

Leaves

2026 PALMER SCULPTURE BIENNIAL PROPOSAL

Coordinators: Sally Caston & Elizabeth (Liz) Ports

Leaves is a ground-based fabric installation composed of a long length of natural fabrics, joined together and hand-printed with imagery of South Australian flora—particularly species native to Palmer and its surrounding areas. The work is designed to be installed around a weathered tree, ideally situated midway up an incline, allowing viewers to gradually encounter and engage with the installation as they approach.

The cloth, approximately 40 cm wide, will be wrapped once around the base of the selected tree before unfurling along the ground in a two-armed spiral. Spacing between the rings of the spiral will invite viewers to walk through and closely experience the printed surfaces.

The fabric will be anchored and tethered securely with rocks sourced from the immediate environment, carefully positioned in unprinted areas along the spiral's edges and centre. Round holes will be cut at intervals between printed sections to provide wind resistance and ensure the work remains stable throughout the exhibition period.

The installation will feature approximately 300 individual prints, produced using a variety of traditional and contemporary printmaking techniques. At least 30 invited artists will contribute prints, working on the provided materials. Invitations will be extended through two key networks: Sally, a professional artist with decades of experience who regularly leads printmaking workshops and retreats, and Liz, an Honours student at the Adelaide Central School of Art, who has strong connections with both current and former students.

No funding or external assistance will be required for the creation, installation, or deinstallation of this work. We anticipate minimal environmental impact during installation and complete restoration of the site post-exhibition. There are no current plans to sell the work, either as a complete piece or as individual prints, though we remain open to future discussions regarding its ongoing life.

Both project coordinators attended the most recent exhibition and are familiar with the site and its context. We are willing to return as needed to discuss placement, logistics, or other aspects of the project. To support contributing artists who may be unable to visit the site in person, we intend to document a range of local plant species and compile these images into a private online reference gallery.

Leaves is a quiet, contemplative response to a changing climate. It centres the native flora of the site, honouring its resilience and beauty. As South Australia continues to dry and introduced species struggle, these hardy plants—rooted in this landscape—will become increasingly important. This installation offers a visual meditation on that shift, inviting reflection on the strength and significance of our indigenous species as companions in an uncertain future.

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