



The Canberra Potter

The Newsletter of Canberra Potters' Society Inc.

MARCH 2015

INSIDE Hidemi Tokutake AIR Program Shop Member Profile
 Canberra Show winners **Stepping Up...**and more

Delineations—Claybodies and new ceramics

Review by Kathryn Wells

Delineations at FORM Gallery Queanbeyan and *Mudlarks* at the Café Gallery Strathnairn by different members of the Claybodies collective represent a dialogue about contemporary art practice in the Canberra region and beyond. As well as being a showcase of contemporary 'new' ceramic work; the works show the strength of the Claybodies forum for Canberra region ceramicists.

Delineations, FORM Gallery, Queanbeyan (9 February–2 March)

Standing in the external stepped corner of the FORM gallery in the afternoon sunlight, silently looking through the range of ceramic works gracing plinths, defying gravity, jumping from the walls, clustered on the floor and draped around slim sticks of wood; the work from Claybodies has clearly defined itself as 'new ceramics'. There was new work from each of the artists that has clearly developed from their association with Claybodies. Many of the works are striking, evocative and dynamic.

Jacqueline Lallemand's small individual dogs leaping through painted cubic metal frames were immediately attractive, clever and popular and definitely 'delineated'. They probably had it all over her cluster of chooks although these 'big-foot chooks' had great strength in their presence, form and glazes. These were in contrast to David Leake's beautifully balanced mesmerising soda-fired vessels, wheel thrown, hand-built altered forms. Sue Hewat's glaze upon glaze effect with marvellously concave vessels in her Tideline series had the effect as if you were gazing into the creation of planetary forms with the promise of life.

Velda Hunter's large ceramic vessels, about 40 cm high, with a depth of soft colour presented the effusive moods of the bush around Canberra from sunrise to sunset with acknowledgement of our belonging to country with 'Coolamon Morning' as well as 'Bush Fire'. This is a long way from the elaborately formed white earthenware pitchers in her previous practice. Tania Tuominen's hand-



Top Tania Tuominen Meditation
 Above Sue Hewat Tideline



Zoë Slee (detail)

Continued on page 6





From the Director

Welcome to the first issue of *The Canberra Potter* as an online newsletter. This form of communication represents huge savings to us in production costs, volunteer time, postage and (not least) our environmental impact. It will evolve over the coming months as we fine tune and integrate it more closely with our soon to be revamped website.

Future versions will allow readers to link to extended articles online, provide expansive photo galleries and allow readers to link directly to relevant sites of interest.

Stepping Up activities are starting to gear up and I urge you to get involved in what promises to be one of the major visual arts events in Canberra this year. The organising committee is pleased to see the Masterclasses filling with spaces remaining only for Juz Kitson's three day intensive exploring form and surface treatment. Be quick!

The CPS *Surround/s* exhibition, which will run during *Stepping Up*, will be our major ceramic exhibition for the year. It will feature work by the region's most accomplished and inspiring ceramic artists and potters. Curated by Patsy Hely and Sarah Rice it promises to be a highlight on the exhibition calendar. We are pleased to host Tasmania and Western Australia's state exhibitions over the same period. So buckle up for a year when too much ceramic art is never enough.

Finally I'd like to thank artsACT for confirming our future funding and their continued interest in our facility. We look forward to working closely with them to achieve all our aims for CPS/WAC.

Richard Thomas
Director



From the President

Did you get to the Canberra Show and see the pottery display? Judy McDonald has been involved in this display for 20 years, the majority of which has been as Chief Steward. Thank you Judy for a job so well done! Judy could not do this job without the help of the volunteers who helped with demonstrating their skills and those who set up the display and packed up at the end of the show. Entries were down somewhat this year so may I suggest that you start keeping your best pots in readiness for the 2016 Canberra Show, Judy's 21st year! Let's make it a BIG one!

The soda kiln has finally been approved. David Leake and I will be test firing it this week and anticipate that we will have to fire it a few times to familiarize ourselves with its idiosyncrasies and prime it with soda. The first course will now take place in Term 2.

Planning for *Stepping Up* the 14th Annual Ceramic Triennale is well under way.

There are to be pre-conference activities and masterclasses, many exhibitions, a trade fair, a potters' market day, pop up exhibitions and demonstrations. The conference itself will run from the 9th–11th July with keynote talks, panel discussions and individual artist presentations.

This will be a wonderful opportunity to experience the work from numerous national and international artists and to take part in the many events and discussions. Visit the [Triennale website](#) for more information.

