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TIME AND BEING AT TRENERRY RESERVE

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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ABSTRACT

Time and Being at Trenerry Reserve, October 2014, Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney. The work exhibited is a small installation consisting of a large wall image and an elliptical table containing contemporary jewellery objects designed to invite the viewer to look closely at works that signify sensory experience and to convey knowledge of plants and place. The pieces include seven brooches, a ring and a neckpiece. A number of these are carved from a material I first developed to represent the texture of a plant. These are made from hundreds of layers of coloured tissue paper, the by-product of which is dyed archival glue – a new material. The neckpiece is made from silver and copper wirework.

The Research Paper is about ways in which we come to know place. To set structure for the research I adopted the observations of poetry anthologist Brian Elliot, in particular as to how poets come to terms with the Australian landscape. In turn, my investigations at Trenerry Reserve involved the exploration of a coastal wetland, where I recorded the sensory experience of being there and how that landscape has changed over time. An essential part of my research was an investigation of the ecology of the wetland, how people have interacted with it, and in what way they have valued that place and the surrounding environment.

By looking largely and closely, I have responded to Trenerry Reserve not only by creating jewellery objects but also by writing about what I have learned in the context of the accounts of others who have come to know places in the landscape more deeply. The works of three established contemporary jewellery artists who have place-related art-practices are also discussed in terms of jewellery communicating moments noticed, the things they are passionate about. Underlying this exploration is the concept of ‘collection’, a theme that resonates with each of the artists, and one that has played a role in my art practice.

FOREWORD

The first need in a new country or colony must obviously be in one way or another to comprehend the physical environment ... At first the urge is merely topographical, to answer the question, what does the place look like? The next is detailed and ecological: how does life arrange itself there? What plants, what animals, what activity, how does man fit in? The next may be moral: how does such a place influence people? And how, in their turn, do the people make their mark upon the place? How have they developed it? Next come the subtler enquiries: what spiritual and emotional qualities does [sic] such a people develop in such an environment? In what way do the forces of nature impinge upon the imagination? How do aesthetic evaluations grow? How may poetry come to life in such a place as Australia? Brian Elliot¹

¹ Brian Elliot, *The landscape of Australian poetry* (Melbourne: F.W. Cheshire, 1967), 4.



Figure 1: *Time and Being at Treener Reserve*, 15 March 2009, 5:26 pm

INTRODUCTION

TIME AND BEING AT TRENERRY RESERVE

AN EXPLORATION OF A COASTAL WETLAND AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PLACE IN BEING

*The botanist's magnifying glass is youth recaptured.
It gives him back the enlarging gaze of a child. With this glass in his hand, he returns to the garden.*
Gaston Bachelard²

On the cliff-tops at Coogee is a place where you can hear frogs. But you can only see them if you take time to look closely. I am curious about this place and wonder how it has changed over time.

This Research Paper explores some of the ways in which we come to know place. The project involves an exploration of a small coastal wetland on the edge of Sydney to learn how it has changed over time and how it is valued. The sensory experience of being at Trenerry Reserve and observations made about the plants there were mediated in jewellery objects that signify sensory experience and connection to place. These works are discussed in light of place knowledge, as are the works of three contemporary jewellery artists and their responses to place.

I am a contemporary jewellery artist whose experience of place is profoundly affected by light.³ In 2000 I moved to Sydney from Wellington, New Zealand. One of the first things you notice when you move to Australia is the very different light. There is a lot of red in the light here, reflected off the orange earth and the iron oxide particles of dust in the air; the colours in the landscape are more intense.⁴ The flora and fauna seem strange and prehistoric (see fig. 2).

² Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, ed. Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), 155.

³ Partway through this MFA degree I learned I have Irlen Syndrome with Irlen Dyslexia. My experience of completing this project in the usual time was greatly impacted by the time it took to determine the Irlen coloured filters that have enabled me greater ease of light perception. Helen Irlen, *The Irlen Revolution: A Guide to Changing your Perception and Your Life*, ed. Michele D'Altorio, (New York: Square One Publishers), 2010.

⁴ James J. Gibson, "The environment to be perceived" in *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception* (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1986), 29-32; Shannon Fricke, *Sense of style: Colour*, ed. Diana Hill (Sydney: Murdock Books, 2006), 32. The closer a country is to the equator the more saturated the colours of a landscape appear.



Figure 2: *Hakea gibbosa*, Coastal Heath Jervis Bay, 16 February 2005, 9:39 am

Learning the story of a place and witnessing the changes over time contribute to a sense of being and belonging. As a New Zealander, my sense of being is shaped by the island environment I come from with its grey sands, green sea, mountainous landscape, wind and rain, clear sunshine and the unique combination of European and Pacific Island cultural influences.

To make a connection with the place I had moved to, I sought out the familiar environment of a coastline to walk, explore and be. Not having grown up hearing the stories of Australia, I began to learn about this place by visiting museums and galleries, reading history and novels, watching film and working with people who had stories to tell. After living in the city for a while, I observed that we rush from place to place, getting caught up with material things, and forget to take a moment to notice the beauty of small occurrences, and *be*.

Ontologist Edward S. Casey comments on the adverse effect 'the incessant motion of post-modern life' has on how we experience place (*or* on forming a sense of place). He says, 'We pay a heavy price for capitalising on our basic animal mobility. This price is the loss of places that can serve as lasting scenes of experience and reflection and memory.'⁵ I think the place where we spent our formative years is often the place to which we have our strongest connection. Perhaps that is because as children we are in a continual state of discovery, focusing on what is before us, absorbed in the moment.

⁵ Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back into Place: toward a renewed understanding of the place-world* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993) xiii.

Traditional Owner Max Dulumunmun points out that in Aboriginal culture attaining a deep sense of connection and belonging to place begins with *being* there. Place is first learned through sensory experience: through movement or stillness, feeling the earth underfoot, observing the scene - becoming aware of sound and aroma. Deep knowledge of landscape is attained over time. The rocks, plants, water and animals are significant in Aboriginal culture because they embody stories of time, and being in place. The stories are told by 'showing', through dance, in speech and art. They teach respect for the land and that people are part of the ecology, a concept that engenders a deep sense of being and belonging to community and place. A feeling that place is part of you and that you are part of place.⁶

Trenerry Reserve is a place I have come to know more deeply by looking *largely* at the landscape and witnessing how it changes over time. I looked *closely* at the plants, delighting in their intricate beauty and learning of their ecological value. This is the place where I chose to centre my project. My research reflects Dulumunmun and Casey's views that to really know a place, one first has to spend time being there. Casey writes:

There is no knowing or sensing a place except by being in that place, and to be in a place is to be in a position to perceive it. Knowledge of place is not, then, subsequent to perception — as Kant dogmatically assumed — but is ingredient [sic] in perception itself. Such knowledge, genuinely local knowledge, is itself experiential in the manner of Erlebnis, 'lived experience' rather than of Erfahrung, the already elapsed experience that is the object of analytical or abstract knowledge.⁷

This Research Paper, and the jewellery objects I made in response to the project, document both 'lived' experience and knowledge gained via formal study. The theory that underpins my research draws from the fields of anthropology, art and contemporary jewellery theory, botany, ecology, history, literature, phenomenology and natural history. Sensory experience of *being* at Trenerry Reserve is recorded in my writing and expressed in my jewellery objects by way of a visual language employed to express the essence of plants and place.

⁶ Max Dulumunmun Harrison & Peter McConchie, *My People's Dreaming: an Aboriginal Elder speaks on life, land, spirit and forgiveness*, ed. Samantha Miles (Australia, New Zealand: Finch), 2009.

⁷ Edward S. Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place in a Fairly Short Stretch of Time" in *Senses of Place*, ed. Steven Feld and Keith Basso (New Mexico: School of American Research Press, 1996), 18.

To obtain assistance in identifying the plants at Trenerry Reserve and to learn about the ecology of coastal wetlands and how they are valued, I conducted interviews with: Bettina Digby, Bushland and Coastal Walkway Supervisor at Randwick City Council, and Bernie McLeod, Traditional Owner and Curator of Booderee Botanical Gardens in Booderee National Park, Jervis Bay. Botanical identification, along with an introduction to taxonomy and the culture of herbariums, was generously provided by Associate Professor Murray Henwood of the School of Biological Sciences and Curator of the John Ray Herbarium, University of Sydney. These interviews, as well as interviews with contemporary jewellery artists Rian de Jong from the Netherlands (via e-mail from on board her sailing ship somewhere off the coast of Brazil) and Warwick Freeman from New Zealand, provided the opportunity to learn from others of their experience of the significance of place in being.⁸

As a guide for presenting my research about Trenerry Reserve, I have closely followed the lead of Australian poetry anthologist Brian Elliot. His introduction to *The Landscape of Australian Poetry* poses a series of observations that describe the ways in which Australian poets progressively come to see, experience, and live in this landscape. Australian academic George Seddon refers to these observations in his foreword to *A Sense of Place*.⁹ I in turn, use them to introduce my project and to structure my paper.

The visual language of my art works reflects the cultural position I come from. This is rooted in colonialism, modernism, design and the organic forms of South Pacific carving. Contemporary jewellery and object art is ideal for expressing large and small ideas, what can be seen and not seen, and to signify what is perceived to be of value. Jewellery can act as a talisman for protection or a memento for place. Jewellery may be beautiful or provocative, playful or serious, and may be created from materials of monetary value or otherwise.¹⁰

⁸ The transcripts of interviews conducted under University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee protocol, are provided on USB enclosed at the back of this document.

⁹ George Seddon, *A Sense of Place: a response to an environment, the Swan coastal plain Western Australia* (Nedlands, Western Australia: University of Western Australia, 1972), xiv. George Seddon is renowned for the ecological study he made of the Swan Valley Coastal Plain, in Western Australia. In *A Sense of Place* he presents his research, observations, experiences, with propositions for how we may perceive our roles in sustainable management of natural and built environments.

¹⁰ Lin Cheung, Beccy Clarke and Indigo Clarke, *New Directions in Jewellery II*, eds. Amy Sackville and Maisie Broadhead (London: Black Dog, 2006); and Liesbeth Den Besten, *On Jewellery: A Compendium of international contemporary jewellery* (Stuttgart: Arnoldsche, 2011).

The material I use to make my jewellery objects is made from hundreds of layers of coloured tissue paper (ordinarily used for gift wrapping). The colours I select and collate together are chosen to express the colour and texture of plants or sensory experience of place (fig.3). The layers of paper are ‘laminated’ using archival glue to form a solid block, from which I carve three-dimensional objects that can be worn or carried about the body.¹¹ Depending on the colours I select, my medium serendipitously resembles other materials like oxidised copper, greenstone, red rock, petrified wood or the cellular structure of a leaf. Part of my process is to record the number of layers. The time I invest in making each object is one indicator of its value; the other is the value we accord to the trees the paper comes from. Because I used predominantly new materials for this project, the brief for myself was to find ways of reusing the archival glue left over from the ‘lamination’ process. The archival glue absorbs dye that leaks from the tissue paper and when dried provides a new material to work from (see fig. 35 and 36).



Figure 3: 382 Layers of Paper – like the colour of Lomandra

To bring a jewellery piece to fruition, the acts of looking largely and closely are required. With my camera I looked largely at the landscape and closely at the plants to study their architecture (see fig. 4 and 5). The very nature of this practice causes me to delight in the details of nature.

¹¹ My process for making this material was inspired by the Japanese forging technique known as Mokumé Gane, meaning wood-eye.



Figure 4: Looking largely across the peat swamp, 5 July 2009, 7:33 am

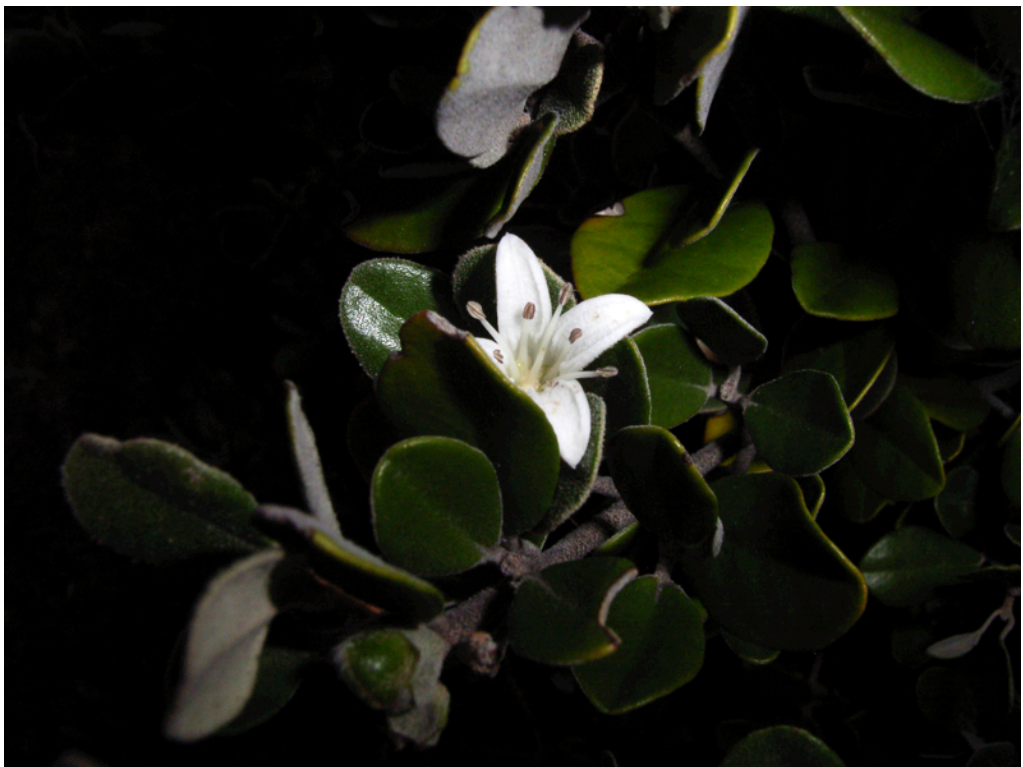


Figure 5: Looking closely at White Correa, *Correa alba*, 27 July 2013, 5:02 pm
The colour and shape of these flowers attracts moths for pollination.¹²

¹² Bettina Digby, the Bush Care Officer and Supervisor for Randwick City Council.

