

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

*Talia Palmer, Tendergrass,
Greta Miller, Christine
Mcfederige, Jack Mitchell,
The Orb Weavers, Bo Stiemer,
Jinghua Qian, Lhotse Collins,
Tamar Chaya, Anwyn Hocking,
Petracore Collective*

RIVERMOUTH

curated by Lhotse Collins

08.10.26–11.10.26

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
12 - 4pm, Saturday - Sunday
69 Capel Street,
West Melbourne VIC 3003

POP-UP

*Tahlia Palmer, Tendergrass, Greta Miller, Christine Mcfederige,
Jack Mitchell, The Orb Weavers, Bo Stierner, Jinghua Qian,
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Rivermouth

Rivermouth is an experimental project in counter-archiving the rivermouth in Naarm, at the confluence of Birrarung, Maribyrnong and bay. The project experiments with art making as a method of historiography to interrupt colonial archives and ways of relating to place. Through various artistic and research practices the project aims to generate a relational, unruly, dis/organised community archive.

Artwork details

DRIVEWAY

Archiving water: WORKSHOP, 2026
Natural inks, river mud, concrete, found
bricks, oystershells

(continues on the bench in Gallery One)

GALLERY ONE

(left to right from main gallery entrance)

Tendergrass, *Concrete rain*, 2026, Painting on
board, acrylic, pigment, collage, ink

Bo Stierner, *Our Mark*, 2026, Single channel
video work, 07:00

Tendergrass, *Chain of Ponds*, 2026, Concrete

The Orbweavers, *Moonee Moonee Chain of
Ponds*, 2018, Mp3, 04:58

Liz Crash and Jinghua Qian, *Underfoot*,
2026, Mp3, 16:30

Petracore Collaborative, *Como Billabong*,
revisioned archive, 2026, Pastel and ink on
calico.

Jack Mitchell, *Resistance Transmission*, 2019,
Archival footage and audio.

GALLERY TWO

(left to right from adjoining entrance):

Tahlia Palmer, *they tried to tame Birrarung
(excerpt)*, 2026, single channel video, 06:07.

Christine Mcfederidge, *An Inconvenient
Curve*, 2024, photographic prints.

Lhotse Collins, *I love the river's mouth
(weaving)*, 2025, Found wool, acrylic, cotton
and naturally dyed linen scraps.

Greta Wallace-Crabbe Miller, *Cutter Suction
Sea Star* 2026, Bronze, Gouache and pencil
on woodboard (also appears in Gallery
One)

GALLERY THREE

Anwyn and Myf Hocking, *Mannitol*, 2026,
single channel video, 03:51

Swollen River

by *Tamar Chaya*

Drink me
In the sound of you rushing, river
Rinse me in
Wanting to be beside you, inside you
Swelling river
I'm flared and inflamed
Swelling river
This raw body
Rising and lowering
Has led me away from you
Swollen river
I moisten in the memories of love
High tides and spines
Submerge my sphincters from
Scarred tissue
Metabolising in my stools, salivating
For you
Swelling river
I can only breathe with you
As we interlace at the confluence
Drink me in
Ocean lips
Obliterate me with your kiss
Salty sea, I am
Breath
Dilation and bones
Pulsing in water becoming limp and melting into
Sex as salivation
Carrying me
To the homecoming tide
Let them drink you in
Find you in the

Dark swelling
Weeping at the shore
Let them drink you in
To the seafloor
That remembers you
And spat out by the sun's dancing outbursts of its brightest white drizzled honeylid eyes,
undulating spinal glimmers flooding my eyelids and fluttering the
Boundless
Sea

Tamar Chaya is a painter, poet, and performance artist, and is in their final year of a Master's of Art Therapy. They are currently based in Brunswick on Wurundjeri Country. Currently, Tamar's autobiographical practice emerges from the intersection of their body, chronic illness, and the medical industrial complex.

Archiving as Relation

by *Lhotse Collins*

I spent a few months rummaging through the archives at the Living Museum of the West. Like an obsessive hunter, I couched over the computers, tape players and shelves looking for any flicker, shimmer or mark of water. Not because of an archival disaster. The museum, although underfunded, is not yet leaking water.