Maryke Henderson
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Board & administration

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Contributions are welcome. Please email copy and images to the editor: Kathryn Wells
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Next Newsletter Deadline
22 March 2015

Contact us

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Gallery/Shop hours

Thursday–Sunday
10–4 pm

ABN 65 491 135 689

Demi thinks big

Hidemi Tokutake was interviewed by Kathryn Wells

Hidemi Tokutake studied modern ceramics at Seto Ceramic College in Aichi prefecture. Seto has been a centre of ceramics for over 1000 years, one of the six ancient kilns of Japan, yet has been renowned for innovation due partly to its mobile population, with its Ceramic school established in 1895. Today, it is a centre of international exchange with a strong artist-in-residence program. After completing her apprenticeship at Seto, Tokutake studied in Australia, completing her Masters of Ceramics at the National Art School in Sydney. Today, her Japanese training inspires her vessel making as much as the fragility and strength of the Australian landscapes her ceramic art as a whole



You studied modern ceramics at Seto Ceramic College and then in Australia you studied ceramics for two years at Hornsby TAFE and five years at The National Art School. What are the connections in this journey from the apprentice traditions at Seto to producing ceramic art forms reflective of the Australian landscape?

At Seto I was influenced by the history of cultural traditions of fine craftsmanship in ceramics although my apprenticeship was concentrated on repeatedly making a cup the same size until I could perfect this repetition. At the same time, there was a very strong Japanese tradition of hand-built sculpture work that came out of the ceramic studios. It is very hard to make, including the coiling, but I got used to how I could use the clay. In Seto they normally just fire once; there is no bisque firing. Other techniques are used for decoration such as spray



Above: Hidemi Tokutake working big for *Sculpture by the Sea 2014*

guns, slip and clear glaze. So my skills are very Japanese.

In comparison, Australia has a wide ceramics world where there is much more talk about ceramic artists, potters, art and craft – which have separate categories. In Japan the basis of art is the craft as this is what influences and inspires the art making. We appreciate art and craft in ceramics at the same time. As in Morocco, the craft cities are the inspiration for much design and art. In Australia, when clay is made into art, such as a cup, it might be difficult to use, but in Japan, always, it is easy to use and it has its soul inside as a piece of craft as well as art. Whilst craft skills are transferred and stay the same, art is changing and expanding. I see myself as a clay worker, part of a long history of ceramics and art.

Your work has consistently explored presence and engagement with the natural world as seen through vessels and open ended sculptural pieces. Can you explain your influences and approach to these considerations of form?

When I came to Australia I realised that I missed the natural environment that I grew up in as a child. My childhood house was surrounded by nature; I would spend my time catching butterflies and I would play with clay. When I moved to Australia I felt removed from this and it was a big shock; I realised I appreciated nature. Then I visited Uluru. Of course I had

seen it a lot before I visited but when I went to see it I was very impressed. I got something from its nature; it gave me ideas and inspired me to create. When I lived in Sydney while I was studying, this inspiration stayed with me: I could see Banksia pods, the ocean scape at Bondi, unique Australian flowers and bright colours in the landscape. It is easy to find unique nature in Australia.

Your Masterclass as an artist-in-residence is on large forms. What qualities do you look for in large forms that are different to smaller ones? How do you resolve this in the creation of the work, the clay and the firing process?

I began to make small clay pieces as this helped me understand the nature of clay. If students start with large pieces then they struggle with the qualities of the clay: soft and fast drying at the same time, which is too difficult with large pieces. However, when I work with students I just get them to play with the clay, to get used to the material and then they make their own pieces. At classes in the United States, I was surprised by what they created. Students didn't believe they could make large pieces but even young girls can make large pieces and this gives them confidence. The students became quite excited by this.

Some people like the firing and some people like the making. There have always been kilns big enough for firing.



However, even in Seto, where there are old kilns, wood firing is very expensive. Even there, as elsewhere, studios use gas and electric kilns.

For students I use stoneware hand building clay. In Australia I use white raku or terracotta clay whatever I feel like, depending on the softness of the clay. I leave my finger marks on the work so the clay has to be just right. For large pieces, the creation is now an unconscious process and I want to share this surprise experience. If you try a conscious approach to large forms then people want to make beautiful things and think too much about this and it doesn't work. Instead if people just consider the making and talk with the clay then they will experience the change and then the thing they are making will change.

Your exhibition this month will



feature your new work created as part of the CPS residency. What are the differences and continuities you find in your new works created in Canberra?

