

Within Reach 2013
collagraph/lino print (diptych), 76cm x 112cm



Before Long 2013
linocut, 76cm x 47.5cm



Handmark Gallery
77 Salamanca Place, Hobart, Tasmania
Open daily 10am - 5pm
www.handmarkgallery.com

Cover image
Finding Centre (detail) 2013, linocut,
76cm x 47.5cm

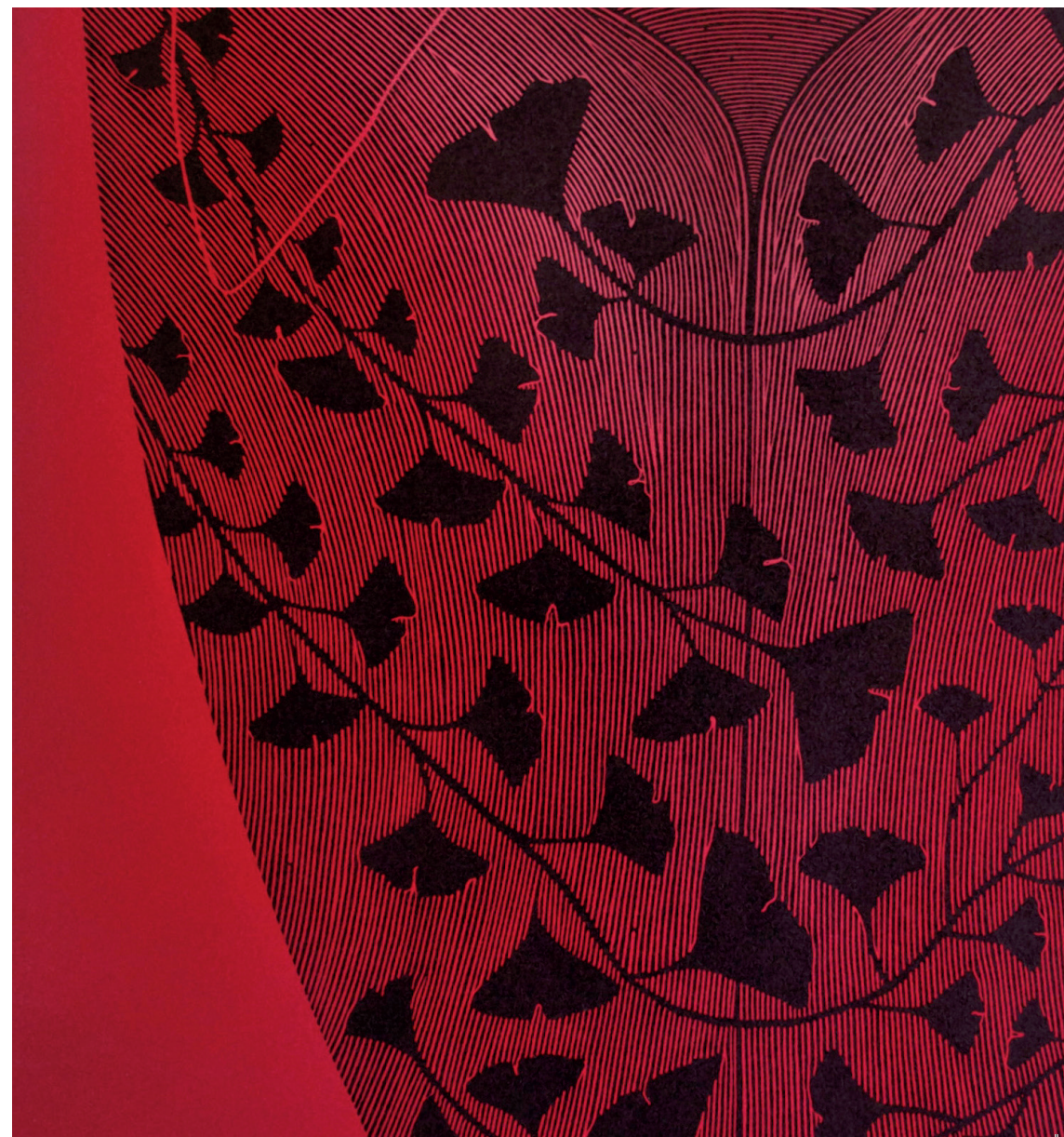
Graphic Design
Marisa Molin

www.melissasmith.net.au

Touching Ground

MELISSA SMITH

6 December - 31 December 2013



Touching Ground

MELISSA SMITH

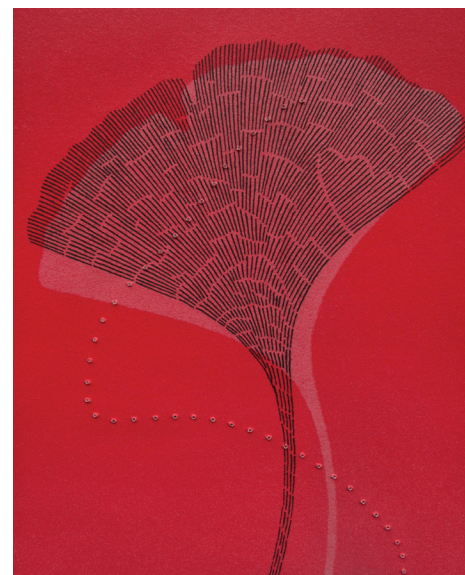
To touch the ground: to gently alight, perhaps from some sort of travel or at least 'away', to come home. In this way, touching ground is a matter of finding balance, of rediscovering one's self within a wider nature, settling into a rhythm. To touch the ground: hinting at tactility, of surface and medium, of earth and matter. Conversely, that ground may be touching, that is, empathetic, reaching out, pulling at the heart and perhaps the mind; touching as an act of reciprocity.

So it is with printmaking, and here in *Touching Ground*, Melissa Smith has sought to ground herself in her home and garden, gathering the fruits of that earth, quietly observing each growing thing through the seasons. Judas tree, ginkgo, jasmine, sycamore: leaves, stems, seed and flowers are collected and arranged, layered and delineated. Smith's signature red is scratched