

# RED OBJECTS

Research in Experimental Design : Objects

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COFASpace, College of Fine Arts, UNSW  
Tuesday 2nd – Saturday 6th August 2011

Katherine Moline  
Jacqueline Clayton  
Roderick Bamford  
Karina Clarke  
Wendy Parker  
Liz Williamson



School of Design Studies, COFA, UNSW

The Research in Experimental Design: Objects group (RED Objects) is a recently launched collaboration of practitioners and researchers who explore the relationships between design, craft, visual art and the histories and theories of art and design at the School of Design Studies, College of Fine Arts, UNSW. Investigating the parameters of design in relation to visual art and craft, RED Objects examine the influences of modern art in design and the historical links between high and low technologies and distribution systems. Their research focuses on how emergent interdisciplinary design practices question and challenge social conventions in relation to histories of design and cultural exchange. In particular, RED Objects explore the space where studio practice engages with social action, sustainable resource management, and where the experimental meshes with the expressive. Ongoing explorations of the hybridity and differences arising between the fields of design, craft and visual art, mass production and the handmade, physical and virtual, and the past and future has led to the formation of the RED Objects group, encouraging practice based research. Widely published in exhibitions, television programmes as well as in academic journals and conferences, researchers involved in RED Objects include: Katherine Moline, Karina Clarke, Jacqueline Clayton, Liz Williamson, Wendy Parker and Rod Bamford.

## Katherine Moline

Constructed from plastic, rubber and stainless steel, *Equipment for the Actual Complexities and Intricacies of String: Super Tube; Super Suction; Super String* (2010-2011) can be seen as devices for connecting materials and bodies separated by distance. The commercial uses for which the material units were designed are obscured by the uses for which Moline re-purposes these ready-made components. This sort of reverse process questions design's purposiveness. Instead of the hype of the new and the useful in much design discourse, this home-made equipment implicitly challenges such over-determination. Instead of optimisation and control, this equipment for connection is experimental. The work continues the series of rubber k/nots exhibited in 2006 which explored the experiences of extreme jetlag as a mirror of the socio-political changes geared around petrol consumption. This series, however, proposes new devices with which to create playful alternatives to the limited terms in which usefulness is understood in current design debate.

*Katherine Moline is a visual artist and design researcher. As a senior lecturer she coordinates Graphics Media and Honours projects in the School of Design Studies, College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales. Her current research focuses on the convergences and differences between experimental practices in design and visual art. It has been her specific interest within the cross-overs and distinctions between the two fields to explore the history of functionalism in design discourse and the democratic values encompassed in many of the manifestoes of modernism. A second concern is resistance to popular commentary regarding globalisation that categorises it as only ever a public good. She has presented her research into how designers resist and question such ideas at conferences, in journals, and most recently, in a chapter in the forthcoming book Design Collectives: An Approach to Practice (Cambridge Scholars, 2011).*

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Katherine Moline, *Equipment for the Actual Complexities and Intricacies of String: Super-Tube, Super-Suction, Super-String* (2010-2011)  
Three units, dimensions variable, 3m x 4m  
installed, neoprene, stainless steel, plastic, rubber, (detail). Photograph by the artist, courtesy of Yuill Crowley Gallery



## Jacqueline Clayton

*Tattoo Flash* comprises a series of objects, each of which is formed under 80 tonnes of pressure. This process develops a very dense, durable porcelain matrix: a significant aspect of Jacqueline Clayton's ongoing research in ceramic chemistry. The clay body qualities, and the relatively narrow foot of the curved form, are attributes that, quite simply, lie outside the capacity of conventional studio production methods. In addition to technical innovations in clay body development and onglaze colour, *Tattoo Flash* represents Clayton's recent work in amending 'tissue transfer' printing for the ceramic surface. Developed in Europe in the 18th Century, traditional ceramic printing transferred images from an etched copper plate onto a tissue substrate using ceramic inks. The inked tissue was subsequently reversed onto the ceramic form and fired. Transfer printing facilitated low cost mass production of decorative ware, most famously the late 18th Century Blue Willow pattern, still manufactured and sold internationally.

