



TVS NEWS

Newsletter, Tree Veneration Society, Jan-Jun 2026



Penny Simons opening *Whispers from the Canopy* in the Broadhurst Gallery, 25 January 2026. Photo: Paula Broom



Tree Veneration Society
Whispers from the Canopy
23 January to 10 February 2026

Hazelhurst SUTHERLANDSHIRE
ARTS
CENTRE

TVS EXHIBITIONS

HAZELHURST EXHIBITION

TVS *Whispers from the Canopy* exhibition took place in the Broadhurst Gallery at the Hazelhurst Art Centre from 23 January to 10 February this year. Another wonderful TVS exhibition. We also held some workshops and a small artist talkfest in the Centre as part of the show. Many thanks to the organisers, Penny Simons, Sue Stevens and Terhi Hakola, and workshopper Elizabeth Gervay.

**"THE BEST WAY TO PREDICT
THE FUTURE IS TO CREATE IT"**

Peter Drucker, the "father of
modern management", 1909-2005

STRATHNAIRN EXHIBITION

This exhibition, to be held just outside Canberra, has been postponed until October 2027. Louise Fowler-Smith is also organising an accompanying symposium. Watch this space - more information about both will be shared as plans develop.

COAL LOADER RESIDENCY

TVS was successful in its application for a year-long residency program at the Coal Loader near Waverton, thanks to North Sydney Council, which commenced in January. The application was prepared by Penny and Paula on behalf of TVS. Diane Mah was our first resident, working on watercolour postcards inspired by the Coal Loader and its surrounds. The residency program continues to grow, with residencies completed by Vanessa Wright and Louise, and Paula recently commencing hers.

WORKSHOPS

Coal Loader Artist in Residence

Public workshops are an important part of the Coal Loader Artist in Residence program, providing opportunities for visitors to engage directly with each artist's creative practice. Vanessa was the second Artist in Residence and presented a few drop-in drawing workshops, which attracted enthusiastic participation. Since Louise's residency has focused primarily on filmmaking, her workshop will be facilitated by Vanessa, who has remained in the studio. Current Artist in Residence Paula will continue this community focus with a drop-in stitching workshop on 25 July, inviting participants to explore nature-inspired hand stitching to become part of her sculptures.

Coal Loader Artisan Markets

North Sydney Council in collaboration with the Coal Loader run quarterly Artisan Markets to coincide with the change of season. They have been keen to engage TVS workshop facilitators for these since we are the current Residents in the studio. Diane, the program's first resident, ran a watercolour postcard workshop for the Coal Loader Artisan Market earlier in the year. It was warmly received and demonstrated the value of weekend programming for public participation. Since then, Catriona Pollard has run a drop-in style weaving workshop for the winter market. More to follow.

North Sydney Council Wellbeing Workshops

Our successful partnership with North Sydney Council continues, with the Wellbeing Workshop program running over the coming months. The workshops offer participants creative opportunities to connect with nature while building community through shared making. This program was secured by Elizabeth in collaboration with Lisa Woolfe at North Sydney Council



Diane Mah, AIR at the Coal Loader in February 2026. Photo: Diane Mah



Participants at Vanessa's drawing workshop, the Coal Loader Studio in April 2026. Photo: Paula Broom



Elizabeth Gervay's drawing workshop for NSC's Creative Wellbeing workshops at the Roz Crichton Centre. Photo: Elizabeth Gervay

WORKSHOPS (cont.)

Weaving for the Balls Head Centenary

TVS is collaborating with North Sydney Council on a community weaving project to celebrate the Balls Head Centenary. After being invited by Council to propose a community project, Vanessa, with assistance from Penny, developed a weaving proposal building on the success of their Rising Tide community weaving project last year. Vanessa has since been working with Andrew Scott, Bushcare Officer at North Sydney Council, to develop a weaving design inspired by the site's natural environment and history.

The community weaving day will take place on Sunday 6 September, and we would love to have more TVS members involved. Before then, we'll also be holding a fabric dyeing day to prepare repurposed and recycled fabrics for the project. Details of both events will be circulated to members soon.



Participants weaving at Rising Tide Nov 2025. Photo: Vanessa Wright

More Workshop News

Vanessa has joined Elizabeth in coordinating the TVS workshop program, taking over coordination of the Coal Loader workshops from Paula and Penny as the program continues to expand.

