



**DAWN
YOULL**

Creature of Habit

by Dawn Youll

2013

Slipcast earthenware, black slip and crystalline glaze

Dimensions - 27cm high x 29cm wide x 18.5cm deep

Creature of Habit comes from a body of work called Locale which explores the aesthetics and conventions of an urban landscape. The larger of the two forms in the piece appears twice in the body of work. I like the fact that the slip cast blanks I make can take on different identities depending on their colour, surface and positioning. In this case its pose gives it a human quality and its prop suggests a character that's been around for a while. Its surface is covered in a crystalline glaze which contains all of the shades in the various pebble-dashed finishes in the 1920s housing estate in which I live.

DAWN YOULL

■ **Where are you based?**

Based in Glasgow.

■ **What is your definition / the definition you prefer of craft?**

Making with skill.

■ **How does craft relate to your practice as an artist?**

In a practical sense craft is essential to what I do as an artist; my ability to make within my chosen medium of ceramics allows me to explore and communicate ideas that could not be achieved without a certain level of craft skills. An awareness of ceramics as an historical craft area also allows me to draw from this in both concept and technique and to position my practice within its rich tradition.

■ **How did you acquire the skills required for your practice?**

The skills I use to produce my work have been learnt and developed on my Ceramics BA course at Glasgow School of Art, on a Set Craft apprenticeship with Scottish Screen including an SVQ in Fibrous Plastering and on my Ceramics MA course at Cardiff School of Art and Design.

■ **How did this prepare you for your practice?**

Strengths - these provided me with a vocabulary of practical skills to draw from. The MA course gave me the opportunity to underpin what interests me as a maker. Weaknesses - perhaps I have a tendency to only think in terms of ceramics.

■ **Thoughts on the future of your area of practice?**

Although there are now fewer opportunities to study ceramics as a specialist subject within educational institutions across the UK, there seems to be a renewed interest and an enthusiasm for using clay being supported by initiatives such as The British Ceramics Biennial. Also from outside of the ceramics discipline there is an increased desire to incorporate clay within visual art practice and as a positive this seems to be opening up opportunities for experiencing ceramics in new ways.

■ **3 key opportunities you have experienced in your career?**

1 - Set Craft Apprenticeship - after graduating from my BA course not quite knowing what I should to do but pretty sure that I wanted to be making in 3-dimensions, I came across the Scottish Screen Training Scheme and was accepted onto a set craft apprenticeship. This was an 18 month training scheme which provided work experience within the set construction department of the TV & film industry in Scotland and the chance to get an SVQ 3 in scenic plastering.

2 - Arts Foundation Fellowship - I was nominated for an Arts Foundation Ceramic Fellowship in 2011 by two of the UK ceramic world's most respected practitioners Richard Slee and the late Emmanuel Cooper. I was fortunate enough to win the award which gave my career both a financial boost and recognition within my field.

3 - Marsden Woo Gallery - In 2010 I began working with Marsden Woo Gallery.



Municiple Bond
2013
Photo Colin Tennant



Regular Arrangement
2013
Photo Colin Tennant

This relationship has given me the opportunity to be part of an influential London applied art gallery, and to present my first solo exhibition in 2013.

■ **What does the work of Archie McCall mean to you?**

As an under graduate student at Glasgow School of Art I remember sitting quietly watching Archie throw in creamy white stoneware and feeling relaxed....until I tried it myself. Throwing was something that didn't come to me naturally (I still can't do it well!), I found it difficult and frustrating yet Archie made it look intuitive and effortless.

His finished works are aesthetically beautiful and can be appreciated more fully by me having had the experience of watching the skill in such a making technique, and trying it out for myself. His work is not always thrown, he also forms vessels by hand building with sheets of rolled clay then joining and manipulating surfaces, methods steeped in tradition which have given me a good grounding for my own practice.

His decorating abilities are evidence that he is in-tune with his tools - his hands and the brushes that he carefully selects because of the specific mark they allow him to make. A language has been developed through the repetitive activities of throwing, building, altering, glazing and decorating in volume - one with which he can control and play to communicate the narrative of the landscape around him.

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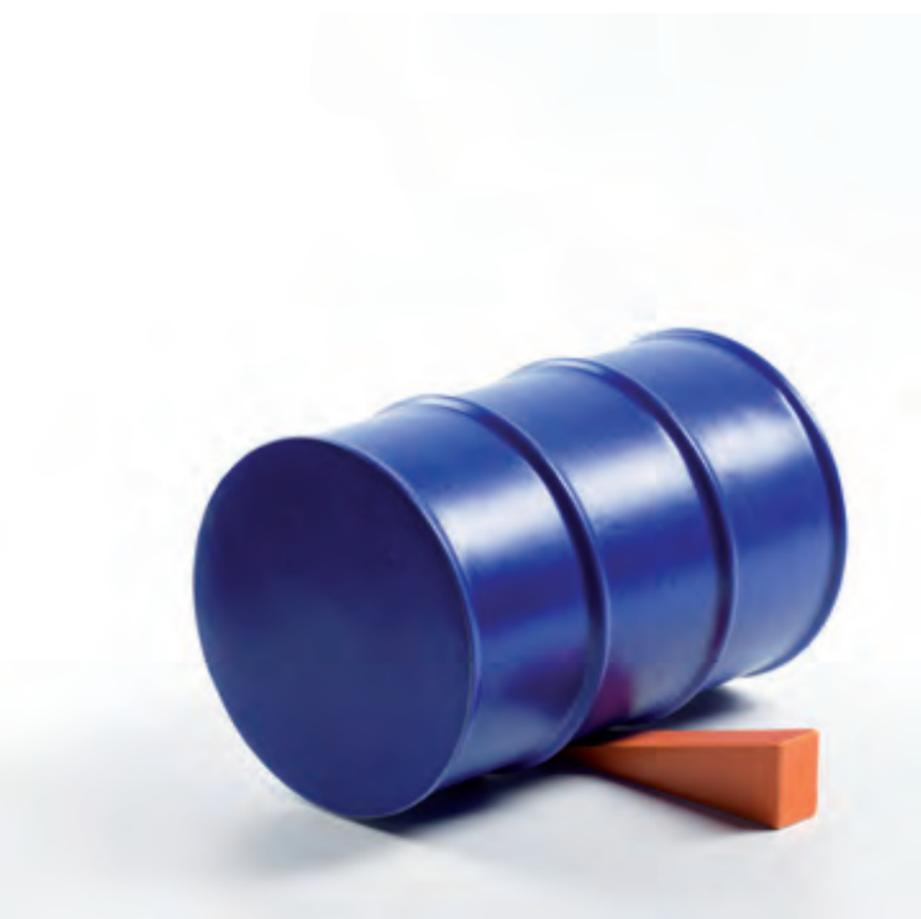
Sunset
2009



Anodyne Adventure
2009



Reflective Properties
2011



Primed
2011