In Chapter One, *Looking Largely and Looking Closely: the Topography and Ecology of Trenerry Reserve*, so as to convey a sense of what Trenerry Reserve looks like, I have provided a brief history of the topographical qualities of the landscape that explains the presence of the wetland, and a description of the plants, by way of a guided exploration around the wetland, to learn of their role in the ecology of that place.¹³

Chapter Two, *How does such a Place Influence People*, gives a portrayal of the effect that landscape has on people and how they have interacted with it over time.

Chapter Three, *The Spirit of the Place*, presents the jewellery objects I have made in response to my 'lived' experience and knowledge of Trenerry Reserve, including a hand held piece that reflects perceptions of how we value materials that we harvest from the land.

Chapter Four, *Artist Response to Place*, discusses the work of three prominent contemporary jewellery artists who have place related art-practices and whose work inspired my own deeper exploration into this subject.

Chapter Five, *Collection Communicating A Larger Story*, discusses the role that 'the collection' has in the production and presentation of my contemporary jewellery art practice.



Figure 6: Trenerry Reserve Information Board, 15 March 2009, 5:10 pm

¹³ This approach mirrors my own experience of looking while guided by Bettina Digby, the Bush Care Officer and Supervisor for Randwick City Council.

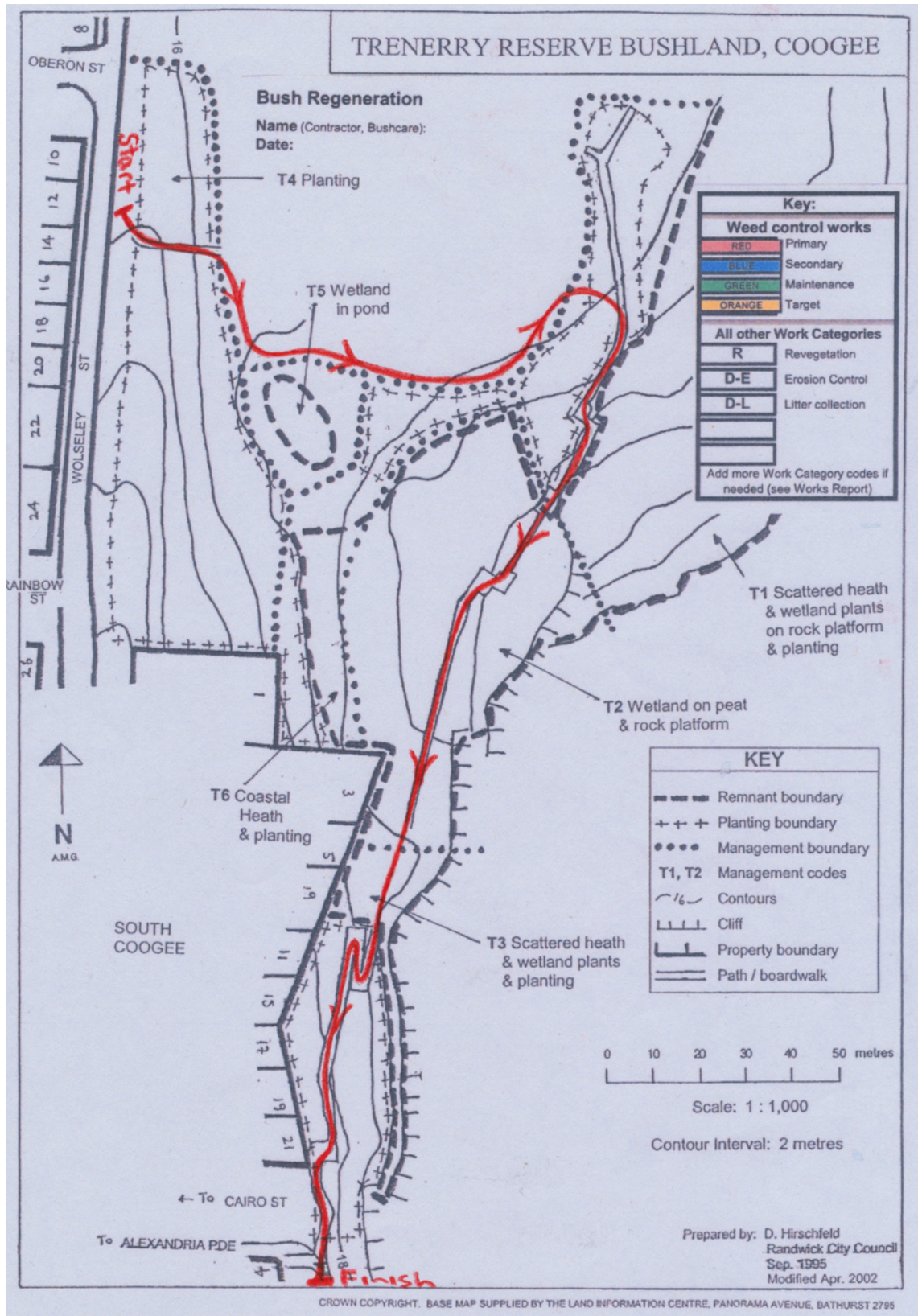


Figure 7: Topographical map of Trenerry Reserve Bushland, Coogee
 Showing the path taken during a botanical exploration of the wetland, as shown by Bettina Digby
 the then time Bushland and Coastal Walkway Supervisor, Randwick City Council.

CHAPTER ONE

LOOKING LARGELY AND LOOKING CLOSELY THE TOPOGRAPHY AND ECOLOGY OF TRENERRY RESERVE

At first the urge is merely topographical, to answer the question, what does the place look like? The next is detailed and ecological: how does life arrange itself there?¹⁴



Figure 8: Wetland species growing in peat on the rock platform, 5 July 2009, 7:26 am

Trenerry Reserve is situated on a rock platform overlooking the ocean at the southern end of Coogee. Within the reserve is a tiny wetland containing a remnant peat swamp, and a man made dam. The rock-strata of this coastline are of Permian age, about 245 million years old. Ten thousand years ago, the coastline extended two to three hundred metres further out into the ocean than it does today. Over time, the sea and wind eroded the sandstone and great shelves of rock dropped into the sea, leaving the wetland suspended.

¹⁴ Elliot, *The landscape of Australian poetry*, 4.

Wetlands typically occur in places prone to flooding. They fill with water after heavy rain and then gradually dry out. Trenerry Reserve's freshwater wetland has formed in the swale of sand dunes, which built up over time on a horizontal platform of Hawkesbury Sandstone. The high steep hill behind the reserve is an ancient sand dune. When rain hits the hillside, it slowly trickles through the earth until it reaches a layer of shale and flows into the wetland. As it seeps through the hillside the water is filtered clean. Fresh water collects in a dam, built into the side of the wetland.¹⁵

The topographical features of a landscape combined with varying water levels create diversity in wetlands that determines the types of plants found in them. The presence of heath species on sand dune provided the environmental conditions for the wetland at Trenerry Reserve to grow. The remnant peat swamp built up in a small basin in the sandstone.¹⁶ Once the swamp was more extensive but now is reduced in size due to erosion and human activity.¹⁷

The species that grow in Trenerry Reserve have adapted for the climate and environment they grow in, like all Australian plants. Over the past 250,000 years the climate has become drier and hotter as the continent inched northward. From around 75,000 years ago, when the last glacial period was beginning, the Australian landscape became increasingly arid, which was exacerbated by cold glacial westerly winds. Throughout the past 15,000 years Australian plants have adapted to the degree that their architecture and regenerative cycles are very different from plants found on other continents (fig. 9).¹⁸

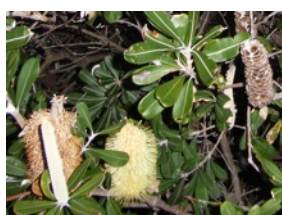


Figure 9: Three stages of Banksia flower and cone development - most Banksia are propagated by fire. Coastal Banksia, *Banksia integrifolia*, 27 July 2013, 5:04 pm

¹⁵ Jocelyn Howell and Doug Benson, *Sydney's Bushland: more than meets the eye*, ed. Penny Farrant (Sydney: Royal Botanic Gardens, 2000), 48.

¹⁶ Peat is the long-term accumulation of organic matter that collects beneath decomposing vegetation such as sedge-land. Paul Adam and Pierre Horwitz. 'Temperate coastal peatlands in Australia' in *The Peatlands of the Australasian Region*. Edited by Jennie Whinam and Geoff Hope, 2005.

¹⁷ J.R. Dodson, J. Chant and J. Daly, "Human impact recorded in an urban wetland's sediments in Sydney, Australia" in *Man and Culture in Oceania* (1995), 11/4, 113-124.

¹⁸ Danielle Clode, *Continent of Curiosities: A Journey Through Australian Natural History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 66.

Prior to European settlement, the landscape we know as the Eastern Suburbs of Sydney was predominantly sand dune. Different combinations of heath grew in the sand dune due to variations in soil, drainage and wind conditions. They were Coastal Dune, Coastal Sandstone Heath, and Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub (now listed as endangered).¹⁹

Today, within the reserve there are a variety of heath combinations that were nearly lost due to degradation of the site. These are Coastal Sandstone Heath, Wetland species, Wetland species with Peat and Heath (fig. 10), and Scattered Heath among Wetland plants. Depending on the season, these plants appear like a tapestry of different colours and textures across the entire reserve.



Figure 10: A tapestry of colour and texture, 14 August 2011, 9:12 am
Wetland species with Peat and Heath

Some of the species growing in the wetland are the same as those recorded in the peat and layers of charcoal found at the site. Palaeontology investigations of pollen found in the peat estimate that the wetland is about one thousand years old. This pollen record is important because it shows clear changes in the environment and the ecology of the wetland as a direct result of changes made to the landscape from the time of European

¹⁹ Howell and Benson, *Sydney's Bushland: more than meets the eye*, 38-43. Heathland plants grow to less than two meters in height, in places where the soil is not good enough to support trees. *Banksia aemula* and the Grass Tree *Xanthorrhoea resinifera* are distinctive examples of Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub.

settlement.²⁰ For example the steep sand hill behind the wetland has been colonised with suburban housing, which resulted in polluting run-off that increased phosphates in the soil and spread the seed of exotic species.²¹



Figure 11: A sense of what the place looks like, 12 November 2011, 7:20 pm

The perimeter of Trenerry Reserve is bounded by: Wolseley Street, a playing field to the north, the sea cliff, and Cairo Street to the south (refer to fig. 7). To get a sense of what the reserve looks like, you can walk down a short path from Wolseley Street that leads through bush to a large grassed area overlooking a wide rock platform above the ocean. Here you encounter the Eastern Beaches Coast Walk that traces the edge of the playing field. Heading south around a sheltered bend, a boardwalk traverses the wetland that lies on the cliff-tops below the large suburban sand hill. Beyond the wetland, along the cliff-line, is a lookout. Then up some stairs another boardwalk passes through a tunnel of Tea-trees. The coastal pathway continues beyond Trenerry Reserve toward Maroubra. Returning to the wetland, there are seats facing out toward the ocean. Waves thunder onto rocks beneath the cliff-face. Birds visit the wetland. You can hear the sound of frogs.

²⁰ Dodson, Chant and Daly, "Human impact recorded in an urban wetland's sediments in Sydney, Australia", 113-124.

²¹ Bettina Digby, (Randwick City Council Bushland and the Coast Walk Supervisor), interviewed by Karin Jakobsson, "Transcript of Interview with Bettina Digby, 14 November 2011"; Bettina Digby, *Trenerry Reserve, Coogee - Indigenous plant species list and site map*; Howell and Benson, *Sydney's Bushland: more than meets the eye*, 38-43; Les Robinson, *Field Guide to the Native Plants of Sydney*, (Sydney: Kangaroo Press, 2003). I refer to this transcript and these books, among others, for detailed information about how the wetland was formed and the plants found there.

To learn about the ecology of the reserve I was taken on a walk around the site by Bush Care Officer, Bettina Digby (see fig. 7). Beginning at Wolseley Street, you can see that the perimeter of Trenerry Reserve has been planted with trees and scrub (fig. 12) such as Coastal Tea-tree, *Leptospermum laevigatum*; Coastal Rosemary, *Westringia fruticosa* (fig. 13); Banksia, *Banksia integrifolia* (see fig.14); Mat Rush, *Lomandra longifolia*; and Pohutukawa, *Metrosideros excels*.²² These enclose the wetland and the playing field. They were planted in the rubble, sand and building waste left over from landfill dumped into the wetland when the site was used as a council tip during the 1950s and 60s.²³



Figure 12: Trees and scrub on boundary, wetland plants mid-ground, wind sculpted Tea-tree, Bracelet Honey-myrtle, Coastal Rosemary and Lomandra in the foreground, 20 November 2011, 3:24 pm

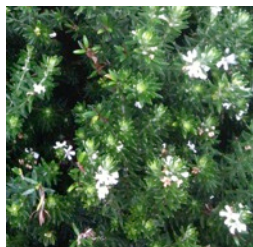


Figure 13: Coastal Rosemary, *Westringia fruticosa*, 14 November 2011, 6:55 pm

²² Geoff Bryant and Eion Scarrow, *The Complete New Zealand Gardener: a practical guide*, (David Bateman, 2006), 199. *Metrosideros excels* are native to New Zealand and other South Pacific Islands.

