



Peta West
PRINTMAKER. ARTIST.

ARTIST CATALOGUE

COLLECTION *III*

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Photography by Peta West

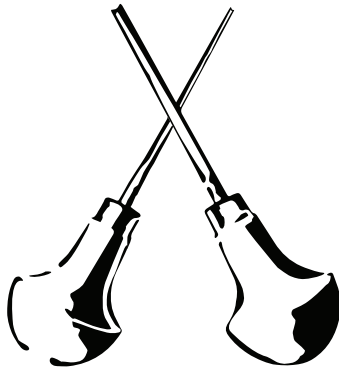
Words by Alice Sandner

Graphic Design by Michelle Lorimer

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INTRODUCTION

This catalogue showcases the third body of work created by printmaker Peta West. Living on the South Coast of New South Wales, West draws inspiration from the surrounding coast and bushland, specifically that of Lake Conjola. A place where the lake opens to the ocean, where stoic Banksias and Gum trees hug the shoreline and where the peak of Didthul (Pigeon House Mountain) silhouettes the western skyline. To walk through this area, the energy of the bush is palpable. Despite the realism with which West portrays her subjects, it is rather her ability to capture an experience of sublimity that is most affecting in her work: a feeling of complete immersion within a living ecosystem.

These images further consolidate the unique style of expansive, monochromatic printmaking that has become synonymous with her practice. Black Cockatoos, enigmatic on paper are once again a point of focus, as are the Coastal Banksias that line the South Coast region. Yet, there is nonetheless a perceptible shift in artistic direction. West has drawn inspiration from the smaller plants and creatures that inhabit the area. Orchids, Ferns, Blue-banded Bees and Emperor Gum Moths meander through the prints, taking on a fresh significance. When working on this series, West regularly ventured into the surrounding landscape and was taken by the activity of the understory. Often overlooked, insects play a vital role in the life of the bush as important pollinators, a food source for other creatures as well as providing nutrients for the soil.

In addition to their place within the larger ecosystem, many of these creatures have important associated symbolism. Moths in particular, are powerful signifiers of transformation.

Their life cycles are reminders of the impermanence of existence. As they morph from egg, to caterpillar, to cocoon, to moth, they are driven by an evolutionary predisposition.

For West, this is a powerful reminder to trust in the ebb and flow of our own lives, to have faith in the process even if we cannot see exactly where we are headed. From something small comes a mighty story of integrity and the ability to evolve.

As a result, many of the large prints in this series emphasize the small. *Rhythm of Summer* (2022) and *Lovesong* (2022) both provide insight into the happenings of the understory. In line with this new found area of artistic exploration, West has created several smaller prints of her insect protagonists. The form of an *Emperor Gum Moth* (2022), *Double Drummer Cicada* (2022) and *Dragonfly* (2022) are portrayed in detail before a blackened circular background, as if introducing them to us as an audience and showcasing their innate beauty.

Another point of divergence has been West's experimentation with Reduction Printing. This method has prompted the introduction of colour into her practice. Each tonal layer is taken from the same piece of linoleum, so carving must be completed gradually, printing colours sequentially. Works such as *Coastal Banksia* (2022) and *Nodding Orchid* (2022) are examples of this new printing technique.

Ultimately, this series can be read as a visual repository of memories from within the landscape. With reverence, West continues to capture the creatures and plants that go about their lives all around us. They are windows into the interconnectivity and astounding beauty of the coastal ecosystem on the South Coast.

*This linocut art was inspired from and created on Yuin Country.
In the spirit of reconciliation I would like to acknowledge the
traditional custodians of this land that I create on, the Yuin People.
I would like to pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging.*





TO BE A WANDERER

Completed in the year 2022
Hand printed on Japanese paper 46gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
33 X 60cm image size
Prussian blue ink
Limited edition of 15 prints



GATHERING OF THE BLUE BEES

Completed in the year 2022
Hand printed on Japanese paper 46gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
34 X 58cm image size
Prussian blue ink
Limited edition of 15 prints







Lyrebirds are notoriously reclusive creatures. Most of us are very familiar with their song, but have rarely observed their behaviour. Lovesong (2022) recreates this moment in print. Bowed, tail thrown over his head, the Lyrebird will flutter his tail before the female.

