

PAULA
DO PRADO



HUÉ SEPÉ
RIVER SKIPPING
SALTANDO RIOS

River Skipping

Saltando Rios

Hué Sepé

Everything is alive and sentient and communication is happening all the time in all different ways. Time is non-linear, and geographic distance does nothing to dull a pulsating spiritual connection. Sometimes I am listening here and there at the same time. I stare into the ponds at Lachlan Swamp where paperbark grow in water and the water surface rises and separates to show its many layers and all the life that is supported and interconnected there. Lachlan Swamp becomes a portal to river Quarai and the river Yagaron that empties out to Merin Lagoon. I sense them part of a vast network that connects back into the river Uruguay and the river Paraná. Place is plural. A conversation with this place, with this waterway is a conversation with all waterways. A conversation with one tree is a conversation with a whole network of trees. The water is not separate to the trees is not separate to the birds, insects and other life is not separate to the spirits that live in all these places, or the clouds, or all the layers of soil, sediment and life underground. Over and over, they speak the same phrase: we extend beyond the fences and our lands were once connected. With my feet softly on land that always was and always will be Aboriginal land, I stand before the mouth between two rivers at Kamay, the sentient waters form a bridge made from reciprocal relational flows, facilitating connection with my ancestral waterways, where the rivers too meet the sea.

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I have a little ritual. I introduce myself to place. I give my full name, three times. I say who my mother is, who my father is, who their parents are and their parents and their parents parents - and when I longer know their names, I say the places. I say the names of the rivers, the trees and the animals who too are my ancestors. And then I say that I too am water. I too am clay and mud.

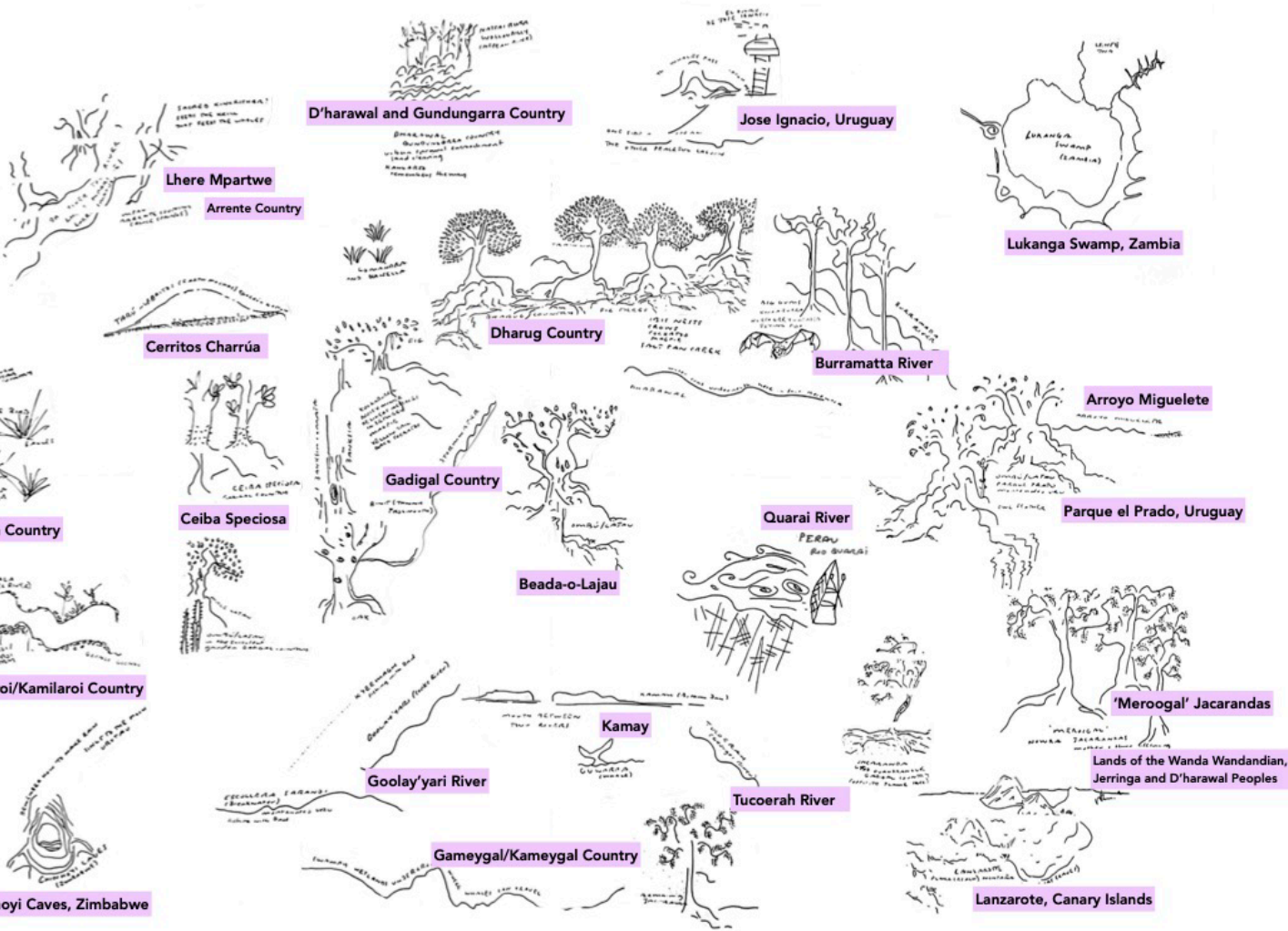
Sometimes I hum a tune as I walk slowly, pausing, looking up, looking down. Slowing down. Sometimes bird or lizard friend. I'm so glad to see/feel/hear you! My heart beats fast. Hello Kookaburra! Hello Garru! Hello Noisy Miner! Hello Wugan! Sometimes a very special Binit feather find, one time even a day time sighting.

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Sometimes offerings or requests. Water from between two rivers. Milk. Honey. Libations. Shells. Sometimes just tears. Sometimes presence best of all.

Mostly lessons and instructions bubble up from the soil: Put away your phone! No pictures here! Take off your shoes, how can you listen without bare feet! Sit! Bum on the ground. Your mind is racing, slow down!

Always begin and end at Lajau. Go to Waddangari past small Oaks, round to Robinia and Plane tree, to pine and big big Oak whose branches touch the ground all the way around past the ferns and the stumps to the pines and the cones. Full loop takes me by banksia serrata but they don't always want to chat. Sometimes lament for the lizards and the snakes. Greet Ficus near Lomandra and the old Waddangari. I read the sticks. Give thanks. Loop complete.



