

# HERENOW|23 In-Between-ness

Patricia AMORIM | Kelsey ASHE | Yvette DUNN-MOSES | Marcia ESPINOSA |  
 Shanti GELMI | Sue LEEMING | Desmond MAH | Leonie Ngahula MANSBRIDGE |  
 Matthew MCALPINE | Lea TAYLOR

Curated by Harrison SEE

Spectrum Project Space

HERENOW is a snapshot of current visual arts practice in Perth, right here and right now! Its focus is provided by an emerging curator keen to develop the complex skills, insights, and sensibilities required to curate an exhibition in a public gallery. Bringing those skills into play and delivering an exhibition that showcases a group of artists whose work they admire and wish to promote is not an easy task. And it is one that is best achieved by doing, in tandem with professional colleagues. Learning the ropes by taking the strain, setting a course, and tackling the challenges that inevitably arise requires courage, commitment, and guidance. Its multiple facets of operation must be coordinated with intricate care. For an aspiring curator, this can be daunting, so the HERE&NOW exhibition series<sup>1</sup> was established in 2012 at the 'Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery' to provide that experience and enable an emerging curator to capture that vibrancy across current practice within an area of focus within the visual arts. Re-named HERENOW, the project moved to Edith Cowan University's 'ECU Galleries' in 2021.

The ECU campus is the perfect venue for experimentation and re-imagining what exhibitions might be and how they can inform, challenge, and provide fresh insights into our world. Within a University that celebrates the diversity of perspectives and creativity of young artists across all disciplines in the arts, HERENOW is a window into the energy, excitement, and vision of the next generation of creative individuals who are shaping our world. The added dimension to this project is the vision of an emerging curator with links to a community of artists they know well. As a result, the exhibition showcases their achievements and provides a local context for their practice. For the first HERENOW|21 Rose Barton focused on the work of regionally based craft practitioners. And in 2022 Isaac Huggins identified a group of artists "challenging the distinction between art and life by finding beauty in the mundane". HERENOW|22: Outside In explored the possibility of fostering a dialogue about the devastating impact of consumerism and creating a sustainable future for the planet.

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<sup>1</sup> For the inaugural HERE&NOW exhibition in 2012, Katie Lenanton curated an exhibition that explored the interface between craft and fine art and the liminal space of Artist-Run-Initiatives (ARIs). HERE&NOW13 focused on artists with a disability, curated by Katherine Wilkinson, HERE&NOW14 showcased artists working in ceramics, curated by Emma Bitmead. In 2015 HERE&NOW15 explored sculpture in an ever-expanding field through the insights of curator Andrew Purvis and in HERE&NOW16: Generation Young Muslim, Hamida Novakovich, examined the practice of four young Muslim artists. In 2017 Chelsea Hopper chose a group of contemporary artists responding to the impact of photography as a tool that shapes our vision of the world. The fiftieth anniversary of Marcel Duchamp's death prompted Anna Louise Richardson to investigate Duchamp's continuing impact on the practice of a select group of Western Australian artists. Then in 2019, Joanna Sulkowski focused on five artists exploring textiles in her exhibition HERE&NOW19: Material Culture, and in 2020, Brent Harrison worked with eight artists who draw on histories and their own lived experiences to create artworks that reflect on what it means to be queer in Perth.

For HERENOW|23: In-Between-ness, Harrison See has curated an exhibition that highlights the creative enterprise of Western Australian artists working in an open and critical approach to the crucial ideas that impact their daily lives. They are actively engaging with peers around the world while keeping themselves deeply embedded here. This sense of connectivity is evident in their practice and in the ways in which they are constructing their careers. Presented as part of FRINGE WORLD this exhibition provides a porthole into the complex process of belonging. I extend my sincere thanks to all the artists involved and to the Curator Harrison See.

HERENOW Curatorial Mentor and Professor Ted SNELL AM CitWA  
*Honorary Professor, School of Arts & Humanities, Edith Cowan University*

HERENOW|23: In-Between-ness is a curated exhibition featuring ten contemporary artists exploring their relationship between land and culture. Each artist lives on or around Noongar Boodja and actively addresses notions of cultural identity, hybridity and diaspora in their creative practices. Together, these ten culturally-diverse artists respond to the question:

*From where does culture emerge (and reside) in a multicultural, yet tension-filled, Australia?*

In the lead up to the exhibition, this question among many others emerged early during the months of dialogue shared between the HERENOW|23 artists and me as an emerging curator. The expectation during such dialogue, however, was not to arrive at an answer, but for artists to channel their cultural experiences through the materialities of paint, print, sculpture, performance, installation, video and photography. This was a shared experience. A shared negotiation of divergent perspectives and practices between artists who collectively draw on lived experiences spanning five continents. Although much commonality was discovered and relished, I do not use the term *negotiate* to imply we brokered some sort of harmonious consensus about what it means to live in Australia. Rather, I use this term as cultural theorist Homi Bhabha asserts: “subversion is negotiation; transgression is negotiation; negotiation is not just some kind of compromise or ‘selling out’ which people too easily understand it to be” (1990, p. 216). Negotiation becomes the site where ideas evolve and hybridity appears, a process that “gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognisable” (Bhabha, 1990, p. 211). In this way, HERENOW|23 is a site of negotiation where differences are celebrated, and plurality embraced as a window into alternative ways of living and making on (and with) this land. The title, *In-Between-ness*, also emerged through negotiation, developing as an interplay of ‘in’ and ‘between’: a duality expressed by many of the artists as they reflected on their cultural identities while living on Noongar Boodja, whether by birth or diaspora. The suffix ‘ness’ emerged shortly after—a way of embracing the perpetually indefinable, in-flux and incompleteness felt when thinking about how their own culture fit into a contemporary Australia. In this way, the artworks featured in HERENOW|23: In-Between-ness are a series of material responses to the artists’ personal experiences, histories and storytelling of living in a multicultural, yet tension filled, colonial nation.

