



Education Guide 2006

Shepparton Art Gallery
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THE SHEPPARTON ART GALLERY

The Shepparton Art Gallery is located in the Eastbank Centre, Welsford Street, Shepparton.

The gallery has a large permanent collection, which includes ceramics, paintings and works on paper.

There is also the capacity to present a higher number of exhibitions and travelling shows, plus a dedicated area for students, artists in residence and workshops.

The gallery's holdings include 400 works on paper – many of which date from the 1970's and 150 paintings which span the colonial period to the present. McCubbin, Streeton, Longstaff to Tony Tuckson, Margaret Preston and Peter Ferguson are all represented in the Shepparton Art Gallery collection and displayed in our permanent exhibition space.

We are a specialist gallery, collecting Australian ceramics from the 19th and 20th Century. We have over 4000 examples of Australian ceramics. The gallery has examples from Lithgow Valley Colliery Company, Bendigo Pottery, the Hoffman Brick Company, to the Boyd family, Harold Hughan, Marguerite Mahood and Klytie Pate. Our contemporary ceramic collection is ever increasing. We have a collection of Aboriginal ceramics and work by Bern Emmerichs, Fiona Murphy, Michael Doolan, Stephen Benwell, Sharon Muir, Lorraine Jemyns, Bev Gallop, Gwyn Hanssen-Pigott, Col Levy, Andrea Hyland, Greg Daly and many other excellent Australian ceramic artists.

Opening on 24th February at 6pm at the Shepparton Art Gallery is the '2006 Sidney Myer Fund International Ceramics Award in association with La Trobe University', to be exhibited from 24th February to 30th April 2004.

'The Sidney Myer Fund International Ceramics Award in association with La Trobe University' is the major international ceramics award held in the southern hemisphere and offers the public an unprecedented opportunity to view ceramics from around the world, as well as Australia.

The exhibition features 50 outstanding contemporary ceramic works from fourteen countries, including - New Zealand, Germany, USA, Switzerland, Portugal, Belgium, Japan, United Kingdom, Canada, Taiwan, South Africa, Israel, China and Australia. The works range from traditional raku and stoneware to highly decorated sculptural works. They push the boundaries of ceramic making and are created by some of the leading ceramists in the world.

The judge for 2006 Akio Takamori from Washington USA. He has come to Australia and judged the winner of the Premier Award of \$15,000, as well as the three Merit Awards totalling \$9,000. Whilst here, He will give talks at the Shepparton International Ceramic Seminar and La Trobe University, Bendigo.

The Gallery is running the International Ceramics Seminar on Saturday February 25th. Speakers include; Keynote Address by Akio Takamori, presentations by Anna Maas – Skepsi on Swanston Gallery; Robert Bell, National Gallery of Australia; Artists Julie Bartholomew and Malina Monks.

A complete list of entries can be viewed online at www.greatershepparton.vic.gov.au/artgallery

THE JUDGE – Akio Takamori

2006 SIDNEY MYER FUND INTERNATIONAL CERAMICS AWARD
IN ASSOCIATION WITH LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

Judge's Statement

I am honored to have been invited as this year's judge for "*Sidney Myer Fund International Ceramics Award*." The opportunity to look at international artwork has truly been a privilege. For me, viewing each applicant's projected images was like traveling around the world. It was fascinating to see the similarities and differences. I began to think about how history, trends, identities, traditions and global influences are expressed in this generation of ceramic artists. In the thirty years that I have worked with clay, I have looked at my personal and cultural past and tried to connect it with the present. I wonder about the future, and these questions are revealed in the changes of my work. In the work I observed, I sense a certain kinship in dialogues regarding cultures and time.

There were several principles I followed to select individual artwork for this exhibition. Most importantly, I looked for things that were new and fresh for my eyes. Artwork that suggests unexplored possibilities and directions stimulate my thinking. It is so motivating to see work which can teach me something and refresh my ideas. In essence, viewing these works is important because it make me reflect on what I thought I knew and understood.

I also looked for a strong relationship between the creative concept and the craft. I believe that any successful work contains a compelling idea which must be supported by careful deliberation and making.

Contemporary ceramics is a balance between an idea and craft. What allow someone to reflect on the conceptual aspects are the aesthetic and visual pleasures.

