

2018

## meeting place An exhibition – and – locating the Country: an Australian bricoleuse's inquiry An exegesis

Annette Nykiel  
*Edith Cowan University*

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**meeting place**

An exhibition

– and –

**locating the Country:  
an Australian bricoleuse's inquiry**

An exegesis.

This thesis is presented in partial completion for the degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**Annette Nykiel**

Edith Cowan University

School of Arts and Humanities

2018

## *Abstract*

This practice-led PhD research investigated alternate forms of articulation to relate stories of place-making, as narrative or object, and added threads to the complex meshwork and herstory of the Country. The research was conducted in ‘The Country’, of the north-eastern Goldfields and Yalgorup Lakes in Western Australia. These two non-urban sites provided unique experiences of the bush, local people’s stories and understandings of time. The research investigated the implications of non-urban spaces as studios in relation to the concepts of place, time and narrative.

This research was, in part, experiential and drew on an absorbed embodied awareness of notions of the Country (a place). This was embedded in an ethical onto-epistemology, through the process of piecing together bricolages of seemingly unrelated fragments of methods, conceptual frameworks and materials in simple and complex ways. In making and thinking, gleaned, recycled and repurposed bits and pieces were gathered and utilised during nomadic wayfaring.

The research drew on ideas pertaining to wayfaring and yarning, ‘mapping’ and experiencing the Country through the multi-faceted lenses of the bricoleuse, the geoscientist, the maker and the artworker. Experiencing the materiality of the Country was a spatial, kinaesthetic and tactile engagement over long periods of time in the midst of the social, physical, material and biotic elements of specific ‘places’.

Narratives and artworks emerged from piecing together pre-used fragments into textiles, then curated to form assemblages in built environments, and at the non-urban sites. Collective gatherings of people making, and sharing were facilitated as part of my practice. Yarning about and creatively mapping, these situated experiences in place, aimed to encourage connections and collaborative understanding between the city and the Country.

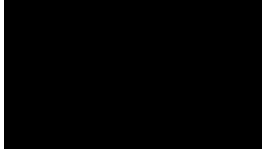
This research contributes to the value and importance of using non-urban spaces both as sustainable sources of material for artwork and as studios. A bricoleuse’s approach to field-based/practice-led research contributes a relational, conceptual and methodological approach to creative arts, and to collaborative and interdisciplinary research frameworks.

## *Declaration*

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

- incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education
- contain any material previously published or written by another person
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Signature

A black rectangular box redacting the signature, followed by a vertical line.

Annette Nykiel

June 2018

## *Acknowledgments*

First and foremost, I acknowledge the Country that supports, sustains and nourishes me and my human and non-human companions and provides my tools and my gleanings. I acknowledge and pay respects to all the elders past and present including my own and all those who love the Country. I particularly include the elders and women of the Noongar, Wongatha and Ngaanyatjarra people.

I would like to acknowledge and express my appreciation to:

Nalda for all that she is, all we have shared and many many hours of conversation and guidance.

Karyn, whom I miss dearly. James who invited me to go for a drive and Jane with whom I shared a conversation in a carpark on a Winter's morn. These happenings led me down new pathways and to this waypoint.

All the couches I have surfed and verandahs I have dumped a swag on, the kitchens I have begged a meal from and the people they belong to—Mum and John, Sue, Rachelle, Donna, Nien and Michael, Nalda, Rocky, Ellie and Bob, the guy from the pub...Holly, Perdy, Sharyn, Nien, Nalda, Nandi and George for sharing the experiences that culminated in *field working and slow making* and to Donna who helped with the logistics and proof reading.

Jane and Sarah for sharing this journey in the studio and the gallery with me, for the phone calls to see if I was still alive and cognisant; and for sharing lifts and shouting me a coffee on the not so good days. To Cim who often brings me natural treasures with a little note attached: "I thought you would find this interesting!" Also, to Sarah for turning a USB full of photos and some much edited word docs into this extraordinary document.

All the women who yarn and make and share.

This project would not have been possible without an Australian Postgraduate Award and an Award for Excellence generously supported by the Edith Cowan University's Graduate Research School. I would like to thank all the Edith Cowan University staff and collegiate whom I have had engaging conversations and support from over the past three and a half years. I would like to thank WAFTA, the Bellwether Fund and NAVA Australian Artist Grants for grants to assist me staging my exhibitions and workshops.

I would like to express my appreciation and heartfelt thanks to my supervisory team Dr Lyndall Adams, Dr Nien Schwarz and Dr Nicola Kaye for their support and mentoring and many long scratchy phone conversations from places as diverse as beach carparks and dongas that serve as airport lounges. I would also like to acknowledge Dr Jo MacFarlane, Dr Francesca Robertson and Kim Gifkins for their help on matters ethical and also to Dr Jo for helping to say things simply and Dr Sally Knowles for her advice on researching.

Lastly but most importantly, with love, to Alyssa and Patrick and Bede for wandering with me as their pathways continue to entangle with mine and sustain me.

## *Research Outputs*

### *Book Chapters*

Nykiel, A. (2017 forthcoming). How ethical is a ball of string: the embodied ethics of creative practice-led bricoleuse? In B. Bolt (Ed.), *The Ethics of Innovation and Creative Practice Research* (under review).

### *Conference Presentations*

Nykiel, A. (2017). *making place*. Paper presented at the AAANZ-Art and its Directions Conference, UWA, Perth, WA.

Nykiel, A. (2017). *A creative practice-led bricoleuse and questions of the Country*. Paper presented at the Mapping the Inland: A Centre for the Study of the Inland Symposium, Latrobe University, Melbourne.

Nykiel, A. (2016). *Reimagining the Country*. Paper presented at the InASA 2016 Encounter, Recognition, Responsibility: Australia Reimagined Conference, Notre Dame University, Fremantle Western Australia.

Nykiel, A. (2016). *How ethical is a ball of string?* Paper presented at the iDARE 2016: Creative Arts Research and the Ethics of Innovation, University of Melbourne, VCA, Southbank Campus.

### *Conference Publications*

Nykiel, A. (2015). *Talking Country*. Paper presented at the ACUADS Conference 2015: Art and Design Education In The Global 24/7, School of Art, Architecture and Design, University of South Australia. [acuads.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Nykiel.pdf](http://acuads.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Nykiel.pdf)

## *Exhibitions*

- 2018 *meeting place*, Spectrum Project Space, Perth, WA.
- 2017 *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes*, Bunbury Regional Art Galleries, WA.
- 2017 *Between the Sheets*, Gallery Central, Perth, WA.
- 2016 *twentyONE+*, Spectrum Project Space, Perth, WA.
- 2016 *field working slow making*, Spectrum Project Space, WA (co-curator).
- 2016 *Direct Address*, Wagga Wagga, NSW.
- 2015 *15 x 15* Fibreswest, Muresk, WA.
- 2015 *Memory and Commemoration*, Perth Convention Centre (collaboration).
- 2014 *Inspired by Nalda*, The Painted Tree Gallery Northcliffe, WA.

## *Artist in residence*

- 2018 Spectrum Project Space, Edith Cowan University, Mount Lawley, WA.
- 2016 Shopfront Gallery, Central TAFE, Perth, WA.

## *List of Acronyms*

AAANZ	The Art Association of Australia and New Zealand
ACUADS	Australian Council of University Art & Design Schools
CREATEC	Centre for Research in Entertainments, Arts, Technology, Education and Communications
ECU	Edith Cowan University
FIFO	fly-in, fly-out
HDR	Higher Degree by Research
iDARE	innovation.design.art.research.ethics
InASA	International Australian Studies Association
PLR	Practice-led research
SPS	Spectrum Project Space
TINAS	This is not a seminar: creative research dialogues
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
WAFTA	Western Australian Fibre and Textile Association



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**Figure 149:** *20161006\_171729*, collection of necklaces and strings of beads, digital photograph, studio, 2016.

**Figure 150:** *I5665*, a marquette for a market stall, digital photograph, studio, 2017.

**Figure 151:** *I5030*, an irregular string of shells, documentary digital photograph, Mt Lawley, 2017.

**Figure 152:** *I5112*, ceramics on a desk and balls on the dado, in the background, more formal than the leadline on the floor, documentary digital photograph, Mt Lawley, 2017.

**Figure 153:** *I5890*, install shot of *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes*, showing detail of the shadows in the mixed media assemblage, *Tideline* (2017).

**Figure 154:** *I5682*, install shot, the itinerant ball of string from *Transient Collection 3 travelling around Thresholds and Thoughtscapes*, Bunbury, 2017.

**Figure 155:** *cid\_636*, after opening night.

**Figure 156:** *cid\_148*, one week into the exhibition.

**Figure 157:** *cid\_2*, school holidays.

**Figure 158:** *cid\_82*, school holidays.

**Figure 159:** *cid\_599*, school holidays.

**Figure 160:** *cid\_666*, school holidays.

**Figure 161:** *cid\_508*, the itinerant ball of string.

**Figure 162:** *I1667*, *field working slow making*, documentary digital photograph, Spectrum Project Space, 2016.

**Figure 163:** *I1925*, campfire of string, install shot *Yarning Circles* (2016), documentary digital photograph, Spectrum Project Space, 2016.

**Figure 164:** *I1642*, intervening in spaces at *field working slow making*, Spectrum Project Space, 2016.

**Figure 165:** *I1727*, the audience viewing, making and yarning in *Yarning Circles* (2016) during the *field working slow making* exhibition.

**Figure 166:** *I1688*, Holly Story making string in *field working slow making*, documentary digital photograph, Spectrum Project Space, 2016. Permission granted.

**Figure 167:** *I1799*, detail of *Yarning Circles* (2016) showing changes to the installation during the life of the exhibition, documentary digital photograph, Spectrum Project Space, 2016.

**Figure 168:** *I1729, Yarning Circles* (2016) in *field working slow making*, Spectrum Project Space, 2016.

**Figure 169:** *I1709*, making and yarning, note the inviting open arc of the circle, *Yarning Circles* (2016), Spectrum Project Space, 2016.

**Figure 170:** *I1910*, install shot of a “constellation” of beads and hand plied silk string in *Yarning Circles* (2016), Spectrum Project Space.

**Figure 171:** Nicholas Folland, *Untitled (jump up)* 2012, found crystal & glassware, nylon coated steel wire & timber (Exception to copyright, Section: ss40, 103C. Exception: Research or study).

**Figure 172:** *I4327, Hanging Potential* (2015-17), mixed media, dimensions variable, site specific.

**Figure 173:** *I2832*, balls of string hand plied, Shopfront Gallery, Perth, 2016.

**Figure 174:** *I5892c, Tideline* (2017), *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes*, mixed, media, site specific, Bunbury Regional Art Gallery.

**Figure 175:** *20170921\_155247c*, the meshwork of hand plied string, *Choreographies of Thought*, ECU, 2017.

**Figure 176:** *DSC\_8988c*, time to come back the way you came, *Choreographies of Thought*, ECU, 2017.

**Figure 177:** *I9291, Strata* (2018), hand dyed cotton cloth, found fence paling, limestone, basalt, 100 x 80cm, Spectrum Project Space.

**Figure 178:** *I9281, The Pit* (2018), blank and hand dyed, repurposed mineralogical sample bags, 350 x 820cm, Spectrum Project Space.

**Figure 179:** *I6961, The Country* (2018), dawn chorus audio, ceramics, beads, string, fibre, baskets, found objects, 1500 x 350cm, Spectrum Project Space.

**Figure 180:** *IMG\_20180201\_183938, The Country* (2018) (detail), dawn chorus audio, ceramics, beads, string, fibre, baskets, found objects, 1500 x 350cm, Spectrum Project Space, photographer Alyssa Nykiel.

**Figure 181:** *I4460, Panspermia I* (2015-17), hand plied string ball of recycled cotton clothes, 45 x 45cm, Spectrum Project Space, photographer Anna Palma.

**Figure 182:** *17\_06\_06, Strata* (2018), hand dyed cotton cloth, found fence paling, limestone, basalt, 100 x 80cm and *Panspermia II* (2015-17), hand plied string ball of recycled cotton clothes, 25 x 25cm, Spectrum Project Space, photographer Claire Busby.

**Figure 183:** *I4470, Panspermia III* (2015-17), hand plied string ball of recycled cotton clothes, 45 x 45cm, Spectrum Project Space, photographer Anna Palma.

**Figure 184:** *I4327, The camp* (2015-17), bundled sample bags, found metal, leaves, string, 25 x 250cm, Spectrum Project Space.



# *Introduction*



Figure 1: *I5601*, documentary digital photograph, balls of hand plied plant fibre string, my living room, 2017.



Figure 2: *I5583*, digital photograph of a hand stitched patchwork quilt pieced together from plant and earth dyed scraps of non-synthetic cloth, my bed, 2017.

Working and dwelling in the Country, I explored creative and conceptual ideas around a relational attachment to the land, as an Australian, aware of an unsettled history. This PhD research has drawn on many years of wayfaring and yarning, mapping, and experiencing the Country through the multi-faceted lenses of the bricoleuse, who enfold the geoscientist, the maker and the artswoker. In this context, the lens is a cultural studies term recognising the assumptive biases of the particular way of seeing with, which one views and reads the world.

For many years, I have been wandering, spending time intently noticing, and haptically relating to two places. One in the arid lands of the north-eastern Western Australian Goldfields and the other adjacent to the wetlands and coastal fringe of the Yalgorup National Park, WA. My meandering initiated this PhD creative arts research, which is process rich and materialised in textiles, collections of gleaned bits and pieces and stories. I sustainably dyed recycled cloth and plied foraged fibre, infusing them with the essences and pigments of the Country gleaned from windfall plant material, sea wrack and mining spoil and the formless detritus of dust, rust and water marks. This was a response to my kinaesthetic observations and spatial practice. The resultant palette is reflective of the environment in which we (body and cloth) were located in at the time of making. This marked cloth may become string (Figure 1), baskets (Figure 33), patchwork (Figure 2) or artist books (Figure 24) imbued in the Country with stories of my experience making myself into these places—yarning objects. In this process, many yarns are shared—both threads and stories. Initially, the tacit knowing makers share, brings people and place together in these relational situations where a range of knowledge may be related as stories. Much of my understanding comes while sitting with women, listening and feeling, waiting, sometimes making, often driving—no notebook open, no camera clicking, no questions asked, just being present and absorbing.

This PhD research uses bricolage both as a conceptual framework and a methodology. The research investigated the implications of the Country as a studio and the creative process of place-making which are entangled in the materiality and relationality of the





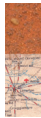
Country. Making do with what I carry and what I can glean from the space that I am in, allowed me to explore the process of place-making and respond to its relational entanglements.

My artistic focus through the research period was process rather than resolved artworks. My relational entanglement, in the midst of the places that I wander, is a creative process of situated inventions in this local environment. This process involves the complex interactions of my body, the surrounding nature and physical properties of materials, the time invested in the perception, and the process of thinking through making. The artefacts that I make slowly are embodied waypoints along the research pathway rather than the objectification of that particular place. This experiential research drew on my absorbed embodied awareness of notions of the Country (a place).

### *ethics*

As a PhD candidate at Edith Cowan University (ECU), I was required to undertake the university human ethics approval process. The research ethics approval issued by ECU (Appendix Four), pertains to responsible research on animals, humans and the use of previously collected data (“Research Ethics Approval Process Diagram,” n.d.). I was required to complete the full ethics approval process because of the potential of collaborating with some of my colleagues, who may identify as Aboriginal, not because of any environmental concerns within my practice process. It is an additional condition of this approval that I obtain ‘all the relevant permits and licences’. Licences and permits to collect native plant material and rock/earth samples are required by various Western Australian government departments and the conditions of these vary depending on the land owners—private, public. Consequently, I felt that I needed to consider the relevance and the legal/ethical conundrums concerning the WA Wildlife Conservation Act of 1950 and the 1978 Mining Act and obtain the relevant paperwork to allow me to gather earth and plant materials for my making.

This conversation about embodied ethics started because of the possibilities of collaborating with some of my fellow artists and makers while undertaking my doctoral research. If, as a sole practitioner, I considered my own work and praxis, I would require an ECU declaration of ethical conduct with no obligations to consider the environment or work sustainably except “to



minimise adverse effects on the wider community and the environment” as advocated by The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (ACRCR), (Chalmers, 2007, p. 1.3). This is an example of the embodiment of my practice-led research which has led to the need to articulate a position on embodied ethical concerns beyond the rubric of the ethics approval process and its forms. My environmental ethics of practice goes beyond and above the institutional ethics. The questions, my work poses lead to broader ethical and environmental questions.

Arguably all relational engagements are ethical (Barad, 2007), they are negotiated, rich embodied and messy, extending beyond the ethics approval process of the academy and research contexts and the gatekeepers to localised, entangled, embodied social and physical engagements with people and place. There is a gap for the quiet unheroic people who have been immersed in relational negotiated local two-way engagements to tell their stories. These ethical, authentic stories are significant and sit alongside and in the midst of the existing discourse on art made in Australia today; showing something of what is done and continuing the conversation. They answer some questions and pose many others for the critics and the gatekeepers. Labels and names—postmodern, contemporary, primitivist, Aboriginal, post contemporary, Australian will come with the critical discourse, away from the Country in which the relationships are embedded.

### *Background*

The background to this research project encompasses earth science, art theory and cultural studies. I drew on critical theory, post-modernism, and the cartographies of relationality from a number of axiological viewpoints. Sometimes, whispers of feminist and phenomenological voices were heard in fragmented, autobiographical narratives. This is in stark contrast to the scientific method, and the empirical, third person reporting of my geological career in the previous century. My cultural research training started with colonialism, hybridity and difference, Homi Bhabha (1990, 1994) and Edward Said (1995) and a feminist flavour



Figure 3: I6192, well worn map, circa 2000-current, Western Australia, 2017.

from Gayatri Spivak (1978, 1999). There were also conversations with Ric Spencer, a phenomenologist whose practice is walking. Now, I wander or sit and make in the midst of post-structuralist feminists and Indigenist thinkers and yarn about relational and embodied ethical practices. This multi-voiced narrative has led to curiosity, and a desire to investigate ways of bringing my life experience into a creative arts research project and possibly develop new ways to research along pathways between the Country and the urban.

I have travelled many roads while living and working on the land in rural and remote Australia. Some of these roads are on my well-worn map (Figure 3). Other tracks have disappeared beneath shifting sand or mining waste or have been rehabilitated, now smothered under verdant regrowth.

I am a gleaner, wherever I am: recycling, recreating, reimagining, and making do with the handmade and the home grown. There is blood, sweat and tears mingling with the dust or the mud in the pores of my skin; in the air that I breathe, in the cloth that I wear. I spent my childhood outside in the bush and later the beach, fascinated with what I saw and felt around me; a haptic, spatial awareness honed, largely, to keep me from the dangers of the Country. There were long visits to my grandparents, where art was a part of everyday life (my grandfather, a sculptor and Australian War Artist). Each year, a trip to 'town' for a new 'best' dress, a pantomime and a gallery visit. My jumpers were unravelled and reknitted as I grew and then passed to younger siblings. Memories of the smell and feel of spinning, weaving, dyeing, and preserves in jars linger. I still wear some of the jumpers knitted by my grandmother, a little threadbare in places and lovingly darned where I have shared them with the moths or caught them on a branch.

Growing up, a limited number of books only partly appeased my insatiable curiosity—all consumed voraciously and repeatedly regardless of subject. A darkroom of cardboard packing boxes was built in the disused boys change room by a mentor in order to coax a recalcitrant 10-year old back to her new school. He encouraged a different way of seeing and allowed me to make quietly, at the back of the classroom. Later, the beach instead of the bush became my backyard, and limestone caves a place for exploration





and observation and wonder. But the bush beckoned, quietly, insistently. Stints as a shedhand, roustabout, farm labourer and mineworker paid for a university degree. I was working in the mines before I graduated. A career in reconnaissance geology, and long periods in solitary bush camps or exploration camps, reconciled the curious, hungry scholar with the tactile, open-eyed, spatially-aware explorer and emerging bricoleuse.

I have always had leanings towards relational and embodied ethical paradigms and a sensitivity to the Country. As a geologist, trained in a rigorous scientific method and an anthropocentric but objective viewpoint, I have some ethical dilemmas regarding the impact of the mining industry within which I worked. In particular, the disregard this industry has for the Country. There tends to be disconnection from the everyday of local rural ecologies and environments in the money driven, urban-centric decision-making processes, and a lack of respect for the existing communities of people and their ways of life.

Life intervened: a new career as stay at home mother and home schooler ensued. Later, I found opportunities to return to study: this time visual art, and a contract position managing a not for profit collaboration between local people, government and mining companies that included an art gallery. Part of this formal collaborative project, between 2008-13, entailed mentoring and working collectively and collaboratively with Wongatha people in the north-eastern Goldfields of Western Australia. The term ‘collaborative’, in the context of this exegesis, unless otherwise specified, generally means a more informal coming together and sharing rather than the more formal arts context of a partnership with mutually agreed roles and responsibilities. The main exception was the *Marlu Kuru Kuru* (Nykiel, 2009, 2010) project, which was a formal arts collaborative project and became part of my contracted duties, in a similar way to those that Una Rey (2014, 2016) writes about. During this time, I graduated from the Centre of Aboriginal Studies at Curtin University of Technology (with First Class Honours). I now had grounding in Indigenist/ous research methodologies, and was one of only a handful of *wadjulas* to graduate from the Centre. I define Indigenist as using research methodologies that are supportive and respectful of Indigenous ontologies, epistemologies and axiologies but I, as a co-researcher do not necessarily identify as Indigenous.



In the voice of Indigenous scholar Vicki Greives:

Aboriginal Spirituality derives from a philosophy that establishes the wholistic notion of the interconnectedness of the elements of the earth and the universe, animate and inanimate, whereby people, the plants and animals, landforms and celestial bodies are interrelated. These relations and the knowledge of how they are interconnected are expressed, and why it is important to keep all things in healthy interdependence is encoded, in sacred stories or myths". (2009, p. 5)

I acknowledge this belief system with reverence as it has many parallels to my relational onto-epistemology and axiology and I have spent time learning and sharing stories with Indigenous people amidst the Country.

A more sustainable embodied understanding arises from familiarity based on a long or repeated engagement, having care and a sense of place and this need not be tied to race, ethnicity or gender or history. The Chinese American anthropologist Anna Tsing (2012) reiterates that sense of place is relational and embodied, also pointing out that understanding of environment extends beyond speciation as Haraway (2008) notes. My embodied understanding of place follows the thoughts of Australian environmental philosopher Freya Matthews (2010) who intimates:

setting aside the dualist understanding of nature encoded in science is a pre-condition for allowing our emotions to be engaged by nature and hence for a transvaluation of desires to occur. Assuming that we do set our dualist assumptions aside, at least experimentally, in the interests of deep sustainability, what would then need to happen for us actually to become emotionally engaged with nature? First-hand observation in the field may be a key...I mean something more akin to the nature-watching of field naturalists. Patiently and unobtrusively observing a family of wrens in one's garden or the activities of a spider in the corner of one's garage or the changing seasonal theatre of one's local creek may induce, in time, a sense of involvement with these existences. (p. 3)

My sustained fieldwork and haptic experiences have become an emotional engagement with places that I have become familiar with, for example, old man emu whose track (Figure 49) I look for whenever I visit his territory or the spider spinning her web across the gallery window during my 2018 Spectrum Project Space residency.



My fieldwork included collaborating with Wongatha women on the *Marlu Kuru Kuru* project (Nykiel, 2009, 2010), I was the 'boss for paper' administering grant monies, curating exhibitions and dealing with associated paperwork and logistics, mentoring the artists, the odd fieldtrip and many gathering trips. These experiences led to a total re-evaluation of my ontology, my epistemology, and my axiology as I related to different worldviews. This curious and gradual process of changing my way of seeing, led to a chaos of not-knowing. I questioned who I was and what I believed in. From this not-knowing state, emerged a relational way of sense making, based on the spatial practice of wandering in the midst of the Country.

I acknowledge that Indigenous people have a close relationship with the land and an understanding of the ecology of the remote regions of Australia which extends at least 50 000 years (Martin et al., 2013). I have spent time yarning with some of the keepers of this knowledge and have been invited to visit places with them and share some of these stories. I respect these people and their knowledge and honour their right to self-actualisation by spending time with them and sharing my stories. I treasure the time we spent together yarning in the bush.

As a non-indigenous person, I form long term relationships, haptically experience and hold knowledge (albeit in a different form) of remote areas. The notion of non-indigenous relationships to the land is also discussed in different contexts by Peter Read (2000), Kim Mahood (particularly in the context of her father in *Craft for a Dry Lake* (2000)), Mandy Martin (Martin, Robin, & Smith, 2005; Read, 2000; Robin, Dickman, & Martin, 2011), Margaret Somerville (Power & Somerville, 2015; Somerville, 2014) and Bill Ashcroft (2015). Mahood, Martin and Somerville have well documented, long term, collaborative relationships with Indigenous women and non-urban places and tell stories of their own journeys through these relationships.

Being non-indigenous fosters a different understanding of the land, if I spend time immersed amidst it. Mine is not an Indigenous sense/knowledge but an embodied sense none the less. Other philosophers including Tim Ingold (2003, 2011), Jane Bennett (2010), Donna Haraway (2016) and Karen Barad (2007, 2012) explore interrelationality



and inter-species connections and the thingyness of the weather world which are also embodied forms of understanding amidst natural places. Ingold (2003) and Tsing (2015) suggest mycorrhizal connections to conceptualise the entanglement of human and land/world/nature. I relate my experience to these scholars and artists and suggest that spending time becoming familiar (entangled/interrelated) with a place evokes a sense of care for the place and its environment.

Due to changing circumstances, there were no sustained collaborations with Indigenous people specific to this doctoral research except with Noongar artist Sharyn Egan. Sharyn Egan, is an artist and collaborator in the *field working slow making* (2016) exhibition. Sharyn and I also meet and talk about our practices and the places that I am working. We have also been involved in workshops together.

During the doctoral candidacy, I drew on my lived experience, and I continued to spend time amidst the Country, sometimes with members of families I have known for years. Sadly, most of the women I worked with and proposed to continue to work with within the framework of this project are now deceased and it is culturally inappropriate for me to mention their names or in some cases the places we visited together. Whenever I visited the Ngaanyatjarra Lands or Laverton, I yarned about my work and what I was up to with the people I met in these somewhat transient communities including the families of the Marlu Kuru Kuru women.

Out of the chaos, a dynamic, haptic, new/neo-materialistic entangled relationship with the materiality of the Country continues to emerge. With my relational and less anthropocentric focus, the Country is highlighted as the primary entity for this research; a mythopoetic wisdom is created and threaded with the stories of the local people (and my own), anecdotes and alternative histories. I engage in the studio of the Country to work intuitively with matter at hand, interbedded with the knowledge and stories of other makers.



I have extensive lived experience in remote communities and working with Indigenous people, mapping multi-voiced stories and multiple entangled relationships to the Country. A collaborative artist and writer who tells stories about art, maps, long drives and transcultural collaborations with people of the desert, Mahood notes, that “one earns the right to a relationship through time spent with people and country” (2000, p. 210). Australian pedagogue and collaborative researcher Somerville’s book, *water in a dry land: place-learning through art and story* (2013) is also a story of mapping and transcultural collaboration. Her story opens with: “a map is a story of Country that shapes our relationship to the known world” (p. 3). Like these female Australian writers, I spend time relating to the Country and tell different stories to male writers including Patrick White and Robert Drewe. I map the Country and remain curious about my relational experiences. I ply my relationships, myself and the materials of the Country into an entangled understanding of a place. Some of this curiosity is expressed through the ontological action of writing storylines of auto/ethnography. Like Somerville (2013), I conceptualise storylines as place-based cultural narratives that inform actions and thinking. I tell my stories in an “epistemological stream of consciousness” (Braidotti, 2011, p. 22) about my relationships to place rather than recounting colonial histories or telling others’ stories. This is an ethical autobiography with accountability.

Place is made by thinking through the Country and the stories are told in my voice and may include the voices of the people who have relationships there. This research is reflexive and diffractive; it is a reimagining of my relational experience through a mythopoetic thoughtscape of that place. My story is told in my voice, from my unique point of view in the language of text, process and materials.

### *processes, protocols and rules of engagement*

Processes, protocols, and rules of engagement in any community are fluid and situational and constantly subject to negotiation. A personal introduction goes a long way. I was invited to Laverton, in 2008, to meet a group of women who had been learning how to dye silk scarves and were interested in developing this into a project and perhaps a small business. When we met, it became apparent that I had known some members of the families of these women when I was in the area in the 1980-90’s. Most of these women are gone now and I do not use their names, out of respect, as is culturally appropriate. I always tell my own story, not to exclude any voices, but out of respect and reverence for the knowledge held by these women and from a keen sense of self-actualisation and self-realisation for myself and the women; a post constructivist view, that is also advocated by writers like Marcia Langton (2008, 2015). I try not to appropriate knowledge and stories. I do have permission to share my anecdotes and some of the things I have learnt in the spirit of two-way learning and a reverence for the Country (the land and all the species it supports) which I am attached to.

The women had experimented with the dye properties of local plants and developed a range of bush dyes using a single technique not dissimilar to one of the processes I use. I was introduced to the women. We talked and shared. On subsequent trips, we began to go out bush to gather and hunt, coming back to their workshop to experiment further. As the relationship developed, a formal project was established (*Marlu Kuru Kuru*)—a business model—with training and infrastructure upgrades, some workshops with visiting artists and local people and exhibitions in Perth. As the boss for paper, I wrote the successful grant



applications to acquire funding and support for the project and secured formal employment as an artswoker to help auspice the project. During this time, I renewed my association with the mining industry, flying to and from Perth to mine sites near Laverton and securing other in-kind support. We had a series of highly successful pop-up exhibitions of local artwork at these sites.

I drove the women to the cities (Kalgoorlie and Perth), to the bush, to visit family in other areas and I visited and shared with the sisters, aunties, mothers. When I travelled to the Ngaanyatjarra Lands with Nalda Searles and other artists we conducted workshops and yarned together in Laverton and on the Lands with the women and their extended families. This framed the basis from which this research project emerged. We also spoke about continuing to collaborate. I wrote about the *Marlu Kuru Kuru* project in my Honours thesis (Nykiel 2010) at Curtin University with the blessing of the women and full ethics clearance. These relationships are complex and morph over time, but they are shared, respectful and two-way. I had knowledge of dyeing techniques and plant chemistry and had also worked with some of the local plants and knew a little of the Country and its tracks. I could bring up supplies from Perth and offer a place to camp and a lift from here to there.

On one particular trip; up bright and early on a clear cool morning, I fuelled up the vehicle and checked the tyres, brought flour, water, butter and fruit from the local shop, before stowing them in the box that held cups, plates, utensils, tea, sugar and powdered milk, alfoil and matches. I double checked that the shovel, tarps, my digging stick (gifted to me by a senior Aunty) and the bags for collecting were still in the vehicle and heaved my swag and water containers onto the roof rack. I set off to visit the various houses and camps around town to pick up the women. An assortment of digging sticks and blankets accumulated in the vehicle. Another stop at the shop and we were off; just one more detour to see if Aunty was still there and to pick up an axe.

We had discussed where we were going and what we were going to look for the previous day. I drew a mudmap, after being teased into telling a story of ‘last time’, to see if I remembered how to get to the place. We had let people know that we would be out all night and roughly where we were headed.

We headed north and east out of town up the gravel road a ways. There was much talk and laughter, mostly at my expense. I learnt while listening and driving, the language beginning to make sense in the context of the Country that it related to. I would listen to the stories and navigate to a chorus of directions and back seat suggestions and admonishments. I tried to remember the directions for the next time we came and at least the gist of the story, although it would be retold on the next visit and reexplained, patiently, until my language skills improved.

“*Wanti!*” Stop here! I guided the vehicle to a stop in the middle of the road. “*Wiya*”, too far, go back. I reversed back and stopped on the edge of the road. One of the younger women with keen eyes had spotted fresh tracks of an emu. “Old fella emu coming back from water, that a way.” Springing from the back of the vehicle, she began to track him back to the nest. Some of the other women grabbed digging sticks and wandered off to forage for lunch. Aunty, who was not well, stayed snug and warm in the car with me and told me a bawdy version of the story I had been learning—complete with actions. This was a different version of the story of the place we were going that I had not heard before and, was not commonly told. This story had a strong moral message that reminded me of some of the Bible stories or Greek myths and emphasised the need to respect this knowledge and this site. We also talked of a medicine bush that grew out this way—where it





might be found and what to look for. I spun a yarn about the last time I had been through this way. The other women came back with a clutch of eggs, some *maku* (bardi grubs) and a handful of quandongs. I collected wood and some *Eucalyptus spp.* leaves for a dyepot, started a fire and put the billy on. Someone made damper and put it on to cook. Later, travelling on, I found the right turn off and drove slowly, keeping an eye out for the medicine bush. Aunty began singing as we harvested the plant.

This yarn relates, in my voice, how learning, mapping, and art-making are entangled when sharing in the Country.

### *voice*

In writing this exegesis, I follow Robyn Stewart's (2003a) ideas as she unpacks practice-led research (PLR) and bricolage. She suggests that the self-reflective, autobiographical aspects of exegetical writing link her art and her life, and therefore writes in first person. Advocating writing in the first person, Indigenous researcher, Shawn Wilson (2008) does not separate his writing from his research as he honours his entangled relationships within his community. He reiterates that research is based on describing and nurturing relationships and embodiment, which have power and cultural implications. I agree with this relational viewpoint and attempt to take these points into account when writing this exegesis in the first person.

Writing and storytelling are intrinsic to the emergence of my praxical understanding. I seek to situate myself within poiesis, entangled in the process of making in place and how this comes about. This becomes a self-reflexive diffraction of a range of ideas to do with my thinking around my making. As the storyteller, I write in the first person, telling a story to this audience, from my understanding of events. I include lyrical anecdotes (yarns) and descriptions of working at my field sites (places in the Country) as an acknowledgment of relationships in those places and in recognition of embodied experiences. My storytelling relates my experiences and often includes a metaphorical thread that can be applied to my research process. For example, the strips of rag I ply into string, may also be imagined as the multiple voices threaded through my conceptual framework. These threads when plied into string become much stronger and more cohesive than a pile of short pieces of fibre or a single voice.

I write in order to map my conceptual thinking and tell stories in the many interwoven tongues of the scientist, the maker, the thinker, the wanderer. I position these stories in what Stewart (2003a) calls intertextuality and what Kip Jones (2013) writes of as textural bricolage, when he unpacks his autoethnographic writing. Writing about my bricolage of theory includes "the fictive and imaginative elements of the presentation of all formal research" (Kincheloe, McLaren, & Steinberg, 2011, p. 168). Stories can be powerful, relational ways to illuminate collisions (Benham, 2007) and tensions between theory and practice in the ecology which I relate to. I spin yarns and include some within this exegetical writing to map some of these tensions and collisions as I create a bricolage of this research. For example, I wander in the midst of the area associated with this research, still seeing through the geo(logist)'s lens. Many years ago, when I fabricated earth stories, I had mapped and ground truthed some of this region. I now return, to tell these stories of looking for gold and add new lines to my herstory (stories told by this feminine body). Metaphorically and literally, the geo digs, unearthing ore and





showing the nuggets—cashing them in as necessary to continue the wandering. The alchemical experience of wonder allows me to wander in gold country; but not all the gold is in nugget form.

Fields of everlasting daisies (*Cephalopterum drummondii*) and mulla mulla (*Ptilotus spp.*) in mulga (*Acacia aneura*) scrubland, *Wildflowersinmulga* (Figure 4) blooming in prospective gold country. This is a good example of the pastoral land recovering from overgrazing and feral goats. Geomorphically, it is poorly sorted, polymictic colluvium over hardpan shedding from nearby ferruginous breakaways, anomalous in nickel, cobalt and gold. It is worth panning a few samples to see if there is any colour (traces of gold) just to keep my hand in. This spot is not far off the Leonora–Laverton Road and shows signs of other wanderers, including the local women I have been gathering and yarning with. I have travelled through here, countless times, and recall stopping for stricken motorists, and attending vehicle accidents. The feeling of scratchy, tired eyes, ever alert for kangaroos and emus after a long day behind the wheel. Memories of dodging donkeys, cows, camels and being chased by a dingo. The pleasure of driving the open road, willy willys spinning along beside me and the pungent smell of fizzing asphalt where lightning struck in front of me. The photo becomes a mnemonic for making meaning in my mythopoetical story of this place, both of which are intrinsic to languaging my praxis in this exegesis.



Figure 4: *wildflowersinmulga*, digital photograph, Murrin Murrin, 2014.





Figure 5: *I3605*, digital photograph, Laverton area, 2014.

## *photographs*

The photographs throughout this exegesis materialise fragments of my experience and are taken through my camera lens unless credited otherwise. They may be included as a part of the audit trail. The photographs frame fragments of the Country, as a metaphor for my noticing or a rearticulation of my making. This materialises what I am thinking and my place-making or documents transient and ephemeral works and drawings or field sites. Sometimes the photograph is an artwork in its own right or of an artwork, sometimes it is the catalyst for a story and sometimes, simply an example to elucidate my reterritorialisation. The titles are numbered and correspond to the original numbers assigned by the camera at that time and place. This has parallels with the sample numbers printed on mineralogical sample bags; an essential tool of the geologist. The numbers on these bags often include the grid coordinates used to map the location of the mineralogical samples collected at a drill site, some which may contain nuggets of gold, *I3605* (Figure 5), for example. I reimagine bits and pieces of the conventions and tools of my scientific training within my creative arts practice and reclaim sample bags as a source of cloth.

## *Aim*

The aim of this research was to creatively expand awareness of the Country in the city, in a Western Australian (WA) context. WA has unique diversity of ecosystems and a dynamic culture. In an increasingly urban-centric WA and Australia in general, there is a vital need to prompt a curiosity in and an awareness of the Country: its stories, and the dirt beneath our feet. In order to address this aim, I produced a number of bodies of work that were intended to materialise my embodied and situated awareness of the Country. This research explored notions of being entangled in the midst of the materiality of the Country and considered how to materialise this. In aiming



to share the way I wayfare (wander) though this inspiring country, I endeavoured to develop bricolage as a methodology. This research, in exhibition, aimed to invite an audience to participate in a dialogue with the materiality, complexity and physicality of the works exhibited and by doing so to add story threads to the mythopoetic wisdom of the Country of the arid lands or the regional coastal fringe of WA.

### *Significance and impact*

This creative bricolage was a research project that transformed my entangled relational experience of place into a socio-cultural experience for an urban audience and investigated the implications of a bricolage as a sustainable field-based creative arts research approach. The significance of adding more threads to the stories of the Country in Australia was a new, visible storyline in the herstory of this creative region. I have told my stories about making place and making in the place of the Country of regional Western Australia with an ethics of care for the ecology of the place and the world. I have been involved in a series of exhibitions and I have been invited to show in several others bringing my experiential making and visceral connection to the Country into urban spaces, and helping to nurture the local sustainable art practices of other artists in some small way.

It is possible that a bricoleuse's approach to field-based/practice-led research may add relational conceptual and methodical approaches to creative arts, collaborative and interdisciplinary research frameworks. This could have applications outside the arts field, possibly in Indigenist contexts, within the fields of nursing, education and remix studies for example, where bricolage and practice-led research are emerging and valid methodologies.

### *Research questions*

How does a bricoleuse relate to being entangled in the midst of the materiality of the Country?

What are the implications for bricolage as a research approach?

How might bricoles/bricolage be installed in the urban environment?

What does a sustainable arts practice look and feel like?



## *Structure of the exegesis*

Chapter One: *Terms of Reference: the audit trail begins* starts wandering along a pathway that sets out the context and reasons for using specific terms. It attempts to tie together and make sense of the collection of fragments of ideas that map my wayfaring and intertwine my conceptual journey with other practitioners and scholars. I introduce the Country and locate it in place by mapping it within poiesis in the context of deep time and belonging. In the becoming of material thinking and new materialism, I move amongst cultural contact zones that include Indigenous and Indigenist paradigms and yarning, dadirri and two-way as ways of relating tacit and embodied knowledge.

Chapter Two: *A Bricoleuse's Yarn: a waypoint on the audit trail* develops a research framework around bricolage and builds a case for coining the term bricoleuse through material thinking and place-making and their intrinsic embeddedness in poiesis. Beginning with Claude Lévi-Strauss, Deena and Michael Weinstein and Joe Kincheloe and his colleagues, I move to discussing the thoughts some of the practice-led, creative and interdisciplinary researchers have in this area. There is some entanglement as I introduce Barad's ideas of onto-epistemology as a relational and ethical approach to research and Braidotti's philosophical nomadism as a conceptualisation to help make sense of the fragments of thinking and process within bricolage. I discuss axiological concerns through the lens of my cultural studies training, but I become more relational and situated as my focus becomes less anthropocentric.

Chapter Three: *A Bricoleuse's Methodological way* wanders through ideas of methodology and its interweaving with onto-epistemology and axiology in the midst of the meshworks of the world. The ideas of theorists and creative practitioners colour and add richness to the methodological bricolage. The diffractive self-reflexivity, the position and criticality of the bricoleuse affects the research and the narrative. I explain the methods within my multi-method engagement including wondering, mapping, not-knowing. This is a relational and physical wandering along pathways in the midst of the meshwork of Ingold's weather-world whilst I glean, gather and forage materials to make string, baskets and quilts.

Chapter Four: *Wandering, relating and yarning with the maker* is told in the voices of the bricoleuse and the situated maker as a quilt maker, a string maker, a map maker and an image maker speaking about craft based skills and material resonances. The chapter begins from an unexpected bend in the road and relates how I make.

Chapter Five: *The Intentions of the Maker* are elucidated in examining some of the artworks resulting from the research process. This includes the exhibitions *field working slow making* (2016), *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes* (2017) and my intentions for the forthcoming residency and solo exhibition *meeting place* (2018). I discuss the implications of my making and the importance of bringing my process and place-making into urban spaces and the gallery.



## *Chapter 1 : Terms of Reference: the audit trail begins*

This chapter introduces some of the key terms and positions, and the context in which they will be used throughout the exegesis. It is a patchwork of textured bits and pieces that form a bricolage of my thinking threaded with research conducted by significant theorists and practitioners rather than a linear glossary. It is a bricolage, a materialisation of my travails and travels and is imbued with essences of me and of the Country.

To assist in navigating this exegesis, I have categorised the terms of reference under the broad headings:

- × Audit Trail, which conceptualises my praxis.
- × The Country, place, maps, belonging, deep time, poiesis which underpin the research.
- × Material Thinking begins to express my knowing as a maker introducing new materialism, tacit and embodied knowing, indeterminate not-knowing, affordances, and becoming.
- × The section Cultural Contact Zones introduces Indigenous and Indigenist approaches, and includes yarning, dadirri and two-way.

The terms defined in this chapter are applied throughout unless otherwise noted, however, key concepts such as bricolage, bricoleur/se, nomadism, and onto-epistemology will be introduced and discussed in detail in *the Bricoleuse's Yarn* of Chapter Two.

### *Audit Trail*

In the context of this research, an audit trail, included yarns to express place-making and articulated connections between eclectic ideas and disciplines using quotations to acknowledge and respect the thinking of a wide range of authors. Academic research supervisor, Chris Wibberley (2012) argued that the methodological process must be theorised and articulated and have an “audit trail” (2012, p. 6) to be rigorous and valid. Pedagogues Joe Kincheloe, Peter McLaren and Shirley Steinberg (2011) and sociologists Weinstein and Weinstein (1992) had similar ideas about rigour, validity and multiple voices in the context of bricolage theory. Yeates and Carson (2009), Stewart (2003a, 2003b, 2010) and Siobhan Murphy (2012a, 2012b) wrote around the complex, multi-layered issues of bricolage, practice-led research and postgraduate research from more student-centric points of view. I have been mindful of the concerns they highlighted with regard to crossing boundaries and the process of working in spaces between practice and theory.

In adopting Brad Haseman's (2006) “artistic audit” (p. 8) as a way of culturally contextualising my practice in light of current practices and literature, I engaged with the ideas of Ainslie Yardley (2008), a bricoleur. Yardley maintained a need for rigorous and authentic conversation about codes, contexts, language and maps in creative research where there may not be an extensive analytical body of ‘literature’ and nonstandard texts, often fictive, should be read intertextually.

Haseman (2006) described an artistic audit as a richer, more complex analysis of the “contexts of practice within which the performative researcher operates” (p. 8) more than just a review of written materials. It is a rich layered analysis of the traditions and conventions associated with artworks and their performance; empathy for the ‘performer’ (the one who acts) and, the will to take the performance (action) at ‘face value’, which Yardley (2008) also advocated.





The ‘auditor’ is critical and informed rather than a viewer just ‘looking’ and prepared to enter the conversation/mythmaking. As an auditor, I made reference to the collaborative work of Nalda Searles as well as her individual fibreworks and her workshops/teaching and our shared travels. John Wolseley and his bricolage technique, and creative practitioners Martin, Mahood and Rey are referenced, as all have travelled and worked in remote Australia. I include local field working and place-making artists with whom I spend time, Holly Story, Nien Schwarz, Sharyn Egan and Perdita Phillips and the *field working slow making* exhibition mounted in 2016.

## *The Country*

The concept of ‘the Country’ underpins this research. It is a place, entangled in belonging; an entity and a set of relationships from which I glean understanding. In this section, I will discuss country/Country, landscape, place and belonging and introduce the concept of ‘the Country’ in the local Australian context. There are many writers and artists working in similar spaces including Mahood and Somerville, Searles, Martin, Rey, and Wolseley.

The literature reviewed provides some of the contemporary debates that contextualise country/Country, place and belonging. Early in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, non-indigenous post-colonial writers including Lesley Head (2000), Catherine Nash (2002), and Peter Read (2000) were writing about country in terms of settler belonging and in the spirit of reconciliation. While Jane Jacobs and Ken Gelder (1998) write in terms of an uncanny Australia that is still unsettled. Michael Tawa (2002), John Bradley (2011) and Deborah Bird Rose (1996) write about their understandings of the Indigenous concept of Country based on their long-term engagements with specific groups of people in specific places. Geographer Edward Relph (1993), Heideggerian scholar Jeff Malpas (2011, 2012) and philosopher Edward Casey (1997, 2013, 2005) write about place as a philosophical concept which may or may not have a physical locality. Archaeologist Barbara Bender (2001) and anthropologist Keith Basso (1996) are amongst many who write about place through a variety of cultural studies lenses intimating that place is a concept with specific local and community meanings. There are parallels with all of these theories of place in discussions about C/country.

I have long-term relational attachment and engagement to two specific places, and this leads me to use the term, ‘the Country’. To conceptualise my relationship with these places, I use a capital “C” in respect for, and acknowledgment of all that is these places. I use ‘the’ to differentiate from the Indigenous concept and ideology of ‘Country’. I dwell in the country, the non-urban, but also in the country of Australia; terms denoted with a small ‘c’. However, the places I refer to as the Country are more than the rural or remote localities in this nation.

Throughout this exegesis, ‘the Country’ will be consistently used except in the discussion of the work of other scholars and practitioners where I will follow the authors’ use of country or Country. In an Indigenous context, country with a small ‘c’ is “a culturally qualified entity conjoining people, land and myth” (Tawa, 2002, p. 45). Indigenous usage, in general, refers to ‘Country’ (Blair, 2015; B. Martin, 2013c) by Indigenous scholars or ‘country’ (Bradley, 2011; Tawa, 2002) by non-indigenous scholars, although contemporary educator Estelle Barrett uses ‘Country’ to describe ‘land’ in Indigenous contexts. Country may be either a common noun or a proper noun in Aboriginal English (Rose, 1996). Architect and academic Tawa (2002, p. 48) further comments that, in an Indigenous context, country “is a narrated topography—an inter-textual setting available to be read, mapped and enunciated interactively”. The places that I



relate to as, the Country are also narrated topographies to be read and mapped through my cultural lenses. ‘The Country’ in the context of this research includes the relational voices of the narrated topographies and a sense of respect and reverence for Indigenous understandings.



Figure 6: *I1501*, Yalgorup National Park after the Waroona bushfire, looking east from Preston Beach, 2016.

The Country, in my conceptualisation, is created around creative researcher Laurene Vaughan’s (2013) idea of place. Place is a “complex socio-cultural, geospatial and temporal entity” (p. 41) created by people spending time relating to a particular space. I have experienced a long-term visceral attachment to and relationships with specific rural and remote spaces. Places, which I now refer to as the Country.

The Country that I am relating to and asking questions of, in this research, is in two non-urban spaces. The arid lands of the north-eastern Goldfields and the wetlands and coastal fringe of the Yalgorup National Park in Western Australia. These areas, where I wander, both enfold different salt lakes, Lake Preston in Yalgorup National Park *I1501* (Figure 6) and Lake Carey in the arid lands *PC070216* (Figure 7). In sustaining a long-term relationship within these places, I am engaging my “mindful body at work with materials and with the land, ‘sewing itself in’ to the textures of the world along the pathways of sensory involvement” (Ingold, 2011, p. 133). Being a string maker and working with stitch, I ply or stitch myself into the textures of the world. In walking the Country, I am stitching myself into the cloth of the place.

Arguably, Mahood, also metaphorically stitches herself into place, as an artist and writer engaged in long-term relationships with Indigenous people and the desert. When writing extensively about her relationship with the country, she uses a small ‘c’. For example, she explains that “the country lays its claim on people, and they carry it inside





them whether or not they live there” (2005, p. 18) and I agree. Mahood is nomadic and eloquently describes her country as:

a state of mind that’s always trying to make connections, draw things together, between the city and the desert, between white and black, between the concrete and the imaginary. It’s a country where geography, memory and imagination meet, and through which I am always travelling. (2005, p. 24)

I echo many of Mahood’s sentiments in framing concepts of the Country. The Country, like the Indigenous ‘country’, is more than landscape (Tawa, 2002), and as a nomad, like Mahood, I wayfare in the chaotic interstitial space of the Country, between city and the non-urban both geographically and in my imagination.