D'harawal and Gundungarra Country

Jose Ignacio, Uruguay

Lukanga Swamp, Zambia

Lhere Mpartwe

Arrente Country

Cerritos Charrúa

Dharug Country

Burramatta River

Arroyo Miguelete

Kariyarra Country

Ceiba Speciosa

Gadigal Country

Bead-a-Lajau

Quarai River

Parque el Prado, Uruguay

Calala River

Gamilaroi/Kamilaroi Country

Kamay

Goolay'yari River

Tucoerah River

'Meroogal' Jacarandas

Lands of the Wanda Wandandian, Jerringa and D'harawal Peoples

Chinhoyi Caves, Zimbabwe

Gameygal/Kameygal Country

Lanzarote, Canary Islands



NATTAI RIVER
WOLLONDILLY
(NEPEAN RIVER)

SANTO
LENDE
TWA

LUKANGA
SWAMP
(ZAMBIA)

DHARAWAL
GUNDUNBARA COUNTRY
urban sprawl encroachment
land clearing
KANGAROO remembers the way

RIO QUARAI / CUAREIM
'PERAU'

CONDORS
PARROTS
WITH VIVID
GREEN FEATHERS
AND HANGING
WOVEN NESTS

URUBRAZIL

AMETHYST
CAVES

SWAMPY WETLANDS UNDERGROUND WHERE WHALES CAN TRAVEL



Eucalyptus tree tagged as number '232', Sturt Art Gallery parking area, Mittagong

the road cuts!

Dharawal and Gundungarra Country, passing through the Nepean and Nattai Rivers through to Werriwa (Lake George) into Ngunnawal and Ngambri lands, Canberra

Within a six month period I found myself revisiting a number of sites travelling from Sydney to Mittagong, followed by a trip to Canberra a few months later travelling by car along some of the same roads. I had not been to visit Mittagong or Canberra in many years and I was struck by the extent of the land clearing, the encroachment of the urban sprawl by way of new roads and housing developments that seemed to butt up against the continuing pastoralism. My anger was at first directed outwards to the greedy developers, the councils and government officials that permit this land clearing, but soon my anger turned inwards because the very road I'm driving on, the road that facilitates me getting to where I need to go, this road I benefit from is also the problem. The road cuts!

I sense/see many things on my drive. From Dharawal to Gundungarra escorted by sleek black eels undulating underground. The Kangaroo remembers a time before the misdirection of the water, before interference without consent. The Nepean is the Nattai and the Nattai is the Nepean. Run-off in the River: a warning. Wrong song all along. The spirits of the land getting squashed into a smaller and smaller area, many have already gone underground.

Black eels all the way to Werriwa. Above crow/raven makes way for eagle. The road cuts all the way here too. Tears come unbidden as Werriwa comes in sight, sparkling and salty. I remember! Weren't there sheep here the last time? From the corner of my eye, movement or wind as if long lithe bodies run down the ranges like rolling pebbles kicking up the dust. Still here despite the distortions in the landscape. Still here despite the violent hoof on the ground. Still here! We are up here, the spirits say, drinking from the mists.



Coastline at Seven Mile Beach, Shoalhaven, Jerrinja and Wandjiman Country

Elsa and the Kookaburra

Seven Mile Beach, Shoalhaven, Jerrinja and Wandjina Country

One year, during the school holidays we went camping and stayed at Shoalhaven Heads. I was about thirteen, going through a bit of a tough time. It was my first and only time camping. I probably even put my parents up to it. It was a humbling experience because whilst I loved the setting, the beach, the trees, the birds - I was not so thrilled by the insects and shower facilities. For whatever reason, the Shoalhaven coast and in particular Seven Mile Beach became a place that my parents and I associated with holiday time spent in Australia and getting away from the city. Seven Mile Beach became the place we would take our relatives that visited from overseas. My paternal grandparents for example made their first ever airplane trip to Australia, and after my grandfather Fermin passed, my grandmother, Abuela Elsa visited a second time on her own. These visits to Seven Mile Beach took on an special significance, in hindsight it almost became a ritual of introduction - to take our beloveds to the salty waters that we are so grateful to, that had in some way adopted us and that were helping us all heal. I think these heart/soul connections to place took us beyond 'the tourist' or 'the migrant'. It wasn't just about Seven Mile Beach either - it always felt a passage - a ritual of arriving to that place, that we would stop in Kiama, that we would visit the blow hole, that we would be buffeted and cleaned off by the winds and sea spray before we would continue on our journey to the beach.

I love to drive and I especially love the drive along the road that leads to Seven Mile Beach. My heart beats faster and in my ever vivid imagination I catch glimpses of the spirits of that place running along the side of the road between the trees. I get all emotional just thinking about it. In my waking dream, the spaces between the trees as I drive past at 100 kms per hour are filled with the custodians of that place, who help me remember were to turn off because I'm shit at reading the GPS.

I am always overwhelmed with a sense of potency driving up into the beach parking area surrounded by tall trees - I feel like I am being watched, like a spiritual pressure, an expectation placed on everyone to step onto this place the right way. I am very formal here with my introduction, I give my full name and the places I am tethered to, ancestors known and unknown. I also express gratitude for safe passage not just for the drive down, but during my stay because I know that at the end of the day the spirits I saw running through the trees, turn to ravens on the beach. It is they who announce its time to go, time to say goodbye to the water, time to get back to the car because the shift into another time comes quickly in this place as sun begins to set.

On her second visit to Australia, we had taken Abuela Elsa to Seven Mile Beach. That time we had decided to cook lunch on one of the bbq's on site. It was after lunch that Abuela was sitting off on the side on her own and we noticed it was as if she was talking to someone. Turns out she was chatting and even sharing her lunch with a Kookaburra. We all just sort of took note, smiled to ourselves and left them to their conversation as we went back to whatever we were doing. I remember last time I looked, Elsa was sat with her arms crossed over her chest and was nodding as if in agreement and Kookaburra was forcefully banging something (a piece of meat? A bone? A gecko?) in their beak onto the ground.

I love this place and my memories it holds. I can feel/imagine it in so clearly in my mind and the feeling is that it is a special, spiritually distinct location that I cannot fully know but this place is connected to that whole continuous Eastern coast. The feeling to return is always there, to pour back into a place that poured into me. What does my responsibility to this place look like? What is reciprocity?



