



# Sew + So :: the in-between space

Conceptual Works in Fibre Art

Contemporary Art Spaces Mandurah

February 3 - March 17 2024





*Sew + So :: the in-between space* considers the significance of the ‘in-between space’ in material and narrative sense by a group of Western Australia-based artists, each situated in a particular cultural landscape, through the medium of contemporary fibre art.

Individually and collectively, the artists capture the possibilities of fibre art traditions within a contemporary setting. Their works explore and reflect the interrelation between what is and what is not, concealment and revelation, and the inherent juxtaposition of presence and absence.

Kate Campbell-Pope

Helen Coleman

Denise Fisher

Alana Grant

Philomena Hali

Marie Mitchell

Jan Mullen

Annette Nykiel

Deidre Robb

Tania Spencer

Chelsea Turner

Martien van Zuilen

Susie Vickery

Jo Wassell

Louise Wells

**Cover**  
*Quietude* (detail) 2023 | Jo Wassell  
Thread on khadi paper  
Diptych, each sheet 42 x 30cm

Photo credit: Bewley Shaylor

**This Page**  
*The Labyrinth* (detail) 2023 | Chelsea Turner  
Copper wire, 23 x 18 x 11cm

Photo credit: Bewley Shaylor

Described as a pause in time, a gap, or interval, the Japanese concept of *Ma* is an intrinsic aesthetic and cultural value, observed in all aspects of life. Consider, for a moment, the pause between our breaths. Or the spaces between words written on a page, the silent intervals between musical notes – relational spaces, that give meaning to the text and form to the composition. An apparent ‘emptiness’, full of possibilities.

*Sew + So :: the in-between space*, explores the experience and value of this ‘in-between space’, through contemporary fibre art works by fifteen local and regional Western Australian-based artists. Each artist is situated in a particular cultural and geographical landscape, which informs their practice and shapes their work. Individually and collectively, they express the interrelation between what is and what is not, concealment and revelation, and the inherent juxtaposition of presence and absence.

Many of the artists choose elementary textile-making techniques, such as stitching, weaving, felting, and knitting, to visualise their experience. They hold an intuitive understanding about the intricacies of crafting, of feeling drawn into the creative possibilities of their medium and the interplay of materials, intent, and the expression of ideas. The inherent material and tactile qualities, coupled with the very processes of making, lies at the heart of their creative practice.

Kate Campbell-Pope’s *Small Comforts for Anxious Times* is imbued with such tangible qualities. The stitching of worry beads which subsequently move through the hands, focuses one’s attention, allowing the mind to wander and wonder, interspersed by a barely perceptible pause that lies between the beads. Likewise, Denise Fisher’s *Nothing + Everything* conveys time dedicated to reflection, through the act of slow stitching and as a narrative space of solace, stillness, infinite possibilities, and potential transformation.

As in stitching, there is a rhythm to the act of weaving, moving the shuttle through the warp threads, left to right,

right to left. Louise Wells used gifted and recycled textiles to weave *A Space of One’s Own*, referencing the importance of solitary time and space during her daily walks. For Jan Mullen, her love of text and textiles converge in *so...we...so*, an engaging visual play on the exhibition title and the humble ellipsis. Each three-word sequence captures thoughts, scenarios, and action. There is much to consider.

Several of the works are sculptural in nature. In *Synapse*, Helen Coleman pays homage to the unfathomable complexity of the human brain and the vital spaces between cells that enable the necessary electrical impulses to pass. Like the human brain, the work might appear fragile, yet it contains an underlying strength, and enduring thoughtfulness.

There is a calmness to be found in simplicity. In creating my work *Entwined*, the elementary act of manipulating wool fibres into a hand-felted sculptural form provided the immersive experience that I relish. The work speaks of connection, as does *Holding, Slipping* yet the physical spaces in the latter also allude to breaches in human dignity and care. As is often the case, the works came into being through doing, rather than being planned.

A further key point in the concept of *Ma* is to consider one’s life from a broader perspective, and the way in which our actions play a role in shaping a shared world. The work of art lies not only in the outcome. The creative process, the handling of materials, tools, and mode of production are an intrinsic and authentic part of what is made, and how, as artists, we relate to the world. Understanding that quality activates the work in new ways.

Susie Vickery conceived the idea for *Yes + No (So + So)* during the public debate leading up to the 2023 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice referendum. But the work extends an infinitely broader invitation for consideration and respect wherever conflict and division are involved. What at first glance might appear to be relatively effortless works are highly skilled drawings using thread. Vickery is a master of her craft.

In *The extraordinary ordinary*, Falcon-based artist Deidre Robb celebrates the quietly magnificent aspects of ordinary life; walking the dog, walking along her local beach, acts of care, kindness, generosity, and everyday demonstrations of love. There is much joy just in thinking about the significance of those and other everyday moments, big or small, and it is poignantly expressed in the work. In similar vein, Albany artist Jo Wassell was drawn to those small moments of stillness that she values deeply; the brief window in a busy day when we take pause and be. Her stitched work, *Quietude*, on paper and using cotton thread, captures that feeling beautifully.

Marie Mitchell uses mostly upcycled materials in her artworks, to reduce her carbon footprint and inspire others to do the same. Her series, *Disconnected Habitat*, expresses both a concern and a hopefulness for the future of our natural landscapes and habitats.

If the in-between space alludes to a gap, it also marks connection. For Alana Grant, who resides close to the coast, her family is at the heart of it all, and the beach is her family’s touchstone. *Staying close, Letting go* is Grant’s testament to the enduring strength of love. The two surfboards, distinct yet harmonious, symbolise a transition in a mother-daughter connection as one prepares to leave the nest. Holding, nourishing, letting go.

Wellard artist Philomena Hali spends extended periods every year on the road, living in a mobile caravan. It necessitates a studio set-up that is pared down to essentials - for Hali this means fabrics, needles, a dyeing pot, and threads. Her handstitched and dyed works constitute narrative records, akin to visual dairies, and *The Influence of Places* is Hali’s tangible trace of locations she called home along the way. For Chelsea Turner, home is also mobile, following her recent decision to part with almost everything she owned and live in a van. This change, which set in motion a deep sense of liberation, is reflected in *The Labyrinth* figurine. Turner uses copper wire to convey her stories and emotions; in *Bloodlines* the copper itself serves as a symbolic conduit, between herself and her son.

Textile-making techniques can demand patience, and an understanding that things cannot be rushed. The concept of time also flows through our work in other ways. Annette Nykiel’s *So caring* is a moving work, using familial textiles - a repurposed flannel sheet and shirts. At once a testament to the relationship with her life partner and a lament for the gradual loss of their shared life due to illness, Nykiel created the immersive work as time allowed. The act of stitching holds much-treasured memories, and a deepening sense of loss and yearning.

Tania Spencer’s *Lace Cloth* is also a reflection on the passage of time, and a metaphor for how we are linked with the next person, each stitch dependent on others for support, and collectively forming a strong fabric. The traditional lace doily pattern, knitted in steel wire motifs, captures local history and the strength of rural communities.

