ABSTRACT

Ceramics and the Everyday: repositioning into functional domestic objects. The work explores the role of ceramics as domestic objects, their function and the spaces which they occupy. A study taking the form of an exhibition of ceramics exhibited at the Canberra School of Art Gallery from March 2002. The outcome of the Studio Practice component, together with the Report which appraises the nature of the research undertaken.

National Institute of the Arts
School of Art

Visual Arts Graduate Program

MASTER OF ARTS (VISUAL ARTS)

Rebecca Dowling

REPORT
PRESENTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE MASTER OF ARTS (VISUAL ARTS)

2002
ABSTRACT

Ceramics and the Everyday: research into functional domestic objects. The work explores the ceramic domestic objects, their function and the spaces which they exist. A study taking the form of an exhibition of ceramics exhibited at the Canberra School of Art Gallery from March 7 to 15, 2002 which comprises the outcome of the Studio Practice component, together with the Report which documents the nature of the course of study undertaken.
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**Addenda**

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- Curriculum Vitae
- Bibliography
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all the staff in the ceramics department, Janet DeBoos (Head), Greg Daly, Anita McIntyre, Tony Flynn and Michael Sainsbury.

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All the studio partner I have had throughout this study, it is you who I spend my days and nights with, my coffee breaks, my lack of sleep and all those fantastic throwing days – Kaye, Pratya, Awang, Chan and Graham – Thank you.

Mum and Dad - for the faith they have.

William – for your constant support and love.
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The story of my Passion

The main concern of my work is the everyday and this is the realm for which I make my pots, everyday ceramic objects and their importance in our domestic space. Those intimate spaces where we spend so much time living, without giving it much thought due to the quick pace and frantic nature of our lives.
The space of our homes is sacred and that is something I intend to preserve, and I will continue to nurture everyday aspects through my work.

'Ceramics are unlike the other arts. We feel we know ceramics, we handle them everyday, we welcome them into our domestic lives and place them at the centre of our rituals. They are often an unremarked constant in the background of our days'. 1

I admit I am obsessed by the process just as much as the end product (if not more).

I am a maker

Working with clay I am driven by making functional pieces for someone else's everyday which reveals both obsession and my pleasure in being a maker. With my thoughts directed towards everyday life it is important to make for both the possibility of use and also for the relationship of the hand crafted object to the user. The useable object has been culturally shaped and personally expressed by me and then let go, to be passed on for others rituals.

Those of us who are makers for the everyday are not alienated from the society in which we work.

'Everyday life is a multiple concept. It exists in the minds of everyone in a thousand different forms, across cultures, economic class, sex and race'. 2

When talking about pots we immediately associate them with our own personal space. Even the vocabulary of the object refers to the human body lip, body, shoulder, belly and foot.
The vocabulary of the intimate space is necessary, both people and pots share the similarity of touch. Touch is an important factor in any relationship being fully experienced and understood. The slight distortions I create in my pots reflect my handling in the making and also they develop an intimate space for the user.

2
Craft is still 'craft' and this reaffirms traditional based handskills and techniques in an ever changing society and through technological advances. New tools have been introduced over time, but craft always retains its awareness of tradition and history. This is pursued through individual creativity. Craft making is based primarily on non-verbal knowledge; Skill, process, ritual, function, ornament and expression.

'For both maker and user, the handmade realm of craft sustains the need to be creative, to construct identity and meaning, and to produce and interact with objects of beauty and usefulness.'

It is the quality in the relationship of pottery and ritual that allows pots to be sacred objects, pieces reserved for specific purposes. The coffee cup and tea cup are the best examples of this relationship, and these objects will probably best define our culture in the future.

'Within the bounds of practical living, we dwell with objects, cultivate them and care for them.

Creating pots for me as the maker also involves not only me but my environment and spiritual concerns, my awareness and knowledge of the world, and a reflection of my entire life.

I was brought up in Castlereagh on the Nepean river at the bottom of the Blue Mountains by my parents with my six brothers and sisters. We were surrounded by orange orchards, paddocks and the Blue Mountains were just across the river. My grandparents built the place and lived just up the road, and life was always good.
And we had our routine
6:00 up and breakfast
7:00 leave for school
10:00 anyone left at home had a cuppa around the table
1:00 lunch
4:00 afternoon cuppa tea
4:30 back home from school to play before any homework was mentioned.

My parents knew what was most important when we were young. And there was nothing apparently frantic about the day. It wasn't until I went to school and had an insight into other peoples lives that I knew how lucky I was for my peaceful existence with my family. This is probably why I am so obsessed by the everyday aspects of people - I know how absolutely wonderful they are and the simple pleasure of spending time with people who share your life.
Story of the Jug

I was determined to begin the journey into a different realm of forms, of domestic objects which I had not yet attempted to make and discover. Each object takes time to develop from the initial idea and also as a clay maker there is the understanding that everything has probably been done before over thousands of years.

Jug. A container for storing and pouring liquid. Until the 17th century, jugs and mugs were synonymous terms. Both were used for storing, pouring and drinking. The refinement of manners and the development of the pouring spout created division into two specialised containers.

Pitcher. A large jug often with a relatively small top. It is intended for carrying and storing liquid rather than pouring and serving.

In order to make my work unique I had to develop my forms in a style that is my own and be totally true to myself and the clay. I began to play with the jug form which developed from the basic beaker I had been making for the past few years. A simple beaker with an irregular rim and two pressed indentations on the side for a resting place for my fingers. From this I cut a hole in the side of the beaker and rolled a paper sheet thickness of clay around my finger to fashion the spout. Immediately this took up a quirky characteristic of a little bird or a rolled tongue which made me laugh and it became an intriguing little object for me to develop. It was not so much a jug but a small pourer for an afternoon tea.

I made many small pourers and over the time the little spouts became bigger and oversized and awkward. As a natural reaction to this I increased the clay volume I was putting on the wheel and began to produce larger jugs. With the increase of liquid volume and the smallness of the spouts in comparison, liquid began to flow over the rims which defeated it having a spout - it may as well been a beaker again. I cut a quarter moon shapes of
clay and attached it to the tops of the jugs above the spout to act as a stopper. And I also began to introduce handles onto the forms because my jugs were not hand size anymore.

Now I had to face my fears of making handles for my work which I always found a difficult process. The handles needed desperately to reflect the jug; to be attached in unison with the piece because its job was an important part of the work and function. Basically there are no boundaries with making objects. If there was a set structure to any form all pieces would be the same.