Throughout the composition, West has further honed in on the life of the undergrowth. Ferns, Fungi, Hardenbergia and Orchids are arranged in the foreground as a collage of encounters taken from walks through the area. The lives of Lyrebirds as well as of the Fungi, plants and insects that are often overlooked or unseen is showcased, opening our eyes to the diversity around us.

LOVESONG

Completed in the year 2022
Hand printed on Japanese paper 46gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
90 X 60cm image size
Prussian blue ink
Limited edition of 15 prints





ALIGHT

Completed in the year 2021
Hand printed on Japanese paper 46gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
60 X 60cm image size
Prussian blue ink
Limited edition of 30 prints



SHE-OAK DWELLERS

Completed in the year 2022
Hand printed on Japanese paper 46gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
60 X 60cm image size
Prussian blue ink
Limited edition of 15 prints







Perhaps most reminiscent of Collection II, *Guardians of the Budawangs* (2022) reminds us of the integral presence Black Cockatoos have in the bush. Similar to previous large scale works such as *This is Yuin Country* (2021), we are once again invited to view the landscape through the bird's gaze. As if with their permission, our eye is lead further into the composition towards the mountains on the horizon. Emperor Gum Moths flutter through the print whilst Cycads ripple out beneath the arms of Gum Trees. One of the oldest seed producing plants in the world, Cycads have evolved to withstand and rejuvenate with fire. In the blackened aftermath, they are usually one of the first plants to re-sprout. After the catastrophic 2019-2020 bushfires, these plants were an important part of the landscape's recovery. Their inclusion alongside Emperor Gum Moths, alludes to the power of transformation, a binding theme through these works. It also invites us to consider the healing power of the bush and perhaps our own place within it.

GUARDIANS OF THE BUDAWANGS

Completed in the year 2022
Hand printed on Japanese paper 46gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
90 X 60cm image size
Prussian blue ink
Limited edition of 15 prints







Double Drummer Cicadas dance across the paper, winding their way amongst Banksias in full bloom. Immediately we are transported to the sound of high summer: warm drawn out evenings underscored by their rhythmic hum. Yet, despite the realism contained in the foreground, the work's depth has been contained. Rather than billowing out towards a horizon, our gaze remains fixed on the foreground. Abstracted silhouettes of Banksia limbs informed by a minimal use of line and negative space frame the hyper real activity before us. By straddling the realms of abstraction and realism, West has successfully positioned us high up in the canopy, immersed within the life of the tree.

RHYTHM OF SUMMER

Completed in the year 2022
Hand printed on Japanese paper 46gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
62 X 45cm image size
Prussian blue ink
Limited edition of 15 prints





*Clockwise from top,
ALIGHT and SHE-OAK
DWELLERS*





GUARDIANS OF THE BUDAWANG

*All prints in Collection III
are framed in a Natural Oak frame*





*Clockwise from top,
COASTAL BANKSIA,
UNFOLDING,
WILD WARATAH,
NODDING ORCHID*





*All prints in Collection III
are framed in a Natural Oak frame*







Greens and browns shape the form of the Banksia, seed pods framed by a ramble of dark leaves. Utilising Reduction printing, West has introduced colour into her body of work. Without being situated within a larger landscape, Coastal Banksia (2022) evokes that of a portrait; a focused study of a unique subject emphasising their individuality. Given West's attuned sense of empathy for the surrounding environment, to consider a Banksia on these terms is not surprising.

The work can also be considered as an exploration into simplicity, an act of pairing back within the context of a practice that is chiefly defined by expansive detailing on a large scale. Through this vignette, West is pushing herself to explore new artistic possibilities. Despite its simplicity, depth remains a point of focus, but instead of achieving its effect through line, West creates the illusion through tonal changes across the composition.