I was hunting for documented water, for information and knowledge about waterways in Naarm. Like someone obsessively in love, I wanted to know everything. Where they had been? Where they would go? Where are they now and why? What colour they used to be? How far up the tides came? What and who lived in them, around them? Everything.

Despite there being a good selection of documents, photographs, and oral history tapes in the collection which offered me some of the information I was stalking, I had a lost and scattered feeling. It was as if the collection items I encountered were marks of something which wasn't there, something just outside my grasp.

It was when I excitedly found the coordinates of the lost wetlands, digitised data from a 1750 colonial map, and opened them up on the blinking screen, I slowly began to realise that my preoccupation with knowing in order to feel a sense of place was a settler anxiety. A kind of empirical knowing which secretly equals owning, having a right to and a grasping of. "I know you so you are mine!"

I've come to realise that the knowing I was desiring is not knowing but relation and as Edward Glissant teaches us, all beings we are in relationship too, always reserve their 'right to opacity' to an unknowability and the rivers and waters reserve their right to theirs.

Working with archives is a well walked path in attempts to re-understand, re-articulate, rebuild and regain power and as a tool or process for imagining different futures. I wonder what purpose archiving has for us here on the banks of the river? What is in them that we need to bring with us? What can help us understand the terrible disjointedness of these late capitalist days we find ourselves in. How can looking at the past support us to gather and rebuild otherwise to the scary futures whose projected horizons have already arrived at our doorstep.

If we were to archive relationally, constantly bringing the past with us, what would that look like? Archiving as a verb; as fostering a relation.



So much of what we know about so-called Australian history is those events and people who have been memorialised. I am interested in how this memorialisation

can be understood as a settler anxiety to clean up our big history mess. I borrow these ideas from Jack Halberstam, where in his text *Queer Art of Failure* he notes “memorialisation has a tendency to tidy up disorderly histories.” I hope for our counter-archive to be a departure from memorialisation and towards disorderliness, one that makes a mess as a process of unsettling assumed completeness and neatness of memorialisation. This assumed completeness is the quiet violence of the archive which sweeps up histories of genocide and ecocide. In steering away from memorialisation we can spend time with not only the big events of the rivermouth but the small things, the traces, the silly and seemingly inconsequential things, to capture your experience and relation with the living rivermouth and the events, feelings and places the state would rather we forgot.

Despite a love of history, working with archives brings me anxiety. There is a sticky reality of failure. Failure to capture, failure to record, to understand, but I have come to see that it is in acceptance of this failure where a relation to the place can germinate. Halberstam offers us failure as an act of dissent or an action of being otherwise, to the colonial, patriarchal and heteronormative manner of being. As attempts to know and archive in a settler way of thinking fails, it opens the archival process to be something otherwise.

Entangled in this failure are the notions of remembering or forgetting. The quantum physicist Karan Barad notes, “Memory is not merely a subjective capacity of the human mind...memory is written into the worlding of the world in all its specificities. The world holds the memory of all traces or rather the world is it’s memory.” If the world is it’s memory then I wonder as Halberstam does, what could be made through forgetting. He notes, “forgetting becomes a way of resisting the heroic and grand logistics of recall and unleashes new forms of memory that relate more to spectrality than to hard evidence, to lost genealogies then to inheritance to erasure rather than inscription” If forgetting might lead us away from human centred remembering towards a memory which exists within the present materiality of the world then maybe we should approach our archive with a practice of forgetting in order to re-remember with water and what it knows.

In the context of a settler colony where forgetting is a tactic of erasure used to deny First Nations sovereignty and acts of genocide, suggesting we use forgetting as an anti-colonial tactic seems dangerous. But there is something in this idea to mull on. To resist memorialisation and hard evidence as the conditions that make the past readable and to instead find a past that has in its unruliness and disorderliness managed to avoid being put dead into the colonial archives but instead stayed alive and leaking into the present in, on, and from the materiality of water and its memories.



Water carries all kinds of histories, stories, entanglements, signifiers and politics. As a settler, learning to be attentive to water bodies around me and within me has instigated what I hope to be a process of relearning my place within complex relations. Learning to love without needing to know, learning to love through opacity.

