

# Buddha's Birthday Education Project

Through  
These Doors

Connecting  
past and present,  
east and west

29 March - 5 May 2013  
Hai Hui Hall, Nan Tien Temple,  
180 Berkeley Rd. Berkeley, NSW, Australia

11 May - 12 May 2013  
Darling Harbour, Sydney, NSW, Australia

Art Exhibition  
Catalogue

# Buddha's Birthday Prayer

## by Venerable Master Hsing Yun

O Great Compassionate Buddha!  
Two-thousand-five-hundred and fifty-six years ago,  
You were born in Kapilavastu  
and the entire nation celebrated your birth joyously.

O Great Compassionate Buddha!  
With all the sincerity of my heart I pray to you,  
Let our world be calm and peaceful, far away from the ravages of war.  
Let all the countries be safe and prosperous, free from catastrophes.  
Let people of all races love and understand each other, and never have racial conflicts again.  
Let our society be strong and wealthy, so that we don't suffer from hunger, or uncertainties of the future  
Let our lives be comfortable in our daily needs, not overwhelmed by financial needs  
Let our body and mind be healthy and happy, free from all kinds of diseases.

O Great Compassionate Buddha!  
Let me have a heart full of equality and tolerance, to forgive all those who have done wrong against me or dislike me.  
Let me have a heart full of gratitude, to return all the help and support I have received from my friends.  
Let me have a heart full of Prajna wisdom, to inspect myself and correct my mistakes.  
Let me have a heart full of the desire to learn and improve, so that I may follow and practice your compassionate teachings.

O Great Compassionate Buddha!  
I can feel your presence in my heart,  
and I vow that from now on,  
I will strive to bring joy to all sentient beings,  
attain enlightenment and to enlighten others,  
I will constantly have the welfare of my country and people in mind,  
and strive to help other people.

O Great Compassionate Buddha!  
Please accept my sincere prayer!



Venerable Master Hsing Yun  
Founder of Fo Guang Shan



# Emeritus Professor John Loxton

## Dean, Nan Tien Institute

### **Buddha's Birthday Education Project**

#### **Through these doors: Connecting past and present, east and west**

It was not just an ordinary elephant. Twenty-six centuries ago, King Suddhodana ruled a land near the Himalaya Mountains. One day, his wife Queen Maya dreamed a vivid dream. Four angels carried her high into the white mountains and clothed her in flowers. A magnificent white elephant with six tusks and bearing a white lotus in its trunk approached Maya and walked around her three times. Then the elephant struck her on the right side with its trunk and vanished into her. This dream foretold the birth of Prince Siddhartha who became Sakyamuni Buddha, the founder and spiritual leader of Buddhism.

Buddha's Birthday has been celebrated around the world going back over 2,000 years. The parade of the Buddha spread first along the Silk Road and eventually reached Australia which now boasts the biggest annual celebration of Buddha's birthday in the world. This fascinating journey is the inspiration for our exhibition and the education project.

The Spirit of Birthdays Past shows us scenes from history. This is how the legends grew. The Spirit of Birthdays Present shows us the festivals today sprinkling their warmth in our lives. The Spirit of Birthdays Yet to Come is the voice of education and enjoins us to honour the messages of past and present and apply this ancient wisdom for the sake of humanity.

Buddha's Birthday is a project conceived and led by Venerable Juewei and based on her doctoral thesis. A team of volunteers has joined her in making the dream happen and devising all the art and fun that goes with it. Each brings special skills, from art to IT to cooking with flair.

Nan Tien Temple has again provided the space for our exhibition. Our thanks to everyone who has joined in the project and made this exhibition possible.

Buddha's Birthday is the story of Buddha in the community. It is a model for the way Nan Tien Institute is approaching Applied Buddhist Studies and our other programs, seeking to offer Insights into Buddhist values and their relevance in the community. We invite you to enjoy the exhibition and to join us in learning more about this great tradition and why it carries a message for us today.

White elephants were regarded as holy in ancient times. Keeping a white elephant was a very expensive undertaking, since the owner had to provide the elephant with special food and provide access for people who wanted to worship it. So it came about in more recent times that, if a Thai King became dissatisfied with a subordinate, he would give him a white elephant. The gift would, in most cases, ruin the recipient. Which just shows what the elephant always knows. It is important to have a long memory and to remember where our story began. This was not just an ordinary expensive elephant of no particular significance, but the beginning of the story of the Buddha.



Emeritus Professor  
John Loxton  
Dean, Nan Tien Institute

# Buddha's Birthday Education Project

## - Founder Message

### **The Power of Thought**

I would like to dedicate the merits of the Buddha's Birthday Education Project to all those who have offered their well wishes; their efforts went a long way to assist in making this a dream come true. The exhibits arose from unswerving international teamwork. Like an unstoppable series of events, one thing led to another. Just as one good thought led to a succession of greater and better ideas, many helping hands came together to turn idea after idea into reality.

The first thought that mothered the Project occurred in early 2011 when my research advisor, Dr. Lewis Lancaster, encouraged us to think outside the box and in this case, it was the box of academic research. Master Hsing Yun's (Founder of Fo Guang Shan) vision is to have "the Buddha's light shining universally upon the three thousandfold world system, and the Dharma water flowing continually throughout the five continents." Hence, it seemed appropriate that rigorous research findings should extend to a wider audience.

