
STATE
OF THE
CRAFTS

A SURVEY EXHIBITION

OF CRAFTS IN TASMANIA



Fine Arts Gallery

University of Tasmania

16 September-3 October, 1986

INTRODUCTION

By

LYNNE SMITH

curator of 'State of the Crafts'

Tasmania has more than its fair share of established professional craftworkers. Les Blakebrough and Penny Smith are synonymous with the high standard of ceramics in this State and have a wide influence on many students and trainees. In the woodcrafts, Kevin Perkins, Peter Taylor and John Smith have national reputations and numerous craftworkers in other media have added to the powerful craft image this State has enjoyed.

The selection of works for this exhibition was extremely difficult. Constrictive time limits imposed constraints together with the problem of attempting to provide a cross section of media.

Focus for this exhibition has been on work of new directions, newly imported or emerging talent. Additionally, attention is towards non-traditional work with an emphasis on crafts away from the 'useful.'

Fresh blood has been injected in recent years by four major professionals moving to the State, Vince McGrath, Ray Norman, Derek Smith and Lorraine Jenyns. These craftworkers have brought established national and international reputations which will further focus interest on the crafts in this State. Vince and Derek come from the antithesis of their new working environment and this influence is already emerging.

Partly lured away by need for survival, Garry Greenwood

remains a Tasmanian by choice. He draws attention to the necessity to support our highly talented professional artists to make it possible for them to remain working in this State. Garry's new fascination is with the sounds his musical objects are beginning to make. A little like Gepetto, one feels the Pinocchio in Garry's instruments coming to have a life of their own, alongside a new cast of theatrically dressed players.

Elizabeth Edwards in the south and Margaret Ainscow in the north are ensuring a lively interest in weaving education and together with Penny Wells and Elizabeth Lada, Elizabeth draws attention to interesting paper works. Other new directions include One-off's intention to encompass other weavers, knitters and designers under their established marketing banner.

Post Lintel Designs is a group of three artists working together on furniture incorporating current art trends and youthful liveliness. Reflecting similar colour and vitality Sally McGillivray joins PLD as emerging talents.

These artists represent just a tip of the craft iceberg and numerous configurations could happily have been brought together as 'State of the Crafts'. The Fine Arts Committee plans to continue this exhibition on at least a biannual basis with a new selection each year.

It is generally accepted that music is the one universal language. There are probably very few people who would not identify with some form of music - be it ancient, popular, classical or experimental. It is not my intention to emulate or to revive instruments of the past but to reflect a variety of thoughts and muses on music through a very tactile and sensuous medium.

Viewed with our present day values most old instruments not only look but sound totally absurd - paradoxically the visual

Garry GREENWOOD

Born Kent, England 1943

Studied art and design, Surrey, England

Moved to Australia 1962 and Tasmania 1972

Currently Head of Leather Workshop,

Canberra School of Art

absurdity was created mainly by the process of functional refinement. I have been making forms identifiable as musical instruments which reflect various aspects of musical tradition coupled with a strong sense of absurdity and humour.

Other recent works include four high relief wall panels and a series of masks. The masks were not made for any particular reason, may be they are my subconscious players of the instruments. Some extend beyond facial representation and reflect character by surrounding the fact with an illusion of costume.



The imagery I work with has been closely associated with the Northern Australian landscape and townscape. It is the result of a reaction to the harsh climate, a respectful attitude of nature's survival and a study of the means man uses in asserting a long-term influence on the land.

Since living in Tasmania my attention has been drawn to the isolated regions of the

**Vincent
McGARTH**

Dip.Art R.M.I.T.

