

MEDIA RELEASE

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Murrumbidgee River [26 days]

Tuggeranong Arts Centre invites you to experience the Murrumbidgee River through a collection of 28 photographs.

The photographs, taken by Alan Lee and Jonquil Mackey over twenty-six (non-consecutive) days, capture the river in its widely varying landscapes and environs.

The exhibition depicts tranquil reflections, deserted roads, industrial details and the symmetrical beauty of irrigated agricultural land.

“Overall, we hope people will get a sense of the river’s journey and its diverse beauty,” Jonquil said

While both artists went into the project with ideas about water and natural resource management and the use of the river for recreation, they both came away with unexpected insights.

“I expected the river to be more consistent but its changeability really struck me - from its lolling flow through the countryside to its diversions into weirs and reservoirs,” Alan said.

“It was so wonderful waking up in beautiful unknown places and spending time with the River, but I was surprised by the diversity and quantity of food produced in the region,” Jonquil said.

The photographs were taken over the course of several years and many long camping trips and were inspired by the discovery that it takes a drop of water twenty-six days to travel from the River’s headwaters in the Snowy Mountains to its Murray junction in Victoria.

Both artists say they were particularly mesmerised by the Murrumbidgee’s source and where it empties into the Murray River. “When we started this project, we both had a good sense of the river from a historical perspective but very little perspective of its diverse path and changing environs.”

This exhibition forms the first chapter in what the artists hope will be an ongoing story. “Next, we’d like to discover the story of the River and the people; how Indigenous people interact with the river and indeed all the people living along the river.”

Janette Lindesay, Professor of Climatology and Deputy Director of the Fenner School of Environment and Society at the Australian National University, will open the Exhibition at 6.30pm on Thursday 1 September.

The exhibition concludes on Saturday 1 October.

Tuggeranong’s proximity to the Murrumbidgee River coupled with the highly contentious issue of land use and conservation within the context of current local development make this a fitting exhibition for the Arts Centre’s 2016 program, which is themed Cultural Resistance.