²³ Digby, interview.



Figure 14: Coastal Banksia, *Banksia integrifolia*, 14 August 2011, 9:27 am

At the Southern end of the playing field, the fenced dam area contains Bulrush, *Typha sp.*, Lomandra and Coastal Wattle, *Acacia longifolia*. There are also invasive weeds like Arundo, *Arundo donax*, and Lantana, *Lantana camara*, that displace native species due to their vigorous growth. Arundo is a giant grass related to bamboo, which grows in the dam (fig. 15). The Lantana is being eradicated because it shades out native plants and creates an environment too dry for frogs to breed. The fresh water that pools in the dam is aerated with microscopic organisms that prevent it from stagnation providing an ideal environment for tadpoles and frogs to lay eggs.²⁴



Figure 15: *Arundo donax* growing in the remediated dam, 11 August 2013, 4:40 pm

²⁴ Digby, interview.

Heath-leaved Banksia, *Banksia ericifolia* (fig. 16), has been planted beside the dam on the hill overlooking the wetland and along the Coastal Walkway.²⁵ This is a very important species for nectar feeding birds during the winter. The bright orange cone is made up of miniature red and yellow flowers which are pollinated by Honeyeaters. Just beyond the southern end of the reserve you can see New Holland Honeyeaters in the evening during winter, ‘bouncing’ into the air as they check for safety, while they feed for nectar.



Figure 16: Heath-leaved Banksia, *Banksia ericifolia*, 11 august 2013, 4:52 pm

Lomandra, Coastal Rosemary, Tea-tree, Coastal Banksia and Bracelet Honey-myrtle, *Melaleuca armillaris*, were planted along the pathway leading south toward the board-walk as well as back up the hill between the wetland, dam and grassed area. Salt-laden wind sculpts these Coastal Heath species. Coastal Rosemary and Heath-myrtle, *Baeckea imbricate*, are pollinated by tiny moths, which are attracted to the white flowers that glow in the moonlight (see fig. 5 and 13). Coastal Banksia has beautiful yellow flowers in September, which develop into woody cones that release seed every year without needing fire or drought to open the seed capsules (see fig. 9). Lomandra is often planted along pathways to provide a protective corridor for wildlife and gives off a wonderful rich aroma when in fruit and flower.

²⁵ Today, Randwick City Council Nursery collects Heath-leaved Banksia seed for propagation under Perspex using heat from the sun. Digby interview.

The plants in the wetland are predominantly species of sedge, CYPERACEAE, and grass or sedge like herbs, JUNCACEAE, together with a small number of primitive plants that are becoming rare due to urbanisation. On the rock platform between the sea cliff and the boardwalk there are Wet Heath species and, in the surface of the peat, a number of small herbs and primitive plants like Hairy Centrolepis, *Centrolepis strigosa*, Sundews, *Drosera* sp. (see fig. 17), Common Pipewort, *Erocaulon scaiosum*, and a tiny sedge *Isolepis cernua*.²⁶ These species are untidy looking and not readily noticed. Sundews are carnivorous herbs that consume small insects that become trapped in the sticky dew on their hairy leaves. The plant senses the insect then rolls up and dissolves it, providing the nitrogen lacking in the sandy soil.²⁷ Botanist J.H. Maiden described sundews as, 'Jewelled with rubies small and bright, each on a crimson stem, Upheld, to catch the chequer'd light'.²⁸



Figure 17: Sundew, *Drosera spathulata*,
Coastal wetland in Booderee Botanical Gardens, 21 May 2012, 11:49am

The wetland plants between the boardwalk, Wolseley Street and the dam are Coastal Heath and Sedge mixed with Bulrush and aquatic herbs like Water Ribbons, *Triglochin* sp. (see fig. 18). You can see large areas of wind swept Twig-rush, *Baumea juncea*, that is a grey-green colour. The smaller Pale Twig-rush, *Baumea acute*, looks as though it is marching across the landscape (see fig. 19). Stitched in time, its spreading rhizomes grow in shallow soil deposited in the runnels of the eroded uplifted sandstone.

²⁶ Dodson, Chant and Daly, *Human impact recorded in an urban wetland's sediments in Sydney, Australia*, 113-124.

²⁷ Daniel Chamovitz, "What a Plant Feels" in *What a Plant Knows*, (Oneworld Publications, 2012), 56. Chamovitz references Charles Darwin's research on sundews.

²⁸ J.H. Maiden, Reference 17 in Dicolyledons, Myrtaceae: J.H. Maiden, *Critical Revision of the Genus Eucalyptus*; number CCXXVIII; Robinson, *Field Guide to the Native Plants of Sydney*, 162-164.



Figure 18: Coastal Heath mixed sedge, rushes and aquatic herbs, 7 November 2010, 6:41 pm



Figure 19: *Baumea acute* – *Stitched in Time*, 5 July 2009, 7:24 am

Water Ribbons, *Triglochin procera*, is a large aquatic herb that grows in still or gently flowing fresh water. It has tuberous roots and long strap-like leaves, with thick spikes that protrude skyward that are densely packed with tiny flowers. The smaller grass-like herb Streaked Arrow-grass, *Triglochin striatum*, grows in a narrow band alongside the boardwalk where dogs galloping through the water cause a lot of damage.



Figure 20: *Baumea acute* and dog trampled *Triglochin striatum*, 15 March 2009, 5:15 pm

On the lower part of rock platform, in front of the boardwalk, there are miniature species hidden among the colonising weeds such as Pennywort, *Hydrocotyle bonariensis*, and Watercress, *Nasturtium officinale*. Duck Weed, *Spirodela punctata*, (fig. 21) is a tiny aquatic herb with one root and one leaf that floats in still and gently flowing water. Flowering in summer, it is rarely seen. Microscopic spiral vessels are visible in the plant giving it the name *Spirodela* (Greek); *punctata* is Latin for spotted. Duck Weed is an important food for waterfowl and fish.



Figure 21: Miniature species including Duck Weed, 27 July 2013, 5:06 pm

From the boardwalk you can hear the ‘crick-crick-crick’ sound made by the Eastern Common Froglets, and a loud ‘tok’ or ‘whuck’ noise made by the Striped Marsh Frogs as they float on water amongst the vegetation or rest at the water’s edge. These frogs are coloured and textured so that they camouflage with the soil layer they inhabit. You can only see them if you take time to look closely.²⁹

Having come from another place, in my case New Zealand, I have had to learn how to see the Australian landscape. At first, this intricate tapestry of life is not visible. Gradually, over time, through being shown the plants, in looking closely, and studying them, I have learned to really see and appreciate their complexity of colour, texture and form. As a jewellery artist, my fascination with the small and detailed was further nourished by this kind of looking.



Figure 22: Creeping Brookweed, *Samolus repens*, 20 November 2011, 3:27 pm

²⁹ Frogs of Australia, “*Limnodynastes peroni*”, <http://frogs.org.au/frogs/species/Limnodynastes/peroni/>; <http://frogs.org.au/frogs/species/Crinia/signifera/>; Martyn Robinson, *A Field Guide to Frogs of Australia*, (Sydney, Kangaroo Press, 2003), 24-30, 40-41.

CHAPTER TWO

HOW DOES SUCH A PLACE INFLUENCE PEOPLE?

*How does such a place influence people? And how, in their turn, do the people make their mark upon the place? How have they developed it?*³⁰

The people who lived in the coastal region of the Sydney Basin were Saltwater people. Their traditional territory stretched from Botany Bay along the Georges River, out west as far as Parramatta, and followed the Hawkesbury River down to its mouth, and south along the coast to include the heads and Eastern Beaches. They identified themselves as Eora, 'the people'. The name Eora is 'derived from Ee (yes) and ora (here, or this place), revealing their deep connection to the land.'³¹ Eora were made up of family groups or clans that resided at specific sites, marrying members of different clans in and around the region.³²

A clan who may have visited the wetland at the Trenerry Reserve site is 'The Kameygal (Spear Clan) [who] occupied Kamay, the north shore of Botany Bay, and the country east of the Cooks River, including present day Botany and La Perouse, and up the coast northwards to outer South Head, including Bondi.'³³ A map showing the locations of Aboriginal groups in the Sydney area, drawn by J. Goodrum in 1788, refers to the Birrabirragal (Camp Cove, South Head), the Cadigal (Sydney), and the Muru-ora-dial (Maroubra).³⁴ Murru-orr means Pathway Place³⁵ and it is reasonable to assume that this is the same pathway that the Trenerry Reserve Boardwalk today follows along the coastline toward Maroubra.

³⁰ Elliot, *The landscape of Australian poetry*, 4.

³¹ Keith Vincent Smith, *Eora: Mapping Aboriginal Sydney 1770-1850*, ed. Theresea Willsted (Sydney: State Library of New South Wales, 2006), 1.

³² Barani - Sydney's Indigenous History. "Barani Indigenous History of Sydney". Accessed 14 August 2010 and 5 October 2013. <http://www.sydneybarani.com.au/sites/aboriginal-people-and-place/>.

³³ Smith, *Eora: Mapping Aboriginal Sydney 1770-1850*, 12.

³⁴ Map: Locations of Aboriginal groups in the Sydney area, based on a map by J Goodrum in Mulvaney, D J & White, J Peter 1987, *Australians to 1788*, Fairfax, Syme & Weldon Associates, Broadway, NSW, Australia: 345; Barani - Sydney's Indigenous History. "Barani Indigenous History of Sydney".

³⁵ Smith, *Eora: Mapping Aboriginal Sydney 1770-1850*, 2. "Cora Gooseberry's words gain significance when we know that she was the daughter of Mooroo-boora, headman of the Murro-ore (Pathway Place) Clan and half-brother of Daringa, who had married Colebee the Cadigal. Mooroo-boora took his own name from his clan's camping place, named from *murru* (pathway) and Boora (Long Bay), and now the seaside suburb of Maroubra."

Oral tradition and traditional dance, passed down through the ages, provide stories of how people lived as part of the place and what it was like.³⁶ Some of these stories can be shared today because descendants of Eora survivors of the 1789 smallpox epidemic remained in the Sydney region, while others moved to different locations to join tribes with family or cultural connections.³⁷ Their knowledge has passed through the generations, and is shared with a wider community.

Bernie McLeod, Traditional Owner, points out that wetlands were preferred places to live because they offered shelter with a ready supply of fresh drinking water, animals, fruit, tuber and seed plants to eat and plants for weaving materials.³⁸ Given the nature of the swampy terrain around Sydney, Anita Heiss and Melodie-Jane Gibson point out that campgrounds would have been on more habitable ground where fresh running water was at hand.³⁹ Julie Freeman of Wreck Bay in Jervis Bay tells of how the women and children used to collect flowers from their coastal heathlands:

*We would collect christmas bush, pink swampies, tea-tree and lilies, all within an afternoon walk. While we were walking we would learn the kids about possum trails, snake wriggles, roo tracks and sundews.*⁴⁰ Julie Freeman

The flowers of *Lomandra* (fig. 23) were eaten and the leaves were used in basket and net making.⁴¹ The tuberous roots of Water Ribbons were baked and eaten; the small green fruit are also edible.⁴² Coastal Wattle seeds were used to make flour for bread.⁴³ The sap of the Swamp Lily, *Crinum Lily*, is still used today to calm bluebottle stings.⁴⁴ Resin

³⁶ Margaret Somerville and Tony Perkins, *Singing the Coast* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2010), 19-20; Fiona Magowan, *Melodies of Mourning: music and emotion in Northern Australia* (Australia: University of Western Australia Press, 2007), 8,13-15; Bernie McLeod, (Traditional Owner and Curator of Booderee Botanical Gardens), interviewed by Karin Jakobsson, "Transcript of Interview with Bernie McLeod, 21 May 2012", 26-34.

³⁷ Barani - Sydney's Indigenous History. "Barani Indigenous History of Sydney". Accessed 14 August 2010 and 5 October 2013. <http://www.sydneybarani.com.au/sites/aboriginal-people-and-place/>; Grace Karskens, *The Colony: A History of Early Sydney* (Australia: Allen & Unwin, 2010), 42; McLeod, interview, 8, 30; People from La Perouse have close connections with families who live in Wreck Bay in Booderee National Park, Jervis Bay, where cultural practices of working with the ecology of the land and sea have been kept alive.

³⁸ McLeod, interview, 18, 48-55.

³⁹ Barani - Sydney's Indigenous History. "Barani Indigenous History of Sydney".

⁴⁰ Renwick, *Geebungs and Snake Whistles: Koori people and the plants of Wreck Bay*, 15.

⁴¹ Digby, interview, 20, 24, 30; Robinson, *Field Guide to the Native Plants of Sydney*, 277.

⁴² Digby, interview, 16, 25; Robinson, *Field Guide to the Native Plants of Sydney*, 426.

⁴³ Digby, interview, 24; Robinson, *Field Guide to the Native Plants of Sydney*, 400.