The title of the exhibition underscores that, as fibre artists, we are often faced with the question as to where we ‘sit’, between art and craft. Such is the fallacy of binaries that we might be asked to choose. However, textile and fibre-based practice is a vibrant creative field that defies categorisation; it has a history of its own.

*Sew + So :: the in-between space* offers more than the sum of its individual parts. In myriad forms, each artist offers a different perspective and response to the theme. Together, they nudge creative boundaries, gather momentum, moving like the air in a billowing sheet on the washing line of creative life, taking flight.

Martien van Zuilen  
Curator  
February 2024



## Kate Campbell-Pope

Albany

Worry beads have been used for millennia by various human communities and cultures. Also forming part of many faith traditions and practices, these objects are designed to occupy the hands, while cultivating the contemplative state of mind. This could be considered akin to various forms of ‘slow stitching’ textile construction or embellishment. Stitching focuses the attention, and allows the mind to wander and wonder, framed within this deeply settling activity.

Materials used for such beads may be chosen for their significance in relation to local availability, value and status. These materials, whether precious or ubiquitous, reflect the cultural milieu in which they are made and used.

The space between the beads signifies a momentary pause, barely perceptible, in which lies possibility; the moment of stillness between one action and the next.

Might awareness of these small still places, offer a chance to respond more thoughtfully to some of our most urgent problems?

Kate Campbell-Pope is a visual artist living in Albany, WA. Her practice encompasses gallery works, community arts, teaching, and mentoring. She has exhibited extensively in exhibitions locally, nationally, and internationally in Chile and Japan, and her works have been included in several national survey exhibitions.

Kate’s artwork is mostly sculptural in nature and is concerned with the relationships between materials and meaning. Kate’s work references the natural environment and our place within it, expressing the ephemerality of human life. Issues of waste and sustainability are central to her art practice, and this is reflected in the choice of materials and use of found and discarded objects.

Artworks are represented in several public collections such as AGWA, King Edward Memorial Hospital, City of Tamworth, and various private collections.



*Small Comforts for Anxious Times*, 2023  
Textile waste and found threads Six works, dimensions variable

Photo Credit: Bewley Shaylor

## Helen Coleman

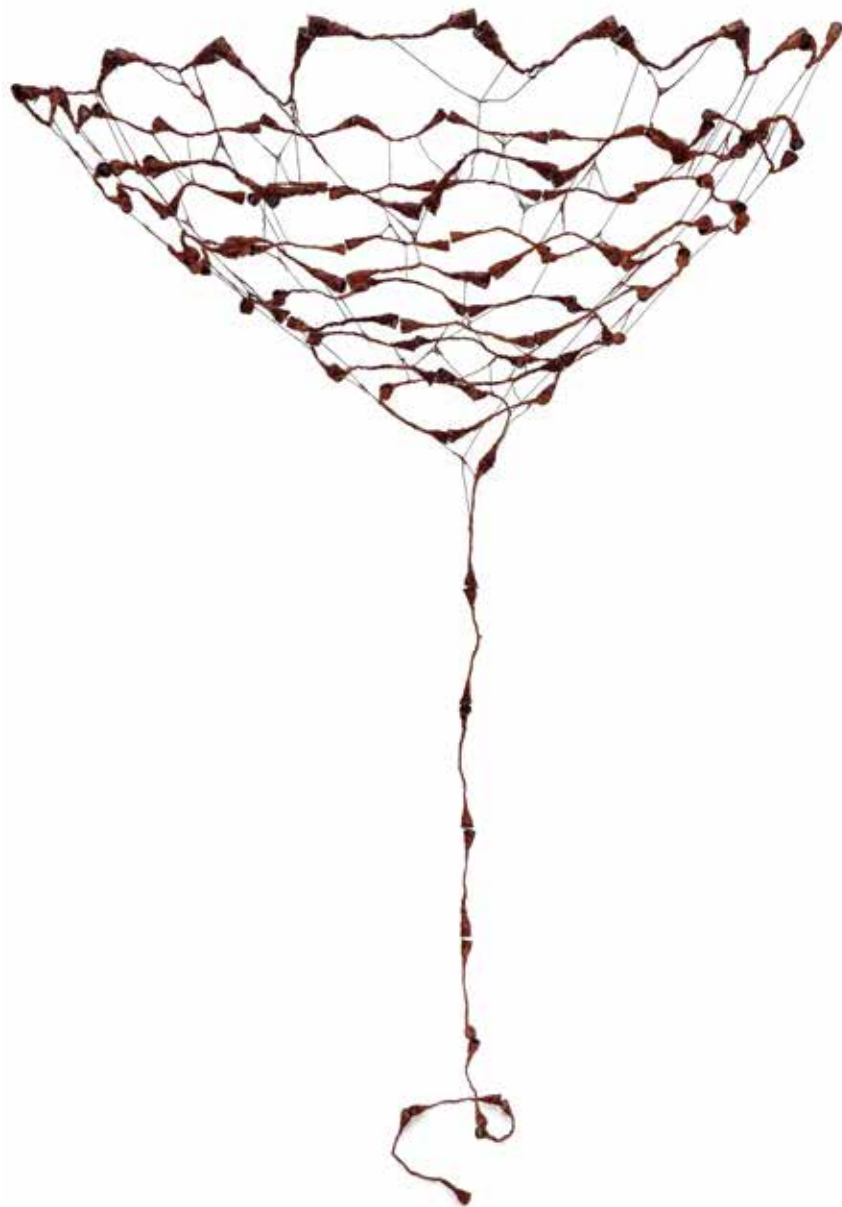
Falcon

Scientists tell us that the billions of cells in the brain share information by passing electrical impulses from one cell to another. This transfer of thoughts, memories and images happens at the synaptic gap, the microscopic but essential gatekeeper of this information flow. Much of this process is still a mystery but the subconscious mind is particularly good at analysing this stored data and generating new ideas.

*Synapse* pays homage to the unfathomable complexity of the human brain. Waking up each morning I receive a gift from my subconscious – perhaps a better way to do a task, a new hypothesis to test, or a reminder of something forgotten. Each new idea building on the past, incrementally expanding my knowledge and driving me forward.

Helen Coleman describes herself as a contemporary colour-woman, with an art practice devoted to process and experimentation. Tapping into a thirty-year career in botany and chemistry, Coleman explores the artistic potential of local plant and earth materials. By blending ancient and contemporary techniques, these diverse samples are transformed into unique dyes, pigments, inks and paints.

In 2022 Coleman moved her dye research from the studio to the laboratory, undertaking a PhD at Curtin University. She is now collaborating with local artists to explore the science and natural dye properties of Marri (*Corymbia calophylla*) gum. With growing public interest in sustainable fashion, Coleman believes there is a bright future for an Indigenous natural dye industry in southwest Western Australia.