I live within the Country not just on it. This is a complex, heterogenous ground “not so much an isotropic platform for life as a coarse cloth or patchwork woven from the comings and goings of its manifold inhabitants” (Ingold, 2011, p. 16). This patchwork, *P3230116c* (Figure 8), can be seen, while flying to the Country of Lake Carey from the coast. In this inhabited ground, I move on paths of becoming rather than across an occupied surface.

I will briefly discuss the terms landscape and Western landscape and their more distancing gaze across the surface. I have chosen not to privilege these terms because of my concerns with the connotations of a colonialist gaze, also for me, the complexity of the Country and my relationship with it is more entangled than the term landscape describes. Landscape is both a physical—“natural and artificial” (Vaughan, 2008, p. 4) and an imagined surface across which a body moves. The imagined surface may be a “ground plane” (Carter, 2010a, p. 153), a surface cutting through the active body that is the world.

Landscape is extended from a surface to the context and elements of somewhere I have created, and examined my relationship to and located



Figure 7: *PC070216*, inflow to Lake Carey between Granny Smith mine and Sunrise Dam, 2014.





myself bodily (Lippard, 1997). This aligns with my notion of place, and in this context, landscape would become the language of place. While I agree with Lippard, I will use the Country instead of landscape throughout this exegesis to delineate an entanglement with place rather than a surface.

Casey (2001) and Anne Whiston Spirn (1998) and Vaughan (2008), all comment that “landscape is a language and a habitat” (p. 7), which is echoed by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin (2013) in their work on theorising and articulating postcolonial studies. They speak of a theory of place that:

does not propose a simple separation between the ‘place’ named and described in language, and some ‘real’ place inaccessible to it...in some sense place is language, something in constant flux, a discourse in process...writers become compelled to try to construct a new language that might fit the place they experience because the language does not simply report the visual or proximate experience but is implicated in its presence. (p. 164)

I identify with the inadequacies of trying to construct a textual or visual language to map the place that I understand in my head, as Mahood (2000) also writes. I cannot find the place I relate to on a map or a page. The language of the Country is in flux and relational, dynamic and impossible to permanently frame or colonise.

The roles of Western landscape framing and the picturesque as a language for the colonising gaze and the physical colonising of Australia are discussed by Carter (2004, 2010a). Wolseley (Carter, 2004) and Phillip Hunter (Carter, 2010a) are contemporary artists disrupting the landscape frame and the colonising gaze with their edifying visual languages of place which refuse the conventions of traditional Western landscape painting. I echo the sentiments of these artists in unhooking place from the horizon, for example, (Figure 8), an aerial photograph of paddocks on the edge of the WA Wheatbelt, a place not dissimilar to the Victorian Goldfields of Wolseley and the Wimmera of Hunter’s absorption.



Figure 8: P3230116c, digital photograph, Eastern Wheatbelt, WA, 2009.



There are other artists working in the contact zone between Western landscape and a more relational practice. For example, those exhibiting in the 2012 *Roads Cross: Contemporary Directions in Australian Art* (Thwaites et al., 2012) where the curators' intention was to start conversations where two cultures meet and featured artists like Searles and Rey who have worked in transcultural collaborative spaces. The 2016 *Black White and Restive* (Rey, 2016b) exhibition in Newcastle, curated by Rey further explored the theme of cross-cultural<sup>1</sup> engagement and included works by Mahood, Marina Strocchi and Ildiko Kovacs. Rey sees the interstitial cross/transcultural zone as a complex, uncomfortable "magnetic zone" of creative possibilities (2016a, p. 41). In a similar context, when writing about painters Marina Strocchi and Rey, Erica Izett describes "this acculturation as a two-way process" (2005, p. 26). Izett, Strocchi and Rey have all been remote artswokers too (I. McLean, 2016).

Remote artswokers, often women, facilitate: professional support and mentoring for artists, management, marketing and promotional skills for galleries in Aboriginal Art Centres in small, isolated, remote communities in northern and inland Australia. Aboriginal Art Centres are not for profit, government supported, Aboriginal owned organisations that provide quality art materials, places for local artists to meet, work and exhibit. The art centre is an ethical vehicle to display, promote and sell artwork and train local art support workers under the guidance of the artswokers. Some of the artswokers form long-term relationships with the artists and the communities which continue beyond their contracts with the art centre and lead to other collaborative projects. Kim Mahood and the Mulan women (including Veronica Lulu) working at Paruku in the Tanami since 2004 (2013) are an example of these sustained relationships. Their collaborative works were included in the *Canning Stock Route* project (Davenport, La Fontaine, & Carty, 2010) and the *Desert Lake-Paruku* project (Martin et al., 2013).

These collaborative relationships often operate at an intersubjective community level involving groups of women rather than individual artists, this is generally more culturally appropriate in those communities. Close, long-term two-way relationships may form between individuals within this context, for example, Pantjiti Mary Mclean and Searles (Jorgensen, 2014; I. McLean, 2014; Searles et al., 2009) and Mahood and Lulu (Mahood, 2016; M. Martin, Carty, Morton, & Mahood, 2013; Rey, 2014). In this contact zone, place is an embodied negotiated space, often fraught, from which possibilities emerge.

### *place*

Place may be described as a more grounded and embodied space of possibilities and probabilities than landscape and therefore more in tune with my concept of the Country. For the purposes of this research, place is described as an embodied "scene of situatedness" (Casey, 2002, p. 350) with its own stories which are more complex and relational than the disembodied abstraction of space and its sites (Casey, 2002). Place becomes immanent in the embodied experiential site of local knowledge within a situated self (Merleau-Ponty, 2005). Casey (2002) who builds on Merleau Ponty's ideas, has suggested we could relate to these located places as topographers and chorographers, walking and studying surfaces in regions and the aesthetics of their relations rather than as distanced cartographers making representations by reducing the land to lines and symbols. Topographers are Heidegger's topologists who study land surfaces and chorographers or

<sup>1</sup> The terms cross-cultural, transcultural and intercultural are used in the context of the authors discussing them throughout this exegesis. I occasionally use transcultural which I define as a contact zone, where the knowledge becomes entangled outside the boundaries of any one culture.





chorographers study space and place (Tawa, 2002). The topographic and choragraphic walking is ground truthing and is inherent in developing a sense of place and methexis.

Methexical is a term I first encountered reading Carter (1996). Methexicality is a practice of visceral and tactile physicality; an embodied and locally situated, performative storytelling. My sense of place is heightened by methexis, in the Country, where I make. The concept is discussed, in an Indigenous context, by Brian Martin (2013a, 2013b) with regards to his

drawings and the work of Kathleen and Margaret Petyarre, Rover Thomas, and carvings of Badger Bates (2013a). Creative arts researcher Barbara Bolt (2004) and Barrett (2015a) also use methexis, in an ontological context in discussing Indigenous culture as an embodied and locally situated web of relations.

The methexical web of relations may be likened to Geertz's webs of significance woven by humans into culture (as cited in Relph, 2009, p. 24). Relph (2009) adds that these webs connect people to the world when they touch the earth. Ingold's (2011) meshworks also develop ideas of interrelated webs and moving along pathways within the meshwork and therefore within the world. However, for Ingold, the world is an inhabited "*meshwork* [original emphasis] of entangled lines of life, growth and movement" (p. 63) which are practically experienced and therefore methexical.

Through this PhD research, I consider the place of the Country as a dynamic pathway along which I travel in a state of becoming, in the midst of the meshwork (Ingold, 2011). For me, it is the methexical that leads to eutierria—a feeling of deep encompassing connection to place (Albrecht, 2012). Bolt (2004) links Carter's methexis with Irigaray's (1993, p. 175) "moving through the world" as a construction of dwelling. This movement may also be a form of dwelling for

the nomad, for whom place is often more embodied and also for the rhapsode, who narrates place into being. Place is not necessarily a named physical space. Places need not be formally named as they are more than undifferentiated space that needs to be claimed, mapped and owned (Carter, 1996; Relph, 2009).

My mapping of place is often synaesthetic rather than a formal cartographic naming and representing. For example, I revisit places I mapped as a geologist, my body remembering them. I spin yarns about being, long after the maps had been forgotten. *P8060062* (Figure 9) is a mnemonic of such a place. A colleague and I jumped, clothes and all, into the



Figure 9: *P8060062*, digital photograph, place in the Country, 2009.





tank filled by this windmill on a long hot dusty trip down the backroad from Laverton in the late 1980's. The next time I passed through, I camped near a breakaway to the west and spent half the night panning samples for heavy mineral analysis. This is an old photograph. The last time I visited this area, while taking Wongatha people to visit the Country, they asked me not to take photographs this time. I didn't remember the bore (for which, I don't have a name, but Murphy's is now scrawled on the tank) until we rounded a bend, turned left off the road, through the creek bed and stopped to open the gate. My recognition was visceral, reliving the sheer pleasure of plunging into the tank and being momentarily free of flies and dust. And the pain of double gee prickles that awaited wet feet, so very long ago.

Naming and mapping having been colonial preoccupations and are still of concern in contemporary spaces. They may memorialise disputed histories and it is important to acknowledge these concerns in the interstitial contact zones of this research, where stories and places are being negotiated. In the traces of my nomadic journeys and through their embodied mapping, I add accreted layers to the stories of the places that I make. I have, now, become less concerned with the formal mapping and naming necessary for the geologist (or at least her clients). I agree that "mapping, naming, fictional and non-fictional narratives create multiple and sometimes conflicting accretions which become the dense text that constitutes place. In short, empty space becomes place through language, in the process of being written and named" (Ashcroft et al., 2013, p. 158).

Carter (1987) and Relph (2009) having similar ideas, all write in a postcolonial context. However, I have some concerns around the need to specifically name these places and the colonialist connotations, and suggest that telling stories is more relational and ethical in my place-making. I spin yarns, from an accumulation of memories, to make a place which I need not name but I include in the Country. My narrative is then more in keeping with the relational axiology of the people I visit these mythopoetic places with, and the relationships I continue to map and sustain in the Country. People whose maps are songlines and storylines where time is not linear, and a place is identified by its characters and events.



## maps

In the Western tradition, maps are measured, representing a fixed relationship between places and/or destinations, which indicate lines of commonality of features (Casey, 2002). However, I prefer to conceptualise maps in Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's terms:

the map does not reproduce an unconscious closed in upon itself; it constructs the unconscious....The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group, or social formation. It can be drawn on a wall, conceived of as a work of art, constructed as a political action or as a meditation. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.12)

I attempt to articulate, how the world runs off the page and off the folded surface of the map, the enfolding quilt; the complex accreted layering of a multi-voiced, interrelated movement backwards and forwards in time, in space, in imagination. My mapmaking tends towards sketch maps or mudmaps which are often ephemeral open-ended and adaptable and change depending on the context. Maps like those documented in 20170904\_153403 (Figure 10) or I5605 (Figure 97), are without the containment of borders and the lines of the grid, in contrast with the gridded geological map of I5238 (Figure 96). In drawing a mudmap, the gestural lines/paths are more important than a demarcation of spaces, or names and often show the marks of more than one hand. The marks and gestures are also the voices in the conversation and the storyteller, annotated and marked rather than measured and plotted (Ingold, 2007a). My wayfaring is more often mapped with mudmaps than cartographers' maps, but I am adept at reading these gridded maps too. Mapmaking, particularly the more informal renderings, may engender a sense of belonging.

Figure 10: 20170904\_153403, mudmap on the back of an envelope, digital photograph, 2017.



### *belonging*

Mapping and discussions of place often include a sense of belonging, for this wanderer. Belonging, like the Country and place, is a dynamic relational concept, a continual, relational becoming that Braidotti states as:

not the attachment to static identity lines but the dynamic and transversal moves across ecosophically interconnected categories. A sense of familiarity with the world flows from the simple fact that we are the products of such ecological interconnections. It speaks of our ability to recollect, and reconnect to the world, and, hence, of our capacity to negotiate our “homes” within it, in the pursuit of sustainable relations (Braidotti 2006) [self reference in the original] and transversal connections. (2014, p. 245)

These ideas of interconnection, relationality and home/belonging as negotiated positions have their roots in Deleuzian rhizomatic and nomadic thought. It is these connections and relational pathways that are often drawn on my mudmaps and are transverse to the static identity lines of the grid of a geological map. These transversal movements and their connections form pathways in the midst of Ingold’s meshwork. A sense of belonging in the environment is a factor in my making sense of place and thus my place-making. In this research, it is used in a long-term sustainable context rather than with connotations of ownership. A sentiment that might find some parallels with cultural views around deep time.

### *deep time*

Deep time is a form of slow time, a measure of change in the Earth’s becoming. In some contexts, it is the interconnected history of Indigenous people which stretches in all directions. It is “vast, extremely remote periods of (natural or







Figure 11: 20161129\_061445, documentary digital photograph, Yalgorup National Park, 2016.

other) history—distant and extensive spans of time that are almost beyond the grasp of the human mind” (Riggs, 2015, p. 47). Deep time is a geological term, the usage of which has now expanded across disciplines and worldviews. With my geologist lens, I recognise and begin to understand the rhythms of deep time and relate to them when I am in their midst in the Country. Similar processes, which have been occurring for millennia leave traces and vestiges to be read in the cycles of deposition/accretion and erosion, pictured in 20161129\_061445 (Figure 11).

This aligns with my understanding of poiesis; in the tacit rhythmic repetition of walking and slow making. The rhythms are measured in my wandering steps and in the twists and loops of my plied string, and in my stitches connecting the cloth fragments as I become embedded in the place of my quiet, slow making.

### *poiesis and storytelling*

Poiesis may be understood as making something out of virtually nothing. The transformative act by a human that results in a thing which can be useful or evaluated (Polkinghorne, 2004). For the purposes of this research, I draw on Bolt, Carter, Donald Polkinghorne and Derek Whitehead and







Figure 12: *I1159, Contained by Fire*, Annette Nykiel (2016). Private Collection.  
Foraged palm inflorescence, foraged palm fibre, random weave, plied fibre string,  
25 x 45 x 40 cm.

their discussions of poiesis in practice. Poiesis, for these authors is closely linked to techne/bringing forth and the openness to the emergence of a creation out of ideas, material and time (Bolt, 2010; Whitehead, 2003), that is the process of creative making that engages intellect and emotions (Carter, 2004). However, Tawa (2002) interprets Chinese thoughts on naming being a form of poiesis, which “produces and fabricates” (p. 48), drawing intertextual allusions rather than definitive descriptions. I agree with the parallels Tawa draws with poiesis as a form of yarning, and spinning yarns as an embodied creative practice; a way of narrating the topography of the Country. I use poiesis, in Tawa’s (2002, p. 56 fn 15) context—to “create, articulate, versify”; that is bringing knowledge and knowing forth in a praxis of performative narrative, to enact a making of place by spinning yarns and materialising experience by making yarning objects.

In the context of this research, I use the concept of spinning yarns in the following ways:

- × to tell stories and pass on tacit knowing, sometimes in yarning circles—collective gatherings of women making and sharing;
- × the stories of the Country embedded in the materials and the making;
- × the lyrical and poetic voice in exegetical writing.

By way of example, *Contained by Fire* (2016) (Figure 12) was made from palm fronds foraged from the verge of a neighbour who had evacuated in the face of the devastating Waroona, WA bushfires of 2016. While isolated and under threat by fire, I used a random weave technique to create a yarning object held together by the stress and tension on the weave; a materialisation of my feelings during this chaotic time. The raw fibre alludes to days without power and running water and long hours of tension, kept in check by weaving in the smoky light. The highly inflammable material symbolises the threat receding and returning. These fibres once hosted inflorescences, and hint at a promise of post fire rebirth and flowering. The basket has a strong base of a community pulling together, with tenuous outside support, and still vulnerable to the precarious vagaries of Nature.



Storytelling may be a form of poiesis where, by the transformative act of the storyteller, a narrative emerges from a spatial practice of wandering, recalling and interweaving signs and allusions (Tawa, 2002)—spinning yarns. In sharing stories of place-making, of my process of becoming, of making, of yarning and its poiesis, I am attempting to add another layer of understanding or intertextual allusion to the language of place and enrich my experience of place and place-making. The language of the story, and the story itself, is dependent on the audience, the context and the place (Carter, 2010b, 2015). Story telling may be material, visual, verbal, scholarly, colloquial/local, spatial but it falls short, and is only symbolic of the actuality of the materiality of the Country and the embodiment of the process in poiesis. Layers of direct experiences and memories can yield innate and deep-rooted understandings of place. My stories are narratives stretching across the palimpsests, pathways, traces and marks of the relational meshwork of the Country which are the interconnected ecosystems of all that is and has been. For example, *20161129\_061445* (Figure 11) pictures the rich narrative of the relational interbedded strata of wind and wave that marks deep time in a cycle of deposition, accretion and erosion in the midst of the contact zone of the beach, part of the ecosystem of the Yalgorup National Park where I wander poietically and practice material thinking.

### *Material Thinking*

I describe material thinking as the engagement of my body in its environment and the potential of this matter to inhabit a sensibility that makes sense of the act of creativity and can lead to the materialisation of thought. Material thinking is about “what is sharable about places” (Tonkinwise, 2008, p. 5) rather than the specificity of place or the place itself. In my practice, it is the wandering, wondering and imagining what I might make; it is the conversation in the string and its conceptualisation as a journey but not the material process of making it. Material thinking happens when one “dares to ask the simple far-reaching questions. What matters? What is the material of thought? To ask these questions is to embark on an intellectual adventure peculiar to the making process” (Carter, 2004, p. xi). Questions, in the studio, are a material of thought. Questioning is the materiality of the thought process. Making then becomes a form of localised knowing emerging from material thinking.

Practice-based design researcher Cameron Tonkinwise (2008, p. 4) sums up material thinking as a process of generating creative metaphors that are:

much freer...about expressing making's knowing. Its contribution is to develop a new vocabulary, or more properly, a new poetics...By contrast too many characterisations of 'research-by-making' involve translating makingly knowing into a very limited set of terms, terms too uncritically accepted from the institutionally delimited language of 'research'.

These sentiments have echoes in new materialist thinking about the language of research and also Tawa's (2002) naming having poietic function, and intertextual allusion as a peripatetic and poetic practice. Material thinking is an embodied practice where theory and body are related and responsibly connected (Barrett, 2007b). It is a form of articulation and embodied visualisation that may materialise ideas and practices (Carter, 2004) and extend existing knowledge. This may decontextualise established discourse by relocating it in a series of local, marginal, experiential acts (Barrett, 2007b; Vaughan, 2008). Material thinking recognises the vital materiality of things (Bennett, 2004, 2010) and the environment they inhabit and this is intrinsic to articulating poiesis.



The term material thinking theorised by Carter (2004), has been utilised and expanded by many creative researchers notably Vaughan, Barrett, Tonkinwise and Nancy de Freitas. De Freitas describes material thinking as engaging in a “particular kind of criticality that is sensitive to the materiality and the poetics of the work...an embodied relationship to objects in our environment, including those not yet transformed from the imagination into material form” (2011, p. 1). While De Freitas implies that a resultant material form is necessary, I prefer to focus on the process and its embodiment in my relations with materials. These are often more significant than the emergent materialisation of a thing, for example, the process of yarnning. Material thinking is not the imposition of will onto matter. On the contrary, it is an engagement where objects, materials, ideas, people and space are acknowledged to have affective force, in which all factors have potential to contribute to the emergence of meaning and form. All are “inter-affective” (De Freitas, 2011, p. 2). I expand on De Freitas’ thoughts on material thinking as an outcome or material form, to include the relational process that is often more significant than the emergent materialisation of a thing, for example, the process of wandering.

Further to material thinking, the bricoleuse also develops a sensitivity to the thingyness of the tools, the materials and the place where they are found and their interrelationships. This sensitivity becomes material process and material practice (Barrett, 2007). Bennett (2004, 2010) coined the term ‘thing-power’. Thing-power is about acknowledging and revealing the materials, environment, time and energy of things and relationships and has some similarities to Heidegger’s “challenging-forth” (Bolt, 2010, p. 81). Matter has agency; the matter and its materiality and its purpose/use and the artist are all co-collaborators in the complex relationship that leads to the emergence of the thing (Bolt, 2013). This, may be what matters. Barad (2007) asks what matters? And expands matter and mattering beyond material thinking through intra-actions and indeterminacy and becoming.

### *new materialism*

New materialists according to Barad (2008) are thinking about how matter comes to matter and that a cultural discourse limited to language and semiotics is insufficient to explain the agency, affect and phenomena of experience and social relationships—their meaning, their matter and why they matter. Lemke (2015, p. 4) argues that:

the ‘linguistic turn’ or primarily textual accounts are insufficient for an adequate understanding of the complex and dynamic interplay of meaning and matter...the focus on discourse, language and culture not only leads to impoverished theoretical accounts and conceptual flaws but also results in serious political problems and ethical quandaries.

I attempt to apply these ideas to my relational and embodied ethical engagement with the Country. New materialism is a series of movements; a set of ideas that do not privilege culture but diffract and intra-act with each other to juxtapose different perspectives of the human being entangled and entwined in their environment. Braidotti favours the term neo-materialism over new materialism because we are revisiting and recontextualising materialism posited by Baruch Spinoza via Michel Foucault, Deleuze, Luce Irigaray and Judith Butler rather than inventing or discovering something new (Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2010, 2012). However, while I agree with Braidotti’s sentiments I will use the more widely used term—new materialism—unless specifically referring to Braidotti.





Braidotti suggests that neo-materialism is an ideal subjective method and conceptual framework to address complex phenomenon without pre-existing blue prints and less restricted by linguistic paradigms (as cited in Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2012). Barad, with similar sentiments, writes that phenomenon “emerge from, rather than precede...specific intra-actions” (2007, p. 128) and hence are indeterminate, messy, complex and unpredictable. This messy, indeterminate emergence has similarities with what Carter (2015) describes as the story of place, invented and told after the place-making. As a bricoleuse, I embrace this complex emergence as fundamental to my process and its mapping and spinning yarns.

New materialism is rooted in Deleuze and Guattari’s and Foucault’s re-examination of Spinoza’s monist materialism that has been taken up by such writers as Manuel DeLanda (2006), and Braidotti (Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2010). DeLanda diffracts the sciences through the “abstract machine” (2006, p. 154) of Deleuze and Guattari (1987) while Braidotti maps the concept through the messy feminist body and its Foucaultian and Deleuzian “embodied subjectivity” (as cited in Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2010, p. 155). Iris Van der Tuin and Rick Dolphijn (2010) and Braidotti (as cited in Blaagaard & van der Tuin, 2014) are interested in the cartography of new materialism to decentre linguistic description. The mapping captures the process of embodied subjectivity in the liminal space of becoming where the external influences may be enfolded (covered completely), concurrently with the unfolding affects towards the external. This is in contrast to the distanced representational view of cartographers espoused by Casey (2002).

In this cartographic process, there is a recognition of commonalities and therefore differences. This allows the concepts of a relational materialism, to sit side by side rather than be dualistically divided, both linguistically and semiotically, by the contemporary epistemic movements that had split consciousness from materiality (Blaagaard & van der Tuin, 2014). Consciousness and materiality reside within the body, and in the midst of the environment in which they are related in an acknowledged, situated position within a meshwork of relations. This is a form of complex deterritorialisation that may be described by non-linear and immanent cartographic processes of mattering (Barad, 2007). The matter is the material, its representation and a relational ethics of care. For me, mapping material thinking through new materialism allows for an embodied reterritorialisation in the place where it happens.

New materialism recontextualises the aesthetic and its ethics and possibly decentres the visual in favour of a collaborative process in interstitial spaces of everyday living (Barrett, 2013). The handling of everyday things such as my string and quilts may become a relational contextualisation of creative practice through new materialism. The “handling is a relation of care and concerned dealings, not a relation where the world is set before us (knowing human subjects) as an object of knowledge” (Bolt, 2010, p. 89). The body that does the handling and responds is both and neither subject or object but complex intra-actions of materiality and its agential affects, both internal and external which are entangled and enfolded with consciousness (Barad, 2007; Barrett, 2015a). This becomes an entangled ethical knowing-being, “the basis of onto-epistemological practice and it is in this sense that we can begin to articulate what we mean by the notion of a ‘new materialism’” (Barrett, 2015a, p. 105).

As a haptic maker, I make sense of materials and their surroundings through tactile and spatial relations and understandings while handling textiles every day. New materialism, material thinking, and their implied embodied ethics and onto-epistemology may be plied into the string of my experience and pieces added to the patchwork of bricolage. This is a dynamic, emerging process always in a state of becoming, and hence with a potential to be reimagined and useful.



*I4642* (Figure 13), pictures a collection of interesting and useful bricoles—jars, rags, windfall leaves, bottle-tops and rainwater reimagined as solar dye kits. These bricoles are objects in themselves that may be useful rather than known firstly for their usefulness, hence the blurriness in including not-knowing in a translation of the French word *hétéroclite* which is generally translated as heterogenous in the context of *bricoleur/ses* using bits and pieces. There are also

some parallels here with Sue Rowley's (1999, 2003) argument that the craft object slowly accrues value with use and time: that is its usefulness. For example, a patchwork quilt becomes valued by the body that snuggles under it nightly. Louise Hamby (2010) in studying and documenting the baskets of Arnhem Land in her book *Containers of Power*, expresses similar sentiments about the value of the skilfully crafted baskets being time-derived, their usefulness accrued in their making and in the time spent using them for gathering, on Country, when they are complete. My baskets are often used for storing my collections of string and notions, but they retain the sense of visceral connection to the Country that is embedded in their fibres. This usefulness may also be a metaphor for not-knowing if/when an artwork is finished as not all artworks are exhibited or deemed suitable for exhibition and some are reimagined or deconstructed to become a part of something else. I think also of a map/journal to which more annotations are added on the next trip; a few more words to tweak a paragraph in an exegesis, another bricole in the patchwork and a few more stitches to a quilt, some threads plied onto a length of string. These are the things and tools of my process and they become yarning objects—an art work or the labour of poesis. My process privileges and celebrates this dynamic, tacit and embodied knowledge.



Figure 13: *I4642*, documentary digital photograph, my shed roof, 2017.

### *tacit knowing*

Tacit knowing and the resulting knowledge are difficult to articulate linguistically (Gourlay, 2002; Polanyi, 2009). We know more than we can tell. Tacit knowing is expressed through skilful

actions and learnt by personally doing and experiencing, usually in rhythmic repetition (Gourlay, 2002). Tacit knowledge is bound up in muscle memory, in craft skills and in the skilled handling of tools, all of which become an embodiment in every day practice. Much of my tacit knowledge has come from relating with groups of women who share similar skills and tell stories. I learnt to knit with two 4 inch nails and some recycled string at the knee of my grandmother, although my grandfather could also knit and chose the 'best' nails for me. Spinning and dyeing wool was a long apprenticeship that started with carding combs and picking dags, in warm kitchens redolent with rising bread and bubbling pots when I wasn't quick enough to escape outside.

The yarnning circle is intrinsic to my work and my practice. Yarning circles are a long unbroken social tradition, with women coming together through sharing and embodying tacit knowledge to support, learn and network. In contemporary Australian culture, the term is usually used in Indigenous contexts, however, women have been learning together and sharing for millennia, and it is in this broader context I use the term. In sharing my stories and demonstrating my tacit making skills, I am continuing the circle in a relational and ethical way as I also continue to learn within these circles. I quite often teach workshops and demonstrate string making during my exhibitions and when I travel in the Country.

Tacit knowing is embodied, and the body is a discourse of materials and understandings entangled in an awareness of knowing and therefore a presence in research (Butler as cited in Ellingson, 2006; Gourlay, 2002). I can show how to use a mould and deckle to make paper, I can explain how to mix the paper pulp to the right consistency, but I cannot tell you what that consistency feels like. Only by dipping your hand in the pulp can you understand and build tacit knowing from the knowledge I have shared.

Waiting and listening are also forms of doing and experiencing necessary for tacit knowing and are common to Indigenous onto-epistemologies and my relational ways of being and knowing. Waiting to learn, waiting for understanding to dawn, waiting and practicing to become skilful and embodying those skills. For example, when you no longer have to think about the steps involved in swerving into the loose gravel to avoid an oncoming road train and you know/feel exactly where the sweet spot is as the wheels grab.





Wandering through the Country requires waiting and listening, an awareness of the time and a tacit, kinaesthetic knowing. This knowing is embedded in the way I relate to being there. This knowing is dynamic and built upon by observation, imagination and an ethical aesthetic engagement with the place and the local people. Skilful mapping requires a knowing that cannot be articulated, a noticing of subtle changes and assemblages, the feel of the Country, an embodied reading of the terrain. This leads to an aesthetic that encompasses this relating and my tacit knowing and allows my imagination to generate possibilities for action.



*indeterminate, not-knowing and affordances*

Not-knowing loops between material inquiry and process are constructive, and utilised by the maker and the bricoleuse (Tonkinwise, 2008; Yee & Bremner, 2011). There are also parallels with Barad's (2007) concepts of indeterminacy, Yee and Bremner (2011) seem to use not-knowing and indeterminacy interchangeably in the context of design research. However, in Barad's context, indeterminacy is a precise concept that extends to the materiality of all intra-actions and phenomena. (Barad, 2007; Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2012). Tonkinwise (2008) frames not-knowing in terms of wondering, exploring, trying, "periods of productive silence" (p. 1) and "affordances" (p. 9). Yee and Bremner (2011, p. 3) comment that "objects have prescribed affordances, methods automatically imply ontological and epistemological affordances"; possibilities for emergence and action.

The tacit knowing and haptic skill of the maker generate affordances—the possibility of an action. Tacit knowledge is the skill of a practitioner, learnt through practicing and embodying a skill. String making is a tacit skill, learnt and mastered over many hours, by gaining proficiency through practicing the twisting and plying and the muscle memory of managing the tension of the threads.

The affordance of this embodied knowledge is a not-knowing space where the experience of handling materials or interacting with the environment may lead to a process of making, an emergence that proceeds knowing. "Affordances are literally articulations, or joinings, material conjunctions of the capacity of tools and the skills of



Figure 14: I7937, documentary digital photograph, waypoint, Great Central Road, 2015.

bodies” (Tonkinwise, 2008, p. 10) and are “unsemiotic” (p. 10)—pre-reflective and tacit and therefore difficult to articulate. They are relational and experiential. This concept of affordance draws from James Gibson’s ecological visual perception theory suggesting that boundaries between the body and its environment or another body are “the result of a decision by an observer rather than something inherent to the nature of an entity” (p. 13). Carter interprets affordances as an “invitation extended by the environment to interact with it” (2013, p. 32) which I liken to a contact zone. In Barad’s (2007) terms, affordances would be the agency of matter, indeterminate until observed or measured by the apparatus. In Ingold’s (2007b) terms, affordances could be imagined as the rockiness of the rock. However, Latour’s thoughts on affordance are about possibility (p. 13); the possibilities available in not-knowing. In terms of my research, affordance is investigating the creative possibilities of an emergent becoming in the midst of the not-knowing of open-ended questions and relationships that favours the maker becoming part of the world. Mahood sums up this not-knowing as an interstitial gap filled with “all the improbabilities and choices and contradictions that have brought me back to this place and this moment” (2000, p. 212). The interstices of toing and froing are filled with stories, conversations and all the decisions and choices that have been plied into the string made along the way. I7937 (Figure 14) shows newly plied string on a clear Winter’s day, at a waypoint somewhere along Great Central Road, WA heading west, a spot I passed heading east several weeks earlier.

### *becoming*

Reading and learning, and therefore making, are catalysts and affirmations of who I am and how I articulate what I am becoming in the toing and froing of my intra-actions with the environment. In terms of this research, the concept of becoming stems from Nietzsche via Deleuze (Braidotti, 1994). Braidotti, interprets Deleuze’s becoming as an “affirmation of the positivity of difference...a multiple and constant process of transformation” (p. 111), dynamic and fluid in its interactions or as Barad (2007) argues, its intra-actions. Barad states that “‘intra-action’ signifies *the mutual*



*constitution of entangled agencies* [original emphasis]” (p. 33). However, the question arises: what kinds of interactions are possible for the maker as agent to materialise self, given subjectivity as an ontology of becoming, an emergent subjectivity which is about agency, nomadism and change, always in the process of becoming? Braidotti (1994) and Marsha Meskimmon (2003) begin to answer this in terms of the subjectivity of the feminist body as “becoming-woman” (Braidotti, 1994, p. 114) or “becoming subject of women” (Meskimmon, 2003, p. 117) as nomadic, embodied collectives of difference. However, Barad (2007) and Bennett (2010) also consider the agency of materiality of the environment the diffracting body inhabits in a less anthropocentric more posthumanist view.

Agential realism is a posthumanist diffractive entanglement that interrupts the dualism of Cartesian thought and is described by Barad (2007). As an:

epistemological-ontological-ethical framework that provides an understanding of the role of human and nonhuman, material and discursive, and natural and cultural factors in scientific and other social-material practices...Indeed, the new philosophical framework... entails a rethinking of fundamental concepts that support...binary thinking, including the notions of matter, discourse, causality, agency, power, identity, embodiment, objectivity, space, and time. (p. 26)

Haraway conceptualised diffraction as a device for a “past-present-future relationality which would not comply with a situation of pejorative... difference” (as cited in Van der Tuin, 2014, p. 234) or dualisms. Diffraction as suggested by Haraway and developed by Barad is theorised as an ethical way of:

reading insights through one another, building new insights, and attentively and carefully reading for differences that matter in their fine details, together with the recognition that there intrinsic to this analysis is an ethics that is not predicated on externality but rather entanglement. Diffractive readings bring inventive provocations ...they are respectful, detailed, ethical engagements. (cited in Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2012, p. 50)

As such, I become entangled in the diffractive intra-actions of agential realism which are the fabric of becoming. This entanglement relates not only to materials and environments but also to the people with whom I have relations and ethical consideration for, and their culture.

### *Cultural Contact Zones*

There are contact zones between and within cultures. There is an ambiguity in articulating the nuances of meaning even within a single culture, for example ‘contact zone’ could mean the area of engagement; a border, a barrier, edge, fringe. Geologically speaking, it is where the igneous intrusion causes metamorphism of the existing country rock; the wave impact zone, littoral, intertidal. The contact zone is liminal, interstitial, in-between, third space, hybrid space, in the midst of where cultures “meet, clash and grapple” with unequal power (Pratt, 1991, p. 34) and sometimes fraught encounters. It may be where “non-indigenous and indigenous collaborators seek to make...a space of engagement where the inequalities of the relations between the parties engaged can be confronted if not resolved” (Ashcroft et al., 2013, p. 49). For this research, the contact zone is defined as the space of engagement where relations are negotiated between the binaries of the edges and there are possibilities for transformation.



Pratt's (1991) contact zones or Haraway's (2008) biological ecotones, can be likened to borderlands. Haraway (2008) describes the inter-species contact zone—"ecotone" (p. 217) where "material-semiotic exchange" (p. 206) occurs. "Contact zones called ecotones, with their edge effects, are where assemblages of biological species form outside their comfort zones. These interdigitating edges are the richest places to look for ecological, evolutionary and historical diversity" Haraway (2008, 217). An ecotone is a liminal space of greater diversity between organisms and their environments where biological assemblages from either habitat may co-exist and evolve (Haraway, 2008). I take biological ecotones into account when mapping in the Country as they are often indicators of geological contact zones.

A contact zone is an interstitial zone between the margins of cultures, a space of overlap, a potentially chaotic gap of indeterminacy and, where bricolage may occur to produce new forms and new knowing. Contact zones may form not-knowing gaps in the interstitial, the liminal spaces, the in-between. Creative arts researcher Irmina Van Niele (2005) finds gaps problematic admitting "I do not know where this in-betweenness is" (p. 13) and cultural studies researcher Elspeth Probyn (1996, p. 40) considers belonging an 'in-between state' which is also between the fixed places that Mahood (2000, 2005, 2009) travels too. However, Ingold's (2011) wayfarer and Braidotti's (2011) nomad are at home on the pathways between the waypoints of fixed destinations. I find the term 'in-between' a little problematic as it feels linear and hints at a point along a line of dichotomy. 'In the midst of' fits my thinking better, amongst, alongside, between, entangled with.

This research defines 'in the midst of' as a more embodied, tangled elucidation of being amongst and immersed in, rather than being at a point between dichotomies. A more apt description of the creative practices of collaborators relationally entangled with place, people and language—in the Country. I move as a bricoleuse "within the borderlands, crossing between time and place, personal practice and practice of others, exploring the history of the discipline and it's changing cultural contexts" (Stewart, 2010, p. 128). In the contact zones in Australian cross-cultural creative collaborative relationships, Rey (2014, 2016a, 2016b) discusses gaps in the discourse due to limited discussion of the praxis of cross-cultural collaborative practitioners. Somerville (2007, 2008; Somerville & Perkins, 2003) discusses contact zones as a way to think through the process of collaborative research in the stories she tells about her research journeys.

Imagined journeys meet the spaces of actual journeys in the interstitial gaps of the "layered myths" (Mahood, 2000, p. 220); in stories woven in many voices and in the fictive elements of research. In the midst of this "it has been necessary to find gaps and holes through which to move, as unobtrusively as possible. A strange precious by-product has been the discovery in these gaps of the raw materials of art" (p. 226). It is the discovery of these resources that may partially answer the question: what kinds of interactions are possible for the maker as agent to materialise subjective selves (Meskimmon, 2003)? Where according to the feminists Braidotti (1994) and (Meskimmon, 2003) the subjectivity of the body of women and her potential agency are monist and dynamic within an ontology of becoming and emergent from internal and external interactions/intra-actions (Barad, 2007). All bodies are subject to culture as part of these interactions but there are different approaches to theorising these.





## *Indigenous, Indigenist approaches*

Indigenous research approaches according to Indigenous researchers Lester-Irabinna Rigney (2001) and Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) are utilised for the benefit of Indigenous people and their issues. The approaches are inherently culturally appropriate and acknowledge, respect and reciprocate Indigenous Knowledge and communities (Rigney, 2001; Smith, 1999). In terms of this research project, my first formal research training was in the School of Aboriginal Studies at Curtin University (2008-10) and was framed through Indigenous research approaches. As a result of this training, I now have some awareness of Indigenous and Indigenist approaches and methodologies from different world views in different nations, particularly through the seminal writers Karen Martin and Booran Mirraboopa (2003), Martin Nakata (1998a, 1998b, 2002), Rigney (1997, 2001), and Smith (1999). The qualitative and or critical methods used in these methodologies are often adapted from participatory action research, auto/ethnography, narrative discourse, post colonialism, feminism, poststructuralism, and standpoint theory. Whether the Indigenist methodologies are appropriated or decolonising (Fejo-King, 2006; Smith, 1999) is a discussion beyond the scope of this research. My awareness has increased with my collaborative relationships with the Noongar and Wongatha people and Ngaanyatjarra women and has led to an interest in other relational paradigms. I have pursued this interest in the context of this research.

My PhD project was prompted by unanswered questions arising from my honours research that suggested that Indigenous Australians have developed or theorised Indigenous-centric, relational research approaches. These include 'dadirri', 'two-way' and various forms of structured and collaborative yarning. These ontologies and methodologies involve culturally appropriate interviewing and relationships in collaborative, transdisciplinary projects where power, position, privilege and Indigenous Knowledge and axiologies are iterative, acknowledged and negotiated by the co-researchers. For example, Dawn Bessarab and Bridget Ng'andu (2010) develop local, culturally appropriately yarning methodologies to discuss health issues in their communities.

With my emerging awareness of relational research, from an Indigenist perspective, I began to study other thinkers. More relational forms of research are not limited to Indigenous thinkers. Ecologists, sustainability theorists, environmental historians and anthropologists, health workers, artists and quantum scientists are theorising through relationality, new materialism, entanglement, embodiment, and practice-led research. These people are also beginning to form transdisciplinary research groups and also co-researching with Indigenous knowledge keepers, for example *The Desert Lake Project* (M. Martin et al., 2013) where artists, scientists and anthropologists worked together to learn more about Paruku.

As a foregrounding to my current research, I worked and spent time in the Country with people in a remote community and travelled to other communities between 2008-2015, and began reading about Indigenous research methods by scholars including Marcia Langton, Marie Battiste, Aileen Moreton-Robinson and Nakata, (Linda Tuhiwai) Smith, Rigney, and Wilson. The political agendas of these writers were beyond my scope. However, their relational ways of seeing and knowing-being have informed my thinking. Their social activism and Indigenous paradigms are in sympathy with the conceptualisation of bricolage by Joe Kincheloe and his colleagues, Kathleen Berry, Kecia Hayes, Shirley Steinberg, Ken Tobin and Peter McLaren and also the relationality of Braidotti's neo-materialism, all of which have influenced my research approach.



## *Indigenist*

Indigenist research according to Rigney (1997) explicitly excludes researchers who do not identify as Indigenous. However, Rigney does acknowledge the contributions of non-indigenous people and suggests that this non-indigenous critical research should continue. Rigney admits his agenda is “overtly political” (1997, p. 637) and he defines Indigenist research as “research by Indigenous Australians whose primary informants are Indigenous Australians and whose goals are to serve and inform the Indigenous struggle for self-determination” (p. 637). I observe that this approach also reinforces a positivist binary by othering, comparing specifically Indigenous paradigms to Western research paradigms.

The recognition of Indigenous Knowledge is a tenet of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Wilson, 2007). Wilson’s Indigenist research paradigm allows for non-Aboriginal people to use and articulate Indigenist paradigms particularly when consciously positioned in Michelle Carey’s (2008, p. 10) context that we “acknowledge our way of being is not commensurable to Aboriginal ontological experiences, but...it is possible to construct our own ontologies that co-exist and support Indigenous ways of being”. Carey echoing Moreton-Robinson insists that Aboriginal belonging is also an “ontological relationship to land” (2008, p. 9). Wilson (2007) posits that Indigenous researchers need not use an Indigenist paradigm but his Indigenist paradigm is inclusive (non-binary) and ‘process-oriented’. It requires that researchers have relational accountability and world views similar to those of Indigenous people, to create knowledge for the benefit of the community. For Wilson (2008, p. 7) relationships do not just “shape reality, they are reality”; where the ontology and epistemology are relational, and the axiology and methodology are relationally accountable.

My understanding of axiology is derived from my grounding in Indigenist Research approaches and can be described as ways of seeing, the worth of knowledge and an accountability of relationships. This follows from Wilson (2004) “once relationality is understood as the key to our epistemology and ontology, an Indigenous methodology and axiology can be seen to be a process of maintaining accountability to all our relations” (Wilson, 2004, p. 1). It is my understanding that the accountability of the agents would include being embodied and behaving ethically within that relationship. For the purposes of this research, I have used the terms Aboriginal or Indigenous in the context of the authors I have quoted but I will generally use the term Indigenous in this exegesis; a detailed discussion of the use of the terms Aboriginal and Indigenous is beyond the scope of this research. I reiterate that I am *wadjula* (whitefella), I make reference to an Indigenist framework based on my training in Australian Indigenous cultural research and Wilson’s paradigm. I also echo Barrett (2015b, p. 2) in asserting that I do not work through an “Indigenous lens nor do I wish to misappropriate Indigenous knowledge”.

Relationality is fundamental to any form of engagement in Indigenous contexts including research (Barrett, 2016). I also support Barrett’s (2016) idea that an awareness of relationality and its ethical implications are important in most research with people, as there are limitations to conventional research approaches in understanding how we come to know. It was my need for an ethical relational research approach that initially led me to investigate and then study Indigenous/Indigenist research paradigms. I was collaborating with a group of Wongatha women on the *Marlu Kuru Kuru* project (Nykiel, 2009, 2010) and found that my existing knowledge was inadequate, inappropriate and did not address my ethical concerns. At this stage, I was unaware of the





emerging work of the new materialists and had shied away from feminist writings because of intersectionalist concerns (although I had not come across this body of knowledge at that time). “Intersectionality is explicitly oriented towards transformation, building coalitions among different groups, and working towards social justice” (Hankivsky, 2014, p. 3). I spent a lot of time listening and yarning with the women and worked as a boss for paper while facilitating their art practices and sharing knowledge and skills. Yarning requires more listening than talking.

### *yarning*

I describe the term yarn in a number of ways: as a continuous spun or plied thread used to make cloth; a colloquial term for telling a story, an exaggerated, larger than life, embroidered story, or tale; a long informal discussion or a two-way conversation. The term ‘yarning’ is contextual. Yarning is a qualitative, valid and culturally appropriate research method used in health and cultural research in an Australian Indigenous context—relational, accountable two-way and locally adaptable (Bessarab & Ng’andu, 2010; Fredericks, Croft, Butler, & Butler, 2014; Geia, Hayes, & Usher, 2013). I summarise two-way as a respectful transcultural reciprocal learning on Country. Yarning allows people to situate themselves, establish relationships and strengthen and activate existing relationships as well as to share, to reciprocate, to learn, to recount and reinforce and narrate new possibilities in a health research context but also in a wider community and cultural context.

### *dadirri*

*Dadirri* a deep, quiet, respectful listening, is a culturally informed philosophy. This is a reciprocal ontology and methodology involving listening and observing with both ears and heart (Atkinson, 2002; Fejo-King, 2006; Stronach & Adair, 2014; Ungunmerr, 1993a; West, Stewart, Foster, & Usher, 2012). Variations of deep respectful listening are cultural protocols in many Indigenous groups and hence this principle is recontextualised and renamed by researchers within these communities (Stronach & Adair, 2014; West et al., 2012). *Dadirri* has been compared to Pablo Friere’s critical pedagogy and transformative education where all voices are valued and given similar weight (West et al., 2012). Kincheloe and his colleagues also draw heavily on Friere when conceptualising their form of bricolage.

### *two-way*

I attempt to engage in a respectful and reciprocal way in my relations in the midst of the Country, these relations may become two-way. Two-way is respectful transdisciplinary reciprocal learning on the Country and involves human, “nonhuman and more-than-human...in a particularised landscape” (Ashcroft, Devlin-Glass, & McCredde, 2009, p. 167) where the focus moves away from race, power and colonialism to the local place, reciprocity, knowledge and skill sharing. Two-way learning is more inclusive and valid in collaborative intercultural relationships and teaching as Hannah Bell (2009) explains in reference to David Mowaljarlai’s work as an artist and bush university teacher.



The transcultural contact zone is a relational two-way space in the interstices between cultures, often mediated by place, where onto-epistemologies and axiologies may be influenced. The contact zone may be a performative, relational space of converging, shared experience where difference is acknowledged and meaning negotiated (Ashcroft, 2014). All the transcultural collaborators become deterritorialised (Sprague, 2014) in this confrontational methexical space. The contact zone is an in-between space of difference and negotiated or potentially suspended meaning where multiple stories coexist, and stories of place are made through the material thinking of “creatively self-aware social arrangements” (Carter, 2015, p. 8). While these spaces need not be physical, most of the collaborations, including mine, in this research take place in the midst of the Country. For me, the Country is a methexical place that affects and is intrinsically entangled with the people, who spend time there. This is not a space of hybridity, assimilation or appropriation but a storied place of “possibilities for cultural transformation ‘when individuals find the words and images that enable people to re-imagine familiar country’” (Somerville, 2012, p. 6). In the long standing, two-way intercultural relationships like those of Searles and Mclean (Jorgensen, 2014), there are mutual understandings and a reimagining of the storied places of these relationships with possibilities for collaborative practice and mutual change. These two-way relationships of a more localised, personalised nature seek to find new meanings in their understanding of specific places that parallel some of the relationships within my practice. I have travelled with Searles to visit Mclean and to spend time yarning and sharing with the people of the Ngaanyatjarra Lands.

There are parallels with the relationality in Indigenist views, two-way, dadirri, and bricolage. All embed the work of making knowledge and understanding within the relationships of daily life and consider the wider environment in which the research takes/makes place (Barrett, 2016). This is reiterated by Wilson (2007) who comments “we cannot be separated from our work, nor should our writing be separated from ourselves...Our own relationships with our environment, families, ancestors, ideas and the cosmos around us shape who we are and how we will conduct our research” (p. 194). These stories and making are entangled in my relationships with the places and the people where I live and work. I move along pathways of becoming and my making is an expression of my experience, my correspondence (co-responses) and sense making that shape this body in the midst of the world. Correspondence is Ingold’s (2013) term for the reflexive maker’s response through an “art of inquiry” (p. 6) to their perception of what is going on in the world around them. The art of inquiry is a praxical way to allow a maker’s knowledge to emerge from “our practical and observational engagements with the beings and things around us” (p. 6)—sense making.

The local, creative and material language of becoming in the world and my process of making through the art of inquiry are, to me, far more expressive and richer for being embodied and experienced rather than reduced to words or objects. Like a rhapsode, I stitch together yarns, plying together the symbols of experience and language to mediate the potential for some linguistic understanding. For example, my intention with *Leadline* (2017) pictured in *I5088* (Figure 138) and *I5096* (Figure 143) was to map a space in a comparable way, to the way I negotiate the Country, I hope to begin making a communicative meshwork not restricted to words. I have a curiosity and interest in inventing a useful material and spatial language and using it to tell stories.



I speculate that praxical knowledge is also a form of two-way, collaborative reciprocal discourse not only with people but entangled with the Country and matter and that my bricolage is the basket in which it may be gathered. The praxical knowledge may emerge in handling materials and being present in a place. These “materialising practices” (Barrett, 2007b, p. 143) may also extend to the relationships between process and text. This encourages a “dialogic relationship” (Barrett, 2007, p. 143) between the practice (the maker) and the exegetical writing (the scholar) within poiesis which may encourage symbols, semiotics and representation in the emerging discourse of visual and written language (Barrett, 2015a). In my practice, this praxical knowledge originates in the Country and is relational, tacit, embodied and entangled.

