



**Australian Government**

**Australian National Botanic Gardens**

4 June 2007

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### ***Caring for Land* exhibition media preview**

A new exhibition at the Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Caring for Land*, uses responses to the land by five local artists to encourage viewers to explore their personal connection with the local environment.

Exhibition curator Christine Watson has brought together the work of artists Antonia Aitken, Nicola Dickson, Jan Hogan, John Pratt and Jim Williams to raise important questions.

How do we see the land here? How does the condition of the land affect us? Is it possible for non-Indigenous Australians to sense the myriad connections between ourselves and the environment, and to live with an awareness of our continuing impact on the land?

Artist Nicola Dickson explores the way early settlers perceived the Australian environment and how this still affects contemporary attitudes to the land.

John Pratt's meditative drawings of botanical forms on the slopes of Mount Ainslie between the bush and housing express his ambivalence about the consequences of settler habitation of Australia.

Jan Hogan follows in the steps of traditional and urban Indigenous artists such as Judy Watson and Karen Casey in drawing on the ground, using soil of the Gundaroo Common.

The delicate work of Ngunnawal painter, Jim Williams on Namadji, express an Indigenous sensibility of personal and social connection with the land – water and food sources, vegetation and winds.

Antonia Aitken has walked, camped and produced artworks in Namadji over a period of two years. Her work suggests that the connection between human beings and land is as intimate as the air we breathe, and that the need to care for the land is vital to our existence.

*Caring for Land* is on display in the Visitor Centre from Wednesday 6 June until Sunday 28 October 2007.

More information is available at [www.anbg.gov.au/anbg/exhibitions/2007-caring-for-land/index.html](http://www.anbg.gov.au/anbg/exhibitions/2007-caring-for-land/index.html)

**What:** *Caring for Land* exhibition – media preview with artists

**Where:** Visitor Centre, Australian National Botanic Gardens

**When:** Wednesday 6 June 2007, 10.00am

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