

# RONA18 Catalogue

2018 Rights of Nature Australia Arts Biennial



australian earth laws alliance

The Australian Earth Laws Alliance (AELA) acknowledges that the sovereignty of the First Nations Peoples of the continent now known as Australia was never ceded by treaty nor in any other way.

AELA acknowledges and respects First Nations Peoples' laws and ecologically sustainable custodianship of Australia over tens of thousands of years through land and sea management practices that continue today.

Produced by the Australian Earth Laws Alliance Ltd.

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All photos and images by and from the artists and AELA

Cover Image: *Stygofauna Nests* / Helen Hardess and Jude Roberts, installed at the Spring Hill Reservoirs, Spring Hill, Brisbane





**RONA18** – “Rights of Nature Australia 2018” – was the second biennial arts celebration hosted by the **Australian Earth Laws Alliance** (AELA), to explore and celebrate the Rights of Nature.

RONA18 was designed to promote cultural engagement with the emerging, global, Rights of Nature movement, and to celebrate the **Australian Peoples’ Tribunal for Community and Nature’s Rights**, which was held on Saturday 27th October 2018, in Brisbane.

The National Exhibition ran from October 23-28 at the Spring Hill Reservoirs, Spring Hill, Brisbane. The participating artists engaged in the creative re-interpretation of environmental governance with cultural responses to the rights of the natural world to exist, thrive and evolve.

Local events and activities took place in Sydney, Lismore, the Sunshine Coast and Cairns during October 2018.

### **Connect with AELA’s Earth Arts Programs**

AELA’s Earth Arts [eartharts.org.au](http://eartharts.org.au)

The Australian Earth Laws Alliance [earthlaws.org.au](http://earthlaws.org.au)

The Australian Peoples’ Tribunal for Community and Nature’s Rights  
[tribunal.org.au](http://tribunal.org.au)

Background image: Anastasia Tyurina’s water microphotography, projected through *Netted Land*, by Jill Sampson

# RONA Themes

RONA events, artworks and responses were invited to reflect on the following inter-connected themes, and to explore the full spectrum of thematic nuance- from meta to micro.

**Reveal, reflect and critique the current flawed paradigm of Western law, which:**

Privileges humans over other forms of life

Has created governance systems that do not reflect how the natural world works

Is built on the idea that humans 'own' nature – nature is property, objectified, commodified (bought and sold), caged, fenced, destroyed

Gives 'rights' to humans and human created fictions such as corporations and ships, while plants, animals, ecosystems have no rights, and are often invisible in the eyes of the law

Privileges western legal, scientific, evidentiary and text-based frameworks of knowledge

Legalises the destruction of vital ecosystems and life support systems

**Imagine and create the paradigm we are proposing – Earth laws and rights of nature:**

Humans are one part of nature – interconnected, interdependent with the Earth Community

Human governance systems respect bio-regional health and live within ecological limits

Non-human agency is vital, the non-human world belongs to no-one; vibrant biodiversity is critical to life on earth

All life and life supporting systems on Earth have "a right to exist, thrive and evolve."

Respects indigenous knowledge, human 'lived' experience, emotional and spiritual connections

Holds all life sacred and balances reasonable human needs with the rights of the natural world to exist and evolve; would never prize human wants over ecosystem destruction

# Rights of Nature Australia 2018

In October 2018, the Australian Earth Laws Alliance (AELA) is hosting Rights of Nature Australia 2018 (RONA18), a series of connected events that explore and promote the rights of nature to exist, thrive and evolve.

