

Water objects — echoes
Louise Boscacci & Toni Warburton



The Cross Art Projects, Sydney

11 March to April 2017

water objects – echoes

Louise Boscacci and Toni Warburton

Cover image: Louise Boscacci, water and breath, 2017 (detail)

11 March to 8 April 2017

The Cross Art Projects

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Contents

- 4 About water objects – echoes, Jo Holder
- 10 Before we drown we may die of thirst, Louise Boscacci
- 12 Coal clay water wood, Toni Warburton
- 16 About the artists and guest speaker

Water objects – echoes

The installation *water objects – echoes*, by eminent ceramic artists Louise Boscacci and Toni Warburton, presents an internal logic based on the artists' experiences of working with environmental concepts as a theme connecting the earth (clay) and water in order to look at what domestic objects can bring to broader discussions on climate. The works claim the exhibition space as an environment for discussion by establishing a *call and response* between the objects. In this way, and by these limits, the artwork is politicised. The project is one of a long-running series of exhibitions about artists who share independently developed conversations. The idea relates to how artists make work: by collaboration, communication and exchange.



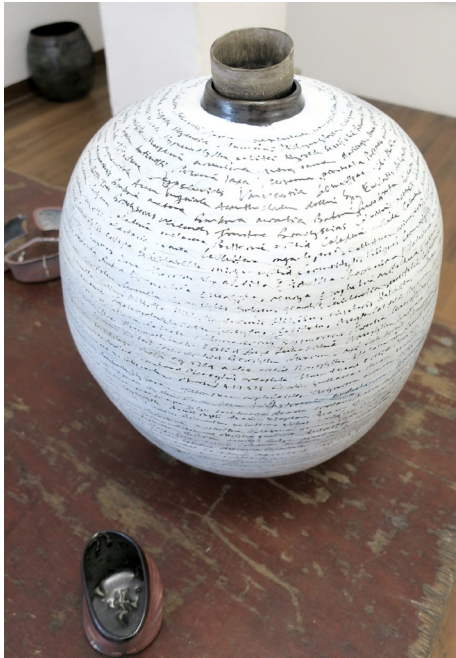
Louise Boscacci, *cloud taster beaker 1*, 2017, ceramic, southerly change arrival 6 February.



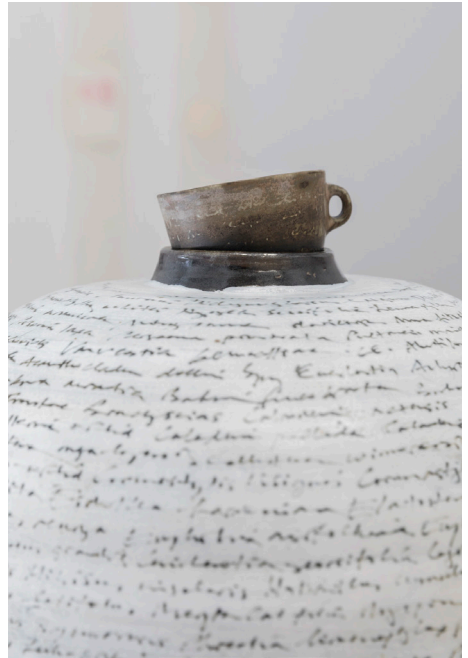
Louise Boscacci, *water and breath* 2017, process object detail,
Wingecarribee (paper) clay wml, glazes, 16 x 13.5 x 5 cm.



Louise Boscacci, *Winge dam process object*, 2016-17. Wingecarribee dam-dug clay: dry, and as a settled slip mix in February 2017 rainwater (volumetric glass flask); three paperclay water object stages from raw to high-fired ceramic; exploratory protoceramics; pressed flower petal from a giant poppy grown as a native bee pollinizer, summer 2015. Work in process.

