

## Horanai finds form in power of nature

*continuity of life at Tweed Regional Gallery*

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**Friday, 3 March 2017**

**Japanese-born artist Maki Horanai celebrates the resilience of life with her exhibition, *the continuity of life: the art of Maki Horanai*, on display at Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre from 3 March to 16 April.**

Out for a drive a few years ago, Horanai noticed a roadside tree had been cut down and the trunk remained in the ground. She thought it had no life but shoots gradually appeared on the side and grew taller each time she passed.

She was amazed at the power of life to spring from what appeared to be dead and imagined birds would soon make nests in those branches, babies would be born and families would grow. The power of nature gave her great hope.

Horanai found the word 'tiller', which had two meanings and was appropriate to use in relationship to the works in this exhibition: 1) one who tills and cares for the earth, 2) a shoot or branch that grows from the main stem; a sapling. Some of her works also contain Latin words or quotes that allude to our connection to nature and her concern and love for it.

Born on the island of Hokkaido in northern Japan, Horanai spent her childhood in small seaside villages. The ocean, the small islands that dotted the seascape and her proximity to nature had a big effect on her heart and mind.

Since her childhood she has loved the stars, moon and ocean and, after moving to Australia, birds. Maki uses her observations of nature and life to inspire the stories that form on the canvas.

Using brush strokes, a palette knife and glazing to create her paintings, Horanai rarely has a fixed idea or composition in mind when she begins a work, and prefers it to unfold as she paints. She starts by building up a surface texture with gesso and charcoal, giving a sense of history to the surface. Through this process she finds forms and shapes, which then become part of her landscapes and figures.

Everyone is invited to an official opening of *the continuity of life: the art of Maki Horanai* by Hillel Weintraub, who has closely followed Horanai's work for the past 15 years, on Friday 3 March at 6pm for 6.30pm (DST).

**Public Program: Sunday 19 March at 1pm to 3pm (DST).** Responding to the Evocative Art of Maki Horanai: a playshop in creative looking and writing. Facilitator Hillel Weintraub enjoys expressing himself through writing and helping others to do the same. When first exposed to Horanai's paintings, Weintraub was moved to write a poetic response, a Japanese haiku poem, and hasn't been able to stop. In a relaxed, playful and sharing atmosphere, participants are invited to try their hand at writing haiku in response to Horanai's paintings on exhibition. The artist will be attending and a handmade journal and supportive guidance will be provided to each participant. No experience in writing is necessary. Bookings are required for this free event. Contact the Gallery before Friday 17 March to secure your place.

### Image credits:

Maki Horanai, *floating above the world*, 2015, synthetic polymer paint on linen, 90 x 120cm. Private collection of Maite Kervella  
Maki Horanai, *song of the harp*, 2014, synthetic polymer paint on linen, 90 x 120cm. Private collection of Annette and Guy Lewington

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**Contact:** Art Gallery Director, Susi Muddiman (02) 6670 2792 or Communications Officer – Media, Fran Silk on (02) 6670 2575

2 Mistral Road (Corner of Tweed Valley Way) in Murwillumbah South. PO Box 816 Murwillumbah, NSW 2484  
P: (02) 6670 2790 F: (02) 6670 2797 [tweedart@tweed.nsw.gov.au](mailto:tweedart@tweed.nsw.gov.au) [artgallery.tweed.nsw.gov.au](http://artgallery.tweed.nsw.gov.au)  
The Gallery and Café is open from Wednesday to Sunday 10am – 5pm.