

MEDIA RELEASE

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South Australian artist gives voice to the trees

Conceptual artist Heidi Kenyon gives voice to the trees in a new body of sound and installation works at the Santos Museum of Economic Botany, Adelaide Botanic Garden 18 June – 29 July 2018.

Kenyon has just completed the Guildhouse Collections Project four-month residency at the Adelaide Botanic Garden, with a focus on the Garden of Health. During this time Kenyon explored a long-held interest in the Garden as a resource for contemplation and healing. Kenyon's focus is on the medicinal and healing properties of plants; a story she tells through the River Red Gum. Growing wildly before European settlement, Kenyon became fascinated with the lone tree that stands near the northerly entrance to the gardens – a likely witness to hundreds of years' history and change.

Using a modern sound interface, Kenyon allows audiences to hear a River Red Gum's retelling; the tree's energy variations triggering sound samples composed by the artist. The sapling sits in the Santos Museum of Economic Botany, broadcasting its own interpretations of Kenyon's poetry and prose amongst the historic Museum's unique collection.

Curator of the Santos Museum of Economic Botany, Tony Kanellos says:

"The curious objects in the Museum of Economic Botany have been telling their stories since 1881. However, Heidi Kenyon has used sound and image in a way that's not been tried in this Museum – to tell an important story about the connection between people, plants and wellbeing. This idea takes us back to the first Botanic Gardens built during the Renaissance to facilitate the study of medicine."

Every Saturday afternoon in July, Kenyon will also invite visitors to join her in the gardens for a series of public programs - to listen to a number of significant trees across the Adelaide Botanic Garden share their stories through her sound compositions.

This sound work is complemented by Kenyon's camera obscura installation, which, using one of the earliest forms of image capture and manipulation, invites the viewer to consider the intrinsic link between plants, medicine and wellbeing.

Guildhouse Chief Executive Officer, Emma Fey says

"The Guildhouse Collections Project with the Botanic Gardens of South Australia provides a rare and wonderful opportunity for an artist to delve deep into the treasures of an important State collection: to research, study and collaborate with specialist curators and produce new work for exhibition in the historic Santos Museum of Economic Botany."

Fey adds "The Collections Project provides wonderful new audience experiences whilst delivering long term benefits to the artistic and career development of artists."

Heidi Kenyon's exhibition *From little things...* at the Santos Museum of Economic Botany runs from 18 June through to 29 July 2018. For more information about the opening event and public program, please visit guildhouse.org.au

For more information, contact Bridget Hodder via communications@guildhouse.org.au or telephone 8410 1822.

Images Heidi Kenyon *From little things ii...* (installation detail) 2018 and Heidi Kenyon on location
Photography Grant Hancock

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