As the bi-centenary of ‘The Swan River Settlement’ of 1829 approaches, it remains ever-relevant for Western Australians—or in this context, those on Noongar Boodja specifically—to consider how our diverse gathering of multicultural communities can move forward. Moving forward, however, inherently requires ‘looking back’ at this ancient land’s relatively recent and tragic history of colonial violence towards the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, not to mention the myriad of communities living in the wake of ‘The White Australia Policy’ or other similar political sentiments. Although past injustices cannot be undone, the diverse peoples of this land can negotiate how we face the present. Again, I use



the term negotiate not to imply striving towards some universally accepted or utopian consensus, nor to suggest that any individual can ever truly ‘know’ the culture of another—both are equally impossible<sup>1</sup>—but to embrace the inevitability of untranslatable and incommensurable perspectives, practices, and ideas encountered in cross-cultural spaces; and who better to negotiate these spaces than artists who actively concern themselves with the complexities of culture. Although HERENOW|23 artists draw on their personal experiences of living and making on (and with) Noongar Boodja, the need for this type of exchange is echoed in the global community’s increasing cultural and political tensions. Further, both in this land and so many others, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these tensions, and as the world begins to reopen, returning to the problematic simplicity of ‘us’ and ‘them’ thinking—which so often accompanies times of conflict—is not enough. I posit shared artistic dialogue, such as that of HERENOW|23: In-Between-ness, as an appropriate means to consider the inescapable plurality of a multicultural land.

As the curator, it is especially important to acknowledge my role in the HERENOW|23 artists’ dialogue. This meant not just being reflexive about the authority and privilege afforded to curators, but also about my own positionality and heritage as an eighth-generation white Australian Perth settler. Not unlike the questions that emerged for the artists, I posed to myself my own curatorial question:

*How could I facilitate dialogue between a diverse group of artists without speaking on their behalf?*

This question served as an important touchstone as I navigated the dynamic between my voice as a curator and those of the artists. If my voice had too much presence (too much authority), then I risked misrepresenting or reappropriating another’s experiences; however, if my voice had too little presence (too little authority), then my role as a curator risked becoming benign, lacking criticality and perhaps even unnecessary. I am mindful that there is no simple or finite solution to negotiating the complexities of cultural differences, nor the inevitability of power imbalances. Just as the artists did, rather than approaching dialogue as a means to a solution, I approached dialogue as the solution; and from this shift a much simpler (and more manageable) question arose:

*When to lead and when to follow—or alternatively, when to speak and when to listen?*

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1 Cultural theorist Homi Bhabha (1990) asserts that “it is actually very difficult, even impossible and counter-productive, to try and fit together different forms of culture and to pretend that they can easily coexist” (p. 209). The notion that all cultures can be harmoniously realised within a universalist framework presumes all cultures can co-exist within a consensus of ethnocentric norms; even when inclusivity is motivated by multiculturalism or diversity, cultures are still typically included and organised within a dominant culture’s framework (Bhabha, 1990). Bhabha (1990) argues that any universalist framework is ineffective at negotiating cultural difference “because the universalism that paradoxically permits diversity [also] makes ethnocentric norms, values and interests” (p. 208).

Therefore, my objective as curator became to reflexively oscillate between leading and following as an effective and ethical facilitator of dialogue. I emphasise the value that emerged during this shared experience that occurred between the ten amazing artists I have had the privilege of working with—it takes time to listen, inquire and connect with others—and as an emerging curator, this opportunity was humbling. As such, I urge readers to engage with the artists' voices through their artworks in the exhibition, as well as their statements on the proceeding pages. These artworks that have emerged are a sample of a greater shared experience that will continue beyond this exhibition, and I hope that future dialogue is generated for visitors about the complexities of what it means to live on this land in 2023.