⁴⁴ Digby, interview, 29; Renwick, *Geebungs and Snake Whistles: Koori people and the plants of Wreck Bay*, 32.

from the Grass Tree was used as glue for attaching hooks to lines and spearheads. After European settlement it was collected to make into lacquer for cabinetmakers.⁴⁵



Figure 23: *Lomandra* in flower, 14 November 2011, 6:28 pm

Layers of charcoal found in the peat at Trenerry Reserve suggest that the heath and woodland surrounding the wetland may have been managed with the regular use of fire for a thousand years or more. The type of sediment found in the peat shows there was little erosion, and the pollen record shows few changes in the balance of plant species at that time, suggesting the fires were mainly lit and managed by Aborigines.⁴⁶ Bernie McLeod described their method as being a mosaic burn of the land every two to five years, so that pockets of bush remain for wildlife to shelter. This type of burn also enables regeneration of bush.⁴⁷ In another form of land management, it is thought that Aboriginal men cleared swathes of Sydney coastal heath to allow ease of passage for the women to gather materials and food, without being lacerated by some of the plants.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ McLeod, interview, 46-47; Renwick, *Geebungs and Snake Whistles: Koori people and the plants of Wreck Bay*, 26-27.

⁴⁶ Randwick City Council Information Board, *Why is this Swamp Special* (Sydney: Randwick City Council).

⁴⁷ McLeod, interview, 2-4.

⁴⁸ Karskens, *The Colony: A History of Early Sydney*, 46.

The letters, journals, illustrations and collections of the explorers and first settlers include accounts of encounters with the Eora and record language and aspects of their culture. Captain Cook, in a letter written in 1771, described the Aboriginal people of the east coast as living in a Garden of Eden. He observed that their diet consisted mainly of fish and wild birds, supplemented with other food provided by the land.

*They live in a Tranquility which is not disturb'd by the inequality of condition, the Earth and Sea of their own accord furnishes them with all things necessary for life; they covet not magnificent Houses Household-stuff &ca. they sleep as sound in a small hovel or even in the open as the King in His Pallace on a Bed of down....*⁴⁹

We can imagine the thrill and wonder botanists Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander experienced when they stepped onto land in Botany Bay and discovered the unusual plants and amazing wildflowers there. Exploring for eight days, they collected over 80 new species and filled 2400 drying sheets with specimens.⁵⁰ On May 4th 1770 Banks went ashore on the north-west side of Botany Bay and described what was probably Eastern Suburbs Banksia. Here the botanists also collected the bright red Mountain Devil *Lambertia Formosa*, a honey flower that can still be found at La Perouse and Kurnell (see fig. 25).⁵¹ Sydney Parkinson, the botanical artist on the *Endeavour*, drew the Christmas Bell, *Blandfordia nobilis* (fig. 24), when it was unusually still in flower. This grew in the swamps around Botany Bay until it was destroyed by industrial and suburban spread.⁵²



Figure 24: Christmas Bell, *Blandfordia nobilis*,
www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/ "Interesting Botany Bay plants"

⁴⁹ "Letter from Captain James Cook to John Walker 1771" in *The Oxford Book of Australian Letters*, eds. Brenda Niall and John Thompson (Melbourne, Oxford, Auckland, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 1-3.

⁵⁰ Adam Fairley, *Wildflowers of Sydney and adjoining areas* (Melbourne: Blooming Books, 2001), v.

⁵¹ Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust. "Banks and Solander specimens". Accessed 24 September 2013. http://www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/science/Evolutionary_Ecology_Research/Botany_of_Botany_Bay/plants/banks_and_solander_specimens. Today the collection is held in the Natural History Museum in London, and since about 1900 duplicate material has been donated by the Museum to other institutions relevant to the Endeavour voyage. A specimen sheet of *Banksia serrata* is held at The National Herbarium of New South Wales at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney, which I had the good fortune to see on display in the gallery of the Herbarium on 14/10/11.

⁵² Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust. "Interesting Botany Bay plants". Accessed 24 September 2013. http://www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/science/Evolutionary_Ecology_Research/Botany_of_Botany_Bay/plants/interesting_botany_bay_plants.



Figure 25: Mountain Devil, *Lambertia Formosa*
Coastal Heath, Jervis Bay, 16 February 2005, 9:37 am

On 12 June 1788 Surgeon George Worgan of the First Fleet wrote a poetic account of the landscape as he saw it on the first sailing from Botany Bay to the shelter of Sydney Cove. Later came the frustration and disappointment of finding that meadowlands that at first had seemed ideal for cultivation were interrupted with rock, sand and swampy surfaces, crowded with large trees and impenetrable ‘Brush-wood’.⁵³

Scribed on a 1791 map in Captain John Hunter’s journal, of the land between Sydney Cove and Botany Bay, which is bounded by Port Jackson, South Head, and the coastline (where lies the remnant wetland and coastal heath at Trenerry Reserve), are the notes: “*Exceedingly rocky, sandy and barren; Barren sands; Sandy and barren*”; west of Cooks River in Botany Bay the land was, “*Sandy, barren swampy country*” and “*Swampy and barren*” in south Botany Bay.⁵⁴

Early illustrations of the landscape on the south side of Port Jackson depict grasslands, rocky outcrops, freshwater runs and Banksia scrub. The presence of Aboriginal people is evident, with Grass Trees and Cycads nearby (fig. 26). These plants were very important to the Eora way of living but were exploited by Europeans to the point that they are no longer seen except in gardens.

⁵³ "Letter from George Worgan to brother Richard Worgan, 12 June 1788" in *The Oxford Book of Australian Letters*, 4-9.

⁵⁴ Paul Ashton and Duncan Waterson, "A Map of the hitherto explored country, contiguous to Port Jackson: laid down from Actual Survey" in *Sydney Takes Shape: a history in maps*, ed. Jim Bowden. (Brisbane: Hemma Maps, 2000), 10-11.



Figure 26: *View of the Heads at the entrance to Port Jackson New South Wales, 1824*, Joseph Lycett, State Library of New South Wales, SAFE F82/16, plate 9

Following European settlement the wetland and surrounding area became progressively degraded. Kikuyu grass (fig. 27) and Buffalo grass colonised the dunes and wetland, and Mirror Bush, *Coprosma repens*, from New Zealand displaced heath species and the wildlife they sustained. By the early 1990s only a handful of coastal heath plants remained.⁵⁵ However it is still possible to imagine what this place was like before colonisation by visiting remnant pockets of coastal heath and wetland in the dune system that once extended between Port Jackson and Botany Bay. These remnants can be found on either side of the entrance to Botany Bay - adjacent to La Perouse; bordering Congwong Bay and the New South Wales Golf Club; and at Kamay Botany Bay National Park, which includes Captain Cook's Landing Place at Kurnell.⁵⁶



Figure 27: Kikuyu grass, Pennywort and Watercress, 15 March 2009, 5:21 pm

⁵⁵ Randwick City Council Information Board, *From 'Goat Track' to Boardwalk* (Sydney: Randwick City Council).

⁵⁶ Howell and Benson, *Sydney's Bushland: more than meets the eye*, 98-99. Pockets of heath and the remains of wetlands can be seen from the air when flying into Sydney.

The wetland in Trenerry Reserve continues to be ‘gardened’. Randwick City Council and Bush-care, a community of local volunteers formerly led by Bettina Digby, the Bushland and Biodiversity Supervisor at Randwick City Council, have preserved the remnant swamp, along with the peat and associated heath. Over the past twenty years volunteers and specialists have used historical and scientific research as a guide to restoring the environment from its badly degraded state. They have implemented erosion control, removed or shaded out weeds, and reintroduced plants indigenous to this environment by collecting seed, propagating it at the council nursery and planting out the seedlings. By participating in the care of Trenerry Reserve this community has become a part of the ecology of this place.⁵⁷



Figure 28: At Trenerry Reserve, 7 June 2009, 4:35 pm

⁵⁷ Digby, interview. It takes time to learn the cycles of plants and the optimum conditions they require to flourish, shade verses sunlight, wet and dry, nutritional balance, and to learn which plants are dependent on others to create the right environment. The plants that do best have a community of species surrounding them.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SPIRIT OF THE PLACE

*What spiritual and emotional qualities does [sic] such a people develop in such an environment? In what ways do the forces of nature impinge upon the imagination?*⁵⁸

I chose to work with Trenerry Reserve during my MFA for its potential to be the focus of a place-related investigation encompassing multiple levels: geological, botanical, historical and cultural. At the start of the project, I was familiar with the locality but could identify only a few of the more common plants that grew there. As long ago as 2004, before I learned the sun was no place for me, I photographed one stark white flower shining brightly in the mid-morning light among dried out Kikuyu grass and drought scorched Pennywort. That flower was Coastal Morning Glory, *Ipomoea cairica*, an environmental weed that quickly smothers trees and understory species.



Figure 29: *Beware of Morning Glory*
White Coastal Morning Glory, *Ipomoea cairica*, 31 October 2004, 10:00 am

⁵⁸ Elliot, *The landscape of Australian poetry*, 4.

It is quite telling, given my interest in the impact of European colonisation and settlement on the local environment, that the plants I knew at the Reserve all turned out to be weeds. Introduced species like Morning Glory had taken hold in their new home. A species of Pennywort, *Hydrocotyle bonariensis*, from South America was one of the most obvious and prolific plants on the cliff-top dunes and in the wetland. The Bulrushes growing there were the most easily identifiable plants to me. Bulrush are native in Australia but not indigenous to this wetland where they only began appearing from the time of European occupation, which changed the environment resulting in an increase of phosphates that enabled Bulrushes to thrive.⁵⁹ At the southern end of Trenerry Reserve, the cliff-face was home to succulents and cacti that were garden escapees, including Mother-of-millions, *Bryophyllum delagoense*, and the garden ornamental Lavender scallops, *Kalanchoe fedtschenkoi*. These succulent plants captured my imagination with their animalistic and prehistoric appearance.

Although I was initially disappointed to learn that the plants that captured my interest were not Australian natives, plants such as Mother-of-millions, Kalanchoe and other the weeds became increasingly important to my work. (The 'Layered Paper' medium I used in this work is the one I invented in 2006 to express the colour, texture and form of Mother-of-millions.) In the context of Trenerry Reserve, I see myself as another weed – an introduced species, not native to this place. However my fair skin, which is exceptionally susceptible to sunlight, means that unlike other weeds I cannot thrive here. Exploring this contradiction led to the production of a number of works: *Pennywort* brooch pin (2009) (fig. 31); *Bulrush* brooch (2009) (fig. 33); *Strong Sunlight* brooch (2009) (fig. 34); *Succulent Skin I, II, III* a series of two brooches and one ring (2010) (fig. 39, 40 and 41). The pieces I made next are about ways in which landscape places are perceived and valued; they are: *Sunlight and Surf* two brooches (2010) (fig. 42 and 43); *Baumea juncea* neckpiece (2011) (fig. 47); three *Specimen boxes* (2012) (see fig. 62); *Worry Bead for the Lucky Country* hand-held talisman (2006-2014) (fig. 48 and 50).⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Randwick City Council Information Board, *Why is this Swamp Special*. This type of sediment provided mineral rich nutrients for Bulrush to grow that did not appear in the pollen and fossil record prior to European settlement.

⁶⁰ During this period I learned my eyesight was rapidly changing, resulting in my not being able to continue making work. It took time to establish the colour of Irlen filters with prescription lenses that gradually improved my ability.

PENNYWORT

While learning about the plants of a place has often been the starting point for my work, I had no intention of creating botanical replications. Rather the aim was to distil elements of the plant and express my sensory experience of the place in which it was found. A rich history of botanical representation already exists in the field of jewellery, so in order to find my own visual language I chose to use abstraction as an expression of what can be seen and experienced of plants found in Australian landscapes.

For example, *Pennywort* brooch pin (2009) (fig. 31) is an abstraction of the Pennyworts colonising Trenerry Reserve (fig. 30). This species is a creeping herb with shiny, circular leaves, centrally attached to a long stalk, which roots along the stem and has rhizomes embedded in shallow soil.⁶¹ If you look closely you can see the leaves have rippled edges and a waxy quality. Viewed en masse, their circular leaves arch over long stems and wave like flags in the wind.



Figure 30: Pennywort, *Hydrocotyle bonariensis*,
15 March 2009, 5:23 pm

⁶¹ Robinson, *Field Guide to the Native Plants of Sydney*, 390.

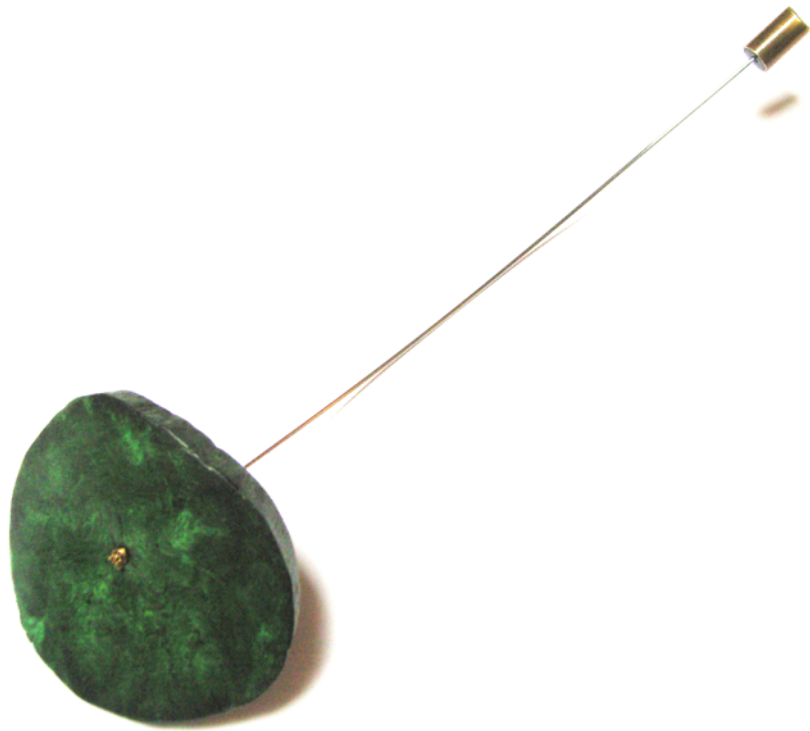


Figure 31: Karin Jakobsson, *Pennywort*, (2009)

My representation of this plant was achieved by creating a leaf shape out of ready-made coils of crepe-paper that were bound and 'laminated' in archival glue, air dried, sawn in cross sections to make circular discs, then filed and polished. The leaf form was riveted centrally to a long curved, brass wire 'stem', with an end-cap of brass tube plugged with dried green archival glue and fashioned to suggest a rhizome. I later learned that key elements that identify *Hydrocotyle* species were represented in this abstraction. These include a cellular surface structure called the lamina, and rounded lobes edging the leaf.⁶²

⁶² Associate Professor Murray Henwood of the School of Biological Sciences, University of Sydney, serendipitously, specialises in the ecological history of *Hydrocotyle* species (Pennyworts) around the world.

