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Glass sculpture: reflections on cultural colonisation

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GLASS SCULPTURE

REFLECTIONS ON CULTURAL COLONISATION

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
award of the degree

DOCTOR OF CREATIVE ARTS

from

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

GERRY KING
Master of Science, Education

SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS
1993

NOTE

This document is an analysis of the works from six solo exhibitions and about twenty group exhibitions. This critique of the information contained in the sculptures, together with the works, meet the requirements of the award.

Certain of the works are examined in detail in the context of specific content, intent and public response. In a developmental sense the work culminates in the exhibition 'Shadows and Auras', City Gallery of Wollongong, June 12 - July 19, 1992.

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PREFACE

The thesis which forms the focus of this award is the realisation of a group of sculptures known collectively as The Cicatrix Series. The primary interest of the author is the making of sculpture and in so doing the works embody a synthesis of disparate concerns. The series addresses the author's study of cultural colonisation and while focussing upon the advent of that phenomenon in Australia it draws upon the dominance of non-Aboriginal cultural practice. A long held concern of the author is that of resting works upon a 'knife edge'. These sculptures are intended to withhold from immediate view the entire orientation of the content and seek rather to initiate a germ of an idea upon which the viewer may elaborate. In that regard the works are conceived as being the basis for questions rather than as the provider of answers. In this series the 'knife edge', for the author, is the public presentation of works which make reference to Aboriginal culture, but are intended to give rise to contemplation of non-Aboriginal culture. Simultaneously, the works are an exploration of technical aspects of forming glass and a study of applying intent to form.

This document is an original work. While it inescapably recognises and responds to the conjecture and established opinion of others, it is directed primarily at reflecting upon the thesis to which it is attached. In order that The Cicatrix Series may be located within the author's exhibition works and within the contemporary glass movement, appropriate contextual information of these entities is provided so as to allow substantiation of the analysis offered.

Accordingly, this document is not intended, nor should it be interpreted as being; a comprehensive history of glass or of the studio glass movement; a discourse upon the art/craft debate or of the place of glass sculpture in mainstream sculpture; an analysis of the nature of contemporary sculpture, contemporary art theory and criticism. This account, while it inevitably makes reference to and is lodged within at least some of the aforementioned, is focused primarily upon the author's experience of The Cicatrix Series.

The author has formed and exhibited glass sculpture for about twenty years and accordingly has personally experienced much of the growth of the studio glass movement. The experience of studying, lecturing, exhibiting and travelling amongst the glass communities of Australia, New Zealand, Japan, North America and Europe, has given access to numerous insights gained from

being exposed to the actual works and from knowing the prominent glass workers, curators, collectors, etcetera, upon which various theories, historical accounts and criticisms by other authors are based. This account does not seek then to be primarily a research study by examination of the writing of others, but is rather researched by the primary experience of the author.

The author is indebted to Professorial Fellow Bert Flugelman and Professor Ian North for their inspiration and guidance. The generous support of the University of South Australia and the City Gallery of Wollongong is greatly appreciated.

ABSTRACT

This document outlines the deliberations of the author while conceiving and producing a body of sculpture known collectively as The Cicatrix Series. The works are grouped into four main categories, ie The Cicatrix Series (1990), The Cicatrix Shadows (1991), The Cicatrix Shields (1992-), and individually named pieces (1991-1992).

The works address the topic of cultural colonisation and make particular reference to Australia. Some background of the exhibition career of the author is examined where contribution to The Cicatrix Series can be elucidated. The process by which the author refines the notions and images of selected works is detailed and general reference is made to those works most clearly forming a group.

Explanation of cultural colonisation is integrated with analysis of the works and discourse upon the author's intended meaning is compared with viewer response. The works exhibited present an idiosyncratic investigation of the potential of glass as a medium of communicative sculpture, explicit in subject orientation while elusive of definitive interpretation. They are an original and unique contribution to contemporary studio glass sculpture.

Cultural colonisation is addressed in these works as a layering of image and symbol upon an imposing but eroding foundation. This foundation is variously depicted as being geographical, architectural or an artefact. The vision of the weathering of imperialism stems from the author's experience in the third world countries of Asia and South America. The images employed refer to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australian culture and focus upon cultural colonisation in this country. The works seek not to illustrate the thoughts, theories, doctrines or interpretations held by others, no matter how well founded they may be, but are rather the author's contribution to the discourse. While using images clearly derived from Aboriginal sources, but not employing actual traditional motifs, these sculptures attest to the (often) unrecognised existence of cultural colonisation in Australia. By intent they are in direct contrast with that appropriation of Aboriginal motifs which contributes to colonisation. Hence, they seek to signal a new perspective of cross-cultural appropriation.

The scale of the works is unusual and the extent of the use of realism employed is infrequent in contemporary Western sculpture. In that regard the works are arguably beyond the mainstream of current sculpture and current studio glass sculpture. The Cicatrix Series is examined by the author/artist in the context of historical location.

Documentation of solo and group exhibitions of The Cicatrix Series is provided along with tabulation of the works, those held in public and private collections, and references in books, journals and media reports.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
I	LOCATING THE CICATRIX SERIES IN THE CONTEXT OF CONTEMPORARY GLASS SCULPTURE	1
	A Glass; Medium for Sculpture	2
	B Glass, Glass sculpture, Sculpture	7
	C Towards the Cicatrix Series	20
II	THE BEGINNINGS OF THE CICATRIX SERIES	29
	A Choosing the Cicatrix	30
	B The Original Cicatrix Works	32
	C The Cicatrix Series	34
III	THE CICATRIX SHIELDS	49
IV	THE CICATRIX SHADOWS	60
V	INDIVIDUALLY TITLED WORKS	73
	A The Float-glass works	75
	B The Vitrolite works	88
	C The Mixed-glass works	98
	D The Life-scale works	112
VI	TECHNICAL ASPECTS	122
	Why glass?	123
VII	CONCLUSION	126
	Art, Facts and Artefacts	127
VIII	DOCUMENTATION	130

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Page

Fig 1	ORIGINAL TEST WORK FOR THE SERIES	33
Fig 2	CICATRIX XIII	37
Fig 3	CICATRIX I	40
Fig 4	CICATRIX II	42
Fig 5	CICATRIX VII	44
Fig 6	CICATRIX IX	46
Fig 7	CICATRIX X	48
Fig 8	CICATRIX SHADOW 2	48
Fig 9	CICATRIX SHADOW 4	48
Fig 10	CICATRIX SHIELD 1	52
Fig 11	CICATRIX SHIELD 3	54
Fig 12	CICATRIX SHIELD 9	56
Fig 13	CICATRIX SHIELD 13	59
Fig 14	CICATRIX SHADOW 11	65
Fig 15	CICATRIX SHADOW 13	68
Fig 16	CICATRIX SHADOW 01	72
Fig 17	FACING THE WALL	79
Fig 18	STEPS TO THE VIEW	82
Fig 19	CASTE CAST	84
Fig 20	CLIMBING THE LADDER	87
Fig 21	REFLECTING	91
Fig 22	RIDING THE PYRE	94
Fig 23	NO ENTRY NO EXIT	97
Fig 24	TWO WORLDS	103
Fig 25	BALANCING ACT	108
Fig 26	FACING THE SUNSET	111

		Page
Fig 27	THROWN STONE	117
Fig 28	PLEASE DON'T SIT	121

CHAPTER ONE

**LOCATING THE CICATRIX SERIES IN THE CONTEXT OF
CONTEMPORARY GLASS SCULPTURE**

A	GLASS; MEDIUM FOR SCULPTURE
B	GLASS, GLASS SCULPTURE, SCULPTURE
C	TOWARDS THE CICATRIX SERIES

A GLASS; MEDIUM FOR SCULPTURE

The Cicatrix Series is a product of its time, contributing to the re-establishment of glass as a valued material for artists, craftspeople and designers. The 'fall from grace' of glass, originally a most precious material available only to the exalted, has in recent times, been reversed by the studio glass movement.¹ This broad grouping of artists, craftspeople and designers has reclaimed glass from the industrial processes of factory and re-introduced one-off and small scale production methods into the hands of the individual.

While it is necessarily the case that to the artist the medium is no more than a means, the history of the use of any given material influences the works created. Painters can not ignore the social role of painting nor achieve absolute independence from the viewers' expectations of a given painting, or paintings in general. The artist working with glass is as subject to public expectation as any other and is currently thought of by many as being a designer or craftsperson by virtue of the recent history of glass making. Such categorisation ignores much of the early history of forming works from glass. To understand the use of glass by the artist of the late twentieth century, some knowledge of that which came before allows some stripping of unfounded preconceptions.

The practice of origins of glass working are not recorded, but certainly obsidian, a volcanic glass and fulgurite, glass formed by lightning strike to sand or rock, were carved for many thousands of years before the melting of glass in furnaces. It is thought that glass making may have been practiced for six thousand years and that the earliest glass blowing may have been by the Phoenicians approximately two thousand years ago. An improbable tale is recorded by the Roman historian, Pliny in the first century AD. The legend is that coastal traders, camped on the beach at the mouth of the River Belus in Phoenicia, used some of their cargo of Natron (crude soda), as one would rocks, to support cooking utensils over the fire. The fire is said to have caused the Natron to fuse with the sand to form glass. The probability of there being sufficient heat from an open fire is remote, however, the physical-chemical reactions of silica (sand) and soda (as a flux) when subjected to sufficient heat is in fact the forming process of glass. A more plausible explanation is that accidental breakage of pots

¹ The term 'Studio Glass Movement' is frequently used to describe the international community of designer-makers which has been at the forefront of exhibited glass development in the later decades of this century.

containing molten bronze allowed the metal to heat the sand and various chemicals in which the pot was invested, thus forming a glass.

The earliest known recording of glass technology is from Mesopotamia (17th Century BC.), however these records suggest that glass making was well advanced both in Mesopotamia and Egypt in four thousand BC. The earliest known glass furnace (1350 BC.) and the oldest known hollow glass (1500 BC.) were found in Egypt. The glass of the Egyptians was made for the Pharaohs and possibly for other high ranking citizens. Miniature works were all that could be produced but ingenious techniques were developed to produce cosmetic containers and detailed elements for other art forms. The essential elements of these techniques are in use today.²

Possibly perfected by the Romans, glass blowing allowed production of a relatively large number of pieces and began the dissemination of glass into the wider community. With the increase of ease with which domestic ware could be produced the association of glass with art forms diminished. There have always been notable exceptions to this generalisation and fine works of art made of glass can be found in any period of history.³ Even when glass objects were mass produced by automated machinery and destined for the 'throw away society' there have been generally acknowledged works of art from glass in both two and three dimensional forms. A parallel history of decorative arts has been maintained by master glass workers using one of the wide variety of techniques which have been developed as specialist activities of a given geographical region.

Of particular interest are those industrial glass centres which are now being introduced to the studio glass arena as the demand for expertise increases beyond that available to the individual studio artist. The great centre of furnace-working, Murano, an island of Venice, is currently experiencing another revival of interest as master blowers are engaged to both fabricate works designed by (typically) American glass makers and to teach their highly developed skills. Recent political change in eastern Europe has influenced the development of Czechoslovakian cast and engraved glass. The tenacity of Japanese glass artists, aided by the sound economy of Japan has enabled accelerated development of glass art in that land in the last

² Stennett-Willson, R Modern Glass, Studio Vista, London, 1975, pp.7-8.

³ This account, is restricted to European glass traditions. Although there are important glass activities in non-European communities, they do not impinge directly upon The Cicatrix Series.

decade. Future international influence by Japanese glass artists seems highly probable. The search for individual expression has been the catalyst to international development in studio glass for the last three decades. Though originating in Europe, it has been most evident in the United States of America where glass departments were formed in university art schools. From inauspicious beginnings in the 1960's, studio glass is now internationally practised, supports respected private galleries, public and private collections, periodicals and major texts. Somewhat overlooked by the self-glorifying nature of American historical accounts, the glass work of Fauve painter Maurice Marinot (from 1911) and Jean Sala Prior (to 1947) established a model of individual studio practice which was further developed by Erwin Eisch (in the early 1960's) and in various European art schools.⁴

The upsurge of activity from the early 1960's saw rapid development, initially in furnace working, but has now expanded to include kiln forming, cold working and mixed media techniques. The level of expertise held by individual artists in their chosen techniques is typically of the highest order in many instances, yet others are able to produce respected works with a minimum of technical finesse. Artists working beyond the mainstream of the studio glass movement but incorporating glass are also embraced with enthusiasm. Earlier devotion to the vessel aesthetic has declined as glass workers have endeavoured to apply skills learnt in earlier work to more sculptural concerns.

Studio glass has its own culture of internationally renowned galleries, public and private collections, artists and collectors' organisations, journals, texts, curators, national and international education facilities, university departments, competitions, exhibitions, photographic collections and international artist exchanges. It is a global community that accepts as ordained the rapid growth in the number and status of glass artists.⁵ Indeed some practitioners espouse glass working as a cause rather than as a practice.

Australia has a sound foothold in this impassioned race for establishing its place in this seemingly available hall of glass glory and immortality. Universities in the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia and South

⁴ Littleton, H Glassblowing, A Search for Form, Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, New York, 1971, pp.11-31.

⁵ This notion is now approached by some writers. See, Grace Cochrane 'Collecting Our Thoughts' in Art Monthly, No. 60, 1993, pp.4-6.

Australia teach glass studies. In most cases these programs developed, as they have internationally, from ceramics departments. The first Australians who embarked upon glass working and who now occupy senior positions in the fraternity were initially trained in the U.S.A. or Britain. Maureen Cahill, John Elsegood, Nick Mount, Warren Langley, Dennis O'Connor, Stephen Skillitzi, the author and others contributed to the establishment of glass practice and continue to develop their involvement.

Development from a skill acquisition orientation towards aesthetic mastery amongst Australian glass workers parallels international developments. Concentration upon sculpture differs, and is interpreted differently in each glass community. The author was formally qualified in and practised fine art prior to engaging upon glass working. The opportunity to practice sculpture was, and is, of limited feasibility to glassworkers dependent upon glass production for generation of income. The initial surge of energy which founded the Australian glass community was directed more commonly towards limited production functional ware. Latterly, concentration on sculptural concerns is evident in individual and group exhibitions, publications and competitions.⁶

Although many galleries in Australia exhibit glass frequently and many craft galleries such as Distelfink in Melbourne, sell more glass than other media, the only gallery dedicated to glass is the 'Glass Artists' Gallery' in Sydney. Notable examples of contemporary glass are held in most public galleries and private collectors have become sufficiently knowledgeable, and acknowledged, to be held in respect by the glass community. The National Art Glass Collection is held, under the regional gallery program at the City Art Gallery of Wagga Wagga. Several authors, notably Jenny Zimmer, have devoted much of their work to Australian glass and the Art Gallery of Western Australia has selected several Australian glass artists to be represented in the international exhibition 'Design Visions'. Initiative and support has been directed towards the glass movement by the Australia Council and significant financial assistance has been made by the Department of the Arts in some states. Particular examples of state government support are the Jam Factory hot glass workshop in Adelaide and the Meat Market hot glass and cold glass workshops in Melbourne.

Although disadvantaged geographically, financially and technically, some

⁶ See, Neylon, J 'If The Slipper Fits', Shadows and Auras Catalogue, Wollongong City Gallery, 1992, p.2.

Australian glass artists have developed international reputations, are being invited to exhibit in overseas private galleries and international exhibitions, have been recorded in noted publications and are lecturing at international workshops and conferences.

There is now considerable argument for disbanding the glass movement and denying categorisation as 'glass sculpture' in order that glass works be recognised as sculpture without concession being made for the material. Glass practitioners discuss this topic both in Australia and in North America but are limited in their action by the practice of private and public galleries in which the line between sculpture and glass sculpture is commonly drawn with certainty.

The ancient and contemporary uses of glass have influenced the author in conceiving and forming the works of which this thesis is comprised. It is in recognition of the little explored potential of glass as a medium of contemporary sculpture beyond the bounds of 'glass sculpture' that The Cicatrix Series is presented. The solo exhibition, 'Shadows and Auras', shown in a public gallery and presented as sculpture rather than as glass-works has made its contribution to the undermining of the 'broad brush' categorisation which has all studio glass regarded as craftworks.

B GLASS, GLASS SCULPTURE, SCULPTURE

An analysis of that contemporary studio glass which is intended and/or regarded as sculpture.

The works of the studio glass movements lie within the realms of art, craft and design with the products of one individual often contributing to more than one category.

Those pieces intended as or justifiably or allegedly categorised as art are further divisible into three groups.

Those in which the principle intent or achievement is

1. The exploitation of the unique properties of glass, to form an attractive work which, while it has formal qualities similar to that of art and may be intended as so being, is not properly so called (ie glass).
2. The forming of a sculpture which is dependent upon the unique properties of glass (ie glass sculpture).
3. The forming of a work which, while it employs the properties of glass, is not dependent upon the peculiarly spectacular or aesthetic qualities of glass (ie sculpture).

GLASS

Studio glass working has forged its heroes in the last thirty years and their status within the glass community has risen more recently to that of demigods. The author has experienced and been a member of the international glass community for some twenty years and to varying extents lived, worked and socialised with that group in Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Canada, U.S.A., England, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, France, Holland, Italy and Switzerland. The growth in status of individuals and national groups is evident at conferences, workshops, competitions and exhibitions. This enhancement of the status of individuals to extraordinarily high levels is comparable with, and possibly a result of, the American cultural values associated with hero forming in other aspects of society.⁷ Rowley's observation concerning the 'artist-as-hero' provides an interesting perspective of the cyclic nature of conferred heroic status.

'... It would be ironic if, just when artists and writers are being seen as subjects formed in culture, craft were to shore up the old myths of artist-as-hero. This bandwagon is already a museum piece'.⁸

Glass artists currently recognise other glass artists as heroes. The reception of Dale Chihuly at the 1993 Ausglass Conference maintained the hero-status first witnessed by the author at Alfred University in 1973 and subsequently at Pilchuck in 1988.

Early exuberance and spontaneity not fettered by tradition and without expectations narrowed by training has given way to intense and specifically focused development of astonishing expertise by various individual artists in their chosen technique and approach to work. The days of reacting to whatever may happen to the glass on the end of the blowpipe, of appreciating random and change effects, of accepting the work on an emotive basis regardless of the technical clumsiness are now left far behind. Works accepted for prestigious exhibitions are now usually executed with extraordinarily high levels of skills and in a manner so highly developed

⁷ For similar understanding of the status of glass in contemporary culture see, Frantz S., 'Internationalism in Glass: Too Much Common Ground', Ausglass Magazine, Post Conference Edition, 1991, p.73.

⁸ Rowley, 'Craft in the Public Eye', Forceps of Language, ed B Thompson, CC of A, 1992, p.105.

that they may be instantly recognised as being by a particular artist and are so distinctive that the method is ethically unavailable to others. There are many such examples, but this argument can be illustrated with the etched and electroplated works of Michael Glancy.⁹ These pieces, refined both technically and aesthetically, have so captured the domain of the technique that attempts to use an approach based upon this method would invariably appear as plagiarism. A senior American curator of glass, lecturing in Australia, stated that there was not an American style. American glass is well recognised within the glass community and is seldom mistaken for that of other glass producing nations. The reality that he was unable to see was that the American style is conspicuous by the degree of individuality in each exhibitor's works. It is not only the work of various individuals which is recognisably of a style but the experienced eye can distinguish national styles.

Both the early 'free form' glass works and the current highly individual works principally draw their merit from the character of and manipulation of the material. They are indeed works entirely lodged in the realm of glass and are beyond categorisation as art and at times stand alone from craft and design.¹⁰ Works of this type are frequently vessel-forms which the maker does not intend to be used and in which the eventual owner will not place anything. The better works of this type are merely unused vessels. There are those which appropriately relate to the vessel aesthetic while the less successful are fraudulent sculptural attempts, unable to stand without reliance upon the vessel aesthetic.

The works here categorised as 'glass' are frequently very pleasing to behold and often optimise the character glass has when worked in that particular technique.¹¹ They are much admired by other glass workers, curators, and the public and on occasion indicate the direction of emerging trends in glass working.¹² The more esoteric examples are appreciated by the studio glass community for exposing qualities of glass, and for unpretentious involvement with the material and technique. These works commonly have some of the visual characteristics of sculpture but do not carry sufficient content or meaning to be more than enjoyable three-dimensional

⁹ 'Considered the contemporary master of Electroforming on glass, Michael Glancy...'. See, Taragin, D Catalogue statement in World Glass Now '91.
¹⁰ 'Contemporary Glass - Its Movement and Possibilities', discussion by jurors. World Glass Now '91, p.18.
¹¹ See, Frantz S. 'Too Much Common Ground', Ausglass Magazine, Post Conference, Edition 1991, p.73, note (C).
¹² See, Klein D, Glass, A Contemporary Art, Rizzoli, New York, 1989, Preface.

forms.¹³ Helmut Ricke, Deputy Director of the Kunstmuseum in Dusseldorf, describes this type of glass working as belonging to the 'glass ghetto'. He views much of current glass making as being 'a special line, a special part of general arts today; but a secluded part...'.¹⁴

Works within the 'glass ghetto' are not necessarily to be dismissed lightly as they include some of the finest and most respected examples of contemporary glass working. On occasion they do though leave the maker with nowhere to go in the sense that the arduous acquisition of skill has precluded the opportunity to develop a rationale beyond that of mastery of the medium.

In the early days of the Australian glass movement the author engaged a master blower (a gaffer) from the then only off-hand glass factory in Australia to demonstrate at a workshop. When it was his turn to demonstrate he asked what should he make. The author suggested that a goblet would be suitable. He then asked which style he should use. Upon suggestion of a particular style he then asked for a piece to be designed. Having the drawing to follow he produced the piece magnificently. His forty years as a maker had not included any of the decision making of 'what' and 'why' but had led to an enormous facility with the 'how'.

¹³ This view is supported by R Craig Miller, Curator of the Denver Art Museum who contends that this rise of contemporary glass from craft working has left some glass workers who wish to be sculptors with only a superficial concern with form and colour rather than a substantial philosophical basis for art production. See, Chanzit G, Hert Bayer Collection and Archive at The Denver Art Museum, Pub Denver Art Museum, 1988, p.11.

¹⁴ Ricke H, Neues Glas in Europa, Pub Glasmuseum Hentrich, Dusseldorf, 1990, p.152.

GLASS SCULPTURE

Many exhibited works of contemporary glass manifest qualities only obtainable by the use of that medium. In this regard they may be categorised as a distinct and distinctive sub-set of contemporary sculpture. Drawing upon one, or a limited range, of the multitude of appealing characteristics of glass these works commonly reveal the highest level of technical finesse and exploratory use of the medium. Such works receive adulatory attention from within and beyond the glass community.

The better examples are majestic specimens which address any criteria of contemporary sculpture that may be reasonably applied. They are often formed as a result of the artist successfully combining an exceptional facility for manipulating glass with a significantly sophisticated aptitude to conceive sculpturally. Less frequently these works are formed by simple or ineloquent manipulation of the glass, yet maintain the same level of interest as sculpture.

The lesser examples are so in that they contribute little to contemporary sculpture, often parodying current or past achievements in the sculpture of others. While these works may be notable achievements in terms of the qualities in, or mastery of, the glass they are not, or would not be, highly thought of by critics familiar with contemporary sculpture.

Works of 'glass sculpture', regardless of the level of significance as sculpture invariably contribute to the artists' and the viewers' development of understanding of the uses of glass. Within the glass community they are often purposeful achievements.

The warranted categorisation of works as 'glass or glass sculpture' is not necessarily easily determined. Some works exhibit characteristics of more than one group. However, this consideration is not justifiably applicable to contention that works, by virtue of being comprised of glass, are necessarily art works but nor is the converse supportable.

The intention of some glass workers to practice as artists and be recognised accordingly has been an on-going process commenced long before the advent of the studio glass movement.¹⁵

¹⁵ 'Glass as a medium for the modelling artists and sculptors has a long history. If one does not wish to

Many exponents of glass sculpture, while engaged in and possibly gaining a livelihood from glass making came from a fine art environment and felt little discomfort with conceiving and fabricating works with sculptural intent which is only achievable with or is dependent upon glass.

Glass sculpture is well represented in prestigious private and public galleries, collections, publications and competitions of national and international significance. While many of the works address universal themes and/or portray one or other of the international styles of contemporary glass they are also often divisible by nationality. Most conspicuously so are the cast works from eastern Europe and Czechoslovakia which require equipment and facilities only available in industrial complexes. Noteworthy are the highly regarded large cast works, made in series by Stanislav Libensky and Jaroslava Brychtova. These '...sculpture-like cast works and large scale monumental pieces...' ¹⁶ epitomise the seductive and mystical qualities of glass. The varying thickness of the glass allows differing transmission of light causing the thin edges to seemingly glow by comparison with the intense hue and sublime depth of the massive centre of the form. These works employ the characteristics of colour in a manner comparable with colour-field painting.

The visual experience offered by these works is not unlike that of viewing water of varying depths in which the ocean bed can be seen in the shallow areas yet is masked by the opacity where deeper ¹⁷ . The speciously seductive qualities of glass can readily bring the glass worker to conceive and fabricate, and the viewer to admire, works which superficially subscribe to characteristics of sculpture, yet are devoid of the content which distinguishes between the notion of contemporary sculpture and that of decoration.

There has developed a labyrinthine language of justification and explanation of works which the maker describes as glass sculpture but which the viewer may

already begin with three dimensional inlays of glass-paste in old Egyptian sculptures or with the small-scale realistic glass heads of the early Roman empire, then one needs to designate the beginning of the testing of the material's three dimensional possibilities with Henri Cross' Pate de verre reliefs from the late 19th century. Ricke H, Neues Glas in Europa, pub. Glasmuseum Heinrich, Dusseldorf, 1990, p.152.

¹⁶ Catalogue statement by Mizutha Yorika, World Glass Now '91, p.179.

¹⁷ 'The material glass gives us the opportunity to consciously organise the substance and its inner space. The illuminating light reveals, defines and forms the colourful expression of the sculpture. The space of colour and vibration - mysterious, dynamic, cool or intimate - is a medium for our message'. Libensky S, and Brychtova J. Quoted in Neues Glas in Europa, pub. Glasmuseum Heinrich, Dusseldorf, 1991, p.154.

perceive as exquisite yet devoid of content. The prescription of unsubstantiated conjecture to attest the sculptural attributes of glass works is not restricted to makers. Critics of various levels of experience and credibility proclaim attributes, on occasion, which defy comparison with warranted analysis. Works of glass, irrespective of admirable aesthetic qualities, are rightfully as subject to the criteria and parameters of sculpture as are works of any media. Fatuous assertions, devoid of attributable reference have arguably hampered the acceptance of sculpture formed from glass into the mainstream of contemporary sculpture. The discernment of glass, glass sculpture and sculpture formed from glass is not necessarily a facile enterprise, for on occasion works stand near the brink of such discernments.¹⁸

From within and beyond the studio glass community there are those who are of the opinion that the acceptance of glass sculpture as sculpture is hindered by the existence of specialist glass galleries, collections and associations. In-so-much as these entities are a support network which have assisted the development of contemporary studio glass from obscurity to international salience they may be understood to be of a finite purpose. Future development of sculpture in glass may necessitate the abandonment of the cloistered existence experienced to date as glass sculpture and discern an exploration of, as yet, unforeseen paths.¹⁹

While the arguments for shedding the clannish attitude of the current glass community must be addressed, the timing of any abandonment is as contributory to eventual success as is the decision to act. While doubtlessly ventures such as the Glass Artists' Gallery (Sydney), The Glass Art Gallery (Toronto), Heller Gallery (New York), Nakama Gallery (Tokyo), Gallery L (Hamburg), and Transparence Gallery (Brussels) have fostered and maintained the public and professional profile of studio glass, the notion that they could best serve the interests of the glass community by discontinuing business can not be substantiated in advance of the actuality.

