

# Pushing the boundaries of porcelain



**SHARON PEOPLES**

## Boundaries

Beaver Galleries, 81 Denison Street, Deakin.  
Until May 19.

**T**his is Marianne Huhn's first solo exhibition at Beaver Galleries. Despite porcelain being notoriously difficult to master, it has come to the fore again in recent decades. Artist at all levels are exploring the potential and the limits of porcelain. Huhn does this deftly.

Often we associate porcelain with the ideal of thin, white and translucent but here Huhn allows the fine texture and subtleties of surface to reveal her intellectual fascination with the division of space. She allows the texture of the material to persist, articulating a sharp delineation between the



Marianne Huhn's *Measuring the distance*, above, and *Landscape* cups, left.

interiors and exterior of the forms. The graphic marks and texts of the outer surfaces contrast with the smooth interiors of the containers.

Many of the works take aerial viewpoints or street map-like images of buildings and urban landscapes, geometric and repetitive. The shadows enhance this

viewpoint. The viewer could be one of the birds that appear, although the work does draw a more contemplative mood than just a cursory glance across these urban scenes.

The two of the most successful works both titled *Landscape*, have the exterior surface fold into the

inside. The images turn upside-down as though it were fabric tucked in. The shadows of the folds of the fabric-like image enhance this.

This emphasises the aerial viewpoints and it evokes the sensation of having done an aerial acrobatic flip. The boundaries then become fickle and seen for what they are.

The notion of the forms being containers, particularly the jugs with their function of pouring out and cups transferring liquids, contribute to that sense of the transitory nature of constructed boundaries.

The fragility of the materials is expressed in the decorative rather than some on the edge technical achievement. The understanding of the qualities of the materials comes through the elegance and refinement of weight and structural balance.

The series of nine small cups, also titled *Landscape*, each with excellent proportions, are individually crafted and beckon the hand to pick them up and use them.