The handle I was undertaking is made by pulling the clay down from a lump held at eye level, making sure to pull the clay down evenly to achieve the desired form. This was difficult but it's all practice and everything is possible with determination and patience. Another consideration is the location of the handle on the pot - would it be attached high or low? Would it be long or short? Would it be easy to hold empty, and full, and also to pour. The location of the spout on the jug began to change as well. Instead of cutting a round hole in the wall I cut the hole on the rim of the jug. This gave me a lot more freedom with inserting the spout. The spout no longer had to curl in on itself but could open up and rest on the rim. By modifying this the liquid could flow from the jug far more easily and the stoppers were no longer needed.
One important factor of the spout is how well it works and whether or not it drips after use. The way in which I make the spout with a thin edge allows the liquid to be 'cut off' with little or no dribbling. For a potter this is a very satisfying accomplishment and also for my Pop who told me the day I made a jug that did not drip would be the day I became a master of my craft. Attention to all of these small details allows me to become more sensitive to meanings behind function and the relationship that we have with domestic objects; and most importantly pots become a pleasure to use.
The style of jug I was making resembled older forms rather than contemporary designs. The realisation of this led me to take interest in traditional English medieval jug forms. I copied images of these from books and pasted them to the wall in my studio for inspiration and also to be reminded of successful jug forms.

These jugs have been referenced by potters for many years with tradition being a deep rooted constant in our craft making. Another great reference is our own collection of ceramics in the department. I bought into my studio jugs that had been made by lecturers, past students and visiting artists, so I was surrounded by many inspiring forms. I looked at each piece to understand the ways in which it was successful and true to the story of a jug. And the thing that excited me mostly was that they were all jugs which all could be held by their handle, they all had a spout of some description but the story of each maker was different. Through the forms, surface treatment and handling each jug was very different from the next.
Story of the Bowl

Bowls come in many forms and have many uses. Their sizes vary from those small enough to be held in a cupped hand to large communal serving bowls. Perhaps bowls are the most useful of household objects, as their functions are so numerous. 5

I have found that making bowls is one of the most pleasurable acts for me as a potter, it is such an honest form and desires use. My thrown bowl with its irregular rim and turned foot has undergone great changes in the course of my study. So much that the serving dish created from this bowl has become an entity in itself and now is merely related to my bowl rather than being the bowl.

I began by eliminating the foot ring and flattening the base resulting in a quite sturdy dish. The walls were strictly vertical and the form became extremely basic.

From this I was inspired to change the circular to oval and I began this process by throwing the wall of the pot separately to the base which allowed me to manipulate the form freely and stretch it oval before the clay stiffened up too much, then attach the wall to the base.

I noticed that by pulling the form on oval it gave a slight appearance of tapered in walls. I began to highlight this by gently throwing the tops of the walls in. This emphasised the form more but disappointingly it made the form very heavy looking, even though they were not. To describe it truly the newer serving dishes looked remarkably like dog bowls, squat and heavy.
I pondered on this for a while and sat down at my wheel to throw again after a few discussions with Greg and Janet. I changed the angles of the walls to taper outward which not surprisingly gave a very different appearance to the pots. They became more open and the fluidity of the irregular rims became a quite beautiful feature again. The form began to take on a life of its own and yearned for food.

It was at this point that the 'lugs' which I had on my earlier beakers came back and complimented the serving dish. While the walls of the pot were still wet from being freshly thrown I pressed my thumb into opposite sides of the walls before I stretched the piece oval. (I enjoy the freshness that remains in a fired piece if it has been worked wet). Then a few hours later I rolled teardrop shapes of clay in my finger and pressed them onto the thumb indentations of the pot. Now the serving dishes had a place to be handled and now they were complete. The lugs I had looked at on other potters work were usually quite large as opposed to the lugs I was attaching to my pieces. These were less obtrusive and worked just as well. There is space enough for lifting because of the added indentations under the lug.

The serving dishes were also very pleasurable to make because all their components could be completed over the course of a day and a night. I felt I was dancing in the studio - from the wheel, up to the table and down again, joining all the parts, thrown, rolled, pressed and coiled.
Story of clay bodies, glaze development and firing

Prior to the start of my masters degree I was awarded a mentorship grant to study more closely under the guidance of Greg Daly. It was during this time that I decided that the next step was to undertake further formal study. It was also during this time I began to experiment with coloured clay and working white and coloured clay together - the other being white stoneware which I was already working with.

Clay bodies

I began by pinching a small amount of terracotta and adding it to the ball of clay on the wheel. I centred the two clays together, threw the form and as a result a spiral of coloured clay appeared around my forms. This new technique excited me and I experimented with more and more clay. The effect which I was desiring was to change the appearance of the fired glaze. Using only one glaze on each piece I was able to work with variations of my glaze because the terracotta which is an iron based clay reacted with the glazes and changed the formula where the terracotta appeared on each piece.

Observing where I placed the terracotta initially on the white stoneware also determined where it would appear on the finished piece. For example, if the terracotta was on the top of the ball of clay it would sit just under the rim of the bowl or the edge of the plate, framing it. And if the piece of terracotta clay was put on the side of the ball it would appear as a spiral around the belly of the pot. The most intense reaction I had from my glazes happened on the glaze with titanium in it. The creamy glaze broke to browns, blues and pinks of the iron clay and was emphasised more if the kiln was fired slightly hotter.

Under the celadon glaze the iron became a mottled olive brown depending entirely on the concentrated iron clay underneath. Each piece
became remarkably different from each other because the technique can only be controlled to a certain extent.

The chun glaze over this technique I preferred to be thickly applied as it gave a very three dimensional quality to the glaze surface. If there were runs in this glaze it took on the qualities of rain running down a window.

With any new technique I tend to work it over and over, then I have to take a step back and remember to look at my forms once again. My head was beginning to fill with ideas of more colours in the clay that could compliment each glaze individually rather than the same for all. I mixed cobalt, chrome and copper into clay bodies separately to produce blue, green and red. The deep blue of cobalt to stripe underneath the icy blue of the chun glaze, the chrome green for a strong line under the gentle green of the celadon and the red of copper to spiral around the green celadon or turn a jacaranda colour under the chun.

My work became busier and more confusing to me. There was so much information on such small domestic pieces, and they had to be “completed” when filled with food.

Now I began to test other iron based clay bodies with my glazes on them. I knew I needed tonal change in my work, but the way to achieve it was still unknown. Not so much unknowing, but I hadn’t found the right way to approach it yet through my testing. It was very exciting to see how the titanium, chun and celadon glazes looked over four new iron stoneware clays, all very different. I have never tested only once. I test first on tiles and then on the forms, usually beginning with the beakers. Every piece I make in the studio becomes a palette for testing glazes and new clays become forms for testing how the clay is to work. From the Walkers clays 5A dark, 5A red, no.6 and no.9 the most satisfying was the 5A red. It gave the celadon a creamy olive appearance and contrasted remarkably against the PB103 white stoneware. The glaze on this clay gave just what I was after, but the problem arose when I made joined pieces. This clay not only needed heavy
compression but cracked at every join. I didn’t want to believe it but I persevered with it for sometime believing I could get to know it well enough to do what I wanted with it.

Glaze development

At this point the next step to achieve tonal qualities in my work progressed, from changing the clay body to changing the glazes. The celadon glaze was my favourite of the three glazes. It’s quietness and purity, but also the way it highlighted the cut irregular forms pooling in every crevice on the pot.

