

*'Walking the through the 2010 Award I am reminded of Mussorgsky's piano, its mix of grandeur, admiration and sadness which seems encapsulated in these artworks; the imminent decay of current domesticity, the turning of our today into trinket, the potential environmental apocalypse and its terrible beauty, and I cannot help but feel that we made the right decision with the Award's restructure.'*

**Kirsten Paisley**

Director, Shepparton Art Gallery

## 2010 Sidney Myer Fund Australian Ceramic Award Shepparton Art Gallery

27 November 2010 - 6 February 2011

### **EDUCATION KIT**



**SIDNEY MYER FUND**  
AUSTRALIAN CERAMICS AWARD  
SHEPPARTON

The 2010 Sidney Myer Fund Australian Ceramic Award (SMFACA) is a biennale acquisitive prize, established as an international event in 1997. The 2010 SMFACA represents a renewed structure and focus, changing from an exhibition of 40 shortlisted artworks by 40 artists around the world, to an exhibition commission awarded to three recipient artists. The three commissions were awarded to the following artists under the categories: Emerging Artist, \$10,000; Australian Artist \$25,000; International Artist, \$25,000. Each of the winning artists has had six months to produce new art works for The Australian Art Award at Shepparton Art Gallery.

## **WINNERS**

**International Artist Commission - Anne Wenzel, The Netherlands, b. Germany.**

*Silent Landscape, 2010*

Black stoneware clay, iron oxides, mural in indian ink, water

**Australian Artists Commission – Stephen Benwell**

*Collection, 2010*

Ceramic, found objects, perspex

**Emerging Artist Commission – Paul Wood**

*Frozen, 2010*

Refired ceramic objects, glass



**Anne Wenzel**  
*Silent Landscape, 2010*

**Physical Description:** *Silent Landscape* is an installation with 44 pieces made of dark clay. Some parts are glazed with a combination of a black glossy glaze and pure copper oxide. They are placed on a black wooden pedestal of 400cm wide and 600cm deep. The whole surface is covered with an approximate 1cm high layer of water. The whole installation, table including sculptures, is 160cm high. The installation is surrounded by a mural with Indian ink, painted directly on the wall.

**Conceptual Description:** *Silent Landscape* is an installation of a dark landscape. On one side there is a dark wood of pine trees. Romantic, but also nightmarish. On the other side there are destroyed landscapes: trunks of burned trees, damaged buildings, lots of debris. *Silent Landscape* is a landscape after a disaster has happened. Nearly frozen. Dark, but also with a certain attraction.

I started with this installation when the tsunami in 2004 happened. Afterwards, I started collecting pictures of landscapes after any catastrophe had happened. They are cruel, but of a certain beauty at the same time. And they are timeless. In a certain way, you can even find those landscapes on paintings of Caspar David Friedrich, centuries ago. Besides this I was intrigued by the fact that people are fascinated by the dark side of life. Why are we intrigued by images of disasters? Why do we love to watch these cruel images that we get on TV in the news. These questions are *what Silent Landscape* is about.

**Anne Wenzel Brief Biography**

**EDUCATION**

1992 t/m 1997 AKI, Academie Voor Beeldende Kunst, Enschede, Netherlands.  
 1995 t/m 1996 Escola Massana, Barcelona, Spain.

**AWARDS/COMMISSIONS**

- 2010 Sidney Myer Fund Australian Ceramic Award, International Artist Commission.
- 2009 Artist in Residence European Ceramic Workcentre , 's Hertogenbosch.
- 2009 Nomination Dolf Henkes Award.
- 2007 Nomination Prix de Rome.
- 2007 Artist in Residence FLACC, Workplace for Visual Artists, Genk, Belgium
- 2003 Artist in Residence European Ceramic Workcentre , 's Hertogenbosch
- 2006, 2008, 2009 Project stipend, The Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts
- 2008 Publication Grant, The Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts
- 2005 Basic Stipend, The Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts
- 2003 Artist in Residence, European Ceramic Workcentre, Den Bosch
- 2003 Project stipend, Centrum voor Beeldende Kunst Rotterdam
- 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005 Project stipend, The Rotterdam Foundation for Visual Arts
- 2001 Basic Stipend, The Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts
- 2000 Starter stipend, The Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts
  
- 2008 Public Sculpture for Court, Zwolle, Netherlands, commissioned by the Rijksgebouwendienst,
- 2008 Public sculpture for Herten, Herte, Roermond, commissioned by SKOR, Foundation Art and Public Space, Netherlands
- 2006 Sculpture for public space, Vreewijk, Rotterdam, (finishing project begin 2008)
- 2005 Draft for sculpture Waterrijk Woerden (Netherlands)
- 2005 Sculpture for Carnisselande (finishing project 2009) commissielonen by the Council of Barendrecht (Netherlands)

Works are held in a large number of private and public collections in the Belgium and Netherlands and private collections in Belgium, Norway, Brazil and Germany.

