



LAND



Land Dialogues

CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHY (IN DIALOGUE WITH LAND)

RENATA BUZIAK

JAMES FARLEY

AMY FINDLAY

CHRISTINE McFETRIDGE

CHRIS ORCHARD

JACOB RAUPACH

KATE ROBERTSON

FELIX WILSON

CAROLYN YOUNG

WAGGA WAGGA ART GALLERY

19TH MARCH - 5TH JUNE

2016



Kate Robertson





Joan Paik

Land Dialogues

CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHY (IN DIALOGUE WITH LAND)

The physical properties of the land remain one of the primary drivers shaping a contemporary Australian national and cultural identity. The changing relationship to the country and its multifarious environments and cultures as a process of colonisation has seen Australia described as a landscape of encounter. These early and enduring experiences with varying topography, shifting geological, climatic and ecological features combined with historical factors; including our vast, and often fraught multicultural history have generated mateship mythologies of a country built on egalitarianism, hospitality & the fair go. These experiences have also created a rich folklore and legend of the Australian bush. Unlike the enduring indigenous sense of spiritual connection to country; where land, people and culture are intrinsically and inseparably linked, colonial Australia, particularly regional Australia, built its identity in opposition to the land and cultures it colonized. The predominant narrative was of rugged tales of a relentless struggle between 'Man' and 'Nature' and was central to a burgeoning Australian character and work-ethic driven by convict labour and informed by European tradition. These traditions included, out of an economic imperative in nation-building, means to represent and identify with place. In Land Dialogues we aim to highlight that a country's character is not static, but protean. As our multicultural composition shifts and relationships to land develop over time, our national character and perceptions of what it means to be Australian exhibits incredible potential for change. In the shadow of anthropogenic climate change, it hosts an obligation to.

The Land Dialogues exhibition responds in its curatorial premise to the shifting politics of national identity where it is informed by emergent discourse in relationship to place through a survey of contemporary photographic practice. Where early Australian depictions of land followed the aesthetic modes of the sublime and picturesque imported with early European settlers, Land Dialogues suggests alternate ways of interacting or engaging with land. Whilst these early modes served a political and economic purpose of their time; that is to provide depictions of the unknown outback as surreal or uncanny suggesting a culture alienated from its environment, or as a means of normalising the land as hospitable to increase European agricultural and pastoralist interest. *Land Dialogues* surveys modern relationships with land and place. It has been argued that landscape photography played a relatively small part in Australia's formative years, as it was not the natural landscape that attracted the camera's eye, but the people and culture that sought to colonise it. Today, photography's ubiquitous nature makes the medium a critical vessel in asking Australians to reflect on our national priorities.

In *Photography and Australia*, author Helen Ennis traces the history of photographing

the Australian landscape from early colonial views through to contemporary fine arts practice. Ennis identifies that trends in landscape photography tend to move with the nation's social and political climate. She traces its movements from a vital nationalist tool in the process of colonisation, to the sunny pictorialist movement prior to WW1. Then there is a turn back to photography as a tool for building a new sense of belonging within the Australian landscape after the destruction of the first world war, which continued building into a proliferation of touristic scenes, promoting the joys the Australian landscape could offer without having to travel far from home after the turmoil of WW2. Ennis concludes the chapter on landscape photography by questioning how, if at all, landscape photography remains central to contemporary photography. It is suggested that Australia's colonial history may have made any form of meaningful connection to, or sense of belonging within, this land impossible. Instead, Ennis suggests that Australians of colonial descent developed a sense of belonging and connection around ideas of 'place' rather than any version of the contested notion of 'country'. (Ennis, 2007) This accurately describes one direction in contemporary Australian discourse, however it does not acknowledge the existence of a significant number of counter approaches that exist on the peripheries of contemporary Australian practice. Land Dialogues is eager to highlight some of these counter approaches, particular by those of regional background or on the urban fringes to broaden the field of photomedia enquiry.