Historical research lent itself quite naturally to artistic expressions. This thought led to my invitation of artist; architect, animation artist, musician, and graphics artist in the United States to make literary materials from 1,500 to 1,700 years ago come alive through their unique talents. We researched and tossed out many drafts before we arrived at plausible interpretations.

Returning to the initial idea of outreach, I thought about using modern day technology. On 28 June 2011, we decided to create a website to host authoritative information about Buddha's Birthday parades in medieval China. This website, <http://www.paradeofthebuddhas.org>, is turning out to be an information-rich repository containing literary and canonical materials, art projects, training resources, travelogues, events, and innovative methods for celebrating Buddha's Birthdays.

After the art pieces were completed, the next thought seemed natural: an art exhibition during Buddha's Birthday to showcase these creative pieces. Since the theme of this academic inquiry involved acculturation, we sought to celebrate the Buddha's birth with a party familiar to Americans in the twenty-first century. An inaugural meeting on 6 November 2011 started an unrelenting flow of energy. Over 100 volunteers helped stage the first Buddha's Birthday Education Project show on 28 April 2012 in Hsi Lai Temple (near Los Angeles).

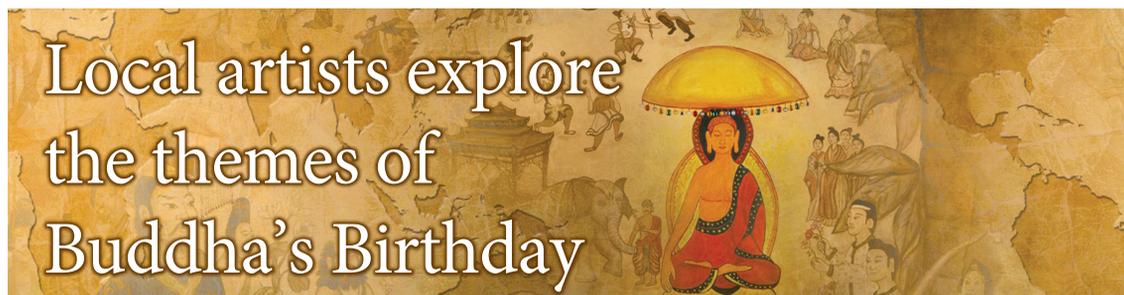
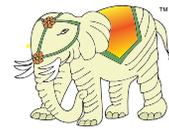
A random thought about the Project going on roadshows turned into a reality when we received invitations to take these art pieces to American temples, a regional park and the Natural History Museum in Las Vegas. And that very thought has also brought the Project to Australia.

January 2013 represents a significant milestone in the Project's history. A team of Australian volunteers from the Sydney and Wollongong areas began the process of turning the Project into a local birthday party. I am also delighted that so many local art talents have responded enthusiastically to this research and project, creating a diverse range of artworks that give this exhibition an Australian interpretation. Today, we are proud to present this collection of stunning and inspiring artworks that truly underscore the theme of our show to connect past and present, east and west.

Thoughts, minds, and peoples connect through streams of consciousness's. Research, history, literature, art, music, culture, and faith can also connect through a festival. May the Buddha's Birthday Education Project give all visitors a joyful, educational, and spiritual experience that transcends time and space boundaries.



Venerable Dr. Juewei



Australia will be the second country in the world to host the Buddha's Birthday Education Project – a multimedia art exhibition and range of educational activities celebrating the birth of the Buddha that will run from 29th March to 12th May 2013.

This exhibition aims to stimulate our local community, international visitors and future students to think about, question and engage with our diverse multi-cultural society by providing an increasing awareness and building relationships between Western and Eastern arts, history and culture.

The original US exhibition has been evolved for Australian audiences with the inclusion of inspiring and thought-provoking artworks created by local Australian artists working in diverse areas throughout the Illawarra region and stretching to the Hawkesbury's Dangar Island.

These artists have brought a diverse range of expressions and thought provoking insights to the concepts of this extensive research. The imagery takes on many forms from multi-media symbols and abstract images that flow in a variety of sequences and interact with the audience, to mixed media, abstract photography, acrylic and oil paintings, indigenous wood carvings as well as the historical research and written words.

This exhibition is designed to inspire questions and a pathway to discover and challenge your ideas about history, birth, what, where and how we celebrate, lifecycles, spirituality, and rituals that ultimately connect us all together.

Please come and celebrate this exhibition with us and the connections of past and present, east and west.

# Emily Windon



*Bringing in of the Moon,  
photographic pigment print, 160cm x 80cm framed*

## Bringing in of the Moon

Bringing in of the Moon takes as a starting point the idea of the Lumbini garden, being prepared for the birth of Buddha as a maiden gently holds and cares for the glowing light of the moon.

However the garden in the image is the Australian garden. The image was taken on a sheep and cattle farm in central west NSW using the artist's daughter as a model. Taken at dawn, the image heralds in the birth of a new day and was set in a natural rocky grotto on a small hill.

Using a distinctly Australian setting for the staging of the scene allows a dialogue of cross cultural transpositions to occur, where the religion of Buddhism is transposed into a new area and an Australian audience who bring to it their own cultural understandings. Just as the bush in Australia is slightly different and unique to its own Australian climate, religions in Australia will have their own dynamics and ways of interpreting and understanding spirituality that are influenced by the Australian cultural way of life.