Two-way movement in creative practice is recontextualised by Barrett (2013, 2015a) in following Kristeva’s thinking that the movement is a form of reciprocal relational material process “between matter, biological processes and discourse” (2013, p. 66)—a dialogic relationship. This may be seen as another form of interrelationality where the makers thoughts and emotions are a filter through which matter and object pass as sensation to become a form of language.

The two-way movement between and within cultural spaces, between the bodies within a community and between the bodies and the world is communicated in a reciprocal relationship between the bodies and the praxical and exegetical discourse. It is this discourse that occurs in the Country and the two-way movement is what I aim to bring back to the urban gallery.

This chapter has introduced and conceptualised an audit trail of the Country, place, maps, belonging, deep time, poiesis, material thinking, new materialism, becoming, useful, tacit and embodied knowing. I have introduced my thinking at cultural contact zones with an awareness of Indigenous research and my training in Indigenist approaches and relational frameworks including yarning, dadirri and two-way. These terms, I will use throughout this exegesis in the context discussed above unless otherwise noted. I have provided a review of some of the writers and artists working in similar spaces. In the next chapter, I will introduce the concept of bricolage as my overarching research approach before entangling myself in place and situating myself considering my axiological lens.

### *a bricoleuse’s yarn-a prelude*

On a wet Winter’s day, I ducked into a lunchtime lecture by a woman I had been introduced to as a guest lecturer during my Indigenous cultural research training. I was a little damp and a little late. Sliding into a seat near the door, I looked up to see a slide titled, *bricolage*, Bessarab (2009). Here was a research approach that allowed me to interweave the polyglot voices in my head and enmesh the concepts and readings I was beginning to understand. I shot out of the lecture and spent the rest of the day in the library!





## *Chapter 2: A Bricoleuse's Yarn: a waypoint on the audit trail*

## *introduction*

I have started the audit trail by introducing key terms and concepts that are the fragments of an overarching bricolage approach. This chapter introduces bricolage as an entangled concept and research approach, also used by some as a methodology including Arprina Murwanti, Yardley, Yee and Bremner. This chapter will unpack the wider complexity whilst, the methodological issues are the focus of the next chapter. The seminal theorists writing around bricolage include Kincheloe, Lambotte and Meunier; Lévi-Strauss; Weinstein and Weinstein and Yee and Bremner. I interpret and apply notions around the bricoleur and the bricoleuse, and the nomad. Bricolage is relationally entangled in not-knowing, includes tacit knowledge and may become an onto-epistemology. I discuss how bricolage is applied to my praxis. The chapter concludes with thoughts on situating myself, considering my axiological lens and my position as agent.

Structuralist notions of bricolage were introduced by Lévi-Strauss' (1962) in his seminal text *La Pensée sauvage*, (published in French in 1962, and translated into English in 1966). Christopher Johnson (2012) reminds us of the translator's footnote in *The Savage Mind* (Lévi-Strauss, 1966), that the term bricoleur does not have a precise English translation. Johnson also adds that there is "uncertainty or instability of the bricoleur as a social category" (p. 360) and as such he is a marginal character, well suited for contact zones. I translated parts of the original text as I found some of the later translations too literal. My schoolgirl French is very rusty, but I enjoyed the translation exercise and my limited ability as a polyglot. The translation gives a far more nuanced flavour, a little like when geological and local language terms spring to mind and begin to colonise my thinking, and articulate the experience of being in the Country. Fortunately, Johnson (2012), has also returned to the French version and can verify my translations:

there still exists among ourselves an activity which on the technical plane gives us quite a good understanding of what a science we prefer to call 'prior' rather than 'primitive', could have been on the plane of speculation. This is what is commonly called 'bricolage' in French. (...) [ellipses and brackets in original] in our own time the 'bricoleur'





is still someone who works with his hands and uses devious means [des moyens détournés, indirect or roundabout means] compared to those of a craftsman [homme de l'art]. The characteristic feature of mythical thought is that it expresses itself by means of a heterogeneous repertoire [un répertoire dont la composition est hétéroclite] which, even if extensive, is nevertheless limited. It has to use this repertoire, however, whatever the task in hand because it has nothing else at its disposal [rien d'autre sous la main, nothing else to hand]. Mythical thought is therefore a kind of intellectual 'bricolage'—which explains the relation which can be perceived between the two. (Lévi-Strauss as translated in Johnson, 2012, p. 358)

Johnson uses the more nuanced “indirect or roundabout” (p. 358) as a translation for devious means and also “disparate, ill-assorted, sundry” (p. 359) for hétéroclite rather than simply heterogenous which is the more usual translation. I would also suggest adding the terms indeterminate and perhaps not-knowing for hétéroclite and wandering to devious means. “Nothing else to hand” (p. 359) translates as closer to making do/ what is at hand and less to what might come in handy. The more nuanced translations are also in keeping with my understanding of Lévi-Strauss’ (1962) text and with my conceptualisation of bricolage. However, I am limited by what I have the skills to use and what I recognise/know in contrast to being specifically selective in what I choose for bricolage. Known things/ideas are potentially useful, albeit, not necessarily utilised to perform their original function. For example, out of a pile of leaves, I will choose those that I know I can strip for fibre or have the potential to yield dye pigments. When my toolbox is full, I disseminate multiples to an audience or offer them back to where they were gifted from. For example, many of the strings of beads I make during workshops are given as gifts and my wireweed drawings find their way back to the sea (Figure 99).

I gather materials that pique my interest and those that I recognise. These may have the potential to be useful, perhaps because I understand their material language. Markham (2017 (forthcoming)) comments that for the bricoleur, materials “are not known as a result of their usefulness; they are deemed to be useful or interesting because they are first of all known” (p. 4) which reiterates Weick’s explanation of Lévi-Strauss’ (1966) passage on bricolage. Bricoles are used as tools in the bricolage process but may also



form a bricolage. For example, a found screwdriver may be used as a door handle rather than buying or searching for screws to fix the old handle. This demonstrates the ambiguity in including not-knowing with heterogenous in the translation *hétéroclite*. For example, in *I4642* (Figure 13) is a collection of interesting and useful but seemingly disparate bricoles—sundry and ill-assorted jars, rags, windfall leaves, bottletops and rainwater, reimagined and made useful as solar dye kits, solving a problem as I did not have a dyepot with me. As a result, they have become an essential tool in my toolbox, but they may also be reimagined and used in other ways. The jar may be used to wrap a cloth bundle around in the next dyepot or for storing the bottletops.

### *What is bricolage?*

The concept of bricolage is continuing to evolve. Bricolage was coined from the French verb ‘bricoler’ and is usually translated as the action of a ‘tinkerer’ or ‘do it yourselfer’ often with a hint of the trickster (Hase, 2014; Helms, 2011; Kincheloe, 2001; Weinstein & Weinstein, 1992). French anthropologist and structuralist Lévi-Strauss (1966), used the term bricolage as a metaphor for ‘meaning-making’. Rafael Lara-Alecio, Sallie Helms, Cindy Guerrero-Valecillos, and Kathleen Cox (2009), describe bricolage as a “form of *structural* [original emphasis] analysis of cultural myth, ritual and social custom” (p. 6). The bricolage of Lévi-Strauss’ metaphor is interpreted by Yee and Bremner (2011) as “a spontaneous creative act that uses whatever is available to reach a desired outcome” (p. 3). Theorists such as Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln, Matt Rogers and Weinstein and Weinstein use a similar interpretation. Their writing provides a range of thoughts, metaphors and interpretations from which the fragments of my understanding of bricolage continue to evolve.

### *Bricolage in research*

In qualitative research, bricolage has emerged as an interpretative, postconstructivist, poststructuralist, postcolonial approach to embrace plurality, flexibility, complexity, and multiple voices in the contact zones between disciplines. The term, bricolage has



been conceptualised and aligned with complexity theory and interdisciplinarity and further developed in the writings of American education lecturer Joe Kincheloe and his colleagues in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century and collected in anthologies by Kincheloe, McLaren, et al. (2011) and Kincheloe, Hayes, Steinberg, and Tobin (2011). Cross-cultural educational researcher Sallie Helms (2009) underpins bricolage in complexity theory while Kincheloe (2008) and Kathleen Berry (2006; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004) develop bricolage methodologies in critical action research in education and ethnic studies.

Bricolage has been further refined and recontextualised in a variety of ways by practitioners and higher degree research supervisors in practice-led research and in design, contemporary art, and creative writing. Self-described “bricoleur-in-training”, Lisa Kay (2016, p. 26), expresses her qualitative arts-based inquiry as bricolage in theory and in practice. Using a bricolage metaphor to describe design process, Panagiotus Louridas (1999) suggests the designer, like the bricoleur, “speak[s] with his work [and]...through his work” (p. 19). Painting about mortality through a feminist lens, Sandy Mayo (2000) uses a bricolage approach to theorise her work. Adapting the artist’s creative process to computer programming for creative applications, Alex McLean and Geraint Wiggins (2010), consider a bricolage approach to conceptualise their work. Tim Mosely (2014) uses a “bricolage writing style” (p. 26) to describe making his artist books and builds on Deleuze’s comment to Foucault that “theory is exactly like a box of tools” (p. 26) choosing to use smooth and striated space as conceptual tools in his thesis. Murwanti (2017) theorises an interdisciplinary bricolage to frame “installation art practice in academic context” (p. 54). Reflexive practitioner, Stewart (2010) describes bricolage in a research context as “a hybrid praxis” (p. 128). Yardley (2008) talks about her methodological bricolage in an intertextual and performative research context. Yeates and Carson (2009) and Wibberley (2012) as Higher Degree by Research (HDR) supervisors in creative arts, creative writing and practice-led research, unpack bricolage from a supervisory perspective. Yee and Bremner (2011) discuss some of the issues of bricolage as methodology in practice-based design PhDs. This is a sample of practitioners and pedagogues across and amid the creative disciplines who are adapting and adopting bricolage approaches.



In contrast, some Indigenous researchers including Wendy Knepper, Greg Lowan-Trudeau and Troy Richardson have issues with bricolage as an approach. Their main concerns are with power, knowledge and colonisation/creolisation (Knepper, 2006; Lowan-Trudeau, 2012) and the lack of acknowledgment of the ecology (Lowan-Trudeau, 2012; Richardson, 2013) or language/metaphors around tools and tinkering (Richardson, 2013). However, the research methodology *métissage* has been developed from bricolage and includes interpretative and Indigenous methodologies (Lowan-Trudeau, 2012). Knepper (2006) also suggests that a postmodern approach to bricolage has “ambivalent, critical potential” (p. 85) in discourses of Caribbean identity. In using a relational lens as one of my tools, I begin to acknowledge some of these issues in my thinking.

### *pedagogy and bricolage*

In the wider research field, critical pedagogues have embraced bricolage theory, particularly the social constructivist group led by Kincheloe. However, many practitioners are now enfolded these ideas into their practice-led research in and across diverse fields including the arts, education and nursing. Creative practitioners are finding ways to incorporate bricolage and the ability to assemble fragments into new reconfigurations useful in theorising their practices, for example, 20170803\_132101 (Figure 15).

Pedagogical ideas suggesting creative bricolage as “a critical interdisciplinary platform of possibility” are explained by Yeates and Carson (2009, p. 4), who as supervisors of HDR candidates, build on critical pedagogue Barry Kanpol’s (1999) ideas about critical interdisciplinarity. They outline the potential for generating possibilities from not-knowing to make new connections between bricoles and how this may nurture self-reflexive diffraction in a practice that is pragmatic and linked to theory. Creative bricolage as a research platform is multi-perspectival and many voiced and always relational. The creative possibilities form from Yee and Bremners’ (2011) “constructive loops” (p. 3) of not-knowing that allow for “predicting an undetermined future, exploring unknown questions and using a non-prescribed way of looking at the world” (p. 4). This can be an interdisciplinary journey of learning where the mature, accomplished bricoleuse privileges time, relationships



Figure 15: 20170803\_132101, practice-led research entangled in string hand plied during a TINAS discussion, ECU 2017.



and process over outcome, and questions over answers (Kincheloe, Hayes, et al., 2011; Yee & Bremner, 2011). This filters into the daily life of a situated knowledge maker. Denzin and Lincoln describe the resulting bricolage as “a complex, dense, reflexive collage-like creation that represents the researcher’s images, understandings and interpretations of the world or phenomenon under analysis” (as cited in Hammersley, 2008, p. 4) at that point of time from the view of the researcher in that place. However, the bricoleuse and the bricolage always remain open to the potentiality of change as the relationships change and new questions form. Meaningful relationships in “social worlds and situations studied” is Stewart’s (2003a, p. 5) interpretation of the Weinstein’s (1992) work on Georg Simmel. Weinstein and Weinstein (1992, p. 164) use Simmel and his novel *The Metropolis and Mental Life* (2002) as an example of a bricoleur who has existential trepidations and decentres the self as an “interlude in a sociocultural bricolage” (p. 164) where relationships are meaningful rather than causal. I begin to take these ideas and existential concerns further, weaving them through Ingold’s (2011) thoughts on relationships. Relationships at all levels of environment—social, physical (including material and abiotic) and biotic where “the properties of materials, regarded as constituents of an environment, cannot be identified as fixed, essential attributes of things, but are rather processual and relational. They are neither objectively determined nor subjectively imagined but practically experienced” (p. 30). It is the possibilities of these relationships that may be connected in putting together fragments of diverse thinking to form a thick bricolage of theory.

Adding another small piece to the theory in the spirit of Witzling (2009) and her herstory of quilting as a decentring social action but in a different context and media is remix studies. Emerging writing on remix theory (Navas, Gallagher, & burrough, 2015), also comments on an artistic practice that investigates alternative views of production and decentring pre-existing cultural artefacts—music and recorded media. Bricolages of sound are pieced together and reassembled to form new narrative structures based on the desire of the remixer/maker. The resulting bricolages may alter the meaning of the fragments as a form of decentring and deterritorialising the original intents and as a socially active commentary on contemporary issues. It has also been suggested that remixing allows the remixer to exercise a “desire to regain a more direct relationship with things” (Campanelli, 2015, p. 74). The things





I make privilege the tactile, as a reminder to me, and perhaps others, of the direct relationship with things—material, and handmade, and places.

### *More than methodology*

Bricolage outside the methodological lens, is variously described in the literature as:

- × a signifier of interdisciplinarity (Kincheloe, 2001, p. 681);
- × a “critical language” and a “mythopoetical activity” (Derrida, 2002, pp. 360-361);
- × a “complex ontology” (Kincheloe, McLaren, et al., 2011, p. 170);
- × an approach “grounded on an epistemology of complexity” (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 324) that, begins to communicate our relationships to a thing or an event rather than describing the thing/event itself;
- × “characterized as *an action* one takes (as a bricoleur), *an attitude* (or epistemology), and the resulting *product* (or outcome) of both [original emphasis]” (Markham, 2017 (forthcoming), p. 1);
- × “a critical interdisciplinary platform of possibility” (Yeates & Carson, 2009);
- × “bricolage-as-praxis” (Lincoln, 2001, p. 693);
- × “bricolage is hybrid praxis” (Stewart, 2010, p. 128);
- × a calling—a journey of “lifelong learning” (Kincheloe, 2001, p. 691; 2008b, p. 24).

The scope of these descriptions reflects the rich nature of bricolage and the complexity and messiness involved in theorising it.

In a slightly different context, bricolage may be created from materials at hand to produce unexpected and innovative artforms or to take objects across cultural or social divides and imbue them with new meanings in different contexts. “In 1979, Dick Hebdige, overturning Frankfurt school dismay over popular culture, declared...punks flaunting shirts held together with safety pins were engaged in a process of bricolage” (Schneider, 2006, p. 212). Similarly, I adopt the bottle top as a cultural artefact within my praxis. The decontextualisation and recontextualisation of invention/imagination where “found elements are rendered strange” (Carter, 2010b, p. 15) and then put together to form new meanings is praxical and ontological.



This invention allows for deterritorialisation.

Storytelling (mythmaking) is a form of bricolage as Lévi-Strauss (1966) explains, where semiotics (signs and symbols) are used to analyse human culture. Narrative, interpretative methodologies and oral traditions may be brought together through the process of bricolage (Lowan-Trudeau, 2012). Bricolage now becomes my overarching research approach with ontological, epistemological and methodological implications, which can also be used as a form of praxis and material thinking and a process for making meaning with objects and mythmaking. In different contexts, I gather fragments of knowledge, ideas and materials to use any or all of these ways although Markham (2017 (forthcoming)) cautions about conflating them.

### *Who practises bricolage?*

Bricoleurs and bricoleuses use bricoles to conceptualise and make bricolage. Deriving from the French, bricoleuse is the feminine form of bricoleur. Bricoleuse is used in its feminine form by French authors including those in the anthology *Des mondes bricolés: arts et sciences à l'épreuve de la notion de bricolage* (Odin & Thuderoz, 2010). However, in English scholarly writing, the most common term is bricoleur regardless of the gender of the writer or the subject (Wheeler, 2015). This is unlike the terms flaneur and the flaneuse, which have been adopted from the French but have distinct gendered connotations given their context of wandering the streets. Sara Wheeler (2015) attempts to establish the feminine noun and encourage its use in academic writing as a “feminizing corrective” (p. 9); she also emphasises the lack of the term in the literature. There are a number of authors who either consider bricoleur as gender neutral or use bricoleur/se (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Louridas (1999) explains that to avoid inconsistencies when discussing Lévi-Strauss, he also uses the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine. However, Louridas notes that he intends no gender bias and that the masculine and feminine forms should be used interchangeably. I disagree. In writing on feminist bricolage, Handforth and Taylor (2016) use multiple voices in the first person but neither refer to bricoleur or bricoleuse. Johnson states that the bricoleur is “unquestionably a



man” (2012, p. 361) which leaves me out of the equation. As a gendered position, the term bricoleuse in my research pursuits is related from my position as a devious woman, who gleans and tinkers. I am a bricoleuse.

### *Who is the bricoleur?*

The metaphorical bricoleur, according to Lévi-Strauss (1966), “works with his hands and uses devious means” (p. 16); a more make-do attitude to his tools than the precise skill of the craftsman. While the bricoleur has been described as a “sly handyman” (Weinstein & Weinstein, 1992, p. 161) possibly due to a literal translation from the French, I agree with Elizabeth Hatton (1989) and Johnson’s (2012) interpretations of ‘devious means’ as “remote, circuitous or indirect” (Hatton, 1989, p. 75) because the bricoleur and the bricolage may swerve, rebound or stray or in my case wander. S/he fashions diverse solutions to the problem and may make the necessary tools or solutions from the materials “at hand” (Rogers, 2012, p. 1) often modifying both the tools and project in the process; an ongoing critical, reflexive/diffractive dialogue with the materials (Louridas, 1999). The bricoleur has enough knowledge to skilfully use the tools and materials but is not constrained by the previous meaning or use of the materials or tools or the expectations of the craftsman/engineer or indeed completing the project.

A bricoleur/se pragmatically and actively employs a bricolage approach in an attempt to be flexible, self-reflexive, positioned. A bricoleur/se may wander in the midst of multiple methodologies, “theoretical perspectives” (Rogers, 2012, p. 4) and points of view to piece together answers to questions raised by and within the research (Berry, 2006; Helms, 2011; Stewart, 2010; Yee & Bremner, 2011). As a bricoleuse I am aware of my situated position and my relationships. Bricoles of my practice and theory are entangled in a hybrid praxis (Stewart, 2010) where I respect and acknowledge “the complexity of meaning-making processes and the contradictions of the lived world” (Rogers, 2012, p. 4) in telling my story.



All tools and materials (methodological, conceptual and practical) have been previously collected by the bricoleur, who is therefore constrained as implied by Lévi-Strauss (1966). This collection becomes the bricoleur's toolbox to which s/he may add bits and pieces from the current project. Lambotte and Meunier (2013) in interpreting Michel De Certeau's (1984) 'making do' suggest that the resources may be imposed on the bricoleur. However, I propose that the debris and the "remains of events" (Lévi-Strauss, 1966, p. 22) and schools of thought (Kincheloe, 2001); the knowledge and the experience of handling the signs, the materials and the tools is all the bricoleur need carry. S/he may glean further bricoles along the way. The artefacts or outcomes potentially become tools or signs in this hermeneutic process and may be added to the toolbox as the bricoleur "appropriates" (Stewart, 2010, p. 128) what is needed while wayfaring between disciplines and methodologies, which I would also liken to the political motives of Braidotti's (2010b, 2011) nomad.

### *I am a bricoleuse*

For this research, I use the term bricoleuse except when quoting from or referring to historical texts. While I agree with Wheeler, I extend the definition and the use of bricoleuse. While acknowledging the work of Lévi-Strauss (1966) and Derrida (2002), I am not a structuralist and hence not a bricoleur in that sense. I am not a bricoleur in Kincheloe's pedagogical sense, but bricoles of social action theory are quilted into my research. I am a cisgender, female researcher who often works with women, so I could use bricoleuse as Wheeler advocates. I could use the term feminist bricolage and refer to myself in the first person as favoured by Handforth and Taylor (2016) but as St Pierre (2015b) points out, Foucault and Deleuze wrote about some issues with the use of personal pronouns as part of the human/non-human dualism. I emphasise with this position, however, the lens of 'I' is the only point of view from which I may speak.

A bricoleuse in the original French sense and based on Hase (2014); Helms (2011); Johnson (2012); Kincheloe (2001); Rogers (2012); Weinstein and Weinstein (1992); Yee and Bremner (2011) is:





- × one who is skilled at working with her hands and improvising with what is at hand—tinkering

or is

- × one who draws intuitively and adaptively on previous experience and ponders complexity, uncertainty and flexibility in research across disciplines and cultures.

I am a socially engaged woman speaking from my situated human point of view but acknowledging the non-human. I tinker with my hands and my philosophy to adapt and draw upon my interdisciplinary and intercultural experience and the materials I have gleaned and hoarded. I am a bricoleuse.

### *Is the bricoleuse a nomad?*

The methodological style of the “nomadic subject” (Braidotti, 2011, p. 66) is very similar to Lévi-Strauss’ bricolage according to Braidotti (2011), who recontextualises Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) concept of the nomad within a poststructuralist feminist approach. However, the nomad need not identify as female and nomadism is not constrained as only a methodology. While I subscribe to many of the ideas of poststructuralist feminists, I take a more relational viewpoint from my toolbox of bricolage which aligns with Ingold (2011), who implies that the nomad has relationships at all levels without privileging any particular voice. However, relationality also finds space with Braidotti (2010b) who suggests that the nomad supports “open-ended and relational” (p. 408) views of the subject, encourages transcultural community thinking and “sustains multiple ecologies of belonging” (p. 408). The nomad is transdisciplinary with little concern for boundaries. Like the bricoleuse, she appropriates and borrows notions and then uses them out of context, building on Deleuze’s ideas of deterritorialisation as the “becoming nomad of ideas” (Braidotti, 2011, p. 66). Braidotti’s nomad speaks in theoretical, poetic, and lyrical voices to destabilise the academy, and to recognise other women and their differences in the “complexity of the semiotic and material conditions” (p. 66) in which we operate. In practising philosophy as a “form of conceptual creativity”,



the nomadic bricoleuse is situated in this research and is entangled in the relational. I tinker with what I find, swerving, straying and rebounding in the midst of the meshwork of life with little regard for borders. I am embodied in my research, which is entangled with my life and the Country. I speak in multiple voices and multiple tongues, with word and artefact, to tell stories of the Country in the contact zones amidst the transdisciplinary and the interdisciplinary and transcultural and the intercultural. This is how I practice as a bricoleuse and some of the implications of this approach for research.

### *nomad as philosopher*

In contrast but contiguous, Braidotti's nomad need not be a physical traveller: a wayfarer. She is a philosopher moving amidst disciplines and schools of thought where nomadism is "a theoretical option...an existential condition that...translates into a style of thinking" (1994, p. 1) more epistemological than methodological. She crosses boundaries, borrows ideas and notions, and recontextualises them using multiple voices and relational subjectivity. Barad (2012) could be said to extend the philosophical metaphor, in the context of theorising, as a form of experimentation and reconfiguring "lured by curiosity, surprise and wonder" (p. 208). She eloquently describes straying from the path as a thought experiment in the possibilities of not-knowing and alludes to the diverging of the wayfarer, the boundary crossing of the nomad and the swerving and straying of the bricoleuse who move indeterminately in the midst of the meshwork of life.

thought experiments are material matters...Stepping into the void, opening to possibilities, straying, going out of bounds, off the beaten path—diverging and touching down again, swerving and returning, not as consecutive moves but as experiments in in/determinacy. (Barad, 2012, p. 208)

As a bricoleuse, I swerve and stray off the track as both wayfarer and philosophical nomad, a literal and disciplinary border crosser, experimenting with theory, but also at home boiling the billy beside the track or presenting geological data in India. I attempt to be critically conscious and resist "settling into socially coded modes of thought and behaviour" (Braidotti, 2011, p. 26). The transdisciplinary nomad, the wayfarer and the bricoleuse travel together, as if they are one, carrying with them what they read and know, speaking as a many voiced polyglot to destabilise the hegemony. A wayfarer,



whose embodied perambulations bind places rather than being place bound, where wayfaring is a process and I would suggest that it is a creative becoming, a performative metaphor in “emphatic proximity [and] intense interconnectedness” (Braidotti, 2011, p. 27). A nomad’s mapping is a way of seeing and becoming.

### *Peripatetic Arts Workers*

There are many women who work, map, wander and make do in the contact zones of remote communities but they do not call themselves bricoleuses or wayfarers. The arts workers, service providers and facilitator/managers in remote Australian communities are mainly women in the “burgeoning industry of Aboriginal culture” (Mahood, 2007, p. 136). When working in these spaces, we have to draw on our own resources both physically and mentally to improvise responses to complex cultural and real-life situations with what we have at hand. The “real work... is not written into the job description of the project or liaison positions” (Mahood, 2007, p. 140) but rather in the workers “grappling with the mind-stripping contradictions between their well-intentioned expectations and the robust, challenging reality of what they encounter” (Mahood, 2005, p. 22). These women of the bush do not fit the stereotype of the Aussie bloke (Carey, 2008, p. 24) or the hermit on a spiritual quest (Mahood, 2000). We are not gentlemen explorers and painters or high profile collaborating artists like John Wolseley or Imants Tillers or Tim Johnson (Rey, 2014). We are peripatetic, sometimes nomadic (both literally and as Braidotti (2011) describes), capable, practical, pragmatic and flexible, building extensive bush capital and making do. ‘Bush capital’ is a term for those who have extensive lived experience in remote communities. Mahood is eloquent in voicing what we do:

out of necessity we construct our lives around movement—not the kind of movement which entails leaving things behind, but movement which is about constantly revisiting places, travelling between fixed points, each with their particular resources, harvesting what we need in each place because it is not available in the other. And many of us are women, which suggests that we are finding in these expanded spaces the room to break out of the sedentary expectations of gender and write new roles for ourselves, unstapled from the requirements of homemaking. (2005, p. 21)

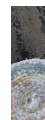
For decades, I have nurtured creative relationships, earned hard won bush capital and learnt by wandering and revisiting rural and remote Western Australia in a number of roles. It is out of these experiences, the tyranny of distance and the need to be a jill of all trades with a stock of things that might come in handy in the bush, that I approach life as a bricoleuse. My life experience and my way of seeing the world is coloured by various stints as a fly in fly out worker (FIFO) as well as the peripatetic worker that Mahood describes above.



It was during my time (2009-2013) as a FIFO arts manager, funded by the mining industry, that I was able to re-establish and maintain the relationships with the communities and the Country of the arid lands. I had previously established contacts/relationships when I worked there in the 1980-90's as I related to this land and its communities in my capacity as a geoscientist. I was also involved in facilitating the Marlu Kuru Kuru Project (2009; Nykiel 2010) as a volunteer before securing the management position. As an artworker, I spent nearly 5 years establishing and maintaining complex relationships in a number of roles at a number of levels within the community and mentoring and supporting artists. I had planned to build upon these relationships in my research project, however, circumstances changed with a downturn in the mining industry, the loss of funding and complex and shifting relationships within the community and my personal life. However, I had gathered some materials and keep some contact with the people and the Country with infrequent trips with other artists and while passing through on other business during the period of this research. As such, the bricolage of my life through which my research is diffracted is more than any of methodology, ontology, epistemology or axiology.

### *What is onto-epistemology?*

Onto-epistemology is defined by Barad as “the study of practices of knowing in being” (2003, p. 829). Knowing is a “direct material engagement” (as cited in Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2012, p. 52) because we are of the world from which our knowing emerges. We are “mutually implicated” (Barad, 2007, p. 185), and entangled in the world’s “differential becoming” (p. 185) rather than standing outside or apart in a Cartesian human/non-human split. Barad (2007, p. ix) explains “to be entangled is not simply to be intertwined with another. Individuals do not pre-exist their interactions; rather, individuals emerge through and as part of their entangled intra-relating”. I posit that onto-epistemology is an embodied entanglement of knowing in becoming but bear in mind Meskimmon’s (2003) question about the subjectivity of the self within this.





Barad (2007) expands further from knowing in being (onto-epistemology) to an ethical knowing in being, conceivably the doing of knowing in being, where the ethical concerns of response-ability (responsibility) and accountability are entangled in action and mattering—the doing (as cited in Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2012). Barad describes this as ethico-onto-epistemology as:

an appreciation of the intertwining of ethics, knowing, and being since each intra-action matters, since the possibilities for what the world may become call out in the pause that precedes each breath before a moment comes into being and the world is remade again, because the becoming of the world is a deeply ethical matter. (2007, p. 185)

It is an ethical pause in the interstice of not-knowing and the breath; a moving through the world that may construct a nomad's methexical dwelling.

My entangled ways of knowing, being and doing are enacted with personal responsibility and accountability to the people and the environment I inhabit. This is becoming an ethico-onto-epistemology informed by relational and Indigenist research paradigms and years of wayfaring. I am aware of where I am situated and try to acknowledge world views that differ from my own (Rose & Davis, 2005). My choices attempt to acknowledge and respect all that matters, and this extends beyond my research to the ways I choose to live.

This entanglement leads to diffraction which aligns with Barrett's (2015a) "cultural production" (p. 101) that occurs in moving through the space between being and knowing. While reflection may imply a distanced mirrored gaze, diffraction is an entangled self-reflection, "marking differences from within and as a part of" (Barad, 2007, p. 89) the world. This leads to questions that problematise my making, my onto-epistemology and my environment. My onto-epistemology has to be formalised in language but is far more complex and relational than its conceptual and theoretical framing. My making and doing also become a signification of the process of arriving at my knowing through a "direct material engagement" (Barad as cited in Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2012, p. 52). My knowing is a series of waypoints in the interstices between ontology and epistemology and other ways of seeing-knowing and other worldviews,





Figure 16: *I4731*, a string of found objects with natural holes, a collection of beads of knowledge of the world, digital photograph (detail), studio, 2017.



Figure 17: *I5245*, hand plied plant dyed string and woodfired beads of recycled clay, lifesize, Fremantle, 2017.

an understanding constructed from gleaned fragments. These waypoints are knots in the wandered pathways of becoming and not-knowing. *I4731* (Figure 16), pictures an entangled string as a metaphor for the pathways in the midst of the meshwork of becoming with its knots and gathered beads of knowing.

The waypoints are sites of ground truthing with signposts to the inarticulatable, unknowable along the boundaries of understanding, meaning, knowing and being (Ashcroft, 2014; Bennett, 2010) and along the “edges of words” (Ashcroft, 2014, p. 109). My lived experience is in the relations to the materials and the environment echoing Ingold’s (2011) observation that the properties of materials are processual, relational and practically experienced. I posit that this practical, relational experience is a form of ground truthing.

Ground truthing, is a task I performed as a field geologist, which requires substantiating the data from maps and aerial photos by walking the ground in the field. Adding the intuitive, the observational—from a different point of view—that, which is only perceptible in being there. Carter (2010a) explains ground truthing as a “search for the creative principles that bring regions into being....[over] an underlay of unedited anecdote, a fine capillary system of interconnected words, places, memories and sensations” (pp. 2-3) like the string of beads of *I4731* (Figure 16). These interconnections are further strengthened, if the string of beads adorn the body like *I5245* (Figure 17) where the earthen beads are both symbolic of the knowledge gleaned by walking the ground and another layer of earth in touch with the grounded body.

Ground truthing is recollecting, an entangled diffracting rather than a mirrored reflection, using the imagination to transform and create intentional meaning through invention. *I5267c*, (Figure 18) imagines a diffracted fabric of ground truthing. The point is “not to expose the ground of truth, the bedrock pattern: it is to weave what is available into an ever-stronger cultural fabric” (Carter, 2010a, p. 199) and to develop a “myth of care” (p. 199), that is, to nurture the topsoil instead of scouring the dirt away to bare rock. With Heidegger in mind, ground truthing is an enquiry “into





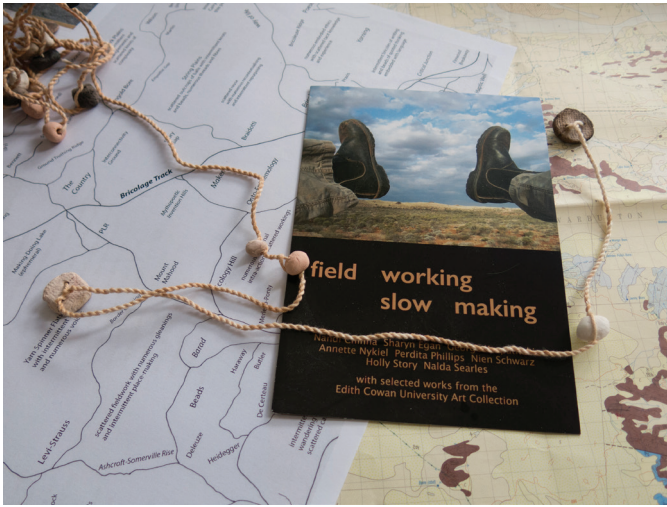


Figure 18: I5267c, transient mapping, mixed media, dimensions variable, documentary digital photograph, Fremantle, 2017.



Figure 19: I3528, self-portrait, Windarra, 2014.

the grounds of Being” (Carter, 2010a, p. 11) to form an understanding of the ground we stand on and its nature as an ethical basis for forming relationships as ground-dwellers (2010a). The moment of breathing and standing still to watch a wave crash, or a bird collect spider webs for its nest. It is an ethical acknowledgment and a measure of time; a listening to a story. Such localisation is ethical, as it creatively places me in the time and space of somewhere in the constructive invention of that place and my story of it in the gap (not-knowing, chaos) between other stories and the ground of the Earth. The gap is a space of wandering and forming relations in the midst of this. If the elements that border the gap are “reflective that is borrow or take their identities from the perceived reciprocities existing among them” (Carter, 2010a, p. 45), then the focus shifts to the pathways/movements between them. These reciprocities or Carter’s sky-earth and Ingold’s weather-world resist the semantic reduction of a single descriptor or a single worldview (Carter, 2010a) and privilege the experience.

For the purposes of this research, ground truthing is assembling a quilt of meaning from the layers of haptic and visual experiences, including stories and theories of being there in place including the physical wandering over the Country. I3528, (Figure 19), was taken on a dry and brittle, late Winter afternoon. My shadow overlays *Triodia spp.* hummock grass on red-brown hardpan. This is a place I have visited with local women to forage for bush tucker and plant materials and to share yarns. This is an example of ground truthing a creative region.

### *creative regions*

A creative region is where as a maker, I diffract my own herstories, geographies, and cultures (Rose, 2005) by ground truthing the creative spaces where I work. The Country is a creative region—a complex “polyhedral arrangement of crossing places” (Carter, 2010a, p. 154), where her/history is told as multiple storylines and as places made after their stories using a maker’s tangled “vocabulary of tracks” (Carter, 2010a, p. 40). These storylines and their yarns



may be reimagined through the “portal of campfire anecdote” (Carter, 2010a, p. 175) and certainly through the car windscreen or lens at the bottom of a glass in a country pub or the lens projecting images onto the wall in the academy.

Ground truthing the creative regions of the Country, is a slow relational process; it is entangled with my embodied ethical onto-epistemology. Creative regions in the Country emerge with my field work and ground truthing and material thinking and in moving in the midst of not-knowing spaces. I develop a sense of place through place-making and making in place. Contiguous with establishing a sense of place in the Country, I situate and make myself a place in the wider world and conceptually by exhibiting artworks.

The co-curation of and exhibiting in the exhibition *field working slow making* (2016) was an attempt to bring some of the stories and voices of the creative region of the Country into an urban gallery and to share with makers who have similar concerns. The slow makers of this exhibition all have creative regions—places where they are entangled and spend time diffracting their histories and collecting stories. For example, Story has a long-term engagement with Deep River on the southern Western Australian coast and Searles wanders the Wheatbelt and the arid lands.

### *Can bricolage be my onto-epistemology?*

Kincheloe and Berry’s (2004) “bricolage model” (as cited in Helms, 2011, p. iii) is described as “epistemologically and ontologically rich....a position adopted by the researcher/bricoleur that is turned toward process and not the object” (Lambotte & Meunier, 2013, p. 87) , this aligns with my process orientated praxis. Their bricolage model, power driven and shaped by social theory, is richer and more complex than Lévi-Strauss’ (1966) structuralist ‘how-to’. By adopting and adapting a similar but more relational bricolage model, I have a framework within which to begin to







Figure 20: 20161024\_153715, digital photograph, my desk, 2016.

account for the way I walk in this world and the process by which I produce/understand/ make knowledge. That is, the implications of bricolage on poiesis as an example of my way of life. 20161024\_153715, (Figure 20) is a transient bricolage of poiesis, an annotated reading, some clay beads and a tangled ball of plant fibre string—the string of my experience and beads of gleaned knowing that may adorn it. This is an example of materialising of my thoughts and my emerging understanding of the how and why of my making.

The creative practice-led research of my bricolage strives to be ethical and is based on a complex onto-epistemology that meanders to and fro. I understand that relationality cultivates a thick, rich accretion of theories and ideas. The accretions and the messy process become inherent in the outcomes as research, researcher and researched and are all intra-acting and entangled (Barad, 2007). Lambotte & Meunier opine that:

bricolage, and the mess that comes with it, [is] inherent to the research process...something a researcher lives with in their daily practice, fleeting or elusive and difficult to grasp, with material contingencies, personal orientations, trials and errors, hesitations, back and forth, etc. (2013, pp. 87-88)

The thick, messy process of my research has become entangled in my daily life as a bricoleuse.

Bricolage is how I conceive my becoming: how I conceive of my way of walking around in the world and the bodies of knowledges around me—my ethico-onto-epistemology. This is my ethical research approach, my conceptual framework, a methodology and a method. I do not imagine myself in my hybrid praxis, instead I attempt to account for the relational process in which I construct reality through my stories and my making.

Bricolage is a “technology of justification” (Kincheloe, McLaren, et al., 2011, p. 169) with what both Murphy (2012b); and Nelson (2013b, p. 33) describe as “theory imbricated within practice”. However, I suggest that bricolage is a way of theorising my praxis where theory and process are intertwined and intercalated rather than imbricated.





Figure 21: 20170612\_160117, digital photograph, Yalgorup National Park, 2017.



Figure 22: I5136, digital photograph, Yalgorup National Park, 2016.

20170612\_160117, (Figure 21) pictures shells that are imbricated (overlap and lay in a similar direction) on the beach, like theory imbricated in practice. I5136 (Figure 22) shows the interstices between the shells formed by their curves with the intercalated fossils. These intercalated (overlapping interbedded layers in an ecotone) of fossil shells are deposited randomly within interbedded layers instead of overlapping in the same direction in the Holocene Lake Preston Coquina approx. 5000yrs old.

Previously, I have asserted that “bricolage is both the constructed knowledge, the language to describe it, the praxis within which it is conceived and actualised” (Nykiel, 2010, p. iii) and the conceptual theory that supports my process of knowing what I assert I know; this echoes Kincheloe (2005).

Bricolage is a socially aware, multi-modal, experiential approach embedded and entangled amidst praxis, poiesis and resulting outcomes (Stewart, 2003a; Weinstein & Weinstein, 1992; Yardley, 2008). The bricoleuse is adaptive, socially engaged, aware, ethical, and creative. I use bricoles pieced together to form an open-ended, thick, rich, messy narratives in a space of not-knowing (Baas & Jacob, 2004) with a variety of visual languages. By reading diffractively and layering bricoles in a patchwork or plying them into lengths of string, existing theories and texts become tools and outcomes. These tools fashioned from the existing frameworks may be used to create what I would describe as new bricolages of ethical thinking in being—knowledge.

As bricoleuse, I am inquiring through tinkering with collections of modified natural materials and hand-made paper, recycled cloth and ceramic objects—a bricolage of possibilities. Some of my collections are hoarded, in a shared studio space documented in 20170517\_170839 (Figure 23). The bricolage, for example *Yarning Circles* (2016) is a dynamic installation that offers waypoints for an audience to interact in the space of the gallery where the phenomena of a place I create can be related. *Samples of Place* (2017), exhibited in *Between the Sheets* (2017), (Figure 24) at Gallery Central, WA is a tactile artist book constructed from reclaimed sample bags coloured with soil and plant material from the Country. This is a good example of tinkering with the gleaned materials of the Country to materialise the phenomena of being in a place, making. The





pages/bags were much handled on opening night. Tania Bruguera (2015) regards the artist as initiator, audience as activators, the artworks as case studies and exhibition/distribution as a network of experiences. The collections of objects in the exhibition may be construed as case studies, sensitive to audience participation/engagement. These

demonstrate my not-knowing loop; a multi-perspectival, non-prescribed way of making sense of the world, privileging the materials including the space and the materiality of process and asking questions rather than anticipating outcomes. My sense of place leads to place-making and is developed from long-term haptic relations and slow making amidst spaces in the arid lands and around the Yalgorup Lakes. Initially, these places were spaces of not-knowing where I desired to form and nurture relationships and map my environment. There are still periods of I don't know/chaos within this dynamic place-making when new questions form in everyday happenings or in large scale events like bushfires.

These times and spaces may be in flux and chaotic, where the outcomes are unknowable or indeterminate in the tacit looping act of making and its process. Braidotti (2010a, p. 214) discusses Deleuze's thoughts on the "generative force of 'Chaos'", where virtually,

all is possible. This chaotic space may become an entangled loop for bringing the possibilities of forms into being along with other unanswered questions.



Figure 23: 20170517\_170839, my collections in a studio space in the postgrad lab, 2015-2017.





### *questioning the bricolage*

In analysing bricolage and naming myself a bricoleuse, I am challenging the premise of bricolage as a dynamic, decentred, messy approach that actively makes a non-

prescriptive position in the liminal contact zones between methods and disciplines, echoing the post-qualitative ideas of St Pierre (2015a). This becomes problematic, but it is also my justification for quoting so many theorists, all who have their own thoughts which I attempt to piece together in a rich but less prescriptive, deterritorialised way than an in-depth analysis of a small number of thinkers from the same school. It may be said that a bricoleuse resists categorisations (Murray, 2014, p. 160) and as such, practices deterritorialisation (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2010).

Addressing a similar premise, Kincheloe, McLaren, et al. (2011, p. 163) suggest that “to lay out a set of fixed characteristics of the position is contrary to the desire of...theorists to avoid the production of blue-prints of sociopolitical and epistemological beliefs” (p. 163), again post-qualitative. This desire may become a “lifetime commitment to study, clarify, sophisticate, and add to the bricolage” (Kincheloe, 2001, p. 681) that emerges when picking through the debris of various schools of thought. Engaging in new relationships with the bricoles of thought, bricolage becomes an ongoing process of deterritorialisation and border crossings. This may offer an “idiosyncratic take” (Kincheloe, McLaren, et al., 2011, p. 163), as a subjective inquiry through my self-reflexive

diffraction. However, this critical subjectivity and its messiness is criticised for a perceived lack of validity and rigour (Kincheloe, 2001; Kincheloe, McLaren, et al., 2011; Lambotte & Meunier, 2013) and as an easy way out of theorising research. However, I refute this criticism by agreeing that bricolage “resists its placement in concrete as it promotes its elasticity” (Kincheloe, McLaren, et al., 2011, p. 168) to deal with the



Figure 24: I3584, Annette Nykiel, *Samples of Place* (detail) 2017, plant and earth pigment dyed mineralogical sample bags. Collection of the Artspace Mackay.





complexity of the phenomena of and within research (Lambotte & Meunier, 2013) and to experience this from different informed viewpoints. Phenomena are theorised, in notions of new materialism, where there are parallels with the desire to avoid blue-prints. Bricolage and new materialism in attempting to resist epistemological blue-prints and linguistic paradigms begin to address the paradox of a bricoleuse's self-analysis and are an implication of my research approach and my emerging praxical knowledge.



Figure 25: *I7386*, is it enough to look through a bricoleuse's lens and call this bricolage? Documentary digital photograph, Old Police Station, 2015.

### *questions of bricolage*

Diverse ways of research need different ways of reading the emergent knowledge. The bricoleuse often uses signs and symbols in new ways, which necessitate new language and new myths. The process and the audit trail of research and its documentation may map this, sometimes becoming the artwork, such as example, *I7386* (Figure 25), a digital photograph taken to document an assemblage of disparate fragments from an old settlement, a town of thousands of people in its heyday. It speaks of boom and bust and the eventual demise of the town, now marked only by broken bricks and glass. The silver fork, no longer polished, speaks of the prosperous times and the gold that bought it. Now, tarnished and rust stained, it lies amongst the rusty 'pressed tin' bearing motifs of India that replaced the flattened kerosene tin walls for the more affluent and the tiles that replaced dirt floors for those who struck it lucky. A woman's touch, perhaps, with the vase fashioned of wire filled with an elegant posy of wildflowers, now dust. There is an irony in the lens surviving intact in a sea of broken glass, but it becomes a symbol of a way of seeing. This assemblage has

become a bricolage which I have photographed and from which I spin a yarn to tease out different meanings. I collected some of the fragments and added them to the leftover bits and pieces from someone else's collection. This way of reading can also be applied to a natural collection, like that washed up by the waves of *I0503* (Figure 26).







Figure 26: *I0503*, documentary digital photograph, Yalgorup National Park, 2015.



Figure 27: *I1097, homage to Henry Moore* (2016), a collection/bricolage of rocks, documentary digital photograph, studio.

This photograph is a fragment of my situated noticing of this collection of flotsam; reconfigured by the next wave. I include this fragment, this photograph, as a documentary image but also a creative production and a materialisation of my process as a bricoleuse. I posit that from an interrelational, post humanist point of view, the sea is the agent affording this very ephemeral collection and my intra-action in noticing it allows it to emerge. However, I am unclear whether it could be called a bricolage. Perhaps, noticing the action of the sea is the process of the bricoleuse and the output need not be a bricolage. Compare this scenario to *I1097, homage to Henry Moore* (2016) (Figure 27). This naming has parallels with naming geographic features by colonising explorers as a way of staking a claim for ownership. While, these are not the same objects as those in *I0503* (Figure 26), they may have been, if I had beaten the wave and gathered them instead of photographing them. Assembling these found objects and titling them to recognise them as an artwork, can be construed as constructing an assemblage, which suggests that the agent/actor should be human. But is it a bricolage? These stones are disparate fragments of sedimentary and igneous rock types and different geological processes, bits and pieces eroded from the land and deposited on the beach, so they could be thought of as bricoles of the geological process. I as bricoleuse, found them interesting and recognised them, so they became potentially useful. I gathered and assembled them to create a form that reminded me of Henry Moore's work; arguably a bricolage.

### *Entanglement in place*

As a bricoleuse, I have a desire to make a place as a form of praxis, and as somewhere to practice (Vaughan, 2008). I wander through located spaces of “encompassing reality” (Casey, 2001, p. 404) accreting embodied experience amid my ways of knowing and place-making. I tell herstories/myths of my sense making that imagine that place like the yarns above. Sense making is a form of knowing that emerges through the reflexive narrative (verbal/written) told about what I come to know about an embodied experience (Lambotte & Meunier, 2013).



The human sense of place is a form of sense making and may be described as synaesthetic, where movement, and touch, sight, hearing, and smell, are combined with anticipation and imaginative purpose (Relph, 2009). It is an internal recognition of the many possibilities of a familiar space in the world, built from the appreciation and contemplative observation/relating of that space. This sense making is used, with my imagination and memories, to find patterns, collect haptic observations and tell stories about familiar spaces. I use this relating and my imagination to create stories, to realise meaning and materialise thought in the praxis of “located making” (Vaughan, 2008, p. 2). I understand the connected synaesthetic sense of place, eutierria as a “culturally informed mapping...a deeper wayfinding” (Weldon, 2014, pp. 24-25) in the midst of the body where the distinctions of internal and external disappear. In the contact zone of touching and sensing, we are also being touched and sensed (Rodaway, 1994).

Describing a mutual entanglement of people and self in place, Somerville (2013) is in agreeance with Thomas Gieryn (2000, p. 471), that place is a “spiral of material form and interpretative understandings”. This entanglement is a place to localise mythopoetical inventions, and interventions, and devious subversions. There are parallels with the double-helix as a visualisation of embodied reality but also with the hermeneutic process of Cora Marshall’s (2010) double helix praxis-exegesis model and Braidotti talking of Kelly’s (1979) “double-edged vision...[of] critique and creativity” (as cited in Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2012, p. 22). Braidotti continues, in the context of embodiment and embeddedness, that this “double genealogy makes my own relationship to materialism a lifelong engagement with complexities and inner contradictions” (p. 23). These are some of the entangled looping complexities and tensions of forming some understanding of the material engagement in place.