The international establishment of contemporary glass working, which is significantly focussed upon glass sculpture, is now so dynamic and soundly based in public galleries, competitions and publications that dismantling it in favour of

¹⁸ 'In every art it is harder than we imagine to establish what deserves praise or blame...'. See, Cage J, Geothe On Art, Scholar Press, London, 1980, p.196.

¹⁹ '...studio glass makers often behave as if their world will continue without end. In part this is because there has been no consensus reached about the nature of its history and development'. See Warmus W, 'The Completion of Studio Glass', in Design Visions, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, 1992, p.33.

integration with mainstream sculpture is difficult to conceive. The probability of a change of focus towards mainstream sculpture, by means of makers of glass sculpture, by default rather than deliberate strategy seems more likely as the lessening of fervour, known to all movements, descends upon this ageing community.

The original Cicatrix works and The Cicatrix Shields are customarily responded to as 'glass sculpture'. In that these works make reference to the vessel form the author accepts that categorisation. The view that vessel-influenced forms ought be regarded as sculpture rather than some sub-set of sculpture is difficult to defend and need not be dwelt upon here.

SCULPTURE

In the context of this statement the term 'sculpture' is here used in reference to works which are properly responded to as sculpture, made exclusively or largely of glass, and which may exhibit mastery of the material but are conceivably plausible works even should the medium be substituted for another. The overriding merit of such works lies not with the mastery of the medium but rather within those criteria correctly and normally applied to contemporary sculpture.

The emergence of contemporary sculpture which employs glass, and is distinct from glass sculpture is overshadowed by the spectacle of and public enthusiasm for the latter. While the practice of using glass for the fabrication of sculpture is traced to at least the time of Egyptian eminence, contemporary occurrence is limited by circumstances both within and beyond the studio glass movement. An impediment to concentration upon original sculpture arises from the relatively low number of practitioners who have been sufficiently able to restrain enthusiasm for the satisfaction of the medium as the principal orientation of the work. This is compounded by the long and arduous period required for the knowledge and skill acquisition necessary to successfully master any of the categories of glass working in order that other than elementary works may be formed. A significant number of contemporary glass workers, having savoured the satisfaction of glass sculpture, lodge either deliberately or unknowingly, within that field or alternatively, have trailed as far in the course of professional development as their circumstance allows.

There is considerable validity in the generalisation that in Australia members of the contemporary studio glass movement have undertaken a sequential development from glassworking through glass sculpture to sculpture. Inhibiting that progression and external to the dictates of the glass makers is the modest monetary gain which may be anticipated and the considerable capital investment normally required to pursue such practice.

Little encouragement for the glass worker desirous of forming sculpture is forthcoming from mainstream sculpture fraternities.

To some extent the reputation of glass as being beyond the parameters of mainstream contemporary sculpture has precluded the presentation of works for entry

into galleries, competitions, exhibition and publications.²⁰ There are though notable exceptions which have lessened and will continue to lessen the divide between glass works and mainstream sculpture. Similarly, contributing to this change are works formed by acknowledged sculptors in ways beyond the precinct of contemporary glass, yet utilising glass for sculptural purpose. Deliberate encouragement of this practice comes from within the studio glass movement. Regardless of the restraints there is a developing practice of sculpture utilising glass and a prefatory acceptance of such works into mainstream contemporary sculpture.

The works of The Cicatrix Series are focussed primarily upon the concerns of sculpture. While this intent is foundational to all of the sub-sets of the series the original Cicatrix works and the consequent Cicatrix Shields, as noted earlier, draw upon the vessel aesthetic and as such are arguably attributable to the category of 'glass sculpture'. In examination of the works as a complete group attention is directed towards The Cicatrix Shadows and the individually titled works.

In that the works are intended as being sculpture yet to some extent unavoidably emanate from contemporary studio glass they may be located in both those entities. While there is far from universal agreement concerning the precise nature of contemporary sculpture, there is sufficient commonality of intent and stylistic direction for the purpose of addressing the location of The Cicatrix Series within that which is current practice, as evidenced in highly regarded exhibited and published works.

In some instances it may be more appropriate to locate The Cicatrix Series alongside rather than within contemporary practice in that by comparison there is some difference in the approach to, or regard for, the object. While acknowledging that the view concerning disregard for the object in contemporary sculpture is subject to overstatement and at times misrepresents the reality of both intention and response, it is not unreasonable to describe The Cicatrix Series as exhibiting more concern for the object and the fabrication of that object than is evident in much of the current practice.

²⁰ '... glass sculpture is not yet permitted entry into the sculptural club'.
See, Sturgeon G, The Development of Australian Sculpture 1788 - 1975, Thames and Hudson, London, 1978

The works of The Cicatrix Series almost exclusively draw upon highly developed yet exploratory fabrication abilities gained by persistent experimentation and extensive practice.²¹ The author's concern for technical finesse is one of need rather than desire. In these works the technique must be highly wrought in order that it not conspicuously intrude upon the literal intention of the image. The need which is dictated by the intent is that of fabricating the work to a sufficient level of refinement that the viewer concentrates not upon the evidence of the technique but rather is unseeing of the means while deliberating the ends. The author's intent with these works is not focussed upon the technical aspects of forming the object other than as an unavoidable consequence of desiring the realisation of the image. Nevertheless the author is intolerant of works in which the intention is unsustained by crude or inappropriate technical facility. While there are works, which are successful, in part because of the crudity of fabrication, the author is concerned in The Cicatrix Series with sublimating evidence of technique.

A further distinction between The Cicatrix Series and much current sculpture practice is that of scale. Works of contemporary sculpture are, relative to adult human height, more commonly large objects and frequently self supporting. The majority of The Cicatrix Series are such that they may be held in two hands and require a plinth or some similar means of elevation.

The matter of scale is, other than pragmatically, of no particular concern to the author. The intent of the image of the works of this scale is, in part, to conjure for the viewer an imaginary scenario in which the sculpture represents an actual architectural form. In this regard the image may be presented at the same scale as the referent or at an increased or decreased scale. Technical, financial and practical restraints dictate that the works are of a scale lesser than that of the referent and that little increase in size is possible. Comparison of the scale of much sculpture formed from glass and that of mainstream contemporary practice may be likened to the dissimilar scale of the majority of exhibited photographs and exhibited paintings resulting usually from a similar basis of technical restraints.

An overriding consideration governing the scale of many of the works of this series is that they are air-freighted to exhibitions both nationally and internationally.

²¹ '... and demonstrates Gerry King's sophisticated control over his medium'.
Walsh J, preface statement, Shadows and Auras, catalogue pub., City Gallery of Wollongong, 1992.

The expense of the transit governs the author's capability to accept invitations to exhibit. While concern for such pedestrian matters may limit the works both in scale, and if given too great an influence in merit, the author must choose to either exhibit or not do so.

To the extent that the references to architecture and Aboriginal images in the subject of these works is patently evident to most viewers, The Cicatrix Series may again be seen to be beyond much of current practice. Whereas a viewer may ask of much contemporary sculpture questions which seek to reveal the subject of the works, it is probable that the same viewer will address The Cicatrix Series with questions concerned with what it is that is intended by the subject. The explicitness of the images, in conjunction with the evident concern for fabrication, stands The Cicatrix Series to one side of mainstream practice.

While deliberation of contemporary art requires some measure of caution regarding fashionable jargon, which obscures rather than elucidates, there is evidence in current critical writing that much mainstream sculptural practice is less directed at specific content than is evident in The Cicatrix Series.²²

Given the warranted interpretations that may be applied to The Cicatrix Series these works stand between the extremes of current practice. While a considerable proportion of contemporary sculpture is without an evident interpretation which allows the viewer confidence in decipherment there are similarly many works which prompt a common response.²³ Much of the current practice variously described as *bricolage* exposes a singular or limited perspective of warranted interpretation. Such works are directed at or responded to as having a comparatively narrow focus of intent and subject than that which the author has required of The Cicatrix Series.²⁴ The diversity

²² '... the experience of meaning or comprehension on the part of the viewer, might bear little or no resemblance to an artist's intention. The work in Independent Vocabularies is undoubtedly intended as discourse, and courts interpretation. However, paradoxically, it is also wilfully opaque, resisting conclusions and even the very idea of meaning!'

Green E. Foreword. Catalogue Independent Vocabularies, pub. University of South Australia Art Museum, 1992.

²³ '... the fact that so many young artists make work which is wilfully uncommunicative...'

Timms P, Editorial, Art Monthly, June, 1993, p.3.

'What can we deduce from all this? And having asked, what are we told? Nothing - the image is exactly what its present title proclaims, an *untitled object*, an image of muteness itself.'

Barrett-Lennard J, in reference to a work by John Barbour in catalogue statement article for (untitled objects) Independent Vocabularies, pub. University of South Australia Art Museum, 1992, p.10.

²⁴ '... The grafting, montage, bricolage or assemblage of dispersed elements refunctions to expose the way

of public response and critical review of The Cicatrix Series is such as to confirm the author's view that the works are of a warranted interpretation as being directed towards posing questions rather than providing answers.

violence is hidden within the seams, or lies in the shadows and folds of the signs which re-affirm the hegemonic relations of discrimination and power'.

Merewether C, catalogue essay, Biennale 1992, Sydney.

C TOWARDS THE CICATRIX SERIES

The origin of the works which comprise this thesis is observable in the background of the author.

'As the poet moves from stage to stage it is not that he is looking to see whether he is saying what he already meant, but rather that he is looking to see whether he wants to mean what he is saying'.

Monroe Beadsley

The Cicatrix Series evolved from an enduring interest in socio-political content in visual art in conjunction with the influences gleaned from a varied career of exhibiting and more particularly from lecturing and publishing on the topic of cultural colonisation. These works are formed in response to both common everyday experience and various provocative experiences which have given some insight into cultural colonisation. Significant to the formation of the series has been the evolutionary contribution of previous exhibition and commissioned works completed since 1965 and in particular, those works since 1979 which have had socio-political intent. As the series developed it was evident from public response that many of the earlier works had limited accessibility for the viewer in that the aesthetic appreciation required more explanation or examination than would normally occur. In order that the works might develop, both for the author and the viewer this limitation was addressed in subsequent works.²⁵

The author's prelude to working with socio-political concerns was originally with The Reclining Bottle Series which was produced in 1979, using furnace glass blowing techniques and employing unusual manipulations of handmade bottles. The author's

²⁵ For discourse on the relationship between the artist and the viewer and the effect of communication upon the creative process.
See, Delahoyd M, 'Seven Alternative Spaces', in Alternative in Retrospect, The New Museum, 1981, New York.

concerns were local to the contemporary glass movement and the art/craft debate rather than having the universal implications of The Cicatrix Works. These works addressed the practice of studio glass workers and the views of their audience at the beginning of the Australian contemporary glass movement. They are a precursor to The Cicatrix Series in that the intention of the work was content orientated. The Reclining Bottles were a reaction to the author's perception of the duality of evaluation made of studio glass by both the maker and the public. (The public included other makers, curators, theorists, gallery directors and clients.) A popular product with furnace glass workers of the 1970's was a tall necked bottle in which the aperture of the neck is of a minimum dimension. This is caused by stretching the neck in the glass blowing process. These bottles (they would by some theorists be described as 'bottles so-called'), were, because of the aperture dimension, unable to receive any of the substances for which bottles are normally employed to contain. Indeed, in some instances, the aperture was so restricted that liquid could not be introduced.

The public response to these works brought the author to the question, 'when is a bottle?' When a bottle-like hollow object is unable to receive any of the substances normally contained by bottles and/or, if the maker intended the object to be responded to as an aesthetic encounter rather than as a utilitarian vessel, and/or if the viewers' response to the work is dictated by aesthetic qualities rather than functional then is the object actually a bottle? Should or should not the work so described be evaluated as an aesthetic object in the manner commonly applied to works of art, for certainly it is beyond the parameters of a genuine craft object though it is clearly described as such by maker and viewer alike. Discussion of these pieces by expert and lay person alike denied the reality that a 'bottle' which can not bottle is not a bottle. This antithetic appreciation (the pieces were much admired) intrigued the author, for the works were discussed as bottles, though they were neither intended as such, nor warranted that categorisation. Although these 'bottles' were not works of art, the assessment of them as such would be more understandable than evaluation as craftworks, for the qualities of form and colour were those which were admired in that manner in which sculpture is often evaluated.²⁶

²⁶ For the purpose of this discourse the term 'art' is taken to mean objects which are nominally known as art-works and are produced with the intention of and are responded to as being principally concerned with aesthetic and content qualities. 'Craft' is used to describe objects which are nominally known as craft-works and incorporate excellence in utilitarian function with aesthetic and technical mastery and are responded to as such. The notion of craft being those objects which have all the qualities of art but not so by virtue of the medium used is not considered here. The delineation between art and craft by the existence or otherwise of intellectual content assessable to the viewer is acknowledged but not here undertaken further. The term

The response to the 'bottles' was not a matter of popular discussion by either makers or viewers. There seemed to be no discomfort in labelling an object with the terminology of the discipline which, by superficial examination, led to the production. The tall necked bottles sat on mantel pieces and exhibition plinths without engendering debate upon the true nature of an object which superficially has the characteristics of craft yet is without utilitarian function. (Since this time there has been a proliferation of non-functional or semi functional objects described as craft). The lack of discussion was as inspirational to the author's interest in the matter as was the disparity between the object and the way in which it was regarded.

Exhibition of the Reclining Bottles brought a response different from that which was anticipated. The pieces were popularly received, exhibited locally and in Japan²⁷ and represented in international publications.²⁸ There was though, little or no discussion of the contradictions of form and function inherent in these pieces in relation to the almost horizontal alignment of the bottle and the exaggerated elongation of the neck. The non-bottle aspects of these works did not inspire comment to the extent of that which was aroused by the division of the base of the form into two equal parts. The intention of this division was to enhance the status of these works as being non-utilitarian regardless of the bottle form references. This aspect though was overlooked in the terms of the intention but drew considerable attention from expert and lay viewers. The divided form was interpreted as being human legs with various suggestions of erotica and pornography being made. Other than the division of one form into two, as in the manner which occurs with the human body as the torso joins the legs, there was no suggestion of leg attributes.

This reaction to the divided form of the reclining bottles led to the author's involvement in an exploration of the extent to which the artist could invest a work with attributes which would instigate reference to the subject of that interpretation. This manifested as a group of works variously described by viewers as human forms. Experimentation with manipulating free blown glass eventually led to the fashioning of a form which was visually intriguing and exhibited potential, with appropriate variations for inclusion in a series of works.

'craft' is used to describe an object, not a practice.
²⁷ Glass from Australia, Canada, U.S.A. and Japan, Tokyo and Kyoto Museums of Modern Art, 1981.
²⁸ Contemporary Glass in the Modern World, Tokyo, Tankosha, 1982.
Contemporary Studio Glass, An International Collection, New York, Weatherhill/Tankosha, 1987.

There were two aspects of these works which directly contributed to The Cicatrix Series. The variance between warranted interpretation and viewer interpretation was evidenced in the extent to which the viewer interpreted the works as being human figures although some of the attributes denied that interpretation. These works did bear some clear connection with the human torso in that there was suggestion of shoulders, chest, back and waist. In some instances the works suggested female breasts. There was though, clear reference to the vessel form in that all of the works were hollow and some had bottle necks. (The vessel connection was lessened in later works in that there was not a solid base.) The contradiction of a hollow form being labelled as a solid form was disregarded by viewers as were those characteristics which denied the favoured interpretation. A more defensible interpretation would have labelled the works as clothing. The nature of the works suggested items of apparel which cling to the body and thus reveal the form beneath. This interpretation of works on the basis of the most immediate attributes while denying those which require some reflection led the author to further interest in the artist's role in determining the meaning of a work. (It is acknowledged in contemporary communication theory that that which is received by the receiver is indeed the message regardless of the intention or the opinion of the speaker with regard to the meaning of the communication.)²⁹ In visual art the viewer determines the meaning (interpretation), but the artist, with knowledge, is to some degree able to understand, predict and influence reaction to the work.

A second aspect of these works contributed to the author's interest in the origin of inspiration. The works originated from experimentation with furnace working techniques which eventually led to the discovery of one in which the aperture of a blown form was divided into three equal parts (forming three apertures). After completing a piece which was sufficiently controlled to reveal the potential of the form for further development, and upon reflection, it seemed that the image had a quality which made reference to some other image or object, notwithstanding the absence of any such intention. Subsequent examination of books held by the author revealed that an image markedly similar to that of the glass work was used on the cover of the publication 'The Female Eunuch'.³⁰ One explanation of the close similarity is that the

²⁹ Application of this understanding of communication is explored by William Epton. See, Olson E, On Value Judgements in the Arts, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1976, pp.120-121.

³⁰ Greer G, The Female Eunuch, Granada, London, 1970.

cover image had been retained in the subconscious and re-emerged, prompted by the developing similarity as the glass was manipulated. Of interest to the author is that this *deja vu* was not the first such encounter under similar circumstances.

While lecturing on native North American ceramics and showing colour slides of Apache and Pueblo ceramic vessels taken some years earlier, the author was surprised to find that the forms were precisely those which were then being produced as twin necked or punctured glass bottles, yet there had not been a conscious intention to emulate, nor a memory of these particular vessels. The author has long since recognised development of images founded upon past visual experience which presumably has lodged in the subconscious. Indeed the building remnant forms employed in The Cicatrix Shadows Series and the individually titled works have emerged thus.³¹

Yet another such experience occurred with the next body of work, the Yukata Series. Again, while engaged in exploratory manipulation of hand blown glass a form was resolved which seemed suitable for further refinement and which bore some resemblance to a Yukata (a Japanese informal kimono which may be compared with a western dressing gown but is acceptable attire in public, the Yukata is increasingly popular as a dressing gown in western society). Similarly, on this occasion the form produced at the furnace seemed reminiscent of an image held by the author. Searching revealed a photograph taken some six years earlier while resident in Tokyo. The photograph and the significance of the occasion were then clearly remembered. While walking to explore the district of Shibuya the author, knowing that the Japanese are reputedly inept at map making, carefully plotted a course as near to a straight line as the twisting and jumbled streets and lanes would allow. Upon turning a corner, it was evident that a circuitous route had been followed, that the map was inaccurate and that the starting point had been revisited. At this moment a Yukata was noticed hanging majestically, arms spread on a bamboo washing pole at the top of a rise in this serene suburban street. It seemed to epitomise the Westerners' image of the orient. (This tranquil scene is one of the few visual experiences of the author which signified an understanding of a broader event or episode.)

³¹ The cryptomenesia of these incidents stems from visual experience but bears notable similarity to Jung's reference to an author discovering influence from a supposedly unknown source. See, Jung C.G, Man and His Symbols, Doubleday and Company Inc, New York, 1964, pp.37-38.

The aforementioned experiences are cited because of the particular significance embodied and the influence upon subsequent deliberation of the origin of those images with which one deals when involved in producing works. In this context, the existence of images in the memory is of little account but rather it is the particulars of the inventory which dictate the fertility of the process of recall. Experience of remembered images prompted by encountering similarities in works being deliberated and manipulated is not in itself infrequent nor of particular significance. It is the process of adoption of those images as working matter which warrants attention.

The author, not uncommonly, has an abundance of memorised images, both common and exotic, which are elicited in situations quite apart from the activity of devising and fabricating sculpture. The existence of the myriad of images and the potential for transfer from one form of experience to another necessitates scrutiny of both the images and one's intentions when devising works. Each adoption of an image, unless evaluated, may entice the artist toward clichéd and facile resolutions.

The author holds another grouping of images drawn from experiences which are consciously memorised. Such images result from exotic visual experience, though not necessarily from exotic circumstances. These visual experiences are, at the time of registration, considered as being potentially worthy contributions to future artworks. In this regard they may be understood as being of a categorisation opposite in nature to the aforementioned. The form of an Australian Aboriginal shield, momentarily glimpsed on a television program initiated research into the visual characteristics of shields. The notion of a shield was deliberated at that time and consequently the (now) completed works which originated from a coolamon form were entitled as shields.

The Yukata Series was primarily concerned with formal elements of composition but in intention alluded to considerations of the symbolic significance of human or human-like forms. That specific intention was barely evident to viewers, but response to the series (exhibited internationally and now held in public and private collections), encouraged continuing exploration of contributing socio-political content into future works. (It was evident that such content required greater enunciation in order that it might communicate the intent. Subsequent works stepped closer to realism and were more explicit in making reference to intended subject matter.)

Viewers have often categorised the Yukata Series as realism.³² There has not been an intention, in either past or current work, to deal with realism upon its own merits, but rather to use aspects of realism to signal subject. Similarly the works do not aspire to present composed or complete doctrine which are designed to unequivocally state the intended meaning, in a manner which might be interpreted as being an answer, but rather are offered as fragments of ideas provocative of questions. The development of works as a repository of questions manifested most clearly in the Ninoy Series, a small group inspired by the events surrounding the assassination of Benigno (Ninoy) Aquino at the Manila airport which now bears his name. While the topic of these works is apparent to those who understand of the fundamental facts of the political climate in the Philippines, interpreting the nuances requires some understanding of the greater political history of this land, colonised for more than four hundred years, and the comparisons which can be made between Aquino and the other revered martyr, Rizal. Though the work 'Welcome Home Ninoy' was selected for a major national touring exhibition and given due prominence it was responded to by critics with varying degrees of enthusiasm and understanding. Discourse upon this work strengthened the commitment to content based works and the sequence of concerns inspirational to each emerging series became increasingly evident to the author. A progression towards The Cicatrix Series originated in the Ninoy Series and can be identified in subsequent works of the Amnesty Series and the View with a Room Series.

The Amnesty Series (exhibited Glass Artists' Gallery, Sydney, 1986) endeavoured to express the frustration of incarceration, irrespective of circumstance. These works were not concerned with the cause, validity or type of imprisonment but were directed at evoking recognition of the futility inherent in acts of injustice. The images of hands and obstacles such as prison bars and chain-wire fencing were taken from visual experiences gathered in criminal and psychiatric institutions and from photo-media representations of Father Brian Gore while he was incarcerated in the Philippines. These works evoked a high level of viewer response and an interpretation generally aligned with the intended meaning. They were somewhat mono-dimensional in warranted interpretation and subsequently gave way to more complex intentions in later works. The critical response to the View With a Room

³² For discourse on the differing uses of 'realism' by artists, see Kuh K, The Artists' Voice, Harper and Row, New York and Evanston, 1960, p3.

Series (exhibited Studio 20, Adelaide, represented National Art Glass Collection, City Gallery of Wagga Wagga, Art Gallery of South Australia) contributed substantially to The Cicatrix Series and was the author's first exhibited work in kiln-formed glass. Each work bore individual socio-political concerns but functioned with similar compositional elements. The basic form of a room, illustrated by two walls and a floor, was manipulated to hold differing emphases suited to the topic. This device re-emerged in those of The Cicatrix Series, which continued capitalisation upon the use of both interior and exterior aspects of the form being apparent from any given view and in so doing, presenting two perspectives of the one proposition. One of the most advantageous attributes of the architectural-fragment form is evidenced in the use of windows or doorways which allow actual or visual passage in two directions, substantial basis for symbolism and reference to the significance being borne by the direction of travel rather than the act of travelling.

The notion of values being determined by the direction or perspective from which one views is most clearly expressed in 'View From the Grand Hotel'. It portrays a female figure standing before the window of a room that has the impersonal characteristics of what might be a hotel bedroom indicated by the wall paper and floor covering. Outside the room the view of a serene ocean is interrupted by a floating life preserver bearing the word 'Belgrano'. This work comments upon the two acts of terror and the manner in which each can be viewed as different from the other should the viewer choose to so do. The window, like most, can be looked through from either direction. An individual may feel at one with the events of that side of the window from which he/she looks but feel detached from those beyond the pane and opposition to more distant events. The direction of viewing may be the determinant factor of the affiliation. The then Prime Minister of Britain, (now Lady) Margaret Thatcher described the actions of the Irish Republican Army in bombing the Grand Hotel at the time of a visit by the British Parliament as despicable, but the sinking of the General Belgrano by the British Navy as noble.³³ One might assume that some Irish and Argentinians may describe these acts in the opposite vein. Classification of violent acts depends not upon the level of violence, but upon the direction from which it is viewed. The direction of viewing the events gives direction to the view which is held of the events.

³³ The bomb placed in The Grand Hotel exploded early on the morning of October 19th, 1984, (see archival records).
The General Belgrano was torpedoed at 1601 hours, May 2nd, 1982, (see archival records).
See, Gavshon A, and Rice D, The Sinking of The Belgrano, Martin Secker and Warburg Limited, Britain, 1984.

This notion of direction-determined values is integral to the portrayal of cultural colonisation in The Cicatrix Series. The viewing of all colonisation is done with a directional value perspective. An individual's view of colonisation, cultural or otherwise, is influenced by her/his position in the hierarchy pertaining to that particular act of colonisation. As a child the author was taught that the British 'came' to Australia and 'settled' in India rather than 'conquered' and 'overruled' the existing social structures. A friend who as a child was a member of the British Raj, speaks of the good fortune Britain bestowed upon India by bringing the railway and postal service. An Indian friend once expressed hatred of the British and abhorrence of that which they had done in and to his land. The same incidents were viewed by these two people from opposing perspectives. These separate encounters enlightened the author on the nature of historical accounts and contributed to an interest in cultural colonisation.

Increasingly, works originated from deliberation of socio-political concerns brought to mind largely by experiences encountered in South East Asian and South American countries. Exposure to the life and living conditions of friends and acquaintances in Pasay (a lesser district of Manila), prompted greater realisation of the realities of cultural colonisation, imperialism and capitalism. During the 1980's the author lectured on and was published on the topic of cultural colonisation. With particular reference to art in education, papers addressed that topic in Brazil and the Philippines. Works planned during this period frequently addressed socio-political concerns held by the author with the intention of exposing those issues inherent in the subject rather than proposing a solution to the specific problems or consequences involved.

Exposure to cultural colonisation in other countries clarified perception of the realities of Australian history. Hindsight allows realisation of the paths which led to The Cicatrix Series.

CHAPTER TWO

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE CICATRIX SERIES

- A CHOOSING THE CICATRIX
- B THE ORIGINAL CICATRIX WORKS
- C THE CICATRIX SERIES

A CHOOSING THE CICATRIX

Little of that which we experience is simple. We may view simplistically, we may deny the multifaceted nature of our experience so as to preserve the comfort of a singular perspective. Seldom does an action exist without a perceptible reaction. The giver receives in the act of giving, the aggressor is brutalised by the violence inflicted upon another, the recipient of prejudice may eventually adopt the hierarchy of the oppressor.³⁴ The Cicatrix Series acknowledges the complexity of interaction between the cultural coloniser and the culturally colonised.

