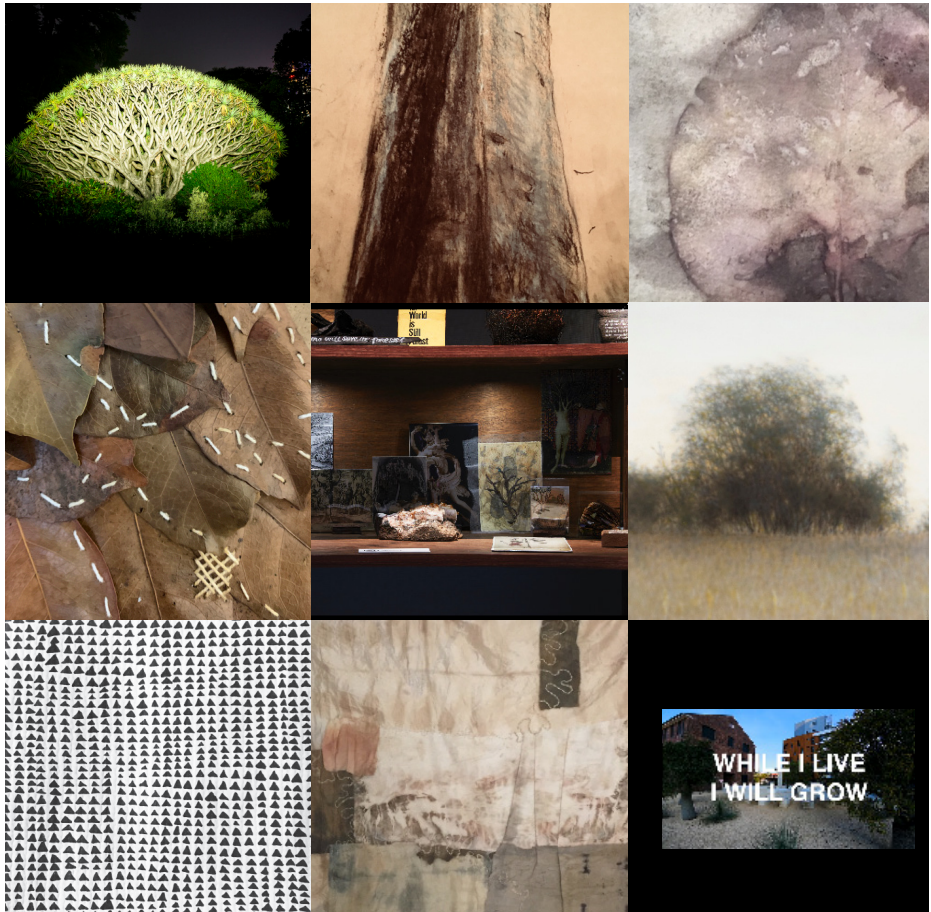


Arboreal Narratives:

A multidisciplinary exhibition in honour of trees

15 October to 2 November 2019

Opening Event and Symposium: Saturday 19 October 1.30-4.30 pm



Arboreal Narratives:

A multidisciplinary exhibition in honour of trees

Grace Cossington Art Gallery, Sydney

15 October to 2 November 2019

Curated by Louise Fowler-Smith

Artists

Guillermo Batiz with Dr Tamryn Bennett, Paula Broom,
Dr Maria Fernanda Cardoso, Amanda Farquharson, Louise Fowler-
Smith, Elizabeth Gervay, Ian Grant, Jane Green, Hobart Hughes,
Haruka Kokubu, Janet Laurence, Liz Perfect, Miho Watanabe.

Opening Event and Symposium Saturday 19 October 1.30-4.30 pm

Symposium 1.30-2.30 pm

Introduction

by Louise Fowler-Smith, Artist & Founder of the
Eco-Art collective The Tree Veneration Society.

Planting Trees for the Future

by Dr Marlien Van der Merwe, Biodiversity Research
Scientist, Royal Botanical Gardens Sydney.

A Double Story of Trees in the Poetic Imagination

by Peter Boyle, acclaimed Sydney based Poet.

Poetic Meditations upon the New Arboreal Florescence

by Dr Kim Satchell, Surfer, Poet, Performer & Environmental Philosopher.

Sonic Explorations of Arboreal Environments

by Dr Daniel Blinkhorn, Multi international Award-winning
Composer, Sound & Digital Media Artist.

The Symposium will be followed by drinks with the artists.

Essay

“The nature of Visionary Fancy or Imagination, is very little known, and the Eternal nature and permanence of its ever Existent Images is considered as less permanent than the things of Vegetative and Generative Nature; yet the Oak dies as well as the Lettuce, but its Eternal Image and Individuality never dies but returns by its seed; just so the Imaginative Image returns by the seed of Contemplative Thought.” William Blake [1]

Arboreal Narratives brings together a group of multidisciplinary artists in an innovative and experimental project that critically explores the multifaceted importance and character of the most venerated constituent of the arboreal ecosystem, the ‘tree’.

Why do we need an exhibition about trees?

With the unpredictable impacts of human behaviour and planetary climate change today affecting the world, the trees of the present day face uncertain futures. Landscapes are being acutely challenged and trees are on the frontline. Desertification, bush fires, deforestation, farming, agriculture, pollution, war and the expansion of cities are amongst the most urgent threats. This exhibition *Arboreal Narratives*, will be informed by these concerns, and build on the legacies of environmental art activism where artists have sought to instigate shifts in ecological consciousness.

