

Toni Warburton some notes on ***containers for borrowed views***.

View group exhibition: <https://www.toniwarburton.com.au/the-course-of-objects-lines-of-enquiry-curated-by-susan-ostling-for-the-australian-ceramics-association-at-manly-art-gallery-and-museum-2014/>

*Shells stained black by mangrove mud, white light on gray day bay waters. Arbours, safe harbours. The inky bay water gleams at night. Silver gelatine prints of old gardens. Mists, clouds, pond rain, sombre moods: quietude. Gleams and smudges of graphite on white paper. Borrowed views held by cones and circles, ribbon tracked lines dragged and dug by drawing, walking, seeing, talking.*

In a museum in Kyoto in 1996, I encountered a beautiful gray and white press moulded plate . Its image of white grasses on a gray ground haunts me. I discovered it was in a style known as *Nezumi Shino*, named after the colour of the coat of a mouse. It is reduced wood fired stone ware with iron gray slips and a white felspathic glaze.

*It's palette evokes the aesthetic qualities of two things that I particularly love: black and white photographs of gardens and views and drawings done with graphite on paper.*

My history of making is essentially in earthenware. A few years ago, so as to better understand this *Nezumi Shino*, I enrolled in the Ceramic Advanced Diploma at GyMEA TAFE and embarked on a new course of research into the materials of grey shino and Bourrie box wood firing with Steve Harrison. I made some progress and became more involved with nuance and tonality and began to attend wood fire conferences. In 1913 I participated in a residency at Sturt with the Fuping artists, culminating with an Anagama firing lead by lead by Owen Rye.

During this residency I developed ***containers for borrowed views***, based on the conic sections of tin dishes as my template to explore drawing, tone, space and form. Japanese walled gardens often incorporate a distant vista, *a borrowed view* to complete their composition. The apprehension of the character of these gardens is revealed through the immersion and movement of the perceiver. This embodied perception is very much what a pottery form invites from a viewer; particularly container forms like dishes and bowls.

For an urban artist, access to wood fire kilns requires planning , so I continue to research the stoneware *Nezumi* palette and seek opportunities. In the meantime, whilst attuning my eye to nuances of grey scale and white glaze surfaces, I recalled the tin glaze over iron and manganese slips that I had learnt when I was an apprentice with Richard Brooks at Booralie Pottery in the late 1970s. Richard was emulating a warm stoneware palette at earthenware temperatures. For me process is how I seem to realise new directions. Last year, when Susan Ostling invited me to make new work for *The Course of Objects: fine lines of enquiry*, the notion of transposing aspects of *Nezumi Shino* into an earthenware palette took hold.

The formal circles and ovals of the first containers became affected by the warped shapes of bush fired tin dishes that my brother salvaged from the family's decimated south coast shack. These distortions translate into the bendable plasticity of clay and the nostalgic movements of place memories as I draw into surfaces through underlying stained slips. Fired at earthenware temperature, white glazes, opacified with zircon, zinc and tin, pull and cloud the tones and run into the grooves of the drawings.

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