

A photograph of a muddy beach with seaweed and shells. The water is shallow and brown, with various pieces of seaweed and shells scattered along the shore. The shells are mostly yellow and green, with some dark ones. The background is a vast expanse of brown sand and water.

AUGUST 7 - AUGUST 18, 2021
GORDON GALLERY

Deb Taylor
Peter Martin
Kerrie Taylor
Nicola Cerini
Helen Martin
Alexis Gambis
Enrico Santucci
Richard Collopy
Stephanie Neville
Jacqui Dreessens
Géraldine Chansard
Zahidah Zeytoun Millie
Barwon Heads Primary School Students





CATALOGUE



Mangroves at Hovell's Creek Reserve, Corio Bay

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge that our exhibition takes place on the traditional land of the Wadawurrung people. We celebrate its beauty and honor and pay our respects to elder's past and present.

Corrina Eccles of the Wadawurrung Nation conducts a

Welcome to Country ceremony at the opening on Monday 26 July.



The Gordon Gallery, Geelong

The exhibition opens on 26 July 2021, International Day for the Preservation of Mangrove Ecosystems, and closes on 8 August. The City of Greater Geelong is our partner, and we also receive support from the Sharjah Heritage Institute in the United Arab Emirates. The *Mangroves from the Water* exhibition will collaborate with community groups in the Geelong region and abroad, including *Humans in Geelong* and the *Barwon Estuary Project* (Students of Barwon Heads Primary School). The student environmental group, *Kids Thrive*, of Northern Bay College is participating in workshops.



Mangroves from the Water

What I have been preparing to say is, that in wilderness is the preservation of the world.

HD Thoreau

This exhibition is a celebration of the mangrove forests and wetlands that are such vital habitats in ever diminishing sections of our Victorian coastline. These niches of wilderness are so important to the health of fish along our coast, to the bird life, to the strength of our estuarine fringes and to our human connection to Nature. This connection began thousands of years ago, and today we would seem to accept that interconnectedness as a given. That even though we are a part of these coastal worlds, we take that relationship for granted. The 12 artists and primary school students of the *Mangroves from the Water* project have immersed themselves in moments of intimate contact with the beauty of these taken for granted wildernesses. The artists of differing background and discipline present their own personal responses to time spent within the mangroves upon the water with a common purpose to celebrate the beauty of these intertidal forests found across the world.

The mangroves are the unsung foundation for many Victorian coastal ecosystems, from Mallacoota to Barwon Heads. Their subtle presence at the estuary of Barwon Heads attracts little attention despite the nurturing and preserving role they play for the health and wealth of humans, birds and animals that interact around and within them. The strength of these estuarine trees is connected to the overall health of the Barwon River that originates in the Otways and gracefully flows through Geelong on its way to the ocean through Lake Connewarre and the townships of Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove. Stories also connect to the mangroves as folkloric identity

celebrates the thousands of years of human connection to the mangroves of the Barwon.

That connection is worldly, the Wadawurrung Nation has always had a strong connection to mangroves as a source of shelter and resource for building lives. Universal human connection is also celebrated in this exhibition with the viewer able to interact with stories and representations from a country one would not expect to be associated with mangroves: the United Arab Emirates. Abdul Aziz Al Musallam, Chairman of the Sharjah Institute of Heritage, and our overseas supporter, writes in his introduction to *Mangroves Festival 2017*:

The mangrove tree has a lot of encompassed forms of expression in the community's memory and it has produced values, customs, traditions, experiences and popular ethics, artistic creations, and experiences of traditions, which add to the totality, the depth, and richness of heritage.

The human connection is an important starting point for engaging with the range of artworks presented in *Mangroves from the Water*.