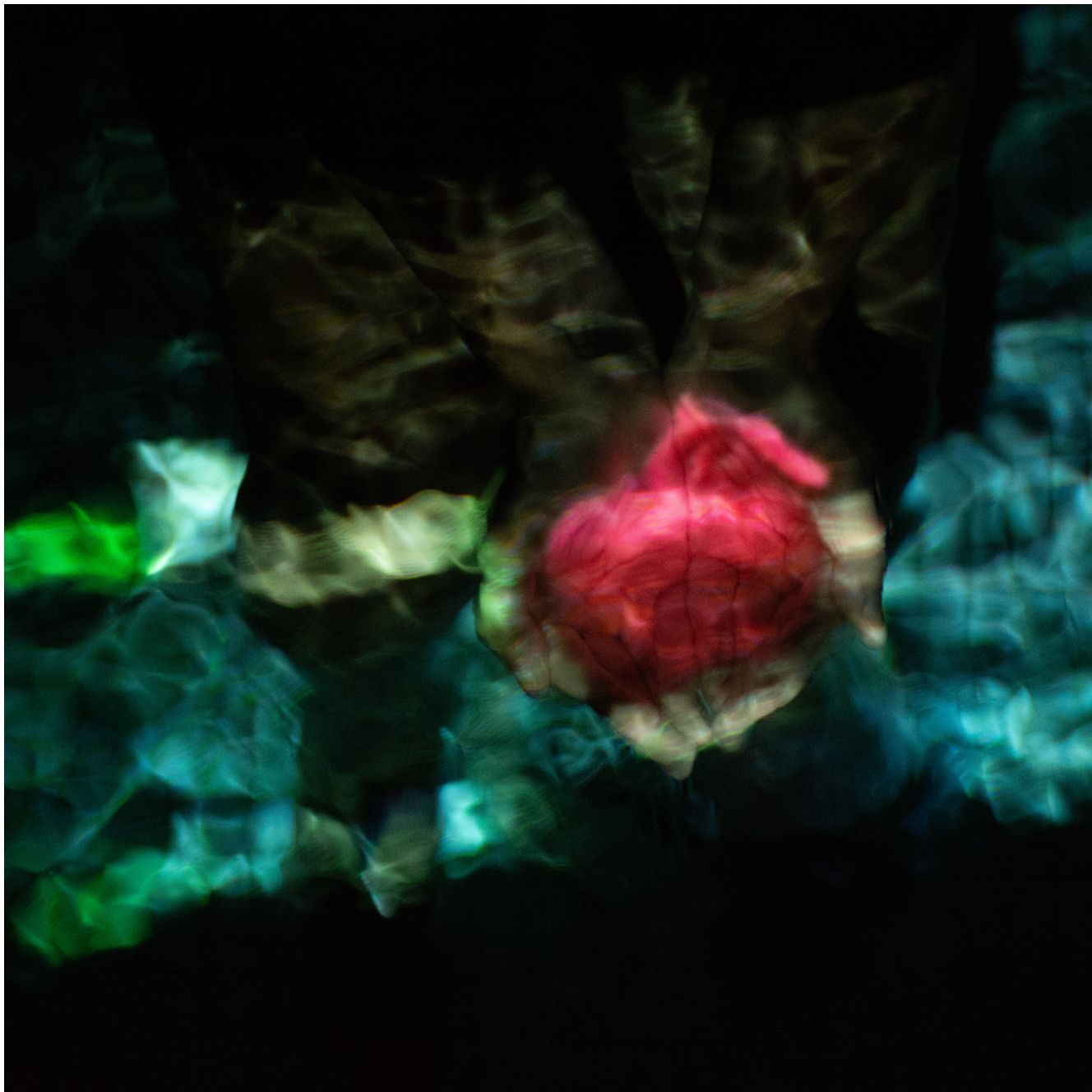
Dr Harrison SEE

*Contemporary artist, arts researcher and emerging curator*

Bhabha, H. (1990). Interview with Homi Bhabha: The third space. In J. Rutherford (Ed.), *Identity: Community, culture, difference* (pp. 207–221). Lawrence and Wishart.

**Artists**

Patricia AMORIM



Patricia Amorim (2022), '*DUPLO Series*' (detail), digital image, 84.1 x 118.9 cm



## **Biography**

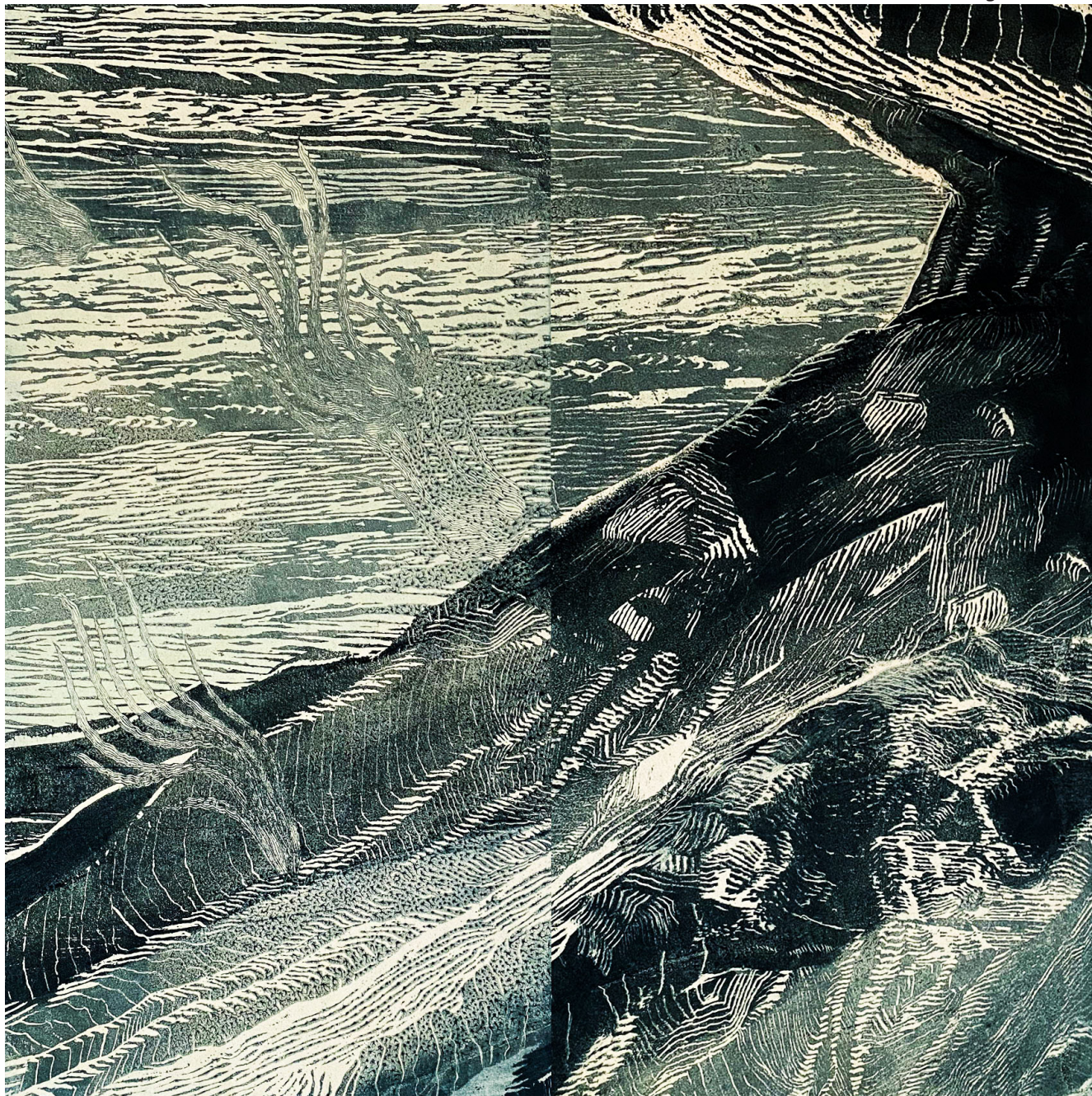
Patricia Amorim is a Brazilian contemporary artist and researcher interested in exploring how identity can be perceived through gendered bodies from a feminist standpoint. She identifies herself as a feminist Latin American woman seen as white in her country of origin, Brazil, although her phenotype is interpreted differently depending on the territory she inhabits. Consequently, her identity is revealed differently in Brazil and overseas. Her practice-led research examines how contemporary digital photography affects the concept of gendered bodies and the possibilities of inscriptions of digitally altered gendered bodies in a cross-cultural setting, considering cultural aspects inherent to Brazil and Australia. Her studio practice integrates photography, digital technology, and image modification to challenge gender and cultural identity. Amorim is a PhD candidate in the School of Arts and Humanities at Edith Cowan University (ECU) and is also the recipient of an ECU Higher Degree by Research Program Scholarship.

