



*The Seven Circuits of a Pearl* is a photographic and mixed media odyssey through the ruinous discoveries in my personal family history and the one of Australia's pearling disasters exploring how witnessing through interrupted material in the archive can enable a series of correspondences between personal and collective histories of loss and their making into new temporal and material forms. The story begins with my relocation to Australia and my exploration of the faraway Western coast, where the Indian Ocean meets the Great Sandy Desert, and where for thousands of years, pearls have been treasured, sought, bought and stolen.

Like another living vessel of refracted time and memory, the archive of the journeys for pearls sails me back to the journeys of my late father as seen through his own personal archives during his time as a sailor in the faraway lands he explored. Driven by curiosity and captivated by the trove of an image of a woman with a pearl necklace found in them, I begin the journey towards the painful discovery of my father's ex-wife and mother of a half-brother I have never met. A journey of multiple paths of deception, the topology of the plot borrows from the archetype of the seven-circuit Cretan being suggestive of the different narrative twists and crossings until the moment of discovery; the final central nucleus of the story.



Maritime disasters, archeological, personal and missing evidence, become the thread between visual and textual material from museum collections, journals, diaries and memoirs researched, and further re-imagined through the mixed-media works produced, aiming at creating an interrelational space amongst the fragments of a larger narrative progressing from an investigative to a more metaphorical and esoteric resolution. In a parallel way, I reflect on the multifaceted and multimodal exchange, trade and commodification of pearls in relation to broader histories of empire, labour management and marine ecology, questioning not only whether humans exist in relation to history, but instead how to access and write the history of this relationship in contemporary art as an emergent response to a personal and cultural heritage in crisis.



#### Artist Bio

Ioanna Sakellaraki [b.1989, Greece] is a visual artist and researcher currently working across Australia and Europe. Her work investigates the relationship between collective cultural memory and fiction. Drawing emphasis on the photographic object, process and encounter, she explores the boundaries of a primitive, yet futuristic vision of places and people.

OD  
PHOTO  
PRIZE

TRACY MARSHALL-GRANT  
2023 JUDGES PICK  
IOANNA SAKELLARAKI  
*THE SEVEN CIRCUITS OF A PEARL*



OD  
PHOTO  
PRIZE

TRACY MARSHALL-GRANT  
2023 JUDGES PICK  
IOANNA SAKELLARAKI  
*THE SEVEN CIRCUITS OF A PEARL*

---

