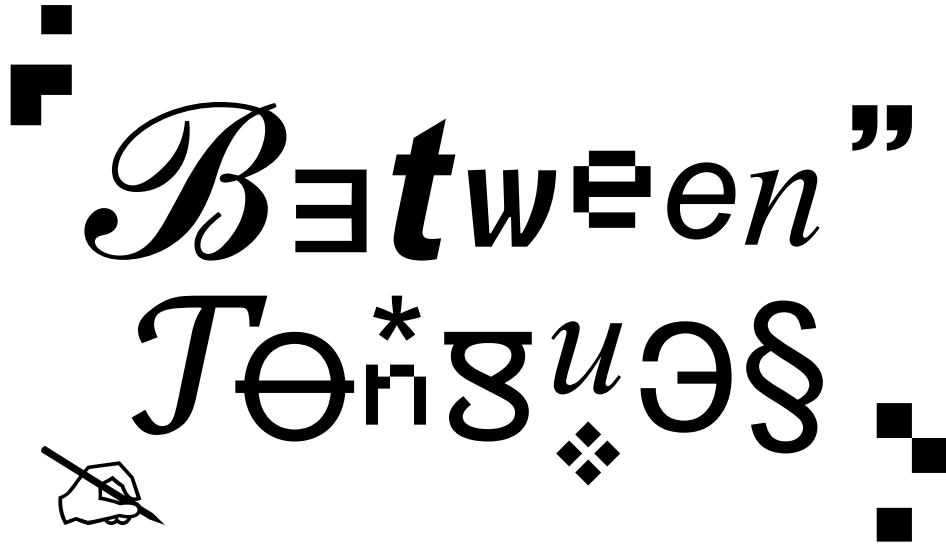


01.02.2026
– 29.03.2026

CURATED BY EMILY GREENWOOD, EMMA HARBRIDGE, AND TIAN ZHANG
WITH ASSISTANCE FROM RAINER CIAR AND SAIRA KRISHAN



Between Tongues

To be in flux is to live, moving with the ebb and flow of life is the only way to survive. We learn from our past for our present, to create our futures. Language is at the beginning of every conversation, every connection, every exchange. Language exists before communication; it exists before we write or even speak a word. It carries our past, ready to utter the words of our ancestors before we open our mouths. Without language, there would be no communication.

Between Tongues recognises the in-between, acknowledging what it means to be in-between languages and in-between cultures, with the expectation to translate all in-between.

Lilah Benetti explores ancestral knowledge, spirituality and the vitality of life in their work *Les Somme De Nous (The Sum of Us)*. The video work collages interviews, video clips, and photographs shot across a six-month road trip across West Africa. These recordings sustain oral histories, archiving ancestral knowledge for future generations. Through the interviews, they seek to understand the role of women and gender non-conforming people to maintain indigenous African spirituality as cultural practice, and how these practices have been displaced through continued colonisation. *Les Somme De Nous* speaks to the in between, quoting one of the interviewees who imparts "Try to have the whole world in your head but don't forget where you come from. That's the only thing that's going to be the link between that world and yourself."

In their collaborative work *blurred outline, permanent imprint* Panda Wong and Lou Garcia-Dolnik aim to transform poetry from solely a written medium, into a physical and ephemeral artform. Exhibiting their collaborative poetry through light-up crystal paper weights and window decals, the work creates fragments of a poem. These poetic fragments, now separated into individual crystal paper weights, are a catalog for audiences to build their own poem and interpretation of the work. The heart-shaped crystal paper

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weight allows insight into Wong and Garcia-Dolnik's intentions with the poem. Perfect for you to hold a fragment in your hand.

