

## The Soils Project

A collaboration between TarraWarra Museum of Art, the Van Abbemuseum, and Struggles for Sovereignty

5 August – 12 November 2023  
TarraWarra Museum of Art, Wurundjeri Country



Image: Peta Clancy, detail from the photographic installation *Surfacing* 2023, ink-jet pigment print, 100 x 150 cm.  
Courtesy the artist and Dominik Mersch Gallery, Sydney

TarraWarra Museum of Art today announced ***The Soils Project*** exhibition, presented from **5 August - 12 November 2023**. *The Soils Project* brings together 13 practitioners and collectives from Australia, the Netherlands and Indonesia to explore the complex and diverse relationships between environmental change and colonisation.

The exhibition is the latest iteration of an ongoing research-based experimental project developed in collaboration with leading contemporary arts museum the **Van Abbemuseum** in Eindhoven, Netherlands and **Struggles for Sovereignty**, a collective based in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. *The Soils Project* arises from specific and situated practices that each of the participants and artists brings to their understanding of soil, as both metaphor and matter.

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*The Soils Project* has been in development since 2018. An international collaboration between three organisations, and several artists, curators, writers and activists, the project has manifested in various iterations over several years including a three-part public webinar series titled *The Soils Project: groundwork*, and a two-week workshop, titled *The Soils Project: On Country*, for participating curators and artists. With a curatorium comprising arts workers from **TarraWarra Museum of Art**, the **Van Abbemuseum**, and **Struggles for Sovereignty**, the project's approach seeks and facilitates opportunities to listen to diverse voices and perspectives around notions of caring for land, soil and sovereign territories.

Developed from this journey, *The Soils Project's* forthcoming exhibition will embrace the deep histories of each participant's location, examining the multiplicity of landscapes and environments, and the impact of colonisations and global industries on cultural heritage, land management and traditional knowledges.

Newly commissioned works by Australian practitioners include a large-scale photographic installation by Bangerang artist **Peta Clancy** that responds to historic photographs taken where the Birrarung (Yarra River) and Brungergalk (Watts River) meet, exploring cultural memory over time. Quandamooka artist **Megan Cope** and Australian artist **Keg de Souza** will collaborate on a series of earth maps of the site of Coranderrk Aboriginal Station located in Healesville. Harnessing the process of soil chromatography, the work uses soil samples collected from significant places throughout Coranderrk.

Dutch artist **Wapke Feenstra** will present *Boerenzij (The Rural Side)*, a video work documenting the people and communities of the southern bank of Rotterdam. The project questions rural migration and cultural gentrification, demanding critical awareness of the ways in which rural culture is being swallowed up and urbanised worldwide. In her series *Melting Heart*, photographer **Diewke van der Heuvel** captures the melting of Aletsch, the largest glacier in the European Alps. Printed on recycled fabric, the large-scale photographs record the grandeur of the natural environment, and the resulting impact of climate change.

From Indonesia, **Lian Gogali**, founder of the grassroots community organisation **Institut Mosintuwu** based in Poso District, Central Sulawesi, will present a collaborative painting titled *Ovarium Map*. Made by women from across Poso, the painting combines seeds, leaves and soils from each of their villages. The painting is a reminder of the crucial role women play in protecting our land, forest, and water. Artist and researcher **Riar Rizaldi** will showcase his Earth trilogy of video works, *Kasiterit*, *Tellurian Drama*, and *Becquerel*, which aim to rethink and interrogate the relationship between technology, extractivism and colonialism. Artist **Moelyono** will present two paintings depicting ludruk, a form of non-hierarchical people's theatre, which uses satire to address the daily struggles of local communities. The paintings result from a five-year collaboration with a group of ludruk performers in Jombang, East Java.

On behalf of the curatorium, **Director of TarraWarra Museum of Art, Dr Victoria Lynn**, says: "*An exploration of situated knowledges and local issues across three countries, The Soils Project continues to grow over time, with every iteration as valuable as the one that has gone before. We are excited for audiences to experience the result of a sustained and ongoing collaborative effort with Struggles for Sovereignty and the Van Abbemuseum, as realised in this major exhibition.*"

*The Soils Project* will continue in 2024, when the Van Abbemuseum will present an exhibition, and in 2025, with a manifestation of the project in Indonesia.

