

# TarraWarra Biennial 2021:

## *Slow Moving Waters*

27 March – 11 July 2021



Jacobus Capone, *Sincerity and Symbiosis* 2019 (video still detail),  
3-channel HD video installation, video duration 36:00m, Courtesy of the artist and Moore Contemporary, Perth

The TarraWarra Biennial 2021 exhibition features 24 artists from across the country making new works that explore ideas of slowness, deceleration, drift and the elasticity of time.

The exhibition title ***Slow Moving Waters*** comes from the accepted translation of the local Woiwurrung word 'tarrawarra', after which the Museum, and its surrounding Yarra Valley area are named.

Guest Curator Nina Miall says the exhibition takes shape around two related cues: the idea of slowness, and the winding course of the Birrarung (Yarra River), which flows south of the Museum grounds.

"In tune with the unhurried arc of the river, ***Slow Moving Waters*** proposes a stay to the ever more rapid flows of people, commerce and information that characterise the dynamic of globalisation," Ms Miall said.

Against today's cult of speed with the relentless hum of its 24/7 communications, the artworks in the Biennial mark a different sort of time – one which connects with the vastness

and intricacy of geological and cosmological cycles, seasonal rhythms, interconnected ecologies, and ancient knowledge systems.

The participating artists engage slowness as a conceptual framework, aesthetic strategy or radical political gesture, invoking it as a mode of resistance and disruption that runs counter to the neoliberal turn in global politics.

Ms Miall said: "Between the hyper-acceleration of our current age and the impossibility of stopping altogether is a temporal space of possibility and resistance: slowing down.

"The TarraWarra Biennial 2021 reflects on the socio-political conditions that have made slowness an increasingly urgent imperative, carving out a space to explore its potential as both a passive and active course for claiming different forms of agency. The meandering logic of the Birrarung is a vital reference point for the exhibition; in its circling eddies we find ways in which we might all disturb the prevailing current."

Unfolding in different ways over its duration, *Slow Moving Waters* rewards close and extended viewing. A number of works explore time's extremes of scale, involve time- or labour-intensive processes, or are intended to develop and change throughout the exhibition. Others draw on strategies such as walking, idleness or sleep, marking intervals of time that cannot be colonised or commodified.

TarraWarra Museum of Art Director, Victoria Lynn, says, "*Slow Moving Waters* has been in development for two years, and emerges as prescient at a time when the world has been forced to slow down and reflect in new ways.

"This exhibition is notable for the strong representation of First Nations artists, and also distinctive in its site-specificity. There will be eleven ambitious new works that reflect the unique context and sense of place particular to TarraWarra.

"*Slow Moving Waters* deserves repeat visitation, with a number of works evolving over the course of the exhibition, harnessing duration as a key element and offering new perspectives and possibilities," Ms Lynn said.

Considering the broader arc of history against the pull of the accelerated now, *Slow Moving Waters* advances relations to time that are grounded in both place and community, attentive to an idea of the present as a site of multiple durations, pasts and possible futures.

The artists exhibiting in the 7<sup>th</sup> TarraWarra Biennial 2021 are: **Robert Andrew, Jeremy Bakker, Lucy Bleach, Lauren Brincat, Louisa Bufardeci, Sundari Carmody, Christian Capurro, Jacobus Capone, Daniel Crooks, Megan Cope, George Egerton-Warburton, Nicole Foreshew and P. Thomas Boorljoongali, Caitlin Franzmann, James Geurts, Michaela Gleave, Jonathan Jones with Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin AO, Nongirrnga Marawili, Brian Martin, Raquel Ormella, Mandy Quadrio, Yasmin Smith, Grant Stevens, and Oliver Wagner.**

The exhibition will be accompanied by a vibrant suite of in-person and online events and public programs, and a catalogue featuring essays by curator Nina Miall and researcher Toni Ross, interspersed with an account of the origins of the Birrarung (Yarra River) by Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin AO and a series of water poems by writer Tony Birch.