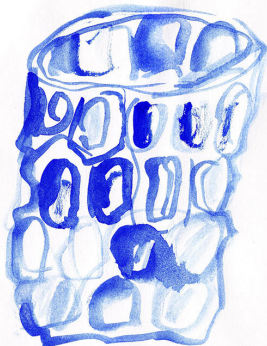


Louise Boscacci, *h2o*, 2017. Water globe, drinker, palm cup; engraved stonewares with Shoalhaven River (Wodi Wodi, Bundanon) yellow ochre; engraved porcelain (palm cup)



Louise Boscacci, *h2o*, 2017. Detail. Photo Silversalt

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Toni Warburton, sketchbook image



Toni Warburton, *untitled*, 2017. Watercolour, from *notes for water objects – echoes*.

Before we drown we may die of thirst

The electric pulse of thunderstorm and sustained rain at midnight broke the exhausting run of record-breaking temperatures on the east coast, and here, in the Wingecarribee of Gundungurra country. Water, like oxygen, is energetically elemental, at once intimate-molecular, hyperlocal, and planetary in its meeting cycles and exchange work. All else, the chaos to bios of everyday life, is a bonus. The rainwater tank, close to empty after three summer months of little rain, is audibly refilling. The small remnant peat wetland, fed by a spring, supporting a circular inner reservoir, co-species rich, and fenced off from the straw-dry rural paddocks, is now collecting, soaking up and sounding this generous cool change. The comings and goings of water in an epoch of critical climate change and endangerment is a material matter uppermost in mind when each daily mouthful is directly collected from the gaseous blue chamber of a runaway-warming atmosphere.

The water objects gathered for this series reflect this a-bodied interconnectivity in situated place, feeling-thinking across and from the idiolocal, and with more-than-human denizens who also live and die in these shared watery grounds. Three responses have been elicited: objects rendered from working with local clay reclaimed from a farmer's paddock dug for a new dam, the in-progress processes of this material exploration and its seedings, and an ensemble of water reservoirs for holding water and a time-traveling archive of engraved names of plants, animals and ecological communities on recent Australian lists of vulnerability in the Anthropocene.

Louise Boscacci, artist statement, 7 February 2017

Title source: Weiss, K 2015, 'Before we drown we may die of thirst', *Nature News*, 526, pp.624–627, 29 October.

List of Threatened Flora (extinct since Euro-colonisation, endangered, vulnerable etc). See EPBC at <http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/about/epbc-act-lists>



Louise Boscacci, table: *night water, boobook calling*, 2017, water jar, drinker, 3 water handholds, cover.
Wall: *steam and cut*, 2017. Wall: *wall duo*. Shelf: *Winge dam process object*, 2016-7, *Wingecarribee dam-dug*
clay: dry, and as a settled slip mix in February 2017 rainwater. Work in process. Photo Silversaltt

Coal clay water wood

For travelling lightly, a traditional Aboriginal woman's kit contains a hand-sized wooden water scoop used to dig and draw water (once a recurrent resource) from the sandy ground of soaks. An elliptical shape, hand carved from a hardwood boll, its convex surface is engraved with a scatter of emu's tracks. A visual analogue, it resonates with conceptual and practical ingenuity. Implicit gestures of access and restraint tell us that water is sourced from ground interlaced with subterranean aquifers that connect to creeks, rivers, springs, clay pans, rock holes, lakes: all of which imbricate into song lines. Cloven hooves of colonising herds of driven cattle, feral camels and pigs and the tracks of four-wheel-drive vehicles continue to damage, pollute and leave soakage places uncovered.

Toni Warburton, artist statement, February 2017

Updated from Toni Warburton, Coal clay water wood, *The Stuttering Frog*, 2013

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Images on page 13

Top: Toni Warburton, *container*, 2017. After Mrs Davies' adzed burl bucket seen at the Mirlirrjarra Art Collection, Ngaanyatjarra Lands, Warburton Ranges WA. Impressed container, Midfired

Bottom: Toni Warburton, *untitled carved container*, 2017. containers after Mrs Davies' adzed burl bucket seen at the Mirlirrjarra Art Collection, Ngaanyatjarra Lands, Warburton Ranges WA. Midfired





Toni Warburton, *Dissolution basin, Powderhulk Bay* (grey heron, window, rock, rain), 2017. Photo Silversalt



