

SHIFTING SENSES



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18 JUNE - 12 JULY 2015, M16 ARTSPACE, CANBERRA

EBONY HEINDENREICH

WAYNE MCARA

SOPHIA NUSKE

MARIA PARMENTER

SOPHIA PHILLIPS

ALISON SMILES

ULRICA TRULSSON

GEORGE ZACHAROYANNIS

CURATED BY RAYLEEN FORESTER



Supported by the South Australian Ceramics Committee and Guildhouse this exhibition showcases South Australian based ceramicists at M16 ArtSpace in Canberra to coincide with Stepping Up: The Australian Ceramics Triennial, 9-11 July 2015.

Cover Image: **Maria Parmenter**, *Kameruka Road* 2015, wheelthrown and altered porcelain, variable dimensions.
Photographer Michael Kluvanek

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Guildhouse in partnership with the South Australian Ceramics Committee are proud to present *Shifting Senses* in collaboration with *Stepping Up*, The Australian Ceramics Triennale, Canberra 2015.

Following on from our successful partnership presenting *Subversive Clay*, The Australian Ceramics Triennale, held in Adelaide in 2012 we are delighted to present eight highly talented artists during the Canberra conference.

Our intention is to give emerging and mid career artists and a curator the opportunity to be presented during this national event and to showcase a select group of talented South Australian artists. Curated by Rayleen Forester this exhibition highlights a broad range of ideas and interests of these creative professionals along with presenting their skilled craftsmanship and creativity.

Rae O'Connell

Executive Director, Guildhouse



Sophia Nuske, *First World Problems? Here's a BADAID* 2014-15, stoneware, house paint, acrylic surface sealant. Variable dimensions. Photographer Michael Kluvanek

THE TRANSITION FROM FUNCTIONAL TO SCULPTURAL

ANGELA VALAMANESH, MAY 2015

After completing my undergraduate studies in ceramics at the South Australian School of Art in the late 1970's I worked as studio potter for 10 years. At this time teaching institutions were somewhat divided between the school of funk and the school of functional ceramics. I chose functional, beginning classes with Milton Moon and learnt to make bowls, cups, bottles and eventually teapots. There was not much formal exposure to design principles but a focus on proficient wheel throwing techniques and basic glaze principles. The classes were small in number and we were expected to be present from 9am to 5pm, five days a week over three years. We were pretty good at making pots and understood the basic principles of studio pottery well.

The presence of Milton Moon leant a strong Japanese influence to the work I produced. I recall being influenced by the Art Gallery of South Australia's

wonderful Asian ceramic collection. Also, since marrying a person of Middle Eastern heritage I became interested in a wider view of the history of ceramics (although I think I only really appreciated European influences) when I became more aware of the work of Lucie Rie and others.

I loved making pots that people would use and handle in their daily lives but I was exhibiting in galleries so when I started to make forms that did not have glaze on them I realised that they probably would no longer be useful in the same way. I was making functional forms that would only be looked at, not handled any longer, and became more interested in the surface and colour of the clay.

In the early 1990's I returned to the South Australian School of Art undertaking a Master of Arts in Visual Arts and was subsequently awarded an Anne and Gordon Samstag International Visual Art Scholarship with a one year residency at

Glasgow School of Art. During this period I made a transition from functional to sculptural ceramics but also spent some time working with a wider range of media. I also began working in collaboration with my partner Hossein Valamanesh on public projects such as the Memorial to the Irish Famine at Hyde Park Barracks in Sydney completed in 1999 and more recently the *Ginkgo Gate* at the Western entrance to Adelaide Botanic Gardens completed in 2011.

The transition from functional to sculptural practice meant I needed to be more aware of the content or ideas underpinning my work. My recent works consist of simple forms that often make links between plant, human and animal.