For details about the week of events in Brisbane, and connected Regional Arts Events, visit:

[www.earthlaws.org.au/rona18](http://www.earthlaws.org.au/rona18)

## RONA18 PROGRAM OF EVENTS

23 - 28 October 2018, Brisbane  
[www.earthlaws.org.au/rona18](http://www.earthlaws.org.au/rona18)

Free Public Lecture:  
When Rivers and Forests Have Legal Rights  
// Museum of Brisbane

Tue  
**23**  
October

Community Earth Rights Workshop:  
// Griffith Ecocentre, Griffith University,  
Nathan Campus, Brisbane

Evening event:  
Australian Launch of ELGA,  
the International Ecological Law  
and Governance Association  
// Spring Hill Reservoir, Brisbane

Wed  
**24**  
October

2 Day International Symposium:  
"Exploring our legal relationship  
with the living world: Caring for Country,  
Rights of Nature and Legal Personhood for Nature"  
// Griffith Ecocentre, Griffith University,  
Nathan Campus, Brisbane

Thurs & Fri  
**25**  
&  
**26**  
October

Australian Peoples' Tribunal  
for Community and Nature's Rights  
// Banco Court, Q&E Courts of Law  
415 George Street, Brisbane

Sat  
**27**  
October

RONA18 National Arts Exhibition  
// Spring Hill Reservoir, Brisbane

Tue to Sun  
**23**  
to  
**28**  
October

For RONA18 event times and bookings, see:

[www.earthlaws.org.au/rona18](http://www.earthlaws.org.au/rona18)  
[convenor@earthlaws.org.au](mailto:convenor@earthlaws.org.au)



australian earth laws alliance

AELA's **RONA18 Poster**,  
outlining the week of  
Rights of Nature events  
that ran concurrently  
with the RONA18  
National Exhibition..

Poster design by James K. Lee

# RONA18 National Exhibition participating artists

Jenny Brown [2018 Earth Arts Curator]

Teila Watson

Dale Collier

Marian Drew

Libby Harward

Anastasia Tyurina

Fiona Hall

Helen Hardess & Jude Roberts

Caresse Cranwell & Di James

Suzanne Bartos

Jill Sampson

Margaret Worthington

Renata Buziak

Jay Carcary

Kay Lawrence

Merete Megarrity

Aviva Reed

Joseph Burgess

AELA's 2018 Earth Arts Curator, Dr Jenny Brown, worked with **AELA's Earth Arts Collective, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Liquid Architecture** and **people+artist+place** to bring together visual and performance artworks for the program.

AELA extends its gratitude to all participants, contributors and supporters who made RONA18 such a success.

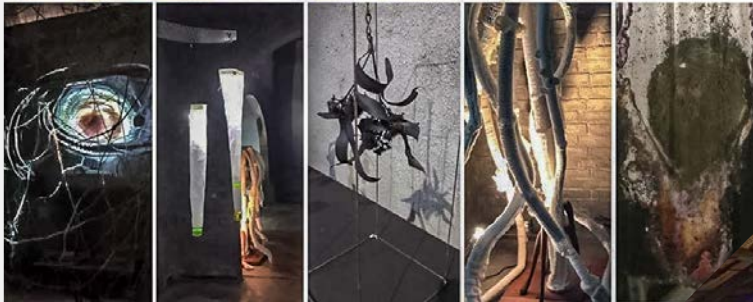
# RONA18 National Exhibition

## 23 – 28 October, 2018

The RONA18 National Exhibition was hosted at the Spring Hill Reservoirs in Brisbane, from October 23 – 28, in the lead up to the Australian Peoples' Tribunal for Community and Nature's Rights. The Exhibition connected with the themes of the 2018 Peoples' Tribunal, which examined the impact of industrialised food systems on the natural world.

