

Diviner : Notes

A series of photographs taken over 2 years of willow trees at the edge of the Lac de Cercey in France. The marks on their trunks show that the water level was once much higher and as it has receded through the controlling mechanisms of a reservoir, the thick fibrous tap roots have been left high and dry.

These "skirts" reminded me of the hooped dresses *guardainfante* of the Spanish court painted by Velasquez.

I decorated individual trees with wild flowers growing at the site before photographing them. These "portraits" have been given the individual names of mythological goddesses associated with either willow or water. The duotone colour in the photographs emphasises the past water level and also refers to older methods of adding tints, dyes and filters to black and white photographs.

In my imagination the decoration of these roots will lure the water back in the same way that a Bowerbird decorates its nest to attract a mate. It is often the case that the Bowerbird will select a single colour to decorate the nest with. Where the *guardainfante* dresses camouflaged illicit pregnancies, it has been suggested that the male Bowerbird has a higher success rate in mating when the objects he arranges have a strong optical illusion or constructed perspective.