The word 'cicatrix' means 'scar'. The term can be applied to the most slight of scars, even the mark remaining on the twig when a leaf is removed, but may equally be applied to any scar that may occur on a human or an animal and may also refer to the ceremonial scarring deliberately applied to the body. The diversity of the meaning of the word parallels the complexity of experience and the variety of ways in which one experience may be interpreted by various individuals. Similarly, an individual may comprehend the variety of interpretations of a shared experience if he/she is receptive to the notion that the phenomenon of any given experience is influenced by interpretation of previous experience. In broadening the meaning of the word to encompass 'emotional scarring', such as may occur when one people is colonised by another, the author concentrates upon cultural colonisation (the imposition of one culture upon people of another), without denying the usual concomitance of military and financial colonisation. When two cultures of unequal power co-exist, the exchange of cultural practice contributes to the complexity of the interaction but the imposition of colonisation is both evident and in a single direction. An academic interest in cultural colonisation predates The Cicatrix Series and acknowledges that the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant Australian group of which the author is a member is both the cultural coloniser and the culturally colonised in different but co-existing

³⁴ The phenomenon of those discriminated against adopting the view that they are in fact inferior, after being subjected to repeated and/or tyrannical statements making that claim is recorded in numerous individual cases of racial and sexist prejudice. Jewish victims of Nazi oppression on occasion came to accept that they were inferior as have some Afro-Americans subjected to generations of racial prejudice. When it is the case that, and in the sense that, the oppressed are not able to cast off the oppressor the statement of superior/inferior existence may become a self-fulfilling prophesy. Author Shelby Steele identifies '... the intense feelings of racial inferiority and self doubt that can assault and sometimes overwhelm blacks ... plunged into a previously all white world..' (White). Similar adoption of the belief of those dominant has been witnessed with hostages. Now known as the 'Stockholm Syndrome' the most controversial case is that of Patty Hearst and the Symbionese Army. See, White J.E., 'On Being Black', Time Magazine, September, 1991, p.34.

situations.

While living in Japan, the author witnessed some media reports of the Australian Bi-Centennial Celebrations. Leaving aside the issues arising from the claim that 1988 was the appropriate date for the event, the author directed attention to the aspects of Australian society that were celebrated, or more properly, to those which were absent. The failure of the celebration to acknowledge significantly the existence of Aboriginal Australians both in 1788 and 1988 inspired involvement with The Cicatrix Series. A more personal experience had occurred some years earlier when many of the descendants of Peter and Mary King, migrants to Australia in 1845, came from distant parts of the continent to meet and celebrate their heritage. Some two hundred family members forgathered. A self appointed spokesperson presumed the religious affiliation of those present, eulogised the forebears and claimed pride in them and their achievement in carving farming land from this hard continent. Knowing something of the practices frequently used in acquiring farming land and of the consequences that befell the original inhabitants, the author considered that shame would be a more appropriate response, yet pride filled the room and the celebratory trappings of the dominant festooned the occasion. There was no acknowledgment of those who had witnessed the establishment of the family empire. There was not time to mourn the vanquished upon whose land contemporary Australia now stands. There were not thoughts of the cost that some had incurred that others might prosper. All that had been done by the 'museumification' of the hapless.³⁵ A sampling of the artefacts of the displaced culture is securely lodged in the public institutions and afforded great respect. The victors acknowledge not the people upon whom they have brought and continue to bring degradation, but contradictorily revere and place upon pedestals the cultural product of those people. Perhaps the museum practice serves to appease our collective guilt. Could it be that the more grand the museum display, the more atonement granted to the national conscience?

The notion of the ramifications of colonising acts being ignored by the descendants of the colonists and atonement being achieved by giving recognition to the culture of the vanquished contributed to the formulation of The Cicatrix Series.³⁶

³⁵ The term 'museumification' is devised by the author. It is intended to describe the process of respecting the artefacts of a subject people by placing them in museums yet simultaneously not respecting the people from whom the artefacts have been taken.

³⁶ 'Western collectors and researchers have always played dual and contradictory roles in their cultural cannibalism of material and symbolic records from pre-industrial societies. Colonial ravaging of indigenous cultures have been widely accompanied by 'conservation' of the latter's unique articles and attributes but, it

B THE ORIGINAL CICATRIX WORKS

The initial tests, both aesthetic and technical, culminated in three elliptical forms which to differing degrees bore some reference to the wooden bowls made by some groups of Australian Aborigines. The multi-purpose vessel is known by many names but most commonly as the 'wirra' or 'coolamon'. These glass vessels employed gentle curves taking the eye from the interior to the exterior. The background colours give some suggestion of the palette of Aboriginal painting. This reference is further substantiated by the dot and hatching patterns of both surfaces. There is a gentle ambience, a softness generated by the low sheen of the surface such as is not usually associated with glass. (Fig 1).

As tests, the works were successful and promised of developmental potential. The techniques of production combined age-old traditions of glass working with original variations. There was evident need for technical improvement and in order to convey the intention, an appropriate means of display which would isolate the glass forms to suggest that particular insularity found in museum collections. The tests were encouraging and with deliberation and enhancement, seemed able to carry the notion that colonised cultures are stripped of their artefacts, both literally and symbolically.

While these test-pieces were not suitable for exhibition purposes, they provided an introductory contribution to the first exhibited Cicatrix work which consequently bore a close resemblance to them shown in an international exhibition in Japan and was purchased for a private collection in Tokyo.

is often argued, ethnographic knowledge and museum collections are more accurate reflections of dominant Western attitudes and aesthetics of the time than they are representations of their originating cultures'. See, Chance I, and Seplin P, 'Cannibal Culture, The (Un)Making of the Modern Museum: A Report on the Fifth International Symposium of Pacific Arts, Performance and Society'. Adelaide, April, 1993, in Broad Sheet, Vol 22, No. 2, June, 1993, p.12-13.

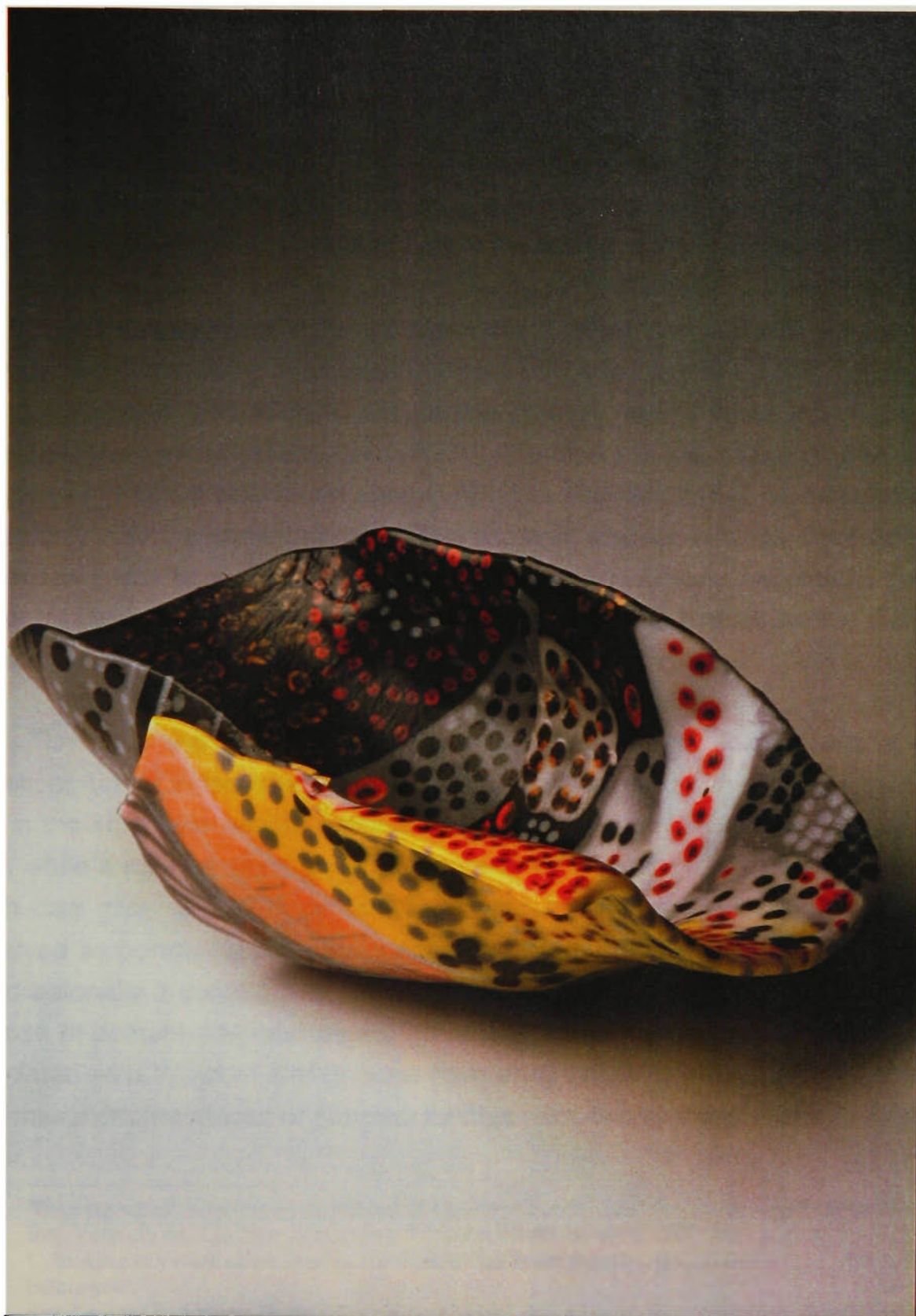


Fig 1 Original Cicatrix Test

C THE CICATRIX SERIES

The Cicatrix Series although it makes some reference to Aboriginal images, is not about the Aboriginal people, nor is it about Aboriginal art. Colonisation is an act of the dominant rather than of the dominated party. The works then are more closely associated with the cultural practice of non-Aboriginal Australians. Cultural colonisation is a sufficiently identifiable phenomenon to stand as the topic of art works or other scholarly discourse without need of co-existing or otherwise supportive subject matter. The intent of this series is divorced from emotive assertion of historical right or wrong and seeks to comment upon the reality of cultural colonisation alone.

The particular act of cultural colonisation to which this series is directed is that of the practice of plucking artefacts from the colonised culture to be reclassified as historic examples according to the criteria of the colonist while not respecting the people from whom the objects are taken.³⁷ The works of this series may be viewed as a displayed artefact positioned upon a plinth or simultaneously as a single form with two acutely differing characteristics. The bifurcate manner in which the works may be addressed predicts a diversity of interpretations which may be concluded by the viewer.³⁸ The element of ambiguity evident in the works is fundamental to the portrayal of the complexities of cultural colonisation.

The work stems in part from cognisance of the twofold impact of museum collections upon, in the one case, those people from whom the objects are collected and, in the other, the people represented by the collector. The massive base of each work, while it may be seen quite elementarily as a plinth, that device of presentation which can give validation or indicate some level of preciousness, may also be perceived as portraying the dominance of Western culture. The base form is a cube (or occasionally a cuboid) with an inference of the angularity of Western architecture. The use of cement emphasises the great weight, both physical and emotional that is associated with Western architecture from early times to present day 'sky scrapers'. (The massive dimensions of Norman castles influenced these forms.) Although the

³⁷ 'The very act of collecting has a political or ideological or aesthetic dimension which cannot be overlooked'. See, Vergo P, ed, The New Museology, Reaktion Books, London, 1989, p.2.

³⁸ '... looking at a work of art, reading the work of art, is not merely a question of seeing what is directly before you'. See, Levinas E, 'Critical Distance, or Critical Mass?', in 24 Hours, pub. Australian Broadcasting Corporation, July, 1993, pp.44-47.

cement form is positioned below that of the glass, it is far from being dominated and asserts its presence as the essential leg upon which the body of the work must stand. The cement base confers the status and the manner in which the glass is intended to be viewed and dictates the terms of the juxtaposition of the two parts of each work.

The glass form offers many contrasts to the cement base and introduces contradictions of its own to the total demeanour of the work. Although glass is an exceptionally heavy material the particular forms used and the positioning of a small leg to join the glass to the cement base alludes to a sense of weightlessness or perhaps in some works, an inference of buoyancy. Alternatively a suggestion of minimal contact with the base, as a dancer might be joined to the stage by the slightest of connections, is open to interpretation. The almost convoluted profile of many of the works tells of natural forms, organic spectacles of grace and extravagant beauty. This elaborate edge of the form grows from the elliptical central depression, a deep well within a sacred ground. This serene form is not conspicuous, nor necessarily evident at the first viewing. It requires some degree of observation or perhaps contemplation before asserting its influence as the focus of the glass component. This form is that of the bowl, albeit elliptical rather than the more common circular. The bowl form is known to most societies and is central to the survival activities of water and food handling. The great significance of the bowl form lies within the relationship between the function of the bowl and the continuance of life. Additionally, many societies give particular significance to bowls used in religious or other ceremonial celebrations. The Cicatrix bowl forms are as subdued as is the reference they make to the wirra. These are not dogmatic assertions of the pivotal place of bowl forms in any society nor are they overt in the central significance they confer on the wirra as a symbol of cultural identification. Rather, the Cicatrix works suggest the significance of the bowl form and imply that the wirra is as significant in Aboriginal culture as the circular bowl is in Western society.

The colonist, by judging the society of the dominated by criteria from his/her background is denied significant understanding of the subtlety and diversity of the colonised culture. The tradition of circular vessels in Western society is knowingly or unknowingly used by members of that group as the standard against which the wirra and other culturally exotic artefacts of this type are measured. There is a cultural bias to judgements of the inherent merit in artefacts of other cultures. The environmental and sociological traditions of Western society are not appropriate yardsticks for

understanding the successful existence of Aboriginal culture. Such straitened evaluation would not appreciate the sophistication of the wirra form. The Cicatrix works are in part concerned with presenting some visual manifestations of the complexities of gauging the culture of another with instruments unsuited to the task. The wirra form in these works is hidden from those who view the works without looking beyond the sensuous nature of the colours and the intrigue of the contoured edge.

The colours of this group of works are initiated by those of the desert country. As the series progresses the palette becomes broader and contradiction is introduced to the colour configuration. Superimposed upon the base colours are dots and lines which, by virtue of their size and juxtaposition make reference to various forms of Aboriginal painting styles but stand apart from the customs and configurations which give rise to literal meaning in actual Aboriginal works. The literal meaning of these works lies in the act of reference rather than in association with the meaning of the subject so referred.

Works from the early stages of this series are typified by Cicatrix XIII. (Fig. 2.)



Fig 2 Cicatrix XIII 1990 22cm H.

Cicatrix I

1990

Private Collection, Germany

Fig 3.

Using low, wide open forms, this work invites the viewer to engage in interaction without confrontation. The contour and patterns are readily engaged and present few obstacles to interpretation. The rhythmic patterning gives emphasis to the significance of the circle in many art forms, including that of Aboriginal Australians. The universal application of the circle in art allows some tentative connection between Aboriginal art and Western art in these works. While motivations, cultural significance and manifestations of those two art forms is at great variance, some similarity exists. This work alludes to that small patch of common ground.

The glass is curled so as to reveal both the upper and lower sides simultaneously. The viewer is encouraged to engage the work as presenting two realities, that of the upper surface, the dominant confident stable entity and that of the lower entity, waiting the correct moment to assert and conquer. The glass exhibits both the elongated bowl form and the surrounding extensions which supportively frame but also entrap the centre. There is a suggestion of the vastness of the desert plains in the wide sweep of the form which is given some emphasis by the colour of the patterning.

The cement base is essentially a post and lintel structure with an extension of the horizontal beam. The glass form stands secure upon the stage-like base, presented for public view but restricted to the confines of that stage rather as an animal in a modern zoo has 'freedom' within the limits of the cage bars. The pronounced horizontal form makes some reference to the author's visual experience while a resident in Japan. The extended lintel form is frequently used in that culture both in architecture and domestic artefacts. Understandably the life experience of the artist is unearthed in examination of the works. In the author's case, the consequence of experience (normally recognised in hindsight) of Japanese culture and North American Indian artefacts manifests a subtle influence upon the forms chosen. A sagacious viewer could interpret the form of this base as suggestive of the growing cultural colonisation of Australia by Japan. (While this process is in its earlier stages, it

is not readily recognised. The acknowledged genius of the Japanese at adapting and improving products and processes somewhat veils the growing colonisation which is at large in Australia and much of the world). The influence of the Japanese manipulation of form in this work is slight and perceptible only to those with some detailed knowledge of that culture. A parallel exists between the current state of colonisation and the suggestion inherent in the form of this base. There is some irony in the multifaceted nature of cultural colonisation in Australia. The dominant Anglo-Saxon group is simultaneously colonised by American and (increasingly by), Japanese cultures while upholding the cultural colonisation of the Aboriginal population.



Fig 3 Cicatrix I 1990 24cm H.

Cicatrix II

1990

Private Collection, New Zealand

Fig 4.

The glass form comes close to closing at the uppermost point of the curve of the rim, then opens generously at the extremes of the ellipse. There is a contradiction evident in the form in that it is in part accessible and in part inaccessible. If approached from the direction of the longer axis, the form is a bowl-like container, if from the top, entry is restricted and improbable. The converse natures of these elements of the work present entry points for interpretation simultaneously with barriers to simplistic explanations.

The more elaborate pattern occurs on the inner surface of the bowl form, the viewers' access is limited and might be thought of as voyeuristic. There is sufficient patterning on the outer surface to appear not as a shield isolating the viewer from access to the interior but as an indication of that which may be discovered beyond the initial viewing. The similarities of and differences between the interior and the exterior are indicative of the basic intention of this work. It is the existence of similarities and differences in contiguous societies rather than the particular similarities in and differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australian cultures that is the concern upon which this work is formed.

The cement base is massive, having two great legs, strong and immovable like the turrets of some ancient castle or the massive uprights of Stonehenge. The glass is elevated from the sobriety of the base, pinned to its allocated space as is a specimen butterfly, standing proud but unable to determine a fate beyond this confine.



Fig 4 Cicatrix II 1990 26cm H.

Cicatrix VII

1990

Private Collection, Japan

Fig 5.

The underside of the glass form is provocative of thoughts of landscape, of watercourses fingering thirsty land, of colour baked by an unlimited sun, of weathering, of the sameness of the plains.

This side of the form is less detailed than the upper face and offers some support or framing effect to the richly patterned interior. The wirra form, surrounded by the organic gently rolling edge stands secure in the womb of this piece. The glass form protrudes significantly beyond the confines of the plinth suggesting independence and asserting the little power it has to pit against the dominant mass of the base. This work exhibits a conflict, the glass form stands proud almost as though it could leave its place whenever it might choose. The cement form stands certain in its great strength, able to hold the glass form whenever and wherever it wishes.



Fig 5 Cicatrix VII 1990 30cm H.

Cicatrix IX

1990

National Art Glass collection

City Gallery of Wagga Wagga

Fig 6

Standing with a tall pedestal Cicatrix IX appears to prevail, detached from its surrounding it infers a sense of dignity which would endure regardless of circumstance. The form exposes little of the intensely patterned interior shielded by the stark exterior. The brace upon which the glass component stands is an assertive element of this work and emphasises the separation between the plinth and the vessel form.

The reference to Aboriginal painting exposed on the outer surface is tentative, suggestive of an eroded or not yet completed image; one which tells of change. A red line cleaves the surface emphasising the incomplete coverage of the pattern. The glass edge is weathered, worn by difficult existence.

This work exhibits contrast, retains some of the fortitude revealed in its patterned surface but concedes the inevitability of change.



Fig 6 Cicatrix IX 1990 25cm H.

Cicatrix X

1990

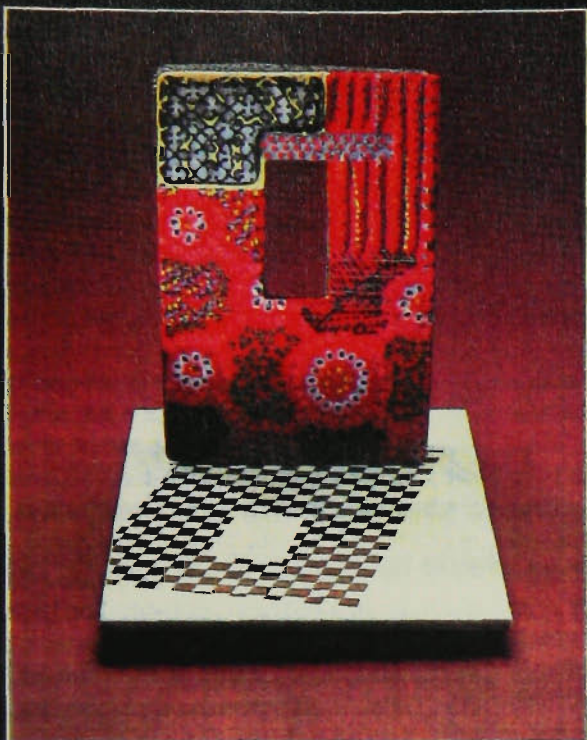
Private Collection, Australia

Fig 7

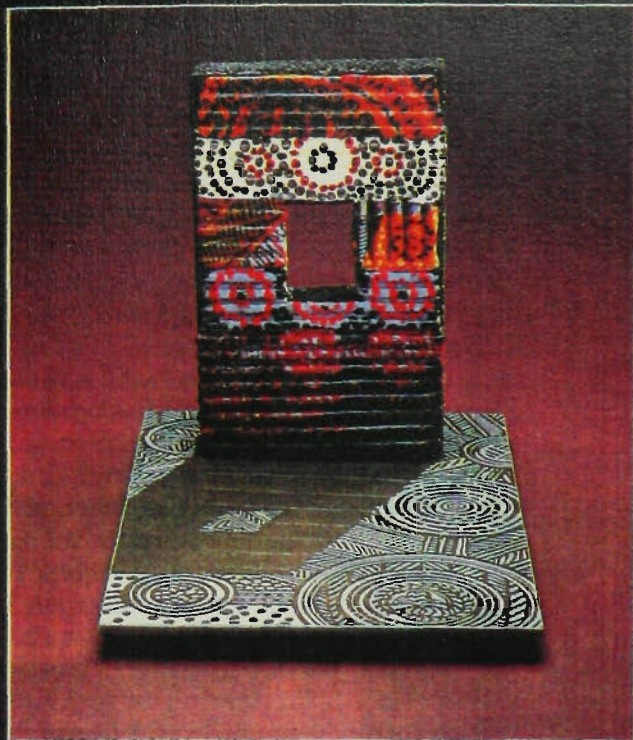
As red earth may glow in the yellow sun, or white clouds circumscribe the horizon, this work shows the strength of the desert colour, aura of the landscape, the history which is impressed into the soil. A red summer emits from the glass. The colour, the form, offer an imagined history and illustrate some of the emotional perceptions held of Australia.

The landscape is shown around the central bowl form; expanse of plain on one side, an upheaval of hills and the retreat of the valley on the other. This landscape is punctuated by the impression of humans, white fields or black dots in line after line.

The glass form and the cement base are separated by the pillar which creates an emotional distance, a sense of hovering between different agendas. It is this distance between the two forms which emphasises the evaluation of the wirra forms upon their plinths, of the status accorded and the limitations imposed. The plinth stands proud, the legs solid and stable.



'Cicatrix Shadow 4', 1991, ht 30 cm



'Cicatrix Shadow 2', 1991, ht 30 cm



'Cicatrix X', 1990, kiln-formed glass and coral cement, ht 40 cm

CHAPTER THREE

THE CICATRIX SHIELDS

The upper form of The Cicatrix Shield works may be likened to either a vessel-form which is symbolic of the openness and hospitality attributable to wide rimmed bowls or alternatively to that of a combat shield symbolising the hostility between adversaries.

The notion that a shield, while being between two dissident parties, is related to both the holder and the withheld and as such provides a link or bond between them became the basis of the choice of the title of this series.

THE CICATRIX SHIELDS

This on-going series, which is recognisably a direct development from the original Cicatrix Series currently comprises some seventeen works. They adopt the same format to the extent that there is an extravagantly coloured glass component supported by a plinth-form. In these works the upper-form has shed the convolutions of the earlier series and presents an elongated elliptical silhouette symmetrically positioned upon an etched float-glass base.

The adoption of a long and relatively narrow ellipse is, for the author, a return to a more direct reference to the wirra in that the original tests were less convoluted than the ensuing works. The colour configurations exhibit greater control in these works and present a more easily interpreted reference to Australian Aboriginal images than was the case in the preceding series. Most of the shields are 760mm in length and present a stark form above a (usually) narrow base.

The appearance of considerable strength in the base is attributable to the use of 6mm (thick) glass. The etched pattern and frosted surface mollifies the geometric precision of the bases. The base is both a component of the overall composition and a plinth for the coloured section.

The Shields are configured upon the same formal relationship as that of the original Cicatrix works. The artefact-like component is held aloft by the plinth-like component. The composition allows conjecture about the relationship(s) between them.

Cicatrix Shield 1

1991

Fig 10.

The muted red background of the shield form engenders a sense of ceremonial or spiritual significance in this work. The pattern is primarily presented as being intensely and formally controlled and is imposed upon the red background. A secondary area of dark brown which may be perceived as having been appliqued to the basic colour does not impede some of the dominant pattern continuing over it. This minor background and the overlay presents as a contradiction of being both distinct from, but included in, the basic image of the coloured form. A white almost triangular shape breaks the continuity of the main form and similarly hosts some of the principal pattern.

The plinth is large, strong and stands upon a base-plate of Aboriginal-like images. It holds the shield-form with surety and dominance.

The work presents an inference of solemnity and quiet monopoly over its surrounds. It is 760mm long and seems as a mammoth work which dominates its space and will not be disturbed by variance of the circumstances which surround its base. The coloured ellipse is a relatively closed form which may be interpreted as determined to maintain its secrets from the observer.

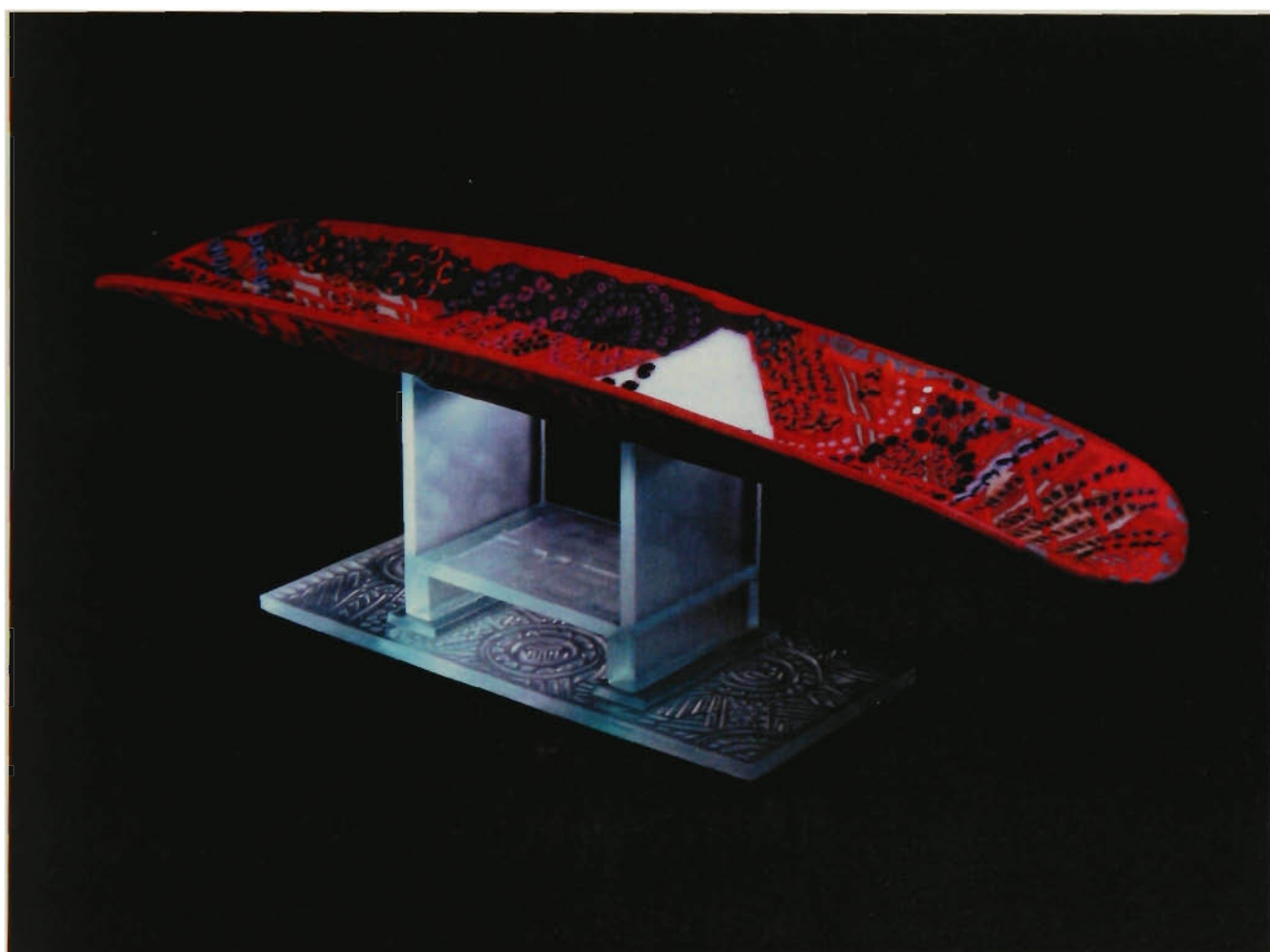


Fig 10 Cicatrix Shield 1 1991 76cm Wide

Cicatrix Shield 3

1991

Private Collection, Germany

Fig 11.

