

SOPHIE ZELDER

Unshore

1 - 23 August, 2026



We take photographs to record what we observe, but it is often only in looking back that we realize what we were truly capturing.

Drawn from reference photos and photo collages taken over the summer of 2024, this series began as a technical experiment: pushing the variable medium of wood lithography (Mokulito) into the delicate realm of figurative portraiture. The medium's habit of leaving unexpected swatches and blotches became a perfect mirror for the themes that emerged, reflecting the dualities of the coast and a deeper climate of uncertainty.

Capturing candid moments across generations at Portsea and Phillip Island, these prints trace the timeless, sensory rituals of the coast - the exhilaration of the surf, salty skin, and quiet contemplation by the water. From young lives looking out toward the horizon to older figures resting on the sand, the subjects in these works inhabit the shoreline at various turning points in life.

Yet beneath the bright haze of a classic summer lies an acute awareness of fragility. These portraits also look beyond the immediate joy of the beach to confront the vulnerability of the present. They acknowledge how easily our realities can shift, how futures pivot, and how quickly trajectories can alter.

A play on certainty and the coastline, Unshore explores the tension between deep gratitude for the present and the delicate, shifting nature of the future. Ultimately, these pieces are an invitation to stand on the shore, bring your own narrative to the space, and see what resonates.

Over Page:
'Flight' 2026

Chinagraph, printing ink, on marine ply
81 x 122 cm
\$1,950

A figure stands at the water's edge, his towel catching the wind like sudden wings in a transient, timeless coastal moment. As the organic textures of the timber bleed into the boy and the horizon, the boundary between figure and landscape dissolves, evoking the young man's momentary ownership of the windswept shoreline. His gaze over the horizon alludes to a young adult's desire to expand and see beyond their own world.





'Pause' 2025

Mokulito print on paper

Image: 59 x 42 cm Framed: 78 x 60.5 cm

\$1,330 ED AP 1/2

By showing the figure from behind, this piece focuses on a quiet, internal moment rather than a specific face. It captures the feeling of being completely alone with your thoughts on the shoreline - feeling alive and exhilarated by the cold water and the fresh air, pausing for breath before diving back into the rush of the surf.



'Smith's' 2025

Mokulito print on paper

Image: 59 x 38 cm Framed: 78 x 56.5 cm

\$1,330 ED AP 1/3

This un-posed moment on the shore at Smith's Beach invites us to sit with another person's internal thoughts. The soft wood grain bleeds through the scene, anchoring the figure to the coast and capturing the moment after he staggers out of the surf to refuel. Gazing out to the horizon, salt-drenched and invigorated, he is lost in his own thoughts.



'Gaze' 2026

Chinagraph, printing ink, gouache on marine ply

62.3 x 80.7 cm

\$1,350

Unlike the anonymous figures in this series, this piece brings us face-to-face with youth. Looking past the viewer toward the open water, the young girl possesses a quiet intensity. The wood plate's sweeping grain moves like coastal weather across her face, binding her to the environment and capturing the poignancy of a child's innocent gaze into an unknown future.



'Swoop' 2026

Mokulito print on paper

Image: 59 x 80 cm

Framed: 79 x 99.5 cm

\$1,580

ED AP 1/2

This piece captures the seconds before disruption as a seagull hovers behind an oblivious child, about to launch a chip into the air. While light-hearted, it echoes how quickly our surroundings can change. In contrast, the larger, stationary figure continues my exploration of form over facial features; a sun-bronzed rower's back with a distinct 'zootie' tan invites viewers to read a person's story through physical presence alone.



