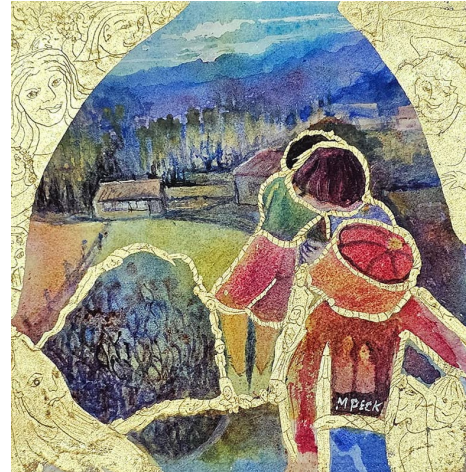


# Marilyn Peck

## *More Than Ten Treasures*

June 1 – June 8 2024

Having recently entered into her ninth decade, Marilyn Peck's current treasury of watercolour works contains a cornucopia of stories and reminiscences aglow with palladium and gold leaf. The title, *More Than Ten Treasures*, refers to an early handmade book called *Ten Treasures* that is ensconced within a handcrafted box. More than this, the exhibition is arrayed with other beautiful, framed miniatures. Marilyn Peck started painting seventy-six years ago when she was sixteen years old. It was the first time she'd been able to afford paints and paint brushes, though she'd been drawing from an early age. Peck subsequently became a commercial artist designing furniture fabrics and wallpaper. A commitment to fine, detailed work has run through all the painting styles she has explored since, most notably in her miniatures using watercolour and precious metal leaf. At ninety-two, Marilyn is still at the top of her game.



"My inner realm - my creativity - is my life source," says Peck. "I pounce on new directions when they flash their flags at me. My young spirit is easily aroused in imagining a new way of doing things because that's when doors and windows open into new realms. I am in the 'Zone', body not intruding because I am OUT THERE."

After many years exhibiting her popular impressionist paintings that depict life around Sydney's Hawkesbury River region, Peck made the switch to the inventiveness of her imagination. "I found ways to pick up accidental pictorial happenings and turn them into recognizable stories," she reveals.

Peck's later work features gold and palladium leaf laid onto her brightly hued watercolour paintings. She explains it involved 'another happy accident'. "Someone had demonstrated the correct method to use these materials. However, I decided I wanted to utilise these precious metals in a way that was my own: as a paint surface that I could draw into. I was in my mid-eighties and ready for a new challenge."

Not content with just the glint of metal adding its magic to her jewel-like paintings, Peck began the laborious process of inscribing into the gold or palladium leaf. "I could see that the blemishes in the applied metal leaf resembled figures, faces and symbols," explains Peck. "Nobody else was doing anything like this. I always want to innovate. I can take the story of the painting so much further because it reveals itself to me as I work."

One of the paintings featured in the upcoming exhibition is titled *Beware of the Prick of a Midnight Rose*. "This is a phrase that haunts me," imparts Peck. "I don't know where I first came across it but I shall continue to attempt to understand the visual implications. I intend to keep painting such for as long as I live and am still able to use all the materials of paper, paint, precious leaf and brushes."

The *Ten Treasures* handmade book featuring ten exquisite miniatures was a gift given to a dear friend and only recently returned to Peck. "It's about the treasure of a well-shared friendship," Peck tells. "All of my long life has been measured in sharing creativity. I don't teach. I share. Creativity starts with perceiving chaos - the 'big bang' - cogitating from a distance then asking how can I depict the visions? I never doubt that what I do will be good enough, because what I do will always be more."