I was drawn to the rivermouth as a site of meeting. It is a place where Birrarung and Maribyrnong and their tributaries meet the Bay and then the Southern Ocean. All the relations along these rivers and ocean come together here and reach outwards; West across the volcanic grasslands, passing factories and toxic defence sites. East up into the Yarra Valley, through farmlands and forest and South out into the Southern Ocean and beyond. This place was abundant and supported life and culture for Wurundjeri, Woiwurrung and Boon Wurrung clans since creation.

Through huge terraforming projects of dredging and draining this confluence became a centre for the colonial empire which continues its projects today. Petrol, chemicals and goods including weapons are exported from this rivermouth carrying and connecting this place across oceans to global markets, war, different ecologies and migration.

Understanding water as something which blurs the boundaries between bodies, between mine and yours and between ours and the rivers and the rivers and elsewhere, offers a way to deeply understand our enmeshment and relation to these places. This enmeshment extends geographies through bodies of migratory birds, linear time and mortality and is a kind of thinking which has articulated for me something lost in my settler knowing.

In the project I wanted to understand the water itself as an archive in its own right, intrinsically linking your body and mine to all the other bodies this water touches and to make/archive from this point, this wet place, this body place, which is both a gurgling interiority of our own embodiment and a wide and flowing exteriority which fills these water ways. Like most of settler origin, I have my secret inherited hang up to hold things in stagnation, to mark them down in linear time, to describe and categorise, but the waterways are constantly moving and shifting and both making the future and remaking their pasts in a thick present.

Rivermouth: Archiving water, is not a centralised archive. It is one that exists between the artists and the community and the water. The exhibition brings together the knowledge generated over time for a brief moment at a confluence, to then flow outwards in streams and tributaries to remain existing within and between people and the river.

There is responsibility in holding these stories in community rather than an institution, to the water and our shared pasts and futures and its these relations that make this messy archive matter.



REFERENCES

- Edward Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*. 1990.
Jack Halberstam, *Queer Art of Failure*. 2016.
Karan Barad, *Nuclear Hauntings & Memory Fields, For the Time-Being(s)*. 2023.



View from Batman's Hill looking westward, from an original sketch taken in 1836 or beginning of 1837. Robert Russell, surveyor, 1884. (The State Library Victoria)

Work descriptions & Artist bios

Tahlia Palmer

they tried to tame Birrarung (excerpt), 2026, single channel video, 06:07.

This work is an excerpt from a 3-channel audio-visual installation commissioned by Koorie Heritage Trust, created in collaboration with Jasper Cohen-Hunter (Wurundjeri), whose narration features over the soundscape. This excerpt does not include Jasper's narration, it is soundscape and video only, and centres on the ghost of a great waterfall, the sacred basalt falls once at the heart of Birrarung. The falls marked the meeting of fresh and salt water, creating a wide, deep basin of profound abundance. Gunawarra and gunabil teemed there; women harvested murnong from rich soils; lagoons became iuk hunting grounds. Junction sites were places of gathering, ceremony, trade, and law for the Wurundjeri-willam, Marin-balluk, and Wurundjeri-balluk clans. This was not passive landscape but a sentient, sustaining entity.

The European invaders did not see a living system. From their cultural lens, the waterway and associated ecosystems presented a challenge to be solved and conquered. In the 1870s and 1880s, on the advice of British engineer John Coode, the falls were dynamited. The vital fresh/salt divide was destroyed. The river was straightened and deepened for shipping, its curves severed, wetlands and lagoons filled, the junction of Birrarung and Maribyrnong moved north. The motive was profit.

The river's current state - brown, polluted by sediment, plastic, oil, heavy metals, unfit to drink or swim in - is physical evidence of this fracture. This video work holds the waterfall in absence and presence, remembering what was while documenting what is. The river is a living archive, its disrupted sediment bearing witness.

The soundtrack makes the historical fracture audible. Built from manipulated field recordings captured from above and below the water's surface, it documents the contemporary reality: the muted ecosystem, the screech of mechanics and electronics. These are not neutral sounds; they are the consequences of the fracture. Against them are manipulated samples of musicians playing sections from Rudolf Bial's "Yarra Waltz," published in the 1879, a "romantic" European composition representing the colonial desire to impose a picturesque order on a living entity. Shredded snippets of the score, played on viola, violin, and clarinet, are manipulated, slowed down, and intercut with the field recordings. The polite waltz fragments are disrupted, overwhelmed, and challenged by the damaged, complex reality those colonial actions created. This sonic juxtaposition makes obvious the gap between colonial perception and consequence, between the fantasy of taming and the reality of ecocide.

This act of shredding and re-assembling is a gesture of resistance. It restores

complexity to a system simplified for extractive gain. It is active listening that encourages renewal in spaces of death. It refuses the waltzes of conquest and points to a deeper story: the Creation story of Birrarung told by Beruk (William Barak), holding the law of intergenerational care. The old European men - planners, engineers, policymakers - were not good to the little children. Their poisoning of the river was part of the poisoning of its people. The fatal equation remains: genocide = ecocide = suicide.

To heal the river is to begin to heal the relationship. Through sound and image, the work is a witness to the fracture and a woven plea to listen, not to the waltzes of conquest, but to the complex, living archive of the river itself.

musician credits:

Aaron Wyatt (Noongar) - Viola

Chloe Sanger - Violin

Megan Alice Clune - Clarinet

Tahlia Palmer is an artist of Yuwaalaraay/Gamilaraay and mixed European descent born on Whudjuk Noongar Boodjar (Perth, WA), living on Woiwurrung Wurundjeri Biik (Melbourne, VIC), working in a variety of mediums to explore history, identity, perception and environmental issues. Descended from an Indigenous paternal line who survived dispossession and forced assimilation (NSW+QLD), and Dutch maternal grandparents who survived WW2, her art practice works on confronting the conditions that create and perpetuate inter-generational trauma, as well as finding pathways for healing. She releases ambient/drone/noise soundscapes under the pseudonym “amby downs”, named after one of the southern QLD stations on which her Aboriginal ancestors worked in servitude.

Tendergrass

Concrete rain, 2026, Painting on board, acrylic, pigment, collage, ink.

Do you feel the rain?

Do you get wet?

I wonder what the concrete feels, designed to be impermeable, to move the water away quickly.

Sometimes my urbanised brain reacts like this, the rain an inconvenience to productivity.

But where there is water, there is life?

Rain feeding the seasons.

The 'west Melbourne swamp' has called people of the Kulin Nation together for tens of thousands of years.

Cities strategically plonked on unceded land to suck from river systems.

Billions of tonnes of concrete burying the sustenance of the land. The city is a system of control.

If you look closely in the drain grates in the Queen Victoria Market carpark you can see maidenhair ferns. They've been growing in that place way before colonial invasion. Life resists in the cracks and hidden corners of the city. Ignored, excluded or suppressed, the water will still take its course.

Chain of Ponds, 2026, Concrete.

The Moonee Moonee (roughly translating to chain of ponds in woi-wurrung) flowed into the 'west Melbourne swamp'. Between the 1940's and 1980's the ponds were concreted to become a drain - to efficiently carry the water out and away. Areas are now being 'revitalized' through extensive community environmental advocacy. This has led to some drain removal and landscape reconstruction (at great expense).

Where there are cracks, plants grow. Where there are objects in the drain, debris builds in floods creating new beds for plant growth. This 'chain of ponds' sculpture is made from pieces of the moonee ponds drain. It tests the idea of how the existing concrete can be reworked to become habitat over time, through creating places for water to gather. Less drain, more terrain.

Tendergrass' creative practice is felt through the complexity of layers of places and how they relate. Through painting, planting and adaptive material reuse they explore and test ideas relating to design processes of the built environment.

Greta Wallace-Crabbe Miller

Cutter Suction Sea Star, 2026, Bronze, Gouache and pencil on woodboard.

