

Image courtesy of the artist.

About the artist

Philomena Hali is a Western Australian textile and fibre artist whose practice centres on traditional stitchwork, dyeing, and tactile exploration.

Her journey began in North Queensland with block printing and fabric manipulation. After spending over three decades living and working in Alice Springs, Northern Territory, she transitioned from a self-taught fibre-basket maker to textiles and fibre. Hali regularly entered the NT Fashion Awards in Darwin, Wearable Arts in Alice Springs and was co-founder of the annual Sustainable Couture event. She taught in Central deserts, schools, migrant groups, senior groups, prisons, mental health organisations, and with people with varied abilities. By attending textile arts workshops, through The Australian Forum of Textile Arts (TAFTA), Hali has increased her repertoire of techniques to enhance her practice.

Hali's work is deeply informed by continuous learning and teaching - notably mastering Shibori and Indigo dyeing as well as traditional hand-stitched Bojagi in Seoul, South Korea. Intrigued by revealing the structural beauty of hidden seams, embroidery and deliberate stitchwork form the core foundation of her visual language. Since returning to WA in 2018, she continues to learn through her travels but also using online resources such as TextileArtist.Org (UK). Hali exhibits regularly across Australia and internationally.

Rockingham Arts Centre
City of Rockingham

Rockingham Arts Centre
11 Kent Street,
Rockingham

Gallery opening times:
Wednesday – Sunday
10am – 12.30pm
1pm – 4pm

Contact:
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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.



Philomena Hali, *Agulhas Needles*, 2026,
wood, thread, cloth, text, hand-dyed textiles, dimensions variable.
Image courtesy the artist.

Pigments of Place

textiles, timber, earth and paper

Philomena Hali
Wednesday 11 November to
Sunday 29 November 2026



Philomena Hali, *Earth Pods*, 2026,
paper, earth pigments, textiles, found objects, dimensions variable.
Image courtesy of the artist.

Exhibition information

Pigments of Place - textiles, timber, earth and paper serves as a visual diary of a twelve-month camping trip through different States in Australia - Tasmania, Victoria and NSW. Created entirely on the road, the works form a physical archive of a year spent moving through and working with the landscape. Each location along the road became the studio. Sustainability and resourcefulness drove the process.

A focus of the trip was an investigation into the Exocarpos cupressiformis, or Native Cherry - its vibrant yellows and lime greens being introduced to Hali by some Tasmanian textile artists. Also identified in Victoria and NSW as the Ballarat Cherry, by gathering leafage from this single species across the Eastern States, Hali's artworks map how different locations affect resulting dye colours. Other natural dyes were created using onion skins, puffball fungi and windfall lichen.

Informed by Hali's background in exhibition, fashion and installation art, the colour gradations created are realised through a series of suspended silk organza works - the fabric's translucency capturing the changing tonal palette of the bush.

Much like the Australian landscapes' expansive skies juxtaposed against the intricacies of its flora and fauna, the scale of these immersive pieces contrast with the scale of more intimate tactile objects. Handmade booklets feature raw earth pigments collected from dry riverbeds, remote salt lakes, roadsides and ochre cliffs, while a floating installation of paper clay pods brings found pigments directly into the gallery airspace. The textiles used throughout the exhibition - ranging from wall pieces layered with earth pigments to woven structures - were mostly sourced from op shops in quirky little towns along the way. These second-hand fabrics were stitched, dyed and constructed at campsites, recording time, place and memories of where they were made.

Tethering the entire exhibition together is an installation of over 100 hand-whittled needles - each needle carved from sticks gathered and identified at different campsites. As both literal tools of construction and markers of time, they represent the daily rhythm of making art while living outdoors.

Pigments of Place - textiles, timber, earth and paper is an exercise in observation, allowing the journey to dictate the medium, method and outcome of the work.



Philomena Hali, *Ochres*, 2026,
found earth pigments, dimensions variable.
Image courtesy of the artist.