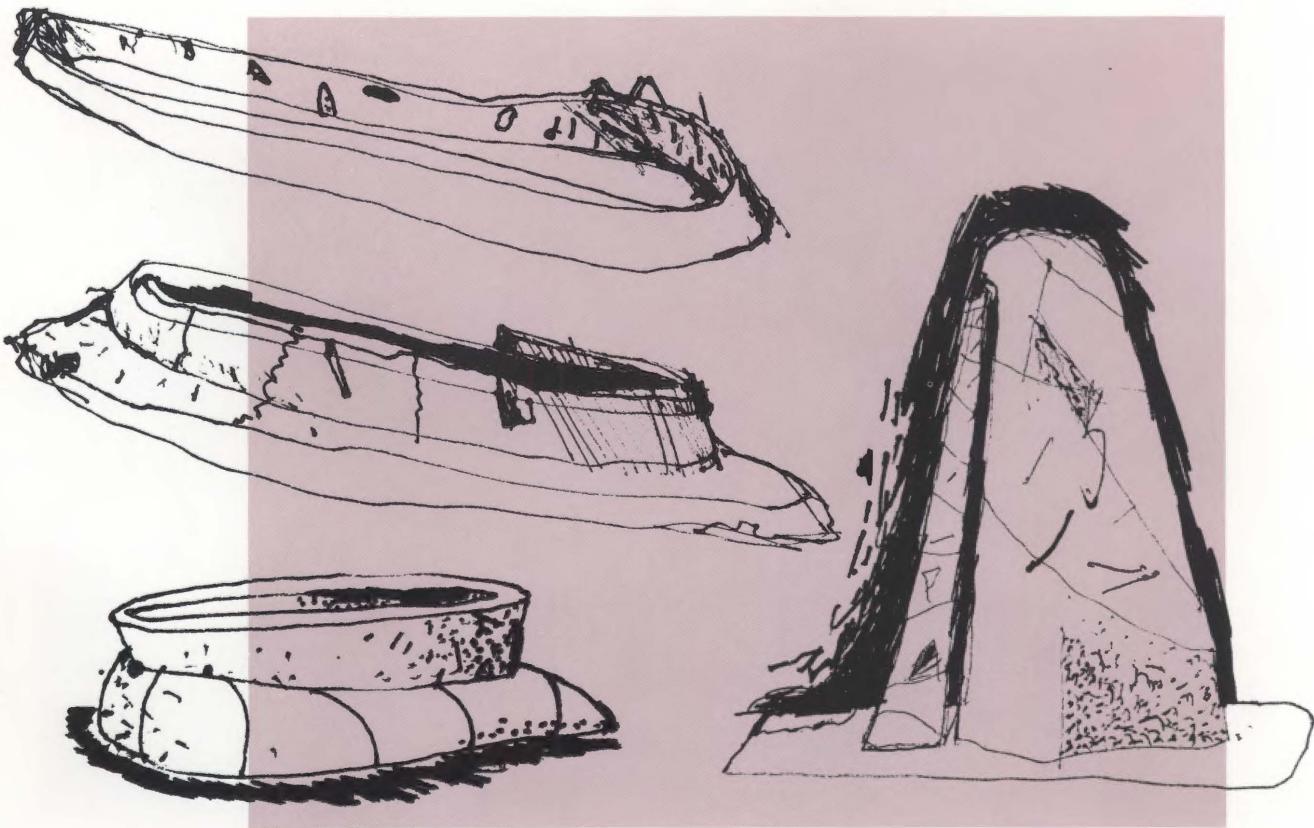
M.F.A. (Hons) Uni of Puget Sound

Washington U.S.A.

Arrived Tasmania 1985

Currently Head, School of Art T.S.I.T.

State, particularly the mining areas, where man has left his unmistakable mark on the landscape. It is not the act of mining but rather the desecration that is my primary concern. Mullock heaps, wrecked vehicles, dilapidated buildings and twisted structures are all symbolic of a past presence. A testament to a cause that abruptly finished, leaving no alternative but to yield to the forces of nature, but at the same time scarring it.



The visual imagery in my work is created by an integration of colour, structure and process. It is through the process of manipulation and shifting which reveals and dictates the surface.

