

## AVITAL SHEFFER

*Avital Sheffer's work is informed by an investigation of her Middle Eastern and Jewish heritage and an ongoing engagement with the landscape, architecture, languages and wisdom of that part of the world. The territory she refers to in her work is historically loaded; few places have produced as much influence on the spread of art, language and spirituality and fewer still have produced as much conflict and dispute. Ancient ceramics, glass, metalware and calligraphy are a well of inspiration. In her recent works, Avital explores how the symbolic power of the female form has remained significant from prehistoric to contemporary times. Through the form, volume, surface and lines of the vessels Avital aims to magnify the enigmatic, rare beauty of the female form, which has been represented across different cultures and times. Avital's ceramic vessels are constructed with coil, slab and mould, fired multiple times with applications of slips, glazes, terra sigillatas and prints.*

*Avital Sheffer grew up in Israel, where she practiced fashion and textile design, building design and town planning. After migrating to Australia in 1990 and settling on the North Coast of NSW, she turned to the making of ceramics, receiving a Diploma in ceramics from Lismore TAFE College in 2003. Over the last seven years Avital has exhibited widely across Australia and the USA, and has been a finalist in numerous awards including the Blake Prize, Manning Art Prize and IV International Biennial of Ceramics in Korea. Avital's work is represented in many collections including the National Gallery of Australia, Powerhouse Museum, Manly Art Gallery and the Museum and Gold Coast City Art Gallery.*

### BIOGRAPHY

- 1954 Born Jaffa, Israel
- 1980-85 Fashion design and manufacturing, Israel
- 1980-90 Architecture/landscape design, CiiI cooperative for Settlement and Development, Western Galilee, Israel
- 1990 Migrated to Australia
- 2004 Diploma in Ceramics, TAFE, Lismore, NSW
- 2009 Elected for membership of the International Academy of Ceramics, Geneva
- 2010 Artist residency, SODA Fremantle, WA

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2011 "Mother tongues", Beaver Galleries, Canberra  
"Terra memoria", Mossgreen Gallery, Melbourne
- 2010 "Continuum", Anthea Polson Art, Main Beach, Qld  
"Peregrinations", Gadfly Gallery, Perth
- 2009 "Terra Anima", Robin Gibson Gallery, Sydney  
"Deep Earth", regionally touring exhibition  
"Origins", Mossgreen Gallery, Melbourne
- 2008 Thomas Riley Galleries, Cleveland, Ohio, USA  
"Terra intima", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
- 2007 Jane Sauer Thirteen Moons Gallery, Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA  
Salmon Galleries, Sydney
- 2006 "Unearthed II", Salmon Galleries, Sydney  
"New work", Lismore Regional Art Gallery, NSW
- 2005 "Unearthed", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
- 2004 Mura Clay Gallery, Sydney (with Marguerite Josephson)  
"Under the dome", Tweed River Regional Art Gallery, NSW

### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2011 "Confined excitement: pleasures of the void", Cavin-Morris Gallery, New York, USA
- 2010 International Academy of Ceramics Members, Sevres Cite de la Ceramique, Paris, France  
"Sculpture 22", Robin Gibson Gallery, Sydney  
"On paper: in time and in others' minds", Art Piece Gallery, Mullumbimby, NSW  
"The space between", Aptos Cruz Gallery, Adelaide  
9th Festival in Ceramics, demonstrators' exhibition, University of Ballarat Post Office Gallery, Vic  
"Down memory lane", Framed Gallery, Darwin  
"Art event", Jewish Museum of Australia / NGV International, Melbourne

- 2009 "Time + place", Cudgegong Gallery, Gulgong, NSW  
"White Heat", The Australian Ceramics Association's Biennial Exhibition, Manly Art Gallery and Museum, Sydney  
"Sculpture 21", Robin Gibson Gallery, Sydney  
"forty", Brisbane Grammar School Art Show  
FEHVA Art Exhibition and Auction, Bangalow, NSW  
"Here/Now", Mossgreen Gallery, Melbourne  
"Our Most Easterly Edge", Fusions Gallery, Brisbane  
"Clay", NCECA Group Exhibition, Cervini Hass Gallery, Scottsdale, Arizona, USA  
"Palm Beach 3", Thomas Riley Galleries, Cleveland, Ohio, USA  
"Egyptian Treasures: Arts of the Pharaohs", The Australian Museum, Sydney  
"The 58th Touring Blake Prize Exhibition", touring exhibition  
Friends of Bezalel Art Exhibition, Arthouse Hotel, Sydney  
"Heated Words", Fusions Gallery, Brisbane
- 2008 "Ceramicos", Waywood Gallery, Byron Bay, NSW  
"Sculpture 20", Robin Gibson Gallery, Sydney  
"Palm Beach 3", Thomas Riley Galleries, Cleveland, Ohio, USA  
COLLECT, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK (Raglan Galleries, Sydney)  
Sidney Myer International Ceramic Award, Shepparton Art Gallery, Vic  
FEHVA Art Exhibition and Auction, Bangalow, NSW  
SOFA Chicago (Thomas Riley Galleries, Cleveland, Ohio, USA)
- 2007 "Palm Beach 3", Thomas Riley Galleries, Cleveland, Ohio, USA  
Art London, UK (Raglan Gallery, Sydney)  
SOFA Chicago (Thomas Riley Galleries, Cleveland, Ohio, USA)  
FEHVA Art Exhibition and Auction, Bangalow, NSW
- 2006 "Hand Made", J Johnson Gallery, Jacksonville Beach, Florida, USA  
SOFA New York 2006, New York, USA (Jane SauerThirteen Moons Gallery, Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA)  
SOFA Chicago 2006, Chicago, USA (Beaver Galleries)  
"Chrysalis", Lismore Regional Art Gallery, NSW  
"ConVerge", Victor Mace Fine Art Gallery, Brisbane  
Gold-Coast International Ceramic Award, Qld  
FEHVA Art Exhibition and Auction, Bangalow, NSW
- 2005 Gold Coast International Ceramic Award, Qld  
The 3rd World Ceramic Biennale, Korea  
SOFA Chicago 2005, Chicago, USA (Beaver Galleries)  
FEHVA Art Exhibition and Auction, Bangalow, NSW
- 2004 "Fusions 2004 Graduate Award Exhibition", Brisbane  
Graduating Students Award Exhibition, Inner City Clayworks, Sydney  
Gold Coast International Ceramic Award, Qld  
"Christmas Exhibition", Mura Clay Gallery, Sydney  
14th Birthday Exhibition, Mura Clay Gallery, Sydney  
Artists Book-Piece Gallery, Mullumbimby, NSW  
"Under the Dome", Tweed River Regional Art Gallery, NSW
- 2003 Gold Coast International Ceramic Award, Qld  
1999 "Thursday Plantation Sculpture Show", Ballina, NSW

