

I WAS JUST HERE

AND
I LEFT
THIS
FOR
YOU

 **ROBYN
CLARKE**



ROBYN CLARKE

Robyn Clarke makes contemporary jewellery that honours landscape and memory through the textures, colours, and felt experience of place.

Working in silver and gold, with precious and semi-precious gems and enamel, her talismanic pieces seek to

capture the genius loci - the spirit of place - in landscapes and habitats that remain with her.

Trained with an Advanced Diploma in Jewellery and Object Design, Robyn has exhibited in group shows and is represented in contemporary jewellery

galleries around Australia. *I Was Just Here* is her first solo exhibition.

Her practice combines material skill with a sense of wonder, offering jewellery and objects that honour the landscapes that shape us.



8 - 26 October | 7 Hillcrest Ave, Eltham 3095

EXHIBITION OPENING:
10 October
6-8pm

Opening Hours:
Wednesday - Sunday,
10am - 4pm

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MONTSALVAT | 8-26 OCTOBER 2025

Overview of Show

This body of work is a response to the deep, beautiful feeling that seeps into us when we have communion with a place. The kind of places that settle into us and change us along the way. Landscapes, ruins, a river, a horizon, a church, a temple – we are altered when we witness them.

I first came across the idea of the **genius loci** - the spirit of place - when studying Geomancy decades ago, and it gave a name to something many of us feel but might struggle to articulate. In ancient Roman religion, the *genius loci* was the protective spirit of a place. Every location, from a grove to a crossroads, was believed to have its own *genius* or guiding presence. These spirits

were localised divinities, not gods of the sky. They were the spirits of the earth, water, passage and dwelling. In modern thought, and for contemporary travellers, the term has evolved in architecture, landscape design, and art to mean the “spirit of place” – *the felt atmosphere of a site*, or, the vibe.

From a childhood spent on the banks of the Yarra in Warrandyte, through travels to ancient and sacred sites, to painting classes by billabongs or walking in the bush, I have been quietly gathering impressions and filing them away for later. And for some of them, later is now.

I Was Just Here (and I left this for you) is an offering to the spirit of place. It is a collection of talismans that honour places that have left their mark on me. Hopefully, they will make you think of your own experience with *genius loci*, and remind you of where you were, what you felt, and what stayed with you.

Acknowledgement of Country

With deep respect I acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which I work and live, including Birrarung, and pay my respects to their Elders past and present. I acknowledge the Woi Wurrung, Djaara, and Taungurung peoples as the Traditional Custodians of Ngannelong (Hanging Rock), and the Kabi Kabi people as the Traditional Custodians of Moreton Bay, Sunshine Coast, Noosa, Maryborough,

and Gympie region. I also acknowledge the Aymara and Quechua peoples, whose ancestral lands include Isla del Sol and the areas surrounding Laguna Colorada and Laguna Verde in Bolivia. **I extend this respect to all first nations people.**

This work is a response to the places that I have moved through, and that have marked me. These are living cultural landscapes with continuous, deep-time connection to Country.

I experience them as a guest, with respect for the stories, knowings, and traditions that extend far beyond my own, and offer this work in recognition of their enduring presence.



HORIZON RINGS

I designed these rings to embody the genius loci of Coolum Beach, which to me is carried by the ocean itself, ever-changing in temperament, force, and colour.

For my family, Coolum was our winter constant - a month every year, without fail. It is where my sisters and I, and later our friends, were environmentally baptised to the sea: surf mats, big waves, discovering the creatures of the rockpools, and endless hours watching the horizon.

Ring one is 18ct yellow gold, set with a .81 carat freeform blue Ceylon sapphire, atmospherically signalling where water meets sky. Ring two is 9ct white gold, featuring a teal Australian freeform sapphire that flashes like bioluminescence. Both bear map contour lines that anchor you to shore, each with a white diamond motif pointing to the horizon – a small beacon across the blue.

1 - Horizon Ring 1 – 18ct yellow gold, 0.81carat freeform Ceylon sapphire, and 8 x EF/SI white diamonds, size M - **\$4,990**

2 - Horizon Ring 2 – 9ct white gold, Australian freeform sapphire, and 1 x 1.5mm EF/SI diamond, size N - **\$3,820**

GHOST GEOGRAPHY RINGS

Shapes that feel like coastlines, inlets and headlands keep appearing in my making, though they do not belong to any place I've known.

This ring set is part of what I have come to think of as a ghost geography - a landscape that exists somewhere between memory, instinct, and invention. I don't know where it is, but part of me believes I will recognise it if I ever stand there. If painters can render imagined landscapes, maybe jewellers can too, guided by instinct and touch.