The work reflects an inner environment which is meditative, spiritual and actively

Elizabeth E D W A R D S

Born 1957 Buffalo, New York USA

MFA Textile Design 1984 Uni. Georgia

BFA Surface Design 1982 Miami Uni. Ohio

Currently: Artist/Lecturer

Centre for the Arts, Hobart

involved in constant change. This change and activity in the surface/structure contains an array of subtleties and surprises in both colour and form. It is these subtleties which aim to involve the viewer from both a distance and from closer inspection.



Flags and banners ... and how we react to such symbols. We stop, give way, swim between, march behind, salute, honour and even 'die for'.

Flags and banners have always been such a part of our society. Each country proudly flies its coloured cloth. Every state, city, town, football team and cub pack within that country also celebrates its existence by constant display of a coloured graphic design.

Penny

W E L L S

Born Hobart

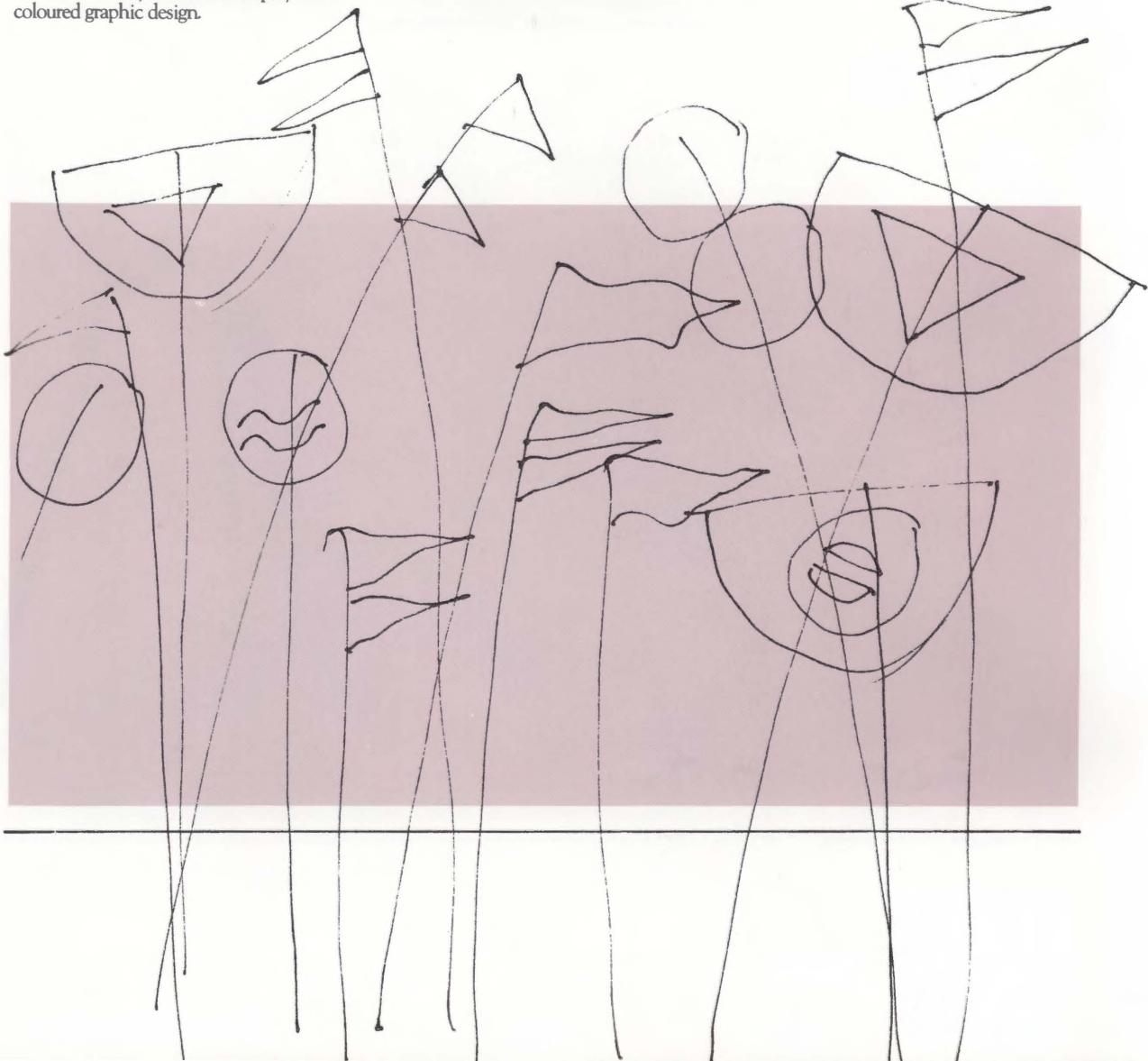
Teachers Diploma of Art 1970