BULRUSH



Figure 32: Bulrush, *Typha orientalis*,
07 January 2011, 6:45 pm

Bulrush brooch (2009) (fig. 33) was also made as an expression of my sensory experience at Trenerry Reserve. Layers of green and yellow paper were embedded with copper shim that, once laminated and dried, was cut using a handsaw that left marks across the coloured layers. To me these marks were like a miniature drawing, capturing the essence of the landscape that contained sunlit Bulrushes, and reminded me of the rich heady scent of vanilla-like Lomandra and the acrid seedpods of yellow flowering Coastal Wattle roasting in the heat. Another side of the brooch was shaped and smoothed to express sunlight catching the edge of the copper/green bulrush leaves twisting in the wind. A layer of green archival glue was painted on the top surface to represent the frogs that live among them.

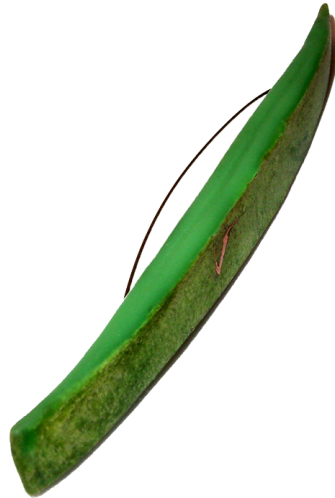


Figure 33: Karin Jakobsson, *Bulrush*, left and right sides, (2009)

STRONG SUNLIGHT

Strong Sunlight brooch (2009) (fig. 34) represents the searing brightness and intensity of Australian light and my own painful experience of being in the sun at Trenerry Reserve. (Until recently I could barely 'see' the landscape. It was as though there was too much light to take in the view: the whole scene rippled and sparkled.) This work is made of hundreds of layers of tissue paper, in different shades of yellow and orange, sandwiching a layer of silver chosen for its reflective brightness.



Figure 34: Karin Jakobsson, *Strong Sunlight*, (2009)

One of the goals I set myself for this project was to extend my material practice by working with the archival glue that is a by-product of the layered paper process. Allowing the glue to dry to a solid block over time produces a material that can be carved (fig. 36). This material derives its colour from dye that was absorbed from the coloured tissue paper during the 'lamination' stage of the layered paper process (fig. 35). While the glue is flexible and non-yellowing, the dye - like the plants I work with, and my own body - is light sensitive; its colour fades with time (fig. 37).

DYED ARCHIVAL GLUE



Figure 35: 'Laminating' bound layered paper in archival glue, 30 June 2006



Figure 36: Air-drying dyed archival glue, 2 July 2009

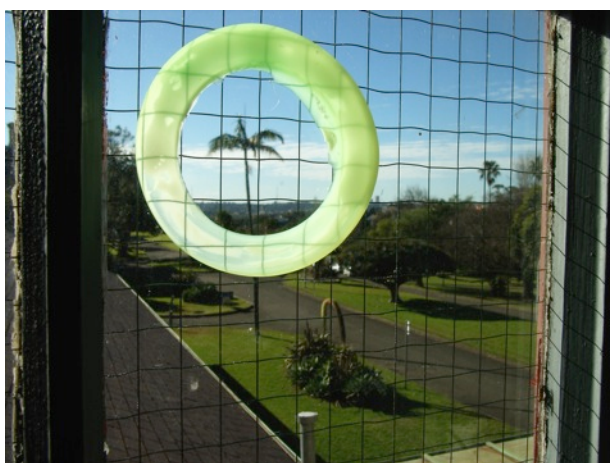


Figure 37: Testing ultra violet light fastness of dyed archival glue, 2 July 2009

KALANCHOE

Kalanchoe fedtschenkoi is the plant I chose to represent myself at Trenerry Reserve. Similar to my own skin, its fleshy leaves turn pink around the edges under strong sunlight or drought conditions.

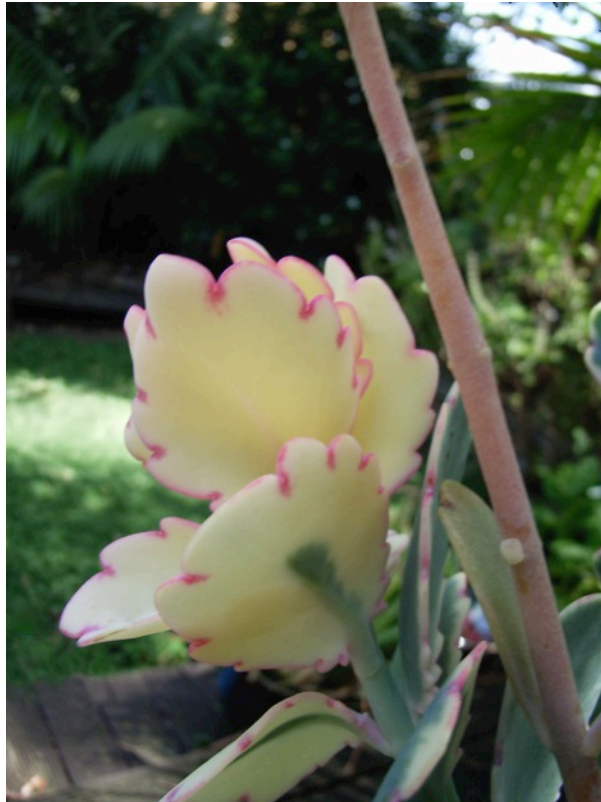


Figure 38: *Kalanchoe fedtschenkoi*, (potted specimen), 19 November 2009

A small series entitled *Succulent skin* (2010) (see figs. 39, 40, 41) was made using a block of glue similar in colour to *Kalanchoe fedtschenkoi*. To make a ring that expresses the soft, skin-like texture and translucent quality of a Kalanchoe leaf and the pain I felt when in the sun at Trenerry Reserve, I carved a semi-translucent Kalanchoe leaf pierced with a vein of pink copper extending out from the leaf to form the ring shank. For the brooches, I utilized the surface of a block of glue for its skin like texture, and carved forms that can be read like leaves or ships to tell an allegorical story of how these plants and Europeans came to be in Australia. The brooches are sliced through with a sheet of silver to reflect bright light.



Figure 39: Karin Jakobsson, *Succulent Skin I*, Ring, (2010)



Figure 40: Karin Jakobsson, *Succulent Skin II*, Brooch, (2010)



Figure 41: Karin Jakobsson, *Succulent Skin III*, Brooch, (2010)

SUNLIGHT AND SURF

At Trenerry Reserve people visit the coastline for sunlight and surf: a place to walk, explore, relax and *be*; enjoying the warmth of the sun, the sound of the waves, the feeling of wind, and breathing salt air. *Sunlight* and *Surf* brooches (2010) (fig. 42 and 43) were made for those who have fond memories of being in sunlight and surf. They are representations of moments of being (observing with sensory experience). These pieces represent stillness and movement, depth and expansion. They are made as souvenirs that are reminiscent of moments in time, which can be worn on the body to signify a connection and relationship with place. The colours and graphic forms of these brooches were designed to express sensory experience of ocean-side scenes, and aim to transport the viewer's imagination to another time and place, instigating a moment to daydream.⁶³



Figure 42: Karin Jakobsson, *Sunlight*, Brooch, (2010)

Surf (2010) (see fig. 43) is a brooch carved from hundreds of layers of paper to resemble an ocean wave. It is coloured like the sea below Trenerry Reserve as it expands toward the horizon, a wall of waves thundering against the rock, a fish surfing a glassy blue break. The layers of paper represent layers of meaning, including the twin ideas of looking closely and largely (see fig. 44). To make these brooches, the designer in me paid attention to the carved form, tension of line, colour, and texture to produce a piece in which the surface suggests the energy of a wave and the coloured, textured layers represent the depth of the sea. They are pieces for contemplation. Their curvaceous forms are body-like; they represent body in place, and place in body.

⁶³ Gaston Bachelard, 'Intimate Immensity' in *The Poetics of Space*, ed. Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), 183. 'And this contemplation produces an attitude that is so special, an inner state that is so unlike any other, that the daydream transports the dreamer outside the immediate world to a world that bears the mark of infinity.'



Figure 43: Karin Jakobsson, *Surf*, Brooch, (2010)

One of the ways we come to know place more deeply is by spending intense moments of time *being* there, experiencing with our senses and noticing changes. During my interview with Warwick Freeman, he spoke of his intense, fleeting pleasure at seeing momentary traces of foam left by waves on a shoreline. Freeman pointed out that even though we have seen that type of scene before, it is never the same. It is the relationship between the elements of a scene at a particular moment in time that stays with us. An experience we are all familiar with, the significance comes from recognising those moments.⁶⁴



Figure 44: Layered paper: deep as the sea

Bernie McLeod, Traditional Owner and curator of Booderee Botanical Gardens, shared with me his experience of teaching young people in his community. He showed them a special place where there are rocks and trees, and a view extending across the ocean to the horizon. He taught them how to sit quietly and take in the scene. As time passed, they began to notice the sounds of the place, the aroma of the bush, the warmth of the sun, and earth beneath them. Those moments of quietly *being* there, gave them a sense of connection to each other and that place. They dreamed of their ancestors who had been there before them; and imagined how they could be in the future, in relation to that place.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Warwick Freeman, (contemporary jewellery artist), interviewed by Karin Jakobsson, "Transcript of Interview with Warwick Freeman, 12 April 2012".

⁶⁵ McLeod, interview, 43-44.

BAUMEA

Species of these sedges have always grown in the peat swamp at Trenerry Reserve. It is likely that coastal Eora women visited the site to collect the nutritious fruit of these plants for making damper, and to cut the stems for basket weaving.⁶⁶



Figure 45: Twig-rush *Baumea juncea*, 07 January 2011, 6:44pm

While learning to identify these plants I came across an image of *Baumea juncea* laid out in sweeping curves on a specimen sheet ready for archiving (see fig. 46).⁶⁷ This image informed the way I treated the production of *Baumea nuda*⁶⁸ necklace (2011) (fig. 47), for which I made varying lengths of hand-twisted, copper and silver wires, linked together and arranged to sweep and curve around the neck. The wirework for this piece was inspired by a demonstration of traditional *string making* techniques by contemporary fibre artist Mavis Ganambarr.⁶⁹ Drops of oxidized copper solder along the ends of the wires were made to resemble the fruiting parts of the plant. The twisted wires express the shadows and light reflecting off the stems and leaves of *Baumea* growing in the wetland. This necklace lost some of its vitality due to my overworking the metal as I twisted the wire; like the collected specimen it had lost its life.

⁶⁶ McLeod, interview, 49, 54.

⁶⁷ Noosa Native Plants. "Baumea juncea". Accessed March 2011 and May 2014. <http://www.noosanativeplants.com.au/plants/79/baumea-juncea>

⁶⁸ This necklace was made prior to my interview with Bettina Digby, Bushland and Coastal Walkway Supervisor at Randwick City Council, where I learned that the *Baumea* species present in Trenerry Reserve are in fact *Baumea juncea* and *Baumea acuta*.

⁶⁹ Mavis Warrngilna Ganambarr, Datiwuy moiety, Elcho Island, northwest Arnhem Land. 'Gunga Djama Mirr (Pandanus Work)' Exhibition, Bandigan Aboriginal Art and Craft, Sydney, 2001.