Through various media including video, installation, painting, drawing, sculpture, photography, performance, poetry, science and music, the artworks

explore humanity’s relationship with the tree, while engaging conceptually with contemporary visual narratives surrounding its arboreal context. It endeavours to reposition the tree from its mundane and everyday understandings to those that relate to its wider historical, cultural, sociological and ecological context.

The exhibition comprises artists from different cultures and countries, some of whom are members of the contemporary Eco-Art collective, the Tree Veneration Society Inc. (TVS) (<https://treevenerationsociety.com>), which has been engaged over many years in raising awareness of the vital role played by the tree in the survival of planetary ecosystems. They will be joined by internationally renowned environmental/eco artists such as Janet Laurence and Maria Fernanda Cardoso, along with award-winning Painter, Ian Grant, who explore the importance of the tree and the natural environment in their work.

Collaboratively, these artists challenge viewers to join them in acting to protect critically endangered natural environments, where symbolically, the tree represents its consciousness and its voice in the many natural worlds it inhabits.

Facts we all should know about trees

The oldest trees in the world are dying; forests are falling victim to prolonged droughts that are killing millions of their trees; and fires are causing havoc in some of the largest ecosystems in the world – those in the Amazon and Indonesia.

We are living in a time that has been declared a climate emergency. An article that appeared in *The Guardian* in July 2019, titled 'Tree Planting has mind blowing potential to tackle climate crisis' declared the cheapest and biggest way to tackle the climate crisis is to plant a trillion trees. They act like a carbon sink, and capture huge amounts of carbon dioxide now at hazardous levels in the atmosphere. During the course of their life, they can store up to 22 tons of carbon dioxide. However, if we cut them down or burn them, they release their carbon into the atmosphere. They also absorb pollutants such as carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide from the air. Because they transform these and other dangerous chemicals and pollutants into benign substances, the cleanest water may be found running through our forests. Deforestation is therefore not an option. Instead, more trees, in vast plantings are needed. Yet governments are failing to plant trees to address this situation.

Furthermore, trees contribute to the stabilisation of soil temperature. Their root systems can stop soil erosion and the build-up of sediments after storms and create a water reservoir for all plants that exist around them. The dropping of

leaves provides a nutrient-rich habitat for countless species of animal and plant life. Trees shade us in the heat and act as windbreaks against cold winds. They influence the temperature and humidity of the air through their absorption and evaporation of rain, contributing to a balanced water table. Every tree could be described as a water column, providing the air with a constant supply of moisture, and en-masse they attract rain. Trees even contribute to the electrical and magnetic forces that are fundamental to the balance of nature, both through their own energetic charges and by connecting to those around them—from the soil, air, humans, even the planets.

Trees are extremely important to life on the planet. They produce the oxygen that we breathe and are symbolic of the health of the community. Research has found that people who walk through forests have a 20 percent better attention span and memory performance than people who never leave the city. In Japan there is a term 'shinrin-yoku', coined by the Japanese Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in 1982 to mean the state of being in contact with and taking in the atmosphere of the forest, or forest bathing. A Japanese marine chemist, Katsuhiko Matsunaga has discovered that when leaves decompose, humic acid seeps into the ocean, helping with the fertilization of plankton which in turn feeds many forms of sea life. As a result of this discovery Japanese fisherman began a campaign called 'Forests are the lovers of the sea', by planting trees along coastlines and rivers.

Research undertaken on the relationship between forests and human health found that among people who gazed on forest scenery for 20 minutes, the average concentration of salivary cortisol, a stress hormone, was 13.4 percent lower than that of people in urban settings. Spending time in a forest has been shown to reduce stress in the body and increase cells in the immune system that fights tumours and viruses. Numerous tree compounds have been shown to be antibacterial, anti-fungal, anti-viral and anti-cancer. Taxane from the Pacific yew tree, for example is a powerful anti-cancer drug. There are hundreds of other chemicals that are emitted by trees that are beneficial to humanity.

We have discovered that trees are more like us than we have ever imagined. In his book *The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate*, Peter Wohlleben, drawing on the research of Suzanne Simard, tells us that trees in the forest are communicative beings. Trees are able to warn each other of danger by sending electrical signals across a fungal network that surround their roots, nicknamed the 'Wood Wide Web.' They can keep the ancient stumps of long-felled companions alive for centuries by feeding them a sugar solution through their roots, at the same time as nursing sick neighbours back to health.

Trees can also warn each other of impending danger by releasing a scent. If an animal or insect starts to feed on a tree it will emit toxic substances through its leaves that repels its predator. The tree then lets the

neighbouring trees of the same species know about the danger by emanating a gas that signals the need to pump a similar toxin into their own leaves.

Collectively, trees can create an ecosystem that enables them to grow, heal, and live for a very long time. The oldest to date is Old Tjikko, a spruce that has been growing and regenerating in Sweden for over 9,500 years! The oldest tree in Australia is considered to be a Huon Pine in Tasmania, the oldest stem of which is 2,000 years old. If we consider common genetically identical root stock of a tree as a method for dating trees, then the absolute "winner" for the oldest tree (or the oldest clonal material belonging to a tree) must go to the Wollemi pine (*Wollemia nobilis*) - at more than 60 million years old!