The Australian bush has long held deep spiritual significance for Australians, from the first Indigenous inhabitants to the many bush chapels that were set up in Colonial times. The bush is ancient and holds its markers of time with dignity, its trees shading rocks that have not moved for eons and have been resting places for countless people and animals over time. The bush sings with deep significance that can be described as a mysticism of nature and that we seek to tap into when we take a quiet moment of sitting in nature.

This mysticism, then, can reflect that essential love, joy and hope that the birth of Buddha brought forth. Surrounded by celebrations partaken by humans, animals and nature the event held the natural world in the highest regard as its beauties and riches were brought forth in ecstasy.

The image is a small reflection on this magnitude. It is a quiet reverie where the idea of a moon being chaperoned as it moves onto its cycle, being held just for a moment before it cycles into its waxing and waning revolution once more to mark the passing on the days and nights and the traveling of time. What if time stopped for a moment, if the moon's path was halted to allow the wonders of hope through spirituality to be experienced in an event like no other.

My artwork is most often a response to themes that I follow in my research and one of my long-term guiding themes has been how we use our physical bodies to interpret space and create subjectivity, which follows on with understanding spirituality, or the mystical, through a subjective paradigm that infuses body mind and spatiality.

# Jennifer Jackson



*Moments in the Journey,*  
*mixed media on paper, framed.*  
*The sequence is chronological, 14 miniature images (10cm x 10cm)*

## **Artist statement**

My art relates to the landscape in abstracted ways. The earth, its history and age are referred to and encompass notions of weathering and cycles. The journeys include memories of landscapes visited and personal symbols of the experience and are often about the local environment of the Illawarra region.

A focus of my work is melding Eastern and Western art practices in relation to depictions of the landscape.

On my journeys I collect objects that can be included in my images. Cross cultural connections are often established through this process linking disparate items and symbols. This gives the artworks personal significance while also allowing the viewer to interpret them in an individual manner.

## **Concept Statement**

I have painted a series of 14 miniature images (10x 10cm) that show my response to the Venerable Dr. Juewei's presentation of her research document.

The images are watercolour and mixed media on paper referring to moments that I connected with when reading the text. The sequence is chronological and represents moments in the journey, which are part of the concept as well as a recurring theme of mine.

The images each are titled from the text providing a form of narrative. The paintings are not illustrations of the text but more visual responses to the document. I have included images and compositions that are both Eastern and Western, as is my practice. Mixed media items and images include eggs, stamps, collected papers and gold leaf. The paintings are semi abstract in muted monochromatic tones similar to work in the exhibition "Unfolding" at the Nan Tien Temple.

The format of 2 groups of seven images creates a long format and is meant to recall the unrolling of a scroll. Each tiny image is a moment to reflect upon before moving on. They are quiet images yet have an energy and sense of celebration within them. The total length of each panel will be approximately 1.25 meters. The panels may be hung independently horizontally following each other or one above the other.

The paintings are a response to this project in a personal manner. I create the images but invite the viewer to connect with them in their own way.

# Leonne James



*The First Divine Bath - Australian Interpretation,  
acrylic paint and mixed media, canvas 76cm x 101cm*

## **The First Divine Bath - Australian Interpretation**

My artwork expresses elements of both Chinese and Indian art style because the earliest Buddhist texts are from India and China. This has also been expanded to include the idea of International Buddhism across the World. The Chinese and Indian elements of the painting represent both the Past and East elements of the theme. The Present and West have been merged together to add the element of Australia, including the local region, and a more modern style of art.

Much thought was given to the individual elements of the painting, so as not to destroy the traditional Buddhist understanding of Buddha's first divine bath, and also to include some more modern aspects to connect with a modern audience.

The red and gold dragon has been painted in a traditional Chinese style and shows the dragon providing the warm water, represented by the warm steam cloud, for the bathing of the mother and baby.

The Australian water dragon is blue, representing the cool water being poured into the lotus leaf bath to be warmed by the heat from the fire dragon. The two dragons bring together the elements of east and west, past and present, hot and cold.

The Lotus leaf bath has rainbow coloured petals representing both the rainbow, the full spectrum of light, and also the coloured crystals that surrounded the Buddha statue sitting on the wagon in the ancient Buddha's birthday parades.

The baby Buddha is shown in a modern western style body position but with an angelic Buddha style face, again combining the elements of east and west.

Buddha's mother, Maya, has been painted in a traditional Madonna and baby style to merge Christianity, Buddhism and motherhood, as mothers and babies are really are all the same the world over, regardless of religious or philosophical beliefs. Maya's clothing is painted in the modern Indian style of Sari and veil.

Flowers represent the garden where Buddha took his first bath with his mother. The lotus flower bath, lotus pods and pond have been included as traditional, past and eastern elements. The Gynea Lily has been selected as it is a native Australian flower, occurring in the Sydney / Illawarra region. The Bird of Paradise flower has been included as it grows all over the world and represents the paradise / better life elements of Buddhist Philosophy.

The surrounding window has been painted in a traditional Indian shape and style. This allows us a glimpse into the past and also the window of possibility that can be attained even while standing right where we are.

