

INSIDE: Les Blakebrough Cathy Franzi & Mollie Bosworth win Awards Ginny Conrow (USA) CPS scoping changes...and more

Les Blakebrough, Fortescue Bay Kelp Bowl #3, 2010.

Clay, the creative process and constitutional change

Working the plasticity of clay is often seen as material evidence of the creative process, encouraging the maker to push things in different ways. In particular, clay enables makers to add divergent thinking to the process where you can explore multiple solutions before resolving the form.

This is evident with the current round of ceramic and arts shows in Canberra, as well as representing the process that the CPS is adopting in regard to considering constitutional changes; a meditative precise engagement on presence!

This process is reflected in the work of emerging artists, Verney Burness, Richilde Flavell and Isabelle Mackay-Sim – ensconced in the CPS studios, with fellow resident Lia Tajcnar and teacher Fran Romano, in a group show opening at Form Gallery on 5 May, Divergence. It is a reflection upon their travel as ceramics journey women, co-existence, building new worlds out of the shells of old, and how abstract is made concrete.

At Beaver Gallery, Les Blakebrough's invention, over ten years, and his creations in Southern Ice Porcelain combine plasticity and transulence, as well as precision, a fascination with surface that is open to exploration and his respect for the generosity of the inside of a bowl that floats, creating a balance between movement and stillness. This experience links presence and engagement in his exhibition, on a human and infinite scale.

Reflection upon landscape and its relation to the body and the layering of skin, ice and sediment, movement in rivers, glaciers, the internal and eternal frontiers are the basis of exploration in Tim Burke's show, Underneath, opening 29 April, Watson Arts Centre. It is uncanny to see how board is layered to resemble the plasticity of clay –creating a dialogue about creative process and the freshness of contemporary art.

In each of these processes, the layers of time and depth, confront and give us insight into how we explore change.

AGM Notice

Sunday 29 May 10.30am Agenda:

Minutes of the previous AGM Board Reports

Election of the new Board
Appointment of Auditor

Receipt of Financial Accounts Honorary Life Members

Members Fees

Changes to the Constitution

- See Director's message about the Business Plan and CPS as a Key Arts Organisation, p 2
- See Chair's message on the process for updating the constitution, p 2
- See Summary of changes to the constitution, p. 6

CanberraPotters'Society WatsonArtsCentre









From the Director

In this issue of The Canberra Potter we focus on some important CPS business. Wait! Before you turn off, tune out and go back to the wheel—your feedback is crucial to ensure the health and vitality of our organisation.

As your inaugural CEO, my first task was to create a Business Plan that would: (a) Secure funding (and support) from the ACT Government and (b) Develop a vision to help us achieve our goals, growth and future sustainability.

As a Key Arts Organisation (KAO) we form an important part of Canberra's arts ecology. It gives us a platform to promote ceramic art and gives us a seat at the table when it comes to exciting opportunities such as developing our facility, building our programs and taking part in decision making influencing the wider arts community.

Our purpose is: To develop Canberra Potters' Society and Watson Arts Centre into a dynamic, innovative and inspiring arts hub of excellence, supporting personal and professional development across all levels of ceramic arts practice while providing exciting community engagement through artist, exhibition and retail experiences. (CPS Business Plan 2014).

To achieve this purpose and maintain our KAO status the Board are proposing some important changes to the Constitution at the AGM. A summary of these proposals can be found on page 6 and a summary of the Business Plan will also be made available to members.

It really is an exciting time for the organisation and one in which I hope you will be engaged. You are invited to provide via email at:

feedback@canberrapotters.com.au

Richard Thomas *Director*



Board Message

As you will realise the AGM is scheduled for Sunday 29 May where an updated constitution for the Canberra Potters Society will be put to a vote.

The modernisation of our Constitution is an important step in the evolution of our society from its beginnings in 1975 as a support group for local potters to the current business with regional, national and international reach catering to the full range of ceramic enthusiasts from beginner to professional. As members of this dynamic and growing organisation, your thoughts and views about components of the proposed updated constitution are critical.