BANKSIA SERRATA

BANKSIA

KOOKABURRA
NOISY MINER
DELIVERS MESSAGES
IN BETWEEN
MAGPIE
YELLOW TAIL
BLACK COCKATOO

FIG

STORMWATER

FEMALE
LATAN

SPIDERS
WORMS
SKINKS
ANTS

OMBÚ/LATAN

BINIT (TAWNY
FROGMOUTH)

BRACHYCHITON

OAK

KYEEMAGH
Fishing with Dad

GOOLAY'YARI (Cooks River)

ESCOLLERA SARANDI
(Breakwater)



Ceremony of the land, Paula do Prado with Ombú/Lajau, Gadigal Country. Photo: Tamara Burlando

ceremony of the land

Ombú/Lajau, Gadigal Country

a self-initiation

a process

guaroj-detit Guidai - 13 Moons

13 moon time offerings

new moon to full moon

full moon to new moon

waxing and waning

7 river stones: from throat to heart to womb

to merge

to immerse oneself

to plunge

to become accountable

to be of service

tending and mending

mending and tending

time

spinning threads

and heart

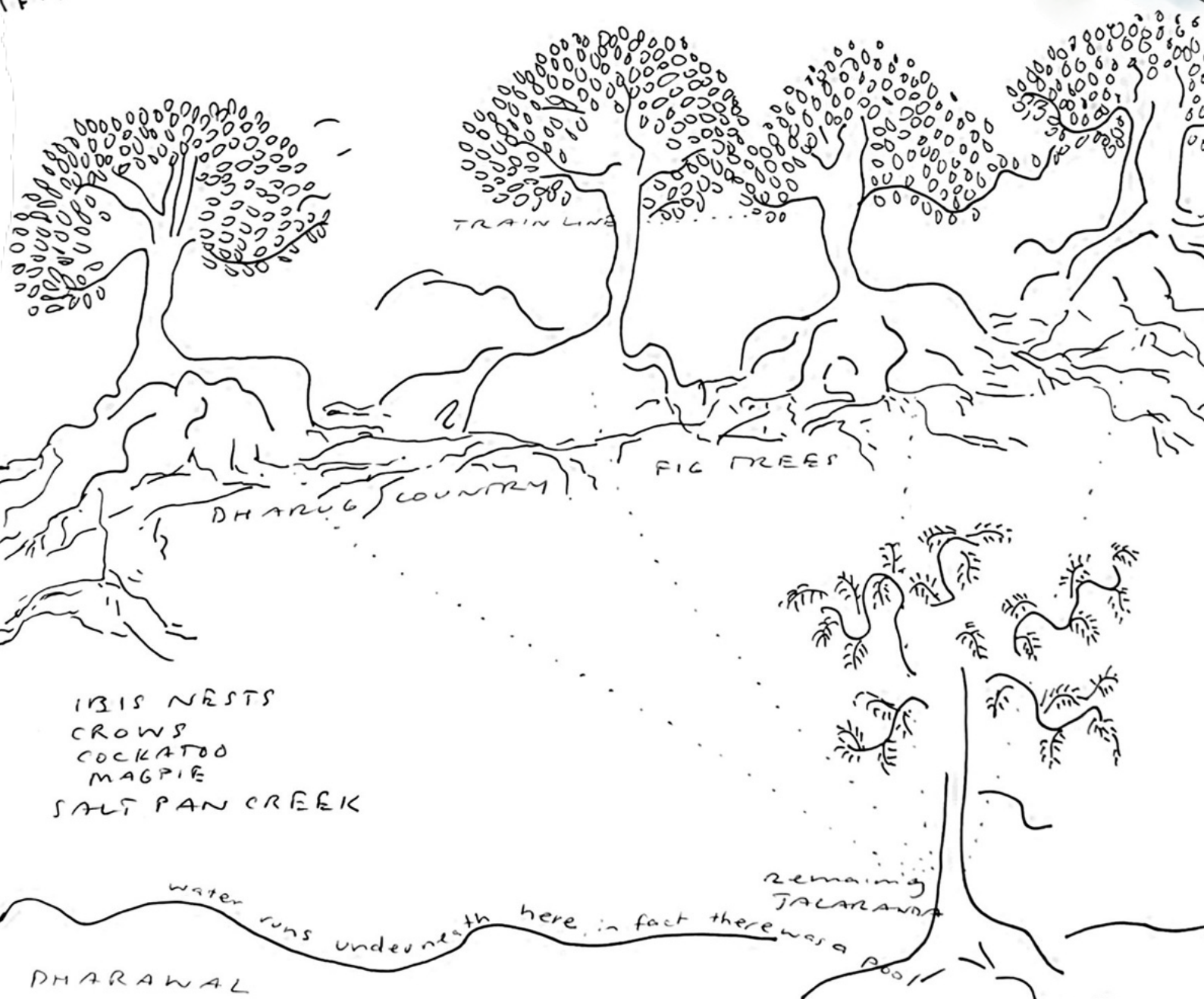
for wounded father-lines

and their horses too are kin

roots attuned to the waters

the colony exploits

that no amount of apology can remedy





Burramatta River, Parramatta Park, Dharug Country

Sit, listen

Burramatta River, Dharug Country

Nest in tree
Fallen tree, hollow log home to many
Swollen log, belly

Many minds all connected

Chatty warambi/grey headed flying foxes

Sit, listen
They say
Show us your Quarai

Close my eyes, practice opening the door to Quarai. I am sitting on the rock at perau. I am a bagre/catfish in the river. I am the bagre and I am also outside the bagre seeing it from the outside. I see its whiskers and how it thrashes about with its head and body stirring up the river silt. The bagre's mouth is my mouth. Rips form on the surface of the water. Loud green parrots in their woven nests high up in the trees that line the river. I made nests like these at Abuela's house, resonances of a river in my bones.

I share all this with warambi and burramatta river.

I offer a story given to me: My father as a young boy, crossing the river in waist deep water with his brothers and cousins, they hold hands to make a human chain so as not to be swept away by the river.

When I walked Quarai's edges, there was evidence of offerings made, lush pineapple, watermelon, oranges.

Back on the rock, I trace the lines etched there. I am on the rock and I am in the river.

I open my eyes at burramatta river's edge. They say time to dip in. Put on your salamander skin. I am hesitant like a cat dipping a paw into the water, immediately retreating to shake off the wet. Needs practice they observe.

