

CLIMARTE POSTER PROJECT 2016 Artist Statements

***Seed Flower* | Thornton Walker**

"Wondering how to best represent my feelings about the need for urgent action on climate change, I was given a haiku my daughter Polly wrote when she was 4yrs old:

Seed flower

Growing into sunflower-

People are waiting

To me this created such a poignant picture of our hopes and dreams for our future.

The figure is a portrait of Polly, aged about 4, happily absorbed by her balloon and not noticing the bleak landscape she walks through, towards an indefinite future. This is why action on climate change is so important to me."

***Renewable* | Katherine Hattam**

"Apart from believing the science surrounding climate Change, I have very specific experiences of changed circumstances, in particular the increased likelihood of severe bushfires. Having lived through the 1983 Ash Wednesday bush fires when our house, built in 1840, burnt down in the Adelaide Hills, and when more frighteningly we were extremely lucky not to have died when the wind changed at 3.38pm that day. My design does not reference this, but rather goes for the more optimistic and beautiful aspects of the wind farms - not only are they beautiful but they are, as my text says, Renewable - how good is that!"

***One Good Day* | Kate Daw**

"To think about the overall environmental global situation is overwhelming and, for me, can induce a sense of inertia and paralysis. I wanted to bring my work to a place of hope and also reference the simultaneous everyday and miraculous aspect of a daily natural event, in this case, the sun setting at the end of an ordinary working day. I took this image from my car on my phone while parked at Williamstown Beach after walking my dog. I like how it could be anywhere, any time. *One Good Day* speaks both to the future and the past and reminds us of what we take for granted."

***The Good & Bad of the Reef* | Miles Howard-Wilks**

Miles Howard-Wilks is primarily a painter, however he works across a range of mediums including ceramics, photography and animation. He is dedicated to exploring themes such as Australian landscapes, seascapes, the environment, football and more specifically, sharks, magpies and trains. He often combines several of these themes into one complex painting. The inclusion of such eclectic subject matter gives his artworks an otherworldly quality. For the CLIMARTE Poster Project Howard-Wilks has focused on illustrating his concerns for marine environments. In particular, 'The Good & Bad of the Reef' highlights his apprehension for the health of the Great Barrier Reef with respect to the growing impact of waste and pollution generated by big corporations on our fragile oceanic ecosystems.

***Great Barrier Reef* | Jon Campbell**

"The Great Barrier Reef holds a particular place in the psyche of this country and seemed a good choice of subject to try and engage the public to think about the damage of climate change, given it is bleaching at an alarming rate.

I've kept the text simple and direct so that it can be read from a distance, though you do have to spend a little more time reading it to work it out fully. The letters are fading/disappearing, highlighting loss. It has a dot screen fade, hopefully making the poster visually engaging up close as well."

***The Future Is Not What It Used To Be* | Angela Brennan**

"The evidence for rapid climate change is compelling: sea level rises, global temperature rises, warming oceans, shrinking ice sheets, ocean acidification, decreased snow cover, declining Arctic sea ice, global retreat and extreme events. When you change the climate you change everything. The future is not what it used to be."

***Whatever Way the Wind Blows* | Martin King**

"When you look up to, instead of looking down at nature you may find a direction for the way ahead. When you allow the wind to give you strength, you may reach your destination. Carry the world gently in your hands."

***HazelShould* | Gabrielle de Vietri & Will Foster**

"Hazelwood is Australia's most pressing issue with regards to climate change. At Melbourne's doorstep the most polluting power station in Australia - and the third most polluting in the world. Hazelwood contributes to three per cent of Australia's carbon emissions. In 2014 the open cut mine set fire, causing one of the worst environmental and public health disasters in Australian history. The plant and the methods it uses are archaic and dangerous, but surprisingly, not many people know about its existence. Maybe Hazelwood needs a face.

In order to have a credible climate change policy, Australia must replace coal-fired power stations, starting with Hazelwood, with clean, safe renewable energy."

Will Foster and Gabrielle de Vietri are co-directors of A Centre for Everything, a collaborative experiment in socially-engaged pedagogy. The project brings together people to learn, eat, create and agitate together.