## **Artist's statement**

The project *DUPLO Series* uses digitally manipulated photography to investigate emerging possibilities for identity formation as perceived through the social construction of gendered bodies. This project considers how my cultural identity and status as a feminist and a Brazilian artist influence my artistic output and how I perceive gendered bodies in a cross-cultural setting. My studio practice is predominantly based on digital photography, partnered with Adobe Photoshop, with a feminist focus on the gendered body. In addition, I project photographs selected from my digital photographic collection of affective memory, which I have been continually developing since 2008, onto clothed gendered bodies. These bodies are re-signified by being re-inscribed by these images. My artistic practice is intimately related to new materialism feminism. I use an intersectional feminist theory and practice approach in my photography production process in terms of the political agency of my work, which respects the different views and experiences of gendered bodies. The relationship between materiality and feminism challenges my perception of gendered bodies through my photographic process, in order to consider the embodied subjectivity and cultural aspects within the context of the power relations explicit in gendered bodies.



Kelsey ASHE



Kelsey Ashe (2022), 'Sea Cave' (detail), wax etched drawings printed as Unique State Indigo Ink Screen-Prints on Canvas, mounted on wood, 144 x 200 cm



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## **Biography**

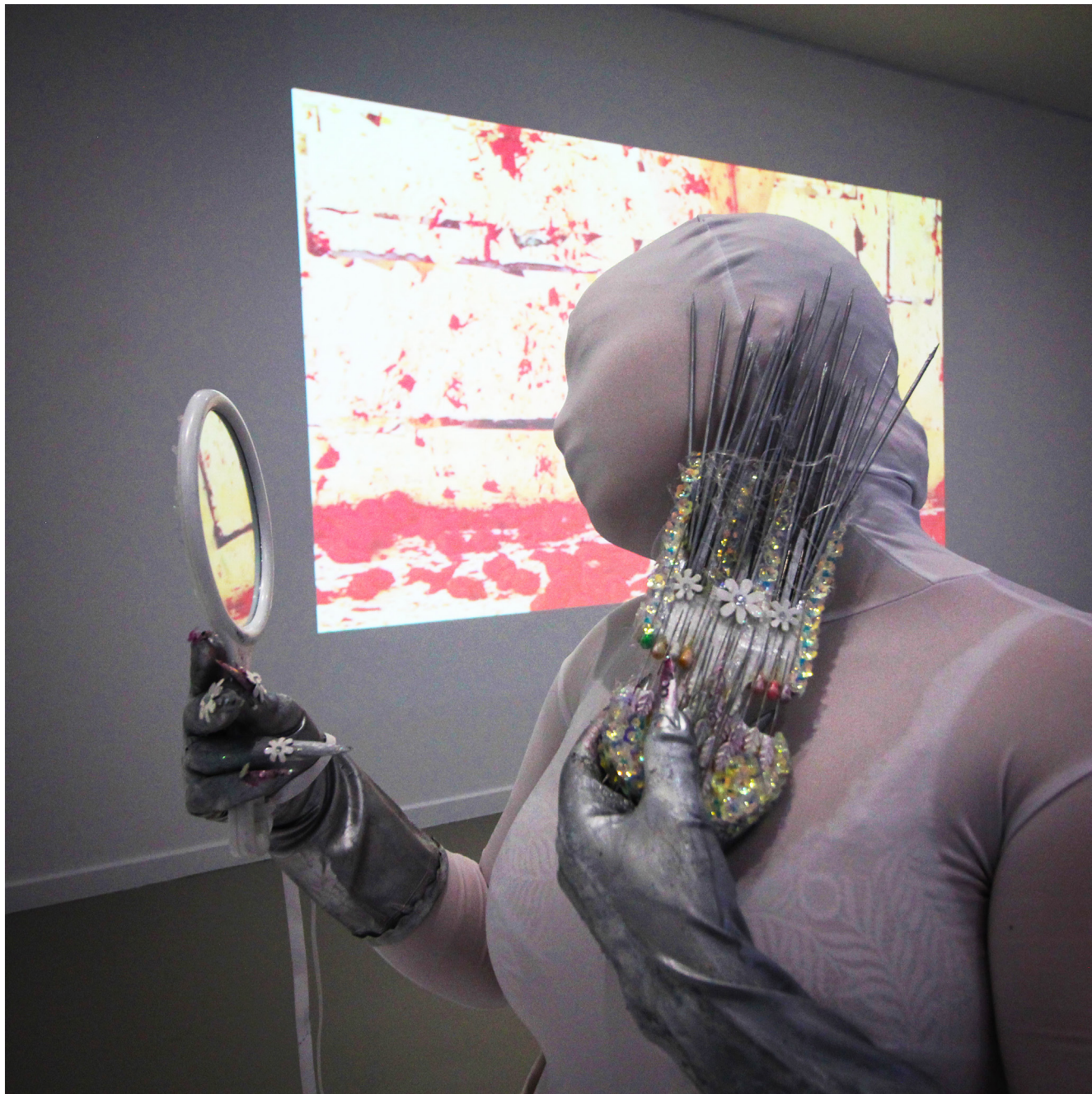
Kelsey Ashe is a contemporary artist whose aesthetic draws from themes within Austral-Asian inter-cultural studies, constructed mythologies and ficto-critical narrative. Recent works seek to comprehend the mysterious and deeply powerful sense of the sublime, grounded in the Landscape Art tradition. Ashe has a Doctorate in Philosophy (PhD Art) (Curtin University, 2018) which directs a depth of knowledge into contemplative works that examine both harmonious and difficult moments of cultural collision. In the age of the 'Archival turn' Ashe researches allegorical, historical and mythological narratives, to subvert, intervene or disrupt the colonial archive. Ashe seeks resonances from previous era's by drawing on universal symbology to sense traces of stories or beliefs from place, to perceive perceptions or concerns for contemporary culture.