Human beings would not survive without trees, yet trees would happily survive without human beings – so which species is more important?

[1] W. Blake, *A Vision of the Last Judgment*, in *Complete Writings*, ed., Geoffrey Keynes, London, 1966, as quoted in R. Cook, *The Tree of Life – Image for the Cosmos*, Thames and Hudson, 1974, p. 7.

**Louise Fowler-Smith
and Dr Marie Geissler**

Symposium Speakers

Louise Fowler-Smith

Introduction

Artist and Founder of the Tree Veneration Society

As an eco-artist Louise Fowler-Smith aims to promote new ways of perceiving the land in the 21st century. She believes that how we perceive and contemplate the land effects how we respond. If we see the land as separate from ourselves, we are less likely to honour and respect it.

For the past 20 years her creative journey and practice-led research has focused on the veneration of trees, a subject she was drawn to for the magnitude of their environmental significance. She has researched the significance of the 'Tree' and how perceptual shifts through imaging can activate change and contribute to creating new insights into environmental issues.



Dr Marlien Van der Merwe

Planting Trees for the Future

Biodiversity Research Scientist Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney

As humans we try to put things in boxes, we try to find patterns in nature so that we can generalise and make things simple and easy to understand. However, our quest to find patterns in nature is revealing the uniqueness of each component. For successful long term conservation and restoration we need to understand when we can generalise and when do we need to unravel the exceptional details of a species or population. I use a combination of genetic and ecological data to better understand the Australian native flora with aim to improve conservation and restoration long term success through empirical scientific data.

I have chosen to speak about planting trees in the future. To plant trees for the future we have to understand the past. I will discuss some of the work I do using mostly genetic data, to understand the historical factors that have impacted on the current Flora and how we use this information to future proof plant restoration efforts.



Peter Boyle

A Double Story of Trees in the Poetic Imagination Acclaimed Sydney-based Poet

Peter Boyle is an acclaimed Sydney-based poet and translator of poetry. In 2017 his seventh book *Ghostspeaking* won the New South Wales Premier's Award for Poetry and was shortlisted for the South Australian Premier's Award. His latest collection *Enfolded in the Wings of a Great Darkness* was published this year by Vagabond Press.

Reading a few of his own poems as well as a translated Venezuelan poem, Peter will weave his own 'arboreal narrative', revealing a double story of trees in the poetic imagination as well as in his own life.



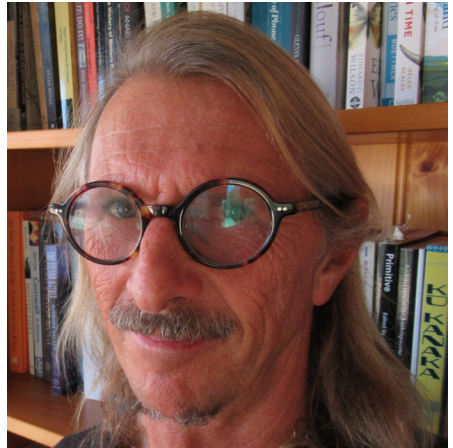
Dr Kim Satchell

Poetic Meditations upon the New Arboreal Florescence

Surfer, Poet, Performer and Environmental Philosopher

Kim Satchell is a surfer, poet, performer and environmental philosopher living on the Mid North Coast of NSW. He is widely published in a range of leading scholarly journals on creative practice, cultural analysis and the environmental humanities. In early 2019, he completed a PhD thesis entitled: *Just coasting: the confluence of space, place and ecology, concerning the care of the soul as the basis for an ecology of care, in response to the Anthropocene.*

His reading presents several poetic meditations speaking to the theme “The New Arboreal Florescence”, experimenting with philosophical animism as an ethical and ecological sensibility for the 21st Century.



Dr Daniel Blinkhorn

Sonic Explorations of Arboreal Environments

Multi-international Award Winning Composer, Sound and Digital Media Artist

Daniel Blinkhorn is an Australian composer, sound and new media artist currently residing in Sydney. He is an ardent location field recordist, where he has embarked upon a growing number of recording expeditions throughout Africa, Alaska, Amazon, Australia, Cuba, West Indies, Mexico, Madagascar, Middle East, Northern Europe, and the high Arctic/ North Pole region of Svalbard.

His creative works have received numerous international and national composition awards at important competitions, and whilst self-taught in electroacoustic music and sound art, Daniel has formally studied composition and the creative arts at a number of Australian universities. He has also worked in a variety of creative, academic, research and teaching contexts, and is currently lecturer in composition and music technology at the Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney. More information about Daniel, as well as samples of his work can be found www.danielblinkhorn.com.



Exhibiting Artists

Dr Tamryn Bennett and Guillermo Batiz

Icaro

A sound installation by Guillermo Batiz and Tamryn Bennett.

Plants and trees have long been entwined with ritual, song and story. In Mexico and South America plants are intrinsic to healing ceremonies. Songs chanted and sung during healing ceremonies are known as icaros and are believed to be communicated by the plants themselves. Honouring the teachings of the plant, this installation stems from the artists' experiences of ritual plants and is offered as a healing to those who interact with the plants.

Guillermo Batiz is a Mexican artist whose interdisciplinary practice encompasses music, sound design, installation and poetry. He has performed and exhibited internationally and across Australia. Guillermo is co-founder of the plant symphony using bioacoustics to deepen connection and communication with plants.