My engagement can be seen in the work *My Ragged, Plant Dyed, Bed Sheets Coiled into the Distanced Lakes of the Beeliar Wetlands* (2015-16) shown in the *Direct Address* exhibition in Wagga Wagga in 2016 *I1486* (Figure 28). This was a group exhibition, carried in a suitcase from the picket lines at the Beeliar Wetlands, WA to Wagga Wagga, NSW to “condense the intensity of feelings and actions around a single environmental issue, explored through our varied creative methods... to articulate the demands and responsibilities of working with the Beeliar Wetlands” (Phillips, 2016b).





A place on the edge of the Beeliar Wetlands has been a home, a waypoint and rest stop (2012-2014) for me to return to from the migration of FIFO shifts. Like the birds who visit the wetlands, I returned on a regular cycle to nurture my children. An embodied

dialogue with this place has emerged from years of living, walking, relating, gleaning windfall debris, and slow making within the wetland surrounds. The worn cotton sheets from my bed were dyed with the essences of plants from this place and plied while I was there. This work focussed on environmental issues of a particular place and how I could express my concerns as a maker to a wider audience with the intention of a more nuanced meaning than the activism of standing in front of a bulldozer or chaining myself to a tree. I was quiet and unheroic but passionate in my making in place about place.

### *place-makers*

Simryn Gill is a contemporary artist who moves between Australia and Malaysia, she is gatherer, a wanderer, a nomad, exploring 'in-between-ness' and making about place. Writing about the art of Gill, Catherine de Zegher (2013, p. 75) points out that "often art lies not so much in making as in simply seeing. In noticing. In being still", in creating space for feelings of eutierria. Gill considers place to be a verb "to [exist] in our doings" (de Zegher, 2013, p. 260). I agree, and add that place-making is a

doing-knowing (Nelson, 2013a; Schon, 1983), a way of understanding and as such place-making becomes a making taking place to make a sense of place. Like Gill, I make myself into place within the meshwork of the larger space of the world.



Figure 28: I1486, *My Ragged, Plant Dyed, Bed Sheets Coiled into the Distanced Lakes of the Beeliar Wetlands*, (2015-16). Transient installation on the sand plains of the Perth Basin. Annette Nykiel, digital photograph.





*meshworks, rhizomes and mycelium*



Figure 29: 20161224\_095053, documentary digital photograph, Yalgorup National Park, 2016.

Ingold (2011) appropriated and then recontextualised the term “meshwork” from Henri Lefebvre. Lefebvre (1991) used meshwork in an architectural context, describing the netlike paths of animals and people in the marginal open spaces around named places, specifically villages and towns. He suggested that pathways and traces of passage are more important in this spatio-temporal sense than the travellers that make the pathways. However, it is the wayfarers in their wandering who mythologise and reanimate these traces of passage when telling stories of the journey (1991). I would liken Lefebvre’s pathways to Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘nomadic trajectories’ which they suggest “*distributes people (or animals) in an open space* [original emphasis], one that is indefinite and noncommunicating.” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 380). I am a wanderer who tells stories of my wayfaring,

Ingold’s meshwork are interweaving lines of possibility (2011), “trails *along* [original emphasis] which life is lived” (2007a, p. 81) rather than nomadic trajectories that travel point to point, to specific destinations. The meshwork travels through the world, specifically the ‘weather-world’ not across it. 20161224\_095053 (Figure 29) is an example of trails in the midst of the weather-world that I notice in my wandering.

Weather-world is Ingold’s (2011) assertion that to be on the Earth’s surface is to be entangled in, related to and experiencing “the substantial flows and aerial fluxes” (p. 96) of the weather—wind, sun, the water cycle. I imagine this as a world that is constantly interrelating, and communicating where surfaces—skin and earth—are liminal spaces and contact zones in flux rather than linear concrete boundaries. All of which may affect what I forage and the questions that arise from my wondering and wandering. The weather-world is a place where fragments of experience can be gleaned when wandering and then pieced together and spun into a yarn or plied into lengths of string, which can be woven into meshworks, both metaphorically and literally.

The interweaving lines of the meshwork have many similarities with Deleuze’s “lines of flight” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 5), or movements of deterritorialisation or





Figure 30: I5688c, digital photograph, Bunbury, 2017.

reterritorialisation which are always in the middle and bunched together rather than interconnecting with a beginning and an end, like the trails to the left of 20161224\_095053 (Figure 29). I5688c (Figure 30) is a bundle of wireweed bunched together like lines of flight. The yarn I spun about the lens is an intertextual narrative of reterritorialisation.

There is an analogy here with a knotted tangle on a thread where the thread forms the knot but is not contained by it (Ingold, 2011). Deleuze and Guattari talk of this web of lines and knots, a meshwork, in terms of the rhizome like that in *rhizome of Iris spp.* (Figure 31), however, Ingold (2003) prefers the fungal mycelium of I1124 (Figure 32) where a constant two-way flow of materials sustains boundaries which are not absolute. For this research, I will use Ingold's theorisation of the meshwork. I acknowledge Lefebvre and Deleuze and Guattari and their meshworks and rhizomes, however I was introduced to the meshwork through Ingold and find much commonality with the relational nature of his mycorrhizal conceptualisations. I apply this conceptualisation by noticing and wondering about the traces of mycelium I1124 (Figure 32), left on limestone after the bushfire, as these tend to be a more indeterminate shape than the rhizome, (Figure 31). It is in the midst of the mycorrhizal meshwork that the wayfarer wanders.

For the wayfarer, place is more self-contained; a series of connecting waypoints on the map, perhaps a home for a time. Possibilities. Embedding place, is a series of happenings, journeys, traces, stories, an appreciation of connections and mycelium rather than a dwelling (Carter, 2009), or building, or city. This wayfaring is fluid, relational and temporally multi-dimensional—slow time, physical time spent, memory revisited, value added. Time is circular, enfolded, entangled, related in stories that loop, where other voices interject, activating and enlivening the happenings to become events. 'Nowhere' becomes 'now here', as Gill observes "there is no way home...[ellipses in text] home starts here" (as cited in de Zegher, 2013, p. 76). For Gary Snyder and myself, "nature is not a place to visit it is home" (2003, p. 7), and somewhere my knowing accretes or erodes into knowledge.







Figure 31: 20170601\_084325, rhizome of *Iris* spp., digital photograph.

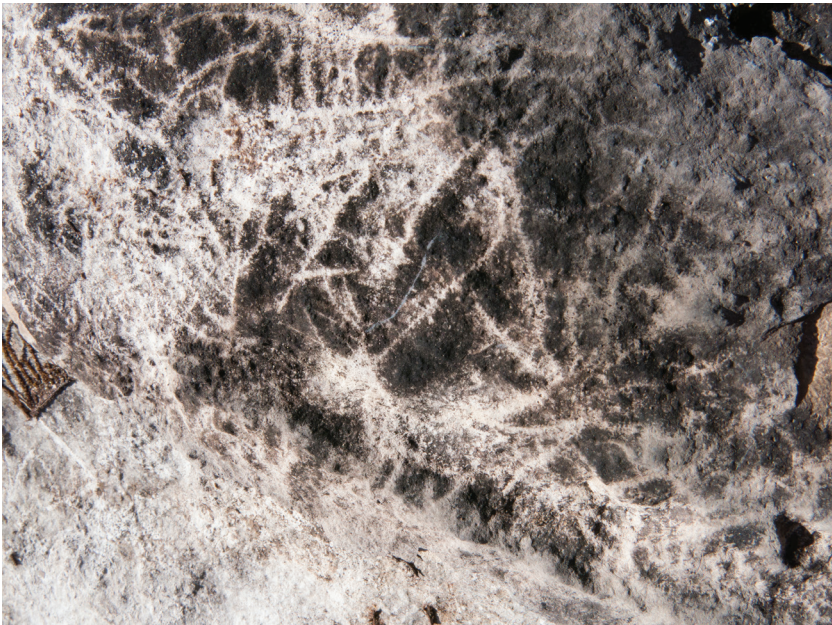


Figure 32: I1124, digital photograph, traces of mycelium left on limestone after the bushfire.

### *situated knowledge*

“Situated knowledge” is a notion of Haraway’s (1991) that Barrett builds on suggesting that it “operates in relation to established knowledge and thus has the capacity to extend or alter what is known” (2007b, p. 145). Braidotti has similar thoughts in supporting a situated recontextualising of theory, commenting “nowadays, there can be no reading of Canguilhem without taking into account Haraway’s work; no Derrida without Butler or Spivak; no Foucault without Stuart Hall and no Deleuze without materialist feminists” (as cited in Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2012, p. 28). While I also acknowledge and pay my respects to the ‘elders’ of Western thought; my scholarly forbears and to the contemporary thinkers with their differing world views, most importantly I acknowledge and respect the Country and its human/non-human inhabitants. In paying homage, I am connected to and entangled with their thinking and situating my knowledge in relation to theirs. My reading of their work is embodied and empowered in my knowing, neither diminished or privileged, but becoming a complex bricolage of fluid hybridity—a situated knowledge.

My story is threaded and entangled amongst these embodied voices. St Pierre (2015a) has some issues with the term embodied as it has, in the past, legitimised a mind/body split. Ingold (2011) reminds us that the weather sweeps the body up in its atmospheric currents rather than becoming enfolded in our embodiment within the weather-world. I usually use the term entanglement instead of embodiment to imply a more monist understanding.

The classic thinkers are not immutable, but the ideas may be reiterated and recontextualised when experientially situated in the midst of the ideas of thinkers with different axiologies. Kincheloe, told his students “to wrestle with his ideas (and the ideas of others) apply them, critique them and move them forward, discarding ones that were no longer of use” (as cited in Ali-khan & Siry, 2012, p. 497). Another possibility is to allow these different interpretations to sit side by side amongst other concepts or indeed other paradigms. Fruit in a fruit basket rather than apples and oranges in separate bags I5939 (Figure 33).



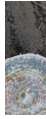


Acknowledgment of position is part of the protocol and a mark of respect and reciprocity in Indigenist and two-way research approaches and ways of living (Ashcroft, 2014; Wilson, 2008). There are also negotiations of power, position and privilege and their implications which Kincheloe and his school would expect to be critiqued and acknowledged in bricolage or critical pedagogy research (Kincheloe, McLaren, et al., 2011). Carey (2008, 2008a) discusses critical whiteness issues and expands Said's (1995) thoughts on power implications that have some parallels with those of Kincheloe and his school. Langton (1993), coming from an Indigenous point of view, unpacks Foucault's (1980) broader discussions of power and the power of knowledge and discourse. Understanding the ideas of these writers helps me to position myself and recognise my axiological lenses, which sit contiguous with my relational views and have implications for my agency in this research.

I have not engaged with the reductionist, constructivist arguments of Said and Bhabha except through writers like Moreton-Robinson (2004a, 2004b) and Kay Anderson and Colin Perrin (2008) in a contemporary Australian context. I prefer to conceptualise through the feminist relational arguments of Braidotti (2011) and Barad (2007). Somerville (2007, 2013) and Ashcroft (2014, 2015; Ashcroft & Kadhim, 2001) also write of postcolonial concerns and I relate to their ideas and their experiences. Anderson and Perrin (2008) use a concept of savagery based on Said's analysis of "a complicity between the formation of colonial knowledge and the exercise of colonial power in the discursive 'construction' of racialised Others" (p. 147). While they state that it is irrefutable that racial stereotypes and notions of savagery were used to support colonialist claims, the constructivist power that constructs the Other is overly generalised and simplistic. I build on this, suggesting all agents are changed by the character of and the anxiety of understanding relationships in all their fluid dynamism. Along the lines of Ashcroft's (2014) criticism of Moreton-Robinson and Barad's (Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2012) relationality with commonalities and differences sitting side by side, terms like savagery, colonialist and civilising become unhelpful and a more new materialist, material thinking is appropriate. In my relationships, agents include people (Indigenous and non-indigenous) and the environment of the place of the Country. It is from within this entanglement, as an agent, I speak on my own behalf.



Figure 33: *I5939, basket of fruit* (2017), hand plied balls of string in coiled basket, studio.





## *agency*

Agency in this research context, becomes the ability of an entanglement of possible activities enlivened by the flow of materials and energies to account for a situated position and to diffract this position amongst the relations of the entanglement (Ingold, 2007b). In this entanglement, agency is an enactment rather than a property like the waves depositing a collection on the beach, perhaps the collection in *I0503* (Figure 26).

Agency is “a matter of possibilities for reconfiguring entanglements....it is about the possibilities and accountability entailed in reconfiguring material-discursive apparatuses of bodily production, including the boundary articulations and exclusions that are marked by those practices” (Barad as cited in Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2012, p. 54). This entanglement may be likened to Haraway’s (1991) material-semiotic actor and may enfold objects of knowledge. As the accountable, critical agent and material-semiotic actor, I am aware of and acknowledge my situated position, power and my self-reflexivity/diffraction. My articulation has shifted from the anthropocentric, whether I am the object of knowledge or the reader and critic. This is ethical conduct for a researcher informed by theory and other relational world views and an implication of this research approach.

As a theoretical example, I piece together explanations of my relational knowing-being by interpreting the theories of Indigenist cultural studies, poststructuralist feminists and new materialists. I add richness and authenticity/validity to this bricolage by telling narrative yarns (auto/ethnobiographical) of my experience. I piece together textile metaphors and photographs and evoke deep time with geological descriptors while referencing the Country from where this understanding emerges.

In this chapter, I stopped at a waypoint on the audit trail to tell my conceptual story. The concept of bricolage was introduced and theorised as more than a methodology, which then blurred the lines between ontology, epistemology and methodology. I explained that bricolage may be undertaken by the bricoleur but that I define and claim the bricoleuse. ‘I’ as bricoleuse wanders as one with nomads and wayfarers and tinkers in two-way spaces between handling materials and text and is entangled in place as a place-maker within the meshwork of the world. As well as having a sense of place, I situate myself as an agent as part of my relational and ethical concerns.

In the next chapter, I will continue to wander through the meshwork of bricolage towards a more methodological space threaded with relationality of new materialism and marked by the travails of the wayfarer and the storyteller.



## *Chapter 3: A Bricoleuse's Methodological Way*



Having introduced bricolage as a conceptual approach in the last chapter, this chapter examines notions of bricolage as a multi-method approach of not-knowing, imagining and gleaning, bearing in mind the paradox raised in the previous chapter about deconstructing and categorising. A bricolage methodology is described as a process based and “epistemologically and ontologically rich” methodology (Lambotte & Meunier, 2013, p. 87). As a methodological approach, bricolage is only one of the bricoles within the overarching framework within the research praxis of the bricoleuse (Rogers, 2012). Bricolage as a methodology is made up of bricoles of other methodologies and methods and practices. In my practice the bricoles of methods include wandering, wondering, gleaning, tinkering, making-do, not-knowing, imagining and yarning. Fragments of the methodologies of auto/ethnobiographic narrative, critical thinking, practice-led research, nomadism, reterritorialisation are also tinkered with by the bricoleuse. As “methodological negotiators” (Kincheloe, McLaren, et al., 2011, p. 168), the bricoleur/se tinkers with the established research methods in the field to form valid dynamic contextual methods. “Tinkering is a high-level cognitive process involving construction and reconstruction” (p. 168). I have adopted the self-reflexive complexity of bricolage to enfold the research methods and practices I use. My research is relational, experiential and process based, and I utilise wandering, material thinking and ground truthing in the midst of field sites and transform these experiences through gathering, making and yarning. This non-linear methodology is entangled in my onto-epistemology and is an ethically appropriate explanation of my wayfaring and gleaning and how I relate and react in the non-urban places I make in the Country. Furthermore, bricolage is also the approach I adopt as a tool of the storyteller as I piece together yarns and diffract my situated and material and tacit knowing through the time, space and the social relation I find myself entangled in. During the processes of becoming, I situate in not-knowing gaps in liminal zones where other voices may interject to add different viewpoints to the story, but the bricolage is mine.





Figure 34: *PC020310*, out in the field, out Wanarn way, 2011.

The bricolage encompasses tacit knowing, yarning and other narratives. It is a way of thinking and materialising process through making as a form of practice-led research. Sometimes I use cloth and textile processes as a metaphor and to add a layer of tacit knowing. This aligns with the technical metaphor of bricolage as an overarching concept (Johnson, 2012) where I am focussed on process rather than artefact, and the borders between the conceptual and the methodological blur amidst the multi-modal approach to meaning making.

Bricolage, in this methodological context, is mapping and ground truthing in the field at a site like that documented in *PC020310* (Figure 34)—a pragmatic, critical and self-reflexive diffraction. I use what I can find within my entangled knowing and my complex, relational way of seeing and wandering around the world to investigate the possibilities of the indeterminate answers to the many questions I ask. Ranging widely outside disciplinary or cultural borders, I glean concepts and materials that I find interesting; I investigate and follow up these hunches, to connect ideas and materials—visually, spatially and linguistically. Stitching mythopoetic ‘maps’ to piece together these fragments; I annotate, redistribute, tell stories and make myths. This folding and refolding of the metaphorical cloth and its mapping creates meaning and makes unique connections between the fragments and different features on the map that now lie beside each other. For example, *16062017102755-0009* (Figure 35), a contour map of a surface pieced together by mining software from photographs of a place, is an explorative map that enfolds geological mapping techniques with mosaics of photographs documenting wildflowers.

Diffraction and mapping is a transient reterritorialisation in this context. This reterritorialisation allows me to explain new findings that do not easily fit into existing theories and I add rich layers of myth and localised creative inventions to the cartography. These mythopoetic narratives may take on the form of a yarn like the one below. They entangle how I practice as a bricoleuse in the Country with the implications of this as a research approach and methodology. By using







SURPAC MINEX GROUP

Sheet 3  
Red walk  
AJN

Scale: 1:	25755	Plan No.	Date: 01-Jan-01
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SURPAC - Surpac Minex Group

clip1\_dtm\_01

Figure 35: 16062017102755-0009, digital image, 2009.



the bottle top, as an example of reterritorialisation, a story can be gleaned, and a yarn spun based on that cultural artefact. A rusty bottle top from a beer bottle, pictured in

*P4070274* (Figure 36), is found in the remnants of an old campfire.

I have repurposed a ubiquitous symbol/artefact of the bush and its culture—the bottle top. In the yarns, it is a metaphor to set up a sense of place. Anyone who has spent time out in the bush knows the intrinsic nature of alcohol consumption in these areas and the problems it fuels regardless of race or gender. I could relate anecdotes of the shearers who had two long necks for breakfast, one for smoko..., the labourers and stockmen who have never touched a drop and the teachers who ordered their wine in boxes. I can tell you it is a six-pack trip from here to there and that that favour will cost you a carton. Mahood (2000) reflects on this culture in the context of her father. Alcohol testing is mandatory before entering mine sites or boarding some FIFO flights and a role carried out by the local highway patrol. The local pub is often a meeting place to socialise, relax, do business and tell stories.

A yarn recalls local breweries now subsumed by multi-nationals but also by the rise of the boutique microbrewery. How beer bottles and tops have

changed in size and shape. Gone, in the bush anyway, are ‘king browns’ with bottle tops that required a bottle opener, teeth or a crooked elbow—large, strong brown glass bottles with the brewery name embossed and usually consumed ‘Kimberley cold’—room



Figure 36: *P4070274*, documentary digital photograph, Great Central Road, 2010.







Figure 37: I3633, documentary digital photograph, Great Central Road, 2014.

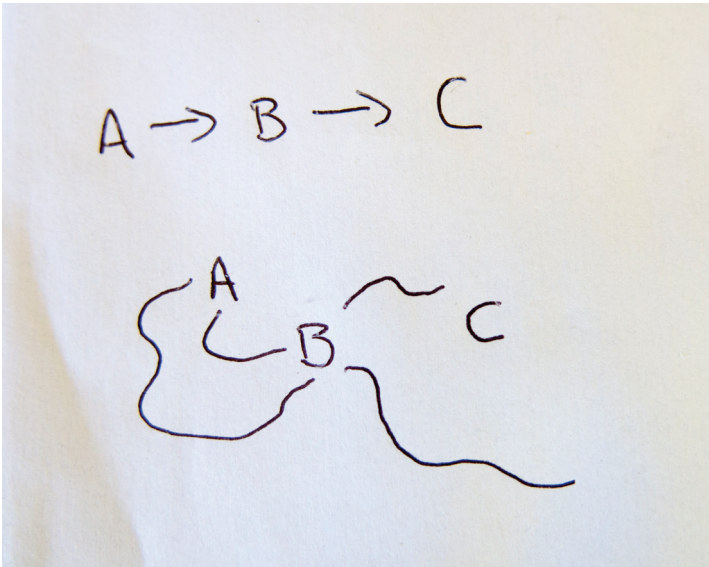


Figure 38: I5937, a sketch of possible outcomes.

temperature. I3633 (Figure 37), pictures an old king brown embossed with a manufacturer's name; melted in a campfire but, broken, jagged and potentially lethal.

They are a lethal weapon when smashed and jagged, as deadly as the snake, *Pseudechis australis* of the same name. The 750ml bottles were banned when local alcohol restrictions were imposed in some remote communities. Now, in some places in the bush, any beverages in glass are unavailable and some communities and mine sites are 'dry'—no alcohol allowed. Not all the glass or the bottletops come from king browns, there are also the remains of 'stubbies' with a ring pull flip top, smaller, brown and squat but still holding more than the 'long necks' (WA vernacular) of today. The long necks of clear, green or brown glass and twist tops with plastic seals are both single use, no longer hoarded by home brewers as the glass is too thin. Back on the coast of WA, it is now rare to find coloured beach glass, smooth and frosted, from long years of tumbling in the ocean. As a child, I collected many beach glass jewels from amongst the sea wrack.

The narrative about the bottletop may be a mythopoetic story; an art work or perhaps a comment on the materiality and historicity of place. It is an intertextual narrative. A methodological tool (Yardley, 2008), but also an artefact of the methodological process pieced together from memory/experience and existing knowledge to emerge in a new form complemented by photographs. This is a form of reterritorialisation in this liminal space of the bricoleuse; where new narratives and new possibilities may emerge from the fragments of the known and experienced.

Each bricoleuse's tool, whether it is method, material, technique or idea is 'preconstrained' by its history; by what it has previously signified and how it was used, but these tools and their uses can be reimagined. The bottletop is no longer keeping liquid contained but is now used as a cultural artefact or a mordant in the dyepot by myself and other artists like Searles and India Flint. The effect of choosing to use any particular tool changes all the following possibilities for the task at hand. The choice of every tool changes the context of the whole, as opposed to following a set of instructions or prescribed method that results in a complete dataset or outcome. So, instead of 'B' following 'A' with an outcome of 'C', if 'B' is chosen to follow 'A' then 'C' is but one possibility dependent on the history of 'A' and its context next to



'B', as drawn in Figure 38. Within the bricoleuse's toolkit there are a number of possible methods for the process of bricolage. A cloth sample bag, for example, could be used to collect a mineralogical sample and sent to the laboratory and destroyed in the sample preparation, but if prenumbered and out of sequence it is discarded. Wandering in the bush, I find a discarded bag now stained reddish like the soil it has lain in. I consider taking a photo of it and leaving it there. I now know where it is and could return to pick it up later if I can think of a use for it. I could spin a yarn about it and other sample bags I have known. But I pick it up. It is too worn to be used to carry things or to make strong string, but sections of it could be added to the patchwork I am stitching. However, it is of a similar size to other bags I have been collecting to make an artist book and eventually it becomes part of *Samples of Place* (2017) (Figure 24). This is an example of how I apply my methodological approach when I am in a not-knowing state, and asking open-ended questions as part of sustaining relationships, which are renegotiated with time and place. I wander and wonder reimagining possibilities with a reflexive awareness of my position, my materials, their materiality and the tools in my toolbox.

### *Categories of bricolage*

The theories of bricolage and the ideas of the theorists equally colour and add richness to the intellectual, interpretative, methodological bricolage. However, more importantly, the diffractive self-reflexivity, the position and criticality of the bricoleuse affects the research and the narrative. Rogers (2012) builds on Denzin and Lincoln (2005) and discusses some of the different approaches to methodological bricolage.

In summary, Roger's (2012) categories of bricolage entail:

- × interpretative—positioned, reflexive, intertextual interpretation, where the researcher recognises that personal her/history and cultural background shape her/his point of view. A reflexive piecing together of the research that acknowledges the complexity of inquiry and allows for multiple interpretations from a number of relational viewpoints, for example intersectionalist and autoethnographical.
- × methodological—contextual not-knowing loops, making do and open-ended questions fuel an emerging creative inquiry where fluid, rich critical interconnections are created with “aesthetic and material tools” (p. 5) of the bricoleuse's craft.
- × theoretical—“plurality of complexity” (p. 9) from diverse readings amidst multiple theoretical perspectives and post-structuralist viewpoints.
- × political—critical, positional and power sensitive researchers and critical pedagogues who “develop counter-hegemonic forms of inquiry” (p. 6) on social justice platforms.
- × narrative—recognises that research is a contextual ideological discourse that shapes knowledge. These researchers adopt fragmented multi-voiced narratives to disrupt common cultural tropes.

The separation into territorialised categories became increasing problematic for me, however, I surmise a feasible way around this is to view the categories as interwoven bricoles within the larger bricolage of an ethico-onto-epistemological quilt, where theoretical patches are stitched together to form iterative patterns.





Rogers (2012) admits that his examples often utilise more than one type of bricolage methodology. For example, Annette Markham (2005) is described as both a narrative and a political bricoleur with her commentary on American college men. Her writing has some parallels with Braidotti's (2011) nomadic subject who blurs the boundaries between theory and fiction in complex mythopoetic narratives that I would describe as yarns.

Jones (2013) talks about arts-based collaboration implying a transdisciplinary bricolage approach, which includes first person narrative, autoethnography and textual bricolages of family members pieced together from images, artefacts and documents. When theorising about first person narratives in creative contexts, Jones (2013) and Stewart (2003a) use the term 'textural bricolage' and write about the intertextuality of their differing methodologies of first person narrative, autobiography, life writing as bricolage. Intertextuality is in this context a methodological bricolage I utilise in the yarn about the bottle-top, for example, as just one of my methodologies within the thick, messy indeterminate methodology of bricolage.

Design as bricolage is expanded by Louridas (1999) and Yee and Bremner (2011) who discuss methodological bricolage within the indeterminacy of practice-led design research. Rogers' model with its categories and boundaries overly simplifies the complexity of bricolage and discourages the thickness and messiness of the process. There is some scope for this messiness in Yee and Bremner's (2011) "pick and mix" (p. 1) approach to method construction and models of inquiry contiguous with investigating questions raised in practice-led research which they describe as methodological bricolage.

Pedagogues, social actions theorists and post-constructionists led by Kincheloe (2001, 2005, 2008) further develop Denzin and Lincoln's (2001) concept of bricolage. They theorise bricolage methodology with the much cited phrase "pragmatic, strategic and self-reflexive" (Nelson et al cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 4) practice using multi-perspectival methods from different disciplines and points of view to facilitate a rigorous qualitative critical research approach (Yee & Bremner, 2011). Kincheloe (2005, 2008)





Figure 39: I5583, documentary digital photograph, Wanarn, 2014.

maintains that bricolage is an active, contextual, critical multi-method methodology which builds knowledge from the complex relationships, processes and connections between phenomena in social research. As such, it is strongly influenced by the position of the researcher and their ways of seeing and is therefore relational. This parallels the Indigenist research methods of Wilson (2008) who maintains that research is a way of forming relationships and bridging the distance between “aspects of our cosmos and ourselves” (2008, p. 14); a respectful relationship with the researcher, the researched and the research. Bricolage as a border crossing methodology is complex, relational and takes into account the position and processes of the researcher and the environment of the research.

### *How does bricolage work for me?*

The bricolages that I make can be many things and combine a number of methods within the methodology but usually include tacit and process based forms of knowing. They may be formal, in an exhibition where bits and pieces made or gleaned in the field, by myself and the other exhibiting artists are assembled/ installed/collected in a gallery setting, for example, *field working slow making* (2016) or *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes* (2017). In both these exhibitions, I took a toolbox that included a collection of bits and pieces and artefacts I had made in the field, not-knowing what I would find in the space or how I would relate to the work of the other artists. Over several days, I created arrangements (installed objects/drawings/assemblages) of my bricoles as a dialogue between myself, the other exhibited works, and the space. Bricolages may be informal—the spontaneous arrangement of collections in the field which may then be gathered and reimagined in the gallery or studio. They may be process based or transient assemblages. I4642 (Figure 13), is a process based collection. I5583 (Figure 39) is a transient assemblage of partially hand plied string wound around a stick exhumed by the grader from the aeolian sand and ferruginous lag of the shifting dune slope, adjacent to the roadside.







Figure 40: I3781, *Beach Fragments* (2017), a mixed media bricolage.



Figure 41: I6084, string and the earth pigmented sample bags from which some of it was made, Old Police Station, 2014.

Bricolages may be formed of the materials found in situ and the basic ‘tools’ I carry with me, where the installation or assemblage is created from the bricoles (bits and pieces) and the tools. *I3781 Beach Fragments* (2017) (Figure 40) for example, includes pieces of hand plied string, fibre from which string may be plied and handmade books, pages still blank, all of which may arguably be tools but have been repurposed as bricoles within this bricolage.

I arrive at field site, either gallery or a studio site, not certain of what I may find or how what I have will be used in my making. Each of my creations takes place in a different field site, even if it is a space I have used before, because the time and conditions, and what I carry with me and glean from around me are different. These materials, tools and the skills I have learned from being a long-term bricoleuse are used imaginatively, innovatively, to begin to inform my sense of this place. Just as different threads may be plied into a continuous entangled string. *I6084* (Figure 41) is an example of the many different threads that may make up string.

The bricoleuse carries a tool kit, which includes as yet unimagined tools to make unique connections. In my toolbox are a toolkit of methods of place-making, not-knowing, imagining, wandering, mapping, gleaning and gathering from which I make do with what I find to tinker with while making in place. From haptically relating to the space I find myself in, I map the sustainable possibilities and begin to glean things that may come in handy, bricoles left over from other projects like discarded sample bags, well used calico dropsheets, bottle-tops, windfall plant materials, fallen branches and drill spoil. I rarely buy anything new. By reimagining and repurposing these things and utilising my craft based skills I often dye the cloth I use. From this, I may make string, which might then become a ball for my collection, a basket or a bag. Or the cloth may be stitched with the string into a patchwork or onto a quilt. Or pulped to make paper. The plant fibres may be dyed, plied or pulped or used as a source of dye. The earthen drill spoil may prove useful to colour cloth or fibre, or to be dampened and shaped into beads and vessels and fired.



The installation of my work needs consideration and some contextualisation to place-making and making in place: Elaine Clocherty is a local artist who installs plant windfall, prunings and other natural materials in specific site based works. Her works are installations as they hug the local topography (mapping). It is (female) artists such as Olga Cironis and Clocherty who have approached *Sculpture by the Sea* to propose on-site residencies—their practices have become socially engaged to different degrees—the public helps to supply material these artists create work from in situ (Nien Schwarz, personal communication, 21 October 2017). For example, during the 2017 *Sculpture by the Sea*, Cironis worked on site, weaving donated human hair (Olga Cironis, personal communication, March 2017). When I am working in a public context like the Shopfront (2016) residency, people often bring me fibre or cloth to make string with. When I conduct workshops, I often point out the materials that can be foraged from the locale, for example, there are New Zealand flax and cordyline plants on campus at ECU whose fallen leaves can be retted to yield fibre for string, paper and weaving. There are also four or five *Eucalyptus spp.* whose leaves and bark have the potential to yield a variety of dye colours, and bottlebrush flowers in season.

Ideas like Bolt's "materialising practices" (2004) expanding on Heidegger's notions of handling and Barrett's "material processes" are other diffractive tools to add to wandering and wondering, imagining and not-knowing. The materialising practice articulates and validates the craft based process/studio methodologies and as such may become problematic to St Pierre's (2015b) post qualitative inquiry. I acknowledge the paradox inherent to theorising bricolage and its methodology, and my making, and endeavour to find ways that they may sit contiguously amidst the meshwork or in the fruit basket.



## *The cartography of new materialism*

I use bricolage as a kind of mapping, and mapping as a methodological tool. I repurpose the skills I honed as a reconnaissance geologist—a problem to solve using what is at hand, the thrill of unearthing understanding, of mixing what I know and what I observe and processing them to tell a plausible new story; often unexpected. Now, we have fruit salad. The field work of scouting around and exploring, observing and feeling and relating to the Country, homing in and bringing my attention back to what was different,

potentially important. *I5002* (Figure 42), documents friable, oxidised clays of an eroded rock face which can be interpreted geologically but also hold possibilities for pigments to dye or mark cloth. The coloured clays suggest connections to deep time and to other places where I have mapped a similar geological assemblage, a form of relational meshwork. Like the pit documented in *I6537* (Figure 80), the various lithological units are often fragmented and eroded and may be considered as bricoles.

In mapping the complex relational meshwork of ‘I’, there are few linear dichotomies. I am not just one or the other, for example geologist or a maker but the materialisation of the dynamic intra-actions amongst them. It is the fundamental force of the tension of these intra-actions that gives ‘I’ shape. This shape is a flexible, malleable enactment of toing and froing with indeterminate edges and manifests in the string, the bags and the baskets that I make as an embodiment of the process of becoming ‘I’ and a cartography of my mind. As a bricoleuse’s tool, the string, a useful thing, is not defined by its prescribed use but mapped by its potential and therefore exemplifies the indeterminacy of the process of becoming, mapped by new materialism.

The self-described cartographer Braidotti (2014), may dispute Casey’s (2002) claim of cartographers being distanced representationalists, as she describes her cartographies as “politically informed readings...that aim at epistemic and ethical accountability for one’s locations in terms of both space (geopolitical or ecosophical



Figure 42: *I5002*, documentary photograph, 2014, Laverton area.





Figure 43: I5250, a collection of maps, digital photograph, Fremantle, 2017.

dimension) and time (historical, genealogical, and virtual dimensions)” (Braidotti, 2014, p. 227). I suggest that Braidotti’s cartographies of the present, based on Deleuze’s (1987), political and metaphorical mapping of events are neither distanced or representational but localised inventions with more similarities to Casey’s (2002) choragraphy than his cartography and as such are methodological as well as epistemic. As a bricoleuse, I map cartographically, enfolding both Casey’s chorographer and Braidotti’s cartographer. Field notebooks, a string plied with earthen beads to map my wayfaring, a mudmap and a geological map; tools and artefacts of this cartographic bricoleuse, I5250 (Figure 43).

Braidotti (2014), in her mapping of Deleuze, also annotates her maps from his ideas about nomadism and Ingold (2011) with his wayfarer, wanders the world redrawing maps of the meshworks. Arguably, my wandering, mapping and the ground truthing that accompanies it are methodological approaches comparable in some ways to phenomenological walking and the creative practices of Richard Long, John Ryan, Perdita Phillips, Mahood, Spencer and Flint and the wandering in place of Story and Searles. The meshwork and its pathways are a way for me to map and make place and practice art within a relational becoming in the world; the doing-being of a rich onto-epistemological process that is bricolage.

### *wayfarer*

The wayfarer is a wanderer who lives slowly, finding her way, amid the mycorrhizal meshwork rather than travelling across it. Ingold (2007a, pp. 15-16) observes that in wayfaring, by contrast to navigating/migrating:

one follows a path that one has previously travelled in the company of others, or in their footsteps, reconstructing the itinerary as one goes along. Only upon reaching his destination...can the traveller truly be said to have found his way.

This brings to mind Mahood’s (2005, p. 18) explanation of her movement:

over time, and in spite of my deep attachment to specific places, I’ve come to understand that my natural home is the space between places.





It's the track that connects one place to another, it's the Faultline  
between white and black, it's the border zone between city and country.  
A citizen of none of them, I have created a web of connections that  
keeps me moving between them.

I would suggest this is wayfaring and I find myself in similar spaces. While wayfaring may be seen as wandering without purpose, I propose that my purpose, as wayfarer, is my relational entanglement along a meshwork of pathways.

I posit that there are commonalities and differences between the wayfarer and the nomad I have described. The wayfarer contrasts with Deleuze and Guattari's metaphorical nomad who "distributes himself in a smooth space; he occupies, inhabits, holds that space; that is his territorial principle. It is therefore false to define the nomad by movement" (1987, p. 381). This territorial nomad is different to Ingold's wayfarer who is defined by movement and crosses boundaries and strays from common pathways like Mahood. "The wayfarer is continually on the move. More strictly, he is his movement" (Ingold, 2007a, p. 75), and could be seen to move in the smooth space of the weather-world (Ingold, 2011). However, I contend that the wayfarer may be nomadic in his wandering—and the nomad may use a wayfaring process—where both may follow previously travelled paths and return to the same place to rest. The nomad and the wayfarer live their lives along pathways of the meshwork—"along [original emphasis] a way of life" (Ingold, 2007a, p. 77).

Not all waypoints are resting places, they may become chaotic even on well-travelled pathways. On one such trip to visit an important site, I have been travelling with some women and the companion dogs they share their lives with. The women were not well and not very mobile but very vocal and insistent, now that the tobacco has run out. Our tempers grew short. We were heading for a particular place and a specific tree, but memories fade and tracks get washed away or overgrown and we have to circle back. I am not familiar with approaching the Country from this direction and rely on the women to guide me. It is hot, and the dogs are restless with the heat and the raised voices. We have planned to leave the dogs at a camp outside the reserve we are heading





for. We haven't been in contact with the people in the camp to let them know we are coming as they are 'always there'. When we get there, we can't find the camp despite a chorus of directions. There are no recent tyre tracks except ours. It is getting late and we press on to a campsite, marked on an old map I had with me and well known to some of the women. There may be water. We drive past an old, rusty, almost illegible NO DOGS ALLOWED sign full of bullet holes and stop at the well, but the water level has fallen too low to access. We head back to a grove of trees that offer some shade. The ants and mosquitos are ferocious, plaguing us and the dogs alike. The women become concerned for the dogs and despite the heat we retreat miserably to eat listlessly in the vehicle and wait for the dark. A dusky moon rises dramatically throwing spooky shadows against the tree trunks, but the ants and mosquitos do not disappear as expected. In a vain hope of getting some rest, I throw my swag on the roof of the vehicle and climb in sweating and slapping until I can free the zip jammed in the flymesh and evict the last of the ferocious ants. The women stay in the vehicle soothing their fractious dogs and slowly drop off to sleep. It finally cools off and the mosquitos stop their incessant whining, but we are all restless and itchy, climbing painfully in and out of the car. No one gets much sleep. Pulling out, just after dawn, we find the tree and complete the business; the women relax. It is going to be a very long drive back and I am exhausted and irritable and itchy; the women petting their dogs are quiet and dozing.

After a day of frequent stops and rough gravel roads but blessedly cooler, we pull into Laverton, WA and I drop off the women, and the dogs. Bleary-eyed, I am looking forward to a chance to rest and restock. I have a day or two's lay over while waiting for some other artists before continuing back to the coast. I have connections here and pull into a driveway to be greeted by the smell of cooking and the offer of a cold beer. While I am here, a tyre is mended, and that annoying squeak found and fixed. I enjoy some fresh bread and a salad, the foodbox is replenished and I have teabags again. The dash is cleared of its flotsam and jetsam and the toolbox sorted, the tools cleaned and sharpened, the washing done, the ants banished. I wander to the tip to see if there is anything that might come in handy—some copper pipe and some drill core. Back in town: behind the shed is a cache of trussed sample bag bundles, solar dyeing in foraged





Figure 44: *marks1*, the marks of foraged drill core and plant dyed sample bag map a grounding waypoint, Old Police Station, 2015.

jars. These are investigated, and some are revamped with dyestuff I have collected on this trip. *marks1* (Figure 44) pictures a plant dyed sample bag and the foraged drill core, tools of the geologist, now reimagined to map this waypoint.

Two of the solar dyed bundles are unbound, rinsed, dried and stitched together as I catch up on the news of my friends and yarn about my latest trip. This is a waypoint I return to in periods of stasis, to rest, to wait, to restock and repack the toolbox and ground myself. I have collections hoarded here, for these times.

### *the toolbox*

The bricoleuse's toolbox is a concept that holds fragments of thought, ideas, theory but it is also a physical container of tools and basic supplies, pictured in *I9559* (Figure 45). If I am flying or walking far, it is pared down to what will fit in my backpack and can be carried easily like the box and its contents in *I9559* (Figure 45). The choice of the contents of this toolbox are the result of many years as a bricoleuse and maximise the possibilities of what I might make with the skills I have and what I might find. If I am driving, the backpack comes too, but the toolkit is added along with essential supplies to help ensure my survival and a few things to make life easier.







Figure 45: I9559, my basic toolkit, I will have to remove the scissors and the screwdriver before I fly back to the city, 2016.

The basic toolkit is always:

- × cotton, wool, cloth string and threads of different weights, some dyed,
- × cloth—recycled calico, non-synthetic rags, some stitched, some dyed
- × mineralogical sample bags
- × sewing notions—needles (darning, basketry, sharps), pins, thread cutter (aviation approved), thimble, crochet hook
- × drawing materials—earth pigment, charcoal, chalk, pencils, graphite, watercolours and brushes
- × paper, some handmade
- × snaplock bags
- × bottle tops, copper pipe, small wooden dowel for wrapping bundles around
- × cigarette lighter (remember to carry on my person if flying)
- × bottle of water
- × handlens, notebook, camera, spare SD card

To the basic kit, the following are usually added:

- × maps, plant guide, laptop (dependent on weight restrictions, some of the small FIFO planes on hot Summer days allow only 3kg due to flying conditions)
- × chargers and batteries
- × scissors, screwdrivers, pliers, penknife, adjustable wrench, multigrips, can opener (dependent on weight restrictions and where I am travelling. In some cases, I would require a permit to bring these tools onto a minesite and they would have to be trucked in)





If I am driving I add:

- × at least 20 litres of water
- × non-perishable food
- × first aid kit and matches
- × extra spare tyre and puncture repair kit
- × maps, books
- × camping chairs and stove
- × swag
- × shovel
- × rope and tarp
- × cooking and eating utensils in a plastic tub
- × billy/tins for dyeing (separate from those I cook with)
- × more sample bags for stowing gleaned and foraged stuff
- × personal effects and clothes
- × fresh supplies
- × workshop materials, gifts and treats for those I visit and often that last minute “when you come out, can you bring a ....”

This list may be added to or modified depending on the season and where I am travelling, what I am currently curious about/feeling like playing with, upcoming projects and what I am working on, and who I am travelling with and why. For example, some good cheese, olives and bottle of red might be included for the first night's lodging and an excuse to yarn a little longer. If it is heading into Winter, I might include a bundle of second hand clothes and blankets for the women I am going to go out on the Country







Figure 46: P2130008, digital photograph, Windarra, 2013.

with and some extra oranges or a box of bright coloured cloth scraps if we are making necklaces and string or conducting a workshop with the high school girls. The girls are taught separately to the boys in the high school classes we visit; it is my understanding that this is culturally appropriate in this area. On the return trip, I carry some bush medicine for the old lady in hospital and some for the old fella in the nursing home and a basket I was given and a tinful of beads I bought. Then, there is a pup we rescued, she finds a good home with one of my travelling companions. For part of the trip, we squash up with a young mum and her two kids, heading to town to see the doctor.



### *wandering around the Country*

Wandering in the Country, carrying my backpack, becomes a methodological vehicle to begin the relating that seeds my place-making and making in place. As Nien Schwarz explains: “wandering entails wondering, and wondering is wandering. The two words permeate the temporal space of my life journey” (2016, p. 2). When place-making, I ask the question: how does the Country feel? I visit and revisit quiet places in the bush. P2130008 (Figure 46) shows a quiet resting place where I often have breakfast, wander and notice how the Country feels and if there is anything useful. *Eucalyptus gongylocarpa* and *Triodia sp.*, aeolian sands and lateritic breakaways over nickel country on the edge of the sandhills out Windarra way, not far from the lightning fire of 2009 and the Old Erlistoun road.

By walking, I am mapping a space into a place through my body. Grounded, stitching steps across the earth. Stepping across the sand, around the lake, through the rocks and the bush, amidst my field site/studio. I read the sky, scan the horizon, feel the space, the distance, the wind and the sun, the terrain through which I move. Sweat beading. Brushing foliage, listening, smelling—sensing the familiar and the unknown, recognising the season. The animals quieten, then scold on my approach or scuttle away at my footfall.



Sensing patterns, orientating myself and my body to the sun or the stars, to where I left the car or the path. Noticing. Mapping. Cataloguing. Connecting. Gathering. I know by being here, smelling the dryness of the ground; leaves crushed underfoot. I feel the texture and the warmth of soil grains, on my skin, shifting under my feet. Ants struggle with a beetle carapace over loamy soil, reddish, with well-sorted quartz and ferruginous lag, like *P4180215* (Figure 47).

The topsoil and unconsolidated colluvium are polymictic with coarse clasts, including BIF (banded iron formation), ferruginous nodules and quartz, some showing desert varnish. Deep time markers. There is minor subcropping; highly weathered, slaty mafics across the slight slope to my left (north east), which *I0708* (Figure 48) documents, but this is probably not the source of the lag.

Windblown acacia leaves on the lee side of the subcrop entangled with wanderrie grass seeds (this grass—good for tjanpi), burrs, an old emu feather—*wipaya*. My language of this place reflects the way I relate to it—the geologist stratified and deeply embedded; fragments of a different tongue, I am always learning. Wisps and phrases from stories I have been told settle like *wipaya* amid the strata. I noticed the solitary track of the old fella emu—*wetj /karlaya* with his crooked toe, *P5260035* (Figure 49). He's been here for years and I'm glad to see he is still around.

The complex forms of the burrs with their little hooks are quite beautiful to look at for example, *P4270183* (Figure 50), but difficult to extract from my socks and no disincentive to the ants.

To my left, a neatly opened bully beef tin hugs a *Solanum spp.* under *Acacia aneura* on colluvial hardpan, and I pause to snap a photograph of it, *I6253* (Figure 51). Someone else has camped here. There is a faint track, perhaps a vehicle, not recent. My footprint crosses bird tracks, maybe a pigeon; there are desiccated kangaroo droppings. I wonder if the tin is sound, it could be useful as a dyepot.

A chattering cloud of finches erupts from the grass, so there is water, not far; a good sign. I am downwind, and I wonder what disturbed them.







Figure 47: *P4180215*, documentary digital photograph, Admiral Hill, 2013.



Figure 48: *I0708*, documentary digital photograph, Admiral Hill, 2013.



Figure 49: *P5260035*, documentary digital photograph, Windarra, 2014.



Figure 50: *P4270183*, burrs documentary digital photograph, Sun Rise Dam, 2014.





Figure 51: I6253, documentary digital photograph, Laverton, 2014.

I am at home, in airports and roadhouses, but equally in the contact zones and borderlands amidst art and science. The cartographer knows, where I am situated, reading the signs and mapping the ground, annotating the maps and telling stories. I travel transdisciplinary spaces and move outside the “discursive strictures of one disciplinary approach” (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 18). It is the work of the bricoleuse that makes herself into place.

Mapping, wayfaring, wondering and wandering are, at the very least, methodological tools available to the bricoleuse and I reimagine them through the lenses of my way of seeing and understanding. In the next section, I will discuss how I apply these methodological tools through the lens of the storyteller who joins the wandering bricoleuse.

### *A storyteller: applying the methodology*

This section discusses how I apply my methodology by looking through my axiological lens and telling a story.

Stories are utterances that “affect both thought and perception” (Barrett, 2011, p. 137). Stories talk about the “context of experience” (Berger & Mohr, 1982, p. 235) and are fragmented but there is tacit agreement about how connections are made and what is left out. This is what makes the same story different, in different contexts, and allows each listener and indeed each narrator to take and add to the story. The place, the story, the teller and the audience are shaped and enfolded by the feel of a story told in the localised context, of that event, at that place. The story is a way of sharing knowledge—tacit and referential while “nurturing and sustaining intercultural relationships” (Carey, 2008, p. 79), a timeless tradition and in some communities, a culturally appropriate way to share knowledge.

Thick layers of narrative, complexity and experience dissolve seeming paradoxes and contradictions. These are conversations between voices—characters in a



mythical story, rich in metaphors, moving through time and memory—both the myth maker and the myth being reinvented in the localised mythopoetics of the story and its place (Carter, 2010b, 2013, 2015). This thread continues adding other voices including Somerville (2007, 2013), Ashcroft (2014) intertwined with Deleuze's interjection:

writing is a question of becoming, always incomplete, always in the midst of being formed and goes beyond the matter of any livable or lived experience. It is a process that is, a passage of Life that traverses both the livable and the lived. (1998, p. 1)

For me, writing stories is a creative part of a process of becoming, wandering in the interstitial spaces amongst theory and practice, between critical and creative. This liminal space is a porous space between known binaries where “one cannot occupy or exist (in-between) two binary states without a resultant tension and/or mobility between both elements of the binary, which resist but also merge with the middle in-between” (Downey et al., 2016, p. 6). I cannot make without writing or write without making. The tension and mobility of this space may be likened to the string I ply, or the patchwork nature of bricolage which leads to seemingly disparate fragments coming together in a complex layering amongst gaps and interstices of poiesis. I am adding to the rich patchwork of knowledge that is emerging from working this way. It can also be seen in the notes in my notebooks—part research journal part diary, mapping my process with fragments of my writing adorned with beads of the knowable, literally and as a metaphor for the thoughts of others, like those in *I5261* (Figure 52).

When I write, filling notebooks, I am enlivened, unsettled, inspired, sometimes frustrated, and inarticulate. I write to think, to untangle ideas to spin into a yarn, to tell a story of words and fragments of narrative I have gleaned, gathered and foraged. My need to articulate is sometimes hampered, by the toing and froing between pages and by the gap between the hand and the pen. The kinaesthetic language of my world view is channelled into marks and symbols; ambiguous signifiers, an abstracted representation that allows fleeting feelings to materialise. I allow my thoughts to flow, my stories to form and to surface. This is a process of reimagining and translation using relational, embodied consciousness to create words and narrative.