3 - Ghost Geography Ring 1 – 18ct yellow gold, set with three Ceylon sapphires, and 16 x EF/SI white diamonds, size M1/2 - **\$4,690**

4 - Ghost Geography Ring 2 – 9ct yellow gold, size M - **\$2,400**

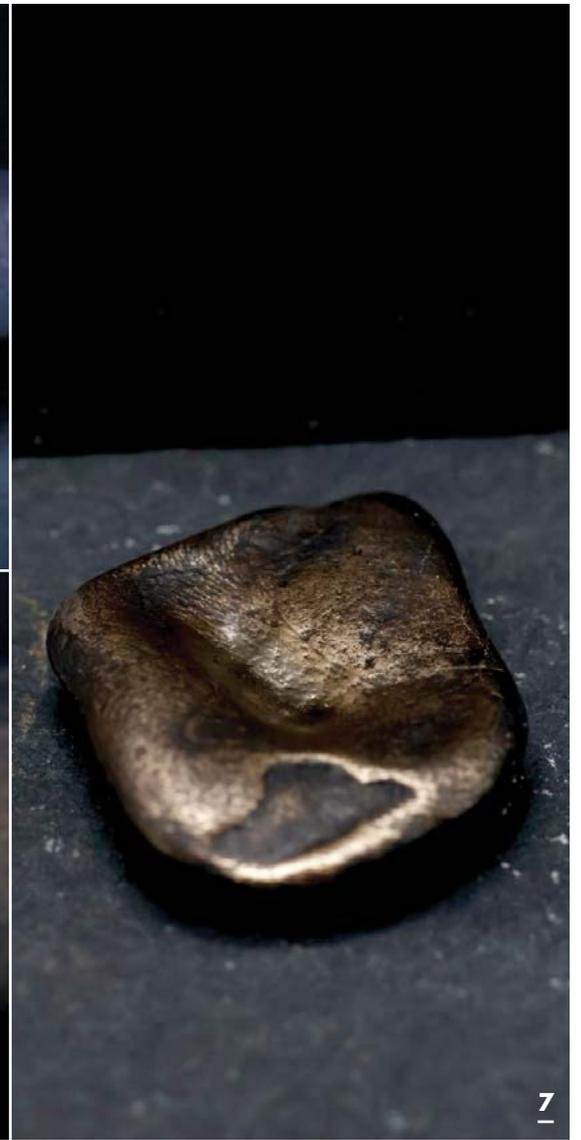




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ISLA DEL SOL

This collection is an offering to the beautiful Isla del Sol (Island of the Sun), a short boat ride from Copacabana, Bolivia, surrounded by the impossibly teal-blue saltwater of Lake Titicaca.

Included is a bronze cast of a rock I collected on the island. I picked it up to hold while walking, and it has been with me ever since. Smooth, undulating, and deeply tactile, it has become a cherished reminder of that trip and the island. Now cast in bronze, it is an anchor to my time there.

The Isla del Sol rings are marked by a stylised tracing of the island, circumnavigating the bezel like a shoreline. Ring one holds a 1.6ct cushion-cut teal sapphire, chosen for the way its colour immediately recalled the lake. Ring two holds a smaller, greener 0.85ct cushion-cut sapphire, a nod to the lush crops grown in the island's ancient Incan terracing. Each ring has small diamond accents set into the shoreline groove at north and south, like guiding stars or a subtle compass for finding your way.

5 - Isla del Sol Ring 1 – 18ct yellow gold, 1.64 carat cushion cut bright teal Queensland sapphire, 2 x EF/SI diamonds, size M - **\$5,500**

6 - Isla del Sol Ring 2 – 9ct white gold, 0.84ct carat cushion cut green Queensland sapphire, 2 x EF/SI diamonds, size M - **\$2,650**

7 - Isla del Sol Bronze Cast Rock – Not For Sale (enquiries welcome)



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LAGUNAS COLORADO AND VERDE IN A DEEP TIME LANDSCAPE

Travelling to Laguna Verde and Laguna Colorado outside Uyuni in Bolivia, we crossed the salt pans in a thunderstorm. The world was reduced to greyscale, clouds mirrored in shallow water so perfectly there was no horizon. When visibility vanished, seven of us spent the night in a LandCruiser on the flooded flats. Waking to no land in sight in any direction was disorienting and otherworldly, and the beginning of a surreal journey through strange and beautiful landscapes.

