

About the artists

Annette Peterson, born in Norway and works on Whadjuk Nyoongar Boodja (Perth), is a conceptual artist whose practice explores the ephemeral nature of everyday life. Working across painting, animation, and mixed media, she investigates movement, memory, and overlooked transient moments. With a background in journalism and psychology, Peterson uses accessible technology, such as smartphones, to capture transient phenomena and reflect the affective undercurrents of ordinary experiences. Peterson holds a Master of Design and Art, BA (Honours), and a Graduate Certificate in Visual Art and Design from Curtin University, 2019.

Sue Leeming is a New Zealand-born artist of Maori, English, and Scottish descent based in Peel, Western Australia. Leeming's current practice is based around painting and drawing mediums and extends ideas of abstraction, landscape, identity and spirituality. She experiments with the physicality of paint and process, allowing the imagery to spring from process. It is in this place of painterly freedom that a unique space is created, calling forth the subconscious world of the artist to connect with her external lived experience. Leeming graduated from the University of Auckland, Elam School of Fine Arts with a Bachelor and a Postgraduate Diploma of Fine Art.

Nicole Steenhof is an artist making on Binjareb, Whadjuk and Nyoongar land. Propelled by an interest in ocean studies, Steenhof works towards an embodied painting process, alert to sensations beyond sight. Her practice concerns hydrocommons, investigating what it means to be a body of water relating to the Indian Ocean. Her sculpture is made from found and recycled items, concentrating on form and connection to the histories of oceans. The works encourage intimate notice and imagination for life within climate crises. Steenhof graduated from Curtin University with a Postgraduate Certificate of Arts (Fine Arts), 2024.



Rockingham Arts Centre
11 Kent Street,
Rockingham

Gallery opening times:
Wednesday – Sunday
10am – 4pm

Contact:
(08) 9527 0734
artscentre@rockingham.wa.gov.au
rockingham.wa.gov.au/exhibitions



The City of Rockingham values your feedback.
Please scan the QR code to complete a short survey. Thank you.

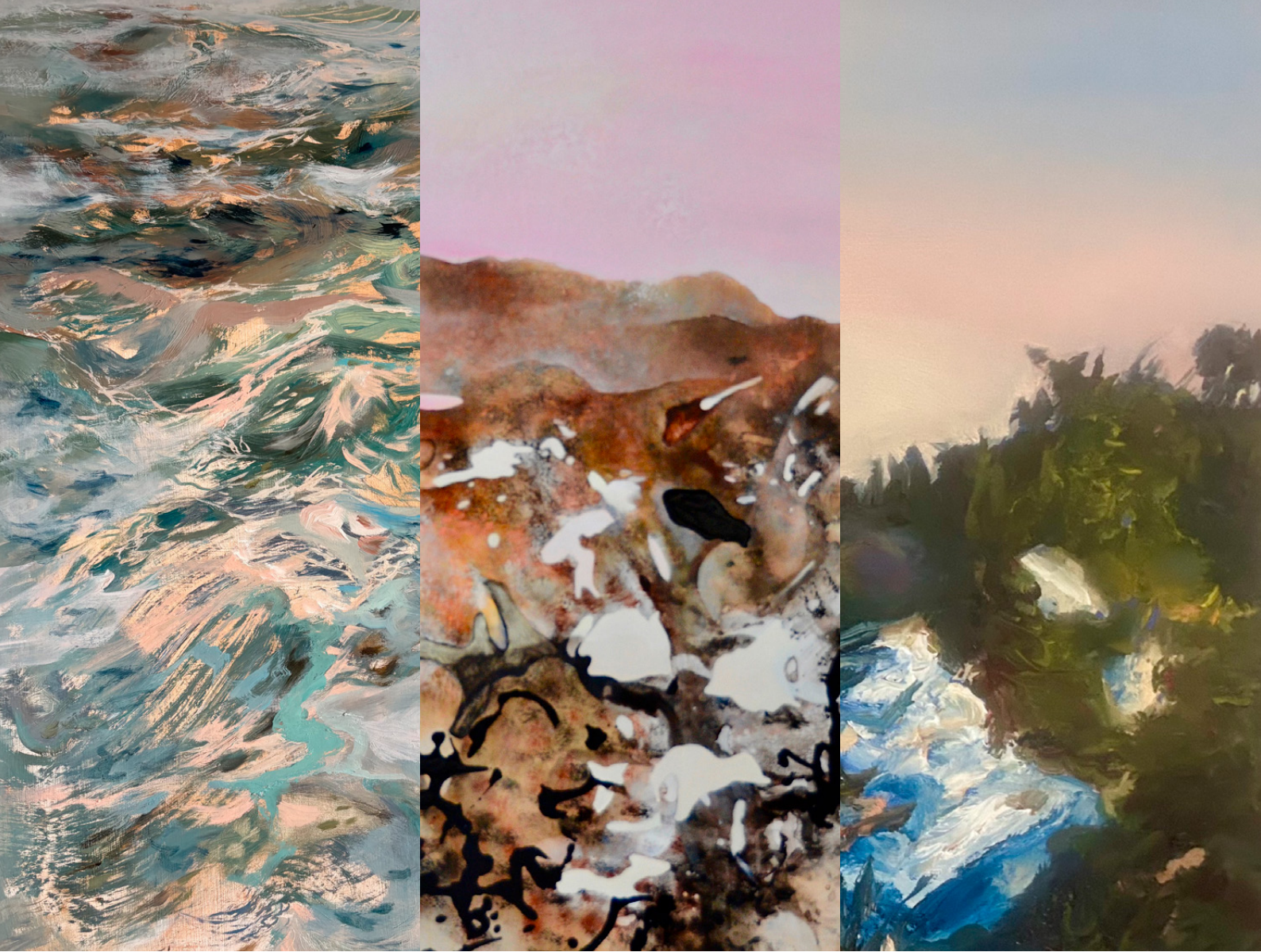
Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Rockingham acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land, the Binjareb and Whadjuk Nyoongar peoples and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of Aboriginal communities and their cultures, and to Elders past and present.