Toni Warburton, *Dissolution basin, Powderhulk Bay* (grey heron, window, rock, rain), 2017. Photo Silversalt

About the artists and guest speaker

Louise Boscacci is an artist and a researcher in the environmental humanities. She has exhibited widely and collaboratively in Australia for two decades. She works with clay, light, sound, co-species, and thinks and writes about the aesthetics of encounter and refrain. Water, its over-abundance and stark absence in cycles of wet and dry seasons of northern Australia prefigures her interest in the watery, micropolitical implications of accelerating climate change and ecological transformations. The comings and goings of water are uppermost on her mind these days. <https://louiseboscacci.net/background/>

Pip Newling's writing focuses on place. Her first book, *Knockabout Girl* (2007) re-told her experiences of living in remote Australia. Since then she has published essays on experiences in Afghanistan, on the NSW town of Moree and at Uluru. Water features prominently in her work, and she is currently writing about local swimming pools in the project, *The Swimming Pool Diaries*. Her doctoral project included a memoir of her home town of Taree on the Mid North Coast, and focussed on the enduring nature of the Manning River, 'a mighty river that runs from the mountains through to the sea'.

Toni Warburton works with ceramics, installation and sculpture, typically working in clay, drawing, and assembling found objects to explore scale in relation to memory, imagination and place or controversy. She is a member of the Williams River Valley Artists' Project (active from 2010 to current) who, for some years, have worked on and agitated on behalf of, the iconic Upper Hunter gorge known as The Drip, at the head of the Goulburn River, the Hunter River's main western tributary. Her ceramic works often take the format of the sculptural landscape object, invested with painted episodes of observation or text on these issues. [Download CV as pdf](#)



Reference Library: top shelf Toni Warburton / lower shelf Louise Boscacci Sketch books.



Louise Boscacci

Detail: *night water, boobook calling*, 2017, water jar, drinker, 3 water handholds, cover; engraved, glazed stonewares, repurposed wood (marine ply) and found metal.



Toni Warburton

Containers after Mrs Davies' adzed burl bucket.

Mirlirrtjarra Art Collection, Ngaanyatjarra Lands, Warburton Ranges WA.

White Shelf

variegated water log vase (study), 2017. Impressed and stained with yellow ochre and black terra sigillata.

ground water, potable, The Drip Gorge, Goulbourn River, Ulan (for JMI), 2013. wood fired stoneware. Black coal.

small oblong carved vase, 2017. Earthenware.

carved clay water container, 2017. Stained with black terra sigillata. \$700



Installation view *Water objects — echoes*: foreground on table Louise Boscacci, *h2o*, 2017, water globe, drinker, palm cup; engraved stonewares with Shoalhaven River (Wodi Wodi, Bundanon) yellow ochre; engraved porcelain (palm cup); background Toni Warburton, *Dissolution basin, Powderhulk Bay* (grey heron, window, rock, rain), 2017. Wall, Reference Library: top shelf Toni Warburton / lower shelf Louise Boscacci sketch books. Photo Silversalt



Installation view *Water objects — echoes*: foreground Toni Warburton, *Dissolution basin*, Powderhulk Bay (grey heron, window, rock, rain), 2017; background on table Louise Boscacci, *h2o*, 2017, water globe, drinker, palm cup; engraved stonewares with Shoalhaven River (Wodi Wodi, Bundanon) yellow ochre; engraved porcelain (palm cup). Photo Silversalt



Installation view *Water objects — echoes*. Toni Warburton, *rill vase*, 2017; *rain boat*, 2015; *bush track tyre puddle*, 2015; *boy drinking a glass of pure water (wild boy of Aveyron)*, 1992. *Study*; *Gulgong clay quarry pond*, 2013; *Gulgong field pond*, 2017; *riparian thicket (small green study)*, 2017; *riparian thicket (green study)*, 2017; *riparian thicket — blackberry, Payne's Creek (Sharrawadgi series)*, 2017; *cloud cup*, (turquoise shelf), 2017. Photo Silversalt

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