



James Tylor and Rebecca Selleck
Fire Country, Kangaroo Island 2 2022
digital photograph on hahnemuhle paper
50 x 50cm

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Artist Statement

The Fire Country series addresses the physical and cultural significance of fire in Australia. It draws the burnt landscape into the domestic space, revealing its intrinsic beauty as part of key environmental mechanisms. These works are representative of our contemporary relationship with fire and potential for better engagement in the future.

The black and white photographs on burnt timber frames features photographs taken from various ecosystems in NSW, ACT and SA that have experienced catastrophic fires in recent years. We live on a continent whose unique ecosystems have evolved in a symbiosis with fire. Most of the country's plants and animals rely on seasonal burns for germination, regeneration, and preservation from catastrophic fires. Emblematic of this is the Eucalypt genus, whose shoots we see emerging from burnt limbs.

Fire is always here. First Nations people learnt over millennia how to control destructive wildfires and turn them into low intensity cultural burns. These burns are distinct to each ecosystem and timed perfectly to ensure the best outcome for the germination of seeds, clearing of dead plant material for new growth, and the safety of endemic flora and fauna. Contemporary Australia lives in fear of fire. With colonisation, First Nations' knowledge of Country was overlaid with incompatible perceptions of land management. Urban

sprawl, land clearing, and avoidance of fire has led to a point today where catastrophic wildfires cost lives, species and ecosystems.

Fire Country attempts to embrace fire in Australia as a part of our collective culture. Referencing the symbiotic relationship that fire has with our continent's landscapes, the work captures the intrinsic beauty of this interplay through the iconic Eucalypt. Through this series of photography we want to offer not just sorrow for what we've lost, but also hope for our future.

Rebecca Selleck | Biography (b. 1986)

Rebecca Selleck is a Canberra-based artist with a focus on interactive sculpture and installation, blending animatronics, assemblage, casting and sound. She completed her Bachelor of Visual Arts at the ANU School of Art with First Class Honours, majoring in Sculpture and Art Theory, and also holds a Bachelor of Communications, majoring in Creative Writing and Literary Studies. She uses her practice to reciprocally investigate and challenge her own perceptions within a culture of conflicting truths. Her work overlays time and place to express the need for human accountability and the painful complexity of animal and environmental ethics in Australia.

She is the recipient of multiple awards, including the prestigious Peter and Lena Karmel Anniversary Prize for best graduating student at the ANU School of Art, and has exhibited across Australia and in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and Venice, Italy. She was a finalist in the inaugural 2017 Ramsay Art Prize at the Art Gallery of South Australia and in 2018 the Arte Laguna Prize in Venice, Italy; the Macquarie Art Prize; the Ravenswood Art Prize (Highly Commended); and the Churchie Art Prize. Her work is currently held in public collections at the Museum of Australian Democracy, Parkes ACT, Western Plains Cultural Centre, Dubbo NSW, Bendigo Art Gallery, VIC, and Shepparton Art Museum, VIC.

James Tylor | Biography (b.1986)

James Tylor is a multi-disciplinary visual artist whose practice explores and recontextualises Australian cultural ideas and representations through the perspectives of his multicultural heritage, that comprises Nunga (Kurna Miyurna), Māori (Te Arawa) and European (British, Dutch and Norwegian) ancestry.

Tylor is interested in Indigenous and European colonial history with a particular focus on South Australia and the indigenous plants and landscape of the Kurna people and how this history plays into present day issues around cultural identity and the environment. The artist specialises in experimental and historical photographic processes often employing a hybrid of analogue and digital photographic techniques to create contemporary Daguerreotypes. He turns the objectifying gaze of 19th century photography from one that documented a 'disappearing' Aboriginal culture onto our current landscape and our shared future care and responsibility to this ecosystem. He opens up new ways of seeing place, environment and culture.

Initially Tylor trained and worked as a carpenter in Australia and Denmark before dedicating himself to an intense period of art studies where following a Bachelor of Visual Arts (Photography) at South Australian School of Art, Adelaide in 2011 he completed Honours in Fine Arts (Photography) at the Tasmanian School of Art, Hobart and then graduated with a Masters in Visual Arts and Design (Photography) at SASA in 2013. The year after graduating Tylor won the Macquarie Group Emerging Artist Prize and in 2021 he was awarded the prestigious Bowness Photography Prize in addition to being a finalist in major awards over the last eight years.

Tylor's work is regularly selected by curators for inclusion in group exhibitions that include the Adelaide Biennial: Free State, AGASA (2022), The National,

AGNSW (2021) and Cutting-edge: 21st century photography, Monash Gallery of Art.

Tylor is widely represented in major public institutional collections and notable international collections including Kluge Ruhe Collection, USA.

James Tylor is represented by GAGPROJECTS, Adelaide & Berlin and Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne