

## Image list

13	Vandalism of the Lea Tree, Australian Institute of Criminology, 1989		NFS
14	Noah Thompson, <i>Untitled</i> , 2020, inkjet print, 60 x 70 cm	1/3	\$1200
15	Noah Thompson, <i>Untitled</i> , 2021, inkjet print, 60 x 70 cm	1/3	\$1200
16	Noah Thompson, <i>Untitled</i> , 2020, inkjet print, 100 x 80 cm	1/3 + 2AP	\$2000
17	Noah Thompson, <i>Untitled</i> , 2022, inkjet print, 60 x 70 cm	1/3	\$1200
18	Noah Thompson, <i>Craig &amp; Charlotte</i> , 2021, inkjet print, 60 x 70 cm	1/3	\$1200
19	Noah Thompson, <i>Mt Lyell</i> , 2020, inkjet print, 120 x 96 cm	1/3 + 2AP	\$3000
20	Noah Thompson, <i>Kristen</i> , 2021, inkjet print, 60 x 70 cm	1/3	\$1200
21	Noah Thompson, <i>Untitled</i> , 2019, inkjet print, 60 x 70 cm	1/3	\$1200
22	Noah Thompson, <i>Travis &amp; Levi</i> , 2021, inkjet print, 60 x 70 cm	1/3	\$1200
23	Noah Thompson, <i>Untitled</i> , 2020, inkjet print, 60 x 70 cm	1/3	\$1200

Please ask for unframed prices.

## About

### Noah Thompson

Noah Thompson (born 1991) is an Australian photographer who splits his time between Lutruwita/Tasmania and Naarm/Melbourne. He specialises in an extended form of documentary creation, with a background in political science and a keen interest in visual narratives. His work explores the interplay between personal and community situations within social, political, and cultural events. Focusing on thoughtful and measured storytelling, Thompson seeks to uncover the nuanced aspects of modern Australian society while drawing insights from historical influences.

Visit [www.gallery.photoaccess.org.au](http://www.gallery.photoaccess.org.au) to learn more about *Huon*.

Huw Davies Gallery  
27th April - 10th June 2023

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## *Huon* Noah Thompson

Lutruwita/Tasmania is a region where breathtaking natural landscapes and the insatiable hunger for industrial progress collide. *Huon* by Noah Thompson explores this delicate balance through medium format film, shedding light on the ongoing conflict between environmental preservation and industrial development in the area.

The work draws inspiration from the destruction of the Lea Tree, a 2500-year-old Huon Pine that pro-dam supporters vandalized during the controversy surrounding the Gordon-below-the-Franklin Dam project in the 1980s. The exhibition delves into the ongoing tensions and complexities that underlie the seemingly opposing sides of conservation and development, which are shaped by traditions, livelihoods, and community.

### *Seeking the Whole*

Light catches on the curves of our faces, framing our gaze, weaving into what it is we are gazing at. The sense we make happens in the dark, in the networked folds of our thinking.

Our response to what we see forms in some ways instantly. In other ways over days and years, as we move our sense of self through this world we somehow hope we belong to, full of our own confusions, our layered contradictions. For many of us, this exchange, as we think and act amid our surrounds, is a kind of search. But for what? Meaning? Connection? A better self?

Proving our presence, we shape the deeds that will fill our days – we dig, ride, burn and build, we speak, we write. We have a proclivity for naming things. More often than embarrassment can avoid, the name we circle around is our own, etched, one way or another, onto the page, onto wood or stone, onto our skin, onto the world.

Many of the etchings are beautiful. Many of the niches we carve, pressed into the Earth's valleys and plains and overhangs, are exquisite, breath-taking for their glimpse of the connection some soul has sought. Others are disturbing. Some simply hurt, whether ourselves and/or the lives around us (human or non-human).