***Yield* | Chris Bond**

"I've approached the work thinking about autonomy and self-sufficiency, getting into character as the invented Norwegian artist Tor Rasmussen to produce an image that speaks of the power of nature – of its potential to offer energy to those that can harness it, and the omnipotent threat of annihilation. As an artist I allow invented characters to take me down unlikely paths, living out scenarios like this one, tilting precariously above a light emitting hole in my backyard, gaining energy from below. Tor has been photographed leaning at the angle of a solar panel, hovering at an incline that gives him maximum yield. His is a lean into the void, one of risk and return. "

The Southern Skies All a Swirl | Siri Hayes

“In my practice I have a long fascination with observing and suggesting art historical references in everyday scenarios. In this work I was thinking about the invisible nature of wind and the swirling currents it twists and forms in the air. It made me think of Van Gogh’s *The Starry Night* in which he painted swirling spirals around the stars. With this visual simile in mind I found an online wind map of the southern oceans with Toora in South Gippsland as fairly central in it. I took a screen grab of the map and superimposed it over an image of the wind farm at Toora I photographed earlier this year. The swirls of the wind map have an ominous presence in the work that perhaps alludes to the way in which humans have impacted upon weather patterns and climate change.”

CLIMARTE POSTER PROJECT II 2019 Artist Statements

ART+CLIMATE=CHANGE 2019 *Festival Poster*

The logo represents data from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology for rainfall, wind speed, and maximum/minimum temperatures in Melbourne for the year ending October 2018.

***The Ripple* | Peter Waples-Crowe**

The Ripple reimagines a 19th century print into the climate debate of the contemporary. During unfolding colonisation, Aboriginal people were seen as savages. Our culture was recorded but often not heard. Is this still the same today, where our Indigenous knowledges could be useful to restore the land back to a time before the coming of the Europeans? *The ripple* reveals that we are part of the country and should be part of the debate on climate change. The stark whiteness of the poster reflects our position as a minority group, a small population. We are smothered by whiteness and the so-called progress that has got us to this point in time. *The ripple* also speaks about drought and the preciousness of water. When is our Indigenous knowledge, caring for Country and wisdom going to be respected? Or is it just history repeating itself. A ripple can turn into a wave of new ways of thinking.

***A Just Transition* | Sam Wallman**

In Australia in the 1970's, builders and labourers heeded the call of environmentalists, heritage activists and public housing residents, by stopping work on construction projects that would have damaging effects on local communities and ecosystems. 'Green Bans' were used as a tool for over four years. Forty-two projects, or \$18 billion worth of development was held in limbo until everyday people's demands were heard. This happened because workers make the wheels turn. As Gavin Stanbrook says, "workers could shut down coal, gas fracking, all those industries - *overnight*". The large format street poster comic *A Just Transition* puts forth the argument that everyday people can lead the charge in the fight against climate change and all its intersecting horrors, because crucially, we do all the work. The climate crisis presents itself today, and for a short while longer, as a tear in the fabric. We can rip that hole wide open and decide collectively what we want the world to look like on the other side.

***Connected?* | Julia Ciccarone**

The open-ended narratives that Julia Ciccarone creates in her work raise many questions, particularly regarding our relationship to the natural world. In *Connected?*, a figure, wrapped in a damp blanket, dials a number from within an iconic Australian phone booth, which is inexplicably situated on a beach. The atmosphere is at once too warm and too cool; a yellow hue pervades a world saturated with light, but the figure is wrapped in blankets, providing much needed comfort and warmth. The edges of this blanket are getting wet, heavy and uncomfortable.

There is a sense of urgency here, the call must be important, as the figure appears at risk: the tide moving in and lapping at their ankles.

Whom is this figure calling, and will they be heard?

Connected? points to both the past, and the future: a call is made from an out-dated telephone booth, but in a world where the rising sea has enveloped a locale that we assume was once safe, dry land. We wonder what action will be taken at this juncture.

The Coal Face (ScoMo) | Eugenia Lim

The Coal Face (ScoMo) is an absurd yet timely portrait of a politician and a nation on the verge of political, ethical and environmental collapse. In February 2017, Scott Morrison, who was at the time Treasurer, brought a lump of coal into the House of Representatives: both a symbolic and physical manifestation of the Liberal government's love of the fossil fuels industry, of the colonisation of Country, and of catastrophic climate denial. This poster depicts a man 'at the coal face' who celebrates as the world burns, who laughs in the face of the apocalypse. Do we follow him into the flames or radically shift the way we live, now, and forever more?