The colours and patterns of this shield are organically configured with a barely perceptible influence of ceremonial images. There is suggestion of the desert landscape illustrated in the reds and browns of the base colour. A painterly quality in many of the colours has been achieved by repeatedly subjecting the glass to high temperature firings.

The plinth-form is demure and holds the shield close to the display surface upon which it stands. The elongated base gives emphasis to the length of the shield. The presence of this work (and Cicatrix Shield 14) is distinctly separate from those of the series with tall plinths. These works have an intimacy which engenders sympathetic interpretation by viewers. This frequently reported (to the author) explication of the grace and easy acceptability of the low plinth may be understood as confirmation that the authors' intention of isolating the majority of the Shields on high plinths has established the desired aloofness and limited approachability of the 'imperial museum' piece that they are designed to represent.³⁹

³⁹ The 'imperial museum' notion is described by critic Robert Hughes as the alienation of the viewer from the exhibit by the process of prescriptive and colonial attitudes by curators to promulgate the notion of the universality of artworks.
Interview, Sightings, Radio National, 28.10.1992.



Fig 11 Cicatrix Shield 3 1991 76cm wide

Cicatrix Shield 9

1991

Fig 12.

The width and restrained curve of the shield, in combination with the soft grey background, exhibit a 'generous' or 'giving' aspect in this work. The patterns are readily recognised as being circles and further emphasise the openness of the image.

The base gives emphasis to the strength and control associated with a plinth, holding the work in position, not allowing any other arrangement of the components. This work typifies the solemnity of the Cicatrix Shields. The two elements, though making contact with each other, have a separation imposed by the difference in material, colour and form. The shield-form has an aura of levitating above the base and insinuates a perpetual balance between the two forms and the cultural entities represented. This balance would be judged as being uneven if assessed by the manner of dominance attributable to each form, but may be interpreted as depicting the different criteria which are more supportably applied to both the forms and the cultures from which the images are drawn.

This work has been illustrated in (at least) four publications and exhibited twice.⁴⁰ It has been well received, with various viewers describing it as an excellent work while demonstrating some acceptance of the intent. One reviewer, (a non-Aboriginal) described this work with '...leaves behind a mixed impression; the danger of trivialising the strongly expressive statement on life by a totally different and foreign culture...'. The knife-edge of depicting cultural colonisation unavoidably exposes the works to this interpretation.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Published Shadows and Auras Catalogue
Neues Glas
Craftwest National
Craft Arts International
Exhibited Shadows and Auras, City Gallery of Wollongong
International Directions in Glass, Art Gallery of Western Australia

⁴¹ Ricke H, 'Design Visions' in Neues Glas, Vol 1, 1993, pp.11-21.

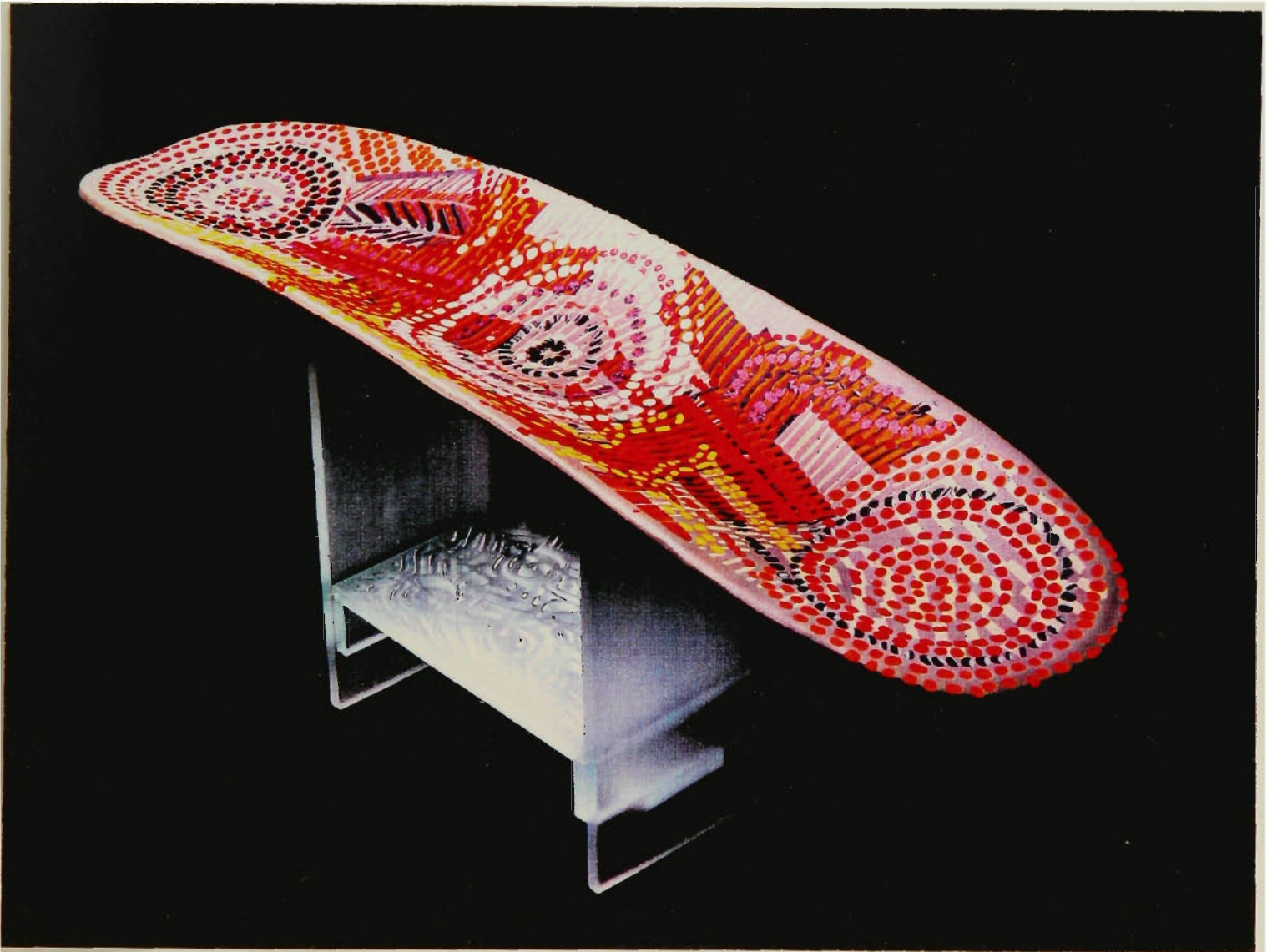


Fig 12 Cicatrix Shield 9 1991 76cm wide.

Fig 13.

Preceding works of this series initially used solid areas of coloured glass which, by various manipulations, were configured into stripes and dots. This work evolved from multi-toned sheet glass which was variously cut and re-arranged so as to expose a texture of very fine dots. The seemingly shimmering surface generated by the countless small sections of various tones of the one hue implies movement as the eye scans the elongated bowl form.

This sensation bring to mind one explanation of the mechanism of sight and the consequent impact upon perception. As a consequence of the theory that sight is the perception of minor variances in a stippled field of vision, it is understood that the comprehension of movement, either unconsciously accepted or peripherally perceived, results from the re-configuration of the particles of which the field is comprised.⁴²

The surface of this work, though stationary, implies an illuminating movement as the countless fine dots are perceived. The disparate aspects of being inert but seemingly in motion, affords a dynamic appearance and introduces another layer of contradiction in the work. Such ambivalence is well suited to the author's intent.

The coloured shield form has relinquished the solid blocks of colour of the earlier works in this series and capitalised upon the emotive quality of the fine particles of colour. These areas suggest a weathering of the surface which may be interpreted as lodging the piece in some type of historical continuum. The emotive qualities of this colour configuration are in contrast with the comparatively formalised elements of the composition. The use of a corrugated line refers to corrugated building iron, which has become an Australian icon. This connection with the colonist is juxtaposed with

⁴² This phenomenon has given rise to a direction to pursue in future works. The shimmering effect suggests connection with the nature of sight. Though it is not currently fully understood, one account of the ability to recognise visually is directed towards the discrimination of particle size and presents vision as the ability to distinguish differences between particular particles of the field of perception.
Arnheim R, Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974, pp.42-48.

images and patterns suggestive of the colonised. As fences may ignore the integrity of sacred lands the patterns swathe lines across the colour field of this work.

The plinth component of the work, in this instance a horizontally aligned wall-like form, exploits the translucency of frosted float glass and reveals from any one view the different patterning of each of the major sides. One face is etched with fragments of precise geometric patterns which (in fact) are derived from industrial sources characteristic of the technology of Western society. The other bears a more intervened assemblage of controlled hatching lines alluding to a ritualistic symbolism. The apparent juxtaposition of the two patterns caused by the translucency of the glass allows speculation of the interaction, the 'give-and-take', of the source cultures.



Fig 13 Cicatrix Shield 13 1991 76cm Wide

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CICATRIX SHADOWS

These works bear some relationship to an earlier group entitled 'The View With a Room Series' in which two walls of a room are the conspicuous element of the composition. The Cicatrix Shadow works utilise one remaining wall of an eroded building to cast a shadow upon a barren ground.

THE CICATRIX SHADOWS

The pre-occupation of the human race with work is on-going and a continual source of amazement for the author. The human race has worked, built houses, carved temples, hewn timber, ploughed the land. The sum total of countless centuries of this passionate industry defies comprehension. The futility of much work and the reclamation of the land by the forces of nature does little to discourage the work ethic.

Two marks of Western culture as it spread relentlessly across the globe conquering and colonising all before it were the fence and the house. The division of land by the fence and the stamping of ownership as designated by the house carved nature into exclusive lots that barred nomadic inhabitants and sealed their fate. The self-righteousness of Western society stands firm even as the monuments of colonisation fall to disuse, crumble and sink back into the earth. The Australian landscape is littered with remnants of farm houses, barns, sheds and outhouses. The Cicatrix Shadow Series, uses the one remaining wall, the final stand of the coloniser to cast the shadow of diminishing influence upon Mother Earth. The shadow, unlike the camera, cannot tell a lie. The shadows in these works may portray an extended or contracted image of the form from which they are cast but they offer accurate depiction of the essential aspects of the reality underlying the facade of racial superiority. The shadows in these works are as much, or perhaps more accurately more than, the essence of the work as is the wall from which they are cast. These shadows elicit the underlying reality of the forty thousand years of human occupation of the land and illuminate the comparative insignificance of two hundred years of posturing. In some works, the shadows portray the essence of Aboriginal image-making that has lain upon the desert sands before the arrival of the walls of the coloniser and will remain as part of the land beyond the crumbling of the architecture which sought to conquer and domesticate this harsh continent. In others, the wall form is boldly emblazoned with the images suggestive of the colonised and the shadow portrays the geometric imposition of the coloniser. These works speak of the bleached bones of the optimist who steps into the desert demanding support from the land but not knowing the survival skills of the nomad. The house, now reduced to one wall, is as much a symbol of the dwellers' defeat as it is the means for establishing an initial victory over the forces of nature. Colonisers commonly destroy many of the artefacts of those who fall under their might. Religious missionaries and zealots often deny the cultural integrity

of the conquered and destroy the images and ceremony upon which rest the essence of the subjugated community. These works address the interaction of cultures and the consequent layering of and subsequent uncovering of periods of power by each culture. They predict a more powerful future for Aboriginal culture.

There is a certain irony in the current revival of Australian Aboriginal art-making and the respect which befalls it in the great art houses of our time. No small part of that irony is the manner in which some of the emergence of Aboriginal art has been aided by its symbolic foe, Western architecture. On at least one occasion, the re-establishment of painting as a central cultural practice has come about when tribal elders have adorned the walls of the community building with the images of the dreaming. While the inside of the building was the western school-room, the outside became the community school-room as the elders passed to their descendants the images and their meanings with paintings which covered the corrugated iron walls of the government-issue one room school. The irony of covering the facade of Westernisation with a facade of Aboriginality was undoubtedly apparent to the painters and is the source of the image-laden walls of this series. Some of the works incorporate sequential layers of facades as the Aboriginal-like images break away to reveal Western decorative patterning. There is a suggestion of 'one-sidedness' in these works, as though the wall forms are paintings behind which there is nothing of significance. In contradiction to that inference each wall form has a monumental structure which supports the facade and when viewed from a position which conceals the decorated side infers a 'one-sidedness' of its own in that it presents as being of singular importance, not unlike the ambience of a European castle wall or the remains of a Roman or Greek tiled villa floor.

This series seeks to present the contradictions and ambiguity of cultural colonisation and depicts fragments of the prevailing influence held at differing times by the two cultures once separate but now forever bound as each in turn, *albeit* disproportionately lays a facade upon the dominion of the other. The facade imposed by Western society is all pervasive, exercising influence, and at times control, over almost every aspect of the colonised culture. The facade contributed by the Aboriginal culture is rare, of limited influence and often exists as a meagre and merely symbolic achievement. The future significance of such applications of fragile facades is yet to be known, though there is a perceptible growth of influence as non-Aboriginal society begins to recognise some of the environmental and social understandings of the

Aboriginal people. The belief that a tribal people are ignorant of civilisation and technology as well as being unable to determine a desirable lifestyle is being slowly eroded as Western Society gradually beholds the shortcomings of industrialisation and capitalism. The paintings of the Elders upon the outside walls of the Education Department building is a symbolic facade, upon the dominance of Western Society. That symbolic change may herald a substantial change as Aboriginal people regain the authority of educating their young. It now seems inconceivable that Aboriginal educational methodology would ever significantly influence the governmental education systems, yet many concepts now commonplace were once assumed impossible. The Cicatrix Shadows tease the understanding of the viewer, layering one symbolic image upon another.

Fig 14

A sombre grey border separates the vibrant patterns upon the wall and the inflexible mesh-like image of the base. Like any border it both divides and joins the entities between which it stands. This border, in part a foundation supporting the colours of the wall, acts primarily as mediator allowing the wall and the base to co-exist in this composition, neither being subordinate. The border emphasises the difference between the shadow and that from which it is cast.

The industrial and geometric pattern of the shadow is sparse and unrelenting. The reference to cyclone-mesh fencing conjures thoughts of imprisonment, exclusion or trespass. This shadow reflects only the form of the wall and stands in stark contrast to the surface decoration as if to deny the existence of the pattern or the pattern maker.

The wall pattern presents as having self-assuredness, implied by the complete coverage of the surface which belies the lack of recognition afforded by the shadow.

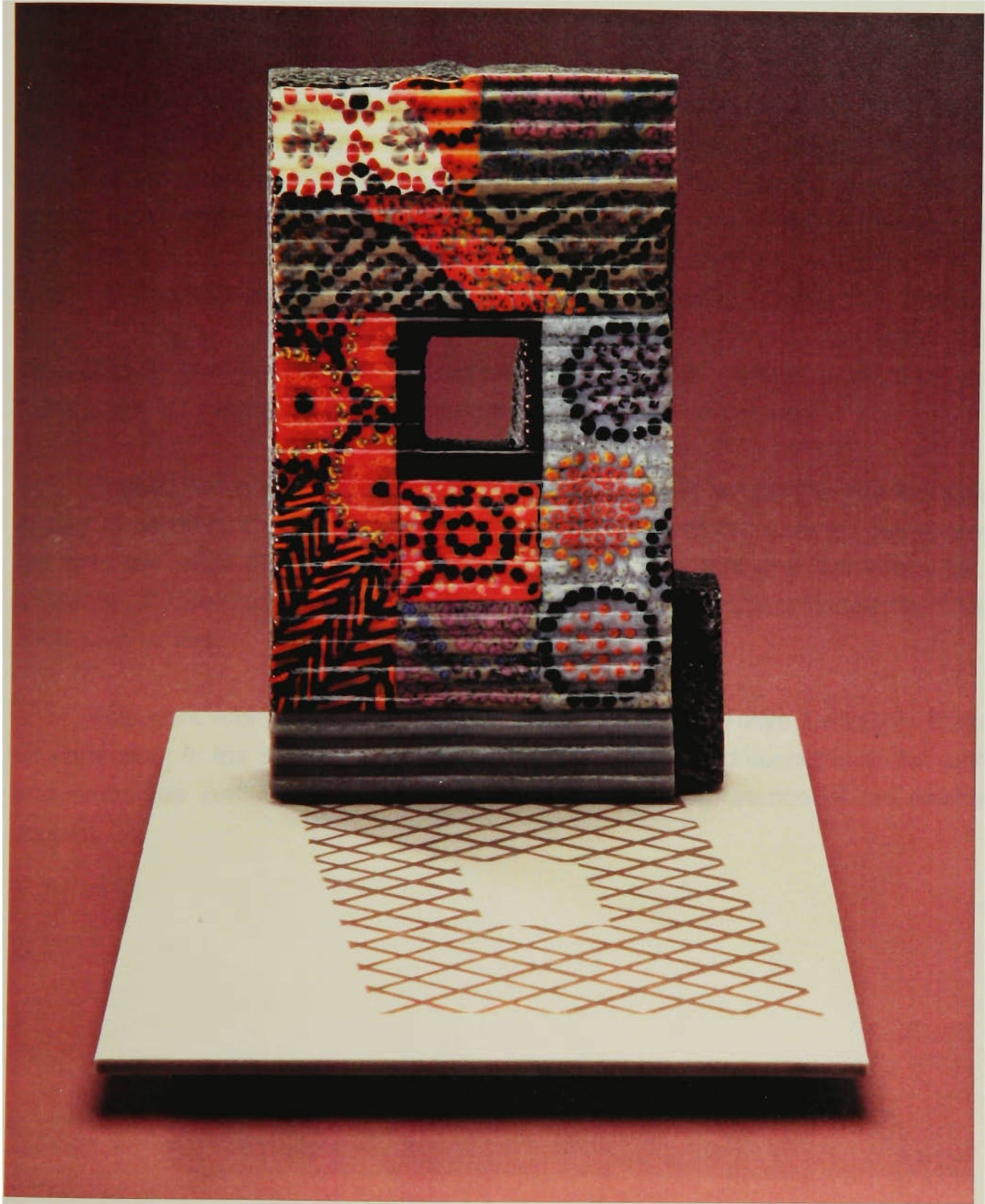


Fig 14 Cicatrix Shadow 11 1991 20cm H.

1991

Fig 9

The combination of images in this work suggests some of the contradictions and conflicts inherent to colonisation. Patterns which are drawn from Aboriginal painting adopt the gentility of wallpaper decoration on the plain surface of the wall but embody a contest diametrically opposed where they intrude upon the corrugated sections. The patchwork of horizontally and vertically aligned corrugations symbolises haphazard and opportunistic development in this work, and as a symbol is attributable to the sporadic process evident in the conquering of Australia. Above the window a suggestion of a lintel lies uncharacteristically off-centre and is unusually richly decorated. A corner of geometrically based wallpaper pattern breaks through the main pattern revealing another section of the history recounted on this wall.

Slightly out of alignment with the wall from which it is cast the shadow tells a history of its own. The geometric pattern is stamped upon the ground, unswervingly riding to the edge of the base. This shadow is independent and owes little for its existence. It does not quite belong to the wall, it does not acknowledge the history upon which it lies.

This work was used as the invitation illustration for the Tokyo Exhibition. Though an early work in the series it portrays many of the underlying concerns of the author and embodies sufficient information to propose an interpretation of the intended content.

1991

Fig 15

A white line swathes across the wall surface, distinct from the other background colours but barely disturbing the pattern of dots and circles. The ashen band, provocative but unexplained, distinguishes this work from others of the series in the manner in which it offers a colour-change independent of the decorative element. It is impossible, from the information presented, to determine the sequence of events. Has the pattern been applied over the contrasting white base or has the base colour been removed from the surface? Though a conclusion can not be determined it is apparent that there is disturbance to the total image and to the chronicle of cultural practice evidenced in the dot-pattern.

On the base of the work the austere shadow imposes itself upon the fertile patterns uncaringly obliterating the testimony of those who have been supplanted from the land represented in these works. The remaining pattern is strong and decisive, accounting for every part of the surface. The shadow is inexorable yet acts as a mirror to the wall reflecting its patterns and corrugations. There is opportunity to speculate upon the eventual impact of the shadow which, while dominating the pattern it covers, unavoidably holds an image of another pattern of origin similar to that of the first.

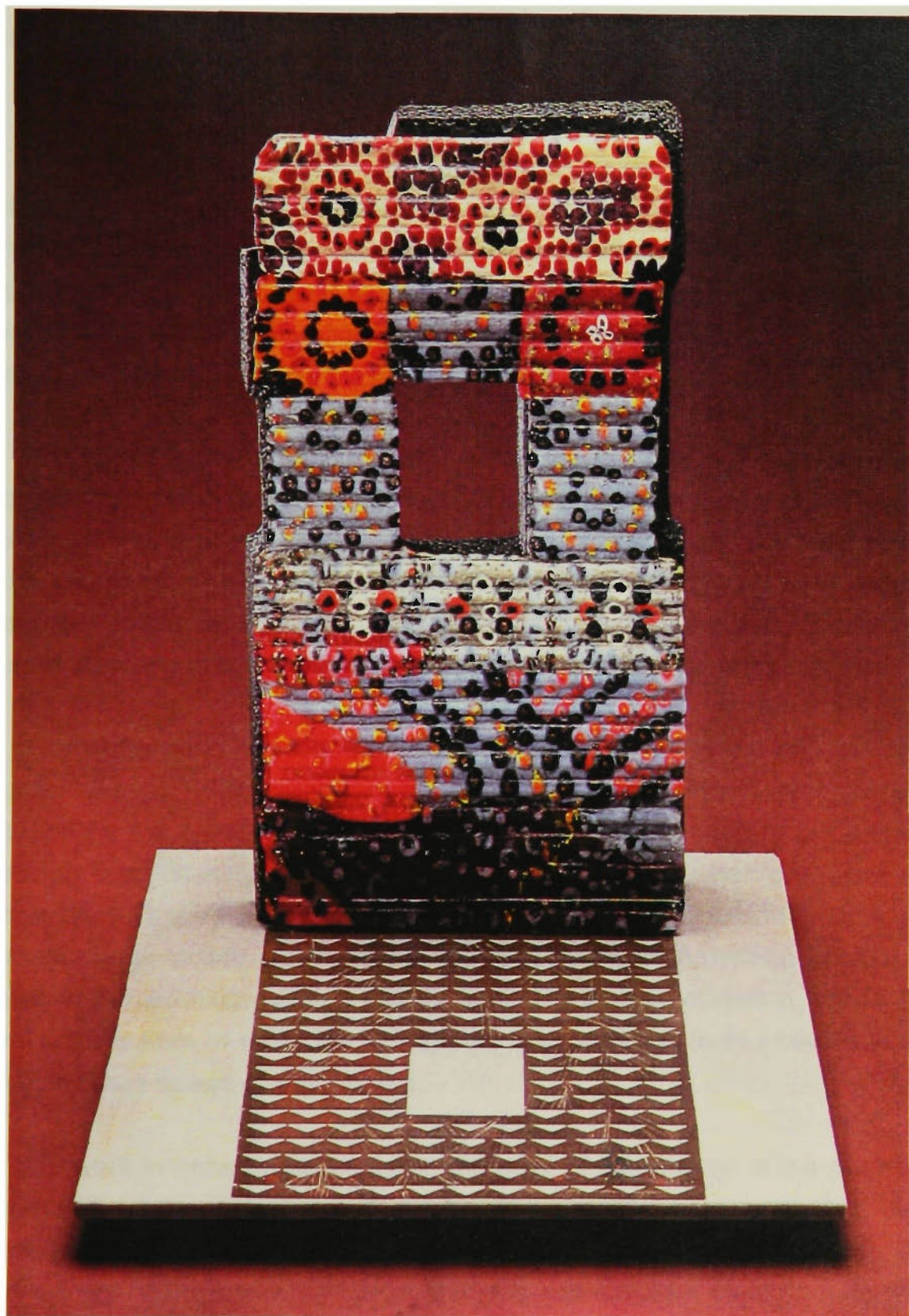


Fig 15 Cicatrix Shadow 13 1991 30cm H.

Fig 16

The visual complexity and greater scale of this work marks perhaps a significant development of the author's comprehension of the multifaceted nature of cultural colonisation and the diversity of approaches with which people engage this subject. Cicatrix Shadow 01 represents more of the underlying theme than earlier works of the series allowing more entry points for viewer interpretation and easier access to understanding of both the work and the topic.

Though the process of cultural colonisation is one-directional there is not infrequently a converse flow of cultural practice adopted often unknowingly by the coloniser. Thus, the imposition of cultural practice gives rise to a localisation of that practice which may eventually be adopted by the colonist. While such practice bears little significance in the total equation of cultural colonisation it does lend complexity to any understanding of the sum effect upon the two peoples so engaged.

Converse direction cultural practice adoption is evidenced in the English language which, while imposed on subject peoples, has been augmented in adaptation by the colonist of localised approximations of standard phraseology. The expression 'long-time-no-see' originated in North America when the American Indian peoples were required to use English language. The inclusion of this and other grammatically simplified statements in mainstream North American English is but the first step in the eventual cultural journey resulting from colonisation. Ironically it is the cultural colonisation of other English speaking groups by North Americans which has internationalised usage of this phrase.

Different in nature, but similar in the level of complexity, is the phenomenon of the adoption by the colonised of an imposed practice as a symbol of defiance or eventually, of independence. The Spanish required Filipino servants to wear thin, almost transparent shirts which prevented the servant from stealing household items by hiding them under his shirt. These shirts, of a Spanish design, were to be worn

tucked into the trousers. To wear the shirt over the trousers was an act of defiance which indicated support for the Independence Movement. The practice was made illegal under Spanish Law. After Independence the style became a form of national costume worn on formal occasions and symbolised the 'freedom' of the Philippines.

While this work is not directed at aspects of language or costume it is influenced by the aforementioned and concerned with notions of reversal and the layering effect cultural colonisation has on both cultures. It is the complexity of the interaction of cultures that inspires this work and which gives rise to the visual intricacy of each of the principal views. The work holds many layers of surface embellishment alluding to the pastiche of historical imposition upon those people and that land now recognised as C20th Australia. The notion of 'layer upon layer' is explored to a degree not apparent in earlier works. The four faces (or views) of the piece offer several simultaneously presented examples of culturally derived patterning or symbolism.

