Welcome to TAFTA’s 2nd ORIGINAL MATERIAL story: CAROLYN SULLIVAN

This new series from Janet De Boer, on behalf of TAFTA, is titled ORIGINAL MATERIAL and goes into considerable depth about the trajectory of the selected artist’s career. Nancy Tingey was the first subject with her story E-published in June 2015. To find the full article consult TAFTA’s Home Page: www.tafta.org.au

INTRODUCTION to CAROLYN SULLIVAN by JANET DE BOER

I’ve spent the last thirty years condensing material for a printed magazine format. Here I can be expansive - and there are so many extraordinary makers out there who deserve a bit of extra space. So, rather than neatly condense and organize Carolyn Sullivan, I decided to include quite a lot about her, interspersed with images - the images are not necessarily in chronological order and are frequently used to enliven the text... At times the images include pages from her journals and sources of inspiration, often inserted at my whim, because I am so inspired by them - like the image shown above from her 'Postcard' series.

I have relied heavily on Carolyn Sullivan's own writing of her story and unless otherwise indicated you can assume all text is provided from Carolyn's own words. I have used bold text freely to draw the eye to the story’s progress. Photo credits: unless a photographer is mentioned, Carolyn Sullivan gets the photo credit.

I hope you take some time to get to know Carolyn Sullivan better - it has been a joy and a privilege to prepare this article on her.

Carolyn Sullivan launches THE JOURNEY
It is usual to present someone in chronological order from their early days through higher education and then into family, a melange of career choices and, eventually, a Textile Addiction.

In the course of preparing this article, Carolyn gave such delightfully forthright replies to questions put to her that one of those replies is used here to launch her story. Text is interspersed with images that may not be a direct part of the story but are very much a part of Carolyn’s journey.

Saturday, July 4th. Dear Janet ...........

I hope when you write the article you acknowledge on my behalf the importance of the Textile Fibre Forums. They have been so important in my development and the opportunity to learn with such intelligent women – yes, they have all been women. In going through my files this last week or so I found 11 certificates from Fibre Forum plus there have been at least two others, with Adele Outeridge in 2012 and Els van Baarle in 2013....It was not only the learning but the opportunity to teach for you and that in itself has opened many doors for me.

When I was finishing up with City and Guilds in 2001, one of the assessors of my work suggested that rather than continue with the next level of C&G, I should find something else that would challenge me which is why I went looking for good classes and you offered them. It was also the trigger to go back to university and do a Diploma of Arts. I studied Art History and it was such an eye opener, not least because I was so much older and enjoyed the university experience more than when I was young.
Above, four postcards created by Carolyn Sullivan when she set herself the challenge, for a year, of making a 'postcard' a day.

One of the other big influences along the way has been my membership in the *Experimentalists*. This is a group that was formed in Canberra after we had all done a workshop with Nancy Crow in 1996. At the time I was living in Sydney and commuted to Canberra for probably only two meetings before it all just got too hard, so I had to leave the group. When I moved to Bundanoon I read an article about the group which still existed so I contacted Dianne Firth and have been attending the quarterly meetings for approximately ten years now.

For the *Experimentalists*, **each quarter a design exercise is set** and while some of them have had no appeal whatever I have fitted them into what I was already doing and that has been an enormous challenge. Seeing the wonderful work that the others do has been terrific too. Each meeting we share books and catalogues that we have found interesting and that, of course, has meant that I have been exposed to so much that I would not have seen otherwise.

*At left, detail of Postcard* - the daily task of making one allowed great scope for experimentation...
You asked me to comment on my earliest aspirations.

I always thought I had no artistic talent. I certainly did not enjoy any art class at school – it was horrible, embarrassing and uncomfortable. In fact, my creative side was spent doing hours and hours of piano practice from the age of 8 until I was 20!

What I did enjoy at school was sewing lessons which were compulsory from Years 3 to 6 at primary school. I also did a little bit at high school because I attended a school that had previously been a domestic science school and there were still staff there who thought that those of us doing Latin and French should have some sort of “grounding” in something that wasn’t academic.

When I look back at my apron that I made in year 4, I can see that I wasn’t very good at sewing but equally I have the food cover that I made in year 8 and it isn’t too bad.....