Ashe's practice-led research is currently focused on experimental large scale screen print and short film. Ashe has exhibited Nationally and Internationally, including the iconic Sedona Arts Centre in Arizona USA, the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh UK, Site: Brooklyn Gallery New York USA, Barrett Art Centre New York USA, the WA Maritime Museum Fremantle AUS and the National Gallery of Victoria Melbourne AUS.

## **Artist's statement**

"...In dreams, landscapes and cultures of past and present collapse into one. Deepest times of past and future exist now...I fly over snaking streams of a Tasmanian gully, then plunge from a waterfall into tropical forests...lagoons of Tahiti. Then high moors then sea cliffs of snow are looming! Polynesia, Aotearoa, Gondwana...All one. I hover out with the planets....Then wake here...Western Australia...."

Constructing a contemporary 'Australian' cross-cultural identity is surveyed through my own Celtic convict and migratory ancestry and from the Austral-Asian basin I call 'home'; the vast land mass of Australia to Tasmania, across to Polynesia and Aotearoa (New Zealand) and to Japan, where family ties leave deep imprints. I include my imagined, albeit fragmented, ties to lands of my DNA by transposing Scotland, Ireland and the Faroe Islands into this voyage. Cultural hybridity creates an exchange point in which some things can be lost and broken, but so too, can new things be formed. I draw specifically on Japanese aesthetic philosophy and print making techniques, and to the concept of 'deep-time' adding further complexity and disruption to a 'place' that is both a dystopia and utopia at once.



Yvette Dunn-Moses (2021), *'Booty & the Butts'* (detail), still image from live performance and video



**Yvette DUNN-MOSES**

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## **Biography**

Yvette Dunn-Moses (born in 1979) is a South African artist who has lived and worked in Perth, Australia since 2019. She has a Fine Art degree and recently completed her Masters in Visual Arts with the University of South Africa. She has worked and exhibited in the Visual Arts since 2004 at multiple galleries internationally. She has taught visual arts from high school to tertiary level. Most recently she lectured and conducted research work at the University of South Africa from 2014 to 2018. Dunn-Moses started recording her performances in 2008 and then doing live performance since 2011. She has participated in numerous exhibitions since 1999.

## **Artist's statement**

Yvette Dunn-Moses is an experimental painter, conceptual and visual arts performer. Through her work she examines complex issues related to female body politics and racial identity. Her performances dramatize the line between vanity and sanity in the pursuit of beauty. Her research in partial fulfilment of her Master's Degree in Visual Arts investigates the current trends of buttock augmentation and other cosmetic surgeries as promoted by influencers and celebrities. Generally social media platforms are used as a vehicle to trigger perceptions of beauty. She regards her experimental paintings, video art and hyperbolic performances focusing on body image as commentary on social media posts. Dunn-Moses appreciates the resilience of women. However, she questions the use of 'enhancements' to become more desirable. Most importantly, she concludes historically and currently that there is an intrinsic link between the definition of beauty and racism.