Tamryn Bennett is a poet and artist. She is the recipient of the Marten Bequest with residencies at Kew Botanic Gardens and California's Redwood Forests. Her books and publications include Phosphene, Lines in Land and Covert Plants: Vegetal Consciousness and Agency in an Anthropocentric World. She co-founded the plant symphony with Guillermo Batiz.



Icaro, 2019
audio installation

Paula Broom

This sculpture by Paula Broom, entitled *Tree Guardian* is made almost entirely from tree parts – sticks and leaves. The leaves are hand sewn together with white cotton - a form of signature of the artist - and fashioned into a pair of wings. Extremely fragile, desiccated and brittle, they allude to the ravages of climate change on a dry continent. This sculpture however, is only given life when the audience interacts with it, when its true purpose unfolds. The audience is encouraged to take a “selfie” in front of the leaf wings, as though they are their own wings, and post the photos to social media using the hashtag #treeguardian. Merely by participating, the audience undertakes an un-spoken pledge to plant trees, grow trees and protect trees. This is a recognition of the importance of trees to the continuation of life on the planet. Drawing on her studies in environmental management, the artist hopes that people who undertake such a pledge will

be more likely to behave in increasingly pro environmental ways going forward.

Sydney-based artist and photographer, Paula Broom, combines her Fine Art degree with her Masters of Environmental Management to explore ecological, social and personal issues relating to loss, death, extinction, and our collective future. Paula’s photography has been selected as a finalist in the Head On Photo Festival Awards and her sculptures shown in various outdoor exhibitions including Sculpture at Scenic World. She is a member of the environmental artist’s collective the Tree Veneration Society, who run Sydney-wide eco-workshops. She also co-manages Instagramers Sydney via Instagram, underpinning her sentiment that art engenders a strong sense of place, connects people and creates community.



Tree Guardian, 2019
sticks, wood, twine, wood glue, leaves and white cotton
dimensions variable

Dr Maria Fernanda Cardoso

While I Live I will Grow connects strongly with the site, which was once part of a series of wetlands that were drained to make way for development and industry, leading to drought and flooding. The bottle trees signify this local history and the water management strategies that are a key aspect of the Green Square renewal project.

Maria Fernanda Cardoso said of her work:

“Bottle trees fascinate me because of their sculptural quality, their character and charm. Their visible growth can also become a visual analogy to the expected growth and maturity of the Green Square community.”

“Part of the brief for the project was to address issues of water management in Green Square. I thought, what could be more physically and formally visible than the shaped trunk of a bottle tree? They expand and contract in times of flood or drought, and they never seem stressed. Not only beautiful, this species has developed a very elegant Australian water management strategy.”

City Art. “While I Live I Will Grow.” City of Sydney. [https://www.cityartsydney.com.au/artwork/while-i-live-i-will-grow/ \(18/7/2019\).](https://www.cityartsydney.com.au/artwork/while-i-live-i-will-grow/ (18/7/2019).)

Maria Fernanda Cardoso is a leading Latin American and Australian artist who lives and works in Sydney. She graduated with an MFA in Sculpture

from Yale University, USA in 1990 and in 2013 she received a PhD from Sydney University in Art and Science. She has exhibited in over 25 countries in institutions as prestigious as NY MoMA, the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York, PS1, New York, the San Francisco Exploratorium, the Centre Georges Pompidou, Fundacion La Caixa in Barcelona, the Centro Reina Sofia in Madrid.

She specializes in art + life, art + science and exhibition display that draws upon the traditions of natural history. She uses research and observation as the basis of her work, and collaborates with scientists, cinematographers, microscopists, videographers, sound-artists, industrial designers, 3D modelers, even landscape architects, as required by each project. Her work questions our human assumptions of species-superiority by exhibiting the wondrous complexity of other forms of life, with an emphasis of the small. Her most recent work aims to reveal the biological foundations of art and culture.

Recent major public art projects are Sandstone Pollen, Darling Harbour Live, 2016, While I Live I Will Grow, South Sydney Hospital, Green Square, 2016, and Wollongong Central, 2014. In 2014 she also received the prestigious Creative Australia Fellowship for her interdisciplinary works.



While I Live I Will Grow (2016-2018)
Queensland bottle trees (*Brachychiton Rupestris*) and a sandstone blocks
located at Greensquare, Sydney
commissioned by Sydney City Council

Amanda Farquharson

Arboreal Narrative is for Farquharson a story of enquiry uncovered/ revealed while walking with trees.

Whilst exploring diverse environs and landscapes, the artist's eye detects curious and unusual elements. Walking with trees is scientifically noted to be curative of anxiety as well as refreshing. We breathe them.

Having a multi-disciplinary and organic practice that weaves the curious of nature's alchemy with textile, sculpture and printmaking, she uses "found" tree-related elements, re-configuring

them to sculptural Tree Creatures and Botanically dyed papers and silks that venerate trees to become "Arboreal Narrative". Farquharson engages the technique that combines traditional bind, weave and twine practices with organic fibres to create her works of ephemeral nature.

Using location specific gathered elements, these pieces hold an essence of their place, identify the interconnectivity of flora and fauna in habitat as well as the significance of nurturing tree-scape in both urban and remote challenging environments.



Night Flight, 2016

mixed media - found feathers, fibres, shells, cog, light sensitive pigment
14 x 28cm

Louise Fowler-Smith

As an eco-artist Louise aims to promote new ways of perceiving the land in the 21st century.