My goal when I was at school was to be a Geography teacher or a primary school teacher. Naively I thought that with my Dip.Ed I could teach Geography to my heart’s content. No one mentioned that I would be in a Social Sciences faculty where Commerce and Economics were taught too. After 18 years of teaching those last two with not enough Geography, I gave up full time work (I was 40) and got on with a more creative life.

The study of Geography may well have fed a passion for Collecting and Arranging...

What I really liked was education – the idea that you could teach something basic now, come back to it in time and build on that some more. I always wanted my students to do as much for themselves as they could. I frequently set assignments that were done in the classroom which gave me time to read what they were doing on a one-to-one basis. I could correct errors, praise good work and encourage the students whose interest in school was limited. I always felt that I was preparing them for life and that the information that I taught in the classroom was only of minimal significance. It was how they went about getting that information that was important.
I cannot shake that concept even as I have been teaching adults to stitch or create artworks. I don’t want to go into a room of 12 – 14 people and say, “this is how it is done; do it this way!” I want to give options and ideas that will trigger their own thinking. I’ve even been known to teach something the “wrong” way so that when it is combined with the “right” way, they can see the bigger picture. I have regarded teaching to be a privilege, both at school and in recent years, to adults.

Experimental Journal Pages of imagery that lends itself beautifully to ‘lateral’ stitching - see below.

While I am talking about important influences on me I cannot overlook the The Embroiderers’ Guild NSW Inc. I have been a member since 1978 and in those early years I was exposed to the work of some brilliant women. I’ve done many classes there and was a member of the Lateral Stitchers group for 12 years. Again, design exercises were set with year long projects that we worked on and in doing these challenges I pushed myself further. So, I don’t just regard education as something for other people, but for myself too.

Now that I live in Bundanoon I like to work quietly in my studio. I have a lovely space – two rooms of a large house which have a double door between them – which allows me to set up things in different places. My quilters’ cutting table is rarely used for that purpose any more. It is covered in plastic and newspaper and is where I paint papers to be used in collage. It’s a mess! Another table I try to keep clean and have stitching projects going – mostly more than one. The third table is where I keep books, my diaries and the computer for administrative work.

Above, a postcard incorporating text about the Hay Plain.
Extensive notes on ideas for quilts and the struggle with Scale: "What might look fine as a painting or as a small collage is a whole different matter when taken up in size..."

I have been writing in Moleskine diaries since late 2006, mostly because I used to go to my husband Ken and tell him all about my latest brilliant idea. He got a bit sick of that and kept telling me to “write it down”. The diaries have become a project in themselves. I don’t write every day but other days I write many pages. After working on these for 9 years, I am now up to book number 50! I keep drawings, designs, layouts, collages and other notes in a series of A4 journals and have about 40 of them which I have worked on since 1991, the year after I gave up full time teaching. My Postcard Obsession is explained below.

"People often ask me how I get so much done. I watch TV while I sew. However, there is no TV in the studio. I usually only watch at night and occasionally in the late afternoon when I can catch up on iView."

In 2014 after reading about other people’s “I did this for a year” projects, I decided to do a postcard collage a day for a year. I now have 365 of them. It got a bit wearing towards the end of 2014, but I was determined to finish. Perhaps the best ones were done in the middle of...
the year when I had “found my stride” so to speak. I had had lots of practice by then and had some good ideas. By the end of the year I just wanted it all over with and the postcards reflect that.

One more thing to stress is my family. My life with Ken has been intellectually challenging and he has always made it possible for me to do what I needed to do. No one could have a better one-man cheer squad.

My children are the joy of my life and now that I have grandchildren, life is even better. My son has discovered himself as an artist and he makes fantastic art jewellery. How about the concept of – “I’m going to an important party and need a new pair of earrings to wear” – and get them! My 5 year old granddaughter draws constantly, scavenges for toilet rolls to make constructions with and gives me a picture for the refrigerator whenever I see her.

My best friend, other than Ken, is my daughter, Linda. She helps me with things technical. She has been the editor of my 3 Blurb books, designs and maintains my website and has recently helped with the technical side of the printing of 6 of my postcards. All of this while working from home and raising her two children. She, like me, has a supportive husband.

Editorial note: To source Carolyn Sullivan's 3 'Blurb' books, investigate the URL: http://au.blurb.com/b/5402457-way-out-there

Carolyn Sullivan has thus far e-published 'Way Out There'; 'Here at Home' and 'Here at Home and Elsewhere.' She is also the author of _Quilted One Block Marvels (2007) and Companion Pieces Quilts and Embroidery_ (see further on).