Figure 46: Pressed specimen of *Baumea juncea* by Sonia MacDonald from the Arthur Harrold Collection. Image by Stephanie Haslam, www.noosanativeplants.com.au/plants/79/baumea-juncea

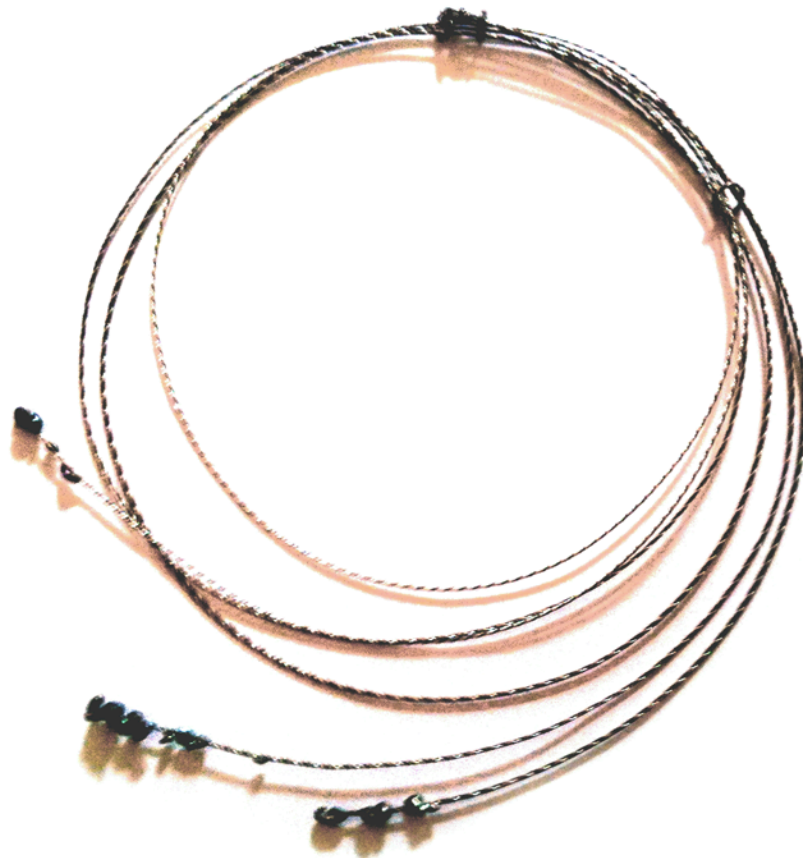


Figure 47: Karin Jakobsson, *Baumea nuda*, Neckpeice, (2011)

WORRY BEAD FOR THE LUCKY COUNTRY

The one piece I made that is not specifically about Trenerry Reserve, *Worry Bead for The Lucky Country* (2006-2014) (fig. 48 and 50), is a talisman for a country being rapidly depleted of its natural resources. Like this ancient landscape, this piece has been a long time in the making, with layers of material carved over time. It is shaped like a Lucky Seed (fig. #) to fit the palm of my hand, with two holes drilled through to play between the fingers, and worry. The holes, like eyes, allow a close look at the materials it is made of - paper, copper, silver and gold, all materials we imagine to be infinite.



Figure 48: Karin Jakobsson, *Worry Bead for the Lucky Country*, Handpiece (green side), (2006 - 2014)

My reference for this piece was a Lucky Seed I found on a shoreline in suburban Sydney (fig. 49). These giant seeds grow in pods on plants such as the Queensland Gogo Vine, *Entada phaseoloides*, in tropical rain forests around the Pacific. The seeds wash into the sea and onto beaches where they have been collected throughout the ages by various cultures for use as talismans, mementos and souvenirs.



Figure 49: Lucky Seed (Sea Bean, Matchbox Bean), *Entada phaseoloide*, Found object

This talisman embodies features that go back to the beginning of my material practice. It is made of the same colour selections of tissue paper used in the first brooch, *The-Mother-of-Millions* (2006). Both these objects have carved profiles informed by the pregnant shape of a Lucky Seed. Viewed topographically, they represent *place*; their rhythmical, concentric layers of colour are suggestive of deep time. It wasn't until 2009 that I knew what the talisman would stand for. When preparing for an exhibition called *re-SOURCE*,⁷⁰ I was thinking about the changes that Europeans made to the wetland at the site of Trenerry Reserve over a short period of time, as well as the radical ways in which the land and ecologies of places throughout Australia have been altered. These musings caused me to transform the piece by splitting the laminated paper to incorporate layers of copper, silver, and gold. Embedded within the layered paper the metal is hard to see, suggesting an equivalence of value with paper (fig. 50). The metal is only revealed through carving, just like the earth these materials are sourced from.



Figure 50: Karin Jakobsson, *Worry Bead for the Lucky Country*, Handpiece (red side), (2006 - 2014)

Historically we have considered the land to be a source of materials for our survival and use. In our exploitation of them we alter the balance of ecological systems that have evolved over time. Like the wetland at Trenerry Reserve that has been restored, gardened, and altered to meet a community's changing needs, I have tended to this talisman over time, remediating and shaping it to achieve a sense of place in my hand.

⁷⁰ 14th JMGA Conference, Perth, 2010.

CHAPTER FOUR

ARTIST RESPONSE TO PLACE

How do aesthetic evaluations grow? And how may poetry come to life in such a place?⁷¹

The artists whom I have thought about most for this project are contemporary jewellery artist Rian de Jong from the Netherlands, New Zealand contemporary jeweller Warwick Freeman, and Australian silversmith Marian Hosking. A common theme in their work and one that relates to my question, ‘what are some of the ways in which we as artists come to know place?’, is site specificity. These artists spend time *being* in places, study them, and create work in response to what they have learned of those places. They employ different modes of observation to make work that reflects what they have seen and learned. Their work expresses physical or emotive responses to the culture of the places represented. In addition, their practices mediate ideas about ways in which resources are valued; they employ aesthetic signifiers that are recognisable in subtle or overt ways; and utilise aspects of the craft of collection, collection being a system of knowledge.

RIAN DE JONG

Rian de Jong is a seasoned traveller who makes works that are reminiscent of souvenirs, which embody the memory of moments experienced and a feeling of the culture of place. In recent years de Jong has been sailing the Americas for months at a time, working from a tiny studio set up on board a small ship.⁷²

⁷¹ Elliot, *The landscape of Australian poetry*, 4.

⁷² Rian de Jong, "Travelling Companions" in *On location making stories: siting, citing, sighting*, 123, 129; Charon Kransen Arts. "Rian de Jong, Artists Biography". Accessed 17 May 2009. http://www.charonkransenarts.com/artists/DeJong/artist_DeJong.html; Rian De Jong, (Artist) interviewed by Karin Jakobsson, "Transcript of Interview with Rian de Jong about Place, Artist and Being, 20 April 2012", via e-mail from her sailing boat somewhere off the coast of South America.

During a workshop entitled 'Transportation' (2006), de Jong shared her ideas about how thoughts and concepts are mediated through three-dimensional objects and how artists can 'get soul' into their work.⁷³ From close observation of a surrounding, an artist can transform their impressions into new ways of seeing. For example, a sea voyage that took de Jong from Amsterdam to Greenland, where the rocky, mountainous landscape is empty of people, then on to New Jersey where she docked directly across from Manhattan, culminated in the creation of jewellery pieces employing this way of thinking. In her tiny on-board studio de Jong created jewellery that combined impressions of these two very different worlds. A brooch was made using a scrap of flotsam found on a pavement to represent the sun, with semiprecious jewels embedded on a golden facade to express the beauty of a sunrise reflecting off Manhattan buildings (fig. 51).⁷⁴



Figure 51: Rian de Jong, *NYNY Right Before My Eyes*, Brooch, (2009)

While these pieces do not have technical perfection they get their strength of form in other ways. De Jong says that her making involves a process of investigating the nature and meaning of disparate materials and forms, resulting in a productive tension between different elements in the piece.⁷⁵ For example, a necklace was made using scraps of acrylic found on a street roughly resembling the shapes of Greenland and North America. These were combined with copper twigs and electro-formed with gold, set with garnets and semi-precious stones to express the space, colour, light and wonder of these two places (see fig. 52).

⁷³ Rian de Jong, "Transportation", workshop during JMGA Conference *On location making stories: siting, citing, sighting*, Sydney, 2006.

⁷⁴ Rian de Jong. *NyNy: Right Before My Eyes*, Exhibition, April 15 - May 15, 2009. Gallery Loupe for Contemporary Art Jewellery, Montclair, New Jersey USA. Gallery Loupe. "Rian de Jong". Accessed 17 May 2009 and 27 March 2012. <http://www.galleryloupe.com/artists.php?sn=7&artist=Rian+de+Jong>

⁷⁵ Rian de Jong, "Travelling Companions", in *On location making stories: siting, citing, sighting*, 123.



Figure 52: Rian de Jong, *NINY Right Before My Eyes*, Brooch, (2008)

WARWICK FREEMAN

Warwick Freeman's compelling jewellery derives its energy from tension of line and strong graphic forms that communicate his observations about the culture of the place where he lives. Throughout his career he has investigated and utilised the attributes of materials that occur naturally in the New Zealand landscape. *White Heart* (2000) is a brooch made from a reshaped scallop shell that did not 'give' itself easily due to its fragility (see fig. 53).⁷⁶ Freeman is highly skilled in using a wide variety of materials, both natural and man-made. The connection devices he designs 'frame' his jewellery pieces, reading like signs that refer to the past and communicate cultural concerns of the present. For neckpieces he uses methods similar to those found in traditional Pacific adornment. The settings he creates for pendants and brooches are made with claws and pins reminiscent of those used in colonial jewellery pieces that, at the time, were popular for 'showing off' exotic acquisitions.⁷⁷ According to Damian Skinner, Freeman's jewellery is 'made with intent', but makes space for the viewer's own meaning. Wearing a Freeman brooch is a prompt for conversations and encounters between wearer and viewer. Freeman responds to the resulting discourse with new ideas and production.

⁷⁶ Damian Skinner and Warwick Freeman, *Given: jewellery by Warwick Freeman*, (Auckland: Starform, 2004), 48.

⁷⁷ Skinner and Freeman, *Given: jewellery by Warwick Freeman*, 30-31, 46-49;



Figure 53: Warwick Freeman, *White Heart*, Brooch, (2000)

As a fellow-New Zealander it is important for me to understand the cultural background that underpins both our works. A new jewellery movement began in the early 1980s in Auckland when the jewellery collective known as Fingers hosted the exhibition *Paua Dreams* (1981). Jewellers from around the country were invited to investigate new ways of using paua shell (blue abalone) in jewellery, with the aim being to redeem the beautiful material from the kitsch of the souvenir industry. Instead of using inlays of paua, a number of jewellers made work using the natural form of the shell, looking to Pacific adornment for a guide to handling the material and ideas for attachments.⁷⁸

For *Paua Dreams* Freeman made *Criss Cross* necklace (1981) with a European take on Pacific adornment. Later he made *Whitebait* necklace (1982) where he worked the curved rim of a number of paua shells, smoothing and polishing them to catch the light, and strung them together with fibre in the shape of a breastplate. They look like a school of silvery whitebait.⁷⁹ Freeman commented about this work that it says something about walking on a New Zealand beach and the pleasure in picking up a beautiful blue/green shell washed up from the sea.⁸⁰ However for Freeman cultural identity is not just national identity but everything we are, including gender, sexuality, race, education and more. He says, it is those 'bigger conversations' that are the source of the pieces that get made.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Skinner and Freeman, *Given: jewellery by Warwick Freeman*, 18-23, 67-75.

⁷⁹ Ibid. 18-21.

⁸⁰ Skinner and Freeman, *Given: jewellery by Warwick Freeman*, 69.

⁸¹ Warwick Freeman, "Can't You Read?" interview with Damian Skinner in *Object*, ([Sydney: Australian Centre for Craft and Design; 2002]), issue 40, 54.

An early emblematic work was the small series *Fern, Fish, Feather, Rose* (1987). According to Freeman, viewers felt uneasy at the inclusion of *Rose*, as it was not from the place of *Fern, Fish, Feather*, and could be viewed as a thorn of contention.⁸² A related work is *Life Sentence* (2002) (fig. 54), a collection of nineteen emblematic brooches made between 1990 and 2002. The brooches are recognisable cultural signifiers of New Zealand and the Pacific, and are arranged linearly like a sentence, suggesting communication with the viewer.⁸³

Damian Skinner discusses the dynamic ideas behind Freeman's emblematic brooches that raise questions about place, identity, bi-culturalism and the appropriation of cultural signifiers.⁸⁴ Skinner demonstrates how complex signs from Maori and post-colonial cultures in Aotearoa (New Zealand) have been shared and absorbed over time. Many New Zealanders today have adopted these signifiers from both cultures and consider them to be part of their identity, which leads to a feeling of belonging to the place that is Aotearoa.



Figure 54: Warwick Freeman, *Life Sentence*, Brooches from series, (1990-2000)

⁸² Skinner and Freeman, *Given: jewellery by Warwick Freeman*, 42, 44-45.

⁸³ Warwick Freeman, "Can't You Read?" interview with Damian Skinner in *Object*, issue 40, 50-54.

⁸⁴ Damian Skinner, "Signs of Life in the Shaky Isles: Warwick Freeman's Jewellery and Contemporary Cultural Politics in Aotearoa" in *On location making stories: siting, citing, sighting*. Sydney: JMGA-NSW, 2007, 47-62.

MARIAN HOSKING

Working predominantly with silver, Marian Hosking creates beautiful jewellery and objects that represent moments in time and occurrences in nature that are easily overlooked. She says of her work that she selects 'slices or fragments' of the Australian landscape, describing her pieces as 'signifiers of place, and being about specific plants that grow in certain locations.'⁸⁵ With the passion of a conservationist, she shares her observations in works that are aimed to evoke a response in the viewer and to heighten our awareness.

One of the ways we come to know place is through time spent *being* there, and by sharing our experience with others. Souvenirs and mementos signify experiences of a time and place. Hosking sees herself as a maker of these, not in the mass-produced sense but rather as 'a maker of something that can stand for a place, situation or moment in time.'⁸⁶ Her *Shell Shard Rings* (2005) are like gift tokens for memories of times spent walking on a beach and picking up a beautiful shell to pass to a friend (fig. 55). These rings read as though she is saying, 'Look! See? Isn't this wonderful?' They are made in a way that draws our attention to the pattern of the striations on the shell, which she has 'highlighted' by polishing. The shells are shaped like eyes, pinned centrally to a shank with silver rivets. Exhibited together, the rings are like a collection of specimens. An uncut shell shard placed beside the rings adds another layer to the reading of this collection, gently directing our memory to shorelines and middens where shell shards can be found.