*Synapse*, 2024  
Corymbia calophylla kino (Marri gum),  
cotton muslin and thread  
200 x 125 x 125 cm

Photo credit: Bewley Shaylor



Denise Fisher

Halls Head

Between what was, and what has not yet been manifested, is a space. Silent, empty, powerful. Nothing and everything.

To be human is to experience moments of darkness, lightness, and endless emotions in between. Transitioning through these moments, and arriving in the space, offers an invitation to explore all the choices available.

Stay a while, surrender. Here lives insight, intuition, spontaneity, and creativity. A time to reflect, assimilate, waiting, not knowing. A place of infinite possibilities and potential transformation.

Growing up in the bush, surrounded by wildness, colour, texture, and birdsong, taught Denise many lessons about resilience, patience, faith, regeneration, and a sense that all is and will be okay. She pays tribute to those lessons through her artwork where colour and texture play a fundamental part in expressing her thoughts, observations, and emotional responses to the world. Often seen stitching outdoors, Denise uses the process of slow, repetitive stitching to silence surrounding disturbances, opening the door for a more intimate relationship with her inner and outer worlds. Thread becomes her voice.



*Nothing + Everything, 2023*  
Silk fabric, thread, wood  
Dimensions variable - framed works 40 x 40cm,  
individual crosses 12 x 12cm

Photo credit: Bewley Shaylor





# Alana Grant

Halls Head

*Staying close, Letting go* symbolises ways in which Alana Grant honours precious time with her teenage daughter who, at the time of creating the works, was embarking on life at boarding school. Leaving home, returning on weekends and during term breaks. Signalling a time of transition in the mother-daughter connection.

Grant resides close to the coast; the beach is her family’s touchstone, a landscape where they find fun and connection as a family. The ebb and flow of the ocean’s tides, moving dunes, and breaking sets of waves are not dissimilar to the undulating emotions tied to separation. The two surfboards, distinct and yet harmonious, mark individual journeys whilst bridging the gap between the familiar coastal home and the new, rural setting.

There are numerous metaphors that can be linked to surfing. Here, Grant views it as being in the same ocean, surfing different waves yet also navigating parallel journeys; of fun, triumph, wipeouts, connection, and contemplation. The work is a testament to the enduring strength of love, nature’s role in emotional transitions, and the symbolic journey of two souls navigating the currents of life and the natural evolution of the relationship between mother and daughter as one begins the transition of moving on from the nest.

Alana Grant is a multidisciplinary artist currently placing emphasis on her fibre and wearable art creations, ceramic sculptures, and installations. Grant’s work reflects her values and everyday life, which often incorporates art made in collaboration with her children. Her work is made directly in nature and from nature. Sustainability, equality, and creating inclusive and safe environments is Grant’s focal point in life and work.

*Staying close, Letting go* (for Ruby), 2024  
Mixed media. Recycled surfboards, willow, cow hide, Marri dyed cord, iron and copper-based paint with oxidising patina  
178 x 48 cm (board 1), 195 x 48 cm (board 2)

Photo credit: Alana Grant





Philomena Hali

Wellard

*The Influence of Places* was created during an extended time of travel, exploring Australia’s natural environments, in 2023.

Vistas of forests, woodlands, treelines. Rivers that separate one state from another. Fence lines, the strung wires, mile after mile. The in-between concept appeared in numerous ways; running water between riverbanks, the gaps between the trees, the lines between the fenceposts, each delineating an area. Farmlands, forests and rivers, intertwined and connected by the voids that outline their forms.

I used scraps of cotton, linen, silk, Japanese hemp and ramie fabrics, which I hand dyed using dropped leafage and natural indigo. The techniques are varied - needle applique, bojagi, illustrative applique (inspired by Emily Jo Gibbs’ teachings), and embroidery.

*The Influence of Places I*, 2023  
Cotton, linen, and silk organza fabrics, leafage dyed, illustrative applique. 30 x 100cm

*The Influence of Places II*, 2023  
Japanese hemp, assorted silks, leaf and indigo dyed, embroidery, cotton organdy, needle applique, bojagi. 35 x 100cm

*The Influence of Places III*, 2023  
Japanese hemp, cotton, linen, silk organza dyed with leafage, embroidery + stitch, indigo resist dyed cotton. 35 x 100cm

Photo credit: Frank Hali

Philomena Hali is a WA based textile artist, who spends many months a year on the road, camping and exploring Australia. It is her lifestyle.

Hali works with minimal materials and sources colour, when necessary, from the bush. Fabrics are gathered and squirreled away, sourced mostly from op shops, some pre-dyed from home. Space is minimal, so only essential items are taken. She works in many remote places, often chasing deadlines and post offices for delivery of content. Phil stitches, uses embroidery and applique as well as bojagi and shibori to tell her stories of time and place. The works absorb the essence of place, climate, flora, and fauna of each location she spends time in. Serenity and solitude, coupled with a lack of digital interference provide the ultimate workings for creating. No pressure - simply creating for the love of it.





# Marie Mitchell

Bouvard

*Disconnected Habitat* is a series of work in which I explore the presence (and absence) of endangered remnant bushland in Australia. With much of this bushland under threat from increased habitat loss and industrial farming, I question the sustainability and ethics of human development of land surfaces, and its consequences for the natural habitat and its inhabitants. The works also embody a hopefulness, towards a future where societies value the intrinsic significance of remnant bushlands in the terrestrial environment and our natural landscapes.

As a symbolic representation of human consumption and its environmental impact, I employ upcycled fabrics, tea and coffee bags, cutting and tearing the fabric, creating holes and gaps in the landscape in ways that expose the underlying layers or the bareness behind them. Highlighting the significance and value of these in-between spaces then becomes a way to foster a biodiverse growth in thought.

**Opposite Page**  
*Fragile Skin 2*, 2021  
Tea and coffee bags, tulle, gauze, rust, sun-dyed fabrics, thread. 30 x 30cm

**This Page**  
*Reconnecting Country*, 2021  
Tea and coffee bags, tulle, gauze, rust, sun-dyed fabrics, thread. 30 x 30cm

*Regeneration 1*, 2021  
Tea bags, tulle, thread. 5 x 5cm

*Regeneration 2*, 2021  
Tea bags, tulle, thread. 5 x 5cm

Photo credit: David Mitchell

Marie Mitchell uses art as a tool for social change, aiming to inspire awareness, appreciation, and action for the natural world and ecosystem fragility. Her work reflects her deep social conscience and personal responsibility, as well as her joy in the local birdlife and conservation efforts, and the need to step lightly within the natural environment.

Mitchell creates visual stories and allegorical images using various mediums and techniques which include fibre art, printmaking, and audiovisual projection. Texture, movement, light, and the passage of time evident in her work delicately weaves a dialogue between ideas, materials, and process. On occasion, she embeds sketches or text, implying another level to the story that may not be obvious at first glance. Her work invites the viewer to look deeper and uncover the hidden meanings within.





Jan Mullen

North Fremantle

With the concept of Ma in mind, my response to this project was one of simplicity.