Over time with changes in technologies and use of silkscreen methods for producing transfer images, the capacity for tonal variation and subtlety in transfer printing diminished. No longer used in large-scale industrial production, in Australia this form of printing is now largely reduced to the production of images that are generally 'flat' and monotonal in character. Fascinated by the narrative, romantic and quixotic associations of classic 'sailor tattoos', and more especially by the sensual integration of ink and skin in their realisation, Clayton has deployed 21st century materials to revisit the traditional tissue transfer, resurrecting its qualities, aesthetic and tonal range and its capacity to fuse into glaze. In so doing, this technique becomes a vehicle and metaphor in referencing the diffusion of pigment, image – and personal history - onto flesh. These allegoric associations with the human body reference Clayton's corpus of work in face powder and its allusions to the persistence of female stereotypes in image and language.

*Jacqueline Clayton's exhibiting history spans disciplines and definitions of practice, as demonstrated in her inclusion in the exhibition Seven Australian Installation Artists, U.S.A.; In[two]art, 2010. Her purchase of a state-of-the-art ceramic factory in 2006 saw her re-engage with an earlier professional focus on ceramic technology and ceramic chemistry. This continues her previous research into how ceramic technology may inform the construction of earth buildings in tropical cyclone zones, a research project that was funded by the United Nations Fund for Women and Australian Government (AIDAB). Clayton's current research focuses on the adaptation of specialised ceramic industrial equipment, materials and technologies to one-off and limited-run production. Clayton connects these resources to the knowledge and skills more usually applied to specialist design and craft outcomes. The result is agile, flexible, small-scale manufacture that benefits from the quality of 'high end' industrial processes and materials, but responds to the demands of customisation, variation and nuance. Early outcomes were exhibited in Smartworks, curated by Grace Cochrane for the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney in 2007.*

*Clayton is currently the COFA Presiding Member and Co-ordinator of the Ceramics Studio.*



Jacqueline Clayton, *Tattoo Flash* (2011)  
vitrified porcelain, cobalt transfer prints, onglaze colour (detail)

## Karina Clarke

A practising designer working in the areas of contemporary furniture and object design, Karina Clarke researches and explores the dialogues between design, craft, and manufacturing. For Clarke, the wide range of contexts in which design is situated demands sophisticated analysis of the collaboration required for the design to be developed, produced and delivered to the market-place. Focused on defining design as a 'dialogue', Clarke creates works that explore the perceived value of objects at an emotional, physical, and spiritual level.

Her ideas are responses to social and cultural understandings of the world we inhabit. In order to investigate the complex and subjective relationship between the object and the viewer, Clarke recontextualises the object's form or function to create a new meaning. The relationship between the object and the viewer becomes activated, and a new experience occurs – one in which the object appears slightly familiar but is understood differently according to its shifted context.

This current presentation aims to provoke a dialogue about the world's current trajectory in regards to consumption, sustainability and climate change. *It's not just a game* makes reference to the Mexican Gulf oil crisis while *Ten white skittles* allows the viewer to consider the fragility and interconnectedness of all things.

*Karina Clarke is a senior lecturer in Design at the College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales (COFA), where she co-ordinates and teaches Applied Object Design and the Final Year Studio Project. Clarke holds a BA (Hons) in Interior Design from RMIT and a Master of Fine Arts in Furniture Design from the University of Tasmania's Centre for the Arts. Her years of study, research and teaching in Australia and overseas give her a deep understanding of the cultural and social influences that shape our response to objects.*



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Karina Clarke, *Ten White Skittles* (2011)  
porcelain, (detail)

