

Lost Soles: Beyond the Sea | 2022

Lost Soles: Beyond the Sea by **Claire DAVENHALL** explores the multi-cultural migration of people to Australia, making social commentary from the pressures placed on the early settlers, to the journey of the migrants, refugees and convicts, travelling across the sea, in their search to reach a land of hope & dreams. It's a collection of 30 sculptural works, that invite the viewer to take a closer look, as she tells the story of their extraordinary existence.

To be officially opened by Dr **Deborah BLACK**

Gallery25

Opening Event: 9 March 5pm - 7pm
Exhibition dates: 10 March - 7 April 2022
ACDC Floor Talk: 6 April 12.30 - 1.30pm
Gallery opening hours: Tuesday to Friday 10am - 4pm
Building 10, 2 Bradford St, Mount Lawley

We acknowledge the Whadjuk people of Boorloo boodja who are the traditional owners of the land on which ECU Galleries stands. We respect their culture, their custodianship, and their continuing contribution to the life of this city and this region. This includes recognising and respecting sovereignty while working in solidarity towards supporting ongoing connection to country. To their Elders, past, present and emerging, we say thank you.

ECU Galleries



Artist Statement

A collection of 30 sculptural works, *Lost Soles: Beyond the Sea* invites the viewer to take a closer look, as artist Claire Davenhall tells the story of the extraordinary existence of migrants, refugees and convicts travelling to Australia.

'Lost Soles at Sea' observes the inhumane number of people who have boarded boats in search for better a life, their lost souls, drift in a sea of knowledge bound together in a vessel of hope... To the soulless boot, hooked up like a prize catch, which hangs on a piece of timber from Fremantle's old Jetty 'Hook, Line and Sinker'. If you dare to 'Take a walk in my shoes before you judge me' read the temperature gauge first, as they come from a place reaching boiling point!

A sculptural installation on the floor of Gallery 25 comprises of 108 convict soles taken from the shoes of the convict women of the first fleet on-board the Lady Penrhyn Ship in 1788. Folklore suggested the broad arrow was stamped on the sole of each convict shoe, so if they ran away, they could see which direction they were heading. There was no right or left shoe and you were considered lucky if you had two! Cast in resin they are finished with a green & gold colour changing pigment to represent the national colours of Australia and their final resting place. Above, float prayer flags from over 200 convict women from the second fleet, on-board the Lady Juliana Ship in 1789. Made from remnants of white cloth & ladies handkerchiefs with embroidered identity markings, they symbolize the tears and fear of their fate, held together and intertwined with a red & black handmade rope, they drift across the room in waves representing the daunting width and depth of the sea.

A sound installation accompanies the work and creates a body rhythm entrapment experience, as it synchronizes with the audiences' breath and creates the illusion the sea can breathe. This work aims to provide historical identity to those lost souls, condemned to transportation, sentenced to a land beyond the seas.

Artist Bio

Claire Davenhall is an International Artist who graduated from Gray's School of Art in Aberdeen with a BA (Hons) in Fine Art Sculpture, North Karelia Polytechnic in Finland & Athens School of Fine Art in 2000. In 2004, Claire studied a PGCE in Art Education at Lancaster University and became a Lecturer in Fine Art where she was proudly awarded the Governors Award for Excellence in Teaching & Learning and was nominated for two National Beacon Award in Art & Design.

She migrated to Western Australia at the end of 2007, where she has focused on exhibiting in beautiful locations such as Sculpture by the Sea in Cottesloe, Swell Sculpture Festival in Queensland, Castaways in Rockingham & Brighton Jetty Classic Sculptures in South Australia. She was awarded Winner of the Shinju Matsuri 'A View to Asia' in Broome 2016 & Major Prize Winner of the Drift Installation Awards 2017.

In 2018, Claire exhibited in Sculpture at Scenic World in NSW along with 39 'World Class' artists & received a Creative Development Grant from Department of Culture & the Arts in WA. She won the International Guest Panellist's Choice Award, at the prestigious Walker Gallery in the UK, where her art events from Western Australia were recognised by The BIG DRAW as having innovation and excellence in drawing practice

worldwide. She received a Honourable Mention Award, for participation and distinction with her sculpture *Lost Soles at Sea*, in the international CFA Artist of the Year Awards in 2019. In 2021 she took part in the IOTA21 Indian Ocean Craft Triennial, an international exhibition that connects artists and makers from around the Indian Ocean.