I think there will certainly continue to be ceramic practices for as long as we are here on this planet and artists continue to have the drive for it as a medium. However, I'm not so confident

My recent works consist of simple forms that often make links between plant, human and animal

about predicting the future. Lately it seems to me that ceramic or clay is one of a number of different mediums that an artist may choose to make things with. Artists are combining the technical nature of this craft with the theory of contemporary practice. It seems that people are more focused on the content of what they're saying as part of the process rather than just trying to master the material that they're using. Personally I would like to see a balance between content and material thoughts in art works in the future.

SHIFTING SENSES

RAYLEEN FORESTER, MAY, 2015

Clay has been used, decorated, coveted and collected for generations, the medium continues to surprise and rearticulate itself through innovative techniques, forms and functions. Contemporary ceramicists are constantly setting new standards and pushing the boundaries of this historically honoured craft material.

Ceramics has consistently explored the notion of an embodied experience, often obliquely through fragmentation and abstraction, as a way of engaging with the processes of making art.

Shifting Senses is an exhibition that investigates experimental processes in contemporary ceramic art. By engaging with three curatorial concerns – a mark, a vessel, and a scene – this exhibition focuses on the formation of new narratives whilst addressing issues concerning identity, the environment, process and possibility.

A MARK

This section focuses on the relationship between the artist, material and the elements. They are fundamental components in reading visual arts and could be considered more recognisable in the work of ceramic artists than any other. Mark making is a historical

touchstone within this practice; it reflects that first imprint in the process of art making; imbuing generational tales and fostering a narrative that can cross social and cultural barriers. There is always an element of chance with ceramic art and the process of marking, stretching, moulding and reworking forms creates a new dialogue between the artist and their chosen materials.

Sophia Phillips Ribs (Adam, Eve, the Serpent, and Me) exemplifies this connection between the artist, material and process. Hanging ominously from the ceiling and comprising a number of components *Ribs* forms part of a larger body of research undertaken by the artist in Australia and China. The work communicates a strong physicality driven by a forceful process of squeezing and stretching clay between the artist's fists and fingers. Phillips reanimates these purposeless objects by linking them together to form a partial cage. The piece exudes tension built from the action of gripping the clay; it is an emotional act only to be released with a contradictory impression left in its place. The viewer is left to question is this action one of attempting to let go or trying to hold on?



Sophia Phillips, *Ribs (Adam, Eve, the Serpent, and Me)* 2014, Jingdezhen porcelain, wire trace, variable dimensions.
Photographer Michael Kluvanek



Alison Smiles, *Shared Repose* 2015, hand built raku clays, linen, variable dimensions. Photographer Michael Kluvanek



Ebony Heindenreich, *Still Lives I* 2015, southern ice porcelain and dark stoneware with various finishes, various dimensions. Photographer Michael Kluvanek

Nestled in unison on the floor of the gallery, Alison Smiles *Shared Repose* is an installation of hand built forms made from raku clay that rests in a large formation. The works transition in and out of the familiar and the peculiar quietly harnessing the viewer's attention. Here, Smiles considers the shared act of simply sleeping; various shapes and sizes all laying down and undertaking the same 'performance'. Smiles translates this act through hand built carved forms; textural and earthy, communicating a 'landscape' of bodies undertaking an unspoken shared experience.

These works lay the foundation for rereading the context of contemporary ceramics today. It is an art form that can speak to a history and future simultaneously. Phillips' and Smiles' exhibition works communicate the physicality and material driven processes used by contemporary ceramic artists today. Whilst remaining true to the tradition of the medium, their reinterpretation highlights this art form's capability as a site for forming new narratives, processes and ideas.

A VESSEL

Here we see works that transition into the contemporary and experiment with form and ideology. Testing skills and processes into functional or abstract works allow artists to push theories, existing histories and re-contextualise the functionality and placement of ceramics in visual arts culture.

