Living Art has been created as a keepsake to document and honour the activities of the Dookie Arts Group in collaboration with the Centre of Visual Art (CoVA) at the University of Melbourne.

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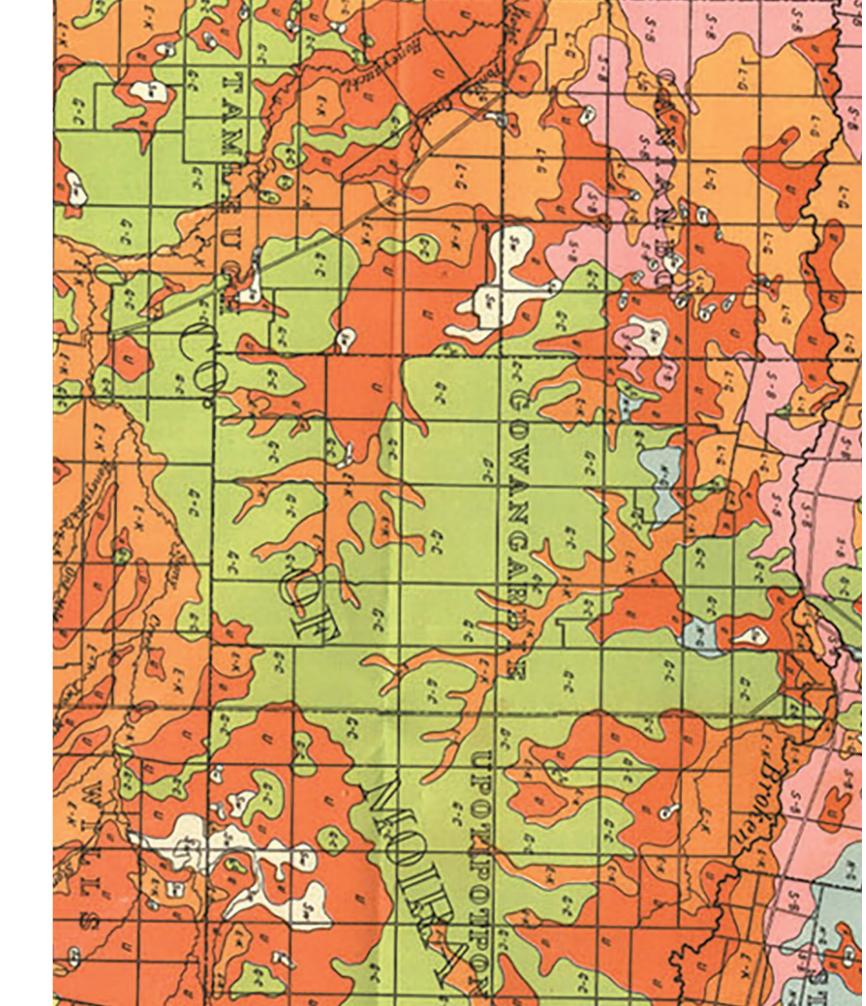
Dookie is situated on the traditional lands of the Yorta Yorta. We recognise the Yorta Yorta People as the Traditional Custodians of this land. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and extend this respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from all nations of Australia. First Nations sovereignty never ceded.

Supported by

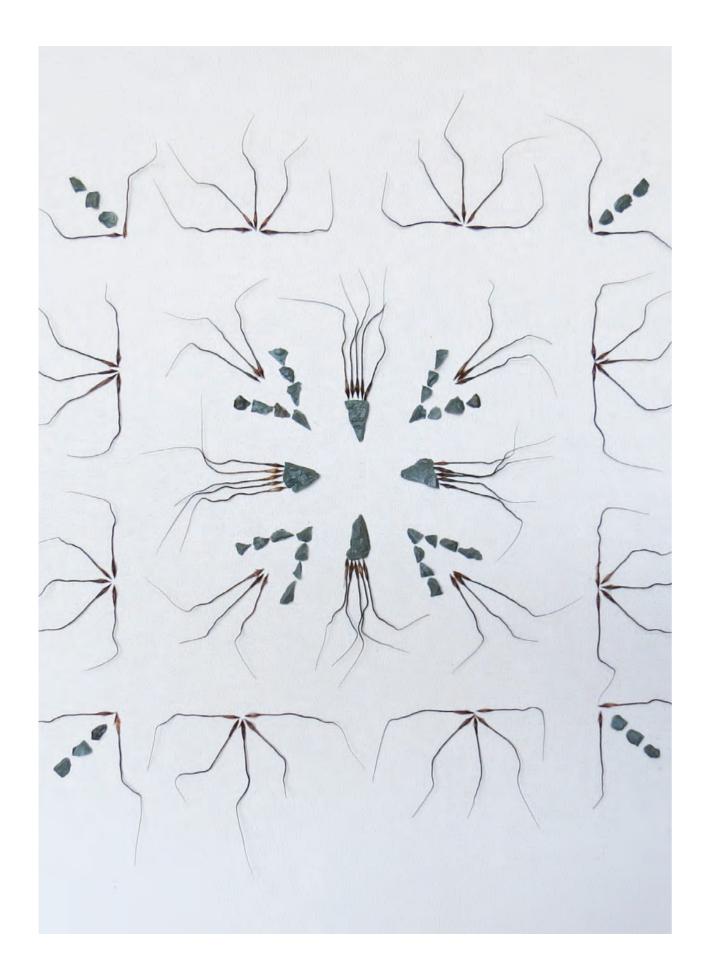


In partnership with





Helen Kelly Janie Christophersen Liz Evans Andrew Sands Penny Algar **The Seedbank Dookie Earthed Dinner for the Future**



Art is a part of life.



Yorta Yorta people have a timeless connection with their Ancestral lands. The ancient rocks that outcrop here, rising above the plains provided prized greenstone and chert for creation of stone tools used for harvesting the abundant resources that thrive on the rich earth of this landscape. It is an inherent lore for Yorta Yorta people to care for this land created by their Ancestors, to look after the land so that in turn it looks after us, as it has since time immemorial. Yorta Yorta people have lived and survived through extreme climate change over thousands of years, evolving and adapting to their environment. We need to listen to this wisdom and help them to return health to Country, so that we are all able to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Neville Atkinson and Gaye Sutherland

"This overall system was designed to utilise the landscape and all that is on it in a sustainable manner to continue to survive; I was told by my father and grandfather when getting eggs or bardi grubs, Fish etc.. "we can take

whatever we need, but ensure there is always enough so we can come back every season after and always replace the earth that you remove." - Neville Atkinson [Yorta Yorta-Man]