I hope all of this helps. It’s been a fun project for me – except when I had to find out how to change a cartridge in the printer!

At left, a final postcard showing the influence of Toulouse Lautrec...

Below, the Journey continues...
MY LAST PATCHWORK QUILT

"Not really THE LAST but a watershed work. I loved these quilts while I did them, and they are still in use on the beds in my home. I do enjoy the richness of the Kaffe Fassett fabrics; it is completely handmade with hexagons. Nowadays I make smaller quilts that are conceptual in nature rather than functional."

Carolyn Sullivan's mother, Norma Loch, taught popular patchwork classes for the The Embroiderers' Guild NSW Inc which is where Carolyn learned initially, starting with a cot quilt in 1981 made for her newborn son. She continued to make quilts for her children while learning new skills. When she started working on the UK-based City & Guilds of London Creative Embroidery and Design course, taught by correspondence, she found she could not combine quilting and embroidery in a way that pleased her. While she continued to use her full repertoire of techniques (and add to them), ultimately she began to feel that stitched soft textiles could convey what she wanted to say with her artworks. It was also through the City & Guilds course that she began to seriously think and learn about design which opened up new worlds for her (she obtained her City & Guilds Diploma in Embroidery in 2002).
Involvement with the The Quilters' Guild of NSW Inc has also been very important to Carolyn Sullivan. A Member Profile (written by Erica Spinks) appeared in a 2003 edition of The Template and included the work seen at right, "Portaloo Street, described here..."

...Until 2005, Carolyn Sullivan lived in Jannali, NSW. "After the 1994 bushfires in Jannali I felt I needed to make a work as a memory. I took lots of photographs of the burnt out suburb but it was some time before I realised that the most significant part of the whole experience was the rebuilding. An essential part of this was the line of portaloos, since each building site was obliged to have its own facilities. Portaloo Street (seen above) was the result."

"Portaloo Street", 27 x 20cm.

Carolyn's first book, Companion Pieces - Quilts and Embroidery was published by J.B. Fairfax (an imprint of Sally Milner Pub) in 1998. The work shown at left, Follow the Shades, was used for the cover and is accompanied by a related embroidery (framed).

Carolyn estimates she has made about 100 quilts in all and that a week-long workshop with Nancy Crow in 1996 was a breakthrough - the cover of Quilted One Block Marvels shows a work made in response to that influence (this book was published jointly by Quiltworks Australia and the USA-based American Quilters' Society in 2007). When I am making a quilt, it is the colour that is my primary focus.'

Having served as Vice-President of The Quilters' Guild of NSW Inc in 1994, Carolyn went on to become President from 1995-1996. These duties kept her so busy that smaller projects such as cushions worked in tapestry embroidery became her focus (see Colours of the Night referred to in the text that follows).

1995 also saw Carolyn Sullivan invited to join the Parkland Stitchers, a group arising from the Embroiderers' Guild of NSW that had a constant membership of fifteen people and was the initial concept of Helen Whelan. Well known embroiderer, Pat Langford, was also part of the group which held a themed exhibition each year.
“Colours of the Night” - stitched tapestry, 24 count congress cloth and three strands of standed cotton: 24 x 24cm. This work was selected for a 2004 exhibition at Fairfield City Museum and Gallery curated by Helen Lancaster and titled “The Colour of Night.”

**QUILTS 2000** was a landmark experience for **Carolyn Sullivan** who was chosen to carry the Paralympic Flame for part of its journey to Sydney Olympic Park in October 2000 as one of the Paralympic Games Special fundraising Projects torchbearers. **QUILTS 2000** was conceived by **Margaret Wright** who, assisted by Karen Fail and Dianne Finnegan, co-opted others (like Carolyn Sullivan) to help achieve the goal of receiving over 2000 donated quilts. Sales raised money for the Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games. A number of the quilts were hung in the Athletes' Village during the Olympics and the Paralympics; others were exhibited at major centres around the country. It was a gargantuan effort and a huge success.

**A GALLERY FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM**

Carolyn Sullivan's CV lists a substantial number of group exhibitions, awards, publications and collections in which she is represented. In the new Millennium she has continued to explore, to extend herself and to surprise, moving back and forth from a seemingly neutral palette to intense vibrancy, from 'kantha' and her Hankie series to her richly coloured 'triptychs'. all of which are 'exhibited' here in a kind of Gallery presentation. It was also in the new millennium (2005 in fact) that she and her husband moved from Jannali to Bundanoon and a 5-acre property near Morton National Park, in the Southern Highlands of NSW.