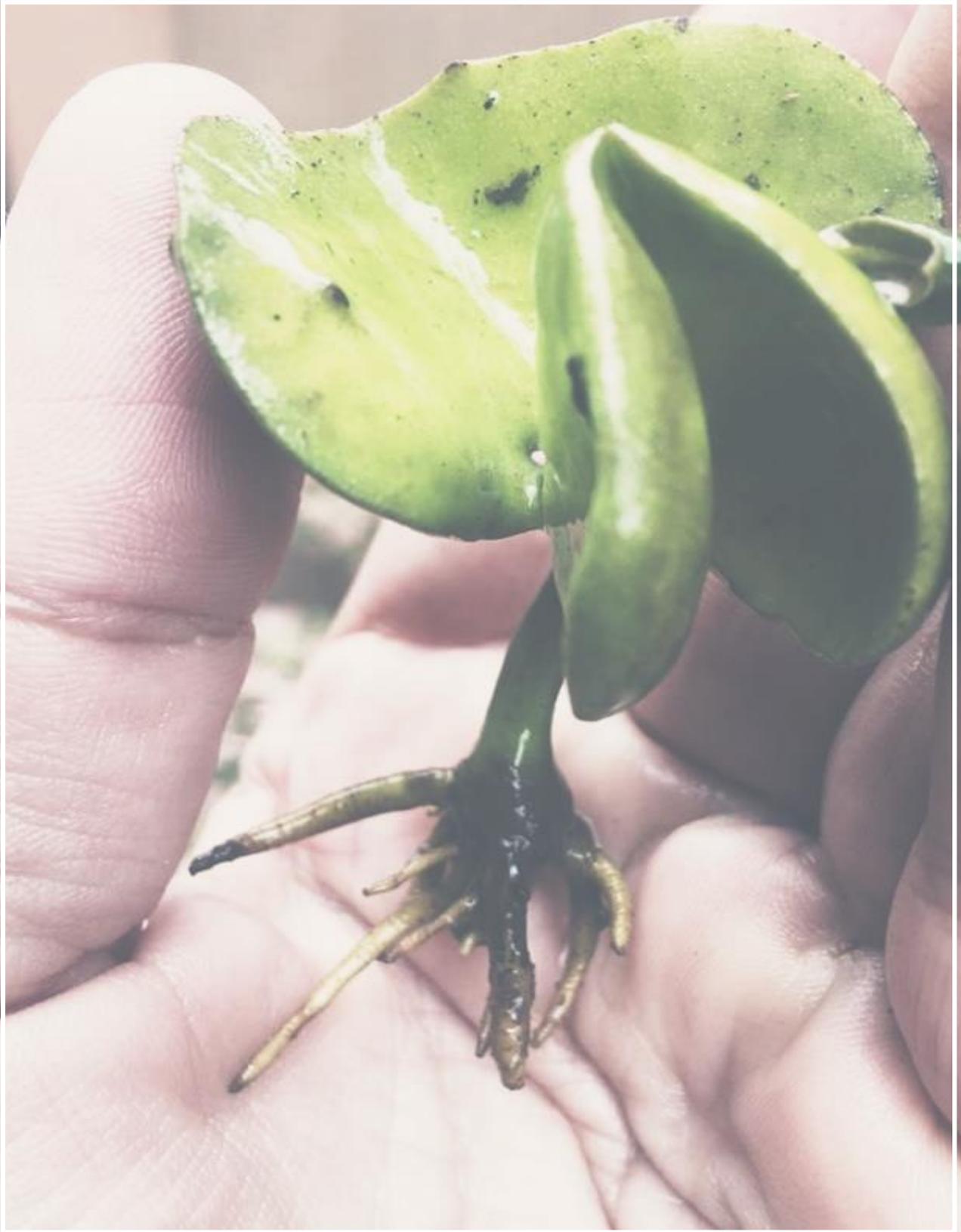


Photo by Zahidah Zeytoun Millie



A Word from the Curator



I moved to Geelong from the United Arab Emirates in 2017. I was happy to discover the mangrove forests at Barwon Heads and began to learn the history of the land around my new home. I researched how the mangrove landscapes of the Port Phillip and coastal fringe areas were irrevocably transformed by colonial occupation. I

also discovered that such change has caused a loss of biodiversity that unfortunately is now a feature of Australia's ecology.

Mangroves - Vanguard of the Sea. Ecologically important in linking land and sea, mangroves are part of Nature's wilderness. The estuarine forests along northern Australia's coastline are at risk, as stated by the Australian Government, Department of Environment and Energy. In southern Australia, though, where wilderness areas have suffered all so greatly, mangrove forests are rarely noticed or celebrated. A common perception of the beauty of the Victorian coastline is white sandy beaches, not an estuarine forest of mangrove trees. Searching tourism and environment websites of the Barwon Heads region where mangroves surround Lake Connewarre I find information about ocean greens relating to golf clubs and white sandy beaches for surfing, swimming, or walking. One can be amazed by plants like bull kelp, sandstone arches and sponge gardens, yet nothing about mangroves.

A question often comes to mind: why the mangrove forest is not considered a place to visit, and to enjoy for its abundant wildlife? Kayaking within mangroves provides a wonderful opportunity to contemplate birds, crabs and fish. How can mangrove forests be so neglected? Surely, they cannot be considered ugly!

Let me provide some information about these forests. Mangroves are collective trees rather than individual. Their roots are intertwined, the only woody plant that connects the land to the sea. The trees act as a protective bridge. From one side



they protect coasts from storms and rising sea levels. From the other, they have a huge root system that stabilises sediment protecting both seagrass and reefs from being smothered. The Ocean Portal Team describes mangrove forests as “an entire community”.

The stability of the trees and the thick foliage create a platform for a rich habitat of plants and animals. Below the tidal surface the thick root system provides a haven to nurture young fish. Mangroves also act as nurseries for other terrestrial and marine plants such as algae which in turn provide a habitat for invertebrates and vertebrates thus aiding biodiversity and helping to increase stocks of fish. In terms of sequestering carbon, mangroves are also considered very efficient carbon sinks. Carbon storage is just one of the positives for the human component of the mangrove habitat. The estuarine forests prevent coastal erosion, provide timber, support livelihoods, and promote biodiversity. Mangroves directly benefit people, and even though they provide a rich, biodiverse habitat, these forests are in decline. The Global Mangrove Alliance predicts that mangroves may all but functionally disappear “by the year 2100”. Action to protect and restore would be needed to prevent this disappearance.

Consideration of the mangroves as a part of the society of Indigenous Australians of Victoria could be a step towards saving mangroves. I find importance in the heritage and storytelling of mangroves that act as an anchor of cultural identity and popular memory, an attribute difficult to find here in Victoria. The writer AJ Elkin¹ points out the significance of the bond between nature and indigenous culture:

The Aborigines have a view of life and nature, more or less logical and systematic, granted its animistic premises, which is a lantern to their feet and a guide to their paths, as they pass from birth to death and beyond. It is spiritual, totemistic, and historical in nature, expressing the central facts of human personality, of man’s intimate relationship to nature, and his tie to the past, all of which is carried over in a belief that personality is beyond space and time.

¹ Glenn AA (2019) *Earth Emotions: New Words for a New World*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca.