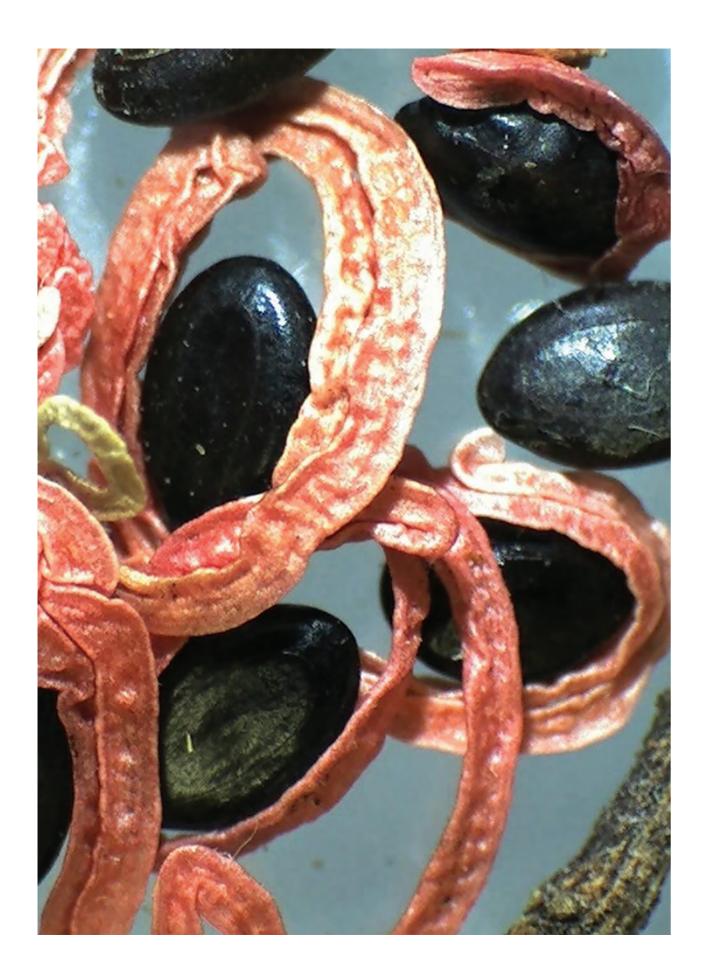
Introduction

Art is a part of life. Simply put, it finds its way into every nook and cranny of living experience. Decoration, adornment, pattern and creative expression are not only the domain of the humanmade world, rather these artistic identifiers can be seen in seeds, soils and stars. In the unifying matter that connects everything, we can see an active and purposeful leaning into aesthetics.

The case studies brought to you in this book share an intention to observe and nurture the connecting strands between art and the living world. All of the projects illustrated in this book are situated in a town in North-Central Victoria, Australia, called Dookie – a place largely defined by agriculture over the last fifty years, but nevertheless teaming with artistic and cultural practices.

We are incredibly grateful to Neville Atkinson, our friend and colleague, whose opening words to this book ground the pages in the Traditional Knowledge of Yorta Yorta practices and caring for Country. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which Dookie is situated and pay respect to Elders past and present.

We speak to you here through archival images and soft, conversational words. The three case studies shown in this book speak to the need for collaboration and connection, and of making space for common



ground. Common ground between the human and non-human, between rural and urban, between institutions and communities, and between the arts and sciences. The projects featured span the last two decades and comprise: the Seed Bank at Dookie Campus, a large-scale art and ecology festival called Dookie Earthed, and the community resilience project Dinner for the Future.

In addition to these three projects, examples of art works and statements from the five artists who have collaborated on this book are dispersed throughout the pages.

This textural book is testament to the rewards of putting in collective effort, as well as the necessity of supporting artistic practice as we prepare for our climate, ecological and planetary futures together. We present these pages also to show that play and imagination are vital across age groups, from the youngest to the oldest and every life stage in between.

The serious realities we are facing need our best imaginative responses to understand and exist in them. And we all need art to live, in whatever forms we encounter it.

Suzie Fraser, along with Elizabeth Evans, Andrew Sands, Janie Christopheren, Penny Algar and Helen Kelly.



Seeds To Grow

The Seedbank

INITIATIVE

YEARS 2001> LOCATION GOULBURN BROKEN CATCHMENT The Seedbank is a place to store and clean indigenous seed that has been carefully collected from specific areas, in this case the Goulburn Broken Catchment.

Permitted collecting of seed takes place in remnant bushland and other collections come from strategically placed Seed Production Areas developed to provide larger quantities of healthy genetically diverse seed.

The seed is used for direct seeding into the ground and sent to nurseries to grow plant stock. It is put back into our environment to maintain and preserve our biodiversity by providing habitat.

The Seedbank was established in 2001 and was situated at The University of Melbourne, Dookie Campus. It contributed to research, training, educating and enhancement of endangered species across the catchment.

Working in the environment, traveling to different areas, seeing different plants, changing climates, and observing over the many years had enormous inspirational influence on our creativity and art practices.







We Need Play and Imagination



We Need Play and Imagination







Helen Kelly

One Saturday I was having a cuppa with my friend Paul Lynzaart and he said to me:

'Art is the intersection between politics and religion' ... chats with Paul were rarely fluffy.

The next day I attended a local gallery and took part in a live art intentional-walking experiment. We were given instructions on the concept of 'intentional walking' and handed a timer and a fluoro vest and told to head out of the gallery space and walk as consciously as we could for a set time without planning where we would go, just letting each step take us to our unknown destination. On my walk, I was exploring the nearby disused nurses' quarters and wandering (consciously/aimlessly/moochingly) along the paths when I turned a corner and came face to face with a big bold paste-up on the door of a disused building that had the words ART IS WAR in bold black letters on a flat yellow background.

I have come to understand that all acts of creativity, no matter how gentle, are political. And powerful. The more gentle the more powerful?





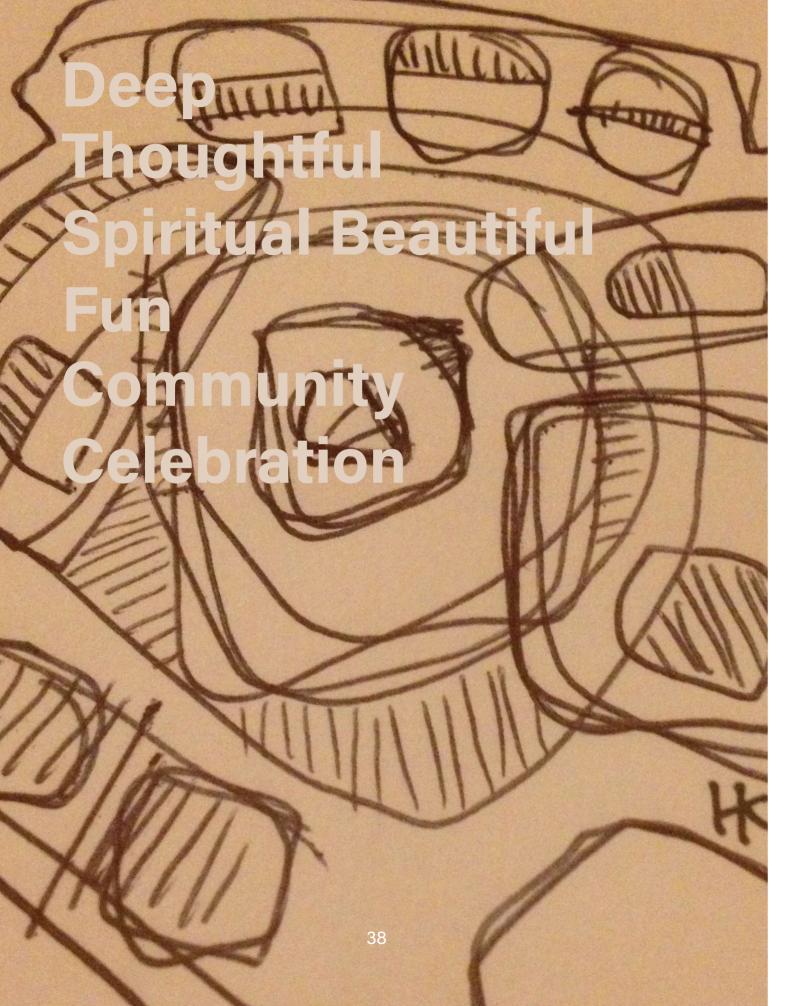


Dookie Earthed

YEAR 2014 LOCATION DOOKIE Following an intensive application and shortlisting process, Dookie was successful in being selected as one of five towns to be part of the first round of Victorian State Government *Small Town Transformations Projects*. Dookie embarked on a journey of bold artistic vision, intensive community participation, and strong commitment to creative place-making which culminated in a significant artistic project, and celebration event 'Dookie Earthed – plugged into art' on 4 October 2014

'Dookie Earthed' was a cross between an immersive artistic experience and a community event. The town produced an explosion of art - theatre, film, puppetry, projections, music, poetry, live art, traditional exhibitions, outdoor installations, sound art - all made specifically for the event and all deeply connected to the stories of Dookie.