Photography critic and theorist Deborah Bright reminds us that "Whatever its [the photograph's] aesthetic merits, every representation of landscape is also a record of human values and actions imposed on the land over time." Part of Land Dialogues remit was to generate conversation between both metropolitan and regional artists engaging in land-based issues in an open acknowledgement that each bring their own unique set of values to the process. This has been a deliberate decision as the focus of critical discourse on relationships with land through photography in contemporary Australia, has to date, disproportionately favoured metropolitan artists. This favouritism is not simply in critical discourse but also institutional recognition and representation. It is true that the distribution of the Australian population supports the trend towards Metropolitanism, however it is becoming increasingly clear that regional areas and the urban fringes are equally rich sources of knowledge and experience. As we experience images through increasingly democratised and decentralised social and digital platforms, our relationship with the land, and the values we ascribe it seem further disconnected. Land Dialogues is a curatorial investigation toward more meaningful and ethical relationships to place through all modes of photography. We favoured innovative approaches that depict a more honest representation of both urban and regional Australia, as well as practice that reflects on the biophysical, livelihood and psychological connection to environmental changes. Our aim is to increase dialogue across the urban and regional divide.

A second aim of Land Dialogues is to respond to a fundamental shift in discussions surrounding landscape photography caused by the unfolding and multifaceted effects of anthropogenic climate change, the loss of biodiversity and the enduring culturally sanctified denial of these issues. Land Dialogues reconnects photography with its capacity for social documentation and commentary, to hold a mirror to Australian nationalism, colonialist mythologies, and extractive industries built on unrestrained growth. This exhibition seeks to contribute new voices to the current dialogue. Land Dialogues is not representative of an overall direction or doctrine of photographic practice in Australia; nor is Land Dialogues a complete picture of the expansive field of photographic practice engaged with or embedded in land or place based issues. The Land Dialogues exhibition is however a broad survey of possibilities. Each artist represents a unique direction and approach through practice to generate personal engagement with land. The curated voices may or may not be related to each other, they may harmonise or clash with one another and at different times, some may even contradict the others. This is deliberate. Land Dialogues aims to highlight the existence of infinite possibilities in practice and knowledge, each forming and breaking connections with one another at different points. However, each works towards the same goal; therefore reiterating the dire need for this type interconnected and evolving dialogue, particularly at this point in time. Land Dialogues is more concerned with establishing channels for continued communication and exploration than it is about dictating specific modes of practice.

The final collective objective is to generate dialogue about changing our national identity. To do this, interconnected dialogue must take place across multiple locations at once. It is not by chance that this exhibition is taking place in Wagga Wagga, one of the largest regional cities in Australia. Despite its regional location between three major metropolitan centres, and despite being only fifty minutes by plane to all, its agri-urban demeanor suffers ostensibly from Australian perceptions of a metropolitan and regional divide. Land Dialogues and Wagga Wagga both form a perfect geographic and intellectual nexus for the urban and regional ideas. Land Dialogues is a clarion call which announces the willingness of regional voices to be heard. It also serves to remind us that the shadow cast by the unknown future falls equally upon all regions of Australia. So too must the responsibility of adapting our national identity to sit comfortably and ethically beneath its shade.

JAMES FARLEY AND CHRISTOPHER ORCHARD

ARTISTS

RENATA BUZIAK

renata-buziak.com

Renata Buziak is a Brisbane based photo-media artist. She is a PhD candidate, a tutor at Queensland College of Art (QCA), Griffith University, and a Queensland Centre for Photography (QCP) management board member.

Renata engages nature and its processes in image making by using an experimental 'biochrome' process based on fusion of organic and photographic materials. The artworks present traces of natural processes and their significance in the cycle of life. Renata's current project focuses on medicinal plants from Minjerribah/North Stradbroke Island.

Renata's award-winning work has been exhibited in solo and group exhibitions, nationally and internationally, and features in private and public collections. Her bilingual monogram Afterimage (in Polish and English) was launched in 2010 by the QCP, and her research paper published in the Studio Research Journal in 2015. In 2014 she was invited to the 4th International Biennale Ars Polonia in Opole, Poland, and in 2015 Renata was a finalist in the Blue Flask photographic competition at the National Museum in Wroclaw.

*LEPTOSPERMUM JUNIPERINUM... INSECT REPELLENT
2015, ARCHIVAL PRINT ON PAPER, 114 X 90 CM*



JAMES FARLEY

jamesfarleyphotography.com

James Farley is an artist and curator based in Wagga Wagga, NSW. He is a PhD candidate and sessional lecturer in photographic practice and theory at Charles Sturt University. He also works as a studio supervisor at the The Art Factory and as an installation technician at the Wagga Wagga Art Gallery.

James combines a variety of photographic methods to explore ideas around ecology, climate change and perceptions of human/nature relationships. His research explores post-photographic practice within the contemporary field of ecological aesthetics.

