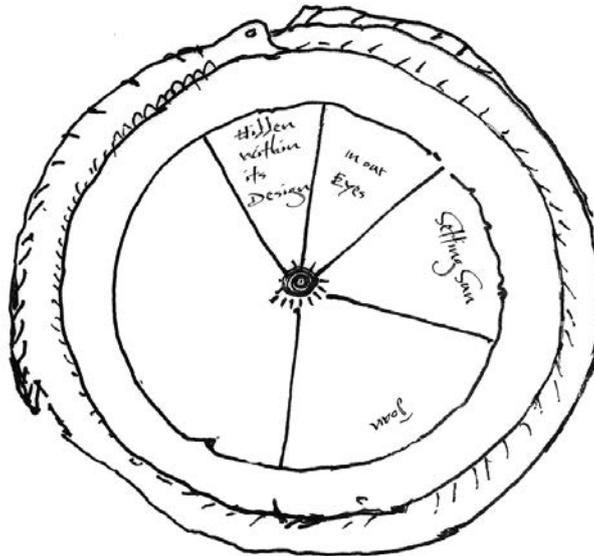


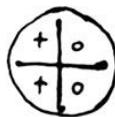
Chapter Four: Joan

Joan (April to late August): silver banksias flower, rainfall increases and the hidden narratives of the landscape emerge.



Country

In this research I explore my whiteness (Foley, 1999; McCarthy, 2003; Schech & Haggis, 2004; Toyosaki, Pensoneau-Conway, Wendt, & Leathers, 2009; Yeung, Spanierman, & Landrum-Brown, 2013) by placing the looking glass upon my own position as a non-Aboriginal man in Australia. In doing so, I examined my own history as a settler born Australian (Maddison, 2012) taking my research to Western Australia where I was born, and where my family history is associated with colonisation of Noongar Country. My ancestors also exploited Wurundjeri Country through colonial opportunities; as a result I confront my own colonial legacy whilst simultaneously questioning the colonial narratives marked in this local landscape.



Boodjar



Figure 18: Ngaala kaaditj Noongar moort kayen kaadak nidja boodja



I went ‘home’, to Western Australia: Nyungar Country.

I was in a deep process of decolonisation.

Back on Nyungar boodjar: where I was born, ‘back home!’

Working towards a post-colonial standpoint.

Following Laenui’s (2000) processes of colonisation and de-colonisation I gazed inwards: at identity, belonging, and on the meaning of home. I gazed outwards: my great-great grandfather, a ‘pioneer’; a founding ‘father’, of the small rural town where I was born: Gnowangerup⁵ (pronounced now -anger-up).

⁵ Ngow is Noongar for Malleefowl, and the town’s name is a version of the original Noongar name for this place. The suffix *-up* means *place of the Malleefowl*, or *place where the Malleefowl make nests*.

His son, my great-grandfather: died recently at 103 years old, and was once the local butcher during the 1930's - 50's.

At the same time, Noongar people were forced to live on a reserve hidden out the back of town.



Figure 19: Gnowangerup mission, near present day Black Rd (drawing from a photo at the local library in Gnowangerup).



Figure 20: Black Road, Gnowangerup, near the Gnowangerup Mission and The Twisted Tree

Noongar moort⁶, were restricted to the old reserve with little to no amenities, denied country without Government permits and permission. Follow the 'rules', and maybe some kind of access will be

granted to the town, shops: for dripping and other simple ingredients, only once a week.



Figure 21: 'The Twisted Tree: 5km south of Gnowangerup, Western Australia, and a recognised historical tree prior to European arrival. A tree known for its cultural and historical significance: a meeting place.

A place of cultural significance: and a place of exploitation.



Figure 22: Family photo, taken just outside Gnowangerup circa 1960's (from personal collection), and a sign along the main street of Gnowangerup: promoting farming as the true future of this landscape.

Still you could only be wadjella⁷ or Noongar.

I am wadjella, from the other side of town. In the words of Homi Bhabha (1990): “a colonial subject, difficult to place” and decolonisation is an on-going process. A process that unhinges my colonial foundations to which my ancestry is chained. Figure 21 illustrates three men, of many who colonised Australia. They act as faces for the hidden colonial narratives found within my own history and that of Australia, gazing back at how Australian history and identity is delivered in school settings (represented in the textured background made up of words and charcoal smudges)

These men and their legacies continue to live in the landscape by name, and impact. Among many others things; James Cook declared Australia terra nullius, Arthur Phillip illegally took possession of Victoria, and James Stirling opened the south-west of Western Australia for Europeans to populate and exploit (which my ancestors took part in, and I benefit from today).

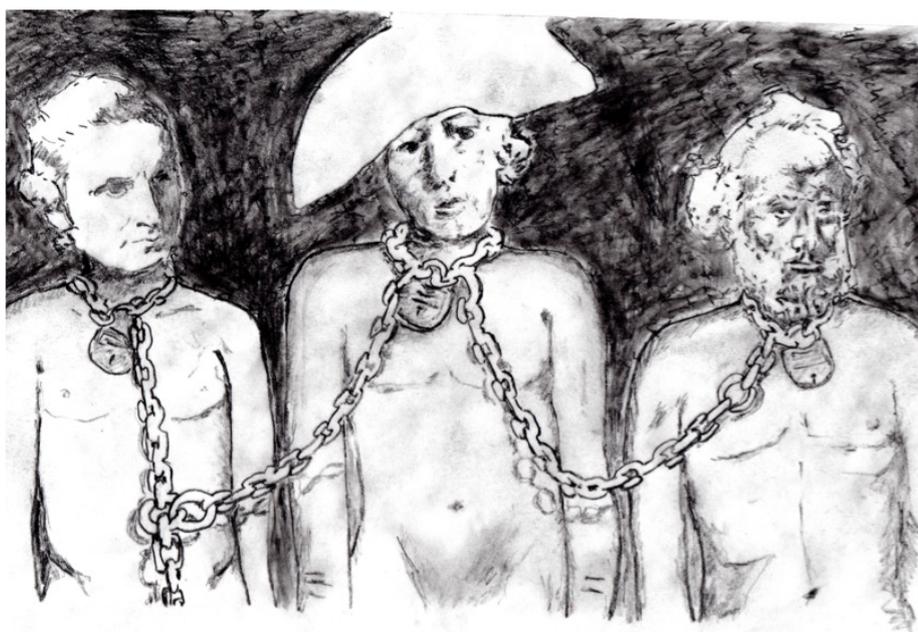


Figure 23: Chains: James Cook, Arthur Phillip and James Stirling.

7

Wadjella is Noongar for a non-Noongar person, generally applied to a *whitefulla*.

Seen in the drawing of Australia (figure 22), I am writing from two separate places related by my life story.

Colonial legacies linger in my birthplace as well as, resonating in the landscape this research is connected to, Wurundjeri country.



Figure 24: Map of Australia highlighting places this research is connected to



Figure 25: Row of Sugar Gums near Jones Creek, St Albans



Walking with plants

A row of Sugar Gums mark a time in history when the landscape was different, yet bound together with the present moment. The silence of these trees speaks from the colonial, early European times through to the present moment. Across the western district of Melbourne these Sugar Gum remnants maintain a colonial presence in the landscape. They mark farmhouses, allotments, borders and boundaries: European notions of land ownership, Sugar Gums serve as a physical reminder of colonial markings on our sense of place.

Plants impart and maintain knowledge and memory. They provide insights into seasons, and carry an assortment of cultural meanings and histories. Plants have guided this research. It is through my interest in local plants that I came to the starting point of this research journey. Standing on the edge of remnant grasslands a small waterway marked the eastern boundary: a waterway called Jones Creek.



Figure 26: Jones Creek lagoons, looking towards remnant grasslands, behind the Sugar Gums

Being mindful of the seasonal movements the observation of local plants, their changes and growth, meant I engaged in walking to the locations of many of the plants I look for: wattles, flax, and orchids to name a few (within a 10km radius of St Albans I know where to find many plants for many different uses, for medicine, food, and art, I often feel a plant's presence, as if they sing out to me, making me notice them). Walking is a liminal act and in that passageway of movement, insights emerge, and connections can be made becoming a method to collect and analyse data in the moment. Irwin (2013) endorses walking as being a pedagogical way to capture and embody the liminal becoming arts education in

action as it maps, and documents arts learning through unique creative processes that include actions like walking.



Figure 27: Sugar Gum walking path

Like Irwin (2013), I am lured into the in-between by the pulsating movements of walking this research, entering moments, opening possibilities for artistic processes to interact with the local environment: embracing the limen of fact and fiction. In this work walking was a way into the landscape enhancing my sense of place.

Following the plants as guides within the sentient landscape, led me back to the catchment ponds of Jones creek. I heard that maybe once, prior to the creek's redevelopments, there were two springs of water: somewhere up near Main Rd⁸ West. In my research into the history of this waterway and area, there was no evidence to suggest there were two springs of water along this waterway. The curiosity to find out if once they existed resulted in a much deeper understanding

⁸ Main Rd, is the major road through St Albans, consisting of two sections: Main Rd East and Main Rd West. The trainline intersects the centre dividing St Albans into two sides.

of place. The thought that maybe there are still signs of these springs left in the landscape and in their search I walked the landscape to find the subtle lie of the land: looking for the silent patches of old pathways of water.

Jones Creek

I found that Jones Creek has an ambiguous history, despite its important role in the life of this landscape. Sourcing information about the creek's past and present came from documents from the Victorian State library, local libraries and historical societies (Carstairs, Lane, & St Albans History Society, 1988; History of St Albans, 2013).

Information re-presented in maps (from the late 1800's to the present day), memoirs, geological and ecological documents highlight the 'at risk' bio-diverse western grasslands, and their rapid destruction since European arrival (Presland, 1985). Most articulate a settler state mentality, with any links made to Jones creek told through a colonial narrative. *Pubs, punts & pastures: the story of Irish pioneer women on the Salt Water River* (Carstairs et al., 1988) provided further insights as it told a female perspective in a white male dominated time and place. Within this book I came upon a map demarking Jones creek as Joan's creek along with the waterway's historical path.

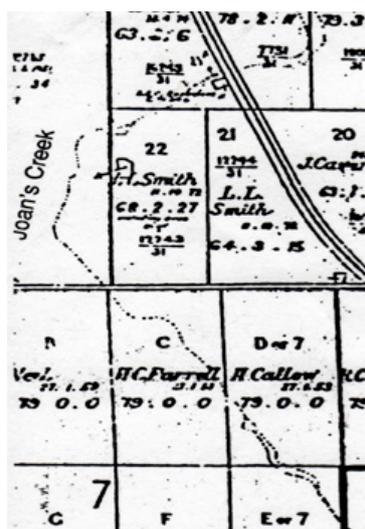


Figure 28: Joan's Creek from (Carstairs et al., 1988)

A local story is of children walking the train tracks near a large dam a few hundred metres from the Hume and Hovell⁹ memorial cairn. A dam big enough to swim in during the hot months and provide water for the immediate area, a once vital source of water, used to exist here. Today there is no dam, rather a muddy drain way underneath the train line.



Figure 29: Hume and Hovell Memorial Cairn



Figure 30: Joan's Dam

Jones Creek has an ambiguous persona, prescribed and assimilated. Today the creek begins approximately three kilometres from where it once had begun. It starts today as a series of large ponds, that are connected to filter the water that drains off the streets, water plants help the series of lakes functioning as filters.

⁹ Hume and Hovell were the first two Europeans to travel from Sydney to Port Phillip (present day Melbourne), in their journal they wrote highly about the topography of present day Keilor Plains, where this memorial Cairn has been placed.

People walk in-between the edge of the creek and the remnant grasslands daily, underneath large pylons of electricity and the flight paths of hawks, and planes.

My focus on this waterway was the northern section of the creek, a section that has been erased from the landscape and developed as industrial, commercial, urban spaces and in some cases, parkland. St Albans since the late 1800's continues to be increasingly sub-divided, once volcanic basalt plains, to squatters, capitalists and now property developers: a small seasonal creek is more of a hindrance to progress and development. The dirt from one of the local bluestone quarries was used to cover over this section of Jones creek. Houses have been erected except where the land would not give in, remaining a dip in the land, where grass and trees line the pathway like a silent avenue of honour.

A place shrouded in historical mystery Joan's creek came to symbolise many things. I was unable to find any documentation about who Joan may have been; I went through the local histories of European families and 'settlers' along the waterway and found no strong connections with Joan. The only Joan that I could find was the author of the book containing the map marking the waterway as Joan's creek. Spelling error or not, the idea of a forgotten person living on as a creek was interesting, a ghost-like character, Joan is both fact and fiction. Likewise, the male counterpart Jones was equally evasive in historical records.

There are many other waterways that have been enclosed like this Jones creek, if not filled with dirt; they are fashioned into concrete drains, swiftly sending storm water to Kororoit creek. Many creeks go nameless in this urban environment but their hidden paths linger.