Keroshin Govender's series *cu-vu-n-ta-r* features engraved and screen-printed ceramic pieces that navigate familial and colonial histories. Utilising photographs from his family's archive and Tamil script, the work follows the (mis-)translations of their family name when their ancestors migrated to South Africa under indentured labour. An approximation of their surname was used out of convenience for the English and Dutch speaking colonisers, which now cannot be accurately translated back to the native Tamil. The different tones of indigo dyes and glazes reference how the plant's industrialised agriculture contributed to famine and displacement in British-occupied India, which fed into the indentured labour system. Disrupting the family photographs, Govender has also included imagery from contemporaneous news events, linking personal stories with broader sociopolitics. The work alludes to formal and informal acts of record keeping and archiving – attempts to fill in the gaps and recover histories for future generations.

from all the eldest daughters before me; LOST IN TRANSLATION THROUGH MOTHER-TONGUES by Maria Thaddea represents ritual and memory, but in a hazy way. The altar and incense within the work signal this as an offering that not only represent matrilineal ancestry but also reference stories, memories and cultural practices handed down to Thaddea as a fourth generation oldest daughter. The work seeks to illustrate the feeling of childhood nostalgia, drawing from childhood memories playing *tjongklak*. It is meant to recall memories with a softer understanding, blasé from the exact details. These memories are represented in the way someone would draw something from memory, the sentiment is right but it may be a bit off. The work approaches mother-daughter relationships as it does language and text; it is muted. Oral history is vital to continuing ancestral anecdotes but even within all the speaking, a lot remains unsaid, meaning available through gesture, through offering.

Makeda Duong seeks to divert the narrative in their work *Dole Bludgeoned Girl*. The hand-knitted textile work seeks to approach the housing and cost of living crisis, exposing the classist double standards for those in a higher tax bracket versus those at the lower end. The physicality of their works resemble industrial buildings and lower class dwellings, with text phrases directly quoting articles written about the ends of the class spectrum in so-called Australia. *Dole Bludgeoned Girl* seeks to employ class prejudices as a way of misleading audiences, asking them to speculate which end of the spectrum these direct quotes were written about.

Bea Rubio-Gabriel's *kaya pa* portrays the emotional and physical journey of her family. Exhibiting the authentic legal documents representing their immigration to Australia, as well as two small bronze sculptures of *pusit* (squid), she draws on personal and familial experiences. The bronze sculptures of two *pusits* represent Rubio-Gabriel and her younger sister: one who lived through the litigation of immigration, the other, first in their family to be born in Australia, unable to speak their mother tongue. The physical

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recording of ancestral and archival history is portrayed through genuine, legal documents, while the remnants of Rubio-Gabriel's performance work and the small bronze sculptures that sit at opposite ends of the work portray the anecdotal history that usually remains unwritten, only existing when it is retold.

Passing Through and Along follows a conversation Leila Frijat had with her mother about her mother's life. Exploring the process of codification, Frijat uses a voice transforming program to shrink and expand the audio recordings of her mother's life story into a visual medium. To further safeguard the specifics of her personal exchange, Frijat has turned the visual imagery into a series of cyanotypes, which are then stitched into a stop-motion animation. The video aspect of their work allows insight into this personal story of her mother's life journey, with the sporadic subtitles revealing certain stages of the story that are safe for wider admittance. Frijat abstracts her mother's story even further with the four cyanotypes exhibited alongside the video aspect of the work. With the safety that ambiguity brings, the installation presents a codified version of her mother's life story.

Leitu Bonnici also explores codification in their paper woven series *KeFe o'e Europa*. Arising from frustration towards Bonnici's classmates and the criminalisation of Palestinian support in Germany, as they undertake studies in Europe the series has been created by weaving their university's terms of engagement document and museum pamphlets used to constrain Bonnici's political and cultural ideologies. The woven works are situated lower to the ground, imitating 'ie toga in line with *fa'a-Samoa*. Translating political statements into Samoan, Bonnici codifies the phrases beyond recognition, utilising and reclaiming Germanic typography to imprint their message.

The tongue is a vessel for speech and language, a muscle that can be flexed. The movement of bodies form language; the movement of people forms culture. Between Tongues negotiates the gaps in-between, of language, communication and translation.

Language is specific to place and time, and yet, it is alive – each word is a seed that grows and adapts, a portal to past and future. While language can be a tool that is used against us, it is also fugitive, escaping attempts to erase and suppress. Some artists retrace and reclaim narratives, attempting to piece together fragments through memories and documentary artefacts. For others encryption and codification are necessary for safety and protection. The exhibition covers what is said and not said – what can't be said and what's intentionally left between the lines.