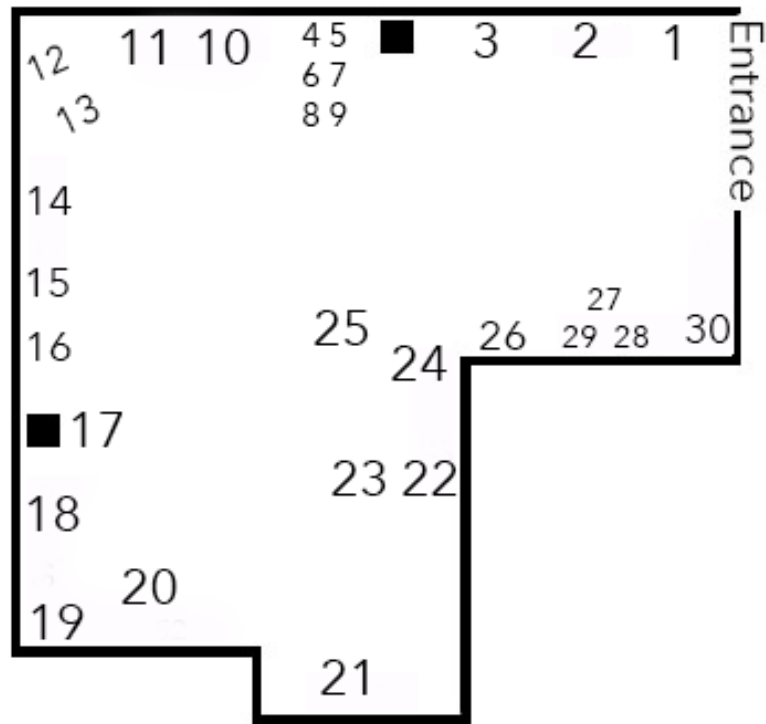
Claire continues to work in both Art & Education as Facilitator, Lecturer & Creative Practitioner.

Speaker Bio

Dr Deborah Black has two passions: sharing knowledge and visual arts. In a career spanning nearly 30 years, Deborah has had the privilege of working in the State and non-government sectors as a school psychologist, classroom teacher, visual art specialist, school leader, University lecturer and education consultant.

From her experiences teaching in metropolitan, rural and remote regions in Western Australia and on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Deborah has observed the importance of the arts in connecting students with their inner creativity and offering them a means of self-expression. Both elements she has found to be powerfully healing and liberating, especially for students who have experienced trauma.

Deborah is currently transitioning out of working in education sectors; she has established a small business that focuses on connecting creativity and craft, allowing her to pursue her passion for sharing knowledge with others and visual art.



- 1 **Do NOT Operate**, 2016, Steel, Leather, Found Objects, Resin & Antique Gold Pigment, 30 x 30 x 30cm, \$1200

Reflecting on life's journey and the constraints placed on us, 'Do Not Operate' takes inspiration from collected mechanical found objects symbolic of the working mechanisms of people in our society.

- 2 **Moon Boots**, 2019, Steel, Leather, Found Objects, Resin & Colour Changing Green, Blue & Purple Pigment, 30 x 30 x 30cm, \$1200

The enigma of Moondyne Joe (AKA Joseph Bolitho Johns 1831 – 1900), who was transported to Western Australia as convict on board the Pyrenees in 1853. He is remembered as the great escapologist and extraordinary measures were taken to ensure he did not escape from Fremantle Prison, which included over 1000 nails in his escape proof cell, so confident of the arrangements, Governor John Hampton promised him; "If you get out again, I'll forgive you". On 7 March 1867, Johns hung up his prison clothes and escaped through a hole he had made in the prison wall, wearing nothing but a pair of boots!

Governor John Hampton, never kept this promise to Johns, who was determined to bid for freedom against the harsh prison discipline of the convict period and he became a romantic figure in the eyes of the public. He was finally laid to rest in peace, on the 13th of August 1900, at Fremantle Cemetery with the Welsh inscription; 'Rhyddid' meaning freedom.

- 3 **Lost Soles of Betty Steel SOS**, 2018, Found Objects, Mechanical Parts & Resin, 30 x 30 x 30cm, \$1200

Betty Steel was the first deaf migrant and pioneer to Australia, she arrived on the Second Fleet and was sentenced to 7 years penal transportation for the theft of a silver watch worth 30 Shillings, which equates to \$3 AUD. She worked in one of London's worst slums before

journeying across unknown seas to Sydney and then Norfolk Island where she pioneered a farm with her husband James Mackey, himself an ex-convict.

