

Water themes inspire Narelle

A WATER theme seemed the logical choice for painter Narelle Manser-Smith, after living between river and sea in Nedlands. But creating works for the solo exhibition *Fluid* was also challenging, leading her to experiment with different techniques to capture the varying, often tumultuous moods.

Painting full-time for the past three years, Manser-Smith still sees the influence of her previous vocation as a pre-primary teacher whose classroom featured “lots of colour and large scale murals”. The career move was prompted by a “real burn to paint and express myself creatively”.

But her love of art began in early childhood, when Manser-Smith would impress her mother with drawings on a

small blackboard in her bedroom.

“We all see the world differently and I want to share how I see it,” she said.

The bulk of the works in *Fluid* were created last year, building on her long-held love of being near water and studying reflections.

But they also reflect the relationship she perceives between people and water, how people can be drawn to the ocean to swim or just walk along the edge.

“For me, it is something I need in my life as a form of relaxation,” she said.

Rather than paint on site, she often takes photographs back to her home studio, such as a recent stunning sunset she witnessed at Rottneest Island.

■ *Fluid* exhibits until March 1 at Ellis House, 116 Milne Street, Bayswater.



Artist Narelle Manser-Smith. Picture: Dominique Menegaldo