

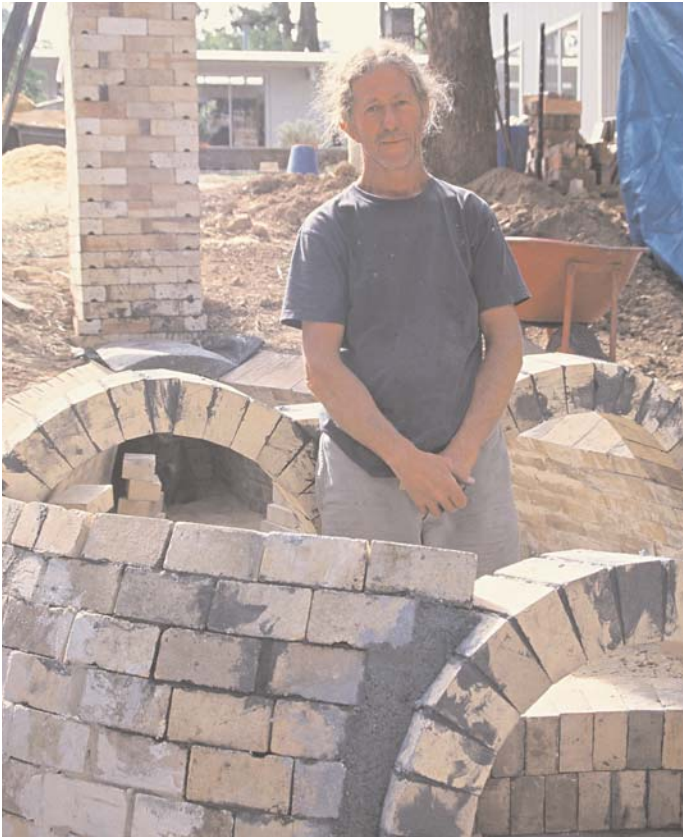


Artist-in-Residence Program

Sturt Australia

*Megan Patey gives us information
on the success of the Sturt program*





*Caption title page:
Patty Wouters.
smoke-fired porcelain.
Above left: Svend
Bayer and his kiln in
process. Right: Kiln
finished.*

PATTI WOUTERS FROM BELGIUM WILL WORK AT Sturt Pottery, Mittagong in Southern NSW, Australia for six weeks in July 2005. During her visit, the artist will develop her well known smoke-fired porcelain, exhibit at Sturt Gallery and conduct a five day workshop at Sturt Pottery. This visit is part of the artist-in-residence program at Sturt Craft Centre.

Benefits of the artist-in-residence program are two fold. For the artist it provides time away from routines, and other commitments and provides a structured, supportive environment for working. Being placed in a new physical environment, working sometimes with unknown materials and with different people, can be liberating and re-energise their personal work.

Benefits of the residency for the Sturt community is equally attractive. The resident comes with fresh energy and a high level of expertise and knowledge. This is particularly relevant for the teaching component of the residency, but knowledge exchange can occur in other ways – during casual interaction in the studio or during the evenings over a glass of wine.

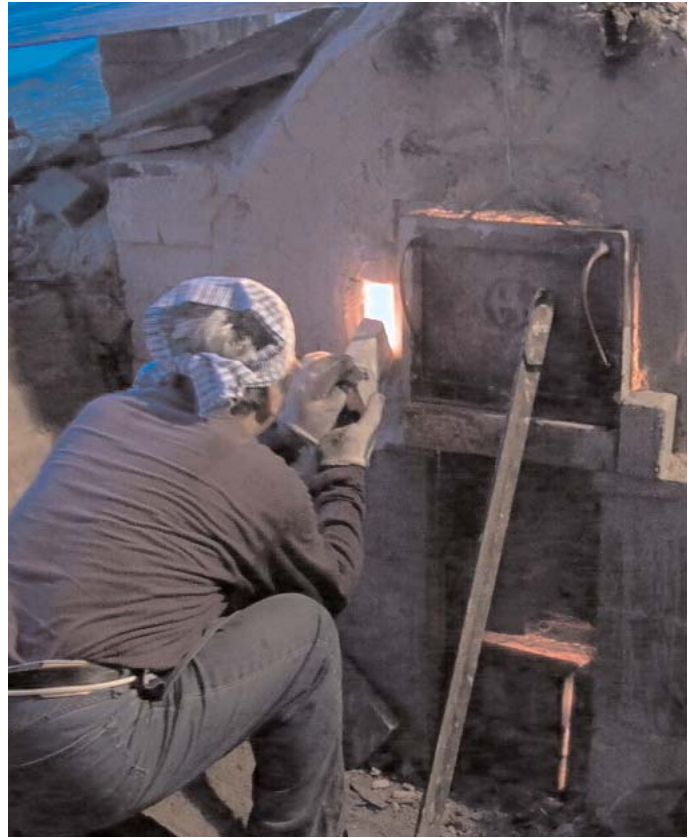
An important component of every residency is the presentation of slide lectures by the visiting artist. By showing the general public a glimpse of the artist's working life, concepts and understanding of creativity and meaning in art are constantly broadened.