To put the need for our constitutional review into context, just over 18 months ago, we received approval for our 5-year Business Plan from the ACT government which secured base funding until 2018 and articulated our vision for future growth and sustainability. This Plan was also necessary for maintaining our status as a Key Arts Organisation (KAO). Many of the key components of our current Constitution have been retained, and our proposed changes add clarification to roles and responsibilities as well as some process matters. We are also seeking to expand our categories of members to adapt to a broadening set of interests and potential sources of revenue.

We are now undertaking formal consultation on the draft document. You will find a draft of the new Constitution on the website as well as a summary document in this newsletter. After we have received your feedback, we will summarise and report how each issue was dealt with. This will be circulated with the final document for voting. It really is an exciting time for the organisation and one in which we hope you will be engaged.

Brad Thomas *Chair*

Board & administration

Board

Brad Thomas **Chair**Graham Durant **Treasurer**Cynthia Anderson
Jessica Coates
Greg Daly
Stefanie Pidcock
Kathryn Wells

President

(Members' representative)

Velda Hunter

Administration

Director Richard Thomas

Workshop Manager Chris Harford

Program Manager Sara Hogwood

Education Program Manager Fran Romano

Education Office Assistant Bhavana Moylan

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Contributions are welcome. Please email copy and images with captions to the editor: Kathryn Wells

 $\underline{editor@canberrapotters.com.au}$

Next Newsletter Deadline 29 March 2016

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From the President

Welcome to our April newsletter. So much has happened since I last wrote — what a fantastic month it has been. A thousand thanks to everyone who helped out at: the Seniors Market at EPIC (17 Mar), at Art-Not-Apart and the Cap Expo (both 19 Mar). I've heard that we got at least 20 new members and enrolments as a direct result of our efforts. Well done.

On 23 March we gathered on the deck, on a beautiful evening, to bid a fond farewell to Carla Wolfs and partner Kees, before their return to Holland. The number of people at the gathering showed just how many friends they made during their stay.

I was thrilled catch up with our two new co-Artists-In-Residence that evening too. Mahala Hill and Anna-Maree O'Neale (winners of the ANU EASS Residency) are already working hard. They are both fully engaged and sharing our wonderful Canberra Potters family also. You will know when Mahala is working in the studio as it smells wonderfully of lavender!

The date for the Annual General Meeting is now set, Sunday 29 May and I urge all members to attend. This is always an important meeting, and an excellent opportunity to witness and vote on the running of Canberra Potters Society for the coming year. Please don't miss this one. So see you there!

Back to the studio for a big throwing session.

Best wishes,

Velda Hunter President velda@tpg.com.au

The Clayground, ART not Apart 2016

For the second time, Canberra Potters participated in the now annual Art, not Apart Festival in New Acton. This time it was a mini-festival of clay within the bigger festival!

For the afternoon of 19 March, the Potters took over an empty space upstairs in the NISHI Building. The area, nicknamed 'the Shed' represented a semi-industrial space due to its unfinished nature.

Dubbed 'The Clayground', we offered a range of immersive and interactive offering: a pop-up exhibition of teachers and Artists—in—Residence work, a structured schedule of demonstrations, 'Have-a-go' at hand-building and wheel work. As well, there were a series of pre-booked paid miniworkshops (1.5 hrs) which included how to make Teapots, Medieval Cookware and Garden Planters.

All participants were novices or complete beginners with clay, and were blown away by what they could make (given the expert tuition of our teachers and the great program outlines they developed for the day).

It couldn't have happened without the contribution of our fantastic cohort of teachers here at Watson. A diligent band of volunteers were enlisted on the day too and special thanks must go to Rick Beviss and Maryke Henderson for going above and beyond the call of duty...Many thanks. Anyone interested in volunteering please email me.