An ellipsis, graphically shown as a group of three dots, suggests a pause, an omission, or something left unsaid. Place a sequence of words within the dots and it has the capacity to concisely illustrate thoughts, scenarios, and action.

Working in a variety of fonts, fabrics, and sizes, I aimed to capture a quiet moment in thought grouped within each three dot/three word sequence. All fabrics used were off my shelves, sourced and collected over many years. They speak to me of other projects and my love of, and the general potential, of fabric.

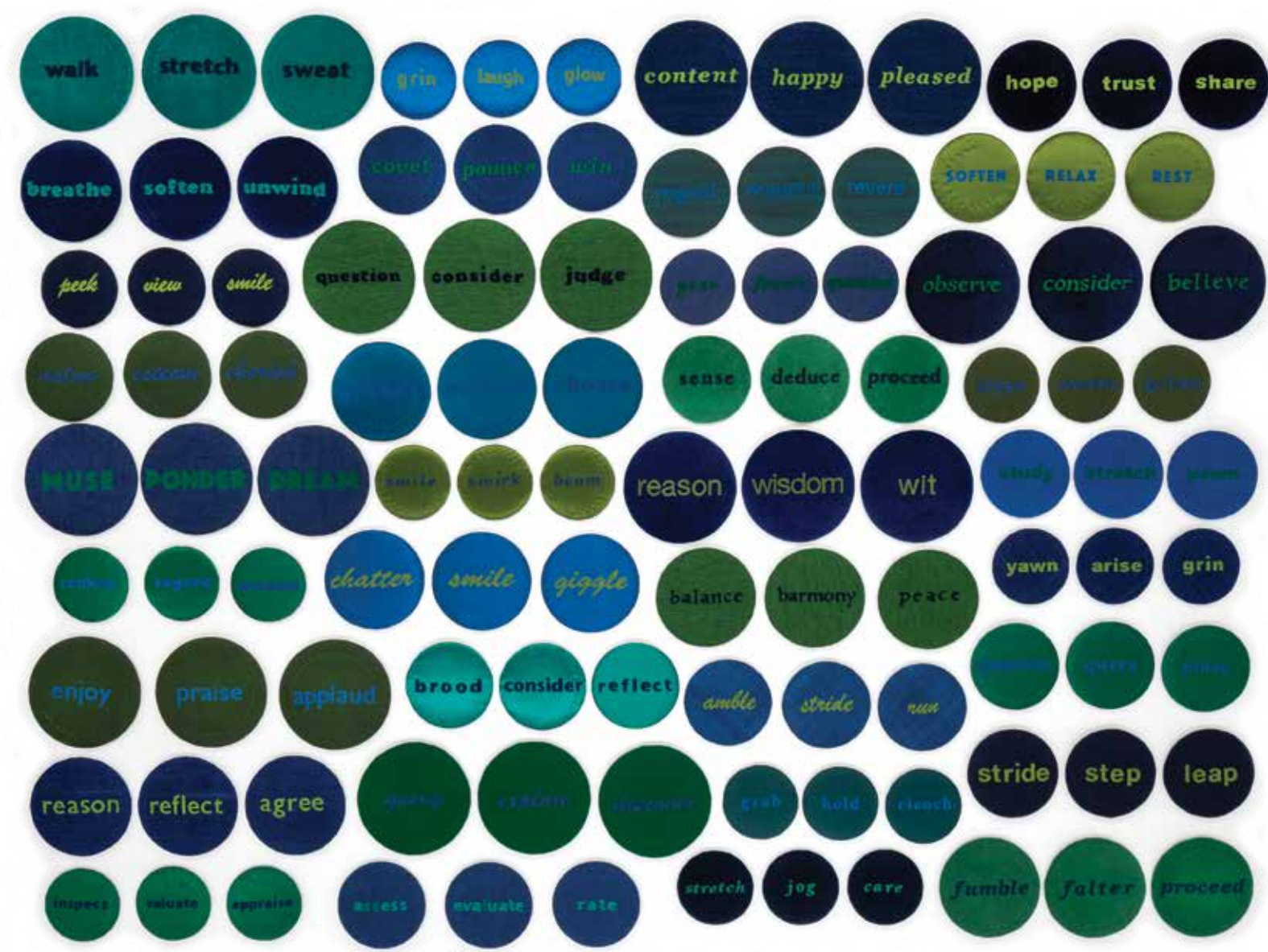
My work is idea and theme based. I draw from an array of diverse skills, techniques, materials and am invigorated by fresh challenges.

I majored in Sculpture, though my knowledge and love for textiles is intrinsic to who I am. Working with dimension using diverse materials, techniques, and ideas is always a welcome challenge.

I have had a varied and far-reaching art-based career - teaching, writing, designing, and making artwork over many years. I have worked with many groups and businesses worldwide - though my interests are now fundamentally local.



so...we...sew, 2023  
Blue and green fabrics, stranded cotton, fusible web, cotton batting, cardboard, plywood. Dimensions variable  
Photo credit: Bewley Shaylor





# Annette Nykiel

Kelmscott

Unpicked flannel shirts, worn thin and marked by time and body, hold stories, and remembered moments. On a folded double sheet, from a bed we no longer share, the spaces between the blue panels of my old shirts become the ground for scraps of plant-dyed cloth from other projects—a glimpse of colour.

These vibrant patches signify in-between moments. Moments of making that are possible among the responsibilities of being a carer in the spaces where I find time to stitch. Moments of joy and connection during the short walks in the bush we share on rare, good days—pocketing a colourful leaf, some gumnuts, or a sculptured twig.

Words, memories jumbled and disappearing. Frustration overwhelms. Amongst the rich textures of life, this journey cloth continues to give me succour when I am too tired and overcome to more than crawl under a jumble of covers.

Annette Nykiel is a slow-maker and fibre/textile artist with a keen interest in materiality. Her geoscientist background deeply influences her slow-making process, as she attentively observes, gathers, and explores the natural landscapes and surroundings. Nykiel contemplates the fragility of soils and the interconnectedness of ecological systems. and in response crafts her artworks using repurposed cloth, bush dyes, and hand-stitching techniques. Working across urban and regional areas, she shares her skills as an arts worker, workshop facilitator, art project manager, and occasional academic. Nykiel’s evolving practice encompasses solo and group exhibitions, residencies, and the artist collective Underfoot. Her work is held in public collections in Western Australia and Queensland.



*So caring*, 2023-4  
Repurposed flannel sheet and shirts (cotton),  
plant-dyed threads (cotton, wool), cloth (cotton), safety pins,  
bamboo pegs, machine and hand stitched. 130 x 145cm

Photo credit: Bewley Shaylor





Deidre Robb

Falcon

We mark special milestones in our lives with celebrations and these events are now routinely shared widely online.

If we are lucky, then in between these big moments our lives are peppered with wonderful private occurrences that are also worth celebrating.

This work is about the quietly magnificent aspects of ordinary life: meetings of kindred spirits; fascinating conversations with strangers; neighbours being neighbourly; friendship and companionship; fun and laughter; acts of care, kindness, and generosity; and everyday demonstrations of love.