## SELECTED ARTWORKS

Produced in close collaboration with Senior Wurundjeri Elder Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin AO, Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi artist **Jonathan Jones**' installation threads throughout the exhibition, combining piles of weathered river stones with sound recordings of how the Birrarung came into being.

**Louisa Bufardec**'s series of new needlepoint works take their imagery from magnified sediments that remained on the soles of the artist's feet after a swim in the river, exploring 'the way place and history stick to us'.

**James Geurts**' expanded drawings visualise moments of rupture and continuity at different points along the upper Birrarung, evoking the invisible histories, archaeologies and contemporary utilities of the waterway.

Quandamooka artist **Megan Cope**'s major new installation features a live painting process, in which three suspended ice sculptures dyed with plant extracts melt slowly over handmade paper derived from algae blooms, staining it in lurid colours to draw attention to ocean acidification.

Working closely with TarraWarra Estate, **Yasmin Smith** creates an ambitious new installation of ceramic grapevines, whose unique, site-derived glaze finds parallels with the French vinicultural concept of *terroir*.

**Robert Andrew**, a descendent of the Yawuru people, creates a kinetic sculpture in which a mechanical apparatus transcribes an Indigenous language word repeatedly in cursive script, enacting a slow material transformation.

Tasmanian artist **Lucy Bleach** responds to the geologic phenomena of slow earthquakes through a site-specific installation in which a double bass is embalmed in a slab of cast toffee. Its vibrating strings carry the infrasonic pulse of slow earthquake events, resonating at a similar frequency to that of the body's vascular system.

**Jacobus Capone**'s three-channel moving image work *Sincerity and Symbiosis* addresses ecological grief through documenting a six-week-long durational performance that the artist undertook in a plantation forest in Shiga prefecture in Japan in 2019.

## ENDS

### For interviews, images and further information please contact:

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**Opening Hours:** Tuesday – Sunday, 11am to 5pm. Open all public holidays except Christmas Day. Open 7 days a week from Boxing Day to Australia Day.

**Admission:** \$10 Adults; \$8 Seniors; \$5 Concession and Students; Museum Members and children under 12 free.

## **NINA MIALl BIOGRAPHY:**

Nina Miall is an independent curator and writer based in Sydney. Primary among her curatorial concerns are socially engaged, relational and site-specific practices, and the politics and poetics of performance.

Nina has curated more than 30 exhibitions across Europe, the US, Asia and Australia. Most recently she was Curator at Carriageworks (2012–2017) where she co-curated the inaugural multi-venue biennial exhibition *The National 2017: New Australian Art* and the major interdisciplinary commissioning project *24 Frames Per Second* (2012–2015). Other exhibitions include *1917: The Great Strike*, *Nick Cave: HEARD.SYD* (2016) with the City of Sydney, *Francesco Clemente: Encampment* (2016), *Ross Manning: Melody Lines* (2016), and *One Year Performance: 1980–1981*, by Taiwanese performance artist Tehching Hsieh (2014).

Prior to Carriageworks, Nina was based in London for 12 years where she was a director of contemporary art gallery Haunch of Venison from 2006–2011, curating exhibitions with artists such as Philippe Parreno, Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, and Jitish Kallat, as well as surveys of contemporary South African art and Soviet Non-Conformist art. From 2003–2005, Nina was Head of Public Programmes for the Royal Academy of Arts in London, working with artists such as David Hockney, Ed Ruscha, Jeff Koons, and Frank Auerbach.

From 2012–2015, Nina was a director of Future Perfect, a commercial gallery in Singapore which worked with artists from south-east Asia and beyond. Future Perfect won the prize for 'Best Gallery Supporting Emerging Contemporary Asian Art' at the Prudential Eye Awards in 2015. Two of the gallery's artists – Arin Rungjang from Thailand, and Charles Lim from Singapore – represented their countries at the Venice Biennale in 2013 and 2015 respectively.

In 2017–2018 Nina completed the Australia Council's Arts Leaders Program. Nina has a BA (Hons I) from the University of Sydney and an MA from the Courtauld Institute of Art, London. She has lectured on contemporary art in Australia and the UK and has published widely.

# MEDIA RELEASE

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