The overarching theme was the **how the** geology of a place affects the people who live there - connections between people and the earth.



WELCOME TO DOOKIE EARTHED

12 hours of non-stop art and creative expression. Inspired by the majestic quarry, the distinct red soil and most significantly, the spirit of the people of Dooke. Dookie Earthed Small Town Transformation is an explosion of Art deeply connected to the stories of Dookie.

Join in the transformation as scores of local and visiting artists create works of film, projection, performance and sculpture in the streets, shops, parks, The Hall, The Quarry and on The Siles.

18 months in the making, Dookie Earthed represents thousands of volunteer hours, creative workshops, community gatherings and art making.

Dookie Earthed has been made possible by the Victorian Government's Small Town Transformations Project, presented by Regional Arts Victoria.

Dookie Arts Committee: Alice Tallis, Leiticia Harmer, Serana Hunt, Janie Christophersen, Andrew Sands. Artistic Director: Helen Kelly.

Artistic Team: Ian Pidd, Jillian Pearce, Russell Goldsmith, Andrew Sands, Janie Christophersen, Liz Evans. Photography: Serana Hunt.





REGIONAL ARTS VICTORIA ARTS dookieARTS CONTRACT



T SADOLEBACH НЕУ

Memorial Hall	Recreation Reserve	The Silos	Art About Town	Toilets
Gladstone Hotel	The Quarry	Skate Park Stage	'The Walk' Route	Hearing Loop
CWA Gardens	Dow Engineering	C Environmental Art	- Parking Access	Accessible Parking
The Emporium	Wine & Cider Bar	Films	Car Parking	
Bowling Club	The Bakery	Feed Lot	C Quarry Ferry	
General Store/ Post office	Old Butcher Shop	i Merchandise & Information	A Camping	



PLAN YOUR DAY

Come for an hour or stay for the full 12 hours – below are recommendations from Artistic Director, Helen Kelly outlining how to make the most of your visit to **Dookie Earthed**.

 $1\ \text{HOUR}$ – Visit The Hall for films. Explore and encounter The Walk, check out the walk-in-walk-out theatre in The Quarry.

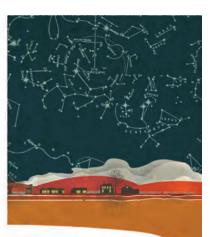
Poster/Program Design: Kris Keiller.

Project Management Team: Carrie Donaldson, Serana Hunt, Sal Sutherland, Graham Coffey, Fiona Smolenaars, Andrea Graham, Jamie Lea, Tanya Blackmore and Sean Bowen.

2-3 HOURS – Catch up with friends listening to great local music. Use the PO letter writing service. Watch the films in The Hall. Check out the exhibitions in The Hall, Main Street and The Walk before visiting The Quarry to experience the Sepia Picnic, Collectables or Working Bee.

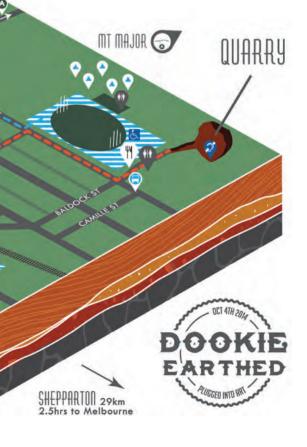


首



SATURDAY 4TH OCTOBER, 2014











We Can Play in the Future and See Thriving Things Who Are We at the Table? Are You Here, Will You Join? What Are You Bringing to the Table? – Those Things You Know How to Do, Say and Make



Janie Christophersen

My artwork began with the simple pleasure of drawing the beauty of the natural world around me, then developed to using my art to help others learn about and appreciate the bush and later to using my art to help encourage the regeneration and protection of bushland.

A gentle form of activism.

Drawing and making gives me sanctuary but is also involved with my observation, appreciation and learning about the bushland which is central to our existence. I tend to use pencil drawing because it's wonderfully portable and good for rendering detail with control and precision, bringing the subject to life.

Recently I've enjoyed working with papier-mâché and used the medium to create a stack of Yam **Daisies and Bulbine Lilies representing a vision** of the past, pre-colonisation, and of a future with an abundance of bush foods easily available.

My arts practice has two threads - Community and collaborative work and intensely immersive detail work - both are connected by responding to the moment and the materials at hand.

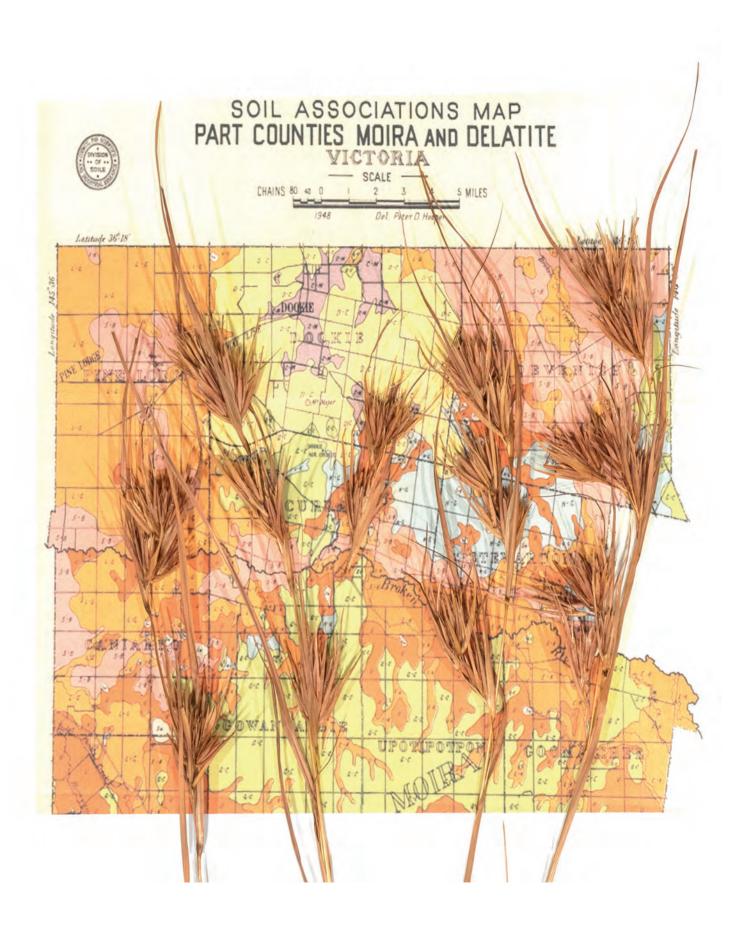






Let's Plant And Grow the Species That Have Lived Here For Millenia

Will We Change The Way We Eat?







