



25.02 – 04.03.2023

# TONDI ( ) TONDO

Curated by Claire Grant

Aaron Butt

Amanda Bennetts

Claire Grant

Jordan Azcune

Julie Smeros

Justine Wake

Karl de Waal

Keemon Williams + Lyle Duncan

Kirralee Robinson

Kuweni Dias Mendis

Lee Wilkes

Rachael Wellisch

# TONDI ( ) TONDO

A group exhibition of circular forms, curated by Claire Grant. Tondo (plural tondi) is a Renaissance term for a circular work of art. Challenging tradition, these thirteen artists dare to break outside the square. Each unique interpretation of the historic tondo shape presents a novel departure from rectangular form:

The round face of a compass dial encircles unseen natural forces, as the needle spins towards the earth's magnetic pole. **Aaron Butt's** raw clay impression *Compass (after Dixon)* is translocated onto a dial scattered with marine silt, offering an ambiguous new direction. Based on an historical compass marking carved into the stone near the artist's home in Sandstone Point, the original carving is believed to have been made by surveyor Robert Dixon, who charted the first maps of the Moreton Bay region in 1840.

**Amanda Bennetts'** petri dishes co-opt the sterility of medical research apparatus, embodying her experience of illness, disability, and medical intervention within a fragile layer of gelatine and cyanotype on glass. The rounded dish shape, used by bacteriologists to grow cells, allows for uniform cooling, plus ease of sterilisation with no corners. Developed by Julius Richard Petri in 1887, the elegant circular design has remained unchanged for over a century.

Curator **Claire Grant's** affinity for tondi stems from gazing out her galley window during a decade of working on planes, experiencing the landscape cropped to a tiny circular vignette. *Flight Simulator II (from my galley window)* invokes an imperfect memory of flight. Almost nothing is square on a plane. Windows and walls curve in deference to the dance of aerodynamic flow. In many other aspects of modern life, hard-edges are imposed on our daily experience. It does not have to be so.

*Rose Window* is a series of circular works by **Jordan Azcune**. Drawing from the decorative windows of Christian architecture, the artist simplifies and abstracts what is often the complicated feature-piece of cathedral stained-glass – the rose window. Lead light panes are imagined by pigmented wax depressions, allowing the viewer to look through the top layer of lattice framework to the glass-like colours beyond. The darker colours and muted pink, purple and blue within *Rose Window (iii)* suggest dimmed light or a window viewed from the outside looking in. The sweet-smelling wax, embedded with traces of pollen, bees and real flowers, reminds the artist of spiritual practices as well as the tension between nature and religious narratives.

As a first-generation Greek Australian, **Julie Smeros'** series of delicate cobalt drawings on porcelain "invite the known or learnt memory, with evocations of the ancient vessel." The characters resemble traditional black-figure designs depicted on the interior of *kylix* – broad, shallow wine-drinking cups typically made of pottery. The revival of the tondo style during the Renaissance took inspiration from the decorative adorning of vases and chalices in ancient Greece.

**Justine Wake's** collection of domestic found objects and repurposed lids gather around a central sun like a mysterious new zodiac. Twelve Bowers protectively encircle their Sun, providing "a place of containment, holding, stillness – connected to giving and nurturing." The bowerbird is a unique creature also renowned for their collecting behaviour. Male bowerbirds build extensive structures to attract a mate, decorating them with a fancy assortment of brightly coloured found objects.

The wry humour of **Karl De Waal's** souvenir spoon studded tyre invokes the saccharine nostalgia of the mythic Australian road trip. Assembling these disparate found objects together playfully recalls Rauschenberg's famous tyre combine *Monogram* (sans goat!). Held aloft on an elevated plinth, the circular tread is suspended, adrift without an axis. As the wheel of colonialism turns upon the land, collecting ever more places along the way, we can imagine each silver spoon becoming embedded deeper and deeper into the thick rubber.