Fran Romano
Education Program Manager
education@canberrapotters.com.au



Fran Romano welcoming visitors to The Clayground



Visitors 'having-a-go' at hand-building



Learning to workshop teapots



Maryke demonstrating large pot making

Les Blakebrough, Porcelain

Beaver Gallery, Canberra **7 April - 1 May 2016**

Review by Kathryn Wells

Les Blakebrough's precision, his fascination with surface that is open to exploration, and his respect for the generosity of the inside of a bowl, and how he allows it to float create an immediate stunning effect of floating shadows of light, a balance between movement and stillness. Thanks to his invention of and creation with Southern Ice Porcelain, that combines plasticity and translucence, these works, mostly unglazed, offer us a meditation and reflection on life and light. They present a sacred understanding of the glimpse of patterns and textures of oceans, in particular, the kelp forests of the Southern Ocean, the poetry of Illawarra surf and the escarpment that contributes to it.



The Kelp #15 — slip cast, deep etched, unglazed porcelain

Blakebroughs technical challenge of thrown bowls that tilt to embody the surfs up at Coledale, the hand-built large oval forms of kelp fronds and the slip cast, cast and applied Illawarra escarpment vessels with translucent inner bodies, embody his presence as an eminent ceramicist. As well, these works throw a challenge to us about the idea of presence in an infinite universe.

On his series of Kelp vessels, # 1, 2 and 8, kelp is seen as connected but dispersed, floating across the surface of the porcelain, hints of green, shadows of light on sprays of water, ice-cold ocean, brilliant sun, light dancing on the interior of the vessel as the kelp floats suggestively on the outer surface. The volumes

are generous, the porcelain wrapped around itself, minimal.



The Kelp #18 — slip cast, deep etched, unglazed porcelain

Blakebrough's blast of light on this phenomenon of the bull-kelp forests where the Southern Ocean meets the Tasman Sea, where kelp 'trees' grow in giant columns 20 metres high, wrapping and tangling themselves in the currents is quite extraordinary. Blakebrough works the porcelain to represent the interconnectedness of life, light and form in the kelp forests and its fragility. Charles Darwin compared the immense marine biodiversity in Tasmania's kelp forests to that of 'the terrestrial ones in the inter-tropical regions'. The living creatures dependent upon the kelp's ecosystem include: crayfish and other crustaceans, as well as sea dragons and sea horses, fish, molluscs, and lace corals, abalone and lobsters surviving under its canopy and feeding on drift algae.

The master play with light and form, the porcelain as subtle in its ethereal beauty as the floating kelp, focuses on the juxtaposition between the lack of knowledge required for the long-term conservation and management of the kelp and Blakebrough's search for knowledge in both the material and its form. In south eastern and eastern Tasmania, in the 30 years to 2012, the giant kelp populations declined to perhaps only 5% of the original

area and were listed as endangered. A warmer East Australian Current, brought about by the hole in the Ozone layer above the South Pole, challenges the survival of the kelp - as well as bringing populations of black sea urchins that contribute to its devastation. Other potential causes of kelp loss include: the commercial harvesting of kelp in the 1970s, coastal runoff, scallop dredging in the 1950s, and ecosystem changes due to fishing.² Blakebrough's resolution of form is astonishing in both how we engage with it and these questions of knowledge. Bull-kelp was noticeably disappearing to its Aboriginal collectors in the 1980s as they too hold keys to its sanctity and survival. Traditionally, the bull kelp was buried in the sand for days, made resilient and still malleable, formed to create a vessel to carry, store and boil water; the bull-kelp water carrier could last generations. In this form, it was translucent against the light, as is porcelain.

The master-piece of the show, The Kelp #30, hand-built with dimensions of 32 x 59 x 45cm, of multiple porcelain kelp-fronds intertwined is a floating supportive mass of life with light playing in and out, indicative of the thinning canopy and surface irradiance, unglazed, but luminous,



Surf's up #3, 8 & 9 — thrown, deep etched, unglazed porcelain

like the fronds, a major source of photosynthetic activity. It is a perfect spiral of life with the fragile holdfast or base of the bowl, supporting the floating ecosystem — that could be ripped apart by strong swell but mercifully holds. Inherent in its structure are the strength of the stalks or stipe, and the floating gas-filled bladders represented by Blakebrough's negative space. It is a triumph of meditation on art and technological astonishment, as well as surprise encountering such unique a specimen.