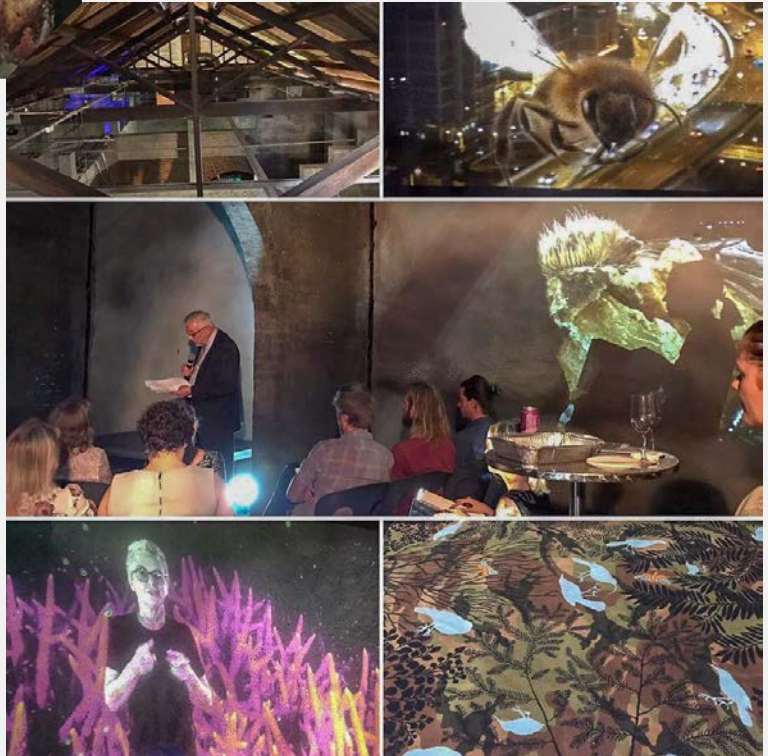
The National Exhibition featured works from artists investigating themes of agency, in relation to existing and future food production and distribution systems. These works revealed, reflected and critiqued the current flaws in the Western legal system that are disabling us from making purposeful choices and taking action to support the transition to earth-centred governance.

For more information about the Australian Peoples' Tribunal for Community and Nature's Rights, visit: [tribunal.org.au](http://tribunal.org.au)



**LEFT**- Top: Exterior of the Spring Hill Reservoirs and historic Tower Mill. Bottom row [L to R]: Artworks by Anastasia Tyurina, Jill Sampson, Helen Hardess & Jude Roberts, Merete Megarrity, Kay Lawrence, and Renata Buziak. Photos by Renata Buziak.

**RIGHT**- Top left: Interior of the Spring Hill Reservoir, Brisbane. Top right: *Hive*, by Marian Drew. Centre: The Hon. Justice Brian Preston, Chief Judge of the NSW Land and Environment Court, speaking at the launch of ELGA (Ecological Law and Governance Association) during an evening event at the Spring Hill Reservoir. Bottom left: *Bleach*, by Caresse Cranwell and Di James. Bottom right: *Clearing* by Fiona Hall. Photos by Renata Buziak.





Background: *20 x 100 = 2000 prayers for the earth*, oil drum 'prayer wheels' by Suzanne Bartos. Middleground: an audience member looks on during one of the RONA18 events held in the reservoir. Foreground: *Netted Land*, Jill Sampson