Did you know it is the bat that pollinates the Ceiba?



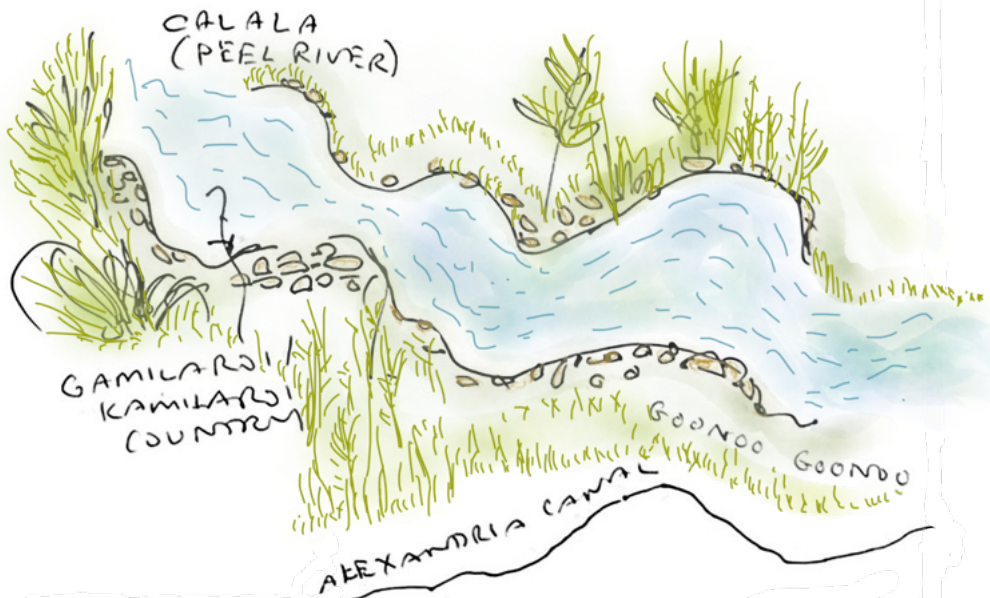
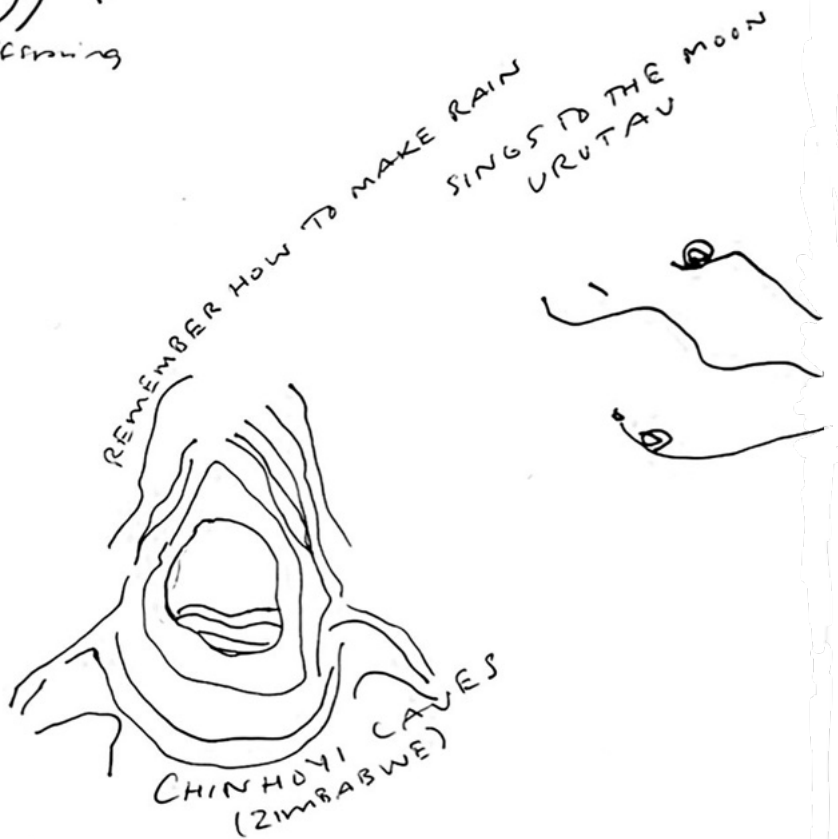
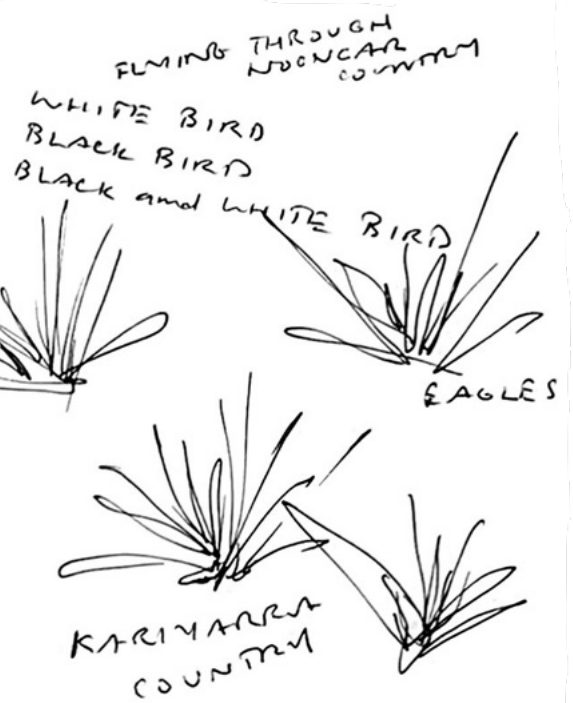
'Mouth between two Rivers', Kaymegal/Gaaymegal Country

kiss the shark and hug the whale

Kaymegal/Gaymegal Country, Kamay/Port Botany

Formerly this stretch of beach was named Seven Mile Beach but now naming is split for each section of beach that runs from Kyeemagh where Goolay'yari (Cooks river) flows into the ocean through the suburbs of Brighton le Sands, Monterey, Dolls Point, Ramsgate and Sandringham where Tucoerah/Toggerai/Tuggerah/Dhugara River (Georges River) flows into the ocean. My inner heart map knows this place as the 'mouth between two rivers'.