Marcia ESPINOSA



Marcia Espinosa (2022), *'The Golden Thread'* (detail), stoneware clay and glazes, 43 x 34 x 16cm

**Marcia ESPINOSA**

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## **Biography**

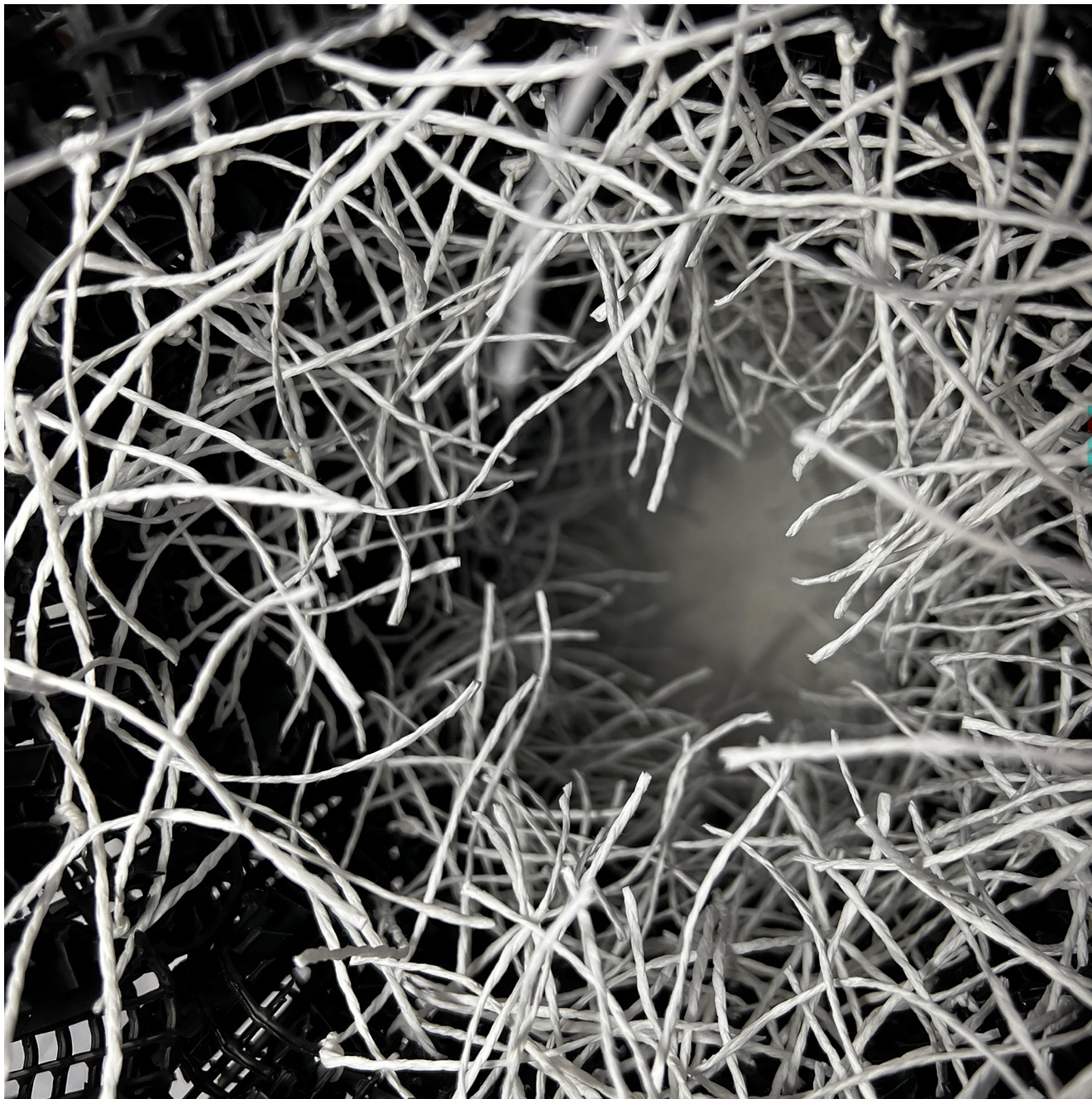
Marcia Espinosa is a Chilean-Australian artist, whose practice investigates themes of identity and meaning within our contemporary globalised society. Working across painting, sculpture, installation and ceramics, she uses everyday products and objects from folklore, media and consumer culture, to pose questions about systems and social structures. Espinosa studied fine arts at the Arcis University, Chile, before moving to Australia, where she received an Advanced Diploma of Visual Art and Contemporary Craft from North Metropolitan TAFE, Perth (2014) and a Bachelor of Arts (Fine Art) (Distinction), from Curtin University, Perth (2018).

## **Artist's statement**

A sense of belonging is an integral part of the human condition. It is inherent in the nature of humans to wish to be part of something. It is a way to establish security, acceptance and contentment. It could be described as the feeling of being home; the transition between their motherland and a new country also can trigger feelings of rootlessness and homesickness. For this project, I have created a series of sculptures in response to my journey (and that of other immigrants) to discover a cross-cultural identity and a way to reconnect with a sense of belonging. It seems to me that this is an essential part of adapting to a new country. I was interested in working through a multicultural conversation between my memories, thoughts and heritage to embrace my life in Australia. In the process, creating new roots and narratives to acknowledge the present here and now.



Shanti GELMI



Shanti Gelmi (2022), *'Cultural Cleansing'* (detail), plastic, paper and ink, dimensions variable



## **Biography**

Shanti Gelmi uses a multidisciplinary approach to explore the complexities of human connection, identity, and behaviour. Employing both conceptual and process driven techniques, she explores form and structure as a metaphor for interconnected existences, memory, and experience. Gelmi's meditative practice of questioning, drawing, cutting, and making has yielded a unique visual language representing biological, environmental, cultural, societal and emotional linkages of experience and memory into schemas of existence. These schemas can also be read as nets which can hold firmly but are permeable. Gelmi considers these nets to be analogous to how we absorb and experience the external world and mediate it through our understanding and memory. Process-driven rules employed in the work are resonant with the societal constructs which often shape one's place in the world.