Currently Lecturer Part-Time

Papermill, Centre for the Arts

These pieces are not only about the esoteric symbolism of the traditional uses for Flags and banners in our society but also about road signs, bunting, flags on golf courses and surveyors marks.

For a week I drove around getting high on the stop signs – so graphic, so straight, so definite; standing proudly on their tall thin sticks.



Post-Lintel Designs is a designer/maker partnership consisting of three graduates from the Tasmanian School of Art. The partnership was formed through our interaction as studio members of Chameleon. The three partners all share a common interest in the decorative arts,

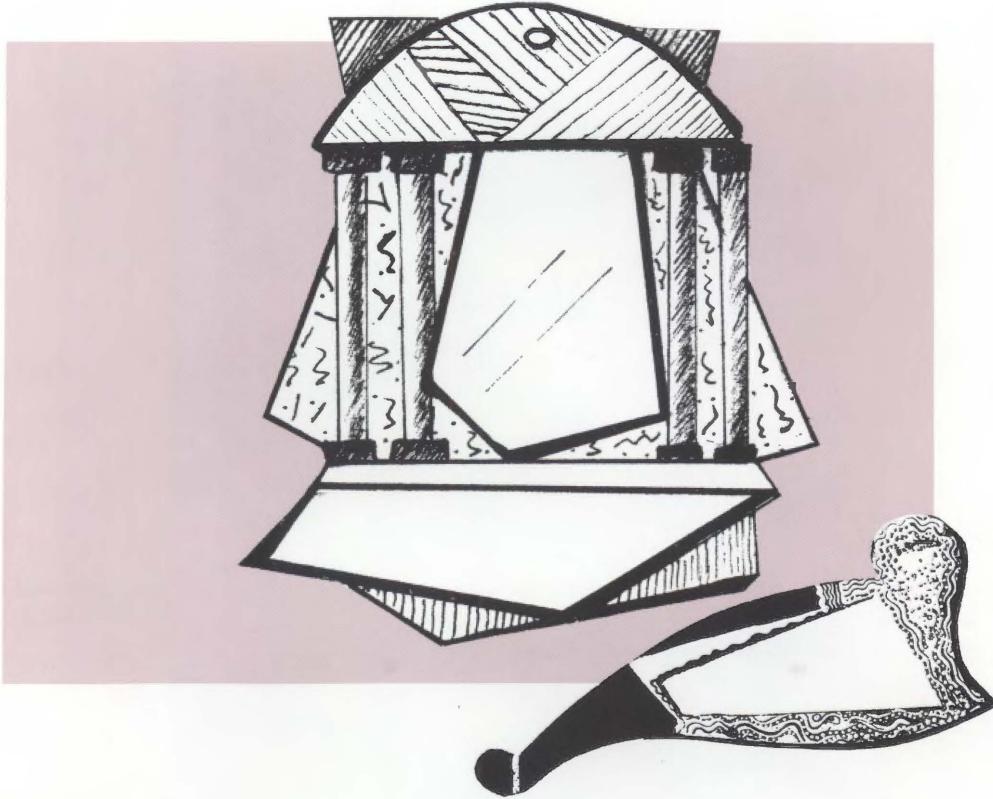
POST LINTEL Designs

WAYNE MALM

HELEN WRIGHT

DAVID KEELING

manifesting itself in our highly ornamental surfaces and designs. Our influences are eclectic and come as much from our particular art practices as they do from interests that are as divergent as folk art, Jacques Ruhlman, the Deco designers and Neo Classicism.



