

**the
sydney
consortium**

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Biodiversity and the Arts



nature culture discover

3

Things it is Difficult to Imagine

1. The World and Everything In It
2. How Things Go Together
3. That Things End

If we know biodiversity is good, and if we know biodiversity is threatened, then why is it still threatened?

The idea of 'biodiversity' let alone the fact of 'biodiversity' on this planet is difficult to imagine. This is true for biology, which in doing its best to map biodiversity has to date identified 1.4 million species, but remains open to the probability that the actual figure might be somewhere between 2 and 100 million. The number of particular living things on any given day on our planet can only be guessed from this necessarily imprecise starting point.

If our imaginations are to help, they need to confront three things that limit understanding. Firstly, we have to imagine the idea of multiplicity itself. Every living thing is a window on the world. Secondly, we have to imagine the idea of interconnectedness. Every animate and inanimate thing contributes to sub-systems within larger eco-systems that in turn comprise the planet as a whole and how it functions. Thirdly, we have to take seriously the idea that things end. We

somehow feel ourselves, and our planet, to be infinite. Yet this feeling can encourage us to avoid the fact that things end: selves, people, places, environments, planets, solar systems, even universes.

The Sydney Consortium and The Australian Museum present Biodiversity and the Arts, an event in which artists, scientists and academics offer a range of perspectives on these three questions. This event will have three parts. There will be a panel discussion with Miles Franklin award-winning novelist Alexis Wright, philosopher Nikolas Kompridis, cultural theorist Brett Neilson, biologist George (Buz) Wilson and astronomer Bryan Gaensler. Five major Australian poets, Robert Adamson, Judith Beveridge, Bonny Cassidy, Peter Minter and Amanda Stewart, will perform new work written for the event. The sound artist Roger Dean, poet Hazel Smith and visual artist Ben Denham will share their perspectives through video and sound.

Biodiversity and the Arts

(Three related events: Poetry, Seminar, Visual Art)

Sat. 11 September 2010

Poetry

'Alive' Auditorium
Australian Museum
entry via William St, Sydney

1pm-2pm

Robert Adamson
Judith Beveridge
Bonny Cassidy
Peter Minter
Amanda Stewart

Sat. 11 September 2010

Seminar

Theatrette, Australian Museum
Entry via William Street, Sydney

3-5pm

Alexis Wright (novelist)
Nikolas Kompridis
(philosopher)
Bryan Gaensler (astronomer)
Brett Neilson (cultural theorist)
George (Buz) Wilson (biologist)

**Thursday 9 September–
Sunday 12 September**

Visual Art

'Alive' Auditorium
Australian Museum
entry via William St, Sydney

Audio-Visual Works by
Roger Dean (sound artist)
Hazel Smith (poet)
Ben Denham (visual artist)

Admission

**(including Museum entry)
\$25 Members,
\$35 Non-Members**

Book Online: <http://www.australianmuseum.net.au/event/Sydney-Consortium>

Or phone 02 9320 6225

For further details:
www.sydneymuseum.com