Figure 31: Forgotten waterway, concrete drain

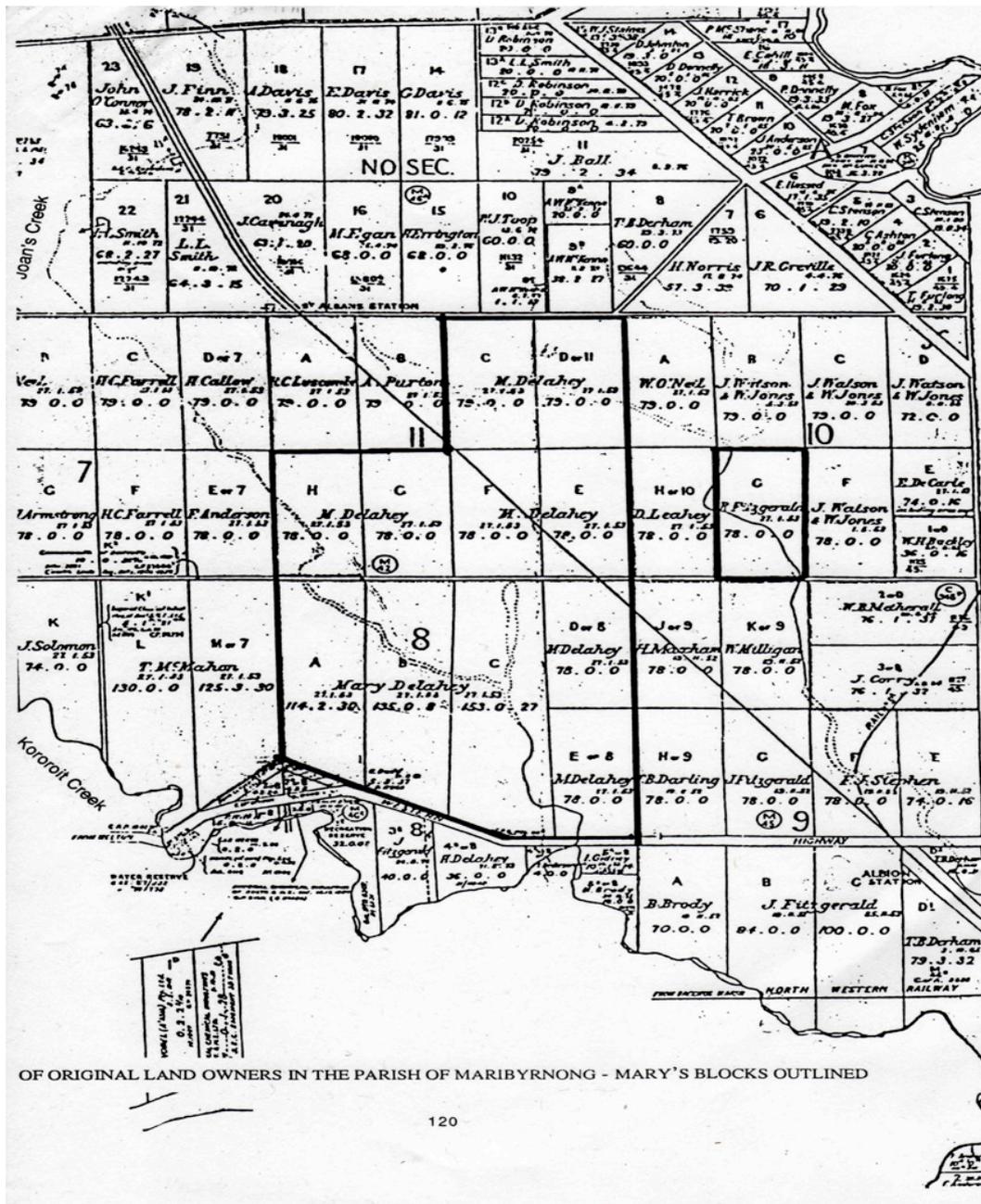


Figure 32: Jones (Joan's) Creek prior to its redevelopment, from Carstairs et al. (1988), titled Original land owners.

Walking Jones Creek









Photostory 3: Joan's Creek



Joan

(5.Joan.mp3)

Verse One

*She ripped her floral red dress,
And her memory's tired and
makes no sense,
She lingers in the flat lie of the
land,*

Chorus One

*For Joan's a ghost, with the
most beautiful hair,
(Oh no, oh no, oh no: there's
two)*

Verse Two

*Looking out over the grass
plains,
She sees her house shimmer
in a haze,
Nothings permanent but I think
she's OK,*

Chorus Two

*For Joan's a ghost, with the
most beautiful hair,
(Oh no, oh no, oh no: there's
two)
Called to the spirits to make
them leave,
The concrete walls slip and
skid,
I thought you might just, like to
know,
Your house is built on bones,
belonging to,
Joan*

Verse Three

*Her floral dressed wedged
between thistle stalks,*

*Taken away with not a
thought,
For the people ask, but your
name is gone,
Replaced by a man, a man
called Mr Jones*

Chorus Three

*For Joan's a ghost, with the
most beautiful hair
(Oh no, oh no, oh no: there's
two)
Stepped in the water, I
needed to see
How really deep is she?
Standing in the floating
debris
You know you're standing on
bones, belonging to Joan
Belonging to Joan
Where is Joan?
She's not alone*

Joan

Instrumentation:

Piano
Drums
Synth
Bass
Two Guitars
Six voices

Verse: Am9 - F9 - G9 - Dm 9

Chorus: C - Fmaj7 - G6 - Dm - G - C

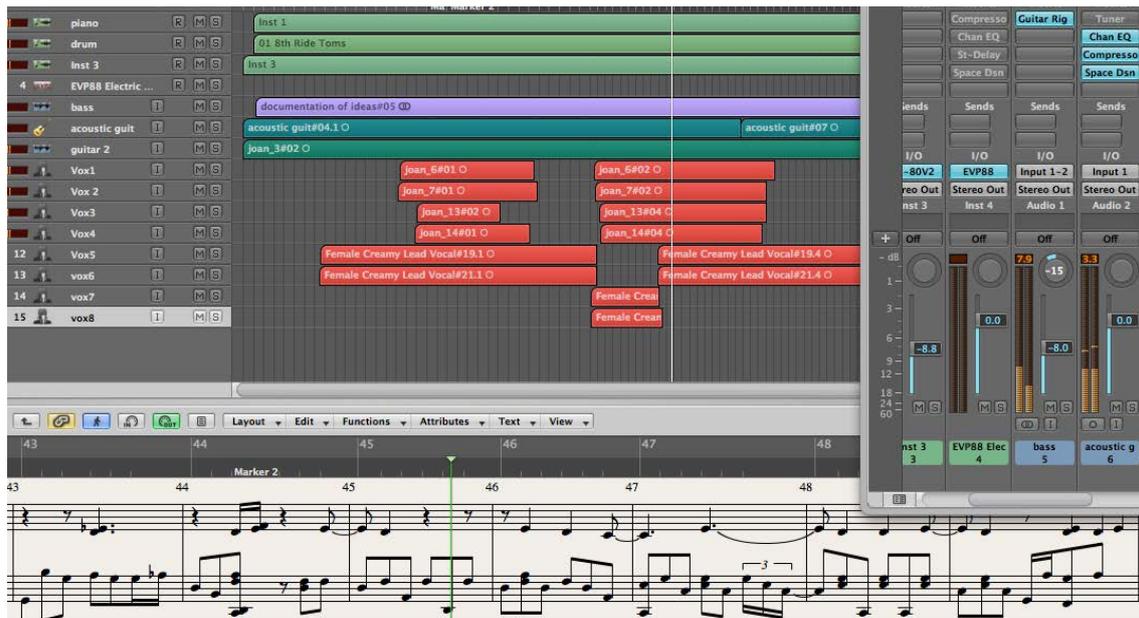


Figure 33: Joan in Logic Pro

Interpretive Music Autoethnography: Klangfarbenmelodie

This arts-based autoethnography as noted earlier makes use of narrative and messy texts, perceiving them as appropriate forms of expression to capture and embrace the theatre of the everyday. Refusing to be centred on any one set of repertoires re-presenting knowledge through a wide range of mediums shifting towards an interpretive turn that moves this arts-based autoethnography to sit alongside autoethnodrama (Denzin, 2013; Moriarty, 2013; Saldaña, 2010).

Capturing data through a range of artistic methods of inquiry (Leavy, 2015) and in turn analysing data through a range of artistic methods. The idea of articulation re-imagines the concept of voices in scholarly writing in a new way. This new way places different ideas together to create new knowledge (Yunkaporta, 2009) where the interpretation of the word voice has added meanings.

Drawing upon Bakhtin (2010), and Johnston & Strong (2008) the articulation of this work perceives “*meaning-making as something occurring in and from dialogic interactions in ways that reflect time, place, and the voices we engage with as we go*” (Johnston & Strong 2008, p.48). My approach to reconciling voices in this research is by exploring and experimenting with musical concepts as metaphors for scholarly writing (Van Schalkwyk, 2002). Bridging concepts such

as Polyphony and Klangfarbenmelodie from the realm of music to that of writing, this work theatrically highlights my voice and those I lean towards (Pelias, 2011). This document engages with a multiplicity of voices and narratives that contribute to my autoethnographic voice (Johnston & Strong, 2008, p. 49).

In music I perceive each instrument as a voice; each voice within an arranged or orchestrated piece of music has a unique and interconnected purpose melodies and harmonic progressions all shift through instrumental ranges and tonal possibilities: in solo, combination or as accompaniment. When orchestrating and arranging music, careful thought is required about how to construct and combine musical voices to give the desired aural effect (Blatter, 1997).

There are many voices being expressed within scholarly writing. Taking an interpretive turn, this research perceives the overlaps in the ideas associated with the term voice, from a musical and scholarly way of knowing. Following Denzin (2013) and interpretive autoethnographic methods of re-presentation, this research distinguishes the voices of others as actors. Woven into the autoethnography these voices contribute to the narrative from their cultural and academic stances.

Hall's (1996 [1986]) theory of articulation resonates with this thinking, where he perceives articulation as being "*how an ideology discovers its subject [enabling] us to think how ideology empowers people, enabling them to begin to make some sense or intelligibility of their ... situation, without reducing those forms of intelligibility*" (p. 53).

The ideology within this arts-based autoethnography enables intelligibility through a theatrical discourse with scholars, place and my artistic sensibilities that create the intertextual, rhizomatic aspects of this work: adding layers of analysis, interpretation and articulation in the final re-presentation (as music, photostories and text).

Merging the artistic and scholarly in a polyphonic way can be made problematic by the experimental nature of performative approaches (Smigiel, 2008). Similarly, writing a thesis in an experimental way requires the boundaries of conventional academic writing to privilege holistic and artistic kinds of knowing and doing. This research follows the pathways of arts-based researchers who are re-shaping the conventional boundaries of scholarship (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Irwin, 2013; (Leavy, 2015); Manovski, 2014; Pelias, 2014): opening possibilities that I can contribute towards and benefit from as we interact and respond emotionally and intuitively, re-presenting data as musical narratives that evoke “*many layered, non-linear insights and reactions*” (Beer, 2015).

The use of Klangfarbenmelodie has the potential to be misunderstood beyond the knowledge walls of 20th Century Western classical music. As a result I will outline and connect how Klangfarbenmelodie is transferred into this text. Klangfarbenmelodie transforms a monophonic (single voiced) melody by sharing the melody across the aural possibilities of any group of instruments, the term refers to the effect it produces when employed.

1. Tone-colour-melody

2. Tone-colour-melody

Klangfarbenmelodie conceptually can be visualised, as seen above where there are two ‘word melodies’, the first melody is monophonic: imagine it is played on the piano; as beautiful as the piano is with it’s rich overtones and timbre, it has a limited tonal palette (all instruments do). In the second ‘word melody’ we could imagine six different instruments, each re-presented as a colour: to highlight the melodic transition through instrumental voice. Each instrument has the possibility to use any of its unique tonal qualities to add tonal colour to the melodic line (why the ‘word melody’ is colour coded): this technique is about exploring possibilities, conceptually and musically. In this way, Klangfarbenmelodie is a metaphor for how I orchestrate the re-presentation of the aural, visual and written elements of this work, where no one conclusive end is met, but rather possibilities and processes are explored as living inquiries, across repertoires: polyphonically.

Composed of photographic, musical, and autoethnographical narratives, my voice merges with those who have informed and guided this research project providing further elaborations to the autoethnographic, in a musical way that embraces the dramatic, the performative. This autoethnography makes connections with relevant literature by exploring Bakhtin's (2010) ideas on the multi-layering of voices—challenging monophonic re-presentations—or as Cutcher (2015) calls multi-vocality, where multiple voices and expressions of voice make “*robust connections to culture*” (p. 224).

Branham (2005) notes that if written life stories shift between prose and writing styles or between layers of scholarly voices, the narrative is not held in suspension (p. 183) rather enhancing and developing the narrative, contributing to its aesthetic. The dynamic nature of such lyrical, and theatrical narratives can be seen as a canvas to experiment and enact linguistically rich performative polyphonic re-presentations of artistic prose (p. 183). The polyphonic layering of voice in this text re-presents an interpretive turn towards articulating the performative act through the concept of Klangfarbenmelodie, and is articulated in this work as follows:

[A] theory of articulation is both a way of understanding how ideological elements come, under certain conditions, to cohere together within a discourse, and a way of asking how they ... become articulated, at specific conjunctures, to certain ... subjects (Hall, 1996 [1986], p. 53).

Each one of us tells monologic vignettes of one kind or another, and we exchange improvised dialogue with others virtually every day of our lives. Theatre simply gives aesthetic shape and magnitude to what we already know how to do. Humans are theatre (Saldaña, 2010, p. 68).

Representing the fracturing and splintering of my own life via an evocative and messy text aims to empower the reader with an enlightened reading, facilitating meaning making that is not determined by an omnipotent author telling them how and what to think. Instead the text interweaves, overlaps, stops and starts and reflects and represents the splintered narratives of my real life (Moriarty, 2013, p. 62).

We have been disciplined to write in neat and tidy ways because this shows that we have thought carefully about our practice, that it's rigorous and credible. How do we write the messy, the ambiguous, the sublime, multilayered, dense, complex, gnarly performative practices? And how can we make that ambiguity and messiness accessible to other people? How can we demonstrate theoretical complexity? (Kilgard, 2011, p. 219).

Denzin (1994) comments on how the 'worlds' we confront are "*neither easy to make sense of nor neat*" (p. 300), this messiness is part of the rich palette qualitative researchers, paint, negotiate, re-present and perform with. My research practices are performative, pedagogical, social, cultural, environmental, political and educational. These acts perform the worlds in which I traverse and study "*enacting a way of seeing and being, [challenging] the official, hegemonic ways of seeing and representing the other*" (Denzin, 2006, p. 422).

All things that exist beyond the self or cultural group can be seen as the other, othering people, cultures, and landscapes only continue exclusionary dualisms and "*politics of difference*" (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992). It is in this research that I engage with cross-cultural knowledge, and re-present this knowledge as music. In this way, the music draws from my musical background and experience.

This approach calls for reflexivity, flexibility and integrity when facing colonial legacies, settler state mentalities and issues surrounding whiteness (Yeung, Spanierman, & Landrum-Brown, 2013) sharing the dilemmas in re-presentation: re-presenting the messy, the complicated and complex nuances of life, at the same time bringing unique worldviews and standpoints into larger discourses.

The goal is to produce an interruption, a performance text that challenges conventional taken-for granted assumptions about the racialized past ... moving back and forth between the personal and the political, the biographical and the historical ... Under this framework we teach one another. We push against racial, sexual and class boundaries in order to achieve the gift of freedom; the gift of love, self-caring; the gift of empowerment, teaching and learning to transgress ... moving forward into new spaces, into new identities, new

relationships, new, radical forms of scholarship, new epiphanies (Denzin, 2013, pp. 137 - 139).

Jones Creek as a musical writing process

Musical concepts such as Klangfarbenmelodie, polyphony, timbre, texture and tone are transferable concepts that move across arts disciplines, across design, across creative practices. It is through the messiness of life that arts-based autoethnography is able to grasp the plurality of being, in order to express how we come to know: to express through music, visual images, metaphors, film, painting, drawing, contribution to scholarly knowledge, with intent to re-think place, the arts and education: holistically wed.

It seems to us to be particularly important to encourage students to explore the less well explored than simply to replicate tried and true research methods that break no new methodological grounds. It is better, we believe, to find new seas on which to sail than old ports at which to dock (Barone & Eisner, 2012, p. 4)

Barone and Eisner (2012) summarise arts-based research as “*an approach to research that exploits the capacities of expressive form to capture qualities of life that impact what we know and how we live*” (p. 5). In this way, arts-based autoethnographies capture life stories, epiphanies, and personal issues through evocative expressions of making art.