*You Got Me Feeling E-mojis (wax)* is a collaborative work by **Keemon Williams + Lyle Duncan**, exploring the impact and utility of emojis in everyday virtual spaces, specifically in the realm of queer intimacy and communication. Filling in for the deep nuances of non-verbal interpersonal engagement, emojis act as gateway to emotional understanding and personal storytelling. Each symbol, a carefully curated design element, now serves to keep safe the experiences and moments of affection associated with their use. Stretching and challenging the presentation of the emoji from the digital to the physical world, *You Got Me Feeling E-mojis (wax)* presents us with tangible interpretations of these modern hieroglyphics.

**"Kirralee Robinson's** *A Reciprocal Meeting* responds as much to itself as an object as it does the environment around it. Each portion of the structure plays a role in the reaction of the other through a combination of movement, reflection, oscillation, and warping. There is a palindromic relationship created between object, plane, and environment, each equally effecting and being affected by the action of its existence." – Micah Rustichelli

Using dye made from lichen and earth pigments, the uninhibited circular brushstrokes of *Running Rivers – Blood Drop* recall the meditative practice of sumi-e Enso circle paintings. For **Kuweni Dias Mendis** the sacred natural forms reflect her deep bodily engagement with the landscape: "Blood takes me to that in-between space between life and death, it reminds me of the first and last breath. Blood reminds me of the human heart and the flow of blood that travels through our body, just like the river that descends from the source to the sea. Female bodies bleed on a cycle that is unique to each body. Life in every creature is in its blood."

Convex mirrors are used as a device for revealing the unseen. Notable examples in art history include *The Arnolfini Portrait* by Jan Van Eyck which incorporates a convex mirror to reveal the painter as witness to a marriage, and Parmigianino's unconventional *Self-portrait in a Convex Mirror* designed to draw the viewers gaze into its vortex. **Lee Wilkes'** hand stamped painting on a convex safety mirror also plays with perception/deception, offering a critical commentary on the threat uranium mining poses to ecological systems. The circle is echoed in the shape of the eye, iPod dial, and in the speakers which play a soundscape of birdsong and bushwalking juxtaposed against the industrial activity of mining vehicles.

**Rachael Wellisch** offers us "a portal for seeing our relationship with consumption and waste anew." Textile waste diverted from landfill has been hand dyed with natural indigo, then hand cut into thousands of individual threads for latch-hooking - a rug practice originally designed to use the small threads leftover from looming to avoid waste. The title draws on historical traditions of textile knots as used for recording both statistical and narrative information, for example the Andean Quipu, which are knotted devices believed to be a form of writing and mnemonic system. Dyed gradations of blue are both substance and action, echoing tipping points or thresholds in both environmental changes and our ability to perceive them.

## LIST OF WORKS

Aaron Butt **Compass (after Dixon)** 2023, air dry clay with natural inclusions, marine mud & timber disk. 610mm diameter. NFS

**Compass and nearby markings** 2023, digital prints in found frames. 380 x 385mm and 210mm diameter each. Enquire

Amanda Bennetts **The Body as Archive Series** 2020–2023, cyanotype gelatinous emulsion on glass, medical trolley, perspex, LED light. Dimensions variable. NFS

Claire Grant **Flight Simulator II (from my galley window)** 2023, laser print on transparency, aluminium, glass, overhead projector. Dimensions variable. Enquire

Jordan Azcune **Rose Window (iii)** 2020, beeswax, pigment and aluminium. 600mm diameter. \$2640

Julie Smeros **Artemis** 2023, porcelain and cobalt, 230mm diameter, \$220. **Scorpion** 2023, porcelain and cobalt, 220mm diameter, \$220. **Pegasus** 2023, porcelain and cobalt, 175mm diameter, \$198. **Eros** 2023, porcelain and cobalt, 230mm diameter, \$220.