Figure 55: Marian Hosking, *Five Rings and a Shell Shard*, (2005)

⁸⁵ Marian Hosking, "A conversation between Marian Hosking and Claudia Terstappen, March 2007" in *Marian Hosking: Jewellery* (Australia: Craftsman House, 2007), 77.

⁸⁶ Marian Hosking, "A conversation between Marian Hosking and Claudia Terstappen, March 2007" in *Marian Hosking: Jewellery*, 79.

In choosing to work with silver, Hosking acknowledges values that have been historically attributed to that material. These include signs of sentiment as well as acquisition. The silver aids in the reading of her work where her intention is to ‘frame’ that which is not seen, and to elevate it in status so we may consider what she is representing in nature to be of value.⁸⁷

She uses a variety of metal working techniques to express what she has observed and learned about elements she finds in the landscape. They include lost-wax casting, a method that accurately receives and preserves details of the unusual forms and surface textures of Australian plants, and saw-pierced silver works, where she cuts out the spaces between photocopied images of plants to make silhouettes that she layers in low relief to ‘represent a pictorial depth of field’ (fig. 56).⁸⁸ These techniques and others, like her beautiful hand drilled patterns, are combined with oxidisation processes to represent qualities of the light and shadow seen in Australian bush scenes.⁸⁹ Kit Wise, in his essay ‘Marian Hosking: tracing nature’, observes that the signifiers she employs are arranged rhythmically rather than as sentences.⁹⁰



Figure 56: Marian Hosking, *Malley Wattle Brooch*, (2007)

⁸⁷ Claudia Terstappen, “In dialogue with Nature” in *Marian Hosking: Jewellery*, 67; Ibid. 80.

⁸⁸ Marian Hosking, “A conversation between Marian Hosking and Claudia Terstappen, March 2007” in *Marian Hosking: Jewellery*, 79.

⁸⁹ Claudia Terstappen, “In dialogue with Nature” in *Marian Hosking: Jewellery*, 69-70.

⁹⁰ Kit Wise. “Marian Hosking: tracing nature”, in *Tracks: works in silver 2005-2006*, Victoria: Monash University Press, 2006, 2.

According to Claudia Terstappen, 'wearing Hosking's jewellery becomes a symbol of bonding and a sign of admiration and respect for nature.'⁹¹ I can echo this; wearing her '*Round-Leaf Gum Neckpiece*' (c. 2009), a neckpiece made up of silver links cast from the heart-shaped leaves of the *Eucalyptus websteriana*, I found myself continually aware of its presence against my skin. This was partly due to its weight but particularly because of the serrations on the leaf edges that rubbed against my skin. The discomfort of wearing this piece led me to look more closely at the rough texture around the edges of the leaf shaped links, which in turn, inspired my curiosity to find out more about what the plant looked like, and to learn about the environment it grows in.⁹²

As well as being important for the aesthetic qualities of their work, these contemporary jewellery artists have found ways to express observations and experience of *being* in the landscape, together with what they have learned through formal study about the ecology and culture of places they are passionate about. Seeing physically and metaphorically, the artists use systems of language to communicate an understanding of our relationship to the land. They adopt historical and cultural signifiers, and re-inscribe them with new meanings in works that engender conversation about how we value and identify with place. Their jewellery and object works are unique expressions, often presented as souvenirs, emblems or mementos of place. When worn, the jewellery claims a space on the body, but never surrenders its status as an autonomous object. Significantly, when these artists exhibit their work it is often as collections, thus communicating a larger story.⁹³ In the following chapter I will investigate the collection in relation to my art practice and this research project.

⁹¹ Claudia Terstappen, "In dialogue with Nature", in *Marian Hosking: Jewellery*, 69.

⁹² *Eucalyptus websteriana* can be found growing in the wild flower region of southwest Australia near Kalgoorlie. *Eucalyptus websteriana*: Webster's Mallee| Atlas of Living Australia <http://www.ala.org.au>, Accessed January 21, 2014.

⁹³ Jakobsson, *Derrida Essay*, 2005; Karin Jakobsson, *Critical Review Essay* (Sydney College of Art, 2009); Mieke Bal; "Light in Painting: Dis-seminating art History" in *Deconstruction and the Visual Arts*, ed. Peter Brunette and David Wills (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 50.

CHAPTER FIVE
COLLECTION
COMMUNICATING A LARGER STORY

The theme of collection is not new in my practice; it runs through all my work as a contemporary jewellery artist. It was already present in my undergraduate work and was further developed during my Honours research, resulting in *Wardian Case* (2005), an installation containing my botanical findings from the Sydney suburb of Drummoyne and exploring how we have changed that place since colonisation. This interest began in my childhood, fostered by my grandfather, a biologist, who gave me his set of early 20th century encyclopaedias, ‘The Children’s Treasure House’.



Figure 57: The Children’s Treasure House. Vol. V.

My current work engages with ‘collection’ in two main ways: natural and man-made objects are collected and archived as reference and resource materials; additionally, my artworks are often presented as collections for exhibition purposes. As discussed in the previous chapter, the artists I have been most concerned with turn out to share this affinity.

During an artist residency in Vienna, Rian de Jong explored the city, calling into shops to source materials that reflected her experience of being there. Her collecting resulted in 'Wanderings', an exhibition comprising works expressing her experiences as an outsider to the city, particularly in reaction to the Viennese cultural obsession with 'the hunt'. The brooches *Noord, Oost, Zuid, West* (2005) (fig. 58) use recycled animal fur to express a cluster of mixed reactions: reverence for the hunt, the conspicuous wealth of the city, defying the cold, and getting lost in an unknown city. She arranged the fur differently on each of the four brooches, to represent the four directions of the compass.⁹⁴ Warwick Freeman, as part of his production process, also collects ideas and ephemera that he intends eventually to bring together in the form of a book.⁹⁵ Using the dust from all the materials he has worked with over the years, he has made large colour swatches, which he calls *Dustworks* (2012) that are serendipitously reflective of the place where he lives.



Figure 58: Rian de Jong, *Noord, Oost, Zuid, West*, (2005)

The natural and man-made objects I collect include prehistoric looking seeds, copper telephone cable, containers; even crepe-paper party streamers are chosen for their structural and textural properties. They are rarely used directly but their parts are studied for translation into other mediums or they are transformed into something else. In addition, I tend to exhibit my works in the form of small museological style collections, with the intention being that the exploration of an idea over a number of related works aids the potential readings of my work.

⁹⁴ Rian de Jong, "Wanderungen" ([Amsterdam]: Catalogue Galerie Spektrum, 2005).

⁹⁵ Warwick Freeman, (New Zealand contemporary jewellery artist), interviewed by Karin Jakobsson, "Transcript of Interview with Warwick Freeman, 12 April 2012", USB attached; Warwick Freeman.

I am aware that there must be a long history of collecting at the spot that is now Trenerry Reserve. Based on information passed to me by Bernie McLeod, and gleaned from the book ‘Geebungs and Snake Whistles: Koori people and plants of Wreck Bay’, it is likely that women and children from the local Murro-ore clan collected wild flowers from the coastal heath along pathways leading to the wetland.⁹⁶ I imagine a very different sense of delight and wonder being experienced much later when the iconic *Banksia serrata* that grew widely throughout the coast heathland on which Trenerry Reserve sits was collected during Cook’s first voyage.⁹⁷



Figure 59: *Banksia serrata* Linn.f. Collected by J. Banks & D. Solander, National Herbarium New South Wales, Royal Botanical Gardens Sydney, NSW 133651

⁹⁶ Renwick, *Geebungs and Snake Whistles: Koori people and the plants of Wreck Bay*, 15; Guriwal Aboriginal Corporation. “La Perouse Bush Tucker Track”. Accessed 4 October 2013.

http://www.guriwal.com.au/site/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/guriwal_bushtuckertrack.pdf.

⁹⁷ Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust. “Banks and Solander specimens”. Accessed 24 September 2013.

http://www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/science/Evolutionary_Ecology_Research/Botany_of_Botany_Bay/plants/banks_and_solander_specimens.

THE CRAFT OF BOTANICAL COLLECTION

Everything about the craft of botanical collection and preservation exerts a powerful aesthetic fascination, even the notebooks in which observations are recorded.⁹⁸ The pressing sheets with dried out specimens, labels, seed-packets and collectors journals are ephemeral objects, yet preserved for all time in climate-controlled archives. By studying them closely, a glimpse of the time and place in which the specimens were collected and the conditions the collector experienced, often in great discomfort, can be gleaned.

My own method of botanical specimen collecting is by means of photographic images. Photography has often been a starting point for my work and is used to document curiosities I have found in nature and to record light, moments in time and place. Taking images of Trenerry Reserve was also a response to my reduced ability to linger in environments with sunshine and even moderate levels of ultra violet light.

The images were taken to look *closely* at the plants and *largely* at the environment they are found in. Macro images enable me to study the architecture of plants, like the large spiky cones of Drooping She-oak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*) that grow on coastal shale and rocky sea-cliffs. Scientific formalities are not part of this record; rather the collection of images records what the environment was like at the times I spent *being* there, and small wonders I discovered on the day. Viewing them at a later date triggers memory of my experience, recalling the aroma of plants, land and sea, and the sounds of the place.

Over time, the images continue to release information. For example, reviewing the dates recorded with the digital images, I can learn when Banksia flowers are attractive to bees. My photographs also show how the plants and ecology of that site have changed from the time I first began photographing there in 2004. The images are used as reference material for new jewellery and object pieces; and my designs for exhibiting these photographs in the future.

⁹⁸ Associate Professor Dr Murray Henwood and curator of The Charles Ray Herbarium at the University of Sydney. The culture of herbariums is that, botanists, before carrying out their research, first review the specimens of their specialty for correct identification. Changes to naming and genus are marked on the specimen sheets, recording the progression of knowledge over time.

COLLECTION IN RELATION TO MATERIAL PRACTICE

I have collected a spectrum of jewel-coloured tissue papers, which are stored ready to make the layered paper medium I carve. Collating the coloured papers is a rhythmical action similar to fabric weaving. As discussed elsewhere, I keep a catalogue of the different combinations, recording the number of layers of tissue paper used to make each laminated block, so I can repeat the process. The number of layers is included in the 'material list' when the jewellery objects are exhibited. I also qualify the amount of paper used to signify the time I spent preparing and carving the jewellery objects.

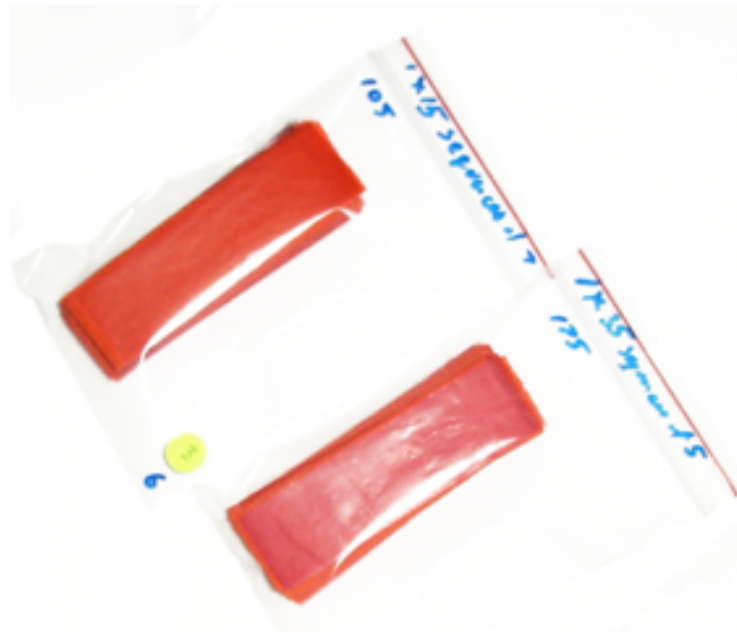


Figure 60: Samples of collated layers of paper - the number of layers are recorded
The colour combinations are catalogued, (2007)

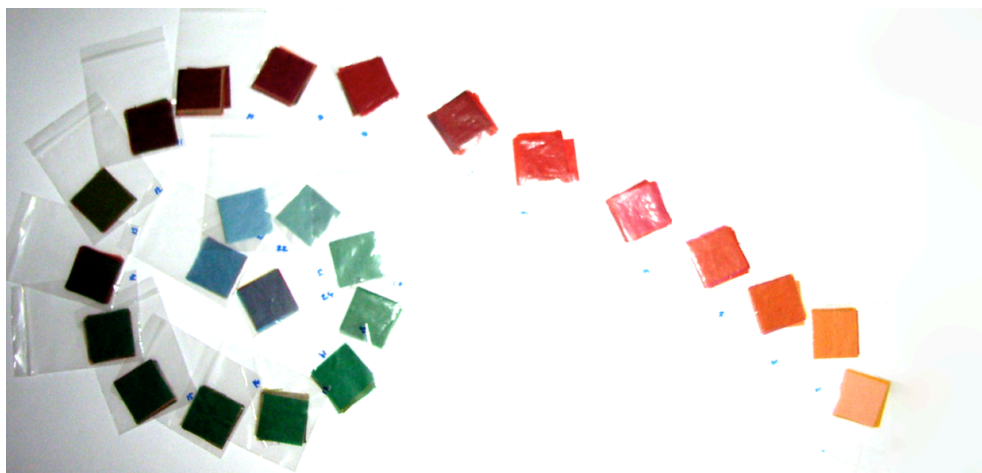


Figure 61: The colour of place - as seen from New Zealand to Australia, (2007)

SPECIMEN BOXES

During the period of time I could not see to make jewellery, I made three specimen boxes to preserve and present my jewellery objects. The boxes were made from archival grey card, closely modelled on a specimen box belonging to my biologist grandfather. In my grandparents' home such boxes were used to contain domestic items such as hand-carved mother of pearl buttons, or a frog toggle from a favoured coat. One of my specimen boxes was made to contain a small collection of my original *Mother of Millions* (2006) brooches for a journey across the Pacific Ocean to Brazil.⁹⁹ Being made of cellulose (paper), the *Mother of Millions* brooches took a long time to pass through Brazilian customs because their presentation as specimens was too convincing.