From the mediation on the infinity and sanctity of deep water ecosystems to the human experience of transcendence in surfing the ocean, Blakebrough offers another technological challenge that surpasses expectations as time is suspended, on the water and in the presentation of the tilted 'Surf's Up' bowls #3,4,5,6,7,8 & 9.

Pared, oblique, with the spidery light of ice-cold oceans, surface water spray, the Surf's Up bowls present a glazed inner calm and presence in comparison to an exterior surface play of movement of calligraphic marks that hold extraordinary detail in the finished piece, creating several layers on the surface. The Surf's Up bowls fascinate with their quiet awareness and physical presence, that give play to Blakebrough's surrounds on the Illawarra coastline, and the idea of suspended time.

In a series of tall vessels, The Sea at Coledale #19 and #24, with the imprint and layers of sand, fossils, backbones, skeletal remains, and, some celadon glazed, convey another sense of the infinite and the light but defining presence we can have on coastal ecosystems and their relationship to us. Blakebrough has slip-cast and deep-etched these mostly unglazed works which gives us a sense of fragility as well as intimacy.

If ever experienced then, the Illawarra Escarpment is solidity itself and yet, in Blakebrough's works, emerging into light and fragility. This time it is the depth of the escarpment cast and applied to the porcelain vessel that is infinitesimal. Yet, it is held by the porcelain that is transcendent in itself, the scatters of ice confronting the ore in the rocky escarpment — formed many ice ages ago.

The exhibition presents and represents the humanity of the artist and the humanity in all of us as we confront the life of the giant kelp forests underneath the oceans, the largest plants in the world, the transcendence of surfing ocean waves, and realising all in its skeletal form on the coastal environment of Coledale. It is no mistake to realise that eventually that while the depth of the escarpment rock can be pounded away only over millennia, humans can destroy whole ecosystems within a generation. Like porcelain, bull kelp vessels are made to last generations but bull-kelp forests are on the verge of extinction within one generation.

The porcelain and the human hand in this exposition of kelp, sea and surf are inextricable. So too is this experience of porcelain and Les Blakebrough's mastery of form — inextricably linked to both his and your resolution of presence and engagement in his works. Visit and be prepared to be present and engaged intimately on both a human and also infinite scale.

- ¹ Charles Darwin, 1845 in Inhabitants of Kelp Forests at www.geog.utas.edu.au/kelpwatch/facts_i.html
- ² Decline of Giant Kelp at http://www.geog.utas.edu.au/kelpwatch/facts_d.html

Les Blakebrough Ceramics at www.lesblakebrough.com.au



The sea at Coledale #24 — slip cast, deep etched, unglazed porcelain



The Kelp #30 — hand built, unglazed porcelain, 32 x 59 x 45cm

Summary of changes to the constitution

Reason

Overall the new CPS constitution reflects the changing requirements of the ACT Associations Incorporation Act 1991 (the Act), the Commonwealth Corporations Act 2010, the directions of the Attorney-General to associations in 2010, the standing of CPS as an ACT Key Arts Organisation since 2009, the change of functions that CPS now performs and its development from an artist-run initiative to an eminent international ceramics organisation.

Process

The process for rewriting the constitution was to refer to the Model Constitutions for Associations in the ACT, NSW and Queensland, as well as best practice constitutions from artists associations for the visual arts and textiles as well as the SA schools model constitution, NSW bar and national medical association constitutions. Two drafts were circulated and discussed by the CPS Board.

Details

The details of the changes are:

1. **Definitions** — as per model

2. Objects and Powers

The four objectives reflect the original objects as well as the change in activities that CPS now undertakes by going beyond promoting ceramics and mounting member's exhibitions to:

- promote, foster and develop excellence and innovation in ceramic and contemporary arts, extending to broad community engagement across the arts,
- provide facilities for classes and workshops, supporting members across all levels
- nurture an interest in ceramic arts, and
- establish and maintain a high-level ceramics focused exhibitions program that reflects both its member as well as its teaching, residency base and CPS as an international ceramics organisation.

The CPS has the right to exercise powers in all things relevant and conducive to all the objectives.

