

*green*

*veined*



*dream*

Jess Tan

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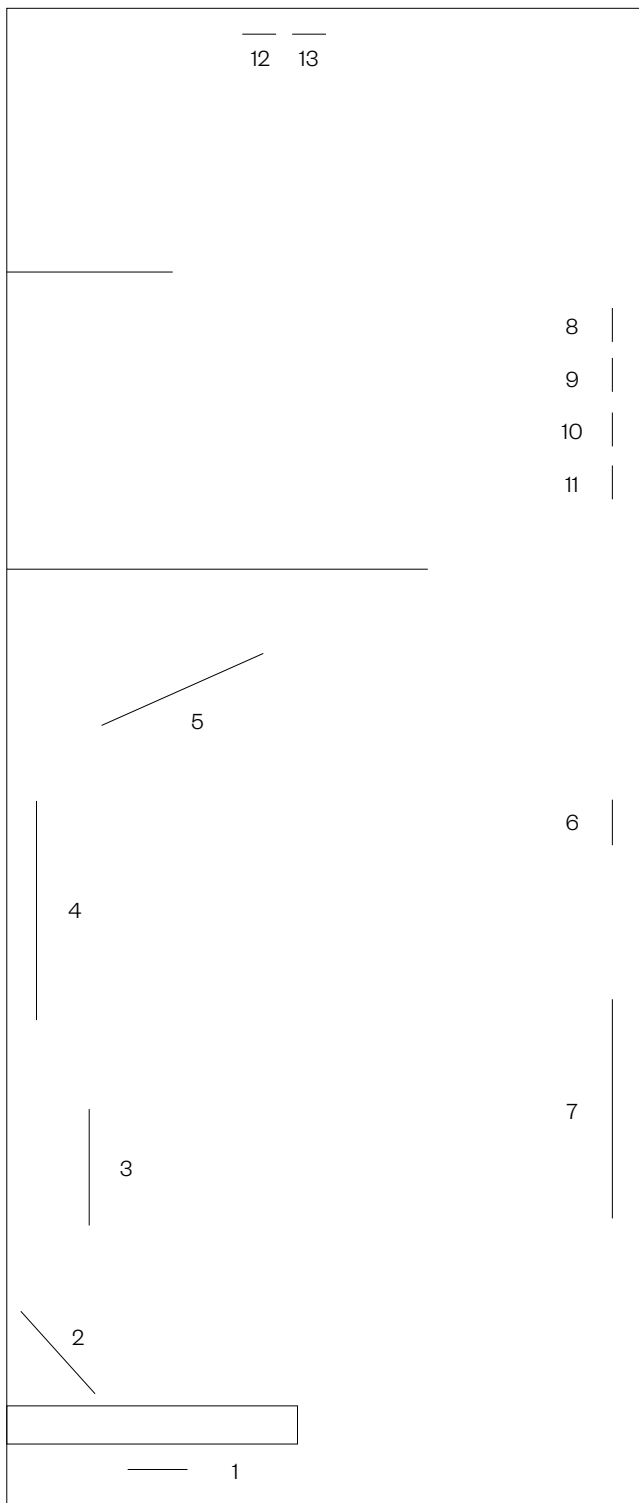
We acknowledge the traditional custodians and rightful owners of the land on which we are situated, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation. We acknowledge all First Nation elders past, present and emerging. This land was never ceded and we work in the spirit of reconciliation.

*green veined dream is an exhibition of new sculptural works that imagines you are in the not-so-distant dystopia of the Capitalocene. There is a salt lick and a water bowl provided. It is humid and your eyes feel funny. There are things that seem like props to assist plants in growing; calcified tree roots forming trellis for vines to climb. Towering structures; the hollowed bodies of deceased flowers stand limp in the still air. A thin film of silt coats each surface; once a place of residence, it feels like where a dream was incubating before it got lost. A deep sense of estranged familiarity permeates the air. It is almost as if a strong gust of wind has lodged each element in its place; or a conjunction of atmospheric conditions. You open your eyes and find yourself lying on the edge a very steep sand dune surrounded by an infinite stretch of eroding coastline.*



