

Longing and Belonging

16 August – 12 October 2024

Artist Statement

Mariana del Castillo

My work in *Longing & Belonging* explores regeneration and the collaborative response to complex traumas experienced by Australia's rural communities after drought, floods, bushfires and the effects of climate change. In 2022 I undertook a Bundanon residency. This solitary time brought clarity to my relationship to nature and its importance to my art practice. Although the landscape of the South coast had undergone devastating fires, the bushland had begun the process of regeneration. Stitching out in the landscape away from the studio allowed me to translate moments on country. The rhythmic process of stitching, collaging and mark making has been the seed for these new constructions as I seek to translate the experience of being in the landscape. I hear and feel its rhythms and gestural energy and I attempt to visually represent this robust and fragile environment.

My despair about waste and excess informs my art practice and is visible in the processes of deconstruction and my use of recycled textiles and objects. Their embedded histories and patinas continue to inform my palette and compositions. Primarily grounded in studio experimentation, I focus on surface textures through mono-printing, collage, stitching, painting, and an overwhelming obsession with mark-making as a means of exploring this visual narrative. My new works move away from the internal landscape of my personal history out into the external landscape of country.