

INSIDE: Robyn Campbell Alex de Vos Magnificent Microbes Stepping Up(date) Michiko Takada...and more

Canberra Potters' Society at the Super Toyworld Craft Expo Royal Canberra Show 2015

by Judy McDonald

I hope you caught up with all the winners in last months newsletter. Congratulations to every one of our prize winners and thank you to all the members who entered and helped with the Show this year.

Special thank you to Richard and Fran, who helped with the set up on the Saturday before the Show and the take down on the Monday after. Thank you to Sara for doing the vouchers and certificates at a very busy time. Thank you to Leonie who helped with the cleanup and set up on the Saturday and the Monday after the Show. SPECIAL BIG THANK YOU to Jenifer who came on the delivery Sunday and clean up after Monday as well as doing 12 hours plus demonstrating over the weekend. She deserves the award for volunteer of the Show!

Thank you to Alex, Paul, Jeanette, Velda, Shirley, Jacque, Linda, Suzanne, Judy G, Chris, Cathy and Sally for your help demonstrating over the weekend. You were great and I couldn't do it without you. Thank you to Alex, Julia, Jeanette, Jacque, Linda, Paul and Susan for bringing their pots along for sale. We sold over \$2,000 worth of pots and made \$265 from the sale of lucky dips. Thank you to Ingrid and anyone else who donated to these as well. We had a record number of entries in the 'Free Pottery Class Draw' this year with 120 child and 144 adult. The child winner was Harry Mitchell of Watson and the adult winner was Vivienne Whitmore of Cook.

This is my 20th year helping with the Canberra Show and I have thoroughly enjoy it every year, even though I'm exhausted by the end of the last 2 weeks in February. When I was Treasurer, I went along to the Show and found the pottery in the Miscellaneous Craft section along with recycled items! The entries were a few burnt offerings from a local school. I thought we could do a lot better and it

wasn't a true representation of what is being produced in our local area. I was given a stand-alone section for pottery as long as I volunteered to manage it and provide volunteers to demonstrate wheel throwing and hand-building. *Continued inside...*

CPS AGM

Our Annual General Meeting will be held at the Watson Arts Centre on Sunday 17 May at 10.30am. The Agenda will be: Minutes of the previous AGM; Committee Reports; Presentation of Financial Accounts Election of new Committee; Other Business.

Anybody wishing to nominate for the Board or as President should send a brief CV and outline of skills they can bring to the Board. Please email our Chair <u>Brad Thomas</u> by 10 May.

CanberraPotters'Society WatsonArtsCentre









From the Director

Welcome to the April issue of *The Canberra Potter*. Thank you for all the positive feedback from members and supporters about the last issue and in particular our move to an online format.

The last month has seen a great effort from our staff and volunteers as we fronted up to three major events to help us connect with the local community. These included Art, Not Apart, Cap Expo and Magnificent Microbes and all just after a sensational effort at the Canberra Show. We're always looking for volunteers so don't be shy in coming forward. Apart from the upcoming Triennale we have our own Open Day and I'd like to call for interested people to form an organising committee. This is a significant year for CPS as we turn 40 so I think a party is called for. Send me an email with your ideas.

Stepping Up is building momentum and we'll keep you informed with our regular update column. This month check out how you can support some terrific fringe events by donating to the current crowd funding initiative.

It was great to see the Mudfactory in action at Art, Not Apart and it's a loose collaboration between CPS, Claybodies and ANU Ceramics which I hope to see grow as we develop stronger relationships.

There's a wonderful AIR retrospective opening in our Gallery this month showing a collection of work from all our past AIR residents. Just in time to welcome Michiko Takada our newest arrival. I urge you to sign up for her Masterclass—it's going to be very special.

So much to tell you so little space—see you at the AGM!

Richard Thomas

Director



From the President

Are you passionate about ceramics? Do you want to be part of the biggest event in the ceramics calendar? We're seeking flexible, motivated and enthusiastic volunteers to help shape the 2015 Australian Ceramics Triennale. Visit the Triennale website and get in touch if you'd like to join the team!

