



CENTER FOR ART + ENVIRONMENT at the Nevada Museum of Art

Mandy Martin: Environmental Projects

Collection CAE1512

Introduction/Abstract

This archive consists of a suite of seven collaborative environmental art projects organized by painter Mandy Martin from 1995 through 2005. Materials include correspondence, slides, exhibition ephemera, photographs, digital images, and research materials.

Biographical Note: Mandy Martin

The archive consists of a suite of Australian projects included the work of many artists, scientists and writers listed below, but the principal organizer and fundraiser is the painter Mandy Martin, one of Australia's foremost environmental artists with works depicting the diversity of the Australian landscape with an intelligent awareness of conservation issues. Her works are held in many public and private collections including the National Gallery of Australia who have her full archive, most state collections and regional galleries. In the USA she is represented in the Guggenheim Museum New York, the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, the Center for Art + Environment at the Nevada Museum have acquired her complementing environmental art project archive and her work is represented in many private collections. She has a wide audience for her art and has given extensive lectures and writings about the land and environmental issues. Her artwork has been included in the NSW secondary school curriculum for many years. She lives on the land in the Central West region of New South Wales, Australia.

Scope and Content

This archive consists of a suite of collaborative environmental art projects organized by painter Mandy Martin from 1995 through 2005. They are unique not only to Australia, but also more globally in that the participating scientists and writers were also asked to make art.

The projects begin with *Tracks: Back O'Bourke*, done in 1995-1996. This was an environmental study that took place in the north western portion of the state of New South Wales, Australia, known as the Western Division. It is an area that represents almost half of the entire state. Martin created all the artworks, and historian Paul Sinclair from Melbourne University contributed an essay. Martin engaged the grazier and conservationist Guy Fitzhardinge as an environment consultant (and he subsequently became her husband). Peter Haynes curated the exhibition and coordinated its tour around Australia.

Watersheds: The Paroo to the Warrego done in 1998-1999, was an environmental study that focused on the upper part of the Murray-Darling Basin catchment, The Paroo and Warrego Rivers, whose headwaters are in the Carnarvon Range in the central part of the state of Queensland, Australia. The study is based on an art project by painter Mandy Martin, who engaged the historian and writer Tom Griffiths and environmental consultant Guy Fitzhardinge.

Inflows: The Channel Country in 2001 was the third project that focused on The Channel Country of the Lake Eyre Basin. The Basin includes large parts of the state of South Australia, the Northern Territory and the state of Queensland; as well as a small part of the western portion of the state of New South Wales. Also, a focus of the project was Coopers Creek, which lies in North Rivers region in the state of New South Wales. The project examined the watershed upstream of the Lake Eyre ephemeral lake basin and to assist in this journey, the South African historian Jane Carruthers joined the team of Mandy Martin, Guy Fitzhardinge and Tom Griffiths. As with each of these three projects, Martin's paintings alluded strongly to—and sometimes quoted in the



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paintings themselves—the 19th century explorers of the region. *Tracks*, *Watersheds* and *Inflows* were like one continuous project where much of the research and field work overlapped and flowed one right into the other.

Land\$cape: Gold & Water in 2002 was a major expansion of the project design, a large-group collaborative and interdisciplinary project among writers and artists that produced an exhibition and book combining art and text. It focused on the Cadia Hill Gold Mine, owned by Newcrest Mining Limited and located on 10,000 hectares of natural habitat and agricultural land alongside the Belubula River, in the Lachlan River catchment, part of Murray Darling Basin in the southeastern portion the state of New South Wales. It is also adjacent to the property owned by the artist and her husband.

The artists engaged in the project were: Marty Huehner, Meg Buchanan, Mandy Martin, John Chappell, John Reid, George Main, Peggy Spratt, Wendy Teakel, Ken Hutchinson, Meta Rothery, Belinda Jessup, Lex Beardsell, Naomi Greschke, Sarah Ryan, Nicola Dickson, Penny Stott, Matt Higgins, Gerry Payne, and Oscar Blyth. The writers engaged in the project were: Mandy Martin, John Chappell, Guy Fitzhardinge, George Main, and Sarah Ryan. Curator Peter Haynes organized the exhibition, which toured to four art centers.

The Lachlan: Blue-Gold in 2003 was a subsequent project dealing with further issues of the Lachlan and water use, that took place in the southeastern portion the state of New South Wales. It also was a collaborative effort done by artists and writers that include: William Bennett & Rebecca Dowling, John Chappell, Nicola Dickson, Melissa Egan, Trish Freeman, Gabrielle Heywood, Matt Higgins, Ken Hutchinson, Belinda Jessup, Jessica Leskela, Mandy Martin, Joy McCann, Nazanin Moradi, Bridget Nicholson, Kirstie Rea, John Reid, Sarah Ryan, Marzena Wasikowska, Carolyn Young, Sara Beavis, John Chappell and Sarah Ryan. The project resulted in an exhibition, catalog and was included, along with *Land\$capes*, in a final presentation by Mandy Martin and Trisha Carroll called, *Absence and Presence Sep. 9-10, 2005*.

Strata: Deserts Past Present and Future was an environmental art project about a Significant Place, that was focused in the area of Alice Springs in the Northern Territory, Australia. A project, book, and exhibition from 2005, again expanded the project design by including Aboriginal artists and community members. It focused on diverse kinds of knowledge and ways of knowing place, in this case Puritjarra, a rock shelter in the Cleland Hills, about seven hours west of Alice Springs by vehicle. It is part of the country of the people of the Ikuntji/Haasts Bluff community, and the site of extremely significant archaeological finds in the 1980s.

Indigenous knowledge depends on country—country is the context for knowledge and the place where knowledge is significant. Western science, by contrast, typically differentiates between the knowing and the place- in many cases, it seeks knowledge systems, Indigenous, scientific and artistic. By locating both ways of knowing in a common place the project sought to create a co-understanding. An exhibition of art works from all the artists associated with *Strata* was curated by Tim Rollason at the Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, 18-24 July 2005.

The artists engaged in the project were: Mandy Martin, Narputta Nangala Jugadai, Daisy Napaltjarri Jugadai, Molly Napaltjarri Jugadai, Anmanari Napanangka Nolan, Eunice Napanangka Jack, Colleen Napanangka Kantawarra, Alice Nampitjinpa, Linda Ngijlarrpa Naparulla, Guy Fitzhardinge, Jake Gillen, Libby Robin, Mike Smith. The writers engaged in the project were: Libby Robin, Mandy Martin, Mike Smith, Guy Fitzhardinge, Jake Gillen. Some of Martin's paintings from this project were included in the earlier 2003 exhibition organized by the Australian National University, *Lachlan: Blue-Gold*.

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This archive is currently in process.