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Issue Editor's Report

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Landscapes

*The Journal of the International Centre for Landscape and Language at Edith
Cowan University*

Issue Editor's Report Summer 2009 Volume 3 Issue 2 *Hydrobotanics*

By John Ryan

This second 2009 issue of *Landscapes* has been germinated out of the 2009 ICLL Symposium held November 17th at ECU in Mt. Lawley. The Symposium, which brought together the perspectives and expertise of scientists, visual and literary artists, and cultural theorists, probed the mysterious interstices between water and plant life, especially in our region of Southwest Australia but particularly in our bioregion, the Swan River coastal plain. As Glen Phillips describes in his evocative 'Introduction' to this issue, memories of growing up in Western Australia are naturally entwined with recollections of water and its cycle of abundance and scarcity, and indigenous plants and their extraordinary strategies of adaptation.



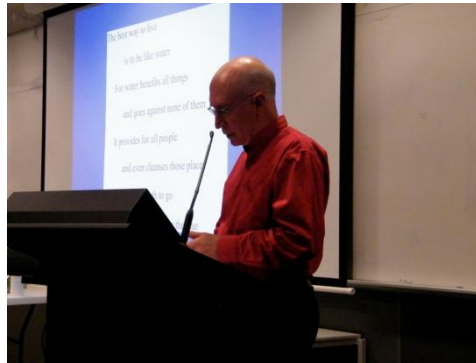
Dr. Glen Phillips introduces speaker Hugo Bekle at the 2009 Symposium

The meditative quality of water is a prominent theme throughout this issue's essays, poems, and photography. The first section 'Hydrologica' begins with Richard Tipping's memorial to the massive flooding of the Brisbane River in 1893 and 1974. *Watermark* (2000) touches on the vicissitudes of water as a poignant visual segue into Rod Giblett's essay 'The Tao of Water', a wonderfully thoughtful meditation on the intricacies of water from Taoist, Da Vincian, and Thoreavian philosophies. Kevin Gillam's 'Blackwood' captures the mystique of the Blackwood River in Southwest Australia in the form of an open-ended conversation, whilst Nandi Chinna's 'Rocky Bay (Kairp Ngungar)' enters into Aboriginal Dreaming of rivers. Encounters with rain,

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lakes, and water-loving creatures run throughout poems by Paula Jones, Liana Joy Christensen, Eunice English, Mardi May, Max Merckenschlager, Rose van Son, Ron Okely, and Sally Clarke.



Dr. Rod Giblett presents 'The Tao of Water'

Botanica' presents nine poems about plants indigenous to Southwest Australia, but also those plants introduced from other parts of Australia and those from the Old World. Nandi Chinna and John Ryan both lend poetic interpretations of the iconic balga tree through their respective poems 'Balga' and 'Balga, Jarrahdale, Western Australia'. Nandi's poem 'Stirling's Garden' evokes the relationship between European plants and colonisation. Other contributors to this section Annamaria Weldon, Jeremy Ballius, Jan Dean, and Kathryn Glasgow celebrate the local flora and seaweed of Western Australia whilst contemplating the universal and local essences of plants.



Visual artist Holly Story presents 'Breath'

Our third section, 'Hydrobotanica' looks at the intersections between plants, water, and place. Included here is a narrative essay on flora, rock outcrops, amphibians, and the ecology of Western Australia by Liana Joy Christensen titled 'Hanging at Picnic Rock'. Glen Phillip's 'China Landscape' speaks of the experience of plants, water, and memory in an environment much different to his native soil of W.A. Scott-Patrick Mitchell's 'everyone knows what pelicans look like' gives an alternate glimpse of a seabird of the Swan River. Kent MacCarter's 'Editorial Requirement for Duck Joy' makes an observant (and witty) analogy between the foraging habits of ducks and the process of editing. Other contributors to this section, Horst Kornberger and Diane Leber, skillfully evoke connections between plants and water within place.

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Lake Clifton in Yalgorup National Park, just south of Mandurah in Western Australia, is the subject of the closing section through the site-specific works of poet Annamaria Weldon and artist Perdita Phillips. The water and plant life of this special ecosystem are highlighted in the works. Annamaria's poems evoke the sounds, textures, and emotional resonance of the lake. Perdita's essay 'Clotted Life and Brittle Waters' proposes a unique soundscape project, *The Sixth Shore*.

I'd like to thank all the contributors to this issue for their generous contributions to the theme, as well as Glen Phillips and Andrew Taylor for the general editing, and Rod Giblett and CREATEC at Edith Cowan University for their support. The intellectual generosity of all of our reviewers is especially appreciated.



Visual artist and ECU faculty member Gregory Pryor speaks about the non-representation of flora

Please also note (and distribute freely) our **Call for Submissions** for the 2010 issue on 'Bipedality: The Art of Walking'. The closing date for submissions is 30 June 2010. We look forward to receiving your interpretations and responses.

Sincerely,

John Ryan

Issue Editor of *Landscapes*