

FOR KARLA DICKEN THERE IS NO LONGER ANY DOUBT ABOUT PLANETARY HEALTH

'THINGS JUST GOT REAL...'



Lismore-based Wiradjuri artist Karla Dicken's current exhibition at Andrew Baker in Bowen Hills, Queensland, brings together a wide-ranging exhibition of photography, video, sculpture, collage and garment-related installations. It is called SOS.

Her subject matter: poverty among Indigenous Australians, the damage and death of native flora and fauna caused by bushfires, and ill-informed and inappropriate land management practices.



In February last year Karla partnered with Bunurong, Tasmanian and Yuin man (and celebrated author of *Dark Emu*) Bruce Pascoe, from Gippsland, Victoria, for a film project with Blacklock Media, facilitated by the Kandos School of Cultural Adaptation.

Filming took place in the area surrounding Bingara, in Gamilaraay country, with Aboriginal children from Bingara Central School also participating.

A stylized signature or logo in black ink.

'LOOK HARD, LEARN QUICK AND LISTEN DEEPLY'



Karla is an award-winning multi-disciplinary artist and Bruce is an author, educator and farmer who in recent years has awakened Australians to the agricultural practices of pre-settlement Aboriginal people. Karla says, 'As Indigenous Australians we connect with Country and refer to the planet as Mother Earth.' The short film speaks of their concerns and the importance of healing the Mother with the help of the youth who are our future and our only hope. Bruce Pascoe does not speak on the film. Karla says: 'It is the viewers' responsibility to look hard, learn quick and listen deeply.'

'What will you see? What action will you take?' This is her challenge.

We are now in a desperate struggle to save our Mother and for Karla Dicken there is no holding back. This woman is a bare knuckle fighter. There is no tame language here and Karla is sending out an SOS.



Photos courtesy of the artist and Andrew Baker, Art Dealer Brisbane

MOTHER'S LITTLE HELPERS

The deathbed rattles
reality has arrived
with an offbeat heart
her veins die

Thirsty and hungry
no shelter to hide
screaming and crying
as water levels rise

No coloured pills
for mother today
overdosing on crooked
Band-aids
shakes from withdrawal stay

Battered and bruised
sweating in pain
the time has come
to nurse her back

Too late for flowers
hold her hand
hug her tight
love her through long, dark
nights

Sleepless chaos
no more fight
I see you, I hear you
I stand to fight

As mother recovers
looking unsure
and drained
she feels connection

Not blissfully
but respectfully
a world where humans
are brave enough to listen

An environment
that builds
trust in survival
where money is not the hero

Another realm
without excuses
hate or cunning
or self searching gain

Stay crazy for a minute longer
imagine a sustainable future
your heart full of hope
and an openness to learn

Where governments and those
in power
make change
with a sense of intelligence
and childish wonder

Let's keep tripping

Act now