3. Membership

New categories of membership are proposed to reflect the wide range of interest in the CPS:

- Ordinary Members with full benefits
- **Associate Members** with less than full benefits
- Friends for local, national and international community members who wish to support and be informed about ceramic arts and practice
- Annual Honorary Members —
 members who in the opinion
 of the Board have rendered
 significant service as volunteers
 over the previous year and who
 are not required to pay annual fees
- Honorary Life Members —
 members who in the opinion
 of the Board have rendered
 distinguished service to the
 association over many years and
 who are not required to pay fees.

The benefits afforded to each of these categories, and any changes to these benefits as may be required from time to time will be determined by the Board following consultation with the CPS membership. The Board will consider the needs of members in applying rates for membership fees as well as the financial planning needs of CPS.

The disciplining of members follows the requirements of the model constitutions and the ACT Act.

4. Management and Board
Public Officer — The Public Officer is now appointed at a general meeting who is at least 18 years of age and resident in the ACT and meets the requirements of the ACT Act.

Powers of the Board — The Board may exercise all powers to control and manage the affairs of CPS:

- setting the broad vision and strategic direction,
- determining policies,
- developing, monitoring and reviewing strategic, business and other plans,
- undertaking risk management,
- · financial management and reporting,
- human resources
- compliance and accountability systems, and
- all other things that are necessary and desirable for the proper management of the Association.

Terms of Board members has changed to board members holding office for a standard two (2) year term following their first election at an AGM under this

new constitution

Office-bearers of the Association have changed to include: the President (instead of the Chair of the Board), Vice-President, Treasurer and the Secretary. The Secretary has clear responsibility for agendas, meeting notices, minutes, safekeeping of the constitution and the common seal. This brings us in line with model constitutions.

The roles and responsibilities of Committees of the Board have been clarified: Committees can include members and non-members. The board can decide how and when to appoint either Standing or Select Ad Hoc committees to examine matters and report as required.

Disclosure of interest: Board, staff members and volunteers must disclose any conflict of interest as soon as it becomes apparent and must not take part in assessments as required under the Act, section 65.

Trade or pecuniary gain: The association may trade or secure pecuniary gain for its member's subject only to a declaration under the Act, Section 15.

Governance requirements: As a legal entity, the association, its Board members along with staff and volunteers shall maintain a sound and lawful governance framework in the exercise of the association's powers, its functions, programs and operations by undertaking and fulfilling requirements under legislation and common law.

5. General Meetings

Remain as specified under the model rules and the ACT Act. Proxy votes are permitted to the limit of 2 votes per member.

6. Miscellaneous

Funds and Public Fund — as per model

Amendment of the constitution — this requires a two-thirds majority of the Board as well as a majority of the members at a general meeting and follows the requirements under the

Please provide your feedback to feedback@canberrapotters.com.au

North CPS Mar Queensland and Pror Ceramics Biennial Strategy

Cathy Franzi wins Scott Brickworks award

CPS Teacher Cathy Franzi won the Scott Brickworks award at the North Queensland Ceramics Biennial, which aims to 'to increase public exposure to a high standard of pottery from around the nation'. Selected works will be on display at Pinnacles Gallery, Townsville 11 March - 1 May 2016



Mollie Bosworth —Award winner

Mollie Bosworth, one-time Canberra Potters EASS exhibition award winner, won the Loloma Jewellers Award at the North Queensland Ceramics Beinnale.



Mollie Bosworth, Rushing water over pebbles Recently, Bosworth has been working on some new designs for a limited range of functional ware. This design is based on Victoria mill from the north Queensland town where she grew up; 'I really like the industrial look and the shapes of all the boilers funnel'.



Mollie Bosworth, *Cups*, laser decal on white satin matt glaze

CPS Marketing and Promotions Strategy

In December 2015, the Board adopted a Marketing and Promotion Strategy to promote the CPS, alongside the Business Plan 2014-18. The broad aim is to increase awareness and use of the CPS as a leading ceramic arts hub, attract sponsors and ceramics participants.