Whether it is through poetry, prose, movement, drama, mime, meditation, painting, drawing, sculpture or any other non-traditional linguistic or non-linguistic form the important thing is to find a way or ways that will allow us to follow the natural internal flow of our inquiry. In a sense this is an essential element for researching through artistic expression “ (Cole and Knowles in, R. A. Stewart, 2003).

It is from this idea that I am expressing and re-presenting the autoethnographical of this inquiry, and its impact on how I know and live in the world around me: as artist, researcher and educator. I am creating knowledge through the artistic processes I am employing, capturing the expressive qualities of my life and the

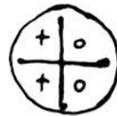
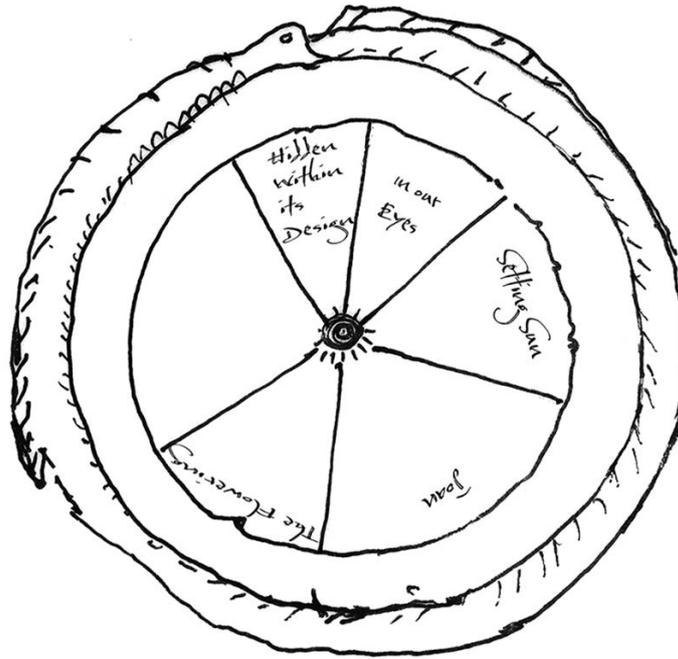
learning that emerges. In this way, both *a/r/t/ography* (Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2005) and arts-based research (Barone & Eisner, 2012) become blurred, where they act as two sides to the one spinning coin, promoting all aspects of artistic inquiry in qualitative research.

Eisner (2013) states that there is a tendency to experience a feeling of uneasiness, when approaching this work, and this uneasiness can drive the creative inquiry. This uneasy feeling Eisner reminds us is natural and expected when working with new methods of study, in this way this approach to conducting research is what Diversi and Moreira (2009) refer to as conducting research in-between, a “*betweener*” way of generating knowledge. I am positioning myself as a *betweener* of arts-based educational research and *a/r/t/ography*, between arts-based research and research found in the environmental sciences, between art music and the social sciences or cultural studies. Between being a researcher and a participant, a composer and a performer, or composer and listener, an educator and a student. Being in motion with the spinning coin of qualitative research I capture and generate imaginative, creative and expressive articulations of myself within and beyond schools: existing at the sites, and place of learning.

Arts-based research and *a/r/t/ography* are woven together into the narratives of this research inquiry capturing the expressive qualities of co-creating and generating knowledge through artistic practices as an artist, researcher and educator. Generating as Barone (2008) suggests research that is “*profoundly aesthetic*” promoting innovative forms of social, cultural and environmental awareness that contributes to the social and cultural aspects communicated by art (p. 34). Following Leavy (2015) my stance towards arts-based research is inclusive of *a/r/t/ography*, arts-based educational research (Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegesmund, 2013) and all other forms of artistic inquiry available to my creative tendencies (p. 3), creating a vibrant tapestry of arts-based inquiry.

Chapter Five: The Flowering

The Flowering (September): orchids, flax-lily flowers and numerous wildflowers; lizards emerge from their holes. Conceptual ideas and artistic practices begin to unfold and emerge.



The warming ground

The skies live in relation to the climate.

Clear night skies; give crisp, cold, icy mornings, gentle sun glistens off the swollen footprints of rain, washing the land. The days slowly grow in length shifting the seasons on.

Crow is the first bird I see, gathering, and building nests, there are other birds begin to show up: New Holland Wrens, Wattlebirds: the Honey-eaters.

Flowers finally emerge on Acacia Floribunda: who have been nurturing their buds throughout this period, and another cycle of

regeneration begins.

Sharing place: people, animals, minerals, birds, plants, climate, skies, and waterways (Martin, 2008).

Flower unfolds, as does learning and awareness. Flowers are a metaphor expressing the happenings found in this seasonal cycle. Plants burst into bloom, acacias, eucalypts, weeds, flax, wildflowers and orchids. I watched, photographed and spent time with plants observing their growth and connections to the wider landscape.

During this time I was engaging with academic literature and maintaining my sense of place and place within the community: from shopping at the supermarket, engaging with post-colonial thinking, to being one of few non-Vietnamese speaking members of a community Tai Chi group communicating and acting beyond any language and culture barriers. The idea of coming into blossom is found in the connections within my everyday and this seasonal time. It becomes a metaphor for this stage of my research, where the theoretical concepts within this work's design begin to meet and overlap: where they begin to flower.

Holding the mirror

In recent years the “*common-place*” curricula of mainstream education has been perceived to be a pre-packaged, disjointed, de-contextualised monoculture, with little emphasis attached to the local place in any great depth (Gradle, 2007; Green, 2008; Gruenewald, 2003b; Inwood, 2008; Popovich, 2008; G. A. Smith & Sobel, 2010; Stauffer, 2010; Wason-Ellam, 2010). In this way, it detaches students and institutions from the phenomena surrounding them (Stevenson, 2008; A. Stewart, 2006).

Situating place at the heart of learning provides alternatives, openings, transformations in how we as educators can resist the restraints and boundaries of a standardised curriculum, and approaches to learning (G. A. Smith & Sobel, 2010; Stauffer, 2010; Wason-Ellam, 2010). The local places, peoples, natural histories and phenomena can be understood through a range of co-created interactions between, people, places, artistic processes and learning environments (Green, 2008; Popovich, 2008).

McInerney et al. (2011) contend that educators need to be exposed to, and undertake critical reading on the philosophies and concepts of '*place*', '*identity*' and '*community*' from a place-based perspective: across all learning disciplines.

'Place' [is] a lens through which young people begin to make sense of themselves and their surroundings. It is where they form relationships and social networks, develop a sense of community and learn to live with others (McInerney et al., 2011, p. 5).

Place-based thinkers and educators argue: nature teaches, understanding place is crucial, and where and how, a student learns, is as vital as what a student learns (Inwood, 2008; Sassen, 2005; Semken & Brandt, 2010; Wason-Ellam, 2010). Inviting the learning possibilities of our local histories, cultures and landscapes into learning places. Place-based arts learning encourages art education to be embedded within the community, reflecting authentic, real world understandings of the human and non-human experience: not confined to museums or distant places (Lewicki, 1998).

The geography shapes my knowing (Meyer, 2011).

Place is a subjective concept

Place and the ascribed meanings associated, become as diverse as all those who experience the place. The subjective nature of meanings at times coincide, at times come into conflict, as local demographics change, and are renegotiated through discourse, scholarship, media, economics, and law (Vanclay, 2008).

Born from our interactions with the physical, conceptual and spiritual qualities of our lives, definitions of place are complex, and subjective, biased to how we see, are within, and know the world around us.

We all ascribe meanings onto places that develop our sense of place.

Place can be seen as the co-creation of the tangible and the intangible (Vanclay, 2008), and is interpreted through socio-cultural and environmental values. Our cultural standpoints combined with the tangible and intangible qualities of the environment shape how we each define place.

We may come to witness shared or mutual gazes (Maoz, 2006) of the landscapes we are part of, as we come to know our own perceptions of our local landscapes. Looking outwardly, and inwardly, at what we value, feel, think and do, our worldviews offer personal and communal insights into how we construct reality: shaping various definitions of place.

The significance of place, sense of place and culture has been discussed at great length over the last century (Gruenewald, 2003a; Relph, 1976; Scannell & Gifford, 2010; Vanclay, 2008). More recently, these discussions have come from diverse disciplines, such as, sociology, psychology, architecture, leisure studies, literary theory, education, geography, philosophy, cultural studies and art (Fettes & Judson, 2011; Inwood, 2008). Artistic practices and place(s) are unique, multidimensional, fluid and dynamic, much like those who inhabit places. Artistic practices aim to “*describe, explore, or discover*” (Leavy, 2015, p. 12) phenomena, concepts, and how we see and know the world, as Leavy highlights, the arts capture the processes entwined in our evolving lives and as such “*subject matter and method*” fuse, becoming mirrors of each other. The possibilities of

communicating an intertextual sense of place through artistic inquiry enables engagement with the relational aspects of place where a “*sense of place occurs when we are involved in an act of creation*” (Lehman, 2008).

Lehman expresses his perspective by encouraging non-Aboriginal Australians to consider and respect the lore of the land. He states that places are living and are perceived as “*manifestations of the creation beings*” (p. 106), in constant communication with us.

A sense of place occurs when we are involved in an act of creation—through the processes of art, poetry, philosophical speculation and engagement with the relational aspects of the universe—not just at a local level but at a much broader and deeper state. This is what Martin Heidegger called ‘dasein’, being in the world in such a way that we realise our role in co-creating the context of our lives (Lehman, 2008, p. 106).

Developing and maintaining a sense of place requires non-Indigenous educators of Australia to critically question their knowledge and understanding of local and national Aboriginal culture, knowledge, and land, including their own cultural identities (Yunkaporta, 2009). This leads to processes of decolonisation and place-based alternatives; local knowledge bridges the school with the local communities. Inviting local voices and narratives into learning environments can expose any hidden colonial narratives. Demystifying misconceptions and monocultural re-presentations to promote an inclusive pedagogy of place.

Cultural protocols, and ways of engaging with Aboriginal perspectives are missing in contemporary Australian education. Harrison and Greenfield (2011) observe that non-Aboriginal educators are ineffectively engaging with Aboriginal knowledge; rather, they are applying a looking glass at Aboriginal people. As a result, non-Aboriginal educators tend to engage with and inform students from a removed meta-narrative about Aboriginal peoples.

Portraying Aboriginal people from the looking glass of a non-Aboriginal educator aligns with Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s (1999) comments on the objectification of

Indigenous people, where the othering of another culture excludes, regulates and maintains unequal power dynamics (Harrison & Greenfield, 2011; L. T. Smith, 1999).

[T]here is considerable confusion over the difference between Aboriginal perspectives and Aboriginal knowledge with both concepts being used interchangeably to teach syllabus content and information about Aboriginal people (Harrison & Greenfield, 2011, p. 65).

Harrison and Greenfield (2011) sought possibilities for educators to avoid the objectification of Aboriginal people, asking questions about what might an ethically responsive pedagogy look like. This stance reacts against the identified stereotypical representations of Aboriginal people and culture. Diversi and Moreira (2009) also avoid the othering of culture by generating knowledge through a post-colonial lens, aiming to transform research as a dirty word into more productive and culturally aware discourses.

Like Harrison and Greenfield, Diversi and Moreira (2009) sought productive possibilities by casting critical gazes on issues associated with the objectification of 'the other', resisting and challenging colonial perspectives. Resisting and challenging colonial assumptions by committing to, and fostering deep relationships with local knowledge and communities permitting the critical gaze to enter places of learning. Harrison and Greenfield (2011) notes that developing strong relationships with place requires authentic collaboration between learning environments and their communities: Indigenous and non-Indigenous.

In this way this overlap brings in discussions about how we as educators, can begin to address this site-based approach to learning from a cross-cultural stance. Situated learning that develops reciprocal relationships with Indigenous people, culture and knowledge. This asks educators to stay grounded in their higher self, and sit with Aboriginal cultural ways of valuing, believing, knowing and doing (Martin & Mirraboopa, 2003), from a local stance.

Western-thinking educators and researchers must make significant changes in order to address needs that are not currently being well met [such as] ethical protocols [that] incorporate Indigenous methodologies, [and] Indigenous knowledges (Tippins, Mueller, & van Eijck, 2010, p. 254).

The Melbourne Declaration on Education and the National Curriculum endorse healthy relationships with the diverse sectors and people within communities, both locally and globally (ACARA, 2012; MCEETYA, 2008). These policy documents endorse a strong emphasis upon local knowledge and experience with Indigenous culture, by nurturing shared reciprocal relationships with Indigenous families and communities (ACARA, 2012; MCEETYA, 2008).

These documents do not explicitly specify ‘how’ educators might begin to provide an ethically appropriate pedagogy that develops lifelong partnerships with the various sectors of the socio-environmental/cultural communities. Local Indigenous protocols and pluralistic ways of knowing, being and doing are at the heart of nurturing reciprocal relationships with local Indigenous communities (Mackinlay, 2010; McGinty, 2012; S. L. Stewart, 2010; Vaughan, 2005).

What is seen, however, is a one-size fits all approach, where Indigenous content is bolted onto curriculum (Burgess, 2009, p. 3). This results in “*a greater potential for the ‘watering down’ of ... Indigenous knowledges, understandings, skills and issues*” (Burgess, 2009, p. 8). Nakata (2010) notes that knowledge from Western and non-western backgrounds “*need[s] to privilege [each other] in the appropriate context for appropriate purposes*” (p. 56).

Lowe and Yunkaporta’s (2013) analysis of Australia’s National Curriculum (ACARA, 2012) highlights the continuation of tokenistic gestures and re-presentations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and narratives. Despite the efforts put forth by the current Australian Curriculum, the watering down of Indigenous content continues to be promulgated.

Some teachers continue to talk about Aboriginal people in the past tense and to use the term 'discovery' of Australia. They talk about how the '[Aboriginal] system was incredible' and how 'they lived in harmony with the environment' (Harrison & Greenfield, 2011, p. 70).

Such narrow re-presentations of Australian Aboriginal cultures exhibit cultural amnesia: forgetting and erasing histories, knowledges and experiences beyond the status quo. These are replaced with fractured, hybrid, neo-anthropological contexts and hidden narratives (Swartz, 2009) hidden within the legacy of colonisation.

Cultural inclusivity and awareness celebrates and collaborates with another (as opposed to the other) culture and people (Martin, 2008). This stance, opposes the notion of the cultural other, and values inclusion and intercultural reciprocity without positioning non-western knowledge systems and cultures to the fringes of Australian education.

A fundamental stance as a non-Aboriginal man is to express my growing knowledge of place—in this southern landscape—where it overlaps with Aboriginal knowledge, and the places this knowledge comes from. Expressing this sense and connection with place, there is an overlap between ways of knowing, being and acting in country. These overlaps allow for western and non-western knowledge to co-create new knowledge.