Dinner for the Future

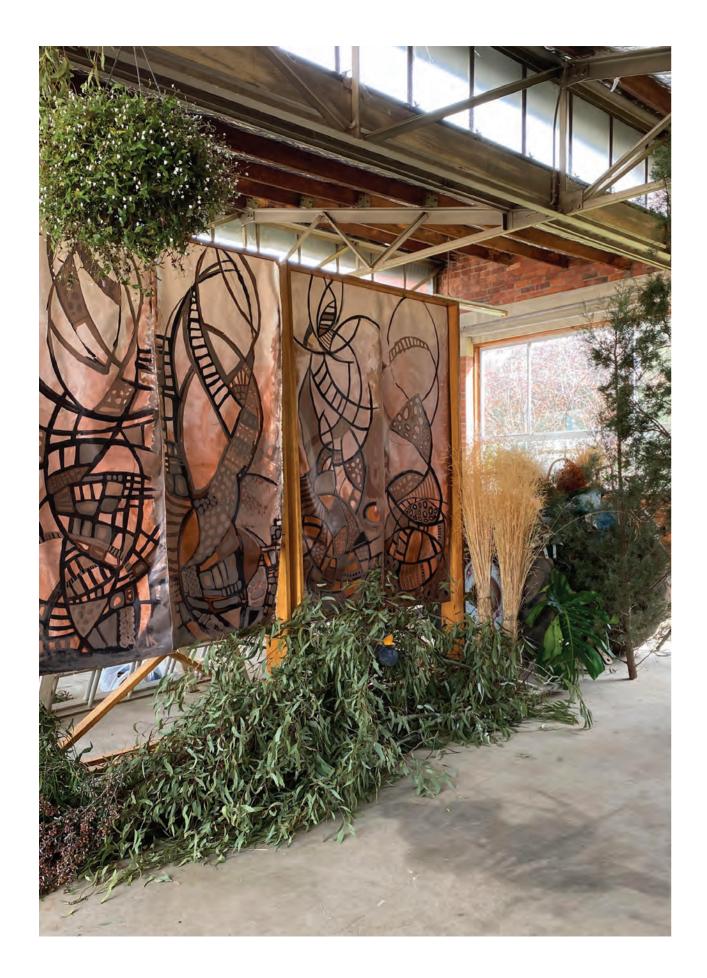
YEARS 2022 **LOCATION DOOKIE** The everyday ritual of dining together is something we are all familiar with - but have you tried doing it in the near future?

We did. We jumped forward 18 years and sat down together in 2040. But to get there we had to get to know each other first, to build trust and respect among our group, and to take stock of our collective experiences, expertise and knowledge.

How else could we get to a shared future in such a comparatively short period of time?

In 2022, a group of artists, scientists, and community members from in and around Dookie sat down together to find out what a positive experience of drought in the future might look and feel like. And how we might be active in the years between then and now to make this imagined experience a reality.

When we got to 2040, we found: cleaned-up rivers across the nation; widespread respect for and investment in Aboriginal Traditional ownership and industries; sugarcane crops replaced with wattle trees, fruit trees and fields of kale; mycelium largely having replaced artificial fertilisers on farms; less meat eating (but still some); wattle-seed falafels; mindfulness; and much more animal and plant caring. We also found a greater emphasis on art and



culture in our societies, building up the resilience of communities through public investment, tourism and networks of support.

The future we encountered was sometimes devasted and precarious, but with social and environmental changes reaping some brilliant rewards.



At various stages of the 18-year project (undertaken over one year) our group included:

Yorta Yorta Man	Neville Atkinson
Yorta Yorta curator	Belinda Briggs
Art Historian	Suzie Fraser
Artist and former farmer	Andrew Sands
Artist and Horticulturist	Elizabeth Evans
Artist	Penny Algar
Botanist and Vegetation Restoration	
Practisioner	Sally Mann
Artist Producer	-
Agriculture Professor	Timothy Reeves
Conceptual Artist	
Cultural Researcher	
Cultural Heritage Adviser and	
Archaeologist	Gaye Sutherland
Edible Eden Design	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·

Dookie Campus Director Associate Professor Ros Gall
Artist and postgraduate student Emily Simek
Artist and postgraduate student Sayoko Suwa
Scientist Rose Faragher
ArtistLuna Mrozik Gawler
Associate Professor Sustainable AgricultureDorin Gupta
Artist and Farmer Janie Christophersen
Education Coordinator
Shepparton Art Museum Anni Jane Linklater
Doctoral student Pragna Prathap
Doctoral student Aleena Joy
Research Fellow Waseem Ashfaq
Senior Lecturer in Livestock
Genetics Surinder Singh Chauhan
Grief and Trauma Councillor Latrobe Rosie Petschack
English Leicester EnthusiastKirsty Harker
Retired Farmer Brian Harker