Gold has been used as it is a major part of eastern artworks and adds a traditional Chinese tone to the work. The tiny diamantes have been added to highlight the sparkle of the water, as this is the major element and theme of the painting that brings cohesion to the other individual elements.

# Sofan Chan



*Buddha Within,  
print on canvas, 45cm x 61cm*

## **Celebration of Our Buddha Nature Within**

There are so many different traditions, rituals and parades in all around the world celebrating of Buddha's Birthday through ages to today.

In participating in the celebration of Buddha's Birthday, we are in yet seeking a way to celebrate our own Buddha's nature.

I am creating a group of Buddha's Faces paintings to illustrate the essences of Buddhism and our own Buddha natures.

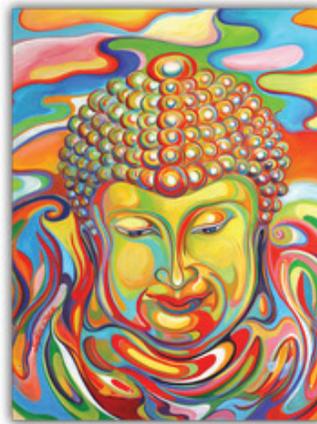
The central theme of this display of paintings is used to illustrate how we celebrate our own Buddha Nature within through Buddhism.



*Celebration of our  
Buddha Nature,  
print on canvas  
45cm x 61cm*



*Face of Tara,  
print on canvas,  
45cm x 61cm*



*Wisdom Mind,  
print on canvas,  
45cm x 61cm*



*Gaia,  
print on canvas,  
45cm x 61cm*



*Lily of  
Consciousness,  
print on canvas,  
45cm x 61cm*



*Live your dream,  
print on canvas,  
45cm x 61cm*



*Face of Serenity,  
print on canvas,  
45cm x 61cm*

# Wanda Grein

## Simply Buddha

'Simply Buddha' is an inspired artwork based around the concept of Buddha's birthday. For the Buddhist community, this is the most important event of the year. It is a celebration of not only the Birth of the Buddha, but also his Enlightenment and Nirvana. Artists throughout history have drawn upon all sources of knowledge, concepts, stories and human life experiences as subject matter to portray divine and mystical special events. Art has long been a medium through which one communicates both beauty and truth. With no exception, Buddha's Birthday is one of these momentous events.

As a Christian I can see the parallel links in the story of Buddha's Birth with the Christian Christmas story, also an important time of the year for all Christians. The artwork does not include Christian images, however, I have included some symbolic imagery from various Western religions and philosophies to illustrate the parallels from an interfaith perspective.

The interfaith mandalas positioned along the spine of the tree are symbolic that as we as a global people move and grow towards a common understanding of our oneness with all that exists. Mandalas historically are designed as a form of meditation and prayer. Here the mandalas symbolise the power of meditation that a peace filled Earth can be achieved by all faiths, cultures and philosophies. Each mandala has a purpose for being included in the artwork.

The first mandala is the Buddhist Dharma Wheel or the Dharmachakra is one of the oldest known Buddhist symbols found in Indian Art.

Mandala two is a Christian mandala, showing the equal arm cross and the life and death of Jesus Christ. It was designed according to the Gospel of Saint John and created by artist Ansgar Holmberg in 2003.

Mandala three represents the Muslim mandala ( black and white image) . This is a very original mandala as its history is so entwined. Whilst found to be linked to Islam, this Kamoliddin Design as it is also known as, means 'my shield, my protection'. For some time this design was also found on samanid coins ( Persia & Iraq). This design has also been linked to Judaism, with the Star of David in the middle, as well as links to the Zoroastrian culture. The maze design surrounding the Star of David goes right back to Ancient Buddhist.

Mandala four is a Tibetan Mandala representing Japanese Shinto and Taoist philosophies. The central design 'the Yin Yang' is globally widely known as the symbol of balance, dual forces, opposites.

Mandala five is from Hindu culture with the familiar Om or Aum Symbol in the middle This mandala is also recognised as the World Peace Mandala. It was designed by artist Om Shantih, in honour of the Hindu Mata Amritanandamayi.

Mandala six is the global symbol for Interfaith Unity. Within this mandala is found the symbols of each religion practised on the Earth at this time.

Mandala Seven positioned at the top of the tree is again another Buddhist Dharma Wheel. This wheel shows the four colours important in Buddhism- Red, Green, White and Yellow. Within each of the four colours is a Buddhist Symbol: The Lotus Flower-the Padma, symbol of purity. The Stupa (looks like a bell) symbolises the Universe; The Triratana-the three Jewels representing the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha: The Dhvaja which symbolises the victory of Buddha's teachings.

Finally, on the left hand brow side you will notice two smaller mandalas. The first is the Jewish Mandala for World Peace, and further left is the Baha'i Peace Mandala.

On the right brow of Buddha is the Jainism Peace mandala followed by the Native Spirituality Peace

mandala.

