

S u n s h i n e • C o a s t

# xpressions

Winter 2002

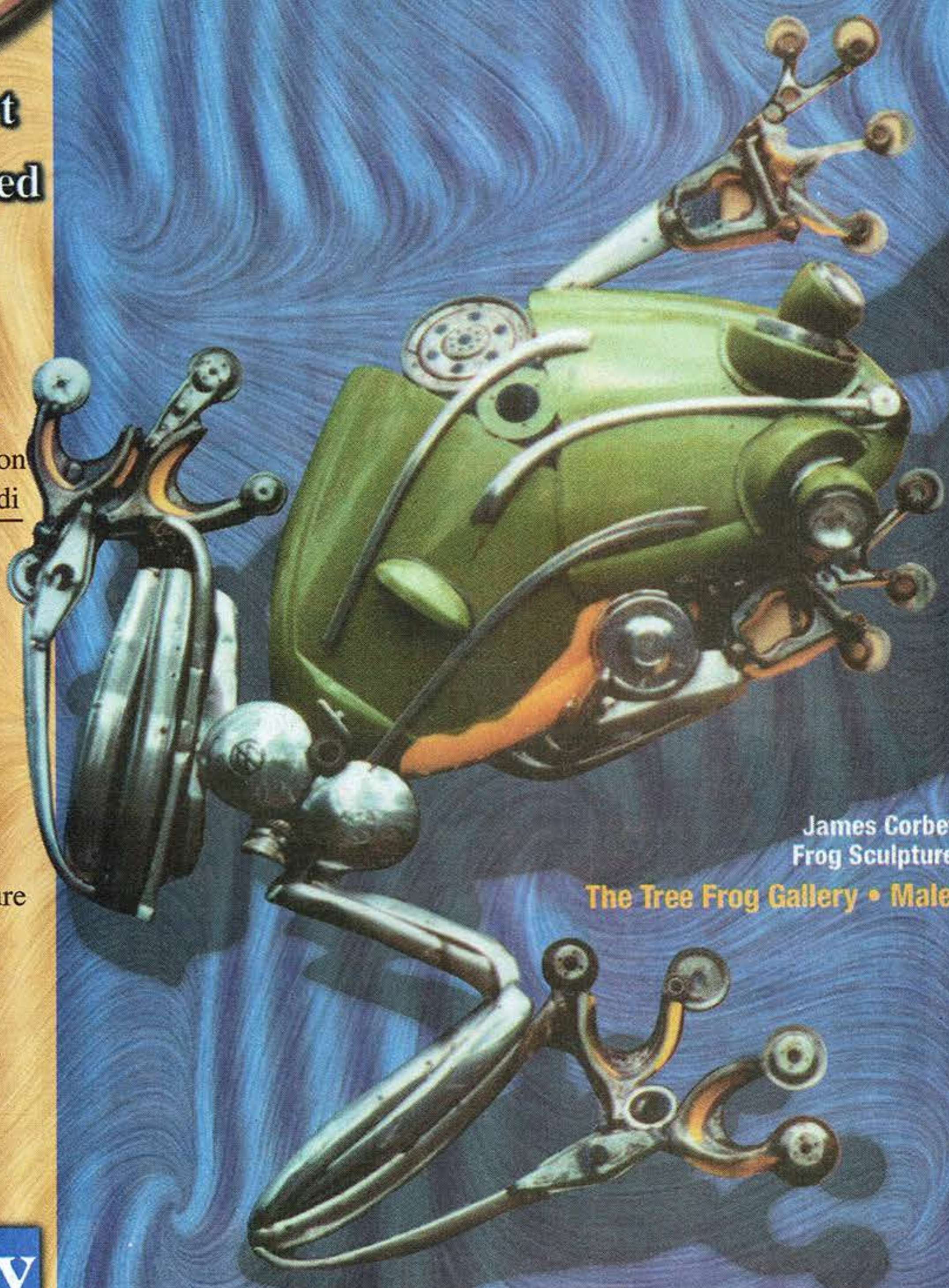
**of Fine Art  
& Specialised  
Craft**

World renowned  
artist Helen Norton  
comes to Eumundi

Gallery  
La Tourelle  
makes its grand  
opening at  
Tanawha

Desley Wain  
shows us her  
exquisite miniature  
costumes

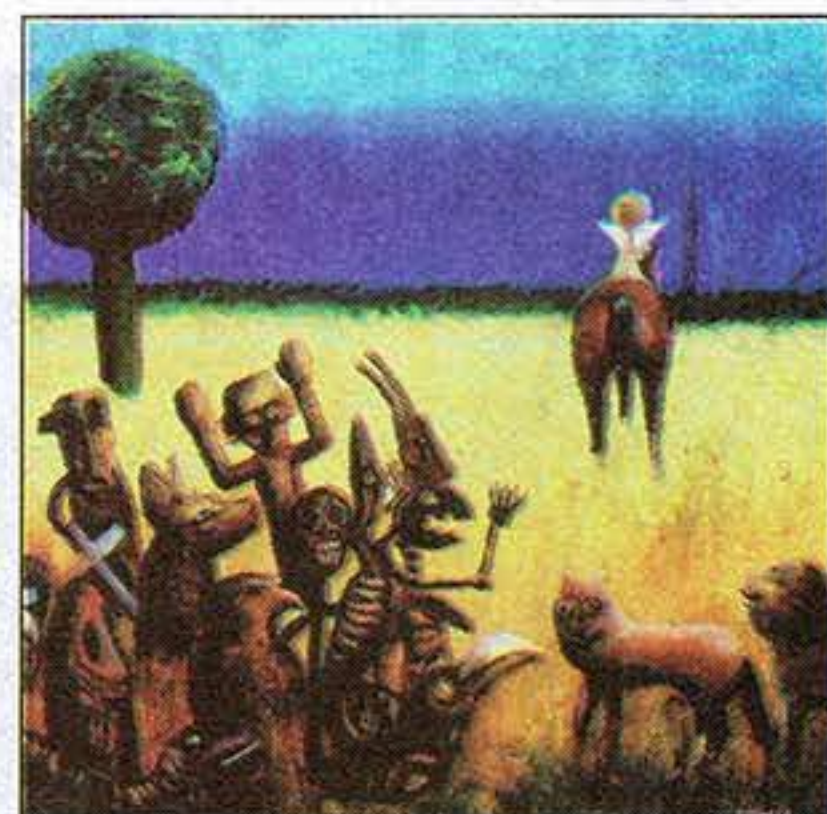
