

# ZORA VERONA

The Art of Nests | Natural Fibre Artist | Forager of flora, fauna and found objects

---

## Artist Bio / Curriculum Vitae Summary

Zora Verona is an emerging interdisciplinary artist based in the Upper Yarra Valley on Wurundjeri Country. She explores the complexity of nest forms to create sculptures that honour birds as artist and architect. Her works intersect visual art, environmental philosophy and avian behaviour, science and history to communicate and document the legacy and trajectory of loss - of habitat, ecosystems and ultimately species.

Zora Verona proudly embraces her creative identity as an ode to her grandmothers, Zora and Verona. During the Second World War in occupied Slovenia, Zora wasn't even able to honour and christen her children with names in their own native tongue, let alone have the freedom to create works of art. The life stories of these women tell of freedoms fought for and hardships endured, so it is with reverence and gratitude that Lori Kravos chooses to create and exhibit under the name Zora Verona.

Growing up in Canada, she long held a desire to embrace a creative life and explored mediums such as pottery, calligraphy and crafting handmade papers from natural fibres and botanicals, yet the stigma and judgement of 'art is not a career, it is a hobby' saw her pack away her art materials and her creative dreams for decades.

Fast forward to early 2020 and with bushfires devastating and displacing billions of animals, a growing disquiet stirred by the anxiety of living through the Black Saturday fires in 2009 prompted Zora Verona to seek restoration, a sense of balance and flow that she knew could be found through creativity and art. Conflicted by the desire to create, yet not wanting to add fuel to the fire of a consumer driven society already drowning in waste, she had an epiphany as she sat at her kitchen table. She was surrounded by birdlife and the beauty of the natural world in the Upper Yarra Valley and she knew then that she could not only honour her grandmothers, she could honour the plant life and the wildlife that had been lost. So began a journey to create sustainable art made from foraged flora, fauna and found objects exploring the complexity of nest forms.

The birds themselves have also been Zora Verona's greatest teachers as she could not find anyone else creating nest sculptures in this same manner. Through the powers of observation of the birds in her own garden and researching historical nest collections in natural history museums, she felt even more inspired to tell their stories and emulated both their techniques and material choices in her artworks.

Her nest sculptures have since been exhibited in group exhibitions in the Yarra Valley at YAVA and The Memo in Healesville and at The Waterwheel Gallery and Upper Yarra Arts Centre in Warburton (2021 & 2022), in Geelong at Geelong Art Space (2021), East Bairnsdale Gallery, Gippsland (2021), Brunswick Street Art Gallery, Melbourne (2022) and now Sydney as a Finalist in the Northern Beaches Environmental Art & Design Prize (2022).

Alongside her artistic practice, Zora Verona has worked full time in professional roles spanning philanthropy and conservation, community and the arts and hospitality and events within the public and private sector. Her philanthropic work within conservation organisations such as the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria and Zoos Victoria have been a privilege, providing unique opportunities to engage with wildlife and natural history collections to harness the power of storytelling and connection to inspire advocacy and support to take transformative actions to protect the natural world. Her professional roles and her artwork share a moral purpose, to recalibrate our compasses to nature as our true north.