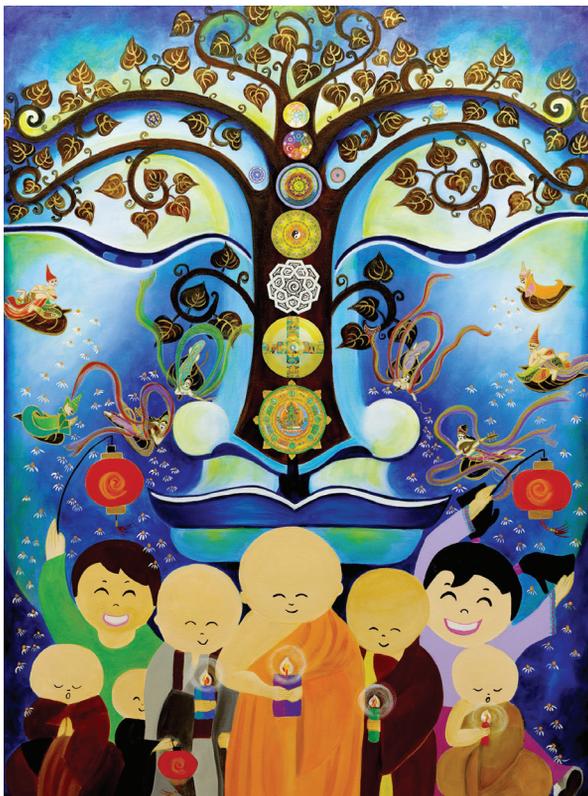
The inclusion of the Bodhi Tree is recognised in Buddhist art with its heart shaped leaves. Historically it represents the Sacred Fig tree growing at the Mahabodhi Temple in Bodh Gaya. Here the tree also represents the 'Tree of Life', known throughout several theologies, mythologies and philosophies as the 'Paradise Tree' reminding us of connection to each other. It represents our interconnectedness of all life on the planet and beyond, and what links us together as One. The Tree of Life resonates in every culture the strong message of Unity, that All forms of Life are connected through Cosmic Energy and that we as humans must live in Peace and harmony with All living beings.

The six Buddhist monk children with their different coloured robes represent the entire Asian Buddhist culture. The colours represent the leaves in the Autumn as a reminder that things are impermanent. The Orange robe represents Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. The yellowish colour represents Sri Lanka, Black is Japan, Reddish tones are Tibet, China and Korea wear the Greyish robes and the Brown-reddish tones represent Burma. The monk children are holding lighted candles. Candles are most often used at birthday parties in most cultures. Here the lighted candles are symbolic that when we celebrate a significant birthday it is an invitation to all of us to become enlightened, to become awakened. The other two children wearing plain clothing, are non-Buddhist, represent the Western Culture. They are holding red lanterns symbolic of the Western Culture participating in the celebration of Buddha's Birthday.

The heavenly creatures or Devas sailing down on Bodhi leaves come along to celebrate Buddha's Birthday. Some are celestial musicians most often depicted in Chinese Art paintings, and the other Devas are found in Thai Buddhist murals. There are eight Devas in total; the number 8 meaning good luck and prosperity in Buddhist Culture. The inclusion of the Devas all appeared to welcome Buddha into the Physical Realm. The Devas in this painting remind me of the Heavenly Angels who appeared to the Shepherd in the field in the Christian Christmas Story.

The Devas are showering the children with tiny white flower blessings and a reminder that as we embark on our journey of enlightenment.

Resting in the background of my painting is the beautiful image of Buddha's face. A peaceful image portrayed by many an artist, and globally recognised as the reminder to us all of a way of 'beingness', a state of open- mindedness, a sense of calm if we choose it. With an open mind, and an open heart great things can be achieved, and to me, this is the true message of Buddhism, and hence the title of my artwork: 'Simply Buddha'.



*Simply Buddha,  
Acrylic and Mixed Media,  
Stretched canvas 100cm X 120cm*

# Andrew Netherwood

## Overview

This interactive multimedia work of Buddhist related images and icons is displayed on a single widescreen display unit which is connected to Apple's iCloud service. The images appearing on the display will be changed remotely over time so that the work will evolve as the exhibition continues, including images taken at the gallery during the exhibition.

The aim is have an evolving virtual parade of Buddhist images celebrating the Buddha's Birthday and symbolising the raising of spiritual consciousness and awareness.

## A Heavenly Stream of Consciousness

This work displays an ascending stream of images randomly sourced from a remote server via a wireless internet connection.

The Buddhism related images ascend at varying speeds and sizes in a meditative virtual parade representing the elevation of consciousness to a heavenly goal. Random combinations of images occur and evolve, evoking synergistic thoughts, concepts and associations of a metaphysical nature.

The author's mobile phone is capable of transmitting recently captured photographs directly to the server, which then immediately become part of the image pool for random selection and display on the local video screen. In this way the virtual parade of rising consciousness changes and evolves through the duration of the exhibition. Visitors to the exhibition who wish to be photographed can become part of the Buddha's virtual parade for the duration of the exhibition.

This work explores the concepts of the relationship of the human mind to the unconscious and supraconscious minds. (The server represents the collective unconscious, the source of imagery and inspiration. The video screen the ongoing flow of imagery and sensation that is human consciousness, and the wireless link between camera and server, the exercise of human will to change and effect the collective conscience on all levels.)

The images placed on the remote server are all photographs and artworks created by Andrew Netherwood. Small prints of selected images will be available for sale during the exhibition. Other sizes are available to order.