COASTAL BANKSIA

Completed in the year 2022
Hand printed on Italian paper 220gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
45 X 30cm image size
11-layer colour reduction print
Limited edition of 7 prints





NODDING ORCHID

Completed in the year 2022
Hand printed on Italian paper 220gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
20 X 50cm image size
8-layer reduction print
Limited edition of 5 prints



WILD WARATAH

Completed in the year 2022
Hand printed on Italian paper 220gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
40 X 50cm image size
9-layer reduction print
Limited edition of 9 prints





UNFOLDING

Completed in the year 2022
Hand printed on Italian paper 220gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
30 X 30cm image size
9-layer colour reduction print
Limited edition of 7 prints



JONES BEACH

Completed in the year 2022
Hand printed on Italian paper 220gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
19 X 23cm image size
8-layer colour reduction print
Limited edition of 5 prints





OLD MAN BANKSIA

Completed in the year 2022
Hand printed on Italian paper 220gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
38 X 50cm image size
8-layer colour reduction print
Limited edition of 7 prints



FLANNEL FLOWERS

Completed in the year 2022
Hand printed on Italian paper 220gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
38 X 50cm image size
7-layer colour reduction print
Limited edition of 8 prints





INTUITION

Completed in the year 2022
Hand printed on Italian paper 220gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
59 X 28cm image size
7-layer colour reduction print
Limited edition of 10 prints





DOUBLE DRUMMER CICADA

Completed in the year 2022
Hand printed on Japanese paper 46gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
28 X 23cm image size
Prussian blue ink
Limited edition of 15 prints



DRAGONFLY

Completed in the year 2022
Hand printed on Japanese paper 46gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
26 X 23cm image size
Prussian blue ink
Limited edition of 15 prints





EMPEROR GUM MOTH

Completed in the year 2022
Hand printed on Japanese paper 46gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
24 X 23cm image size
Prussian blue ink
Limited edition of 15 prints



BLUE AGAVE AND THE MONARCH

Completed in the year 2022
Hand printed on Japanese paper 46gsm
Hand carved on silk linoleum
30 X 45cm image size
Prussian blue ink
Limited edition of 15 prints



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Peta West is a practicing contemporary Australian printmaker whose work taps into the sublimity of her surrounding environment on the South Coast of New South Wales. Working primarily with linoleum, West creates immersive large-scale prints that beguile audiences with their intricate detailing and depth. West's prints are worlds unto their own, each a self-contained universe, where plants and animals appear in abundance. They are odes to the natural beauty and resilience of the Australian bush.

Prior to printmaking, West was a photographer for over two decades, a medium which allowed her to develop an eye for composition, depth and balance. This initial training in darkrooms forever instilled in her a love for monochrome, as well as the tactile process of working an image out of a medium.

Since taking up printmaking in 2016, her work is increasingly gaining the attention of galleries and collectors alike. Her recent exhibitions including: Peta West, Milton WorkHub, NSW, 2020; Group Exhibition, White Wall Projects, Berrima, NSW, 2021, a near sell-out show: Songs of the Earth at Van Rensburg Galleries, Milton, NSW, 2021 and her 2nd exhibition Birdsong at Van Rensburg Galleries 2022.

In 2020, West was a finalist in the Arts in the Valley Art Prize, Kangaroo Valley, NSW. In the following year, 2021, she was a finalist in both The Ravenswood Australian Women's Art Prize, Sydney, and the Burnie Print Prize, Tasmania. This year West was again a finalist in the Arts in the Valley Art Prize, Kangaroo Valley, NSW. West was a finalist in the 2022 Waverly Art Prize, Bondi NSW where she was awarded the Mayors Prize, Highly Commended, for *This is Yuin Country* (2021).

THANK YOU



Thank you for taking the time to view
my work! To learn more about what
I do please visit petawest.com.au

Peta West