Why not gather a group of friends and put together a pop up exhibition. Contact Linda Davy lbdavy@gmail.com for details.

We're looking for members to host some of the speakers and demonstrators for the duration of the conference. Cathy Franzi is coordinating home hosting contact cathy.franzi@anu.edu.au if you can help.

Hidemi Tokutake's residency has ended with her exhibition in the gallery. Our new visiting artist from Japan, Michiko Takada is busily working in Studio 3. Please make her feel welcome and do drop by and see her create her beautiful delicate sculptural forms from string and slip. She also enjoys a game of Ten Pin Bowling and could be a formidable opponent if you wish to have a game with her.

Our Education Program Manager, Fran Romano has done a sterling job organising the participation of CPS in Art, Not Apart and Cap Expo. Thank you to all those who assisted with these events and thank you Fran.

My term as President ends at the AGM in May. If you are considering the role or any position on the Board please let me know. The Presidency has been a rewarding period and I have been blessed to have made so many friends during my time as your representative. I am happy to discuss the ins and outs with interested members.

Maryke Henderson

President

Board & administration

Board

Chair Brad Thomas
Treasurer Roger Ellyard
Cynthia Anderson
Robyn Booth
Jessica Coates
Greg Daly
Andrea Ho
Catherine Reid
Stefanie Pidcock

President(Members' representative)
Maryke Henderson

Administration
Director Richard Thomas
Workshop Manager Chris Harford
Program Manager Sara Hogwood
Education Program Manager
Fran Romano
Education Office Assistant

The Canberra Potter is published monthly February—December.

Contributions are welcome.
Please email copy and images to
the editor: Kathryn Wells
editor@canberrapotters.com.au

Next Newsletter Deadline 22 March 2015

Contact us

Canberra Potters' Society Inc Watson Arts Centre Aspinall St, Watson ACT

PO Box 7021 Watson ACT 2602

Gallery/Shop hours Thursday–Sunday 10–4 pm

ABN 65 491 135 689

Robyn Campbell Re-emerges



Robyn Campbell was interviewed by Kathryn Wells as part of an Artist's Conversation with members of the public hosted at Belconnen Arts Centre

Robyn Campbell has a long history of professional making that began as a student in The Glass Workshop at the ANU in 1990. After a break of many years having a family and a career change, Campbell took a year off, in 2013-14, to focus on reestablishing her skills in making and developing ideas. This time gave her the freedom to play with material in an unconstrained way. She chose unglazed ceramics as her medium. Campbell discovered an appreciation of the immediacy of clay and its visual diversity that allowed her to play with form. Many of the handbuilt sculptural pieces produced are evocative of natural forms. Presented in exhibition, the clay pieces create a dialogue between the viewer and the landscape that Campbell has created.

Can you share some of your history that led you to creating in clay in 2014?

After graduating from ANU, I shared a studio at ANCA with another glass artist, Itzell Tazzyman. It was a great community of artists. This led me to exhibiting both locally and internationally. In 1999, I travelled to the USA with three other glass artists



above left: artist Robyn Campbell **above:** Cut-away 1—2

attending the GAS International Expo. This was a success in terms of sales and interest from a US gallery in exhibiting my work. However, after the birth of my first child in 2000 and the end of my studio lease, I found it almost impossible to continue my practice. Eventually I established my own studio and started producing work again. I had worked with clay occasionally over the years and thought clay would allow me to move through 3D ideas quickly. Initially, I was using clay as a way of sketching ideas for later use with glass. The Canberra Potters Society teachers and members, with all their expert knowledge, especially Chris Harford, gave me advice on techniques to help me create the forms I wanted. Then I realised clay was doing an excellent job of expressing my ideas and I started to love it.

What was it about clay that you loved?