The 'inside' view reveals some stripping away of the fabric which forms the building exposing beneath each surface a fragment of yet another by-gone era; some historical record of the toil of those who came before. Each layer may be seen as a complete statement until recognition of the existence of the other components gives rise to thoughts of incompleteness both physically and emotionally. Each view also presents an element of erosion. The base shows European construction methods eroded to reveal patterning suggestive of Aboriginal image-making which is in turn eroded to expose the chilling starkness of the grey, reflective base plate. Beyond the 'floor' lies a chair, turned on its side, telling something of a history but not revealing the details of the events which took the chair from the upright position. Has the chair been abandoned by previous occupants, cast aside by those who do not have need for a device to elevate them from the ground, fallen and remained as the evidence of some participation in an act of suicide?

The chair poses questions, does not give answers, but in so doing directs the viewer to address a limited range of possibilities. One leg of the chair is 'repaired'. The join is well formed but evidence of some earlier misadventure, or perhaps testimony to the lack of ability of the owner to replace the flawed item. This chair is ordinary, it is common, can be found in many a second-hand goods store and is distinctive only in that it is found upturned, repaired and in this particular location.

The chair testifies to the advent of human habitation, stands as a divider of society and when upturned, as in this case points not only to past events but provokes some suggestion as to the future. This work stands in recognition of the continuous nature of cultural colonisation, it speaks not only of the distant past but of the recent past, the present and looks towards the future. As such, it marks a new approach to The Cicatrix Shadow.

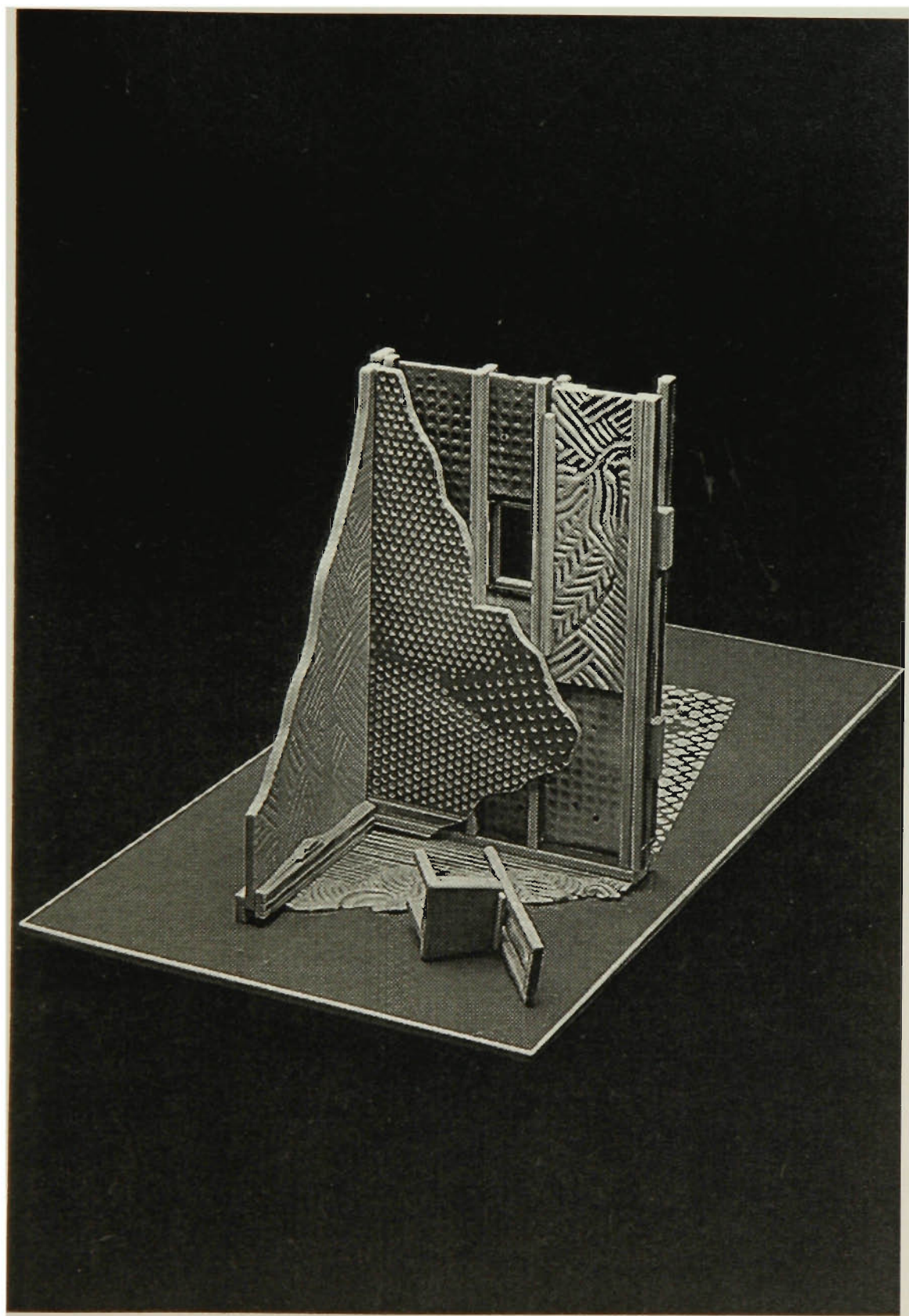


Fig 16 Cicatrix Shadow 01 1992 30cm H.

CHAPTER FIVE

INDIVIDUALLY TITLED WORKS

- A THE FLOAT-GLASS WORKS
- B THE VITROLITE WORKS
- C THE MIXED-GLASS WORKS
- D THE LIFE-SCALE WORKS

INDIVIDUALLY TITLED WORKS

The original contemplations which underlie The Cicatrix Series led to working in editions of works, each of which illustrated a facet of the central concern of the group. This endeavour continues with The Cicatrix Shield Series which will be continued beyond the completion of this document.

The refinement of the author's discernment while devising the edition works inevitably gave rise to concerns which are most readily expressed in more individual works. This group, subdivided for the purpose of this document into classification by media is discreet interpretations of aspects of the general concern and they are thus titled individually. The series works have been foundational to the formation of the individually titled works. Certainly the acquisition of many of the technical abilities was undertaken with the series works.

A THE FLOAT-GLASS WORKS

'Float-glass' is the correct term for the modern material commonly known as 'window-glass'. When float-glass is etched there is sufficient retention of the translucency to allow ready recognition of the material yet it exhibits an exotic aura enabling the concocting of a surreal inference in the image. Two works of this group combine the qualities of the glass with subtle and improbable configurations of architectural remnants and domestic articles. These juxtapositions direct attention to the slight difference that may divide the normal from the abnormal. The other two works present a stark image of one remaining wall of a building isolated on a broad plane which portrays a plain.

Fig 17

This work portrays the two remaining walls and the damaged floor of a domestic room. One wall has a window, the other, from which the interior lining is missing, reveals a pattern reminiscent of Aboriginal painting applied to the interior face of the exterior wall which can now be seen through the stud work. A chair faces this wall. It is as close to the wall as it could be while being used. (This distance is much less than that which is normally seen between a chair and a wall.) The chair casts a shadow across the floor.

The room is used as symbolic reference to the diminishing bastion of the colonist. This house, by the process of erosion is gradually returning to the earth over which it previously stood as an emblem of dominance. This once majestic building (whether suburban or a farmhouse) was formerly the centre of an empire but now it stands forlorn.⁴³

The image seen on the once hidden inner side of the wall, revealed only as a result of the deterioration of the building, stands like a testimony to the former presence and significance of the Aboriginal inhabitants of this piece of land. The positioning of the image is suggestive of a discovery, rather as cave paintings by long past peoples are stumbled across by intrepid under-ground explorers. Comparison could also be made with discoveries such as old newspapers found under many layers of wallpaper or floor covering. The significance of the statements in such newspapers, and the image of this wall are both subject to influence by their location. The notion of layering is relevant to many of the Cicatrix Shadow Series as images

⁴³ In evaluating The Cicatrix Series it should be understood that the colonised people of Australia did not indicate ownership of the land by visible means and that the colonists dictated ownership by the use of fences and buildings. The colonists were not privy to the Aboriginal understanding of possession in regard to land and used the Western model of the nexus between possession and the law to establish their own form of land rights. It was also a belief of the colonist that the Aboriginal population were not using the land and therefore had no justifiable claim of ownership. The Aboriginal belief that the 'land owns people' is of course not compatible with Western laws concerning land ownership. It is in recognition of this conflict that the building form, as a symbolic reference to colonisation, is used. The works are not primarily directed towards the whole process of the colonisation of Australia but rather, as much as it may be divisible, to cultural colonisation, using Australia as the particular example.

derived from layers of wall treatment, one upon another, are used to deliberate the layering of different cultural influences upon the history of this land.

The window-wall presents a smaller fragment extending less than half the length of the floor. A corner of the inner lining remains. Reminiscent of the finely fluted corrugated iron used to afford some level of decoration to the brutally functional buildings of this style the fragment stands perhaps in defiance of the 'Aboriginality' of the larger wall. This window may be seen, as may all images of windows, as a view of freedom, or at the least an opportunity to engage a perspective at variance with that offered by the interior. Its significance is bound to the positioning of the chair.

The chair may be regarded as a prime example of an artefact of Western society. It is also the case that in some other societies the chair is used to denote socio-economic class and relative authority relationships in many settings.⁴⁴ The style of the chair is an indication of the authority of the sitter, (The Royal Throne, the Managing Director's chair, the Carver's chair, etc). The position of the chair is equally important in describing the authority of the sitter.⁴⁵ In this work the close proximity of the leading edge of the chair to the wall suggests an uncomfortable circumstance for the sitter or alternatively that the sitter has a compelling reason for being so positioned. Visitors are often disturbed when observing that mental hospital patients stand and sit in positions not normally chosen by society at large. The positioning of this chair is potentially similarly disturbing to the viewer and suggestive of an other than normal decision by the sitter. A teacher or parent may tell a child to 'stand in the corner' or 'face the wall' as punishment. The positioning in Facing The Wall implies a similarly low status of the sitter. The placing of the chair poses questions as to who decided the configuration and who may be, or might have been, the occupier.

One might also ponder that the chair position denies, or perhaps defies the common logic of facing the window. (The benefits of having a view is known to both city dwellers and prisoners. Indeed, prisoners have often testified to going to considerable lengths to snatch a view from a high window or a small hole.) The

⁴⁴ The boss sits while the worker stands. The rich 'get the best seats'. Ruling classes sit in the front of the bus. The privileged have corporate boxes at sporting events.

⁴⁵ The Judges' bench is raised, school teachers were formally positioned on a rostrum at the front of the classroom. School buildings constructed in Australia more recently are without a rostrum, older classrooms have been modified to be more compatible with the changes in pedagogy, the wish to exhibit the teacher as an authority has been less important to contemporary educators. The positioning of the teacher's chair on the same plane as that of the student indicates a lessening of the status differential.

relationship between the chair and the window begs the question, 'Has the sitter chosen to avoid the window or has she/he been without choice?' Given the use of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal references in the work one might question the identity of the sitter and whether he/she has left the chair, not yet arrived, or sits invisibly.

The shadow cast by the chair comes not from light entering the window nor from the customary overhead centre position of a light fitting. The shadow poses questions of its own. Does the shadow come from an unseen light source? Is the wall emitting the light? Does the chair cast the shadow independently of any outside source? The imagery which comprises the shadow is suggestive of Aboriginal 'sand paintings.' It may be considered that the shadow weighs heavily upon the floor, or that the reality that glass is fused sand suggests some similar nexus between the shadow and the floor, or the societies from which these element have been drawn.

Though the response of any viewer is beyond the prediction and absolute control of the artist, the work may be directed towards interpretation as either embodying the artist's answers to the questions involved in its content, or either as confronting the viewer with unanswered questions. Facing the Wall is concerned primarily with questions.



Fig 17 Facing The Wall 1991 28cm H.

Steps To The View

1991

Fig 18

A wall stands on a plane, barren save for an imposed grid and two shadows. The plane, in this and other works, is suggestive of a geomorphic plain. One shadow prescribes the claim upon the land made by this wall, the other makes the same claim for the stairs which lead to one side of the walls' window. The shadows though lie not simply upon the earth but expose the images of a previous history which rises from a surface disturbed only by the regularity of a grid. Each pattern, the ancient images and the grid, vies for dominance. The shadow from the stairs simultaneously presents itself as a path to the stairs. When read as a path this component of the work provides guidance to one who would seek to climb those stairs to reach the window positioned above. When read as a shadow the uneven surface indicates the tribulation to be met by the traveller who seeks to traverse the darkness and mount the stairs.

The window is high in the wall, offering a view by virtue of being a window, yet denying that opportunity in that it is positioned out of reach from one side of the wall and may be barely claimed from the top step of the other side. Those who approach from the side offering steps have some slight chance of claiming the view while those destined to be on the other side are without any means of claiming that which is close but unobtainable. The notion of inequality of opportunity is alluded to by the configuration of the window and the steps, however the steps do not offer an undemanding path for each riser bares a fractured surface. The view from the window is not easily claimed, the viewer faces vexation before the reward.

All windows offer solace, the extent of which is governed both by the characteristics of the aperture and by the circumstances of those who would wish to view. In rooms of ordinary scale regular windows are almost unnoticed in daily life. Either extreme in the provision of windows brings stark realisation of the relationship between the interior and exterior. The circumstance of the occupant bears upon the manner in which the window is regarded.⁴⁶ This window stands as a directive that the viewer should muse upon the need humans hold for viewing beyond the immediate.

⁴⁶ Windows, and in particular, glazed windows were and continue to be a symbol of status in many societies.

Although the view could be seen by moving around the wall the presence of the window dictates that that particular view is of significance and as a frame directs the manner in which a picture is viewed, a window influences the conjecture derived from a prescribed view.

Splendid scenes are claimed by the powerful. The homes of the rich have panoramic views and enjoyment of such beauty is not without a sense of power and ownership. The views to be obtained through this window are real in that the window is actual. They are also close to illusory in that the act of viewing through the window may be readily avoided in this case as the wall is both easily bypassed and obviously translucent.

The isolation of this one standing wall heightens the potential significance of the window as a symbolic reference to the phenomenon that the direction of approach to a circumstance may have profound influence upon the perception of that circumstance. (The extreme case of this phenomenon is prejudice.)

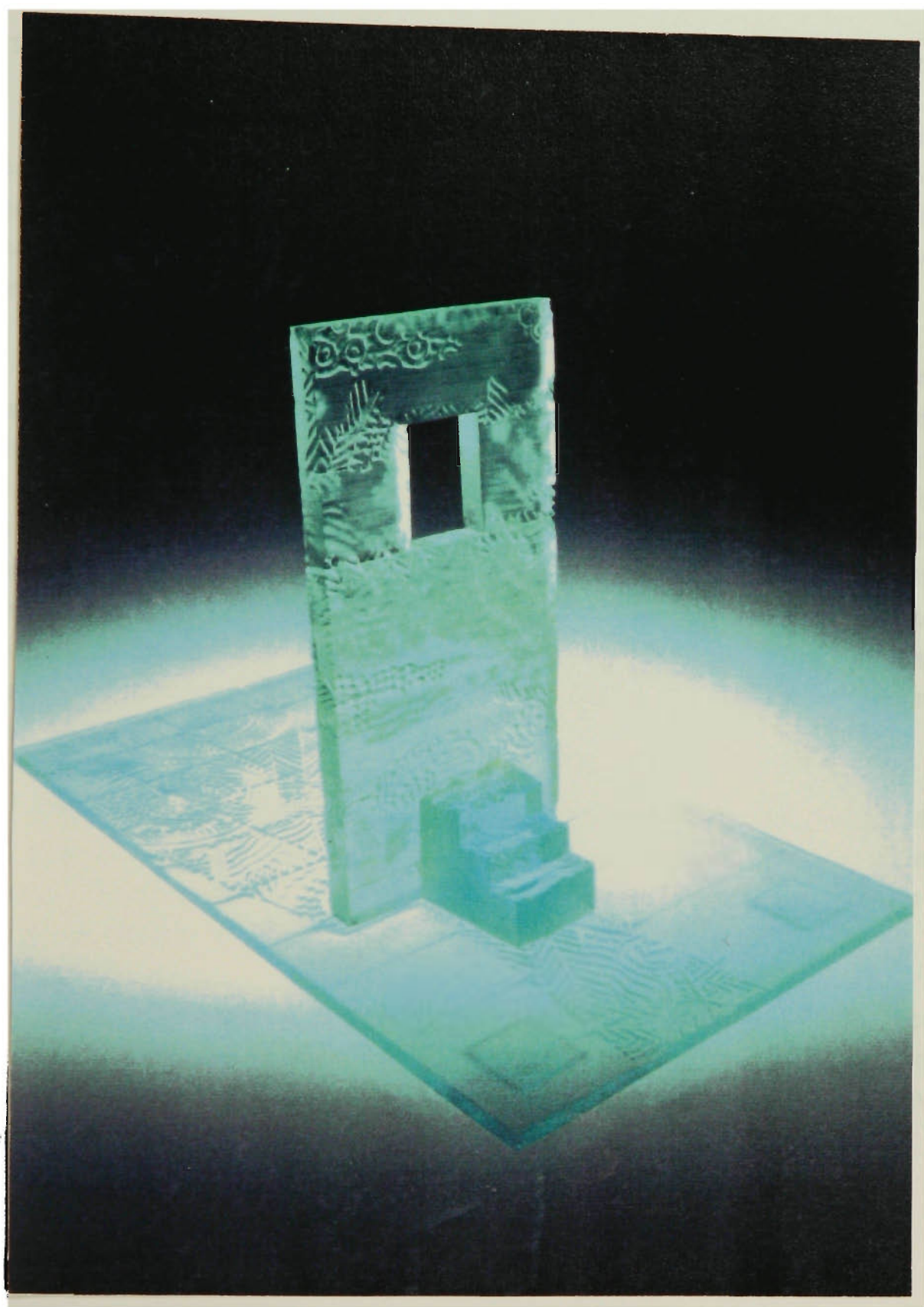


Fig 18 Steps To The View 1991 30cm H.

Fig 19

A wall with a small window is on the edge of a plane. It stands seemingly precariously balanced yet as stable as if in the centre of the plane. It may be perceived as being perched on the edge of a continent or indeed, the world, the last fragment of a once imposing edifice. Though ragged and worn it is still strong and faces squarely the erosions of time.

Shadows cast by the sun extend in one direction in the morning and another in the afternoon. Those cast by artificial illumination carve a path that has been directed by the human hand which positions the source of the light. These directed shadows may incise a path contrary to the direction of those from nature and can exhibit in more than one direction at a given time.⁴⁷ This wall casts two shadows, each describing a pattern of one of the two cultures which inhabit the land upon which they fall. The wall, via its shadows, tells two stories and each may be viewed by addressing the window from but one side. The window acts as a conjunction between these two disparate lands. There is not an indication of inside or outside on this wall and in that respect each side is equal.

The path of cultural colonisation is similarly controlled by (s)he who holds the light. It competes with the prior order and casts its shadows with an undeniable authority. The shadows in this work denote the castes inevitably cast as the act of cultural colonisation divides and conquers.

Parallel lines cross the plane becoming more intense as they near the shadows. They are in keeping with the half-drop pattern of one of the shadows, supportive of its own parallel lines, but exhibit no sympathy with the ritual pattern of the other. These lines divide the plane in the manner that fences divide nature.

⁴⁷ Contemporary illumination of field games played at night casts many shadows at the one time. Players stand and move in the centre of radiating shadows rather than at one end of a sun-cast shadow.

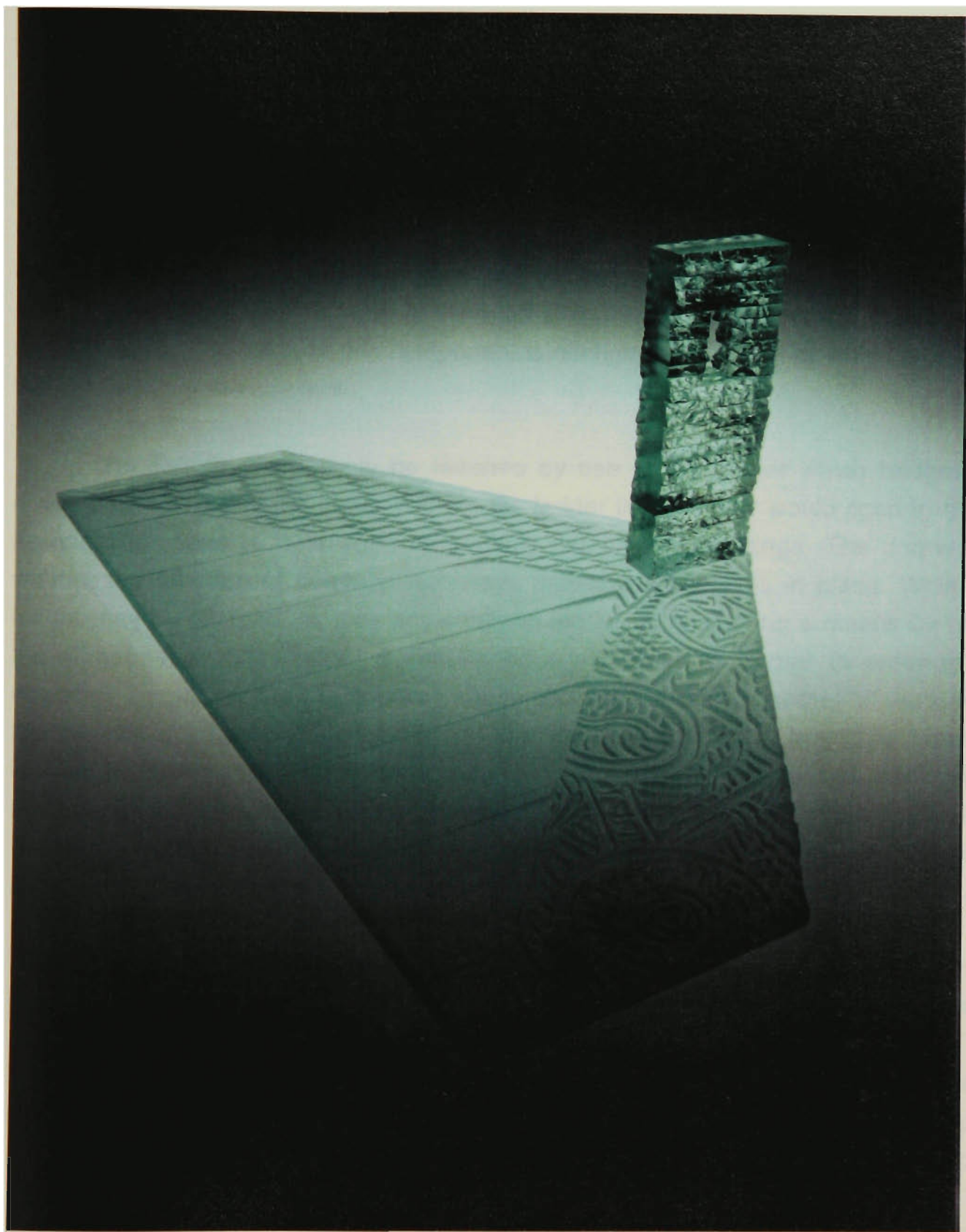


Fig 19 Caste Cast 1991 20cm H.

Climbing the Ladder

1991

Fig 20

Height is frequently used to denote status. Typically, the greater the height the greater the status. Language is supportive of this notion with common terms, 'reach for the sky', 'climbing the rungs of success', 'highflyer', 'lofty stature', etc, giving emphasis to a correlation of height and superiority. In hierarchical architecture the master has the upstairs, the servant the basement; the dress circle surveys not only the stage but oversees behaviour in the stalls; the higher the penthouse the greater the status and cost. The floor-level in this work is elevated and presents to the viewer the prospect that the relative isolation of this component is configured as a barrier which separates the exalted from the common.

The floor-level can only be reached by use of the ladder which bridges the divide between it and the base. Without the ladder the doorway would open to a void as might be seen in unfinished or partially demolished buildings. The doorway is without the function of common doorways unless the ladder is in place. While the ladder may be climbed, as may any common ladder, in presenting a means by which the climber may gain height it simultaneously presents a barrier to entering the doorway. The ladder fills the doorway and in allowing the climber access to the level of the interior it hinders advancement to the floor. Similarly the blockage impedes movement from the interior to the ladder. The conundrum is not necessarily immediately obvious to the viewer for only by consideration of the improbable scale of the ladder in comparison to that of the doorway is it apparent that while each element is ordinary, in combination they are in conflict.

The ladder casts two shadows. Raised from the level of the base the longer shadow reveals the images of the colonised. Depicted as might be impressions made in sand, they are similarly stable for the present but subject to a fate which will inevitably bring erosion. This tenuous and short-lived dominance of the plane-base by the shadow-form may also be perceived as a path leading to the ladder. The path indicates that to climb the ladder one must first travel a preordained route. The upper part of the ladder casts a shadow of its form upon the floor but it is not alone. The doorway allows an illumination, (the opposite of a shadow), to strike the floor

indicating a minor overlaying of the colonised peoples images upon the regular check-pattern which is the floor. The imposition of the images from the colonised upon that of the colonist makes some small testimony for the rare occasion when conquered people bring their culture to the fore. This work infers that albeit limited in frequency and scale Aboriginal cultural understanding has been recognised by the non-Aboriginal culture.⁴⁸

The indication of structure shown in the walls reveal the architectural genre of the colonist. The familiar corrugated iron is supported by stud-work and joists used in the style of Northern Australian and tropical regions to elevate the dwelling from the hostile earth.

This work expounds the notion that the climbing of the ladder from one status level to another is not readily achieved nor is the complexity of the required move as apparent as first impressions may connote.

⁴⁸ Internationally, examples of adoption of Aboriginal peoples' music, medicine, environmental management, social structure, art and dance have been repeatedly acknowledged in non-Aboriginal culture. In Australia some limited recognition occurs in the arts and environmental management.



Fig 20 Climbing The Ladder 1991 30cm H.

B THE VITROLITE WORKS

Intended as an architectural facing material, vitrolite was manufactured in the United States of America in large and particularly flat sheets which were often flashed on the viewing surface.⁴⁹ No longer in production, the opaque glass may still be seen on hotel and butcher-shop facades. It is now some forty years since manufacturing ceased and the availability for studio use is a rare opportunity in Australia. Its dense opacity, soft hues and particular working qualities make vitrolite a desirable glass for sculptural use. The architectural history and rarity infers an additional suitability for The Cicatrix Series.

⁴⁹ The term 'flashed' describes a thin layer of glass of one colour or tone heat-fused to the primary sheet which is of another colour or tone. The flashed colour is normally etched in part to reveal the primary colour.

Reflecting

1992

Fig 21

A black chair-form stands in the corner of a room. The positioning may infer that the occupant, (if there is one), is undergoing punishment for some unexplained misdemeanour. Alternatively the chair may signify that the occupant is contemplating a matter of some significance or is reflecting upon his/her circumstance. The chair is constructed from a heavily wrinkled black glass of most unusual appearance. The form of this chair is ordinary though it stands on two broad legs rather than the customary four linear supports. The combination of these usual and unusual attributes enhances the speculative potential of this chair.

The floor-form upon which the chair stands is elevated sufficiently from the base of the work to suggest the appearance of a stage. The base is etched and ground to produce a subtle patterning which is barely detectable. The pattern is illustrative of Australian Aboriginal images though does not replicate any particular image. Across the patterning strikes a grid which imposes a foreign order to the circles, dots and hatched lines.

The most provocative quality of the work, perhaps because it is subtle and dependent upon the fall of light and the angle of viewing, is the reflection of the chair in both of the walls and the floor. There is a mirror-like quality of the reflection in the darker wall which infers an unreality to the composition. The reflective quality of this wall is reminiscent of the multiple images generated when two mirrors are aligned so that each reflects that which is reflected in the other.⁵⁰ The reflection in the lighter-toned wall is less evident and consequently has a 'ghost-like' quality. Under some lighting conditions there is not a reflection in the wall but rather a shadow is cast from the chair. Similarly, the occurrence of a shadow on one wall and a simultaneously occurring reflection in the other is a provocative image which the viewer may interpret as having qualities of surrealism.

