

Divination for an Entangled Novel Ecology

by Jessica Garment

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of

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under the supervision of Saskia Schut & Rhys Williams

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an Entangled Novel Ecology

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Certificate of Original Authorship

I, Jessica Garment declare that this thesis, is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Architecture (Research), in the Faculty of Design, Architecture, and Building at the University of Technology, Sydney. This thesis is wholly my own work unless otherwise reference or acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis. This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

This research is supported by the Australian Government Research Training Program.

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Preface.

Divination for an Entangled Novel Ecology is conducted by research through design. It consists of a thesis with a creative component.

In this research, I design *divinationfor* a method for observing, witnessing and learning with novel ecologies. To preface reading this paper, I invite the reader to participate in this method I have been developing over the last 18months. The link will open up a webpage that hosts *divinationfor* the method of investigation.

<https://divinationfor.org/divination/>

Please follow the instructions on the screen, clicking through the lines of text until you reach the end. Please note down these instructions, writing them down somewhere (perhaps a phone or a notebook) and take them with you. I encourage the reader to find a site of novel ecology, whether it be an unkempt garden, vegetation growing through cracks in the infrastructure, or another place that you wander by on your day-to-day. Once with this place, I ask the reader to engage the words presented, using them to approach the species within this site —to observe and witness the liveliness.

I design and construct a website to host and expand upon my research as part of my practice. Within the website, I host the extended body of work. This consisted of a designed method of investigation and the documentation and evidence to each inquiry with a landscape. To read this thesis. I would encourage the reader to simultaneously engage with the website to see the full spectrum of works that have been developed over this research masters.

<https://divinationfor.org>

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Abstract.

The conditions of the Anthropocene have provoked the emergence of new ecological landscape typologies, which are the direct result of human impact. These are called novel ecosystems. This research designs a method for celebrating the weird origins of these landscapes by responding to these ecosystems in their 'as found' condition. I investigate ways of learning at a situated level by revealing the intricate relationships that build each unique ecology. Novel ecologies exist as political and cultural entities that reflect the abundant changes in our current ecological climate. They sit as physical manifestations of Australia's industrial history and as a counter to the governed values prescribed by councils. Where practices of restoration are employed as a measure of reversing the ecological damage created in our industrial past, however, these strategies are not inclusive of novel ecologies. What is needed instead are strategies that sensitively respond to these landscapes.

This research proposes *divinationfor* is proposed as a counter. A method that attunes how we might learn from and listen to novel ecologies through intimate instructions. I engage with Donna Haraway's cyborg, tangling the digital, the landscape and the human together to form this practice. This research designs *divinationfor* through JavaScript code as a method that is tested through continued site-centred encounters within Johnstons Creek, a novel ecosystem located in Sydney's inner west. Through this method, I investigate this ecology through novel explorations that are reflective of the site's ecological complexity. I use a website to gather each of these explorations into a single platform, enabling multiple representation forms to exist together and revealing the intimate relationships established between the landscape and myself. The research is uncovering how to become a participant with the landscape, designing how the landscape architect engages with novel ecosystems by becoming novel themselves.