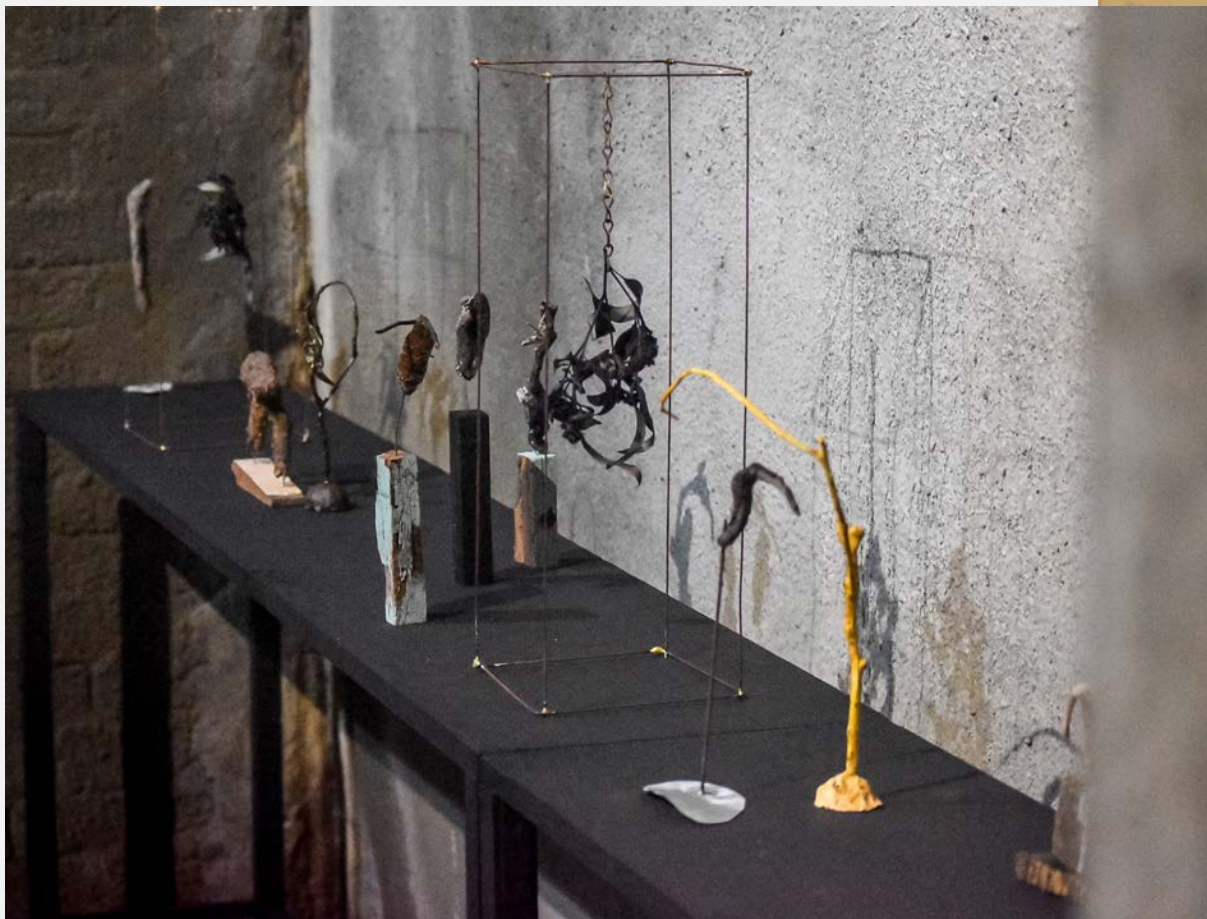


Above: *Clearing*, Fiona Hall



Left: performances in the reservoir during the RONA18 week. Below: Performance work displayed as a video projection, by Joseph Burgess





Above: *Offering 2018*, by Merete Megarrity

# Australian Peoples' Tribunal for Community and Nature's Rights

RONA18 was held in conjunction with AELA's Rights of Nature Conference, and the Australian Peoples' Tribunal for Community and Nature's Rights (Tribunal).

The Tribunal is a unique forum for ecological and social justice in Australia. Created in 2016, it is a permanent civil society institution that aims to enable people to share their concerns about the destruction of the environment, articulate their vision for ecological justice and law reform, and work collectively to develop their ideas for building a socially just, Earth centred society.

**The Tribunal aims to respond to situations where the current Australian legal system is perceived as failing to support community and nature's rights.**

The Tribunal holds Public Inquiries and hears Ecological Justice Cases, brought on behalf of flora, fauna, ecosystems, bioregions and local communities around Australia.

Below: Nunukul Yuggera Aboriginal Dancers open the 2018 Special Hearing of the Australian Peoples' Tribunal for Community and Nature's Rights.



In 2018, the Tribunal conducted a **Citizens' Inquiry into the Impacts of Industrial Scale Agriculture on Community and Nature's Rights**.