*It is time to let Carolyn speak in her own voice again, starting with 'Looking Out, Looking in'. For this first section, colour is important but a less vibrant feature, yielding to subtle textures.*
I like looking at the land – its shapes, its colours, its textures.

I enjoy living in a place where my view of the land is instantly visible.

I visit other places to see how the land is different. Is it a dry, stoney desert; a tropical rainforest; dry grasslands; steep, rocky mountains; a field of brilliant yellow canola, or purple Paterson’s Curse; a fast flowing river; the waves pounding the seashore; a steep valley or rolling hills?

I want to know why the land is different. How much water is there? What is the geologic history? How do the people who live there respond to and talk about their place? How do they care for their land?

Above, 'Looking Out, Looking In': 38 x 48cm. "It has never been exhibited but I really let fly with the Artist Statement..."

I explore my own place and see the organisms that share my space:

- the lichens; the trees; and their leaves, particularly their autumn colours;
- the animals – even the wombat who wanted to live under our house;
- the insects and the marks some of them make in wood;
- the variety of fungi; spiderwebs; grasses; the beautiful, green, speckled plovers’ eggs laid out in the middle of the frosty paddock; and wildflowers.

Cicada shells, photographed
I see the undulating hills of my community, brown and frost bitten in winter. Green and lush in spring and brown again in the heat of summer. I love the series of plateaux extending to the east, green in spring, blue in winter, smoke hazed in summer. I am thrilled by the mists that occasionally envelop us and hide the land.

I use the plants of our land to colour cloth. And I represent with stitch what I have felt and found as I have “looked out” and “looked in”.

Above, 'Mushroom' accepted in the prestigious ‘Quilt National 2011’ USA. Silk, cotton and wool; lino printing plant dyed, hand-stitched; 140 x 92cm. Photographer: Andy Payne, Photographix. "QN is seen as the ‘holy grail’ of quilt making and it was wonderful to be included. 'Mushroom' is about looking at the underside of the many mushrooms that grow on our property and comparing that to the expansive undulations of the land.”

The Influence of KANTHA..... starting with the HANKIE SERIES..

There are two parts to this story. Some years ago when my husband Ken visited his mother in the USA he brought home a pile of about 60 men’s handkerchiefs. Ken’s not sure if they belonged to his father or if they came out of the family dry cleaning business where his mother worked until she married.

Whichever the story, they are very old. They have been soaked to clean them up and are lovely soft fabrics which are a delight to stitch.
The second part of the story happened in 2014 when we visited Ken’s family in Philadelphia and were taken to the Philadelphia Art Museum where I had made an appointment to visit their Costume and Textiles Resource Center. **There I was shown 7 of their vast collection of bed sized kanthas** that were donated by 2 collectors. (‘Kantha’ usually refers to a simple running stitch, originally used to stitch layers of old sari cloth together in India to create domestic cloths). There had been an exhibition and excellent catalogue written in 2010. **When I came home I decided to try to reproduce some of the patterns.**

My original intent was to see how the stitching was done but for various reasons I decided I needed to use my own sense of stitch in making a 3metre x 12cm long sampler. **Since then I have concentrated on working on these hankies, trying out all sorts of techniques and stitches, some simply reproducing the patterns, others being a bit creative.** No matter how I try, they are mine, not copies (I really did think I could do nearly exact replicas but found that my “hand” is different to the original stitcher’s and she used different fabric and threads to mine, all of which changes the end result.) I have ideas for lots more. I like to keep up with my exhibition work so they are fitted “in between”. They are relaxation from the “deep and meaningful”.

*Little Leaves, A-4 size, kantha stitching; used frequently for teaching. ‘Leaf rubbings are created using transfer crayons which can yield lovely subtle colour. I also use it to demonstrate how I assemble numerous fabrics into a whole cloth.’*
ART QUILT TEACHING  In 2005, the Committee of The Embroiderers’ Guild NSW Inc was brave enough to allow me to teach a class that I called Art Quilts (simplistically defined as a three-layered, stitched textile that can be used by the artist to convey a message).

While the message was given definite importance, concentration on good design and the learning of techniques was also stressed. Each student made an A-4 size quilt each month over the course of ten differently themed sessions.