After field research in India led her to discover that the practice of venerating, or honouring a tree led to the tree's protection she founded an eco-artist collective, The Tree Veneration Society Inc.

In her own artistic practice, she began to venerate trees with light. Alone and in the quiet of the night in a variety of landscapes she 'burns' the light onto medium format film through long exposures, sometimes for nearly an hour. Her artistic work to date has focused on Trees in Australia, India, Japan, Italy and France, as can be seen on her website. <http://www.louisefowler-smith.com>

Louise has exhibited in Australia and internationally. In 2018 she held a solo exhibition with the Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle in France. Titled *Portraits d'Arbres Remarquables Illuminés*, the exhibition honours some of the Remarkable Trees of France, and includes nocturnal images taken in the Jardin des Plantes and the Jardin des Tuileries in Paris along with the Parc du Petit Trianon and the Arboretum de Versailles-Chèvreloup in Versailles.

In the *Arboreal Narratives* exhibition Louise is exhibiting a video titled 'Rousseau's Tree'. Louise originally shot this video in a small forest just outside of Paris, where the philosopher Jean-

Jacques Rousseau would walk on a regular basis. It has been noted that Rousseau used to sit under this particular tree to contemplate. It is quite possible that some of his writings, included in the video, could have been formulated while sitting under this tree. The sound piece was made by Ant Banister (from the band Sounds Like Winter), based on a recording that Louise made of water being drawn up the trunk of a tree.

Louise is also exhibiting a preview of her forthcoming exhibition in 2020 at the Royal Botanical Gardens. The two photographs come from a series that she has produced on The Significant Trees of the Botanical Gardens. Inspired by her exhibition on the Remarkable Trees of Paris and Versailles Louise spent many nights in the gardens, with these trees. Her aim is to offer an alternative perception and to introduce us to the enchantment of these trees.

Louise's publications on trees include *Adorning and Adoring: The Sacred Trees of India. Special Issue on Sacred Trees, Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature & Culture. USA. [JSRNC 12.3 (2018) 261-284]* JSRNC (print) ISSN 1749-4907; *Hindu Tree Veneration as a mode of Environmental Encounter*. Published in *Leonardo – The Journal of the International Society for the Arts, Science and Technology*. Volume 42, Number 1 Edition. Pps 43 – 51 and a pending book Titled *Adorned and Adored: India's Sacred Trees*.



Dragon Tree 2, 2019

illuminated time exposure photography on Canson Photographique paper
95 x 74 cm

Part of the 'Significant Trees of the Royal Botanical Gardens' series

Elizabeth Gervay

For Elizabeth Gervay the *Arboreal Narrative* lies in the never ending cycle of life – a life cycle of renewal and transformation.

Each element plays a vital role in the symbiotic whole.

In her work she focuses on one of the hidden elements – *roots*. Often *roots* are unseen and unnoticed, though, it is roots that seek, give sustenance and structural strength.

Roots are a catalyst for renewal and transformation, being part of inevitability of change.

Author of 'The Hidden Life of Trees', arborist Peter Wohlleben introduces his audience to the existence of the “wood-wide web” and thereby confirms Elizabeth

Gervay's commitment to *renewal and transformation*... even trees do it.

Whether in the Australian bush or in the Himalayas, the wood-wide web, that is, the *roots* are communicating, supporting, defending, feeding, housing, growing, decaying and nurturing.

Utilising her inter-disciplinary art practice and using discarded but once treasured man made products, Elizabeth Gervay acknowledges and honours the hidden life of roots; their essential role in *transformation and renewal*, and the preciousness of what is not visible.

Fluidity, Symbiotic, Interwoven Roots, Fungi, Fungal Filaments, Osmosis



Hidden Treasure, 2019
mixed media assemblage, silver plate case, housed in glass dome
Height 42 cm x diameter 32 cm

Ian Grant

Ian Grant was born in Sydney in 1947 and trained at the National Art School and Alexander Mackie College, completing a Diploma in Art Education in 1971. In 1986 he completed a Master of Art (Visual Arts) at Sydney C.A.E. He commenced tertiary teaching in Art Education at Alexander Mackie College in 1976, was a lecturer in Art Education and Painting at Sydney C.A.E. before being appointed Head, Painting Studies in 1988 and continuing in that position at The University of New South Wales College of Fine Arts from 1989 to 2006. In this role he was co-founder and Presiding Member of the Imaging the Land International Research Institute (ILIRI).

He has held 22 solo exhibitions since 1972 in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide and is represented by Liverpool Street Gallery. He has been included in major group exhibitions in Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane and Perth and has been part of themed group and

survey exhibitions in regional galleries, university galleries and corporate venues throughout Australia, Asia and Europe. He was awarded the Blake Prize in 1987, the Fleurieu Prize in 2004 and has been a frequent finalist in the Wynne Prize. His work is held in collections of the National Gallery of Australia, the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Artbank, the Australian Defence Force Academy, New South Wales Parliament House, numerous regional galleries, corporations and universities as well as private collections in Australia, America and Europe.

His landscape paintings have been described as 'ambient realism at its best' and do not refer to specific sites. Rather, they seek to evoke experience and memory of generic encounters with land, space and natural elements. Trees are used as both singular, evocative images and as important elements in the imaging of experience with land.