Agriculture is the largest single cause of deforestation, vegetation clearing and biodiversity loss around the world. In Australia, land clearing for grazing has led to significant ecological impacts and large scale irrigation for crops has had a devastating impact on many of our water systems – rivers, streams and groundwater. Two bioregions were identified as being critical exemplars for this Inquiry: the Brigalow Belt Bioregion (Queensland and NSW) and the Darling River, including the Menindee Lakes.

The primary focus of the Tribunal was to hear about impacts, solutions and positive ways forward, that restore biodiversity, soil and water systems, embrace compassionate farming practices and support Indigenous knowledge systems and ongoing cultural practices. The 2018 Citizens' Inquiry is non-adversarial and is solutions focused.

Full details, including written judgments, can be found on the Tribunal website: [www.tribunal.org.au](http://www.tribunal.org.au)

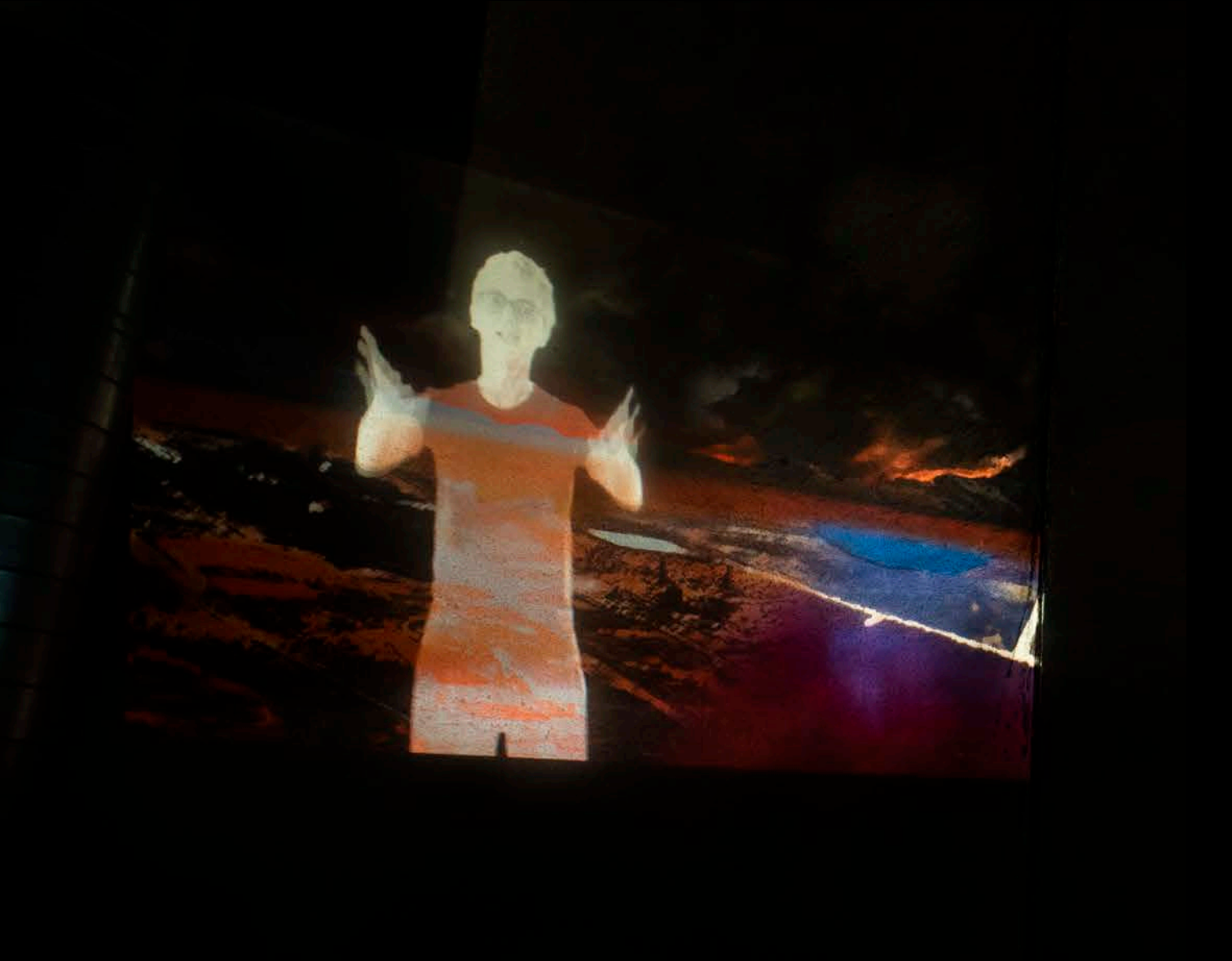


## AUSTRALIAN PEOPLES' TRIBUNAL

for Community and Nature's Rights

27 OCTOBER 2018  
Banco Court, Brisbane  
[www.tribunal.org.au](http://www.tribunal.org.au)





Video works projected onto the textured, grey, inner walls of the Spring Hill Reservoirs.  
Above: *Bleach*, Di James (video artist) and Caresse Cranwell (Spoken word poetry & performance)