Nicole Steenhof, *Skin Between Oceans*, 2025,
oil on cradled board, 40 x 50 cm.
Image courtesy of the artist.

Sue Leeming, *HIKOI: In the Land of the Living*, 2025,
oil ink on wood panel, 100 x 100 x 4 cm.
Image courtesy of the artist.

Annette Peterson, *Lingering Hold*, 2025,
oil on wood, 30 x 40 cm.
Image courtesy of the artist.

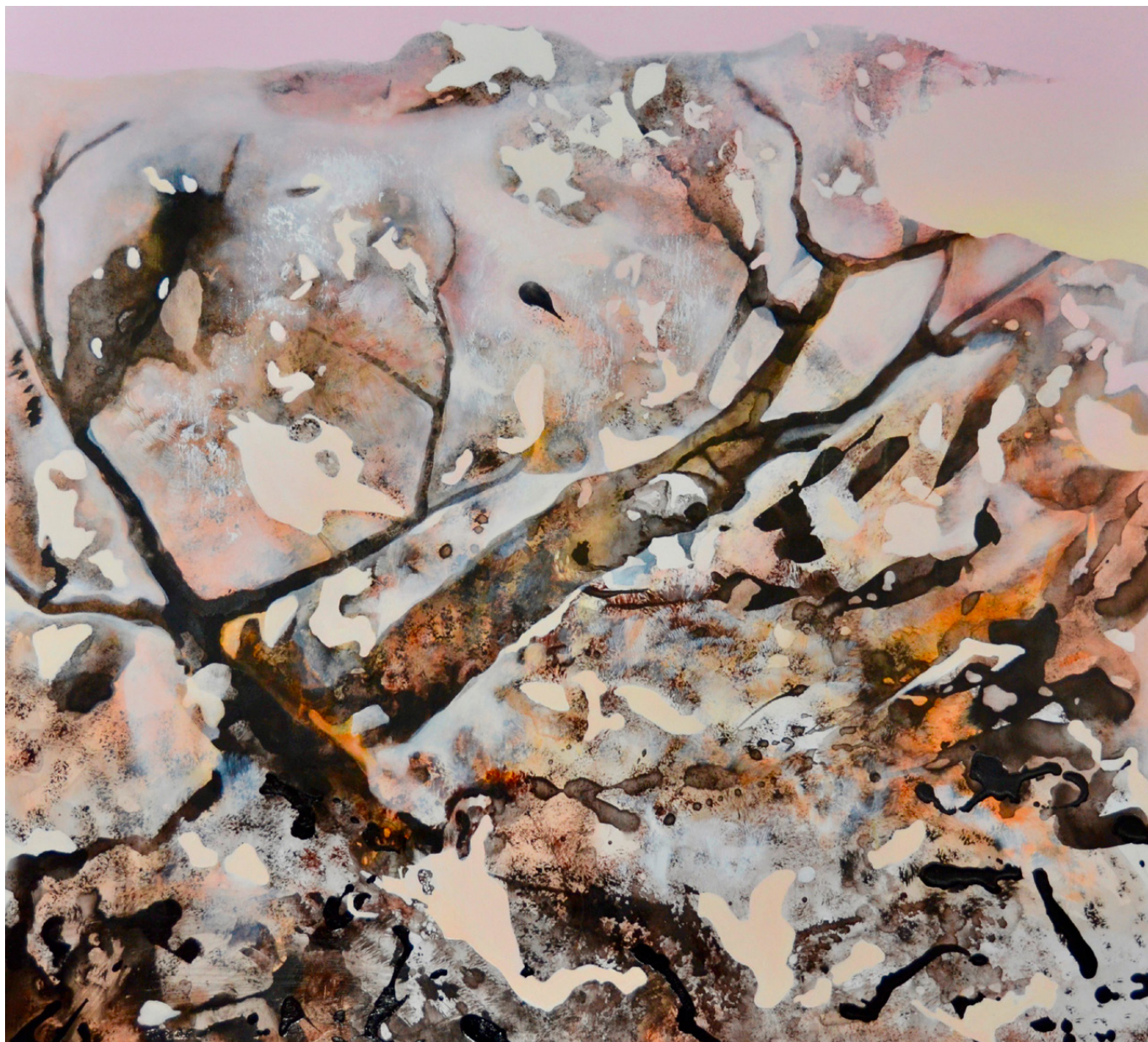


Tender

Nicole Steenhof, Sue Leeming, Annette Peterson
Wednesday 30 July to Sunday 17 August 2025



From left to right: Annette Peterson, Sue Leeming, Nicole Steenhof
Image courtesy of the artists.



Sue Leeming *HIKOI: Early Morning Walks*, 2025, oil, ink and cold wax on panel, 100 x 100 cm.
Image courtesy of the artist.

Exhibition information

Tender is an expression and an exploration in painting, touch, and interpretation. Sue Leeming, Annette Peterson, and Nicole Steenhof navigate the theme as an aesthetic and cathartic experience. *Tender* signifies more than the word; it explores the power of paint.

Steenhof responds by exploring the sea through intimacy and touch. Isabelle Graw's discussion on the value of indexical effect of the hand in making has encouraged Steenhof in her painting and sculpture, and their haptic qualities.¹ She focuses on the composition of the Fibonacci spiral found in abalone shells, and the chaos of iridescence on the surface of sea and shell alike. Beyond superficial understanding, Steenhof examines the phenomenon of iridescence revealing truth and intimacy of surface in the layers of light in the paintings.

Steenhof also draws from Tavi Meraud who describes surfaces not as boundaries, but as the site of the interplay between reality and appearance.² Her curiosity with surface is evident in her explorations of the sea – where does the exterior surface end once submersed into the tender interior?

Scale is also explored; the size of the shells in paintings and sculptures create a closer intimacy, referencing the tenderness of childhood.