Coming from my understandings and sense of place I am able to find the overlaps with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal notions of place through aligned place-based metaphors. Concepts that in essence bring meaning to my growing awareness of place and identity. Through art, I am able to see, be and share these overlaps and seek inclusive, and constructive possibilities. Promoting holistic views of place fostering the idea that *"there is more than meets the eye ... [and it] demands an on-going, open-ended effort at understanding its complexities and embeddedness in relationships, and adapting our visions to those realities."* (Fettes & Judson, 2011, pp. 124 - 125).

Place and art: sharing our visions

Vanclay (2008) outlines three qualities to validate and generate deeper awareness of the landscapes we enact our lives in. These ideas are linked with my own approach to maintaining a relational awareness with what is around me, these are:

1. Begin to know our personal, cultural and communal attachments with the local places we live. Examining how we are connected to what is both familiar and unfamiliar
2. Be open to communicate about place awareness and knowledge developing collective attachments to where we live. Including the way we think and speak about these places, raising a diverse range of questions about;
3. How we commit to being within local landscapes and this impacts our sense of place, identity and community.

Music has the ability to conjure up powerful images of place, and express our deep attachments to, and with place (Hudson, 2006, p. 626).

Through art, people have communicated their relationality with local places for millennia (G. A. Smith & Sobel, 2010), the arts are “*not merely “fluff” or pleasant distractions*” but are essential in enhancing “*vital social and cognitive skills*” (Purnell, 2011, p. 88). Much more than pleasant distractions artistic processes allow for a variety of perspectives to enter into learning environments confronting the placelessness associated with destructive colonial practices in education and beyond (Nakata, Keech, & Bolt, 2012; Relph, 1976; Till, 2008, 2011).



The Flowering

(6. TheFlowering.mp3)



This music tells a simple story, but a story that is essential to the survival and regeneration of this local place. The story is of a flower opening and unfolding its hidden scent, or colour, inviting bees and birds. As the sun moves west, the flower tilts and follows the gentle warm sun: closing slowly, waiting for the next days warming rays.

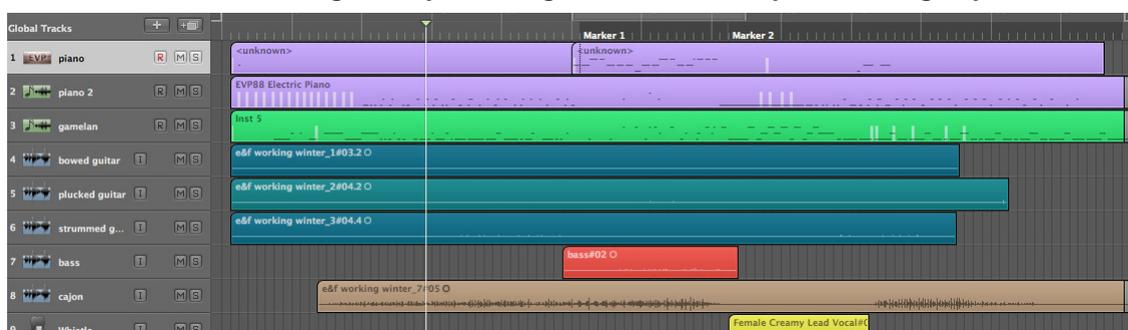


Figure 34: The Flowering in Logic Pro

Instrumentation:

Piano 1

Piano 2

Sampled Gamelan

Three Guitars: Bowed, plucked and strummed

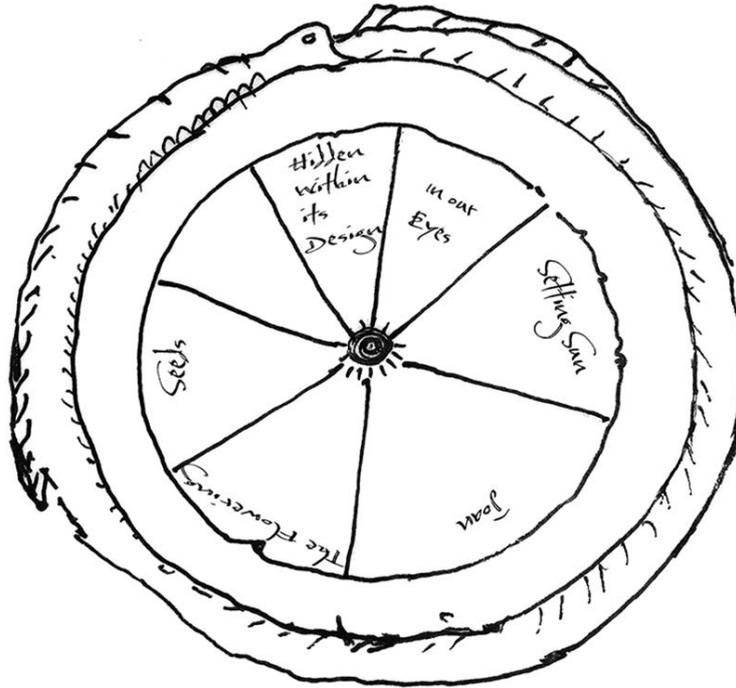
Bass

Cajon

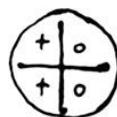
Whistling

Chapter Six: Seeds

Seeds (October): wildflowers set seed along with the bringing together of conceptual ideas found in the sentient landscape.



September to October have very subtle seasonal changes. It was only obvious due to previous yearly observations and a more focused eye in this seasonal cycle. As a metaphor these two months are represented as plants bringing together all resources to set flower, to regenerate, and then to go through transformation and set seed. The unfolding of theoretical concepts continue to ebb and flow into each other exploring what is common across concepts, beliefs, and knowledge. Like Dentith & Root (2012) revitalising and acknowledging the cultural commons.



The Cultural Commons

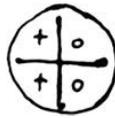
[T]he cultural commons represents the intergenerational knowledge, skills, and mentoring relationships that enable [people] to be more self-reliant in the areas of food, healing, creative arts ... narratives, ceremonies, civil liberties, and other aspects of daily life that are less dependent upon consumerism and participation in a money economy. Basically, it encompasses what is shared in common, which may also include traditions of exploitation and prejudice (Bowers, 2010, p. 18).

Bowers celebrates what is inclusively common through a culturally informed awareness; practice and knowledge of our local place permit multiple approaches to dwelling with the land. Working from the idea of the cultural commons, cultural knowledge is seen as being central in defining, making, re-making, and sustaining our unique communities.

An informed cultural commons does not only rely upon western ideologies and perspectives assuming “*that western theorists possess the answers that another culture should live by*” (Bowers, 2008, p. 325). Problematized by my own whiteness and position as a non-Aboriginal theorist, I am aware of my position as a colonial subject difficult to place (Bhabha H, 1994).

The communication of cultural understandings, awareness, and of knowledge, plays vital roles in transforming a more sustainable stance, grounded in the local. Looking at place, through Bowers' (2010) idea of the cultural commons, reinforces a critical, reflexive gaze, on the systems and functions embedded in our teaching and learning. Replacing consumerist approaches cultivating an ecological intelligence that is aware of destructive linguistic patterns of erasure.

Coming from the ecological sciences and ecojustice (Tippins et al., 2010), the idea of the cultural commons examines the role language plays in continuing universalist power structures across life and cultures. Bowers (2014) refers to the destructive powers of language as ‘*enclosure*’, a process of erosion: of erasure and monocultural production, a process of elimination.

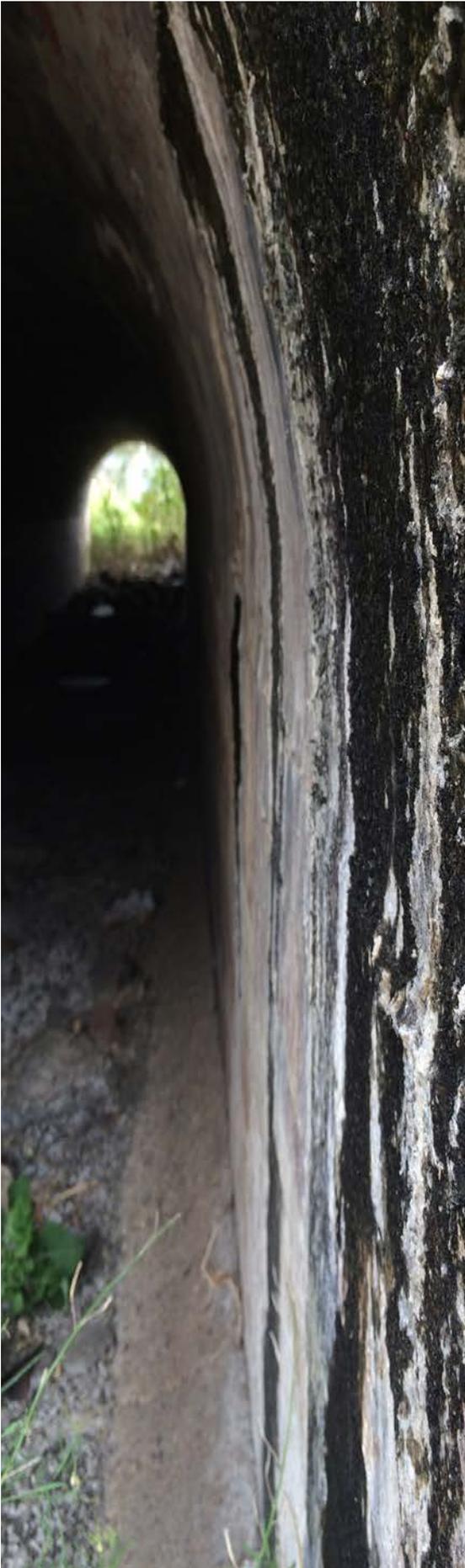
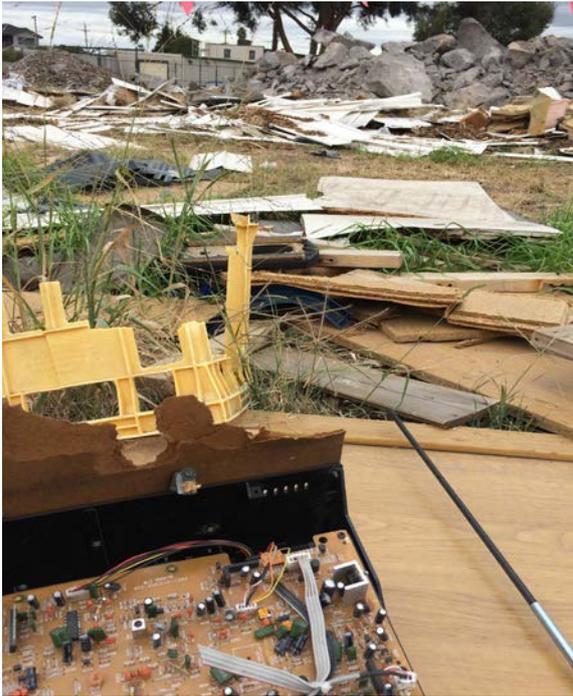


Redefining the landscape

Jones creek has been subjected to rapid re-definitions since the 1800's. The palimpsest treatment of Jones creek is a powerful example of enclosure, enclosing local knowledge, history and natural systems











Photostory 4: Redefining the landscape



Decision-making about which practices sustain the commons may be undermined by authoritarian powers—including universal prescriptions that are too often couched in the language of progress and emancipation from traditions (Bowers, 2014).

Enclosure authorises itself through many guises, often subtle and well ingrained in dominant culture, through the privatisation, monetisation and amalgamation of dominant western industrial culture. Embracing creative, thick alternatives and descriptions brings the formation of new metaphors and ways of thinking to invert patriarchal, anthropocentric control.

Adopting new ways of thinking that implement communal reflexivity and engagement, instigating multiple gazes, and standpoints as being effective ways of valuing, being, knowing and doing. Accepting new metaphors—linguistic and artistic—and meanings to be carried into new contexts that evade the Universalist standardisation of how we can be in this world.

As globalisation and development spread, contestation over places important to different groups for different reasons can be expected to occur. This will be an evermore important effect as the world population grows, and as different ideologies and religions expand their spheres of influence” (Semken & Brandt, 2010, p. 294).

In the present moment borders and boundaries within and beyond education have progressively become global in their nature blurring the boundaries of local places (Somerville, 2010; Cutcher, 2015). Place-based educators have argued for a re-connection with our local environments, negotiating the global aspects of our lives and learning. Planting learning deeply in the local allows students and educators to be situated in order to navigate the hybridity and standardisation of a global identity (Ball, 2006; Bowers, 2008; Gruenewald, 2003a, 2003b; Ngai & Koehn, 2010; G. A. Smith, 2007; A. Stewart, 2006).

David Sobel, a leading place-based educator urges teachers to work from a stance that moves from the students' homes outwardly, to the global environmental, social, political, and cultural issues (Sobel, 1997). In this way, learning connects with students' lived experiences and realities, based on experiential encounters, before engaging with abstract distant places: enabling a relational global view. Rejecting life in a '*privatised Idaho*'¹⁰ the dynamism found between the cultural commons and a southern view privilege intergenerational and communal knowledge.

Entering the Dynamic Overlaps

Indigenous and non-Indigenous approaches to pedagogy and knowledge are continually guiding my academic, educational and artistic processes. Yunkaporta (2009) communicates ten cultural interface protocols that allow me to ethically and effectively engage with and express, how I come to know and engage with place, Indigenous knowledge and culture. These protocols are:

1. *Use Aboriginal ways of learning to come to Aboriginal knowledge.*
2. *Approach Aboriginal knowledge in gradual stages, not all at once.*
3. *Be grounded in your own cultural identity (not 'colour') with integrity.*
4. *Bring your highest self to the knowledge and settle your fears and issues.*
5. *Share your own stories of relatedness and deepest knowledge.*
6. *See the shape of the knowledge and express it with images and objects.*
7. *Build your knowledge around real relationships with Aboriginal people.*
8. *Use this knowledge for the benefit of the Aboriginal community.*
9. *Bring your familiar understandings, but be willing to grow beyond these.*
10. *Respect the aspects of spirit and place that the knowledge is grounded in.*

(Yunkaporta, 2009, pp. 114 - 115)

¹⁰ Direct use of the B-52's song titled Private Idaho. A song that refers to people living in their own private little worlds

I see these protocols as essential processes in knowing place and enacting a relational pedagogy that addresses McInerney et al. (2011) urge for educators to critically engage with place, identity and community. Willing to grow beyond my familiar understandings as I engage with this sentient landscape, my current expression of place-based knowledge is situated beside Indigenous knowledge. Listening and being aware of Indigenous knowledge alongside my own understandings of reading the landscape co-creates a southern view that is inclusive.

