



UNRAVEL

jennifer eadie and  
adrienne semmens

accompanying texts to  
exhibition

if place is understood as something lived/ how do we speak of  
it/ without causing a fracture?  
there is vulnerability when we  
say: I too am part of that place/  
too many colours/ it is not  
something that can be held/ always unravelling.

The body of work in this exhibition explores relationship to place. Embedded in the work is our acknowledgment of Country, always aware that our practice and processes are created on and with Kaurna Yarta.

What if authentic relationship to place is an act of opening that fractures a stable sense of identity? What tensions arise when we, with mixed heritage, attempt to articulate a sense of connection to land that is not our ancestral country?

Any attempt to enact this connection or belonging demands an acceptance that we will be constantly giving, losing, reorientating ourselves in order to negotiate – make meaningful and respectful – this relationship with country that is not ours.

UNRAVEL responds to these questions indirectly, as a means of acknowledging the difficulty and complexity of not being able to articulate a resolute response to these themes, despite being so important to us.

The exhibition is grounded by natural elements and textiles as a gesture, hands outwards, continuing lineage to country.

We would like to again acknowledge that this work was created on Kaurna Yarta. We are thankful to Rosemary Wanganeen for welcoming us to country at the exhibition opening.

## SCULPTURE

### FALSE CAPER | EUPHORBIA TERRACINA

Euphorbia' is the name of a Greek physician (1st century B.C.) who discovered the medicinal uses of this plant.

'Terracina', a coastal city in Italy, is the plant's home. Here, the plant was/is used to cure fever and induce vomiting.

False Caper was first documented in South Australia in 1903. Records note that reasons for the arrival and dispersal of the plant are unclear. It just appeared. Currently categorized as a noxious weed. It is found in wastelands, dunes, and riverbeds.

When broken, the stem bleeds a white sap that is toxic and irritating if touched; causing the skin to blister.

## SCULPTURE

### FEATHER SPEAR-GRASS | AUSTROSTIPA ELEGANTISSIMA

A perennial grass native to southern Australia, reaching from Western to Southern Australia, across to New South Wales

It grows up to 2 metres and is sometimes seen growing through low bushes.

Flowering from August to January, it is commonly known as feather spear grass, for its fluffy, silver flowers.

It is an important habitat and food source for a range of species, including lizards, small birds, and butterflies.

The grass is found in all regions of South Australia other than Lake Eyre and is now valued by local councils as part of their rejuvenation and remnant native vegetation plans.

**MONOPRINT**  
**(love letter backward)**

**FALSE CAPER | EUPHORBIA TERRACINA**



I read that your name refers to your

I read that your sap/ saliva causes blistering of the skin, if  
touched when broken

when eaten, the stem/ the sap will make one throw up: violent  
matter  
All of it/ up

you hold the cards of medicinal native and invasive weed, what a  
balancing act.

of this balancing, I have found myself asking you, along with the  
stones and water: is it ok if I find some kind of family in you/ your  
colours?

I read government records that are unsure of how you arrived/  
you got here when there was too much violence: 1903.  
but you are from Italy/  
where half of my soul is from.

and with that, I ask you:  
mi offrirai una famiglia che non ho qui?, and why not, we have  
both found ourselves here?

you reply:

sure, siamo entrambi ospiti qui, ma questo non ti impedisce di  
diventare questo posto.,  
it just means our relationship is reciprocal/  
not easy.

and with that on tongue/ I hold you like armour to test our  
agreement:  
to my chest where I breathe in, holding  
waiting for an opening.

as I hold you/ I say:

it is ok to break the boundary of our skin because I have broken  
your back to get here.

I wonder about how much of you I could balance, holding?

I ask again:

what do you and the river come up with when you are  
carried by her/ soaking, becoming sweet?

And again:

what if I bring up everything from holding you close?  
maybe then I/we can start again?

You say: listen to all that unravelling/ you need to just carry and  
let go slowly.

**MONOPRINT**  
**(love letter backward)**

**FEATHER SPEAR-GRASS | AUSTROSTIPA ELEGANTISSIMA**



We have grown together, to call this our home.

Your kin, remnants of this place. Under the trees, who hold,  
so many stories.

Watching soft banks poured hard

An act of acknowledgement. We striped our garden of the neat  
line, evenly spaced.

We planted you.

Burden, so real, visitors, here to stay. Tread lightly on this once  
grassy plain.

You reach and grow through the now dying shrub, your flowers, a  
silvery soft lining.

We hold you, twisting between our fingers. Brushing down our  
skin.

Soft touch, like a whisper.

My sons call to the places we visit,

but we are always on country. Unceded.

I pull you from my hair. You linger by our door.  
Pieces of you everywhere.

Spilling over my body and framing my face. We pause.

We have grown together, this place, our home.

Still.

Grass underfoot and eyes to the sky. Grateful, a corridor they say,  
“Native grasses grow

here”.

## ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

UNRAVEL is a collaboration between South Australian based artist and writer **Jennifer Eadie** and dance practitioner, **Adrienne Semmens**. Jennifer and Adrienne were recently awarded a Delving into Dance/Critical Path Commission (2020) and undertook a collaborative Breakout Residency at The Mill (2020/21).

**Jennifer Eadie** is a writer, artist, and academic living on Kaurna Yarta in South Australia. She grew up on Taribelang Bunda Country and has European–mongrel heritage. Her creative practice is interdisciplinary and place–based. Her collaborative work with Adrienne explores the relationship between identity and place. Her individual practice is motivated by the capacity of post–invasion Australia to censor the multiple histories, agencies and stories that are embedded in place. Via installations that combine text, artwork and performance, her work aims to respond to and undermine this censorship. Her recent work has been shared with TEXT Journal, CORDITE Poetry Review and The Mill.

[jennifereadie.cargo.site](http://jennifereadie.cargo.site) | [@vito\\_the\\_saint\\_of\\_lost\\_dogs](https://twitter.com/vito_the_saint_of_lost_dogs)

**Adrienne Semmens** is a dance practitioner and descendant of the Barkindji People of NSW. Explorations of identity and place continue to be recurring themes within her practice, evident within her own work and ongoing collaboration with Jennifer. Choreographic highlights include Immerse, commissioned by Australian Dance Theatre whilst Adrienne was the company's 2021 Associate Artist, and Thread (2020). Adrienne works closely with Tjarutja Dance Theatre Collective led by Gina Rings and has enjoyed performing in Inma, Our Corka Bubs and the 2021 Tarnanthi Festival opening event. Adrienne continues to be engaged in many education and community projects, such as co–founding the First Nations Choreographic Lab in 2021 and previous role with The Australian Ballet as a Dance Presenter for their Education Ensemble:

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## **INQUIRIES ABOUT ARTWORK**

Inquiries can be sent to: Adele Sliuzas, Visual Arts Curator:  
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