Two stars, alike in their hunger for destruction. One star is metal, bumpy spine gouging into silt and sand. Forever cutting deeper channels. The other star is beautiful, but not so good in this place. Sucked into the belly of ships in those 'other' places, and spat out in the 'here' places. The cutter head of the dredger is star shaped. It is attached to the end of an arm that reaches down from the water's surface. Spinning and gouging. In the ballast water of cargo ships are Northern Pacific Seastars. Orangy, yellow creatures with purple colouring on the ends of their arms. They threaten native marine habitat by out-competing native species for food and laying millions of eggs. These rivers have changed a lot, they've been moved. Once this was marsh, swamp, mangrove - the water chose its own path, moving and moulding sand and silt. Now this place is an international trading port, the boats that come this way are bigger than skyscrapers

Greta Wallace-Crabbe Miller

Based on Wurunjeri country, and also on Dharawal country.

Human and seaweed, seaweed and star, star and milk crate. I yearn for waters, salt and fresh, fascinated and in love with our living planet.

Making things, for me, has always been a means of processing, an embodied coming-to-terms-with, something to do in uncertain times. Experiments come first. My art making is deeply practice-based, using mediums like ceramics, bronze, mould making, performance, found-object assemblage, and always, drawing and painting. I am concerned with materiality, methods-of-being and planetary ecologies.

Jack Mitchell

Resistance Transmission, 2019, Archival footage and audio.

Resistance Transmission was a collaborative deep listening project between Eliki Reade and Jack Mitchell as part of the Due West Arts Festival in 2019. The project had 10 days of events, from musical performances by DRMNGNOW, poetry by Lay The Mystic, through to live storytelling with Larry Walsh and Peter Haffenden, and Talanoa/Yarning circles with knowledge keepers, politicians and artists. Across three of the nights, there was a triptych of recorded stories broadcast locally on FM radio, focusing on the source, confluence and mouth of the Maribyrnong river and based around 3 different First Nations stories; The Filling of the Bay and The Time of Chaos by Narweet Carolyn Briggs, The Platypus Story by Uncle Larry Walsh, and the Swan Story by Uncle Larry Walsh. The project wanted to tell the stories of that place in that place, with the shared resonance communicating to that ancient custodial nature that exists in all of us but lies dormant in many settler bodies. As a direct response to the anxiety inducing and fear based push for climate action, the project wanted to invite people into a kind of belonging, to awaken their innate custodial nature a reminder that even though the cellular memory that they carry to this land might not be from here, they too are a body of water that can love this land and its waterways, but that the invitation into that belonging must come through connection to its oldest stories. The following audio is what was broadcast to the audience on the banks of the Maribyrnong in 2019.

Jack Mitchell is a person who makes things: sometimes alone, sometimes with other people. He tries to synthesise a mixed bag of diasporic lineages into harmonic relationship with place by putting down the ring of power, but Gollum is nothing if not persistent. He has values and ideals that he's forgotten, and remembers something about having a purpose once, but is listing on an ocean of information circling towards the Great Internet Garbage Heap. He is currently trying to sail these tumultuous apocalyptic waters of grief by engaging in the paradox that is academic study via a PhD, called Blak White and Bluespace, which is looking at Indigenous cultural relationships to water.

Anwyn and Myf hocking

Mannitol, 2026, Single channel video, 03:51

When I visited the river in a thunderstorm, I realised that while I might not have fully understood what it means to become ungovernable, the river always had. *Mannitol* (2026) is an exploration of the contaminants that flow through bodies of water and the impacts of colonial capitalism on these different bodies' experiences of breathing.

All footage recorded in and around the Maribyrnong River, on the lands of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong peoples. We pay our respects to elders past and present. Lands and waters back now.

Anwyn Hocking is an urban researcher and maker of things, living and thinking on the unceded lands of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong Peoples. They are interested in manifestations of settler common sense in moments of environmental rupture, as well as conceptions of place and belonging. Alongside research and making, they are involved in anti-colonial, anti-military and housing organising.

Myf Hocking (they/them) is an artist living and working in Narrm. As a playwright, poet, actor, theatremaker and teacher, they create postdramatic work across a myriad of forms.

Bo Stierner

Our Mark, 2026, Single channel video work, 07:00.