This is reflected by Nakata (2010) where he discusses traditional Torres Strait ecological knowledge, working besides and with western ecological knowledge. Nakata refers to this meeting of cultures as '*The Cultural Interface*' (Nakata, 2007a, 2007b). Nakata (2007b) and Yunkaporta (2009) highlight the cultural interface as being a creative third space (Yunkaporta & McGinty, 2009), created when two or more cultures come together (Yunupingu, 1994b).

In this research, place is perceived as the physical cultural interface (as distinct from a theoretical construct), and privileges the overlaps born from, and in the landscape. In doing so, this contributes to how I critically engage with place, identity and community encouraged by McInerney et al. (2011) and Eijck (2010). Definitions of place and identity are complex and many-sided where Cutcher (2015) notes, identity is never complete, but rather a continually revolving fractal consisting of situations associated with the environmental, cultural "*social, psychological, and physical*" (p. 130) factors of individuals. In this way, there can be many similar and divergent knowledge and levels of awareness relating to local communal concerns. As with identity place is ever evolving, and our personal meanings are fluid, and at times may be contested. Education provides a rich avenue for engaging with local knowledge and practices for the benefit of all involved.

Educators have a significant role to play in the revalorisation of the cultural commons, with an obligation to actively listen to the cultural voices found in our local places. Stevenson (2008) argues that the "*junctions and disjunctions* [can

reveal] and [be] used as a pedagogical [place] for authentic environmental and cultural learning” (p. 353).

It is through the connections and disconnections that this relational public pedagogical view constructs thick descriptions and critical analysis of the local, through sharing interlinked cultural perspectives, and individual perceptions of where we are: historically and contemporaneously. Thick descriptions of the places we dwell enable powerful transformations and expressions of where and how learning exists (Stevenson, 2008), with and in a sentient landscape.

Listening to intergenerational and inter-cultural knowledge this creative work reflects and reaches out to the cultural commons of my place: expressed through my cultural understandings. In so doing, this creative work endorses inclusive relationships with place to be less dependent upon capitalistic agendas for the elite few, celebrating what is common across places, identities and communities. This approach revitalises the commons and traditions of celebration by offering my own deep stories of relationality back to the place this work serves and commemorates. An aim of this research as stated throughout is to provide an example of how arts educators can draw upon their own knowledge traditions and find the intersections with local and global Indigenous knowledge traditions.

The processes engaged within the making of this thesis intend to give tools to think, see, and act differently when conceptualising and developing professional knowledge as educators who are situated in a place. Doing so, I am addressing the Australian Curriculum’s first cross-curriculum priority: the inclusion of Aboriginal perspectives, history and culture into all curriculum areas (ACARA, 2012). In order to address this curriculum priority, I believe it is necessary for me to stay grounded in my own cultural identity, with integrity (Yunkaporta, 2009) and find the dynamic overlaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ways of valuing, being, knowing and doing. This is a means of finding the shared ways of seeing this world across disciplines and beyond learning institutions.

The dynamic overlaps are vital for genuine engagement with Aboriginal knowledge and culture, connecting cultures through place with integrity, with availability, with flexibility, aiding relationality between people and country. Critical conversations about our cultural identities and their expressions of knowledge provide an inclusive view of the responsibilities educators provide to the wider community. Engaging with a relational sense of place allows educators to value, be, know and act in new ways and embrace new practices that acknowledge learning and teaching as being connected to place, requiring a “*flexibility in thought, policy and practice*” (Marika et al., 2009, p. 406).

This kind of relational engagement is both conceptual and marked in the landscape. From the dynamic layers in our meanings of place, this research rejoices in the sentient landscape where knowledge can be situated and learnt from (Marker, 2006). A place-based, local understanding of place intersects with theoretical and philosophical understandings, creating a relational middle ground: a middle ground that is best understood through Yunkaporta’s idea of the dynamic overlap.

The dynamic overlap is more than an interface; it is a vital place of interactions and awareness, more than a third space, or a hybrid space. It is an actual place that is alive and dynamic (Yunkaporta, 2009), a meeting place comprised of changing relationships between the tangible and intangible. These overlaps, or interfaces are referred to by various names and meanings across disciplines Yunkaporta and McGinty (2009) highlight these dynamic overlaps as powerful sites of learning, born from the local landscape and from cultural knowledge of local places, where cultures meet at the edge.

Mollison and Holmgren (1979) perceive the meeting of ecological systems as vibrant and highly resourceful places. Calling these places in the landscape “*the edge*”, a principle found in permaculture theory, a rich site with a range of diverse resources: encouraging re-generation (Mollison & Holmgren, 1979). As concepts, edges, or eco tones, become powerful metaphors for the intersections of knowledge.

The edge is where the action is! Edges or eco-tones are the interfaces where two ecosystems come together to form a third, and more diverse, fertile and productive area, because energies and materials accumulate there and resources from both ecosystems can be used (Mollison & Holmgren, 1979, p. 2).

I considered the potential for rivers and creeks to act as cultural meeting places and the thought given to “ecotones,” or highly productive biological edges, in permaculture philosophy (Reinsborough, 2010, p. 50).

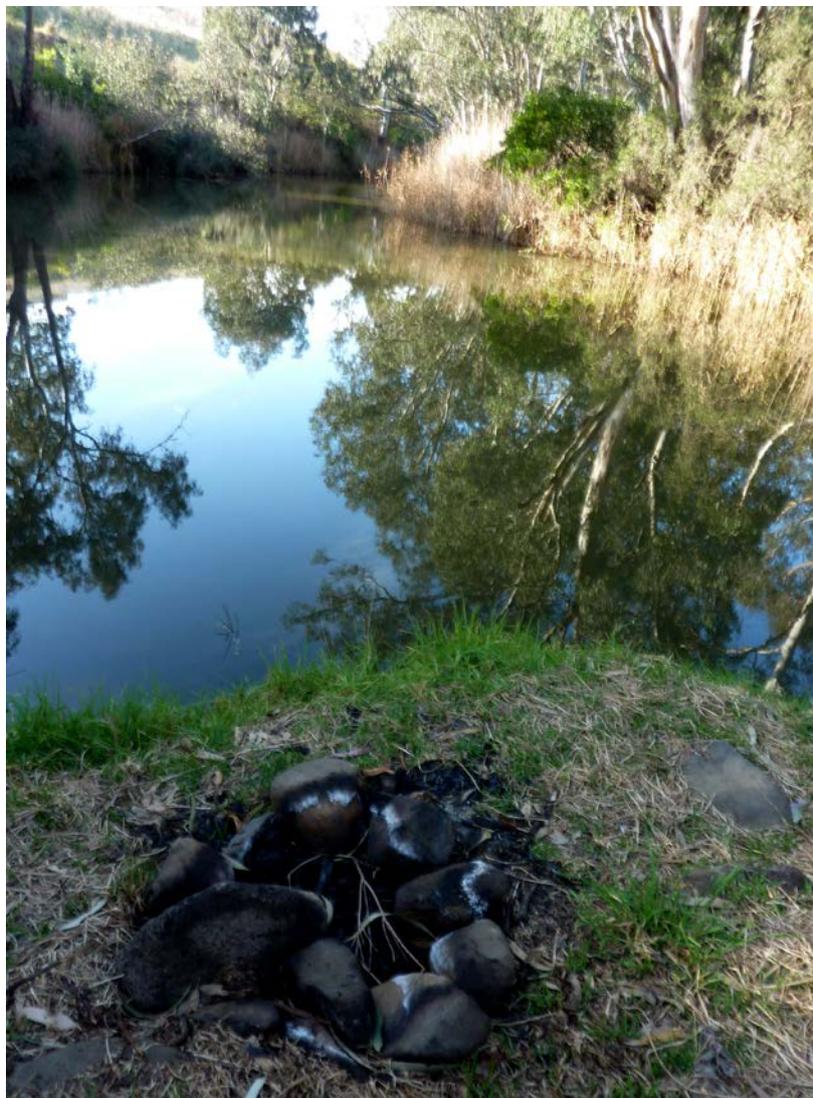


Figure 35: Meeting at the Junction

Yunupingu (1994a) shares the powerful metaphor, Ganma, coming from Yolngu bio-cultural knowledge. Ganma, a Yolngu concept, “views the interaction of opposite systems such as fresh and salt water as [being] a magical source of creation” (Yunkaporta & McGinty, 2009, p. 58). In reference to this magical source of creation, Yunupingu (1994a) states:

This pool is a balance between two different natural patterns, the pattern of tidal flow, saltwater moving in through the mangrove channels, and the pattern of the fresh water streams varying in their flow across the wet and dry seasons (p. 8).

Ganma is a metaphor. We are talking about natural processes but meaning at another level (Yunupingu, 1994a, p. 8).

It makes sense for us to find what pedagogy we have in common with non-Aboriginal ways too, balancing the two worlds. If we find the overlap between our best ways of learning and the mainstream’s best ways of learning then we will have an equal balance.

There are always connections among all things, places where different elements are no longer separate but mix together and become something else. This way of working gives us new innovations as well as bringing us together (Yunkaporta, 2010, p. 38).



Setting seed

(7. Seeds.mp3)

Composing this music, I brought ideas together to create new knowledge, relating it conceptually to this chapter. The way I felt best to re-present this is by using extended chords, when deconstructed appear to be two different chords played simultaneously.

Instrumentation

Any number of musicians can perform this work; as a solo piece or as an ensemble. In the musical score I have provided harmonic progressions with some melodic ideas as orchestration guides. As this music is a re-presentation of how conceptual ideas are brought together in this research, these ideas can also be found in the landscape. The metaphor of a seed holding all requirements for its life is applied to this musical score which holds all requirements for musicians to create their own interpretation of this music.

To extend the ideas being brought together in this work, this music has been notated to represent a musical seed. The idea behind this is that all information to create a version of this song is captured in a condense way, similar to a seed, and re-presenting this as circular notation bridging together the act of notating music and conducting music-based research

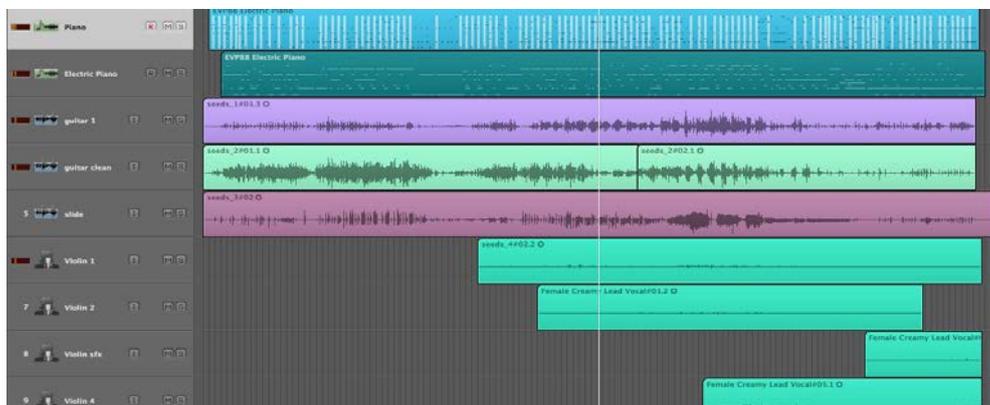
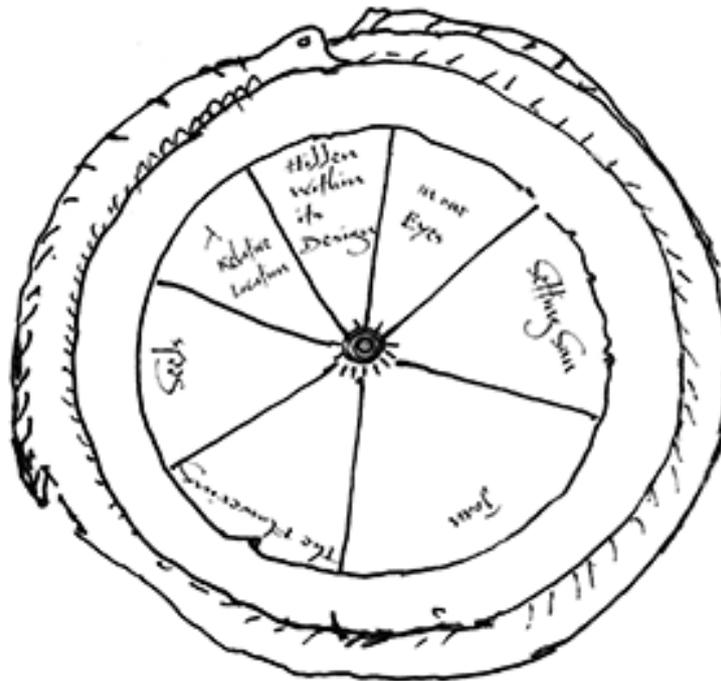


Figure 36: Seeds in Logic Pro

Chapter Seven: A Relative Location

A Relative Location (November): kangaroo grass flowers, Orion can be seen and Flax lily begins to fruit, adding purple colour to the landscape: place-based response to place-based learning. This chapter is dedicated this to Des Johnson.



1. *Observation: Take time to pay attention to what the natural systems are doing. Permaculture is a cyclic pattern that mimics and supports the natural cycles of the places we inhabit. It is recommended that we observe, map, design, implement, and continue yearly cycles to know the interconnections between all things. It is from this principle, that this research implements the journey of seasonal cycles.*
2. *Every Element Supports Multiple Functions: the elements—plants, animals, waterways, air and climates—work in many ways, supporting at least two or more functions within the landscape, highlighting the diversity of all things in a location.*
3. *Relative Location: all elements make up the natural systems as they work in relation to each other.*
4. *Every Function Is Supported By Many Elements: each element serves multiple*

functions and should be utilised to its fullest potential.

Mollison and Holmgren (1979).

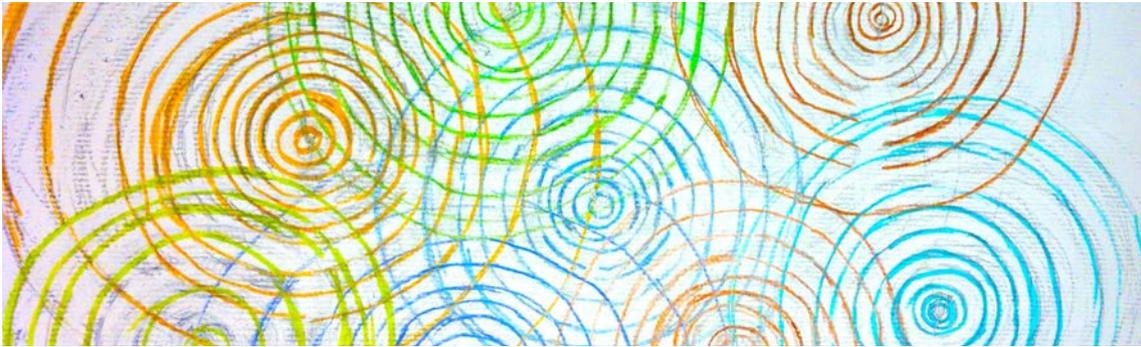


Figure 37: Dynamically overlapping

McNiff (2008) in his arts-based research article states that the best way to understand, build an appreciation of, or develop awareness of a creative practice, or issue is to immerse the research into the study in a direct meaningful way (p. 31) In this final chapter I am completely immersed in this inquiry, my connections to this place and to my artful, musical encounters that mimic permaculture principles as I deeply witness this place.

