

**BEN BUGDEN**

**HEAD ABOVE WATER**

02 -28 NOVEMBER 2018

**OPENING 6pm – 8pm Friday 02 November 2018**

Lone Goat Gallery - 28 Lawson St, Byron Bay NSW 2481

Head Above Water is a body of photographic work by local artist Ben Bugden. It aims to document his relationship with the ocean as not only a lifelong companion, but also as a place of healing and reflection.

*“ Being born and raised in Byron, the ocean and the lifestyle surrounding it have been pivotal in shaping me as a person. In my imagery I want to capture a tactile, emotional and textural representation of my relationship with it.*

*As a surfer the ocean has always been my place of recreation, but it is also much more than that. For me it is my place to escape, reset and relax when anxiety, stress or grief visit.*

*Floating alone out there. Free. Silent. Just a head above water. It brings me a sense of peace and calm like no other. I’d love it if people are able to connect with that through my work and feel it too. For me, creating these images is as much a form of self-administered therapy as it is photography.”*

Watch the ocean for long enough and you’ll realise it’s a place that has as many complex nuances and moods as humans do. Darkness, light, peacefulness and rage, and within each there is beauty to be found.

**Bio – Ben Bugden**

Lucky enough to be born and bred in Byron Bay – back when it was still possible to surf The Pass with a handful of friends and the road to Tallows was dirt.

Throughout Ben’s life the ocean and the lifestyle surrounding it have been pivotal in shaping him as a person and a photographer.

*“This rings true in even my earliest memories. Sitting on the beach with Mum eating apricots; the shimmering surface and cool relief of the water the first time I stepped in; lying in the rain curled up in Dad’s board-bag under Pandanus Palms waiting for him to come in from the surf; the invigorating kiss of water droplets on a hot day; the feeling of a stressful day melting away with the embrace of the ocean.”*

Ben holds degrees in both Graphic Design and Photoimaging. He currently shoots, writes and works as deputy editor for Tracks Magazine, and is also a creative guide for Vagabond Photographic.

Ben lives and works in Byron Bay, Australia.

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# VYBE



TOP FIVE

## Water works

BORN and bred in Byron, Ben Bugden's latest body of photographic works aims to reflect his relationship with the ocean and the lifestyle that comes with it.

"The ocean, and the way of life in Byron, have been pivotal in shaping me as a person. In my imagery, I want to capture a tactile, emotional and textural representation of my relationship with it," Ben said.

Ben holds degrees in both graphic design and photo imaging. He currently shoots, writes and works as deputy editor for *Tracks Magazine*.

■ Ben Bugden: Head Above Water, Lone Goat Gallery, Byron Bay Library, November 2-28.



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# Ben's head above water

Capturing the beauty of the sea

**Christian Morrow**  
christian.morrow@byronnews.com.au

PHOTOGRAPHER Ben Bugden was lucky enough to grow up in Byron Bay back when it was still possible to surf The Pass with just a handful of friends, the road to Tallows was a dirt track and bananas still grew on the hillsides at Wategos.

Throughout his life the ocean and the lifestyle surrounding it have been pivotal in shaping him as a person and photographer and his new exhibition, *Head Above Water*, opens at 6-8pm tomorrow at The Lone Goat Gallery in Byron Bay.

Ben and his partner have just returned to Byron Bay but he retains his role as deputy editor of *Tracks Magazine* - Australia's most iconic surf publication.

So Ben really knows the ocean and what it takes to make a great photo of the sea that surrounds him physically and spiritually.

"The work in this exhibition reflects the feeling the ocean gives me - it has always been a place for me to go and reset," he said.

"No matter what is going on in my life, I can dive into the ocean and it casts a more positive light on the day.

"In these works I am not



SNAPPED AT SEA: Talented Byron photographer Ben Bugden's new exhibition is on show until November 28.

PHOTO: CHRISTIAN MORROW

capturing a surfer or a particular manoeuvre, quite a few of the works are almost abstract and impressionistic - it's more about capturing the moods the ocean can take on from moment to moment."

Ben's father introduced him to surfing early, "chucking me into the surf

at the Pass when I was about five" and from then on the ocean and surfing have been a constant in his life.

He studied traditional dark room photography as a student at Byron Bay High School with the photography of Australian legend Max Dupain proving a revelation. "As well as Dupain's

classic image of the *Sunbaker*, its all those early memories of the beach that are still strong with me," Ben said.

"Sitting on the beach with mum eating apricots, the shimmering surface and cool relief of the water the first time I stepped in, lying in the rain curled up in Dad's

board bag under pandanus palms waiting for him to come in and the feeling of a stressful day melting away with the embrace of the ocean."

*Head Above Water* continues until Wednesday, November 28. Go to [www.facebook.com/lonegoatgallery](http://www.facebook.com/lonegoatgallery) for more details