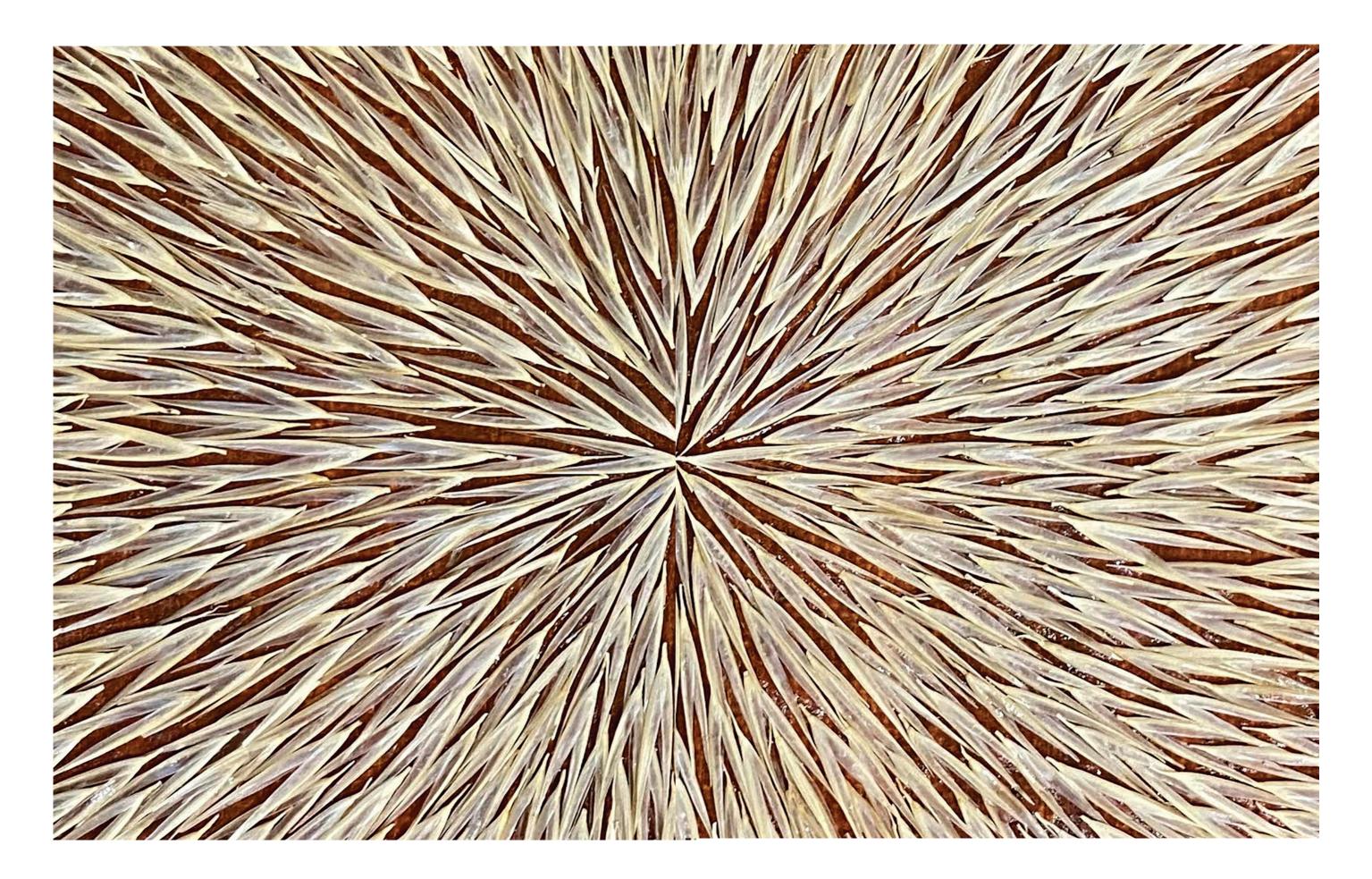


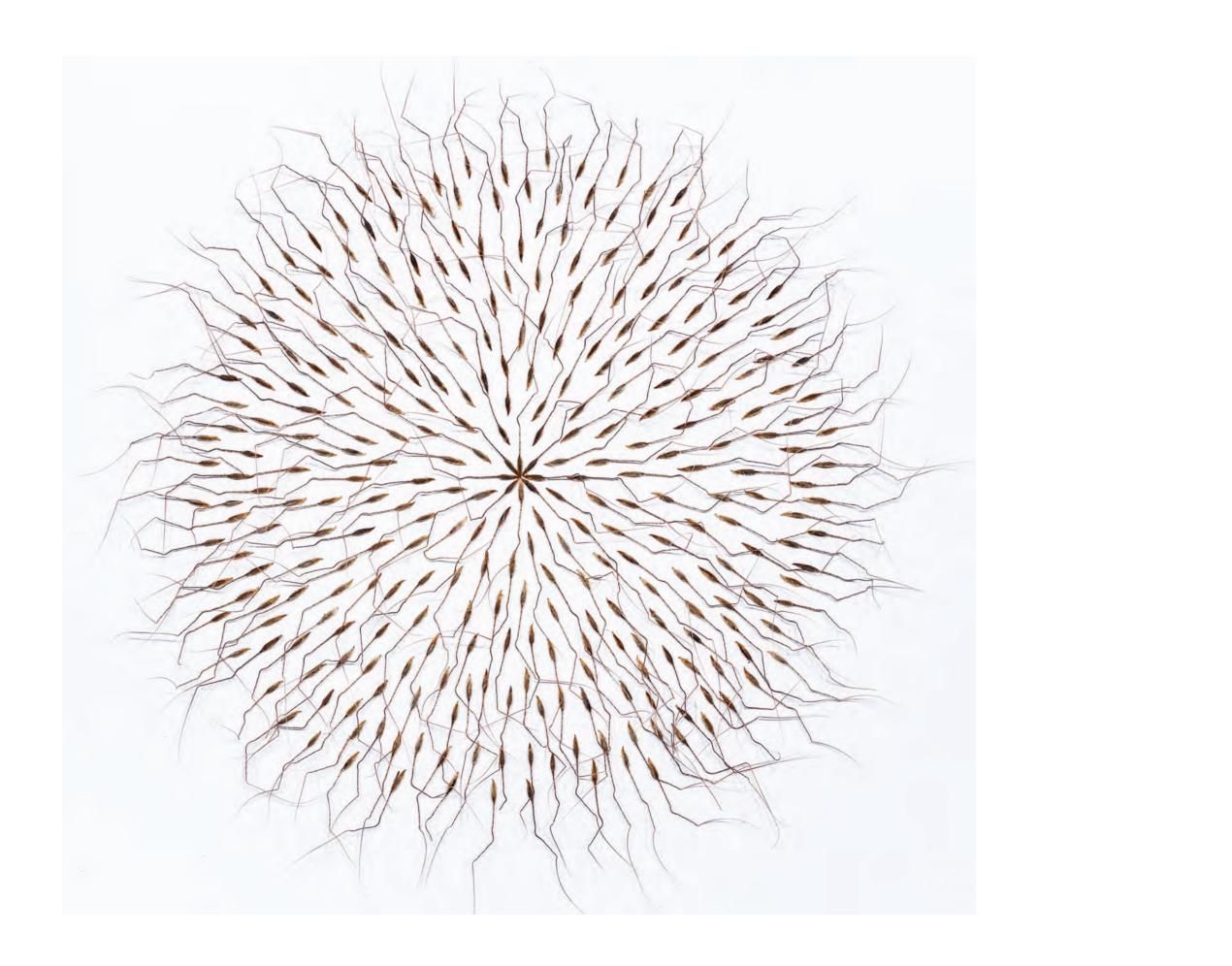
We are Grieving What We Can't Get Back But What Comes Next is Still Ours for the Making

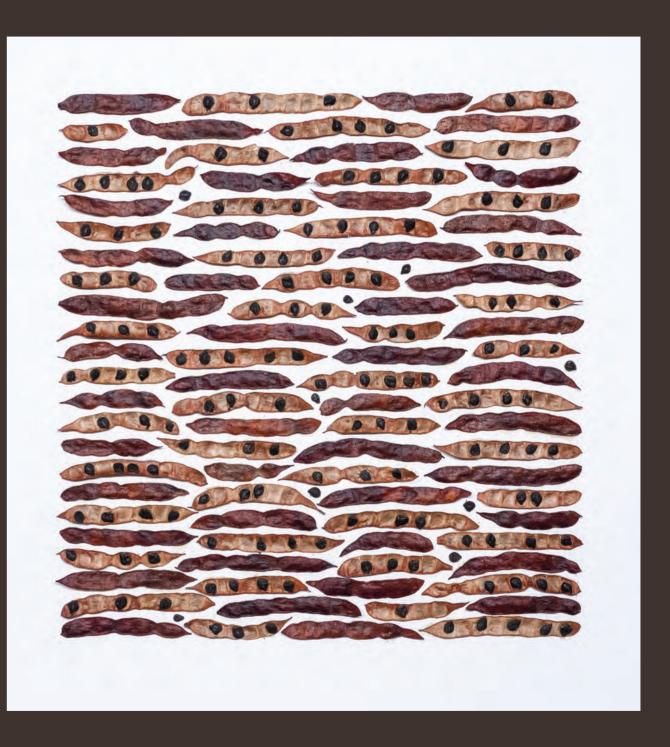
Liz Evans

From as far back as I can remember I had interest in nature, especially plants. Following my grandmother around her garden or wandering along a leafy lane in Kalorama picking foliage for her vases. Years later I realised I knew the plants names and their aromas. Even when living in a small caravan, space was taken up with plants. My employment though varied, was always conservation and horticulturally inclined.