Iron oxide is the element of the glaze recipe used to produce the greens of the celadon in a reducing kiln atmosphere. In oxidation the celadon becomes shades of amber. All of the testing I did was in both oxidation and reduction atmospheres. With incremental additions of iron the celadon changes from light green, olive green and the black of tenmoku, to maroon with yellow crystals. The light green through to black was the palette I most desired. I tested this glaze by increasing tiny amounts of red iron oxide in increments of 0.125 grams up to about 6 grams. This gave me the range in which I was to work. From the palette I chose 10 celadons, all 5 samples apart so the tonal change would flow evenly through my work.
I could already see the possibilities of a display of many domestic pieces changing celadons as the viewer passed the work. The first of my displays was an image I had in my mind of a line of many plates standing upright at a 45 degree angle running along the wall beginning with the lightest shade through to the darkest. I introduced the Tenmoku glaze on the last of the pieces in the installation to play the part of finishing the phrase, the full stop at the end of the sentence.

These plates were not only functional domestic pieces but also a vehicle for my glaze expression, the wave of celadon. The celadon glaze has intrigued me for several years now and many others for centuries. There seems to be a certain spirituality to this glaze, by its appearance and touch and its long history of use throughout Asia.

Last year a friend of mine named Manjari was fortunate like myself to visit Japan for a short time. It was on her trip that she happened across a gallery in Osaka which was dedicating an entire exhibition to the celadon glaze. Written on one wall of the gallery in English was a phrase about natural light and Manjari wrote this down for me;
It has been said, 'that to appreciate fully the colour of celadon, it should be viewed at 10 am in the morning on a sunny autumn day, in a room facing north with one shoji sliding paper door'.

A quote like this reinforces my belief that this is a spiritual glaze.

From ancient times in China people were very fond of green jade which they delighted in because not only was the colour a fresh green but also there seemed nothing finer than its smooth touch to the skin and lips when used. Celadon is the name given to green glazes obtained from iron bearing glazes fired in a reduction kiln. The name of this glaze came later from a character in a seventeenth century French play named Celadon, who always wore green clothes.

Firing

Reduction firing, or reducing, means that part of the glaze firing cycle continues with less oxygen present. This is done in my firing cycle beginning at 1000 degrees until the firing has reached my desired temperature of about 1280 degrees. I am able to control this in the gas kiln by closing down the primary air intake of the burners and also by partially closing the flue of the kiln. In reduction, the free carbon dioxide in the kiln’s atmosphere draws oxygen from and reduces the oxygen content of the metallic oxides in both the clay body and the glaze, thus altering the colour. Heavy reduction is undesirable because it can led to the clay cracking and the glaze appearing dirty grey. If the reduction is too light it may result in slight oxidation and bleach out the desired colour of the glaze. It is up to the individual to find a happy medium and remember that each kiln is different, and although firing principles are the same you have to learn the personality of each kiln over many firings.

Over the two year period of my course I tested the glazes in three of the five gas kilns in the department. Each of these kilns (nos. 7, 9 & 15 as they are known) have slightly different firing cycles.

*See firing schedules
Firing Schedules

Kiln no. - 7
Cones set – ^06, 8, 9, 10
Density of pack – tight
Atmosphere – reduced
Firing cone – 9
No. shelves used – 3
Glazes – celadon, chun, tenmoku

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Atmosphere - reduced
Firing cone - 9
No. shelves used - 3
Glazes - celadon, chun, tenmoku

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Density of pack - medium
Atmosphere - reduced
Firing cone - 9
No. shelves used - 12
Glazes - celadon

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TURN OFF KILN
These tests show the four glaze (celadon, titanium, tenmoku and chun) over white stoneware clay and terracotta slip.
Red Iron Oxide Blends using 4 different bases.

0.5 through to 6 describes the percentage of red iron oxide used in the line blend fired in reduction (green) and oxidation (amber).

A = 0.5    B = 1    C = 1.5    D = 2    E = 2.5
F = 3    G = 4    H = 5    I = 6
0.5 through to 6 describes the percentage of yellow ochre used in the line blend fired in reduction (green) and oxidation (amber).

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccccc}
A & B & C & D & E & F & G & H & I \\
0.5 & 1 & 1.5 & 2 & 2.5 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6
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Clay Mix

- 100% PB·103 -
20% terra 80% PB·103 -
40% terra 60% PB·103 -
60% terra 40% PB·103 -
80% terra 20% PB·103 -
100% terracotta 120° -

DA + titanium Glaze

Soda feldspar 50
Whiting 20
Silica 20
Kaolin 10

PLUS

+ titanium 0, 5, 10, 15, 20
Daly’s ‘D’ base using red iron oxide from 0.25 percent through to 6.

Daly’s ‘D’ base (replacing potash feldspar with soda feldspar) using red iron oxide from 0.5 percent through to 4.
testing stains under glazes

- 4% titanium
- 0.5% cobalt
- 4% copper
- 2% cobalt
- 1% chrome
- 1% red iron

- VA Clear: ox
- VA Clear: reduction
- leach 5% celadon: ox
- leach 5% celadon: reduction
- chun: reduction
- VA+10 titanium: ox
- VA+10 titanium: reduction
- copper red: ox
- copper red: reduction
- R5.28 celadon: ox
- R5.28 celadon: reduction
Reduction and Oxidation

Increasing iron increments of 0.125 percentages
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<tr>
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<td>nepheline syenite</td>
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<td>Frit 4110</td>
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**Four Base Glazes Used in the Red Iron Oxide and Yellow Ochre Blends**

1. Nepheline syenite 40
   Whiting 20
   Silica 30
   Kaolin 10

2. Nepheline syenite 36
   Whiting 18
   Frit 4124 9
   Talc 4
   Silica 28
   Kaolin 5

3. Soda feldspar 50
   Whiting 20
   Silica 20
   Kaolin 10

4. Potash feldspar 50
   Whiting 20
   Silica 20
   Kaolin 10
Conclusion

Throughout my study, my main concern has always been centered around the ceramic objects which can be used in our homes during daily rituals of eating – ordinary objects which have ordinary functions.

I have made these objects unique, representing me and my beliefs and have now through my final exhibition introduced them to the people who will choose to use them in their daily rituals.

I also used these objects as a vehicle to display an aspect of glaze testing which I researched throughout my masters degree. I did this by installing my work as separate displays. Eighty seven plates spanning six metres – standing on a shelf along a wall, racks holding the plates in place. Each plate is complete in itself, although together they show the gradation of the celadon glaze until the tenmoku finishes the phase. The jug display showed the change of celadon as well. The jugs on each shelf in the display was a darker glaze from those on the shelf above. Eleven shelves, ten celadons and one tenmoku. The oval serving dishes sat in groups on plinths, occasionally a smaller dish sat inside a larger dish. These units especially could not be separated.

All the objects in my final exhibition shared an important similarity. That is, they all performed the act of serving as their main function - the plate, the jug and the oval serving dish.

To serve is a great gesture from a friend to a friend or unknown person - my work is representing this gesture.
Endnote

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Sub-thesis

In recent years there has been growing evidence of what Helen Stephens has called 'a renewed relationship with objects that form a part of everyday life'. I want to examine this new relationship through a focus on contemporary craft makers; how their objects are being made and why.

