



The Edge of Shadows

Val Brooks
Wednesday 1 April to
Sunday 26 April 2026



Image courtesy of the artist.

About the Artist

Val Brooks is an Australian artist working in pastels and oils in her response to the West Australian landscape.

Born in England, Val migrated to Perth in 1981. She has always worked in art related careers, initially as a window dresser and later as a primary school Art Specialist. Developing her own studio pottery in the UK, Val subsequently studied ceramics at Carine TAFE (now North Metropolitan TAFE) producing wheel-thrown pots in woodfired kilns and a range of majolica tableware where working with onglaze colours led to an exploration of the medium of dry pastel.

In recent years Val has become passionate about en plein air painting, mainly using oils, which contributes authenticity to her studio works. Her artwork is a response to local and statewide landscapes and has resulted in numerous awards.

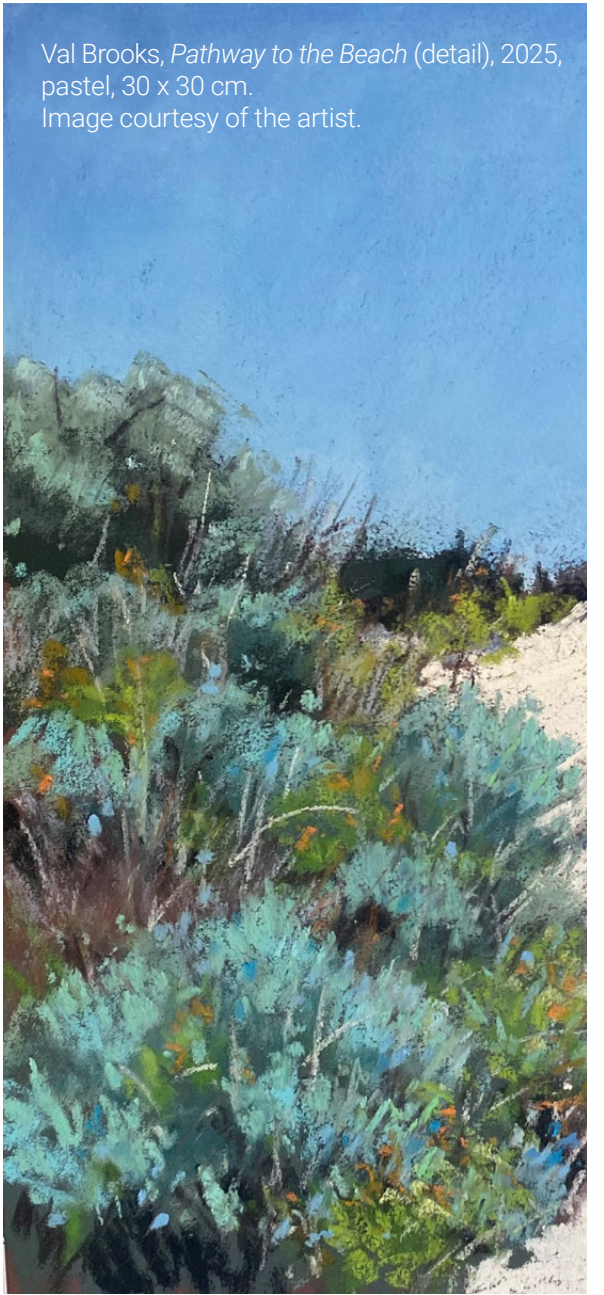
Val uses her teaching background to inspire others through demonstrations and workshops - always striving to push the medium through her practise.

The Edge of Shadows

The Edge of Shadows invites the viewer to immerse themselves in the colours, shapes, textures and temperature of the West Australian landscape, the artworks acting as a trigger for memories and stories from Val's observation of the natural landscape. Her work is a direct response to the impact that these places have on her as an artist.

Initially Val is drawn to colour in the landscape. The use of shadows emphasises the brightness and clarity of their immediate edges, creating patterns that lead the eye into a painting. Through en plein air studies, photography and memory the aim of a painting is to connect, resonate and leave a lasting impression.

Val's preferred medium is pastel for its ability to be used in thin layers. This allows colours to vibrate and create interest in what could be a seemingly solid area of shadow or a deep expanse of water. This is even more evident when observing rapidly changing light conditions during an en plein air painting where she often uses oils. Light creeps across the landscape invading and diluting shadow areas, creating fleeting impressions, and challenging Val as an artist to capture them.



Val Brooks, *Pathway to the Beach* (detail), 2025, pastel, 30 x 30 cm. Image courtesy of the artist.



Rockingham Arts Centre
11 Kent Street,
Rockingham

Gallery opening times:
Wednesday – Sunday
10am – 12.30pm
1pm – 4pm

Contact:
(08) 9527 0734
artscentre@rockingham.wa.gov.au
rockingham.wa.gov.au/exhibitions



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Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Rockingham acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land, the Binjareb and Whadjuk Nyoongar peoples and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of Aboriginal communities and their cultures, and to Elders past and present.

Val Brooks, *Cygnets Bay II*, 2026, pastel, 75 x 45 cm. Image courtesy of the artist.

Saskia Lopes, *New Mercies*, 2025, acrylic on canvas, 91 x 121 cm. Image courtesy of the artist.



Liminal Time - Bridges

Saskia Lopes
Wednesday 1 April to
Sunday 26 April 2026



Image courtesy of the artist.

Saskia Lopes

About the Artist

Saskia Lopes completed a Bachelor of Fine Art at Northern Territory University (now Charles Darwin University) in 1998, followed by a Graduate Diploma of Secondary Education in 1999. She taught both secondary and tertiary art before pursuing further studies in science, earning both a Bachelor of Science, 2006, and a Bachelor of Chiropractic Science, 2009, from Murdoch University. Since then, she has worked professionally in private practice as a chiropractor while raising a family. In 2025, she returned to her art practice with renewed focus and passion.

Saskia's work reflects a deep engagement with transitional moments in life, exploring themes of waiting, change, and the beauty of in-between spaces. Through painting she finds joy and fulfilment, while navigating the ongoing balance of being a mother, wife, grandmother, healthcare provider, and artist. This body of work exemplifies her exploration, capturing both personal and universal experiences of passage, reflection, and the quiet tension between endings and beginnings.

Liminal Time - Bridges

Liminal Time - Bridges explores the transitional moments of our lives - the spaces between one state and another, where endings and beginnings coexist. The exhibition reflects on times of waiting, change and reflection, capturing both personal and universal experiences of passage. Many of the paintings depict the Swan River, a place where the artist walks most mornings, observing the subtle shifts of light and atmosphere at dawn and dusk. The river's edge, neither fully land or water, becomes a visual metaphor for liminality: a space suspended between states rich with memory and potential.

Other works focus on weather changes, moments just before or just as rain begins, emphasising the charged stillness of anticipation. These liminal moments - quiet, fleeting, and often overlooked - hold both beauty and tension, and in them joy and grief coexist. The layering of washes and the selective removal of paint mirrors this conceptual framework, revealing the accumulation of experience while allowing space for the unexpected to emerge. Spiritual reflection is also present, as the artist learns to trust God in the waiting, seeing the pause itself as meaningful, full of grace, and deeply beautiful.



Saskia Lopes, *First Rain #3 (detail)*, 2025, acrylic on canvas, 50 x 121 cm. Image courtesy of the artist.



Saskia Lopes, *Before the Storm*, 2025, acrylic on canvas, 101 x 101 cm. Image courtesy of the artist.