James' award winning photography has been exhibited extensively in Australia, The United States of America and The United Kingdom. In 2015 he received the inaugural 2015 Young Regional Artist Scholarship through Arts NSW, he also represented Charles Sturt University as a student finalist in the 2015 Sony World Photography Awards. In 2016, James published a newspaper, *Limits to Growth*, with Currency Editions which was selected as a finalist in the 2016 Australian Photobook of the Year Awards.

IN THE GARDEN (WAGGA WAGGA 01), 2015
ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT, 70 x 50 CM



AMY FINDLAY

Amy Findlay is a photographic artist based in Melbourne and a sessional tutor in photo imaging at Charles Sturt University. Amy's photographic practice led her to a Master in Social Work at Monash University in 2016.

Amy uses portraiture and landscape photography as allegory for self, to explore ideas around identity, the unconscious and the therapeutic use of the camera. She investigates the search for identity through the process of understanding, which instills a sense of empowerment. She presents images in historical narrative, which shift from constraining and one-dimensional to liberating multi-dimensionality.

Amy is working towards implementing her photographic practice and research into her current studies, to utilise the therapeutic value of the camera in the practice of social work.



CHRISTINE MCFETRIDGE

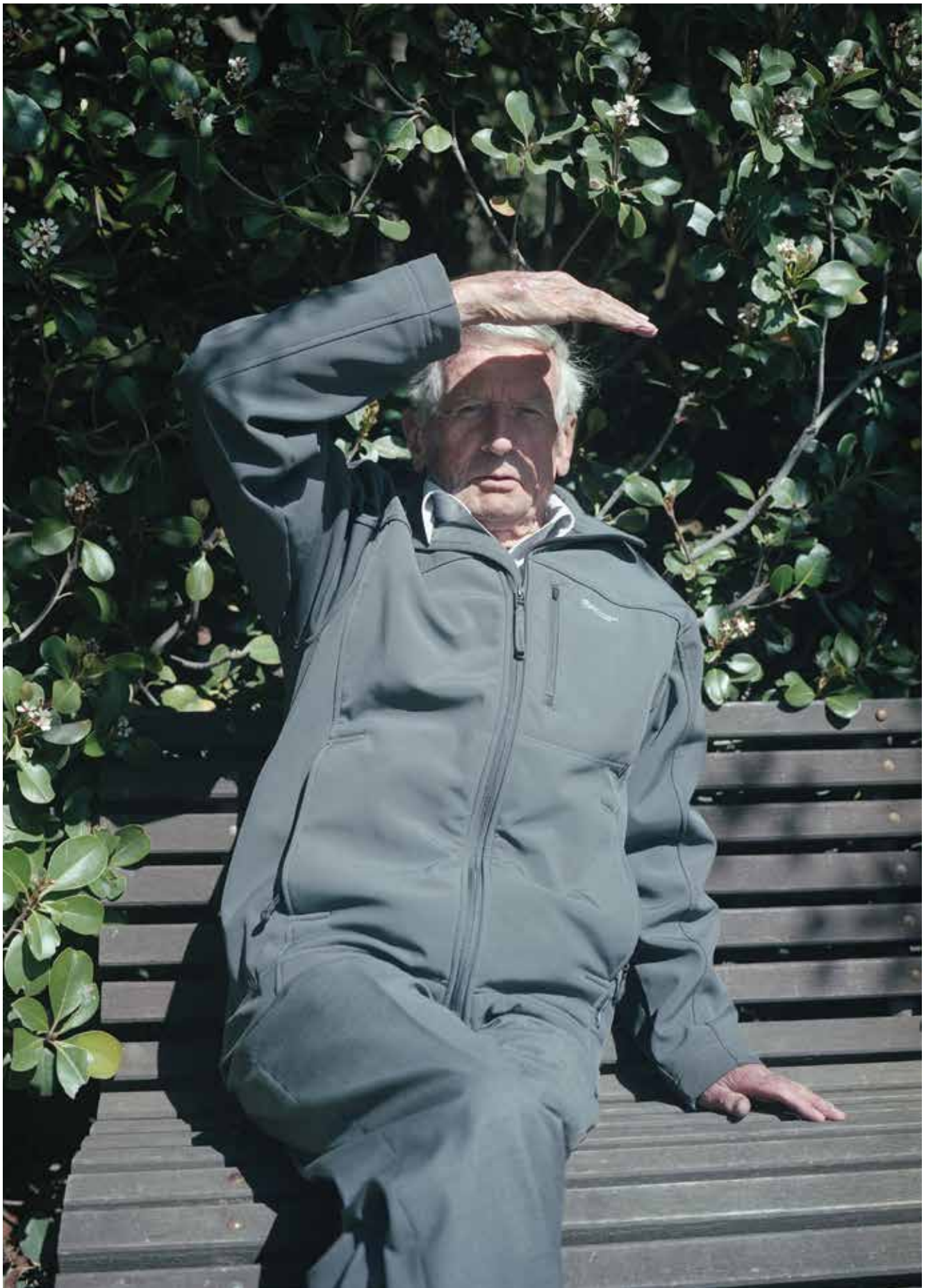
christinemcfetridge.com

Christine McFetridge is a New Zealand born photographer, writer, and curator currently based in Melbourne. Her practice and research meet at the intersection of social documentary, oral history, and the photobook to examine migrant experience and the correlation between cultural identity and belonging.

Christine exhibits her work locally and internationally, and in 2015 she won the inaugural Womankind Photographers Award. Significantly, in 2014, she was awarded a traveling scholarship that enabled her to travel to the United States to conduct research. She attended the New York Art Book Fair and co-ordinated events with the Indie Photobook Library as a representative of the Melbourne-based Asia-Pacific Photobook Archive.

McFetridge is currently engaged with Chapter House Lane as Arts Writer and is a regular contributor to Common Ground Journal, an online publication dedicated to promoting the work of female photographers.

THE WINTER GARDEN (UNTITLED), 2016,
ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT, 20 x 16 CM