In an increasingly turbulent and troubling world, finding joy in such things gives me strength and the resolve to live well.

Deidre Robb investigates meaningful stories, experiences and causes. These range from the deeply personal through to universal social issues, and the environmental issues impacting on the places we live.

Her interests in historical textiles, traditional handcrafts and sustainable living strongly inform her work. Most of her artworks are made from found or imperfect textiles.

Her work is almost exclusively stitched by hand, with machine stitching only used for structural purposes. This slow, considered, and reflective process is an important element in her work.



*The extraordinary ordinary*, 2024  
Textiles, aluminium, dimensions variable (3 works, each 1m x 20cm x 10cm)  
Photo credit: Bewley Shaylor



# Tania Spencer

Lake Grace

I consider my knitted wire structures as stitches in the fabric of emotional and physical relationships. A metaphor for how we are linked with the next person. Each stitch depends on the other for support, and collectively the stitches make a strong fabric. The interlinked lace areas and openings reflect the degrees of closeness or distance, and the types of relationships we have. It reflects the order of, and the inevitability of life.

In the making of *Lace Cloth*, I expanded the space between stitches, and explored the distance between a lace doily and my wire motifs.

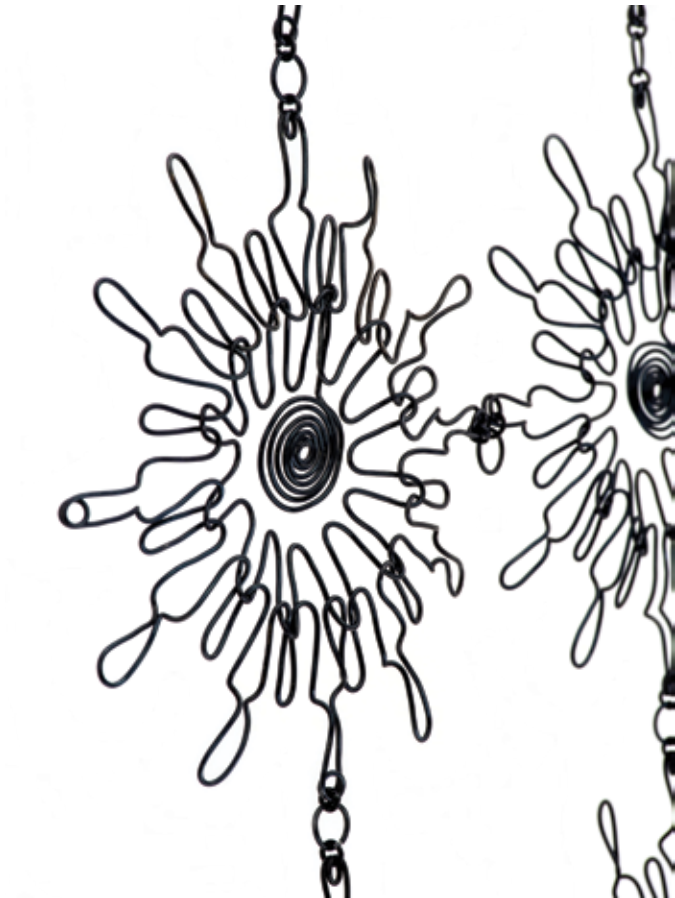
While making each motif I thought about creation time; the time we work while watching telly or in conversation with someone, or just work quietly in our own space. This work deliberates on the time we choose to make art and what that means.

As a child of the 70’s I was exposed to the CWA craft movement, learning to make things such as ribbon roses and macramé with this group of older women. I grew up with the patterns and textures they made for their families, friends and homes. These familial and community influences reflect strongly in the methods I use, and are evident throughout my work.

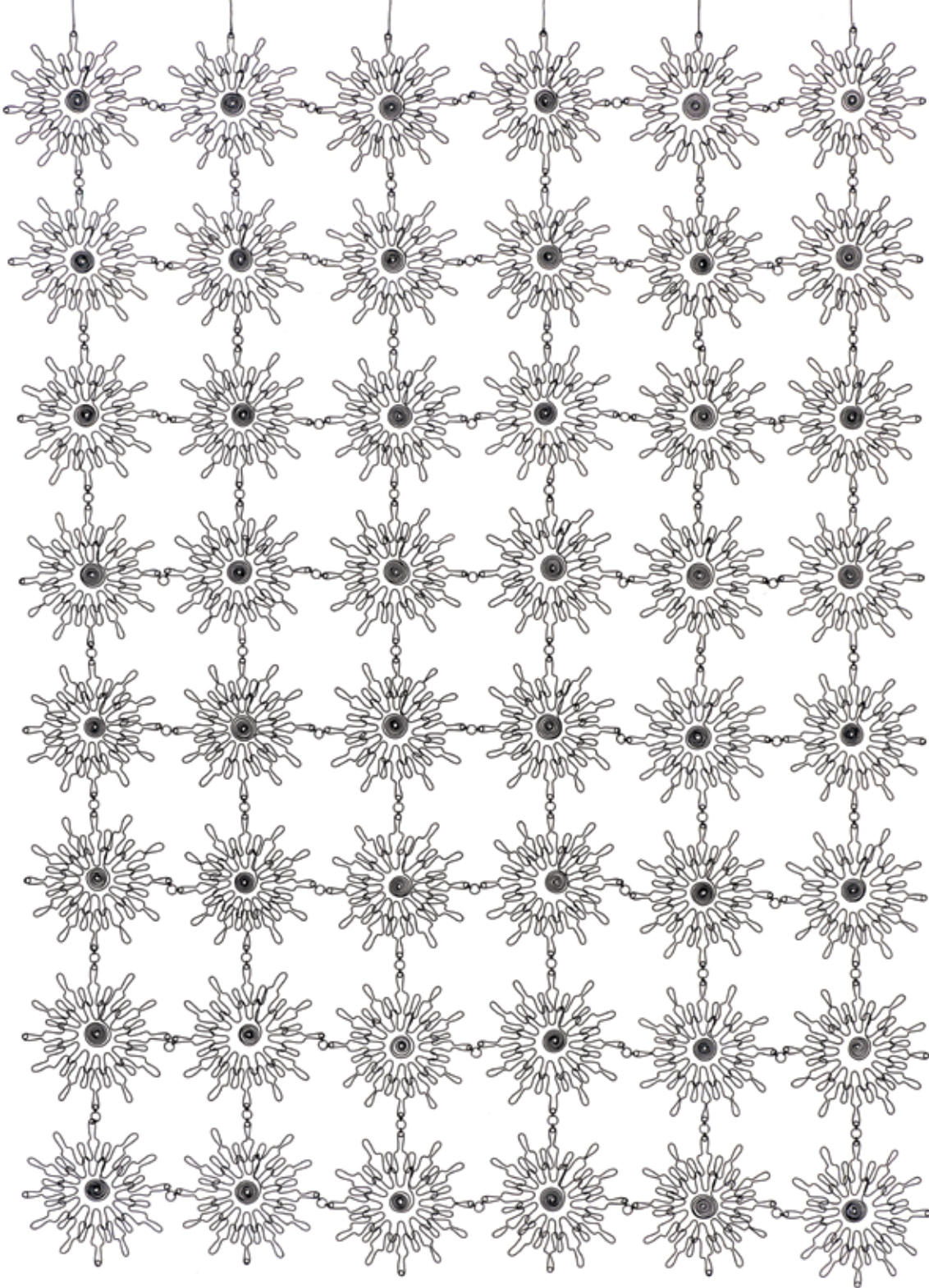
Growing up on a farm, my art process fuses my rural and domestic heritage. I combine the textile techniques of knit, crochet, embroidery or weaving with rural, industrial or recycled materials, often resulting in large scale knitted installations from fencing wire, sculptural objects and metal embroideries.