**How objects are being made** - define their qualities and characteristics
- form/shape
- material/tactile/texture/surface
- process/repetition/meditation
- scale/size
- colour

**Why objects are being made**
- technological revolution
- desire for rituals/new rituals
- meditation
- inspiration
- relationship to the body
- function

**What** is the work saying?
The element common to all art forms is space. But the different ways that different art forms deal with space is what sets them apart from one another. [1]

An animated element of art is ritual - private or public, newly created or recreated through research and imagination. Art making itself is a ritual, perhaps the most valid one left to our society.

Those of us who are makers for the everyday do not tend to alienate ourselves from the society in which we work. As Helen Stephens says 'Everyday life is a multiple concept. It exists in the minds of everyone in a thousand different forms, across cultures, economic class, sex and race' [2]. Many contemporary artists are working on restoring the severed connections between art and the everyday. Reconnections are being made between 'medium and message' and 'subject and object'.

Lucy Lippard explores the concepts of space in her book titled 'Overlay', ...private to public to private is offered in a spirit of intimacy as a means to strengthen the feeble bond between artist and viewer in a society where 'uniformity of social values' has indeed shattered. These collectively generated rituals expand contemporary art by creating their own audiences and by acknowledging the importance of exchange between artist and audience [3].

Pottery accumulates time and preserves it. This is one reason why today we know so much about the rituals of past societies and vanished cultures - through their pots aspects of these cultures' identities have been retained. Knowing how important the study of ancient ceramic pieces are brings to mind questions about how our contemporary culture will be viewed through our throw away paper cup society. It is the quality of the relationship between pottery and ritual that allows pots to be sacred objects, pieces reserved for specific purposes. The coffee cup and tea cup are the best examples of this relationship, and these objects will probably best define our culture in future references amongst all the plastics and polystyrene.
As Helen Stephens has written of her view of domestic objects,

Once we begin to consider objects which are part of the practical living of everyday life as objects in their own right, not as symbols of status, subordinate as property, a new connection with objects becomes possible. Being with objects, those things which we come to know and appreciate at first hand through practice and experience, becomes part of daily living[2].

Pots represent life on a domestic scale, and also represent shared social activities of eating and drinking, both of which are extremely important and necessary in all cultures, new and old. Most pots hold many stories and shared secrets deep within their walls because it seems to be at these times of eating and drinking that stories unfold. A hand-crafted pot celebrates the individualism of the makers, even though they might be anonymous. Crafts are grounded in the sensuous because craft making is based primarily on non-verbal knowledge. When talking about pots we immediately associate them with our own personal space. There is a shared vocabulary with the human body, we refer to the lip, body, shoulder, belly and foot of an object. Also, the vocabulary of the intimate space is necessary. People and pots sharing the similarities of touch being an important factor of the relationship to be fully experienced and understood. Pots not only represent life but their purpose is also to participate in life.

Crafts are not only objects but also material manifestations of relationships. The making of any craft object involves a silent knowledge which is unconscious and intuitive. The process can be just as much a concern as the final product for makers. Creating for makers may also involve not only the makers themselves but their environment and their spiritual concerns, their awareness and knowledge of the world.
Being with Objects

In 1995, three Australian contemporary ceramic artists participated in a touring exhibition titled 'Being With Objects'. Patsy Hely, Susan Ostling and Toni Warburton brought meaning and value to simple domestic objects, showing their uses and pleasures. In the introduction of the catalogue essay Helen Stephens argues that there has been a return to creating pleasures associated with making utilitarian objects in contemporary craft practices.

Ostling describes her work titled 'Acts and Experiences: send, serve, recall, work'. Five oval dishes in the series are objects used in everyday life. For Hely the exhibition was a meditation on the issues surrounding domestic objects, making references to traditions in ceramics and the use of objects, 'reconstructing...old objects with new parts'[2].

Hely's beautifully simple non-decorative porcelain jugs and bowls take on new meanings when the odd wooden or aluminium lid and metal stand are added to them bringing the domestic space into the gallery. These pieces are also making reference to industrialized non ceramic domestic objects which most of us are familiar with or in fact have in our own cupboards. Warburton's vessels display a residue of gesture 'indicating a kind of ritual associating the involvement with objects as part of everyday life'[2]. An
imprint is the mark left by passing through, by being there. It is an immediate form of identification, an elemental gesture.

In their displays of their work these artists bring the elements of the domestic space into the gallery, through the use of tables and dish racks to replace the white plinth. This amplifies the importance of the domestic space which is often overlooked and forgotten. More artists now are rediscovering the importance of domestic space or as in Janet DeBoos' case, creating work reflecting an ongoing passion.

Until 1995 DeBoos had been making domestic ware for galleries and shops. Since then she has been reinventing her ceramic work, focusing her thoughts on function, the nature of producing and the meaning of the two. Deboos writes about the importance of this in an article published in Pottery in Australia titled 'The Meaning of Function'[4]. DeBoos' work gives the user choices through the 'Endless Possibilities of Form' she has created and implied, giving work engaging titles. Rather than using the title 'mugs', for example, DeBoos uses 'Six Possibilities for Monday Morning' to describe a powerful yet quiet work of varying sized porcelain mugs for black coffee which she displayed in a wall mounted cedar box.
DeBoos' work takes in many dimensions of domestic life, emotions, memories and the enjoyment of sharing these with company. In her view 'This capacity that pottery has to insinuate itself into people's lives is a great strength (and perhaps a great weakness as it removes it from the eye of the critic who is necessary for its survival as a considered art practice)[4].

'Within the bounds of practical living, we dwell with objects, cultivate them and care for them'[2]. When looking around my own room at the pieces of furniture I have after moving out of my family home, I rediscovered how preciously I regarded the old metal trunk, clothes drawers and bookshelf. Each of these items is attached to me with immediate recall of family stories, times, places, and the environments these objects used to occupy when I was a young child. Even though I now live 300kms from my family home, these objects are familiar and carry memories of home. 'In these new/renewed connections, dwelling becomes an issue when we consider being with objects'[2]
Performance, Installation and Repetition

Conceptual artists are more interested in ideas than product and in producing art that can not be bought and sold. Performance has been considered as one way of bringing to life the many formal and conceptual ideas on which the making of art is based. Performance manifestos, from the Futurists to the present, have been the expression of dissidents who have attempted to find other means to evaluate art experiences in everyday life. 'It is, finally, about the desire of many artists to make art that functions outside the confines of museums and galleries'[5]. Performance art has been used as a way of appealing directly to the larger public, as well as sometimes shocking audiences into reassessing their own notions of art and its relation to our culture. These artists' efforts assimilate more the realm of play and pleasure in creating art which observes less the traditional limitations of making art objects, so that in the end a performance artist can take delight in almost any activity imaginable.

Both performance artists and viewers experience and consume movement in public space whereas domestic objects are experienced in personal space, either singularly or communally, and offer intimacy to the user. Humans need to touch, to hold and to make.