I consider the boxes as more than just storage; they are part of my creative practice. Ready-made archival boxes have a clinical quality about them: when made by hand, the boxes 'gift' something I have seen and value. They protect something I have made. A part of my *being* is mediated in the jewellery pieces and the specimen boxes that contain them.



Figure 62: Karin Jakobsson, *Specimen Box* - in memory of a grandfather who gifted the idea of being curious, (2012)

In this research project botanical collection is a subsidiary theme but a significant one. Not only does it link many different levels of experience and knowledge within this project, it is one of the ways I have chosen to come to know this place.

⁹⁹ *Voyage of The Mother-of-Millions* (2006-2012), *Percorso* (2012), (Sao Paulo, Muse de A Casa, [August 15-October 4, 2012]). Percorso means: route - space traversed, path. These works participated in a story of the journey of contemporary jewellery. They remain as part of the museums collection.

CONCLUSION

This Research Paper has been about some of the ways in which we come to know place. To write it, I drew on different modes of learning about place: looking largely and closely; observing through time; recording 'lived' experience of *being* in place; studying formally; learning from those with expert knowledge; and by analysing the works of other artists and their influence on mine.

The paper documents what I have learned about the topography and ecology of the landscape where Trenerry Reserve is situated, its history and how people have interacted with and been influenced by that environment over time. The contemporary jewellery works I made in response to my experience of *being* at Trenerry Reserve are discussed in the context of coming to know landscape and place more deeply, and in relation to the work of three influential contemporary jewellery artists whose perceptions of place are reflected in their work. Finally, the paper discusses the role collection and collecting play in my contemporary jewellery art practice.

In Chapter One I looked *largely* at the landscape, to learn how the topography has changed over time, and *closely* at the plants and the ecology of the place, to learn how the wetland came to be there and how it is valued. I presented a guided walk through the reserve that taught me how to look closely and truly 'see' the plants, and how to appreciate the place of a community composed of wildlife and people in the continual growth and renewal of that Coastal Heath and wetland system.

In Chapter Two I examined how people have connected with the landscape that encompasses Trenerry Reserve, by first introducing the Aboriginal clans who lived in the region and imagining their relationship with that landscape. I presented accounts of wonder and dismay recorded in the journals and maps of colonists and settlers as they came to terms with a landscape that was foreign to them. I concluded this chapter with today's changed perception that the restored ecology of the heath and wetland is valuable for the present and future health of the whole environment and the community of people who use this place for recreation.

My purpose for this part of my enquiry was to come to know a particular place more deeply. Having gone through the process of study and writing, I do feel a stronger sense of connection to the place. The research has provided a rich source of ideas and information that, as an artist, I can share through jewellery works that communicate what is not easily seen in nature, the feeling of a place, and relationships we have with the landscape.

Chapters Three, Four and Five place the jewellery objects I made in the context of the wider contemporary jewellery community. In Chapter Three, *The Spirit of the Place*, I wrote about my sensory experience and knowledge of plants and place that informed the making of my jewellery objects, and introduced the idea that they act as souvenirs and mementoes – signifiers of the scenes of memory and connection to place. Two other accounts were provided of experiences which have contributed to a deeper sense of being and belonging to place: that of the contemporary jewellery artist, Warwick Freeman and that of an Aboriginal Traditional Owner, Bernie McLeod. The macro - micro aspect of my jewellery objects, with the layered materiality of the hand-carved forms, represents the expansion and contraction of looking largely and closely for a deeper knowledge of place in time.

To set my work in the context of other established artists in my field, the approach I took in Chapter Four was to investigate how three contemporary jewellery artists, who have place-related art practices, respond to their surroundings and communicate their perceptions of place through their work. Engaging with Rian de Jong, Warwick Freeman and Marian Hosking has been valuable. They are artists who have inspired me to think more deeply about ways in which we come to know place. Their practices and the conversations we have shared, have affirmed my understanding of how jewellery signifies connections we have with places, people and things we are passionate about.

The visual culture of museological collections is attractive to many of those who participate in the field of contemporary jewellery. In my case, the theme of collection runs throughout my work. In the paper I have demonstrated how I use the tropes of collection and collecting to communicate my connection with people and place, including how I use the photography of plants that are growing as a collecting tool. The paper acknowledges the collecting practices of Aboriginal people who would have gathered materials from the heath

and wetlands of Trenerry Reserve as resources for daily living. In my jewellery, museological forms of collection and presentation are applied in combination with personal-historical references, looking at the past in the present, and the implications of both for the future. My interest in collecting and my curiosity about the natural world were first inspired by the gift of my Grandfather's childhood encyclopaedia. With it in mind, I have presented this paper in a style that references the books and catalogues which depict moments of wonder and discovery of the details in nature.

Trenerry Reserve continues to change. Last time I visited it was to film the moving rushes. I set up my camera on the rocks behind the boardwalk that now floats over the landscape, and stepped aside. While I was looking across the boardwalk at a heron on the other side of the wetland, people started to slow down to see what had attracted me. Because I was interacting with the site in a particular way, they began to ask questions: What kind of bird is it? What are you doing? Are you looking for frogs?

A few years before, a rebuilding of the boardwalk which involved removing a previously existing railing had changed the way people behaved there. Instead of leaning on the railing to pause and look, they are much more inclined to rush along the boardwalk. This resurgence of curiosity, years later, in response to my small act of stopping to look, imaginatively returned me to the place where I began this project and reasserted the values that have driven it all along: curiosity, looking closely, wanting to learn more and to share that knowledge.

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Figure 14.	<i>Succulent Skin II (Kalanchoe fedtschenkoi)</i> , Brooch, (2010) 76 Dyed archival glue (colour #14) Layered paper (colour #14 as with the Mother-of-millions) Archival glue, 925 silver, stainless steel 85mm x 11mm x 25mm
Figure 15.	<i>Succulent Skin III (Kalanchoe fedtschenkoi)</i> , Brooch, (2010) 76 Dyed archival glue (colour #15) 925 silver, stainless steel 88mm x 11mm x 24mm
Figure 16.	<i>Baumea nuda</i> , Neckpiece, (2011) 77 Hand-twisted copper and silver wire, copper solder 240mm D (variable)
Figure 17.	<i>Baumea nuda</i> , Neckpiece (detail) 78
Figure 18.	<i>Baumea nuda</i> , Neckpiece (jump-ring slide and lock detail) 78

WORKS PRESENTED FOR EXHIBITION



Figure 1: Installation *At Trenerry Reserve*, (2014)

Made in response to my observations and sensory experience at Trenerry Reserve.
The installation included: 7 jewellery objects, an elliptical layered table, 1 projected image of Peat
Swamp plant species growing with weeds, and the sound of frogs.



Figure 2: Installation set up



Figure 3: Projected image: *Plants in the coastal wetland at Trenerry Reserve, (2011)*
Peat swamp species *Baumea juncea* and Pipewort growing with Native Violet, and the weeds Pennywort and Watercress.



Figure 4: Elliptical layered table designed to represent place (with 7 jewellery objects)
Elements of the table signify: topographical lines, sunlit sandstone; rock strata at Trenerry Reserve,
a hole - for the peat cut from the swamp, a fish surfing a wave.



Figure 5: Layout of the jewellery objects as viewed from behind the table

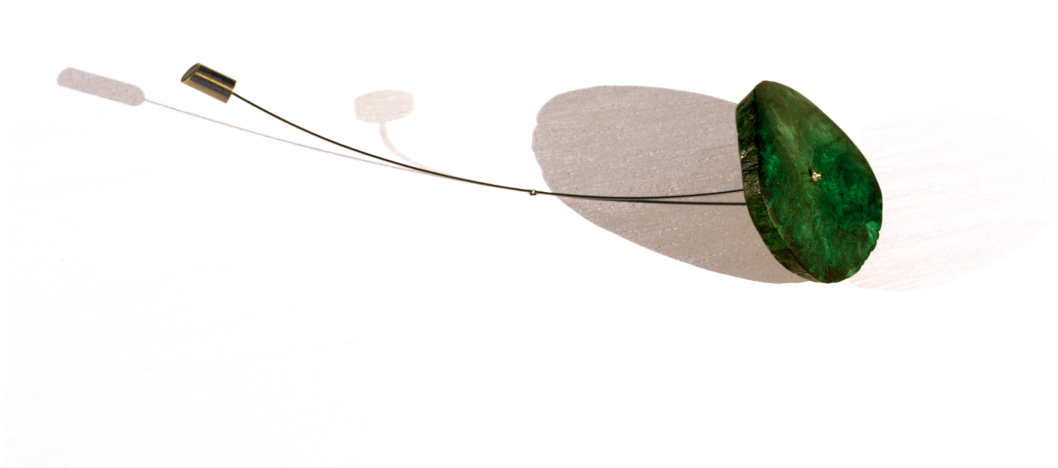


Figure 6: *Pennywort* Brooch pin, (2009)



Figure 7: *Pennywort* close-up of rippled leaf edge and serendipitous representation of the leaf lamina of *Hydrocotyle* species.



Figure 8: *Bulrush*, Brooch, (2009)



Figure 9: *Bulrush*, Brooch (left side – like drawing)
The colour and texture of sunlight reflecting off Bulrush leaves twisting in the wind.
Saw marks expose the layers of coloured paper, copper shim and archival glue.



Figure 10: *Bulrush*, Brooch (right side)

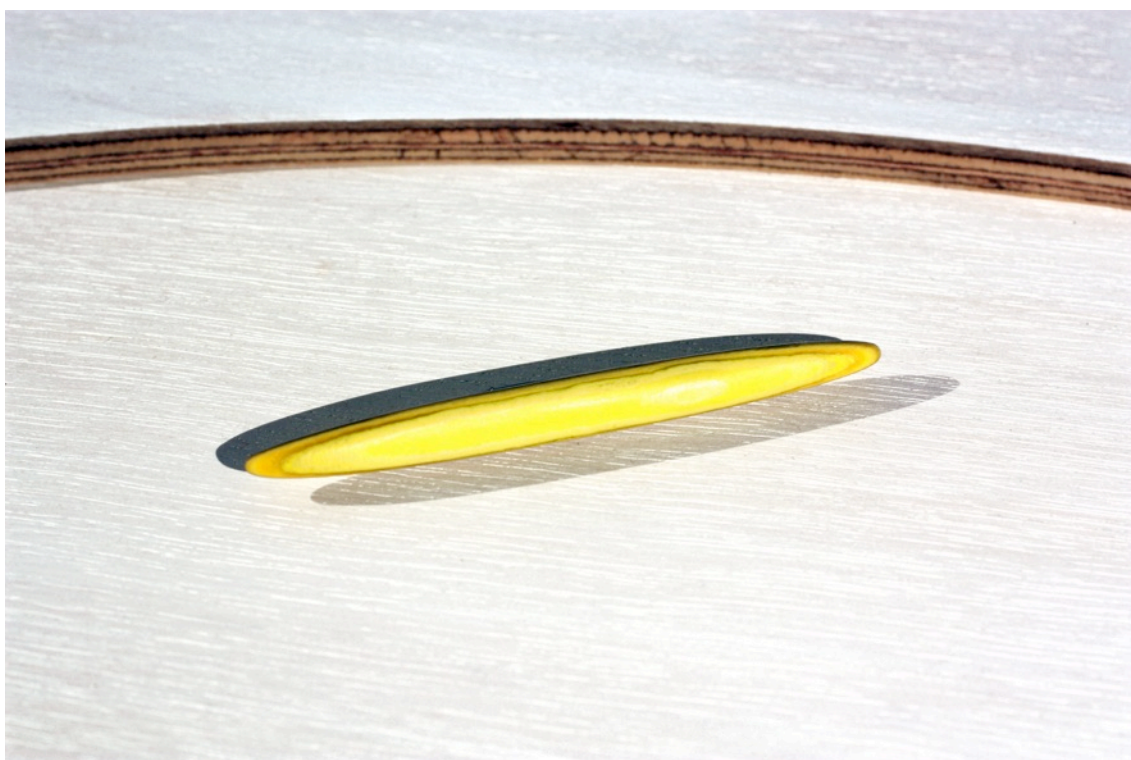


Figure 11: *Strong Sunlight*, Brooch, (2009)



Figure 12: *Succulent Skin I (Kalanchoe fedtschenkoi)*, Ring (front view), (2010)



Figure 13: *Succulent Skin I (Kalanchoe fedtschenkoi)*, Ring (back view)



Figure 14: *Succulent Skin II (Kalanchoe fedtschenkoi)*, Brooch, (2010)



Figure 15: *Succulent Skin III (Kalanchoe fedtschenkoi)*, Brooch, (2010)



Figure 16: *Baumea nuda*, Neckpiece, (2011)



Figure 17: *Baumea nuda*, Neckpiece (detail)
Representation of inflorescence using copper solder, and hand twisted silver and copper wires.



Figure 18: *Baumea nuda*, Neckpiece (jump-ring slide and lock detail)