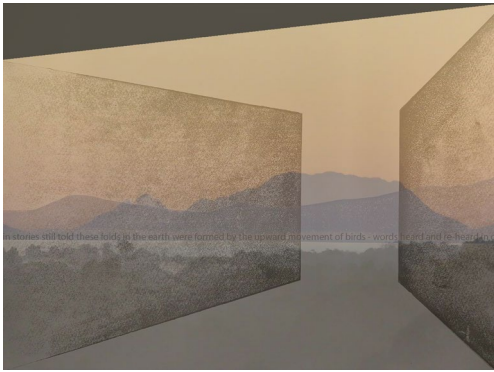


TRACING GONDWANA

19 NOVEMBER 2022 - 18 FEBRUARY 2023

The Southwest Ecoregion is one of the world's major biodiversity hotspots. *Tracing Gondwana* sees printmakers Monika Lukowska and Nikki Green and writer Reneé Pettitt-Schipp partner with Gondwana Link to explore the cultural and ecological significance of our internationally recognised hotspot through combined creativity.



Nikki Green, *A Window of Time - In Stories Still Told*, excerpt from *All the Stories We Do Not Know* by Reneé Pettitt-Schipp, 2022, digital print on archival paper, 56 x 76 cm.

Tracing Gondwana launches on Saturday 19 November with a public program curated to complement the artists' responses to the vulnerability of our world heritage biodiversity hotspot in WA. The program includes a screening of Gondwana Link's film *Breathing Life into Boodja*, followed by a panel discussion with the exhibiting artists and special guests Basil Schur (Green Skills), Keith Bradby (Gondwana Link), Uncle Eugene Eades (Goreng-Menang Elder) and Auntie Carol Pettersen (Noongar-Menang Elder).

Nikki Green is inspired by the Australian landscape and was drawn to Southwest WA from Melbourne in 2008, after obtaining her degree in Fine Art at the National Art School, Sydney in 2001 and a Graduate Diploma in Education from University of Melbourne in 2006.

Green embodies her visceral intentions for *Tracing Gondwana* by layering the possibilities of printmaking - drawing, carving, stamping, and cutting away. Her work delves into personal experiences in the southwest of WA, exploring the human impact on our fragile landscape. Delicately interwoven throughout her work are fragments of poems written by Reneé Pettitt-Schipp, with the literary rhythm intended to provoke thought and wonder. Her recent work, *Koi Kyeunu-Ruff: A Brutal Perspective on an Ancient Range* has recently been announced the winner of the Waverley Woollahra Print Prize in Sydney.

The ancient undulations of Koy Kyeunu-Ruff (The Stirling Ranges) are a constant ghost-like feature throughout Green's work. Framed by a series of windows, the viewer glimpses the delicate appearance and disappearance of the endemic flora against a startling backdrop of Brutalist concrete-like shapes. Green creates a warped sense of perspective through enfolding spaces of human habitat, symbolising our stamp on our more-than-human-world.



Nikki Green, *Koi Kyeunu-Ruff: A Brutal Perspective on an Ancient Range*, 2022, digital print on archival paper, 43 x 150 cm.

Printmaker Monika Lukowska is an artist, educator and academic from Poland currently based in Perth, Western Australia. She obtained her MA from the E. Geppert Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Wroclaw, Poland in 2011, MFA from San Francisco Art Institute, USA in 2014 and PhD from Curtin University, Perth in 2018. Lukowska's artworks have been exhibited internationally, and she is a recipient of several awards and scholarships. In her practice, Lukowska investigates the intersection between traditional and digital printmaking, questioning how the experience of place can be embedded within the printed surface.



Monika Lukowska, *Topographies I*, 2022, digital print, 56 x 43 cm.

Lukowska's work originates from explorations of southern landscape of WA. Within the vast landscape she is drawn to million-year-old rocks, granites, stromatolites, and dramatic coastal landscapes formed during the collision of continental masses. Lukowska considers those formations not only as invaluable parts of the environment but as elements that "tell" stories. Almost like palimpsests, they retain layers of local history, geological data and hold spiritual significance for Indigenous groups. Through creative practice, Lukowska engages with their materiality and gradually unravels their entangled complexities and hidden meanings. The experiential knowledge of place, gained through an active engagement with the sites, is then translated into artworks that aim to emulate the close connectivity of the body and place and to flesh out the place's tactility and highlight its importance.

Reneé Pettitt-Schipp is a writer, poet and educator, living in WA's Great Southern region. In 1996, she completed a Bachelor of Arts (English and

Comparative Literature/Philosophy) at Murdoch University. In 2013 she was awarded First Class Honours in Creative Writing, Curtin University. Most recently, in 2020, Pettitt-Schipp received her Philosophy doctorate (Media, Creative Arts and Social Inquiry) from Curtin University.

In 2019, Pettitt-Schipp's first collection of poetry, *The Sky Runs Right Through Us*, was inspired by her work with asylum seekers in detention on Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands and won the Greg Crombie 'Work of the Year' in the Humanities Research Awards, as well as the WA Premier's Literary Award for an Emerging Writer. In 2022, she won the Liquid Amber Poetry Prize for *Nowanup* and the 'World Award' in the Grieve Poetry Prize for *After Fourteen Years the Boorabbin Fire Finally Claims You*.

Pettitt-Schipp's series of poems for *Tracing Gondwana* seek to explore the tensions and contradictions in what it means to be a seventh generation white West Australian living in the shadow of a complex colonial history as well as in the contemporary context of a climate emergency, while being surrounded by abundance and beauty.



Nikki Green, *Place Where the Eye and Clouds are Drawn*, with excerpt from *Nowanup* by Reneé Pettitt-Schipp, 2022, digital print on archival paper, 27.5 x 36 cm.

Midland Junction Arts Centre (MJAC), first opened as a school in 1895, has always been a convergent point for community education and today MJAC presents a diverse and stimulating cultural program and is pleased to showcase exhibitions such as *Tracing Gondwana*. The exhibition is a creative collaboration resulting in a captivating and thought-provoking body of work responding to our current climate emergency. Weaving words and image through traditional and contemporary printmaking processes, *Tracing Gondwana* evokes a personal sense of hope amidst an extremely vulnerable and threatened ecological time. The exhibition is on show at MJAC from 19 November – 17 December 2022, continuing 18 January - 18 February 2023.

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