee

Painting Competition: 10am – 12 noon

Judging, Awards and Sales: from 12.30pm

\$20 adults, \$10 aged 18 and under.

All ages welcome.

Would you like to take part?

Pre-register online or pay on the day.



The Mandurah Plein Air Artists invite you to paint with them on Tuesday mornings, somewhere in the great outdoors. All skill levels, mediums and ages – simply a group of friendly, like-minded people who enjoy painting the landscape.

**Check Facebook for
weekly paint out
locations.**



www.mandurahpleinair.com



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