⁵⁰ Though this wall exhibits a single reflection, the 'barber shop experience' of multiple reflections is recalled in this view. This multiple reflection phenomenon is experienced on occasion in clothes department dressing rooms and show ground fairs.

The reflection in the floor competes for attention with a suggested shadow of the chair yet the viewer perceives an illusion of great depth which might be likened to the appearance of a body of water. It is of interest, though not normally discerned by the viewer, that the darker wall and the floor are of precisely the same material but the different plane presented to the ambient light cause them to appear as disparate hues.

Reflecting is presented to the viewer both as a mirror in which can be seen that which is placed before it and simultaneously as a 'blank slate' upon which can be written the interpretation of a work which tells little of its inception. It provides reflection and in so doing requires reflective analysis by the viewer.

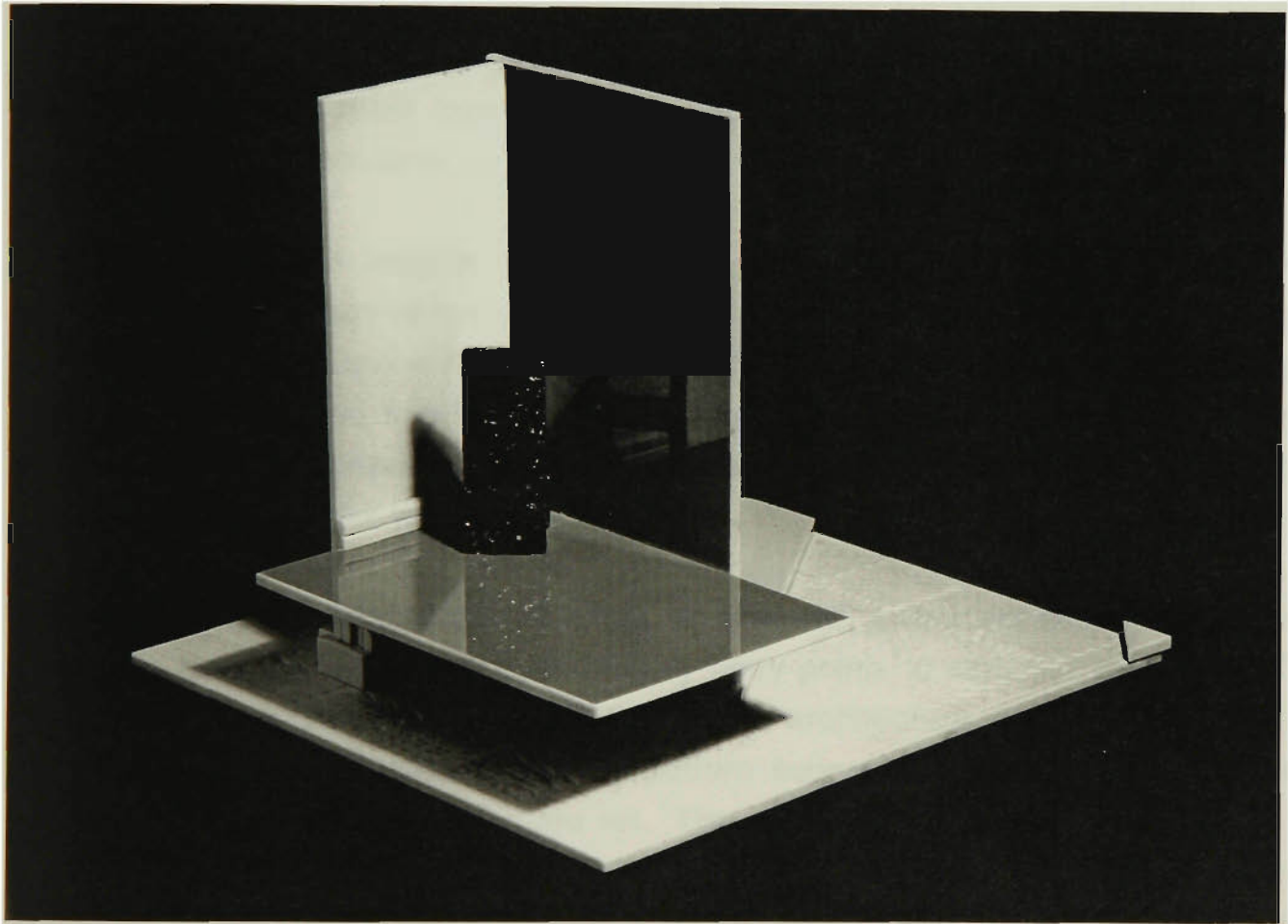


Fig 21 Reflecting 1992 25cm H.

Riding The Pyre

1992

National Art Glass Collection.

City Gallery of Wagga Wagga.

Fig 22

The floor level of this work stands elevated from the base at a height equivalent to that of the height of the walls above the floor. The horizontal elements of the supports are configured as a stack as might be seen in log-cabin constructions or in traditionally set wood fires destined for either cooking or cremations.⁵¹ The vertical piers and horizontal stack form an element which supports yet is also the means of destruction of the room-form.

The chair-form stands upon the floor as a funerary casket may be firmly positioned at the crown of the pyre. The floor is broken and reveals a lower surface marked with faint images of the colonised culture. The chair has one leg-form on each level of the floor. The wall-form is similarly fractured, revealing similar images on a previously covered surface. The linear quality of the break is similar to that of common structural cracks in brick walls.

The obverse view of this work has, on one wall, a door set before three stairs. The stairs have the appearance of ordinary entry points to domestic buildings. The door is of the proportions found in domestic architecture of the 1920's. It is unremarkable except that it exhibits a pattern suggestive of Australian Aboriginal imagery where the screen panels are set. The stairs, though aligned with the door do not provide access for they lie upon the base while the door is on the elevated level. The door, on the outside of the wall does not correspond with any such attribute upon the inside of the same wall. The outside surface of the other wall has a window. The window and a covering shade are well detailed. Similarly, there is not a corresponding window on the inside of the same wall.

⁵¹ The author has viewed traditional backwoods style log cabins in the Adirondack Mountains (hillbilly country in the United States of America), and the ceremonial cremation stacks in Benares, India. The interweaving of the timber in both cases uses the same basic format which is also illustrated in text book instruction for fire setting in 'outdoors' manuals of the 1950's.

The chair stands resolute, unacknowledging the peculiarities of its circumstance. It is stable on a base which will eventually crumble.

The use of the term 'pyre' in the title of this work makes particular reference to the momentary stability of a cremation pyre before the rise of the flames. The chair, and any occupant 'ride' that moment with a surety possible only to those who are fearless of the future. The term 'riding' refers to that momentary journey of the unlit pyre and is inspired by the foolhardy practice of 'surfing' railway vehicles. 'Train surfing', first practised by the hapless and destitute youth of Brazil, leads to instant death as the thrilling ride ends with decapitation caused by colliding with a power-line. This aspect of human behaviour, by those who are the flotsam of the conquered society, seems to the author to emphasise the destitution of the powerless class which is inevitably produced by colonisation.

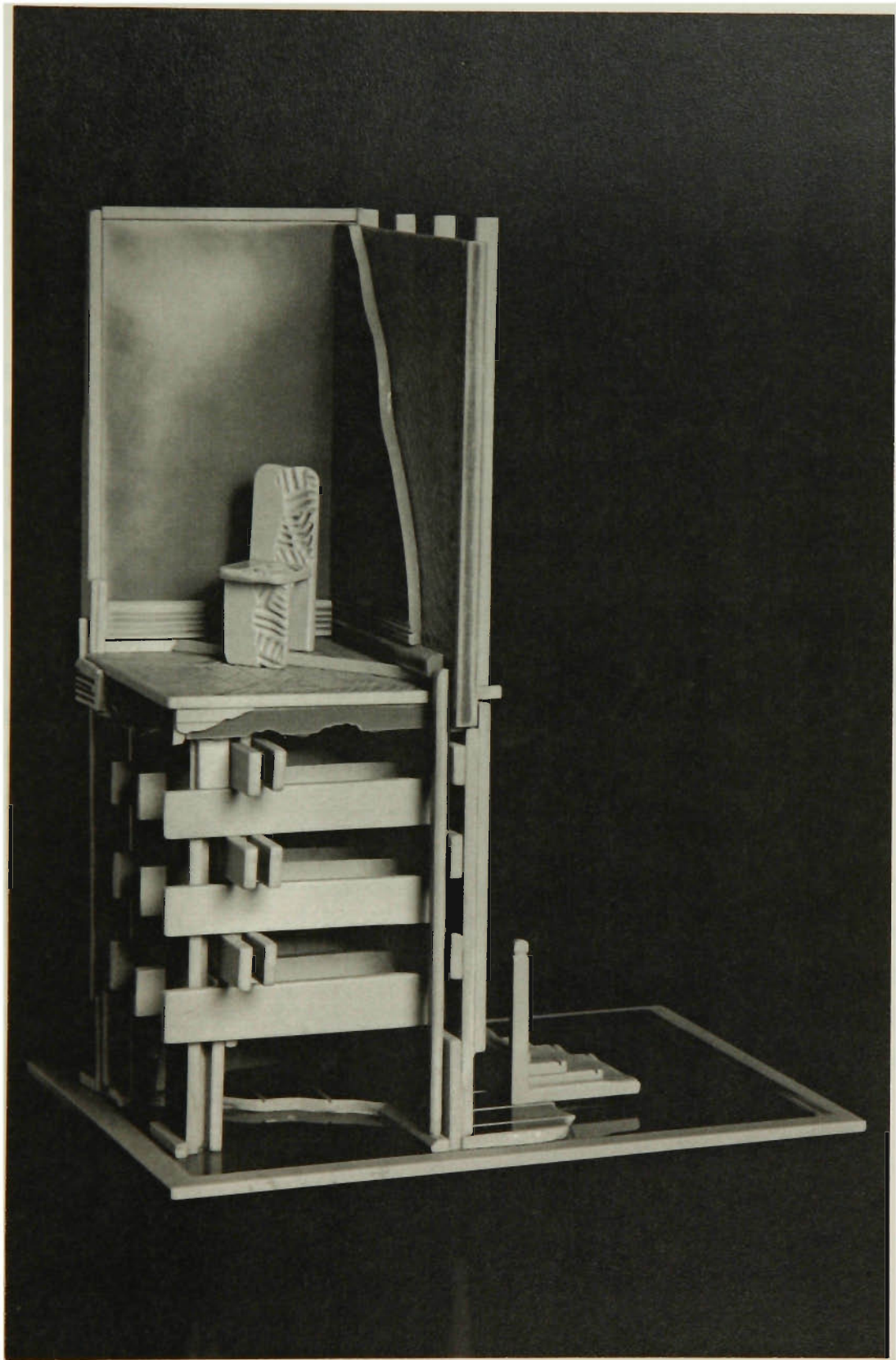


Fig 22 Riding The Pyre 1992 45cm H.

No Entry No Exit

1992

Fig 23

A stairway leads to the door on the outside wall of a room. A doorway is evident on the inside wall of the same room. The door and the doorway are on opposite walls of this room. The view from the outside is complete and indicates a means of entry. The view from the inside is complete and indicates a means of exit. Each view is imperfect, allowing hope but offering only a futile quest for entrance or departure.

The doorway is defined by a frame which extends from the skirting board. The black glass which fills the frame may be perceived as a solid object or a void. If interpreted as a door there is potential for the viewer to attribute it with those mythical qualities associated with the absence of colour which is 'black'. The culturally determined meaning of 'black' differs from one community to another but is frequently associated with death and misfortune. If interpreted as a void the black panel may be attributed as being the unknown, the apprehensively approached night, the almost tangible oppression of a dark place. A third possible perception of this panel is that by virtue of its 'blackness' it makes reference to black people in a manner suggestive of the use of segregated doorways formally instigated under apartheid or insinuated by the practice of racial prejudice.

It is the authors' intention to provide in these attributes of No Entry No Exit and other works of The Cicatrix Series the potential for such questions without the provision of an irrefutable answer. The author does not have a literally intended meaning for the black panel. The intention is to provoke questions sympathetic to the inferences recognised by the author rather than to pose a 'guessing game' to reveal the 'hidden meaning'.

The black doorway, in contradiction of nature, allows light to spill onto the floor. Sunlight, or artificial light, may illuminate any floor when projected through any doorway. This illumination is only remarkable in that it is juxtapositional to the blackness of the doorway. The contradiction inherent in this image may be initially unnoticed by the viewer as the shape of the illumination echoes that of a natural shadow should it be cast in the same location.

This composition of doors, walls, illuminations, etc, is intended to indicate something of the enigma presented by cultural colonisation. The work bears images reminiscent of those of the Australian Aboriginal culture while others, the architecture, the check base, etc, are derived from Western culture. The viewer may extrapolate from the conundrums of cultural colonisation and make comparison with other aspects of human existence. The door that has all the attributes of an ordinary door yet does not lead anywhere, the darkness which may be interpreted in various ways, the contradiction of light and shade, are all applicable as the basis for reflective interpretation while making reference to the frustrations and contradictions of human existence.

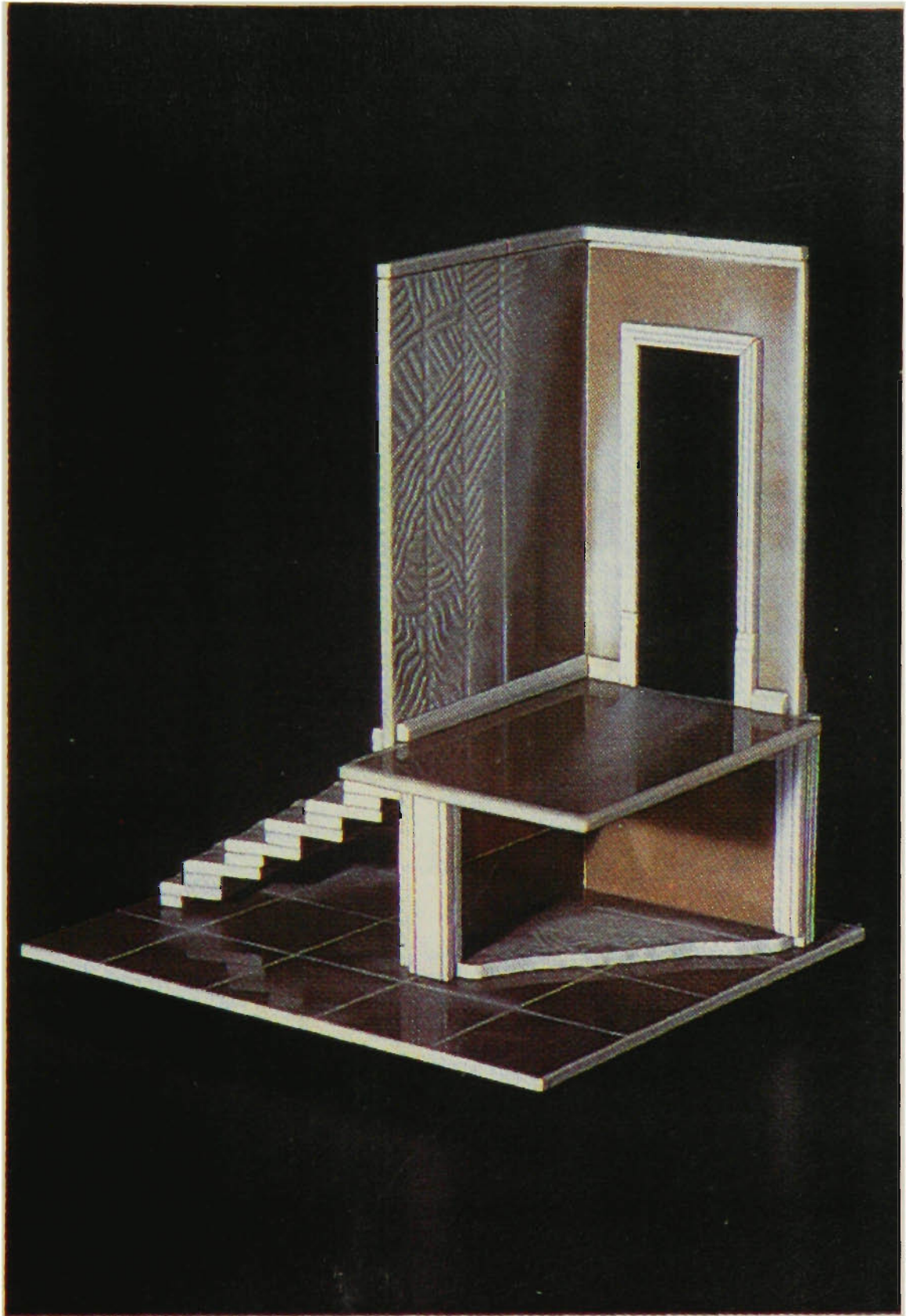


Fig 23 No Entry No Exit 1992 35cm H.

C THE MIXED-GLASS WORKS

The combination of kiln formed compatible glass and vitrolite in the two works of this group presents both technical and aesthetic difficulties beyond those of the series which are comparatively harmonious in technique and colour combination. Of the works at this scale, they are a culmination of the development of the use of architectural reference as indicators of the authors' intention. Similar considerations are embodied in the making of Cicatrix Shadow 01 and Facing the Sunset.

Two Worlds

1992

Fig 24

As the separate pieces of a jigsaw puzzle are joined by the interlocking of the forms but simultaneously kept apart by the divide which prescribes that relationship this work is united by a division in the floor which is also its shear. Two Worlds portrays its division as normality, implies acceptance of its separation and turns attention away from the uncertainties of its foundation.

While the division in the floor and the manner in which it is straddled by the chair is clearly the focus of the composition, this broken base-piece casts doubts about the stability and/or fragility of the entire work, and focuses particular attention on the status of the chair. The composition provokes conjectural discourse. Is the chair threatened by the division in the base, or is it well supported by two bases which share the load? Should it be viewed as one might the straddling of a fracturing iceberg presenting an ever diminishing foothold, or alternatively is it braced upon two patrons, neither required nor willing to surrender either? Interpretation of the symbolism of the chair is inextricably bound to the symbolic significance given to the division over which it stands. Individual viewers will undoubtedly give individually subscribed meaning to the division and the chair.

The connection between these two elements is the gist of interpretation of Two Worlds. The chair suggests the quiet dignity and unpretentious grace of that which, regardless of being ordinary, meets all the requirements of its function. This chair speaks of the domestic, of that certain nobility sometimes ascribed to the working class and those artefacts with which their lives are surrounded. It is a 'kitchen-chair', existing without laurels or historical eminence. This chair is not a 'dining-room' chair. It is devoid of superfluous scrolls, embellishments and fine lacquers. It is as removed as it can be from the furniture of the ruling class, the comforts of the nobility, the emperor's throne. It stands alone, humble but unflinching when subject to classification as a lesser form of furniture.

This chair, and other chair-forms used in The Cicatrix Series are modelled upon an actual chair which was formerly the property of the authors' paternal grandfather. It stood with others of the set in his kitchen. As was the custom of the era the house was

shuttered and sombre. The chair stood as a symbol emphasising serenity to a child's flickering gaze. A grandfather clock ticked in the half-light of a house with memorably thick curtains and blinds always to be drawn. The clock, the dimmed rooms, the chair were statements of station. The author's experience of visiting the only family members of that generation remains as a memory of the emotive image of this chair. Two generations removed, many life-times apart, those ancestors saw the world and experienced life in a way which the author has not.

Two Worlds makes reference to that past world of domestic routine, of absolute order, of clear class consciousness, of traditional manufacturing techniques, solid timber joined rather than particle board stapled, a world of stability and courtesy. The chair is now in the author's studio, surrounded by miscellanea glass, machinery, packing cases, tools, digital clocks, computerised electronic controls, rubbish, incomplete sculptures and incomplete ideas. It stands apart from the chaos of the studio, portraying a past, telling of another time, being a bridge to a previous age and generation. The personal references exert an influence but it is the most persistent of the ideas which informs these works. This piece is indicative of

The Cicatrix Series in that it designates monumentality to the ordinary. The commonplace object is used here as a vehicle for discourse upon the socio-economic factors of human experience as a governance on the developing of understanding. This object is presented as both a chair in a certain location and a chair-symbol in a symbolic location. It is indivisibly bound as both an object of and a symbol for the ordinary experience of the ordinary person.

As a symbol of a chair it contributes to the symbolic repertoire which delineates persons of a social position which would lead them to be probable users. In this sense, and as an artefact the chair is not unlike a footprint, an impression left by interaction. The footprint can be studied, personal and group history can be determined but the footprint can only exist in a given location if certain human history has passed before. The chair has a spatial history as does the footprint. It tells of another time, it is a reminder of past situations. It can only occupy this space, this time, if certain interactions have preceded. Is this chair, cast-off, abandoned? Will the user return? Is the user invisible? The work does not, nor is it intended to, offer answers to these questions.

The commonplace nature of this chair is disturbed by it being incomplete. No

evidence is presented in the work to establish that it was either unfinished or has deteriorated by use or vandalism. Without a seat and some of the backrest the chair is unable to fulfil its common function. While it is a chair by inference it is without every component of a chair and as one assesses its structure it becomes increasingly, a chair-symbol.

This chair, or perhaps it should be addressed, 'this inferred chair' bridges the division in the floor and stands upon the changing patterns of that floor. The patterning which is etched into the surface gives limited stability to the chair although the regularity of the check infers an eternal solidarity. The check gives way to, resists, accommodates or possibly mutates into the organic ritual pattern of the leading corner of the composition, this aspect of the floor is provocative in that its relationship with the check is unstated. The image is drawn from Aboriginal painting styles however the viewer may perceive it as being botanic in origin. Regardless of the categorisation given, any analysis of the piece must consider the tension between the two patterns, determine which if any is dominant and ponder future movement between the two.

This work suggests parallels between the scant recognition given to the reality of cultural colonisation and the limited recognition afforded the simple domestic item as an icon of ordinary life. The cornerstones of the history of any cultural practice preclude recognition of other types of historical documentation. A contributing experience to the formulation of these works occurred during the 1970's. The author heard a history teacher state that Australian Aboriginal people didn't 'have a history'. He meant that they hadn't experienced any great wars. While a little reflection on the events documented readily identifies that European history is punctuated by 'great wars' it is unendingly puzzling that a history teacher could be so ignorant of the fact that there are other ways of establishing the cornerstones of a people's history. Indeed, the discipline of history ought to be but a recording of events and not a determination of the existence or non-existence of significant events. This history teacher is not alone in his lack of understanding of the history of colonised peoples. (While of course all history is an interpretation of events the author contends that historians ought not limit the parameters of significant occurrences such that the mores of colonised peoples are excluded.)

Cultural colonisation is barely recognised in any society and is least understood by the colonist. It is effectively written out of history by historians who concentrate

upon the 'great events' and not signifying that each such highlight is but the pinnacle of countless common events. As a cultural group Australians are taught that the Europeans 'discovered', 'came to', 'settled' Australia rather than colonised the existing inhabitants.

Two Worlds is to some extent a historical documentation of the ordinary, the overlooked and the unseen cultural practice, the foundation upon which the grand events of history stand. The wall areas of this work use a layering or peeling of veneers referring to the various holdings of the land. The images are in part evocative of Aboriginal painting and Non-Aboriginal wallpaper patterns. They show some deterioration, some history of their own but might be thought of as samples or test-patterns of the various epochs of ownership or tenancy. The stud work of these walls is unusual in comparison to others of the series in that it is unfinished and shows the cut-line, the fracturing of the material. It marks a reversal of the author's perception of and willingness to accept the qualities of scored and snapped glass and its application to the intended meaning of these works. There is an understated but none the less contributory excitement of the edges of the studwork as light plays across the facets. Earlier works of this group were aesthetically dependent upon technical finesse and all edges were laboriously ground and polished. This discovery of the suitability of the unfinished edges was of the type that causes an artist to consider the plausibility that technique has been allowed to dominate working practice. Such self-assessment is difficult to rationalise but the consideration does cause realisation of the danger of having too much mastery of technique.

The bridge form approaching the doorway might be seen as a precarious link with the remainder of society. The bridge is stable but narrow. There is no obvious danger, but caution when traversing a narrow bridge is prudent. There is then some potential for psychological impediment to enter or leave the room. The pattern on the bridge is rather like a 'red-carpet' though the inference of Aboriginal images is evident. The surface is corrugated like that of building iron. There is allowance for contemplation as to the extent to which this bridge is a passageway or a barrier. In an unfamiliar culture it may be a difficult decision to determine if one should walk on the carpet, remove ones' shoes, walk before or after the host, tread lightly or with comforting assurance. This 'carpet' allows such deliberations.

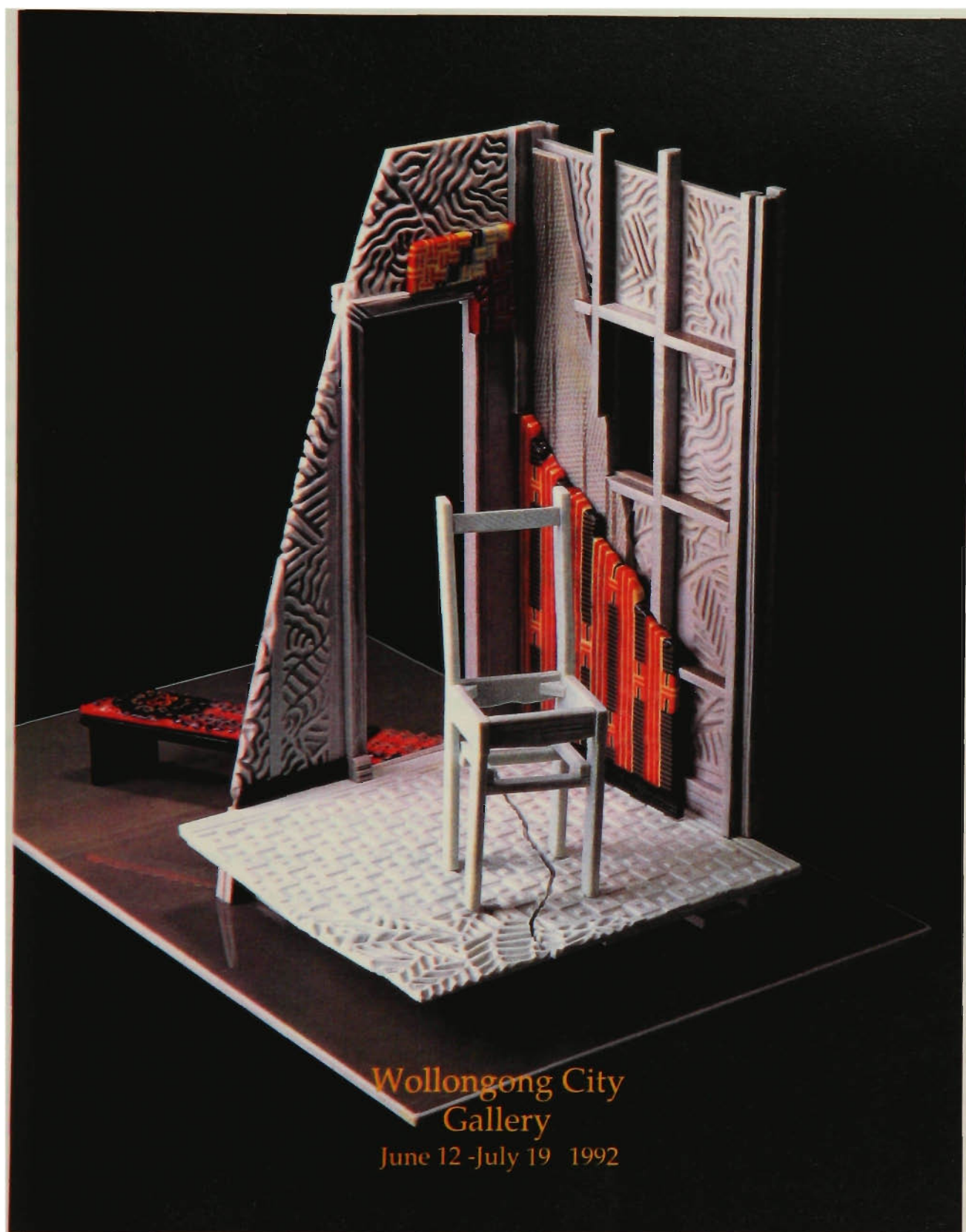


Fig 24 Two Worlds 1992 40cm H.