#### AWARDS / COMMISSIONS

- 2011 Finalist, Burnie Print Prize, Burnie Regional Art Gallery, Tas  
2010 Acquisition Award, Stanthorpe Art Festival, Stanthorpe Regional Art Gallery, Qld  
Finalist, Ergon Energy CQ Ceramic Award, Rockhampton Regional Art Gallery, Qld  
2009 Finalist, Burnie Print Prize, Burnie Regional Art Gallery, Tas  
Highly Commended, Muswellbrook Open Art Prize, Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre, NSW  
Finalist, Prometheus Visual Arts Award  
Finalist, IV International Biennial of Ceramics, Talavera de la Reina, Toledo, Spain  
Finalist, The Blake Prize

- 2008 Finalist, Manning Art Prize, Manning Regional Art Gallery, Taree, NSW  
Grant, Australia Council New Work  
Finalist, The Sidney Myer International Ceramic Award  
Winner, Border Art Prize, Tweed River Art Gallery, NSW
- 2006 Grant, Australia Council New Work  
Finalist, Gold Coast International Ceramic Award
- 2005 Acquisition Award, Gold Coast International Ceramics Award - The Josephine Ulrick Award For Excellence, Qld  
Honorary Mention, The 3rd World Ceramic Biennale International Competition, Korea
- 2004 Finalist, Gold Coast International Ceramic Award
- 2003 Finalist, Gold Coast International Ceramic Award
- 1999 Special Mention, Thursday Plantation Sculpture Show, Ballina, NSW

#### PUBLICATIONS

- 2011 "Fusing form and decoration", Kerry-Anne Cousins, *Canberra Times*, 17 February
- 2010 Acquisition Award, Stanthorpe Art Festival, Stanthorpe Regional Art Gallery, Qld  
Finalist, Ergon Energy CQ Ceramic Award, Rockhampton Regional Art Gallery, Qld
- 2009 "A present past/ a continuous present", Louise Martin Chew, *Deep Earth* catalogue  
"Avital Sheffer: Body of Work", Ann McMahon, *The Journal of Australian Ceramics*, issue 48 no. 1  
"Exhibitions: Avital Sheffer", *Ceramics Monthly*, October  
"White Heat", *The Journal of Australian Ceramics*, issue 48 no. 2  
Exhibition review, Dalia Sable, *The Australian Jewish News*, 10 November  
Gallery review, *Ceramic Review*, issue 240  
"Visual Art", Dylan Rainforth, *The Age*, 12 November
- 2008 "New works by Avital Sheffer", Pollyanna Sutton, *Craft Arts International*, issue 72  
"Encoded sentinels", Kerry-Anne Cousins, *Canberra Times*, 25 October
- 2007 "Avital Sheffer: Exhibition", *Craft Arts International*, issue 71  
*Art London 2007* Catalogue  
"ConVerge: The Strength of a Region", Grace Cochrane, *Ceramics Art and Perception*, issue 67
- 2006 "24th Gold Coast International Ceramic Award", *Craft Arts International*, issue 66  
"The Emergence of Northern Rivers Artists", Louise Martin Chew, *Chrysalis* catalogue  
"ConVerge: Northern Rivers Touring Exhibition Catalogue", Kerry Selwood, Arts Northern Rivers, September  
*SOFA Chicago 2006* catalogue
- 2005 "Tradition to Modernity", Gordon Foulds, *Craft Arts International*, issue 64  
"Unearthed culture", Sonia Barron, *Canberra Times*, 22 September  
*Ceramics Art and Perception*, issue 60
- 2004 *The Journal of Australian Ceramics*, issue 43 # 2  
*The Journal of Australian Ceramics*, issue 43 # 3

#### REPRESENTED

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; Powerhouse Museum, Sydney; Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Qld; Manly Art Gallery and Museum, Sydney; Tweed River Art Gallery, NSW; Jewish Museum of Australia, Melbourne; Art Gallery of Ballarat, Vic; Shepparton Art Gallery, Vic; Southern Downs Regional Art Collection, Stanthorpe, Qld; Glasshouse Regional Gallery, Port Macquarie, NSW; Ceramics Victoria Permanent Collection, Vic; Brisbane Grammar School Art Collection, Brisbane; The Russell Berrie Foundation, Teaneck, USA; The Charles Bronfman Collection, Teaneck, USA