In the early 1970's performance artists in Australia were more concerned with actual presentation rather than with the illusions which were then associated with representation; 'the focus on real time and space, on action rather than imitation, was presented as a way of cutting through the distance which separated artists from spectator'[6]. In the late 1970's and 1980's most performance artists reconsidered the relation to 'real' space and began designing, script writing and directing their events. This blurred the distinctions between theatre and performance. This realism allows a direct empathy with actions or objects as well as symbols in the work. Lucy Lippard points out that 'Too often, however, a broader audience remains out of reach, even to those artists most resistant to the erosion of art's communicative functions, because available forms are not easily understood'[3].

Ritual indicates a concern with that balance between the individual and collective, the theory and practice, and the object and action. There is a relationship of belief to the forms that convey ritual or suggest it. They become ritual when filled by a communal impulse that connects the past with present and future. As Lucy Lippard has argued, 'For some Artists, the notion of ritual is used to provide a flavour of ambiguity or an implied solemnity.'
And for others, art has become a personal counterpart of religion'. And Lippard continues, 'the concept of knowing through doing and communicating through participating continues, whether it is applied to daily routines or mystical statues of enlightenment'[3]. In 1995 Janet DeBoos and Daniel Jenkins, both craft artists in Australia took on The Performance Space in Sydney with their performance exhibition titled 'Process and Obsession'. Both artists became performer, author, choreographer, player or maker. The performance exposed their working processes, Janet DeBoos a ceramic artist, and Daniel Jenkins a metal artist. Once the viewer entered their space they immediately became a voyeur into the craft practices which were being theatrically performed, 'the temporality of performance' revealing 'ritual of making meaning through process'[7]. Through this performance non-makers who viewed the ritual of making developed an understanding and they could buy the bowls produced, singuarily or in a set of personally chosen bowls, almost as souvenirs of the performance.
'The act of making is a highly ritualized sequence of movements' and reveals 'both pleasure and obsession'[7]. The repetitive actions of makers is a challenging activity to follow and to make each object exist in its own right. The repetitive actions are indeed meditative and ritualistic involving the whole body, emotions and gestures of the maker. Of DeBoos' performance Gillian McCracken writes 'her production appears endless and repetitive and yet each fragmentary bowl has its own existence, virtue, and difference'[7]. DeBoos succeeds in mastering her craft by having the ability to give individual life to each object. Making the same bowl form over and over through the length of this performance, DeBoos noticed quite quickly how the 'same' bowl could change slightly over a shortened time when this consumed all attention. 'It was possible to tell the pots made on one day from another. They were marked by time and conversely marked time'[4]. With reference to her functional work, DeBoos states 'the longer I work with functional form, the more I realize its potential as a vehicle for artistic expression. Every jug carries with it the whole history of jugs and their usage, every teapot relates to the facts of human relationship and daily life'[4].

When ceramist Kevin White writes about the art and craft of pottery, he describes realities of the practice known only to the makers:

In a series of identical pots thrown by hand, the skilled practioner and connoisseur recognise the capacity for minor inflections and nuances to confer special qualities on the pot that lie beyond a meagre celebration of technical proficiency. Two seemingly identical pots may both be considered well-made, but one may exert a powerful feeling of 'rightness' over the other. Whilst one may be merely a display of competent craftsmanship, the other may have the capacity to transcend its place and time [8].

Another element which is an integral part of ritual is repetition. For Lucy Lippard 'ritual is not just a passive repetition but the acting out of collective needs'[3]. Installation artists often use repetition with objects to make their statements. There is a powerful element in repetition which draws viewers in to observe and then to usually wonder what it all means. Through repetition of objects in installation the aesthetics of beauty often follows due to the patterning of placed objects. An installation artist who immediately comes to mind in this context is Noelene Lucas and her work 'Presence of Centre', 1993. This work was composed of 1800 pastry dishes turned upside
down and painted white with earth coloured lines painted runningly across the dishes. These dishes were installed on the floor of Silpakorn Universities Gallery in Bangkok within a strong grid system. Lucas examines the 'paradox of the constancy of orientation in a constantly changing landscape'[9]. The installation expresses Lucas' perception of Central Australia on passing over at 11000 metres on plane trips to Asia. It is her bird's eye view, her topographical map. Lucas examines dislocation and negotiation of new spaces both physical and cultural.
Craft

Craft objects can fill in and compensate for what machine-made products can not produce. Hand-crafted objects are personal. In the modern world, society is used to paying a higher price for objects and services that are personalized. An object seems to mean even more still if the maker is known personally, and therefore instantly increases in personal value from this emotional attachment.

Mass produced, standardized, shop-bought objects not only clog our cities but muffle our minds and imaginations; they flatten out the possibilities of self-expression. In making things by hand we are practising our individualism as makers.

In the past this was less of an issue because everything was made by the hands of craftsmen and peasant artists, making work that functioned and expressed the needs of their communities and its identity. Craft provided all articles necessary for daily life, everything of material culture. Consequently when country folk migrated to towns, communities decayed. Craftsmen's creativity was dissipated by having to supply the rapidly enlarging market. Artists and craftsmen's work became devalued as the industrial revolution swept the world and introduced 'sameness' into multiples and planned obselecene into objects. The crafts almost lost their meaning and certainly lost their vitality and integrity. This signified a loss of a culture. In the birth of industrialization there is no trace of the traditions of the employed craftsmen's own work or cultures. However there was the continuation of the relationship between maker and craft, heart and hand. The nature of the work still demanded this relationship.

One of the things that industrialization achieved was the universal availability of cheap objects for the everyday use of people in most levels of society. In the face of increasing industrialization and the fear of extinction, the hand-crafted objects became valuable once again in the mid nineteenth century to those who appreciated the uniqueness of hand crafted objects and also those who could afford them. In England notions of craft practices were developed by the utopian beliefs of Morris and Ruskin with the Pre-Raphaelite movement. Makers were highly respected by their communities, and it was only with the industrial age that the skill and role of today's makers are heir to a great fall in status. Craft is spent on things that are of use, craft objects inspire playfulness. They bring delight and imagination into a world dominated by mechanical, rational standardization of many kinds.
Through the making of craft objects practitioners can develop an attitude towards living. It focuses on the nature of people, the society, the site, the relationship to community, and a sense of place. And it is true to say that craft makers have created a society within a society. Craft is viewed as a way of being and develops certain attitudes towards making, all in all, craft making has its own value system which breathes humanity and nature. For those who live outside the realm of making, the intimate relationship between maker and medium can be difficult to understand. In my view a well crafted object is capable of breathing out this intimacy of the making to the new owner/user, and can open up the society in which the craft makers move. Each craft medium has its own vocabulary which again creates new dialects within craft practices. Even, say, a potter and a papermaker need to de-code when discussing their crafts.