Surface texture • ancient cultures • discarded objects • Thea Proctor • colour • femmage • carnival • remnants • gold leaf • Giotto • plant fibre paper • meditation • textile design • archeological finds • Miriam Schapiro • fans • silk threads • memories • wings • folk art • angeology • willow • harmony • feathers

Elizabeth L A D A

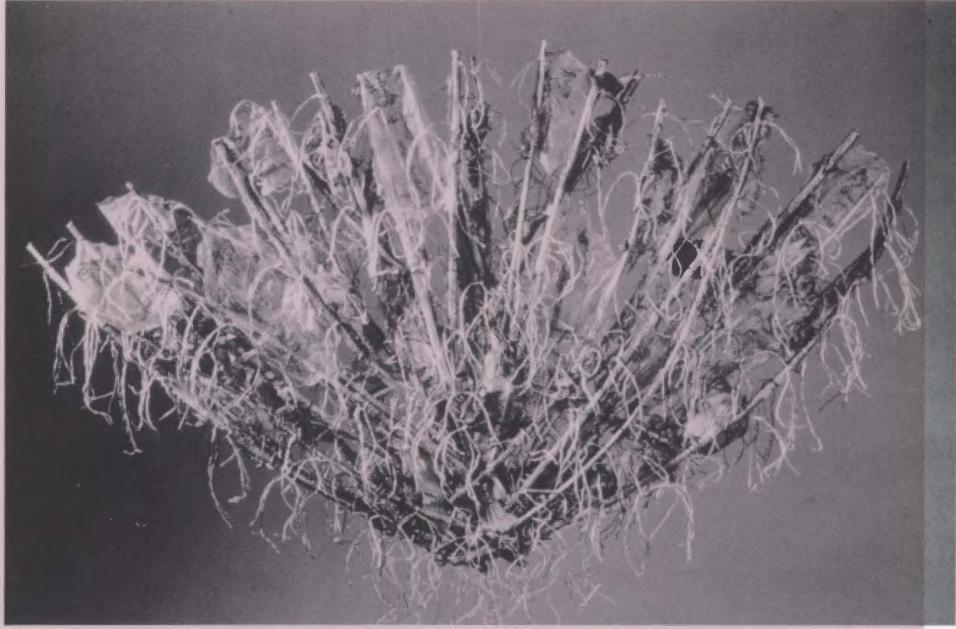
Born 1944, Hobart, Tasmania

Bachelor Fine Arts, 1982,

University of Tasmania, School of Art.

Practicing in Hobart.

• spontaneity • torn edges • sky dancing • astrology • goddesses • reincarnation • frayed fabric • spirituality • music • muslin • mythical pastimes • light • first impressions • footnotes • layers • images within • metempsychosis • reflections • paisley • miracles • gathering • learning • icons • beads • mists of paradox • dreams • Persian fana.



Since returning to Tasmania, after running a large production and training workshop in Sydney, my entire work ethic has changed.

My previous work environment which was situated on a busy, traffic polluted thoroughfare has been exchanged for the clean and peaceful atmosphere of a Tasmanian country property.

Instead of managing a staff of seven employees and trainees I now work alone.

