



## **One Tree Art Prize**

**Artist:** Michele Bentink

**Title:** Beastly Easterlies

**GPS:** -30.8329871, 117.6309888

The tree is near Bencubbin on the Bencubbin-Koorda Road. It captured my attention and I felt a sense of loneliness and sorrow, but with determination and a defiant will to survive.

This is a place where woodlands and bush once held the wind in their arms. Where thousands of trunks and crowns softened the forces of the world. Now only a single trunk remains to bear the relentless push of clearing, farming, wind, and time. In the northeastern Wheatbelt, the Beastly Easterlies arrive hot, dry, and unyielding, scouring the open country.

The tree faces forces never meant to be endured alone - winds that a whole woodland once absorbed collectively.

This solitary salmon gum stands as witness, sentinel, and storyteller in a landscape thinned to the bone. And through it all, the tree mourns quietly.