Music is perceptible sound organised over a defined period of time and space (Gibson & Ewing, 2011). A more scientific explanation could be music or sound is a sensation and is composed and communicates through vibrations that resonate with other aural vibrations in the air and our hearing abilities (Scholes & Ward, 1970). Sound frequencies are measured as a hertz (Hz) or Kilohertz (KHz): $1000 \text{ Hz} = 1 \text{ kHz}$. The hertz value of a sound indicates that it beats or vibrates a certain amount of times per second. An example would be 50Hz vibrates 50 times per second creating a particular frequency, commonly sound frequencies are illustrated as a sine wave.

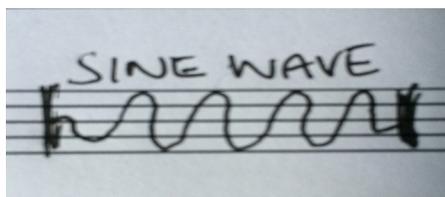


Figure 38: A Sine Wave

This approach to visualising sound is useful when understanding the acoustics, physics and phenomena of sound. Thinking about how sound reverberates outwardly into its environment and how it interacts with other sounds is circular and non-linear. Visualising sound this way transforms the sine wave into vibrations rippling outwardly, and merging with other sounds, contributing towards what is known in music as tone colour or timbre.

Timbre is the tone colour of sounds; each sound has its own unique quality, even within one instrument. This uniqueness is referred to as an aural colour, a feeling that incites certain reactions from each listener. It is through timbre that composers are able to paint with sound, examples can be found throughout musical history (Blatter, 1997). In this way, I visualise sound as coloured concentric circles, vibrating and moving in all directions. Visualising sound this way enables me to re-present how timbre and harmony interact in a relational way.

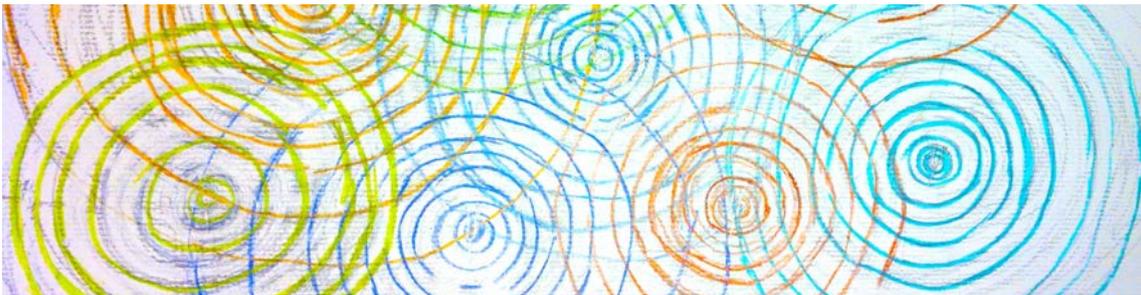


Figure 39: Vibrations of Sound

Each of these conceptual ideas resonates in their own right, but also meet, overlap, and co-create. These ideas are not seen as being separate but as being relational, existing in a shared landscape reinforcing the relational qualities of the creative component of this thesis, co-created with this southern landscape. The musical narratives and photostories express my musical and visual 'I'.

Place-based learning: The waterways

Through this research the waterways of western Melbourne have been a recurring motif. Jones Creek has been discussed throughout this research: it was at the edge of this waterway and the remnant grasslands that this research began and it is at the edge of another small waterway that starts near Jones Creek this research concludes, where the small waterway meets with the powerful and dynamic Maribyrnong River, in the eastern section of St Albans.



Figure 40: The meeting of two waterways

Local Sunshine¹ man Desmond Johnson has documented the western region's waterways through photography for the past forty years. In conjunction with Brimbank Council and a local community based artist, Des' photographic, cartographic and personal narratives were shared at a local community gallery space. The invitation to meet Des and attend his exhibition provided an exciting opportunity to discuss his experiences and knowledge of Jones Creek through photographs and stories. Over a forty-year period Des has worked and lived in the greater Sunshine area. Part of his working and personal life ensured he always carried a camera. As he walked, rode, and documented the waterways, through photographs, he has collated an impressive amount of information about the waterways of western Melbourne.

¹ Sunshine is a neighboring suburb to St Albans with an interconnected and a unique local history.



Figure 41: Des Johnson, photo taken by local artist Debbie Qadri, used with permission.

Looking through the Jones Creek album, Des shared stories of walking the concreted tunnels that cover Jones Creek: in the most southern part of the waterway. Additionally, in the Jones Creek album there was an extensive collection of photographs and maps of a nearby waterway that enters the Maribyrnong River.

Des named this small waterway Cray Creek, after the sight of freshwater crayfish (yabbies), approximately three decades ago. To this day, no map indicates a name for this small waterway, Cray Creek, like Jones Creek has partly been erased as indicated in Des' annotated Aerial Survey Maps from the 1940's. Des followed the lie of the land marking the pathways of all small seasonal waterways that feed into both the Maribyrnong and Kororoit water systems: amending the maps to indicate where the tributaries had previously flowed and began. Copies of these maps were kindly shared for the benefit of this research and to contribute to the preservation of communal cultural knowledge.

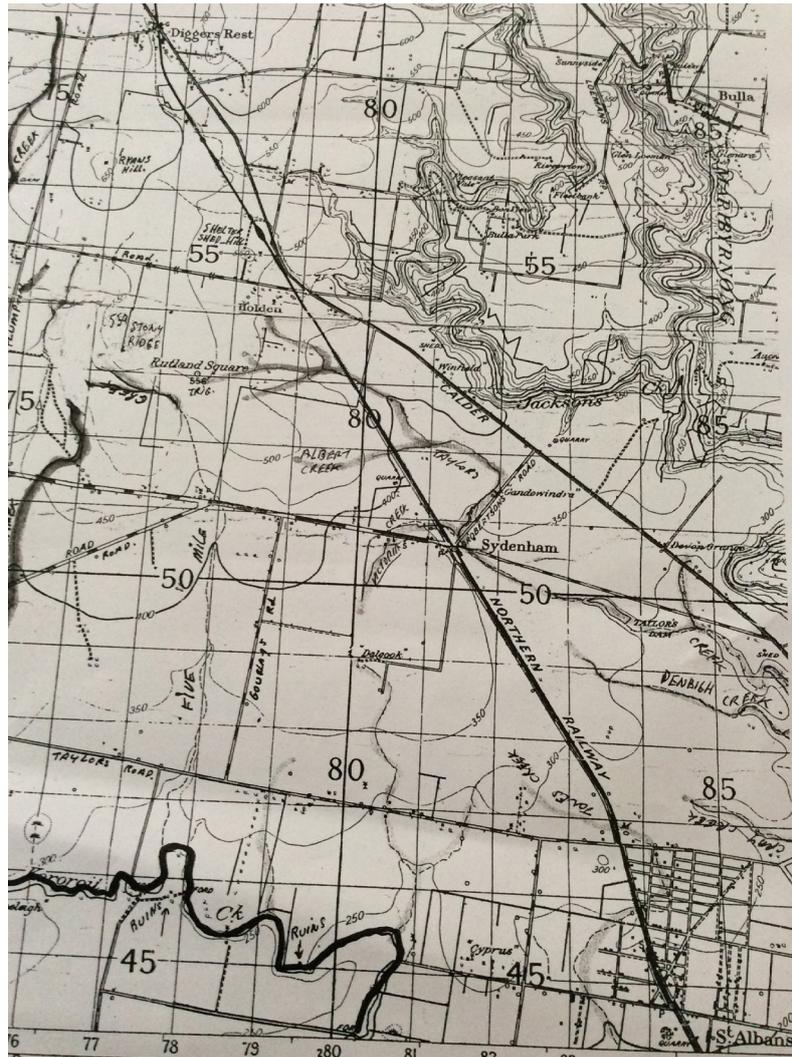


Figure 42: Des' annotated topographic map

Cray Creek begins in a similar way to Jones Creek, however Cray Creek is nurtured by a deep gully. The valleys are steep and end in a narrow, rocky, snake infested waterway. It is now impossible to walk this waterway as Des once did, especially during the dry hot time of the year.

Des' extensive knowledge of this area is alive with narratives that articulate a cross-cultural awareness of the waterways he is engaging with. Engaging with land-based learning expressed through images and stories, Des highlights on maps the original passageways water has carved into this landscape.

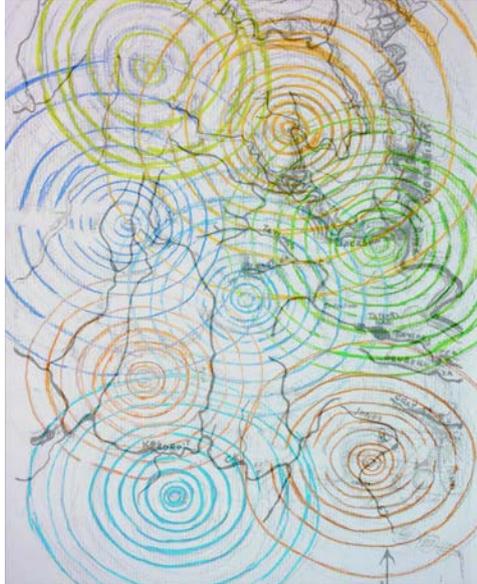


Figure 44: The vibrating landscape

There is a Creek that crosses St Albans from north to south; it has the name Jones Creek. This creek begins in an open field, fenced away to house a radio transmitter, near the memorial for Hume and Hovell. .



Figure 45: Hume and Hovell Memorial

Nearby in the east, another creek slowly marks the landscape. Houses sit on top of the once small indent in the land, until it suddenly drops into a deep valley. Hidden in this deep valley, a small waterway washes into the Maribyrnong River. At the junction of the Maribyrnong River and Cray creek I am reminded of the permaculture idea: a relative location. A relative location is where all things exist in relation to another, at the meeting place of two waters, the wild celery on moss

along the water's edge in combination with the steep valley slopes, with protruding stones: feels like eyes upon you.

The water begins to follow a direct path, gradually opening into small ponds, slowly drifting the water gently pulls back into a direct flow before opening into a larger pool. The water ripples and rolls into one last force into the raging Maribyrnong River, rushing past basalt stones, fallen branches, car bonnets, and other accumulation of refuse, the waters meet and become new water.

Taking my feelings and musical ideas found in this place, I drew the musical score to represent the flow of water. It acts as a graphic score, where the images, and musical notations indicate how a musician could reproduce this music. It is a style of writing music, and links visual art with music notation. Graphic notation is both a painting of a scene and directions on how to replicate the music. This music, *A Relative Location*, is the culmination of all my work, where I am responding to art with art, and expressing my learning from within that process. The conceptual ideas behind this research are within the creation of this work, as I walked, photographed, and sang with this location. Seeing knowledge come from and be in the sentient landscape, expressed through my artistic thinking.



A relative Location

(8. ARelativeLocation.mp3)



Figure 46: Kangaroo Grass

Dry grass shake remnant seed

This research project began when kangaroo grass is dry, shedding its seed to start another seasonal cycle. As this work began it finishes in the time when kangaroo grass is dry, when tussock grass is dry and where the landscape holds knowledge hidden within its design.

The music score for aRelative Location is 'a graphic score', a visual representation of the waterway and the musical form and structure: illustrating the tonal hues of the place and music (see; p. 121).

Starting in the top left corner the blue line represents the beginning of the water movement: travelling through rocky pathways the water builds energy as it moves downhill. Entering into open gentle pools before again rushing through liminal passageways, into larger still and quiet pools; eventually crashing with force into the larger Maribyrnong River, overlooked by two old River Gums, car bonnets, rock formations that feel alive and wounded, the oppressive quarry.

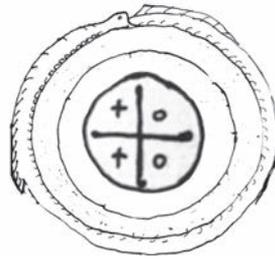


Figure 47: Thesis expressed as symbols

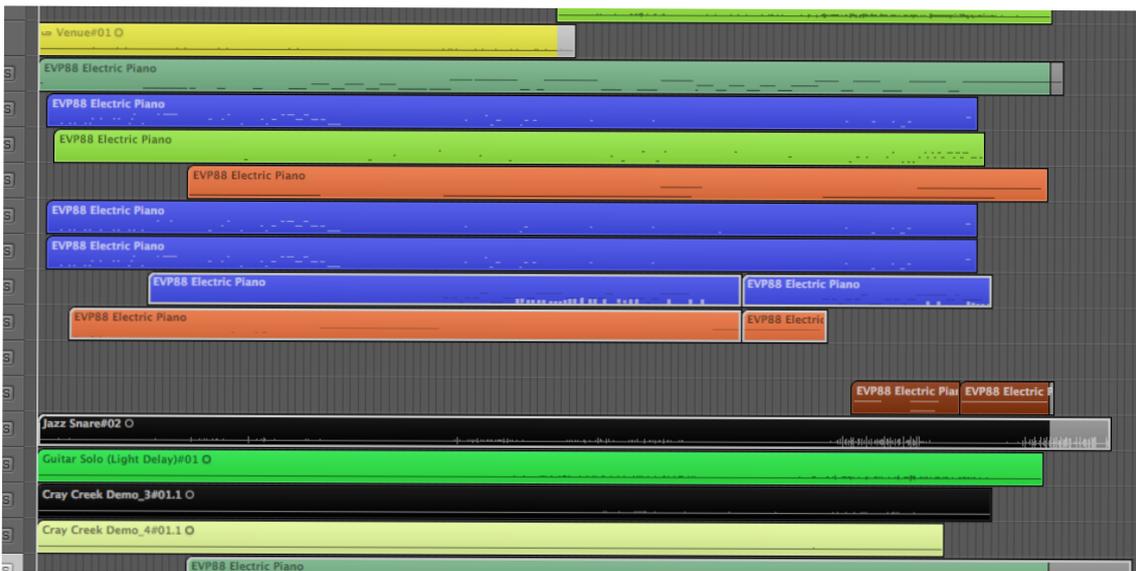


Figure 48: A Relative Location in Logic Pro

Formal Structure
 AABAABA'
 AABAABA'

The only limit on the number of uses of a resource is the limit of the information and the imagination of the designer.
 (William Elzinga, 1979)

EVERY ELEMENT IS PLACED IN WORKING RELATIONSHIP TO ANOTHER. (MUSICIAN)

ELEMENTS OF FORMAL SYSTEMS ARE DYNAMIC AND SHIFTE

IF YOU KNOW WHAT SUPPORTS EACH OTHER KNOWS THE ELEMENTS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO ANOTHER. (MUSICIAN)

ELEMENTS THAT ARE BEHAVING AS A SYSTEM ARE BEHAVING AS A SYSTEM.

