

Awa illustrated: Waikato River the theme of new exhibition opening at Welcome Swallow



Mike Mather | Waikato Times

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Chris Greenslade's watercolour work titled Early Evening Rowers is one of the pieces featured in the exhibition Our River, which opens at the Welcome Swallow gallery on Grey St on Friday.

Photo: Supplied

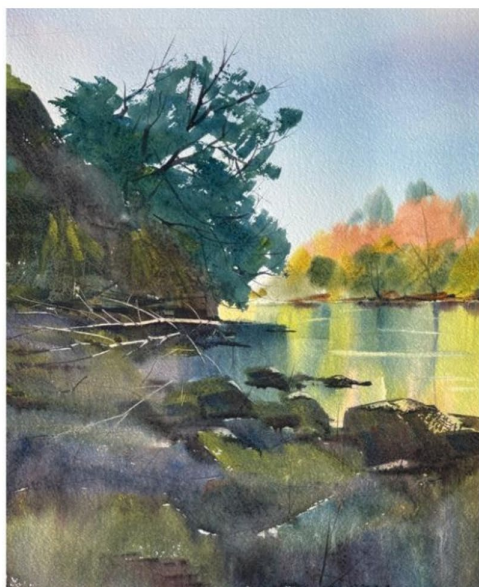
The Waikato's most distinguishing geographic feature – the waterway that weaves through the region – is the binding theme of a major new exhibition opening in Hamilton on Friday.

Our River, at the Welcome Swallow gallery on Grey St, will feature 25 works, many of which have been created by Waikato artists.

As gallery curator Clive Gilson points out in the exhibition programme, while the Waikato River has featured in many of the previous 43 shows at the gallery, it has never had its own review – until now.

“The artists in this exhibition have employed every form of art expression and interpretation, equally covering the length and breadth of the Waikato River, source to mouth.

“Vantage points to view include flying over, driving over, swimming in, rowing, sailing, cultural heritage, seasonal ambience and finally, geographical context.



This watercolour diptych of the Waikato River created by Martin Necas also features in Our River.

“Even a cursory review of this exhibition demonstrates how the river has a formative influence over many aspects of our lives. Surely, encountered, embraced, admired and deeply respected.”

The artists featured include some well-known Waikato creators such as Hamilton painter Hong Cumming, Cambridge landscape artist Kirsten McIntosh, Hamilton artist and pianist Chris Greenslade and Ōtorohanga’s Rebecca Dowman-Ngapo.

Many of the group, opined Gilson, would have taken inspiration from some of the great masters.

“Monet, obsessed with reflections in water, did a whole series on the Thames, as shown in a 2017 exhibition at Tate Britain.



Rosanne Croucher's oil on canvas work Winter Breath is also included in the Our River exhibition at the Welcome Swallow Gallery.

“British artists Turner and Constable respectively used the rivers Thames and Stour to project atmosphere and social commentary. Vincent van Gogh also painted his Starry Night interpretation as, Starry Night over the Rhone.

“New Zealand artist Douglas Badcock as part of his landscape studies included rugged river compositions such as his 1974, Above the Rapids.”

The exhibition will run until October 16 and all the works featured are for sale.



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