

Emergence: Local artists Leonie Ryan, Kerrie Warren and Ursula Theinert are to exhibit their work based on the Black Saturday fires at Federation Square.

Art triggers debate

By EBONNIE LORD

AN EMERGING art movement has turned the Premier's head and has got intellectual circles talking.

Environmental Expressionism, first coined by Latrobe Valley artist Peter Biram in 2003, is gaining momentum.

Last year the movement was launched by Premier Ted Baillieu, then opposition leader, when art, inspired by the movement, was exhibited at Melbourne's Queens Hall captured his attention while walking past.

Mr Biram said he had copped flack from some circles for allowing the Coalition to be aligned with the movement.

"Although the movement is political, it is not party political," Mr Biram told *The Express* on Thursday.

day.
"It would be great to get
Bob Brown involved but
he is yet to show interest.

"We are hoping to attract the premier's attention again this year, when we hold another exhibition."

bition."
Mr Biram said the
movement was born out of
concern about global
warming and other environmental issues.

"Art can be used as a political tool to create dialogue, we are not saying this is the way things areart opens up discussion," he said.

he said.
"It is what is left behind for past civilsations where as politicians come and go."

Callignee artist Ursula Theinert, who lost her art studio and an upwards of 30 pieces of work on Black Saturday, said she was



Artist's statement: Peter Biram Art teacher at GippsTAFE Yallourn started
Environmental Expressionism the first of its kind known in the world, out of concern
for the environment.

concerned about the environment and had a special interest in forest management, erosion and waste, which she ex-

pressed though her art.

"We have just finished rebuilding the studio, it's been a long hard slog," Ms

Theinert said.

"The good thing about art is that it is a less threatening way of confronting things, it can show things in a way that gets people talking, rather than polarising them."

Former Latrobe Valley artist Kerrie Warren who had experienced the fires first hand said it was hard to hear about the floods with more people's livelihoods destroyed.

"I was overwhelmed once again by the force of nature, the ferocity and the mess it left behind,"

Ms Warren said.

Meanwhile, Mr Biram,
Ms Theinert and Ms Warren along with Leonie
Ryan are among a group of
local artists exhibiting at
the 'Emergence- Art on the
Move' at Federation
Square next week.

The exhibition is for

emerging and professional artists who have created work in reference to the Black Saturday bushfires and the truth of the recov-

ery process.

The exhibition runs from Friday to Sunday, 13 February in the Atrium and reproduced on the big screen in the Main Square.

Any artist interested in joining Environmental Expressionism should phone Peter Biram on 0408 598 666.