Figure 52: *I5261*, documentary digital photograph, Fremantle, 2017.







Figure 53: I5367, documentary digital photograph, Great Central Road, 2014.

Even as a storyteller, I find words problematic and often not very representative of the experience I am trying to relate. However, spinning yarns and infusing the physical detritus of the Country in what I make and handle may begin to allow a more performative understanding and a whisper of the Country in these narratives:

a performative understanding of discursive practices challenges the representationalist belief in the power of words to represent pre-existing things. Performativity, properly construed, is not an invitation to turn everything (including material bodies) into words; on the contrary, performativity is precisely a contestation of the excessive power granted to language to determine what is real. (Barad, 2008, p. 121)

Language, for me, in any medium is challenging, problematic and inarticulate and skews power in the gaps between what I say about what I mean. Language, is a way of thinking out loud to manipulate signs in a variety of visual, verbal or written forms (Mitchell, 1984). The language in which I speak and write may be mine, English, but it is imbued with the cadences of the Country, its environment and the people who speak of it and with it, in the transcultural contact zone.

This cadence might be described as a “material resonance” (Ashcroft, 2014, 2015). I suggest material resonance is contextual, residual and may be specific to a place and the context of the speaker or the materiality of the text. However, as Ashcroft (2014) also points out, the material resonance of the writing changes when it is recited, and I would add narrated. My material resonance and my written language form from notes and single words rather than sentences—anecdotes, impressions and sketches. These bricoles find their way into yarns like the one below.





*a yarn about a bottle top*



Figure 54: *I4677*, documentary digital photograph, on the road, 2017.

This story begins by spinning a yarn about another bottle top, perhaps the bottle top in *I5367* (Figure 53), an old crown seal rusting in the polymictic gravel of an abandoned campsite. This bottle top has no plastic seal, so it predates twist tops, first introduced in the late 1970's, and common today. Or perhaps it was used to seal the tomato sauce I bottled in old beer bottles and capped with shiny gold. It has become a cultural artefact. Firstly, there must be some inkling as to why a bottle top may be of interest to this research. The bottle top is an example of the messy richness of bricolage, perhaps a methodological metaphor. It is a practically, metaphorically and conceptually rich object associated with a vessel—inside/outside and contained/uncontained relationships and opening or closing off. A gatekeeper who monitors what is contained or released from the vessel.

Bottle tops have multiple creative possibilities, I glean them from the non-spaces of carparks and along roads, preflattened and rusty, for dyeing cloth or stringing amongst clay beads. I have some understanding of the chemistry of metal, salt and moisture and the physics of the action of cars running them over them. I ponder the geological processes that formed the iron rich rocks, which I may have mapped as a geologist. The geographical and transformative journey of the metal rich ore to become this bottle top and its nomadic return to the earth from which it was formed, perhaps not far from this spot. I think of the deep time, as I pocket another along my walk. My thoughts turn to making. I anticipate how these bottle tops will react with the chemistry within the dyepot and the resulting marks and colours they might make. The marks are often curved or circular with traces of the 21 flutes of the standard crown seal. Gum leaves (*Eucalyptus spp.*) are sometimes printed in exacting botanic detail where the iron, the cloth and the leaf are in intimate contact. The bottle top may become a recurring motif to be overstitched, embroidered or printed or redyed on to the cloth.

The ubiquitous twist top bottle tops, like *I4677* (Figure 54), are from 'takeaway' bottles of beer and alcopops, and symbolic of the local drinking culture. Having lived and worked adjacent to the pub in an outback town and now regularly walking past a resort to the



beach, I see parades of cartons, slabs and blocks. I don't need to undertake a quantitative study and structured collaborative yarnning (or to be a participant in street drinking) to conclude that there is street drinking and cause for concern. I have sat in meetings listening to the problems, the statistics and the analyses of the situation. I have been involved in facilitating yarnning around this issue. I have yarned with the locals about drinking and sat amongst the drinkers. As a bricoleuse, I do not need to carry the bottle-tops with me. I do carry the knowledge of where to forage for them, their usefulness as a material and what they symbolise. I am able to tell my story about the bottle-tops. This story may be a multi-modal narrative—verbal, visual and/or textual, it may be an art work. The narrative may comment on street drinking, or on the materiality of the place where the material possibly originated, or the mining economy or the chemistry of the dyepot, but it is for me a valid, rigorous and authentic approach and relates to how I make in the Country and the socio-cultural importance of what I bring back to an urban gallery space. The bottle-top may make its way to the gallery in my toolbox or as part of a collection of objects or dyed bundles, or as an impression on a sample bag, or its chemistry in the colour of the length of string dyed in its presence, or its motif stitched on a piece of cloth. This cultural artefact is transformed from a discarded remnant of drinking to a potentially powerful symbol within a bricolage created in the gallery which may be viewed, beer in hand, on opening night.

It is my intention to share a little of a trip to spend time amidst the Country and perhaps forage a bottle-top or two; a reflection of how I do what I do, relating, feeling, gleaning, foraging and making. It may also be interpreted as a metaphor for poiesis. I am spinning a yarn, from a number of campfires and dyepots, where myriad other pathways cross and entangle at waypoints on an imagined map. This narrative is plied together from threads of reading, making, thinking, becoming. It is my intent that the reader becomes a part of the yarn, and this may have socio-cultural implications.







Figure 55: P5120186, documentary digital photograph, Granny Smith Road, 2014.



Figure 56: I7361, documentary digital photograph, off the Great Central Road, 2015.

Preparing for travelling is visceral. The stress and fatigue of preparing and packing dissipates, replaced by what ifs, frissons of anticipation and something nameless deep in my gut. Also, that nagging thought that I have forgotten something. I can feel my body adapting—to the long drive and the feel and sound of the car and the road and open road driving.

I have been on the asphalt a while, heading ‘bush’ when the liminal zone of the roadside offers up its possibilities—leaves of *Agonis spp.* and a bottletop for the dyepot when I have removed the plastic seal, and a photograph, I4677 (Figure 54). My heart lifts at the sight of unencumbered horizons and big skies. My focus shifts from the ground to accommodate these. I remember how to read the Country and slip into it like well-worn boots.

I have stopped near a pub. Stretching and yawning, I stoop to pick up several beer bottletops and shove them in a pocket. An empty water bottle has blown up against the tyre. I pick that up too. Not far from the pub is a salt lake, I use the foraged water bottle to collect briny water for dyeing.

The long straight road, now gravel, is heading for open skies and wide plains. I have the windows down. Heading north and east on the recently graded road, I peer through the insect smeared lens of the windscreen and empty water bottles, dust already accumulating on the dash, and pluming out behind, P5120186 (Figure 55). There is no radio reception and the CD player won’t work due to the corrugations hidden in the dust, so the stones pinging away from the tyres are the soundtrack for my thoughts.

After hours of glaring sun and dust, the horizon clouds up ominously, as seen in I7361 (Figure 56), a darkening sky. Thunder rumbles, clouds burst, and the road quickly turns to mud. Within minutes, the storm recedes and driving on, the dust flies again. There is a tendril of smoke spiralling in the rear-view mirror—a lightning sparked grass fire. I need to stop to clear the wheels of clinging mud before it sets like concrete. The flies, even more sticky than the mud, are intent on the corners of my eyes and mouth. I lever red clay off the tyres into a snaplock bag. Munching the sandwich, formerly sealed in the







Figure 57: *campfire*, documentary digital photograph, north of Warakuna, 2015.



Figure 58: *I1593*, documentary digital photograph, off the Goldfields Highway, 2012.



Figure 59: *P8020416*, documentary digital photograph, off the Goldfields Hwy, 2012.



Figure 60: *I5155*, documentary digital photograph, on the road, 2017.



Figure 61: *20170302\_163702*, documentary digital photograph, Warburton, 2015.



Figure 62: *20160811\_100100*, documentary digital photograph, Preston Beach, 2016.



Figure 63: *P1160846*, documentary digital photograph, Warburton, 2015.

bag, I keep a close eye on the smoke, now dissipating. Miles down the track, I pull up to make camp at an unfamiliar spot, uncertain what I will find, as I don't usually camp along this stretch of road.

After, checking assiduously for ants on the ground and smoke on the horizon; I find a nice level spot, clear of spinifex (*Triodia spp.*). There are windfall branches from the sheltering trees (*Eucalyptus spp.*) for a fire. The dusty swag is rolled out and the blackened kettle set to boil. *Campfire* (Figure 57) is a familiar scene. The kettle is on, the campsite 'mapped', a conversation starts.

As part of the ant screening process, I have been for a wander, established my bearings and mentally catalogued vegetation, rock types and things that I recognise and might come in handy, for example, another bottle top, no plastic seal. There are signs and tracks of other people, animals other than ants and other stories. There are possibilities for making a good yellow/orange dye from the leaves (*Eucalyptus gongylocarpa*). I collect an armful of wind fallen leaves and plenty of fallen branches. Something rusty catches my eye at the edge of the spinifex on the margins of the camp.

It is a battered and rusty billy, missing a handle, and home to small spiders, *I1593* (Figure 58). A new dyepot! All it needs is a handle and some spider relocations.

Note to self: look up what species of eucalypt those leaves belong to and boil a few to test for colour.

Noticing the spiders, reminds me to look out for the nets of golden orb-weaving spiders (*Nephila edulis*). The webs are beautiful, complex constructions like the one in *P8020416* (Figure 59) hosted by *Acacia colletiodes* on a dewy morning. The webs intriguing to look at, are dreadfully sticky and disconcertingly cling on my face if I happen to walk into one while busy looking at the ground.

Back to the foraged billy, which is sound and will come in useful as a dyepot with a little panel beating. I return my pliers to the toolbox, having fashioned a handle from a length of wire as I anticipate boiling up a brew and the alchemy of the rusty pot. No need for the bottle tops in this brew. Old billy, new handle, a ball of string, a sample bag bundle and *Eucalyptus spp.* leaves are set to simmer in brine on the edge of a campfire as I anticipate the chemistry that will occur during the night. *I5155* (Figure 60) pictures a bundle and ball of string set to simmer in the slightly misshapen pot. The brine should react with the iron and stain the cloth. The rust may also interact with the leaves to darken the colour (or to turn it grey, black or green).

I take stock of what I have collected and delve into the toolbox making a pile of useful bits and pieces for dyeing in a second pot. *20170302\_163702* (Figure 61), documents bundles of cloth sample bags, recycled calico, bottle tops, wind fallen leaves (*Eucalyptus spp.*) trussed with string and ready for the pot, and dye materials dumped directly in the billy.

Peering into a cooling dyepot, *20160811\_100100* (Figure 62), the bundles have been boiled in *Eucalyptus caesia* bark. *P1160846* (Figure 63), a photograph of tins from last night's dinner repurposed as mini dyepots—some stuffed with bundles simmering, others just *Eucalyptus spp.* leaves steeping. The resultant dye from these leaves goes into a glass jar with some non-synthetic cloth to become another dyepot, like the one top centre of







Figure 64: *I3463*, beads and buttons 1 to 3 cm, documentary digital photograph, studio, 2016.



Figure 65: *I5813*, digital photograph, Great Central Road, 2015.

*P1160846* (Figure 63) or the jars of *I4642* (Figure 13). These jars are sealed by simmering in the pot and can be stowed away or left to mature in the sun as a form of solar dyeing. The tins may also simmer on the edge of the coals, if there is no room in the billy. Non-synthetic cloth takes natural pigments more readily. Although, the sample bags are now often polycotton and degrade with long exposure to the sun, no longer calico, they usually still take the colour, albeit differently.

The mud off the tyres is rolled into beads to be baked in a tin on the fire, used to paint sample bags, or caked on cloth in patterns to resist the dye. *I3463* (Figure 64) documents clay beads, wood fired and smoked, perhaps made from the tyre mud and fired in a coffee tin on the campfire.

Sitting with a cuppa, reflecting, hands busy plying string, I anticipate the results of the alchemy happening in the fire's heat and the collection that may form an assemblage at my forthcoming exhibition. The sand is still warm to sit on even though the sun has dropped. Time passes, meditatively, contemplatively. Shadows lengthen, colours soften. The breeze drops. Birds return and largely ignore me—I wish the flies would too. The ants have arrived; one crumb was all it took.

Some of the bundles go into the snaplock bag with the mud and spend the rest of the trip on the dash of the car—solar dyeing. I am expecting reds and greys, but we'll see. Somewhere along the Great Central Road, heading west for the WA/NT border under cloudy skies and a drop or two of rain I note the beads of moisture beginning to form on the inside of the snaplock bag, with its bundled cloth and string, but not much solar dyeing today *I5813* (Figure 65). The dash is probably not the safest place to accumulate the bags, but space is at a premium and it is, the warmest spot. The collection on the dash becomes an emergent 'cabinet of curiosities' throughout the trip and a journal for this exegesis.

Dyeing is a complex interwoven, intra-acting relational process. The bottletop may mark the cloth with colour or print through image transfer or staining. It may also change the chemistry and possibly the colour of the dyepot and the ability of the cloth to take up the dye, or it may become redundant, if using a rusty billy—plenty of possibilities,







Figure 66: *PA150071s*, documentary digital photograph, studio, 2014.



Figure 67: *I7473*, digital photograph, Old Police Station, 2015.

what if's and not-knowings. *PA150071s* (Figure 66), documents an unbundled, gifted silk scarf bundle with bottle tops (and their marks) and coloured by *Eucalyptus salubris* leaves. The material echoes of the bottle tops marked the cloth black, and with shades of rust but appeared to have negligible visible effect on the chemistry of the dyepot. In my experience, these leaves usually render a similar shade. I collect more of these leaves on the return trip; however, this time they yield a pale dusty pink when boiled in the absence of bottle tops, so perhaps the bottle tops do change the chemistry. Note to self: test this further next time I collect *Eucalyptus salubris* leaves, preferably from this tree, as I know that individual trees may yield different shades.

I am relaxing beside a softly glowing campfire, under clear, brittle skies, and a canopy of wheeling stars punctuated by the flash of satellites and meteors. Light flickers from this, the last campfire I built at the Old Police Station, dirt in a mulga stump burning green *I7473* (Figure 67). The fireworks of a meteor shower commemorate our moving on. Glimpsed and gone. The dye simmers quietly.

Below the steam swirling through the headlamp beam, colour is emerging from the leaves, the bundles soaking it up. I soak up the essences of this place, lying back on my swag, hands absorbing the warmth of a cradled cup of tea, its vapour leaving a trace of moisture on my face and soothing tired eyes. I let my body feel—comfortable and satiated, frissons of fatigue and taxed muscles, not-knowing, apprehension, excitement and anticipation flicker through me like lightning across distant storm clouds.

All will be revealed as night slips into tomorrow.

After a misty dawn I peer curiously into the still warm dyepot, snapped in *20160811\_100100* (Figure 62). I extract the bundles, redolent with eucalyptus, smoke







Figure 68: 20170428\_102201, documentary digital photograph, studio, 2017.

and the Country. 20170428\_102201 (Figure 68), documents a bundle cooling after being fished out of its *Eucalyptus spp.* bark dyepot. The dye is strained from the pot and bottled in a water bottle retrieved from the roadhouse, yesterday. The dye will be added to the toolkit, for another day.

Despite my impatience to unbind them, some bundles join a growing collection of bagged bundles, string and flotsam on the dashboard to finish dyeing in the sun, as I5935 (Figure 69) documents, bouncing along the corrugated Great Central Road. The beads of moisture in the bags are the only sign of water apart from my water bottle and a mug of tea today. The bundles and loose string are spread out to dry on the dash in the sun and are less likely to go mouldy.

The unused leaves (*Santulum spicata* and *Eucalyptus youngiana*), collected yesterday, are bagged in sample bags, labelled—name, date, location, foliage/bark and stowed in the back. The smell of *Eucalyptus spp.* wafts through the vehicle after a particularly rough stretch of road.

Further down the track, 20170317\_121838 (Figure 70) pictures bundles unbound from patinaed copper pipe (foraged from a discarded air-conditioner at the tip); *Eucalyptus spp.*, on cotton, in an iron oxide bath. The string used for the binding, or fished out of the dyepot, is carefully wound into balls to be reused for binding or stitching, or to become part of a collection that includes the balls of string on the dash. The bottletops return to the toolbox; now rustier. I4639 (Figure 71), shows string used for binding, and patinaed metal used for mordanting bundles, now, released from their snaplock bag. Perhaps one or two bottletops will go into the saved dye to change the colour and another threaded onto a string of beads.

Driving on, I reflect on the unbundled cloth of PA150071s (Figure 66), now dry. There are minute decisions to be made. Do the marks reflect my experience of the physicality of being in the Country? Are the colour, marks, clarity, aesthetic, condition of the cloth reflective of the materiality of the Country? What is the story of the cloth and its relation to this yarn? Does it need to go back into the dyepot







Figure 69: *I5935*, documentary digital photograph, Great Central Road, 2015.



Figure 70: *20170317\_121838*, documentary digital photograph, studio, 2017.



Figure 71: *I4639*, documentary digital photograph, Warburton, 2015.





Figure 72: *I2956*, documentary digital photograph, home, 2015.



Figure 73: *I9438*, documentary digital photograph, home, 2015.

because I desire a particular colour or marks, or it does not suggest the aesthetic or materiality I feel? Will I stitch back into it, tear it up, ply it into string, or just add it to the stash in *I2956* (Figure 72)? A stash<sup>2</sup> of hoarded plant dyed and earth pigment stained sample bags, a collection of research; a journal of travail; the remnants of events; a bricolage of stories that may become an artist's book of sample bags, like *Samples of Place* (2017) (Figure 24). Perhaps, I will stitch back into these bags and other dyed cloth in my stash and add other marks or use them to store other bricoles I pick up.

Speculating, about another dyepot, perhaps on tonight's fire, to which I may add copper wire from a charred battery lead found partially buried in the graded windrow at the edge of a sandy road not far from the assemblage I documented in *I5583* (Figure 39). Toss in fresh leaves, more water, and bark, the heavily patinaed bottle tops and previously dyed cloth tied with string. As always, the traces that emerge after each gestation are unknown but eagerly anticipated and imagined.

Glancing across the dash, I notice some of the bundles have become mouldy and mildewed as seen in *I9438* (Figure 73). Peering through the snaplock bag reveals beads of rusty moisture in the bundle, potentially a biohazard. Note the bottle tops at the bottom of the image *I9438* (Figure 73). Bright green algae grow across cloth. The hyphae of the mould and mildew and the filaments of the algae will leave their own traces and holes in the cloth, a symbolic mycorrhizal meshwork, although probably not fungal in origin. These decaying bundles can be salvaged. Double wrapped and sealed, the bundles will be consigned to the freezer, when one is available, to be sanitised for a time before being opened. The cold should render the mould spores and other biota harmless to the cloth and to my lungs and throat. In the meantime, boiling them vigorously should slow the spread but cold seems to banish them completely.

One bag has split, the cloth now imprinted with text from the corner of the newspaper that it lay on at some point. Several bundles, now, unbound, show few marks and may return to the dyepot or an unsplit snaplock; others have already been used for other projects. Are the scantily marked sample bags as valued as the heavily marked ones?







Figure 74: I3651, documentary digital photograph, Old Police Station, 2014.

Perhaps they are more indicative of a light touch on the Country or is it aesthetics? Is there more scope to add to the story? The layering of cloth and dyestuff in the dyepots and layering and overdyeing of cloth and intersecting dyed threads are a metaphorical patchwork and form of storytelling.

The numbered sample bags are now infused with various samples of the Country, albeit somewhat differently from their originally intended use. The traces of leaves/objects have diffracted through the cloth, like the sample bag I3651 (Figure 74), unbound from its bundle and marked from the journey. *Eucalyptus kruseana* leaves with iron and the Summer desert sun, the bricoleuse and my bricolage are similarly marked by their journey.

There is plenty of time for reflecting during the long hours at the wheel and I imagine an artist book like 20160908\_094556 (Figure 75) created from sample bags and pieces of cloth, gathering stories of the Country through which it has travelled with me, while accumulating and absorbing diverse knowledges in different voices, mainly non-human. A journal of stories, collected in marks and colour and detritus—the material language and voice of the Country to be read and translated or interpreted by a storyteller or a reader. The pages of this book, without written text, could become a form of mnemonic prompts to recall memories from which I create narratives, as yarns and artworks.

I gather materials to make connections between new and existing ideas. With these thoughts, the materials and objects are not constrained by being carried in the toolbox or a written account, but expand into what could be done with what is found on site or interpreted from the bricoles collected. My observational and geographical skills, the knowledge of dye chemistry and botany allow me to recognise things that I know and that might come in handy. There is potential for these things to make narrative marks, a physical archive of the journey laid down in the moment of making or possibly diffracted into something more alchemical in their blending like the pages of the artist book of 20160908\_094556 (Figure 75). This archive is also available for interpretation by myself, or by an audience if exhibited. The artist book may also be a metaphor for my journals and notebooks notated in long hand, where thinking and reading through diffracting lenses of seeing and becoming underpin the context



Figure 75: 20160908\_094556, documentary digital photograph, studio 2016.





Figure 76: *I7295*, documentary digital photograph, home, 2015.



Figure 77: *I7293*, documentary digital photograph, home, 2015.

of what I read and intertwine through not-knowing loops while waiting/resting at waypoints on the actual and conceptual wayfaring from which bricolage emerges. The not-knowing space is entangled and loops, from emerging knowledge to new questions and possibilities, like the tangles in newly plied string of *I7295* (Figure 76). There is also a conceptual entanglement around how I relate to my making in the Country and its implications for research, and for exhibition as I gather materials to connect existing ideas in innovative ways.

Early camp today. Wrestling the wind-buffed vehicle over rough roads and repairing a flat tyre has been exhausting. I am nestled up against a breakaway, out of the wind; no fire tonight—too windy and it would be dangerous to be caught by fire in this Country where there is plenty of spinifex after a good season. I am not sure what the ramifications of burning someone else's Country would be either. The light still good enough to stitch. The cloth has collected more marks and some stitches along the way—tea splashes, ash, part of a boot print; a rent made by a wind-slammed car door has been darned. The stitches added to the cloth are like those of *I7293* (Figure 77), now accreting as symbols in the mapped layers of a field site. Metaphorically, the embodied time of travelling to and within the field site is signified as the lines or symbols on a map. Stories and events are traced in the seams and marks, but no explanatory legend or grid is provided. I embellish and read the map as I sit quietly—the stitches my footprints, the spaces of my strides in the midst of wandering the Country. The map is a narrative of the field sites; the tracks of this trip with new questions arising from the 'debris of experience' and the materiality of being in the Country. In this section, I have related a story, a bricolage, through the cultural artefact of the bottle top; how I make and why I make through the double articulation of Barrett's meme model (2007a) by spinning a yarn. This is an explanation of how as a bricoleuse I undertake and apply research in the Country, its implications and what might be brought back into urban spaces. The quiltmaker and the stringmaker have related their craft, metaphorically and literally and continue the conversation in the next chapter.



## *Chapter 4: Wandering, relating and yarning with the maker*



This chapter starts at a bend in the road on which I wander as a bricoleuse and a maker of quilts, string, maps and images. I discuss the sense making and tacit knowing embedded in their craft and its material resonances. I have spun a yarn about the ambivalence and ambiguity of being entangled in materiality and making place.

### *A bend in the road*

There have been a number of twists and turns, some due to cultural and economic factors. The early stages of this research were conducted in the Laverton area, where I stayed with the caretaker at the Old Police Station, and included trips with other women artists into the Ngaanyatjarra Lands to the east. Here, we visited and supported some of the local women, conducted workshops and spent time in the Country. However, a series of unforeseen events and shifting family circumstances led to my full-time relocation to Perth with my partner and to a studio space on campus, followed by another move to the edge of the Yalgorup National Park, a place I have visited many times over many years. In early 2016, eight weeks after moving to the coast, we were under threat from and then isolated by the devastating Waroona bushfires (Figure 6). This catastrophic fire coincided with illness and injury of some of the people I had been working and travelling with and a trip back to the Ngaanyatjarra Lands was indefinitely postponed, although I have since been back to Laverton. The formal collaborative relationships I forged in the arid lands of the Laverton area morphed and have become dormant as people moved around and sickness and age take their toll.

After rounding this metaphoric bend, my research has become concerned with how I use a bricolage of fieldwork techniques in place-making, contiguous with but not necessarily physically in a particular place. However, it is these two places in WA, the Laverton area in the arid lands, 12 hours north-east of Perth, and the Yalgorup National Park on the coastal fringe an hour and a half south of the city that I relate to as the Country. The desert trips were part of the observational and material gathering, a form of field-based investigation, although I would contend that the fieldwork continues, albeit with a different emphasis on what I am relating to and with different groups of people. Fieldwork is, in part, the way I relate to or make in place, wherever I am physically.

Many circumstances have changed; the ebb and flow of the mining cycle, contracts ended, people becoming ill, passing away—crisis moments. Personal and professional relationships have morphed. Compromises made. The personal cost has been high. I have retreated, become more entangled, immersed in making place/the Country, through poiesis; a bricolage of yarning and making.

Just after my partner and I retreated from Laverton, we were invited to exhibit in WAFTA's (Western Australian Fibre and Textile Association) *Memory and Commemoration* in the Perth Exhibition Centre, May 2015. These collaborative mixed media assemblages *TRAPPED* (2015), Annette Nykiel and Bede Jacobsen (Figure 78) and *MEMORY CRADLE* (2015), Annette Nykiel and Bede Jacobsen (Figure 79)—addressed the themes of the exhibition—memory and commemoration. We were still feeling lost and unsettled as we adjusted to our displacement and the sometimes fraught events surrounding it, during which much had to be left behind. This was a waypoint at a bend in the road as I regrouped and changed the focus of my research and reconnected with people on the coastal fringe.





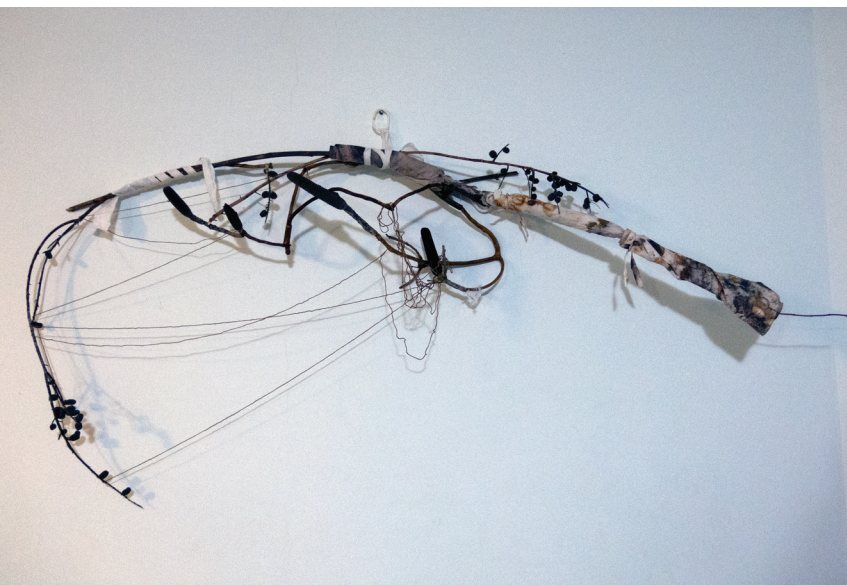


Figure 78: I7567, *TRAPPED*, Annette Nykiel and Bede Jacobsen (2015), as installed. Repurposed plant dyed cotton, silk and threads, plant material and copper, hand dyed, stitched, and twined. Aprox 180 x 90 x 30 cm.

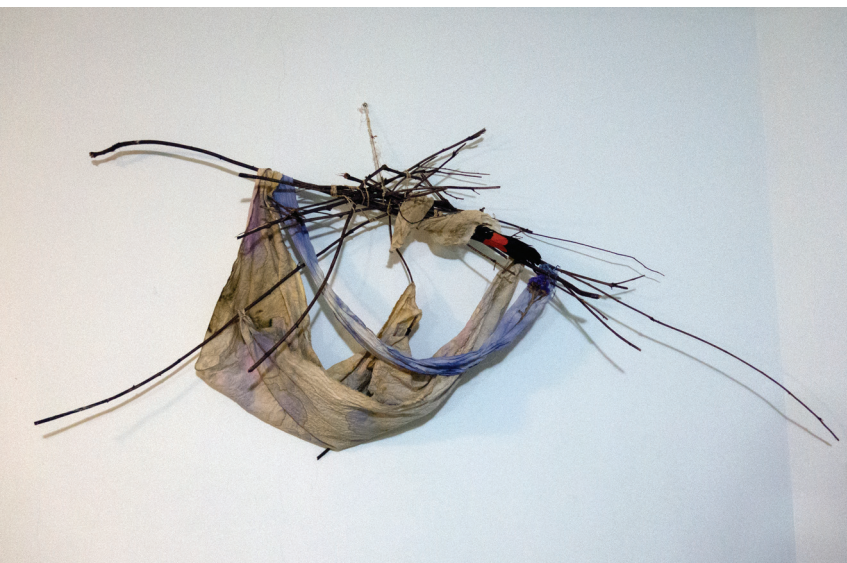


Figure 79: I7568, *MEMORY CRADLE*, Annette Nykiel and Bede Jacobsen (2015), as installed. Repurposed plant dyed cotton, silk and threads, plant material and feathers, hand dyed, stitched and twined. Aprox 180 x 90 x 30 cm.

The artists' statement for *TRAPPED* (2015) (Figure 78) simply read:

we  
set  
our traps  
and  
memories flood.

The piece reflected an abstract representation of tools and memories suggesting netting and trapping. A memorial to lost peoples. The work was constructed out of an improvised structure of natural elements and fibres.

*MEMORY CRADLE* (2015) (Figure 79), a carry all reflected a memorial to those who flee with only what they can carry. As a poignant reminder, the artists statement read:

in time  
we  
forget  
memories cradle  
stories  
told.

The traces and the stories of my time in the arid lands are still with me, and I map those and continue the ongoing conversations that were initiated then. I keep in contact with friends and we get together infrequently, at various waypoints to catch up on news and make plans. I read and talk to those who write about the desert and their complex relationships, rather than working on the frontline, at the pitface, as it were, in formal collaborations as an artworker or boss for paper. Metaphorically, the pitface could be one like I6537 (Figure 80), the abandoned open cut at Euro, north-eastern Goldfields, with its weathered berms and







Figure 80: I6537, digital photograph, Euro area, 2015.





Figure 81: *I5481*, digital photograph, Yalgorup National Park, 2017.



Figure 82: *I5492*, digital photograph, Yalgorup National Park, 2017.



Figure 83: *I5552*, digital photograph, Yalgorup National Park, 2017.

faces. This pit has experienced the ebb and flow of the mining cycle since the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and many ounces of gold have been wrested from it. The fortunes of the Country around it ebb and flow too. The pitface can be seen as a surface, a topology, an oblique coloured map of the Country. The Country is usually mapped from the near horizontal topographic surfaces rather than the negative space of a hole beneath that surface. The language, and the story I read from these surfaces are a part of my herstory and my bricolage process. I have spent many months in pits such as these, walking the berms, mapping the faces, supervising their construction/deconstruction, ethically unsettled. But, I later returned to the arid lands and to the pit to spend time there, wearing a different hat and weaving another more relational thread into my herstory. The warp and weft of my weaving echo the boom and bust of mining cycles, and the erosion, deposition and accretion in deep time.

I will return, some day. In the quiet, when I stop to notice, I hear the insistent whisper of the arid lands and a gentle visceral tug, a gathering of tension in anticipation as the dust devils stir fitfully. Reminded, again, that it is the balance of the tension that holds the string, the bricolage and me, together. I recall, what the ground looks like when I squat, when I notice, and spend time attentive of the space between my feet. This takes time. How do I create the feeling of these in word or thing if I spend my life “hurrying away from the real, as though it were deadly to us. ‘It must be somewhere up there on the horizon,’ we think. And all the time it is in the soil, right beneath our feet” (Logan, 1995, 97)? I take this time when I wander.

In practising the art of inquiry and correspondence: I wander from my coastal home: my steps lead to the beach, carved by storms and bearing a multi-textured cloak of sea wrack. The sea, reminiscent of the dregs of the teapot, still churns. I stand here in awe of the power of wind and water, reminded of deep time. The marks in the shifting dunes mirror the strata I have mapped in ancient rocks. In acknowledgment of my relation to this coastal place, I invest time in reading its stories and noticing its materiality as I would in the arid lands. *I5481* (Figure 81), for example, is the recent erosion of interbedded, well-sorted, quartz-rich sand with occasional bivalve fragments in the shifting fore dunes. These observations might be woven into the fibre I glean while I wander. I wonder what I might find when foraging amongst the sea wrack?

Sea wrack on the tideline has formed tangled balls of fibre, including wireweed and flotsam pictured in *I5492* (Figure 82). The scent of these balls catches my attention. They smell slightly fishy and overripe, of decay and death in the cycle of life, but not fetid. It is part of the cycle, a natural process that yields a clean fibre that I will gather avidly later in the season like that in *I5552* (Figure 83), wireweed dried and stripped and ready for gathering.



As an ethical bricoleuse, it is the process of noticing the possibilities of gathering—gathering/foraging/gleaning/collecting—the bits and pieces that is the bricolage. *I5578* (Figure 84) is a collection of bits and pieces foraged from a day's wander. Bottletops and rusty iron for the dyepot, shells for beads, *Eucalyptus argutifolia* pruned by



Figure 84: *I5578*, digital photograph of collection, Preston Beach, 2017.

the galahs could yield a yellow dye, and the ball of entangled fibres will go in the collection put aside for the upcoming *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes* (2017) exhibition. The rusty tweezers put me in mind of local photographer, George Karpathakis, a fellow artist in the *field walking slow making* (2016) exhibition, and his collections of small, metallic, lost things he forages while walking. Yellow *oxalis* spp. flowers: the first time I have seen them here, a garden weed now flowering in a rehabilitated dune area, a reliable source of a strong acid yellow dye. However, these flowers yield little colour when crushed between my fingers. This sense making forms part of the language of my making process and is an embodied understanding of the discursive practice of being in the world.

### *Situating the Maker*

My sense making and the tacit knowing of my craft based skills are entangled in the herstories of a long line of women making-do. I grew up with spinning and weaving and dyeing wool and hand knitted jumpers. Clothes were patched and darned and ended their days as rags in the machinery shed. Many of my clothes

were handmade or handed down but sewing had little appeal. I was too impatient to sew, until I became a mother, but a crochet hook and a ball of wool often found its way into my pockets. The meditative repetition allowed me to still my mind and

to sit for a while. Wool scraps were more readily available than cloth and usually wound into balls. Balls of wool and thread were easy to carry and did not have loops that caught and tangled like a skein. Heavy woollen blankets given as wedding gifts and to celebrate births; treasured and passed on. Two of these blankets, I have had ever since I can remember, now worn and faded, form the backing of my patchwork, for example (Figure 2, page 2 and Figure 89, page 127).

I switched from knitting and crocheting to string and patchwork and from wool to cotton when my children were young. Cotton was easier to wash and more comfortable for the children in the Perth Hills climate, but more difficult to dye and I enjoyed the challenge. My work worn hands catch on silk and the kids found it slippery. Around this time, I also met generous and caring women including Eugene du Chattle, Jane Donlin, Trudi Pollard, Anne Williams and Nalda Searles, skilled textile makers and experienced dyemakers. We would get together infrequently to yarn and make over dyepots and buckets of fibre pulp for making paper, and shared lunches. I was homeschooling the children, so they also shared on these days. We continued our investigations and experiments on our frequent camping trips, and at home on our two acre block. We made journals and cards from handmade paper. All skills I carried forth into this research project. Donlin, Searles, Pollard and Williams are mature accomplished craft-based practitioners and we have yarned, shared and attended workshops and field camps together. We are all experienced and passionate about using and sharing natural dyes. I acknowledge with appreciation that these women are amongst those who have shared their knowledge of natural dyes, string making and basket making. I continue to experiment, glean and share understanding and reciprocate by passing these skills on to the people I yarn with. There are many similarities in our processes and our aesthetic as we use similar processes and materials in local practices grounded in sustainable and ethical concerns for the environment and women. Pollard and Searles have long term, collaborative relationships with Indigenous women, Williams has used sample bags in her work. Donlin is an exemplary string maker. Donlin and Searles continue offer mentorship and critique of my work and we get together infrequently to yarn and to share while making string.

String triggers memories. In the kitchen drawer were lengths of string, carefully wound around a piece of stout cardboard. A piece of string laced through the back of an old cereal box to teach a child to tie shoelaces. The string bags hanging limp on the pantry door no longer bulging with shopping. Hunting for a piece of string and a drawing pin to draw chalk circles and arcs, and cats cradles, a timeless string game. Marking grids of drill patterns off coloured coded lengths of cord. Green were 3m spacings, pink 5m, and dark blue 12.5m. Returning later to pick up the samples and whip the drawstrings around the top of up to 600 cloth sample bags a day, similar to those in (Figure 5).

My sister introduced me to quilting but I was too impatient with pattern matching and fussy cutting and too frugal to cut new fabric into scraps, but I did make several mosaic quilts from bits and pieces I had accumulated. However, my stash of hand dyed cloth needed a vehicle, so I began to piece together crazy patchworks, hand stitched at odd moments in a mother's day. Small projects that were easy to carry and to pick up, and put down and could be added to and expanded. Practical, useful quilts for picnics and cubby houses and snuggling under at story time, lighter than blankets in swags when camping. My finished quilts are all in use and valuable to their owners. I have several bricoles of patchwork that have not been quilted and are still very much works in progress, however it is my intention that some quilts will be shown in *meeting place* (2018).





There is a long tradition and associated cultural associations around the value of quilts, which Witzling (2009) expands on. However, there is no tradition of handmade quilts in my family, and mine are different, as I dye my own fabric in so many different places. My quilts are more akin to maps and more related to the land than the social ritual and perhaps a little less anthropocentric, an important departure from the quilt tradition. The colour palette of the natural dyes matched the ground of the Country and gently soothed my yearning for the arid lands, at this stage, a visceral unease I was peripherally aware of. The patchwork and its lines of stitches evoked memories of ground truthing and drawing maps, travelling and working outdoors in my younger days. Draped over the somnolent children I nurture, these connected our bodies to the places and the Country that nurture us. The slow process of the dyeing and the making and its recognition with natural cycles fitted well into our lifestyle and learning about the world around us.

When the children went to school I enrolled in a BA(art) at Curtin University, WA. Wandering in the bush and making days continued infrequently and seasonally. It was around this time that Flint's book *Eco colour: botanical dyes for beautiful textiles* (2008) was published and the profile of non-synthetic dyeing was lifted, although many of us had been sharing and teaching long before this. At ECU textile camps, many WA art students learnt natural dyeing techniques and how to ply rag string and coil baskets from bush materials. While my wandering and gleaning methodology has similarities with Flint's, the cloth I dye is different and I rarely make wearable garments. I have been more strongly influenced by local WA women particularly Searles and Story.

How does the quilt-making relate to other critical feminist and socially engaged art practice? Witzling (2009) in referring to the writing of Radka Donnell describes 'quilt poetics' thus:

women have a special relationship with cloth, which she describes as 'the emblem of human connectedness'. Cloth is usually seen as a humble, 'low' material, connected to the body. 'Taking a piece of cloth and using it for something other than defining social status and gender is not an aesthetic talent', she writes. 'It is a step to social deliverance.' (cited in Witzling 2009, p. 624)

Quilt making is undertaken by women, often in groups, and often with a combination of old and new fabrics that have been collected, swapped and gifted amongst the group. Each piece and each quilt have a herstory, this is clearly demonstrated in my quilts. As such, my quilt-making is feminist and socially engaged. Arguably also sustainable, because the quilts are pieced together, slowly—by hand, from recycled and repurposed rags and sample bags that are marked by the pigments of the land and the windfallen flora foraged amongst it. While these ideas and indeed quilt-making are not radically new, they are supporting and reconceptualising traditional skills practiced by women in a contemporary context and re/minding and re/turning to the environment that the body, in my case, female, is embedded and entangled in and the people I yarn with.

Curtin Volunteers invited me to travel to Laverton to meet a group of Wongatha women who were dyeing silk scarves with local plants. This led to the *Marlu Kuru Kuru* (Nykiel, 2009, 2010) project and eventually a job as an artswoker and cultural centre manager that reconnected me to the mining industry and FIFO life and then further study culminating in this PhD. But most importantly, I was back in the arid lands and wandering in the Country, listening, yarnning, sharing and making. I retrieved part of a pallet of mineralogical sample bags destined for the tip and these became my main source of cloth, until the stash was depleted, although a few are still hoarded, and some have been redyed and repurposed from other projects. I am now recycling a pile of calico drop sheets and cotton rags I was gifted or have foraged to dye and make with, for the forthcoming show.





The balls, the baskets and the bags are all vessels, or holders useful for storing, gathering and foraging but furthermore they are yarning objects symbolic of the Country. The vessel has connotations of the woman's body and I acknowledge this. I also acknowledge the long tradition of usefulness that is embedded in making craft objects, but this is beyond the scope of this research. For me, as the bricoleuse who hoards and makes do, their value is in their sense of a visceral connection to the Country. These yarning objects are made in, on and about the Country, which is embedded in every fibre. There are also echoes of the stories woven into their fibres and the links to the sample bag and the geologist and my multiple connections to the ground beneath my feet. They emerge from material thinking, practice and process and are indexical of the Country and of craft tradition, and manifest in various forms in the gallery to provide a context for a more visceral connection.

An unexpected implication of unpacking and theorising my making, in this research, has been threading it through my more theoretical positioning about bricolage and interrelationality. Before this project, in my mind, the voices of the maker, who thinks through making, the storyteller who finds meaning in intertextual narrative and the densely theoretical scholar were separate layers with large gaps and little common ground at paradoxical odds with my interrelational view of the world. Conceptualising the yarning objects as powerful metaphors of thinking and making to tell stories has been the impetus to piece together these reflections and diffractions and then stitch together a more cohesive intercalated story. This articulation of the entanglement of the bricoleuse in my bricolage has resulted from using this research approach and may be of value to other maker-scholars. The following sections demonstrate how the conceptual thinking and the making are now interwoven from various points of view as a maker.

### *Quiltmaker*

I patch together quilts, I dye, I stitch, I handle materials in an attempt to materialise the feelings of experience. I am an ethical bricoleuse who practises the art of inquiry. I metaphorically stitch patchwork quilts from concepts and theory, images and experiences including the tacit knowing of craft skills and sharing with established artists to decentre my thinking and piece together knowing and relating to the world. The layering of quilting, stitching and weaving of dyed cloth are often employed as metaphors for the research that forms a thread of the fabric of my life, for example, to use Yardley's words I am "a maker of patchwork, a weaver of stories" (2008, p. 1). The fragments—bricoles—of thinking are like the piecework on a quilt, where:

the metaphor of piecing suggests an alternative mode of artistic practice, also oppositional to the current western view of the production of art. In piecing (and appliqué as well), small, useless bits—fragments—are put together to form a coherent and beautiful whole. (Piercy and De Brettville as cited in Witzling, 2009, p. 629)

Piecing is an activity that can be done in fragments of time and in small blocks by many hands before being assembled and stitched into a complex coherent whole, both creative and aesthetic. This aligns with Bennett's (2010) "thing power" in respecting the scraps and converting so-called waste. Piecing is a slow unheroic practice that reminds us to notice (Witzling, 2009).



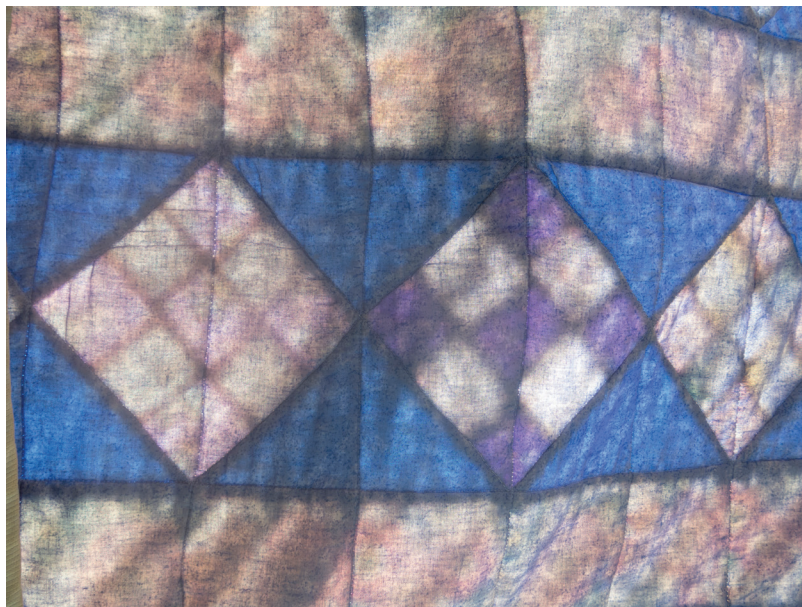


Figure 85: *I5586*, digital photograph, sunny washing line, 2017.



Figure 86: *I7500*, digital photograph, my bed, 2015.

In the language of the quilt, the pieces may be foundation pieced; carefully measured and cut to fit together precisely; literally, the structuralist notions of Lévi-Strauss (1966). *I5586* (Figure 85) pictures an example of a pieced and patterned quilt I made, hanging out in the sun for airing. This quilt contrasts with the crazy patchwork shown in *I7500* (Figure 86), that I usually make, still pieced together as a bricolage but without a prescribed pattern or structure where seemingly disparate bits and pieces come together.

The quilt may be freeform, crazy patchwork—a mosaic, a patchwork or a medallion quilt, rich, messy, overstitched, improvised and patched together from scraps where neither stitch, seam or fabric is privileged, such as *I5583* (Figure 2). *I7500* (Figure 86) shows the detail of a hand stitched, rich, crazy patchwork quilt. Each piece of this patchwork has a story attached and a yarn stitched into it. The central patch in this quilt, patterned by bottle tops in a *Eucalyptus spp.* dye, a scrap of old cotton sheet torn when used to wrap furniture when we moved. The bottle tops foraged from the carpark of the adjacent shopping centre and the leaves windfallen from the street tree up the road from our new house at the time (this one, never a home). The fine close stitching, to the right, materialising long distance, late night phone calls whispering over thirsty, fallow paddocks to the Country as the children and I adjusted to suburbia and the routine of new educational institutions and bus timetables.

The quilt may be a series of yarns, a map or a representational picture or thread painting but it has stories to tell although they may never be heard except, perhaps, in these yarns. However, the quilt is not just the top, the patchwork or piecing, it is also the seams and the sandwiched layers stitched together in the process of its making. It is the backing and batting or wadding layers and the stitches that give it strength and warmth, making the quilt useful rather than simply decorative. In another folded quilt pictured in *I7294* (Figure 87) the layers give it warmth and strength, and the stitching on the back maps another way of seeing, another voice in the story about the Country. It is the back of the quilt that has the most contact with the body despite the piecing or pattern of the front of the quilt and its initial aesthetic and visual appeal. The stitching holds the seams and the patterns together but also accretes or binds the intercalated layers together.





Metaphorically, the layers of the quilt are the theory, the methodology, and the conceptualisation of my knowing in being and doing. The colours of the cloth and the quilting action of the skilled maker materialises and embodies the relations and the creativity of the research. The patterned stitching on the backing alludes to a different way of seeing the world and allows seeming paradoxes to lie contiguously. To me, seams are liminal spaces between thoughts or disciplines, while the quilting stitches across the borders of their patterns. The quilt borders are meeting or talking places, sites of exchange and cooperation. The quilt becomes a map of a potential collaborative outcome that may emerge but also a skin, adopting the contours of the surface, enfolding and encompassing, taking on the shape of the 'body' it covers and gives comfort to; collecting stories and accreting layers of narrative and thoughts and bodily detritus. There is tacit knowing and pleasure in the handling of the patchwork; in the making, in choosing, colouring and shaping the scraps; the piecing and stitching and binding; in its contact with my skin while I am making. The waypoint plant dyed scraps retain the essence of the Country in their colour and smell and my memories. Seams may weaken and be mended, bright new patches stitched over or added amongst stains, tears, worn and frayed cloth; new stories told and annotated adding richness from experiences and acts resulting from material thinking. The freeform quilt may be added to with new borders and patterns; a cot size quilt becomes a bed sized quilt. Folded and refolded as its usage changes, it becomes a treasured object, a vessel of experiences; skilfully crafted, useful and accumulating value and myths (conceptual and narrative) with time.



Figure 87: I7294, digital photograph, studio, 2015.

I snuggle under the quilt in I7500 (Figure 86) and allow it to follow the contours of my visceral terrain. Comfortably enfolded, drifting off to imagine, embedded stories stitched over and through the marks of travail on dyed cloth. Tracks of stitches, trace of creased fold, tearstains of wounded child and too hot tea. In the accumulation of pulled threads, caught stitches, and frayed patches are the not-knowings and what if's and not quite expressed questions.







Figure 88: 20160911\_125317, documentary digital photograph, studio, 2016.

