

ACQUISITION INSIGHT: HELD TOGETHER COLLECTION

The Collection: Three ceramic works from a group show whose purpose was 'to reflect contemporary ceramic practice and the ecosystem that allows it to flourish' by integrating the work of three artists who share a studio, who have distinct practices, but who are sustained by 'a culture of exchange, generosity and care'.

Artist 1: Alyssa Nuttall

Title: Anima #8

Dimensions: H16cm x W26cm

Medium: Clay

Aesthetics and Technique: Through carving, layering, reconstruction and calibrated balance, Alyssa's process invites the clay to shift, fracture and settle within its own material limits. Her forms sit between tension and release – often poised on the edge of resilience and collapse.

Artist 2: Franky Frankland

Title: Slow Shifts #1

Dimensions: H38cm x W28cm

Medium: Slip, clay, glaze, mason stains

Aesthetics and Technique: Franky's work focuses on the materiality of clay – treating it like paper by tearing, layering and assembling the vessels layer by layer. Through the application of coloured slips and textured surfaces, they investigate the potential of the unglazed ceramic surface.

Artist 3: Lucile Sciallano (Alterfact Studio)

Title: Thankyou But No Thankyou

Dimensions: H38cm x W17cm

Medium: Clay, 3D printing

Aesthetics and Technique: Spanning art, craft and design
Lucille's interdisciplinary practice pushes the boundaries of plastic-based 3D printing and plays with the capacities of clay to form intricate design and effects, borrowing inspiration from textiles, fibre arts, tapestry and basketry. Following a disruption in the making process, the ceramic vessel embodies movements - the fluidity of clay as well as the pattern and changing form emerging from the coils.

Gallery: Shown at Dowell Jones, Fitzroy St, Fitzroy

Date or Purchase: 16/11/25

Buying Committee: Sarah George, Fiona Hardie, Wendy Kozica

Shadow Members: Susan Jones, Fiona Edwards, Fiona Brockhoff

CONTENT/SUBJECT OF THE COLLECTION

As the Exhibition Statement attested, the group show 'Held Together', was designed to reflect 'the vital role of the communal studio: the invisible network that allows creative practice to thrive. Within this space ideas, materials and encouragement move freely. Through conversation, feedback and quiet observation each artist bears witness to the others' small hesitations and quiet breakthroughs – a process that becomes part of the work itself. What emerges is not collaboration, but interdependence; a portrait of contemporary ceramic practice, and the ecosystem that allows it to endure.'

CONTENT/SUBJECT OF THE WORKS

Each artist and their work has its own story.

Alyssa Nuttell, Anima #8

Alyssa says, 'Anima holds space for ecological grief and quiet resilience. The vessel responds to the climate pressures re-shaping Australia. The form sits in the tension between balance and collapse'. Working with clay is how the artist processes ecological dread; she says she 'makes *with* the material rather than *from* it, treating clay as witness and collaborator'. She considers each work incomplete until someone engages with it; 'that moment being a shared act of noticing, a reminder of what endures, what's at risk, and what is still possible'.

Franky Frankland, Slow Shifts #1

Slow Shifts looks at geographical stratification found in sedimentary rock formations. Each layer is distinct, each layer contains information about the history of the earth and the passing of time. Franky draws a parallel between these layers and the generations of LGBTIQA+ activists who have fought and continue to fight for legal, political, social and medical equality. The work is constructed, they say, 'with an intentional tenderness'. Using paper-thin strips of clay, Franky wraps and supports each form throughout the building process, ensuring structural integrity while allowing space for collapse, crumpling and fragility. This process, they say, 'mirrors the delicate balance of resistance: the need to hold each other up while making space for vulnerability'.

Lucile Sciallano, (Alterfact Studio) Thankyou But No Thankyou

Inspired by the transformative power of adaptation and the intricate dance between control and chaos, stability and fragility, this work explores the ripple effects that alter the course of a journey. Lucile explains: 'Following a disruption in the making process, the ceramic vessel embodies movements, capturing the fluidity of clay and the pattern rising from the superposition of the coils. As the foundations waver and the alignment shifts, how do you keep building without collapsing?

When do you decide that it's enough, that the risk is too big, and make the decision to stop?’

CONTEXT

These three emerging/mid-career artists are representative of the vibrant community of contemporary ceramicists living and working in Naarm/Melbourne.

Alyssa Nuttall

Alyssa is an emerging artist whose practice examines the interdependence between people and the fragile environments that sustain us. Her forms sit between tension and release – often poised on the edge of resilience and collapse. Through carving, layering, reconstruction and calibrated balance, her process invites the clay to shift, fracture and settle in dialogue with its own material limits. These gestures echo the pressures of drought, bushfire, coastal erosion and coral bleaching, conditions that increasingly shape life in Australia. Alyssa has a Bachelor of Clinical Psychology with a Minor in Music. She teaches wheel throwing at Slow Clay Centre and works from her studio in Brunswick East. Her work has recently been exhibited at the Museum of Modern Craft (Craft Victoria and Dowell Jones) and in Held Together.

Franky Frankland

Franky is an interdisciplinary artist who graduated with a Master of Fine Art in 2014. Their practice merges hand-built and wheel-thrown ceramics and draws upon their background in painting and drawing. Franky's current work focuses on the materiality of clay – treating it like paper by tearing, layering and assembling the vessels layer by layer. Through the application of coloured slips and textured surfaces, they investigate the potential of the unglazed ceramic surface. Thematically, their work delves into concepts of geological time, generational shifts, and the vulnerability of being human. With a particular

emphasis on LGBTIQA+ histories and narratives. Franky's practice invites reflection on how personal and collective experience can embed itself in form and material.

Lucile Sciallano

Lucille trained at the prestigious Design Academy in Eindhoven, Netherlands before moving to Australia in 2013. She studied and emigrated and collaborated with her partner Ben Landau, co-founding Alterfact Studio in Melbourne in 2014. Their work has been shown and collected nationally including by the NGA, ,NGV, Melbourne Design Week, Powerhouse Museum and Australian Tapestry Workshop; and internationally including Gyeonggi International Ceramics Biennial in Korea, Schallaburg Art Museum in Austria, and the Korea Ceramic Foundation. In 2021 Ben Landau was diagnosed with advanced bowel cancer, and passed away the following year aged 37. The goals and work of Alterfact Studio - to merge new technology and tradition through 3D-printed ceramics - are continued by Lucile. Lucile's work continues to explore the space between handmade and mass-manufactured form and the influence of digital technology on craft practice. Spanning art, craft and design her interdisciplinary practice pushes the boundaries of plastic-based 3D printing and plays with the capacities of clay to form intricate design and effects, borrowing inspiration from textiles, fibre arts, tapestry and basketry.

COLLECTION STATEMENT

Given that the 25/26 Buying Committee is focusing on emerging artists, and is also looking to acquire more ceramics for the collection, when we learnt of the three-day 'pop-up' exhibition, Held Together, at the Dowell Jones space in Fitzroy, we made sure we got there. Sarah knows Alyssa well through their own shared ceramic practice, and spoke highly of her

work. The whole experience, from finding the space down a little lane, to meeting Alyssa and having her show us around the works, with deep knowledge, created an exciting sense of the lives and work of our young Melbourne artists, and the quality and considered intention of their work.