As newly arrived migrants, my parents would bring me to the beach at Dolls Point when I was young. I was enamoured by the sand and clear water. As a non-swimmer I particularly loved the shallow stretch of shoreline. I still visit this place and bring my son and my parents, and sometimes it is my parents and my son who visit. I also visit on my own regularly, it is a powerful place to spend time with and listen. I look across and see the bustling shipping port and the airport, a constant flow arrivals and departures by water and air. I can also see Kurnell across the way, the site of the arrival of the First Fleet. Every time I visit I announce my presence, as if entering the house of a relative who you know leaves the door open. But this relative receives many visitors, some who announce themselves, some who do not. My visits to this relative have taught me that it is always respectful and a good idea to announce yourself. On my visits I like to scan for familiars in the form of pigface succulents, sand, rocks, banksia, pine, the pigeons, rats and seagulls. Sometimes I help this relative with cleaning up bits of debris and pesky plastics from the sand and water left behind by fellow visitors. Sometimes I bring things to show the water and the familiars, something I've started making or I draw an idea into the wet sand and a wave will take it and we will think about it more together. Sometimes I divine with the sand. Sometime I meditate by slipping into the water whilst my body stays dry, sitting on the beach. In my imagination, in my salamander form, I can swim all the way up to the mouth and beyond. By way of greeting I kiss the shark and hug the whales.





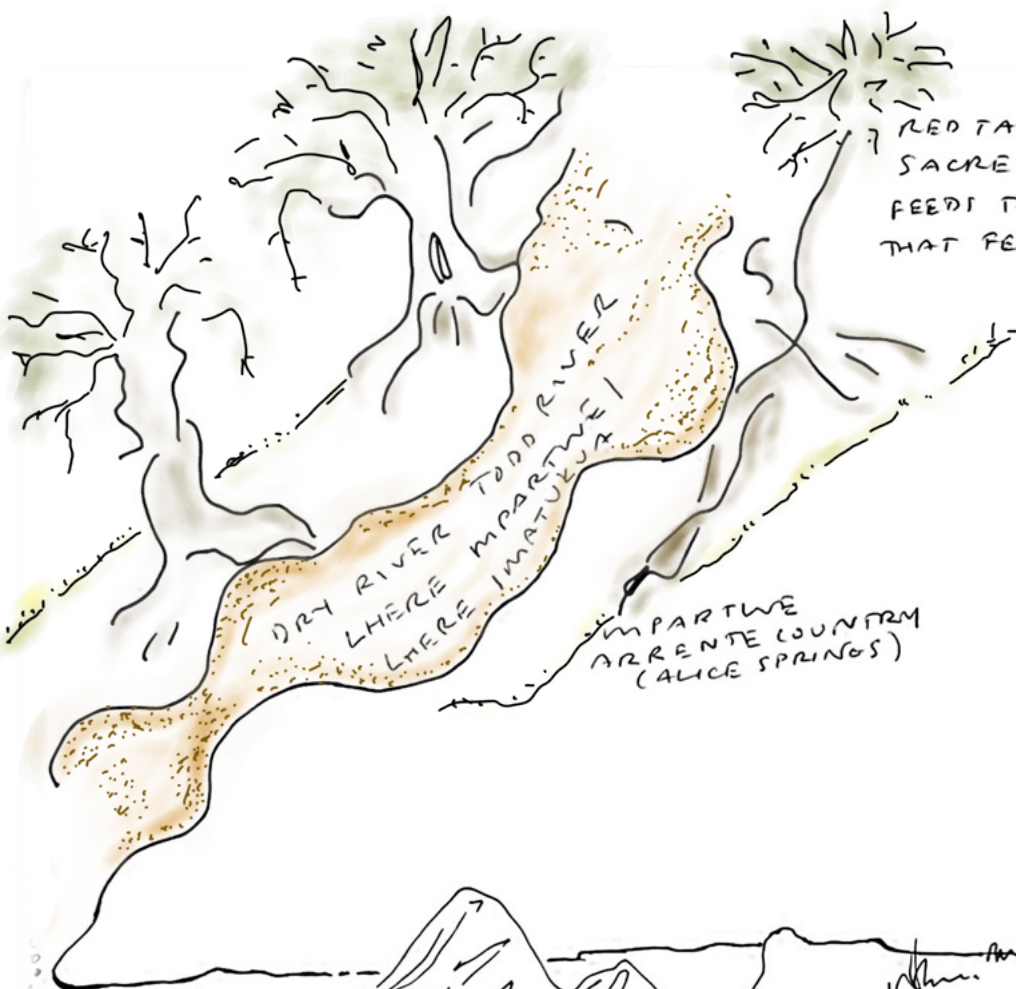
Calala (Peel River), Kamilaroi/Gamilaroi Country

meet me by the river

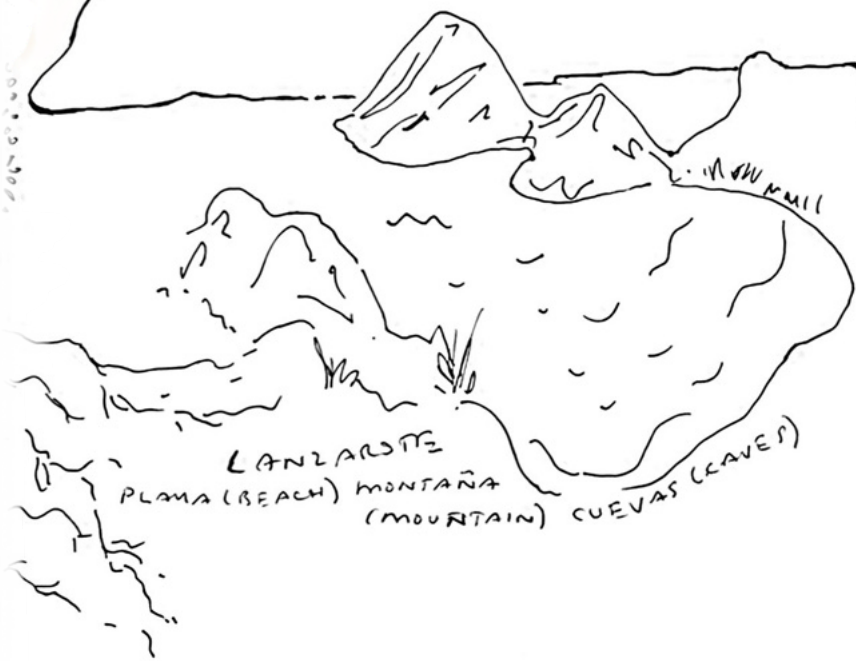
Calala (Peel River), Kamilaroi/Gamilaroi, Country (Tamworth NSW)