Above: *Pseudophryne Cementia*, Dale Collier



Left: *Murphys Creek Gully*, textile work by Renata Buziak. Above (Top): *Hive*, video work by Marian Drew. Above (Centre): Excerpt of the textile storyboard work by RONA18 Curator, Jenny Brown. Above (Bottom): *Vanishing Food Bowls*, Jill Sampson



Above: a page from *eon*, an illustrated book by Aviva Reed



# RONA18 Regional Responses

A vital part of RONA18 – and all of AELA's biennial arts events - are the exciting regional events held in towns and communities around Australia.

In every biennial, artists and creatives, arts centres, community groups, and interested members of the community are invited to host art exhibitions, plays, storytelling sessions, performances, and other creative events to celebrate the Rights of Nature.

The RONA18 Regional Events included activities in the Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast, Sydney and Northern Queensland. Our heartfelt thanks goes out to the organisers and creators of these diverse events, including:

Liz Barker, Louisa Miranda, and Thomas Dick  
Karen Benjamin  
Jorge Cantellano  
Susan Courley  
Julia Peddie  
Margaret Worthington  
Gemma Wright  
Fabian Flite

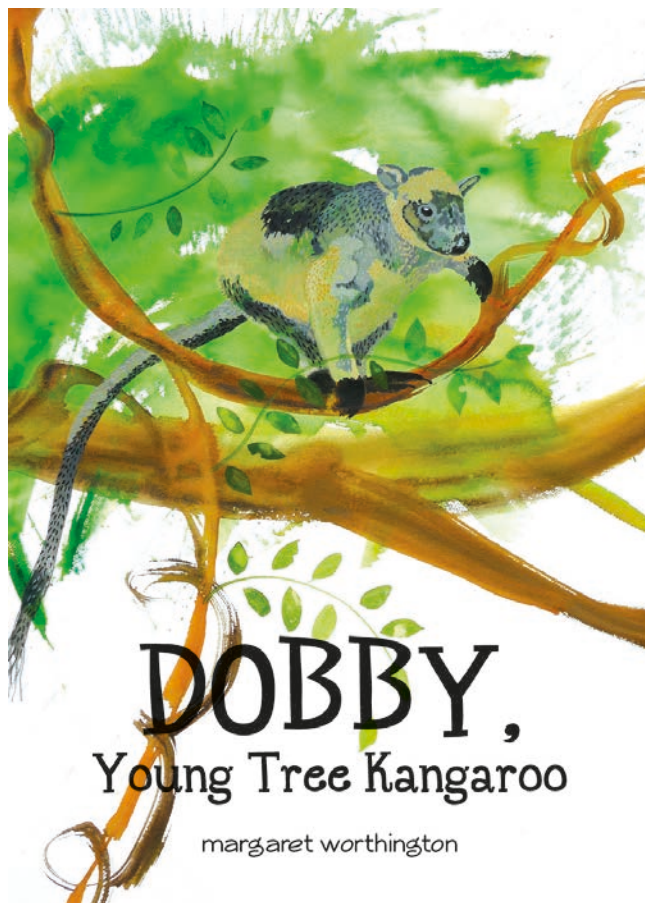


Left (this page): *Continuum Effectum*  
by Gemma Wright,  
photo by Raoul Slater.  
Facing page: *A magpie ginger stalks*,  
by Julia Peddie