I find the best way to talk about the mangroves is through learning the roots of the culture of the indigenous people who have lived by and with mangroves over generations. That human connection with nature can be translated through a group and multimedia art exhibition; artists interconnected just like the intertwined root systems of a mangrove forest.

The aims of our project are to:

- encourage viewers to realise the beauty and importance of mangroves,
- protect wetlands and mangroves globally which have a strong tie to indigenous people,
- encourage discussion about the mangroves, sea grasses and wetlands, to be held at the Gallery during the exhibition period, and
- emphasise the importance of finding heritage and contemporary storytelling of mangroves that act as a reference point for cultural identity and popular memory in Victoria.

The *Mangroves from the Water* exhibition project is very grateful for the support of the City of Greater Geelong. The exhibition aims to collaborate with community groups in the Geelong region and internationally, the United Arab Emirates featuring in this exhibition. The image of mangroves as a bridge between land and sea is reflected in the mangroves campaign that connects our project's efforts with overseas supporters of mangroves. The UAE Sharjah Heritage Institute supports our exhibition with books, a special issue of Al Mawruth magazine about the mangroves and an Arab majlis (sitting place). The connection is ongoing as the Institute is to donate these exhibits to the School of Humanities and Social Studies at Deakin University.

[Zahidah Zeytoun Millie](http://mangrovesfromthewater.com)

mangrovesfromthewater.com

26 July 2021



Guest Speaker: Fr Peter Martin- Anglican Priest, Vicar of the Parish of St George the Martyr in Queenscliff & Point Lonsdale, writer.



As a young adult my vocational interest shifted from the science of the environment to things that can't be put under a microscope. Being a good child of secular Australia I had bought into the great Enlightenment delusion that reasonable minds would prevail once the evidence was made known. However, already, the question for me was: 'Why doesn't the truth of science get traction in the human heart? On top of this, how can the beauty and wonderment of creation fail to trump human greed and selfishness, which then makes us deaf to the just cries of the environment and to the poor?'

I am Peter Martin an Anglican Priest currently Vicar of Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale Parish and convenor of the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC) in the Geelong region.

In recent years, as my involvement in climate action has grown, I realise that my deep connections with creation were forged where I was born and grew up: Gosford, which sits on the shores of the northern reaches of the Brisbane Waters, an area with abundant mangrove habitat. We lived on the water and the mangroves were our playground. We were always encountering in the landscape the outward signs of the deep culture of the Darkinjung people whose country it was, violently suppressed by European settlement, but never destroyed and now rising again.

My first experience of environmental degradation came with the rapid and rapacious development of these waterways in the 1960s which had a devastating impact on coastal marine ecosystems, and especially the mangrove habitat which we knew was vital to the health of the whole, but in the eyes of developers were swamps to be re-purposed for profit.

I studied environmental science and resource management. I then turned my interest to the human heart and its capacity to turn its back on the science that supports the beauty and integrity of the planet which, in its diversity, supports all life.

The mangrove project is for me a re-entry into my formative foundations. This enables me to be better equipped, spiritually, emotionally, and morally, to keep feeling the pain and lament of what is being lost. At the same time, this land and its beauty, and its deep dreaming mediated by the nation groups of Aboriginal Australia, nourishes, and energizes me to play my part in forging new and more life-giving ways of being for the human family.



The Artists



Mangrove roots intertwine and connect, and we are the *Mangroves from the Water* artists exhibiting together to mirror that connectedness. Australia possesses people of multicultural backgrounds, indigenous and non-indigenous people. Artists in the exhibition project represent this

diversity, being from all over the world.

We all have something to tell. We want to protect our mother Earth and to generate peace and love on land. When we give love, we receive love. Form, be it musical, visual, or verbal, moves us deeply because of the unconscious meaning embodied in symbolism. The *Mangroves from the Water* project members believe that through our art we can build awareness of the importance of protecting this important mangrove ecosystem. The project members approach the theme with a range of media: impressionist watercolors from a kayak, paintings, a short film, weaving, sculpture, performance dance, music, and an art installation of printed textiles. The mangrove artists present a fascinating approach celebrating the wonders of this unique habitat through art. The artists will participate in discussions throughout the exhibition.

The artists are:

Alexis Gambis, Nicola Cerini, Enrico Santucci, Deb Taylor, Richard Collopy, Jacqui Dreessens, Stephanie Neville, Geraldine Chansard, Helen and Peter Martin, Kerrie Taylor, the Barwon Heads Primary School and Zahidah Zeytoun Millie.





Zahidah Zeytoun Millie - artist & curator



My art practice is mystical and connected to poetry, music, mythology, ecology, and philosophy. The joy of expressing myself with colour is what inspired me to become a painter. I work with different media: sculpture, ceramic, paper, glass, and canvas. I also work from a kayak, surrounded by mangroves and the sights, sounds, smells all connecting me to my work.

As an environmentalist, artist, and activist, I explore the subject of mangroves as a means to generate awareness of the destruction of my homeland Syria and environmental concerns. There is a link between conflict and overdevelopment. In an age of global warming mangroves do not get the attention they deserve either in terms of their beauty or their ecological importance. I have found the mangroves a source of power, beauty, energy, and simplicity. I intend to do my part to protect our mother Earth and to generate peace and love on land. However, I believe that the mangroves art project will succeed when I exhibit as part of a group of artists, gathering a range of media and artists to make a celebration and a festival of art in one show. "What becomes important is what an artwork can do" (Simon O'Sullivan).