When payments from the government for their maize were not honoured they were both left to perish. She was condemned to the margins of history, denied individual historical identity and denied a voice. Her remains were found in 1991 alongside many others in Sydney Town Hall and at last her story can be told. The price for her soul was 30 shillings or 30S a symbol so close to SOS an International distress signal meaning 'Save Our Souls', which may well have been her last plea.

4 Hot Boots, 2015, Print on Birch Wood, 30 x 30 x 1.2cm. \$250

A pair of children's work boots that change colour from purple to green to blue, depending on how the light hits the surface, paired with a thermometer set in a brass cog, they represent the rising challenges of a new generation of workers.

5 Do NOT Operate, 2018, Print on Birch Wood, 30 x 30 x 1.2cm. \$250

Reflecting on life's journey and the constraints placed on us, 'Do Not Operate' takes inspiration from collected mechanical found objects symbolic of the working mechanisms of people in our society.

6 Toyoda, 2018, Print on Birch Wood, 30 x 30 x 1.2cm. \$250

Lost Soles Toyoda makes comments about the hardships of the early migrants of Australia, in particular the pressure on young children; note the spelling of Toyoda on the radiator cap. Toyoda is the original Japanese name of the Toyota company, named after Sakichi Toyoda, who founded the Toyota Industries Corporation in 1937. The name changed from Toyoda to Toyota, because the number of strokes to write Toyota in Japanese (eight) was thought to bring luck and prosperity.

7 Gold Rush, 2018, Print on Birch Wood, 30 x 30 x 1.2cm. \$250

A pair of boots filled with antique gold pigment with a clock facing the viewer reflecting on the West Australian gold rush era, which began with the first discovery of gold in the late 1890s. The clock symbolises the passing of time and the passing of lost soles in their endless exploration to strike gold.

8 Wandering Artist, 2018, Print on Birch Wood, 30 x 30 x 1.2cm. \$250

Inspired by the lifestyle of the living artist, this works celebrates the journey of the creative, the tools of our trade and the steps we take to get there. Artist Miranda Free who travelled the circumference of Australia, to painting the landscape every 100km, inspired this work.

9 For the Fallen, 2018, Print on Birch Wood, 30 x 30 x 1.2cm. \$250

A pair of old boots, representing the history of colonised Australia and the roles Australian migrants have played in shaping the nation. Inside the right boot contains three pieces of text from past generations. The left boot contains a gear, which represent the changing roles people took during their lives. Text on the Parchment scrolls includes three quotes from; 'For the Fallen', 'Psalm 23:4' & 'Advance Australia Fair'.

10

Lost Soles - Take a Walk in my Shoes, 2017, Found Objects, Wood, Leather, Metal, Resin & Green/Gold Pigment, 30 x 30 x 30cm, \$1200

Take a walk in my shoes before you judge me, makes a statement about the rising number of refugees searching for asylum and taking a step up in the world. The temperature gauge reads 120 degrees reflecting on the boiling point of their situation.

11

Lost Soles - Hook, Line & Sinker, 2017, Found Objects, Timber, Leather, Rope, Metal, Resin & Antique Pigment, 80 x 40 x 30cm. \$2800

The soulless boot, hooked up like a prize catch, hangs on a piece of timber from Fremantle's old Jetty. It tells a fateful story of the crewman on the Greek Island of Kastelorizo, who got his foot caught round the rope while releasing the boat from its mooring and was dragged into the water, hook, line and sinker!

The entire population of Kastelorizo, was evacuated during World War II before the village was flattened by German bombing and later razed by fire. A once-prosperous community reduced to rubble. Most chose not to return and settled in Australia. Today there are 327 island residents yet 50,000 Kastelorizian's live in Australia.

12

Sea of Knowledge, 2019, World Book Encyclopedias, Wine Barrel, Netting & Resin, 90 x 170 x 280cm. \$4800

The World Book Encyclopedia's mission is to enhance our learning of the world around us, but in the digital age, these books lay closed, unread and castaway. Knowledge is as vast as the ocean, the world drifts on a sea of knowledge that spills into the sea leaving their stories untold.