Bo Stierner grew up in the Netherlands, a country proud of its ability to control water. From this perspective, *Our Mark* was created. The video work connects Dutch company Boskalis' dredging of Port Phillip Bay with this belief system about water management. Its soundscape collages language from Boskalis and the Dutch water authority promotional videos. This is paired with archival footage assembled from those videos, and underwater footage of the Bay. The visuals convey the glorification of the dredging vessels, their apocalyptic beauty, and the violence they inflict. *Our Mark* reflects on the colonial structures underlying Dutch international water management. Turning the propaganda back on itself, Stierner demonstrates its destructive impact on a rivermouth on the other side of the world.

Sound Designer: Fay Arapatsani

Voice Actor: Joost Stierner.

Bo Stierner is a Dutch artist and researcher working with video, sound, and installation. Her site-specific practice explores wounded landscapes, and addresses themes of ecocide, colonialism, and family. As a Dutch artist, Stierner recognises that she comes from a country with its own colonial legacy, and her practice begins from that position. She is concerned with uncovering stories that systems of oppression attempt to bury.

The Orbweavers

Moonee Moonee Chain of Ponds, 2018, Mp3, 04:58

Pre-invasion, Moonee Ponds Creek met the Birrarung through a series of ephemeral tidal ponds on a saltmarsh estuarine floodplain. Early colonial maps named this waterway Moonee Moonee Chain of Ponds. Coode's engineering projects of the 1870s destroyed the ponds through dredging and realignment, to form what is now called the Railway Canal - a straight passage of water used for coal barges travelling north from the Birrarung to the Spencer Street railyards, terminating at Macaulay Station. A vast, tidal Blue Lake, west of the ponds, was also infilled at this time. In the 1990s, CityLink freeway was constructed over the creek's southern reaches.

Water continues to flow through this important waterway, traversing Wurundjeri Woiwurrung Country, over stone, under bridges and roadways out into the bay of Boonwurrung / Bunurong Country. Black swans and reeds resist and persist along the disused railway yards. River Red Gum piles from former trestle bridges and piers are visible and strong in the water. On sunny days the canal becomes a ribbon of blue, reflecting the sky. Southerly sections are replanted with Pig Face and Saltbush.

This song is a lament for the dredged ponds which were overlaid with logistics infrastructure, bitumen and cement, stoked by colonisation and industrialisation. These wetlands are still there, beneath our feet.

First published in 'Newer Volcanics' Chapbook, Cordite Poetry Review, 2018
From album 'New Moon / Silver Moon', Mistletoe Records, 2024

The Orbweavers are Marita Dyson and Stuart Flanagan, multidisciplinary artists working in songwriting, music, performance and visual art, based in Narm / Melbourne, on the unceded lands of the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung people. The Orbweavers' creative work responds to local histories, memory and place, often with a focus on water. Their latest album 'New Moon / Silver Moon' responds to the many layered histories of two places: Narm / Melbourne, and Broken Hill on Wilyakali Country, and surrounding Barkindji Country. The songs of 'New Moon Silver Moon', contemplates waterways, ecosystems and the impacts of industrialisation, along with personal stories and reflections from the present.

Liz Crash and Jinghua Qian

Underfoot, 2026, Mp3, 16:30.

Underfoot is a series of virtual audio tours by Liz Crash and Jinghua Qian uncovering the secret histories of Footscray (S1) and Yarra Bend Park (S2).

Lhotse Collins

I love the river's mouth (script), 2026, Script / performance

I love the river's mouth is a script which explores the histories and ongoing practices of colonial placemaking of the rivermouth in Naarm. The script is collectively read in collaboration with those who attend the reading. The work reaches from within the opaqueness of archives towards the turbid waters of West Melbourne Swamp, Birrarung, Maribyrnong and Bay. It ebbs and flows and fails in its attempts to truly know. The text is informed by Indigenous oral histories, the archives at the Living Museum of the West, time spent loitering around the docks and Imagined encounters. There is an accompanying soundscape by Takecare made of various field recordings and in this iteration is performed by Lili Ward.

I love the river's mouth (weaving), 2025, Found wool, acrylic, cotton and naturally dyed linen scraps

This weaving emerged alongside a fledgling connection to the waterways I had moved to and now live within. Weaving was my process, alongside archival research, to meet these places, through their deep time and colonial present.