Ebony Heindenreich, Maria Parmenter and Ulrica Trulsson each experiment with this re-articulation of the ordinary. By creating

the old, new again Heindenreich and Parmenter devise a new kind of curiosity towards art making and the use of historical materials. They are focused on contemporary, popular culture ideologies steeped in traditional, aesthetic driven practices. For Heindenreich process is just as important as the outcome. Each form, although visible as a functional piece, is also an experiment in action. Parmenter's beautiful objects succinctly highlight the capability of this art form. These 'metaphorical vessels' are instilled with multiple meanings although they exude a serene quietness. It is an experiment in the mundane whilst rearticulating the domestic without highlighting the history or personal memory of what these objects mean; this translation or connection is stripped away from the surface yet remains charged within the work.

For Ulrica Trulsson an intrinsic part of her practice is experimenting with functionality, form and metaphors associated with the vessel. Driven by an intuitive process the evolution of her work continually develops throughout the creative process. Her connection with landscape is apparent; through richly textural surfaces reminiscent of deserts or coastlines; for Trulsson, the domesticated object is a boundless form of purposes and its exploration is limitless.

This section communicates an expansive range of ideas, forms and materials that a number of ceramic artists' utilise in their practice. *A vessel* considers the space in which ideas are held, molded and reinterpreted.

A SCENE

The final section of this exhibition investigates the role of installation and other contemporary visual arts practices in ceramics art. The works exhibited initiate a new dialogue regarding contemporary ceramic art and the role of the artist and their audience.

Wayne Mcara's practice is known for its tactile qualities. Blurring reality and fiction through alternative meanings of the familiar or emotive he (sometimes literally) weaves new stories into the delicate porcelain forms he makes. *#icantbreathe* is one such work which questions intuition and provokes further reading. Utilising slip casting and hand building techniques, a row of porcelain masks can be seen hanging against the wall. A cluster of identical masks sit on the floor in groups each different to one another. On closer inspection we can see the detail of the original paper masks and the intricate stitching that Mcara has undertaken on the surface of the work. It is a compelling piece quietly questioning our place in the global community and our outlook on inequality within social structures. *#icantbreathe* toys with perception and narrative through sculpture and installation.

The final two installations, both site specific in nature, communicate a number of personal and global ideas. Sophia Nuske's delicate *First World Problems? Here's a BADAID* is a clever and humorous approach to social and political unrest, sensitivity and the trivial nature of modern-day problem solving. The use of artificial Band-Aids highlights the inconsequential nature of some of

society's dilemmas (without dictating it to the audience). It's simple and funny in its approach but addresses a larger discussion around the value of current social and political discourse.

George Zacharoyannis' *Untitled* delves into personal narratives and story-telling through objects. Hand built pieces, found objects and mass produced bricks line a wall in the gallery, quietly exposing the artist's own truths regarding a number of different social issues. His process-driven practice allows him to test and re-test materiality and kinetic energy. *Untitled* unravels the artist's views on individuality and his position within social constructs.

Curatorially, by engaging with three areas of concern, each artist has had the opportunity to pursue new techniques and approaches to their art making. Through this experimental approach the artwork produced speaks to a larger theory regarding process driven art, the formation of narratives through the object, and the relationship of ceramics to sculpture, craft and installation. Ceramic art is a multifaceted practice which can inform audiences of a number of concerns through traditional and experimental art making. *Shifting Senses* is an exhibition that not only brings together the individual practices of eight ceramic artists, but also communicates a broader conversation around contemporary processes in this historic material.



Maria Parmenter, Kameruka Road 2015, (detail) wheelthrown and altered porcelain, variable dimensions. Photographer Michael Kluvanek