Gelmi completed a Bachelor of Contemporary Arts at Edith Cowan University in 2020 and is represented in the University's Art Collection. She has been awarded prizes for her work, several funding opportunities from the Australian Government, two National Graduate Exhibitions and residencies in 2021. Gelmi was commissioned by Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts to develop her solo 'Shadowed' exhibited in 2021 into a Virtual Reality experience in 2022.

## **Artist's statement**

*Cultural Cleansing* explores the diffusion of culture. Cultural loss is experienced personally and collectively in many ways, subtle or overt, intentional, accidental, or forced, with each individual or group's experience unique. There is, however, likely to be a shared feeling or understanding of loss and lament for the past 'old' ways, common to many peoples.

I am the firstborn daughter of migrant parents who sought a better life for themselves and their future family in Australia. Moving from one colonised place to another, they made a good life, sacrificing their culture, language, and names to do so. The more my parents held on to their culture, the more I dismissed it to fit in. The result is a disconnect to my authenticity—a limbo between what was and what could be. I am interested in the tension between holding tight to cultural identity whilst simultaneously letting it merge into a new identity.

Sue LEEMING



Sue Leeming (2022), *'Homecoming'* (detail), oil, ink and coldwax on board, 80 x 80 cm

## **Biography**

Sue Leeming (Te Atiawa) is an Australian resident born in Taranaki, Aotearoa New Zealand and identifies as a New Zealand women of Maori, English and Scottish descent now residing on Noongar Boodjar in the Serpentine Jarrahdale region with her husband and four children. She attended The University of Auckland (Elam School of Fine Art) graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts majoring in printmaking, as well as a Post-Graduate Diploma in Fine Arts in 1995. Leeming immigrated to Perth, Western Australia in 1998 and is currently represented by Stala Contemporary Art Gallery.

*Kia ora tatou - Greetings all*  
*Ko Taranaki te maunga - Taranaki is the mountain*  
*Ko Te Waiwhakaiho te awa - Waiwhakaiho is the river*  
*Ko Te Atiawa te iwi - Te Atiawa is the tribe*

## **Artist's statement**

Te Ao Mārama - (noun) world of life and light, Earth, physical world.

Te Ao Moemoeā - (noun) surrealism, dream world - sometimes used as a name for Australia.

Te Ao Mārama: Te Ao Moemoeā acknowledges the relationship between the physical world and the internal landscapes revealed in the slippage between memory whakapapa/ancestry and spirituality. Memories coalesce to form meditative works expressive of Leeming's intuitive approach to the language of paint and respond to the unseen, felt experience of belonging to the land.

“There are the in between places, the non-spaces, the gaps in my local landscape that I pass by in my everyday. Sometimes I pause; my attention has been captured by a quiet presence. I stand still and simply breathe ... memories wash over me, quietness restores, insignificant details become imbued with meaning and trigger memories of home.”

When one immigrates there is a sense of always becoming, of journey, holding on and letting go, but not so much that all is lost. Establishing a presence in this new life we have chosen; dreams are realised and yet it all seems a little surreal. We move forward into the unknown.





Desmond Mah (2022), *'The more I live, the less I know'* (detail), synthetic polymer, wire, arduino, motorised with sound, 38 x 7 x 20cm



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## **Biography**

Desmond Mah was born in 1974 in Singapore and migrated to Australia (Boorloo/Perth, Western Australia) in 1987 as a youth. He graduated from Loughborough University (UK) with a BA (Hons) in Painting (1998). After graduation, he worked in high school education before emerging as an artist in 2016. He lives and works in Boorloo, on the unceded land of Whadjuk Boodjar. Mah recently won the E.SUN Bank Special Selection prize (2022, Taiwan) and the Southern Buoy Studios Portrait Prize (2021) and has been a returning finalists in other art prizes while exhibiting in solo and group shows in Perth, Sydney and Beijing. In 2023, Mah will be taking up a six-month residency at Fremantle Arts Centre. His previous residencies include the Red Gate Residency (Beijing, 2018), in which contemporary artist, He Yunchang mentored him (何云昌). Mah is a recipient of various grants and work for commissions. Mah has a work in Judith Neilson's private collection. He is currently self-represented.

## **Artist's statement**

Desmond Mah's family heritage is complicated; his paternal grandfather is possibly linked to Hui ancestry (回族, Chinese Muslim, China), while his maternal grandfather has Kinmen ancestry (金門縣, Kinmen County/Islands, Taiwan). These cultural identities morphed and evolved with time as they traversed and negotiated a third host place (Singapore). Mah's identity is an amalgamation of cultural hybridities—not exclusive to any single origin—always feeling like a sojourner that resides temporarily in a place. The lived experiences of immigration have shaped his explorations around identity and marginalisation. As a member of a marginalised diasporic community in Australia, his works examine how his identity is viewed by a globalising Western culture—challenging the determinist version of identity to advocate an alternative space for transnationality.

Mah channels his neurodivergent mind into his art practice, crafting forms somewhere between hybrid painting and pseudo sculpture. Forms crafted from painterly marks that also incorporate elements of smell, sound, automation and Arduino. These incorporations parade a heightened awareness to sensory stimuli such as sight, sound, taste, touch and smell, which unveil the correlation between his painterly language and the technological.