Barklines; 78 x 82cm. “This is one of the kanthas that I made when I first came to live in Bundanoon. I was so taken with living in a rural place that I looked at everything around me for inspiration. The lines in the bark were one of the many influences at the time. I also liked it because all of the lines have the look of a large river system.”
One Hundred (40 x 40cm). Until the last few years when I have exhibited I have not done machine embroidery on my works. There were so many of these tiny leaves – which I collected along the driveway at the Textile Forum in Orange that I was not interested in all of the hand stitch so I machined around them all just to show everyone that I did know how to use a sewing machine. The background has been filled with kantha stitching. I love arranging things, especially leaves and this was one I enjoyed. This work was an invited piece in Ozquilt Networks’ Australia Wide 3 where I was one of the selectors.

Grasslands (40 x 40cm). Not only were the flowers lush that we found in Central Australia on our trip in 2013, but so was all of the grass. This small work is representative of that. It is at present traveling with Ozquilt Network Inc’s Australia Wide 4.

Digression: Carolyn Sullivan served as president of Ozquilt Network Inc in 2006 when Alison Muir (then VP) encouraged the notion of traveling exhibitions which have proved very successful (‘Australia Wide’). "The idea of having a conference at the same time as the AGM was mine... It was meant to be professional development and as we have moved on we have included a session related to the life work of one person (e.g. Alvena Hall in 2014)." Now masterclass workshops are part of the formula and the exhibition Art Quilt Australia 2015 was launched in October at the National Wool Museum Geelong to coincide with the 2015 AGM.
**Abundance** (60 x 60cm): I have always loved cultural textiles, mostly embroidery, of course. **This design is based on an embroidery I did when I was about 19.** It was one of those traced linen cloths that were embroidered – fancy work. My mother crocheted a very elaborate edging to it some years later when I married and I still have that cloth today. In the late 1990’s I made a version of it in the same scale as “Abundance” and did it in a technique that I was working with at the time. **It was one of my first attempts at kantha stitch** which I first discovered when I was doing City and Guilds from London with Julia Caprara in the late 1990’s. Then, in 2012 **I had a third attempt at the same design and made this work using colours that I had seen in a book about cultural embroidery.** I have since developed a workshop based on the notion of Cultural Textiles.

Here is a more complete view of ‘Frivolous’, a detail of which appears near the start of this article. An artist friend that I meet with regularly brought me a postcard from a small museum in eastern Europe and I could just see how the work in that image could be worked using the technique I had developed for the needlefelter (embellishing machine), a tool recently added to the repertoire.

‘Frivolous’ measures 60 x 60cm and won a Second Prize, and Judges’ Choice Award at the Sydney Quilt Show 2012.

**Further Out** (seen below): Ken and I drove to Central Australia in 2013. It was a long drive. We crossed the Hay Plains, cut across South Australia via Renmark and Burra to Port Augusta and then up the Stuart Highway to Alice Springs. 2013 had been a wet year so rather than travel through obvious desert we saw the land covered in flowers. **Most of the stitching I have done since we returned has been about the flowers in the desert rather than the parched land I expected to see.** This work was included in *Living Colour*, an exhibition curated by Brenda Gael Smith which travelled Australia from January 2014 - October 2015. Dimensions: 40 x 100cm.
I asked Carolyn Sullivan about the three-panel approach she often uses these days, which I find especially engaging and unique. Here is her reply.

I actually started making the three panels for the quilts for practical reasons. My hands are getting older and I wanted to make large works without pain or to aggravate the tendonitis that is already there. At first they were the kantha ones, *Roadside Coreopsis, Out There*, etc, which are quite light in weight. But when I got the embellishing machine and started working with felt, which is heavier, and adds weight between the layers it became even more important. With the kantha ones there are three distinct things that I was trying to portray, both the expanse of the landscape and the little things.

Above, *Roadside Coreopsis*, dyed with coreopsis flowers that grow along Penrose Road, an alternate route to the Hume Highway between Sydney and Goulburn - that is where we live - and it represents both the colour of the flowers locally and the bushland. 135 x 97cm. Photographer Andy Payne of Photographix. Winner of First Prize, Art Quilts, Sydney Quilt Show 2012, and Judge’s Choice.
In *Out There*, the top and bottom panels represent whatever little things might be lurking “out there” but the centre panel is the undulating landscape.