The craft of pottery is unthinkable without the attention and acknowledgement of tradition, thousands of years of human expression and culture cannot be dismissed. Tradition is vital for the survival of any craft and mirrors life in its form. The changes and developments in the form of the clay which passes through our fingers can parallel, complement, signify and support the changes and evolution of our own inner consciousness. Edmund deWaal points out that 'Ceramics are unlike the other arts. We feel we know ceramics, we handle them everyday, we welcome them into our domestic lives and place them at the centre of our rituals. They are often an unremarked constant in the background of our days'[10].

Without dwelling too much on the importance of past histories and traditions associated with the crafts I am aiming to discover contemporary craft makers and the reasons which drive them to make, and also the issues which surround their craft making practices.
Robert Howard, an Australian wood crafter, painstakingly hand carves elegant wooden bowl forms and sculptured chairs with his own personal design. His work has been described by Rodney Haywood as 'Poetry in Wood'.

Howard firmly believes that a simple, perfect bowl is the hardest form to make because it has nothing to hide behind, no decoration to distract the viewer from its pure state, and it must be able to stand without hesitation. To look at a simple bowl which has been made by a skilled maker should give immediate pleasure to the viewer, even before it is used. The bowls which Howard carves are evolutionary forms of the bowl before. He disagrees with the ideas of the 'one off' and asks 'how could you possibly get it right the first time?', the subtle differences are what is important to him and even knowing there is an infinite number of bowls he can make, the immediate bowl is the most important.

Each piece which is carved is a reflection of Howard and a product of his entire life, another piece added to his series of additions. Howard states 'I am what I am and I can not write about my history of today, only that of ten years ago when I look back and take everything in of that time'. Howard creates a rhythm in his working which allows him to become sensitive to detail, form, flow of line, thickness and thinness. His design process ensures that there is a conservative and straightforward logic in his work. When working with wood, the rhythm developed is the subtracting process of the wood, little by little, and working with what wood remains on a three dimensional view. Starting on the block and closing in with refinements with the question always surfacing 'what has got to come off next?' To help work out difficulties with form Howard began to make small prototypes from wood and plasticine, primarily because he can not afford to make mistakes in the carving of a large piece knowing that each piece takes weeks of work to complete. Howard lives off what he makes and sells because he believes it keeps him in the reality of his world.

Howard's inspirations are that of Native American and Australian Aboriginal baskets, Shaker furniture, Amish quilts, Korean and Japanese tea bowls. To Howard these are some of the best crafted objects which demonstrate extraordinary simplicity, purity and overall beauty achievable by 'working within the structured freedom of a tradition'[11]. Different generations evolved these objects over time, by repetition and practice, perfecting techniques and resolving the smallest details in design.
Howard successfully appeals to the viewer's emotions with his piece titled 'Ripcurl', a beautiful finely carved bowl from Australian red cedar. It appears as if the wood had become malleable and Howard softly folded over part of the bowl's lip. This bowl floats on the surface on which it sits and curls gracefully into itself.

The common status of the wooden bowl form has changed from a functional utensil for eating and drinking to that of a decorative object. When I questioned Howard about the functions associated with his bowl forms, he replied 'I have a sadness about function, I would like it to be functional but it is not'. Because his pieces have become highly valued in the collector's market, not as affordable objects to be used, but as objects desirable to acquire. Howard relies on the tactility of his bowls which he believes gives them an emotional content. Some of Howard's pieces have been carved to lift off the table, to function in the sense of an offertory vessel acknowledging ancient religious significance associated with the bowl.

Unlike the bowls which Howard now crafts for the 'collectors' market, his sculptured chairs invite usage. The price is high, but then again so is the level of skill displayed and the time a chair takes to be born. A chair is one of the most interactive pieces of furniture that we have. Seated in a chair, we have an ongoing relationship with its body language and the experience of
intimacy. Howard's chairs create a special place for the sitter and invite us into its space, unlike a bowl which we invite into our personal space.

Gwyn Hanssen-Pigott's work refers to a long tradition of functional ceramic ware, while at the same time she exhibits her work in such a way that references the conventions of still life painting, implying non-functionality. Her work is refined and delicate porcelain which depends on the collective relationship established between each grouping of bottles, mugs and other domestic objects. The presence of the individual pieces, therefore, is dependent upon their relationship to others within the group. Being functional, Hanssen-Pigott's work inhabits real space and also echos the ideals of minimal art with her use of monochromatic still life forms. Through this her work exists somewhere between the realms of functional and abstract form. There can be no doubting the functional possibilities in the work, however, her intention is to make a selection of vessel forms for display together as a 'still life' group. Spaces between and around the pots, together with light and shadow, assume an importance equal to that of any three-dimensional sculpture.
From the potters Lucie Rie, Alan Caiger-Smith, Ivan McMeekin, Ray Finch, Michael Cardew and Bernard Leach that Hanssen-Pigott trained with she learned much more than just techniques, clay and glaze technology. She learnt to care for pots, and take time with them. She learnt to understand the medium and developed a love and respect for her chosen craft - her life was committed. Hanssen-Pigott never approaches her work to achieve quantity or sameness, and her attention to detail and her uncompromising attitudes are reflected in her work. 'For pots that you actually use everyday, there is a terrific challenge to make them last, so they get nicer as you use them...it is hard to achieve, and it is not a cerebral thing. It certainly doesn't go with the fashion, but you can't help but be influenced'[12]. The challenge and also the usefulness of functional ceramics, and the fact that people can use it in their daily lives is important to Hanssen-Pigott.

Greg Daly is an Australian potter who works in thrown porcelain, stoneware and earthenware dealing with images, illusions, light and form. Daly’s work is precisely thrown and finished exhibiting his mastery of the wheel and also the surface, finish and decoration of his forms. His work is sophisticated and he possesses a keen eye for refinement. Daly’s work has involved many genres, covering a variety of scale, finishes and techniques. Sculpturally thrown and altered forms, to finely thrown miniature bowls, and platters which span one metre. Daly is a strong believer in the development of work and extending techniques allowing any idea to be pushed further, he has no fear and an incredible amount of inquisitive
passionate energy. For Daly it all comes down to the demands he sets upon himself and what he makes ceramics to be in his life.

The main vehicle for Daly to express his passion of surface, colour and form is the vessel. The large scale wall platters which he throws with seeming ease provide a surface on which to develop glaze effects, colour, texture and decoration. There is a depth to these works and also a creation of abstract images which balance beautifully in their space. Daly's lustre ware maintains vitality and motion through the varying surfaces and tonal change. Surface changes occur as the viewer moves around these forms as the lustres interact with the light, and an illusionary kaleidoscopic surface occurs.

For Daly, it seems that life itself is his stimulus for making pots and evolving ideas. Cloud formations, aerial views, shadows, architecture, landscape and the five senses; from these, ideas flow and Daly brings them to life and as his work progresses he reacts intuitively to each piece. His craft is his life and he finds pleasure in every activity he undertakes. There are intensive working periods, peppered with contemplative days, for thinking, experimenting, studio cleaning, sitting out the back in the sun with friends.
Sandy Lockwood, an Australian potter, is one of the few who has decided to master the difficult medium of salt glazing over the past fifteen years. Her pots, generally vases, jars, bowls and trays are unified in their seemingly casual forms. In her own words Lockwood speaks of her craft,

The medium of clay fascinates me because of its fluid responsiveness. This unique potential can be carried through the entire making process into the finished object. The fluidity of the material enlivened by salt glazing facilities expression of the human gestural vocabulary which forms a significant aspect of my work. I believe that the best contemporary craft exhibits expertise with materials and creative talent bound together by a passion for the medium. The jigsaw is quite complex and most of the pieces are invisible. There is no short cut, and the maker’s journey is not always easy. Sometimes however, it is glorious.

