

Karrawirra Pari Reflection

- Taylor Power

people see your pretty face
as if that's all you have to offer

I see you for what you are

a lover
a provider

a place of refuge for Aboriginal children
as they shied away from the prying eyes of invaders

a survivor with depth not many dare to explore

home

majestic and ancient
your grounding presence so powerful
it dwarfs the buildings around you
and renders them invisible

sitting on your banks
and marvelling at your grace
I imagine our people meandering
along your water's edge

running river
racing thoughts

the birds' song start to sound like distant hymns
the whispering breeze a gentle reminder to breathe
while I digest what life was like for the
Kaurna children that were forced to recite them

I wonder how often your tears ripple the water
as people bash a ball across the plain
without ever questioning
how many of my ancestors' bodies
fertilised the growth surrounding it

beneath your calm surface
lies blood-stained roots
generations of untold truths
and a graveyard of dreams
crushed by invasion

and yet despite it all
you are here

filled with substance and hope

you are alive

the spirit of this land
invincible and almighty

'tis by her I am guided
'tis she who makes me strong

Karrawirra Pari Reflection

- Domeninc Guerrera

State of River

i cry
 when i see
a plastic island
 float by
on a river of
 fractured streams

 now a canal for wastewater

Ghost of River

i stand by the river head tilted to one side
shoulders weighted in sorrow

i find it hard to see beauty in the river anymore
it just reflects painful memories
 of you

i collect and hide them amongst the reeds
tucked under swans nesting their eggs

i ask the trees to absorb and release them in their blooms
so we can breathe a scent of you

this river runs long shallow in depth
unlike your life

short but deep

Love of River

gum trees rattle in hot winds
white smoke billows
we cloud our bodies
to arrest our worries
 and heal us from fear

ducks fuss in the shallows
around
 the feet of an ancestral pose

through song and mud
the river calls me
 calls us
we strip off our clothes

and jump in

old nanna
works on the banks
where the river swallows the dirt

as she turns the topsoil
the yams are layered out
in a line just like ants marching

nanna protects them within the dirt
safe

now we can rest
as seeds know how to grow

Karrawirra Pari Reflection

- Dearna Newchurch

What has this place seen?

generations of change, loss, devastation
and new beginnings

through waves of change
it continues to nurture life
within it and surrounding it

its life ensures the rich, natural diversity
of this place

all the things we notice at a glance
but often take for granted

to survive in this way takes strength
but to take the leap to thrive
calls for immense courage

walking through this place I see
its strength and survival

from the birds who call this place home
to the trees that are anchored in its banks

I admire this strength

this resilience

it inspires me to be strong in spite of the doubt
and odds weighed against me

not just for myself
but for my family

What has this place seen?

Karrawirra Pari Reflection

- Carly Tarkari Dodd

step by step I walk along paths submerged
in a beautiful grounding energy

thriving parklands wrap the bustling city
like a blanket

this is my ancestor's land
how much of the land is left to the people?

I stand here grounded on my country
how much beauty has been taken away?

I crave connections to traditions
how much culture has been destroyed?

my ancestors walk beside me every step of the way
how many stories have been lost?

I wonder...
 when will there be action?
 how many died at the hands of colonisation?
 how many continue to die?

step by step I walk
my ancestors beside me
every step of the way