**Owl** 2023, porcelain and cobalt, 120mm diameter, \$100

Justine Wake **Sun** 2023, oil on plastic bucket lid, 300mm diameter. SOLD

**Twelve Bowers Series** 2023, plaster, found objects, nail varnish and paint on plastic paint lid; textile, paint, pigment on house paint tin lid; found objects, paint, pigment on house paint tin lid; gasket, paint, wire on rubber; paint, wire, nail varnish, found objects on gesso plastic seal; spirit, paint, pigment on plastic object; plaster, paint, pigment on metal ring; found objects, plaster, paint, pigment on wooden dish; found objects, paint, nail varnish, glitter on metal object; paint, pigmented varnish on house paint tin lid; paint, pigment on house paint tin lid; polymer clay, beads, paint, pigment on house paint tin lid. Various sizes. \$88 large, \$66 medium, \$44 Small

Karl de Waal **On the Road Again** 2019, found tyre, Australian souvenir spoons, tyre stand, steel plinth, 2310 x 900 x 350mm. Enquire

Keemon Williams + Lyle Duncan **You Got Me Feeling E-mojis (wax)** 2023, wax. 110mm diameter x 20mm, \$110 each or \$550 for set of 6

Kirralee Robinson **A Reciprocal Meeting** 2023, found chrome table bases, reclaimed acrylic, found fan, aluminium, and reclaimed plywood. Dimensions variable. Enquire

Kuweni Dias Mendis **Running Rivers – Blood Drop** 2023, Natural plant pigments, earth pigments and pastel on paper, 700mm diameter. \$1320

Lee Wilkes **Uranium Mine Rehabilitation Project** 2023, oil on convex safety mirror, single-channel video, dual-channel audio, iPod, speakers, power amplifier and timber shelf. Dimensions variable. Enquire

Rachael Wellisch **Knot Work** 2022, indigo dyed organic cotton t-shirt offcuts on recycled canvas. 1400 x 1400 x 500mm. \$4400

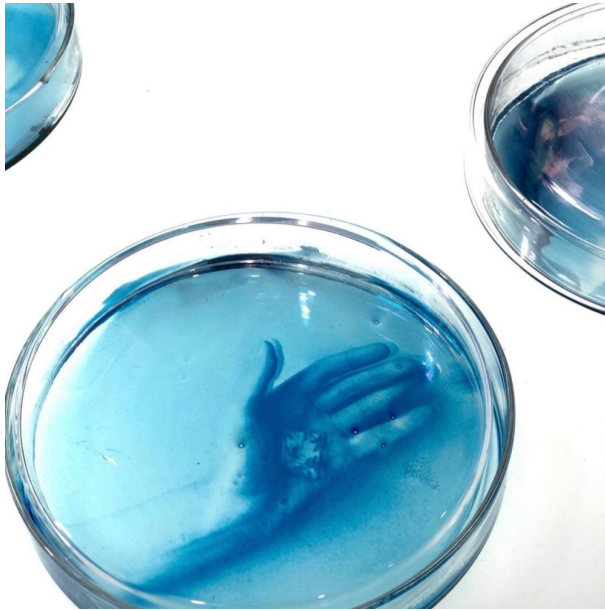


Aaron Butt **Compass (after Dixon)** 2023, air dry clay with natural inclusions, marine mud & timber disk. 610mm diameter. NFS

## Aaron Butt

Aaron Butt is an artist living in Ningi on Gubbi Gubbi Country. His work responds to the local landscape in painting, drawing, photography and sculpture. Aaron completed his Master of Fine Arts (Research) at Queensland University of Technology in 2018.

Instagram: @aaron.butt Website: [aaronbutt.com](http://aaronbutt.com)