For the exhibition I am making three-legged sculptures as normal but this time I found a wasp's nest, created out of clay. Normally you cannot see the inside of the nest as they are enclosed and high up. This gave me some new ideas on how to structure the vessels to show the inside. Also the outside is to be a very dark colour and the inside very light. So it is as if you are peering down into the wasp's nest.

It is important that each one is different, the same as it is in nature, in the same way that one leaf appears the same as another but actually it is different in a subtle way. If they are the

same then they become a product, and not part of nature.

The pieces might look fragile resting on their sharp ends, and appear unstable but, in fact, they are three pronged and the triangle is the strongest form. Then if I am making a family of pieces, the work can become a family of six or nine, still standing on their sharp ends. People can wonder how it came about. It causes people to think about the idea of how they are connecting. This is part of the question of art as well as the craft.

*Artist-in-residence masterclass with Hidemi Tokutake,
large forms: 15 March
Exhibition: 12–29 March*



Artist-in-residence program

The artist-in-residence program commenced in 2011, since when we have hosted artists from Australia, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Canada and the US. The artist has the exclusive use of an on-site, one-bedroom residence and an adjacent private studio.

The objectives of our society are to promote excellence and innovation in ceramics, foster an appreciation of handcrafted ceramics in the broader community and encourage the professional development of our members. The residency program is an important part of our overall program, which incorporates teaching, professional development, exhibitions and retail activities. Artists-in-residence are encouraged to interact with society members and the public through various aspects of all these activities.

Information on the types of residencies offered and the application process are available from [our website](#).

Shop member profile

Jacqueline Lewis

I work intuitively, influenced by organic forms found in rock, bone and landscape. The peace and calm of the Japanese aesthetic is an inspiration. I want the forms to be unexpected and to express strength and movement. These sculptural vessels are hand built and are an exploration of form and its relationship to space.

The surface treatment is multi layered and textured allowing the viewer to see more at each viewing. I use torn and cut stencils for geometric shapes, everyday objects like pens, chopsticks and cable ties to indent the clay and large brushes to apply slip and terra sigillata in a painterly fashion. The painting and decorating of the vessel again gives me the opportunity to explore movement and the relationship of positive and negative space.

These sculptural vessels are designed to complement a boardroom or foyer or can sit quietly in the garden.



Would you like to become a CPS shop member?

Our cooperative run shop currently has places available for ceramic artists and potters.

From our Inner North location we offer quality ceramic objects from talented local artists and crafts people: large and small sculptural artworks, jewellery, and a wide selection of functional wares such as mugs, bowls and teapots.

As Canberra's only ceramic focused retail outlet we are experiencing a period of growth. We've updated our layout and image, increasing public awareness of the shop and Arts Centre activities.

Membership offers you the chance to interact with your buyers, network with other ceramicists and be involved in cross promotional activities such as gallery openings and attending visiting artist events.

Some advantages of membership are:

- Low 22% commission rate
- Ceramic only retail outlet
- Networking opportunities
- Commissions
- Retail experience
- Personalised shop flyer
- Exposure to new audiences through Arts Centre activities
- Invitation to sell at CPS mid year and Christmas markets

Shop hours Thursday–Sunday 10am–4pm and most public holidays.

Members have shop duty about one day every five weeks.

For further information or to apply for membership contact Marlene Flanagan 6249 1493



Above: Jacqueline Lewis

"I'm encouraged when my work is purchased"

CPS Shop Member

"Being in the shop has made me explore and develop different clay processes"

CPS Shop Member

"I've had the opportunity to get commissions and take orders for my work"

CPS Shop Member

from cover

built stoneware balancing balls, the black porcelain slip sgraffito were a meditation on delineation.

Suzanne Oakman's surreal sea-horses, dancing coral and sea pods, mostly in southern ice porcelain, are colourful sensual pieces with a reference to their delicate environment as well as the sensuality that connects humans with these dancing living forms. The delineation between human, monotremes as egg-laying mammals

and mythic creation sites (Lake George) and the fox as predator was deliberately blurred in Zoë Slee's exquisitely disturbing Foxtail pieces: contrasting porcelain quills with silk organza follicles and a mixed media underside membrane.

Delineations is a wonderful and remarkable show carefully curated to engage in critical dialogue about contemporary ceramics.

CPS Members among the winners at the Royal Canberra Show

Once again many of our members were involved with this year's Royal Canberra Show. Congratulations to all the entrants and winners.

The Show is a fantastic opportunity for CPS to show its talents, promote our activities and reach new members.

A full show report will appear in the next issue.