RONA18

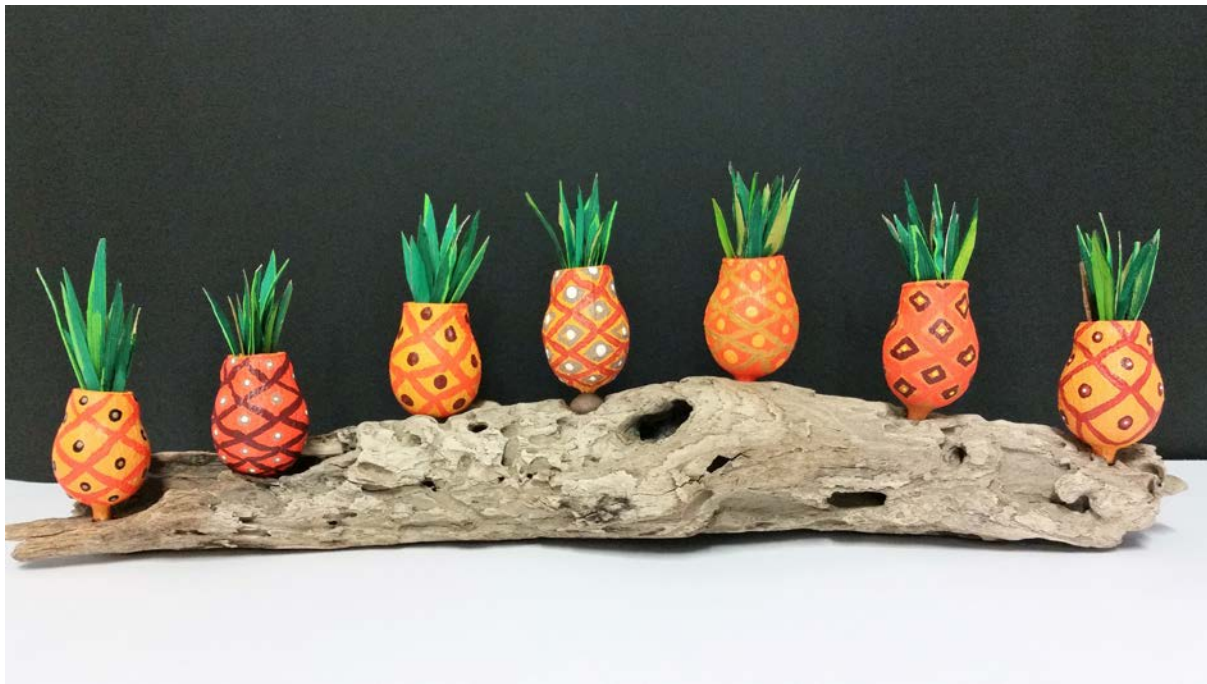
## Regional Responses

Below: *She the River*, a curatorial collaboration by Liz Barker, Louisa Miranda, and Thomas Dick. Exhibited in Lismore, NSW.



