

24 January 2020

Noosa Council
Media Release

Gallery to share stories told through patchwork and an alter ego

A Life in Patches opens at Noosa Regional Gallery on January 31, featuring 29 handmade patchwork quilts from the 55 quilters who make up the Wallace House Quilters.

"It is an exhibition about lives lived in the company of stitching. Every single patchwork quilt is a celebration of life," says exhibition curator and popular tea cosy book author Loani Prior.

"I knew that in this creative, generous, boisterous group of women there'd be a plethora of stories to tell. Here are just 29 of them. It's powerful stuff."

The group formed in 1984 with just seven quilters and has met weekly ever since.

"We craved inspiration in those days. We were happy to travel many miles to further our knowledge," founding member Margaret Johnston says.

Director Michael Brennan said the Gallery was pleased to present the group's works.

"We're thrilled to be able to showcase such beautiful quilts, and to be able to tell the stories of the personalities behind each piece," Mr Brennan said.

"The display of quilts alongside professionally shot portraits and narratives about the women who've lovingly laboured over these exquisite works gives a depth to the exhibition, which is bound to provide a unique and immersive insight into our community."

The Gallery will exhibit works by acclaimed Queensland artist Davida Allen in parallel with *A Life in Patches*.

It features 14 original lithographs and 10 original etchings, featured in Allen's 1991 novel, a semi-autobiographical *The Autobiography of Vicki Myers: Close to the Bone*.

The book, and exhibition of the same name, tell the story of a woman's struggle to balance her artistic passions with the daily demands of domestic responsibility and caring for children.

"When my fingers hold a paintbrush" Allen writes, through her character Vicki, "they desperately want to assort the various pieces of my domestic life into some sort of clear resolution. The agony of being an artist and having another me, a domestic me, watching me be an artist..."

The Autobiography of Vicki Myers: Close to the Bone exhibition is on loan from the John and Lyn McCrea Collection.

Both exhibitions will be on show at Noosa Regional Gallery from January 31 to March 8, 2020. Entry to the Gallery is free. Visit: www.noosaregionalgallery.com.au

Image: Margaret Johnston with one of the patchwork quilts. Photo by Mark Crocker.

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