Anne Wenzell is represented by Tatjana Pieters Gallery, Ghent and Akinci Gallery, Amsterdam

## Stephen Benwell

### *Collection, 2010*



**Physical Description:** The design for this exhibition, titled *Collection*, reproduces a room in a museum where there are cases containing artefacts. To achieve this design I propose a series of twelve cases. The presentation of the cases – their positioning, lighting, labelling – is planned to suggest the respectful, discreet environment of a museum.

The cases are of a high quality and commissioned from a specialist maker. They are square with an opaque white Perspex base and a cover of clear Perspex. Overall each case measures 26.5cm high x 50cm wide x 50cm deep.

The contents of these cases – the ‘artefacts’ - are predominately ceramic objects made by myself. These take the form of small statues, urns, busts, trophies, pots, shards, implements, broken masonry and a scattering of rubble remains. As well, found objects, some of ceramic, some of other materials, are added to the cases. Each case has up to fifty individual components.

**Conceptual Description:** The rationale for this exhibition, titled *Collection*, began when I made a tour of museums in Greece. Tours like these are an uncomfortable mix of hapless tourists, beautiful encased objects, and museum attendants who seem either disinterested or contemptuous of the spectacle. This absurdist and comedic experience skewed my feelings of reverence for the past.

*Collection* reflects on this experience, probably a common one. To explore this idea, *Collection* makes use of the museum’s favourite modus operandi - the cased narrative of art history. This exhibition is a series of cases, such as one might see in a museum, crowded with objects that emulate artefacts.

*Collection* might be from a just-opened tomb in which the contents, tumbled together, have the sense of being left behind only recently. Or perhaps a glimpse of ancient ruins where masonry and statues have fallen to the ground and settled in awkward ways.

There are objects that, like ruins, are solemnized by virtue of being broken, chipped and worn away. Other pieces relate to the weirdly interesting tourist souvenirs and brightly coloured ornaments that might be toys or the pieces of a board game.

*Collection* is a different sort of museum experience, one that indulges in the desire for hoarding ancient loot while ignoring any pretence of order and authenticity, and one where the objects are decidedly tongue in cheek.

## Stephen Benwell Brief Biography

### EDUCATION

- 2005 Master of Fine Arts, Monash University, Melbourne. Currently a PhD candidate at Monash University.
- 1976 Diploma of Education, Melbourne State College
- 1974 Diploma of Art from the Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne

### AWARDS/GRANTS

- 2010 Sidney Myer Fund Australian Ceramic Award, Australian Artist Commission
- 2008 Monash Travel Grant to research Greek classical sculpture in Greece
- 1984-1985 Studio residency at the Cite Internationale des Arts, Paris
- 1975-2009 Regular exhibitions in Australia including thirty solo exhibitions and approximately seventy group exhibitions since 1975.
- Since 1975 26 awards and grants

Works are held in a large number of private and public collections in Australia and overseas. Stephen Benwell is represented by Niagara Galleries, Melbourne.

## Paul Wood *Frozen, 2010*

**Physical Description:** The artwork *Frozen* will be the result of a collection of everyday white ceramic objects such as plates, bowls, jugs, cups, statues, basins and toilets that I will have placed in a wood fire kiln and re-fired. It will be a large floor piece that will be made-up of smaller elements comprising of the discussed objects. I will fire the basins and toilet separately to the other items. Smaller objects will be placed together in piles so they warp and their glazes melt and fuse them with other items surrounding them during the firing process.



During the firing I intend to add materials such as animal bones to create 'flashings' of different colour and texture on the surface of the objects being fired. Using ceramic objects with white glaze surfaces will highlight the unique effect the wood fire process has on glaze and surface.

I will set-up the objects in the kiln with the hope that they will warp and change form from the heat in ways I will not know until I open the kiln.

The artwork will be installed so as to allude to the natural landscape. For example some parts may appear as cliffs or rocky outcrops. Please see previous work for a general impression of the form the proposed artwork will take but take into consideration that this is the first time I will have wood-fired mass-produced and found ceramic objects so the surfaces etc. will look quite different in my proposed artwork. I also intend each stack to have more symmetry than previous work.