Foliage IV, 2011
acrylic on Arches paper
45 x 45 cm

Jane Green

Jane Green is a multidisciplinary, visual artist with an interest in human identity and how we shape and are shaped by our environment.

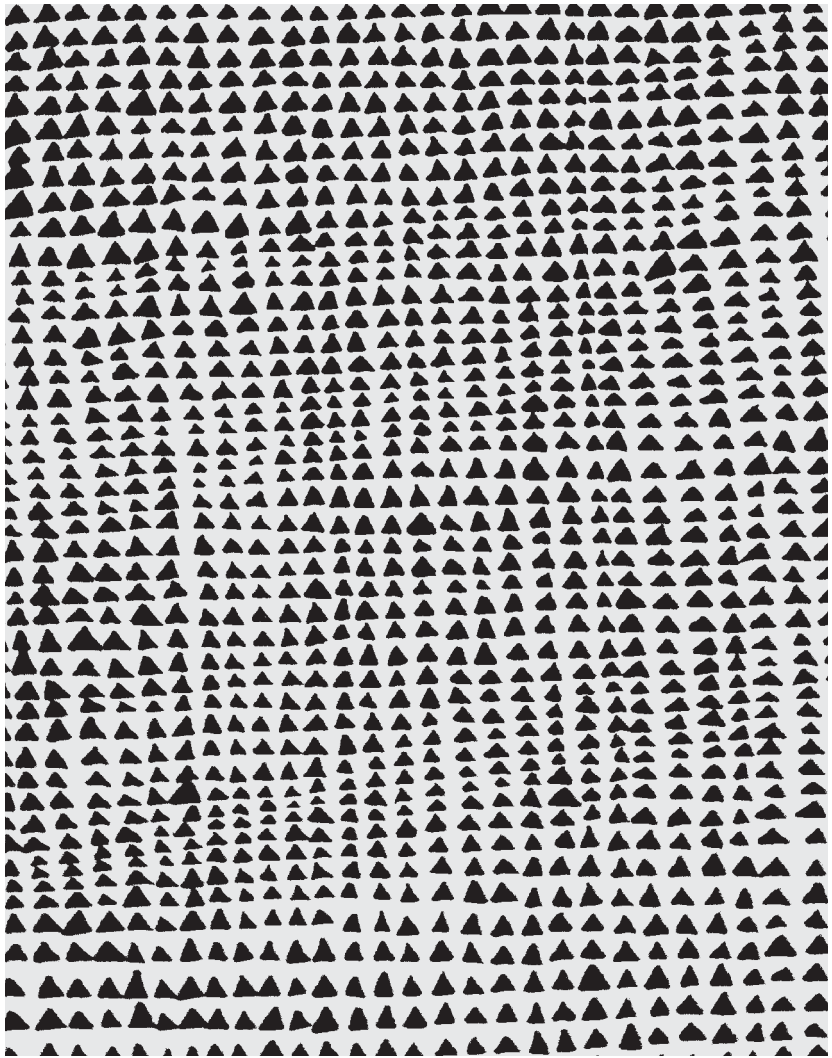
Her work with the Eco-Art collective, the Tree Veneration Society has been directed toward raising awareness of the importance of natural environment and of the need to live more sustainably.

'Watching a tree fall in the woods with one earbud in' is one of a series of hand drawn works on found paper and cardboard, created at timed intervals.

She refers to them as 'Endurance Drawings', explorations of art and sport.

Green experiments with ideas of flow and focus, observances of an anxious 'state of things' a 'flux' in the contemporary human experience, a need and a want to change behaviour for the better.

For Green the Arboreal Narrative is a memorialisation of trees lost to urban development, a quiet acknowledgement of change in the natural environment, a contemplation of a permanence destabilised, paired with a desire to act.



Watching a tree fall in the woods with one earbud in, 2019
ink on found wallpaper
92 x 230 cm

Hobart Hughes

Water and The Tree – The inside visual story of how water moves from the ground through the roots, trunk, limbs and finally the leaves. Accurately depicted the gravity defying physics of the tree.

Hobart Hughes aka John E Hughes Hobart's work spans performance, installation, poetry, sculpture, animation and film.

He was creative director and writer for Even Orchestra an experimental theatre company, winner of the Zap award at the Brighton Festival 1988 and toured Australia the UK and the US.

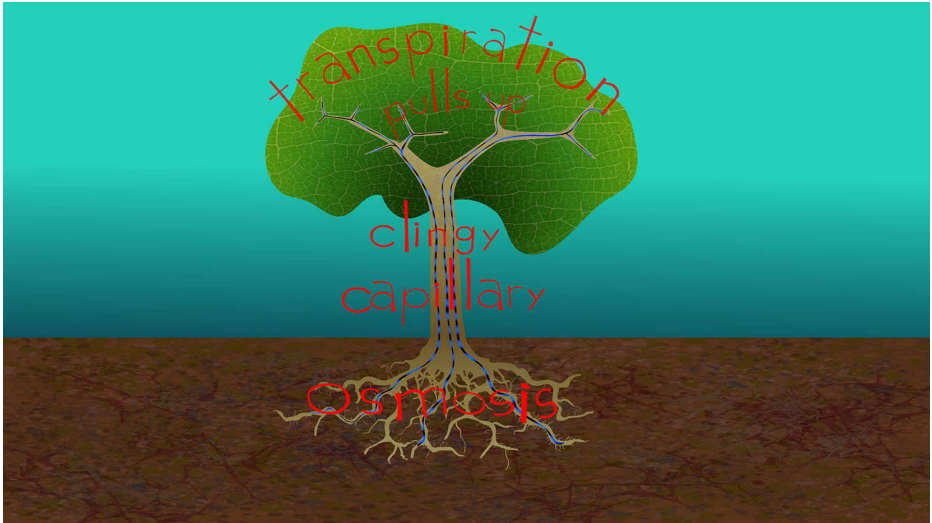
He has written and directed over a dozen Australian films and animations winning awards in Australia, Hong Kong and the UK.