1. Lilah Benetti

Les Somme De Nous (The Sum of Us), 2024

Single-channel analogue video (Super 8 film and magnetic tape transferred to HD), colour, sound
8 min 33 sec

Multilingual: Wolof, French, English

Sound Design: Rei Ha Ra

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Interviewees: Togbe; Colonel Abdoulaye Ndiaye; Professor Serigne Mor Mbaye; Julien Kalipe; Raki Cis; Bachita Banasse; Khaoula Ksiksi

End Drums and Vocals: Ndeye Seck, Raki Cis

Filming Locations: Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal

LES SOMME DO NOUS is a contemplative audiovisual work by Lilah Benetti that seeks to reimagine our identities beyond Western frameworks, tracing the entanglements of language, selfhood, and place. Developed over six months across Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Ghana, and Senegal, the work engages the historical presence of gender non-conformity within traditional spiritual practices amidst the complex contemporary political landscapes across these regions.

At its core, *LES SOMME DE NOUS* is shaped through quiet encounters, intimate interviews and the textures of everyday life that foregrounds the role of non-men in sustaining cultural, spiritual and social lineages. Individual presence is positioned not as spectacle, but as continuity, resistance, and possibility.

Through layered sound and image, the work invites reflection rather than resolution. It asks how silenced voices might be honoured, who remains excluded from collective visions of freedom, and how diasporic communities might imagine futures that are more relational, inclusive, and liberated. Rather than offering answers, *LES SOMME DE NOUS* holds space, allowing meaning to emerge through proximity, listening, and duration.

This work draws from and contributes to *BLACK AND BLUR*, a living anarchic archive of memory and cultural survival, under the custodianship of Lilah Benetti and co-authored by many.

2. Lou Garcia-Dolnik & Panda Wong

blurred outline, permanent imprint, 2025

Laser engraved crystals, LED lights, white stock hi-tac vinyl decals
15 x 20 x 5 cm each

For *Between Tongues*, we have created a work that plays with the idea of poetry as 3-dimensional through 'crystal poems', decals and light. We sifted through our previous works, pulling lines that shared an attention to language. We discovered that these lines also spoke to transience and temporariness, often tending to reference the things we hold most dear.

Decals float in the window, lines of poetry filtering out the light to fall onto the gallery floor as distorted echoes of themselves. The changing glow of LED lights illuminate the fragments.

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We were moved by paperweights and their traditional function of holding things down, trapping that which wants to flee. We also wanted to explore the poetic potential in the paperweight as a merchandise object or corporate anachronism. Take a closer look at the

crystals to see the poems they compose in each new arrangement.

Thank you to Lucy Fan at Pujiang Crystal Factory for crystallising our poems <3

3. Keroshin Govender

cu-vu-n-ta-r, 2026

Glazed, engraved, hand painted and screen printed ceramic slabs

Dimensions variable

Cu-vu-n-dar comprises a series of ceramic tablets. Words and images are overlaid on the clay. Some are clearly defined, while other inscriptions are barely visible. Marks are made via engraving, glazing, printing and painting. These palimpsests have been used in my attempts to translate the Govender surname into Tamil.

There are 1.5 million persons of South Asian origin residing in South Africa, commonly referred to as South African Indians. A large portion identify as Tamil, and amongst South African Tamils one of the most popular surnames is "Govender". However, this name cannot be written in Tamil script as it was a name given to various South Asian indentured labourers arriving in Durban in the late 1800's. Many were illiterate or at least could not write in English. The Govender surname can thus be seen as the result of misspelling, and/or anglicizing, or even complete fabrication depending on who you speak with.

Even though there are 247 characters in the Tamil abugida script, no combination of these characters can accurately write the name Govender. This artwork acts as an attempt at connecting with a source culture, the mother tongue, ancestral homeland, etc. all the while knowing that these attempts are futile.

