



Wild work

For this eco-artist duo, nature in their suburban Sydney neighbourhood serves as both canvas and muse.

Visitors will be able to observe a living, breathing artwork as part of an upcoming exhibition that pays homage to Sydney's once-prolific turpentine-ironbark forests. The exhibition 'Re-Wilding', at the Chrissie Cotter Gallery in Camperdown, will invite visitors to enter an immersive space, activated not just visually, but through scent, sound and scale.

The exhibition is the brainchild of Sydney-based eco artists, Annelies Jahn and Jane Burton Taylor, who have worked collaboratively for the past six years on site-specific projects and installations. Their practice focuses on deepening their connection to the natural world and inspiring others to do the same.

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Collaborating artists, Annelies Jahn (left) and Jane Burton Taylor (right). Photo credit: Beata Geyer

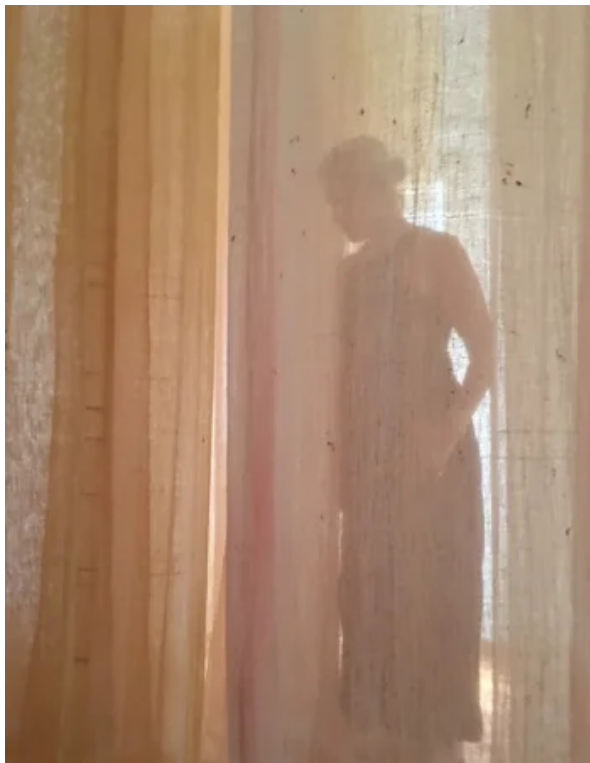


Plants for Threshold

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Before even entering the gallery, visitors will encounter two garden beds planted by the artists with endemic species – a practical and symbolic gesture that reimagines the original landscape. *Meadow*, a living artwork within the gallery itself, will showcase native plants the artists have grown from seed and seedlings. These plants will be gifted to visitors at a native plant workshop during the closing event.

Dyed textiles, created using indigenous plant species, will form an ethereal floor-to-ceiling installation titled *Refuge* in the main gallery. Similarly, *Disperse* draws on distilled botanical essences of native plants. Through these processes, the artists reveal the sensuous and endearing qualities of the local flora.



Refuge, a floor to ceiling installation in the main gallery

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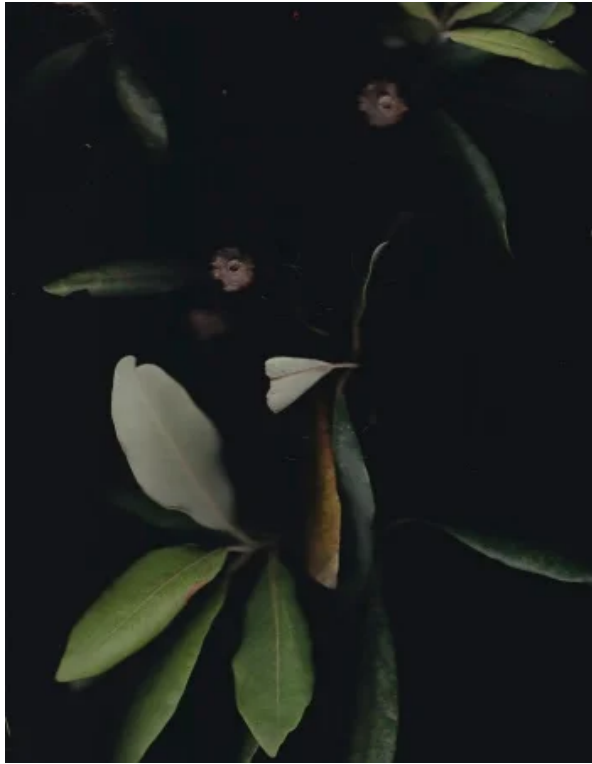
Distillation of floral essences for Disperse

Flatbed scans capture the beauty and idiosyncrasies of Sydney's ironbark species, while another artwork, *Torrangora Forest* (Torrangora is the local Aboriginal name for the species), records in film the few remaining stands of turpentine-ironbark forest: Wallumatta Reserve in North Ryde and at Macquarie University.



Flatbed scans of ironbark specimens for Disperse

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Playful yet striking, the series *100 Days* brings together discarded objects and natural materials gathered by the artists. The assemblages invite visitors to reflect on the impact of post-industrial colonial settlement on Gadigal land.



Assemblages of found objects from the series 100 Days

‘Re-Wilding’ is Annelies and Jane’s way of caring for Country and supporting a gentle recovery. While colonialism stripped much of the Sydney Basin for suburbia, the artists see hope in the idea that we can re-nature these spaces. “We believe in native gardens to support native wildlife,” they say. “Love the place where you live and look after it as best you can, is our philosophy.”

Annelies and Jane’s interest in indigenous plant life was inspired in part by Karen Smith, education officer at the Aboriginal Heritage Office in Freshwater, who will speak at the opening event on June 28. “We joined Karen on a walk at North Head, and simply being with her deepened our understanding and appreciation of the indigenous environment,”

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“In preparing this show, we’ve come to experience indigenous plants more intimately and are often in awe of their scent, appearance, and function – as well as the life they support.”

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Annelies and Jane hope their exhibition encourages people to engage with local flora, foster biodiversity in their homes and gardens, and develop a deeper care for the environment.

The duo express deep gratitude for the support they’ve received from the Inner West Council, which provided the gallery space. Much of their plant material was sourced from IndigiGrow at La Perouse and Harvest Seeds at Terrey Hills, as well as through generous contributions from individuals: John Macris, biodiversity planner at Macquarie University, Tim Berryman from Cumberland Plain Seeds, and Adam Ward from the Inner West Council’s nurseries. “What has really struck us,” they say, “is the support, goodwill and down-to-earth nature of the humans who work in this field – from council staff to the growers in native nurseries. These are people quietly working away, supporting and caring for Country 24/7.”

Annelies and Jane’s exhibition ‘Re-Wilding’ will run from June 26 to July 13 at Chrissie Cotter Gallery in Camperdown, Sydney. Go to innerwest.nsw.gov.au for more details.



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