MAIS
WRIGHT

Snakes and Ladders

The bronze crescent moon in this work has had multiple lives, initially it pierced a reflective marble table, then it languished in my studio until some years later it was discovered by my friend artist Romuald Hazoume who used the moon as a stencil to create a painting with a glowing moon hanging in a night sky, he said this moon, in Benin, his country, was a symbol for collecting good fortune and luck.

Eventually years later the moon has emerged again. It hangs above a blue maze, the maze can be traversed by paying great attention, it is a game, you may reach an ancient wooden ladder in the centre, this can be climbed with difficulty, if at all. The blue maze is beautiful, for me it symbolises the extraordinary patterns in nature, in our world, what we have, what we may lose. My work is attempting to draw attention to what we have, what has been here for so long, and what has existed in harmony with First Nations people, what must be protected.

The world that we share is a planet that we are damaging, we love this planet,but it is being damaged by a dominant species… maybe we, through an aesthetic understanding, through artworks and critical and social movement we can turn the damage around.

Anne Graham 2025

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Duiwan River

Rivers carve passages through our landscapes, a river in all its beauty and grandeur can take us on a journey from source to sea encapsulating the elegance and flow of water on the move. I live and work above the Duiwan River (Cox's River) in the Kanimbla Valley, in Gundungurra Country NSW. The elemental force of the river has created this valley, and the river is its life blood. Home to platypus, trout and many small creatures, my children, and grandchildren swim in the river, climb the waterfalls and delight in the rivers 'inhabitants'.

Human impact from contemporary urbanisation, industry and mining have seen many significant and negative effects on the river system. The closure of power stations and increased environmental awareness has meant that life in the river has slowly returned with platypus, eastern water rats and a variety of water bird species now sighted in larger numbers. However, the threats to the river continue as industry proposes to release vast quantities of polluted water into the tributaries which feed into the Duiwan River. This would cause great damage to the life of the river and would also eventually reach Warragamba Dam and Sydney's drinking water supply.

My work has been deeply influenced by the extraordinary beauty of my home environment, the view of the escarpment from my window and the ever-changing river. Using 'Lidar' Satellite Map technology to provide detailed information about the contours of the Duiwan River, I have illuminated the colours and curves of the Kanimbla Valley, the image of the river meanders across the six works around the gallery walls. I have used recycled material in the creation of the work, mainly recycled woollen blankets, felted and dyed. I have then hand cut the fabric in response to the contours of the maps.

Inspired by Fukuda Chiyo-ni, Japanese poet and Buddhist nun, wishing "to teach her heart to be like the clear water which flows night and day". I hope my work will draw attention to the necessity of saving these magical First Nations heritage places and I acknowledge the debt and respect we owe to the Traditional Custodians of the land.

Anne Graham 2025