4. Maria Thaddea

from all the eldest daughters before me; LOST IN TRANSLATION THROUGH MOTHER-TONGUES, 2026

Glazed ceramics, incense, wood, textiles

44 x 40 x 160cm

An ongoing exploration into ancestral veneration

An altar cabinet of sorts

from an eldest daughter,

of an eldest daughter,

of an eldest daughter,

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of an eldest daughter

Made of muddled layers of patterns learnt, misconstrued and understood
Through lines said, left unsaid and read between
Of different mothers, mother-tongues
– equal parts familiar and dissonant

Patterns carved into being
Perfect valleys to bear blame
To let nestle – to accommodate
always
to bear 'till overflow

5. Makeda Duong

Dole Bludgeoned Girl, 2025–2026

Hand knitted wool and polyester, felt, floristry wire
92cm x 84cm; 48cm x 39cm

I was raised in a housing trust house. We lived on government payments. We did not live in poverty, but we certainly would have without those payments. Knitting is an accessible and comparatively cheap material for a poorer artist. What I don't pay for in expensive materials, I pay for in time and labour. Into this work I have snuck in quotes from puffpiece articles about wealthy patrons of the arts. Can you tell which quotes were written about them and which quotes are from articles about the 'welfare' class? What does it mean to go into the arts, coming from a family with limited means? We may have been financially poor but our home was rich culturally. I never felt limited in my options. As the cost of living looms large over Australians, I felt the need to reflect on choosing a career that is notoriously low paid, expensive to undertake, and paradoxically requires mixing with wealthy 'cultured' elites. Our needs feel insignificant in the face of such power. Cultural capital is extracted from us, but what's left over for us living artists?

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body.

6. Bea Rubio-Gabriel

kaya pa, 2026

Performance, bronze, legal documents (assorted)
Dimensions variable, duration ongoing

Every system has its own rhythm to its movements. Our modes of production, structures of family, social systems, cultural protocols, governance – each has its own colour and cadence that allows us to move through the world.

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I was not born in the place we say I was, I did not arrive here in the way I thought I did.

When the body is caught between systems designed for its subjugation, control enacts movement. The body is forced beyond capacity, displaced from its roots, pulled out of safeties. It dances now, through a new, sharpened choreography.

My body knows more than the languages I speak.

*Whenever I felt I could no longer go on
my father would tell me: **tiaga at tiis lang, Anak***

Enfolded within me is the language of how to patiently persevere through pain.

*My father no longer says **konting tiis nalang.***

*Perceiving the altered movements of my body,
he instead attempts to convince me to escape.*

When we are at our limit we say: kaya pa!

What is asked of us and what is possible meets in the thresholds of our fatigues.

This is the dance of cultural inheritances, the choreography of finding ways to survive within.

7. Leila Frijat

Passing Through & Along, 2024

Single-channel video, cyanotype prints

2 min, 45 x 33 cm each

Passing Through and Along examines the ever-evolving nature of familial stories. It draws upon a recorded conversation with my mother over coffee. As the story is passed back and forth between digital and analogue mediums, it increasingly falls out of sync with the original recording. It is further distanced in its translation from Arabic to English, the story is rendered into a series of statements and facts.

Accompanying the animation are four cyanotype prints of frames that were omitted in the final video. These moments capture small but crucial details that reveal my mother's character; her dark humour, the quiet stillness when she remembers, or dramatic proclamations of life. Passed along to me, I chose to have these remain untranslated, keeping them sacred to a moment shared.

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8. Leitu Bonnici

Kefe o'e Europa, 2024

Various materials and dimensions.

(starting from the top left and going clockwise)

Kuki le Kapiteni, 2024.

Approximately 212mm x 295mm, woven pamphlets from the Humboldt Ethnological Museum in Berlin, Germany, screen printed graphic (English typefaces).

Kefe o'e Fa'alua U T, 2024.

Approximately 185mm x 304mm, woven printed Dutch masters course Terms of Engagement document, screen printed graphic (Dutch typefaces).

Kefe o'e Siamani, 2024.

Approximately 360mm x 465mm, woven recycled risograph prints (work of classmates), screen printed graphic (tatau symbols and German typefaces).

'*Kefe o'e Europa*' is a series of woven works that speak to Indigenous resistance while being located in the colonial centres of Europe.

'*Kefe o'e Siamani*' challenges Germany for the lack of acknowledgement concerning colonial histories despite their much more far reaching and devastating impacts than the Second World War. This work in particular references German colonisation of Samoa and the country's ongoing persecution of Indigenous peoples through their suppression of Palestinians. The work was first displayed at a book fair in Germany and is woven from leftover prints of classmates who opposed making a public statement in support of Palestine.

'*Kuka le Kapiteni*' is woven from pamphlets taken from the Ethnological Museum in Berlin where a tour guide was heard proudly speaking of items 'acquired' by 'Captain' Cook. At the time that these pamphlets were collected, there were huge displays of va'a (ships), architecture and other items stolen from the Great Ocean, including Samoa.

