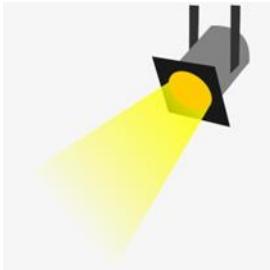




HAGAS Artist in the Spotlight

Name: Chris Ashton



1. Where were you born?

I was born in Port Melbourne and lived there till 8 years of age. My family then moved to Eltham, also in Victoria. I attended Eltham High School, a public school with a big arts focus. When I finished high school, I came to South Australia to attend teacher's college.

Throughout my education I have studied various art forms. I also did a Certificate of Art at Aldgate TAFE (1987-1989), which I did when my children were young. During my time at TAFE I participated in various exhibitions, along with my fellow students. I received 'most promising student' award in 1989. My major subject was printmaking, primarily doing screen printing, lino printing and etching.

I lived in Birdwood for 32 years, before moving to Henley Beach.

2. When and why did you join HAGAS?

I moved to Henley Beach in 2007. I then joined HAGAS in 2009 and attended kiln formed glass classes. I attended a mosaic workshop at HAGAS which I embraced and made numerous mosaic creations. I particularly like recycling old crockery.

I don't really regard myself as an 'artist' as I've always thought that an artist is a person that can make a living from what they make. I've just really dabbled in a range of artist pursuits. I love creating things. My garden is full of my creations and was one of the gardens featured in Henley Beach in Open Gardens SA, 2023.

3. What's your medium and why do you do what you do?

I work primarily in ceramics (hand built). I particularly love sgraffito and combining that with tissue transfers.

I have worked on a series of ceramic totems which have been well received. I entered one in the HAGAS gallery for SALA 2023. I entered this same piece in the Mark Butler 'emerging artist' category in 2023, at the Jackalope gallery in Port Adelaide and to my surprise, won the award. This has resulted in some of my work being featured at Jackalope.

I currently have another totem at Jackalope. It reads: "Award winning ceramic artist Chris Ashton has created this "Totem" constructed with individual pieces that are threaded together onto a metal framework. Each totem is a one-off piece. Chris was featured in Open Garden SA and the National Brooch Show in Melbourne as well as the 2023 Mark Butler award winner for Emerging Artists."

I also make smaller jewellery items like earrings, brooches, pendants.

I have made pears and birds. I have used various materials like crochet in combination with clay to enhance the items e.g. the leaves of the pears, nests made of a variety of mediums. I have regularly made birds that are sometimes



presented in a nest. The nests have been woven, made of clay, crochet or wire. More recently I have been making wire sculptures. Some contain ceramic birds, beads (handmade), or air plants.

4. How has your work changed over time?

I've always been drawn to more abstract images. I like to limit my colour palate. I often work with blue- slip or tissue transfers. I then use a clear glaze for the final stage.

5. What themes do you pursue?

Fish are a recurring theme in my work.

6. Name three artists you'd like to be compared to.

Barbara Hanrahan- prints

Gerry Wedd- blue and white ceramics

Tom Moore- glass maker