The art works produced for this exhibition are informed by kayaking and painting trips over two years in the mangroves of Victoria. I have used two opposing media, glass, and hessian. Glass is a rich medium, like water, that reflects light and overlays

of knowledge. The overlays help project a deconstruction of ideas. The coarse texture of hessian is in opposition to that of glass, unable to reflect light. The opposing materials are much like the mangrove and water.

I gained a Master of Visual Arts (Monash University) in 2011 and I'm currently a PhD candidate at Deakin University.



Mangrove Roots 1. Glass and stone, 2021



Conversation with the Moonah Tree, 74 x 49 cm, acrylic, Syrian brocade, twigs on a recycled hessian coffee bag, 2020

www.zahidahart.com.

Richard Collopy - Traditional owner, Otways storyteller & artist



Finding a voice for the wetlands is a difficult task but that is the mission. Our once vast and interconnecting wetlands in the southern regions are suffering. This is obvious near and within intertidal, resource rich zones where the fight for real-estate plays out. From ponds, pools, streams, lakes, rivers, seas, and oceans, how can we speak about the deeper serious problems that are not going away? We need to speak from a human connected perspective and the secret must be to find our chord again, be very aware and not be fooled.

Through art, perhaps softly, we can share some stories and visualize and listen to motivate ourselves into seeing a multi-dimensional view. This would allow one to connect in a spiritual/cultural dimension and I believe in this case help shape mental tools required to save our precious wetlands. From the Tropics to the southern shores, mangroves are teaching me their place and my place in a timeless way. The Mangroves struggle in a sick environment, just like us, and now they are suffering.

Since Settlement in the mid-1830s I have heard it said that within ten years a third of the billabongs dried up not to return. There is no traditional dreaming for horse, cow, sheep, goat, donkey, pig, camel and not ever in millions of years did this land hear or feel the hardened hoof and the legacy of all that came. At times, the water would flow from Corangamite to the ocean and the mangroves of the Barwon.



Soap. Acrylic, oil, sap, dye, and spray on canvas, 170x120cm, 2021

For this exhibition I have turned my hand to a way of expressing that leaves me in a way feeling more exposed than I had predicted. Hopefully, there can be some positive impact such as with 'larger than life' sculpture or painting, as in this case. So, I committed to painting a new idea that was playing out in the back of my mind when we met by the wetlands at home three or so years ago. Very risky and exposing, where do you start and where do you stop? I went back to an unfinished idea, a painting I began in '89, or so.

This first one was a bit of a struggle of mind, trying to measure everything whilst at that time I was also researching and going back over 'The Letters' (letters to and from *The Protectorate*). So, I'd be dreaming about confrontations that were critical to the storylines of loss of community and wetlands but also the key to survival today. These very stories and dreams along the very river lines that we are raising focus to in this exhibition, in and around the headwaters of the Barwon and Corangamite waterholes to the ocean, and at Barwon Heads and the 'Mae Mae' swampy country where the mangroves survive today. It can look like a collage of craziness. When the land use started to change in the Southwest, the new arrivals walked up these rivers, potentially as Brothers. It led them from the Heads to Colac so quickly and in two or three years it had all changed, through Country and subtly differing communities to the Mob in the second painting, and back to the 1830s early frontier time, as it was called. A very complex time indeed, that of 'divide and conquer', embedded in the colonial system of land tenure.

So, I am calling this one *Brothers*, as it is inspired by them. They know who they are, still looking out from the bush, still holding their stories of the precious wetlands. I



challenged myself, I had one hour left; painting quickly, I wanted to surprise everyone. They saw it in the bush, as they drove in. Yes! It is an expression of survival in the Tee-tree and desire for 'Tree-tee' in the Mangroves and wetlands, so to speak. I spent lots of times playing and surfing around the mangroves at Barwon Heads as a child, in the '70s. Sometimes with Uncle we would venture to the muddy mangrove islands in the Bay to fish for mullet or flathead. In the '80s- '90s I observed mangroves in the north being removed for hotels, marinas, and golf-courses. Then to now in the 2020s, I am doing what I can for our ecology in the South and talking more Language and immersing in these differences to know that we must discuss and in Gulidjan and Gadubanud Country, which has survived for so long. In doing this I am working on, even more.

richard.collopy@bigpond.com



Brothers. Acrylic washed with sap, oil, sap on canvas,
180x120cm, 2021



Enrico Santucci - video producer & photographer



I was born in Italy, a country where beautiful scenery, architecture and history are the landscape of a vivacious culture. Inspiration for my printed photography works springs out from the surrounding environment. I am in it!

My connection with nature becomes more relevant in this time of global destruction as I recognize the importance of individual action to change, not just my impact upon the planet, but to stimulate others to be more aware of what we can lose if we do not reconnect with the environment. I capture and present images that incorporate local nature in places of everyday living, as architectural decoration, indoors and out.

A few years ago, I asked myself why a floor needs to be just a two-dimensional aspect of just a few natural colors, when through digital printing on canvas using resin, it is possible to create a unique floor? Or, why a roller blind is just a fabric screen with basic colors when you can make a full-size print as the window frames become a frame for nature scenery? I create images that open up a confined space, a home to the environment we live in, as printing on canvas and the use of coating giving depth to the image. The home becomes more in tune with the outside space we live in, giving the impression that we are included, and not so isolated. When we feel isolated, we become disconnected from the environment, alienated and insecure.

