



Conversātiō

In the company of bees

ANNE NOBLE WITH ZARA STANHOPE AND ANNA BROWN



\$60

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AUTHOR RESIDENCE:

New Plymouth, New Zealand

**PRINTABLE A3 POSTER
AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

RENOWNED PHOTOGRAPHER FOCUSES ON THE IMPORTANCE OF BEES

Conversātiō looks at the astounding practice of leading photographer Anne Noble, set against the issues of ecosystem collapse and climate change and examining what an artist can do in response. Its creative focus is on that most important insect, the European bee. Reminiscent of an artist book in its extensive visual content, its appeal is to a wide readership curious about art, ecology, science, literature and their intersections.

Through Noble's art and newly commissioned essays, the book traverses Noble's deep interest in how humans relate to bees. From images of communities of bees to tintype photographs showing the beauty of translucent bee wings, photograms from the wings of dead bees and a black and white series of electron microscope images, Noble's photographs present the hive life of bees in rich detail. Like the finest honey this book is a treasure.

'An important part of Noble's bee photographs is her acute awareness of the vulnerability of the species to environmental degradation . . . Her exquisite Dead Bee portraits and delicate photographs of dead bees' wings are especially poignant in this regard and are among the many highlights of this remarkable and beautifully produced book.' — Peter Simpson, Kete

ABOUT THE CREATORS

Anne Noble is one of Aotearoa New Zealand's most widely respected contemporary photographers; she has been at the fore front of photographic practice in New Zealand since the early 1980s.

Anna Brown is a book designer, educator and researcher who works with visual artists, curators, art historians and musicians.

Dr Zara Stanhope is Director of the Govett-Brewster Gallery in New Plymouth.

SALES POINTS

- The magnificent work of one of New Zealand's most renowned photographers
- Interest in bees and their critical role in ecosystems is on the rise
- Beautifully designed and packaged
- Bonus postcard and posterw



In Conversation Anne Noble + Zara Stanhope



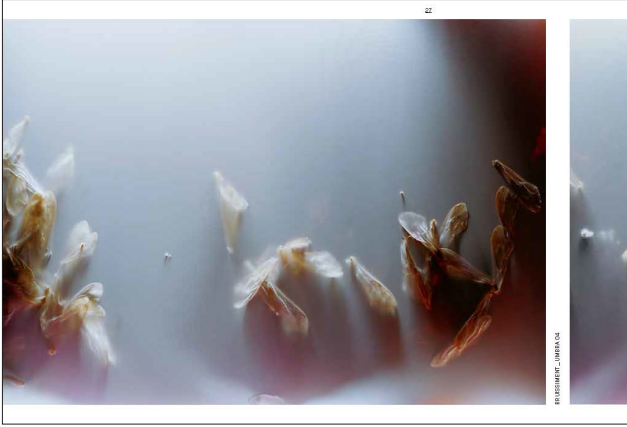

Anne, you said it so wonderfully about bees in your practice, five years ago and we've said things like that since. I hope that you've enjoyed the project but I guess the main thing is that there is more that we don't know about the nature of the honeybee than what we do – well, in terms of questions about our appreciation and understanding of the natural world and ourselves and our culture. What brings us to the world of the bee in your art? Is it a part of your education or is it that you are very curious and have a desire to understand the world around us?
Can you tell me about how you developed your personal relationship with bees?

About 10 years ago I started a hive at the bottom of my garden, as many of our fruit trees were flowering but not setting fruit. To look after bees requires doing, doing and observing through observation in the low horizon. Operating the hive with a hand who had once been a professional welder, filling the space and discovering the workings of the hive – its complexity and the beauty of bees both individually and collectively – was magic.

I often went out in the evening to spend time watching the bees flying home. As the sun went down the low-angle light would catch the bees' wings. Clusters of light coming and going, one time, one of a kind of white, changes to another as the bees fly – as a complex, more extended network of relationships that a colony of bees in bees only can create.

Examining the bee and the hive became a passion. Bees are completely independent of you. They are not. So you have a sense of responsibility for the quality of their lives, their larger environment and their own well-being. It's about the quality of their lives, the quality of their lives, the quality of their lives. Are the bees, but not healthy or are they being brought in? I have a sense of responsibility for the quality of their lives.

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Small brains, smart minds and biologically inspired flying machines

Mandyam V. Srinivasan




Why are I so excited by honeybees? Let me explain. A honeybee performs a remarkably complex search for food over a distance of 100 km and discovers a good source of nectar and then they fly back to the hive. Upon returning, they regurgitate the nectar to their co-workers, who store the nectar in cells of the honeycomb. The returned forager then performs a precisely choreographed dance to inform her workers about the precise location of the food source in terms of its distance and direction, so that they can also fly there to bring nectar back to the hive. Clearly, these creatures possess visual, navigational and cognitive capabilities that, at least on the surface, are far beyond anything that we can currently build machines that can do. What is it that makes honeybees tick and tick so well?

This essay offers insights into honeybee flight and associated navigation. It is based on research in the lab part of the first part of the book. It describes how bees can be trained to guide control of various aspects of flight and navigation. The second part of the book describes how some of the principles gleaned from these studies are being used to develop biologically inspired flying robots and autonomous aircraft. The third part explores the question: how "smart" was the bee? At what limits of their perceptual and cognitive capabilities do the bees operate? The fourth part explores the collective intelligence of the colony as a whole. In the fifth part, I recount my role which was minor, and my personal contributions were very meaningful in participating in Anne Noble's book as a project co-ordinator. Book title: In Conversation with Anne Noble in 2019.

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