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It is not just us as individuals who create, of course, the marks of humanity. The choices we think of as ours to make, the names we choose to write and the practices we embrace, are skewed by the societies we live within and are exposed to. There are some overwhelming examples of this. It is an increasing problem, to put it mildly, that many of us operate within Westernised norms that tell us to take and to waste as if the world were expendable – a bargain bin to be voraciously emptied without emptiness itself ever being thought of as a problem. More, says Western mythology, must always be made available, as if the obsession with infinite growth were itself an assurance. To regard the world as an exploitable resource is to associate greater extraction with greater rewards – more jobs, more tools, more stuff, more sales, and more power for those few who control the land, the processes, the labourers, and the profit.

This bias, and the explosive human population that lives within it, is costing us greatly, finding its limit through disruptions to biodiversity, climate stability and ecological resilience. With it, as well, comes human conflict – for many indigenous cultures, the natural world means something strikingly and intimately different, neither separable nor expendable, and Western invasiveness is a source of enormous confrontation. There is conflict *within* Westernised societies too, between the empowered and the disempowered, for instance, and between those who would protect and those who would continue to exploit the ecosystems we are part of.

We can readily conjure images of the latter – anti-logging protests, no-dams and anti-fracking protests, marches for climate action, all at loggerheads, we might assume, with corrupt governments and greedy corporations. But there are more immediate, more personal conflicts as well.

Through so many of our activities, each of us are ourselves implicated in acts of exploitation, acts, more closely, of carelessness with regard to the more-than-human world. The foods we eat, our communication devices, our travel and recreation choices, the fashions we consume, the sheer quantity of materials we, in our billions, take in and throw out in our lifetimes, are having alarming impacts on the planet. Everything must come from somewhere, of course, and loss and gain are joined in the game of life. The visibly tragic flaw within current Western mythology lies in the insistence that the gain can be separated into the hands of the few, and that the losses, however much they accumulate, however catastrophic for the lives and ecosystems involved, will always be able to be ridden over towards ever more gain. It's a reaching for linearity inside a circular world.

Individually, we contribute to and yet do not solely control the circumstances in which we find ourselves. Somehow we decide on the marks we will make amid the opportunities that appear to be ours. Deep-running conflicts might thread these opportunities with sadness, with longing, with disappointment. Perhaps also with ideas of change or of the good that can be done. Our own fragility, our own flesh and bone, can be tested by where we are – by the world, our society, ourselves – and yet, in that vulnerability, we are also capable of extraordinary expression.

Perhaps the difficulties of our time will be solved by human ingenuity – more tech, a shift in market pressures, greater efficiency. There is another hope we might also embrace – that the dominant human cultures become ones that cease to recognise a human-nature divide, that the global norm might be to think and act in terms of the biosphere, the dynamics of the Earth, the planet's interwoven vitality, ourselves inside it.

We are part of a chaotic pattern, an interconnectedness, physical, biological, historical. It is within our reach not only to remember *that* we are joined to our surroundings and our companions but to consider *what* that join might mean, how it might shape our decisions. We might look less for marks of the self, for example, and more for expressions of responsibility, existing as we do in a home we could rightly be expected to love and care for as if our lives depended on it.

It would be heartening to imagine that this is in truth what we are searching for – to know ourselves as part of this rare and extraordinary Earth.

As the light weaves again into our gaze, what we see will have changed. There will be external shifts, and the sense we make of what is in front of us will reflect, as well, the shifts that have occurred inside us. The names we seek, the connections and relationships, will perhaps have started to mean something different. We might choose, too, different expressions in our response. We could record an image of our outward appearance, pin it to the wall and wonder – in a day, in a year, in a decade, what etchings might we be lending to ourselves and the world?

- Kristen Lang, May 29, 2022

*Kristen Lang, originally from Melbourne, relocated to rural Tasmania during her childhood and currently resides in the mountainous terrain of north-west Tasmania. Her writing uniquely blends intimacy and connection with a perspective that extends beyond humanity, celebrating ecological continuity.*