At over 4200 metres, Laguna Colorado's red-pink water sits beneath ochre volcanoes and a fierce blue sky. Nearby, Laguna Verde glows cool and vivid below snow-capped peaks. Travelling through this deep-time landscape, the only sounds were wind, water, and the occasional flamingo. I did not yet know the term *genius loci*, but I was immersed in it. These pieces carry that atmosphere forward.

8 - Lagunas Ring 1 – Laguna Verde 18ct yellow gold, 1.10carat round teal sapphire, 5 x 1.75mm EFSI diamonds, 5 x 1.5mm EFSI diamonds, size M - **\$6,270**

9 - Lagunas Ring 2 – Laguna Colorado 9ct rose gold, 6mm round pink tourmaline, 4 x 1.5mm FG/SI diamonds, 4 x 1.2 Padparadscha sapphires, size M - **\$3,900**

10 - Lagunas Ring 3 – Laguna Verde (contour line precursor) 9ct yellow gold, 0.84 carat bright green Queensland sapphire, 4 x 1.75mm EFSI diamonds, size M - **\$2,480**

11 - Lagunas Ring 4 – Laguna Colorado (contour line maquette) Sterling Silver, Rhodolite garnets, size M - **\$620**



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BIRRARUNG COLLECTION

I grew up in Warrandyte, with Birrarung (The Yarra) at the bottom of our block. We shared it with eels, platypus, tiger snakes, and countless birds. We rode ponies along its banks, sat in the rapids in summer, swung from rope swings into the deep pools, and floated downstream on lilos. It wound its way around us, a constant presence, a barometer for the weather, and an environmental magnet for all of us.

Even though I don't live right beside it now, I still visit several times a week. Birrarung is a 242-kilometre waterway, stately and grounding, flowing from Mount Baw Baw to Port Phillip Bay. I love its quick, clear sections as much as the wide, slow stretches that are deceptively calm.

This work is rooted in my own relationship with the river, but it also gestures toward the deep and ongoing connection so many people across Melbourne and surrounding Country have with Birrarung. It is an iconic, storied waterway, beloved and respected - a reminder of how water holds memory, and how a river can shape our sense of place.

12 - Birrarung Ring 1 – 3mm round 9ct yellow gold band with 19 x various pink sapphires, size N - **\$3,590**

13 - Birrarung Ring 2 – 3mm round 9ct white gold band with 17 x various teal, blue and green sapphires, size N1/2 - **\$3,750**

14 - Birrarung Torus Pendant – 3mm round 9ct yellow gold torus set with cognac, champagne and white diamonds, on 45cm oxidised sterling silver chain - **\$1,990**

15 - Birrarung Contour Pendant – 9ct yellow gold pendant with contour line engraving, set with blue Ceylon sapphires, on 9ct yellow gold 45cm chain - **\$3,390**

16 - Birrarung Cormorant Earrings – 9ct yellow gold carved rock shape set with bright blue sapphires, with sterling silver drop shape set with small bright blue sapphires - **\$1,470**

17 - Birrarung Peninsula Earrings – 9ct yellow gold disc set with champagne zircons, with sterling silver drop shape set with 5 diamonds each, ranging from white to cognac - **\$1,990**



MYSTIC WEIGHT

Hanging Rock, or originally Ngannelong and also known as Mount Diogenes, carries a mystic weight. Most who have visited will have felt it.

For many, that sense of mystery has been shaped by Joan Lindsay's Picnic at Hanging Rock (1967) and Peter Weir's 1975 film, whose panpipes cast a dreamy, otherworldly spell still felt decades later. For me, childhood visits, family picnics and learning to dowse around the rock gave roots to that sense of mystery.

Even without those stories, the place itself holds a palpable presence. My encounters there inspired Pendant 1- an angular green tourmaline suspended in 9ct yellow gold. Muted sapphires and diamonds echo the surrounding bushland, softening its geometry.