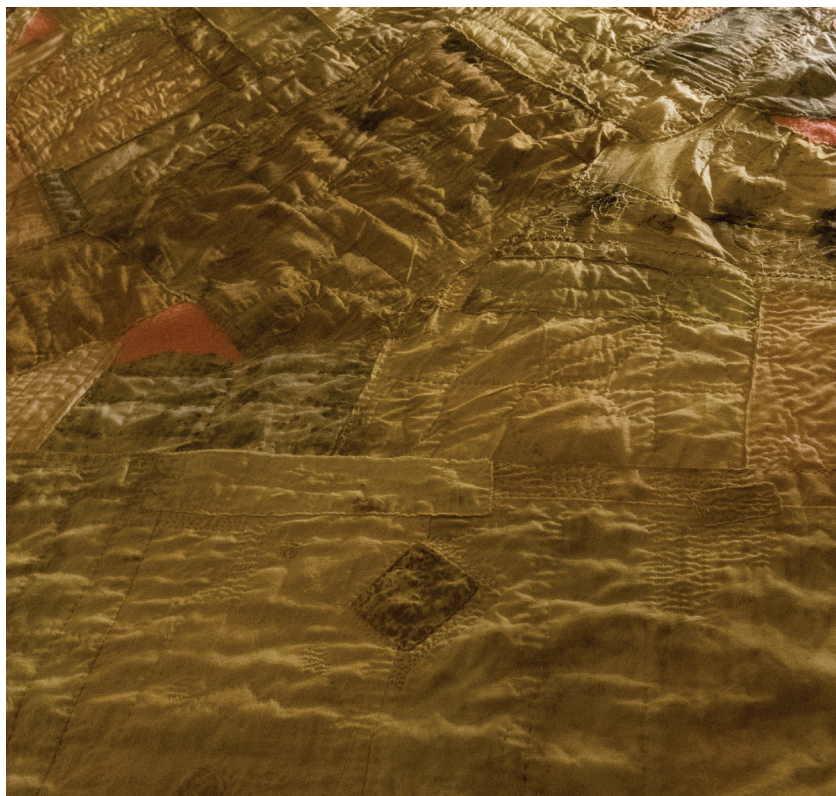


Figure 89: I5594, the textured topography of one of my handstitched quilts documentary digital photograph, my bed, 2017.

Yarns are spun and embroidered into the cloth, and into the fabric of my world. 20160911\_125317 (Figure 88) shows another slowly made, hand stitched quilt—a bricolage of fragments with tracks mapped, stitched, patched, creased, stained and enfolded into its surfaces and layers. This cloth is impregnated with pigments of earth and plant matter from places that the quilt or its cloth patches have travelled and the essence and the blood, sweat and skin of the maker. Whispered stories, unasked questions and words unspoken are stitched with the threads of memories and the longings that the feeling for a place brings. Draped on my body, it alludes to the pit walls of an open cut in I6537 (Figure 80), memories flood. Echoes of stories resonate when snuggled in the quilt where the skin of the world, the skin of the body and the cloth of the quilt may be seen as a hazy line from a distance but from the view of the storyteller are immanently entangled. These quilts are a vehicle of temporal multiplicities, the tactility, the embodiment of process and the tacit knowing.

The handmade quilt I7500 (Figure 86) on my bed is especially valuable. It was the first thing I grabbed when we were threatened by the 2016 Waroona fires that were to claim lives and incinerate thousands of hectares. Just the right size to shelter my body. Into it, I bundled: wallet, a change of clothes, some towels.... and flung it and my backpack in the car. The hand dyed colours have mellowed, some fading; the hand stitching becoming its own topography, texturing the surface like I5594 (Figure 89), the same quilt as Figure 2 (page 2). The stitched threads and the gaps between the stitches trace a place in my imagining, and tell their yarns. The imaginings that became my PhD research proposal are also stitched into this quilt. Patched and faded colour, darned, embellished, new brighter threads. Ideas stitched out as if pacing, overlapping, threading together lines of narrative.

Squares and rectangles of different sizes are stitched and patched together, the outside edges of the blanket are stitched; the backing two layers of recycled flannel sheet.

Browns, greys, gold, pinks of P3230116 (Figure 90), evoke memories of the earthy palette of wheatbelt paddocks, somnolent, waiting patiently for rain on the margins of cleared land, adorned by a beaded chain of salt lakes. Old fire scars mark the uncleared edge of







Figure 90: P3230116, aerial digital photograph, Eastern Wheatbelt, 2009.







Figure 91: 20161006\_171712, a tangle of plied rag strips, a strong string, hanging on my studio wall, documentary digital photograph, 2016.

the kwongan heathlands, WA, in the foreground. Another view from a FIFO plane. Memories and these flights weave to and fro like lines of stitching across cycles of time.

Even now, a few lines of stitch are occasionally added to these quilts. Another chapter, or voice, a strengthening of a seam. Most nights, a quilt feels the heat of my body as I feel the physical and literal warmth of it. The conversations and the journeys it has mapped are the echoes of my dreams.

### *Stringmaker*

Like the quilt, string is a powerful metaphor and gathers detritus and material supplements, such as the tangle of string in 20161006\_171712 (Figure 91) hanging on my studio wall.

Plying string has been carried out for at least 200 000 years (Bednarik, 2005; Hardy, 2008). Some form of cloth and thread making is intrinsic to almost all cultures. Each hand adds a unique specificity to the process, in the place of making. Fibre basket making was not a widespread practice amongst the Wongatha and Ngaanyatjarra women although they did spin fibres and ply string (Keller, 2010; Watson, 2012). Artswomen Nalda Searles and Thisbe Purich with Pantjiti Mary Mclean were involved in workshops, in the 1990's, hosted by the Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara Women's Council (NPYWC) to teach coiling and basketry techniques that became *tjanpi*—grass baskets and sculptures based loosely on *manguri*-head rings (Watson, 2012). Missionary raised Wongatha women learnt to make baskets from cane and willow in more traditional European styles at the Mt Margaret Mission (Keller, 2010; West, 2009). Noongar people made string from *Pimela spp.*, common near the south coast (Hansen & Horsfall, 2016). Local artist Holly Story made string from this fibre during the *field working slow making* (2016) exhibition. Searles, Story and I have all travelled to the Ngaanyatjarra Lands at different times to workshop with and mentor women in the use of fibre techniques.

Fibres and scraps are collected, twisted together to form a strong thread—far stronger in the entwining and entanglement than a bunch of fibres alone. These threads, in turn, are rolled into balls of string. The fibres of a ball of string, I5827 (Figure 92), such as the one made while travelling the Great Central Road, WA, with Searles and Betsy Bush are travail stained and imbued

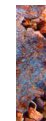






Figure 92: I5827, digital photograph, car dash, Great Central Road, 2014.





Figure 93: I9410, *Necklace for Bede* (2015), hand plied string and drilled wooden fragments marked with ochre and charcoal.

with the stories and language of this journey, the Country, and echoes of the road's song. For example, the dyed string in I5939 (Figure 33) that repurposes the sample bags carries the potential to be useful but is embedded with traces of the place it was made; a bricole that may be stitched or woven into a bricolage of cloth, a basket or bag or used to bind or tie. The string bag and the basket forms were traditionally used to gather food on the land, but I use them to gather and store bricoles more often than food. Within the ball, the string is contiguous, looped and entwined at many points along itself, but there are also liminal and negative spaces in between the threads where the string may overlap, cross or lay parallel at different places along its continuous length much like intersecting lines on my maps.

The tangles that form when making string, like those pictured in 20161006\_171712 (Figure 91), do not constrain the threads of the length of string but allow it to pass through, as do the beads threaded on the string, like those on *Necklace for Bede* (2015) (Figure 93), just as the wayfarer is not constrained by the pathway she travels. Neither the string or the wayfarer are contained or limited by the knots or the pathway, they travel through entangled but unhampered.

String and fibre and the containers made from them become the raw materials from which to assemble and install artworks including *The Country* (2018) (Figure 179 and Figure 180). I draw with string and fibre as transient expression of the relational engagements I feel while wandering (Figure 115 and Figure 117). Or I try to articulate these sentiments as artworks in the studio or gallery space, for example the wireweed drawing I5024 (Figure 140), dodder laurel drawing in 20170427\_135259 (Figure 146) and the constellation in string to the right of I1709 (Figure 170) or the campfire built of balls of string and rag in I1925 (Figure 164).

The fibres and the threads are the experiencing, the thinking, the making, the doing, the becoming that have been collected and plied into the string of my accumulating knowledge, adorned with a bead or two, that is the life long journey of the nomadic, wayfaring bricoleuse. The potentially useful thread, that this making inhabits, is relationally sewing itself into the fabric of the world. The ball of string may be likened to a haptic perception of Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) smooth space of the world in its continuous variation and the contiguous nature of its unwinding thread. Travelling and nomadism are liminal spaces and ways of being and knowing; threading down paths that are lines of becoming; places are knots or local, temporal gatherings of things and people amid the surface of the cloth that is the woven meshwork of the world.





## Mapmaker



Figure 94: *I3603c*, pile of handmade paper, rag, calico and shredded paper, 2015.



Figure 95: *I7628*, documentary digital photograph, studio, 2015.

I use the map as a tool when I am wayfaring and as a metaphor in cloth when I am making and as part of my audit trail in this research. Tools from the bricoleuse's toolbox can be combined to make various forms which themselves may then become tools. *I3603c* (Figure 94) images a pile of paper made while I was teaching a papermaking workshop and is made from scraps of recycled clothing that were not suitable for making string, and some shredded paper I foraged. The blue paper is made from the stained worn-out jeans I wore when working in the Country. My handmade paper has stories embedded in its very materiality; it is not just a substrate or surface like most paper. The skills and the scraps are combined to make paper that is then used to make maps that may become a book, an artwork or a document; a bricolage process.

*I7628* (Figure 95) is the detail of embossed maps of string (hand plied) on handmade rag paper—perhaps from the stack above. The marks are from contour maps stitched on calico (perhaps from reclaimed mineralogical sample bags) and recall the tracks and geological folds and the feel of walking, mapping and sampling in the Country. These embossed maps are visual documents of the audit trail of the process of this research.

These maps with their imprinted contours demonstrate the nuances of the language of these materials. They map and ground truth my research audit trail as a chart or document. My maps, including these embossed ones, are annotated travel guides and mud maps not simply road maps. Stories in this context are unsignposted destinations, amid unknown dialogues created by the mapmaker. The imagination and the vision of the maker is the path to these uncharted areas on the map (van Noord, 2002), the gestures of the process enlivening the journey as the rhapsode brings the story to life.

Is the ball of string and the quilt a map or a mud map of the bricolage? Are they useful only in their immediate context—like the mud map scrawled in the sand at your feet when you can identify the broken windmill and dead camel corner and remember where Fitzzy got bogged, for example, *I5605* (Figure 97)? This hastily scrawled mud map may describe the same place as the detail of a place on a published geological map *I5238* (Figure 96) but these maps are





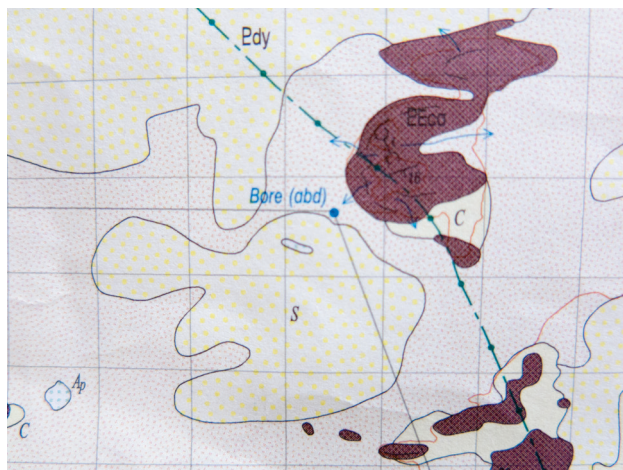


Figure 96: I5238, detail of a geological map, digital photograph, studio, 2017.



Figure 97: I5605, a hastily scrawled mud map in the sand, digital photograph, 2017.

useful only in their immediate context. Without their stories, whether they are the yarn or the coded legend, the maps are only unintelligible signs. The geological map is unintelligible without a legend or if you are not familiar with the geology or the area. Similarly, the mud map is incomprehensible, if you have no idea who Fitzy is. However, I contemplate the marks of these maps and may commit them to memory before they are scuffed out or folded away. The reinvention of the poetics of these marks in the context of this story now gives them another layer of meaning. For me, finding meaning embodies time, when situated tacit understanding is part of the process of making meaning and the mud map is meaningful. These mud maps allow me to wander in the world. Walking stitches me into the fabric of the world. The physicality of walking connects threads of thought about what I know and experience with what I think and make (Duxbury, Grierson, & Waite, 2008) and this becomes the material of thought from which to draw mud maps. The path I take is a thread of my passing, the steps are stitches, the paces are spaces in between the contact of the steps, small not-knowing loops, the odd knot, contact zones. Walking is a multi-sensorial engagement, which becomes a mindful, visceral experience.

Other local artists practise this mindful walking. In the lead up to *InConversation* (2014) exhibition at Spectrum Project Space and as part of *field working slow making* (2016), and *Direct Address* (2016), artists such as Phillips, Chinna, Story and Schwarz conducted or participated in multiple workshop-walks—practising awareness, silence. The entire *100 strong Silent Speaks* (2016) in Forrest Chase, Perth was not just a protest against Roe8 Highway development but a performance, resonant with experiences, with intent to project through collective energy the visceral and emotional nuances generated by being aware of specific places people love and want to protect. These are examples of contemporary practice doing exactly this—dialogue between self and place—but shared as community. There is a lot of action to help preserve country and generate interest in country through activist art. I have participated in some of these activist collaborations including *Direct Address* (2016) as I interweave through my local community.

When I walk, in the Country, I notice the vibrations of my uneven steps, the resistance of the ground, the dislodging of a stone. I feel the dryness of the air, the zephyr of breeze, my position and that of the sun, my orientation—north over my right shoulder, my balance, the itching bite of an insect, the tension of working muscles, the irritation of a burr or a tick hitchhiking in my sock.

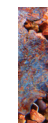




Figure 98: *P7310205*, the patina of rusty metal, digital photograph, Mary Mac, 2011.



Figure 99: *20170325\_181519*, twisted and woven wireweed left as a token of my passing amid the sea wrack and the tracks, documentary digital photograph, Yalgorup National Park, 2017.

My body reacts, an unconscious frisson of anxiety, as I stumble over a root or a loose rock. I start at the panicked flight of a fleeing animal in the undergrowth. My breathing quickens and steadies, my attention drawn to the space at my feet.

I hear the sounds my passing makes, crunch of gravel, scrape of leaves, whisper of cloth, flight of bird. I hear the sounds the Country makes, the skid and skitter of stone, chatter of birds and then their settling, the thrum of insects, creak of branch. I smell and taste the salt in the breeze, the pungency of bruised leaf or hot plants, the dust of dry earth, the promise of rain. The smell and glare of the coastal salt lake brings to mind a desert salt lake.

I stand still and feel unnameable, visceral, emotions. The pleasure, the tension, the slowing down, tuning into the nuances of where I am. Now I can experience, relate. I map, almost unconsciously, the assemblages of plant, soil, landform; the season and the condition of the Country. Different here on the coast, after the desert, but still the Country; two places I feel attachment to. I look for the traces and tracks of animal, of people, of the weather and of water. I check for things and spaces that may be useful, mapping and cataloguing them in my memory; some are still here from last time. I reach out to touch: the graininess of sand, the worn smoothness of a rock, the barkiness of the tree, the patina of rusty metal, flaky, rough and grainy to the touch, *P7310205* (Figure 98), staining the skin with a metallic smell, sharp shards break off and embed themselves in trailing fingers.

I pause, and pluck some fibre to twist and weave it into tokens of this experience. *20170325\_181519* (Figure 99) shows twisted and woven wireweed left as a token of my passing amid the sea wrack and the tracks. Many such tokens are left, as transient expressions, gifts, tangible marks of my passing. The gifts are a reciprocal gesture in acknowledgment of mapping my relationship here. Some of the tokens I will see again when I retrace my steps, others return, without trace, from whence they came. This yarn, like a mud map, narrates what it means, to me, to be entangled in the midst of the materiality of the Country.





This is a situated experience of walking in place and an ethical commitment of time and relations “where the topography and the body are encountered and gathered through narrative recollection and enunciation” (Tawa, 2002, p. 45). Where “walking country is...a process of reading, in great detail, its current state and conditions—its ecology, geology, meteorology, astronomy, and so on” (Tawa, 2002, p. 48). My views are grounded, partial and dynamic rather than grand, distanced scenic vistas. I practice:

an environmentally attuned poetics that is anti-colonial in its aims. It does not mean ‘climbing to a commanding point in order to see further’, but rather ‘renouncing this nostalgia for horizons, focusing instead on the ground at our feet, beginning to pay attention to its folds and inclines.’ (Carter as cited in Mulligan, 2003, pp. 280-281)



Figure 100: *I1766*, basket and plant fibre string Holly Story (2016), *field working slowing making* exhibition, Spectrum Project Space. Permission Holly Story.

The quilts I make invoke the tactile, aesthetic experience of warmth, shelter, protection as well as the folds and inclines of the topography. The striated and layered circular structures of the baskets may suggest the negative spaces of old open cut mines but, for me, they are about collecting and gathering and visceral connections, and for some people, they are bound in the domestic. For Story, baskets are “bound to their particular place. I wonder at the multiplicity of forms—for example called ‘basket’—born from the interrelationality of domestic need, availability of materials and creative insight” (2016, p. 2).

*I1766* (Figure 100) pictures one of Story’s baskets and skeins of plant fibre string in the *field working slowing making* (2016) exhibition. For me, the haptic process of dyeing and plying the string and coiling or weaving the baskets is a way of thinking through matter, and what I have mapped as a way of becoming. The emergence of the basket is a metaphor and also an embodiment of my experience and place-making—weaving myself into place.

As a maker, like Story, I have an inherent aesthetic in my tacit skills and the way I use them to tell stories. Making objects to use, has cultural and social implications which affect the aesthetic of the object. The object containing the inherent skill of the maker becomes more valued with use and time (Hamby, 2010; Paz, 1990; Rowley, 2003). This patina of use adds to its aesthetic, for example, the comfort of a well-worn quilt. The





Figure 101: 20170827\_073331, documentary digital photograph, Yalgorup National Park, 2017.



Figure 102: I5328c, a meshwork of netting, detail of a string bag of plant dyed, recycled calico, studio, 2017.

poiesis of the cloth I make is ethical in the gathering, dyeing and slow-making, and adds to the aesthetic of its visual and tactile appeal. The cloth gains personal and perhaps cultural value with use. It also reminds us of the intrinsic cultural and human value of the tactility of things, and maps the traces and personal importance of the places where I made them. A relationality of care begins with the familiar. Perhaps, if I exhibit artwork made in and about places I care for, I may invite others to consider them too. This is a challenge, for many artists, and it is ongoing.

The process and relationality of the bricoleuse, including mapping, ground truthing and making, and the materiality of my bricoles, are phenomena that I favour over the objects I make—although the objects may also be a bricolage in its becoming. My ‘rules’ of stepping lightly and living sustainably are the ethical constraints or limits within which I act as bricoleuse but also drive my desire to engage with the Country. I spend time relating to the materiality of the Country. I gather from natural assemblages and imagine possibilities for using what I have collected to materialise and articulate my experiences, sense of place, and process of place-making. Noticing the materiality of knots and entanglement of the meshwork in a natural assemblage like the one pictured in 20170827\_073331 (Figure 101) inspires the emergence of material thinking. The storm waves have tangled together fresh wireweed and a richly textured collection of seaweed, changing their materiality as the life force leaves them—a complexity of textures, colours and lines in a chaotic space that entangles energy and materials. This puts me in mind of John Wolseley and his intricate detailed drawings of small insects within his frottaged lines, or the ghost net weavers in the detail of my string bags in I5328c (Figure 102).

The process and the assemblage, both forms of bricolage, become the perception of a “technical metaphor for a cognitive and creative process; the composition and generation of mythical discourse” (Johnson, 2012, p. 358) in its fluidity, complexity, multiplicity and heterogeneity (Carter, 2004; Johnson, 2012; Markham, 2017 (forthcoming)). Weaving is suggested by Carter (2004) as a form of material thinking as well as a metaphor for the conceptualisation of craft. The threads of the warp and weft are different and contiguous, like contour lines on a map, rather than binary. The decision to pass the shuttle through





the gap in the warp to create another line in the weft is a crisis moment. The woven cloth becomes the discourse, telling a story of making but also the material sign as an artefact of the discursive practice.

I may then take that woven cloth and deconstruct it, tearing it into strips, before gathering up those strips and locally reinventing them in the dyepot with disparate pieces of metal, earth and plant—humid and colloidal materials (Carter, 2004). The labour of my making employs this process, skilled craftsmanship and tacit knowing to create some thing from the strips which have been scattered and recombined—string, patchwork, basket, map.



Figure 103: *DSC\_0146*, string bags, Annette Nykiel 2016-17, plant and earth pigment dyed calico.

The skills of the maker in handling the materials, may be a form of collaboration between myself—the maker and those who have taught and worked with me and those I have passed my skills onto. A multiplicity of hands, voices, materials and ideas are reflected in the rhythmic repetitive action of the making, and the multiple vessels of that making. This multiplicity is reflected in the string bags of *DSC\_0146* (Figure 103). The lines of knotless netting are woven from contiguous threads and multiple intertwined loops using techniques that are thousands of years old (Balme, 2013). For example, *I5328c* (Figure 102) shows the detail of one of these techniques which many cultures still use today. A similar technique is used to weave the vessels in *Gathering Thoughts* (2017) (Figure 106) and *I5888* (Figure 107). All these forms contain materialisations of my ethical concerns as I make.

### *Ethical Imagemaker*

My photographs are another materialisation of my ethical concerns. The photographs I frame in the camera lens and the drawings that I make whilst wandering, are fragments and intra-actions that materialise my conceptualisation of the thought or theory. These share the possibility of becoming bricoles in my continuing experience as a bricoleuse. The photographs are a kind of making-do, noticing a fragment of the Country and then reterritorialising it by framing it within the camera lens. These images may be interpreted as an artwork. Their status as artworks is dependent on whether or how the

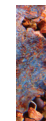


image is communicated, beyond the frame of the lens, how and where it is circulated and my original intent in capturing the image. For me, this is ethically embodied through noticing and treading lightly in my relations with the Country. The digital images are bricoles I gather of natural assemblages and collections, and of transient drawings such as *I5558* (Figure 104), a digital image of an inspiring transient, natural collection.

These digital images are light to carry in a camera or card, but it is debatable whether they are sustainable, or more sustainable than film with its toxic processing. Both need printing or projecting and storage albeit digital, all of which use up resources of energy,



Figure 104: *I5558*, digital photograph, Yalgorup National Park, 2017.

technology and time. An ethical dilemma I continue to grapple with, but reconcile to some extent in that the cards and storage technology I use have multiple uses, and were not bought or gifted specifically for these images. However, the camera was given as a gift to document the way I see the world. My computer equipment is generally secondhand or reconditioned. I label and archive my images chronologically by their camera assigned nomenclature. It is a conscious decision on my part to adjust the camera and frame the image to minimise post processing and record a camera diffracted image of what I was observing at the time. I do spend a lot of time browsing my images, which I greatly enjoy as a form of mapping.

My backpack remains light, but includes my camera and scribbles of my relating in notebooks, and questions scattering and gathering the conceptual thoughts in my head, these become fragments that describe waypoints. These are grounded meeting places where a tangle of fibres of thought meet at a knot amidst the pathways, of named and gathered materials that are familiar, which are known, and might come in handy. My embodied, ethical research “involves so much more than getting an institutional ethics clearance. It leads from places of not-knowing. It is onto-epistemological, a life choice; acknowledging and respecting an entangled relational becoming in the world” (Nykiel, 2017 (forthcoming)).

I recognise the possibilities of patterns and materials from wandering in the Country and articulate my entanglement in that place by making useful things from bits and pieces by:

foraging, walking the land, gathering simple things, and making simple things out of them...making them into bits and pieces that are wearable and useful. It brings attention to our wastefulness as a country and as a people, our different perspectives of what's precious and what isn't precious. (Hepburn, 2016)

My sentiments, echoed in jeweller Nicky Hepburn's quotation, are a very important socio-cultural and environmental reason, to bring a visual presence of my experience in the Country back into urban galleries.





My resonance with Hepburn's words, and a similar feeling I have in the midst of the Country, is an energy that forms in the chaotic space of interstitial relations. These transformative gaps give me the space to make sense out of chaos. They may form, even between beings of like mind, and allow the emergence of a reciprocal engagement, which may also include resonances between creativity and matter. This, I posit, is a transforming act of artistic creation that sets up resonances. It is performed by the interpretation of the artistic machine (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) as a series of not-knowing spaces in collaboration with nature amidst the meshwork. It is the action, by me, as artistic machine, where not-knowing and the interstitial spaces are not a beginning or an end but a pause in the conversation of the discourse. I would extend this to a dialogue between myself and place, "a discourse of material signs"



Figure 105: DSCN1721, digital photograph, Crystal Cave, 2015. Photographer Patrick Nykiel.

(Carter, 2004, p. 182). The reconceptualised matter is not necessarily solid, a fragment of place, and not necessarily located in a physical space. The energy of the process of material thought and making sense is diffracted through an ethical gathering and re-placing. This recreates a different environment and social relation away from the Country or its images, but is still the place in my head. For example, the foraging, recombining and the alchemical process of dyeing cloth and string is a collaborative reconceptualisation of the formless matter (e.g. chemical properties of dye and cloth) and my skilled action, now, materialised as a dye colour. The resultant marks on the cloth are recombined into a material sign and a dialogue of the process is translated from the mythmaker's point of view. The cloth, and what is made from it becomes a material sign of the plastic intelligence and phenomena of our intra-actions where the string emerges from the transformation of artistic creation but retains the reciprocal resonances of the experience. When these material signs are assembled in the environment of the gallery, different social relations may form with an audience while the assemblages retain their resonance. The digital images are also a reconceptualisation of formless matter through my skilled action with the camera and may resonate with an audience when shown.

The dyed cloth pictured in *PA150071s* (Figure 66) and indeed this image then become bricoles in a collection (left over from other projects), another tool in the toolbox, something at hand that may be re-examined and re-imagined as

part of the next project. For example, this piece of cloth could conceivably be used as a bottle top to stop a bottle. This is a "complex process of material, social and environmental handing over" (Carter, 2004, p. 184), where the recombining and handling of materials echoes the dissipation and gathering/recycling that occurs in natural cycles like those of *DSCN1721* (Figure 105). These formations are an example of a natural cycle that utilises recycling and recombining;







Figure 106: *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes* (installation view), Bunbury Regional Art Galleries, 2017. Photographer Ian Yendell.



stalactites, straws and helictites form from dissolved Tertiary aeolian calcilutite precipitating out of groundwater in a natural cycle of erosion and deposition. These formations are so fragile that the acid from a fingerprint or the exhalation of a breath is enough to damage them by altering their chemistry. But, the impulse to reach out and touch is almost visceral.

*the tension of tactile interaction*

Unlike many other non-synthetic dyers and makers who glean natural objects I do not wear what I make, do not sell wearable outcomes or post images of place-making on Instagram or to a blog. My material bricolages are quite private in nature and when shared publicly, out of the context of the place where they were made, are mediated by the context of the institutional white cube gallery which then problematises ideas about making objects that are haptically appealing.

By arranging and assembling my tactile collections, it is my intention to create pathways for an audience that suggest moving through the Country. The tension of tactile interaction with my work has increased as my social engagement has shifted from facilitating collaborative creations and workshops to exhibiting work and providing the possibilities to an urban audience to view artwork I have made to reflect my experience of the Country. This has been a slow emergence rather than a revelatory moment or sharp turning point. There was evidence of covert touching or overt handling with *Gathering Thoughts* (2017) during *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes*, Bunbury Regional Art Galleries, 2017. Ian Yendell's panorama (Figure 106) is the pre-opening install shot and *I5888* (Figure 107), a photograph taken during the exhibition; an indication that someone had been handling the work. I enjoy sharing the tactile pleasure of my work in more informal spaces like workshops and yarning circles and sometimes feel that it completes the work. For me, there is an unresolved paradox between the intentional considered placing of my collections to attenuate their meaning in a specific gallery space, and the rearrangement by a tactile audience, which needs further investigation.



Figure 107: *I5888 Gathering Thoughts* (2017) (detail), mixed media, during the exhibition, *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes*, Bunbury Regional Art Galleries, 2017.



*I wander around; prelude to place-making*

This research explored notions of being entangled in the midst of the materiality of the Country and considered how to materialise this. It is the process of this relating that becomes the making. *A landscape in rust* (2015) (Figure 108) is a digital photograph of rusty metal seen and handled when yarning with a colleague during an early morning wander on the edge of a desert community. A pause. A gathering of energy before a long day in the driver's seat. I could have collected this piece of metal to add to the toolkit, but instead its image becomes an artefact of my ethical, relational process—a strangely tactile image of a fragment of metal. An image of the Country in the detail of a rusting hulk of a vehicle, an older version of the one in which I will spend many hours physically distancing myself from this place, but not its entanglement. A fragment that I notice, frame and recontextualise as a symbol of the Country and my experience of it, gleaned and repurposed from the debris of the town's rubbish dump.

My being in the Country *P2130008* (Figure 109) is marked by my tracks and treads, and my inhalations and exhalations: sometimes in awe, where my desire to understand is driven by curiosity and wonder. *I5961* (Figure 110) is a photograph taken in sandhill country out Windarra way, where the vegetation is still sparse after a lightning ignited a bushfire. I pause to engage kinaesthetically with this space and get a sense of it, taking my first steps in making-place. My shadow a transient mark; my boot marks a faint trace of my passage; of my wonder and my being there.

I absorb deeply, and begin to relate. I gather materials and observations, adding them to my backpack. The hand sized scale is most comfortable for me to work with. Both in terms of portability and manipulability—pleasure in making and handability. Fist sized forms are a sustainable size to work with, and to source materials for—a handful of clay, or fibre, and to carry in a pocket or a backpack to work on in odd moments and times of waiting. I am reminded that the “pleasure in handling is hard wired into human nature for good reason: it predisposes us to be tool users and makers” (Dissanayake, 1995, p. 44). Makers, who “intentionally shape, embellish, and otherwise fashion aspects of [our] world to make these more than ordinary” (Dissanayake,

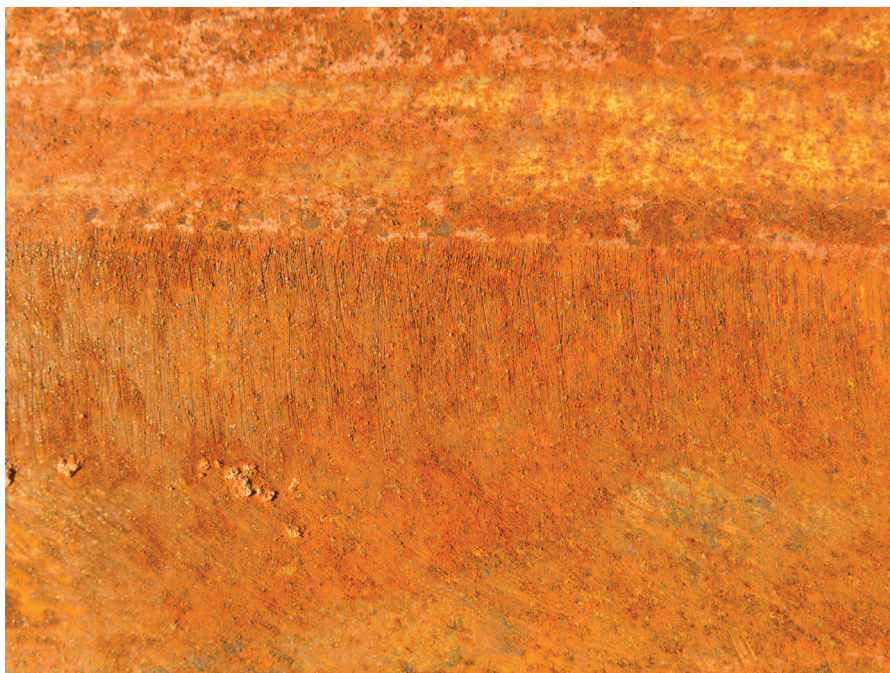


Figure 108: *I8818, A landscape in rust* (2015), digital photograph of a transient moment.







Figure 109: *P2130008*, digital photograph Windarra, 2013.



Figure 110: *I5961*, self-portrait, digital photograph Windarra, 2014.



Figure 111: *I6827*, self portrait of a bricoleuse (2015), mixed media, aprox 40 cm x 15cm.





Figure 112: 20170602\_133922, amidst the materiality of the beach, digital photograph, Yalgorup National Park, 2017.



Figure 113: 20170128\_170259, twisted fibres in place, documentary digital photograph, Yalgorup National Park, 2017.



Figure 114: 20170128\_170328, wireweed (*Amphibolis* spp.) drawing, documentary digital photograph, Yalgorup National Park, 2017.

2004, para. 11) like I6827 (Figure 111). I relate to the Country, and in doing so create memories from things—stories, artefacts and vessels. For example, I6827 (Figure 111) a self-portrait of a bricoleuse amid my field samples, remembering, January 2015 at the Old Police Station. A milder Summer than the last allows more wandering and the flies are a little less bothersome. The latest additions (central right) are gypsum roses, picked up amongst abandoned mine workings, located within walking distance. Their stained hues reminiscent of the dyed sample bags that have just been unbundled and are now drying under the verandah, around the corner. The verandah where many hours were spent discussing and engaging in making. Tea, spilt from this cup marks some of the threads of the ball of string. This ball tells many stories of its travels and appears again in the midst of this writing. These symbolic things begin to express what I think and feel about the place where they are made.

The words I write, are a selective paraphrasing of what I experience. However, including my photographs, adds thickness and richness to embellish the yarn of my making and make the Country more than ordinary. This is an implication of this research and a possibility, through this exegetical writing to bring the value of research in the midst of the Country back to the city and the academy.

### *entangled in materiality*

I focus on the more than ordinary materiality of the ground I traverse. 20170602\_133922 (Figure 112) depicts one such place, early one Winter afternoon. Footprints recall the feel of the sand, the shells, the salt. Sea wrack marks last night's tide, the shattered shells, once home to animals, trace the energy of the shoreline and the turning of the cycle of life. The rams horn shells, *Spirula spirula* (bottom left), mark the season when these cephalopod skeletons wash up in abundance from the deep ocean. They remind me of deep time as the only living species of an ancient family, little changed in millions of years (belemnites of the Early Jurassic, 65-200MYA). The damp sand sharpens my senses and is gritty, in between my toes. I follow the sea wrack and shells, a contour map of waves and tide. Passing shadows deepen and shift. A cloud briefly veils the sun's warmth. A faint misting of salt spray touches the seaward side of my face; the southerly breeze is felt on my nose and the tide is ebbing under a waxing moon. Sets of crashing waves vibrate in my ears and up the taut muscles of my calves. Soft sand is marked by footfalls and settles into new patterns. Seagrass fibres poke through the sand and my fingers pluck them to test their embedded tension. The sinewy length allows the fibres to twist





Figure 115: 20170325\_181846r, *Liminal spaces* (2017), transient wireweed drawing on aeolian calcilutite with interbedded fossil molluscs, documentary digital photograph, Yalgorup National Park, 2017.



Figure 116: 20170325\_175508, sea balls, documentary digital photograph, Yalgorup National Park, 2017.6



Figure 117: 20170307\_181523, *Lyrical* (2017), transient, wireweed drawing in situ amongst the curves of the contact zone of the littoral, documentary digital photograph, Yalgorup National Park, 2017.





Figure 118: 20161126\_091133, *After Whiteley's nude on a beach* (2017), digital photograph, Yalgorup National Park.

upon themselves and my fingers bend the fibre ends into tangled shapes while stripping away the last of the foliage 20170128\_170259 (Figure 113). My fingers working twisted fibres and the soft sand is marked by footfalls.

The warm red brown seagrass (*Amphibolis spp.*) stems are pliable and smooth, they bend and flex and like to curl; they tolerate a twist and a loose knot. The fibres can be made into strong, lightweight objects and drawings with a wiry aesthetic that is enhanced by their thrown shadows. 20170128\_170328 (Figure 114), a wireweed (*Amphibolis spp.*) drawing adds its shadow lines to the map of marks of wind, plant, animal and sea. These descriptions begin to articulate how the material feels to the touch; sensations that are difficult to relate in the digital images of 20170128\_170328 (Figure 114) and *Liminal spaces* (2017), (Figure 115) wireweed drawing on aeolian calcilutite with interbedded fossil molluscs. However, these transient wireweed drawings, 20170128\_170328 (Figure 114) and *Liminal spaces* (2017) (Figure 115) also convey a vibrancy and complexity of the liminal zones between the sea and the land; between object and drawing. The liminal, littoral strand is where the wireweed, torn from its undersea meadows, is deposited after washing back and forwards in the swells. The rolling fibres become entangled with discarded flotsam and debris whilst gathering layers of salt. Above the tideline, they become subjects of the wind, blown into drifts, scoured and buried by sand. The wind changes, the tide rises, and they are uncovered again, now devoid of leaves and encrusting fauna. The fibre they shed may become the spherical sea balls lying along the tideline of shells and rocks. In this way, the felted fibre balls, made by the sea, become entangled, and embody the energy of the ocean and the cycle of life as 20170325\_175508 (Figure 116) simply illustrates.

The wireweed journeys from sea plant affixed to the ocean floor to the shoreline and then to the structures that form in my hand. A curve, then a circle and a twist becomes a knot; the contact zone of entanglement without the straight solid edge of the line or a corner like *Lyrical* (2017) (Figure 117). My making enables a relational aspect of this embodied becoming at a waypoint, where my journey is momentarily entangled with that of the wireweed's. We may travel together awhile, if I add the wireweed to my toolbox and the documentary photos to my exegesis, otherwise, only memories may be left as the drawing of *Liminal spaces* (2017) (Figure 115), cartwheels away to be covered by sand and that of *Lyrical* (2017) (Figure 117) returns to the sea







Figure 119: P3230078, contact zones become lines, aerial digital photograph, Lake Carey, 2014.



Figure 120: Simryn Gill, *(Eyes and Storms) 6* (2012-2013). Ilfachrome print 49.2 x 49.2 inches. (Exception to copyright, Section: ss40, 103C. Exception: Research or study).

on the incoming tide. My embodied experiences, like those described above, are entangled in my making process. I sometimes feel an ambivalence in this travail where memories and their heterogenous topology are all that remain, and this may also be diffracted through my relationships to place.

### *ambivalence and ambiguity*

The everchanging contact zone of the littoral, depicted in *After Whiteley's nude on a beach* (2017) (Figure 118), whether in raging storm or gentle lapping, mirrors the nomad's ambivalence and the internal tensions of my relationship to this place and another in the desert, both of which, I relate to as the Country. The physical, emotional and psychological toing and froing manifests in the ambivalence of being in this place but not in the other. Here, not here, there. The backwards and forwards of past and present, the non-linear wayfaring, entangled memories and observations, like Mahood's (2016) unfolding map, creased, torn, mended, annotated, traced and reannotated, where things are not quite where I left them. There is also an ambivalence that may resolve itself through my layered, sedimented, accreted stories. Stories that language the making, the process, the materials. A mythopoetic translation, making meaning of an embodied poetics of materials and body in place. Mythopoetic stories are retold or reinvented at crisis moments (Carter, 2004) in the contact zones of ambivalence and ambiguity that occur throughout the Country—"points of intersection, hot spots where the new maps overlay the old" (Mahood, 2000, p. 212).

These contact zones are energetic and may be fraught, transient, transitional and chaotic places of transformation and lively creative spaces. These zones may appear to become lines when viewed from a distance. The Earth's surface is not a line but a contact zone between above and below—between the sky and the earth. The skin between the body and the environment akin to Merleau-Ponty's (2005) "flesh of the world". Places become spots, blots (Carter, 2004), like viewing the lights of Earth from space at night, or the circles on Daisy Bates' maps marking Aboriginal tribal and linguistic associations and sites. Contact zones become lines, like the littoral lakeshores of P3230078 (Figure 119). The

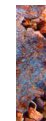




Figure 121: I3455, tangled plant dyed string, plant dyed and iron mordanted cloth coiled over old bedsheets; *Hardenbergia spp.* vine basket, studio, 2016.

lines of the salt lake shores and a transecting vehicle track, the spots and blots of dune and plant photographed from the distanced gaze through an aircraft window. I found the FIFO flights, like the one when this image was taken, a sharp more disembodied cut than a contact zone. In some ways a culture shock, with the feeling of being wrenched out of one role and into another. Driving between the coast and the desert is a more grounded and embodied temporal and spatial transition. Places may become things when seen from aerial heights, blobs of light in the darkness or holes or strange shapes. Aerial photos of mine sites from Gill's 2012-13 *Eyes and Storms* series (as cited in de Zegher, 2013) look, to me, like strange disembodied things embedded in the landscape as demonstrated in *Eyes and Storms 6* (Figure 120). With distance, some of these contact zones with their overlapping entanglements may appear to become lines like a coastline or a lake shore seen as a line on a map and echoed in smaller scales in a strandline on a beach. Threads and strings may be seen as lines from a distanced view. This is also a matter of scale and variance, where the micro takes on similar patterns to the macro.

How does thinking about ambivalence, ambiguity, contact zones and lines apply to string making? The string is the soft, tactile line of the contact zone, the thread of my journeys. String making relates as a metaphor for the meaning, an abstraction of place, and my process. It is certainly beyond the physical, material and process embodiment of making, more like a reflection or diffraction in entanglement.

The entanglement has entwined lengths of string, fibre and just as significantly, creates negative spaces amidst them. I3455 (Figure 121) depicts a loosely woven basket of *Hardenbergia spp.* vine blown down in a storm. The basket holds two smaller coiled baskets, which in turn hold a tangled length of rag string, still being plied. Each basket is an interrelational meshwork of fibre and negative spaces. The coiled baskets and the string also have negative spaces between the rows and the fibres, and it is the tension of being plied or coiled and stitched that keeps them intact. The tension on the bent stems of the vine hold this basket together while the negative spaces allow some flexibility and movement, so the vine doesn't snap, or the basket fall apart. When plying string, one thread is twisted clockwise and the other anti-clockwise before being twisted together. It







Figure 122: *I1538, Line drawing* (2016) (detail), lines of palm fibre woven and interconnected with the spaces in between, approx. 100cm x 100cm, digital photograph.

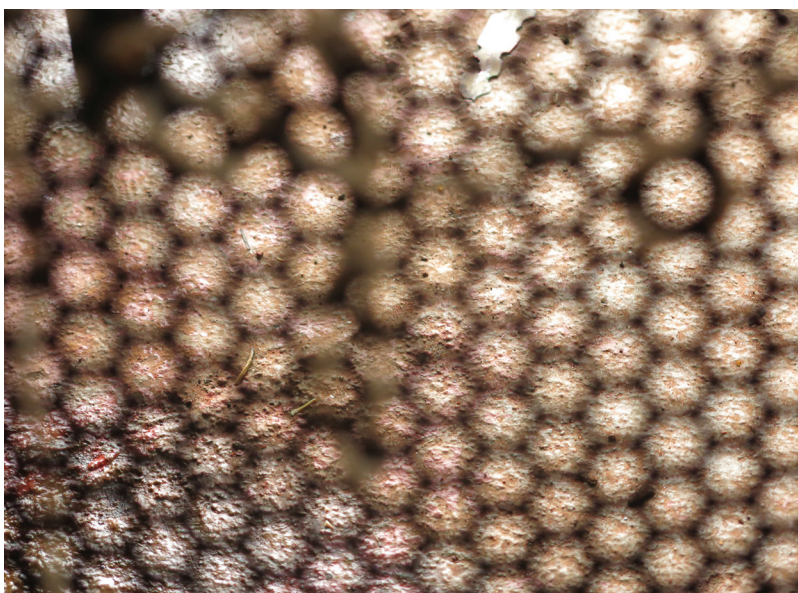


Figure 123: *I2843*, the patterned spaces and the lines of the meshwork, documentary digital photograph, Old Police Station, 2015.

is the tension of these fibres acting against each other that stops the string unravelling. When coiling a basket, using the string plied, (as above), the tension translates into giving the basket its shape, a torsioning figure 8 stitch then secures this. The negative spaces between the threads in the string and the stitch and the coil in the basket lend strength by allowing some flexibility.

The form and the materials of the string and the basket and the negative spaces within them are, metaphorically, situated entangled response-able relationships. The dyeing and the coiling are the essences of the experiences interweaving into the meshwork, the intra-agential relationships in all their myriad forms (Barad, 2007). The string itself is all the threads, all the fibres, gathering and connected as one story, the collective experience, the experience of becoming in the world and the movement in the midst of the meshwork that may bring this forth. The response-ability, the accountability is the strength of the string and the basket, more cohesive and useful than the individual fibres and containing all the traces of the making.

The line as trace, as vestige, as palimpsest, as connection—a thread contingent with the weaving but not defined by the weave or its pattern where it leaves marks of its passing. *Line Drawing* (2016) (Figure 122) expresses seemingly natural lines, of woven palm inflorescence, twisted and torsioned, and interconnected with the spaces in between. On the other hand, *I2843* (Figure 123) depicts the patterned spaces and the lines on a surface of a meshwork. Both the lines and the spaces are necessary and defining—together, apart in the process of becoming, of making. This work situates line: as border, boundary, demarcation, within, without, amongst, as edge or surface.

Both line and surface and their unevennesses are relational, a border zone between ‘things’, space and gaps, and form. *I2883* (Figure 124) where the weathered surface/skin of the cloth, now faded to the muted palette of geological strata, relates the texture and the striated form of the weave with its gaps, to the weather-world, the grains of sand and the burrs of a seedpod. Recognising that it is cloth—a child’s blue jumper as I recall—worn on the body relates a sense of the body in this place, a track of human passing long after the footprints have been eroded. The digital image and its story may describe my







Figure 124: I2883, documentary digital photograph, Ngaanyatjarra Lands, 2014.



journey along the movement of a line, a pathway, or perhaps within it, whether I am tracing along its surface or connecting with it and becoming part of it. I move in accordance with the liminal phenomena of the weather-world between the air and the land—connecting to the Earth, moving within the air and leaving/following traces on/in/across both—where as a wayfarer I wander.



Figure 125: *I6327*, documentary digital photograph, Old Police Station, 2014.

This movement and its entangled threads of *I6327* (Figure 125) are relational, like the ball of string with its supplement of material signs—hair, skin, dirt, stray threads—that hint at the mobility and formlessness of matter that exists without rigid boundaries in its becoming and its ability to scatter and recombine (Grosz, 1994, 2011). The threads within a ball of string, can touch, encounter, entangle, lay beside each other despite being long distances apart along the length of the thread, as can enfolded points on the surface of a map or a piece of cloth, just like the pathways of life, sometimes ambiguous and ambivalent.

String theory—the transformative process of bringing string into being—has the “itinerant, improvisatory and rhythmic qualities of making as a way of working with lines.... the ontology of making is to be found in a length of twine” (Ingold, 2007b, pp. 99-100). Repetition is transformative, cyclical, and normal in nature. A thread spun by practised, tacit, haptic movements brings thought into form becoming a threshold between “bodily movement and abstract

reason...between the haptic and the optical, between improvisation and abduction, and between becoming and being” (p. 100). The abduction is the gathering of materials into form. The thread, a line of fuzzy edges or a ball of string of entwined fibres, intrinsically formed by skilled hands from material and space and the torsion that keeps them plied. The movements of mattering and becoming are threaded through each other. The material, the “material supplement” of detritus (Carter, 2004, p. 183), the force and the space are intrinsic and contain and are contained, entangled, immanent both included and excluded—vital and enlivened (Barad, 2007) as in *I6327* (Figure 125).







Figure 126: *I7659*, *Eucalyptus spp.* dyed, creased and folded silk, approx. 110cm x 110cm, 2015.



Figure 127: *I7564*, the entwined waypoints of a twisting, turning length of string on the pathway to an unknown destination, documentary digital photograph, North Lake, 2015.

The making, the meaning and the materials are all entangled. A becoming that is improvisational, dynamic, a transient (rather than ephemeral) mapping of pathways and connections, traces place, the Country and the life of the maker. The making process is a two-way reciprocal process, multi-directional, multi-dimensional and multi-sensorial: Barrett's (2013) material process. The tension measures time passing; in the making of the string and in the waiting of its potential use and in the journey of the maker to get here. *I7659* (Figure 126) maps traces of place with ghost marks of string on *Eucalyptus spp.* dyed, creased and folded silk. This hand dyed cloth tells the tale of the growth of those leaves on that tree, the specific details of chemistry of the dyepot and hints at the history of the creased silk. The colour of the cloth entangles the specificity, the environment of the place from which the dye was made with the material and the hands of the maker. Metaphorically, "the map maker takes up the thread, weaving her strange tale with the cross-threads of country and some loose end of my mind" (Mahood, 2000, p. 120) and "establishes contact with the twists and turns of...language" (Carter, 2004, p. 174).

*I7564* (Figure 127) is a photograph of fabric that illuminates the entwined waypoints of a twisting, turning length of string on the pathway to an unknown destination. This string is plied from some of my worn-out clothes, discarded as an act of moving to a new home, the twisted tension of the string reflects the stress of moving and the language of the yarn. The string forms a transient map of a time, perhaps the last, that I stood in this place and brings to mind the yarn of Murphy's Bore. The pathway marks the journey to the not-knowing space of a new town and the material process of making a new place that includes the fragments from other places embodied in the worn-out clothes I carry with me and signifies the creation of a new path of wandering. The pathway of *I7564* (Figure 127) was a waypoint where I rested, between the arid lands and the Yalgorup wetlands, WA.

I wander, creating a new pathway.

In this moment, at this place, the heavy grey stillness fizzes in anticipation of the storm. Suddenly, buffeting gusts send leaves skipping down the street and break the





stillness. A willie wagtail is in earnest conversation with his reflection in the window near my feet. I feel the vibrations of his tapping and fluttering on the glass. His partner darts after insects, unseen by my eye. The grey fantail joins the insect harvesting. Scrub wrens and blue wrens and silver eyes chatter and hop busily amongst the leaves and along the verandah, unperturbed by the gusts. A soloist magpie in the *Agonis flexuosa* tree accompanies them. The first drops fall. One. And another. The smell of petrichlor wafts through the window. Ooh so welcome after the long dry. There is a collective in-drawn breath and a sigh as the drops become insistent. The birds dance and flutter in the rain wet plants, shaking and preening after their bath.