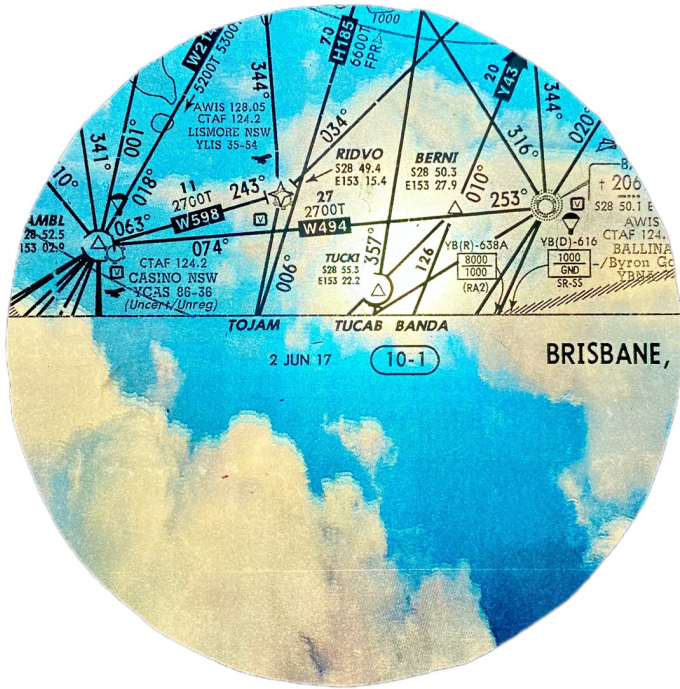


Amanda Bennetts ***The Body as Archive Series*** 2020–2023, cyanotype gelatinous emulsion on glass, medical trolley, perspex, LED light (detail). Dimensions variable. NFS

## Amanda Bennetts

Amanda Bennetts is a Meanjin/Brisbane and Noosa photo-media, installation and moving image artist. Her work is influenced by the medical encounter, drawing from her own lived experience. She engages with found objects and materiality whilst incorporating medical imagery and disability aesthetics to investigate the lived experience and representation of the chronically ill and disabled body.

Instagram: [@amanda\\_bennetts\\_art](https://www.instagram.com/amanda_bennetts_art) Website: [amandabennetts.art](http://amandabennetts.art)

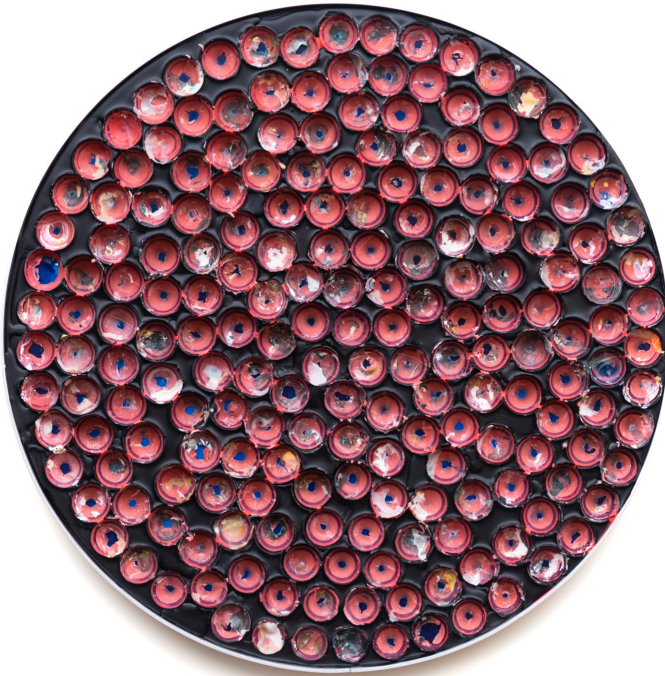


Claire Grant *Flight Simulator II (from my galley window)* (detail) 2023, laser print on transparency, aluminium, glass, overhead projector. Dimensions variable. Enquire

## Claire Grant

After working in aviation for over a decade, Claire Grant takes inspiration from the aerial viewpoint and restricted perspectives observed in flight. Using light as her medium, she combines personal experiences of the landscape with alternative photography and analogue processes.

Instagram: @\_loudandclaire\_ Website: [clairegrantart.com](http://clairegrantart.com)



Jordan Azcune **Rose Window (iii)** 2020, beeswax, pigment and aluminium. 600mm diameter. \$2640

## Jordan Azcune

Fascinated with colour, optics, and spiritual connection, Jordan Azcune's artwork relates to the natural world, the body, and architecture. He is captivated by natural bee's wax and its connection to heat, its elemental state of being both liquid, and solid.

