

NICK WIRDNAM

Nick Wirdnam is a highly regarded glass artist who incorporates into his work a language of recurring symbols and motifs on which we often project a special meaning. In previous years, Nick's work has been inspired by superstitions and the way in which events can be influenced by an object, an act or a saying. In his recent exhibition, he continues to explore the power of the object by looking at the role of the charm - "We invest value in symbols and objects which protect us from misfortune and provide hope and promise. This work employs familiar objects with an historical association of good fortune, hope and consolation." The role of charms has changed over time from that of a means of warding off evil, to a purely aesthetic one. Charms were worn during the era of Queen Victoria as a fashion accessory and are still worn today as personal items that resonate with personal memories and emotions. However, it is the historical use that interests Nick as "these small ornamental objects reputedly have a certain power, as amulets or lucky charms. These charms are symbols that offer hope and protection." With a masterful distillation of all the sensuality inherent in glass, Nick creates beautiful hot sculpted objects that immediately attract and then confound.

Born in Portsmouth, England, Nick Wirdnam became a foundation member of the studio team at Isle of Wight Glass in 1974, where he stayed for the next nine years, producing award winning decorative functional work and art objects. Moving to Australia in 1983, Nick took up a teaching position at Monash University, Melbourne, where he continued to lecture until 2007. In 1998, Nick was awarded the Pilchuck Scholarship to attend hot-sculpting classes with Italian master, Dino Rosin and, in 2002, he accepted a residency at North Lands Creative Glass Centre in Caithness, Scotland. Nick has been a consistent finalist in prestigious awards such as the Ranamok Glass Prize, Waterhouse Natural Science Art Prize and Tom Malone Prize. He has had numerous solo and group exhibitions both in Australia and overseas, and is represented in major public collections including the National Gallery of Australia, Queensland Art Gallery, National Art Glass Collection at Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, Nijima Glass Art Museum (Japan) and the Shanghai Museum of Glass (China).

BIOGRAPHY

- 1956 Born Portsmouth, England
- 1975-83 Founder member, Isle of Wight Studio Glass
- 1982 Operated One Man Studio, Jersey, Channel Islands
- 1988-89 President, Ausglass Victoria
Lecturer, Chisholm Institute of Technology, Melbourne
- 1989-2007 Coordinator and lecturer, Monash University, Melbourne
- 1990 Bachelor of Arts, Ceramic Design, Monash University, Melbourne, VIC
Visiting lecturer, Anderson University, Indiana
3 mth overseas study program - observations & participation in studios of Dale Chihuly, Ben Moore, Dante Marioni
- 1993-2007 Subject coordinator, glass studies, Monash University, Melbourne
- 1995-97 President, Ausglass Victoria
- 2002 Residency, Northlands, Scotland
- 2003 Lecturer, Pilchuck Glass School, Stanwood, Washington, USA
- 2006 Artist-in-residence, Glass Studio of Kurashiki University of Science and Art, Okayama, Japan
- 2009 Residency, Canberra Glassworks

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2018 "Regale – Crafting the Table", Craft Victoria, Melbourne
- 2017 "Charm", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
"The nature of things", Hill Smith Gallery, Adelaide
- 2016 "Charmed", Sabbia Gallery, Sydney
- 2014 "Beliefs", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
- 2012 "Belief", Sabbia Gallery, Sydney
- 2011 "Geometry", Sabbia Gallery, Sydney
- 2010 "Superstition", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
- 2008 "Portraits", Dane Gallery, Nantucket, USA
- 2007 "Portraits of life", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
"Portraits: past & present", William Traver Gallery, Seattle, Washington, USA
- 2006 "Portraits: past & present", Sabbia Gallery, Sydney
"Portraits", Dane Gallery, Nantucket, USA
- 2005 "Refined portraits", Traver Gallery, Tacoma, Washington, USA
- 2004 "Portraits of life", Traver Gallery, Tacoma, Washington, USA
- 2001 "Linkage", Kirra, Australia