For this exhibition I am displaying a mangrove plant I have nurtured at home from seed. I have also collaborated with choreographer Jacqui Dresseens to capture her authentic movement responses from her embodied experiences in the mangroves in still photos and a 10-minute video. www.virtualtoursphoto.com



video producer of the choreographer
Jacqui Dresseens



Deb Taylor - artist



My art practice is driven by a desire to lead people into contemplation. Generally, we are drawn to beauty and repulsed by ugliness. Implicit in the idea of beauty is often an assumption of/equivalence to perfection, and the binary opposites of ugly/imperfect. But when what is perceived as beautiful/perfect or ugly/imperfect, regarding the environment (both natural and built), our judgements can be colored by notions of usefulness, worthiness, and economic value over an acceptance. Nature can just exist as it is: in a perfect, albeit shifting state.

I am interested in how mangrove forests, unique and diverse plants, embody these binaries of beauty/ugliness, use/without use as well as other binaries of above/below, tough/fragile, submerged/exposed, seen/unseen. Mangroves provide an intricate network of connections between each tree, the Earth, water, air, and the creatures that inhabit the same liminal space as the mangroves.

For this exhibition I have explored these ideas through a series of small watercolour studies and larger works in ink and collage, culminating in five paintings on wood panels.

www.debtaylor.com.au



*Mangrove, Study 4, ink, and collage on paper,
38x38, 2020*



Nicola Cerini, textile artist



Helping people to connect with nature is the primary motivation for my work as a textile artist and designer. My early childhood at Tower Hill Wildlife Reserve near Warrnambool is one of the key inspirations for my biophilic art and design practice and I attribute this time as a major creative influence. By utilising natural elements, patterns and forms, my work evokes a distinct sense of place and connectedness. By creating work people connect with I aim to build awareness of the beauty and fragility of our natural world so that we may continue to preserve it.

My work for Mangroves from the Water consists of two digitally printed fabric lengths 1.4 x 2m. I was inspired by fun kayaking trips through the mangroves at Barwon Heads with some of the artists in 2019 and 2020. Despite getting very wet in my leaky child-sized kayak on my first trip, I went back for more. The second trip was in an adult-sized kayak and I managed to take lots of photos which helped me decide how I wanted to represent the amazing landscape I'd seen. It's such a unique ecosystem in the mangroves. I had no idea the Barwon Heads Mangroves existed until I became involved in this project. In my early twenties I spent some time on Lizard Island and in far north Queensland. I was fascinated by the murky, mysterious landscapes that came and went with the tide. I'd always associated mangroves with a tropical climate, so it was exciting to find that we had our own cold climate mangroves very close to home.



Hidden Beauty. Digital print on fabric, 140 x 200cm, *Another World*. Digital print on fabric, 220 x 140cm 2021

I was drawn to the variety of textures and layers from the water, up through the muddy root systems that almost reach the low-lying branches of the large mangrove trees. There were beautiful light spaces filtering through the branches often creating silhouettes and bands of horizontal colour in the distance representing the sky and banks of green, brackish, friendly plants. The contrast of the solid, ancient mangrove trunks against the delicate leaf and flower silhouettes was striking. Looking into these landscapes was like exploring a new world, exciting!

Jacqueline Dreessens - performance dancer, choreographer, and film director



I am an ethnochoreologist, multi-disciplined artist and community arts practitioner in choreography and percussion. Through the nexus of Dance, my creative practice is expressed through performance ritual and sensoriality to create sacred space that wields at the intersection of sound, movement, poetry, and film. I draw inspiration from nature and the environment, exploring the ecology of place and embodied experience.

The research into my dance film, *Échelons* began with visits to the mangroves site by kayak to simply sit, see, sense, and feel this experience through sound, film, and photography. My response to this mangrove encounter on Wadawurrung country was then expressed into poetry. My written response was then further developed into movement improvisations at The Loft Yoga and Dance Studio with the support of their Open-Door residency.

I wanted to explore my sense of connection to the mangrove forest by investigating the spaces between the spaces. Where does the light travel within and around the branches? What pathways does it travel along and through? How does this interconnection of light and murky muddy waters unfold into flexible limbs that sustain the comfort for creatures?



Upwards
Rooted
Down
Muddy
Waters
Clear
Skies
Alive

I then collaborated with costume designer Jen Farthing to capture the reflective blue light on my body. Workshops with Gunditjmara weaver Bronwyn Razem inspired me to create my headdress from woven branches and recycled drum skin. Film maker Enrico Santucci captured my authentic movement responses from my embodied experiences of the specific mangroves site. Our ten-minute film was centered around my sensorial experience in the mangroves investigating the question: what is my permanent reality manifesting in this transient moment?

My sensorial embodied experience of *Échelons* is a personal transformation, moving through the sacred dance of grief to love and connection.

www.instagram.com/wildmovesinternational





Helen Martin - artist



I have been a practicing artist for over ten years, working from my studio in Queenscliff, Victoria. I studied for my BA Visual Arts at The Gordon in Geelong, graduating in 2011. I regularly show my work in Queenscliff and further afield, in Geelong and Melbourne.

Taking my inspiration from the landscape around me, I explore themes of belonging and connection to place. Working primarily with oil and beeswax medium, knife, and a limited color palette, I have developed a distinctive visual language which speaks boldly to my themes.

For the Mangroves from the Water Exhibition, I am collaborating with my husband Peter Martin who has a deep attentiveness to the spiritual in our world and the environment in particular. My works for the exhibition draw on recent images of a small stand of white mangroves planted in the early 1960s by the five Martin boys at shoreline in front of their family home at Peak's Point, East Gosford in New South Wales. These young boys were motivated to plant mangrove seedlings they had found nearby in response to the degradation and destruction of the local mangroves, their playground, caused by unabashed urban development. These mangroves were seeded in the rocky foreshore among the clusters of native oysters, and over the past 50 years thrived, creating a new habitat.