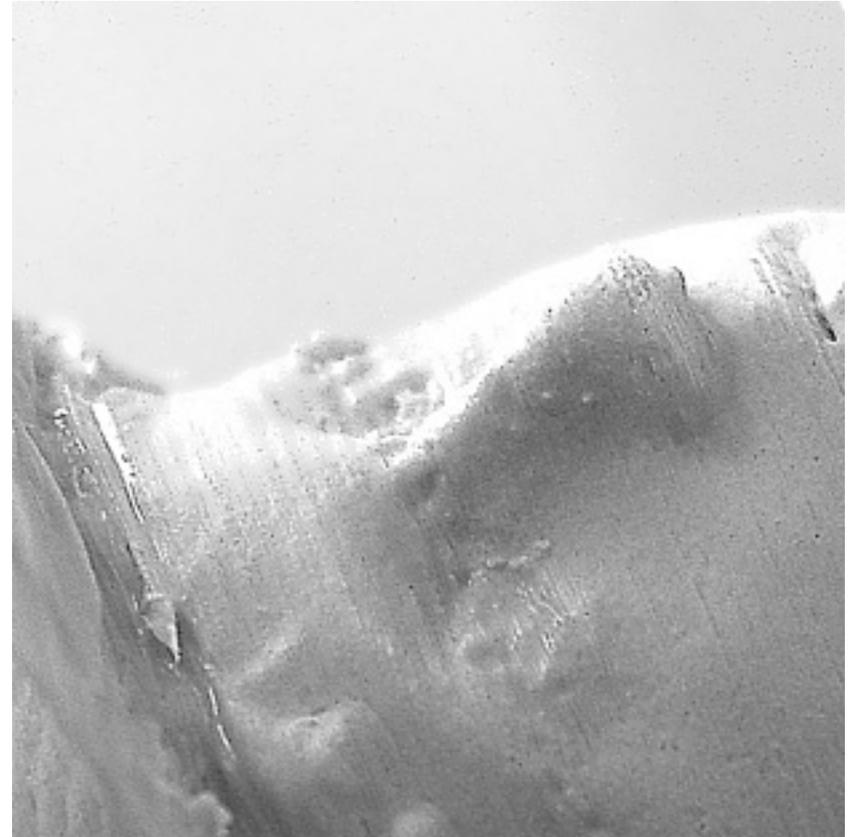
## Roderick Bamford

Roderick Bamford's research explores a dialogue of making that spans natural and technologically encountered experience, including an ethical paradox of creative agency and consumption in art and design. These themes are explored using digital technologies such as 3D scanning, rapid prototyping and digital printing, incorporating digitally recorded experiences to create 'transmedia' objects.

The works in this exhibition represent explorations in three dimensional printing technologies, including experimental works created using an open source code to drive a CNC robot, modified to print organic and inorganic pastes. These early prototypes explore future product prospects linked to issues of food security, resource and waste reclamation.

*Roderick Bamford is a lecturer in the School of Design Studies, College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales. His works traverses the fields of art and design, drawing on experience in the field of ceramics, digital media technologies, and related media. For a number of years his artwork investigated the aesthetics of tension between development, redundancy and waste, in exhibitions such as Urban Debris at the National Gallery of Australia (1992) and Insensible Landscape at the Kohler Company in the USA (1989). Bamford has been awarded commissions and residencies, participated in exhibitions and presented lectures internationally. His work is represented widely in major collections, including the National Galleries of Australia and Victoria, the Powerhouse Museum and museum collections in Europe, North Asia, and the USA. As President of the Crafts Council of NSW he led the establishment of the respected journal Object Magazine. In 1999 his studio received an Australian Designex Award.*

*Bamford has developed concepts for synthesising qualitative and quantitative design attributes to promote agility and attenuate environmental impacts in production. The model has been applied to commercial projects including The Cup Suite and Liberare La Forma ranges of porcelain tableware, designed by Bamford. In a research project supported by the National Trust & Lindsay Foundation, Bamford developed a 'trans dimensional' printing process for conserving damaged historical ceramic works in the Norman Lindsay collection. An Australia Council MMM special Project Grant facilitated the extension of this research, resulting in a series of digitally augmented limited edition 'utilities' – dynamic multifunctional objects for urban spaces – which were included in the exhibition Smartworks, at The Powerhouse Museum in 2006. The work Sonic Loop, shown in the 2010 Australian World Expo Pavilion exhibit in Shanghai, explores digital fabrication to embody musical data within a physical ceramic form.*



## Wendy Parker

Wendy Parker's personal recollections and reflections on childhood and young adolescence have furnished both a time and a place for her *The Kept Object* research project, presented in this exhibition. Memories derived from the intimate local spaces of the rituals of dawn fishing trips or afternoon tea provide triggers for investigations into objects that create a dialogue between past and present.

Ours was an aqueous life, however as swimmers and rock pool investigators we were brought sharply to land by the prospect of afternoon tea. A house on the water's edge, open to Summer's prevailing nor'easterly breezes, where the tidal chart was augmented with the daily schedule of meals at the family table.

