

KINGS Artist Run acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we operate. We offer our respect to Elders both past and present and extend this offer to all First Nations people.

# KINGS

## *Jen Valender* US&S

JULY  
13.07.23–5.08.23

Artist Run

Established in 2003, KINGS Artist-Run provides a location for contemporary art practice, supporting distinctive experimental projects by artists at all stages of their careers.

Open 12-5pm Thursday,  
Friday, Saturday  
69 Capel Street,  
West Melbourne VIC 3003

*Jen Valender*  
US&S

How do we discuss difficulties while keeping in tune? *Under soil & skin* (US&S) aims to re-imagine troubled ecologies through ruptured song. Working with the premise of a broken chord, a fractured composition is performed with a disfigured cello for the fire-damaged forests of the Blue Mountains. It may be read through a lens of colonisation, feminism, isolation, phenomenology, coexistence, trauma, loss and life cycles. This engagement with the landscape positions art as a navigational tool to work through dissonance and to find the points at which harmony sits, strikes or sings.

US&S, 2022.  
4 minutes, 30 seconds.

“*Under soil & skin* presents the work of art as a constructed, conceptual undertaking, and raises questions about its subsequent relationship to the natural world. It poses the problem of how a thing so seemingly out of kilter with the realities and rhythms of nature might establish harmony between or within them ... it invites the viewer to consider how the art object, in its intentionality, might be well placed to communicate both the conditions of its own making and those of the world it exists within ... ” — Elyssia Bugg

*4min 30sec*  
*DoP: Gene Alberts*  
*Score: Matthijs van Dijk*  
*Audio design: Simon Ratcliffe*

**Jen Valender** is a contemporary artist who works across moving image, photography, sound, sculpture and performance. Her practice is premised on compressing complex experiences, histories and intersections between art and nature into poetic gestures. Born in Aotearoa New Zealand and based in Naarm/Melbourne, Valender holds a Master of Fine Arts (Research) from the Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne. She has exhibited in galleries and public spaces locally and internationally including Heide Museum of Modern Art; Ian Potter Museum of Art; Museum of Art and Culture, Lake Macquarie; Collingwood Yards Art Precinct; WIRWIR Gallery, Berlin and Forum des images, Paris.