In creating a type of archival textile, my processes are purposely low tech. I hand bend each wire stitch, with tools found in the shed, usually consisting of bolt cutters, drills, welders, handmade jigs, pliers and a wire spinning ginny.

I choose to work in an area that questions the categorising of women’s art and reflects the importance of textiles, tradition and the hand made.



*Lace Cloth*, 2024  
Steel wire, 160 x 120 x 2cm  
Photo credit: Bewley Shaylor





# Chelsea Turner

Nannup

My art expresses my inner life. I grew up in cult like conditions which meant there was no room to grow my own thoughts, my own voice, or build my own life. My art is the vehicle I use to comprehend the impact on my mental health from loss of innocence, identity, dignity, childhood sexual assault, narcissistic parents, domestic violence, and suicide attempts. These intense and compelling topics are often the focus of my artworks which, importantly, also provide an insight to my recovery from the impact of these events.

Two main elements are important to my art practice. One is the process of physically constructing the artworks and the other is the communication of my stories and emotion. Both are vital to conveying my ideas effectively.

In *Bloodlines* I wanted to represent the space between dreams becoming reality and in *The Labyrinth*, the space between holding on and letting go.

*Bloodlines* depicts two womb-like bowls. The first is created using rigid shapes and traditional techniques, illustrating the pot of intense and compelling topics of my childhood. The dream of creating a different childhood, for my son, emerges as strands of wire which connect to the second bowl, creating a visual manifestation of my dream for him to have a childhood of joy and safety.

*The Labyrinth* represents my recent decision to part with everything I owned, to live on the road in a van full time. The challenge was to keep and hold on to items, especially those of huge sentimental value. In the process, I discovered that this difficult task set in motion a deep sense of liberation. The creatures of flight capture the emotion and space between attachment to physical things and the freedom of owning very little.



**This Page**  
*The Labyrinth* 2023  
Copper wire, 23 x 18 x 11cm

**Opposite Page**  
*Bloodlines*, 2023  
Copper wire, 12 x 38 x 17cm

Photo credit: Bewley Shaylor



## Martien van Zuilen

North Perth

Convergence - the point where two or more elements gather and establish a connection - formed the spark from which *Entwined* and *Holding, Slipping* emerged. I wanted to emphasise both the intrinsic worth of discrete elements, their communality when joined, and that (our) actions play a role in shaping a shared world.

Hand-felted links are seamlessly joined to form *Entwined*. Distinctive markings on each link distinguishes it from others. The chain is strong, yet each link is characteristically its own and can change direction.

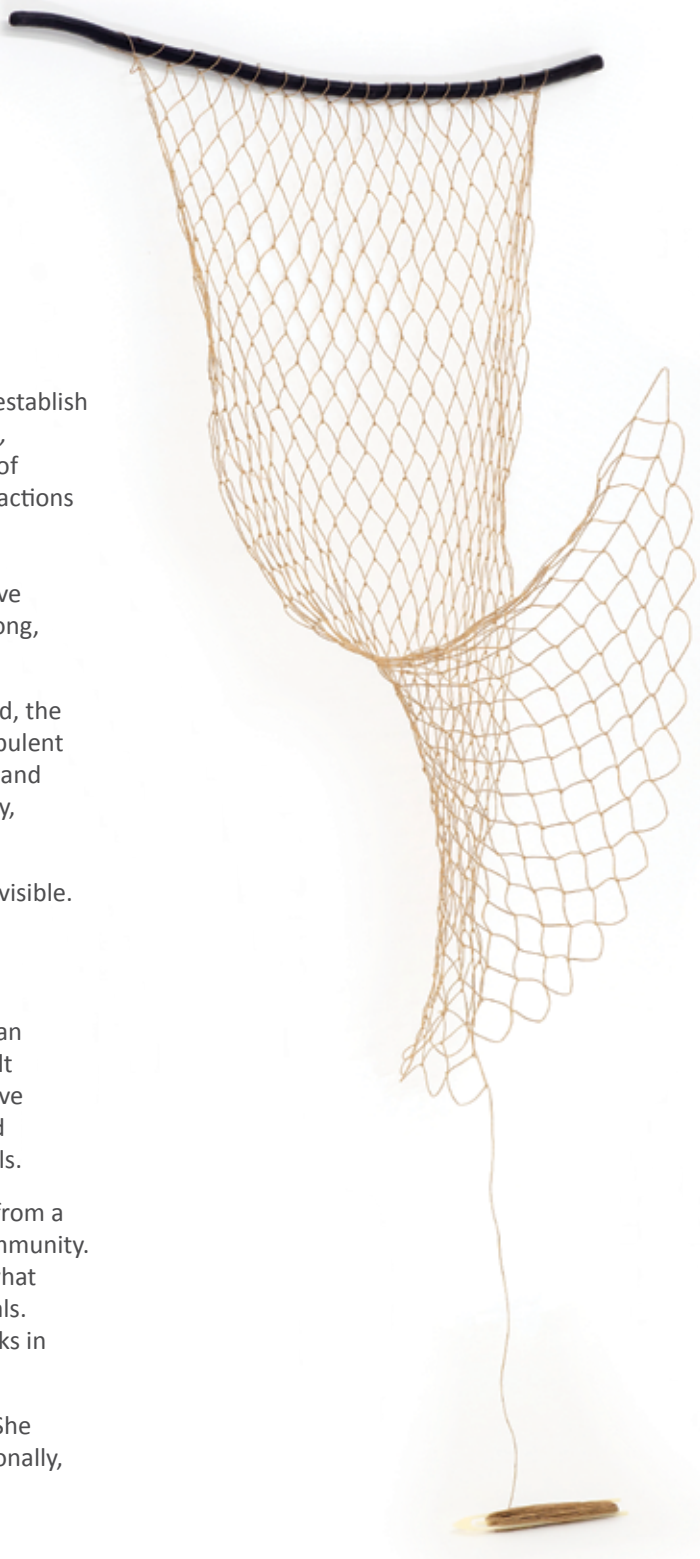
*Holding, Slipping* represents a symbolic safety net. On the one hand, the hand-knotted structure forms a supportive web, catching us in turbulent times, cushioning the impact, keeping us safe, with human dignity and care. Yet the net also emanates a fragility, a precarious vulnerability, at risk of being dismantled, and room to slip through the gaps.