Fig 25

A chair stands upon a table. It is not a particularly unusual configuration though one which permits speculation. There are numerous possible causes of this arrangement of furniture. Cleaners do this though often the chair is upside-down. People wishing to change a light-bulb or reach the man-hole may use a chair and table as a ladder. This structure may occur in warehouses, transit vans, community halls, etc. Indeed, on occasion such an arrangement is used to enable suicide. (While the piece gives no support to this interpretation it is an inescapable reference point to viewers aware of the practice.) The chair is ordinary and the table is ordinary, only their juxtaposition is noteworthy. The work does not proffer a paramount reason as to why the furniture is so arranged. The chair stares directly at the viewer, the soft white effluence of its etched opal glass conveys a quiet confidence as it stands, barely contacting the table. This table is unpretentious, it is not for grand banquets nor exalted tomes. It stands serenely, as does the bottom man in a circus balancing act. Not in the limelight but crucial to the endeavour.

The relationship between the table and the chair is left open to as many interpretations as the viewers' conjecture allows. The chair may be seen as dominant while it stands upon the table or the table may be understood to have possession of the chair. The white of the chair and black of the table may be seen as portraying racial characteristics, and should that be the case, does this have any bearing upon the notions of dominance and mastery? Consideration of the balance of power portrayed by the table and the chair may lead to speculation of other less than obvious dominance/submissive roles. As the work does not promote a single interpretation the viewer may speculate upon the issue of power relationships in general terms.

A common black and white configuration on the floor form gives an appearance of being composed of tiles forming a check pattern. Scrutiny reveals that while the right hand side is a basic check the other is a half drop pattern and the two merge in the centre. This mutation from one standard pattern to another may suggest to the viewer a significance beyond that of visual or technical gymnastics. The more protracted the discovery of the change the more invested with meaning the

interpretation may be. At a minimum, realisation of the pattern change illustrates that first impressions do not necessarily reveal complete information. It is to this end that the pattern has been manipulated to provide the viewer opportunity to become increasingly aware of the detailing while developing an intimacy with the work.

Behind the chair and table forms stands a wall which incorporates a window. This consists of a studwork frame and various layers of patterned structure, the dominant part consisting of red and white check over which is fused a transparent brown layer of etched glass. The etching has formed a dynamic pattern in contrast with the simple formality of the check. The varying depths of the etch allows a diversity of impositions of the brown upon the red and white. Accordingly the angle at which the piece is viewed similarly dictates one of a number of appearances of this panel. The transparent brown, from some angles, dominates the check while at other views it is subsumed by it. The viewers' attributed meaning of this segment warrants the same level of consideration as that demanded by the floor patterning. The dominance of one pattern over another is open to question and the significance of the changing impressions gathered from different viewpoints is provocative of subjective analysis aligned with the ascribed cultural importance of the origins of each pattern. The origins of the brown glass pattern is not necessarily immediately obvious to the viewer and some deliberation may be necessitated before attribution to Aboriginal imagery. The transparent brown glass is a veneer upon the under layer, both technically and visually. The varying thickness of the veneer infers some lack of permanence or alternatively a limited viability of the brown pattern. Whereas one would normally propose that the colonising culture is a thin skin covering that of the colonised this section speculates that the reverse is possible and that the colonised becomes dependent upon the authority of the dominant.

The title Balancing Act, as with all titles in The Cicatrix Series is open to individualised explication by the viewer. The word 'balance' may be used with reference to physical equilibrium or conversely directed towards equality of arguments, accounts or rights. The term 'act' has both a common connotation as any occurrence as well as a more theatrical usage. It is the intention of the title to deliver the opportunity for viewers to deliberate the proposed meaning. The most immediate reference of the title is that of the arrangement of the chair and the table. 'Balancing' is often used to indicate precarious poise as might be expected of a carnival performance yet the chair is firmly placed upon the table and in that respect is

unsupportive of this notion. 'Act' is more commonly used with a theatrical connotation and thus the implication of that understanding of the term again focuses upon the deliberate and contrived form of balance. This chair upon this table, should it be a balancing act in the theatrical sense is then a particularly insignificant performance, unless perhaps there is an unusually subtle interpretation of both 'balancing' and 'act'. Another supportable interpretation inherent in the title is that for some the 'balancing act' of life is domestic and ordinary, far removed from the spectacular feats of the elite performer. Indeed, this chair and this table may imply that all of ordinary life is a balancing act.

While society holds in awe the ability to balance exhibited by the circus performer, the marvel of ordinary acts of balancing, when walking, bending, rising, etc that must be learnt in infancy is normally unacknowledged. The process of learning everyday and performance balancing is indeed the same practice. However, perfection of the act of balancing is unconscious in the former, while in the latter it is a conscious behaviour. The portent of everyday balance is actually more worthy of admiration than performance feats. The title of the work, in conjunction with the commonplace content of the image is intended to allow attention to such notions. The inspiration of the title has two sources. The act of balancing that must be continuously undertaken by a member of the minority when living in the domain of a powerful majority is arduous but unseen by those for whom it is unnecessary. The delicate balance required of the colonised in maintaining some vestige of their original culture while negotiating the everyday 'tightrope' of the dominant culture is similarly unacknowledged. These considerations form the first inspiration. The second is a precariously held memory of a balancing act glimpsed from a small rear window of a moving car as the afternoon light was failing. The incident took place in Calcutta after a long day of visiting art schools. Contending with the traffic, congestion and exposure to the poverty had led to tiredness causing this experience to have a somewhat dreamlike quality. The view was brief, limited by movement of the vehicle and by the low level of illumination. (For countless millions, life in India is a precarious balance as they negotiate the hard trail of poverty. Some of the begging caste address the balance by mutilating their children in order that they might be more attractive candidates for baksheesh. The sight of small children without fingers offering their stumped palms to tourists as evidence of need is not uncommon.) It is in this light that, the author witnessed a street performer, perhaps returning home after a day of work. He held above him a stout pole of perhaps three metres in length perched upon which

was a small child possibly of three years of age. This balancing act by parent and progeny, while less tragic than that of the beggar, holds for the author a dramatic impact more revealing of the precarious equilibrium of life. The father had deliberated the relative risks of either negotiating the bustling streets surrounded by vehicles, pedestrians and pollution or of undertaking other work in the quest to maintain life. This parent had apparently decided that the child was safer atop the pole than it would be otherwise. The balance of the pole had been chosen in preference to other of life's balances. It is around this notion of a calculated risk that the title of this work is orientated. The balancing act in Balancing Act is a speculation upon a comparison of risks.

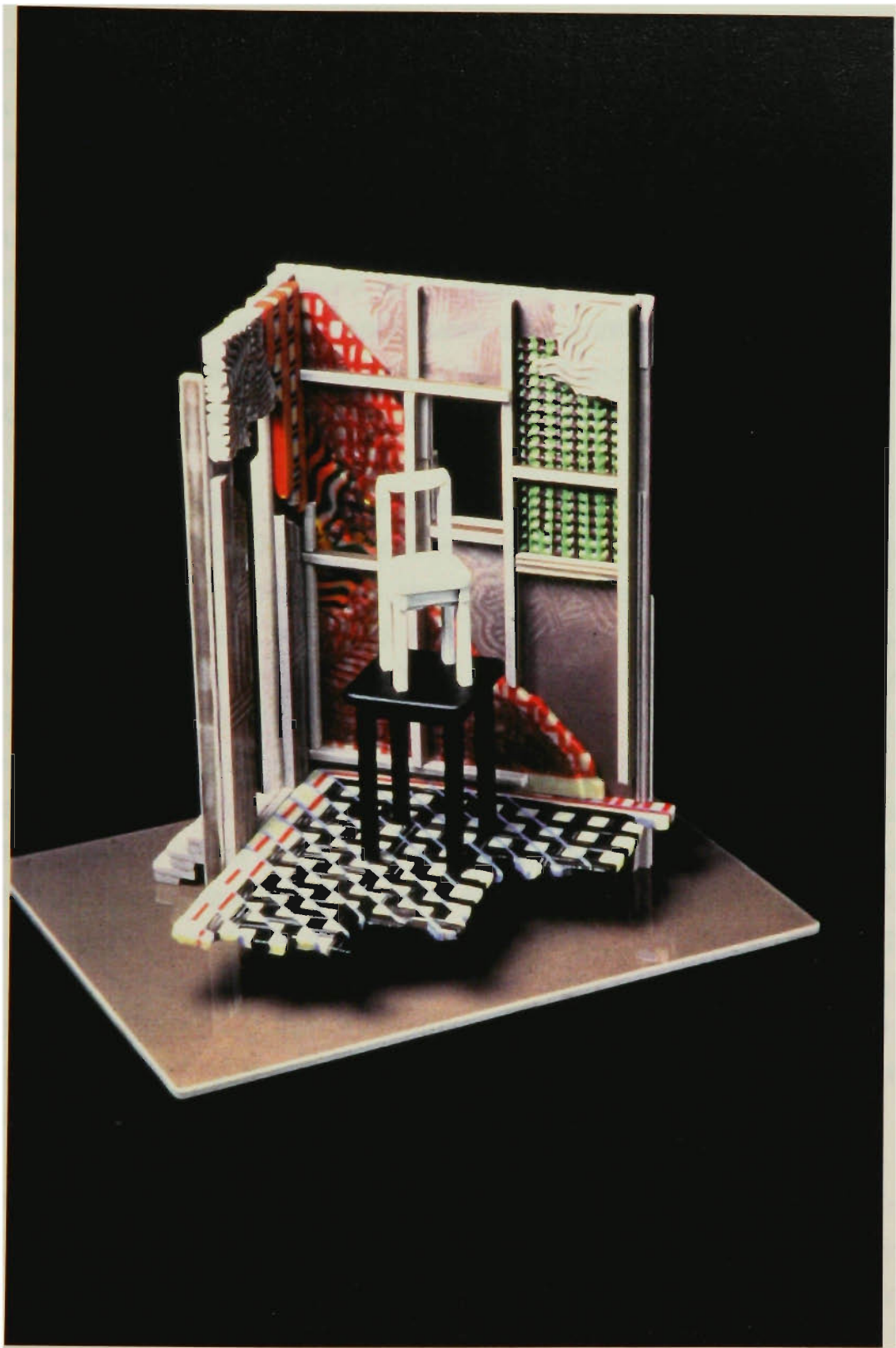


Fig 25 Balancing Act 1992 34cm H.

Facing the Sunset

1992

Fig 26

The sunset marks the end. It preserves the warmth of the day yet is a warning of the dark to follow. To this extent it is a contradiction which offers the security of the day while heralding the spectre of the night. To those who fear the passing of time, who feel life ebbing away as each day passes, who resent the markers of each day's end, the sunset is the diurnal test of Stoicism. To face this daily measure of death unflinchingly requires the resolve of the heroic or the wretched, the gambler who seeks no tomorrow but accepts each dawn as it comes. This work is responsive to both the author's apprehension of each day's end and the resolve that those who are enslaved by circumstance must hold in order that they might conquer debilitating fear.

Facing the Sunset provides the viewer not with an image of the sun but suggests a dais for the unflinching who, for reasons perhaps known only to them, stare beyond the horizon. The chair form stands resolute ready to accept any who wish to sit. The fabric of the chair is eroded, has a history of its own and does itself face the sunset which suspends it in time. This work suggests a suspension of the usual understanding of time, that which aligns one moment after the other in a continuum. The notions that all time occurs simultaneously or that time is arranged in a continuous circle bears consideration in regard to this work. The suspension of time might be likened to splicing a frame from a film and holding it between finger and thumb. To be speculated upon until courage allows the viewer to look away. The image of this work stands still, held in the viewer's gaze like the isolated frame from a film. The work is resolute, it will not discontinue the connection with the viewer but cannot resist the ending of that relationship. It is subservient to the intention of the viewer in that the subject of the world lies beyond the formal elements presented. While all art works may be so categorised, this work lies at the extreme of this notion.

The sun casts life unto all that it beholds, the sunlight bares and reveals the veracity of that upon which it alights. In this work the chair casts not a shadow but rather a segment of historical revelation exposing to public view the imagery of the original inhabitants of the land. The rich colours and dynamic patterns of Facing the Sunset are predominantly drawn from the paintings of the colonised caste in Australia

though by contrast some areas show reference to the imposed imagery of this land.

Facing the Sunset had a protracted birth. The base piece, of thin layers of *pate de verre* fused to flashed vitrolite existed for many months before a decision on the particular patterns was taken and the etching executed.⁵² Many chairs, and many versions of the final chair were constructed. The eventual chair was formed as a result of dismantling, rebuilding and dismantling again to provide the almost backless appearance of the finished work. The chair has a composure of completeness even though the frame is without a backrest. This suggestion of physical discomfort for an occupant of the chair is in addition to the more immediate impression that the chair is substantial and whole.

⁵² Pate de verre - particles of glass joined together by heat
 Flashed - a thin layer of glass of one colour joined by heat to a base sheet of colour
 Vitrolite - a particular chemistry of glass used for the production of coloured sheet glass

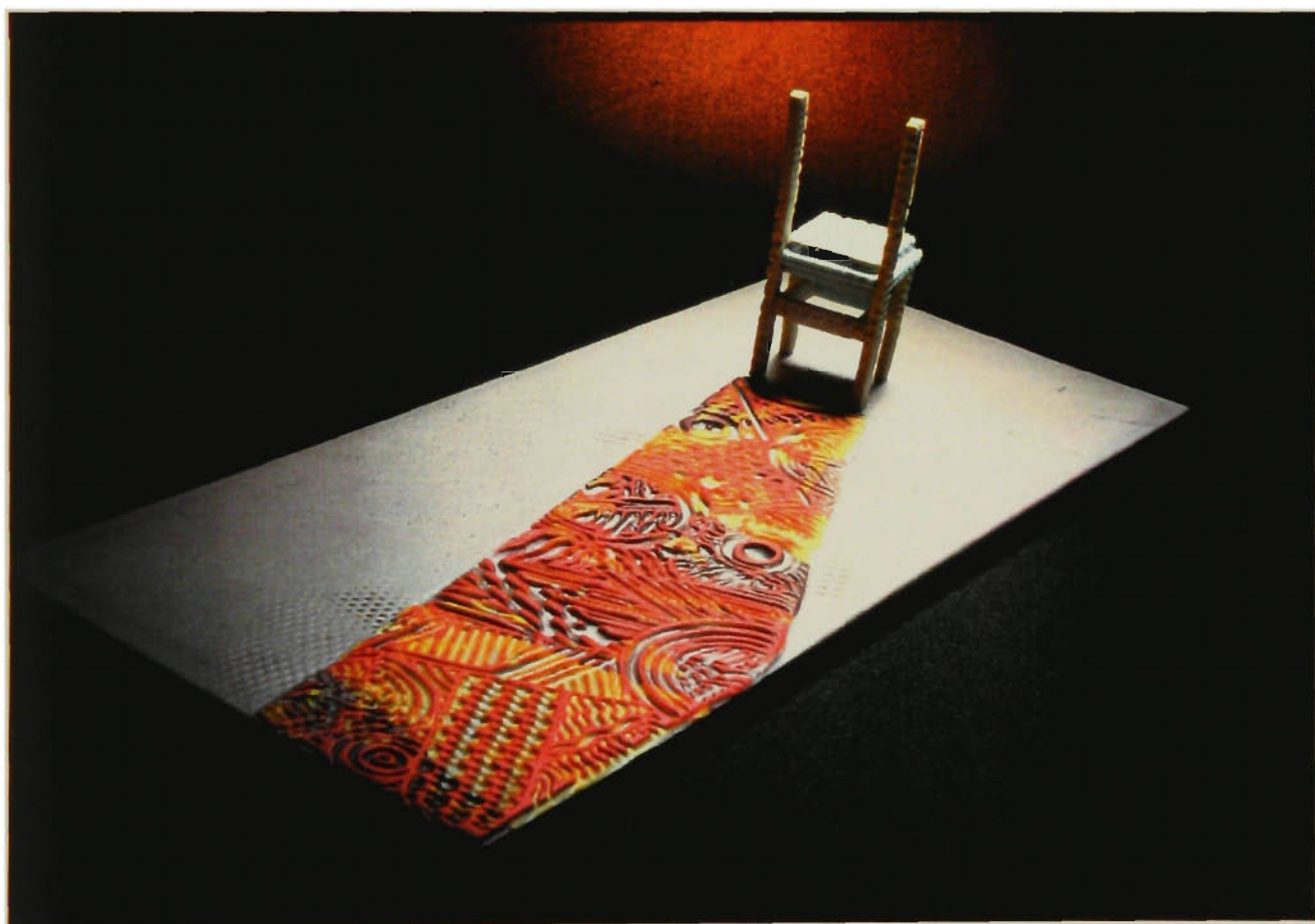


Fig 26 Facing The Sunset 1992 12cm H.

D THE LIFE-SCALE WORKS

Thrown Stone and Please Don't Sit are, at the time of writing, the final works of the group. They present a distinct new direction for the author and The Cicatrix Series.

Fig 27

'People who live in glass houses shouldn't ...'. What it is that they shouldn't is dependent upon that which defines the nature of their 'glass house'. One's vulnerability is related to the nature of one's enterprise, ambition and the fundamentals of self-image. The well worn expression allows interpretation of the nature of the fragility which surely visits us all upon occasions. Once the stone is thrown we are devoid of the ability to guide its path and stand captive of the repercussions of our act. Without learning from historic records we seem to have entered upon a monumental period of 'stone throwing'. In this decade of 'broken windows' mighty empires have disintegrated, royalty has slid from grace, immorality of many political leaders has been exposed and tycoons have been left penniless The list seems endless, the victims of 'stones thrown' abound in the last decade of the nineties. This piece is concerned with the 'glass house' of the colonist and the aftermath of 'stone throwing' which eventually befalls all tyranny. This decade is not unique in terms of calamity for it is the nature of the events of self-destruction rather than the frequency of the act which is of significance. Rather as the inferred uniqueness some historians bestow upon the rise and fall of the Roman Empire as fallacious, for that journey has been taken by many occupants of the 'glass house', the notion that the desecration of social order currently occurring is an unparalleled product of our times is an erroneous view of history. The internationally noteworthy calamities of our times, the famines, monetary collapses, civil wars etc, when viewed as isolated events are not revealing. It is in a context of socio-historical analysis that some pattern may be seen. The common ordering of historical events might be likened to the building upon shifting sands. That practice is not a reliable basis of permanency. The narrow focus of each of the great empires, military, commercial or cultural, that have sought to colonise similarly mistake short term achievements as permanent conquests. Colonisation of any type has eventual consequences unforeseen by the colonist and, though it may take hundreds of years, the yoke of colonisation is one day cast off. The rigid pattern of historical domination perceived by the colonist has not the stability which might be suggested by short-term analysis but inevitably crumbles as the uncertain base upon which it is built shifts below it. The domination inherent in any act of cultural

colonisation is as much built upon the uncertain sands as is the longevity of any hegemonic group.

Thrown Stone is a response to an understanding of the complex thread of human interaction which is cultural colonisation and the knowledge that all great empires eventually fall. The notion of a glass house being a 'glass house' and the reaping of that which one sows underlies this work. Thrown Stone, by its size, takes the argument to the viewer in a manner which is distinct from that found in the smaller works. It requires less quizzical inspection and presents the viewer with an acute initial visual impact from first sighting.

It can not be as likened to a modelling of a discourse on a proposal of reality as can smaller works of the series but rather must be confronted as a segment of that proposal. While of course it is a modelling as is any work of art the scale infers a degree of 'virtual' reality.⁵³

This work trades upon the chameleon-like ability of glass to adopt the essence of other materials without surrendering its unique visual characteristics. The glass panels of Thrown Stone accept, to varying degrees, the appearance of sheet metal, wallpaper, timber and inferred Aboriginal images. The 'window' in the larger 'wall' connects at adult eye-level the formality and relative uniformity of the exterior with the intimacy and at times skittish nature of the interior. Around the 'window' the exterior stands proud and stable, seemingly able to withstand adverse advances as is required of a dwelling. The interior surface is exposed, in a state of partial undress, illustrating a history of alternating application and erosion, the panels defying the confines of the dwelling yet with the translucency acknowledging the configuration of the supporting frame. The 'floor' has an ambience almost suggesting levitation which is accentuated by the cantilever of the longer sections. This element portrays as originally serving the

⁵³ Perhaps 'virtual reality' is a most appropriate term. It should be understood though, that the currency of the term is not yet settled. The adoption, or expropriation of the term 'reality' by the makers of the electronic device, 'virtual reality' is perhaps fortuitous. If one realises that the link between the device and the actual experience of virtual reality is tenuous indeed. While the device gives some experience which is slightly disorientating it does not conjure an experience which is perceived as reality. Any subscription to an experience which echoes reality required considerable contribution by the individual so involved. The viewing of a work such as Thrown Stone similarly borders on that line between reality and virtual reality. The work is in some ways an example of reality but, as does the device, it requires a pro active initiative by the viewer to attend to the experience of reality in viewing the work. The metal form is in fact a genuine example of contemporary stud work. The reality of the piece is but a short distance from the reality of that which it portrays.

purpose of a floor yet, by virtue of the etched pattern, an aura of indifference to the common function and a self-sufficiency beyond that of a floor normally found in a dwelling. The bowl form introduces an added suspense as it sits provocatively upon the work. This bowl makes reference to the ceremonial significance of vessels in many cultures.⁵⁴ The bowl consists of images drawn from Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal culture and has a broad, low, 'giving' form welcoming use.

Thrown Stone confronts the viewer with some inherent contradictions. The glass elements indicate some passing of time, they exhibit torn edges, weathered surfaces, overlaying of patterns and fragmentation. The metal stud work is disparate with crisp, hard, cold, straight lines, illustrating the machine process with which it was made it cuts an unwavering path, technologically of today but somehow timeless in its unweathered pristine state. This contrast denies facile interpretation, the quaintness of time-worn artefacts is avoided yet the notion of age and memories is laid before the viewer. The stud work and the techniques of fabrication are in fact those currently used in the construction of frame housing. There is an economy of procedure evident in this methodology which dictates the unadorned elegance and simultaneously an absence of sentimentality. Once the metal stud work technology is embraced there can be no significant deviation from the practice of the factory for this material does not accommodate creative manipulation. The frame runs resolute under the tattered history conveyed by the glass element but nevertheless holding it together, albeit by its own terms. The metal presents a contradiction in that it both allows the glass to stand but restrains it from deviating to any other variant of the notion. In this sense the stud work is less sympathetic to homogenous working than more commonly used structural elements.

A contradiction of this type is evident in the phenomenon of cultural colonisation. The dominant power of the colonist both permits and restricts the actions of the colonised. The colonist, in dictating the terms of cultural activity, contributes to the maintenance of those cultural practices so permitted. At times the colonist has aided cultural conservation for ulterior motives. International tourism is the most recent contribution to this form of cultural maintenance. The cultural practice of the

⁵⁴ The font in Roman Catholicism, the tea bowl in Zen Buddhism, the kava bowl in Fiji, are but some of the many bowls of particular significance. All bowls have potential for some importance beyond that of function. The generous opening form invites interpretation as a 'giving' form, one suited to sharing and communal use. Bowls larger than those used for individual portions infer a sharing of the content. There is then a communal quality to serving bowls.

vanquished is being brought to the fore, often given honour beyond that which it enjoyed in its original context.⁵⁵

The performance of ceremonial song and dance, once banned by the missionary is now a virtue of the colonised. The tourist performance brings monetary gain for the colonist. The more excellent the performance the more the potential reward. This change of fortune rated headlines in a special report on Queensland.⁵⁶ It states ... 'cultural ventures enhance paradise' (headline) and quotes the federal government's recent national tourism strategy... 'Developing the tourism potential of Aboriginal culture can provide many social and economic benefits.'

⁵⁵ It is to contradictions of this type that Thrown Stone is addressed. The work is directed at presenting to the viewer some comfort in recognition of various aspects of the work while maintaining a little disharmony at the variance of materials and techniques used.

⁵⁶ The Australian, Friday September 11th, 1992, p.14.

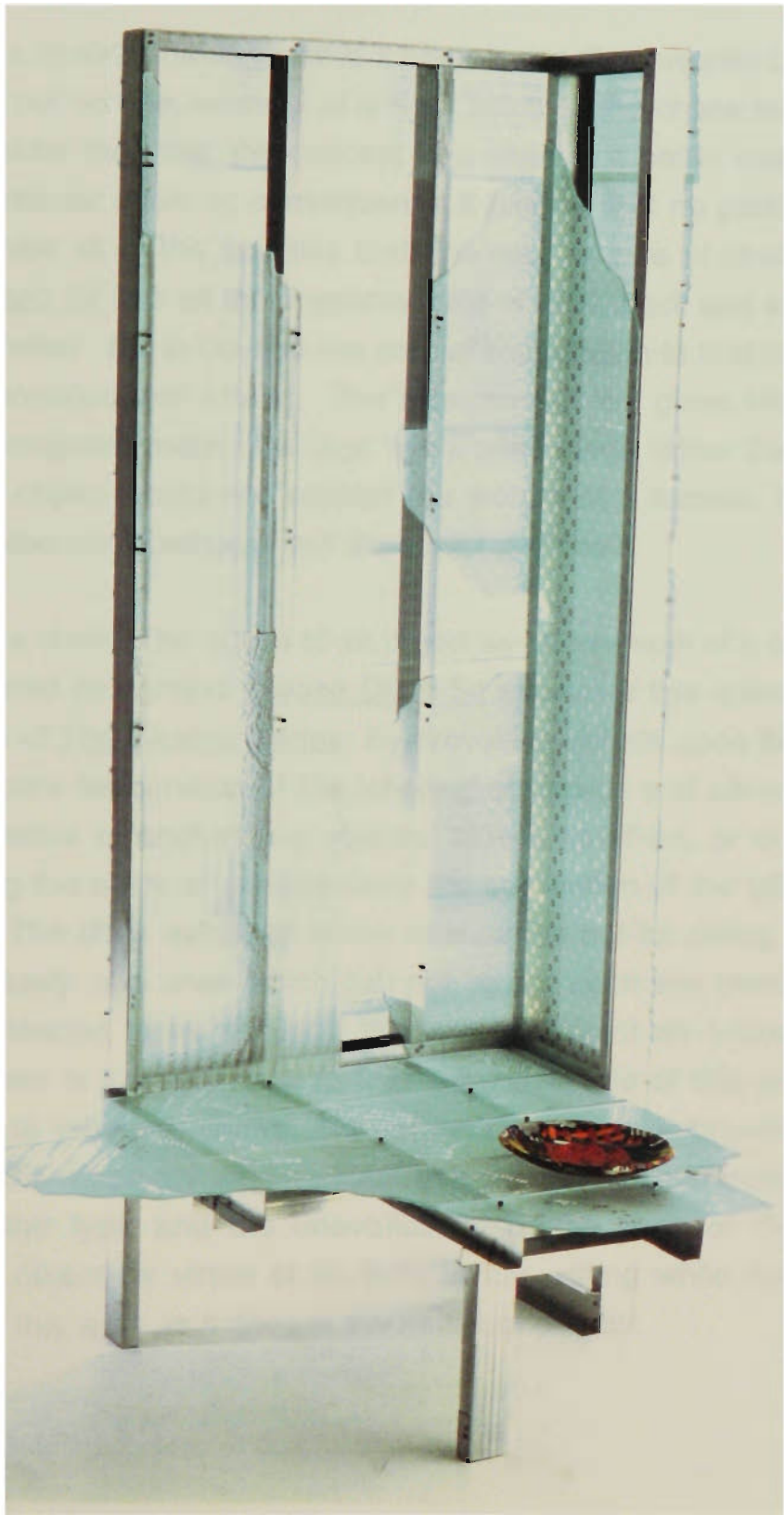


Fig 27 Thrown Stone 1992 200cm H.