Meet me by the river (2023) is a major collaborative work completed for the 5th Tamworth Textile Triennial. The group exhibition is currently on a regional galleries tour until 2025. I was a participant in the inaugural Tamworth Textile Triennial in 2011 curated by Patrick Snelling. The Tamworth Textile Collection originally began in 1973. Looking back now, it was a pivotal point in my early career and the whole experience of having been selected for the exhibition, travelling for the opening and artists talks in both Tamworth and Melbourne provided me with a sense of validation and confidence to continue to pursue a career as an artist working predominantly in textiles. The Tamworth Textile Collection and exhibition is unique in Australia, celebrating and showcasing a diverse range of textile practices. In 2011, I was in the early stages of my art journey, seeking to understand my place within so-called Australia and my connections to multiple ancestral lineages that I found difficult to articulate. It was a wonderful opportunity to again be a part of the Tamworth Textile Triennial in 2023, more than 10 years since my first showing. It felt like the closing of one cycle and the opening of a new new one. The most recent iteration of the exhibition provided me with the opportunity to witness the progression in my own textile practice as well as see my work dialogue along side other artists who also tap into the enduring power of textiles and fibre to express what cannot be put into words.

Over the last ten years, place-based connections have become a significant concern in my work and my thinking about making and feeling in place. The context in which work is made and shown is important and as I am learning to be led by place, the opportunity to return to Kamilaroi/Gamilaroi Country was invaluable. I was able to spend time with Calala (Peel river) on two occasions during the process of developing and exhibiting the work and experience a Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony led by Tamworth Councillor Marc Sutherland and Tamworth Textile Triennial artist Amy Hammond. Meet me by the River is a collaborative work, created with friend and fellow artist Tamara Burlando, of Huarpe, Uruguayan and Iberian descent based in Mparntwe, Arrernte Country, Alice Springs. An early echo of *River Skipping*, it speaks to the confluence of many rivers and their extended waterways beyond the perceived limitations of geographical distance.



RED TAIL BLACK COCKATOO
SACRED KINGFISHER?
FEEDS THE KRILL
THAT FEEDS THE WHALES



LANZAROTE
PLANA (BEACH) MONTAÑA
(MOUNTAIN) CUEVAS (CAVES)

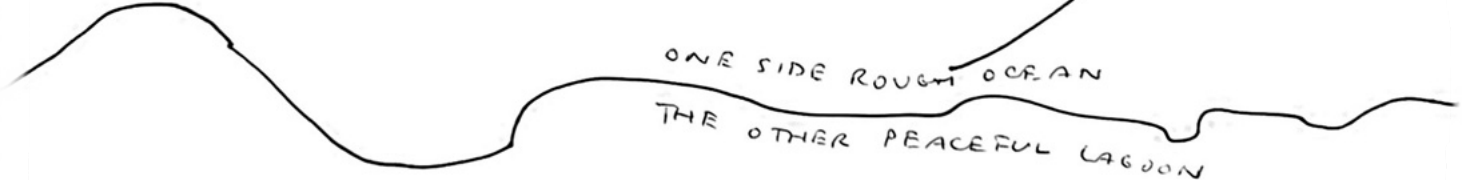


JACHIANA
LAND QUADRANGLE
GADIAL COUNTRY
(OPPOSITE FLAME TREE)

EL FARO
DE JOSE IGNACIO



THE WHALES PASS THROUGH HERE



ONE SIDE ROUGH OCEAN
THE OTHER PEACEFUL LAGOON



Lehre Mparntwe (Todd River), Arrente Country

*feed the whales**

Lerhe Mparntwe (Todd River), Mparntwe, Arrente Country, Alice Springs

dry river
river of sand
 and ants
hollow trees like the one my great-grandfather took refuge in
a river of birds
 blue feathers
 black and red
river stones tapped together: canto rodado

offering song to the four winds

river of sustenance
ritual place
long piece of string
where air and lighting conspire with water and sand
to feed the whales

In June 2023 I travelled to Alice Springs to spend time with friend and artist collaborator, Tamara Burlando to create the artwork *Meet me by the river* (2023) for the 5th Tamworth Textile Triennial. It seemed fitting that having spent time with Calala River on Gomerioi/Kamilaroi Country that we should also go talk to Lehre Mparntwe, on Arrente Country where Tamara lives, and tell of our makings there and why.

*I am grateful to have learned of the connection between Lehre Mparntwe and the whales through Aunty Joanne Selfe. I was fortunate to meet and collaborate with Aunty Jo through a series of workshops we delivered at Marrickville Library for National Reconciliation Week 2022. The weaving workshops titled *Murray Loo Lo Tamira* (*Great Many Hands*) were organised by Megan Ridgeway and supported by Rosell Flatley as part of Inner West Council.



Fig Trees parallel to train tracks, Bankstown Art Centre, Dharug Country

a season of care

Salt Pan Creek, Tucoerah (Georges' River), Dharug Country

when you keep returning to a place
introductions, reasons and purpose
noticing, observing, reading
sometimes even hearing
two Jacarandas, now one
the ficus siblings that line the track
'mother's eyes' on patrol
whilst sacred Ibis fusses over the nests
and pigeons leave a trail of feathers
gathered round the fire on a full moon
gathered at a table serving thread
remembering



Elsa and Fermin, my paternal grandparents, at the Royal National Park, D'harawal Country

salt water healing

The Entrance

It was our first summer in Australia, I was 7 years old. It was the school holidays and we were being shown around by some family friends. We made a trip to Guringai and Darkinjung lands, I can't remember if it was Woy Woy, The Entrance or Gosford. What I do remember is being in awe of the beach, the clean sand and the sparkling water, so clear and inviting. It was nothing like the water on the coast of Montevideo city that sits on the River Plate and on a good day is a swirl of muddy brown river bed silt.

I have always had a fear of large bodies of water. I couldn't swim (still can't) but could not resist the joy of playing along that central coast shoreline, wetting my feet and hands in sparkling clear water. As a highly curious toddler in Uruguay, I'd had an accident with a heater resulting in a small raised cluster of white burn scars on my left pinky finger and the side of my hand. That first time on the central coast, I spent hours happily playing in and out of the salt water. At some point I must have finally taken a break from playing and sat down to eat. I distinctly remember my mum calling out excitedly to my dad and they both checked me over and looked in surprise at the now smooth skin of my left hand where the bubbly white scars had been. The burn scars had seemingly dissolved away. My mum exclaimed "la agua salada le curo la mano!" / the saltwater healed her hand!