Hobart's music clip for Mental As Anything 'Let's Cook' was selected for an exhibition at the Museum Of Modern Art, New York in 1982. He directed clips for some seminal Australian bands including Laughing Clowns and the Cockroaches. In 2008 his animation Removed was screened at the Tate Modern in the Figuring Landscapes show.

For the past decade he has concentrated on Sculpture, Installation and Performance.

In 2016 he won the Chippendale World Art Prize which entailed a residency and sole show in Kefalonia Greece

He recently exhibited in 2017 Berlin Art Week at Momentum Worldwide at the Kunsqarter Betanian
<https://youtu.be/gDZ3SJRjz5c>



Water and The Tree, 2019
Digital HDTV 1080 25 video
duration 4 mins

Haruka Kokubu

Message from the Scribble Gum is a conceptual landscape formed as a result of Haruka Kokubu's recent COSMOS OSMOSIS solar capsules investigations. Kokubu worked with a time-based and interactive installation project that considers the effects upon specific objects. By combining Scribble Gum leaves with other Australian plants, this process involves highlighting qualities that are grounded upon areas of hybridization, as well as feelings of displacement linked to her experiences as an immigrant. With this Solar-dyeing method, the audience can sense the hidden colours of the plants as they seep through into the fabric. The capsules act as places of creation, a confined space, or incubators for the duration of the installation period. Time, Sun and the surrounding landscape are Kokubu's collaborators in this art process. The solar-dyed textiles were then unravelled, collected together and intuitively sewn with a Japanese Boro technique that creates a free hanging installation piece.

'My practice of employing natural dye techniques mirrors how I encounter this foreign nature, from the point of view of a Japanese woman. I experience the landscape by walking, gathering and sorting. I collect materials: leaves and barks from local bushwalks, used

textiles and found objects. I also collect visual landscapes: memories from childhood, views from my window or in meditative walks through the forest. Even roadside construction sites that I pass by. I work with these found objects and memories, transforming them in the process. The landscape is my collaborator and as I engage with it, it provides me with a sense of belonging. Through this process, I have developed a new sense of self.'

Message from the Scribble Gum is part of 'home', an assemblage of memories, like souvenirs from the past, all patch-worked as a conceptual landscape, which we all carry as a place of belonging. The mechanism of identity formation, from childhood, as a formative experience, plays a significant role in shaping our perceptions and identity. This also reflects the immigrant experience of projection and introjection, between the internal and the external world, through imitation, absorbing and adopting. Kokubu's interest is in investigating how the definition of one's homeland or a place of belonging is constantly under construction, and re-construction, especially as it evolves with the influence of time, relocation and personal interrogation.



Message from the Scribble Gum, 2019
Eucalyptus and other botanical dyes, fabric, wood
180 x 150 cm

Janet Laurence

Exploring notions of art, science, imagination, memory, and loss, Janet Laurence's practice examines our physical, cultural and conflicting relationship to the natural world through both site specific, gallery and museum works. Working in varying mediums, Laurence creates immersive environments that navigate the interconnections between life world.

Her work explores what it might mean to heal, albeit metaphorically, the natural environment, fusing this sense of communal loss with a search for connection with powerful life-forces. Laurence's work alerts us to the subtle dependencies between water, life, culture and nature in our eco-system. In the face of this, we do yearn for a form of alchemy, for the power of enchantment and transformation. Her work reminds us that art can provoke its audience into a renewed awareness about our environment.

For the Arboreal Narratives exhibition Janet Laurence will reinstall a small section of her Theatre of Trees installation, that formed an important part of her recent exhibition, After Nature at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney.

The original installation was a large circular structure composed of three concentric rings, like those of a tree, that viewers were invited to walk within.

Inside, they were literally enveloped by the towering mesh structure, which supported semi-transparent 'veils' imprinted with imagery of the natural world. Some were based on photographs taken by Laurence on her global travels through old-growth forests and wilderness environments. Others contained imagery that has been reworked by Laurence from art-historical sources, medieval books, and documentation from conservation and activist organisations.

The large circular structure was expanded by three smaller, enclosed spaces which contained a botanical library, herbarium housing 19th century botanical models, and 'elixir lab' where visitors could taste healing plant extracts over the course of the exhibition.

We have pleasure in reproducing a part of the 'botanical library' in this exhibition.

Laurence has been a recipient of Rockefeller, Churchill and Australia Council Fellowships, and the Alumni Award for Arts, UNSW. Laurence was a Trustee of the Art Gallery of NSW, a former Board Member of the VAB Board of the Australia Council and was Visiting Fellow at the NSW University Art and Design.

Laurence was the Australian representative for the COP21/

FIAC, Artists 4 Paris Climate 2015 Exhibition, exhibiting a major work – Deep Breathing: Resuscitation for the Reef – at the Muséum National D’Histoire Naturelle, in Paris, France.