***Get There in a Canter* | Clare McCracken**

Growing up in rural Australia, my family and I battled the invasive species introduced by settlers. Ferdinand Von Mueller's blackberries filled every gully with their prickly entanglement of deep green leaves; Thomas Austin's rabbits deforested swathes of land until all that was left was bulldust brown; and Jane Paterson's echium planagineum (Paterson's curse) blanketed kilometres of farm land in luminous purple. The devastating impact of invasive species on Australia's unique ecology could be described in a few shades of colour. *Get There in a Canter* reflects on how climate change is enacting a new devastation on the Australian landscape by once again reflecting on how it shifts the hues of our unique ecologies. In the last couple of years acres of coral has bleached, tens of thousands of ghostly fish have floated to the surface of stagnant rivers and the ground of rural Australia, backed by drought, has transformed from a pallet of golden browns, silvery greens and shimmering purples, to a whitish-grey scored by deep black cracks that suck thirsty kangaroos into the heart of the earth.

***Our Future* | Amy Spiers**

Our future... presents translations in Woi Wurrung and Boon Wurrung languages of the statement: "Our future depends on respecting Country and Indigenous ways of being". It employs phrases in local Aboriginal languages to consider the rich knowledge and experience of ecological management and protection held by Aboriginal people. Conversely, it highlights many settlers' ongoing disregard of that knowledge.

For millennia, Indigenous people have cared for Country, and many argue that in order to combat the devastating ecological crisis we are now experiencing, the broader community needs to meaningfully engage with Indigenous practices of caring for Country.

However, when sited in public, the poster does not communicate its message to the majority of settler-readers in what becomes a performative manifestation of the dominant cultures' illiteracy of First Nations expertise. It is a warning that cannot be heeded. It demonstrates the huge shift necessary to recognise the importance of Indigenous knowledge in creating a safe, just future for all.

With deep thanks to the people of the Woi Wurrung and Boon Wurrung language groups of the eastern Kulin Nation, and the linguists and Elders who assisted this project. Additional thanks to designer Andrew Clapham.

***Get Floaties* | Salote Tawale**

Get Floaties explores the poster as a site of public advertisement. In the urban cityscape, passers-by move past hundreds of images catching glimpses of the world in front of them. What will they read from this combination of resigned humour and quiet panic?

The image of a semi-submerged person could depict an ordinary idyllic swimming scene, but the camera angle and bubbles rising from the clothed body suggest haste, unpreparedness.

The asterisk that leads to the fine print reveals the terms and conditions of this short-term solution: sea levels are rising and this poster is about our climate future.

***SPECTRE* | Dean Cross**

There is almost nothing that can assuage the deep rumbling that rolls around the recesses of the mind reminding us that our time is almost up. Eco-anxiety is all consuming.

This spectre casts a long shadow. I recall that Sam Cooke song, the one where he tells us he was born by a river. I wonder whether that river is now bone dry or causing havoc in a record-breaking flood. Either seems probable. Like Sam Cooke, we too know that a change is gonna come.

Inevitability is terrifying and adaptability paramount.

My ancestors adapted – even in the face of great change. They would have loved that Sam Cooke song.

2030 Survival Guide (Tip #19): Field Dressing | Jen Rae **Illustration by Indie Ladan**

2030 SURVIVAL GUIDE (TIP #19): FIELD DRESSING is a visual double entendre and a provocation to consider a future impacted by climate change from a disaster preparedness perspective. The illustration provides basic instructions on how to field dress a rabbit in case of food scarcity. It also brings to the fore questions around the abdication of climate action and responsibility by the global elite; altruism and population control; and, international food security. The most rigorous scientific report published in human history states we only have 11 years to curb run-away climate change and collapse. Some are preparing for the worst better than others in the game of 'survival of the richest'. For instance, billionaires are investing in prime farmland globally; 'doomsday bunkers' are now hot real estate for rich 'preppers'; and, most apocalyptic survival guides are written by and for middle-class, often middle-aged, white men. In Australia, this same demographic is respectively 10% of the population, yet they hold over 70% of seats in politics and leadership across the corporate, academic, media and judiciary sectors. What does that mean for commoners? Disasters heighten disadvantage. By the time the elite take action, it might be too late for most commoners. Hence, why the stakes are extremely high this ~~hunting~~ election season.

No Future | Kelly Doley

Echoing the infamous Sex Pistols song, this work references the text 'No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive' by theorist Lee Edelman where he proposes queerness as a willingness to embrace a refusal of the social and political order, in particular reproduction. When placed within the context of an environmental poster, 'No Future' becomes a deliberately pessimistic and negative call to action – there will literally be no future if extreme climate change and weather events continue, as evidenced by the recent Northern Murray-Darling Basin 'fish kill' incident.