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2016 "Small works", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
"Waterhouse Natural Science Art Prize", Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 2015 Hill Smith Gallery, Adelaide
- 2014 SOFA Chicago, Navy Pier, Chicago, USA (Beaver Galleries)
"Revere – Glass Masters 2014", Sabbia Gallery, Sydney
- 2013 "Tom Malone Prize", Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
"Waterhouse Natural Science Art Prize", Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
"Prima", Sabbia Gallery, Sydney
"Australian Glass Now", Traver Gallery, Seattle, Washington, USA
"Masters in Blown Glass", Kirra Galleries, Melbourne
- 2012 "Small Works", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
"Alphabet", Craft ACT
"Ranamok Glass Prize", Canberra Glassworks
- 2011 SOFA Chicago, Navy Pier, Chicago, USA (Beaver Galleries)
"Drink", Canberra Glassworks
Waterhouse Art Prize, South Australian Museum, Adelaide and National Archives of Australia, Canberra
Tom Malone Glass Prize, Perth
Ranamok Glass Prize, Canberra Glassworks and touring nationally
- 2008 "Echoes of Nature", Axia Modern Art, Melbourne
- 2006 "Diversity in Collaboration", Southside Arts, Melbourne
"Reflections: A decade of North Lands Creative Glass, Edinburgh, Scotland
- 2005 "25 years: Monash Glass", Faculty Gallery, Monash University, Melbourne
- 2004 "1st Annual World Glass Exhibition", Traver Gallery, Tacoma, Washington, USA
Ranamok Glass Prize, touring nationally
"Pilchuck 20", Stewart Gallery, Boise, Idaho, USA
- 2003 "Hot Glass 2003", Axia Modern Art, Melbourne
Ranamok Glass Prize, touring nationally
- 2002 "Ecstasy", Quadrivium, Sydney
"Dialogue", Quadrivium, Sydney
Ranamok Glass Prize, touring nationally
North Lands Residency Exhibition, Caithness, Scotland
- 2001 Ausglass Members' Show, Faculty Gallery, Monash University, Melbourne
"The Cutting Edge", Axia Modern Art, Melbourne
"Lust", Australian Contemporary Glass, Quadrivium, Sydney
"Glass Art In Australia", Quadrivium
Cheongju-International Craft Biennale, Korea
"Vessels of the Victorious", Makers Mark, Melbourne
- 2000 "The Cutting Edge" (travelling exhibition), Brisbane City Gallery; Object Gallery, Sydney; GalerieHandwerk, Munich
- 1998 ApertoVetro, Venice, Italy
- 1997 "Bowled over", Savode Gallery, Brisbane, Qld
Contemporary Australian Glass, Arica Gallery, Perth
- 1995 "Glass Australia 1995", Melbourne
Ausglass Members' Show, Adelaide, SA
- 1993 A.C.I. Glass Exhibition, Meat Market Craft Centre, Melbourne
- 1992 "1000 Goblets", Nakama Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
"Victorian Tableware", Meat Market Craft Centre, Melbourne

AWARDS / COMMISSIONS

- 2016 "Waterhouse Natural Science Art Prize", Finalist, Art Gallery of South Australia
- 2013 "Tom Malone Prize", Finalist, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
"Waterhouse Natural Science Art Prize", Finalist, Highly Commended award, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 2012 "Ranamok Glass Prize", Finalist, Canberra
- 2011 "Waterhouse Natural History Art Prize", Finalist, 2nd prize (Sculpture and Objects), National Archives of Australia, Canberra
"Ranamok Glass Prize", Finalist, Canberra
Tom Malone Prize, Finalist, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth

- 2003 People's Choice Award, Ranamok Glass Prize, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
2000 RFC Glass Prize, Finalist
1998 Pilchuck Scholarship, Dino Rosin: Hot sculpting glass
1997 Nominee, Saxe Award, Pilchuck Glass School

PUBLICATIONS

- 2014 "Superstitions in Sculptures", Kerry-Anne Cousins, *Canberra Times*, 3 September
2010 "What do we fear and want?", Kerry-Anne Cousins, *Canberra Times*, 22 June
2007 "Private journey's simple success", Meredith Hinchliffe, *Canberra Times*, 16 August
2003 "Hot-sculpted nuances", Gordon Foulds, *Craft Arts International*, no. 59

REPRESENTED

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; National Glass Collection, Wagga Wagga, NSW; Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane; Nijima Glass Art Museum, Japan; Shanghai Museum of Glass, China; Ebeltoft Glass Museum, Denmark; North Lands Creative Glass Collection, Lybster, Scotland