Each of Lockwood’s pieces speak of movement and fluidity through her unique style of making. As does this teapot with its leaning back gesture, the handle still wet in appearance draped casually on the skirt of the teapot. Each of Lockwood’s pieces is about what goes on between the object and the user and their everyday rituals.
Kevin White is concerned with the qualities of the functional as an aesthetic of form, which he expresses in combination with a fine sensibility in graphic design and brush work. His elegant work is made by using porcelain, then decorated in underglaze blue with an on-glaze red enamel pigment. Teapots, bowls and other vessels fuse the distillation of his experiences in Japan and England. 'My work stems from a preoccupation with functional aesthetics, and whilst the work is seldom prescriptively utilitarian, its character seeks to be revealed through use. Whilst at rest, the work may act as the custodian of ceremony, in use to celebrate it'.[14]

What White learnt in Japan has to do, not so much with the outward appearance of the work, but rather with the sensibility which informs its making. This might be best summed up as a concern about the way everyday artefacts are capable of interacting with people's lives, the way useful objects can stimulate the imagination and connect the ordinary with the imaginative experience, the way the magical can be made to re-invent the mundane. This is something that useful objects are, in fact, uniquely placed to do. White believes its reconnection with lived experiences is arguably the most important project for the crafts. It does not simply involve concern with external signs but rather real engagement with process, a genuine rapport between maker and user wherein the maker leaves room for the user's creative input. White says 'We ask, What is it? What is it for?, We should be
asking, How can I use this? What can I do with it?

White’s pots engage a pure relationship between form and decoration, and his use of design is just as important to the pieces as the beautifully thrown and altered forms, creating a kind of balance and harmony. White’s pieces are strongly directional with circular bases moving into triangular rims through three ridges thrown into the pieces. Depending on the angle from which the pot is viewed the painted decoration both camouflages and accentuates the form. Every work speaks of use - these pots are not trying to challenge the user or reconstruct the idea of usefulness. White’s work is both functional and practical and enhances the joy of the user through these features and also the beautiful aesthetics.
Conclusion

What I have found in my research into contemporary craft makers, how their objects are being made and why, is that craft people are driven by their inner passion for their chosen craft.

Craft makers who are concerned with the aspects of the everyday celebrate life and the objects which are used. Not only are they driven by the making almost as an obsession, but they also consider the user, the people who will invite the object into their own lives using it in their own intimate spaces.

These makers all celebrate and recognise past traditions and rituals of their craft as important aspects to their work in combination with their own contemporary lives from which they draw inspiration. And what they desire is that their objects have a positive affect on the users and therefore play an important role in improving the quality of living through their contributions to contemporary society.
Long live craft makers!
Endnote


Aim of the Project Outline

To produce a body of thrown work reflecting the rituals of the domestic space, driven primarily by the force of function and the relationship of the hand crafted object to the user.

In recent years there has been growing evidence among Craft Makers of what Helen Stephens has called 'a renewed relationship with objects that form a part of everyday life', I want to examine this new relationship in the field of the crafts.

Methods and Resources

I have developed a strong awareness of the importance of tactility relating to form over the past two years, especially in the domestic space where each object is handled often and sometimes several times a day. Intimate relationships are developed with these objects when we invite them into our personal space.

Objects I am investigating through my thrown forms are drinking vessels, bowls, serving dishes, jugs and plates. These objects are around us everyday and I aim to make my work with small distortions, impressed fingermarks where I hold the pieces when they are freshly thrown and irregular rims. These characteristics I have developed in these forms create fluid and gentle gestures from me the maker into the hands of the user. It reflects my handling and also creates a space within the domestic space for the user.

My concerns are not only in the making, although this is my greatest, but also in the life after the studio - when it leaves my space for someone elses.

The methods I am researching and using in the studio is concerned with the glaze interaction over the varying clay bodies. I am investigating the response of iron glazes and slips in reduced firing atmospheres.

Context

An animated element of art is ritual - private or public, newly created or recreated through research and imagination. Art making itself is a ritual, perhaps the most valid one left to our society.
Those of us who are makers for the everyday do not tend to alienate ourselves from the society in which we work. As Helen Stephens says 'Everyday life is a multiple concept. It exists in the minds of everyone in a thousand different forms, across cultures, economic class, sex and race'. (Being with Objects p.34)

Lucy Lippard explores the concepts of space in her book titled 'Overlay', ...private to public to private is offered in a spirit of intimacy as a means to strengthen the feeble bond between artist and viewer in a society where 'uniformity of social values' has indeed shattered. These collectively generated rituals expand contemporary art by creating their own audiences and by acknowledging the importance of exchange between artist and audience. (Overlay p.195)

Pottery accumulates time and preserves it. This is one reason why today we know so much about the rituals of past societies and vanished cultures - through their pots aspects of these cultures' identities have been retained. Knowing how important the study of ancient ceramic pieces are brings to mind questions about how our contemporary culture will be viewed through our throw away paper cup society. It is the quality of the relationship between pottery and ritual that allows pots to be sacred objects, pieces reserved for specific purposes. The coffee cup and tea cup are the best examples of this relationship, and these objects will probably best define our culture in future references amongst all the plastics and polystyrene.

As Helen Stephens has written of her view of domestic objects, 'Once we begin to consider objects which are part of the practical living of everyday life as objects in their own right, not as symbols of status, subordinate as property, a new connection with objects becomes possible. Being with objects, those things which we come to know and appreciate at first hand through practice and experience, becomes part of daily living. (Being with Objects p.37)

Pots represent life on a domestic scale, and also represent shared social activities of eating and drinking, both of which are extremely important and necessary in all cultures, new and old. Most pots hold many stories and shared secrets deep within their walls because it seems to be at these times of eating and drinking that stories unfold. A hand-crafted pot celebrates the individualism of the makers, even though they might be anonymous. Crafts
are grounded in the sensuous because craft making is based primarily on non-verbal knowledge. When talking about pots we immediately associate them with our own personal space. There is a shared vocabulary with the human body, we refer to the lip, body, shoulder, belly and foot of an object. Also, the vocabulary of the intimate space is necessary. People and pots sharing the similarities of touch being an important factor of the relationship to be fully experienced and understood. Pots not only represent life but their purpose is also to participate in life.