Paula was successful in securing a Woollahra Council grant for TVS to deliver **Create, Connect, Recover: A Nature-Inspired Community Arts Program**. The program will comprise six nature-inspired creative workshops delivered over the coming year in collaboration with Bondi Junction-based Oncology Recovery Services (ORSI), supporting people living with and beyond cancer, as well as their carers, families, friends and the wider community. The workshops will explore accessible creative practices including textiles, weaving, painting and drawing.

Bayside Council invited TVS to submit a proposal for nature-inspired creative workshops as part of their environmental day, Project Planet. The proposal was prepared by Paula on behalf of TVS, and we are currently awaiting the outcome.

Anyone who wishes to run future workshops through TVS should email Elizabeth/Vanessa with a proper workshop proposal. Please bear in mind that TVS charges a 10% commission on all workshops secured by us.

“In some Native languages the term for plants translates to “those who take care of us.”

Robin Wall Kimmerer, plant ecologist, distinguished professor, and enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation

TVS ACTIVISM

Bob Brown Foundation/Takayna

This year many TVS artists are involved in activities for and with the Bob Brown Foundation.

Bird Puppet Making Workshops

In early March, Heidi Yuko from the Bob Brown Foundation, with help from TVS's very own Adrienne Hunt and Vanessa Wright, organised a weekend of bird puppet-making workshops in preparation for the March for Forests. Drawing on skills learned from the acclaimed Erth puppeteers, Heidi led the Swift Parrot groups, while Adrienne taught participants to make Black Cockatoos and Vanessa led the Masked Owl groups. Many TVS artists took part, and the quirky flock of articulated bird puppets was proudly carried by TVS members at the March for Forests in March, bringing creativity and a strong visual presence to the campaign for native forests. We thank them for all their hard work on bringing these valuable workshops to life!

Art 4 Takayna Residency and Exhibition

Several TVS artists participated in the Bob Brown Foundation's Art 4 Takayna residency and exhibition in Tasmania, using art to advocate for the protection of Takayna's globally significant rainforest and wild landscapes. TVS artists Audrey Egan, Bianca Yrure, Brooke Thompson, Kat Seward, Paula and Vanessa exhibited work in the exhibition.

Congratulations to Bianca on curating another highly successful Art 4 Takayna exhibition, which attracted a record 700 visitors on opening night. We're delighted that Bianca has also recently taken on the role of TVS Exhibitions Officer.

Citizen Science Greater Glider Spotlighting

In early May, six TVS artists joined other volunteers in Tallaganda State Forest for a Bob Brown Foundation citizen science weekend, helping to survey for the threatened Greater Glider. Activities included learning to climb trees safely for habitat surveys, a hike to Plumwood Mountain, named after renowned environmental philosopher Val Plumwood, an introductory talk about non-violent direct action, and most importantly, night-time spotlighting to locate Greater Gliders and identify their den trees.

Together, the citizen scientists recorded 23 Greater Glider den trees in an area earmarked for logging. Each den tree identified triggers a 50-metre exclusion zone from logging, providing immediate protection for critical habitat and demonstrating the important role citizen science can play in native forest conservation.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”

MARGARET MEAD, CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGIST



Hobart Hughes climbs a tree as part of the citizen science weekend near Braidwood, May 2026. Photo: Paula Broom

OTHER NEWS

BIG CI CREATIVE ENCOUNTERS, BILPIN

TVS was invited by Daniel Bolotin, son of BigCi owners, to participate in one of their first Creative Encounters with their artists in residence so about ten of us headed up to Bilpin for a day of art and nature. It was wonderful to spend time with likeminded people, and we hope to collaborate with BigCi on other projects in future.

PUBLICATIONS

Louise wrote a detailed article about the Tree Veneration Society that was accepted and published by *Interalia Magazine*, an online magazine dedicated to interaction between the arts, science and consciousness. Louise emailed this to everyone but the direct access link is here

<https://www.interaliamag.org/articles/louise-fowler-smith-tree-veneration-in-the-time-of-the-anthropocene-why-trees-matter-and-why-a-cultural-response-matters-too/>

NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY

Louise also sent a submission for the new National Cultural Policy in April which she also emailed to all members to read on 8 April.

That's all for now. Thanks to all who help run this crazy ship!!!

Look forward to seeing many of you at the TVS picnic event at the Coal Loader on Thursday 2 July from 11am!



Collaborative drawing as part of BigCi's Creative Encounters in March 2026. Photo: BigCi

**"I firmly believe that
nature brings solace in all
troubles"**

Anne Frank

