



***Vibrations in Australian Drawing***

**Cowra Regional Gallery**

**7 June to 13 July 2025**

**Opening Speech by Rhonda Davis, Senior Curator of the Macquarie University Art Gallery**

**Opening event: 6pm, Saturday 7 June 2025**

Can you remember drawing as a child, did your parents, carers keep those drawings. I'm wondering how we would respond to our younger self in the world of drawing how we saw the world and how of course all that has changed so much for each life experienced decade.

Drawing really becomes a lifelong thread, from childhood scribbles to the refined gestures of practiced artists. While I don't have my own childhood drawings, I did keep my children's and grandchildren's, it's very powerful to look back at those early marks as the first expressions of perception, emotion, and identity.

In this exhibition we looked at the drawing practices of the 109 artists. We were to reimagine what it is to draw. Our pre-school educators that brought children to the exhibition each week has that natural flow urge to draw, from the teacher's perspective for children drawing is writing and it's a pathway to learning about the world with their drawings seen as languages of expression. There's something timeless and universal in that urge to draw—before we write letters, we draw lines; before we speak fluently, we gesture.

The title of the exhibition stemmed from that notion there is a hint of vibrations that we can visibly see if we look very closely to a drawing and that comes direct from the artist's hand in the act of making a line, a gesture, it's like an embodiment of various sources that are retraced and made visible by the hand of the artist.

The idea that drawing is a kind of visible vibration, a trace of the artist's presence and thinking resonates with the notion that drawing is not just a visual act, but a physical and cognitive one—a dance between eye, hand, and memory.

We have artists present here this evening, so I want to read out what drawing means to them one by one:

*I love the feeling of being out in Nature with pencil and sketchbook, completely absorbed in the act of drawing. In the studio I use these sketches, my memories and imagination to create finished works.*

**Jackie Balassa**

*Drawing means many things to me but on the spot,  
Drawing gives me freedom to take risks.*

**Anthony Cahill**

*Listening to Trees.*

**Jan Cleveringa**

*Drawing was my first language, a superhighway between my deepest feelings, observations and imagination.*

**Rhonda Dee**

*Drawing can be expansive, but a rubbing of the image is to be within a world of realism.*

**Ian Howard**

*It's never what you intend it to be.*

**Ambrose Reisch**

*To me drawing is the shorthand for an epic story*

*Seeing an object beyond the visual, capturing the seen, the felt, the story without syntax or wasted words.....Can simply be articulated through drawing...*

**Pat Shirvington**

***Vibrations in Australian Drawing*** re-examines the defining characteristics of drawing as a process of gestures made by the hand of the artist, mostly using pencil and paper. Drawing is an innate practice to many artists from a range of disciplines, where the 'thinking eye' releases the gesture from hand to paper bound by the experiences of the maker.