Champion Overall

Dot Kelsey

Encouragement Award

Paul Riley

Open Wheelthrown

Andrea Ho

Open Handbuilt

Dot Kelsey

Open Sculpture Dot Kelsey

Professional Wheelthrown

Velda Hunter

Professional Handbuilt

Sally Armstrong

Professional Sculpture

Brian Privett

Open Seniors

Julia Laybutt

U18 Student Encouragement Award

David Cavenagh

U18 Student Handbuilt Award

David Cavenagh

U18 Student Sculpture

Emma Dragh

U12 Encouragement

Award Marilla Cavenagh

U12 Student Handbuilt Award

Sienna Devey

U12 Student Sculpture

Ari Mathews

Teapot Challenge

Caitlin Dobbs

Jewellery Challenge

Brian Privett

Firing Challenge

Azusa Oakley

Rainbow Challenge

Nyla Walkear

Term Of Pottery Lessons U12

Encouragement Award

Adele Loughhead

Term Of Pottery Lessons U18

Encouragement Award

Robert Cavenagh

Walker Ceramic Challenge Award

Nyla Walkear

Barbara Mayo Memorial Award

Dot Kelsey



David Cavenagh—U18 student



Adele Loughhead—U12



Stepping Up Australian Ceramics Triennale 2015

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

Program now available online

The Stepping Up committee is delighted to present the 14th Australian Ceramics Triennale program. The conference program consists of themed days beginning each day with a keynote address followed by speaker presentations. Early bird registration is limited so book now.

Masterclass registration now open

Stepping Up is proud to offer three masterclasses for a range of levels, techniques and content led by world-renowned ceramists **Fred Olsen, Janet DeBoos** and **Juz Kitson**. There is only a limited number of tickets available so register now.

Call for Stall Holders

Market Place and Trade Stands

We are calling for expressions of interest for Stall Holders as part of Stepping Up. Market Place expressions of interest have been extended to Friday 27 March.

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

Watson Arts Centre activities

The Bald Archy Prize finished on the weekend with Watson Arts Centre welcoming over 5,500 mirthful gallery patrons. The Gallery now prepares for our next exhibition which will feature the work of our most recent Artist-in-Residence Hidemi Tokutake (see interview this issue).



Diary dates

March

Hideki Tokutake (Japan)

March 12–29

Visiting Artist-in-Residence (AIR) presents work created during her current residency at the Watson Arts Centre.

April

AIR Retrospective

April 2–25

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

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

1st Sunday of each month

Workshop orientations
Bookings 02 6241 7800

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/current-exhibition



Kevin White Marianne Huhn Ceramics Beaver Galleries Now showing until 24 March

Both artists explore the application of surface imagery on porcelain. Huhn's recent works explore contemporary political themes. White takes inspiration from traditional Japanese ceramics.

beavergalleries.com.au



From France 2 Contemporary French Ceramics Narek Galleries Now showing until 23 March 2015

Christian Faillat, Yves Gaget, Brigitte Long, Jean-Marc Plantier, Maryse Tavernier



Re-Emergence Robyn Campbell Belconnen Arts Centre 20 March–12 April Meet the artist 29 March, 1pm

Her years spent working in glass saw the evolution of pieces paired down, organic, tactile and sensual essence, these qualities continue in this current body of work in clay.

Canberra Brickworks walking tour National Trust Saturday 11 April, 3pm

2015 is the centenary of the Staffordshire kiln and the National Trust ACT, along with the support of the Yarralumla Residents Association, will lead a tour around the historic brickworks.

Bookings essential
info@nationaltrustact.org.au

Opportunities

Seniors Week Twilight market Friday 20 March 2-7pm Southside Community Services

Handcrafted items wanted. Stalls free, donations 5% of sales to SCS.

Bookings 6126 4700

Handmade Markets 14–15 March, 10am–4pm EPIC

Strand Ephemera Call for artists Proposals by Friday 27 March, 5pm

Artists are invited to submit concepts for Townsville's outdoor sculpture exhibition. \$10 000 prize.

townsville.qld.gov.au

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

Artists and Artworkers living and working in regional Australia now have an opportunity to develop their practice thanks to the launch of a dedicated Regional Arts Development Fellowship program.

regionalarts.com.au

Craft ACT: Craft & Design Centre Exhibition program 2016 Call for expressions of interest Closes Friday 13 March

Proposals are invited from our individual members, from local and national craft and design practitioners and independent curators for solo or group exhibitions. These can be thematic, based on traditional or new practice, concepts, processes, interpretations or philosophies.

Contact 02 6262 9333

mel.george@craftact.org.au

Sponsorship Opportunities—Canberra Potters Society is actively seeking ways to enhance existing 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

