A Country in Mind
Memoir with landscape

by Saskia Beudel

‘Saskia Beudel has a painterly eye for landscape. A Country In Mind offers an insightful account of Australian places and the lives that traverse them.’ — Michelle de Kretser, author of Questions of Travel.

Walking through vast landscapes and combining vivid examinations of the external world with internal musings, A Country in Mind is a deeply explorative and imagery-rich memoir with historical and ecological value.

After the death of her father and grandmother, Beudel travels and remembers stories from her father’s childhood in Borneo and Sumatra.

With her partner and child in tow, she explores Alice Springs, the MacDonnell Ranges, the Arnhem Land Plateau, Wollemi National Park, the Snowy Mountains, the South Coast of Tasmania, Waratah Bay, as well as Ladakah in the Himalayas and Bukittingi in West Sumatra.

Beudel investigates the history and colonial legacy of the sites she encounters, and meditates on the musical nature and indigenous philosophy of the Australian landscape.

Dealing with a myriad of issues from the personal to the global, A Country in Mind merges the historical, ecological and aesthetic elements of the land with the emotional study of its occupants, resulting in a lavishly descriptive narrative of cultural importance.

- Features ecological and environmental sites including Mt Wedge, MacDonnell Ranges, Redbank Gorge.
- Importance placed on Aboriginal sacred sites, dreamtime stories, culture.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Saskia Beudel is a novelist, essayist and writer of nonfiction. She first trained as a visual artist before turning to writing. Her novel, Borrowed Eyes (Picador, 2002), was shortlisted for the NSW Premier’s Literary Award and the Dobbie Award. She has been awarded grants by the Australia Council and artsACT, and held an Asialink literature residency in India. She was the recipient of a Felix Meyer Scholarship to conduct archival research in Amsterdam and an Amy Gaye Cowper Scholarship (both from the University of Melbourne). Saskia is currently a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Sydney, based at Sydney College of the Arts. Prior to that she was a Postdoctoral Research Associate at UNSW co-authoring a book on the arts and urban sustainability with Professor Jill Bennett (under contract with UNSW Press).