CHRIS ORCHARD

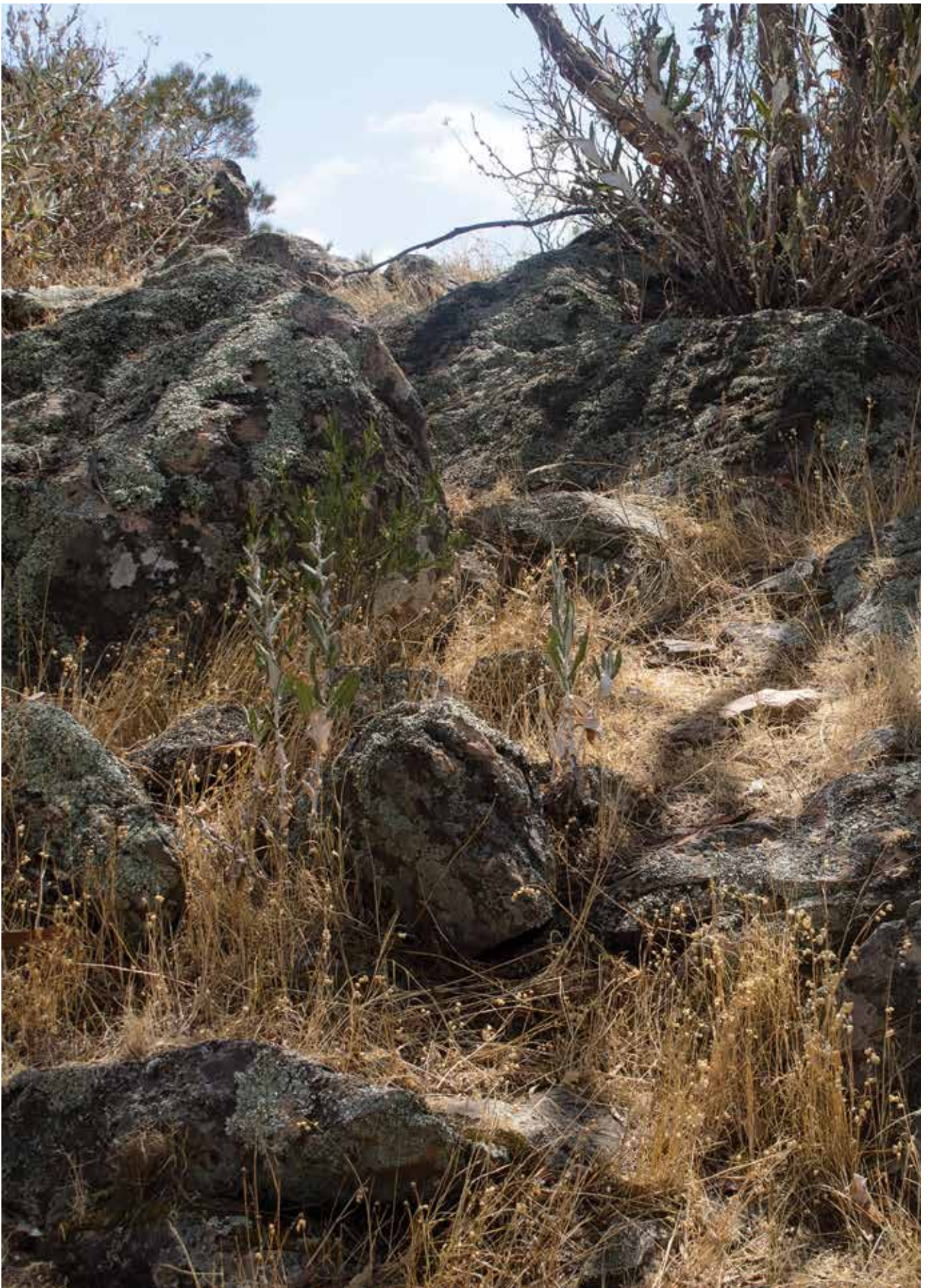
corchard.com.au

Christopher Orchard is Course Director in Creative Industries, Lecturer in Photography and interdisciplinary researcher in the School of Communication and Creative Industries based on Charles Sturt University's Wagga Wagga campus.

Christopher is currently undertaking postgraduate study in the Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Tasmania within the Tasmanian College of the Arts. His research draws from a wide field of discourse on landscape health, natural resource management, trauma studies, terror management theory and broad art and cultural theory to generate transdisciplinary dialogue on landscape issues utilising practice-led research methodologies.

Christopher has an extensive international exhibition and curatorial history. His work is held in numerous institutions and private collections including the Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, MaMA and the National Gallery of Australia. Christopher is a regular at speaking and conference engagements around the world on developing a 'photography for environmental commensalism'.

SIGNIFICANT ROADSIDE ENVIRONMENT, 2015,
ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT, 41 x 56 CM
(DETAIL)