My works focus on the trees themselves and their foundations in the rocky ground. With waxy paint I depict the intertwined branches and the dappled light filtering through the thick glossy leaves. My limited palette of mars violet, ultramarine blue

and sap green creates a mysterious atmosphere, hinting at the games played by children here over the years and other unknown happenings.



Mangroves at Peek's Point, Darkinjung Country: A Martin Legacy I, Oil, and beeswax on canvas, 40.5 x 40.5cm



Kerrie Taylor - artist



I'm a printmaker and fibre artist responding to the natural world's beauty, particularly through the observation of mangroves. Having lived and worked with First Nations peoples for over 20 years my work has come to reflect Aboriginal wisdom. The cultural and spiritual teaching of an Aboriginal elder provides the impetus for my fascination for mangroves. I'm intrigued with the multitude of hidden elements living in the complex mangrove system.

My practice creates richly textured imagery, mimicking the intricate mangrove root environment, including the air roots or pneumatophores. Using repurposed materials, the fibre installations integrate traditional crochet techniques with contemporary assemblage methods.

Mangroves protect coastal zones from erosion and are highly efficient in capturing carbon. They provide breeding grounds and habitats for flora and fauna, and a sustainable source of food and medicine for First Nations peoples. These complex mangrove systems have a unique role and, like the other artists in this exhibition, I'm concerned for their future. My fibre installations explore and celebrate

opportunities for a way forward, challenging us to be custodians of our diverse natural resources.

I've presented a solo exhibition and participated in many group exhibitions, including exhibitions in Japan and online in Hong Kong. I have been a finalist in several art prizes including the Wyndham Art Prize and the Women Abstract Artists Biennial 2020 (online).

www.kerrietaylor.com



I'm sorry for not holding you in my arms. Coiled crocheted weaving, recycled yarn around rope, 14 pieces, varying sizes to 60cm in height, 2019



Stephanie Neville - artist



I'm a South African artist and have resided in the UAE since 1999 having completed a Master of Visual Arts at the University of South Africa. I have won awards and exhibited internationally, with works in personal and public collections.

My artworks for the exhibition are inspired by the Umm Al Quwain mangroves in the United Arab Emirates. I associate knitting and crocheting with the tender love and care of a motherly act of compassion, nurture, and protection; to keep you warm and safe, to wrap you up. Knitting a protective layer for the mangrove trees



We'll keep you safe (2015 - ongoing). Community project. Knitted/ crocheted wool blanket. 1m x 1m each; 1m x 45 m total.

offers a little help to Mother Nature in taking care of her 'family'. An open call to the local and international community has resulted in nearly 70 swatches, creating individual 1m x 1m blankets, at a total length of 45 m length!



I'll keep you safe close up. Knitted wool, 28x40 cm each, site-specific installation, photo document printed on canvas, Umm Al Quwain, 2015-2021

I'll keep you safe (2015-2021) was a site-installation in conjunction with the *Mangroves from the Water* 2015 exhibition. This unique blanket covered a mangrove tree in Umm Al Quwain. I use yarnbombing to symbolize protection and care. The use of traditional techniques such as knitting denotes a motherly love shown through nurturing a family. The documentary photograph is printed on canvas and embellished with fibres.

Focusing on conceptual art derived from intensive research, my approach to art making is primarily autobiographical. The main premise of my work is that we all have a collective understanding of shared personal experiences. The main concerns of my art are the effects of absence in personal relationships, identity, and a sense of belonging. With an interest in feminine and environmental issues, I explore the concept of sustainability and the local natural environment. I carefully select media that translate the fragility and tension of the process of sustaining, particularly through traditional techniques such as embroidery and crochet. Environmental sustainability is a growing concern, internationally and personally. Being active in the protection of the local mangroves, I present onsite installations and work with naturally found objects to highlight the protection of the environment.

www.stephanieneville.com

Alexis Gambis, French Venezuelan, Imagine Science film producer



I am a French-Venezuelan biologist, filmmaker, and a TED 2019 Fellow. My films combine documentary and fiction, oftentimes embracing animal perspectives. I have written and directed over a dozen shorts that have played at festivals worldwide. My first feature film 'The Fly Room', which has screened in over 50 cities, is based on the true story of the birth of modern genetics and was produced with support from the Spike Lee Production Fund and Hollywood Foreign Press Association. I am in post-production on a second feature, 'Son of Monarchs', which delves into issues of immigration, migration and animal-human hybrids. My work aims at transforming the way science is communicated to the public through film and visual arts. I received a PhD in Molecular Biology at the Rockefeller University and a master's in fine arts from NYU Tisch School of the Arts. My first feature film 'the Fly Room; about the birthplace of genetics in New York, has toured festivals and academic institutions worldwide ending with a theatrical release in New York, Paris, and Berlin in the fall of 2017. I have been featured in *the New York Times*, *Forbes*, *Nature*, *Cell*, TED, and WNYC. At New York University I teach in both the Biology and Film departments. My courses combine scientific research and storytelling often featuring animals as actors and blurring the lines between fact and fiction. I am also the founder and executive director of the Imagine Science Films Festival, an annual science film festival now celebrating its 10th anniversary. I also recently launched LABOCINE, a science film platform, research video database and magazine coined by reviewers as the "science new wave" (www.alexgambis.com).