My father Jorge, fishing with a friend at Garie Beach in the mid 80s, D'harawal Country. Unknown photographer.

la escollera

Escollera* Sarandi, Montevideo Uruguay

bagre, pejerrey

flathead and bream

no fish but bolas de fraile/fried doughnut treats

between the stone blocks

shark eggs, crabs

high tide

low tide

moon tide

Fishing connects my father, to his father, to his father's father and so on forever

*Escollera = a man made breakwater



Ombú/Lajau tree at El Prado Park, Montevideo, September 2023. Photo by Guidaí Vargas

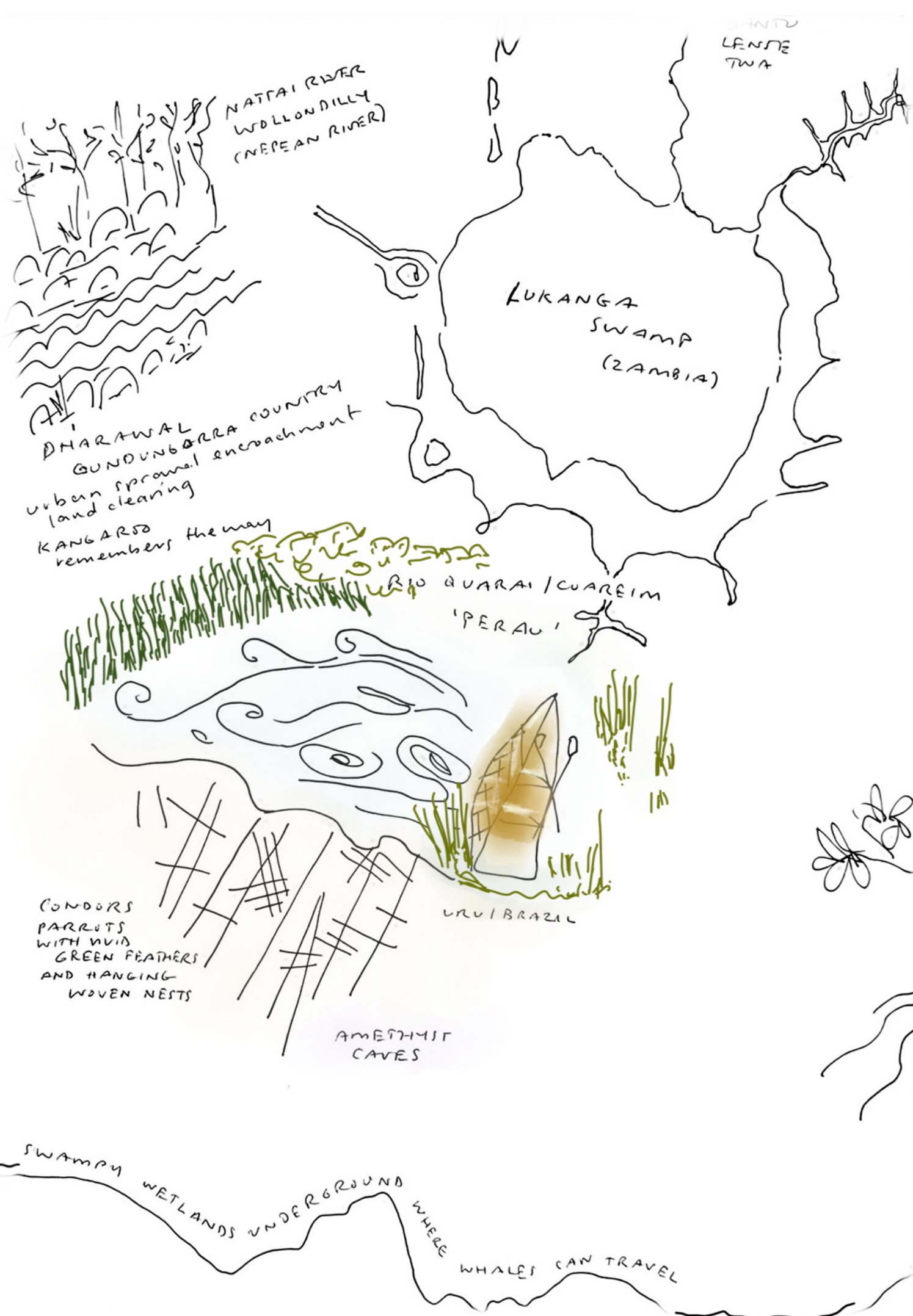
el regalo de una pluma de lechuza

Ombú/Lajau Parque el Prado, Arroyo Migulete, Montevideo, Uruguay

on the day before I left
I went to say farewell
to the Ombúes
across from the Charrúas cast in bronze
and I hoped that all my feeling of thanks and awe
would travel through my body and out my palm
onto the cool knobbly bark
and at that moment when I didn't really want to leave
a sparkle caught my eye
entangled with a bit of rubbish, a piece of foil chocolate wrapper
I received the gift of an owl feather

—

el día antes de partir
fui a despedirme
de los Ombúes
frente a los Charrúas de bronce
y esperaba que todo mi sentimiento de agradecimiento y admiración
recorriera mi cuerpo y saliera por mi palma
hacia la corteza fresca y nudosa
y en ese momento en que realmente no quería irme
un destello me llamó la atención
enredado con una basurita, un envoltorio de chocolate de aluminio
recibí el regalo de una pluma de lechuza



SANDY
LENS
TWA

NATTA RIVER
WOLLONDILLY
(NEPEAN RIVER)

LUKANGA
SWAMP
(ZAMBIA)

DHARAWAL
GUNDARRA COUNTRY
urban sprawl encroachment
land clearing
KANGAROO
remembers the way

URU QUARAI / CUAREIM
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AMETHYST
CAVES

URU / BRAZIL

SWAMPY
WETLANDS UNDERGROUND WHERE
WHALES CAN TRAVEL



Sitting on the rock at Perau (main) and found offerings of fruit, Cuareim/Quarai River, Artigas, Uruguay.
Main photo by Ana-Corina Britos

canto rodado

Rio Cuareim/Quarai, Artigas, Uruguay

I'd been relying on my father's stories. So I had to come see-feel-think for myself. In this photo I am visiting a part of Rio Cuareim/Quarai known as "Perau" for the first time. It is a deceptively deep and treacherous part of the river where many have drowned. Local children are warned to avoid this part of the river. My paternal lineage has always been connected to this river.