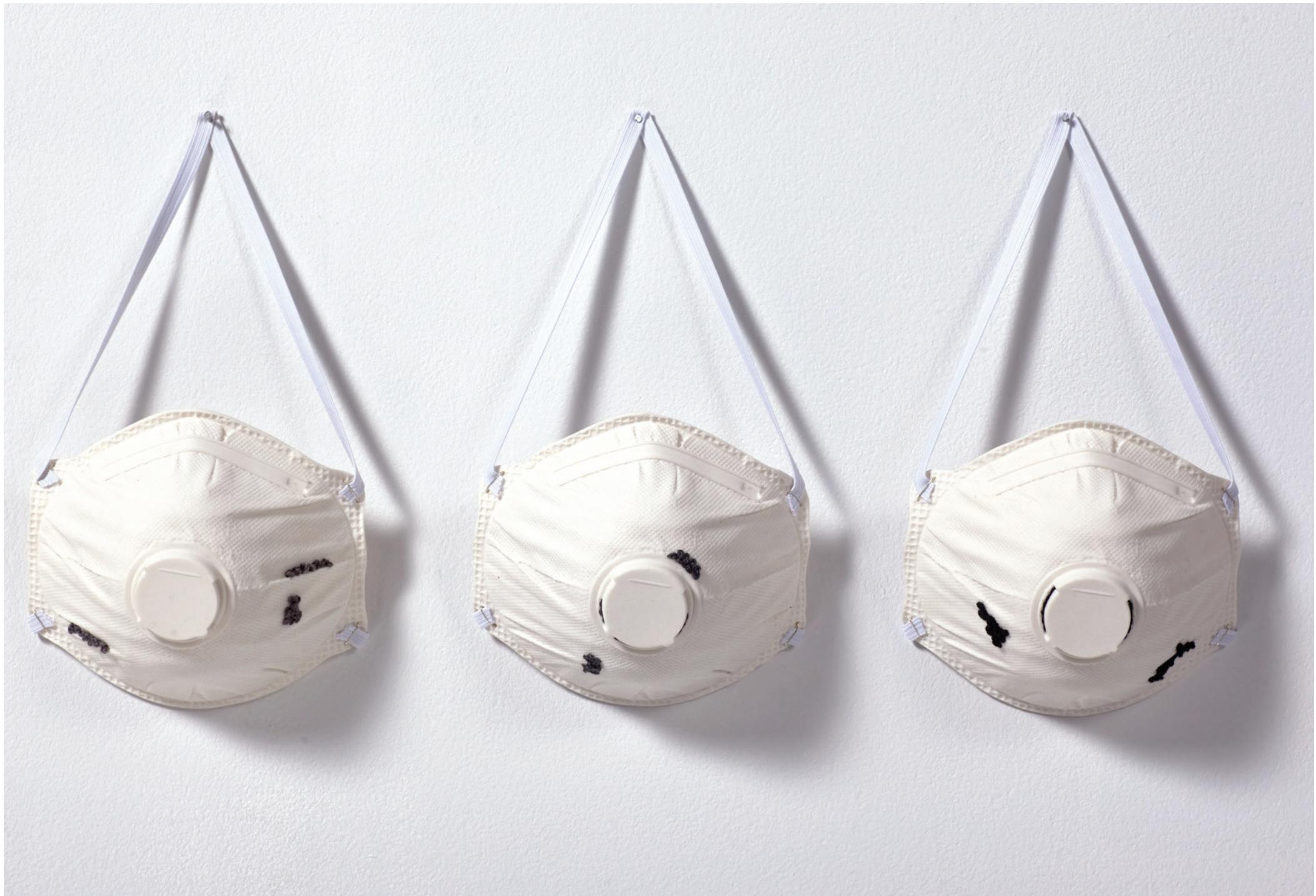
Ulrica Trulsson, *Traverse* 2015, porcelaneous stoneware, glaze, series of seven, variable dimensions. Photographer Michael Kluvanek