The limitation in the number of pieces is always a difficult challenge, of course. I wish that I could choose everything I found interesting, but an important consideration in a group exhibition is to create visual coherence and consistent quality. Therefore, I had to draw a line, and for that, I felt somehow I had to suffer. After selecting the work, I tried to envision how the exhibition would look like as a whole. I hope that the installation will be able to bring out the strongest aspects of any individual piece.

Through the slide images, I imagined the real objects. Still, like any photograph, not all information can be conveyed, so I am very excited to see the pieces selected for the exhibition. There will be both surprises and familiarity. I think this feeling is like meeting someone for the first time that you have seen only in photographs—a recognition and curiosity of coming face to face with a distant relative.

Akio Takamori

CERAMIC TECHNIQUES

BASIC FORMS

- ***Pinching*** – the technique of pinching out bowls from a small ball of clay is one of the most ancient methods of forming pottery and dates back to prehistoric times. Pinch formed pots have a character that is unique, their scale is the scale of the hand and their form relates directly to the shapes of cupped hands and fingertips.
- ***Coil building*** – the art of building pots from coils is so ancient that it is impossible to say when or where it began. The process is simple, as coils are made by taking a section of clay and rolling it between the hands to form a thick solid cylinder.
- ***Slab building*** – is an extremely flexible technique. Forms can range from the geometric, to the highly organic. The basis of slab constructed form is a rolled out sheet of clay.
- ***Moulded forms*** – there are two basic types of moulds – the positive or drape mould and the negative or pressed mould. Plaster of Paris or fired biscuit moulds are simple to make, and extremely useful for the production of a wide variety of forms.
- ***Carving*** – the practise of forming pottery by a carving technique is comparatively rare, and the only ceramic product traditionally made in this way is the Japanese Raku ware.
- ***Throwing on the potter's wheel*** – is probably the most common production technique used by the studio potter. Normally it is used to create symmetrical bowls, jars, teapots, cups, flower containers and other functional hollow ware. It can also be adapted to provide components for the creation of constructed sculpture and the formation of asymmetric hollow ware.

DECORATIVE PROCESSES

- ***Brushwork*** – painting by hand to achieve individual styles, either over a white slip or directly onto the clay surface and covered by a clear glaze.
- ***Slip decorating*** – besides being used for brushwork decoration, can be adapted to a number of other decorative techniques. Of these the most common is the application of a coat of coloured slip over all or part of a piece.

- **Impressed decoration** – the impression of motifs into the surface of clay forms while the material is still fairly plastic is one of the oldest methods of ceramic decoration. Any object, which can be pressed into the clay surface and removed to leave a decorative impression, can be used.
- **Applied decoration** – joining of decorative pieces to an object.
- **Relief decoration** – have elements in common with impressed decoration. It involves joining cast clay bas-relief elements onto a pot surface, in the manner made famous by the English Wedgwood factory.
- **Wax resist** - the wax most frequently used is white paraffin wax, heated and then brushed on the piece. There are two basic methods of using wax resist. The wax is used to mask the field against the colour, which forms the decorative motif; or the wax is used in a positive way to form the motif.
- **Inlaid** – fine sections of ceramic laid into incised areas and fired, often showing colour.
- **Engobe** – An engine is used to cover a clay, produce a buffer layer, and give a different surface, texture and colour. It is applied by brush, dip, spray etc. It can be in a jelly or a stiff form; usually containing materials, which are normally, considered glaze materials, as well as clay slips.
- **Burnishing** – Rubbing the surface of the clay to cause the grains of the clay to lie in such a fashion as to present a smooth and polished surface.
- **Decals** – A transfer used to carry a ceramic pigment shape from an original design to the surface of a ceramic work.
- **Terra Sigillata** – Very fine relief work on decorated earthenware with a smooth red gloss finish. The gloss is a very fine slip coating.
- **On glaze** – Overglaze colour. Ceramic colours applied on top of a fired glaze surface and refired at low temperature. The Glaze is not absorbed into the other glaze, it sits on top.
- **Reduction** – The action of taking oxygen away from metal oxides. The potter uses reduction to coax different effects from the same metal oxide in clay or glaze.