A RELATIVE LOCATION FOR A WALTZ.

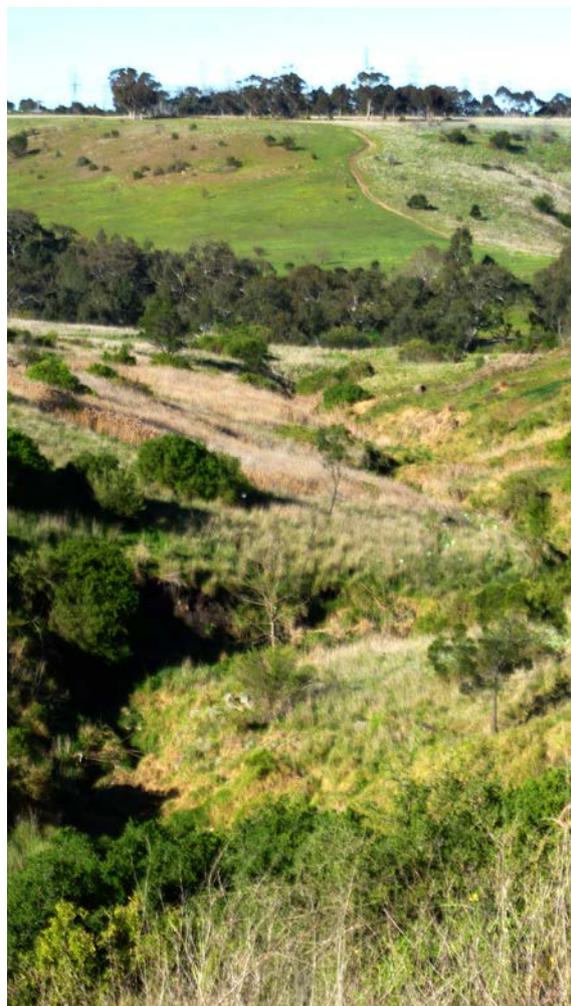
Energy/Energy

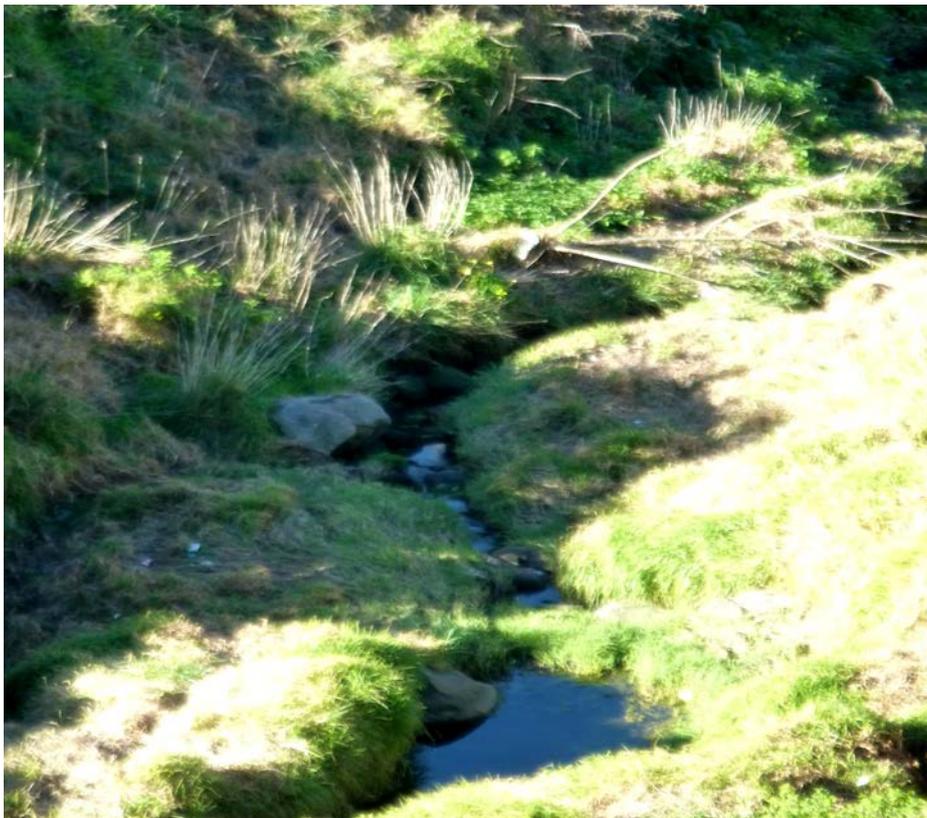
melody	harmony
CS-80 Sequencer	Arpeggiator
Trombone	Clarinet
Viola	Alto Sax
Drum (Bass)	Drum (Snare)

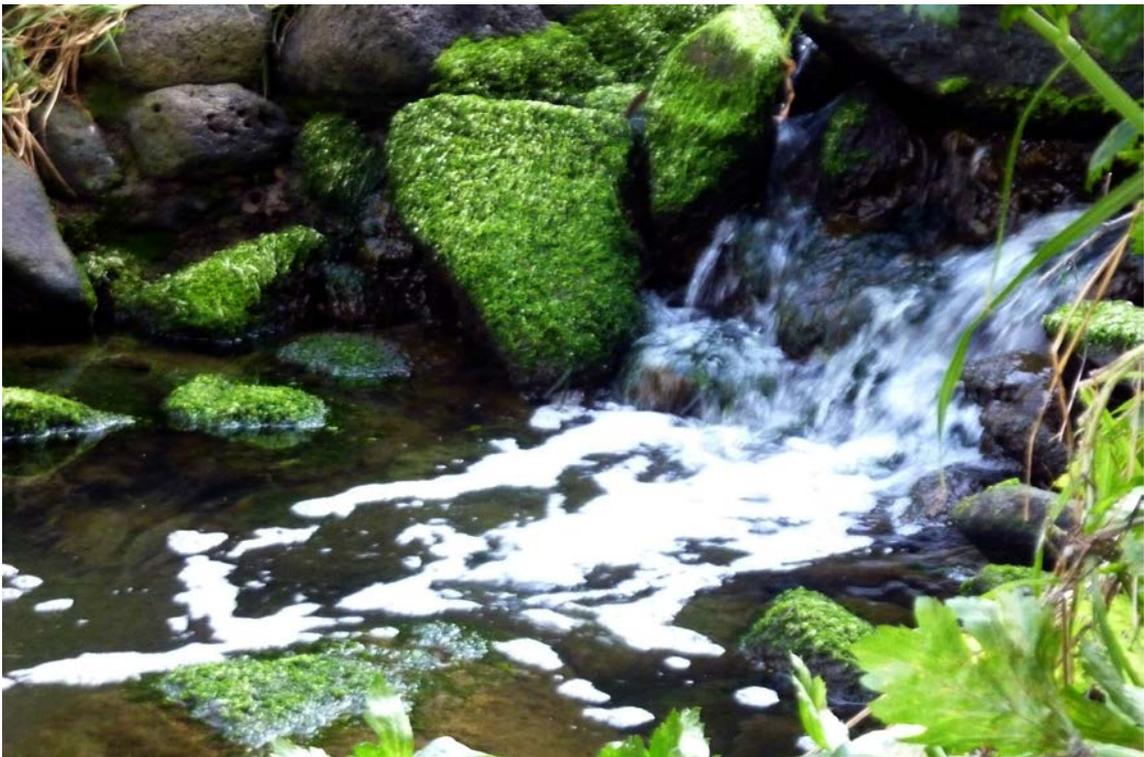
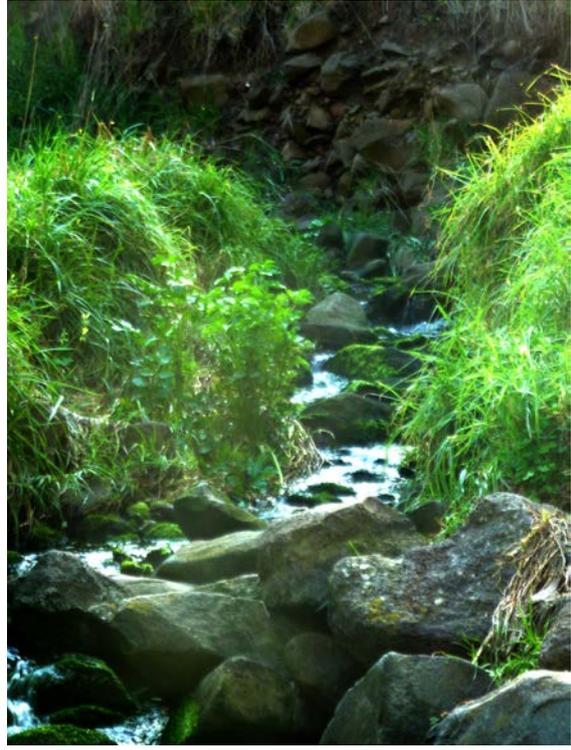
to other

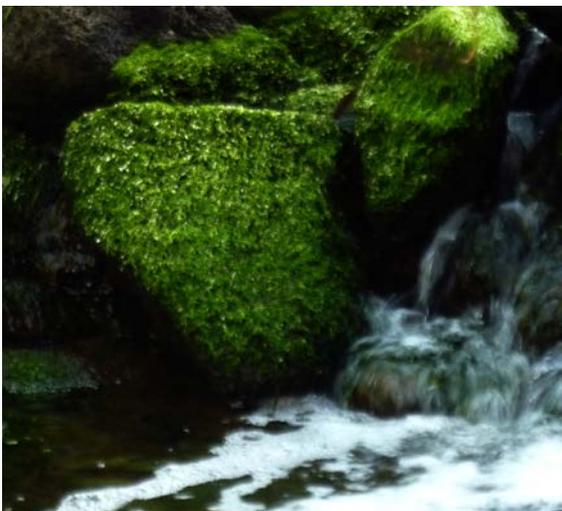
Figure 49: A relative location music score

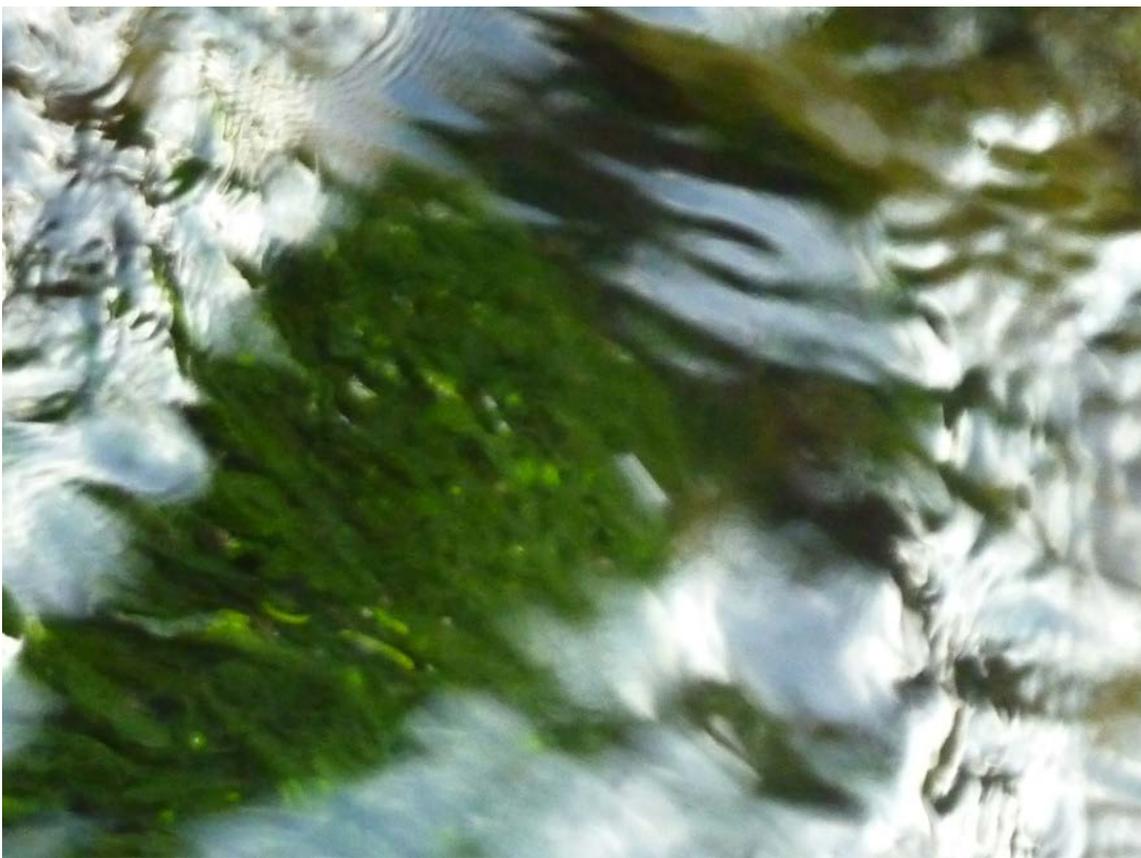
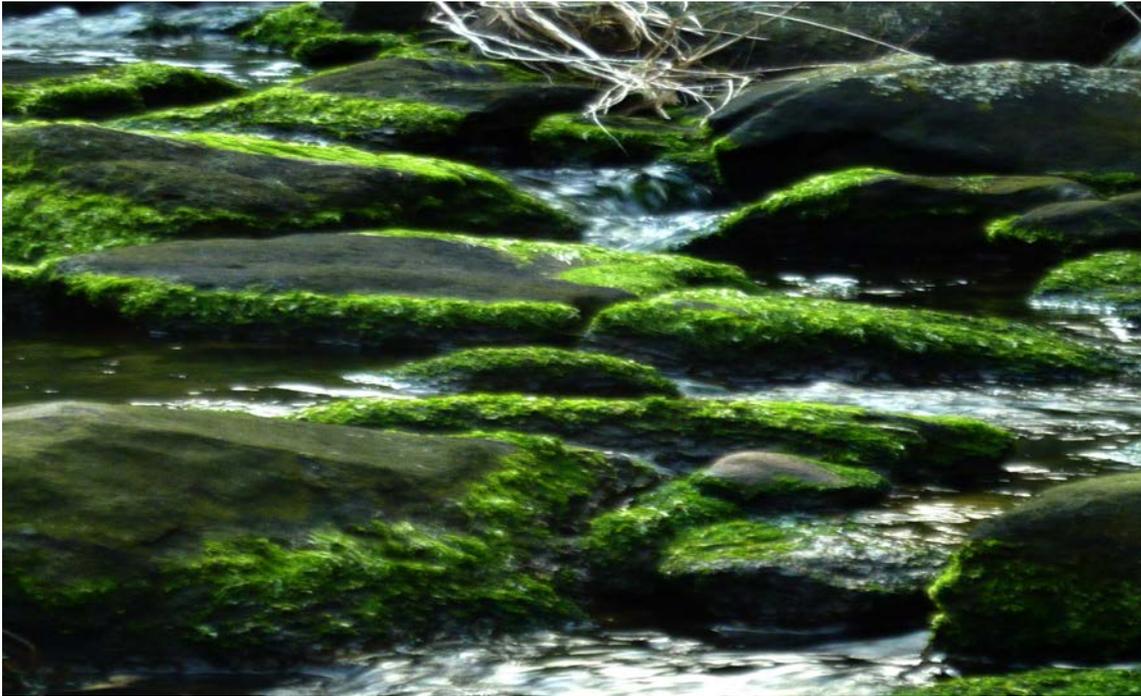
A Relative Location Photostory