My education was at a technical school where I did the art course, enjoying mediums and visuals of all kinds. During my time working as a Seedbank Coordinator the two came together, using sticks, pods and seeds to create assemblages. The beauty of the micro world of seeds was undeniable as was the vegetation it came from. I hope that my work provokes an unexpected awareness of nature. I feel privileged to have been able to work and create while contributing to our biodiversity.









Have you Sat with a Sheep Before



Have You Sat with a Tree Before

And Felt Connected with Them?



Andrew Sands

I do love a good wander about in one of the bushland reserves near our home. Some are small, perhaps a few hectares and on land which may be a little wet or rocky. The tree canopy is quite sparse with a wayward shrub layer of acacias. The ground layer of fallen timber and leaf matter adds to this random appearance which offers protection for small plants and fauna.

Another place to wander is our own property where we have a rich thick layer of native grasses which we have encouraged through careful management. This area has many species of local grasses with many contrasting habits. Long slender upright spear grass, brush wire grass, more a clumping type and the soft wallaby grass provide so much habitat for fauna and aesthetic relief for us humans if we care to look.

The richness and variety of habitat in these areas offer a certain feeling of order, structure and balance plus a little tension which comes to the surface when creating my artwork. As I push paint around the canvas or bend and weld metal, gestural and spontaneous marks and shapes appear within my works.





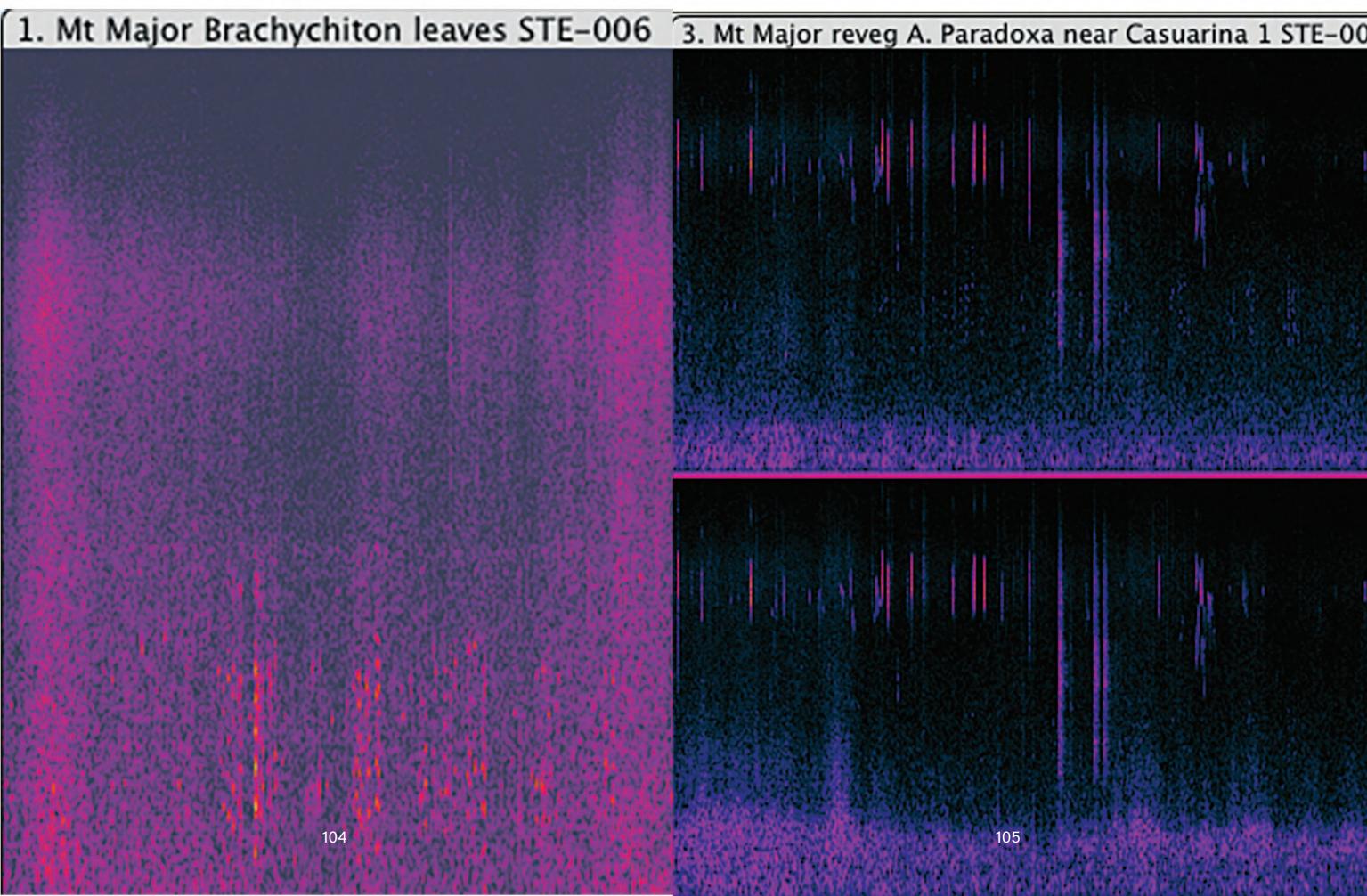
RECORDING ACOUSTIC **ECOLGY FIELD** ACOUSTIC BIRDSONG ECOACOUSTICS GRIEF **OBSERVATORY** CLIMATE LIMINAL DIAPHANOUS TERROIR SUBTERRANEAN RHIZOSPHERE **PHENOLOGY SOLISTA-**COLLABORATION **ONOMATOPOEIC** GIA VESTIGIAL **STYGOFAUNA** MATRIX EQUANIMITY BLINDNESS PLANT PLANT RESILIENCE **MORPHOLOGIES** OCEANS OF **FUTURE** LOVE **PLANTS** FOR THE REPAIR AND REPURPOSE Ν U S Η Μ Ε R Ν \mathbf{O} CONVERSATIONS FOR THE **FUTURE** HOPE **SYNAESTHESIA OPTOMISM** COMMUNITY GATHERING **PLACES** RESTORATION

