



But for all the apparent confidence suggested by the work in *Dividing Range*, the new works are the result of a harrowing process.

Kim Westcott: *Dividing Range*

WHERE: Australian Art Resources, Southbank.
Tel: 9699 8600 **WHEN:** To July 23

The twisting and meandering lines portray a landscape that is as much poetic doodling as it is the depiction of reality. The lines swirl and surge, boiling with pagan energy, resulting in a pure landscape of the imagination.

Kim Westcott has always been obsessed with place. During a snow-laden stay in New York her imagery took on the modernist grid of that city. She lived in Sorrento for a time, and then one could almost discern the gentle wavering of seaside ti-trees in her pictures. Things became more minimal and harsher following a journey through the dead heart of Australia, where the artist was fascinated by the ability of life to appear in the harshest of environments.

More recently, Westcott has settled in the Warby Ranges in north-eastern Victoria. Her latest exhibition, *Dividing Range*, is essentially a celebration of her new home.

Westcott is also obsessed by her medium. She is a printmaker through and through and has pushed the potential of gouging copper plates to extraordinary lengths. Whether it be drypoint or monoprint, Westcott can wax poetic about the potential of the medium.

Although her work is essentially an exploration

of landscape, her abstract approach has gained her fans around the globe. Her etchings sit in the collections of the New York Public Library and the San Diego Museum of Art, in prestigious collections in Taipei, Japan and almost every state gallery in Australia.

But for all the apparent confidence suggested by the work in *Dividing Range*, the new works are the result of a harrowing process.

Being a master printmaker, Westcott prints all her works single-handedly. As a rule she would make proofs from her copper plates as the works evolved, but the move to the Warby Ranges precluded this. Accordingly she was "working blind", having to finish plates before the long journey to Melbourne to print them.

"The process really varies," says Westcott. "Usually I'd proof a plate two or three times, sometimes anything up to five times, and then you'd run with it. I just didn't have that luxury."

Westcott says that at first she had tended to overwork the plates and she would be forced to use the results for simple colours and textures. "Then I backed off," she says. "I was working the plates less than ever before."

The result has led to a number of the resulting works featuring an elegant minimalism. "I'd even let go of what I had originally intended and accept what came out, and something would be there that I didn't expect or plan."