It struck me that so often our attention might be drawn to what is visible. It is in the spaces in-between where my gaze also resides.

With a creative practice spanning close to four decades, Martien van Zuilen is an established fibre artist specialising in the handmade felt medium; transforming loose woollen fibres into distinctive, narrative works of art. She often incorporates other artmaking elements and techniques, such as basketry, mixed media, and a range of materials.

Foremost in Martien’s practice is the creation of works that come from a connection to, and experience of, place and the significance of community. Honouring traditional techniques and using minimal equipment, what matters is an intentional engagement with the potential of materials. Process is everything, resulting in interpretative and reflective works in visual and material form.

Martien’s artwork has been shown nationally and internationally. She delivers felt-making workshops throughout Australia and internationally, and her work is included in numerous publications.



**This Page**  
*Entwined*, 2024  
Merino wool and silk fibres,  
threads (wool and cotton)  
Dimensions variable

**Opposite Page**  
*Holding, Slipping* 2024  
Waxed linen, windfall branch,  
beeswax, netting needle  
(all materials gifted by friends, and nature)  
Dimensions variable

Photo credit: Bewley Shaylor





Susie Vickery

South Fremantle

Sometimes that in-between space can only divide us. We all just need to go for a swim, smile at our neighbour and get sewing.

Susie Vickery worked for many years as a theatrical costumier. After moving to South Asia, she studied embroidery and worked with women’s handicraft and art projects. Her community engagement and development work form the inspiration for her story-telling with embroidered animations, puppets, automata and textile pieces.



*Yes + No (So + So)*  
*Yes*, 2020 Embroidery, appliqué, 40 x 70 x 2cm  
*No (So + So)*, 2024 Embroidery, appliqué, 40 x 30cm  
Photo credit: Susie Vickery

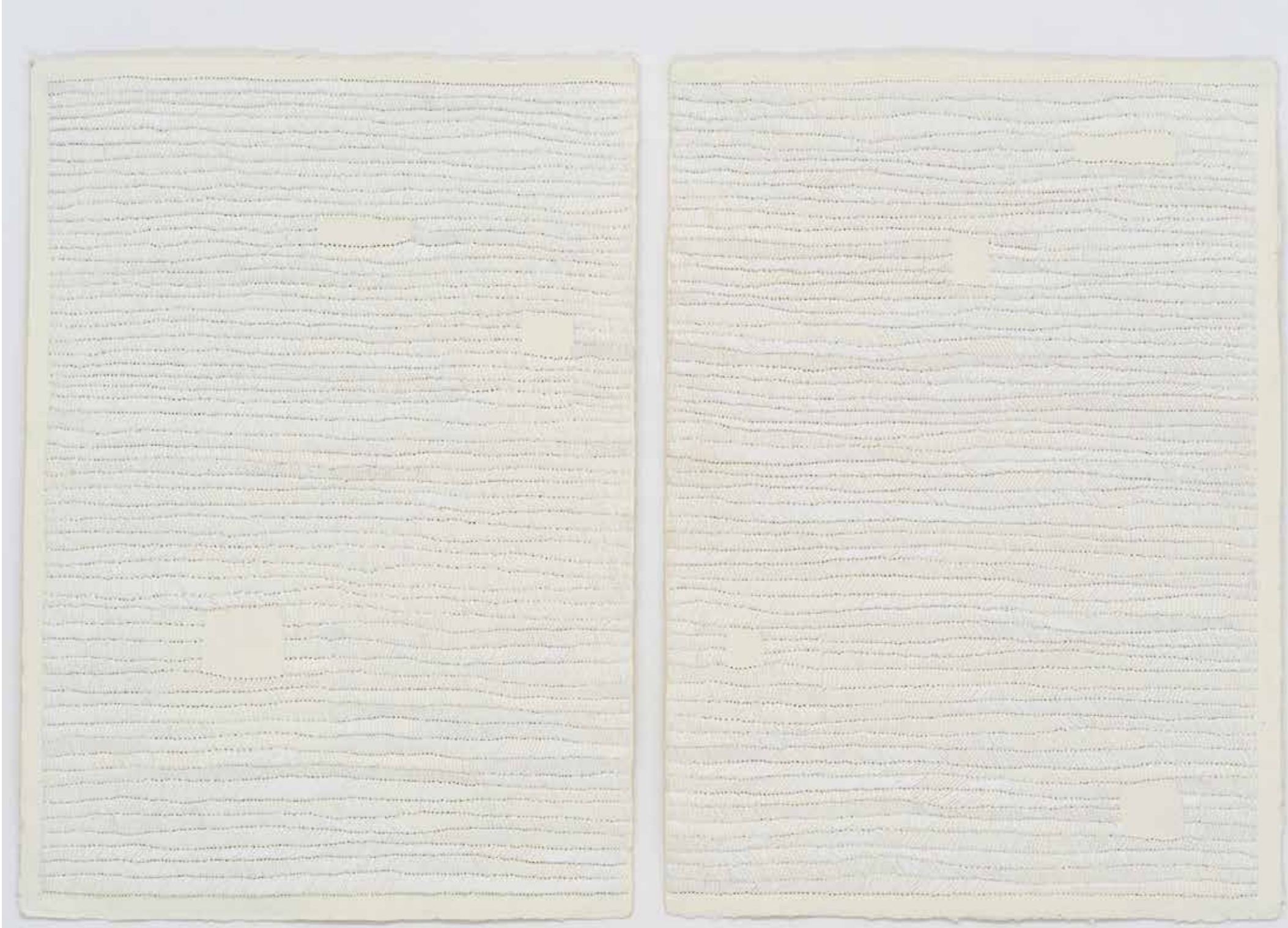


Jo Wassell

Albany

I am inspired by my immediate environment: people, places, memories and stories. My move to Kinjarling, Albany, in 2017, was pivotal to the development of my practice, and many works have been borne from my growing connection to the Great Southern region of Western Australia. I am currently working towards a solo exhibition in 2024, which will comprise of drawings and textile works.

I had a strong ‘felt’ response to the theme of this exhibition. It took me to those small moments of stillness that I value so highly; the brief window in a busy day when we take pause, and be. I chose to create a work that captures that feeling and, in turn, found quietude through the process of making.