Derek

S M I T H

Nat. Dip. of Design, England

Taught National Art School, Sydney

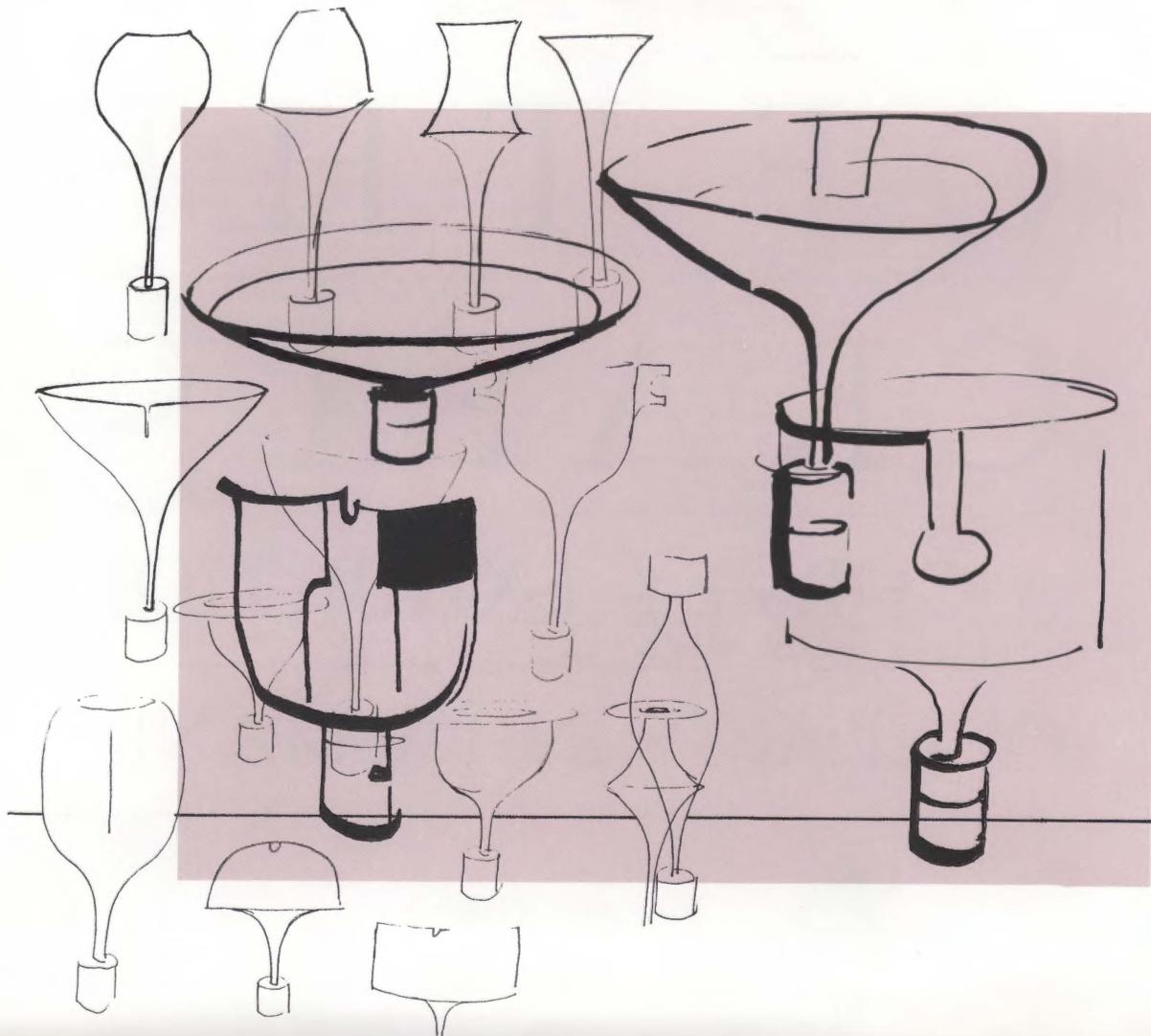
Studio Manager, Royal Doulton

Director, Blackfriars Pottery, Sydney

Arrived Tasmania 1984

My thoughts are now more focused on the ceramics medium as a means of expression rather than as a way of earning a living and paying the wages of my employees.

I am currently working with on-glaze colours and liquid gold, using a third firing, combined with sand-blasting as a post-firing technique. This has given me a much wider field of expression to explore and far greater flexibility with my materials.



As a Jeweller metalsmith I am concerned with making objects that are involving, wearable, intimate, precious and challenging.