*Jess Tan* is a Boorloo-based artist whose work stems from an associative drawing practice to form a biomorphic language that expands into sculpture and site-specific installations. *Tan* collects from the residual of what she has eaten, broken, found and previously made, as well as what the things around her have made in the process of being. She likens her studio activities to an endless circulation of slow digestion, regurgitation, indigestion and re-digestion as she navigates various stages of learning and learning. She often works in collaboration with humans, materials and environments. Her practice follows an inquiry into how materials morph through ongoing reconfiguration and can generate unfamiliar ways of knowing and understanding through their affective capacities. This follows a series of process-led transitions that lead to outcomes that embrace failure, adaptation and uncertainty as matter transforms into altered states, adopting an internal logic as they accumulate. A practice formed through material dialogue.

*Jess Tan*



List of Works:

- |   |  |    |  |
|---|--|----|--|
| 1 | <i>feeding station (i), 2025</i><br>Dried sunflower stalk, mortar, low-carbon steel wire offcuts and Tyvek.  | 8  | <i>anteannae navigates odourless aroma, 2021</i><br>Coloured pencil on snail eaten paper, framed<br>59.5 x 42 cm |
| 2 | <i>pheromone trap (industrial soot), 2025</i><br>Repurposed shade cloth, copper wire, enamel paint, cotton and Tyvek.  | 9  | <i>bubble rea, 2021</i><br>Coloured pencil on snail eaten paper, framed<br>59.5 x 42 cm                          |
| 3 | <i>vacancy chain (staying close to what has fallen out of time), 2025</i><br>Dried sunflower stalks, paraffin wax, mortar, corn husk, wood offcuts, oxide, paperclay, watercolour and low-carbon steel wire offcuts. | 10 | <i>cows eyelashes flutter, 2021</i><br>Coloured pencil on snail eaten paper, framed<br>59.5 x 42 cm              |
| 4 | <i>we make between-edges - tall, but with holes for wide and deep, 2025</i><br>Borosilicate, poppies, soy wax, oil paint, wonga vine.  | 11 | <i>foggy pond (wish i was a frog), 2021</i><br>Coloured pencil on snail eaten paper, framed<br>59.5 x 42 cm      |
| 5 | <i>feeding station (ii), 2025</i><br>Paperclay, wood offcuts, low-carbon steel wire offcuts, peach tree resin, dried sunflower stems, seasponge, mortar, nails, watercolour, and sugar cane mulch .                  | 12 | <i>laughing pears and cabbages, 2021</i><br>Coloured pencil on snail eaten paper, framed<br>59.5 x 42 cm         |
| 6 | <i>The Krabooz, 2025</i><br>Laser cut etching, wood offcuts, wonga vine, low-carbon steel wire offcuts and mortar.   | 13 | <i>my bellybutton is running away, 2021</i><br>Coloured pencil on snail eaten paper, framed<br>59.5 x 42 cm      |
| 7 | <i>dream sequences and flashbacks, 2025</i><br>Found pavers, ceramic tiles, grout and oxide.   |    |  |

*Crustaceous Eras*

*Gemma Watson*

We have heard that in the Before Before Time the Great Pool was glittering deep and cold and there were endless chains of Vacancies. Worm Friends would eat by cleaning our softbodies and the eating for us was good too, the Great Pool expanding with Plenty while it feasted itself on the ground, sucking stones smooth with its coming and going. In the Before Before Time the Big Light made careful lazy passage to and from hiding and when it hid the Small Light smiled and yawned to keep company. The Before Before Time was a long time, and a long long time ago.

The Before Time was a long time too, but long differently, the always of stillness. In the Before Time there was glittering, making a tall always-edge instead, solid with deep behind. Just Wet enough to keep breathing, always. Big Light was still, always, and would hide suddenly and then no Small Light but a soft pink warm that came from everywhere. It calmed. There was rumbling far away and then closer and then far away again, making a memory-shape, unplaceable.