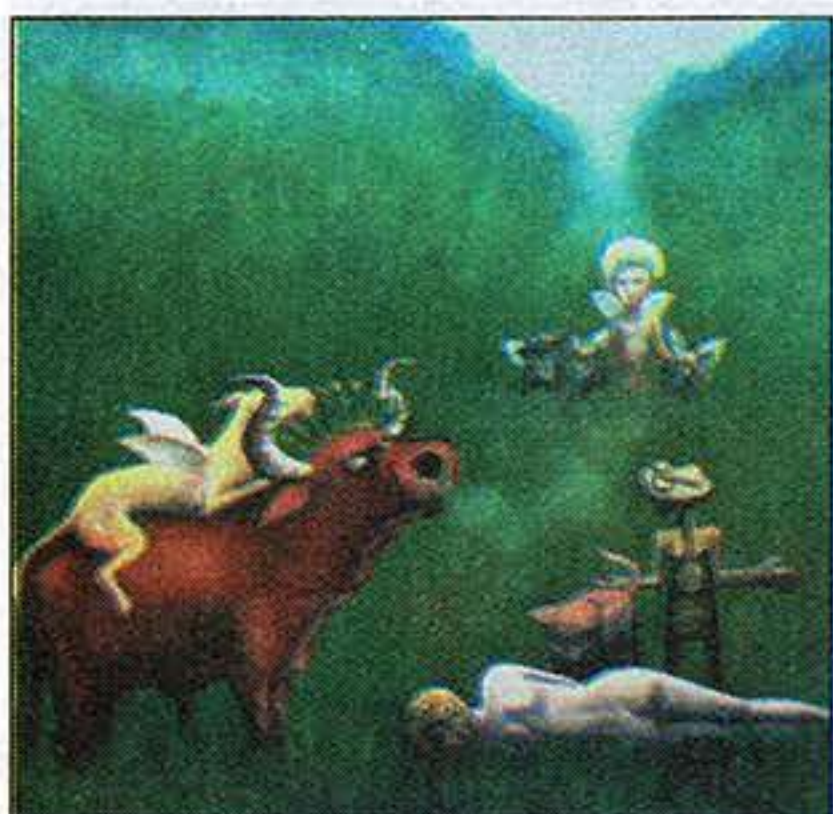
Maleny Art  
Gallery to hold  
major Wildlife  
Exhibition



James Corbett's  
Frog Sculpture at  
**The Tree Frog Gallery • Maleny**



## Artist profile



# Norton shares her work

IT'S difficult to write a story about artist Helen Norton without using superlatives. So we'll start with a quote from one of her elaborate and colourful brochures.