These birds and the rain bring me quiet joy. They distract me when these words I am writing lose their flavour. I am reminded that there is a tangible world beyond this computer screen. Relating to their avian antics heightens my understanding at the edge of the words and in the interstices of ontology and epistemology. This being here, now, noticing, aware is how I understand my place in this world and how I begin to gain a sense of the stories, which are animated by the inhabitants. A phrase from Mahood comes to mind “a sense of how the country is animated, storied, inhabited” (2005, p. 22). This is the context of place and is part of my making process and poiesis as a bricoleuse.

### *making place*

How do I articulate and then bring the experience of these places back to the urban? Like Chinna I am “not simply describing the place...but trying to articulate the effect that the country had upon me and trying to find a language for the particularities of the plants, birds, animals, the soils, skies and rocks that I’d experienced” (2016, p. 2).

The places I relate to as the Country are the arid lands and the lakes, 1000km apart, but the place-making/fieldwork is embedded in the way I relate to the world and therefore I make, wherever I am. The desert and my fraught relations and juggling of roles within it are all too consuming of me to be sustainable as a place to live full-time. The liminal spaces of the beach and the lakes of the Yalgorup National Park shelter me in a softer,



Figure 128: *I1211*, a familiar liminal campsite between coastal fringe and desert, between urban and remote, I spend time here becoming more nomadic, digital photograph, Elachbutting, 2017.



less demanding but a more shallow, ephemeral relationship, with a less honed need to survive. I have a history in these places, a story that interweaves with the desert voices, and whispers of salty breezes and entwines on itself; long-term nomadic toing and froings. I can relate to Mahood's observation that at "the campsites along the way, familiar staging points...I slough off the routines of staying put and reinhabit a nomadic, more provisional self" (2005, p. 19). *I1211* (Figure 128) depicts a familiar waypoint between coastal fringe and desert, between urban and remote. I spend time here becoming more provisional, slowing down. This is far less easy to do on the FIFO charter flight that passes overhead. On the ground I can wander in the midst of the Country where "even the quietest places are not silent; they ask us to acknowledge other voices—and to slow down and attend to them much more acutely" (Phillips, 2016a, p. 2).

Effectively, I am re-making places in the remote, the rural and the urban/built environment. Do these places sit side by side—contiguous and entangled and if so why? While I am wandering, nomadic, in the midst of the voices and the places, plying a tenuous thread I read and map the desert, the lake and the city studio space in a similar vein whether as a geo (geologist and geomorphologist) or as bricoleuse. Walking, wondering, reconnoitring, orientating, mapping, cataloguing, gleaning, and imagining possibilities. Slowly making. Annotating and mapping until a cartography emerges and becomes one overlapping entity often folded and refolded, where places may lie contiguous across the folds until the map is unfolded again or is caught by the breeze and flies to enfold the cartographer.

In time, I make a place by overlaying, what I have with me and what I can find. I approach my writing in a similar manner. I embody and 'make sense' of the experience in process and prefer the viewer/reader to make their own meaning from the artefacts. Place-making, making in place, make sense. Making sense of place.

In this chapter, I have written myself into place, through field sites and differing geographies and spoken as the maker of quilts, string, maps and images, telling of ethical concerns and of the materiality of place and how to apply and language these. In the following chapter I will talk through some of my artworks, and outline my intentions for my final exhibition to bring a little of my bricoleuse's experience of the Country into the gallery space.





## *Chapter 5: The Intentions of the Maker*



This chapter unpacks some of the intentions of the maker in the studio of the academy—its spaces and the gallery—in an urban location. The intentions of the maker are elucidated in examining some of the artefacts and artwork resulting from the research process. This includes the exhibitions *field working slow making* (2016), *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes* (2017) and my intentions for my forthcoming residency and solo exhibition *meeting place* at the Spectrum Project Space, ECU, WA in early 2018. I discuss the implications of my making and the importance of bringing my process and place-making into urban spaces and the gallery. One of my overarching intentions was to test and polish my installation aesthetic and skills in an effort to enhance my craft based praxis, but more significantly to use installations of bricoles and bricolage to bring an experience of a visceral connection of the Country to urban sites. There have been some aha moments and critical waypoints, but also many slow changes in direction and a few dead ends. The chaotic Summer of 2015-16 marked a critical point and a substantial change in direction. An invitation to speak at the 2016 iDARE conference in Melbourne was also a marked waypoint as I had begun to articulate my entanglement in the ethical implications of the way I work and the resulting balls of string. My presentation fostered the realisation that the story of my ethical concerns and my process are more important than the way I exhibit. However, somewhat paradoxically, it was also at this point that ideas pertaining to haptic engagement started to emerge. An early test of these ideas was *Box to handle* (2017). I built on the ideas of haptic engagement and tactile appeal, and mapping spaces in *Leadline* (2017) and further refined these ideas in *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes* (2017). There are still unresolved issues around these notions coming from this exhibition, which I continue to evaluate, but it is my intention to further test and resolve these ideas in *meeting place* in early 2018. This exegesis is but a dot on the map of my research and written before my solo show.

### *exhibiting as a form of questioning*

My original proposal for part of this research, had been to work with Wongatha women and other artists in the Laverton area and also travel into the Ngaanyatjarra Lands and to research my role in this as a creative praxis. However, changing circumstances led to me rekindling relationships with the coastal fringe and people who live there. This has influenced my praxis, enabling me to spend time making and yarning with some of WA's most experienced place-makers and textile artists during slow making days and shared lunches. This reconnecting led to residencies, exhibitions and other unexpected opportunities and fieldtrips to some non-urban and urban places that these artists are attached to. As a part of this research, I also spent time researching The Edith Cowan University Art Collection. These experiences have facilitated research into materiality, sustainable fieldwork and installing bricoles from my collections and helped to strengthen local culture and community based practice and sharing. I feel that there is a gap and a demand for more collective gatherings to facilitate haptic experiences connected to the Country.

Exhibitions included *field working slow making* (2016), a group show which I co-curated with Dr Nien Schwarz to bring together eight local interdisciplinary creative practitioners who are place-makers, in a conversation about how we practice around our concerns for place. The artists included Nien Schwarz, Nalda Searles, Perdita Phillips, Sharyn Egan, George Karpathakis, Nandi Chinna, Holly Story and myself. The show also included rarely seen artefacts, and artworks from The Edith Cowan University Art Collection to add richness to the dialogue and lend the voices of others who made in place.







Figure 129: *I1640, yuwa, wiya, wanti, wiyartu* (detail) (2016), mixed media, dimensions, *field working slow making*, Spectrum Project Space.



Figure 130: *I5725*, install shot from *Thresholds and Thoughtscales* (2017), Bunbury Regional Art Galleries.

*yuwa, wiya, wanti, wiyartu* (2016) (Figure 129), photographed through the gallery window, is one of my installed artworks in *field working slow making* (2016). It materialises conversations in the Country entangled with the bureaucracy of the city, seen with a distanced gaze, or often going unnoticed, as was this work, installed in a narrow space difficult to access from within the gallery, more easily viewed from outside. The words in the title translate to yes, no, stop, nothing; all commonly heard during phone calls to city based decision makers and their minions.

The exhibition, *Thresholds and Thoughtscales* (2017), was held in the regional city of Bunbury, as a creative dialogue between three women—Sarah Robinson, Jane Whelan and myself—who notice the small details of place and was a chance for me to test some ideas about haptic engagement and creating pathways to move through a space. *I5725* (Figure 130), is an install shot from the exhibition with my work *Gathering Thoughts*, (2017) in the front area of the gallery and *Transient Collection 1-4* (2017) intervening in unexpected spaces where they may be noticed, for example, on the skirting, the top of the power box and in the curve of the arch in the left of *I5752* (Figure 131) and Figure 106. On the right of *I5752* (Figure 131), and the centre of Figure 106 is *Transient Collection 4*, in conversation with Jane Whelan's drawings *Story in Time* (2017), *Descant* (2017), *Fold* (2017) and *Absorbed* (2017), some of which are drawn on my handmade paper.

A significant finding from these engagements and highlighted in the *field working slow making* (2016) exhibition was that I facilitated and supported the artists, arguably the role of a co-curator, but sometimes at the expense of privileging my own artwork, a similar role to the one I have played in desert collaborations which became unsustainable. Although not my intention, I took on a similar non-privileging role in *Thresholds and Thoughtscales* (2017). The placing of my balls of string and beads in this space bound the thematic conversations of the installed works together. It is also unusual and significant that I did not conduct any workshops or spend time in the gallery except for the install, opening night and an artist talk on the following day. However, this is neither signification or representation or an object of the process but a waypoint in the cartography of my relational praxis. Arguably, this facilitating role is a significant part of my practice and cause for further research to unpack notions of





Figure 131: *I5752*, install shot *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes*, (2017), Bunbury Regional Art Galleries.

the facilitation of collaborative and collective social engagement as praxis, using my own example as a case study. In the context of my research, I use the term 'social engagement' to revalue notions around the long unbroken tradition of the collective and how and why women gather to share including support, a sense of community and skill sharing. This has led to questions around the effectiveness of these artworks to communicate notions of me being in the Country without my presence and the stories I tell. *meeting place* (2018) will allow me to continue my research around installing my bricolage, and my artwork will be the focus of the exhibition. However, I may still conduct workshops or yarnning circles during the residency and tell stories while spending time in the gallery.

### *firing up education*

Early in my candidature, the pending redevelopment of the art building on campus left me without access to a studio space over the Summer of 2015-16. During this period, I was not able to wander in the Country either. Fortunately, I found a niche in the arts workshops for education students and I mapped this new field site as a bricoleuse. During my reconnoitring, I noticed clay scraps, wood offcuts, sawdust and shredded paper. I wondered what to do with them. I rummaged in my toolbox and considered my ethical concerns and my skill set and my longing for the Country, the red dirt and shallow vessels of

the damp lakes. Determined to make the most of the rich opportunities this space in the academy provided, I made clay and ceramic objects that could be juxtaposed with the waste materials of student learning and enhance my tactile understanding of earth and fire, while treading lightly. I was on a pathway between the two places of the Country, in between a chaos of packing, moving and a disastrous bushfire, rather than a more gentle wandering. Making the ceramics was a waypoint, a resting place to ground myself in this time of chaos.

By Autumn, when the burning restrictions had been lifted, I was ready to fire my beads and vessels in a borrowed hand built kiln, pictured in *20160811\_121849* (Figure 132). *Box to handle* (2017) was a collection of newly fired ceramic vessels and beads, still warm, redolent of smoke and charcoal and sawdust, similar to *20161117\_113133* (Figure 133). This was an attempt to connect with the academy and the urban, and investigate ways to encourage haptic understandings and the pleasure of making and handling, and to make connections to the Country. Colleagues engaged with the box and its



Figure 132: *20160811\_121849*, documentary digital photograph, Mt Lawley, 2017.



contents in different ways, but it was not a good test of my somewhat naive intentions to encourage a haptic engagement and to bring a little of the Country to the city. I am left with a collection of approximately 100 ceramic vessels for which I struggle to find a way to exhibit their embodied meaning or the importance of the haptic as a way to experience the materiality of the Country. The vessels of this collection have become self-portraits, in a way, perceived as rough and unpolished and not an articulate way to bring understanding of the importance of the Country into the urban.



Figure 133: 20161117\_113133, (detail), documentary digital photograph, Mt Lawley, 2016.

In context, however, the materiality of these vessels is powerful. The clay is excavated—a product mined beyond the urban. Some clay I have used, comes from mine spoil or road verges. The pinching and twisting used to make string is echoed in pinch pots, and their circular forms in the spots of Bate's maps and my aerial photographs. The ceramic form may be seen as a contact zone between body and environment or ambiguous knowing—a form of tokenistic mudmap or urban hardpan. It is fired, a process that like dye making, requires tending and is unpredictable and alchemical. Fired by scraps of wood from a wood working shop next door—foraged windfall at this marked waypoint, both for me and for the ceramics. The clay may be likened to the cloth or rags—scraps of clay are a found natural material. The resulting objects are an archive of my displacement, perhaps a different form of memory cradle. Like the string and the cloth, they have become mnemonics for the stories rather than carefully labelled with details of their process. In similarity with slow made textiles, there is a whole artistic movement creating little dishes—the hand held that invite haptic engagement, like those in Figure 152. Instagram is full of small, wonky ceramic vessels by ceramic artists from across Australia. Mine are far less refined, but unlike my dyed pieces, they visibly contain the very traces of my unique finger prints at this field site and, of feeling lost and off my familiar map. I also used this making as a way to quiet my mind, to help ground my way into a place and remember the cycles of nature. My little vessels of reflective glaze may be likened to the mine sites in Gill's *Eyes and Storms* and her thoughts regarding place being a form of doing; in a place where home starts—here—where I am, now (as cited in de Zegher, 2013). Gill also shows collections of small found circular objects *Naught* (2010-12), strung together like my necklaces of beads and found objects.

I was uneasy in the white spaces and wondered how to create specific pathways which would invite an audience to move through this space. My curiosity in assembling the ceramics to disrupt a space as a way to privilege their materiality generated interest, for me, particularly when placed at a threshold, perhaps spilling through a doorway, blurring the boundaries of the gallery. The threshold of the doorway is a place not normally thought of as disruptive but metaphorically it is a meeting place, and meeting places are often disruptive spaces. I was influenced by Antony Gormley's *Field for the Art Gallery of New South Wales* (1989) and imagined a gallery floor filled with vessels—string, cloth, ceramic. However, the logistics of this proved too difficult, physically and financially and I resolved not to test it because of my ethical concerns about making enough vessels to have an impact, both in terms of resources needed and also that the ceramic vessels do not readily decompose. However, the thought of amassing objects on the floor continued to pique my interest after researching Ai Weiwei's installations of porcelain river crabs *He Xie*, (2011) and Simyrn Gill's collections, *Roadkill* (1999-2000) or *Mine* (2007-08). I was





Figure 134: Abigail Reynolds *Mount Fear East London* (2003), statistics for all violent crimes in East London between 2002-2003. 145h x 540w x 425d cm. (Exception to copyright, Section: ss40, 103C. Exception: Research or study).



Figure 135: Penny Dunstan *PastPresent*, 2014-2015, ink, graphite, charcoal, coal (Exception to copyright, Section: ss40, 103C. Exception: Research or study)

inspired by Abigail Reynolds (2003), *Mount Fear East London* (Figure 134) and the maps of Penny Dunstan (2014-15) (Figure 135) to research ideas about installing all my collections as a contour map or quilt on the floor of the gallery, and I continue to pursue the possibilities of this sort of installation that stays within my ethical constraints.

### *walking a line, negotiating a space*

20170917\_123306 (Figure 136) is a sketch map of the *Leadline* (2017) installation in 10.224, a large empty class room. It maps the layout of a test install that helped me to change a space to enable possibilities of moving through it in a comparable way to the way I wander, aware, in the Country. I placed small details directly on the floor, echoing the ground between my feet.

*I5096* (Figure 137) and *I5001* (Figure 138) document the *Leadline* (2017) and its disruption of the space. A leadline of hand plied cloth string and fired clay beads meanders roughly south-west/north-east across the floor from the door and transects the room, *I5088* (Figure 138), gatherings of similar artefacts are grouped on floor, dado and table (Figure 139). Instinctively, I notice the direction, it will be useful to annotate the map, and the sunlight creeps across the floor, a transient mark of the passage of time; tools of the nomad. As a geological tool, the leadline (plumbline) is a string marked at measured distances for laying out drill hole patterns, collecting samples or measuring water depths. In this work, it serves to lead the audience into the space. I have gone on to develop this idea in *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes* (2017) through the itinerant ball of string in *Transient Collection 3* (2017) and it is my intention to further develop it in my final exhibition. However, over the school holidays the itinerant ball of string has explored much of its gallery space and morphed from a ball to a tangle and back to a ball. Does its meaning change when its form changes and what are the implications of this, and for me as the maker? These are some questions arising from this artwork.





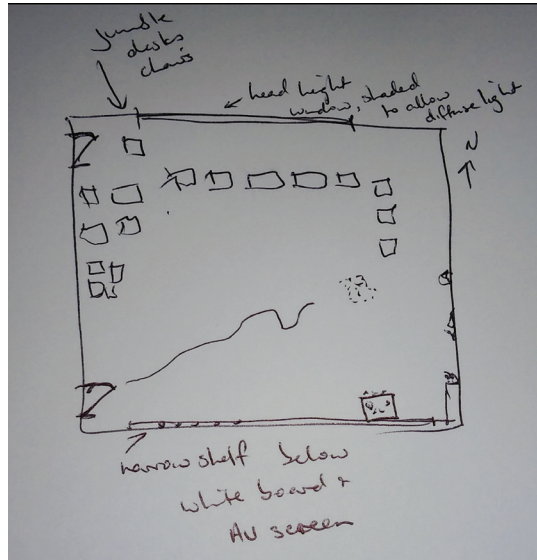


Figure 136: 20170917\_123306, sketch map of the installation of *Leadline* (2017) in room 10.224, 2017.



Figure 137: *I5096*, fragments in the foreground, balls of string on south wall shelf and leadline to the door, documentary digital photograph, Mt Lawley, 2017.



Figure 138: *I5088*, detail of *Leadline* as seen from the door, documentary digital photograph, Mt Lawley, 2017.



Figure 139: *I5001*, detail of balls of calico string, differing in size but of similar, colour and tone on the dado that runs along the southern wall, documentary digital photograph, Mt Lawley, 2017.

*I5066* (Figure 142) and *I5012* (Figure 143) document the eastern wall of *Leadline* (2017) where scribblings of wireweed (*Amphibolis spp.*) and foraged shells were installed, and a constellation of beads hung. This imagined collection of stars in a night sky, no longer visible in the light pollution of the city, a reverberating echo from the constellation in *Yarning Circles* (2016) (Figure 170). The shadows thrown by the beads angle towards the drawings, (Figure 141), hung at different heights like the changing heights of the vegetation of the Country. The shadows pointed the way to drawings, which invoked thoughts of wind and tangled hair, and a feeling they may have blown against the wall rather than being installed there, as pictured in *I5024* (Figure 140). These are things I would notice in the Country and I began to see some possible solutions to the problem of bringing the experience of the Country into an urban space but wondered how an audience might view them.

The interventions of beads in the work of other artists in *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes* (2017), (Figure 144) had the intent of discovery by those who slow down and notice and was well received. I will continue to explore notions of placing objects (usually small) in unexpected spaces that I notice.

In *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes* (2017), this discourse is continued by the itinerant ball of string and also in *Transient Collection 1* (2017). *I5881* (Figure 145) shows the fibre shed from the ball of dodder laurel given to me by a colleague and also from the wireweed drawing above it. This 'detritus' often forms intriguing drawings (Figure 146). I continue to wonder about these happenings occurring without my deliberate action, and if they could be of use in expressing the materiality of the Country. Could this thinking could be extended to the itinerant ball of string?

It is my intent that the yarning objects are haptically appealing and that some reflect the materiality of the Country, but I cannot know if this is how the audience will receive them. They fit comfortably in my cupped hand like the balls in *I5040* (Figure 147) or could be worn on the body like the beads of *I5061* (Figure 148). I am aligning my intent with the way I may move through places/space in the Country with a more embodied awareness. I will continue to build pathways and invite an audience to wander through the gallery in my 2018 solo show. For example, noticing the leadline of *I5088* (Figure 138), on the floor and the incidental needle and cloth scrap *I5096* (Figure 137). An attention to the ground between my feet; where my body is in relation to the things and our surroundings; a constantly shifting awareness from my immediate surroundings to a wider view of the space I am temporarily inhabiting and moving in.

I cannot know what the audience feels. I install my collections in a way that uses the architectural space with the intent of moving the viewer through that space along a particular pathway which may have some echoes in the visceral connections I feel. This comes from tried and tested strategies and many hours spent in galleries. Australians are encouraged to stay on the path/road, for good reason, you ruin the Country if you do not, think of the fenced tracks to the beach, the boardwalks over the wetlands. If you stray from the road, you might get lost, encounter hazards and snakes and perhaps die. Significantly, this installation becomes another map that intimates to an audience where they are allowed to go. I will use my bush capital in the space of the gallery and invite the audience to wander along these paths. As a bricoleuse, I will attempt to use the space of the gallery to create a *place* in which I offer the audience the possibility of sharing an experience.







Figure 140: *I5024, Leadline* (2017) (detail), wireweed drawing blown against the wall, documentary digital photograph, Mt Lawley, 2017.



Figure 141: *I5083*, constellation of beads, documentary digital photograph, Mt Lawley, 2017.



Figure 142: *I5066*, scribbles of wireweed (*Amphibolis spp.*) and foraged sea snail drilled shells at different heights further to the north (left) a small constellation of beads, Mt Lawley, 2017.



Figure 143: *I5012*, drawings on the eastern wall, documentary digital photograph, Mt Lawley, 2017.



Figure 144: *I5858*, intervention of my beads into Jane Whelan's drawing (2017), Bunbury, 2017.



Figure 145: *I5881*, install shot from *Transient Collection 1* (detail) in *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes*, Bunbury Regional Art Galleries (2017).



Figure 146: *20170427\_135259*, dodder laurel drawing, studio, 2017.



Figure 147: *I5040*, constellation of balls, documentary digital photograph, Mt Lawley, 2017.



Figure 148: *I5061*, fragments or beads, so inviting to touch, documentary digital photograph, Mt Lawley, 2017.





Figure 149: 20161006\_171729, collection of necklaces and strings of beads, studio, 2016.

The original intention, when I made beads from clay sourced in the Country or discarded in the workshops for education students, was for the fragments or earth to be beads or buttons and strung on threads/string with a potential to be worn. I have many strings of beads which I do not wear but often gift to others, who may wear them and appreciate them. This overabundance was to be a bend in the track, a slight change of direction as I began to make longer and longer strings as a way of forming a collection that connected the beads back to the Country through the leadline. The gift giving is a form of acknowledgment and respect for the materials from which they are made and the ground from which it is sourced but also for the people who may now wear them. Many of the necklaces I have, were made in the Country or as demonstration pieces during workshops like those pictured in the left of 20161006\_171729 (Figure 149). I am not, by nature, one to wear adornments and I had intended the workshops and the gifting to continue, during this research but became more focussed on unpacking my praxis. However, necklaces like *Necklace for Bede* (2015) (Figure 93) are symbolic of the body in a space and that place on the body. 20161006\_171729 (Figure 149) maps the more formal necklaces on the left shifting to collections of more intertwining strings of beads on the right. As the necklaces have become strings of beads, and then leadlines and collections their meaning shifts. This shift also aligns with me moving to less anthropocentric leanings.





Figure 150: *I5665*, a marquette for a marker stall, digital photograph, studio, 2017.



Figure 151: *I5030*, an irregular string of shells, documentary digital photo, Mt Lawley, 2017.

The necklaces still have the potential to invoke the body but the beads they collect become, for me, place-markers, in the Country. The leadline is intended to be read not as adornment or wearable, but as a connection to the ground, the body and to life. Or, as a tool like the leadline of seafarers and geologists.

The looped strings of shells on wireweed, *I5066* (Figure 142), invoke memories of kitsch necklaces for sale at seaside holiday resorts and markets. As a way to facilitate dialogue, I pursued a market stall installation idea, unsuccessfully in *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes*, because the stall was still kitsch and superficial in my eyes, *I5665* (Figure 150). My mind leaps to mass produced Aboriginal designs and stereotypic pictures of blue sky and red dirt on souvenirs, postcards and travel websites, a superficial representation of the desert and the tourist. However, in *Leadline* (2017) an irregular line of shells, still strung, curving across the floor read more as a drawing, perhaps a drawn strandline or at least evocative of the natural assemblages of the beach. From another viewpoint, the string of shells became an improvised tool for counting *I5030* (Figure 151).

I aimed to create some tension in a built space by investigating how the space of the installation is negotiated and how the traffic flows. The angled leadline in *Leadline* (2017) intended to test the way a viewer interacts with and negotiates the space, focussing attention down the installation towards the wall works and drawing the viewer to the scattered pile of fragments on the floor. This had ongoing effects on the way I may invite interest in the ground beneath my feet, which I intend to explore further in my upcoming residency and solo exhibition.

After *Leadline* (2017), I looked into possibilities for inviting the viewer to look at different views, by using different hanging and installing strategies in the *Transient Collection* series in *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes* (2017), pictured in *I5881* (Figure 145) and *I5890* (Figure 153). In *Tideline* (2017), my original intention had been to recreate a tideline of objects just above eye height to invite a viewer to consider the spaces between their feet in the Country from which these objects were gathered or made. As I was balanced on a ladder about to deconstruct the assemblage, a serendipitous moment occurred as I recognised the possibilities of solving the problem with what was at hand







Figure 152: *I5112*, ceramics on a desk and balls on the dado, in the background, more formal than the leadline on the floor, documentary digital photo, Mt Lawley, 2017.



Figure 153: *I5890*, install shot of *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes*, showing detail of the shadows in the mixed media assemblage, *Tideline* (2017).

by manipulating and refocussing the lighting to concentrate the shadows on the wall adjacent to the *Tideline* (2017) rather than on the objects themselves. The objects stayed where they had been suspended and we tweaked the lighting to enhance the shadows and draw attention to the walls and also the adjacent *Transient Collection 2* (2017). *I5890* (Figure 153) is an early shot of the shadows, now part of *Tideline* (2017) with the objects mentioned hanging centre left. The wireweed drawing is part of the *Transient Collection* (2017) series and if I was to rehang it, I would ensure that its lines just brushed the diagonal shadow to bring attention to the architectural space in which it was situated.

Leading up to my final exhibition, I plan to continue exploring ways to capture attention with shadows, which require exacting detail in the placement of the objects and the lights. I would like to explore the tension between works I meticulously place with attention to detail, like the wireweed drawing meeting a shadow I described above, and works like the itinerant ball of string, which evoke my curiosity as to how they will be noticed by an audience. For example, the movements of the itinerant ball of string mapped during the *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes* (2017) exhibition and documented (Figure 154 to Figure 161).

In regard to hanging and install approaches, I tried to express how the work reflects what I experience in the Country. This may not conform to salon or centre hang approaches or square plinths; sometimes I utilised existing fixtures and hardware within the gallery. There were tensions and perhaps conversations between the assemblages and the objects in *Leadline* (2017) and in *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes* (2017). In *Leadline* (2017) visual connections could be made between the cluster of ceramic fragments on the floor and the beads that were positioned over existing nail holes on the wall. There was tension between the ceramic fragments/beads on the floor and the ceramic vessels that spilled off the desk, unbroken (Figure 152). The proximity of the soft cloth baskets in their malleable, unbasketlike forms contrasted with the rigid solidity of the ceramic vessels. Negotiating these dichotomies in materials, form and placement—may allude to negotiating pathways between the Country and the gallery. This invited questions and creatively shifted the conversation between the leadline of string and the drawings on



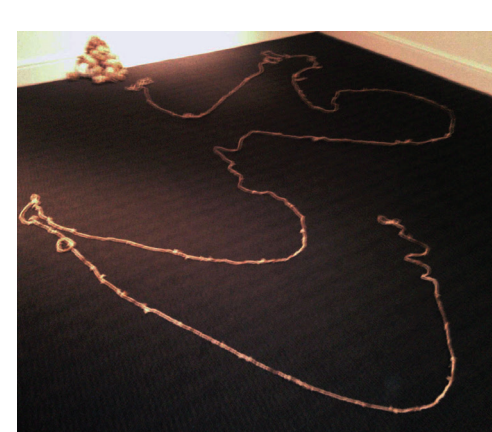


Figure 154: *I5682*, install shot, the itinerant ball of string from *Transient Collection 3* travelling around *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes*, Bunbury, 2017.

Figure 155: *cid\_636*, after opening night.

Figure 156: *cid\_148*, one week in to the exhibition

Figure 157: *cid\_2*, school holidays,

Figure 158: *cid\_82*, school holidays,

Figure 159: *cid\_599*, school holidays,

Figure 160: *cid\_666*, school holidays

Figure 161 *cid\_508*, the itinerant ball of string ...





Figure 162: *I1667, field working slow making*, documentary digital photograph, Spectrum Project Space, 2016.



Figure 163: *I1925, campfire of string*, install shot *Yarning Circles* (2016), documentary digital photograph, Spectrum Project Space, 2016.

the wall. These were hung without concern for the compositional rules of dynamic symmetry or at standard 1550mm viewing heights, but they shared similarities in colours and tones throughout.

The discourse between the artworks was energised by the seeming disparity between the natural materials of the drawings and the crafted materials of fired clay and textile. The informal elements and arrangements of the assemblages and indeed the objects from which they are assembled also fuel the discourse. The wall drawings were made spontaneously, intuitively, insitu, from foraged natural materials, gathered in the Country, they entered the gallery as bricoles and tools from the toolbox as did the baskets that contained these materials. They were repurposed in this context to become part of the installation, in reaction to ideas of changing pathways through this space and ways to notice the ground.

### *yarning circles*

*Yarning Circles* (2016) comprised a circle of dust stained camp chairs towards the back of the main gallery. In the focal point of the centre of the ring, balls of string or rag were piled up to resemble the campfire on which they may have simmered in a dyepot. There was an arrangement of small balls of fine string in a gridded constellation on the adjacent wall. The artist and her toolbox were occupying the space and there were other people—laughing, talking and making. The intention of *Yarning Circles* (2016) was to create a dynamic space where people could come and yarn and make and share discussions about the Country and our making, *I1667* (Figure 162) is an install shot.

Making during yarning is often spontaneous. While yarning with experienced textile makers in *Yarning Circles* (2016), some people chose rag balls from the campfire *I1925* (Figure 163), and plied them into string before adding them to the assembled campfire. One ball of rag strips from the campfire of *Yarning Circles* (2016) (Figure 163) has been gifted back to me, after spending time in rural spaces in the pocket of





Figure 164: *I1727*, the audience viewing, making and yarning in *Yarning Circles* (2016) during the *field working slow making* exhibition.



Figure 165: *I1642*, intervening in spaces at *field working slow making*, Spectrum Project Space, 2016.

an artist who carried it from the yarning circle. It is now a beautifully crafted length of string; an example of sharing and reciprocal haptic pleasure. String maker and friend Donlin, on the left of *I1727* (Figure 164) and *I1729* (Figure 168) plies string while yarning with local artist Colin Story; both artists who make in non-urban spaces.

Many experienced fibre and textile makers made time to come and yarn in *Yarning Circles*, including Story, Searles, Donlin, Williams and Judy-Mary Seward, *I1727* (Figure 164). These women are all highly experienced contemporary textile makers with a wealth of knowledge and enjoy sharing and making. We spent many hours together at this exhibition and shared time with poets, filmmakers and people who care about the non-urban. Yarning with my peers made me realise what a wealth of knowledge we have about our sustainable practices, our skills, and the places that we make our homes, and our willingness to share this knowing. This has generated much thought about how to continue this sharing and encourage others to join the circle(s).

During the exhibition, I quietly placed balls of string, in unexpected spaces, that I noticed, for example *I1642* (Figure 165). It was my intention, to map the spaces I noticed around the edges and at different viewing heights and to privilege these spaces as I might when I move through the Country. My intention was also to allude to my attention to detail as gleaner, and the reward of finding something for making time to be more attentive, part of curiosity and wonder for the environment I wander through, and my heightened awareness of being. However, there may be possibilities to investigate, in mapping, the journey of part/all of a transient collection in parallel with my wandering. This has become a fundamental tenet of my installation work.

As co-curator of *field working slow making* (2016), I was interested in how the invited makers would bring the Country of their field sites into and relate to the gallery space. I made the decision to leave the roles the makers would play in the space ambiguous to see how they would react to the gallery. The ambiguity led to many conversations on the nature of the role of the maker, both in this context and in wider contexts including field sites. Questions arising from this discourse have informed some of this research and I continue to ponder my role as a maker and facilitator, and how I relate within the gallery space. There are differences between







Figure 166: *I1688*, Holly Story making string in *field working slow making*, documentary digital photograph, Spectrum Project Space, 2016. Permission granted.

performance and being socially engaged, and between field site and gallery space for many artists. These not-knowing gaps, in the context of this exhibition, may have been just a little too large to bridge but warrant further investigation. My role as co-curator, artist and storyteller left me spread a little too thin in this project, tinkering with the bricolage of the project and solving problems but perhaps straying and swerving too far from my own installed artwork. *Yarning Circles* (2016) as a dynamic space to make yarning objects bears further testing outside the context of this research. I am still intrigued by the challenge of creating installations/spaces where people notice the dirt beneath their feet and how to invoke awe in these.

Spending time with Story while we yarned and made string in *field working slow making* (2016), *I1688* (Figure 166), raised questions around whether, in this context, we were: artists in residence, performers, makers, or an interactive installation. My interests in these questions have led to inquiring about the role of the craft based practitioner in a contemporary gallery setting. I investigated my role in an art space as part of my 2016 residency at the Shopfront, Central TAFE, Perth, where much of my time was spent yarning and teaching stringmaking. I intended to investigate ways of installing string to make a space into a place. However, the social engagement, collective gathering and reciprocal sharing of skills made this space into a place in a way I had not envisaged. Questions about place-making and making in place and yarning to ponder further during my upcoming residency.

In the work, *Yarning Circles* (2016), there was a deliberate ambiguity—were the well-worn camp chairs in the circle part of a static installation or were they an invitation to sit and interact. The variety of reactions to this arrangement of chairs ranged from those who joined in almost immediately to those who asked permission and then chose to sit with us. Many of those who sat with me, initially, without express invitation, were people who knew me through my work; the initiated as it were.

My original intent had been for the circle of chairs to open towards the imagined night sky featured in the changing constellations on the north wall of the gallery (Figure 170) as a focal point. Changing the configuration of the chairs to include a more welcoming





Figure 167: I1799, detail of *Yarning Circles* (2016) showing changes to the installation during the life of the exhibition, documentary digital photograph, Spectrum Project Space, 2016.



Figure 168: I1729, *Yarning Circles* (2016) in *field working slow making*, Spectrum Project Space, 2016.



Figure 169: I1709, making and yarning, note the inviting open arc of the circle, *Yarning Circles*, Spectrum Project Space, 2016.



Figure 170: I1910, install shot of a “constellation” of beads and hand plied silk string in *Yarning Circles* (2016), Spectrum Project Space, 2016.





Figure 171: Nicholas Folland, *Untitled (jump up)* 2012, found crystal & glassware, nylon coated steel wire & timber (Exception to copyright, Section: ss40, 103C. Exception: Research or study)



Figure 172: I4327, *Hanging Potential* (2015-17), mixed media, dimensions variable, site specific.

gap facing east towards the gallery entrance invited people into the space and more audience participation (Figure 167, Figure 168, Figure 169). The popularity of yarning within a dynamic space and its shifting arrangement of chairs, posed questions in my mind about visual weight and impact and the change in the value and meaning of an installation when the audience physically interacts with me in it.

Whilst the jumble of, sometimes, empty chairs may have appeared unfinished to the uninitiated observer, it raised questions about the nature of social engagement and collective gatherings through installations, and the role of facilitating this as a creative praxis. There is an interesting argument along this vein, from Rey (2014, 2016) supported by her research on collaborations between Indigenous and non-indigenous artists and/or artworkers. In her opinion, the facilitation of artistic collaborations is an unrecognised form of creative praxis in its own right and needs to be critiqued and theorised; another thread for future research.

These inquiries have continued to lead me down the pathways that created maps of spaces of the gallery along which I invited an audience to wander.

### *hanging potential*

A chance encounter with Nick Folland's *Untitled (jump up)* (2012) (Figure 171) in 2015 in Adelaide was a pivotal moment in this research. This inspired me, and I was prompted to think about suspending balls of string to change the space within the gallery to reflect moving in the midst of the 3-D topography of the Country. Pathways and maps need not be on the gallery floor or top hung on the walls. Many things in the Country hang from branches or are suspended between plants, for example the spider web of *P8020416* (Figure 59). Windfall dye materials may get caught up in bushes and low hanging branches. Track markers for guiding sample crews are more visible tied to foliage at eye height.

Earlier studio experiments included *Hanging Potential* (2015-2017) (Figure 172), continue to morph with the addition and subtraction of materials used for other



Figure 173: *I2832*, balls of string hand plied Shopfront Gallery. Perth, 2016.



Figure 174: *I5892c*, *Tideline* (2017), *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes*, mixed media, site specific, Bunbury Regional Art Galleries.

collections and installations. The assemblage has been installed in several formats but not shown publicly and tinkers with different ways of hanging and suspending balls and fibre.

I played with other suspended assemblages during a 2016 residency at the Shopfront Gallery Central TAFE, Perth. This included suspending balls of string in shopfront windows utilising the pre-positioned hooks left from someone else's project. *I2832* (Figure 173), looks through the suspended balls and out onto the street. The assemblage had been fine tuned to emphasise the architectural lines of the building across the street and complement the road markings, an echo of grids. I reacted to what I found in this space and began to recognise its unique features and potential to become a place. But, the road is a pathway to other places and whispered to me of the Country to which it leads.

Through further investigations into the architectural space, I was inspired to include some of its features in my works. I also considered the architectural lines and shadows of the gallery when I installed *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes* (2017) *I5890* (Figure 153). Playing with suspending balls and objects continued and has led to *Tideline* (2017) (Figure 174), and an interest in manipulating shadows. I also reconsidered the shadows thrown by the artworks *Contained by Fire* (2016) (Figure 12) and *Gathering Thoughts* (2017) and their potential to draw attention to the objects exhibited. Another natural line formed by the entangled materiality of light and fibre, leaves transient traces of its existence like tidemarks in the sand.

### *collective gathering*

Another aspect of the TAFE Shopfront residency was social engagement and collective gathering and its effect on the role of the maker who inhabits the gallery space. These collective gatherings are entangled with my process through the people who are part of the Country. Sharing skills and knowledge also shows acknowledgment, reciprocity and respect both from a craft tradition and a more relational onto-epistemology. My social engagement continues in the form of artist talks and workshops associated with exhibitions and residencies, impromptu yarning circles, demonstrations and sharing skills with the collegiate on campus. This aspect of my research still piques my interest as I often learn new skills and garner ideas from these gatherings.





*Yarning Circles* (2016) was a good example of my social engagement and collective gatherings. I investigated some of the more informal aspects of gathering together and sharing by honouring and acknowledging other makers. A number of local artists and writers with sustainable and socially engaged practices including Martien Van Zuilen, Jennifer Kronberger, Horst Kronberger spent time yarning with the exhibiting artists during *field working slow making* (2016) and suggested that sustainable arts practices are flourishing but need to be nurtured in this unique place—WA.

I intend to investigate naming individual strings of beads after artists and the events we have shared and assembling them in collective gatherings at a height that they would be worn on the body. The challenge is to find a way of acknowledging that these people and their part in the sharing of our stories is appreciated and that they have informed and enriched my praxis and invite people with little connection to the Country to share. However, there is a danger that this may be viewed as a closed exclusive gathering and this needs to be addressed. It is my intention to show the resulting work in *meeting place* (2018). While the focus of this show will be on the objects I make and assemble as artworks, collective gatherings are an important and ongoing part of my praxis and may have a place during the residency and I intend to spend time in the gallery during the exhibition.

I conducted workshops in conjunction with *field working slow making* exhibition (2016) and the Shopfront residency and artist talks at these and the *TwentyONE+* (2016) and *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes* (2017) exhibitions which gave me a chance to spin a yarn. The workshops I conducted in conjunction with the *field working slow making* exhibition (2016) together with the Shopfront residency included artist talks about the contexts of the works being shown. These short duration engagements allowed me to tell a story and occasionally demonstrate how to make string. For example, I spoke of my experience during the Waroona bushfires from which the work *Contained by Fire* (2016) emerged and was shown in the *TwentyONE+* exhibition (2016). However, I found the yarning circles a slower, richer, more reciprocal experience.



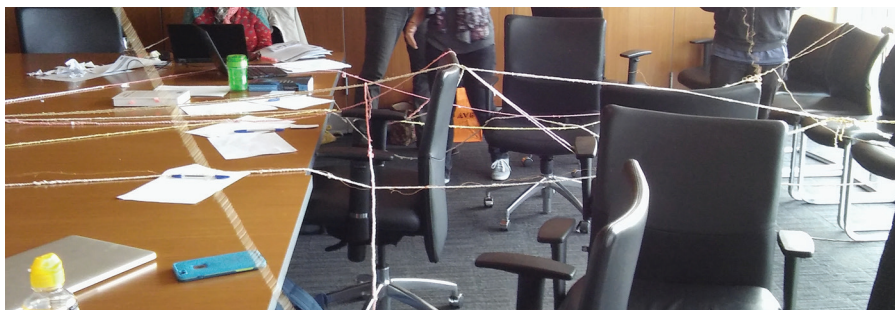


Figure 175: 20170921\_155247c, the meshwork of hand plied string, *Choreographies of Thought*, ECU, 2017.



Figure 176: DSC\_8988c, time to come back the way you came, *Choreographies of Thought*, ECU, 2017.

Recently, I ran a session during ECU Research Week's *Choreographies of Thought*, (2017) based on the theme "Playtime: Avenues of play/playfulness/playing in creative arts research." Extending an invitation to the participants to relate to the space in a playful way, I asked them to look for balls of my hand-plied string placed in unexpected spaces around the room. We followed a simple set of verbal instructions inviting us to engage with the space and connect with other people. For example, sharing a ball of string with someone across the room, and then again with someone else beside you and behind you to create a meshwork of interaction as pictured in 20170921\_155247c (Figure 175). The final instruction was to retrace your steps and go back the way you came. However, this became problematic as the space had changed and became chaotic and distracting, causing a few laughs and some perplexed looks.

DSC\_8988c (Figure 176), shows some of the group contemplating how to retrace their steps to deconstruct the meshwork. My intent was to invite the participants to enjoy a haptic engagement with the space and its materiality and the tactile qualities of a ball of string. Anecdotal feedback suggested that this exercise and its tactility was a lot of fun in a familiar space, now experienced a little differently. This exercise was built, in part, on the travail of the itinerant ball of string, and ideas about a more directed haptic engagement with space and ideas about more experiential artworks. This theme will be continued in a collaborative artist performance during the deinstallation of *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes* (2017) in November, where it is our intention to document a conversation between the works and the artists whilst using string. Questions arising from this performance may feed into *meeting place* (2018).





Figure 177: I9291, *Strata* (2018), hand dyed cotton cloth, found fence paling, limestone, basalt, 100 x 80cm Spectrum Project Space, 2018.

### *meeting place*

How do I take the ball of string from the dashboard of the car and install it with the expectation of it performing as an art object? How does installing sample bags critique the mining industry? In early 2018, sitting in an untidy ‘campsite’ amongst a gathering of materials from my process orientated practice I was flooded with memories of place invoked by handing balls of strings. Thus, I began the three-week residency at Spectrum Project Space, as part of the FRINGEWORLD and Summerset Festivals which culminated in my first solo exhibition *meeting place* (2018). My intention for the exhibition, was to bring a sense of the non-urban—geology, history and human relations and transform the gallery space into a map of place using site-specific installations. Many, sometimes fraught, critical decisions had to be made to make the materials into art objects and this space into a place where a viewer might wonder and wander. Ultimately, the show was successful and won the 2018 FRINGEWORLD visual arts prize. Appendix One, and Two include the exhibition catalogue and a critic’s review.

The original overarching idea had been to map the topography of place on the floor with found objects, textiles, and ceramics. One large installation would cover most of the gallery floor leaving the walls bare and either a pathway around the perimeter, or a clear path through the installation. After reflecting on a few test arrangements with bags, textiles and ceramics, I concluded that, as a viewer, I would feel excluded and detached rather than entangled and immersed in the place. Continuing to test topography, for many hours, I sorted stacked and arranged the sample bags—recalling hours stacking bags as a geologist—testing colour, hue or history but they were still too distancing and exclusive and resembled *Samples of Place* (2017) (Figure 24). However, refining these tests led to *Strata* (2018), with its unexpected symmetry, (Figure 177) reflecting a cross section through the geology and the deep time beneath the topography of the earth’s surface and echoing the palette of earth, landscape and flora of the place.

The bags were sorted and arranged in contour lines on the floor then laid out as if field sampling, none of these assemblages spoke to me of place or drew stories from the bags. The bags were then assembled as a drawing on the wall and a multilayered collage, but the aesthetic of the non-urban was not apparent, and the uniquely marked bags became anonymous, their stories homogenised, and their voices lost. Negative space was becoming more important reflecting the space of the Country. After many rejected iterations, a large gridded installation covered the back wall of the gallery and angled down across the two adjacent walls leaving the floor bare. *The Pit* (2018) (Figure 178) is a little reminiscent of Nien Schwarz's installation *Requiem for rain* (2006) at Perth Institute of Contemporary Art. As the final iteration, *The Pit* (2018), began as a single vast wall of 216 bags, but it was too spectacular and distanced the viewer. More experiments with bag placement led to angling bags on the adjacent walls, suggesting an open cut mine assembled from discarded remnants of the mining process and echoing the colour palette both above and below the topographic surface of the Country. The desert colours are often mirrored in the geomorphology and vegetation of the ground into which the pits have been gouged and the waste dumps emerge on the skyline. These new land features are revegetated by hybrid and rambunctious assemblages of native and feral biota after being abandoned by the miners.

The symbolic use of these repurposed sample bags operates as a critique for mining and cycles of disturbance by telling stories embodied in the colours and the details of the bags. The stains of red brown, for example, may also allude to blood, shed by the land and the people—the original inhabitants and the miners and the FIFO workers damaged by the extraction of the mineral wealth. The bags embedded with their stories bring to my mind, the where and the how of their making and our embedded histories. This installation was unseen from the gallery entrance. I anticipated an element of surprise for the viewer as they turned the corner further down the gallery. It was my intention to build on this surprise and invite the viewer to come closer and notice the small details that may be experienced when time is spent immersed in a space.







Figure 178: 19281, *The Pit* (2018), blank and hand dyed, repurposed mineralogical sample bags, 350 x 820cm, Spectrum Project Space.





*The Country* (2018) (Figure 179, Figure 180) was intended as a visceral landscape of object, artefact and subtle pathways of materiality and juxtaposition with carefully positioned gatherings of string, baskets, beads, ceramic shards, fibre and ceramic vessels. This installation covered the floor and was mirrored (almost a Rorschach blot) on the wall where the landscape dissolves into scattered constellations blurring land into sky, and floor into wall. This was intended as an invocation to the Country, earth, sky, biota and environment; an expansive map to invoke a sense of place and alluding to pathways, tracks and traces through stone and sand, tidelines left by waves, erosion, deposition and the slow passage of time. Peopled by the

Figure 179: I6961, *The Country* (2018), dawn chorus audio, ceramics, beads, string, fibre, baskets, found objects, 1500 x 350cm, Spectrum Project Space.





viewer wandering through *IMG\_20180201\_183938* (Figure 180), an embodied connection between the viewer and the land emerged. There were traces left by other people passing, a stray hair, a piece of coloured fluff, a drop of red wine; a reminder that people and the land are entangled regardless of where they are.

Intermittently, birds chorus, fading and returning. Are they in the gallery or in the garden outside? It was my intent that *The Country* (2018) would surprise and draw a viewer to explore and experience—notice, wonder, listen, touch. Some viewers remarked with surprise and pleasure at the birdsong and the possibility of being able to walk through *The Country* (2018) (Figure 180), spending longer than they had intended with the artworks. The unfamiliar juxtaposition of soft/hard and vessels on the floor and the wall as part of a complex, rich assemblage evoked a recognition of the care, sensitivity and tenderness of their placement and a “very real sense of place” for one viewer. The things of the installation were not privileged in isolation but were intended to allude to the vast potential of stories these containers may hold and the places they were made—becoming a textured map of place.

Figure 180: *IMG\_20180201\_183938*, *The Country* (2018) (detail), dawn chorus audio, ceramics, beads, string, fibre, baskets, found objects, 1500 x 350cm, Spectrum Project Space. Photographer Alyssa Nykiel.





Figure 181: *I4460, Panspermia I* (2015-17), hand plied string ball of recycled cotton clothes, 45 x 45cm, Spectrum Project Space. Photographer Anna Palma.







Figure 182: *17\_06\_06, Strata* (2018), hand dyed cotton cloth, found fence paling, limestone, basalt, 100 x 80cm and *Panspermia II* (2015-17), hand plied string ball of recycled cotton clothes, 25 x 25cm, Spectrum Project Space. Photographer Claire Busby.



Figure 183: *I4470, Panspermia III* (2015-17), hand plied string ball of recycled cotton clothes, 45 x 45cm, Spectrum Project Space. Photographer Anna Palma.

*Panspermia I* (2018) (Figure 181) was a ball of pink string, head-sized, and suspended at head height, close to the entrance and the north wall, and clearly visible. This piece was installed as a clear visual signal with the intention of enticing to passing foot traffic to stop and wander through the exhibition after feedback during the residency suggested that there was no 'hook'. *Panspermia II* and *III* (2018) (Figures 182 and 183) were positioned with the purpose of adding layers of detail to the story told by the exhibition, where links may be made only on turning to leave the gallery and noticing *Panspermia III* (2018) behind the pillar. Audience feedback suggested that the elements of surprise when noticing the small details were welcomed and some found them humorous. It was my intent to introduce a little playfulness in this exhibition. From the installation that invited wandering through (*The Country* (2018)) to balls of string in obscure places (*Panspermia II and III* (2018) and *Coming-going* (2017)). *The Camp* (2018) (Figure 184) was seen by some as humorous and reminiscent of the packing and stacking of bundles when camping. Other feedback described this installation as speaking of the possibilities and potential energy of the tensions of history and experience in the Country.