I liked the solidity, the subdued colours of the material, the textures and visual density. However it is not the material so much that matters, it's what material works for the ideas you want to produce. As well, it was the meditative

process of hand building that appealed to me. In the glass I was producing, texture was lost in the translucency whereas in my ceramic work the texture leaps out. I take great delight in sitting and patterning the surface of works. The work is not usually glazed although I do use Magnesium Dioxide to emphasise pattern and texture. One of my preferred clays is Buff Raku Trachyte, it is very forgiving, holds its shape and doesn't usually slump. At the same time, I have started experimenting with Southern Ice Porcelain which is very plastic and soft and I find difficult to use.

Visitors to the exhibition have described some of your natural forms as adhering to the Fibonacci numbers sequence that is used to describe the shape of seeds, pine cones, shells, flowers and fruit. What is your attraction in bringing forms to this shape?

A scientist/ceramicist once said to me she would like to analyse mathematically if there are particular curves which are more satisfying than others. However my approach is not mathematical. I play with drawing a lot, I start with an idea for a curve and play

with it on paper until its right. However it can change in the building process as 2D and 3D are very different. Curves can be difficult to construct. When I was at ANCA, Robert Foster, taught me to see that a curve has to be right, small faults can leap out and that is all the viewer will see. Curves and texture make my forms sensuous; they reference the landscape, relationships and community. I want the work to create a sense of peace, I'm not after tension in this work.



above: Trompo

How do you decide on the clusters and relationships that you create from the different forms?

All my work starts with drawing and in that process I realise some forms ask to be clustered, they work better in groups than alone. The relationships between forms and the negative spaces really matter and need to be carefully considered. I try not to get attached to pieces. This is much easier in clay as you can remove, add and reshape material quite easily, reshaping is more difficult in glass. In my year of making and working with clay I could work rapidly from one idea to the next,

then the next idea and the next one again; it was wonderful. This flow from one idea to the next helps create a connection between each piece over time.

Inherent in moving through the clusters of forms is a sense of internal rhythm. How would you describe the rhythm in your work?

The rhythm is there in the physical process of making: the kneading, coil rolling, pinching, beating, scraping and smoothing as you create the form in clay. There is also a slow sense of rhythm over time as one idea leads to another and this keeps a strong connection between each idea so that there is a connection, a rhythmic pattern between each idea. At the end however, there is stillness in these textured, solid, curvaceous forms.

As the clusters create landscapes, they also reflect the essence of the creation of landscapes. How has your work evolved to represent these qualities?

Some people have said that my work to them represents Aboriginal grinding stones whilst other people say they experience being in the bush or forest, others feel embedded in a seascape with rock pools and others, desert country. My love of landscape and light, rock shelves on the coast, seeds and manufactured spinning tops all comes into play. The years of working in glass saw the evolution of work with a pared down, organic, tactile and sensual essence. I believe these qualities continue in this current body of work in clay. For me these forms try to capture the solidity and stillness of stone in the landscape.

What approaches have you used to achieve this pared down yet tactile haptic presence?

I spend a lot of time shaping the forms, getting curves right and angles sharp. The textures are achieved through mark making into the leather hard clay, using my glass lathe to cut a smooth surface, or simply using the inherent textures that come with clays like BRT. In Bud and Rest 1, I ended up placing contrasting smooth, light coloured clay shapes on the larger, rough, conical Trachyte (BRT) clay sculptures. This was about completing the form. In the Bud pieces a lip was needed to attach one form to another and this gave me the idea to use exaggerated rims in many of the works that followed, such as in Whisper 1.

What do you see yourself doing in a few years' time and how does this resolve itself with going forward as well as back into the world of making?

Over the next ten years I look forward to seeing how my work develops. It could change a lot over time as I develop my skills. I would like to continue exhibiting in group and solo shows. I like the idea of bringing small groups of artists, perhaps working in different media, together to exhibit and/or collaborate. I agree that this exhibition is a step forward even though it has emerged from 'a step back into the world of making'. That is why I called the exhibition 'Reemergence' and why it was such a relief to actually present my ideas from this last year of making. Altogether, it has been a time of much learning and relearning and definitely a positive change of direction.