Instagram: @jazcune Website: [jordanazcune.com](http://jordanazcune.com)





1. **Artemis** 2023, porcelain and cobalt, 230mm diameter, \$220.
2. **Scorpion** 2023, porcelain and cobalt, 220mm diameter, \$220.
3. **Pegasus** 2023, porcelain and cobalt, 175mm diameter, \$198.
4. **Eros** 2023, porcelain and cobalt, 230mm diameter, \$220.
5. **Owl** 2023, porcelain and cobalt, 120mm diameter, \$100

## Julie Smeros

Julie Smeros is a ceramic artist who draws inspiration from classical Greek pottery. She explores the use of mythological imagery on contemporary porcelain domestic ware. These vessels serve as a medium for visual storytelling and as a source of strength, inspiration and empowerment.

Instagram: @juliesmeros Website: [juliesmeros.com](http://juliesmeros.com)



**Sun (12 bowers series), 2023, oil on plastic bucket lid, 30cm Ø SOLD**

1. **First bower, 2023, plaster, found objects, nail varnish and paint on plastic paint lid 6cm Ø \$66**
2. **Second bower, 2023, textile, paint, pigment on house paint tin lid 8cm Ø \$66**
3. **Third bower, 2023, found objects, paint, pigment on house paint tin lid 8cm Ø \$66**
4. **Fourth bower, 2023, gasket, paint, wire on rubber 4cm Ø \$44**
5. **Fifth bower, 2023, paint, wire, nail varnish, found objects on gesso plastic seal 8cm Ø. \$44**
6. **Sixth bower, 2023, spirit, paint, pigment on plastic object 8cm Ø \$44**
7. **Seventh bower, 2023, plaster, paint, pigment on metal ring 5cm Ø \$44**
8. **Eighth bower, 2023, found objects, plaster, paint, pigment on wooden dish 8cm Ø \$66**
9. **Ninth bower, 2023, found objects, paint, nail varnish, glitter on metal object 6.5cm Ø \$66**
10. **Tenth bower, 2023, paint, pigmented varnish on house paint tin lid 10cm Ø \$66**
11. **Eleventh bower, 2023, paint, pigment on house paint tin lid 10cm Ø \$66**
12. **Twelfth bower, 2023, polymer clay, beads, paint, pigment on house paint tin lid 13cm Ø \$88**

## Justine Wake

Justine's work explores inner psychological space and its relationship to natural phenomena out in the big picture. She is especially interested in states that occur just prior to the emergence of something new, and while she has worked in this space with people as a therapist for over two decades, she has explored it in her art making for longer.

Instagram: @justinewake Website: [justinewake.com](http://justinewake.com)



Karl de Waal *On the Road Again* 2019, found tyre, Australian souvenir spoons, tyre stand, steel plinth, 2310 x 900 x 350mm. Enquire

## Karl De Waal

Karl de Waal studied art at COFA receiving his BFA in 1992. He believes his practice is quite simply a commentary of watching the world trying to make sense of its paradoxes and ironies. In a contemporary world, where the bulimic consumption of experience and knowledge saturates us, his work seeks to remind us of the transient and fragile nature of humanity.

Instagram: @karldewaal



Keemon Williams + Lyle Duncan **You Got Me Feeling E-mojis (wax)** (detail) 2023, wax. 110mm diameter x 20mm, \$110 each or \$550 for set of 6

## Keemon Williams

Keemon Williams is a queer interdisciplinary Meanjin (Brisbane) based artist of Koa, Kuku Yalanji and Meriam Mir descent. He utilizes a diverse range of mediums and performative elements to interrogate the relationships between location, personal histories, and the manifestation of culture in a postcolonial world. His practice seeks to critically examine facets of his identity and its intrinsic tethering to the wider context of being “Australian.” Responding to realms of architecture, cultural production, and pseudo-ethnic representations, Williams reconciles a sense of indigeneity and occupancy within the everyday.