Laurence is currently a visiting fellow of the 2016/2017 Hanse-WissenschaftKolleg (HWK) foundation fellowship.

Laurence is currently exhibiting *Nach de Natur* in Bonn, Germany at the Koenig Museum

Laurence’s work is included in many Museum, University and Corporate collections as well as within architectural and landscaped public places, worldwide.



Knowledge (Tree of Life), 2018-19

installation view, Janet Laurence: *After Nature*, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney, 2019, botanical books from the artist’s private library, artist’s sketchbooks, wood specimens, prints on opalescent paper, handwritten texts, video extracts, plywood, metal, duraclear, bird’s nest, audio: Dr Ann Jones and Prof David Lindenmayer, ‘Sounds of a wild night in the forest’, Off Track, ABC, source imagery:m3architecture, Brisbane; The Wilderness Society; City of Sydney; Spring Bay Mill; Bob Brown Archive; and the Centre for Compassionate Conservation, University of Technology Sydney, collection of the artist, image courtesy of the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia © the artist, photograph: Zan Wimberley.

Liz Perfect

Liz Perfect's daily experience of the bush has a regenerative effect on her mood and wellbeing which she transfers to paper, using both drawing and printmaking. The processes in these mediums she finds reflective of the change and renewal in the natural world.

She discovered Birdwood Gully in the Blue Mountains recently and found, at a bend it had imposed on the track, a massive gumtree offering shelter inside its trunk. More than 30 m tall, the spiralling details of the trunk force the eyes upwards to its capping of three burnt branches. The dominance of the tree's canopy has gone, but there, quietly, were small fresh shoots of green leaves, testament to its resilience and continuing power.

Liz emigrated to Australia from the UK following her undergraduate degree in Art from Central School of Art & Design, London, and after winning three Italian Government Scholarships to visit Italy to draw and paint. She was immediately fascinated by Australian landscape and its complex interactions with its Indigenous history and European settlement. She then chose to live close to the bush, and to focus on *plein air* drawing. In 2015, Liz completed her Master in Printmaking at UNSW and it was there she was invited to join artists with similar environmental interests, who formed the Tree Veneration Society (TVS). Her involvement with TVS led to

The Shadow Tree interactive workshop at Beams Festival, and a series of additional drawing workshops most recently at The Royal Botanic Gardens as part of Sydney Science Festival 2019.

Since completing her Masters, Liz initiated the first Artist's Residency at the National Trust's Norman Lindsay Gallery and Museum in the Blue Mountains, in 2016. This created the opportunity to work with Lindsay's original press so that visitors could see how the printing process generates ideas. Inspiration for this work was provided by close access to the World Heritage National Park. Following two solo exhibitions of drawings and etchings there, Liz joined another group of artists devoted to conservation working at Glenbrook Lagoon. Her work focused on the *baraba*, the local reeds, and the important part they played in past Indigenous culture. This work resulted in an exhibition titled *A Year at Glenbrook Lagoon* at Braemar Gallery, Springwood in November 2018.

Liz currently exhibits regularly in the Blue Mountains and Sydney, and teaches drawing, painting and printmaking at Nepean TAFE. She also holds classes and workshops at several locations, including the Blue Mountains Cultural Centre and The Norman Lindsay Gallery and Museum.



Birdwood Gully Gum

Miho Watanabe

As a Japanese-Australian diaspora artist Miho's practice and research is awareness of 'between-ness'; making the invisible subject 'between-ness' theoretically and technically visible, and becoming aware of it. She is currently a PhD candidate at ANU.

'Awareness of Between-ness: Street Tree like bonsai' is to bring awareness of the nature's strength of the tree within the urban setting. 'Awareness of Between-ness' is her art-making concept which she defined to name her perspective as a Japanese-Australian diaspora artist, visualising this seemingly invisible subject, 'between-ness'. Street tree project is her life-long project since she has been living in Sydney for nearly half of her life. When she saw an amazing shape of street trees in the city, she always appreciated it and she wants to return this appreciation in her work. Bonsai and street trees have one most significant similarity in their aesthetic which comes from an enormous power of their strength; that is one aim to 'just live'. Human beings' intention and input towards both trees are different in between the street tree and bonsai, but the perspective from the trees are the same as strength in challenging environments. The shape of the street trees show nature's

strength, and this aesthetic could be, by chance, in both the council's hands and the circumstances of the street trees' life, and she sees they are waiting to be 'found'.

Her art-making explores the views of Japanese diaspora artists, in reconnecting with her heritage and culture, and the way they bring this into her artworks consciously to represent the 'between-ness'. Art-making for her is always about being aware of 'between-ness'; that is, making the invisible subject 'between-ness' theoretically and technically visible, and becoming aware of it. "Awareness of Between-ness" is the doorway to the concealed realm. As a Japanese/Australian diaspora artist, she experiments with the real and non-real to the nature of identity when one is between cultures. She has been working as a professional commercial/editorial photographer, which led her to create her artworks using photography. Her work creates photography as a means of memory and painting as a means of connection in between reality and the concealed realm. She believes the meaning of space, time and mind are hidden in between-ness. The concept of 'awareness of between-ness' reflects a re-mix of influences on her life to identify the differences between cultures.



Awareness of Between-ness: Street Tree like bonsai
photograph



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