Robyn Campbell Re-emergence, Belconnen Arts Centre Now showing until 12 April 2015







Shop member profile

Alexander de Vos

My work is inspired by my interest in medieval history and the story a pot can tell, especially in its forms and decorative techniques. Whilst there have been many variations of beakers, pitchers and bowls over the centuries, certain shapes keep occurring because they just feel right in the hand.

I use sgrafitto to decorate the forms based on Byzantine and Persian pottery, as well as English & Italian pottery from the 1000s to the 1400s and other medieval pottery, especially German salt-fired Stoneware from the 1400s and 1500s. Dragons and gargoyles frequently form decorative or design elements of my work. I like to use stoneware clays for their strenath.

The other main technique that I use is salt-firing. The glaze is formed by adding salt to a kiln at stoneware temperatures, at 1280c. This offers a range of subtle effects depending on location in the kiln, type of clay and the atmosphere inside the kiln.

I like the small imperfections like fingerprints that add to the story of how a pot was created. This can be a time, place, function or purpose, and is especially reflected in the shape of a beaker.

Alex runs Flaming Gargoyle Pottery





Magnificent Microbes

Canberra Potters' Society recently participated in a collaborative project initiated by local ceramist and CPS Member, Janet DeBoos. The pilot project took place at the local Blue Gum Community School's creative arts hub Artyology, under the guidance of Arts Director, Mikki Trail.

Students created a multitude of magnificent microbes with pharmacist, scientist & textile artist Mary Murray, alongside ceramic artist Janet De Boos and visiting artists from Singapore Michelle Lim and Seok Har Ng. They were joined by the team from The Mud Factory —which is an education initiative coming from the Stepping UP Ceramics Triennale Schools program. That has seen ANU Ceramics Department, individual volunteer ceramicists and Canberra Potters' Society members join ranks for selected events.

Their joint project, Making Microbes and Building Bodies has built a community across the generations just as microbes form communities within our bodies.

As hands kept busy, discussion flowed around what microbes actually look like especially as diverse communities (a challenge that scientists are still investigating)... Amazing things happen when adults

Below: Jackie Lallemand (CPS) and young helpers





slow down and take time to listen to young people.

Not only did the students learn from artists and scientists, but creative thinking and scientific theorising flowed the other way as well, as the students entered into dialogue with the artists and together they relished the challenge of exploring and imagining the unknown.

The day was so successful that further sessions are being planned for parents and community members. A further session for young people with disabilities is also being planned for the Tuggeranong Arts Centre at a future date.

Volunteers are still needed, and anyone interested in assisting should contact:

Richilde Flavell schools.steppingup@gmail.com

The students' responses and discoveries will be on display during STEPPING UP, The Australian Ceramics Conference Triennale.

Cap Expo

The Connect and Participate Expo was held on Saturday 28 March at the Old Bus Depot Markets and was a fantastic opportunity for CPS to promote our activities to an eager audience. A steady stream of visitors to our demonstration space kept Rick, Nina, Paul, Jackie and Fran busy all day. A great effort by our volunteers and we look forward to welcoming new members as a result. **Below:** Rick Beviss works the crowd at Cap Expo photo: Brett Coombes





...from cover

We have space for children to come and make a modest hand-built piece. it's the best free entertainment at the Show. I still get parents coming back and telling me their child is now doing arts at Uni, thanks to us getting them interested at the Show. Wow! One of the important roles is to hand out brochures for the term time and holiday classes for children and adults -the income CPS earns from running these classes is a major component of our business. We are also getting exposure for the Gallery and Potters Place shop, a lot of visitors that come to the Show are not the sort of people that would normally go to visit a gallery, and we get a lot of positive feedback and sales during the Show.

Thank you to our judge of 2 years, Annette Horvarth, a long time potter and friend of CPS.

It is always a difficult job but Annette managed very well and even though the numbers were low this year she was impressed with the standard of work submitted. If you have any ideas for a judge for next year please let me know.