LEONIE NGAHUIA MANSBRIDGE



Leonie Ngahuia Mansbridge (2022), *'Somewhere Between'* (detail), synthetic polymer on old truck tarpaulin, 240 x 216 cm

# LEONIE NGAHUIA MANSBRIDGE

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## Biography

Dr Leonie Ngahuia Mansbridge (Ngāti Maniapoto) was born in Aotearoa New Zealand and now lives and works on Whadjuk Noongar Country. In 2018, Mansbridge completed her Creative Doctorate through Curtin University, Western Australia, researching “The Cross-Cultural Corridor: Performing Māori/Pākehā Identities”. Her creative arts practice is key to her story-ing as she continues to engage with issues of identity and colonisation. Mansbridge has exhibited consistently for twenty years in Australia and overseas. She has received a number of awards, including Invited Artist to the Joondalup art awards, and the Bangladesh Biennale.

Mansbridge works from her home studio, where her recent abstract paintings seek to explore her identity; she uses the landscape to connect through her indigenous heritage. Mansbridge also has a Masters of Arts (Visual Arts), with distinction, and a Bachelor of Arts (Art) (Honours) First Class, at Curtin University. Mansbridge has presented papers at Indigenous conferences in New Zealand, Canada and Australia.

## Artist’s statement

Māori artist (Ngāti Maniapoto) Leonie Ngahuia Mansbridge’s practice explores the relationship between landscape and identity. Her research practice involves uncovering, re-storying and unmasking colonial history and identity. Shifting to landscape as her principal genre and developing a visual language, Mansbridge repositions the way the viewer experiences her work by disrupting expectations of representative landscapes; she identifies to the land through her culture. The use of her iconology within her mark making are combined to create a visual experiences and transformation within the works. Language of materials are used to interpret her work which are codes and directional markers. As a storyteller each mark has its story to tell. There is a story to tell relating to themes of cross-cultural identity, loss of culture and land displacement.



MATTHEW MCALPINE



Matthew McAlpine (2022), *'To mark this commonwealth II'* (detail), acrylic, sand, fluorescent pigment and binder on canvas, 122 x 91 cm

## **MATTHEW MCALPINE**

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### **Biography**

Matthew McAlpine is an artist and curator predominantly working in painting and sculpture and currently living and working in Boorloo/Perth. McAlpine graduated from Curtin University in 2016 with a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) and has been exhibiting regularly ever since. His practice aims to explore the complexities and problems that arise from celebrating colonial legacies. While McAlpine draws upon a range of disciplines to interrogate these ideas, his practice is brought together by its poetic and material sensibilities.

### **Artist's statement**

Matthew McAlpine's artworks in HERENOW|23 prod at the intersection of landscape, nationalism, and environmental degradation in contemporary Australia. Rendered with a selective palette with a gritty impasto surface achieved through the addition of builder's sand in acrylic paint, the artworks poetically allude to colours and textures of charred landscapes.

Interested in the power of language and using the Australian National Anthem as a departure point, McAlpine has manipulated, removed, or added words to lines from the anthem. The text sits embedded in the paintings, applied with stencils, a process that metaphorically reckons with the construction of history, nationhood, and landscape. The idea of construction is further explored by using builder's sand, symbols of Nationalism such as the southern cross and fragments of a cast acrylic ornate frames. The fragmented frames draw upon the continued presence of colonial legacies in contemporary Australia.





Lea Taylor (2022), *'Gabbi Didup-yen Gnamma - Ripples on the Waterholes'* (detail), hand dyed raffia, natural raffia, hand dyed jute, galvanised steel, 50 cm x 7 pieces



**LEA TAYLOR**

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## **Biography**

Lea Taylor is a Wadandi, Menang, Goreng Bibbulmun yorga who's family connections are to the Hill and Maher/Williams families. Taylor's art influence came from her mother, starting at a young age, seeing her mother paint, write, sew and play music.

Over many years Taylor dabbled in a variety of art practices, never really finding her true fit. It was not until Taylor reached her fifties that she began to approach her art practice in a more deliberate way and as a way to calm her mind. Her practice was predominately painting but she soon discovered that her true passion and talent lay elsewhere. When she started Coiling (weaving) and making Booka (kangaroo skin cloaks) her art practice bloomed.

As a self-taught weaver and cultural artist, Taylor has freely explored technique and style through the use of traditional and contemporary materials along with the use of found objects such as bones, quills and feathers. Taylor is inspired by culture, nature and the environment. She strongly believes that her ancestors guide her to create in a culturally respectful way; she is creating contemporary Aboriginal art that will become tomorrow's Cultural Artefacts.

## **Artist's statement**

Noun – Ripple

Plural Noun – Ripples

*A small wave or series of waves on the surface of water, especially as caused by a slight breeze or an object dropping into it.*

Ripple Effect: The continuing and spreading results of an event or action.

The ripple effect of colonisation; our lands were stolen and our ancestors displaced. The colonisers established a firm hold, cutting us from our traditional songlines. The bidi we would travel to hunt and move through boodja as the seasons dictated were no longer open to us. We were cut off from the Gnamma, we were cut off from the all-important water sources essential for sustaining life as we traversed the harsh land now known as Southwest Western Australia. The Gnamma was cut off to the Bibbulmun, access denied because the farmers had closed "their land". The Gabbi Didup-yen Gnamma, ripples on the waterholes, were invisible to us.

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Curated by Harrison SEE

Spectrum Project Space

To be opened by curatorial mentor Professor **Ted SNELL**, AM CitWA

Opening: 1 February 2023 5–7 pm. Official opening 6:15pm

Exhibition dates: 2 February to 30 March 2023

Curatorial mentor, floor talk: Wednesday, 1 March 12:30pm–1:30pm

Artists floor talks: 18 and 25 February 1:00pm–2:00pm

Gallery opening hours: Tuesday–Friday (10am–4pm) and Saturday (11am–2pm)

Building 3, 2 Bradford St, Mount Lawley



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ECU Galleries