I define my work as a hybrid of research and visual storytelling, two entities in symbiosis and equally important to create original films. I take scientific data outside the confines of the lab and throw them into fictional landscapes, to infiltrate people's imagination and echo with their personal lives, cultures, and politics. Science is a beautiful, malleable, and universal language to speak about the human condition across cultures and the state of our planet. I act as a messenger. I am an activist trying to lead a movement of radical transformation, where scientific research is transformed into artistic practices and fuels the minds of our future generations, that will make the right decisions about the future of our fragile system. I like to call this moment the science new wave. Recently, my film *Son of Monarchs* won the New American Cinema Grand Jury Award at the 2021 Seattle International Film Festival and the Alfred P. Sloan Feature 2021 Feature Film Prize Winner at the Sundance Film Festival 2021.



GUARDIAN OF THE MANGROVES (doc fiction, 9 minutes, 2015)

Fatouh, the Guardian of the Mangroves has not been seen for the last few decades. Some say he left after disputes with local tribes while others claim that it is increasing destruction and pollution of these ecosystems in the Arabian Gulf that have forced him out. And yet recently fishermen have reported sightings of Fatouh. As we maneuver into the tiny mangrove islands inhabited by flamingoes and cormorants of Umm Al Quwain, we discover traces of this forgotten creature and reminisce about his life.

www.alexgambis.com





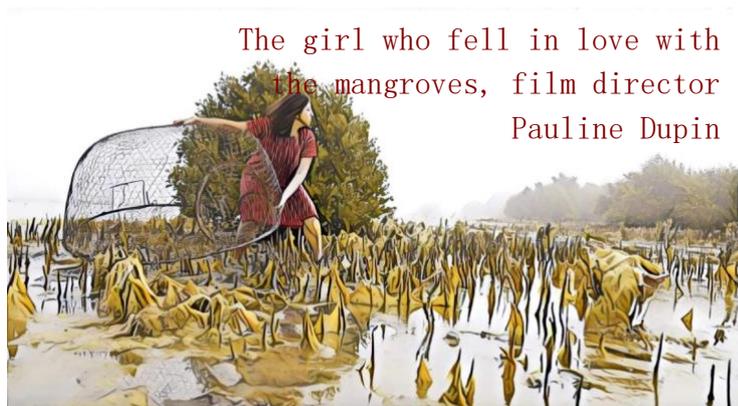
Geraldine Chansard - artist



I am a French artist with a bachelor's degree in Visual Arts from Pantheon-Sorbonne University (1999) and have lived and worked in the United Arab Emirates since 2012. My artistic research focuses on heritage and its transmission. The best way to grow and develop skills is to integrate the past but only if you accept the place where you are living. I discovered my expressive style of painting in 2010. "Art comes from the heart". I look for an invisible reality; the one from the inside

where emotions and feelings cannot lie. It is a challenge to accept to face such a reality made with the beliefs, the fears, the souvenirs...

Even today, a legend tells that the soul of a young woman who fell in love with mangroves awakens through the roots of a small shoot, the branches of which begin to bud in her honor, at low tide, at the Sunrise...



This 'video tale', *The girl who fell in love with the mangroves*

stems from my desire to collaborate with Pauline Dupin to highlight my artwork *The Woman from the*

Mangroves. I created a sculpture inspired by a natural plant in 2015 as a member of the mangrove preservation group of artists *Mangroves from the Water*, and continue my association in July 2021, in Australia.

Because of the fragility and the difficulties to ship the art piece from the UAE where it stays, my partnership with Pauline enables me to show the sculpture through the eye of the camera.

Pauline, French author, and director listened to my story carefully. She took note of my process of being in touch with the mangroves. She knew exactly how to transform a simple contemplative video, presenting the sculpture in all its forms, filmed in its natural environment: the mangroves of Umm Al Quwain into a realization of an adventure story, a tale. This is how we combined our talents to achieve a touching and sincere work, that a legend was born.

In my painting, I try to be expressive, entering the colorful world of the child, breaking conventionality, and creating curiosity for the viewer. Though I depict simple characters that are clearly distinguishable, their presence in the paintings and sculptures delivers strong messages. I also present in parallel artistic practices and disciplines of art history and heritage handcraft that interact and engage with my child like creations. Art is from the heart, hands make art.

Since 2015 the sculpture has been exhibited in different emirates in the UAE: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ras Al Khaimah and Umm Al Quwain; to raise awareness of the role of mangroves. May this extraordinary experience of creating this film from the structure serve to interest and educate on how we can live respectfully together with Nature.

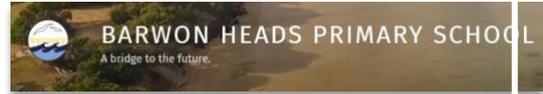
<https://geraldinechansard.wixsite.com/arts>



The Woman from the mangrove. 2015/2019 UAE -120 x 280 x 185cm. Wire weaving on fishing nests; Cargoor in Arabic, paletuvier dead wood, bead, linen fibers, acrylic, paletuvier's leaves on brown tulle fabric.

The Barwon Heads Primary School

Students present artwork expressing their connection to the estuary of the Barwon River



leading out into Bass Strait. Jonathon Phillips, the school project leader, writes about the students' involvement in *Mangroves from the Water*.

"I belong to a world bigger than my own". The students at Barwon Heads Primary School are familiar with that statement as it forms a key part of their education. The students are encouraged to look after and respect their environment, and to recognize that they can make positive contributions to the world around them. The invitation to participate in this exhibition fits perfectly with the students' sustainability goals. With assured guidance from local photographer Martin Griffith, the students of Grade 6A walked down to the mangroves and had a wonderful time observing, listening, and learning. Armed with a little knowledge and iPads they engaged with the mangroves and captured image after image. The results are the views of the mangroves from the perspectives of children. Their observations. Their eyes.