### Conceptual Description:

The concept for the artwork is an exploration and unification of two areas in ceramic practice that usually exist in opposition. On the one hand there is the functional use of a mass-produced plate, cup or toilet and on the other is the exhibition of finely crafted wood-fired objects (usually hand-thrown or hand-built) revered for their unique qualities. I will aim to make the ordinary and mass-produced unique by giving it some special TLC – a soak in a wood-fire kiln.

Conceptually I intend to develop a relationship between ideas of popular culture light-heartedness and high-art earnestness. Obvious reference will be made to Duchamp's 'Urinal'. However I will be taking the 'ready-made' art concept a step back towards 'high-art'. I will do this by 'beautifying' ready-made with high-art techniques and making the ordinary unique.

In my practice I have investigated and developed links between mass produced objects and unique and labour intensive ceramic items. I think creating this artwork in the way described will create an interesting meeting point between these two polar opposites that exist in the traditions of ceramic practice. I like the democratic qualities attributed to mass-produced ceramic objects. However, I also value the artisan skills required to produce beautiful one-off items.

I will continue my concern with using the ceramic medium as a means to explore artistic ideas relating to social and environmental issues like consumption and waste in this work.

## Paul Wood Brief Biography

### EDUCATION

2002 Graduate Diploma of Visual Arts, Victorian College of the Arts  
1998 Bachelor of Fine Art – Ceramics, Victorian College of the Arts

### AWARDS/GRANTS

2009 *Skills and Development Grant* – Australia Council for the Arts  
2006 *Australia Council New Work Grant* – Australia Council  
2005 *3<sup>rd</sup> World Ceramic Biennale–Honorable Mention* -Icheon World Ceramic Centre, Korea  
*Australia-Korea Foundation Travel Grant* - Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
2004 *Gold Coast International Ceramic Award – Finalist* - Gold Coast City Art Gallery  
2002 *ANZ Fellowship Exhibition – Finalist* - ANZ Building  
1998 *The Lowenstein Feiglin Ades Award* - Victorian College of the Arts

Paul Wood is represented by Nellie Castan Gallery, Melbourne.

## Secondary Activities

### Exploring – Responding

1/ After viewing all three art works what do you think are the main ideas or themes shown in each of the works? Consider the questions below in relation to aspects of both everyday life and larger issues.

- Do any of the art works use humour?
- What aspects of the past or present do the art works refer to?
- Which art work can you relate to most? Can you explain why?

2/ What are the predominant elements and principles used by each of the art works?

Rate the use of the following in the order of importance from most important (1) to least important (13) in creating each of the art works.

<b>Paul Wood</b>	<b>Stephen Benwell</b>	<b>Anne Wenzell</b>
Line	Line	Line
Tone	Tone	Tone
Texture	Texture	Texture
Colour	Colour	Colour
Shape	Shape	Shape
Pattern/repetition	Pattern/repetition	Pattern/repetition
Balance	Balance	Balance
Unity	Unity	Unity
Variety	Variety	Variety
Harmony	Harmony	Harmony
Contrast	Contrast	Contrast
Proportion	Proportion	Proportion
Movement	Movement	Movement

3/ Consider how each artist manipulates or extends the medium and traditional uses of clay.

- Is there any overlap or similarity of ideas or materials that the artists are exploring?
- How are they different to each other?
- At school create a chart that shows the similarities and differences that they share.

4/ How is each art work displayed in the gallery? Consider lighting, placement of objects, other design elements or props used.

- Which art work is the most successful in conveying a mood, feeling, thoughts or ideas that you relate to? Give details.

### Creating/Making

5/ Using strong or contrasting tones sketch a section of this art work from 3 different points of view or angles.

View 1	View 2	View 3

- At school or home combine the 3 views to create one art work using shades of one colour with pencil and watercolour.

## Primary Activities

### Exploring - Responding

Select one art work from the exhibition and respond to the following questions:

1/ What is the title of the work who made it?

2/ What media have been used?

3/ What props or special effects have been used to display this work?

4/ What is the mood, atmosphere or feeling is created by the art work?

5/ What 3 questions would you like to ask the artist about their work?

6/ What do you think was the intention of the artist in making this work?

7/ What are the main art elements used by each of the art works?

Rate the use of the following –Line, Tone, Texture, Colour, Shape, Pattern/Repetition in the order of importance from most important (1) to least important (6) in creating each of the art works.

Paul Wood	Stephen Benwell	Anne Wenzell
Line Tone Texture Colour Shape Pattern/repetition	Line Tone Texture Colour Shape Pattern/repetition	Line Tone Texture Colour Shape Pattern/repetition

### Creating/making

8/ Sketch a section of this art work from 3 different points of view or angles.

View 1	View 2	View 3

- Enlarge your best drawing onto an A3. Use light and colours to bring out the shapes and spaces around the objects.