"Mention Helen Norton's work and many collectors of Australian art will have their own story to tell about her paintings. Her work is reminiscent of Sydney Nolan — the ochre reds, the cobalt blues — and a cast of characters who resemble Ned Kelly types through duckshooters posing as God; angels and butterfly men, Mona Lisa languishing in the outback and the moose style neighbours in front of a white picket fence.

"Her images of dogs, usually white, are one of her trademarks, they add a magical quality to her paintings with a mixture of whimsy and hope."

Helen Norton's works are outstanding. So is her attitude. And her philosophy.

But perhaps the best part of this story is that Helen Norton is exhibiting her work at the Cockatoo Gallery in Eumundi.

Early this year Cockatoo Gallery opened in Memorial Drive, Eumundi. Cockatoo Gallery specialises in Nortons works.

Originally from Melbourne, Helen spent 10 years working in the Australian outback in varied occupations ranging from jillarooing to truck driving. She then settled in Broome in the North West and built up her career as a sought after national and international artist for 15 years before moving to



**HELEN NORTON:** Her work has featured in more than 50 exhibitions.

Vanuatu two years ago.

She is just 40 and did not start her painting career until 1986.

Her work has featured in more than 50 exhibitions in Australia, London and New York. With the bulk of the demand for her work in Europe, Perth, Sydney and Melbourne, why has she chosen to exhibit in Eumundi?

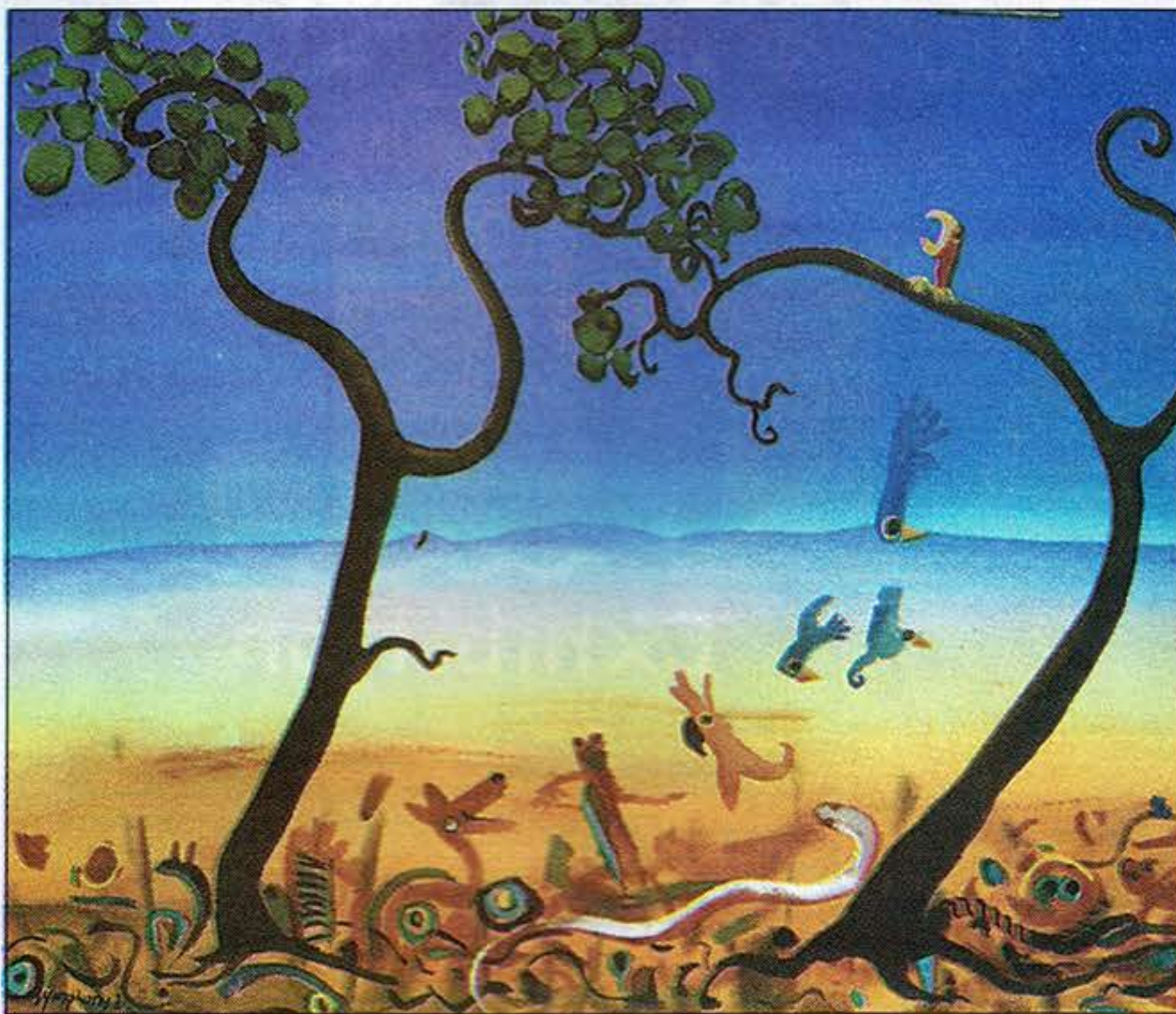
"I wanted to share my work with Queenslanders, because there was a noticeable absence of Queenslanders coming to Broome therefore my imagery was not reaching them."