For a long time after we moved to Bundanoon I referred to much of the work I did under a banner of “here at home”. After the Central Australia trip I started referring to “out there”—this was the first work and has been dyed with eucalyptus cinerea. I love the red colour I get from the dye pot. It won the *Expressions Wool Quilt* prize in 2012 and is now in the collection of the National Wool Museum in Geelong.

Once I moved to the needlefelted pieces like *Flowering Red Gums*, seen below, I realised that there was so much more that I could do because I had made many, many samples with the new embellishing machine. It allowed me to use more colour, and show more of what I was thinking. It also allowed me more freedom in how I used stitch.

**A brief history of The Embellisher:** In 2011 I won a sewing machine but did not really need another one so when I went to collect the machine I walked out with a needlefelting machine—and a good working light. I’ve had so much fun playing with the machine and seeing some of its potential. *Flowering Red Gums* followed on from all the samples and was made with heavily stitched wool flowers that were needlefelted and then oversewn with stranded cotton. The stitching is very rich. I was invited to exhibit it at Goulburn Regional Art Gallery in 2014 in a group exhibition called “Efflorescence”. 
The work, *returning* has special significance as it was exhibited recently in the Hazelhurst Regional Gallery and Arts Centre, where Carolyn Sullivan undertook a residency from 8-23 August 2015 in conjunction with the *Labours of Love* exhibition ('Australian Quilts 1845-2015'). Carolyn says, "Hazelhurst is an area of Sydney that I know. I used to walk past the gallery on the way home from school, and from university, and knew the property before it became an art complex."
I was given a place to work on my own projects without any commitment to the gallery in terms of what I would work on. Included in the residency is accommodation in the cottage that was the original home of the property and was built in 1947, although with some renovations in recent times. The artist studio, bedroom and lounge are upstairs so there is a lovely feeling up being up in the trees with lots of light, shadows and birds with views over the gallery gardens. The gardens themselves are a place for quiet reflection even though they are used extensively by the local community.

I knew that I would have the residency about 18 months before it happened so I had a lot of time to think about what I might do while I was there. In 2013, Ken and I travelled to Central Australia. On returning home I started making collages representing all that I had seen while I was away. This entailed painting up my own papers which in turn, reflected what I had seen. I made over fifty 16 x 16 collages. These were interpreted into small stitched tapestries. I felt, however, that they would also make different quilts to the hand stitched quilts I have been making for many years. So a lot of my time at the cottage was spent at the sewing machine doing raw edge appliqué and then constructing three quilts from the 6 large panels that I had made. I have never had such an intense time at the sewing machine!

A RETURN TO STITCHED TAPESTRIES and the Wangaratta Purchase

Carolyn Sullivan has received numerous awards and has quilts and embroideries in many private collections in Australia and the USA. Her work has been acquired by the Southern Downs Regional Art Collection, Stanthorpe, Queensland; by the National Wool Museum Geelong, Victoria (see ‘Out There’ above) and by the Wangaratta Art Gallery, Victoria. It is this last purchase which is described here and which completes her story. For now.
I did a lot of collages after the Central Australian trip and then started doing 8 x 8cm fine needlepoint tapestries based on those collages. There are 12 of them in all so when I was preparing a talk for the Geelong Fibre Forum in 2014, I decided to put them all together into one image rather than trying to show an 8 x 8 piece blown up onto the theatre screen - too much distortion. Three of them were shown in the **2014 “Petite Miniature Textiles” exhibition at Wangaratta Art Gallery** and were purchased for their collection. Three others were juried into the Goulburn Regional Art Gallery Art Prize show.

I did quite a bit of artwork at night during the Central Australian journey and when I returned home did a series of over 50 collages, 16 x 16cm each. Examples are shown above. As a geographer, it was a longed for experience to get to The Centre and very inspirational. We traveled a few weeks after rain had fallen over the desert, so my image of the desert is one of colourful blossoms across the red sand dunes, burnt out tree trunks and the rugged scenery of the MacDonnell Ranges.

I then extrapolated parts of each collage to design the three stitched tapestries acquired by Wangaratta Art Gallery and shown below. These are worked on 24 count canvas with three strands of stranded cotton.
FOR ALL THE VARIATIONS AND CHANGES IN MY JOURNEY ONE THING IS CERTAIN - MY LIFE IS ONE OF STITCH.