Over the last few years our volunteer numbers have been lower than we need, with some of our original helpers retiring which puts extra pressure on those who are always there volunteering their time to 'fill the gaps' and do extra time. This year we also had a lot fewer entries in the competitive aspects of the Show—



Julia Laybutt—Open Seniors



Velda Hunter—Professional Wheelthrown

something that reflects poorly on us as ambassadors for our craft. I put in 2 weeks work every year for the Show, I am asking you to get involved in the Show in 2016—enter a pot (one entry from every member would be fantastic) or volunteer your time (a four hour shift with a ticket to the Show), it's fun and a wonderful experience. Jennifer has agreed to help me with running the Pottery section next year and we will be visiting classes later in the year to encourage students to submit entries (forms are due in December) and I would love to hear from any member who would like to participate or help in any way in 2016.

Happy Potting, Judy McDonald



Andrea Ho—Open Wheelthrown



Sally Armstrong—Professional Handbuilt



Sienna Devey—U12 Student Handbuilt



Emma Dragh—U18 Student Sculpture



Stepping Up(date) Australian Ceramics Triennale 2015

Canberra, Associated Program commences 6 July Conference 9–11 July 2015

The Public Programs team need your help! We aim to create exciting fringe events surrounding the Triennale where Canberra locals can get together with Triennale visitors to eat, drink, chat and play with clay. Getting to know people is an important part of building a lively community, and having casual, fun events is a great way to welcome outsiders to the wonderful world of ceramics.

We are planning two evenings of ceramic related entertainment:

Slip Graffiti—a fun night of dancing, eating and arting at the ANU food co-op. Featuring the creation of a community artwork made with painted layers of clay, live bands, hot soup and drinks sold in handmade bowls and cups for you to take home and treasure.

Movie Night—A cosy evening of ceramics-focused film, including locally made claymations.

To make these events happen please donate online at IndieGoGo.

https://www.indiegogo.com/ projects/stepping-up-publicprogramsManaging Organisation

Managing Organisation

Craft ACT Craft & Design Centre Jasmine, Project Manager project@craftact.org.au Phone 02 6262 9333 australianceramicstriennale.com

Partners

Craft ACT: Craft & Design Centre Australian National University Strathnairn Arts Canberra Potters' Society The Australian Ceramics Association

Meet our new AIR Michiko Takada...

Artist Talk: 6pm Friday 10 April

Join us for drinks & nibbles

Meet current Artist-in-Residence, Michiko Takada, who is visiting CPS from Japan until the end of May.

Michiko's delicate porcelain slip work is inspired by the everyday. She has developed a pain-staking process for making these fine works and has exhibited widely.

Learn about her career and work in this informal gathering. Come along and welcome her to CPS and be inspired.

A two day workshop will follow on 2nd and 3rd May—register your interest early.

Stay tuned to our Facebook page and website for further details.



...and farewell Hidemi Tokutake



Hidemi Tokutake and Robert Bell

AIR Exhibition March 12-29

Hidemi Tokutake enjoyed a very productive residency at Watson Arts Centre as evidenced by her stunning exhibition which concluded last month.

Graciously opened by our very own Janet DeBoos who provided insights into the creative process apparent in Demi's work. Drawing our attention to the fact that each mark on the surfaces represent a single physical action—staggering when viewing each individual thumb print on the conical forms.

Tokutake's Watson Arts Centre residency's work responded to her immediate environment and mimics the mud wasp nests of our area. This individual response to her environment ensures her work remains current and ever changing.

Janet spoke of Tokutake's commitment to residency programs nationally and internationally—for that we are very thankful.

Diary dates

Apri

AIR Retrospective April 2-25

A ceramics showcase featuring work from past AIR residents from America, Australia, Ireland, Japan and Korea.

Artist Talk April 10

Michiko Takada AIR. Drinks and nibbles from 6pm.

Holiday Classes 13-24 April

Kid's classes available during the Autumn Holidays

May

Classes

Term 2 Classes for Adults and Children commence 2 May

Masterclass

May 2-3

Michiko Takada AIR will give an unforgettable Masterclass experience. Places Limited.