and glazed, layered and erased. Grouped works become visual demonstrations of relationships between humans and other natural beings, between seed and soil, between eye and hand. These forms also allude to repetition in nature, with each repeat being yet an original. Against the organic form of a succulent flower, geometric patterning visually references a

textile or sand pattern, perhaps a raked gravel garden. In a completing gesture, each print is perforated from the verso to enable the raised Braille-like reading of the form that inhabits, in its redness, the extent of the print: a final pinning down of the subject, formalising relationships across a series of images.

Touching Ground is the first body of work produced by Melissa Smith on a press previously worked by Denise Campbell and by Bea Maddock. Stamped on the press the initials 'DC BM MS' denote its history and, by extension, that of a particular vein of Tasmanian printmaking. A touchstone of past experience, the press is a platform from which life will continue to grow, as in a garden, from leaf, to flower, to the seed as it touches fertile ground.

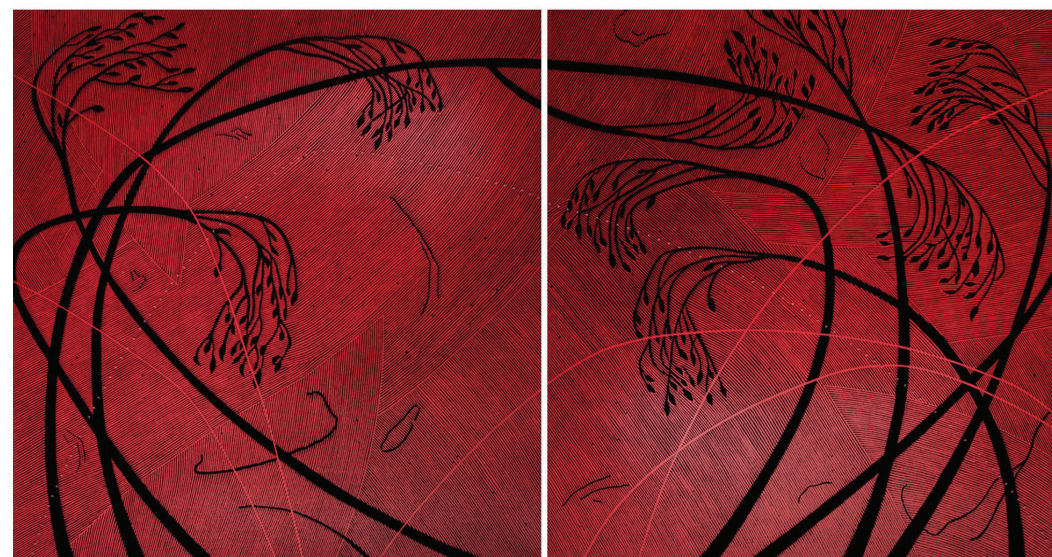
Dr Deb Malor
Tasmanian College of the Arts



Seek 2013
collagraph/lino print, 22.5cm x 16.5cm



Follow 2013
collagraph/lino print, 22.5cm x 16.5cm



Searching 2013
linocut (diptych), 56cm x 108cm