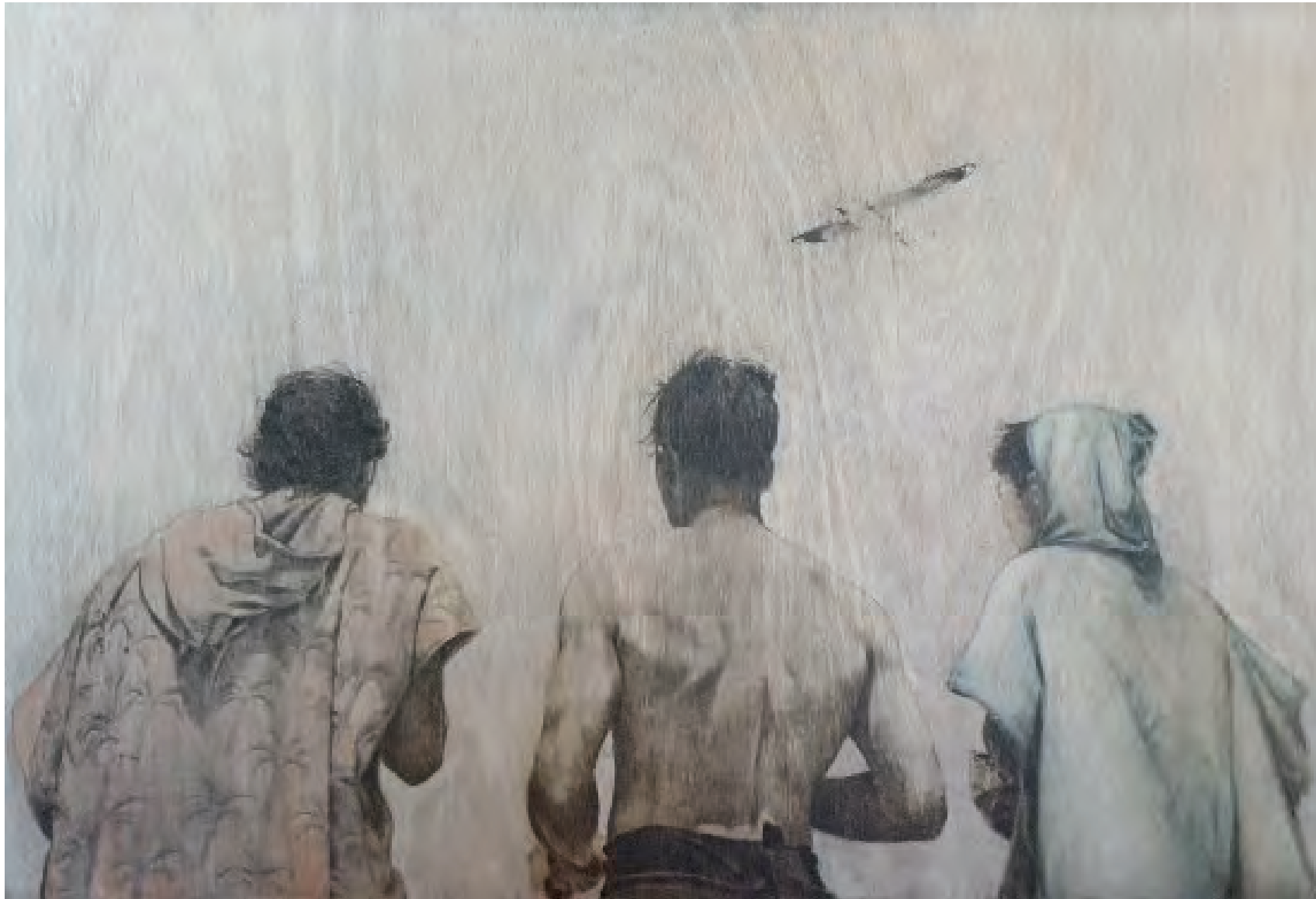
'Guns' 2026

Chinagraph, printing ink, gouache and pencil on marine ply

64 x 81.5 cm

\$1,350

Chosen for its strong graphic elements, this piece utilizes bold contrast against the natural wood grain to mimic the ripples of the tide. It captures a pivotal narrative of mentorship on the shoreline. A hesitant young surfer looks to older figures for guidance - a quiet study of vulnerability and uncertainty.



'Surveillance' 2026

Chinagraph, printing ink, gouache on marine ply

81 x 122 cm

\$1,950

This work returns to the intergenerational spirit of the beach, gathering three figures side-by-side. Viewed from behind, their shared stance captures the timeless experience of looking out at the water together. The warm scene highlights a collective pause - sharing the same view and bag of chips, while holding their own quiet thoughts.



'Surveillance' 2026

Mokulito print on paper

Image: 78 x 120 cm Framed: 88 x 130 cm

\$2,400

ED AP 1/2

Born from a summer afternoon with family, this image captures a fleeting moment of quiet after hours in the surf. Aware of life's fragility, I deeply appreciate these generational moments. Amidst an uncertain global climate, this work observes the delicate space where these young men enjoy a peaceful freedom that could look entirely different on another shoreline.



'Vigil' 2026

Chinagraph, printing ink, gouache on marine ply

62 x 80.5 cm

\$1,350

Shifting focus to animal stillness, this piece explores a silent, instinctual vigilance as a dog's silhouette watches the open expanse. Presented on the original wood block, the timber's heavy grain dissolves the horizon line, grounding the devoted dog at the water's edge as it stares intently into the unknown.



'Vigil' 2026

Mokulito print on paper

Image: 62 x 80.5 cm Framed: tbc

\$1,650

ED AP 1/1

Shifting focus to animal stillness, this piece explores an instinctual vigilance as a dog's silhouette watches the open expanse with quiet devotion. In this printed impression, the image is reversed, flipping the directional energy of the gaze while the dissolved horizon mimics a soft coastal mist.



'Shoreline' 2026

Chinagraph, printing ink, gouache and pencil on marine ply

59 x 81 cm

\$1,350

This portrait of my mother on the beach at Portsea explores the beauty of a temperamental medium. Captured in her element - rain, hail, or shine - with her face obscured, she challenged me to convey her essence through form alone. By embracing Mokulito's unpredictable wood grain, the figure blends into the landscape, evoking the experience of immersion into a muffled beach soundscape, a space for quiet and contemplation.

Over Page:

'Vessel' 2026

Chinagraph, printing ink, gouache on marine ply
81 x 122 cm

\$1,950

In light of recent world events, the silent, gliding mass of this cargo ship - a common sight entering Port Phillip Bay, represents an undertone of global unease. Highlighting a somewhat tenuous flow of goods amidst rising political turmoil and fluctuating fuel prices, it symbolises how quickly the wider world can disrupt our local certainties.





Sophie Zelder is a Melbourne-based contemporary artist. Currently exploring the technique of Mokulito (wood lithography), Sophie creates variable, limited-edition works, with the plywood plate itself frequently serving as a finished piece.

After completing a BA of Fine Arts (Sculpture) at the VCA, a traineeship in animation and a BA in Interior Design at RMIT in the late 90s and early 2000s, Sophie worked in a breadth of fields before returning to practice in 2023. Recently awarded the 2026 Australian Print Workshop James Northfield Lithography Scholarship, she develops works in her home studio and prints at the Australian Print Workshop.

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