BIOGRAPHIES

RAYLEEN FORESTER is an Adelaide based curator and arts writer. Rayleen graduated from the South Australian School of Art majoring in History & Theory and continued her post-graduate studies completing a Graduate Diploma in Art History and a Graduate Diploma in Arts & Cultural Management at the University of Adelaide and University of South Australia. Rayleen managed the production of the *2014 Adelaide International* a biennial exhibition presented in four major public art institutions in South Australia as part of Australia's longest running arts festival, the Adelaide Festival. She co-curated the long established 2014 Artists' Week symposium with Lars Bang Larsen (DEN) and Richard Grayson (UK). Rayleen's curatorial interests focus on cross-cultural engagement through contemporary and experimental art practices. In 2012 she was awarded the inaugural Curator Mentorship Initiative grant through NAVA and the Australia Council for the Arts to work with established international curator Cuauhtémoc Medina at the second largest European Biennale MANIFESTA. In 2010 Rayleen was awarded the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi Travel Grant to collaborate with Japanese curator and Gallery Director Katsuya Ishida where she lived and worked for two and half years. She writes for national publications including Arts Hub and Broadsheet and is co-founder of Adelaide's longest running ARI FELTspace.

EBONY HEINDENREICH is an emerging ceramic artist based in Adelaide. In 2012 she completed a Bachelor of Visual Arts at the University of South Australia and has recently completed her Honours degree. During this time she has taken part in various exhibitions and was privileged to receive the Trudie Alfred Bequest Scholarship at the beginning of 2014. Throughout her practice she has endeavoured to honour this age-old craft by forever refining her skills. However, contemporary clay working also lends itself to an element of exploration and subversion. Pushing the limitations of the material, looking outside traditional functionality, crossing boundaries between disciplines and mediums are important aspects of her work. Ebony has always been interested in the rich links between ceramics and the home and she is currently exploring themes of women's work, the importance of materiality and the act of making.

WAYNE MCARA is a ceramic artist and designer working from his studio at JamFactory in Adelaide. A graduate from Adelaide College of the Arts, Wayne was the recipient of a Helpmann Academy professional development scholarship in 2010, which saw him undertake a six week residency at the Pottery Workshop in Jingdezhen, China. In 2012 Wayne completed the two year associate training program at JamFactory, during which time he won the inaugural South Australian Emerging Designer Award. Wayne has exhibited his work in Adelaide, interstate and overseas including JamFactory Galleries in Adelaide and the Barossa Valley; Kerry Packer Civic Gallery (UniSA), Light Square Gallery (TAFE SA); The Adelaide Town Hall; Prospect Gallery; Gallery M; Beaver Galleries (Canberra), Panoply Gallery (VIC) and at Artinformal in Manila, Philippines. Wayne has participated in two group exhibitions during Feast Festivals in 2007 and 2009, and in 2013 presented new work in the exhibition Eyes on Design at JamFactory retail space.



Wayne Mcara, #icantbreathe 2015, porcelain, thread, woven elastic & silver wire, 120 x 110 x 60 mm each, seven pieces. Photographer Michael Kluvanek

BIOGRAPHIES

SOPHIA NUSKE is an artist based at JamFactory in Adelaide. She completed a Bachelor's Degree in 2010 and Honours in 2013 at the University of South Australia. In 2012 Nuske contributed to a number of events coinciding with the Australian Ceramics Triennial, co-curating the student survey exhibitions, as well as presenting on the student panel discussing future directions in tertiary art education. After graduating, Nuske was selected to take part in the annual Helpmann Academy Graduate Exhibition. Here she was awarded the Adelaide City Council Acquisitive Award, with the work *soft penCILs* becoming part of the council collection. She later travelled to the Jingdezhen Pottery Workshop in China for six weeks as part of the Helpmann Academy Residency. This year Nuske is a tenant based at JamFactory and will be undertaking a mentorship with ceramicist Stephen Bird in South Korea through the Beyond Limitations clay mentoring program.