Residencies over the past five years have included Ian Jones (ceramics), Svend Bayer, UK (ceramics), Erica Semler (weaving), Sondi Stankov (jewellery), Roger Gifkins (wood), Lissa Ward (design), Vanessa Samuels (jewellery), Julie Ryder (textiles), Suzie and Nigel Atkins, France (ceramics), Melanie Olde (textiles), Victor Greenaway (ceramics), Yasuhisa Kohyama, Japan (ceramics), Nic Statham (wood), Virginia Kaiser (basketry), in 2005, Patty Wouters, Belgium (ceramics).

As the 16th artist-in-residence, Patty Wouters brings to Sturt her wide knowledge of both Belgium and, world ceramics, gained from many years participation in exhibitions workshops, and forums on an international level.

Patty Wouters is well known for her fine porcelain work, which she plans to

The residency program has been a successful adjunct to Sturt's continual focus on contemporary craft education. Since the residency program commenced in 1999, fifteen residencies have occurred, with support from the Friends of Sturt as well as the NSW Ministry for the Arts.



explore in new ways when working at Sturt pottery. She throws the porcelain forms then refines and decorates these in a variety of ways – including burnishing, adding terra sigillata, carving, using resists to add colourants and sulphates, and finally, firing. For Wouters, the firing is an important part of her process. She uses reducing atmospheres in saggars to obtain the results she seeks.

Wouters comments: “Ancient pots are important because of their historical value to us. From excavated pots and vessels archaeologists have been able to deduce details of the everyday life and religious rituals of ancient cultures. These ancient vessels are based on archetypal forms and radiate a universal spirit. It is this kind of spirit I wish to express in my work. My pots carry signs and symbols and tell stories about existence, relationships and communication, about origin and evolutions. The finishing and firing techniques together with the title intensify the symbolic meaning of each piece. Titles refer to movement, action or interaction. My intention is to allude to events that happen to people in their private lives or in a social context. Everything seems to be in motion and somehow connected. Working with clay is like meditation for me. Some actions are automatic and repetitive so that my mind can be completely free. The many-sidedness of the ceramic process is a fascinating game. I have consciously chosen primitive firing techniques, where the combustibles are directly in touch with the ceramics. Every firing is different. The simple forms, the playful parts, the subtle balance of the vessels, the contrasts in colour and texture all refer to our surroundings, society and my concept of life.”

Megan Patey is a potter and director of Sturt workshops. Patti Wouters will be artist-in-residence at Sturt Pottery from the mid June till 30 July 2005. Her exhibition will open at Sturt Gallery on Sunday 11am 31st July. She will be tutoring in a five day workshop on throwing porcelain for burnishing, and decorating as well as exploring low firing techniques at Sturt from 28th June till 2nd July. For further enquiries Sturt on 02 4860 2083.

Left: Yasuhisa Kohyama work in progress. Right: Yasuhisa Kohyama firing.

Sturt is situated in the Southern Highlands of NSW, one hour south of Sydney. Well known for its history of teaching and production of fine craft, Sturt has studios in the disciplines of ceramics, wood, jewellery and textiles studios. The campus also includes gardens, Sturt Gallery, Sturt café, a retail area and accommodation unit. Today, Sturt is particularly famous for the Sturt School for Wood, which offers a one year full time Certificate in Fine Woodworking to 12 students each year. As well, Sturt Pottery (under Paul Davis' direction) continues to attract high quality potters who come to teach and work at Sturt. The residency program forms an important addition to studio life at Sturt.