Instagram: @plasticaboriginal Website:



Keemon Williams + Lyle Duncan **You Got Me Feeling Emojis (wax)** (detail) 2023, wax. 110mm diameter x 20mm, \$110 each or \$550 for set of 6

## Lyle Duncan

Lyle Duncan is an interdisciplinary artist based in the Yugambeh Region (Gold Coast). He is interested in the construction of meaning and how we, collectively or individually, create meaning for objects or ideas. He utilises the process of recontextualisation or subversion as his work takes the form of sculpture, installation, performance, and digital-media.

Instagram: @lyleduncan\_ Website: [lyleduncan.com](http://lyleduncan.com)

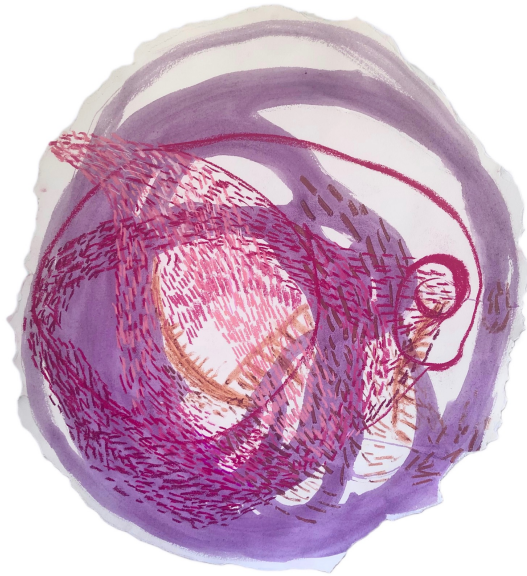


Kirralee Robinson **A Reciprocal Meeting** (detail) 2023, found chrome table bases, reclaimed acrylic, found fan, aluminium, and reclaimed plywood. Dimensions variable. Enquire

## Kirralee Robinson

Kirralee Robinson primarily works in sculpture to explore elemental phenomenon such as light, optics and tactility. Kirralee operates her practice within sustainable parameters, using reclaimed materials wherever possible. She is intrigued by the way objects can be used to foster connection and spark memory to places, people and materials.

Instagram: @kirralee.robinson Website: [kirraleerobinson.com](http://kirraleerobinson.com)



Kuweni Dias Mendis **Running Rivers – Blood Drop** 2023, Natural plant pigments, earth pigments and pastel on paper, 700mm diameter. \$1320

## Kuweni Dias Mendis

Kuweni Dias Mendis is an intercultural contemporary landscape artist exploring primordial forces within natural spaces. Her distinctive raw mark making speaks to the power she draws from the earth. Kuweni marks paper and fabric using ink, watercolours, pastels, paints and stitching. She makes her brushes with sticks, feathers, plant material and her paints from plants, rocks and fungi from the bushland. Kuweni uses dance as the source of her artistic manifestations, her creative inquiry into the rhythm of place.

Instagram: @kuweni\_artist Website: [kuweni.com](http://kuweni.com)



Lee Wilkes *Uranium Mine Rehabilitation Project* (detail) 2023, oil on convex safety mirror, single-channel video, dual-channel audio, iPod, speakers, power amplifier and timber shelf. Dimensions variable. Enquire

## Lee Wilkes

Lee Wilkes combines traditional oil paint with alternative materials to capture the landscape's evolving relation to time, place, and memory. Wilkes uses repetition, reflection, and abstraction to express a feeling of impermanence and transformation in his work. He lives and works in Meanjin (Brisbane) on Turrbal and Yagera land.

Instagram: @lee\_wilkes\_art Website: [leewilkesart.com](http://leewilkesart.com)





Rachael Wellisch *Knot Work* (detail) 2022, indigo dyed organic cotton t-shirt offcuts on recycled canvas. 1400 x 1400 x 500mm. \$4400

## Rachael Wellisch

Rachael Wellisch is a Meanjin based artist, exploring sustainability using natural indigo dye and salvaged textiles. Graduating with a BFA (Honours) in 2016, she has exhibited both nationally and internationally, and has been selected for, and awarded in both national and international art prizes and grants.

Instagram: @rachael\_wellisch Website: [rachaelwellisch.com](http://rachaelwellisch.com)

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