

## 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