Please Don't Sit
1992

Fig 28

What is a chair? The concept of a chair is readily conjured by those from chair using societies but no one example of a chair holds all the characteristics of all chairs. One must consider then that the concept of a chair is a better example of chairness than is any particular chair. In consequence it follows that no particular chair can be required to exhibit all of the qualities that one may require of chairs in general. The work Please Don't Sit has all the characteristics of seat, back and legs normally found in the concept 'chair', but is beyond the normal expectation in that the material used is not usually associated with chairs. The treatment of the glass infers that there is a reference to corrugated metal, the 'legs' are a solid plane rather than individual linear forms and this object would not support the weight of a human. In this context the viewer must deliberate whether or not the object is a chair.

When is a chair? The status of an object as an example of a concept is not fixed but may be altered by context. Please Don't Sit examines this question in the context of the concerns of The Cicatrix Series. By provoking debate upon its status as a chair this work promotes deliberation of the labelling of objects and allows consideration of the changing status of unchanging objects. Museums of art, or of other disciplines, while presenting the entity of exhibits deny the application of the utilitarian purpose of those exhibits. The chair exhibited in the museum is not for sitting upon but is to be appreciated visually. Is a chair which can not be sat upon any more a chair than one which is not intended to be utilised? When is an object an example of its type or alternatively when is it a reference to that type? The title of this piece is taken from signs attached to museum chairs. The reference though is broader and is directed towards both the anomaly of museum objects being references to rather than examples of their type and the unavailability of the chair of the colonist to the colonised. The object by virtue of its form invites sitting while the title denies that opportunity with this work as it does in the museum display.

This work is composed upon the notion of the exhibited object being used to form questions directed at the nature of both the actual and the referred existence of objects as artefacts. This chair is intended to be unused, it is intended to portray one material by use of another and is intended to pose more as a vehicle of questions than as a means to validate answers.⁵⁷ Just as museums take the ordinary and make it extraordinary this work endeavours to make special the common chair form. The form is less than absolute in that one side does not completely meet the floor. This entrance to the inside of the work may be understood as an intentional flaw in the integrity of the concept upon which the chair is based.

Please Don't Sit assumes some recognition upon the part of the viewer of the iconoclastic significance of corrugated iron in Australia and the peculiarity of the chair as an indicator of socioeconomic status. This chair form, by virtue of the use of glass to assemble a common chair shape straddles the realms of preciousness and practicality. Glass in some applications retains a measure of its former glory as the preserve of the Pharaohs. The translucency of this work emits a certain aura of specialness while conversely the proportion of the form tells of it being ordinary. It infers, by its form the utility normally associated with chairs and thus invites use in the manner of any common chair. In a community of chair users this chair, like most, offers acceptance and rest.

As an object, or indeed as a concept, it is not threatening to one who is as familiar with chairs as is usual in western society. As such, it stands as a demarcation between western society and those various colonised cultures for whom the chair is alien and to be associated with the dominant. (The master sits while the humble and humbled stand when being spoken to.) The chair is placed upon the podium and becomes part of the stagecraft of the colonist. The chair becomes synonymous with the authority-figure. This power invested in the concept of the chair is not recognised by the colonist to the same extent as it may be by the colonised. The very familiar is often difficult to recognise as having attributes accepted by one's own cultural group but unacceptable to those beyond that group. The act of colonising becomes unthought of

⁵⁷ "I found Gerry King's corrugated glass chair slightly disturbing as no doubt I was meant to. I was unsure of the significance of its 'Australian-ness' (by virtue of the corrugations) but every time I looked at it I could not prevent myself imagining sitting on the thing and collapsing to the floor in a shower of glass! For not only was it glass, it was thin glass obviously incapable of supporting even my weight. Was it a metaphor for Australia? I don't know".

Stone G, 'Ausglass Members Show Canberra 1993', Ausglass Magazine, Autumn 1993, pp.8-9.

as the role becomes increasingly comfortable. The colonist can readily appreciate the status of a magistrate's bench or the emperor's throne but looks beyond the ordinary for objects to be vested with symbolism and ignores the symbolism of the commonplace object which denotes demarcation between cultural groups.

This chair stands as a symbol of civilisation, technologically far removed from nature, offering the subdued glow of etched glass, soft, subtle, but far from submissive. The glass portrays the profile of corrugated iron thus offering itself as a symbol of the European settlement of land previously not fettered by fences and titles, governments and greed. The difficult landscape of Australia is now mastered by posts and rails, iron and brick dividing it with the technology of the new age. Corrugated iron, in this work portrayed by glass, has a quality of timelessness in an age which has spanned a mere two hundred years. There is though conflict in the use of 'corrugated iron' for the fabric of a chair for while it offers cerebral comfort, by virtue of the general form, it assures little physical comfort, rather as an emperor's throne normally provides authority but not luxury.

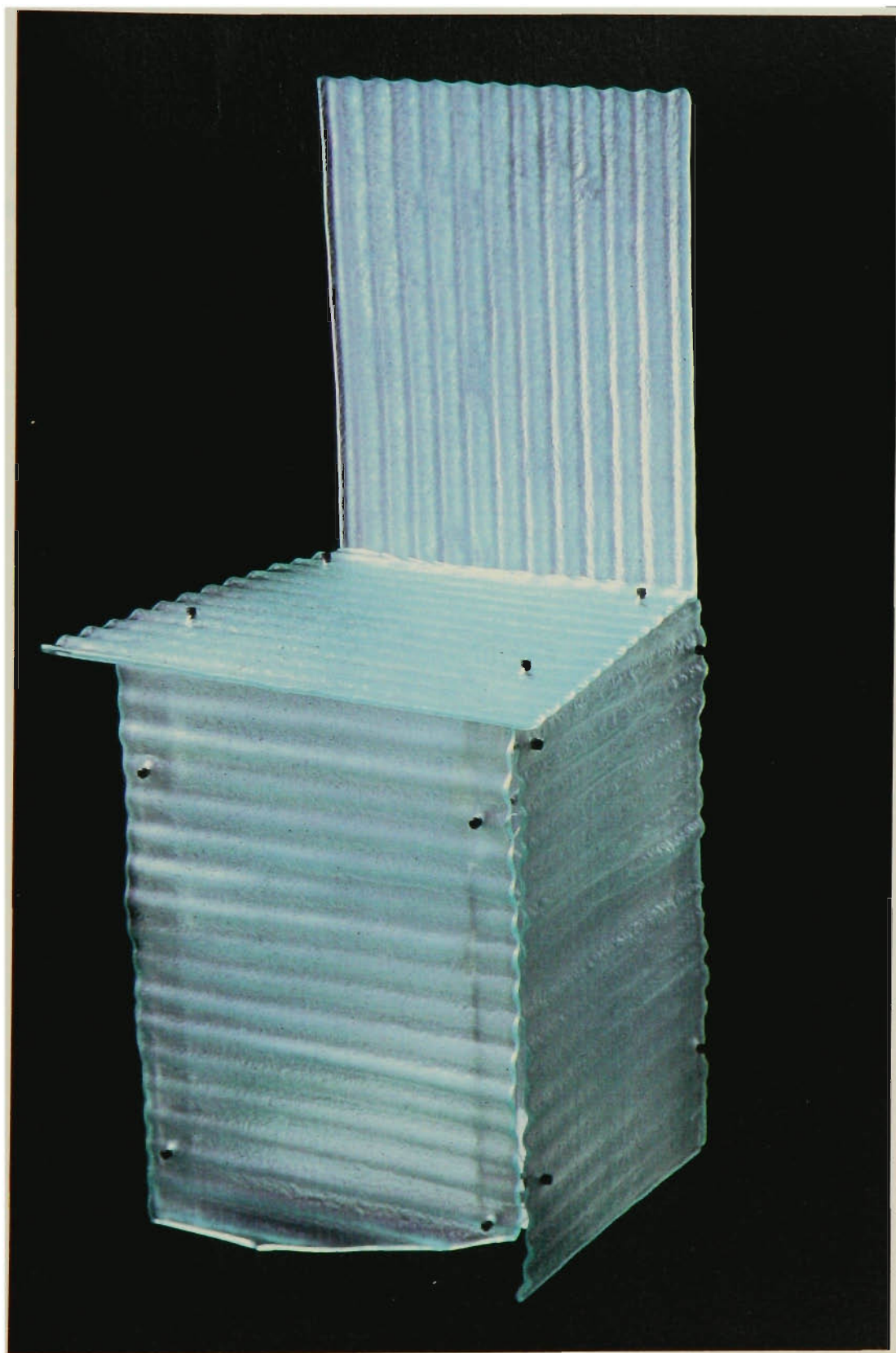


Fig 28 Please Don't Sit 1992 100cm H.

CHAPTER VI

TECHNICAL ASPECTS

A summary of the technical procedures utilised in The Cicatrix Series is preceded by some explanation of the application of glass to sculpture.

WHY GLASS?

For the artist, one of the most significant attractions of glass as a medium is the great range and diversity of appearances that may be utilised. This is so because glass, although it normally appears as a solid, is in fact a liquid. An almost unique attribute of glass is the absence of a crystalline structure. As water will take the form of the vessel in which it is contained, glass, at certain temperatures will adopt the form of that which it contacts. (At room temperature this change would take thousands or millions of years). A principal difference between glass and other liquids is its reaction to temperature. Water will freeze or evaporate with the application of certain known degrees of heat but will remain in a liquid state between those temperatures. Glass does not undergo distinct changes of state at certain temperatures but rather becomes more fluid-like as heat is increased.⁵⁸ The application of heat, usually in the range of 800°C to 1000°C, will allow the artist to form the glass or to alter the surface of an existing glass form.

There are three distinct areas of glass working temperatures which give rise to differing techniques, and consequently, differing appearances. At room temperature glass can be manipulated in the manner of a solid. It can be broken, sawn, ground, polished, scratched, abraded, glued, painted and drilled. In a kiln, at 600°C to (usually) a maximum of 900°C it can be fused, laminated, slumped, draped, bonded, cast (formed into one piece in a mould), caused to include other materials (metal is the most common) polished (known as 'fire-polished') and stretched. At a glory-hole or furnace it can be blown, solid worked, cast, acquire inclusions, combined with glass of other colours, enamelled, lustred and stretched. (The aforementioned is not an exhaustive listing but includes the primary classifications of techniques). The great diversity of these techniques allows the artist to fabricate a wide variety of forms and surface treatments. In this regard glass is an attractive medium for the artist.

⁵⁸ Only in extreme experimental conditions has glass frozen to become solid.

Techniques employed in The Cicatrix Series

The Cicatrix Series makes use of kiln-working, flame working and cold-working, techniques in conjunction with, in some works, cement-casting. The patterns of dots and lines used on the original Cicatrix works, The Cicatrix Shadows and The Cicatrix Shields are formed from especially formulated and tested compatible glass manufactured in the United States of America. This glass is pre-heated in a kiln to 500°C before being attached to a hot stainless steel rod. The rod (punti) is used to heat the glass in an especially designed gas fired chamber (glory hole) until a sufficient quantity is of a temperature at which it will stretch when pulled. (This technique of cane making, at the highest level of use, is attributed to the Venetians and has been developed with an exceptional degree of skill by the glassmakers of Murano). When cold the cane is broken or cut into small lengths (murrini) to be arranged into a pattern before being joined to each other or fused into a base sheet at 900°C.

The base sheet is separately formed before the addition of the pattern. In the original Cicatrix works and The Cicatrix Shadows sheets of the same glass are joined by the application of heat. In The Cicatrix Shields sheets of the same glass are cut into strips, fused into patterns, re-cut, re-fused into more complex patterns and re-fused to form the basic shape. An open mould is used to determine the shape of the base-sheet. The pattern elements are fused to both sides of the base sheet (except for the shadow pieces) before a final draping or polishing firing. The coloured components of Two Worlds and Balancing Act are made by a similar process, at times using a thin sheet of *pate de verre* to form the patterns.

The vitrolite elements of the Shadow works, Two Worlds and Balancing Act are formed by masking some of the glass and sand-blasting the exposed areas. A progressive reduction of air pressure causes the glass to become polished. The float glass works and the bases of The Cicatrix Shields are similarly treated.

The corrugated glass elements of Please Don't Sit and Thrown Stone are heated until the glass takes the form of a metal mould which is positioned below it. Other areas are acid etched or sand blasted.

Works or elements of works which can not be joined by the application of heat are cold laminated (glued) with either a two-part epoxy or adhesive sensitive to ultra-violet light.

The cement components are a mixture of ordinary cement combined with especially formulated, protein covered, styrene balls. The cement is cast and then ground to the final finish.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The Cicatrix Series has been a project of prime concern to the author from the inception of the idea in 1988 to the major solo exhibitions of 1992. The series will continue beyond the completion of this document.

ART, FACTS and ARTEFACTS

The making of the Cicatrix Series has inevitably engaged the author in a quest for a clarification of the nature of the art object. To some extent, such study is inherent in the practice of contemporary Western art-making and has been similarly experienced by the author when undertaking earlier works. Particular emphasis upon this aspect of the total process of making art-works has been engendered by the requirement of philosophical and theoretical testimony related to the works which is the subject of this document.⁵⁹

This document is not, nor is it intended to be, a definitive study of meaning of art or the interpretation of objects as art. In undertaking the making of The Cicatrix Series within a predetermined framework of intention, the author has of necessity been involved in a study of the interpretation of these objects by the viewers. The level of recognition of the earlier works as art-works and as vehicles of communication unavoidably influenced the author when engaged in subsequent production.

The intentional basis of these works is centred upon the viewer regarding the object as a statement which provokes questions rather than as one which provides answers. In this circumstance an artist is necessarily concerned with the communicative attributes of the work. These can only be measured by assessment of the response of the viewer. Should it then be that the viewer is not responding to the intended meaning an artist may endeavour to make the questions more apparent in subsequent works. It is problematic that inherent in the increased revealing of the question, the work becomes closer to dictating one answer rather than implying many.

In forming these works the author has contended with three principal difficulties. The first is that glass-works are not commonly responded to as works of art and this impediment is conditional to the viewers' response to The Cicatrix Series. Secondly, the topic of cultural colonisation is not commonly understood and is at times difficult to

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A case is at times made for the notion of the naive artist who is without understanding of the nature of art, but is able to make artworks. The author is unconvinced by such argument. The award requirement (University of Wollongong, Doctor of Creative Arts), that this document be written is similarly contrary to the notion of the naive artist. The posturing of various theorists and critics, whilst not enunciating the case, does on occasion infer that the artist is necessarily naive of the content, communicative and contextual characteristics of his/her own work. More evident in the supercilious tone than in the literal interpretation of some writing or lecture presentations, the assertion that the artist is not positioned so as to understand the meaning of the work, is not entirely uncommon.

present independently of the all-encompassing nature of military and administrative colonisation. Finally, the intention of producing works which discuss cultural colonisation, rather than contribute to it, exposes the author to undesired criticism should the viewer not accept that intention and interpret the work as appropriating unacceptably the images of the colonised.

The 'art/craft debate' is given, at times, to tedious inanity when theoretical posturing which distinguishes art from craft by intention and response is evidenced by examples conversely chosen by the attribute of medium. Such inconsistency is recognised by those upon whom it imposes a false categorisation. Works in glass, regardless of intent and the response of various viewers, are commonly categorised as being beyond the parameters of art, by virtue of the medium, by some who are otherwise recognised as expert in the field of art.⁶⁰ The limited acceptance of glass-works in the realm of contemporary art has unintentionally contributed to the vitality of the contemporary glass galleries, publications and collections. The author has trained and been employed in the fields of art, craft and design. The unthinking categorisation of an object by medium is an annoyance to one who is familiar with the use of that medium in differing fields.

The Cicatrix Series is an endeavour to raise deliberation of, among other concerns, the nature and significance of artefacts. The original Cicatrix Works and The Cicatrix Shields are more immediately discernible as artefacts in the manner of museum objects. The Cicatrix Shadow Series and the individually titled works employ objects less recognised as artefacts which are treated as symbols. To some extent the entire group is representative of two opposing categorisations. The Cicatrix Shields are intended in part to illustrate the making of an everyday artefact (the wirra) into a precious object by giving it museum status. The Shadow Series is intended to enhance the status of domestic objects as artefacts with cultural significance. The works utilise both the ordinary-status and the art-status meanings of the term 'artefact'.

⁶⁰ The most resolute narrow vision is often found within rather than beyond a given field. Within the contemporary glass community there are practitioners who believe that glass working is not applicable to contemporary art. A work of the author's, was once described as 'having an excellent intent as a work of art though glass was not the correct medium for such endeavours'. The statement was made by a member of the contemporary glass community.
A similar sentiment is expressed by Tony Hanning who contends that 'glass is not a prime material for sculpture'.
Hanning T, Unpublished Conference Paper, Ausglass Conference, January, 1993.

The Cicatrix Series has enabled the author to fuse into a body of works deliberations which recognise the actuality of cultural colonisation while in pursuit of making meaning of images.

CHAPTER XIII

DOCUMENTATION

Individually Titled Works

'Steps to the View'	1991 First exhibited, MasterWorks Gallery, New Zealand
'Caste Cast'	1991 First exhibited, MasterWorks Gallery, New Zealand
'Facing the Wall'	1991 First exhibited, MasterWorks Gallery, New Zealand
'Climbing the Ladder'	1991 First exhibited, MasterWorks Gallery, New Zealand
'Riding the Pyre'	1992 First exhibited, City Gallery of Wollongong National Art Glass Collection City of Wagga Wagga.
'Reflecting'	1992 First exhibited, Conternporary Art Centre, Adelaide
'No Entry No Exit'	1992 First exhibited, City Gallery of Wollongong.
'Two Worlds'	1992 First exhibited, City Gallery of Wollongong.
'Cicatrix Shadow 01'	1992 First exhibited, City Gallery of Wollongong. Permanent Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia
'Facing the Sunset'	1992 First exhibited, City Gallery of Wollongong.
'Please Don't Sit'	1992 First exhibited, City Gallery of Wollongong.
'Thrown Stone'	1992 First exhibited, City Gallery of Wollongong.

Cicatrix Shadow Series

Cicatrix Shadow 1	1991	First exhibited, Glass Art Gallery, Canada
Cicatrix Shadow 2	1991	First exhibited, Glass Art Gallery, Canada
Cicatrix Shadow 3	1991	First exhibited, Glass Art Gallery, Canada
Cicatrix Shadow 4	1991	First exhibited, Glass Art Gallery, Canada
Cicatrix Shadow 5	1991	First exhibited, Glass Art Gallery, Canada
Cicatrix Shadow 6	1991	First exhibited, Glass Art Gallery, Canada
Cicatrix Shadow 7	1991	First exhibited, Glass Art Gallery, Canada
Cicatrix Shadow 8	1991	First exhibited, Glass Art Gallery, Canada
Cicatrix Shadow 9	1991	First exhibited, Glass Art Gallery, Canada
Cicatrix Shadow 10	1991	First exhibited, Glass Art Gallery, Canada
Cicatrix Shadow 11	1991	First exhibited, Glass Art Gallery, Canada
Cicatrix Shadow 12	1991	First exhibited, Glass Art Gallery, Canada
Cicatrix Shadow 13	1991	First exhibited, Glass Art Gallery, Canada
Cicatrix Shadow 14	1991	First exhibited, Glass Art Gallery, Canada

Cicatrix Shadow Series

Cicatrix Shadow 15	1991	First exhibited, Seibu Gallery, Japan
Cicatrix Shadow 16	1991	First exhibited, Seibu Gallery, Japan
Cicatrix Shadow 17	1991	First exhibited, Seibu Gallery, Japan
Cicatrix Shadow 18	1991	First exhibited, Seibu Gallery, Japan
Cicatrix Shadow 19	1991	First exhibited, Seibu Gallery, Japan
Cicatrix Shadow 20	1991	First exhibited, Seibu Gallery, Japan
Cicatrix Shadow 21	1991	First exhibited, Seibu Gallery, Japan
Cicatrix Shadow 22	1991	First exhibited, Seibu Gallery, Japan
Cicatrix Shadow 23	1991	First exhibited, Seibu Gallery, Japan
Cicatrix Shadow 24	1991	First exhibited, Seibu Gallery, Japan
Cicatrix Shadow 25	1991	First exhibited, Seibu Gallery, Japan

Cicatrix Series

Cicatrix I	1990	First exhibited, Solander Gallery, Canberra Opitz Collection, Germany
Cicatrix II	1990	First exhibited, Solander Gallery, Canberra McDonald Collection, New Zealand
Cicatrix III	1990	First exhibited, Solander Gallery, Canberra
Cicatrix IV	1990	First exhibited, Solander Gallery, Canberra Nigara Co Ltd Collection, Japan
Cicatrix V	1990	First exhibited, Solander Gallery, Canberra
Cicatrix VI	1990	First exhibited, Solander Gallery, Canberra
Cicatrix VII	1990	First exhibited, Solander Gallery, Canberra
Cicatrix VIII	1990	First exhibited, Solander Gallery, Canberra
Cicatrix IX	1990	First exhibited, City Gallery of Wagga Wagga National Art Glass Collection Wagga Wagga City Gallery
Cicatrix X	1990	First exhibited, Solander Gallery, Canberra Kerfoot Collection, Melbourne
Cicatrix XI	1990	First exhibited, Solander Gallery, Canberra

Cicatrix Shields

Cicatrix Shield 1	1991 First exhibited Jam Factory, Adelaide
Cicatrix Shield 2	1991 Not exhibited
Cicatrix Shield 3	1991 First exhibited Glass Artists Gallery, Sydney Bayer Collection, Germany
Cicatrix Shield 4	1991 First exhibited Master Works Gallery, New Zealand
Cicatrix Shield 5	1991 First exhibited Master Works Gallery, New Zealand
Cicatrix Shield 6	1991 First exhibited Master Works Gallery, New Zealand
Cicatrix Shield7	1991 First exhibited Master Works Gallery, New Zealand Collection of City Gallery of Auckland, New Zealand
Cicatrix Shield 8	1991 Not exhibited Wiiken Collection, U.S.A.
Cicatrix Shield 9	1992 First exhibited City Gallery, Wollongong
Cicatrix Shield 10	1992 First exhibited Kanazawa International Glass Exhibition, Japan
Cicatrix Shield 11	1992 First exhibited Chicago New Art Forms Exposition, U.S.A.
Cicatrix Shield 12	1992 First Exhibited Gallery L, Germany
Cicatrix Shield 13	1992 First exhibited Gallery L, Germany
Cicatrix Shield 14	1992 First exhibited Chicago New Art Forms Exposition, U.S.A. Anderson Collection, U.S.A.
Cicatrix Shield 15	1992 First exhibited Beaver Gallery, Canberra

Cicatrix Shield 16	1992	First exhibited Beaver Gallery, Canberra Howarth Collection, Australia
Cicatrix Shield 17	1992	First exhibited Beaver Gallery, Canberra Cohn Family Trust Collection, U.S.A.
Cicatrix Shield 18	1993	First exhibited Chicago New Art Forms Exposition, U.S.A.
Cicatrix Shield 19	1993	First exhibited Chicago New Art Forms Exposition, U.S.A.
Cicatrix Shield 20	1993	First exhibited Chicago New Art Forms Exposition, U.S.A.

One-Person Exhibitions

The sculpture presented in this document is a family of pieces known collectively as The Cicatrix Series which have been exhibited in the following One-Person Exhibitions.

The Cicatrix Series 1990 Solander Gallery, Canberra, Australia

The Cicatrix Shadow Series 1991 The Glass Art Gallery, Toronto, Canada
(Cicatrix Shadow 1 - Cicatrix Shadow 14)

1991 Seibu Shibuya Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
(Cicatrix Shadow 15 - Cicatrix Shadow 25)

The Cicatrix Shield Series 1991 MasterWorks Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand

Shadows and Auras - Works from the Cicatrix Series

1992 The City Gallery of Wollongong

Cicatrix Memories 1992 Gallery L, Hamburg Germany

Group Exhibitions

Selected works have been shown in Group Exhibitions as detailed.

Contemporary Glass Art	1990 Kanazawa, Japan
Coupe Colossus	1991 The Jam Factory, Adelaide, Australia
Australian Glass	1991 Distelfink Gallery, Melbourne Australia
Members' Exhibition	1991 Contemporary Art Centre, Adelaide, Australia
A Decade of Australian Glass	1991 The Glass Artists' Gallery, Sydney, Australia
20th Anniversary Exhibition	1991 Gallery L, Hamburg, Germany
Recent Work	1991 Crafts Council of New Zealand, Wellington, New Zealand
International Directions in Glass	1992 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Western Australia.
Australia Day Exhibition	1992 Crafts Council of Australia, Sydney, Australia
International Glass Art	1992 Kanazawa, Japan
New Art Forms Exposition	1992 Chicago, USA
International Glass Art	1992 Galerie Fur Angewandte Kunst, Munich, Germany

International Glass	1992 Hamburg, Germany
International Craft Arts	1992 Museum Fur Kunstund Gewerbe, Hamburg, Germany
The National Committee of Vice Chancellors' Exhibition	1992 Adelaide, Australia
Glass Sculpture	1992 Beaver Galleries, Canberra, Australia
Australian Glass	1993 Barrack Gallery, Canberra, Australia
Gallery Holdings	1993 Deson and Saunders Gallery, Chicago, USA
Hannover Art Fair	1993 Hannover, Germany
New Art Forms Exposition	1993 Chicago, U.S.A.
A.C.I. Glass Award Exhibition	1993 Meat Market Craft Centre, Melbourne, Australia

Permanent Collections

Works from the Series have been selected for the following Permanent Collections.

Public Collections

National Art Glass Collection City Gallery of Wagga Wagga	Cicatrix IX 1990 Riding the Pyre 1992
The City Gallery of Auckland, New Zealand	Cicatrix Shield 12 1992
The Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth	Cicatrix Shadow 01 1992

Private Collections

Kerfoot Collection	Australia	Cicatrix X	1990
Nigara Co Ltd Collection	Japan	Cicatrix IV	1990
Wiiken Collection	U.S.A	Cicatrix Shield 8	1991
McDonald Collection	New Zealand	Cicatrix II	1990
Bayer Collection	Germany	Cicatrix Shield 3	1992
Anderson Collection	U.S.A	Cicatrix Shield 14	1992
Howarth Collection	Australia	Cicatrix Shield 16	1993
Cohn Family Trust	U.S.A.	Cicatrix Shield 17	1993

Publications

Works from the Series have been represented in the following Publications.

Forceps of Language	Sydney	Australia
Craft Arts International	Sydney	Australia
Neues Glass	Frencken	Germany
Design Visions	Perth	Australia
Craftwest National	Perth	Australia
CraftWest	Perth	Australia
Oz Arts	Wentworth Falls	Australia
Art and Australia	Sydney	Australia
Japan/South Australia Brochure	Adelaide	Australia

Newspapers:

The Advertiser	NSW
The Illawarra Mercury	NSW
The New Zealand Herald	NZ
The Auckland City Harbour News	NZ