I find the jewel and jewellery a satisfactory means of dealing with ideas. The possessor/wearer's involvement in a work is important and at the same time unpredictable. This notion I find both compelling and fascinating.

Ray N O R M A N

Born 1945 Kyogle NSW

Founded Sturt Metal 1969

Moved to Tasmania 1984

Currently Lecturer

School of Art T.S.I.T.

My ideas often spring from my environment or if you like, the Australian experience. That experience I see as having both a regional and international context.

Underpinning these concerns there are the materials and their possibilities, a consideration that I also find provocative. It is the sum total of all these things that keeps me working and making.



ONE-OFF was established in 1980, aided by a grant from the Crafts Board of the Australia Council.

It has concentrated on the production of hand dyed and hand woven one-off items. These have been; Accessories (shawls and scarves in pure wool carry the wool board label), fashion items such as tops, jackets in wool and cotton; interior items such as throws, wall hangings, cu-

ONE-OFF

Trained Secheron School of Weaving

Stuart Devlin Craft Award

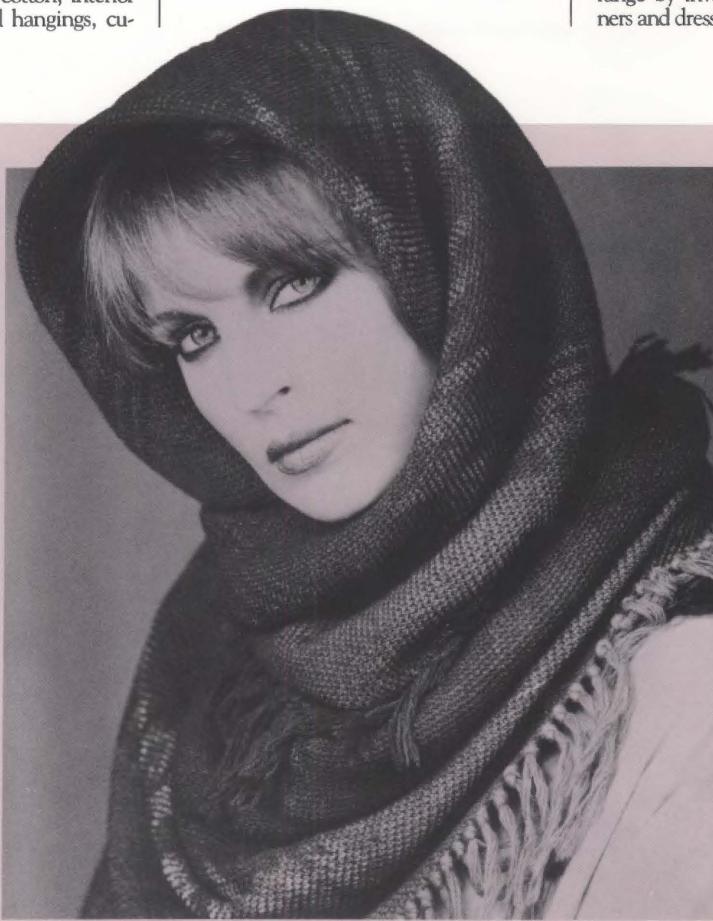
Currently producing in Hobart

shions; cloth lengths for individual designers.

ONE-OFF has marketed these items locally and throughout Australia and overseas.

The production range is limited, and attention has been paid to individual design and colour.

In 1987 ONE-OFF plans to expand its range by involving other weavers, designers and dressmakers in the workshop.



My aims this year are to develop and produce a marketable range of garden ceramics such as patio urns, garden containers and tiles, whilst at the same time remain open to respond to private or public commissions for large scale one-off works.

Sally McGILLIVRAY

Born Melbourne 1964

Arrived Hobart 1968

BFA Tas. School of Art

Currently Hon. Research Assoc.

Centre for the Arts

In addition I am exploring and expanding on the coloured slip scraffito decoration I have developed, in particular over the past year, using figurative and floral imagery as I feel this decorative technique could well compliment a range of garden ware.

