

## MEDIA RELEASE

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**Kath Inglis**

### ***Immersed in the Offshore***

South Australian contemporary jewellery Kath Inglis presents a solo exhibition of vividly coloured and intricately crafted wearable pieces that are inspired by her research on marine algae at the State Herbarium in the Adelaide Botanic Gardens.

Exhibitor: Kath Inglis

**Kath Inglis: *Immersed in the Offshore*** is showing at JamFactory Adelaide, in Gallery Two from 15 December 2023 – 28 April 2024.

South Australian jeweller Kath Inglis is a material-based maker who transforms seemingly ordinary Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) sheet plastic into vividly coloured and intricately detailed wearable objects. Eschewing expensive gemstones and metals in favour of prosaic PVC, Inglis uses a variety of hand driven techniques to transform sleek clear PVC into highly textured jewel-like objects that glitter with a play of light and reflection. In her innovative practice, Inglis manipulates flexible PVC sheets through the simple processes of hand dyeing, incising, carving and adding components through heat fusing to elevate a mundane material into an array of precious treasures.

In her latest solo exhibition, *Immersed in the Offshore*, Inglis presents a new body of work inspired by her ongoing research on marine algae at the State Herbarium of South Australia. This research was initiated in 2019 when Inglis was awarded a Guildhouse Collections Project with the Adelaide Botanic Gardens, during which time she examined the marine algae collection and considered 'value' and the impact of plastic waste on marine health. The title, with the deliberate misspelling of 'offshore', suggests an unease with the current state of oceans globally in the face of disposable single use plastics and the resulting ecological damage of microplastics. Despite the condemnation surrounding plastic waste, the material itself is problematic largely because it is misused and misunderstood. Indeed, as Inglis demonstrates in her jewellery practice, when instilled with value and regarded as a precious material, plastic has the ability to be transformed into an exquisite keepsake of great beauty and worth.

Over the course of her research with the collection, Inglis was particularly drawn to epiphytes: plants or algae that grow upon one another. Distinct from parasitic or symbiotic relationships in nature, an epiphyte is a single plant that hosts one or many others in a rich entanglement of biodiversity. Many of the pieces featured in *Immersed in the Offshore* reflect Inglis' admiration of these complex arrangements as nature's demonstration of a mutually respectful and sustainable way of living together. "Observing the dried specimens of marine algae through a microscope, I frequently referenced their intriguing surfaces to the plastic materials that I was familiar with – cling wrap, lollypop sticks, cellophane, fishing line, mesh fruit bags, etc," Inglis says. "Many of these items are often discarded after a single use and so I decided to weave these 'new' materials into my

explorations upon my return to the jewellery bench.” These inclusions serve to further underscore the way that the value of single use plastics can be elevated and reframed to assist in alleviating plastic waste. Through incorporating these undervalued materials into her wearable objects, Inglis explores the complex system of values between the living and non-living, recognising positive natural relationships, creative hope and the importance of material justice in contemporary craft and design.

*Kath Inglis was raised in Garramilla/Darwin and later moved to Tarndanya/Adelaide to study contemporary jewellery. After graduating with a Bachelor of Applied Arts in Jewellery and Metalsmithing from the South Australian School of Art in 2000, Inglis undertook JamFactory’s Associate Program in the Metal Design Studio from 2002-2003. In the years that followed, Inglis continued to develop her practice by working at a number of studios, including the renowned Gray Street Workshop, soda and rhyme, and JamFactory’s Metal Design Studio. From 2021-2023, Inglis served as the Studio Head of JamFactory’s Jewellery and Metal Studio. She currently works from a studio at the Hahndorf Academy on Peramangk Country in the Adelaide Hills.*