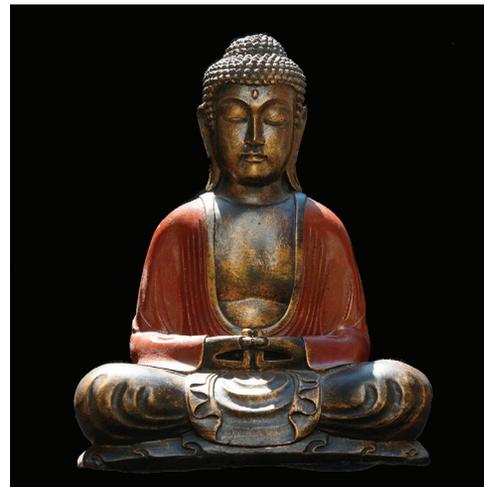
Further information is available at [www.ndesign.net.au](http://www.ndesign.net.au)



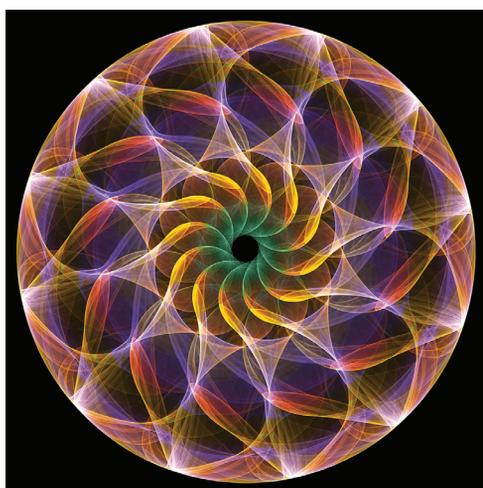
*A Heavenly Stream of Consciousness. Interactive multi-media, Single widescreen TV*



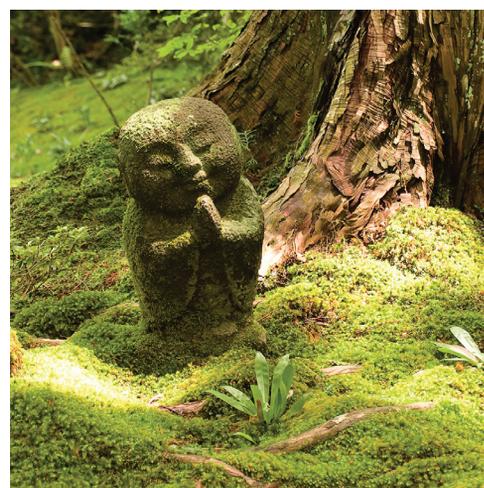
*selection from the large range of 20cm x 20cm prints for sale, photographic paper, unframed*



*selection from the large range of 20cm x 20cm prints for sale, photographic paper, unframed*



*selection from the large range of 20cm x 20cm prints for sale, photographic paper, unframed*



*selection from the large range of 20cm x 20cm prints for sale, photographic paper, unframed*

# Noel Butler

Noel Butler is an Indigenous elder and custodian of traditional Indigenous customs and culture of the Budawang people of the Yuin Nation, South coast NSW.

Noel Butler being the principal Educator on Cultural Awareness, Cultural Enrichment and Cross Cultural Education and has been teaching and working with Aboriginal and non aboriginal people for over 25 years.

The Carved Tree, the most ancient art form of Indigenous Australia, signifies a special place - Burial Site.

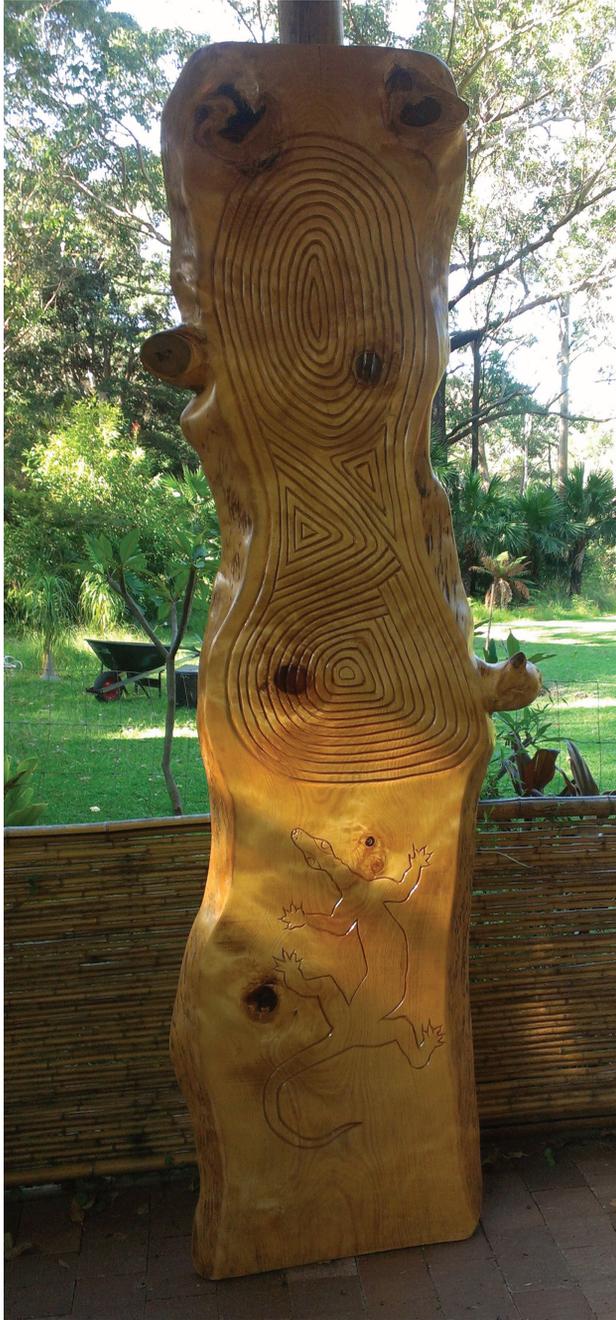
The Goanna ( Barniga) symbolises a person's Totem. The physical body returns to earth but the spirit travels through the tree fern from the earth to continue. The unfurling frond (crozier) is our symbol of birth.