Drawing upon her memories and recollections, **MARIA PARMENTER** works in porcelain and stoneware to create playful, handbuilt sculptural forms that celebrate the nature of recall, and explore the beauty of everyday paraphernalia. Maria's ceramics are reminiscent of ordinary domestic objects that are used in our daily unspoken rituals of everyday life. Her hybrid forms are intentionally ambiguous in shape, often combining distinct, recognisable elements from a range of objects in a single piece. This morphological uncertainty allows the viewer to explore the abstract reality of our memories and the feeling that exists between the familiar and the unfamiliar. Maria's sculptural ceramics also question our personal attachment to utilitarian household objects and the significance we place on them as a connection to our past. Maria Parmenter completed a Bachelor of Visual Arts in ceramics at the South Australian School of Art, University of South Australia, in 2004 and completed her honours the following year. She was recipient of the Helpmann Academy Optus Mentorship (with Angela Valamanesh) and has received numerous awards including Judges Commendation at the South Australian Ceramics Award (2007), Jamboree Ceramics Award from the University of South Australia. Maria's work is exhibited throughout Australia and is held by numerous private collectors and in the collection of the Art Gallery of South Australia.

SOPHIA PHILLIPS is a ceramic artist and writer born in Adelaide who has exhibited locally and nationally. After growing up playing with local clay Sophia went on to study ceramics at the South Australian School of Art in 2002, completing a Bachelor of Visual Arts (Ceramics) in 2004 and Honours in 2005. She continued her postgraduate studies at UniSA after receiving the Australia Postgraduate Award; her PhD in Visual Arts, which was conferred in 2010, explored the therapeutic aspects of making with clay, with a particular interest in the embodiment of emotion and experience within the hand made. In 2011-2012 Sophia was a ceramics associate at JamFactory where she contributed to the design of the studio product, the 'Sophia Bowl' with Prue Venables and Kirsten Coelho acting as her mentors. Along with two people she met during her time in the ceramics studio, Stephanie James-Manttan and Alison Smiles, Sophia is now working in a group studio in West Croydon – one of the only group ceramic studios in South Australia. In 2014 Sophia undertook a six week artist residency in Jingdezhen, China where she experimented with different forming techniques.



George Zacharoyannis, *Untitled* 2015, white earthenware, glaze, imitation gold leaf and found objects, 230cm x 170cm x 30cm. Photographer Michael Kluvanek

BIOGRAPHIES

ALISON SMILES is an emerging artist; the main area of her practice involves sculptural ceramic work that explores the gaps between the art object and the intangible world of human relationships. She completed her final year of Bachelor of Visual Arts at the University of Sunderland, UK, as part of a student exchange, and this opportunity has afforded her the ability to explore her work in a practice based process, enriching her work and helping her to question and develop her practice further. Initially working in the area of two dimensional, yet very detailed monochromatic drawings and printmaking processes, Alison's sculptural work has been greatly informed by this background. The three dimensional work she makes retains a narrative context, due to the illustrative nature of the surface treatment. A former associate at Adelaide's JamFactory ceramics studio, Alison is also a co-founder of 6 Hands Studio, an artist run ceramics studio based in Croydon, Adelaide.

ULRICA TRULSSON is an Adelaide based ceramic artist. She uses functional objects as vessels for exploring form, function and subtle metaphor. Trulsson likens her investigations into form, material and surface in ceramics to the limitless discoveries in the intricacies of objects and details of the landscape. The apparent simplicity of her work is underpinned by the refinement and precise detailing in their making. Wheel throwing is central to her practice, although she also develops work using a blend of both wheel throwing and hand building techniques. Her carefully arranged groupings are enhanced by the use of textured and coloured clays and richly variable glaze surfaces, usually achieved by gas firing in reduction. Trulsson was a Ceramics Associate at JamFactory 2012-13, and has exhibited nationally and internationally.

GEORGE ZACHAROYANNIS graduated from the University of South Australia in 2010 with a specialisation in ceramics and minor in painting. He continued his studies in ceramics at Adelaide College of the Arts. George has shown work in group shows across South Australia. He recently participated in the exhibition *Flora Botanica* at Adelaide Central Gallery. His work is informed by introspection and consequently circumspection. He examines mythological, sociological and existential themes and its relationships to the individual throughout his work.



Sophia Nuske, *First World Problems? Here's a BADAID* 2014-15, stoneware, house paint, acrylic surface sealant. Variable dimensions. Photographer Michael Kluvanek