In 1995, three Australian contemporary ceramic artists participated in a touring exhibition titled 'Being With Objects'. Patsy Hely, Susan Ostling and Toni Warburton brought meaning and value to simple domestic objects, showing their uses and pleasures. In the introduction of the catalogue essay Helen Stephens argues that there has been a return to creating pleasures associated with making utilitarian objects in contemporary craft practices. In their displays of their work these artists bring the elements of the domestic space into the gallery, through the use of tables and dish racks to replace the white plinth. This amplifies the importance of the domestic space which is often overlooked and forgotten. More artists now are rediscovering the importance of domestic space or as in Janet DeBoos' case, creating work reflecting an ongoing passion.

Deboos writes about the importance of this in an article published in Pottery in Australia titled 'The Meaning of Function'. (Pottery in Australia vol 35, no.1, 1996 p.23-25) DeBoos' work gives the user choices through the 'Endless Possibilities of Form' she has created and implied, giving work engaging titles. Rather than using the title 'mugs', for example, DeBoos uses 'Six Possibilities for Monday Morning' to describe a powerful yet quiet work of varying sized porcelain mugs for black coffee which she displayed in a wall mounted cedar box. DeBoos' work takes in many dimensions of domestic life, emotions, memories and the enjoyment of sharing these with company.

'Within the bounds of practical living, we dwell with objects, cultivate them and care for them'. (Being with Objects p.40) When looking around my own room at the pieces of furniture I have after moving out of my family home, I rediscovered how preciously I regarded the old metal trunk, clothes drawers and book shelf. Each of these items is attached to me with immediate recall of family stories, times, places, and the environments these objects used
to occupy when I was a young child.

Through the making of craft objects practitioners can develop an attitude towards living. It focuses on the nature of people, the society, the site, the relationship to community, and a sense of place. And it is true to say that craft makers have created a society within a society. Craft is viewed as a way of being and develops certain attitudes towards making, all in all, craft making has its own value system which breathes humanity and nature. For those who live outside the realm of making, the intimate relationship between maker and medium can be difficult to understand. In my view a well crafted object is capable of breathing out this intimacy of the making to the new owner/user, and can open up the society in which the craft makers move. Each craft medium has its own vocabulary which again creates new dialects within craft practices. Even, say, a potter and a papermaker need to de-code when discussing their crafts.

The craft of pottery is unthinkable without the attention and acknowledgement of tradition, thousands of years of human expression and culture cannot be dismissed. Tradition is vital for the survival of any craft and mirrors life in its form. The changes and developments in the form of the clay which passes through our fingers can parallel, complement, signify and support the changes and evolution of our own inner consciousness. Edmund deWaal points out that 'Ceramics are unlike the other arts. We feel we know ceramics, we handle them everyday, we welcome them into our domestic lives and place them at the centre of our rituals. They are often an unremarked constant in the background of our days'. (Edmund deWaal)
Second Semester 2001

At my mid year assessment I was able to show my progress and experimentation of my forms and glazes to date, all of which I had proposed to do. Also which pleased me was that at this point of my study I had a vision of my final work and had chosen the pieces which I was to dedicate my final semester to and also reasons for culling the others.

The three forms I am currently producing are plates, oval serving dishes and jugs. These forms I am making on mass because of the nature in which I prefer to exhibit. Not as small settings but rather an installation of domestic ware. Jugs hanging from the wall in a massive grid, a shelf of plates that stretches metres all standing up in a rack, and large oval dishes nurturing smaller oval dishes inside itself.

I feel I have conquered the glazing of my work also to achieve a strong visual effect rather than a hazy flea market feeling, which worries me with too much colour. My love of iron in glazes led me to a pallet I created by tiny additions of an eighth of a gram increments to produce enough celadon to keep me busy for a while. From this I chose ten celadons so my work will gradually move through these greens like a wave as you move past my work.
Rebecca Dowling - Curriculum Vitae
rebeccadowling@hotmail.com
Raintree Farm
904 North Logan Rd, Cowra 2794
02 63429463
Born 1975, N.S.W

Education
2000-02 Candidate, Master Arts Visual Arts - Coursework
School of Art, National Institute of the Arts, ANU
1998 Graduate Diploma of Art
School of Art, Institute of the Arts, ANU
1996 Bachelor of Arts (visual)
University of Western Sydney, Nepean

Group Exhibitions
2002 Graduation Exhibition, NITA Gallery ANU
Cowra Festival Art Award, Cowra Gallery
2001 Members Exhibition, Craft ACT Gallery
39th Festival of Fisher's Ghost Art Award, Campbelltown
Made in Canberra, Back to Back Galleries, Newcastle
CSA Exhibition, Gulgong
2000 Off Centre, Mentorship Exhibition, Craft ACT
Tableware Exhibition, Link Gallery, Craft ACT
1999 Members Exhibition, Craft ACT Gallery
Ceramic Art Gallery, Paddington
1998 Graduate Diploma of Art, Canberra School of Art Gallery
Craft for Christmas, Craft ACT Gallery
Christmas Exhibition, Mura Clay Gallery, Newtown
1996 Graduate Bachelor of Visual Arts, UWS, Nepean
Twentieth Annual Walker Ceramic Award, Westpac Gallery, Melbourne
1995 3Dimensional Exhibition, Nepean Art House, Penrith

Professional Experience
2002 Casual Lecturing, National Institute of Arts, ANU
Visual Art Access Teaching, NITA, ANU
2001 Casual Lecturing, Canberra School of Art, ANU
Visual Art Access Teaching, Canberra School of Art, ANU
Pottery Teaching for the disabled, Hands on Studio
Assistant to Janet DeBoos, Ceramics Distance Diploma Course,
Canberra School of Art, ANU
2000 Casual Lecturing, Canberra School of Art, ANU
Assistant to Janet DeBoos, Ceramics Distance Diploma Course,
Canberra School of Art, ANU
Assistant to Greg Daly, Copper Red Research
Open Art Teaching, Canberra School of Art, ANU
1999 Casual Lecturing, Canberra School of Art, ANU
Pottery Teacher, Aboriginal group, Cowra (TAFE)
Pottery Teacher, Rehabilitation Centre, Canowindra (TAFE)
Pottery Teacher ‘Come and Try weekend’ Canberra Blind Society
Graduate in Residence, Canberra School of Art, ANU

1998-99
Part-time employment, Bison Homewares Production Pottery

1998
Graduate in Residence, Canberra School of Art, ANU
Casual Lecturing, Canberra School of Art, ANU
Pottery Teacher, Sutton Primary School

1997
Assistant to Jacqueline Clayton in ‘Artists in the House’
Elizabeth Bay House, Sydney

1995
Assistant to Jacqueline Clayton and Anne Graham in ‘Doing Time’, Casula Power House

Grants
2001
Post-graduate Materials grant, Canberra School of Art, ANU

2000
Post-graduate Materials grant, Canberra School of Art, ANU

1999
Mentorship to study under Greg Daly, funded by the Australia Council, offered by Craft ACT

1994
DEET University Mobility in the Asia Pacific Region
Studying ceramics at the Decorative Arts Faculty, Silpakorn University, Thailand

Publications
2000
Canberra Times, Dec 9, p.12
The Chronicle, Dec 12, p.33

1999
Object Magazine 4, no.4 1999 pg 45-47

Donations
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