Barniga person and spirit continues through life, learning to care for Country and all living things within equally.

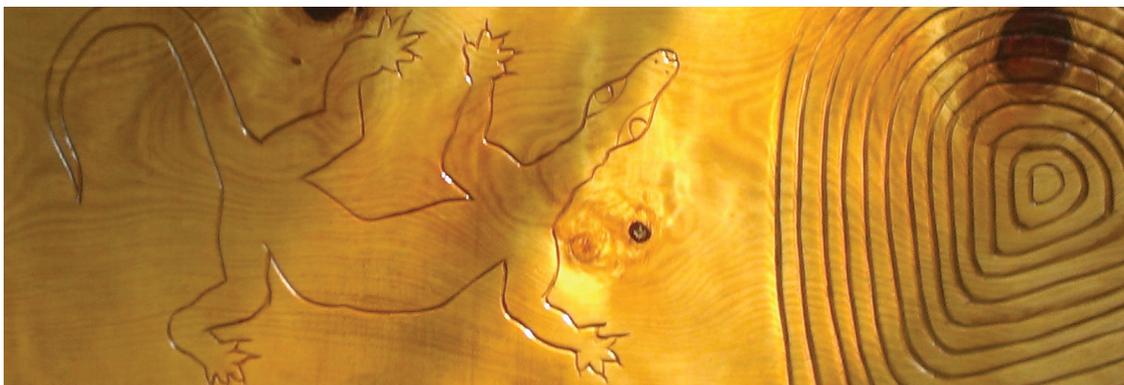
West (Indigenous) and East share four concepts of living

- Connection to Country
- Connection to family
- Spirituality
- Belief system

All of these intact and maintained are celebrations of birth & life.



*Sacred Transitions*  
*Traditional indigenous wood carving*  
*100cm x 240cm*  
*Bunya Timber*



*detail from Sacred Transitions*

# Joanne Simpson

## **Dancing at the Billabong - a Celebration of Buddha's Birthday**

My overall concept for this artwork is one of joy - a celebration!

I began by choosing the Laughing Buddha as, to me, he embodies a feeling of happiness and contentment.

I then chose to place Buddha in an Australian rainforest to represent the Lumbini Garden with its abundance of white flowers (in this case, frangipani and flannel flowers) bringing concepts of East and West together.

Stylised bodhi tree leaves hang like pennants from the tree along with colourful streamers and the branches are alight with lanterns.

Bathing Buddha are two native Australian dragons - a desert-dwelling bearded dragon to pour the warm water and the cooler rainforest water dragon pouring the cold - with Buddha becoming a waterfall. Lizards have an association with dreaming, promoting the energy of change - a rebirth perhaps.

The sulphur-crested and black cockatoos, along with the colourful king parrot and the flamboyant lyrebird represent music and Buddha stands upon lotus flowers (of which there are 7 in total) which float in a billabong.

In fact, the overall image actually put me in mind of the iconic Australian song "Waltzing Matilda" which begins, "Once a jolly swagman sat by a billabong, under the shade of a coolibah tree"!

I wanted the painting to convey a feeling of happiness and nature with a mix of Australian and oriental themes with a message that was neither too cryptic or complicated.



*Dancing at the Billabong - a Celebration of Buddha's Birthday,  
acrylic paint, canvas, 61cm x 91cm*



*Close up on Dancing at the Billabong-  
a celebration of Buddha's Birthday*

# About Nan Tien Temple

Nan Tien Temple is the largest Buddhist Temple in the Southern Hemisphere. Visit or stay at Nan Tien Temple, the largest Buddhist Temple in the Southern Hemisphere and an award-winning tourist destination.

Nan Tien Temple means "Paradise of the South" and the authentic, contemplative and rejuvenating environment of the Nan Tien Temple really is paradise.

Established within 56 acres of award-winning gardens, Nan Tien is very different from most tourist attractions because there is so much to offer: the visual delights of grandeur architecture, art and culture including unique exhibitions and festivals, Buddhist festivals, vegetarian culinary delights, educational and healthy lifestyle classes and retreats, accommodation, top class conference and auditorium facilities. There is also the spiritual and religious experience that is unforgettable and even life changing for some.



Pilgrim Lodge, Wollongong's most unique accommodation setting is a 100 room facility, which is open all year round and located in the grounds of the Temple.

The Lodge overlooks the lotus pond, the peaceful Temple, splendid gardens, the beautiful rolling hills and famous escarpment of the Illawarra.



Situated in Berkeley, which is only 10 minutes south of Wollongong City and famous beaches. Come and be inspired.

