



## A WERGAIA WOMAN FROM THE MALLEE IN NORTHWEST VICTORIA

SHEREE STEWART

SPOKEN WORD FOR WEST PAPUA

ACU Art Gallery, Brunswick St, Fitzroy  
Saturday 6 December 2015



author:  
the wild rainbow: journeying as woman, mother  
and sage-femme, Birthsong Press, 2013

labyrinth of half-eaten stars (with jacinta cross)  
Birthsong Press, 2013



FRWP Women's Office  
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Docklands, Victoria

A WERGAIA WOMAN FROM THE MALLEE IN NORTHWEST VICTORIA

SHEREE STEWART

I SAT WITH BUNGIL ON SATURN

I SAW NEW WORLDS FORM FROM STARDUST, HOPE FROM A TOUCH OF MAGIC

I SAT WITH GOORIALLA UNDERGROUND

AND I HEARD HER BELLY RUMBLE

AND WITNESSED AS SHE ERUPTED AND FORMED HILLS, MOUNTAINS, VALLEYS, RIVERS, FISH, MEN

I SAT WITH MY PEOPLE FOR HUNDREDS AND THOUSANDS OF YEARS

AND WE SUNG CREATION SONGS POWERFUL TO FORM OCEANS AND STARS

I WATCHED AS EONS PASSED BEFORE MY EYES

I SAW BODIES TURN TO BONE, TURN TO EARTH, TURN TO DUST, TURN TO STARS, TURN TO COSMOS

I WAS THERE WHEN THE MOON FIRST CAME AND MADE LOVE TO THE OCEAN

EBB AND FLOW, EBB AND FLOW

PUSH, PULL, PUSH, PULL

I WAS THERE WITH MY CROWN OF STARS AS MY RING OF FIRE BURNED

AND NEW WORLD BIRTHED FROM BETWEEN MY LEGS

MY NAME IS PILEPILETA WUNJUB LERDMUL

MY PEOPLE COME FROM WERGAIA AND GORMANJANYUK

SOME OF US COME FROM NORTH-WEST VICTORIA

WE HAVE RED DUST ON OUR FEET AND WE BREATHE IN THE SCENT OF THE MALLEE SCRUB

SOME OF US ARE FROM THE RIVER

WE KNOW DREAMTIME STORIES OF BUNYIPS

AND WE KNOW RIVER SONGS AND HOW TO CALL IN THE RAIN

MY TOTEM ANIMALS ARE THE RED-CRESTED BLACK COCKATOO, AND THE PELICAN

PILEPILETA MEANS SHINING, GLITTERING, EXPLODING LIGHT

WUNJUB IS A LOVE THAT IS ALL ENCOMPASSING

LERDMUL IS A MOB OF WOMEN

WOMEN HOLD THE CREATION, WOMEN HOLD UP THE WORLD

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I AM WOMAN RADIATING SHINING LIGHT  
ALL-ENCOMPASSING LOVE  
AND I DO THIS WITH MY MOB OF WOMEN  
TOGETHER WITH OUR HANDS AND HEARTS WE HOLD UP THE WORLD

IN MY INDIGENOUS LINEAGE, WE ARE GIVEN A NAME AS CHILDREN BY ONE OF OUR ELDERS  
AS WE GROW INTO MAN OR WOMEN, OUR CHILD-NAME DIES AND OUR NEW NAME COMES  
ONE THAT WE ARE EXPECTED TO LIVE UP TO AND EMBODY  
MY NAME TOOK A LONG TIME TO COME

IT TOOK SIX BABIES, AND PUTTING THEIR PLACENTAS IN THE GROUND  
IT DIDN'T COME UNTIL AFTER I LEFT MY MARRIAGE  
IT DIDN'T COME UNTIL I WAS BROKEN  
AND MY MOB OF WOMEN CAME FOR ME

IT DIDN'T HAPPEN UNTIL I WAS STRONG ENOUGH  
BUT I AM STRONG ENOUGH NOW  
I AM STRONG ENOUGH NOW AND THIS IS MY NAME  
I AM PILEPILETA WUNJUB LERDMUL

AND THIS IS WHAT I MUST NOW EMBODY  
I WANT TO CALL YOU ALL IN  
INTO THIS COUNTRY, AND ONTO THIS PLANET  
TO COME IN AND BE CONNECTED

KANYA, WARRANG, KALEENA  
TO BREATHE, TO SING, TO LOVE  
COME IN, COME IN, COME INTO MY CAMP

KANYA, WARRANG, KALEENA  
TO BREATHE, TO SING, TO LOVE  
COME IN, COME IN, COME INTO MY CAMP

KANYA, WARRANG, KALEENA  
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