JACOB RAUPACH

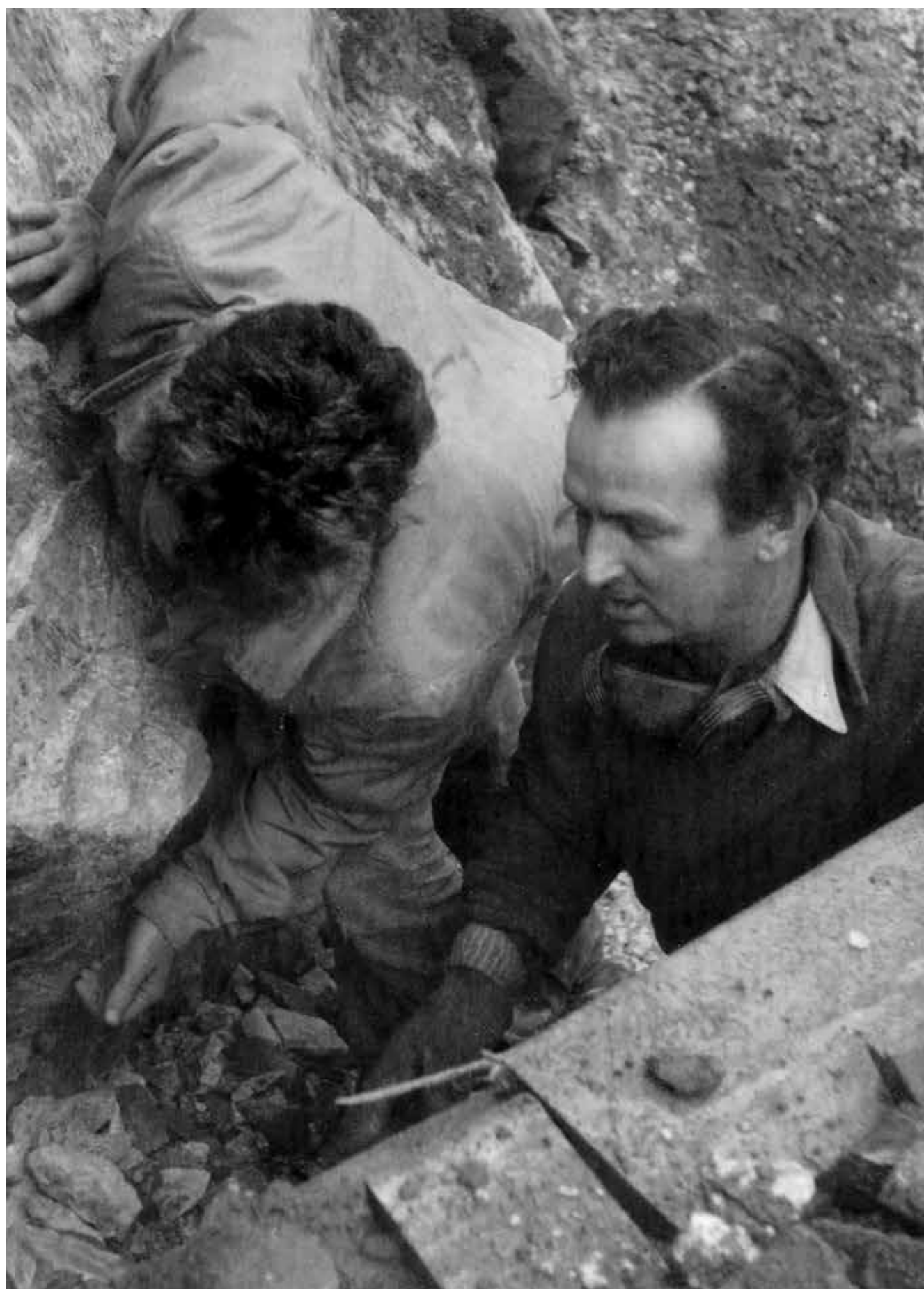
jacobraupach.com

Jacob Raupach is an artist based in Wagga Wagga, NSW. He graduated with a Bachelor of Visual Arts (Honours) from Charles Sturt University in 2013.

Jacob's work is concerned with the relationships between industry, labour, history and failure; in particular, how photographs and objects can contribute alternate historical narratives and critiques of these intertwining systems. His work has continuously tried to address these issues through an examination of regional areas dealing with the ever changing post-industrial landscape.

His first self-published book, *Radiata*, won the 2013 Asia-Pacific Photobook Archive's Student Photobook Competition, resulting in an exhibition at Colour Factory Gallery, Melbourne in 2014. He has recently exhibited in both solo and group exhibitions at Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, Bus Projects, Underbelly Arts Festival and the Centre for Contemporary Photography amongst others. In 2015 he published a new book, *Wealth*, with Particle Books and was selected as a finalist in the Josephine Ulrick & Win Schubert Photography Award. He was also a recipient of an Artstart grant from the Australia Council of the Arts and recieved the inaugural 2015 Young Regional Artist Scholarship through Arts NSW.