Norton has been very successful commercially, with some of her large paintings selling for up to \$20,000.

*Continued Page 13*



## Artist profile



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She realises only a few people can afford those prices. Therefore there are other levels of artwork available ranging from prints, limited editions and smaller originals.

"I feel it's nice that there is something for everyone.

"It seemed a shame that only a handful of people could afford to take an image home.

"That is why we developed the prints."

This is so refreshing coming from someone who is so successful.

This is a no nonsense lady who knows what she wants from life — and so far her life has been more than colourful.

When Qantas commissioned her to do a painting they sent her on board the QE2 to do the Southampton to New York crossing to see what she would come up with.

The result is a wonderfully true and funny painting entitled *The Captain's Table* (you'll have to visit the Cockatoo Gallery and let it impact on you to understand.)

Helen supports many charities and regularly makes donations to these as

part of giving back.

She is deeply interested in the human condition and psychology.

When she paints a major exhibition she prefers to work with a theme, where she can also explore the use of poetry and writing to better delve into her muse, subject or the the object of her focus.

Some of her paintings are laced in humour, in others you can sense a sinister message about ourselves lurking, a dark side.

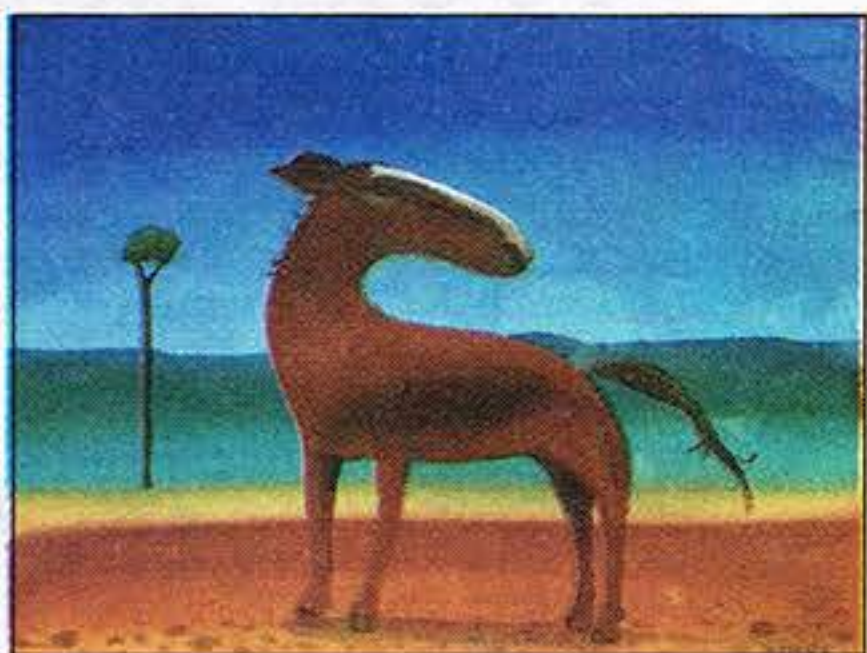
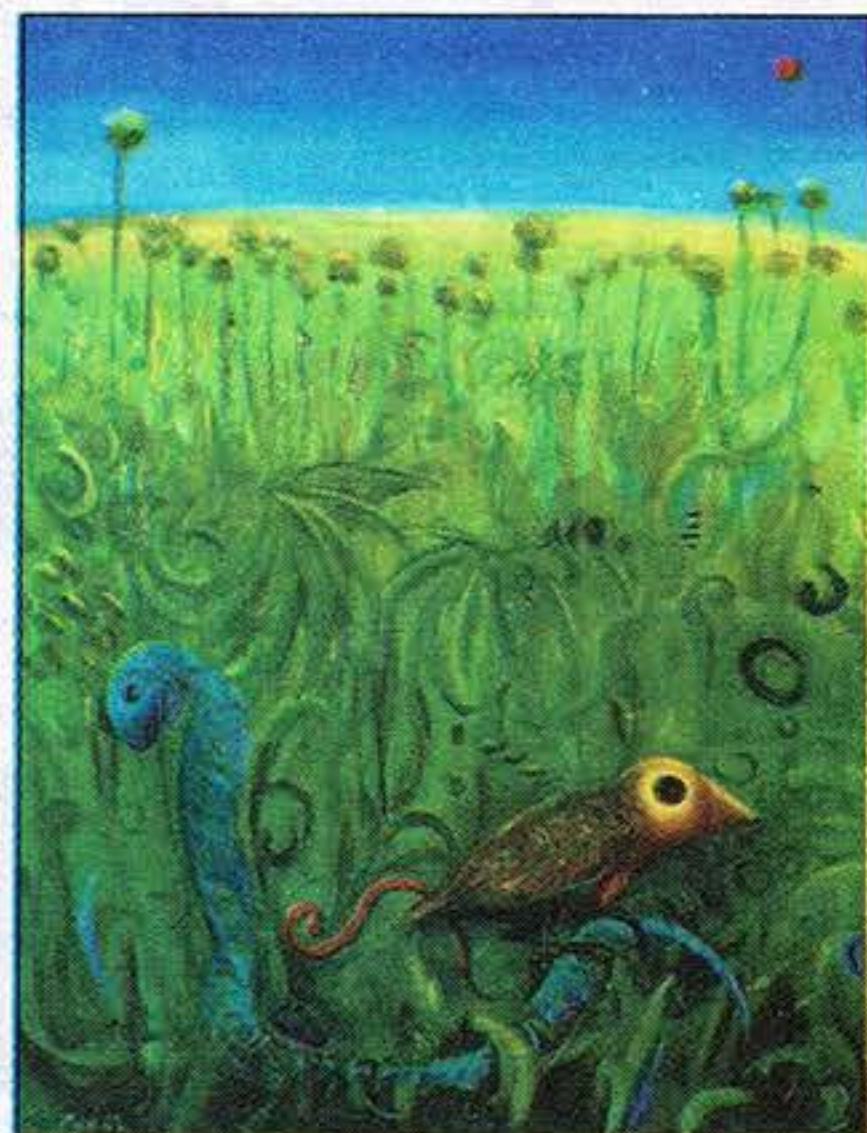
"The reason I work in themes is that I prefer to use a metaphor or a story to perform a very complex and deep exploration of an emotion. I present this by way of a story to the audience.

"I want them to come and have a journey with me.

"I prefer that the viewing of a major exhibition is more like a complete experience rather than a visit to an art gallery or an exhibition of paintings for paintings sake.

"Rather than just a sensing experience that you may have by viewing an exhibition of landscapes or still life paintings, you generally come away with some sort of emotional reaction," she said.

"It may be positive and it may be



negative, but it's rarely neutral. I report on the human condition."

Helen will visit the Sunshine Coast often while she paints and writes in Vanuatu at her studio.

"I love Queensland. I love the area. You certainly are in God's country.

"If I had to chose one place in the world to live it would be the Coast hinterland."