CLIMARTE POSTER PROJECT III: A CALL TO ART 2021/22 Artist Statements

***White Faced Dead Mangrove Heron* | Laura Wills**

In 2020, ten hectares of mangroves died along with 35 hectares of salt marsh in the St Kilda region just North of Adelaide. This drawing is a response the heartache I feel when thinking about the death of such a world significant area. Mangroves are one of the best producers and protectors of coastal areas. This area is the resting and breeding ground for migratory birds and provides countless nurseries and habitat for numerous sea life. White Faced Dead Mangrove Heron depicts an endemic bird from this region drawn into a photograph of the area. The photograph shows the dying mangroves and wetlands with many dead plants and trees. The St Kilda Mangroves Alliance has formed to ensure best practice for their remediation in this globally significant area. <https://www.savestkildamangroves.com/home>.

***Masked Galah* | Tai Snaith**

This work was made as part of a series of collaged watercolour works I made of birds wearing masks, others in the series included a Black Cockatoo and a Rainbow Lorikeet. It was actually before the pandemic hit and masks became a way of life, way back during the Black Summer fires, where people had to get used to the inconvenience of wearing a mask during any outdoor activity because the air was full of smoke for so long. The work presents us with the obviously absurd anthropomorphist idea of an animal wearing a human mask, which at once kind of looks like a beak, but also helps us to feel empathy for all creatures suffering the effects of Climate Change, not just us. I couldn't help thinking 'If we can't breathe with all this smoke, imagine how the birds are feeling?' My ongoing kids picture book work depicts many different species of animals and aims to create a greater awareness of the duty of care we have to protect habitats in order to ensure the survival of these creatures we share the planet with.

***The Canary in the Coal Mine* | Studio 29B – Anthea Boesenberg, Anna Russell and Rhonda Nelson**

For most of the 20th century miners used canaries to detect the presence of gases like carbon monoxide and methane in coal mines. Canaries' rapid breathing and high metabolic rate, make them more sensitive to toxic gases than humans. Their illness or death signalled to miners that urgent action was necessary to save lives. Today we have sophisticated measures of atmospheric and environmental decline which are being ignored because action is politically inconvenient and a threat to vested interests. The cage, with its sad cargo of a dead canary, speaks of the urgency with which we need to act on climate change. The cage suggests the trap we are creating for ourselves by continuing business as usual. Our caged canary is in a circle of light, surrounded by coal. The text is an affectionate nod to the epitaph of comedian and environmental supporter, Spike Milligan.

Tick Tock | Simon Welsh

Tick Tock is a reminder to us all that we losing time when it comes to making real change. It's a blend of infrastructure, carbon emissions, the urban landscape and our protagonist. She is being led blindly; the outcome for her future is unclear. She has no direction; she balances on unstable legs, burdened with the future problems of indecisiveness and inaction.

Australia's Offering to the Pacific, 2050 | Autumn Tansey

Australia's suburban plug; the one that is displaced and forgotten, at the back of the kitchen cupboard, or in a container of broken pegs next to the laundry sink. This humble plug, as ready-made as it be, is dried and cracked in the heat of the expanding desert sun and no longer stops the water. But it can, still, slow it down for a time. Addressing Australia's international obligations, this poster seeks to highlight the direct correlation between our actions now, and their projected impact in the years to come. Plug, cracks, ship-wrecked boat, asylum seekers, endless beach, drought, quick fix, use-less object, broken, scant solutions, 2020-2030-2050, propaganda, weak gesture, future present, too late. The shrivelled plug; a devastating reminder of the consequences of our inaction unified in a single inadequate object. This is Australia's Offering to the Pacific, in 2050.

***Hot Air* | Judy Kuo**

Climate catastrophe is real and upon us, yet our Prime Minister's empty catchphrases and quips show just how out of touch our nation's leader is to the struggles experienced by those on the frontline of climate change. This piece features real quotes from our Prime Minister on climate action and social issues. His words are in direct relation to the rising sea levels and extreme temperatures that frontline communities endure as a result. The orange and black of this work is a reference to the 2019-20 bushfires, during which the Prime Minister made several of the remarks featured. Australians reeled against his lack of leadership and seriousness, while the nation was incandescent with rage. It was during this time images of an unnaturally orange sky were circulated, and the photo of the Mallacoota mother and son fleeing the bushfire by boat shocked us all. In many ways, "everyday Australians" enjoyed protection from the worst effects of climate change, but that summer we caught a glimpse of what it might look like to flee catastrophe in our own home. Yet our own Prime Minister proudly claims to have 'stopped the boats'. What happens when we are the ones on the boats? What happens when we realise the flight of refugees is also attributable to the same colonial violence behind climate change? And that that violence sometimes looks as hollow as it is devastating? And what of our Pacific neighbours who are already facing the disappearance of their homes? And First Nations communities in Australia dislocated from their own Country because colonisation has made it inhabitable? Hot air might be just that, but the consequences of inaction are severe and life-threatening.