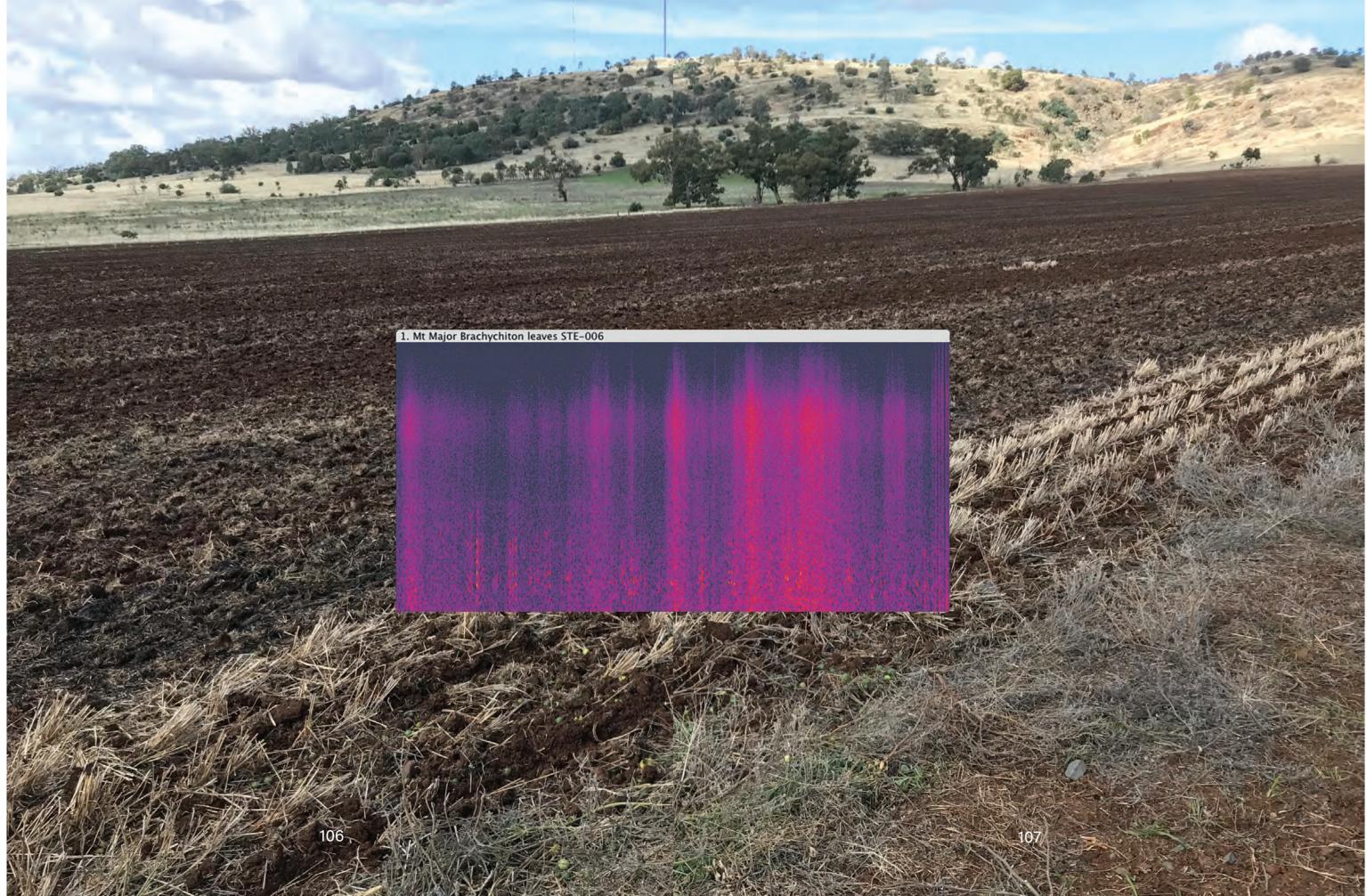
Penny Algar

Over a 20-year period my husband and I had worked on a landscape restoration project at our property in the foothills of the Strathbogie Ranges. Our intention was to try to bring back fragments of a Grassy Woodland ecosystem which, after 200 years of livestock grazing, was severely depleted.

My visual art practice during that time, crafting handmade books and small sculptural Japanese paper "Biodiversity Cones", reference that experience. Listening to and observing birds with binoculars, noting the arrival and departure of species at different times of the year became something of an obsession. As new plantings became established, the landscape acoustics also changed. If its possible to have a sustainable non-toxic art practice, then sound recording may be a good fit.

One of my favourite Australian endemic plant species, the White Cypress Pine (*Callitris glaucophylla*), still grows in remnant patches around the fringes of Dookie's agricultural landscapes. It has also been used in revegetation along the Mount Major walking track together with other bird attracting local indigenous species. Most of my recent field recordings were made in close proximity to this species.









Dookie is a Town in Regional Victoria

112

Dookie is on Traditional Lands



We Share Stories From Country

And From The Future



We Speak to you From the Past

Please join in where you are to prepare for our climate futures –

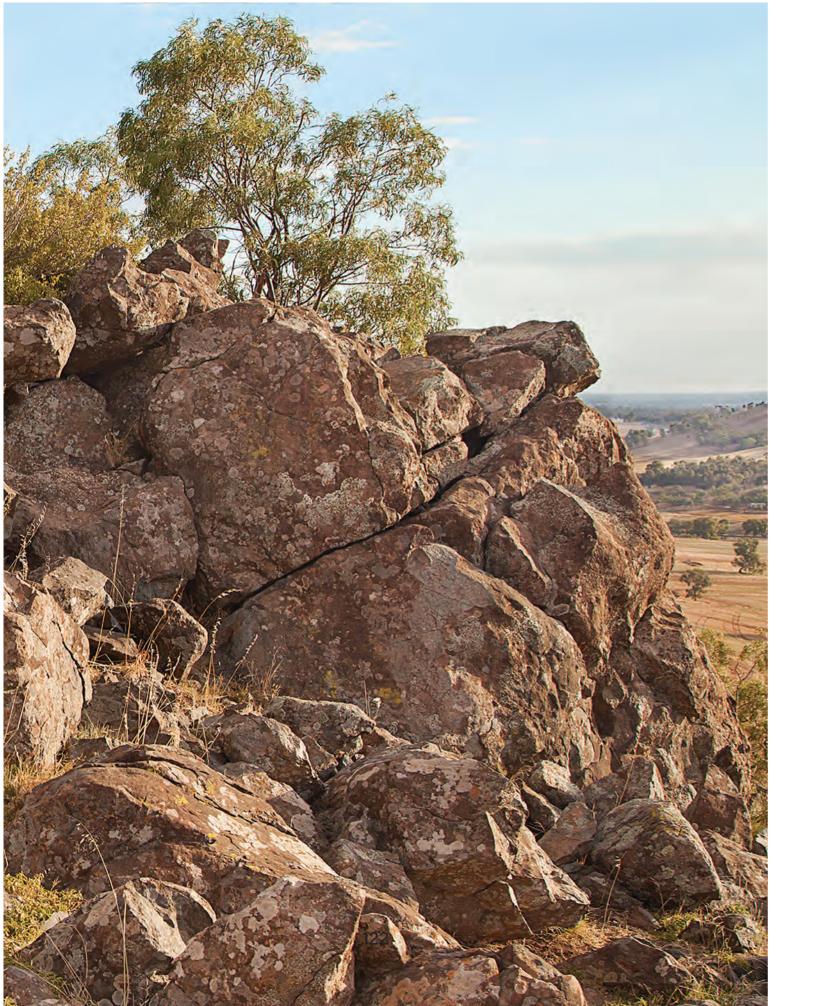


You are needed

Dennis O'Brien

Associate Professor and Head of Dookie Campus, University of Melbourne 2003 – 2011 Chair Winton Wetlands Committee of Management The ecological systems that we all live in are our inheritances and our legacy to the generations that follow. They reflect and influence our sense of wellbeing and culture. These systems are not only ours but belong to all living creatures and are essential to our and their capacity to thrive and survive. We clearly have not had sufficient understanding of the importance of our actions on the planet we live in. This has improved in recent times as the impacts of our actions have become more and more apparent.

We are now undoubtedly at a point where we have two tasks. The first is to ameliorate the impacts that the damage to our environment is causing to global warming or climate change. The second is to arrest the rate of further damage, or ideally, to cease causing further damage all together. The food and fibre sector, of which agriculture is a crucial component, has responsibilities in both areas. But responsibility needs to be broader than just on farmers. Everyone who participates in the food and fibre value chain, from consumers through to food processors and retailers, transport and logistics, farmers, agricultural input providers, researchers and educators, has responsibility to varying degrees and in different ways. It is about awareness and choices by all those in that chain.