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## The full list of *The Soils Project* exhibition participants:

**Australia:** Brooke Wandin (Wurundjeri); Peta Clancy (Bangerang); Megan Cope (Quandamooka) and Keg de Souza; D Harding (Bidjara, Ghungalu, and Garingbal).

**Netherlands:** Wapke Feenstra; Diewke van den Heuvel; Pluriversity weavers: Seynawiku Izquierdo Torres, Dwasimney Del Carmen Izquierdo Torres, Dwanimako Arroyo Izquierdo, María Eufemia Arroyo Izquierdo (Kwarte Umuke community, Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia), Alike van der Kruijs, LI Yuchen, Ana Bravo Pérez, Aldo Ramos.

**Indonesia:** Lian Gogali, founder and Chair of Institut Mosintuwu, Poso District, Central Sulawesi; Yurni Sadariah, adat (indigenous/customary) activist and member of PEREMPUAN AMAN (the Women's Association of the 'Indigenous Peoples Alliance of the Archipelago'), Rangan, East Kalimantan; Badan Kajian Pertanahan (BKP, 'Agency for the Study of Land Affairs'), a collaboration between Bunga Siagian and Ismal Muntaha, Jatiwangi, Majalengka; Moelyono, artist, Tulungagung, Central Java; and Riar Rizaldi, artist, amateur researcher, and curator.

*Ends*

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**IMAGES** available to download [HERE](#)

### **ABOUT TARRAWARRA MUSEUM OF ART:**

TarraWarra Museum of Art actively engages with art, place and ideas within global, national and First Nations contexts. Established in 2003, the Museum presents a changing exhibition program of twentieth and twenty-first century art, creating dynamic and memorable experiences for all audiences encouraging curiosity and creativity within the wider community. The Museum, located in Healesville, has a collection of over 700 works of Australian twenty and twenty-first century art.

Project team: Victoria Lynn, Anthony Fitzpatrick, Charlotte Carter.

### **ABOUT VAN ABBEMUSEUM:**

The Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven is one of the first public museums for contemporary art to be established in Europe. The museum's collection of over 3,400 works of art includes key works and archives by Joseph Beuys, Marc Chagall, René Daniëls, Marlene Dumas, Sheela Gowda, Patricia Kaersenhout, Gülsün Karamustafa, Iris Kensmil, Oskar Kokoschka, John Körmeling, El Lissitzky, Paul McCarthy, Pablo Picasso, Martha Rosler, and Lidwien van de Ven. The museum has an experimental approach towards art's role in society.

Project team: Charles Esche, Teresa Cos Rebollo, Vivian Heyms.

### **ABOUT STRUGGLES FOR SOVEREIGNTY:**

Struggles for Sovereignty (SFS) is a collective rooted in Yogyakarta Indonesia, focusing on social and ecological justice. SFS collaborates with practitioners and communities across the Indonesian archipelago and other majority world contexts,

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who are working on the front line of colonial and ecological struggles. Through their programmes they explore the possibilities of cultural practice to act as a tool in developing lasting solidarity infrastructure.

Project team: Eliesta Handitya, Gatari Surya Kusuma, Sanne Oorthuizen, Alec Steadman.

The Soils Project Advisors: Wandoon Estate Aboriginal Corporation; Zena Cumpston (Barkandji researcher, writer and storyteller); Antariksa (independent historian, artist and member of KUNCI Study Forum & Collective); Dr Danny Butt (University of Melbourne); Dr Helen Hughes (Monash University); and Rolando Vázquez (Utrecht University).

**TarraWarra Museum of Art**, Wurundjeri Country, 313 Healesville-Yarra Glen Road, Healesville VIC 3777  
T +61 (0)3 5957 3100 W [twma.com.au](http://twma.com.au) **Opening Hours:** Tuesday – Sunday, 11am to 5pm. Open all public holidays except Christmas Day.

The Soils Project is supported by

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