***A Lot at Steak* | Gustavo Morales (he/him) Kattattak Studio**

Beef production is responsible for 41% of deforestation, and if cattle were a country they would be the third largest emitter of greenhouse gases. Questioning meat-centric diets is an essential step in face of the climate emergency. Sources: Our World in Data 2021, Project Drawdown 2021

***Make the Yarra Swimmable* | Sam Wallman**

Large sections of the Birrarung, or Yarra river, were formed by ancient lava flows from a volcano in the northeast of Victoria - today's waterway tracing the course of where the lava flow stopped. It has been a life force for people here for tens of thousands of years, serving the function of a vital vein or artery. But somehow it is maligned and dismissed by many of the people that live in this city. We are alienated from the environment by the double helix of settler colonialism and capitalism, and subsequently most people perceive the river as a two-dimensional, polluted, no-go-zone. Comedian Norman Gunston joked once that the river was so polluted that you could catch a bream already wrapped in newspaper. It's not quite as dirty as it once was - but it still doesn't receive the respect it deserves. This might also be in part because the river presents itself as dirtier than it is - it looks cloudy, because of fine silt and clay soils that float toward the surface, which is why some people call it "the upside down river". But the river gets healthier each year as we attempt to clean up our act, as communities click together to protect the ecosystems that the river represents.

Taking care of the waterway affords us an opportunity to redress all kinds of ills. The "Make the Yarra / Birrarung swimmable" street poster is an attempt to celebrate the efforts of people who care for the river, to make their work visible, while also making the argument that we can use the river as a symbol of healing, and attempt to repair all kinds of damage, as we try to understand that ourselves and the environment are indivisible. The challenges posed by cleaning up the river are immense, and present as multiple crises collapsing in together. But maybe we can be instructed by the fact that in both Chinese and Japanese languages, the word "crisis" is written with two symbols or characters -- one signifies "danger" and the other signifies "opportunity."

Displaced [TRANSplant V] | Donna Davis

Referencing climate-induced species displacement this work explores imagined ecological-adaptations and inter-species relationships; presenting an imagined future where plants adapt and uproot to explore new places to live in response to the climate crisis. The work responds to an art/science residency led by the Australian Tropical Herbarium, that is working to secure the future of Australia's climate-threatened tropical mountaintop plants by building ex-situ conservation reserves to 'backup' at-risk wild populations. Using the idea of transplanting as a metaphor, removing the species from their vulnerable ecological home to implant into foreign landscapes, this imagined work features plant-hybrids able to freely move around, exploring varied landscapes, seeking refuge and perhaps allies in new anthropogenic landscapes. Changes in climate will affect all life on Earth, forcing many species to migrate or adapt. Those that cannot escape or adapt are likely to become vulnerable to extinction; this work ruminates on their plight. Artwork created in response to the Tropical Mountain Plant Science Project; an art/science residency with the Australian Tropical Herbarium at James Cook University, supported by the Wet Tropics Management Authority. Plant-hybrids created by digitally merging images of propagated saplings with various vegetable root images photographed by the artist. Flora sapling featured: *Boea kinnearii* (listed as Endangered), photographed by the artist at the Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG).

Weight of Being | Olga Dziemidowicz

This poster acknowledges the uncomfortable and dark feelings we might be having about climate change and urges us to act despite them. It's a call for reclaiming personal power, courage, and action because our planet and our lives depend on it. Climate change is undoubtedly a hard, wicked problem but we shouldn't hide from the problem because it feels hard and uncomfortable. The black jumbled up black lines sitting heavily at the bottom illustrate the sinking feeling, emotional heaviness and emotions connected to any hard problem that feels overwhelming, and suggests that we embrace them. "Own the feeling and take action" anyway. The image in the background is a painting titled "Weight of Being" from my series "Vibrations of a new reality" created with the support of the City of Melbourne COVID-19 Arts Grants in 2020.