13

Lost Soles Artist Sculpture Book, 2019, Paper, Leather, Sculpture Photography, Paper Cut, Luggage Tags and Ink, 18 x 13 x 13cm. \$840

The Lost Soles Artist Sculpture Book takes inspiration from found objects to reveal the hidden stories and provide historical identity to lost souls, condemned to transportation, sentenced to a land beyond the seas.

14

Lost Soles at Sea, 2017, Found Objects, Wood, Leather, Chain-Link Fabric, Paper Resin, Green & Gold Pigment, 200 x 200 x 200cm. \$6200

When it's safer to take your chances on the water than it is to stay on the land. This work explores the inhuman number of people who have boarded boats in search for a better a life, the lost soles, lost at sea, drifting in a sea of knowledge, bound together with a school of thought in a vessel of hope.

15

Preserve Something Historic - The Lost Fragment, 2018, Watercolour, Pen and Ink, 44 x 52cm. \$840.

The Lost Fragment from the 1872 Rockingham Old Jetty, washed ashore, echoing the shape and form of an anchored boat of its past, now held in the artists hand to preserve something historic. The washes of colour, scratchy pen marks and softly torn edges of the paper symbolise the fragility of remembrance.

16**Lost Soles at Sea**, 2018, Watercolour, Masking Tape, Pen & Ink on paper, 87 x 73cm. \$1260

Lost Soles at Sea, depicts the fragmented migrant families, who board boats in search for a better life, floating on a sea of knowledge, bound together by a school of thought and drifting in a vessel of hope.

17**Lost Soles - Convict Soles**, 2018, Cast Polyurethane Resin, Textiles and Silver Spoon, 3 x 300 x 500cm. \$800

These convict soles are taken from the shoe of convict women on-board the first fleet on the Lady Penrhyn Ship in 1788, which were condemned to the margins of history. Folklore suggested that the broad arrow, a symbol of government property, was stamped on the sole of each shoe, so if they ran away they could see which direction they went. There was no right or left shoe, a shoe was just a shoe and you were lucky if you had two! The price of this convict woman's soul was three pieces of cloth and a silver spoon.

18**With Wind & Waves**, 2020, Sound Track, 1 hr, 12 min and 18 sec. NFS

'With wind and waves... the sea can breathe', is a sound track that represents the sound of the sea. Each wave creates a body rhythm entrapment as it synchronizes with the audiences' breath and creates the illusion the sea can breathe with your every breath.

19**Slave Ship**, 2022, Projection of a Watercolour Painting, Dimensions variable. NFS

Slave ships were widely used in the 17 & 18 Century to transport slaves to Australia. Slave traders were paid for the amount of slaves who boarded the ships, not the amount that safely made it across the sea. They were known for throwing their dead and dying slaves of overboard into the sickening sea. Human trafficking still exists today as a form of modern day slavery with huge amounts of people paying with their lives on their journey to a land of hope and dreams.

20**Prayer Flags**, 2020, Handmade Rope & Textiles, 45cm x 30m x 10cm. \$2400

A handmade rope suspending over 200 white prayer flags with handwritten messages taken from love tokens or leaden hearts, given to loved ones as an act of remembrance when sent to land beyond the sea. They are a tangible record of their final message, these ladies handkerchiefs capture the tears and fears, as they surrender to their fate & board the transportation ships.

21**When This You See, Remember Me**, 2021, Metal Travel Box, Textiles, Deep Sea Phillips Buoy, Shipping Chain & Replica Convict Love Token, 60 x 90 x 60cm. \$2400

When word got back to England from the first fleet to send more eligible women to help colonize the newly founded Settlement in Australia, they sent hundreds of young convict women. As they boarded the transportation ships, they were de-shackled and sailors were entitled to take themselves a wife for the duration of the journey. As they surrendered to their fate, the only advice given to these young ladies was: 'Lie back & think of England', a quote made famous by Queen Victoria. The Lady Juliana Ship became notoriously known as a floating brothel.

Convict love token is a tangible record of the convicts' last words, and are given as a parting

gift to a loved one, as an act of remembrance when sentenced to land beyond the seas'. It reads; 'When this you see remember me & bare me in your mind,' and lies on a pillow fashioned from the union jack flag.

22 **Forget Me Not**, 2022, Photographic Print, 30 x 30cm. NFS

Leaden hearts or love tokens where given as a final act of remembrance, originally written on copper low demoniacal coins, sanded smooth and hand-engraved to reveal heart felt sentimental messages.