My father tells a story that his father told him about his grandfather. The story takes place in Artigas, to the north of Uruguay where Rio Cuareim/Quarai runs along the border with Brazil. In the early 1900s in Artigas, my great-grandfather went everywhere on horseback and rode his bagual across and on both sides of the river. He was a superior horseman who happened to get into a bit of trouble with the authorities. We know he worked on the land often doing seasonal or short term jobs at the estancias or large farms that were almost exclusively owned by European-settlers turned ranchers. He had gotten into some sort of dispute possibly about payment or livestock, or maybe the ranchers just didn't like a gaucho media Indio media negro around. He was on the run and to evade being captured he let his horse go free and hid himself in the hollow of a tree. In how I imagine the story, the tree hollow belong to an ombú. Whilst he was in the tree a large securi came in to rest at the base of the tree hollow, seemingly having come to disgust after a meal. So the story goes great-grandfather had to wait for days, almost certainly suffering cramp, dehydration and hunger suspended high within the tree hollow until finally sucuri slithered out, allowing him to also exit the hollow.

Canto rodado is the Spanish for pebbles. Specifically river pebbles. But the literal translation is canto = song and rodado = round. It is said river pebbles are called canto rodado because they make a sound as the pebbles get rolled along and against each other becoming smooth and rounded by the river flow. The name is also used within a tongue twister: rodaban cantando, cantan rondando cantan cantos rodados .



My aunt preparing to cleanse the house with smoke using Bay leaves and cinnamon sticks, Minas, Lavalleja, Uruguay

las canteras

Barriga Negra, Los Tapes, Lavalleja, Uruguay

my maternal grandfather was born
amongst shards of stones
sharp slate
rough quarry
patterned by
absent fathers
and single mothers
but he loved his children
they remember him
humble and kind



Coastline near the Faro/Lighthouse at Jose Ignacio, Uruguay

el faro

Jose Ignacio, Uruguay

between the rough ocean waves and the placid lagoons
amongst the rocks and familiar pig face
I am in love with the unkempt grasses combed by wind
and the messy tangled wild flowers growing in sandy soil

to the same waters, I introduced my toddler son
we embraced the waves with laughter
and hiccuping we stumbled
into a lifelong remembering
of being remembered

I keep a piece of found fisherman's rope
for weaving
and give thanks for a river sister
who offers me a place to sleep



View overlooking water inlet at Discovery Parks Port Hedland, Kariyarra Country

weaving a constellation

Port Hedland, Kariyarra Country

"Sky is mirror. The constellations, the visible and invisible parts of the cosmos underpin the connections between ancient cultures and practices. There's nothing quite like flying into Kariyarra Country especially as the sun is setting. Pink, orange, purple, gold bands dance on the horizon and eventually a blanket of stars covers the big sky. My paternal grandfather taught me about the stars and told me stories about how he learnt to navigate his way in the night. I take his stories with me everywhere and I have come to understand they were not just stories about navigating place so you wouldn't get lost but they were also stories about navigating relationships.

I have had the opportunity to visit Spinifex Hill Studio twice and spend time with the studio artists and staff. I was invited to share my weaving practice. Weaving is and has always been about a lot more than the technical how to of making something. Weaving is a space, a language and a way of relating. The works created as part of this installation represent moments shared and stories exchanged over cups of tea, laughter, impromptu song and all the emotions that can come up from remembering a way of doing. Weaving wakes up the hands and wakes up the heart."

Paula do Prado artist statement for the artwork "Weaving a Constellation" made in collaboration with Spinifex Hill Studio, Jacky Cheng and members of the South Hedland, Warralong and Strelley Communities, 2023. The latest iteration of the work was exhibited as part of "Woven Together + Mara, Jinbi, Ngurra" for The Indian Ocean Craft Triennial 2024, FORM Gallery, Perth, 2 August to 28 September 2024.



Montevideo coastline, along the rambla/promenade, Uruguay

la rambla

Playa Ramirez, Montevideo, Uruguay

where the river meets the sea
my paternal grandfather's favourite beach
where he asked his ashes be scattered
now he is in the stars
in the water and in the wind
sometimes a fish
other times a bird
I sense him in stones and rocks
shells and bits of debris: wire, bottle tops, sea glass
that my son collects and treasures



Swan River shoreline, Matilda Bay, Noongar Whadjuk Boodja

spirit daughter

Swan River, Boorloo (Perth), Whadjuk Noongar County

time to surface our in-common stories
for joint resistance
time to get serious and sit listen
intently, regularly and as a priority

its not a hobby or a phase
its been building, growing, flexing
no room for fear or shame
its time to act

write talk
a collaboration with the soil and waters
make lightning
in harmony with the clouds

Reading list/notes

Cover image: Cuareim/Quarai River at Perau, Artigas, Uruguay. All images taken by the author unless otherwise stated.

Various Aboriginal place names and language sources were used including:

- The Sydney Language by Dr Jakelin Troy
- D'harawal Dreaming Stories by Aunty Frances Bodkin <https://dharawalstories.com/>
- Dharug and Dharawal Resources <https://dharug.dalang.com.au/language/dictionary>
- AIATSIS <https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/map-indigenous-australia>
- <https://australian.museum/learn/cultures/atsi-collection/sydney/place-names-chart/>
- Gambay - First Languages Map <https://gambay.com.au/about>
- Common Ground, Major Cities <https://www.commonground.org.au/article/first-nations-place-names-of-major-cities>

Artworks/Exhibitions mentioned

Woven Together with Spinifex Hill Artist Studio

https://issuu.com/form-wa/docs/iota_woven-together_mara-jinbi-ngurra_final_issuu

Meet me by the river, collaboration with Tamara Burlando

5th Tamworth Textile Triennial, Residue + Response curated by Carol McGregor

<https://tamworthregionalgallery.com.au/5ttt-catalogue>

A season of care artists residency at Utp - <https://utp.org.au/event/soc-residencies>

Other reading

- Refugia, Elfie Shiosaki
- Returning, Kirli Saunders
- Gadigal Ngurra by Konstantina

'Ceremony of the land' references the Chapter "Ceremony of the Land ¿Y dónde está tu ombligo?" In Red Medicine: Traditional Indigenous Rites of Birthing and Healing by Patricia Gonzales