ΔGM

May 17 Sunday at 10.30am

Refreshments and Guest Speaker

Watson Arts Centre is a Key Arts Organisation supported by the ACT government and run by Canberra Potters' Society. We offer:

Classes for children and adults across all levels of ceramic practice. Workshops, Summer Schools and Kids' Holiday classes are available too.

Studios where tenancy applications are always welcome from emerging and established ceramic artists.

Artist-in-Residence program including studio and residence facilities to national and international visiting artists.

Gallery hosting a ceramic focused exhibition program.

Shop with a range of pottery and ceramics to suit all tastes and budgets.

The gallery and shop are open Thursday to Sunday 10am–4pm and most public holidays.

For further information on all programs, events and available facilities please visit

canberrapotters.com.au

Exhibitions

Of National Significance Ceramics then and now Sturt Gallery 22 February—12 April 2015

This exhibition will feature new work by a selection of prominent Australian and international artists alongside the historic work in the Sturt collection:

Les Blakebrough, Patty Wouters, Campbell Hegan, Yasuo Terada, Yasuhisa Kohyama, Svend Bayer, Chris Weaver, Kevin White, Paul Davis, Prue Venables, Liz Charles, Martin Halstead, Ian Jones, Sandy Lockwood and Victor Greenaway.

sturt.nsw.edu.au/whats-on/currentexhibition



Five Thoughts—Just One Idea Steve Harrison Watters Gallery, East Sydney Now showing until 11 April Artist-in-Residence Watson Arts Centre 2—6 April

This exhibition presents works from seven past artists-in-residence: Verney Burness; Amy Hick; Cathy Jefferson; Jane Jermyn; Michael Keighery; Ryozo Shibata; and Hidemi Tokutake.



Material Evidence Featuring Sandy Lockwood and Yasuhisa Kohyama Olsen Irwin Gallery, Woollahra NSW 1—19 April

Re-Emergence Robyn Campbell Belconnen Arts Centre 20 March–12 April

See interview this issue.

Entertainment Anneke Saunders Bungendore Fine Art 4–30 April

An exhibition of paintings by this multi diciplinary artist and CPS member.

Southern Oscillation Anna Buck, Jan Collingridge, Louella McPaul, Jane Murphy, Anneke Paijmans, Georgia Partridge and Jan Ridgway Belconnen Arts Centre 17 April—10 May

Anneke Paijmans ceramics and artisits from the South Coast in a group mixed media show.

Studios

Watson Arts Centre

Enquiries are welcome and information about the application process and selection criteria are available at: canberrapotters.com.au

Opportunities

Regional Arts Fellowships Applications now open, closing at midnight 17 April for activities commencing on or after 1 July 2015 regionalarts.com.au

Sunshine Coast Art Prize 2015 Entries Open 2 March Close 4 May Exhibition dates 20 Aug—11 Oct gallery.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au

Clunes Ceramic Award Closing dates for entries 27 July

To all ceramic artists. Entry forms are now available for the 2015 award. Major prize \$10,000 peoples' choice \$2.000

clunesceramicaward.com.au

ACT Arts Policy Framework Survey and Feedback

artsACT is seeking feedback from organisations and individuals on their current ACT Arts Policy Framework. www.surveymonkey.com/s/XLY6HPM

Australian Ceramics
Open Studios
15 & 16 August 2015
EOI deadline Friday 15 May

The third national open studios event. Welcome the locals in to see what we make. You must be a TACA member to participate.

australianceramics.com

City of Hobart Art Prize Entries Close: Midnight (EST) Monday 1st June, 2015 Information & Enquiries 03 6238 2430 artprize@hobartcity.com.au

The Pod (Exhibition & Retail Space)
Craft ACT & DesignCentre
Information & Enquiries
02 6262 9333
shop@craftact.org.au

Sponsorship Opportunities—Canberra Potters Society is actively seeking ways to enhance exisiting sponsor relationships and to engage with new sponsors. If you would like to discuss how you might partner with CPS please contact **Richard Thomas** on 02 6241 1670 or director@canberrapotters.com.au

In 2015 the Members' Exhibition was supported by

















