ART

Use of colour adds to intensity

By SONIA BARRON

Peter Smith and Nancy Tingey, Jardine Street Gallery, Kingston, Wednesday to Sunday, noon-5pm, until November 12.

THE TITLE of Canberra-based Peter Smith's first solo exhibition is *A Sense of Connectedness*. The connection he refers to is between people, families and couples and emotions generated by circumstance. Throughout his paintings he suggests these different relationships by his configurations of vague misty figures painted mainly in primary colours, black, red and blue, with an occasional blast of yellow.

Smith admits to thinking of Aboriginal figurative images. There are certainly echoes of the magical Wandjina figures in his work, and in *Waiting* and *Sitting* he has responded to the angular figures, with their drawn-up legs, found in bark paintings from West Arnhem Land. It is the evocative strength of these stylistic convention that he has adapted rather than their significance.

His use of sprays of strong colours are reminiscent of Sidney Nolan, for example in *Bride and Groom* and in *Lost souls*, the latter in particular, with its cross-like figures on brilliant red. This lends a degree of emotional intensity to his otherwise "fussy" images, as one of Smith's friends has accurately described them.

Nancy Tingey, who is a 1996 recipient of a Churchill Fellowship "to investigate ways of using art as therapy for people with Parkinson's disease", also teaches watercolour painting in a number of colleges in Canberra and has earlier exhibited as a textile artist locally and in the United Kingdom.

These small watercolours are her response to the landscape of Arckaringa in South Australia and the coasts of Western Australia and NSW. Her intention is to impart the elemental experience and a sense of a particular place. Her atmospheric washes are succinct, a paring down to essentials. I particularly liked her *Storm over Yanchep* and *Cloud*

A traveller from an antique land (oil on board), by Virgina Ferrier.

ive of where she is coming from, would have been helpful to an unfamiliar audience.

Virginia Ferrier, paintings, and *Paintings from Turkey Creek*, Chapman Gallery, 31 Captain Cook Crescent, Manuka, Wednesday-Sunday, 11am-6pm, until November 19.

BRISBANE artist Virginia Ferrier returns to Chapman with yet another series of lovely still life paintings.

As in her earlier exhibitions, Ferrier describes with a seemingly uncontrived directness the bounty of the garden, its flowers, vegetables and fruit, together with well-used and homely utensils and furnishings. Painted against a clear, light background, her arrangements speak of simple delights mediated by a consistent sensitivity to the aesthetic resolution of her imagery.

This preoccupation is so unlike the work of some artists whose still lifes focus on luxurious and exotic objects and lush botanical arrangements; works that articulate, if anything, Sydney harbourside affluence and materialism. Noted in the gallery listing, many of her titles are quotations from the late Pamela Bell's anthology, *Poetry 1947-1989*.

Three sacks of potatoes in *And*

number of floral images, has a very real association with the nurturing of nature's gifts.

In the smaller exhibition space is a selection of paintings by artists from Turkey Creek acquired during Judith Behan's recent trip to the community. The most familiar names are those of Rover Thomas, Jack Britten and Freddy Timms, who have achieved national and international recognition. Rover Thomas, together with the urban Aboriginal artist Trevor Nickolls, represented Australia at the Venice Biennale in 1990. As well there are works on paper in ochres from Mable Juli and Peggy Patrick and paintings by Beerabee Mungnari.

All share certain stylistic conventions, such as the dotted outline of shapes within their images. Whereas Rover Thomas has evolved a personal style of strongly articulated shapes, which we may read more as abstractions from nature and which appear more aerial in their perspective, other artists take a more obvious planar view on the landscape. As Wally Caruana has pointed out in his indispensable book *Aboriginal Art*, "... the emphasis is on the depiction of the features of the environment created by the an-

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By SASHA GRISHIN

Mantles of Darkness. Wendy S anos. Nolan Gallery, Lanyon, Tuesday to Sunday, 10am to until December 17.

WENDY STAVRIAN widely regarded as o Australia's leading fe artists, is well known to berra audiences, having taug the Canberra School of Ar tween 1978 and 1985.

This exhibition is an excep al and even overwhelming ex tion for which I would lik write this personal tribute, r than an art critique.

The exhibition is dedicate the artist's son, Peter, who tragically, unexpectedly and maturely in 1993. Virtually the paintings in The series executed in 1990-91, a long before Peter's death, yet on a tain level they are about him his tragic fate.

I first saw these painting the summer of 1992 in St anos's shearing-shed studi her central-Victorian pro near Harcourt, not far from digo. I still recall my sens on first viewing them: I felt overwhelmed in their pres almost guilty in a voyeur sense. It was as if I was s something very private, inti and tragic, yet I was someho

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By BERNADETTE CRUI

WHILE attending the tralian Opera in Sy I met Hans-Di Michatz, one of the featured ists at the Early Music F jointly organised by the Can Recorder & Early Music So and the National Folk Festiv

Two days of intensive w shopping and concerts wil held next weekend at Can Grammar School. Flute, rec and harpsichord recitals, r eval music, early-dance sess choral work and informative tures will be available for e siasts.

Michatz will be providi workshop on Saturday for tists (early and modern) o roque interpretation; both mentary and advanced stu are welcome. On Sunday, he