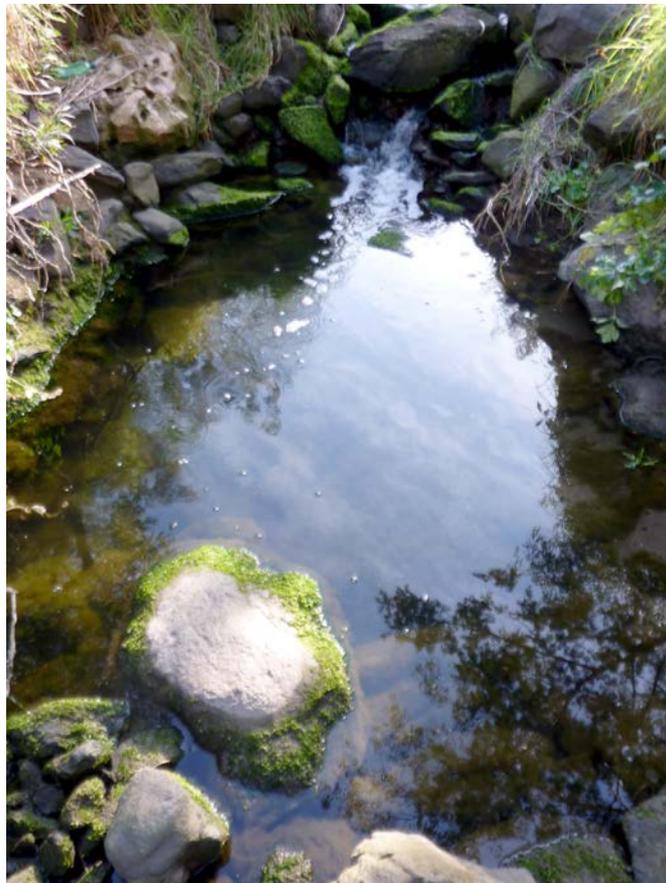


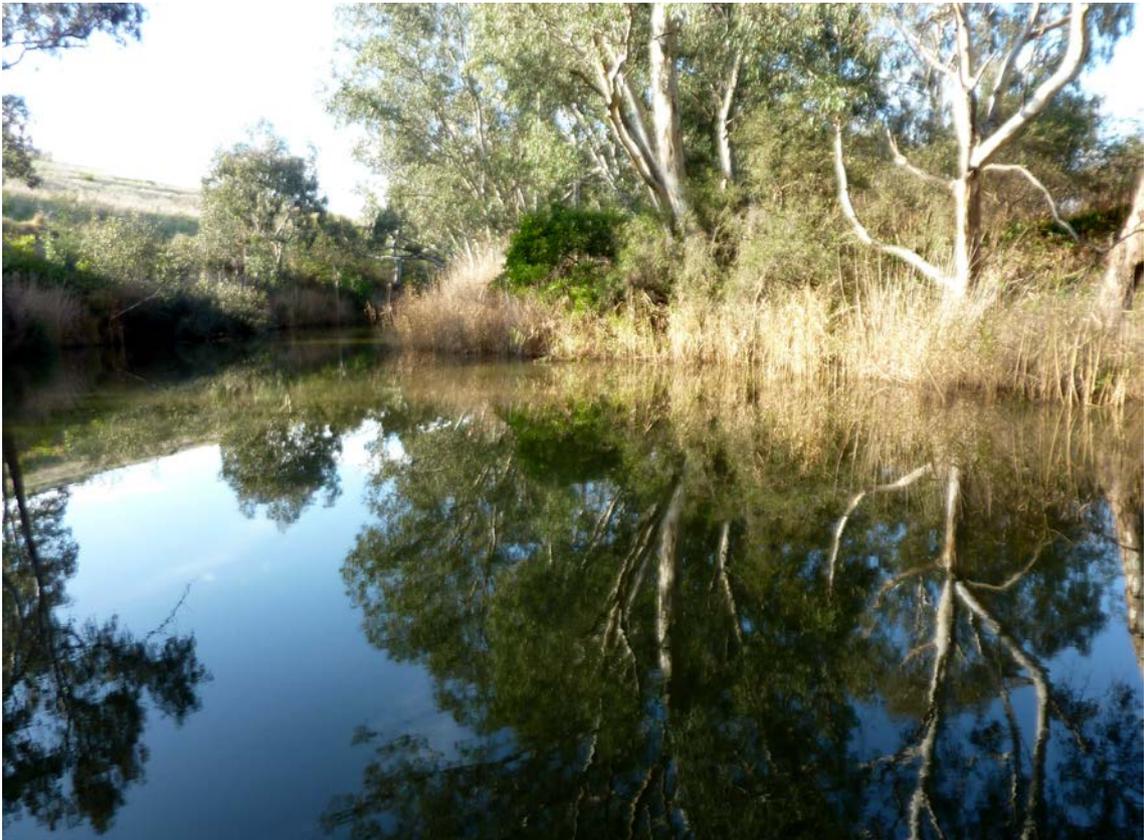
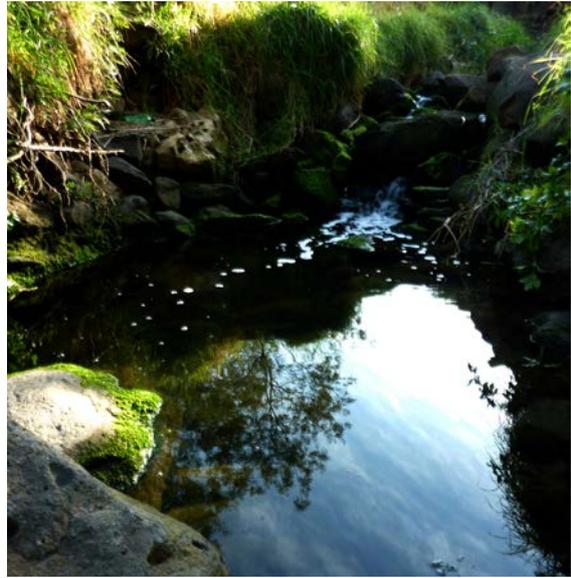


















Photostory 5: A relative location

Conclusion: Closing the seasonal circle

The dynamic and rich possibilities of education and place can create rich learning possibilities when combined, enhancing opportunities and connections between cross-cultural, and personal learning. These connections allowed me to work in a culturally safe (Bin-Sallik, 2003) manner, with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal worldviews. It is in the dynamic overlaps that the shared cultural understandings become innovative sites to view from multiple perspectives: observing the interconnectedness between all things; holding up windows and mirrors on ourselves, and those we interact with—human and non-human; embracing notions of a mutual gaze (Maoz, 2006) and a southern view (Connell, 2007b; Gale, 2009; Garbutt, 2011).

Diversi and Moreira (2009) enact a critical process of gazing back and forth by employing performative writing, placing them in-between, a liminal place Diversi and Moreira call being a '*betweenner*'. Embracing notions of a mutual gaze and southern view drive this post-colonial performative thinking towards being "*ever more inclusive*" (p. 20) as knowledge is constructed and worked with, navigating and negotiating cross-cultural betweenness.

Taking this stance allows me as artist, researcher and educator to re-think how Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal narratives can sit with each other in an educational context (within and beyond the arts). As highlighted in this work, I follow Yunkaporta (2009) by looking to the dynamic overlaps found between cultural practices, and make the cultural move as an educator towards working with Aboriginal concepts, metaphors, processes and pedagogies, as opposed to content about Aboriginal cultures.

This research demonstrates how non-Aboriginal educators can address the cross-curricula priorities (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia, and Sustainability) mandated in the new Australian Curriculum, how they can reflexively engage with and enact these

priorities. This work articulates my engagement with two of the three priorities: the inclusion in curriculum of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and narratives and sustainability. This place-based awareness articulates the shared cultural, social and environmental connections with the landscape and local place: bridging cultural boundaries.

Gazing inwardly and outwardly benefits for me a local, southern hemisphere dialogue and seeks the overlaps. In these dynamic overlaps of the socio-cultural and socio-environmental, the 'cracks' of place become powerful performative sites of expression. This autoethnographic document offers many possibilities in re-thinking the art of learning and re-thinking the roles educators have beyond the classroom, in order to strengthen their classrooms. In doing so, this document also offers possibilities for strengthening student learning, by drawing on their knowledge, making learning relevant to their lives, and extending this learning through deep engagement with place.

The benefits of such a methodology are in its potential to bring about a shift towards creating a holistic and culturally aware approach to curriculum, policy, assessment and pedagogy. As studied throughout, this methodology is based on sharing life stories, co-creating experiences, and returning that knowledge back to the communities where teachers and students live and learn. This allows learning to swell back into the local places where we enact our professions, not restricted by the school gates. The cracks of creativity are thus found in everyday life.

The idea of a southern view emerges from post-colonial writing (Connell, 2007a, 2007b; Garbutt, 2011), working in southern landscapes, such as Australia, New Zealand, Argentina, or South Africa. Southern perspectives are where scholars are writing from unique places with distinctive knowledge expressions. Working from this stance the colonial dichotomies and binaries of north and south become apparent. Reinsborough (2010) illustrates decolonising methodologies as an avenue for environmental and arts education to merge and in line with this, decolonising methodologies as explored in this work connect education with the

environmental and Indigenous knowledge and wisdom.

It is argued that the North has been positioned as the epicentre of knowledge production and worth (Connell, 2007a). This research problematises the homogenous western monopoly of what constitutes knowledge and pedagogy, celebrating the unique ways of approaching knowledge and culture from the southern landscape.

Expressing the redistribution of expertise, redistributing power imbalances and challenging dominant Eurocentric paradigms reconfigures our practices as educators, reconfiguring how we learn, teach, value, believe, and know.

Encouraging a re-thinking of the many layers of knowledge: as educators, artists, and as members of the wider community.

The intent to transform needs to be ethically grounded or else we wind up reproducing colonialist logics and oppressive conditions that are inhospitable to social change. If pedagogy is also on some level a philosophical orientation to one's teaching, then to place ethics first is to relinquish control over outcomes in a way that allows for the transformative capacity of the encounter to emerge organically. The deliberate breaking of particular boundaries and subject positions that are set up to keep us from knowing one another is key to producing a public where justice can be realized (Rosario, 2015, p. 65 - 66).

Learning beyond institutions opens up connections with public pedagogy (Giroux, 2004) and enables us to privilege 'learning' over 'education'. Learning exists beyond educational institutions and in this way; the role of an educator likewise, extends beyond the institution. There is an '*ethic of connection*' (Rose, 1999) when accepting this stance as an educator, establishing connections through dialogue.

Dialogue begins where one is, and thus is always situated, [and] dialogue is open ... the outcome is not known in advance. Openness produces reflexivity, so that one's own ground becomes destabilised. In open dialogue one holds one's self-available to be surprised, to be challenged, and to be changed (Rose, 1999, p. 175).

Eurocentric hierarchy has been overlaid in much of how we perceive and enact learning and how these Eurocentric hierarchical systems of knowledge dissemination can reproduce oppression. This includes the way we engage with place or anything that is seen as ‘the other’: people, animals and all living systems. Flipping this dialogue around to be centred from a southern stance, we can ethically engage with southern systems and privilege place-based knowledge traditions and ways of being, knowing, doing and valuing as valid and innovative approaches to pedagogy, curriculum and assessment (Martin, 2008; Rose, 1999).

As noted in Chapter one *Leaning in and out* (Pelias, 2011) from lived experiences this relational pedagogy embraces interpretive autoethnography as a valid way for sharing such complex patterns of learning. Bowers (2012) encourages autoethnography as a way to express “*how different aspects of the cultural commons are the basis of daily experience*”. Bowers claims such autoethnographies can celebrate communal knowledge and intergenerational learning where cultural traditions are a vital foundation for individual and collective liberation.

When explicit awareness of the different forms of intergenerational knowledge and skills is lacking, outside economic and political forces may undermine or appropriate different aspects of the cultural commons without people knowing what has been lost. For example, important parts of our vocabulary have been lost to the forces of science and technology, just as non-western cultures have lost traditions of intergenerational knowledge as their youth have been socialized to adopt the western assumptions essential to making them dependent upon an industrial/consumer-dependent lifestyle. Socializing the poor to the values and vocabulary that support dependence ... as well as the loss of intergenerational knowledge (Bowers, 2012).

“Both cultures [are] to be respected equally” (Yunupingu, 1989, p. 4).

“In each of the sources of flowing water there is ebb and flow” (Yunupingu, 1994b) there is a complex form of balance. Moving into this central point, there

can be tension, as dynamic forces meet—“*through the ebb and flow of competing interests*” (Yunupingu, 1994a, p. 4). These powerful sites of learning and sharing can be places of tension, but also sites of reconciliation (Yunkaporta & McGinty, 2009).

Transitional places begin to emerge through an in-between liminal process that can be pedagogical, seeking “*possibilities for mutual care in a system of connections and reciprocities that includes humans, non-human living beings, and environments*” (Rose, 1999): a public pedagogy (Giroux, 2004). This is a transitional pedagogy that can help “*us bridge the boundaries between self and other*” (Burdick & Sandlin, 2013, p. 159), crossing the line between the person we have been, and the person we are becoming (Ellsworth, 2005, in Burdick & Sandlin, 2013, p. 159).

Arts-based autoethnographic approaches open discussions into how educators engage with the many layers of place and their significance to them and their students, particularly in terms of critical and creative approaches to pedagogy and interpreting curriculum. Identities are shaped through the liminal processes of learning, building upon previous knowledge, making new arrangements and looking innovatively at the processes of learning: co-created with, and in, a southern landscape.

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