<https://bhps.education/>





Photo by Zahidah Zeytoun Millie



Workshops





Schedule

Date/Time	Presenter	Workshop	Location
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شجر القرم من الماء Mangroves from the Water

Gordon Gallery
2 Fenwick St.
Geelong, Victoria, Australia

A multi-disciplinary exhibition of work
curated by Zahidah Zeytoun Millie
www.mangrovesfromthewater.com

Exhibition hours:
Daily 11am - 4pm

This exhibition was made
possible by a Community
Events Grant from



Also supported by:



معهد الشارقة للتراث
SHARJAH INSTITUTE FOR HERITAGE





zephyr

Photo by Barwon Heads Primary School



Curator Contact Details

Zahidah Zeytoun Millie

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mangrovesfromthewater.com

Mangroves from the Water is an ongoing exhibition started as an art campaign in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in 2014 with a touring group a multi-disciplinary art exhibition and a 2017 Mangroves Festival. The campaign continues with this exhibition on International Mangroves Day 2021 in Geelong, Australia.

Follow us for news and updates:



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Our Partners



Local government area of the Barwon South West region of Victoria.

A scientific, academic and cultural centre promoting heritage and folklore in the United Arab Emirates.



Enabling communities to identify and address their own needs.

Caring for the Barwon Estuary.



The Barwon Estuary Project



Inspiring, connecting and strengthening our Community.

Barwon Heads Primary School.



The Gordon Gallery, for exhibitions and events.

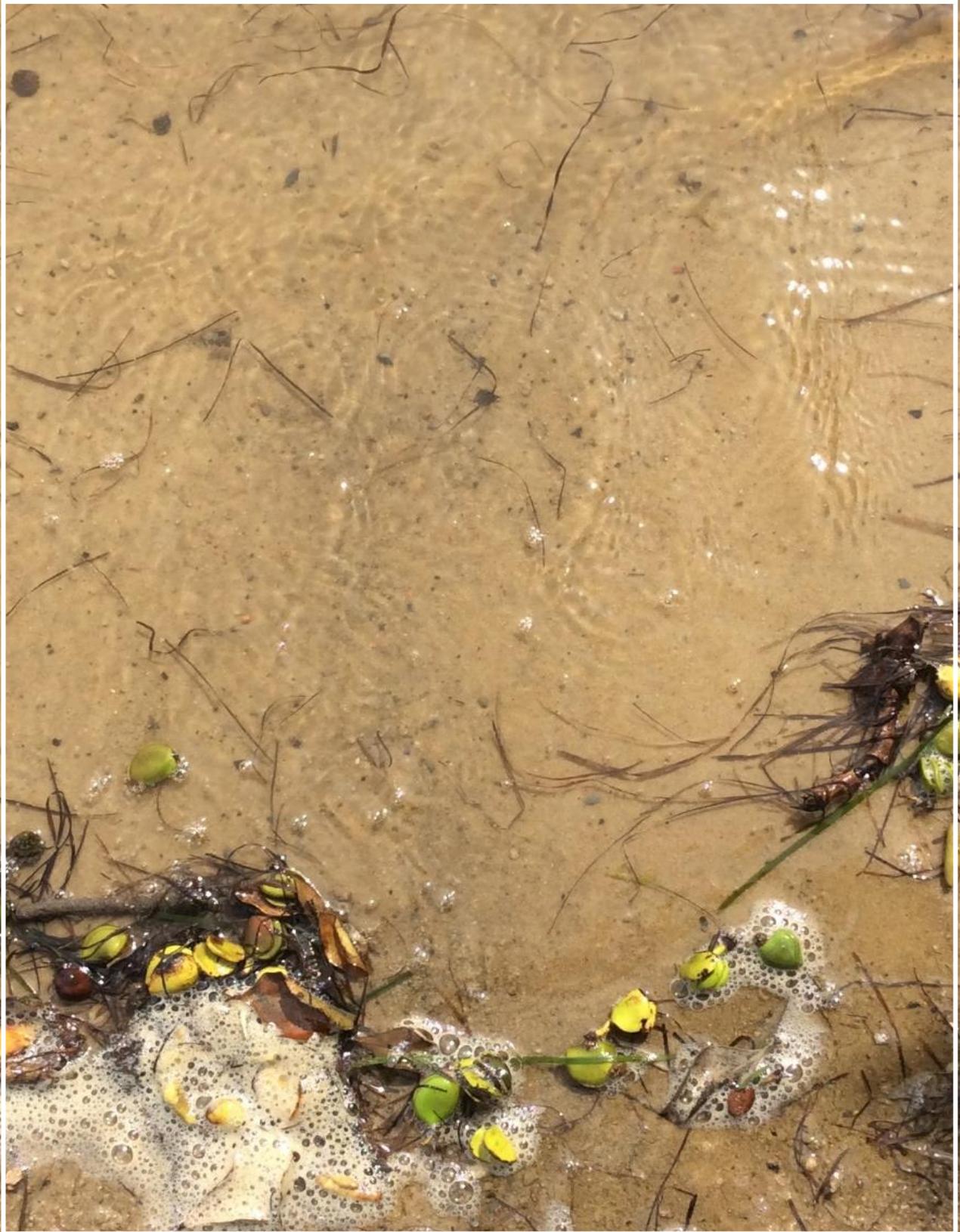


Photo Helen Martin



Photo by Zahidah Zeytoun Millie