The rivermouth is the place where the rivers, tributaries and bays meet. The process of weaving is durational and slowly pulls (pools?) threads together, similarly to the way water does.

Lhotse Collins is a multidisciplinary artist with a focus on place based anti-colonial research. Often with a DIY approach, they work across installation, performance, creative writing and curating. They are most often preoccupied with place, story, history, multi-species kinship, the otherwise and water. They grew up on Yuin Country by the sea and now live in Naarm on Wurundjeri Country.

Petracore Collaborative

Como Billabong, revisioned archive, 2026, Pastel and Ink on Calico.

Along the lower reaches of the Birrarung is Como Billabong, hidden below the oval at Como Park. Prior to colonisation, this was a thriving landscape under the custodianship of the Boon Wurrung people, many of whom were murdered and displaced further up the river so the land could be settled in 1847 by English barrister Edward Williams.

In September last year, when the billabong would have been filling up, when eels were plentiful, and thousands of mobs from across the Kulin Nations would begin to gather in this food bowl, we took forty people on a walk through this floodplain. We spoke to the layers of relationships in this ecology, the hidden cultural and ecological histories of the land we walked on.

We then came together to create this artwork, guided by a charcoal outline depicting the earliest photograph of this Billabong flooded. Together we redrew this archival image, embedding it with our own stories and agendas, marking our collective situated experiences of this billabong.

Reimagining this billabong is a process of recentering the living stories hidden by colonisation and urbanisation, recording other ways to see, feel and live in our shared and layered environment.

Petricore Collaborative

We are a landscape architecture and research practice focused on driving and promoting opportunities for First Nations-led processes, intrinsically tied to place and ecosystems. Jakobi, Gina, Maria and Harrison together are building this emerging group that strives to foster people's relationship with Country through both storytelling and design.to water.

Christine Mcfederidge

An Inconvenient Curve, 2024, Photographic prints.

In 1879, English civil engineer John Coode furthered the colonial project in Narm by recommending considerable and violent changes to Birrarung to expand the port. He proposed what are now known as the Coode Canal, Victoria Dock and Victoria Harbour—where the Library at the Dock is situated—to allow access to larger ships and reduce travel time along the river. To justify the new canal, Coode noted that Birrarung's course near its chosen confluence with the Maribyrnong River was an 'inconvenient curve'.

An Inconvenient Curve: Unlearning Settler Colonial Representations of Birrarung is the exhibition outcome of Christine McFetridge's practice-led doctoral research at RMIT University. By combining archival material, photography, video and text, this project attends to the violence of the ongoing colonial regime. In making the ways Birrarung has been and continues to be used as a resource for colonial and economic expansion explicit, McFetridge, a settler coloniser from Aotearoa New Zealand, speculates on the role photography and video can have in reshaping public perceptions of the river.

Christine Mcfederige is a settler coloniser of British and Irish descent born in Aotearoa New Zealand and based on unceded Wadawurrung Country. She is an artist, educator and researcher represented by M.33. Using photography, video and writing, McFetridge's work aims to contest and unsettle colonial histories by engaging with public archives. In 2024, she completed her practice-led doctoral research project *An Inconvenient Curve: Unlearning Settler Colonial Representations of Birrarung*.

Archiving Water: WORKSHOP

Natural inks, river mud, concrete, found bricks, oystershells.

As part of this exhibition a workshop was held down by the maribyrnong, on a very rainy saturday morning. participants huddled under the bridge and shared space with a theatre group and rock climbers. After being led in a river sensing exercise by Angela Clarke. Participants were invited to spend time making.

Drawings were made with natural inks and river mud. With invitation from Artist, Greta Wallace-Crabbe Miller to pay attention to what was around us that day, a bird, a bridge, a bit of rubbish, making a kind of expanded life ID book.

Tendergrass invited participants to construct habitat out of industrial rubble from around the site and from moonee ponds creek drain. asking us to think about the surfaces we offer other life forms and how our urban spaces could be better adapted for a mutli-species city.



1139 No. 1 Appleton Dock. Discharge from suction dredge 'G.F. H.' into reclamation basin. (Public Records Office Victoria).

LITTLE BRUNSWICK WINE CO.

HEAPS
NORMAL