

# Mungo inspires artist

By Hannah Knight

GHOSTS of Lake Mungo's past come to life in Brenda Runnegar's latest exhibition.

On display in Stefano's Gallery 25, "Hills of Sand" explores Lake Mungo's unique landscape and evolutionary history.

Weaving images of fossils, sea creatures and other-worldly beings into her work, Ms Runnegar brings a haunting tranquillity to outback NSW.

The Canberra-based artist is the Art Vault's newest resident and will show her work at Stefano's Gallery 25 until January 28.

Ms Runnegar, 64, recently took up full-time work after completing a Master of Fine Arts at Monash University.

"I've always loved arts, but I've only recently really been able to focus on it," she said.

"I came here in August for a trip and visited Lake Mungo and since then I've been working on that area of the world.

"My work was initially quite specific and quite literal, but that's been changing because I've become much more in tune with the idea of the Mungo man and woman that were found there."

While Ms Runnegar had plans to depict Lake Mungo's past as an inland sea, her



**ARTIST IN RESIDENCE:** Brenda Runnegar's exhibition "Hills of Sand" is on show at Stefano's Gallery 25.

Picture: Stacey Merlin

work has taken another different direction.

"My previous work was all about fish and marine life," she said.

"I liked the idea of Mungo

because of the fact it was an inland sea and that the fish were still there but fossilised.

"But, the fish have now taken a secondary position and I'm focusing on other el-

ements of Lake Mungo."

Introducing bodies in to her landscapes, Ms Runnegar brings a haunting quality to Lake Mungo.

"I think when I go to Lake

Mungo there's this spiritual feel and presence there that I want to capture in my work," she said.

"It's about being aware of what's underneath."