23 **COINS**, 2020, Love Token and Old Pennies, 20 x 20 x 20cm. NFS

24 **Lost Soles - D.C to C.D.**, 2018, Bronze, Rope and Found Objects, 120 x 80 x 80cm, \$4800

This sculpture work explores the life of Daisy Cooper 1886 – 1921 and the strength of family bonds that tie us together through the journey of life.

25 **Lost Soles from the Lady Penrhyn**, 2019, 108 Cast Resin, Green/Gold Colour Changing Pigment, Rope, Paper & Text, 1 x 8 x 20cm. \$4800

Convict soles taken from the shoes of 108 convict women of the first fleet onboard the Lady Penrhyn Ship in 1788. Folklore suggested that the broad arrow was stamped on the sole of each shoe, so if they ran away they could see which direction they were heading in. There was no right or left shoe, a shoe was just a shoe and you were lucky if you had two! They are cast in resin with a colour changing green to gold pigment, representing the national colours of Australia and their final resting place.

26 **Oceans Apart**, 2019, Found objects, Sand, Stone, Resin, Paper and Ink, 54 x 70 x 44cm. \$1200

Capturing the many waves of migration to Australia, the sea has an amazing yet daunting expanse and depth. As a metaphor for life and its hardships, at its core, this pair of lost soles represent the lasting endurance and journey of migrants and refugees traveling across the sea, in their search to reach a land of hope & dreams.

27 **Lost Soles of Mary Rose**, 2020, Found Objects, Mechanical Parts, Convict Love Token, Red/Gold Pearl Pigment & Resin \$1200

The Lost Soles of Mary Rose, destined to follow in the virtuous steps of the Virgin Mary, Star of the Sea. This beautiful English Rose fell into the shackles of a gaolbird after enduring a tale of broken hearts, promises and abandonment; her only 'crime' was love. The vulnerable 16 year old falsely accused and betrayed, lost both home and liberty. She departed on The Lady Juliana Convict Ship during the summer of 1789 with 226 women, sentenced to 7 years transportation, all bound for land beyond the seas! Convict 'LOVE' tokens were given as a final act of remembrance, while the handkerchief captures the tears and fears, as the ship sets sail and she surrenders to her fate.

28 **Lost Soles - Hot Boots**, 2015, Found Objects, Mechanical Parts, Colour-changing pigment, 30 x 30 x 30cm, \$1200

A pair of children's work boots that change colour from purple to green to blue, depending on how the light hits the surface, paired with a thermometer set in a brass cog, they represent the rising challenges of a new generation of workers.

29

Lost Soles - Toyoda, 2015, Found Objects, Mechanical Parts, Resin, 30 x 30 x 30cm, \$1200

Lost Soles Toyoda makes comments about the hardships of the early migrants of Australia, in particular the pressure on young children; note the spelling of Toyoda on the radiator cap. Toyoda is the original Japanese name of the Toyota company, named after Sakichi Toyoda, who the founded the Toyota Industries Corporation in 1937. The name changed from Toyoda to Toyota, because the number of strokes to write Toyota in Japanese (eight) was thought to bring luck and prosperity.

30

Migration Messages, 2013, Plastic Wine Bottles, Shipping Chain, Flotsam & Jetsam, 150 x 120 x 300cm. \$1200

Inspired by my own migration to Australian and becoming an Australian citizen, this work celebrates and sends messages of love, hope and dreams; 'To beautiful people in far away places'. Messages are handwritten on luggage tags and suspended on a 10m shipping chain, symbolizing the journey of migration to Australia.

- Claire Davenport

"Take every ex-lover you've had and throw them into the sea. Little notes attached to their feet, like cadavers of the meet-and-greet. Look for the limpid blue to fill their eyes, free yourself from those shared pasts, erode any old deceit.

Teach a small child penmanship, or how to deal with loss. An after-school care of glass shards, transformed to calligraphy, scratchy handwriting addressed to dead grandparents or dogs. A smile softened, a mind sharpened, a heart reconnected via 2B.

Talk with birds, and treat people like momentarily lost migrations. Learn as much from listening, as living. As humans, we're poor, wingless things, nostalgic lovelings, caught in our contemplations. In your new flight of fancy, float your body towards a foreign shore."

- Rafael SW