The role of agriculture in causing environmental damage and hence climate change is clear. Nothing has altered the natural landscape more significantly than the expansion of agriculture and the consequent clearing of the natural environment over millennia. The task now is for research to focus on developing technologies that will produce the food and fibre that an increasing and more prosperous global population will demand that is environmentally sustainable. The next task is for educators and policy makers to ensure those technologies are made available to farmers all over the world and the final step is for farmers to adopt those technologies. This will not be easy but it is essential.



Images Index	17	22-23	32-33	44-45	56-57	Ecology Hub with	88-89
	Acacia	Projections on	Plant – Polymer	Dookie Earthed	Acacia pycnantha	various members	Artwork Pa
2	melanoxylon seed	Dookie Quarry	paint on canvas	– Steam engine	seed microscope	of the local	Tree Dook
Art assemblage		wall created by	- Helen Kelly.	Creation shadow	view. This seed	community and	– Andrew
Kangaroo grass		Dookie School	Photo: Craig	play, chemical	was used by Sally	the community	Photo: Ser
seed - Themeda	18-19 Dive	children who	Gaston	drums cut up	Mann to make	of the University	Hughes
triandra and	Blue	drew inspiration		and attached to	falafel's for the	of Melbourne	
Greenstone -	Devil-Eryngium	from looking	34-35	a Ute to make	Dinner for the	Dookie Campus	93
Liz Evans	ovinum	at indigenous	Dookie Earthed	the shadow of a	Future		Metal Scul
	(Background)	seed through a	mudded up bus	steam engine that			inspired by
		microscope. Their	and cow created	once operated	61	80-81	behriana -
4	18	drawings were	with a bucket	in the Dookie	Archival map of	Assemblage of	Wire-grass
Chert pieces, red	Enneapogon	representative of		Quarry. Photo:	Dookie area with	Rytidosperma flag	Andrew Sa
patina. Photo:	nigricans – Bottle	sea creatures that	of mud and a	Serana Hunt-	Kangaroo grass,	on Dookie Earth –	Photo Sera
Gaye Sutherland	Washers	were once living	blower vac. Photo:	Hughes	Themeda triandra.	Liz Evans. Photo:	Hughes
		in the inland sea.	Serana Hunt-	3	Photo: Serana	Serana Hunt-	0
6-7			Hughes		Hunt Hughes	Hughes	96
Chert outcrop.	19	0.4		48-49	Hunt Hughes		Tree Sculp
Photo: Gaye	Collecting	²⁴ Papier-mâché	38	Dinner for the		82-83	Andrew Sa
Sutherland	Acacia implexa	masks Dinner	Dookie Earthed	Future of food	62-63	Assemblage	Photo: Ser
	(Lightwood) seed	for the Future,	Artistic Direction	on the table	Plate of fungi,	Austrostipa	Hunt-Hugh
			Artwork - Helen		Dinner for the	bigeniculata	nunt-nugi
10 Disalawaad Assais	20-21	Bearded Dragon	Kelly	52-53	future	– Kneed Spear-	
Blackwood-Acacia	Daviesia ulicifolia		,	Artwork		grass seeds	97
melanoxylon seed	seed, Gorse	25		-'subterranean'	64-65	Artwork – Liz	Graphite d
showing colourful	Bitter-pea under	Papier-mâché	39	pencil drawing	Dinner for the	Evans. Photo:	Brush Wire
aril under	microscope	masks Dinner for	Flyers explaining	- Janie	Future of food	Serana Hunt-	Spear gras
microscope	(background)	the Future, Bee	the Dookie	Christophersen	on the table.	Hughes	Eucalypts
	(background)		Earthed event		Photo: Jeremy	riugiles	Sands. Pho
12-13		26-27	by Kris Keiller		Lines		Serana-Hu
Wallaby	20	Mycelium,		54 Artist Janie		85	Hughes
grass seeds –	Seed cleaning	Hyphae,Glomalin	40-41		68	Assemblage	
Rytidosperma	with Kimseed	– Polymer paints,	Dookie Earthed	Christophersen	Dinner for the	Senna	98
microscope view	Cleaner	crochet, soil, and	 Mudded up Ute 	Art work –'curly	Future Artwork	artemisioides	Artwork A
		mixed media	using a bucket	leaf, pencil	– Fungi pushing	 Narrow-leaf 	shrub And
16-17	21	- Helen Kelly.	of Dookie dirt	drawing - Janie	through - Helen	Desert Cassia	Sands. Pho
Kneed-	Dianella - Native	Photo: Craig	and blower vac,	Christophersen	Kelly	seeds and pods	Serana Hu
Spear-Grass	Flax-lily fruit on	Gaston	first creation for		itely	Artwork –	Hughes
- Austrostipa	plate	adoton	Dookie Earthed.	55	70-71	Liz Evans. Photo:	July
bigeniculata	plate		Photo: Serana	Artwork 'Bunch	Dinner for the	Serana Hunt-	
(Background)		30-31	Hunt-Hughes	of Yam Daisies		Hughes	100-101
(Dackground)	22-23	Underneath your		and Bulbine Lilies'	Future Sally		Text by Pe
	Papier-mâché	feet – Mixed	42-43	Papier-mâché,	Mann and Karen	86-87	
16	mask Dinner	media on canvas	Dookie Earthed -	and watercolour	Sutherland	Dinner for the	104-111
Ruby Salt-bush	for the Future	- Helen Kelly.	Fence art, people	paint- Janie	preparing for	Future Workshop	Field Reco
– Enchylaena	- animal	Photo: Craig	stencils using	Christophersen	dinner	at The Chateau	Penny Alga
tomentosa	consciousness,	Gaston	Dookie dirt in	Photo Serana		Dookie, Suzie	-
	English Leicester		a bucket and a	Hunt-Hughes	74-75	Fraser sitting with	110 110
	sheep using their		blower vac. Photo:		Dinner for the	English Leicester	112-113 Rup and Si
	wool		Serana Hunt-		Future Gathering \	sheep. Photo:	Bus and Si
			Hughes		workshop Art and	Jeremy Lines	Dookie Ea
			lugiles			Jerenny Lines	

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Sculpture ed by Aristida na – Brush grass – w Sands.

Serana Hunt-

culpture – w Sands. : Serana Hughes

ite drawing, Wire-grass, grass and /pts – Andrew & Photo: a-Hunt-

rk Acacia Andrew . Photo: a Hunt-

Penny Algar

Recordings by Algar

nd Silos – e Earthed ¹¹⁴⁻¹¹⁵ Enneapogon nigricans – Bottle Washers on Mount Major farmlands beyond

116-117

Dinner for the Future Workshop Chateau Dookie - With thanks to Kirsty Harker. Photo: Jeremy Lines

¹¹⁸⁻¹¹⁹ Landscape shots of greenstone (metamorphosed basalt). Photo: David Rhodes

¹²² Rock Correa Walk (Tallis Hill). Photo: David Rhodes

¹²⁴⁻²⁵ Dookie Earthed – Opera singer on wall of Dookie Quarry

Cover: Handmade paper with Dookie seeds - Bursaria spinosa - Sweet Bursaria, Eutaxia diffusa -Spreading Eutaxia and Rytidosperma -Wallaby Grass Inside cover: Archival map of Dookie area

(uncredited photos taken by Liz Evans and Andrew Sands).