A 2024 residency at Mount Flora in Waterman's Bay found Peterson exploring tender as an affect generated by conflicting forces of pain and comfort in the landscape. Initially, she produced studies denoting her experiences around the site's boundaries, with a pivotal moment observed as the wind blew low tree branches, affecting the earth beneath and appearing to provide comfort at the intrusion - with tender denoting the tension that generates strength from vulnerability.

Peterson found a similar phenomenon in the limestone rising from beneath the site. The fossilised traces of ancient life, memories embedded in stone, foreign in the suburban landscape. Unlike harder rocks resisting change, limestone responds to erosion and time.

Leeming silently reflects through 'free verse' poetry, a stream of consciousness dialogue around belonging, loss and connection to home, saying silence is as important as the work. Walking, meditating, praying, and listening connect her internal landscapes and memories residing beyond awareness. Leeming sits in the present, in the land that is now home.

Leeming's free verse is based on Hikoī, a Māori word and concept carrying cultural resonance, to walk or journey. The work embodies a physical act and a spiritual or emotional passage – through life, grief, and hope. Leeming affirms beauty in loss, the tender surrender of what cannot be held. She endeavours to discover the eternal realities of love as a journey towards inevitable separation. There is no avoiding this farewell, it is a place we all pass through as we bravely respond to the call of life and move forward, we must do so with hope and faith in our hearts...to walk on. HIKOI

1. Graw, Isabelle, 2019, 'The Love of Painting: Genealogy of a Success Medium', Sternberg Press.
2. Meraud, Tavi, 2015, 'Iridescence, Intimacies', e-flux journal no. 61, pp. 1-12.



Nicole Steenhof, *Iridescent Ambiguity (Abalone Still Life)*, 2025, oil on board, 40 x 30 cm.
Image courtesy of the artist.



Annette Peterson, *Being Held*, 2025, oil on board, 30 x 40 cm.
Image courtesy of the artist.