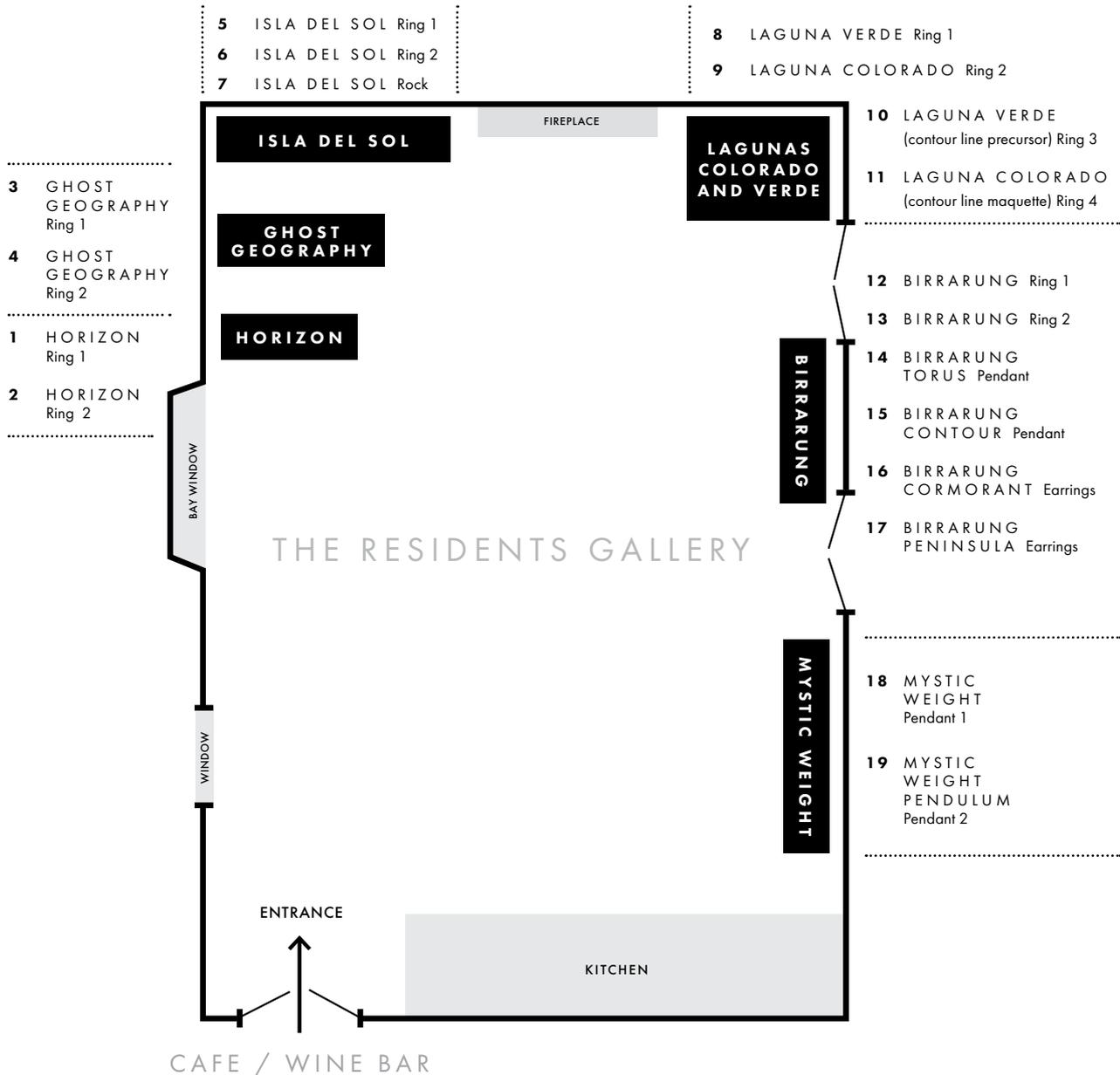
Pendant 2 is an 18ct yellow gold and diamond pendulum – a nod to dowsing the energetics of the rock, and a wearable divination tool, or simply a pendant.

Energetically shaped by thousands of years of cultural and ceremonial gathering, and more recently by the novel and film, this sacred landmark offers its genius loci like a gift - a presence you cannot miss.

18 - Mystic Weight Pendant 1 – 9ct yellow gold, 1.31 carat trapezoid green tourmaline, 2 x 1.5mm teal sapphires, 4 x 1.3/1.00mm EF/SI diamonds, on 9ct yellow gold 45cm chain - **\$3,390**

19 - Mystic Weight Pendulum 2 – 18ct yellow gold, 3.25mm FG/SI diamond, 1.2mm EF/SI diamond, on 9ct yellow gold 45cm chain - **\$2,800**





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WITH GRATITUDE TO:

- Vinni Kohleppel (for personal and technical support, shoe leather and patience)
- Matt, Alex, Essie and Leo Power
- Heidelberg Chinese Medicine
- Naina Knoess (graphic design and technical support)
- Nick Barkiolas (gem setting)
- Peter Wilhelm
- Natalie Dalton
- Talitha Brown
- Kathie Tracey
- Belinda Newick
- Montsalvat program and administration staff
- Cliff the Postie



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