- **Vitrification**- The furtherest stage to which a body can be taken without deformation.
- **Oxidation** – Refers to the combination of oxygen with an element or compound. Such an action occurs in the firing at temperatures above red heat and if required is achieved by introducing pure air to the fire or into the muffle or through the pots.
- **Vapour Glazing** – There are a number of techniques which make use of propensity of some glaze fluxes to volatilize at kiln firing temperatures. Zinc oxides, lead oxides, sodium compounds and boron oxide can be introduced into the firing or in containers placed amongst the ware. The volatile fluxes (gases) attack the clay surfaces to form glaze. The most well-known processes use common salt and soda.
- **Crystalline Glazes** – Glazes which contain crystals within the amorphous (glassy) matrix of the glaze. The glaze itself is not entirely composed of crystals. Crystals give opacity, matt surface and visual effects. The crystals grow mostly during cooling by isolation of the essential oxides from the surrounding fluid glaze.

MATERIALS

- **Paper clay** – A mixture of shredded paper pulp and clay. It has surprising green and dry strength and fires like a normal body when the paper has burnt away. Rolled out into very thin sheets it is strong and flexible enough to be used for printing or delicate shapes. It can be joined dry or wet using a slurry mix to create sculptures. The paper pulp is composed mainly of vegetable cellulose fibres (plants and trees), coated with a thin layer of water-repellent adhesive called lingnim.
- **“T” Material** – Trade name for the very light grey prepared body with white coarse grog manufactured by Magnate Thermal Ceramics Ltd. It is strong and plastic in its raw state and increases in strength as it is fired. It is considered refractory clay and vitrifies at about 1300°C.
- **Celadon** – Grey green / grey blue stoneware and porcelain glaze. Originated in China. Classic celadon glaze is thickly applied and semi-transparent.
- **Nepheline Syenite glaze** – is a transparent and colourless variety of nepheline which is feldspathoid mineral variable in colour from white to dark greenish brown. Has a low melting point.

STUDIO ARTS 1+2

1.1 Make a list of artists and their country of origin.

Select four pieces, which reflect the influence of:

Artists country of origin

Social comment

Political comment

Environmental comment

Select a piece which you feel has been influenced by another artist or style. Explain this influence.

1.2 Use three examples and indicate how the artist has used, traditional / new materials and techniques.

Select a piece which displays materials and techniques to achieve a specific visual effect.

Select a piece which displays materials and techniques to convey a particular idea of that artist.

STUDIO ARTS 3 and 4

3.1 Select one piece of work, and briefly explain the design process used by the artist. (Read the artist statement, comment on inspiration, area exploration, development, organisation and methods of achieving a creative solution).

3.2 Professional practices

Select a piece and explain how new and emerging technologies have influenced the creation of the piece.

4.1 Studio production (personal design process, see 3.1).

4.2 Art industry context

How has the 2004 Sidney Myer Fund International Ceramic Award (2004 ICA) exhibition and award been promoted by the Shepparton Art Gallery?

Locally

Nationally

Internationally

In your answers, mention promotion, marketing, public perception, industry recognition, ethical considerations and regulations.

4.2 How is an award / exhibition like the 2004 ICA organised?

How is it funded?

What other logistical problems does an award / exhibition such as the 2004 ICA create?

Eg.

- packing (transport)
- storage
- environment regulations
- display
- curatorial
- catalogues
- education kits
- training guides
- judging / criteria
- opening

VCE ART 1, 2, 3+4

Find a piece which has used another material as well as ceramics (clay). Has the cross media exploration been an effective visual solution? Explain why / why not. What aspect of ceramics was the artist interested in or exploring?

Select one piece of work and visually analyse it. Discuss surface composition, space, modelling, and structure. How have these elements contributed to the message conveyed in the artwork?

Compare and contrast 2 pieces from the 2004 ICA. Discuss in relation to the formal qualities of balance, colour, line, shape etc.

Suggested activity.

Select a partner. Together choose a piece from the 2004 ICA. Do not discuss the piece. Individually write your own interpretation of the selected artwork. Compare your interpretation with that of your partner, noting any differences and or similarities.

MIDDLE SCHOOL TASKS

1. John Stroomer
"Classical Gas"

This piece has been glazed using a crystalline glaze technique. Find in your notes the technique of crystalline glazing. Do you think that this technique of surface decoration has worked well with the shape of the vessel? Why / why not?

2. Ann Ferguson Durkin
"Fire and Fruit"

This work was inspired by the tree, a symbol of fragility and strength in both the environment and our personal lives. Look carefully and try to see which hand building techniques the artist has used.

3. Name two pieces which are functional.

1.

2.

4 Name two pieces which are non functional.

1.

2.

IDEAS AND SKETCHING