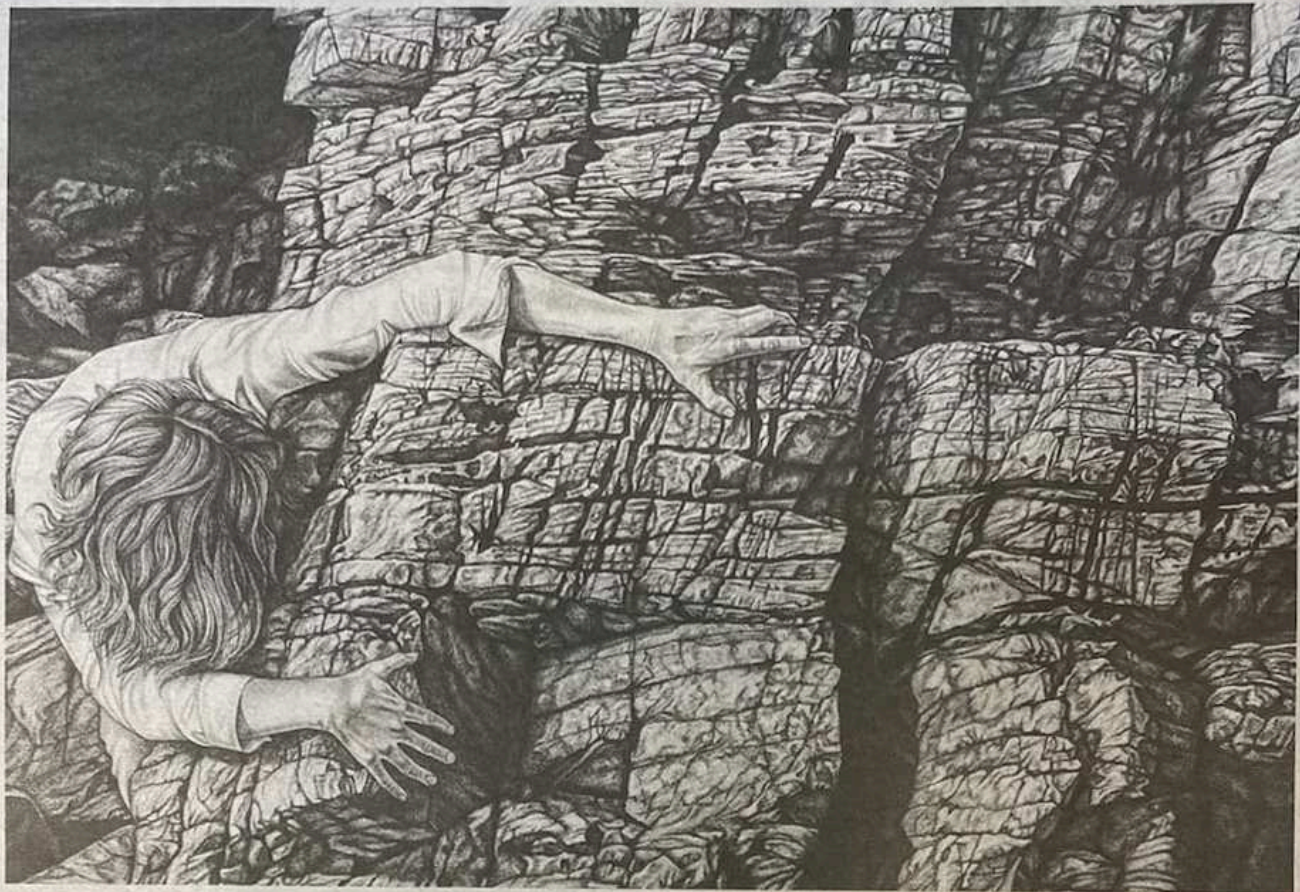


DRAWN TO HUMANITY



**THE WIND WANDERS
AROUND MY BONES**
Kim Anderson
Penny Contemporary
Until January 19
Price range: \$900-\$3200

Climate breakdown and ecological collapse are probably the biggest stories on the planet right now, and increasingly are the defining issues of our times. It's a powerful topic for artists, of course, but this isn't new. If you've lived in Tasmania for any length of time, art that comments on ecological issues has been here for decades – there was certainly plenty of crucial art that emerged from the Franklin Dam debate – and it could be argued that some of the most iconic and significant Tasmanian art is intrinsically wrapped up in green politics and ecological protest. We're used to this here as Tasmania is the crucible of green politics.

Climate breakdown art is a bit different though, and Kim Anderson's work in *The Wind Wanders around My Bones* really makes a point out of that. The alteration of the climate is harder to visualise – if we see anything we see effects and results – at the moment there are no iconic rivers to save. What we have is loss; the devastation of bushfires, the growing list of extinct species.

Anderson has hit on the idea that this experience is a source of mental anguish: some people are now experiencing a kind of environmental grief, which might be understood as a complex and eroding, unending assault on the human psyche. This is not an original idea, but Anderson's work symbolically depicts an isolated individual, understood to be the artist herself, alone in a

strange environment of weathered rocks and outcroppings.

Realised as exquisitely detailed pencil drawings, the entire collection is rich and powerful art.

Anderson has a lot of genuine talent with her chosen medium, and manages to draw incredibly complex rock surfaces that have been subjected to intense weathering over a vast gulf of time with great realism and skill.

These images are remarkably engrossing – indeed, Anderson could have just drawn these rock formations with great success. These are real rock formations found by the artist on a residence she undertook on the Isle of Skye in Scotland, a place of distinct geology where weather and sea have powerfully shaped the land. Anderson juxtaposes these with a barefoot human being (presumably herself).

The images are deceptively simple and resonate with ideas. There's a human alone in an unforgiving environment, a soft biological body lying against the hard surface of rocks, moving in a slow dance across a complex, indifferent surface. The environment is devoid of all life but the human lost in it, and there's a marked sensation that she is totally alone.

The images are really very deft, portraying both an anxious psychological state, awkwardness and extreme discomfort, while also showing a real environment. By focusing on geology, Anderson also suggests a different kind of timescale, one more in tune with the immense history of the Earth before humans came along, which even implies that there will be a future after people.

The work is an enthralling mixture of bleakness, wonder and a strange kind of hope, inscribed in the markings on stone made by the process of weather and time Anderson has so lovingly recorded.

Clockwise from top: *The Penitent*; *The Wanderer* (detail); and *The Gap*, all works by Kim Anderson, currently on show at Penny Contemporary.