UNTITLED (MINE #6) N.D., FOUND PHOTOGRAPH
DETAIL FROM STRATA (MORE GAPS THAN RECORD)
2016, PHOTOGRAPHIC OBJECTS



KATE ROBERTSON

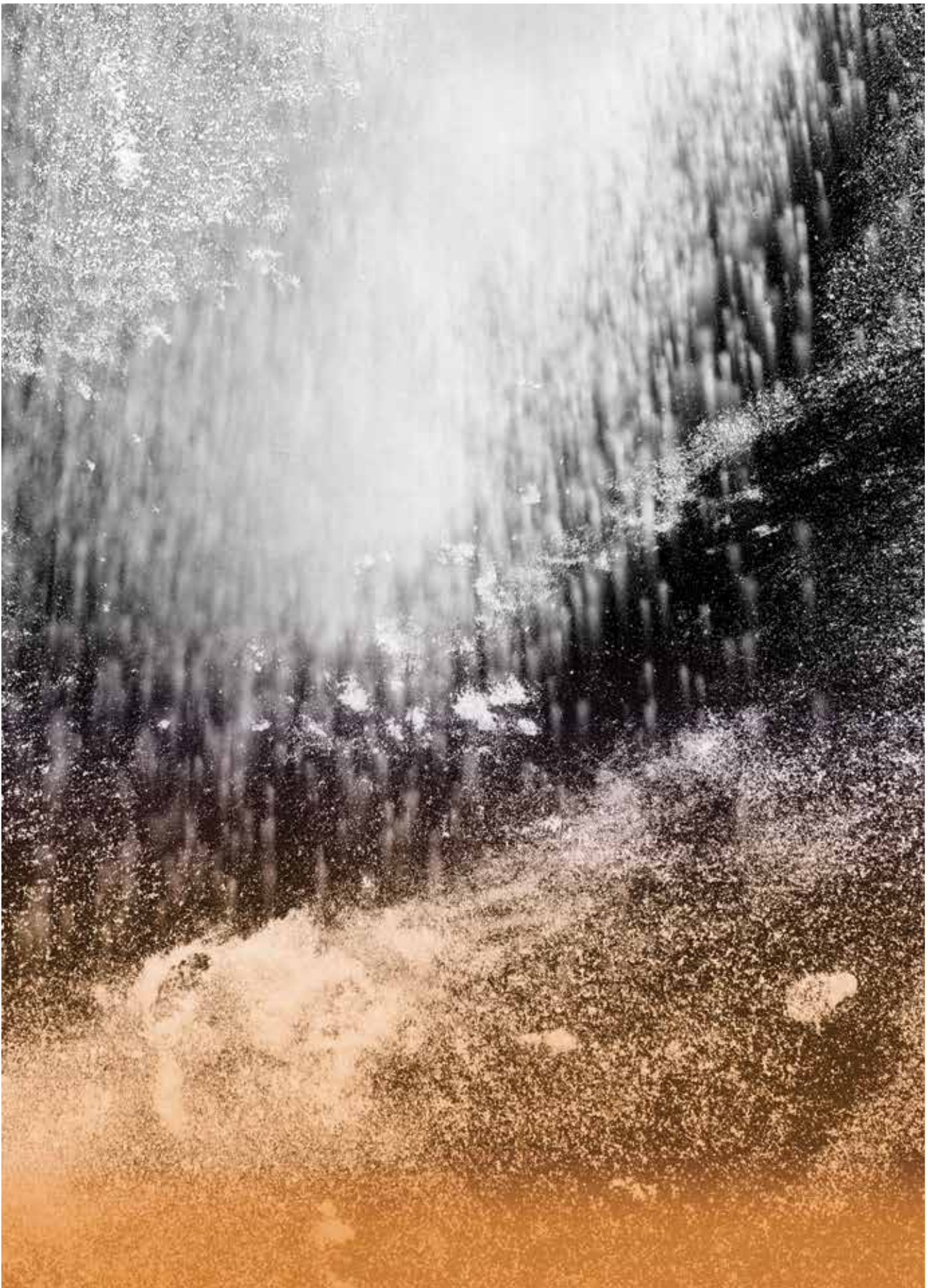
kate-robertson.com

Kate Robertson is a Melbourne based photographer exploring the inner-workings of community and 'ways of being' through photographic forms and concepts. She is currently undertaking a practice based PhD at RMIT University.

Recent exhibitions include Garnkiny to Ganyu: Artists who capture the night , GYRACC, Katherine (2015); Galerie Pavlova , Photo London, London (2015); the Alchemists, Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney (2015); Fixed Object , Wellington St Projects, Sydney (2014); Transforming Landscape , Wallflower Gallery, Mildura (2014). Kate has also exhibited at Melbourne galleries Edmund Pearce, Strange Neighbour, Margaret Lawrence, TCB, Kings ARI, Blindside, Trocadero and George Paton.

Her photographic work has appeared in Unless You Will (AUS), Musee Magazine (USA), LENS CRATCH (USA) and Feature Shoot (USA). Kate was a finalist for the 2013 and 2014 Bowness Photography Prize, Monash Gallery of Art; 2012 Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photography Award, Gold Coast Arts Centre; and the 2011 UNCOVER (young and emerging artist award), Perth Centre for Photography.

DUST LANDSCAPE 7
2012, PIGMENT PRINT, 120 x 96 CM
(DETAIL)



FELIX WILSON

felixwilson.com

Felix Wilson holds a Bachelor of Information Systems and a Bachelor of Fine Arts with Honours (first class) from the University of Tasmania. He is currently a candidate for a Masters by Research in the school of Fine Art at RMIT.

His current research project explores ecological relations within the contemporary city at night, using photographic images to examine moments of encounter and how the flows of electricity and light draw together temporally and spatially distant processes and objects. This research follows from previous work that examines the ways that human beings understand their environment and their fellow creatures through images.

Felix's work has been exhibited in solo and group exhibitions throughout Australia. His honours project was selected for the national graduate exhibition Hatched at the Perth Institute of Contemporary Art. After graduating he was awarded an APA scholarship to continue his research in a Masters by Research at RMIT. He also operates Particle Books, a small press publisher that produces and shares the work of emerging photographic artists.

*ENCOUNTER SEQUENCE (MELBOURNE)
2016, PHOTOGRAPHIC INSTALLATION
(DETAIL)*



CAROLYN YOUNG

carolynyoung.com.au

Carolyn Young lives in New South Wales. She is a PhD student in visual arts, photography at The Australian National University (Canberra) and holds an honours degree in Natural Resources from the University of New England.