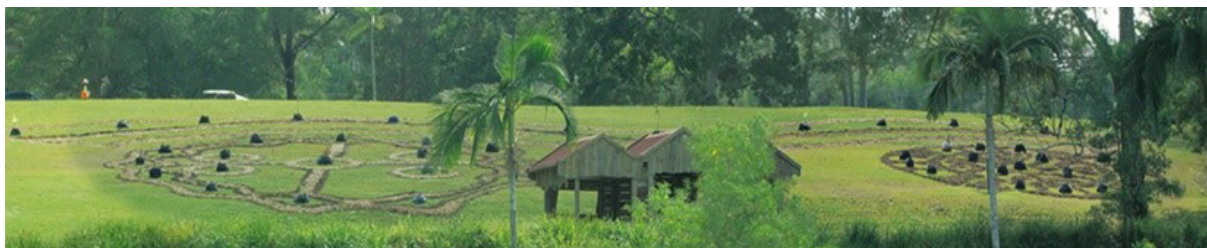
Above: *Dobby, Young Tree Kangaroo*, children's picture book by Margaret Worthington, exhibited in Cairns, QLD.





Above: *Plant Matters*, Karen Benjamin.

Below: *Ediblescapes*, land art by Jorge Cantellano,  
Gold Coast, QLD.





Left: RONA18 Response Poster from inner Sydney event, 'RONA Renegade at the Park'

## Earth Arts Events

Amazing local responses organised in conjunction with the 2018 Australian Peoples' Tribunal for Community and Nature's Rights, were held in Sydney and the Sunshine Coast on October 27th, 2018.

Left: RONA18 Response Poster from inner Sydney event, 'RONA Renegade at the Park'



The Australian Earth Laws Alliance (AELA) is hosting Rights of Nature Australia 2018 (RONA18), a series of connected events that explore and promote the rights of nature to exist, thrive and evolve. RONA18 involves a Peoples Tribunal and arts events around Australia, during October.

Sunshine Coast artists have responded with an **Earth Arts Festival**, bringing together the Arts and Sustainable Living. Join us for a drug & alcohol free, family fun day, at the **Nambour Community Centre**.

**Tiny Houses and Sustainable Living talks and stalls**

**AELA Rights of Nature Australia: People's Tribunal Live-stream**

*An inquiry into the Impacts of Industrial Scale Agriculture on the Rights of Nature*

**Sunshine Coast Artists' response: Live Music & Visual Arts**

**Vegan food, Adults & Kids arts activities, workshops & more**

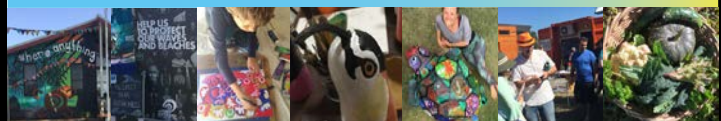
**\$10**  
online donation\*  
www.polkadot.  
eventzilla.net

**Saturday, 27th October, 9am-5pm**

**NAMBOUR COMMUNITY CENTRE**

**2 Shearer Street Nambour**

FB @aelasunshinecoast. For People's Tribunal visit [www.earthlaws.org.au/events/tribunal2018](http://www.earthlaws.org.au/events/tribunal2018)  
\*Entry by donation: \$10 for early birds, \$15 on the day, \$20 family ticket (2 adults, 1-4 kids)  
Donations will support AELA, Nambour Community House and CHASM Housing





Local brushtail possum (*Trichosurus vulpecula*) examining the exhibition layout map and 'helping' set up the exhibition. Photo: James K. Lee





## Earth Arts Retreat – Chenrezig

In June 2018, members of AELA's Earth Arts Collective, together with other artists and creatives, gathered at Chenrezig Buddhist Retreat on the Sunshine Coast hinterland for a three-day retreat. The Earth Arts Retreat provided participants with a masterclass about Earth jurisprudence, coordinated and presented by AELA Co-Founder and National Convenor, Dr Michelle Maloney. Guest speakers also Dr Mary Graham, Adjunct Associate Professor, University of Queensland and Kombumerri Elder, and Dr Edward Morgan, (Griffith University) who spoke about systems theory and the scientific understanding of our interconnected world.

The Retreat enabled participants to explore new concepts and incorporate new ways of thinking into their creative practices.

# Australian Earth Laws Alliance

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