Diffraction is a process that could be used by the bricoleuse to invent/gain new insights based on a detailed engagement with what is at hand and the recognition of the differences which may lead to spaces for a new combination/coming together. This is arguably the case in yarnning circles and also in the large-scale installations *The Country* (2018) and *The Pit* (2018). The artefacts—sample bags and textiles, ceramics and found objects are combined to tell stories and provide the potential for insight into the places from which they have emerged. These installations invite a diffraction of multiple views of the same phenomena influenced by materials, time, place, and viewer.





It is difficult to see the diffraction patterns—the patterns of difference that make a difference—when the cordoning off of concerns into separate domains elides the resonances and dissonances that make up diffraction patterns that make the entanglements visible. (Barad cited in Van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2012, p. 50)

This may be the case if a reductionist lens is used and why this research using the multiple lenses of the bricoleuse offers new understandings.

In summarising this chapter, the themes of mapping space and haptic engagement have ongoing effects on the way I make pathways. My intention is to invite an audience through the gallery space and perhaps notice and diffract a little of the Country.



Figure 184: *I4327, The camp* (2015-17), bundled sample bags, found metal, leaves, string, 25 x 250cm, Spectrum Project Space.



## *Conclusion*



In concluding this exegesis, I reiterate how I research sustainably, and conceptually in terms of a relational bricoleuse. How and why, I am entangled in poiesis, and tell stories as ways of sharing knowing and inquiring into questions of the Country.

I have presented my research at on-campus forums including TINAS, CREATEC and Research Week and at national and international conferences including the 2015 ACUADS conference in Adelaide, iDARE 2016 in Melbourne, the InASA conference in Fremantle in 2016, *Mapping the Inland* symposium in Melbourne in 2017 and the 2017 AAANZ conference in Perth. My research and my stories continue to generate interest and curiosity about the non-urban and my experiences there, as I asked questions of myself, my research, and the Country.

Exhibitions included *field working slow making* (2016), an exhibition I co-curated that allowed me to undertake some research into how my peers and colleagues conduct field work in non-urban places and my award winning solo show *meeting place* (2018). My artwork has been featured in on-line exhibitions for *Garland* magazine (Appendix Three). This provided an opportunity to bring non-urban focussed arts practices with their underlying environmental and cultural concerns into an urban gallery and to wider audiences.

There were also opportunities to work with the collegiate, and this resulted in the exhibition *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes* (2017). The exhibition was held in the regional WA city of Bunbury, and the gallery staff conducted many school group tours through this exhibition exposing the work to a diverse audience. My artworks in this context built on the *field working slow making* (2016) exhibition and extended my dialogue concerning bringing bricoles of my experience and my gatherings in the environment of the non-urban into an urban gallery space, and enriching arts practices by engaging in collaborative dialogue with other artists. Engaging with the community and spinning yarns are a significant part of my praxis but do not define it.

A storyteller spins yarns while plying string or stitching patchwork, imagining and narrating myths in multiple voices and narratives. The aim: to add a little of the Country—the arid lands, 1000km east and the wetlands 130km south of Perth, to the urban in an attempt to impart the significance of making and its intrinsic relationality to place, and the importance of this in the larger meshwork of an increasingly globalised world. Yarning provided some answers to some questions, and led to more questions, and this process fuels my continuing inquiries and piecing together of bricoles.

My inquiries suggest that the process of the bricoleuse is entangled in a relational wandering in the place of the Country, where I step lightly and take time noticing, gleaning, tinkering, and sharing my skills and experience by making, and yarnning.

Wandering along pathways with loops of not-knowing and knots that may lead to previously unimaginable possibilities and tasks that need creative solutions. I use tools (literal and conceptual) that have not yet been invented but can be created and imagined from the bits and pieces I glean and repurpose or from the toolbox I carry.





This research project aimed to stimulate curiosity in and expand awareness of the Country in the city through making and to develop bricolage as a conceptual framework and a methodology. The resulting bricolage was a response to transforming the entangled relational experience of a bricoleuse into a socio-cultural experience for an urban audience. This also investigated the implications of bricolage as a research approach where the studio is a situated, mythopoetic place. The significance of this project has been in adding a new, visible storyline in the herstory of the creative region that is the Country, in a Western Australian context. There appears to be a gap and a demand for the facilitation of haptic experiences connected to the Country. Through a series of exhibitions and exhibited artworks, I engaged with various means of connecting with other makers and bringing a situated and embodied awareness of the Country into an urban space.

A bricoleuse's approach to the practise of the art of inquiry adds to conceptual and methodological approaches in creative, collaborative and interdisciplinary research. This could have applications outside the arts field, where bricolage and practice-led research approaches are emerging as valid frameworks and methodologies.

In this research, bricolage was introduced as an overarching conceptual approach with the potential to embrace a more relational and ethical onto-epistemology and a complex axiological methodology born initially from Indigenist research paradigms. Bricolage is more than a multi-modal methodological framework, and is driven from within interstitial gaps, not-knowing loops and the open-ended questions of a practice-led art of inquiry. In my case, it has become an informed, ethical, sustainable way of life. I have coined the gendered positioned term bricoleuse to describe my self in a situated poiesis where experience is more important than description and process is privileged over artefact. However, conceptualising the yarning objects as powerful metaphors of thinking and making to tell stories has been the impetus to piece together these reflections and diffractions and then stitch together a more cohesive intercalated story. This articulation of the entanglement of the bricoleuse in my bricolage has resulted from using this research approach and may be of value to other maker-scholars. The implications of this, in the broader field, are to introduce a framework and methodology that can be adapted to less anthropocentric and more relational paradigms where the researcher is situated within the research.

An audit trail maps this exegetical path to tie together and make sense of the rich collection of fragments of ideas of wayfaring and intertwine more voices along conceptual pathways. The Country was introduced and conceptualised as a place—a creative region of situated knowing where the Country is an intra-acting entity entangled in the meshwork of the world in which the bricoleuse wanders. It is in the midst of these pathways that the place was mapped with stories as a way of engaging with, and adding to knowledge from different viewpoints.

When unpacking poiesis, it was possible to articulate an entanglement in the becoming of material thinking and new materialism while wandering amid cultural contact zones yarning and making myths. This was facilitated in my practice by yarning circles and reciprocity of sharing tacit and embodied knowledge with a wider audience in the city and the Country and resulted in discourses about slowing down, slow making and noticing.



Some of the articulable intentions of the maker were unpacked by investigating artefacts resulting from the research process. This included the group exhibitions *field working slow making* (2016), *Thresholds and Thoughtscapes* (2017), and other individual artworks. These intentions were further explored in my residency and solo exhibition *meeting place* at Spectrum Project Space in early 2018. These are built from breakthroughs in these exhibitions and yarnning circles and tinkering in the studio—field and academy.

The critical potential of bricolage, and hence this PhD research, has been to piece together the meaning of fragments of haptic observation, relationships and memory. Critically situating these bricoles together, may articulate and enrich the discourse in the indeterminate and dynamic process of creating place. *The Country* (2018) (Figure 179) is a self-reflective outcome and an artefact created by a situated bricoleuse and assembled in a gallery space with the intention of audience engagement.

This research suggested that the process of the bricoleuse is entangled in a relational wandering in the place of the Country, where a sustainable, slow making practice adapts to what is available both literally and theoretically. Where I, as the maker, converse with the materials of my environment and those I choose to handle. My thinking happens through relating and making; and my understanding emerges through practicing the art of inquiry. This tacit knowing and embodied experience is narrated and shared through telling stories. My entanglement in my sustainable praxis is relational, and I attempt to be ethically embodied as I wander through daily life. My articulation has shifted from the anthropocentric to a more relational point of view. This is ethical conduct for a researcher informed by theory and other relational world views and is an implication of this bricolage research approach. Reiterating Hepburn's (2016) comments regarding foraging and wandering and gathering and making simple things that are useful and not wasteful; this is a what a sustainable arts practice looks and feels like.

As a research approach, at this waypoint, bricolage is a rich, thick, messy, valid form of inquiry that allows less prescriptive, and more interdisciplinary and relational collaborations within contact zones of reciprocal negotiated engagement. A space where alternative forms of knowing, that are situated and positioned, can be shared in multiple languages—text, verbal, visual, spatial and material. The emerging importance of a bricolage approach to poiesis and its process is to materialise an intrinsic entanglement in the meshwork of the world and invite an audience to slow down and notice. Sharing a little of the experience of being in the Country in the gallery can foster a sense of place in a local context as a metaphor for possibilities within the wider ecology.

Weaving a methodology for bricolage adds understanding to arts practice, material thinking and place-making. This is significant as it furthers the discourse on bricolage as a valid interdisciplinary post-qualitative research approach. My research has been discussed as an ethical, place-based, socially and culturally mediated discourse in the midst of making and experiencing, and materials and their relationships. The discourse continues and there is potential for further research in poiesis and in the broader field.





There appears to be a demand for the type of social engagement that occurred in the work *Yarning Circles* (2016) and this is of significance and interest as an avenue for further creative arts research. It is my intent to continue this engagement and further developments will be acted upon in my practice moving forward from this research.

During and after *field working slow making* (2016), I have been engaged in much discussion on the merits of the yarning circle, in providing opportunities for impromptu gatherings, as a time and space to slow down, and to spend time making and talking about making. The possibility of taking an exhibition of a similar format to field work areas and to the Country has been endorsed by Art on the Move, an organisation that facilitates multi-venue regional touring of art exhibitions throughout Australia, and I will put forward a proposal for this in 2018. These are socio-cultural implications for this research, both in urban and non-urban spaces, which will enrich art practices beyond my own.

Going forward from here, I will continue spinning yarns about the Country and aim to rekindle some of my relationships to foster collaborative work in the arid lands. The shape of these collaborations is currently indeterminate but will be dependent on the time, the place and the interests of those involved and will emerge from the possibilities of not-knowing. I am also interested in sharing the stories of the peripatetic remote artworkers and place-makers in creative rather than didactic ways, including further inquiry and discussion about how to theorise such practices as alternative, valid forms of knowing.

One possibility being discussed is for a group of women artists to spend time collaborating in the field and then installing a transient exhibition in the Country. The exhibition would be available to an urban audience only over the internet/skype from the field site. This would be an avenue to investigate the tyranny of distance, and the experiencing of a mediated work via the Internet—and the multiplicity of questions this will pose. A sharing of experience when immanently touchable things are untouchable is a contiguous journey to that of bringing essence of the Country to the city.

A yarn to conclude:

We sit, a collective of mature women and a younger bloke, relaxed and sharing, under the big Moreton Bay Fig. The gnarled roots and low branches have been hosts to innumerable stories and making days. We are drawn together, today, by the tacit knowing of Nalda and her generosity.

A rescued camp dog, from the arid lands, cavorts amongst the baskets of notions, and bags of fibres. Agilely, she snatches a biscuit from the shared meal spread on the table and races off. The table legs are moated in jars of water to deter the ants. We remember absent friends and spin yarns of trips to places we are attached to. Hands are busy, as some watch, and some listen. Another voice joins in sharing her story as a few more threads are plied into the string and a seam or two stitched into the patchwork. There is much laughter—gentle and slow.

My exegetical yarn and the yarns it enfolds are but a waypoint, where I have been repacking, resting and preparing for the next step. From here, I am almost ready to wander along, my next waypoint currently indeterminate. I will head east and north along this pathway, wondering, but not-knowing where I will stop again, gleaning and spinning yarns to as yet unimagined audiences as I go.



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*Appendix One*

*meeting place catalogue*

# meeting place Annette Nykiel

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Spectrum Project Space  
1 to 17 February 2018







For my three week residency in the gallery space, I spend time handling the things I have gathered and acknowledging the people and the places entangled with them. I remember the Country, an non-urban space, which I feel an innate connection to and visit often. My edginess quietens as my mind wanders to moments in the Country walking the ground. I recollect the familiar hint of dust tinting the whisper of the breeze that teases my hair. I feel the heat rising from the weathered strata beneath my feet and dancing across the desiccated salt lake. I reimagine a similar dance reflected in the steam rising from the dyepot or the flue of the kiln, redolent with woodsmoke and hot metal, and the anticipation of revealing the alchemical transformations. Traces of these times endure in the marks of the sample bags and beads. A waft of eucalyptus lingers in the folded cloth and balled string. Snatches of yarns spun during making echo in my thoughts, and I recall who I was sitting with listening, and sharing skills and stories. I select each yarning object—vessel, bundle, ball—pausing to absorb its texture, retell its story, then arranging or installing it to map pathways and connections and re/create places of the Country in this exhibition.

When a maker and her materials become connected through slow making in the field, they are entangled in creating places in the Country. This tactile place-making questions the evolving relationships between the maker, the materials, and the environment. By gathering the objects of the experience within a gallery setting, a meeting with places is made possible.

In the days leading up to the residency, my collections of yarning objects—balls of rag strips and plied string, vessels of cloth, fibre and clay, and repurposed sample bags, coloured and bundled with plant materials and found objects—were gathered together. Bringing them into the gallery space, I sorted, heavily edited, arranged, assembled, and installed elements of these collections. Slowly, over many hours and multiple iterations, the space has been transformed into a meeting place. An exhibition has emerged, and becomes a place to meet what I have created from my experience in the Country. A meeting place to share, to make and yarn, and to acknowledge the Country which sustains us.





## ***Hand Plied String...a brief story***

There is a pungent woody aroma, a steady rhythmic hammering. It's a warm day in an African village in distant Zimbabwe. A woman sits on the earth preparing root fibre harvested from a nearby baobab tree, from this she will make hand plied string.

The root fibres are evenly separated and selected into small clumps then plied either on the shin or thigh or using a drop spindle. Tightly twisted fibre will issue from this process, using two strands twisted in opposing directions and then continuously exchanged one for the other over and over, the now single strand becomes a strong two-ply string.

In my possession is a fibre figurine twined entirely from such hand plied string. Amina the maker was skilled in all aspects of its meditative production including stuffing the tight twining with small rolls of newspaper (Zimbabwe Times August 1989)

Necessity is the mother of invention, the making of string is as ancient as mankind's first efforts at developing a workable strong fibre for many uses. From tightly plied animal skin to grasses, barks and ultimately the plied textiles of wools, silks, linens and cottons.

It is a practice which travels in time. A person teaches the next person and that person in turn teaches others, it's a generational procedure. The African maker Amina's matriarchal ancestors would have passed it along the familial line.

Of course, it is not exclusive to woman. Men are makers of hand plied strings and ropes equally. I saw in the Kalahari a group of men sitting beneath a shade tree with animal hide stretched into strips hanging from its branches. They were using rocks to suspend the plied lengths and passing each strand from on to another. This was serious rope making, but the principal remains. Aboriginal men have been observed using a similar method.

Within the non-indigenous population hand plied string making all but disappeared as a craft practice. That simple back and forth plying became a mystery to many and still is. However, the nature of the process, a small hand movement which yields a magical thread has found a new audience, its attraction being the use of recycling pliable textiles.

To find a bundle of hand plied string in a gallery setting is no longer unique but certainly fascinating. In the manner of all things reborn we attach a certain deeper meaning to it and hand plied string does not disappoint us. The spirit of the material used, and its stated history. The energy of the makers plying action, where the activity is located and in whose company. All these aspects now take on subtle meanings which can be addressed and incorporated into what now can be referred to as the "artwork".

The crafted Zimbabwean figurine and the new length of hand plied cotton sheet string have parted, each in its own way, but equally valid.

**Nalda Searles**





# meeting place Annette Nykiel

**Spectrum Project Space  
1 to 17 February 2018**

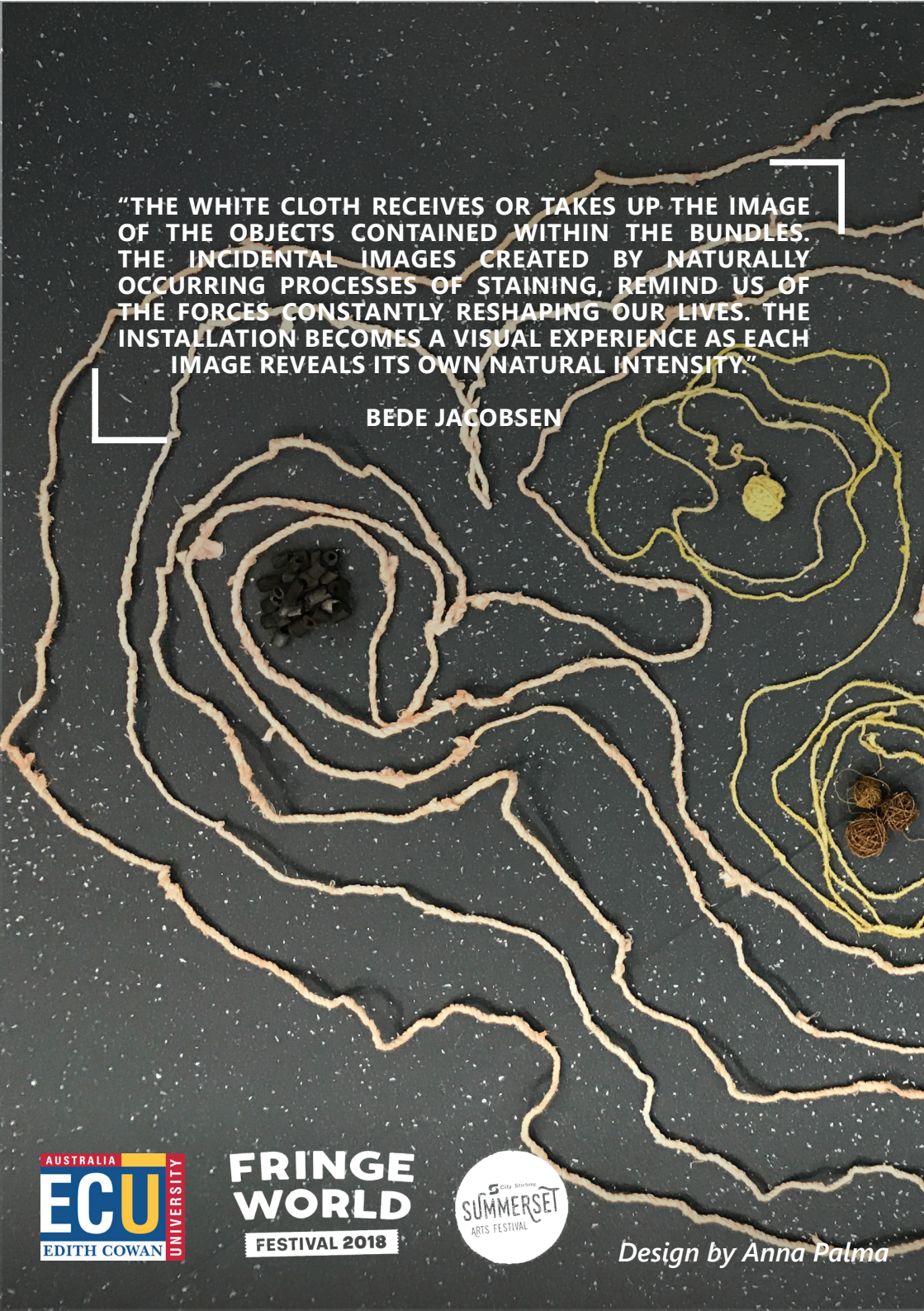
**Exhibition runs:  
Friday, 2 February to  
Saturday, 17 February  
Open Tuesday to Friday 10am-5pm  
and Saturdays 12pm-5pm**

**Artist talk:  
1pm, Saturday, 3 February**

On Fridays 19 January, 2 and 9 February  
the artist will be making and yarning at  
the Spectrum Project Space and invites  
you to join her from 10am-3pm.







"THE WHITE CLOTH RECEIVES OR TAKES UP THE IMAGE OF THE OBJECTS CONTAINED WITHIN THE BUNDLES. THE INCIDENTAL IMAGES CREATED BY NATURALLY OCCURRING PROCESSES OF STAINING, REMIND US OF THE FORCES CONSTANTLY RESHAPING OUR LIVES. THE INSTALLATION BECOMES A VISUAL EXPERIENCE AS EACH IMAGE REVEALS ITS OWN NATURAL INTENSITY."

BEDE JACOBSEN





- Western Australia's arts playground -

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MIXED MEDIA, NEWS, REVIEWS, VISUAL ARTS

String theory

February 13, 2018 Editor

Fringe World review: Annette Nykiel’s “Meeting Place” ·

Spectrum Project Space ·

Review by Belinda Hermawan ·

A product of Annette Nykiel’s three-week residency at Spectrum Project Space at Edith Cowan University, Mt Lawley, “Meeting Place” is an exhibition that embraces the concept of textured storytelling. Utilising hand-plied string and hand-dyed cotton cloth, Nykiel entangles us in an



exploration of what she has termed “the Country” – several non-urban places to which she feels an attachment to and visits often.

The purposeful use of yarning objects echoes the idea of Nykiel as a creator, the spinner of an immersive tale in which cloth, beads, rocks, fibre and string are handled and built upon, wound and coiled, encased and released. Many of the incorporated elements are made from naturally occurring materials that have been processed in some way to achieve their current form, for instance, cloth from cotton, or ceramic from clay.

Yet these installations are far from static. One cannot help but feel an energy from *Panspermia 1, 2* and 3, as if there is potential being encased in these tightly bound balls of string. The feature piece *The Country* is a mixed media work spanning a wall and the floor beneath that could very well be seen as an explosion of volcanic energy, where rock has been catapulted on both the X and Y axis, plotting an array of woven and fired objects. This scattering is also reminiscent of how we find ancient artefacts in the ground; fragments all within a tight radius of each other, yet still wholly hidden under the earth.



The feature piece *The Pit*, consisting of neat rows of repurposed mineralogical sample bags and spanning an entire wall, is more ordered in its dynamism. Each bag has been hand-dyed

individually, creating one-of-a-kind patterns with variations in colour, tone, saturation and negative space. Together, the grid assembly mimics an impressive periodic table, a man-made formation designed to help us make sense of all the discovered elements.

Meanwhile, the folded, dyed cloths in the nearby *Strata* sit in a pile – have they been folded down or are they to be hung up? Like the hand-plied sting of *Coming-going*, installed on the floor in a multi-layered line against Spectrum’s information desk, visiting Nykiel’s “Country” implies a freedom of movement; we are not trapped where we have come from or where we are now.

The idea that there are threads, both literal and metaphorical, that bind is not a new one. String making itself is a craft that has existed since time immemorial. The idea of cyclic life is also universal, as easily experienced again on viewing *Yarning Circle*, made from retted and bound fibre. However, rather than being purely derivative, Nykiel invites us to engage with these recycled materials and appreciate that reinvention can in itself be creation.

*‘Meeting Place’ runs from 1 – 17 February 2018 at Spectrum Project Space as part of Fringe Festival.*

Tagged Annette Nykiel, Fringe World, Spectrum Project Space

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#### PREVIOUS POST

[Celestial grace](#)

#### NEXT POST

[Hell nods to Beckett](#)

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# Discover: Works inspired by found objects

Online exhibition

See you not that the ships sail through the sea by Allah’s Grace? That He may show you of His Signs? Verily, in this are signs for every patient, grateful (person)” – verse 31 of the 31st or Surah Luqman of the Holy Quran

The Indian Ocean has been a region where cultures meet, including the great trading civilisations of Malay, India, Oman, China, Portugal, Netherlands, France and Britain. The shores across the Indian Ocean are strewn with objects from foreign cultures. This online exhibition features works made by artists that are inspired by their discoveries.

[Fakhriya Al-Yahyai](#) [Fatemah Barg](#) [Sandra Black](#) [Siân Boucherd](#) [Jacqueline Bradley](#) [Kate Campbell-Pope](#) [Pixels + Fibre](#) [Karin Findeis](#) [Graham Hay](#) [Blandine Halle](#) [Pennie Jiagello](#) [Ba An Le](#) [Saberah Malik](#) [Lieta Marziali](#) [Barry McGuire](#) [Britt Mikkelsen](#) [Annette Nykiel](#) [Helen O’Shea](#) [Beverley Price](#) [Stephanie Radok](#) [Holly Story](#) [April Surgent](#) [Annie Fong Nie Teu](#) [Lynne Tinley](#) [Melinda Young](#)



Click image to view gallery

Waanginy Boorna (Message Stick) sculptures are an invitation to all nations to , in one ceremony, in one place, at one time.

One day my Dad took me into the shed and he pulled out a ragged object, around thirty centimetres long, wrapped in possum fur. “This is a waanginy boorna (message stick)”,

Dad said, “I want you to have it. This is for you to hold until your son comes along and then he will give it to his son and so on through the generations, ngadabinyarra.”

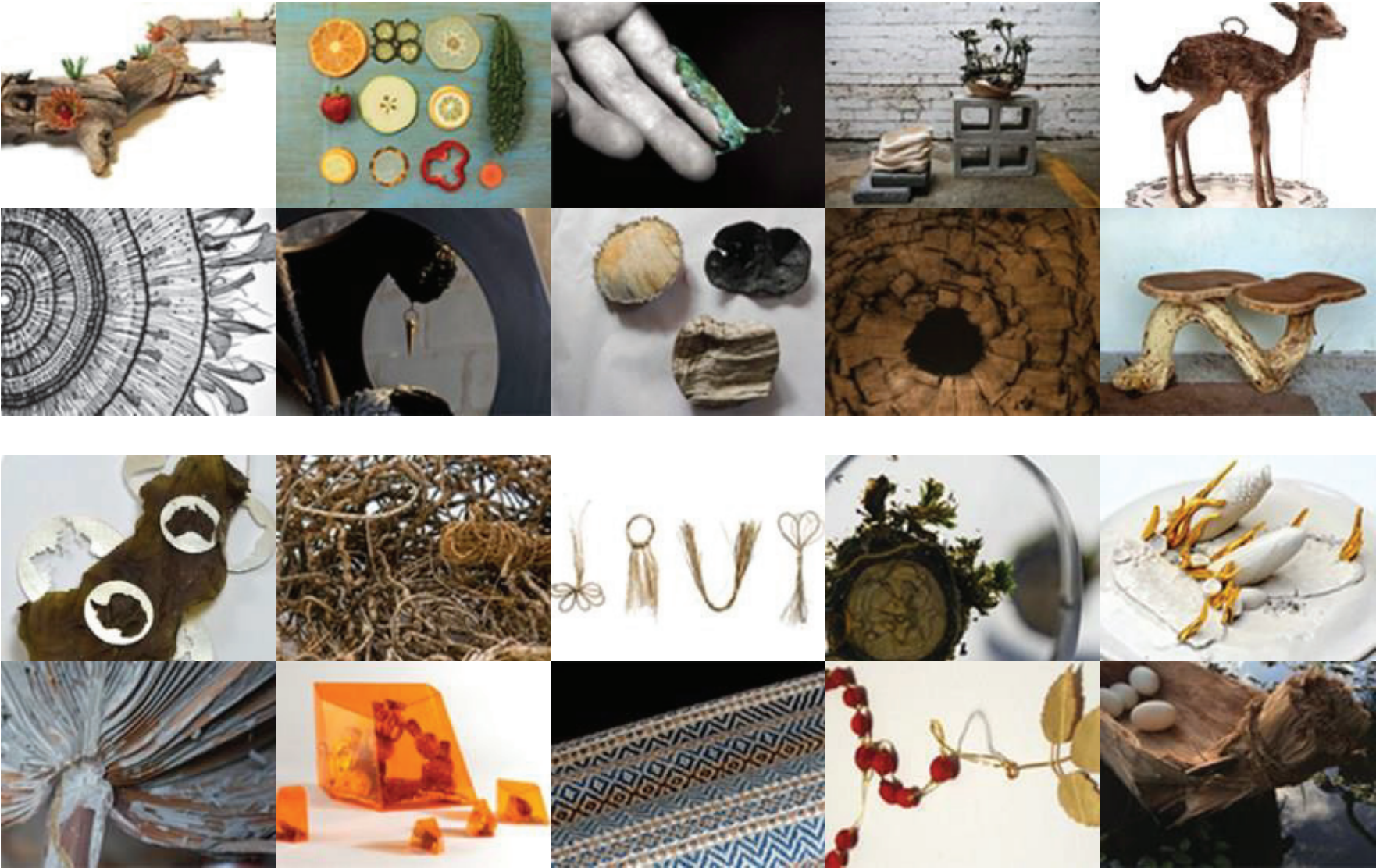
I remember looking at the markings carved into the wood. Dad told me that these symbols contained information that could convey messages between Aboriginal People across vast distances and was an invitation for people to come together for a Waarna (ceremony). As I held the waanginy boorna I could not imagine how many men had held it across time or how often it had brought people together.

*Barry McGuire, a Whadjuk, Ballardong, Noongar artist, has cast in bronze his interpretation of the waanginy boorna here as a symbol of eternalising the implements place in this Boodja (Country). Standing over 4 metres high, the sculptures act as an invitation to all nations to come together to celebrate in the Stadium Park. The concrete plinths the Waanginy Boorna (Message Sticks) sit on is reflective of the full moon, used to guide the message stick runner as they travelled through country. Travel along the BHP Boardwalk at the edge of the Bily Lake to see this artwork’s companion. The Waanginy Boorna (Message Stick) artworks welcome visitors at both the northern and the southern entries of the Stadium Park.*



Nature craft

Tanya Dutt



In what way can craft be in partnership with nature?

The traditional story of craft as an art of civilisation involves controlling nature. Fibre is spun, wood is carved, metal is cast, glass is blown and clay is thrown. Making seems to involve an improvement in the otherwise formless quality of materials found in the environment. Natural substances are mastered in order to manipulate them into forms of useful beauty.

So what might be a craft of the anthropocene era, where nature and human are seen to be intertwined? How does craft practice reflect an ecological relation to nature, where the process of making plays a role in the sustainability of materials? And how can nature influence the making process? What can craft offer to nature in return for its gifts? Is there beauty in the natural world that can be retained and enhanced by the intervention of the human hand?

Through the wondrous objects of this exhibition, *Nature Craft* unravels the mysterious relationship between what nature offers and how we use it. These artists show us the nature behind what we make:

[Amanda Brooks](#) | [Julia deVile](#) | [Emma Davies](#) | [Melinda Young](#) | [Zhu Ohmu](#) | [Holly Story](#) | [Marisa Molin](#) | [Rebecca Chernow](#) | [Carli Holcomb](#) | [Vaidehi Hemant](#) | [Shaun Edwards](#) | [Parul Thacker](#) | [Marcelo Mainardi](#) | [Dani Ortman](#) | [Marian Hosking](#) | [Neelam Varma](#) | [Lynn Kelly](#) | [Jesika Dawnn](#) | [Tamal Bhattacharya](#) | [Natalie Holtsbaum](#) | [Annette Nykiel](#) | [Kathrine Redford](#) | [Marisa Georgiou](#)

Annette Nykiel

Contained by Fire

Made while being isolated and under threat by fire, this random weave contains the chaotic experience. The highly inflammable palm inflorescence symbolises threat but also post fire rebirth.



## SECTION 4 – PARTICIPANTS

## 4.1 APPLICATION TYPE

Use of information from databanks (with no contact with participants)	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Use of previously collected information	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use of previously collected human tissue samples only	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Contact with participants	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 4.2 PARTICIPANTS

*Details of the potential participants in this research project.*

It is difficult to be exact - because of transience of Indigenous peoples. However, unless culturally inappropriate, groups will not be restricted to Indigenous people only unless determined in the context and with consultation with the group and/or Elders.

I expect the yarnning group will include about 5-10 mature women over the age of 18 and under 70. One or two of these women may go on to work collaboratively with me to make creative works.

I expect to yarn informally with 2-3 male artists over the age of 18 and under 70. This is likely to be a separate group to the women's group and may also lead to collaborative artworks.

Some previously collected information may be included in this research as this research is practice-led (in the form of catalogue and biographical content that is in the public domain).

I already have existing relationships with possible participants who may have also been participants in my Honours project (in which similar research methods were used and all data and participants are re-identifiable) .

## 4.3 METHOD OF RECRUITMENT

*The methods that will be used to recruit potential participants.*

Email	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Personal contacts of the researcher(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mailout	<input type="checkbox"/>	Participants from a previous study	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Advertisement, poster, or flyer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Telephone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Recruitment by a third party e.g. via an organisation, doctor, etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	Snowball (participants to suggest other potential participants)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Use of contact details:		Convenience sample	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• from publicly available information (e.g. telephone book)	<input type="checkbox"/>	From a designated public space e.g. theatre, classroom or community group	<input type="checkbox"/>
• from private sources (e.g. membership list from an organisation, use of a database, schools, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other – see explanation	<input type="checkbox"/>		

## 4.4 RECRUITMENT PROCESS

*A brief description of the recruitment process.*

I will recruit all participants with initial contact through existing personal contacts. it is likely that snowballing will occur amongst the mob. The focus of the research will be people (including but not restricted to Wongatha people) from the Laverton region of the Northern Goldfields of Western Australia. All participants will be recruited the same way from the same area.

## 4.5 INCLUSION/EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Will any inclusion and/or exclusion criteria be used to determine the participants who will be invited to participate in the project?	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
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I would particularly like to yarn with artists (potentially including Wongatha artists). It is likely that most of the participants will be women, however male participants, if culturally appropriate, will also be welcome as determined in the context and with consultation with the group and Elders. It is possible that these conversations may lead to some collaborative art work. If this happens, all artists will be named and acknowledged in culturally appropriate ways.

#### 4.6 DEPENDENT AND/OR UNEQUAL RELATIONSHIPS

<b>Does this research project include participants who may be in a dependent and/or unequal relationship with the researcher(s) – particularly the researcher(s) involved in recruitment and data collection?</b>	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
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In previous employment, I was a manager of the Laverton Outback Gallery, where some of the potential participants have volunteered, trained, exhibited or made art. However, this employment has now ceased and I believe that if there was any inequality in the past, it has now been levelled as we are all artists and I do not retain any ties to my previous place of employment. This is recognised in the community.

#### 4.7 COMPENSATION AND/OR REIMBURSEMENT

<b>Will participants receive any compensation and/or reimbursement as a result of participation?</b>	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Light refreshments will be provided for example billy tea and ingredients for making damper if out in the field. Making damper and tea becomes part of the yarning process. Water and fruit will also be offered. Art materials may also be supplied if any collaborative creative work is undertaken. Copies of photographs taken as part of the research will also be offered to participants, if culturally appropriate.

#### 4.8 DECEPTION

<b>Will this research project involve any deception of participants?</b>	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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#### 4.9 OTHER INFORMATION ABOUT PARTICIPANTS

<b>Is there any other information relevant to the participants that would assist the HREC in reviewing this project?</b>	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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#### 4.10 SPECIFIC TYPES OF PARTICIPANTS

<b>Children and/or young people (under the age of 18 years of age)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and/or communities</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>People in other countries</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>People who may be involved in illegal activities</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>People with a cognitive impairment, an intellectual disability, or a mental illness</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>People highly dependent on medical care who may be unable to give consent</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## SECTION 5 – INFORMED CONSENT

### 5.1 INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS

<i>Will potential participants be provided with a written information letter explaining the research project and inviting them to participate?</i>	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
--	-----	--------------------------	----	-------------------------------------

*Details of how potential participants will be provided with information about the project and invited to participate.*

<i>Information will be emailed to participants</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Information will be provided verbally to participants</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Other – see explanation</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	All potential participants will also be provided with a written information letter using culturally appropriate language. Literacy levels and vision impairment may deter a complete of understanding, therefore I will also give information verbally (also culturally appropriate in some circumstances)	

### 5.2 CONSENT PROCESS

<i>Will potential participants indicate their consent to participate by returning a signed consent form?</i>	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
--	-----	--------------------------	----	-------------------------------------

*An explanation of why a consent form is unnecessary or inappropriate and details of how consent will be clearly established.*

With potential literacy and vision impairment issues amongst some of the participants, recorded verbal consent may be more appropriate. However, there is some concern about using voice records if a participant should pass away within the research period. Should this happen, all material including any voice records and collaborative art work will be treated in a culturally appropriate way in accordance with the families wishes.

<i>Return of an anonymous survey</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Verbal agreement to participate</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Via recorded agreement for an interview</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<i>Other – see explanation</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

The National Statement indicates that the Human Research Ethics Committee is required to review and approve all information intended for potential participants. Please attach a copy of the information letter and consent form (if necessary) with your application.

### 5.3 CONSENT PROCESS – PARTICIPANTS UNABLE TO GIVE CONSENT

<i>Does the project involve participants who may be unable to give informed consent?</i>	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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### 5.4 CONSENT PROCESS – PARTICIPANTS WHO MAY HAVE DIFFICULTY UNDERSTANDING ENGLISH

<i>Does the project involve participants who have difficulty understanding English?</i>	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
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All potential participants will be provided with a written information letter using culturally appropriate language. See attached letter (modelled on information letters approved by the Curtin University ethics committee and the Marlu Kuru Kuru women in my Honours Project).

Literacy levels and vision impairment may deter complete understanding, therefore I will also give information verbally (also culturally appropriate in some circumstances as determined in the context and with consultation with the group and Elders).

Verbal consent may be recorded if appropriate, after the project has been fully and culturally appropriately explained.

An officially certified translator will be used should they be required.



MOUNT LAWLEY CAMPUS

2 Bradford Street, Mount Lawley  
Western Australia 6050  
☎ 134 328

## INFORMATION LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

**Title of Project: a question of Country: a bricoleur's inquiry**

[www.ecu.edu.au](http://www.ecu.edu.au)

ABR 54 361 485 361 CRICOS IPC 002/58

My name is Annette Nykiel. I am an artist. I am also a postgraduate student, I create with textiles and photos and art works in Laverton.

I am currently completing some yarns to finish my story for my Doctor of Philosophy at Edith Cowan University in Perth, Western Australia.

I want to talk to people and make art about Country. This art may be exhibited both on Country and in the city.

I would like to yarn with you about things and perhaps we can make artwork together.

Whether you yarn with me is up to you and you can come and go as you please. If you do want to yarn with me, I will ask you to sign some paperwork saying that you agree to share stories with me and allow me to use what we have talked about in my story. I will ask you to sign some paperwork saying that you agree to allow me to take photos. You can see the photographs before I use them for my story.

I will only be using what I think and feel about my experiences here. There will be nothing that tells people who you are or that they are your stories (unless it is art work we have made together or the photos if you agree). If you want me to record you saying yes you agree to work with me rather than signing a paper, I will tape this. Otherwise, I will not be taping or recording the yarning. I will be making notes and sharing the work as we make it. My notes will be stored in a locked cupboard in my office and kept after I have finished telling my story, I might tell another story about this one day. The only risk will be taking up some of your time.

If you have any questions about the research project or require further information you may contact the following:

Student Researcher: Annette Nykiel  
Email: [anykiel@our.ecu.edu.au](mailto:anykiel@our.ecu.edu.au)

Supervisor: Dr Lyndall Adams  
Telephone: 08 9370 6769  
Email : [l.adams@ecu.edu.au](mailto:l.adams@ecu.edu.au)

If you have any concerns or complaints and wish to contact an independent person about this research project, you may contact:

Research Ethics Officer  
Edith Cowan University  
Telephone: 08 6304 2170  
Email: [research.ethics@ecu.edu.au](mailto:research.ethics@ecu.edu.au)

Thank you very much for yarning with me, your participation is greatly welcomed and respected.

Yours sincerely,

Annette Nykiel  
PhD Candidate  
School of Communications and Arts ECU



MOUNT LAWLEY CAMPUS

2 Bradford Street, Mount Lawley  
Western Australia 6060  
☎ 134 328

[www.ecu.edu.au](http://www.ecu.edu.au)

ABN 64 931 485 961 CRICOS IPC 00229B

## CONSENT FORM

**Title of Project: a question of Country: a bricoleur's inquiry**

- I have read or had explained to me, the information on the attached letter and would like to share my yarns to add to the story.
- Any questions I have asked have been answered well and things explained to me.
- I agree to participate in this but understand that I can change my mind or stop at any time up until publication of the papers (journal, exhibition, catalogue or exegesis).
- I agree that yarns gathered for this may be published or included in the story.
- Our names and other information that lets people know who we are will not be used/published. I understand that the story will be shown and told to us before it goes on paper (published) and it will be presented in a culturally appropriate and respectful way.
- It is OK for my voice to be recorded (saying yes to yarning).
- It is OK for you to take photos.
- I can see the photographs before you use them in the story or in an artist statement.
- It is OK for you to hang onto the stories after you have finished the research.
- I am aware that I can contact Dr Lyndall Adams or the Research Ethics Officer at ECU if I have any further queries, or if I have concerns or complaints. I have been given their contact details in the Information Letter.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_



# PHOTOGRAPH RELEASE FORM

Title of Project: a question of Country: a bricoleur's inquiry

Researcher: Annette Nykiel

Email: anykiel@our.ecu.edu.au

NAME OF THE PHOTOGRAPHED PERSON	(“the Subject”)
PERSON TAKING THE PHOTOGRAPHS	Annette Nykiel anykiel@our.ecu.edu.au (“the Student”)
LOCATION	(“the Location”)
PURPOSE	Artist statement (“Purpose”)

I, the Subject, hereby consent to and authorise Edith Cowan University (“ECU”) and/or the Student and persons authorised through them to photograph me at the Location and to reproduce, publish and communicate the photographs in any medium for the Purpose.

I acknowledge that the negatives and/or any other storage device or medium in which the image is held and all rights in the photographs, including copyright, will remain the property of the Student.

I hereby absolutely and irrevocably release and forever discharge, and agree to save harmless ECU and/or the Student and all persons acting under their permission or authority from any claims, liability or injury that may occur arising from the use of the photographs which but for the execution of this Deed I may have had against ECU and/or the Student.

Claims includes all claims, actions, suits, causes of actions, debts, dues, costs, claims, liabilities, demands, damages, losses, costs and expenses of any description, decisions, awards, judgment and orders whether at law or in equity or arising under statute arising out, during or in connection with the Project.

SIGNATURE OF SUBJECT	DATE
ADDRESS	POST CODE

(If the Subject is under the age of 18 years at the date of signing, the consent of the legal guardian – i.e. a parent – is required.)

In my capacity as the Legal Guardian of the Subject, I hereby consent to the above terms of the deed of release on behalf of the Performer.

SIGNATURE OF GUARDIAN	DATE
NAME OF GUARDIAN	
ADDRESS	POST CODE

**NOTE:** This release form authorises the use of photographs only for the purposes specified. The use of the photographs in any other circumstances is prohibited unless authorised by the signing of a further release.

**MINING ACT 1978**  
**APPLICATION FOR A MINER'S RIGHT**

(OFFICE USE ONLY)

Miner's Right No:

Receipt No:

TO: Director, Mineral Titles Division  
Department of Mines and Petroleum  
Level 1, Mineral House  
100 Plain Street  
EAST PERTH WA 6004 (May also be sent to any Mining Registrar's Office)  
Email: mineraltitles.enquiries@dmp.wa.gov.au

ANNETTE JANIEVE NYKIEL

(name in full-block letters)

of

[REDACTED]  
(full postal address)

Postcode: 6440

Telephone No: [REDACTED]

hereby make application for the use of a Miner's Right pursuant to Section 40C of the *Mining Act 1978*.

The prescribed fee of \$25.00 is attached.

[REDACTED]  
(Signature of Applicant)

**N.B. Proof of identity must support the Application for a Miner's Right**





## Application for a Scientific or Other Prescribed Purposes Licence

To take protected (native) flora taken from Crown land for non-commercial purposes

**Completed forms should be returned to:**

Department of Parks and Wildlife  
Locked Bag 30 Bentley Delivery Centre WA 6983  
Or faxed to (08) 9334 0242 or emailed.

**Further information** on the licensing requirements

is available from DPaW Wildlife Licensing Section  
Phone: (08) 9219 9836  
Email: [wildlifelicencing@dpaw.wa.gov.au](mailto:wildlifelicencing@dpaw.wa.gov.au)

SCIENTIFIC OR OTHER PRESCRIBED PURPOSES LICENCES ARE ISSUED FOR A MAXIMUM 1-YEAR PERIOD, WITH A \$10 FEE, HOWEVER IN SOME CASES THIS FEE IS WAIVED (REFER TO 'PAYMENT' SECTION FOR DETAILS)

PLEASE ALLOW TEN (10) WORKING DAYS TO PROCESS COMPLETE AND CORRECT APPLICATIONS.

PLEASE NOTE THAT RENEWAL OF A LICENCE IS DEPENDENT ON SATISFACTORY SUBMISSION OF REPORT DETAILING COLLECTION ACTIVITIES (IF IT WAS A CONDITION OF YOUR PREVIOUS LICENCE)

**Applicant:**

Surname Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms	N YKIEL	Other names	Annette
Address (residential)			
		Postcode	6163
Address (postal)			
		Postcode	
Day time Telephone		Email address	
Business Name (if applicable)			
Date of birth	19 / 08 / 1966	Previous Licence No.: S.....	Expiry Date: / /

**Details of your proposed use of flora**

- ☐ Collection of flora for identification purposes during surveys while employed by .....
- ☐ Collection of flora for identification & specimen vouchering purposes with ..... (name of herbarium)
- ☐ Collection of flora for non-commercial propagation purposes for use in local revegetation projects, while with ..... (name of Community Group/Company)
- ☒ Collection of flora for study/ teaching/ research (circle your selection) purposes while with  
ECU ..... (name of Registered Training Organisation/Institution)
- ☐ Collection of flora for display & education purposes for the ..... (name of show) Wildflower Show
- ☐ Other (attach proposal): .....

**Supporting documents** (Note: the following documents will need to be provided with your application in the following circumstances, and then tick the declaration box below):

- **Confirmation of employment-** required when applying for a licence while employed by a company, educational institution or government (eg. covering letter or email from company supervisor)
- **Confirmation of studying status-** required when applying for a licence while studying with an Registered Training Organisation (covering letter or email from course supervisor)
- **Confirmation of membership with Community Group-** required when applying for a licence while with a Community Group (covering letter or email from head of group)

☒ To the best of my knowledge I have attached all of the supporting documents required for my application

**Land to which application relates**

☒ Whole of State- various locations not yet known (Note: once licensed you are required to obtain the permission of each Land Manager)

OR

**Non-CALM managed lands** (Note: once licensed you are required to obtain the permission of each Land Manager)

Name of Local Government Authority (eg. Shire, Town, City)	Location of Crown Land: (e.g. Reserve or Location No., name of Pastoral Station, or Reserve name)	Land Manager (Government Agency who manages the land)

**DPaW managed lands**

Specific name of land managed by DPaW (eg. State Forest, National Park, Nature Reserve, Marine Park, etc. or UCL-please provide description of location of UCL)	DPaW District

OR

☐ List attached (specific locations known)

**Note:** For lands managed by DPaW (except UCL) a Regulation 4 Authority is required in addition to a Scientific or Other Prescribed Purposes licence. Please select one of the following:

- ☐ Application for a Regulation 4 Authority submitted with this application
- ☐ Already hold a Regulation 4 Authority for this location and project: CE.....
- ☐ Authorised under someone else's Regulation 4 Authority which is for the same location and project: CE.....

**Flora to which application relates**

☒ Identification (material) Seed/Cuttings (circle your selection) for all flora except Declared Rare Flora

OR

Scientific Name (e.g. <i>Banksia pruriens</i> )	Common Name (if any)	Parts to be taken (e.g. Flowering Stems, Fruits/Nuts, Seeds, Leaves, Cuttings)

OR



☐ List attached**Period for which licence will be required/duration of activity:** (Maximum 12 months where activity is ongoing and frequent)☒ 12 months from date of issue (ONLY if project is ongoing and frequent)

OR

Starting Date: 1.09.15 Finishing Date: 1.09.16Signature  ntDate 26/8/15**Payment** (Please read the following and if you are still not sure whether you are eligible for a waived fee licence please contact Wildlife Licensing for confirmation):**The following situations are eligible for a waived fee licence when using the licence for these purposes:**

- Government employees
- Regional Herbarium/WA Herbarium volunteers
- Students of educational institutions
- Community groups (where no sale of the flora is occurring)
- Registered DPaW volunteers
- Employees of educational institutions
- Wildflower Society members

If your activity **does not** fit in any of the above categories you are required to pay the \$10.00 application fee (Please select one of the following payment methods):

- ☐ Cheque enclosed ☐ Money order enclosed
- ☐ Payment made at DPaW office (refer to 'Office Use Only' section below)
- ☐ Credit Card (complete 'Credit Card Payment' section below)

**No responsibility will be taken for cash payments sent via mail.**

<b>Credit Card Payment</b>	(VISA & MASTERCARD ONLY)	**Please print clearly**
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div> </div>		
Name of Cardholder: _____		Expiry Date: ____/____
Signature of Cardholder: _____		

**OFFICE USE ONLY**

NAME OF RECEIPTING OFFICER: <small>PLEASE PRINT NAME AND SURNAME OF OFFICER</small>	RECEIPT NUMBER: <small>PLEASE PRINT RECEIPT NUMBER</small>
SIGNATURE: <small>PLEASE SIGN AND PRINT NAME OF OFFICER</small>	DATE: <small>PLEASE PRINT DATE</small>
POSITION HELD & OFFICE LOCATION: <small>PLEASE PRINT POSITION AND OFFICE LOCATION</small>	AMOUNT: \$....._00

Department of Parks and Wildlife  
Wildlife Licensing Section  
Locked Bag 30 Bentley Delivery Centre  
WA 6983

1 September 2015

To whom it may concern,

This is to confirm that **Annette Nyklel** is a full time PhD candidate in the Faculty of Education and Arts in the School of Communications and Art at Edith Cowan University, Mt Lawley.

She is applying for an **Application for a Scientific or Other Prescribed Purposes Licence** to allow her to collect plant materials to further her studies.

Regards

Dr Lyndall Adams