Inspired by the complexities of nature, and through collaborating with ecologists, farmers and others, Carolyn's artwork examines the interface between culture, science and environmental management.

Young has been the recipient of several grants and the 2015 ANU Vice-Chancellors College Artist Fellowship. In 2015 she was a finalist in the Bowness Photography Prize. Her photographs have been included in a number of national exhibitions and the international exhibition Pingyao International Contemporary Festival in China. Her work is held in the collections of The Australian National University, Canberra; Goulburn-Broken Catchment Management Authority, Canberra; Canberra Hospital; Murray-Darling Basin Authority, Canberra; and Corrs Chambers Westgarth, Melbourne.

In NSW, Carolyn is represented by Weswal Gallery.

REFLECTING ON NGUNAWAL PLANT USE IN NOVEMBER,
2015, ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT, 93.5 x 111.0 CM
(DETAIL)



LIST OF WORKS

RENATA BUZIAK

Eucalyptus tereticornis (blue gum)... antimicrobial...

2012, archival print on rag paper, 134 x 93 cm

Alphitonia excelsa... antiseptic...

2015, archival print on rag paper, 120 x 90 cm

Carpobrotus glaucescens ... anaesthetic...

2014, archival print on rag paper, 120 x 90 cm

Leptospermum juniperinum... insect repellent...

2015, archival print on rag paper, 114 x 90 cm

JAMES FARLEY

In the Garden (Wagga Wagga, No.2)

2015, archival print, 70 x 50 cm

In the Garden (Wagga Wagga, No.3)

2015, archival print, 70 x 50 cm

In the Garden (Broken Hill, No.1)

2015, archival print, 70 x 50 cm

In the Garden (Broken Hill, No.2)

2015, archival print, 70 x 50 cm

AMY FINDLAY

Trauma

2015, digital archival print, 59.4 x 84.1 cm

Resilience

2015, digital archival print, 59.4 x 84.1 cm

CHRISTINE MCFETRIDGE

The Winter Garden Sequence

2015, photographic installation

CHRIS ORCHARD

Significant Roadside Environment Installation

2015, digital archival prints, scent of freshly mowed grass

JACOB RAUPACH

Strata (More Gaps Than Record) Installation

2016, photographic objects

KATE ROBERTSON

Dust Landscape 5

2012, pigment print, 120 x 96 cm

Dust Landscape 11

2012, pigment print, 120 x 96 cm

Dust Landscape 7

2012, pigment print, 120 x 96 cm

FELIX WILSON

Encounter Sequence (Melbourne) Installation

2016, mounted digital archival prints

CAROLYN YOUNG

Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary, Spring

2015, archival inkjet print, 91 x 107 cm

Mulligans Flat Ploughlands, Spring

2015, archival inkjet print, 91 x 107 cm

Reflecting on Ngunawal Plant Use in November

2015, archival inkjet print, 91 x 107 cm

Carion Insects from a Kangaroo Carcass

2015, archival inkjet print, 91 x 107 cm



CAROLYN YOUNG



IRNEGIE GALLERY



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land where this exhibition takes place, the Wiradjuri People, and pay our respects elders past, present and future.

‘Yindyamarra Winhanganha’ is a Wiradjuri phrase meaning, ‘the wisdom of respectfully knowing how to live well in a world worth living in’. This phrase is central to the vision of Charles Sturt University. It also reflects a key motivation behind exploring the dialogue between contemporary creative practice and the land. We believe artists will play a key role

in influencing the direction of the future. It is our shared responsibility to learn about Aboriginal Culture and history and to reflect that knowledge through our practice, so that together we may move towards a future informed by the wisdom of respectfully knowing how to live well, in a world worth living in.

Land Dialogues was made possible through the support of the many people and organisations within our community and beyond. We would like to acknowledge the generous support of the Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, particularly Stephen Payne and Drew Halyday. Their guidance was instrumental in the development and success of this exhibition. We would also like to acknowledge the continued support and collegial support from our colleagues at the School of Communication and Creative Industries (SCCI), Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga.

This project would not have been possible without the support of an Arts and Cultural Grant from the Wagga Wagga City Council’s Annual Grant Program.

The Land Dialogues exhibition was printed at the School of Communication and Creative Industries, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga*. A special thank you to Mr. Timothy Crutchett, whose dedication and skill in achieving the perfect print is unmatched.

*Except Carolyn Young’s work, which was provided courtesy of the artist.

Finally, we would like to thank all the artists who participated in this exhibition. Without you the conversations, questions and ideas that arise from this project may have never occurred.



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