*Quietude*, 2023  
Thread on khadi paper  
Diptych, each sheet 42 x 30cm

Photo credit: Bewley Shaylor



# Louise Wells

Inglewood

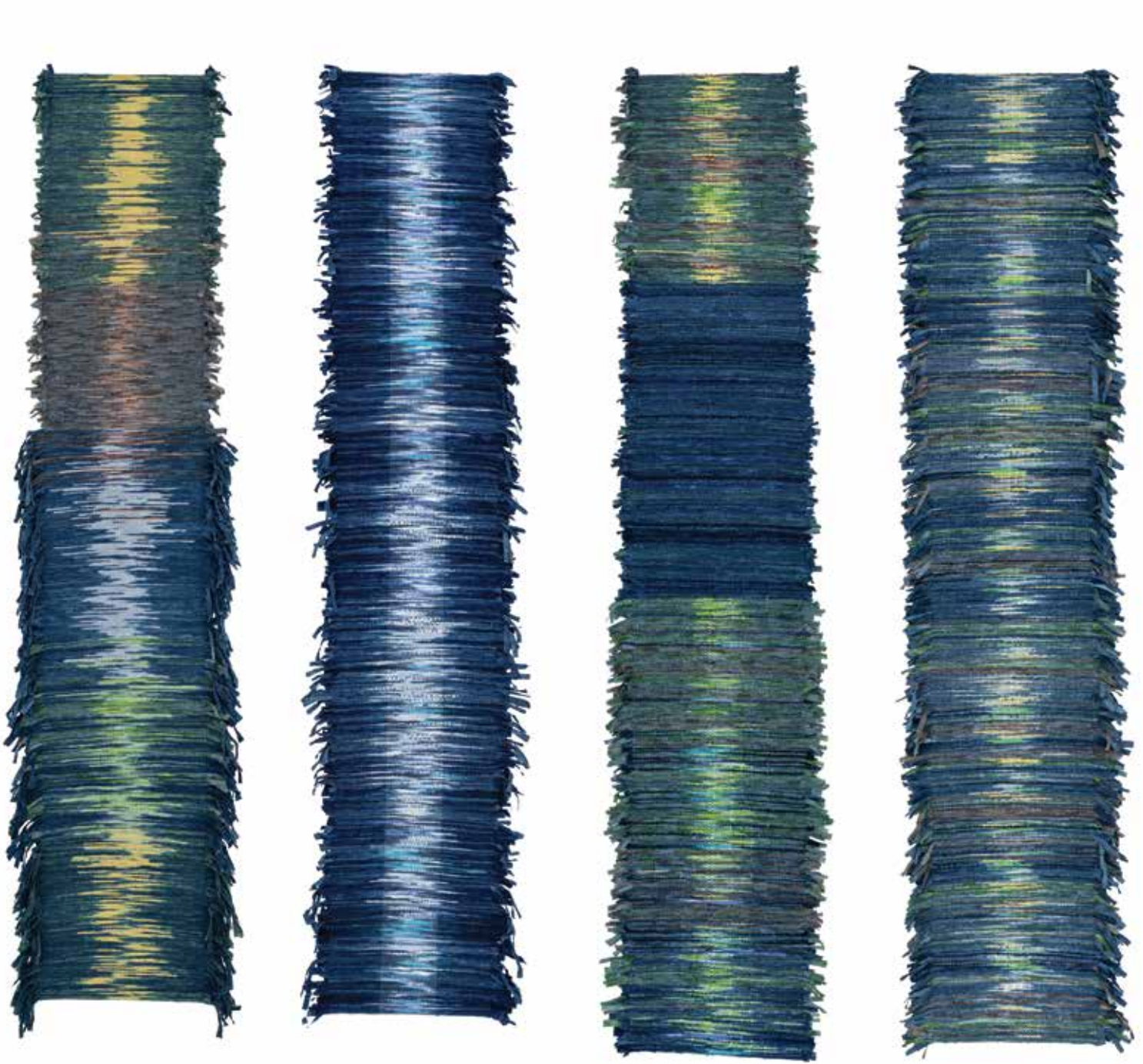
Four years ago, I started a brisk daily walk, purely for exercise. As I walked the same path day after day, I began to notice subtle changes in the landscape, the days became shorter, darker and cooler, leaves changed colour and began to fall. After months of cold and wet walks, it was a delight to see the first signs of spring as new shoots appeared.

I soon realised this walk, this movement, was essential for the longevity of my arts practice. I sit so much of the day in the studio, and walking relieves my back and shoulders for the day ahead.

What I had not anticipated was the value of time and space away from the house, family, and endless to do lists. On the walk, my mind wanders, I sort out plans for the day, ideas start to fall into place ... and sometimes I just dream.

Louise Wells is based in Inglewood, WA. Looking at the lost beauty in the ordinary is a major theme she explores, which has led to a focus on working with recycled materials, mostly textiles. Her work is inspired by domestic life, family stories, local history, and the environmental impacts of textile production.

Louise has exhibited in numerous group and jury selected exhibitions. She is a finalist in Bunbury Biennale 2023, International Fibre Art Australia 2023, Australia Wide 8 2022, twentyFIVE+ 2022, York Botanic Art Prize 2021, Collie Art Prize (CAP) and Australian Textile Award 2020, Cultura Diffusa, Como Italy and Fiber Arts IX, California USA 2019. She is a five times finalist in Wearable Art Mandurah, winning the Avant Garde category in 2017. Recent solo exhibitions include Of Our Time - Ordinary Lives 2018, Suburban Secrets 2021. Louise is Co-Coordinator of Quilt and Textile Study Group.



*A Space of One's Own, 2023*  
Recycled bed sheets and vintage crochet cotton, Indigo dyed and hand woven  
Dimensions variable; four panels measuring 235-250 x 52-67 x 0.5cm

Photo credit: Bewley Shaylor





*So caring* (detail), 2023-4 | Annette Nykiel  
Repurposed flannel sheet and shirts (cotton), plant-dyed threads (cotton, wool),  
cloth (cotton), safety pins, bamboo pegs, machine and hand stitched. 130 x 145cm

Photo credit Bewley Shaylor



CONTEMPORARY ART SPACES MANDURAH (CASM)

CASM acknowledges the Bindjareb Noongar people as the traditional custodians of the land on which CASM is situated and operates. CASM pays respect to Noongar elders past, present and future and recognises their continuing culture and contribution they make to the life of this city and region.

CASM is centrally located within the Mandurah CBD, nestled on the picturesque Mandurah estuary. It sits adjacent to the CASM Workshop Space and the City of Mandurah administration building at 63 Ormsby Terrace.

CASM supports a dynamic annual exhibition program, alongside exhibition development and partnerships with artists, arts organisations, and communities by providing low-cost rental spaces, a diverse workshop program, studio residencies, and information services for artists.

CASM provides a platform to assist recent graduates and emerging artists navigate early exhibition experiences. It also supports established artists presenting a body of work that is new and experimental in relation to their normal practice.

Stay up to date by subscribing to the monthly Creative Mandurah newsletter via the CASM website and follow us on Facebook!

**GALLERY OPEN HOURS:** Wednesday to Sunday, 10am – 4pm during exhibition dates  
**Phone:** 08 9550 3662 | 08 9550 3989 (9am - 4pm Wed – Fri)  
**Email:** [casm@mandurah.wa.gov.au](mailto:casm@mandurah.wa.gov.au)



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# Contemporary Art Spaces Mandurah

63 Ormsby Terrace, Mandurah Western Australia 6210

