



# THE LIVING ARCHIVE

## EXTINCTION STORIES FROM OCEANIA

### STORY DETAILS

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**Title:**

The Mourning Gown

**Author:**

Sherrell Cuneo

**Publication date:**

March 19, 2020

**Place:**

Australia

**Summary:**

Costumer Sherrell Cuneo explores species extinction through a feminist lens in her ongoing and dedicated stitching.

**Author bio:**

Sherrell Cuneo is a professional costumer, through stitching and public quilting she explores feminism, climate change and species extinction.

**Publication information:**

This story was originally published on the website of the *Living Archive of Extinction Stories from Oceania*. This archived version is available from [www.thomvandooren.org/extinctionstories](http://www.thomvandooren.org/extinctionstories).

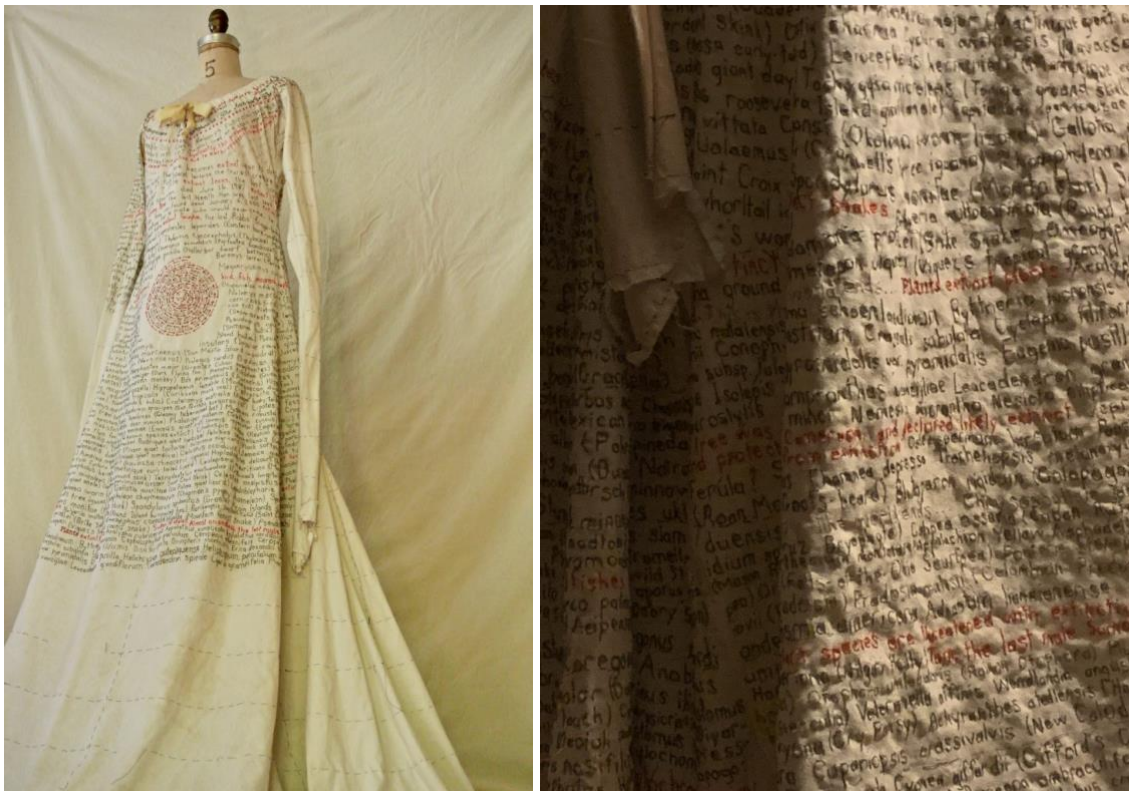
## THE MOURNING GOWN

The Mourning Gown is a simple gown, in cut, with incredibly long sleeves. The hem, when viewed from above, forms an equal armed cross. It is sewn from old muslin and has somewhat tattered, frayed edges. Encircling the neck it reads “She cries as each dies...”, which is accompanied by major extinction events, “The Anthropocene”, and “666”. There are thoughts on extinction, the definition of the word ‘endling’, the lyrics to Moondog’s ‘All Is Loneliness’, and a circle dance prayer at the womb. Mostly however, the gown is an ongoing list of the names, scientific and common, of recent species extinctions. I have tried to keep these grouped taxonomically.

The embroidery is all done by hand.

“Is this penance she wonders”.

It has occurred to me that in embroidering a name, I am perhaps dedicating more time to this species than has been given in a long while?



This is an ongoing project. It will be finished when the dress is filled, for the extinctions I’m afraid will go on. This is an ongoing project. It will be finished when the dress is filled, for the extinctions I’m afraid will go on.