'*Kefe o'e Fa'alua U T*' is woven from a printed version of a Dutch masters course Terms of Engagement document where several students openly made fun of colonisation to demean the work of their Indigenous classmate for calling them 'white'. The quote over the top was taken from an email a head tutor was pressured to send that requested apologies for 'discriminatory and/or racist behaviour'.

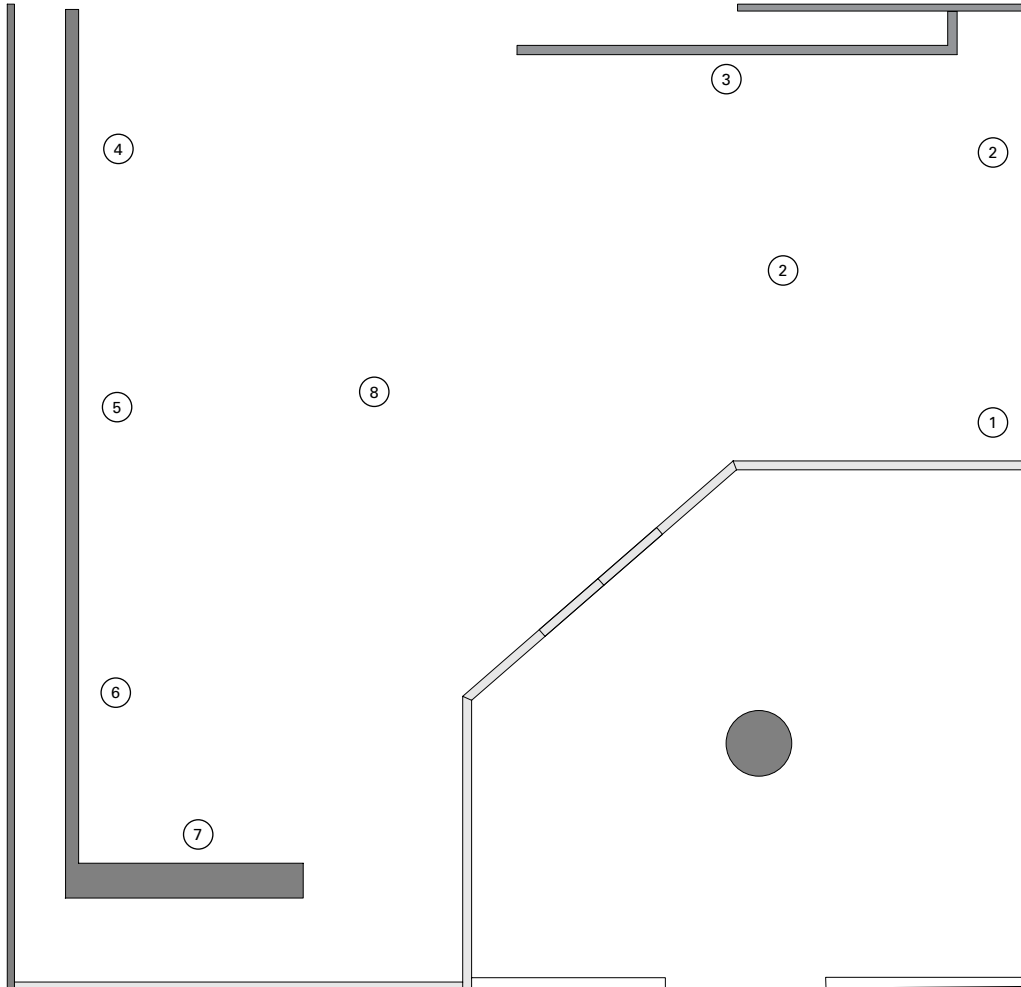
The typefaces screen printed onto all three woven pieces subvert typefaces from Germany, England and the Netherlands, which inherently embody the extractivist, individualistic and white supremacist characteristics of these cultures. The documents used in these works are deconstructed and reinvigorated through a Samoan style of weaving.

Pari is supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW.
Pari is assisted by the Visual Arts, Craft and Design Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments. Pari receives rental support from the City of Parramatta.

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