Opening times: 9am to 5pm Tuesday to Sunday, closed Monday  
Public Holidays: 9am - 5pm

For more information: [www.nantien.org.au](http://www.nantien.org.au)

# About Nan Tien Institute

Nan Tien Institute (NTI) is Australia's first tertiary institution grounded in Applied Buddhist wisdom and values.

NTI is a government accredited higher education provider that currently offers a postgraduate Masters, Diploma and Certificate in Applied Buddhist Studies, and special interest subjects.

Its tertiary education program commenced in 2011, and NTI already has a number of students who have graduated with a Certificate and Diploma in Applied Buddhist Studies. It is expanding to offer a range of postgraduate, undergraduate and single subject courses. Currently NTI operates from its Temple Campus on-site at the award-winning major tourist attraction Nan Tien Temple – the largest Buddhist Temple in the Southern Hemisphere – located in Wollongong.

It also has a new Tertiary and education and Cultural Centre and Art Gallery under construction nearby due to be opened in 2014.



NTI's vision is to make a unique contribution providing innovative teaching and learning in Humanities, Social Sciences and Management and research in Applied Buddhist Studies.

It aims to be recognised internationally for its outstanding location, unique teaching program, world renowned lecturers and researchers, and high-achieving and inspiring students.

For more information: [www.nantien.edu.au](http://www.nantien.edu.au)



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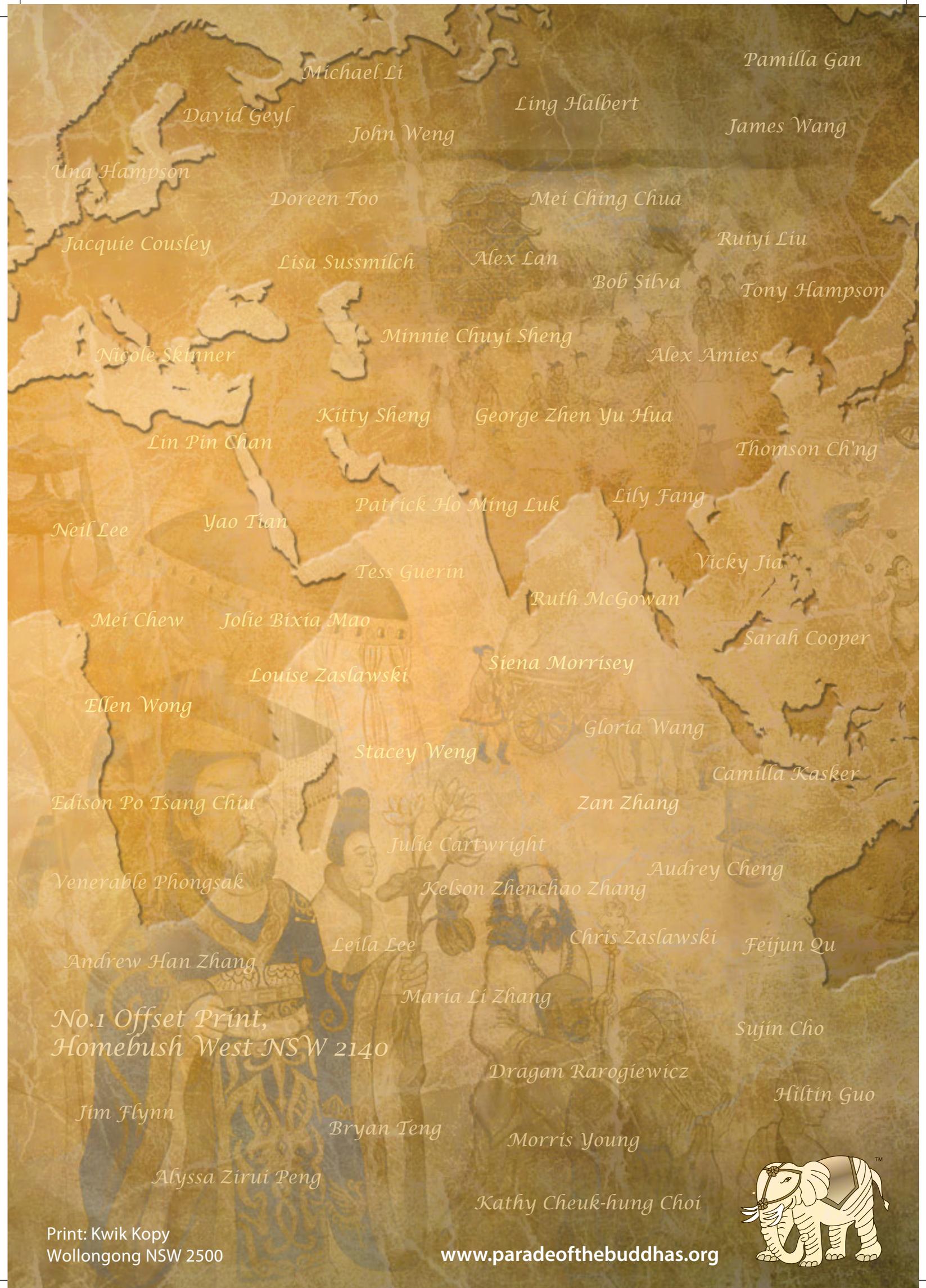
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