

The background of the cover is a vibrant, abstract composition. It features a grid of glowing yellow and orange lines. In the upper left, there is a semi-transparent silhouette of a bat in flight. In the lower right, a purple and blue microscope is visible. The central focus is a woman with short brown hair and blue eyes, wearing a dark red lace top. Her face is covered in colorful, multi-colored paint splatters and patterns.

The Weather Diaries

Exegesis

By Kathy Drayton

Exegesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Creative Arts
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences | University of Technology Sydney | March 2022

CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

I, Kathleen Drayton, declare that this documentary film and accompanying exegesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Creative Arts, in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Technology Sydney.

The film and exegesis are wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Neither this film nor this document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

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

Signature: Production Note:
Signature removed prior to publication.

Date: 11 March 2022

FORMAT OF SUBMISSION

There are two components of the work here submitted for examination.

1: The documentary film: *The Weather Diaries*

Duration: 91 minutes

The film can be streamed from these platforms:

[Fanforce](#)

[Ronin](#)

[Kanopy](#)

2: This exegesis.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to pay my respects to the First Nations people as the original inhabitants and Traditional Owners of the lands on which this project was created, and all Elders past and present. I recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture, and that sovereignty has never been ceded.

It is only because of the persistent encouragement and support of my primary supervisor, Dr Jeremy Walker, that both film and exegesis exist. He has consistently defended the project's worthiness to me, as my own belief in it went through periodic implosions. The compassion and intellect that Jeremy brought to the work, his insight and nuanced feedback which drew out deep underlying themes in both the film and writing, has enriched both elements immeasurably. I am very grateful to have had him on my team.

Dr Andrew Taylor took over as primary supervisor while I was producing the film and was especially invaluable in post-production. His advice and notes on the film as it developed, his excellent co-ordination of test screenings and moderation of feedback sessions afterwards was generous and supportive. Andrew's talent for script editing along with his feedback on both the writing and delivery of the narration was incisive, occasionally hilariously brutal, but always for the best. Later when I was wrestling with how to approach the writing of the exegesis, Andrew's encouragement to incorporate the personal voice I'd developed in the narration of the film was enormously helpful.

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I couldn't have made *The Weather Diaries* without the co-operation and support of Imogen, who as a fifteen-year-old was the first person to commit to being in the film. They put their trust in me and stayed a very long course, watching various cuts, encouraging me onwards when I was flagging, donating their wonderful music to the film, and afterwards doing interviews and attending Q&A's with me. I'm so proud of this work we've made together. It's been very special. Also massive thanks to Imogen's schoolfriends and bandmates; Nathan Moas who made the dark electronica that accompanies the scenes at the whole tree chambers, and Mara Schwerdtfeger whose

touching and delicate music accompanies the flying fox scenes and the 2019 fires at the end of the film. They both watched edits and contributed feedback and encouragement along the way too. These three talented young musicians each provided around 20 minutes of music for the film, which they all made when they were still in their teens.

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Many thanks to Producer Tom Zubrycki who came on board in the final stages of editing. He secured the funding needed to mix and grade the film for the screen, create original animation, and pay licensing fees for public screenings. He also contributed notes and oversaw the final polish of edit and narration and found distribution for the film. And big thanks to Peter Johnson, Annie Breslin and Andrew Belletty for the soundtracking and mix, and Roen Davis for grading and online services. Also to Melody Li for the beautiful animation she made for the film in a wonderful collaboration with Imogen and I. Thanks also to distributors Danny Lachevre and the team at Fan-Force who made the trailer and publicity materials for the film, and helped organise and co-ordinate the screenings, a tough job during the pandemic. And many thanks to Andrew Pike at Ronin Films who has taken the film on for educational distribution.

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ABSTRACT

Drawing on traditions of feminist ethnographic documentary making and recent work in the environmental humanities, *The Weather Diaries* explores how autoethnographic filmmaking, working within the intimate, local realm of everyday life, can engage audiences around the catastrophic global unfolding of anthropogenic climate change and the sixth mass extinction. Both film and exegesis explore the potential of engaging audiences in the painful relinquishment of the familiar form of hope - as the projection of current conditions into a future imagined as progress - that we bear for our children and companion species at this devastating moment in human and Earth history. Seeking to promote constructive dialogue about the irreparable erosion of the more-than-human world as witnessed locally, the work represents a search for a realistic vision of the future that inspires and sustains urgent action to confront the interwoven crises of extinction and global heating. Focusing on the beauty to be found in everyday life and our interconnection with the natural world, the power of dreams and stories and music in our lives, and the inspiration to be found in people working directly or indirectly with climate change, *The Weather Diaries* supports a modest hope, one that doesn't shy away from grieving the losses we're already suffering, but a realistic hope that with creativity, determination, and contributing in our various ways to the care and protection of the lives we love, we can make a difference.

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