In the Before Time, Plenty came from above with Big Cheliped, which had no pincer but chitin on each tip, five. Big Cheliped came sudden with Big Light, bringing more Wet too and even sometimes – Enrichment. Bright stones and crackling sticks! We folded inside ourselves to Give Thanks from the half-deep benthic safety of Small Pool, which shimmered with the ghost of Great. Friend-ghosts shimmered too in the always-edge, following us. Big Cheliped chose new hardbodies and took old away, No Vacancies. The Before Time was Comfort but Lonely, too.

We don't know what made the Before Time Now Time, but Big Light moves slow and careful again, creeping the warm in and out with it, and no Big Cheliped. There is argument over edges - should they be tall and solid like Before or wide and deep like Before Before? We make between-edges -tall, but with holes for wide and deep. There is an argument about Plenty, too. We make a bowl so Plenty will come when Big Light hides, like Before. Mixed results. Sometimes, new Friends arrive from beyond the edges and below with Plenty for trade. No longer Lonely, but sometimes Afraid.

Some say we will need to make Plenty for ourselves now, and Enrichment. Some say Now Time can become Before, or even Before Before -that we could make a new Great Pool to glitter with Plenty for us. So far, only Small Pool, which goes away without more Wet.

Some even say the Great Pool still glitters with deep somewhere beyond the edges, and that we can find it. That if we try, we will hear it calling, from the place where we hold our hard and soft bodies together.

*Green veined dream*

*Dee Parker*

"Yet in spite of its canonization in literary and philosophical circles, the Paedrus is filled with non-philosophical excursions and adjunct exchanges typically glossed over in the secondary literature. Indeed much of the opening is dedicated to ambling around the countryside and choosing the ideal spot to recline and chat, the ideal grounds for thinking, suggesting that an a priori locus might be necessary for thought, that the place of thought precedes thought itself."

('Excommunication' (Galloway, Thacker, Wark), 2014)

In a terrarium, feeding trays are filled due to the will of the inhabitants' hunger. For us looking in, a cage full of food but with no animal would feel like the scene of an abduction, or a sight gag or a sort of mafia code. A small pet – fish or crabs who live in a commune with others of its species and who can't play at being human - and its supposed owner train each other in the conventions of domesticity, and an exchange is made for an overbearing attention paid to the small animal's bodily necessities. Now fed and with litter swept clean, the small pet is energised to assist in the conjuring of its microcosm. The owner in God mode sees the family outliving its members as deceased fish and crabs are removed and replaced and the herd remains. And in opposition to living with dogs and cats, where we see our own mortality played in fast forward, in this way the terrarium performs a pantomime of homeostasis.

The ability to stave off entropy, through the feed-shit cycle and other mechanisms, is a reoccurring criterion in discussions over the definition of 'life.' James Lovelock famously proposed the whole Earth - a relatively stable 3.5-billion-year-old cybernetic system – as a single self-sustaining organism existing in the habitat of the cosmos and in proximity to the sun. It was his work as a NASA scientist tasked with developing a methodology for detecting life on Mars that lead him to his Gaia Hypothesis, arguing the same criteria we apply to seagulls, bacteria and krill to categorise them as living – possessing a set of feedback systems which create homeostasis - can also be applied to the Earth in its entirety. To use an analogy, from this perspective we are to the Earth, what bacteria in the container of our guts are to us.

Jess Tan's sculptural assemblages operate as evidence of 'life', particularly as it occurs in the vivacious anaerobic and digestive processes of the midden, compost heap and stomach. It is from these processings of matter no longer useful to the body, that chemicals are made accessible for re-uptake and so-called useful work by the rest of the biome. 'Pottering' is a term commonly understood as the carrying out of minor tasks in no structured order within the home. It is work untethered from schedule, objective and productivity and is instead driven by an embodied response to material and site. Tan's work emerges from efforts to order, clutter, decorate, repair and other tasks which structure the pleasure-revulsion economy of living. This processing is prefigured by rooms with their associated biological functions, by the garden and its insects, by consumption patterns of neighbours evidenced in skip bins and by the shared sense and consensus of cohabitants.

Simone Weil: "It is only from the light which streams constantly from heaven that a tree can derive the energy to strike its roots deep into the soil. The tree is in fact rooted in the sky."

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*AVA* is a gallery located at *58 Pier Street* in *Boorloo* on *Noongar Boodjar*  
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