Key marketing goals

This strategy is hoped to be achieved with the following existing and new look:

- Website to be revitalised
- Branding to be revitalised
- Gallery exhibition new policy
- Engaging with sponsors
- Engaging with partners
- Media Releases establish a process and templates
- Communication and crosspromotion — with regional and local Arts Centres
- Retail Markets Ceramics Winter Market at NGA.
- Refurbishment enticing visitors, staff and sponsors through a refurbished entry to the shop and gallery space, expanded teaching studios on south side, enhanced offices and a proposed Members and Friends Lounge (scoping in 2016)
- Canberra Potters as a destination, with outside signage (scoping in 2016)
- Studio leases and education program — to continue
- Artist-in-residence (A-I-R)
 program promotion and
 exhibition showcase a new
 'Cone' gallery space, front of the
 gallery, select exhibition pieces

Members will be consulted about each phase of the strategy.
Feedback welcome at

feedback@canberrapotters.com.au

Diary dates

April

Artist talk Ginny Conrow

Friday 29 April, 6 pm @ Last Friday Supper Club Details TBA

Crystalline Glaze Workshop

Ginny Conrow (US) Sat 30 April - Sun 1 May

Day 1: glaze development and testing/firing

Day2: demonstration throwing/making

Select one or both days Bookings now open

Winter School dates

18-22 July

FEAST! With Steve Williams Focus on designing and making tableware

Further details TBA.

Artist Talk

Mahala Hill & Anna Neale Emerging Artists in Residence

Friday 29 May, 6 pm @ Last Friday Supper Club

Special Short course

Use of the Soda Kiln With Maryke Henderson 22 May — 12 June Bookings now open

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

<u>canberrapotters.com.au</u>

Exhibitions

Les Blakebrough Porcelain Beaver Gallery, Canberra 1 April — 1 May 2016



Les Blakebrough, $\it Escarpment~\#14-slip~cast, cast$ and applied, unglazed porcelain

Tim Burke Underneath Watson Arts Centre 28 April — 15 May 2016 Opening Thu 28 April 6pm

It connects landscape to the human body in the layering of skin, ice and sediment, the movement in rivers, glaciers and body fluids. The internal and external experiences of extreme frontiers reveal the profound and mysterious scale differences of unknowable place.



In 2015 the Members' Exhibition was supported by

Elaine Bradley, Verney Burness, Richilde Flavell, Isabelle Mackay-Sim, Fran Romano, Lia Tajcnar Divergence FORM Art Gallery 3 — 25 May 2016 Opening Thu 5 May 6pm

Opportunities

Wyatt Amend ANU School of Art Visiting Artist

Wyatt Amend is a ceramic artist from Ojai, California. His works are inspired by ancient venetian glassblowing techniques and are made using reductive carving similar to that of a wood worker on a lathe. He was teaching assistant to Greg Daly at Penland School of Crafts, which led him to the ANU. He is currently a Visiting Artist in the Ceramics Workshop.



Radford Art Show

This popular Canberra art event has been running now for over thirty years. Online registration and the Terms and Conditions of entry will be available through the Art Show page on the College website on Monday 4 April, and registrations will close on Monday 2 May.

artshow@radford.act.edu.au

Australia Council Arts Projects applications

The Australia council Grant program, Art Projects, for individuals and groups are available from \$10,000 - \$50,000. This program funds a range of activities that deliver benefits to the arts sector and wider public, including national and international audiences. Applications Close 7 June 2016.

Pottery studio space for sale

Jane Crick's pottery, Moonshill, 1 km to the east of Tarago consisting of 50 acres of land, 20 acres of which is remnant forest, and several sheds and a vintage rail Guards Van is for sale. It has magnificent views of the surrounding countryside. The main Colorbond shed, used as a studio, has a concrete base and a veranda. It is divided into two with a workshop area and the other half carpeted and lined. It also has a slow combustion wood heater, LPG stove and fridge. The second large shed was used as a kiln shed and has an enclosed storage area with a concrete base. There is also a smaller shed with a concrete base, which was used as a gallery. The Guards Van has a bedroom, living area, study, toilet, and a large storage area. It requires further work to bring it up to scratch. The asking price is \$285,000. For more details or EOI, please contact lan Crick on 62812594 or by email: crickian@gmail.com



Moonshill, suitable for a pottery studio