There was the lure of the early morning surf and our confidence as small people to use the prevailing rip, "the escalator", to speed us out past the rocks where we waited for the perfect wave that would shoot us back to the shallows of the beach, as heroes of the ocean.

When the tide was low we scavenged over the sandstone rim of the beach and observed the occupants of our favourite rock pools. We collected treasure and caught dinner. In winter the storm sea was felt through the foundations of the house as the waves pounded and crashed onto the beach and reverberated through the sand on which the house was built. The house was a refuge that held the stories.

*Wendy Parker is an exhibiting jewellery artist and a designer and lecturer in the School of Design Studies, College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales, where she is also the Coordinator of Postgraduate Research and Jewellery. A maker of individual jewellery works for exhibitions in a gallery environment, Parker also collaborates with Peter Stutchbury, one of Australia's leading architects, to design and make jewels for the body, the building and table; recently undertaking the landscape design and interior design for Stutchbury's Garden House, winner of a 2008 Architecture Award, AIA NSW. She has maintained a long-term professional interest in the making, materiality and meaning of Asian jewellery and is a founding member of The Asian Arts Society of Australia (TAASA). Parker also works on commissions for national organisations.*

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Wendy Parker, *Kept Boat Neckpieces* (2011)  
monofilament, sterling silver, mother of pearl,  
(detail)



## Liz Williamson

The close relationship between textiles, clothing and the body lies at the heart of Liz Williamson's practice. Her recent work continues this pre-occupation, researching, examining and revealing the bodily memories encapsulated in textiles, and the intimate association between clothing and the body.

The pieces presented in this exhibition typify this association. Woven from various materials and strips of fabric, some created from her old garments, these works show hints of pattern, colour and texture, suggesting their previous incarnation. The thick knobbed texture of the weave is reminiscent of historical Australian and European rag rugs, and evokes the traditions of the re-use of garments. The tube shapes suggest protection and containment; that they were once used to contain, or enclose, creating an environment or place for hiding, seclusion and security. These works are subtle, seductive and suggestive, and 'a mediation on fabric and cloth as a metaphoric and precariously mutable form of protection ... Functionality, utility and innate body image forms are carefully calibrated by a precise range of aesthetic qualities that comprise a deeper, subtle view of the complexities and frailties of human form and need. [Sangster, G (2010) *Liz Williamson: Textiles*, Craft ACT Gallery, Canberra, ACT]

*Liz Williamson is an internationally respected textile artist who began weaving in the late 1970s. Her work engages with cultural associations, history and construction of cloth with the relationship between clothing, memory and the body informing her practice.*

*Since establishing her studio in 1985, Williamson has designed for industry, created works for major exhibitions and maintained an ongoing studio production. Specialising in hand-woven textiles, her work embraces traditional techniques alongside digital processes with some designs being woven in India. Williamson's work is represented in most major public collections in Australia including the National Gallery of Australia, the National Gallery of Victoria and the Powerhouse Museum.*

*In 2007 Williamson was selected for the prestigious Living Treasures: Masters of Australian Craft series, an award given by Object Gallery and Craft Australia acknowledging her 30-year contribution to the craft and design sector through practice, education and advocacy. The exhibition *Liz Williamson: Textiles* opened at Object Gallery in November 2008 before touring regional galleries nationally during 2009, 2010 and 2011. Dr Grace Cochrane is the author of the publication with the same name.*

*In 2008, Williamson was appointed as Head, School of Design Studies, College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales, Sydney. She regularly presents lectures and workshops in Europe, Asia, North America, with those in Asia being her current focus.*

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Liz Williamson, *Shadows from the Wardrobe* (2011)  
hand woven from various types of black fabric, (detail)  
Photograph by Ian Hobbs



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**Katherine Moline**

*Equipment for the Actual Complexities and Intricacies of String:*

*Super-Tube, Super-Suction, Super-String (2010-2011)*

three units, dimensions variable, 3 x 4 (m) installed, neoprene, stainless steel, plastic, rubber

**Jacqueline Clayton**

*Tattoo Flash (2011)*

vitrified porcelain, cobalt transfer prints, onglaze colour

**Wendy Parker**

*Kept Objects (2011)*

monofilament, sterling silver, mother of pearl

**Karina Clarke**

*Ten White Skittles (2011)*

porcelain

ten units, dimensions 500h x 75d (mm)

*It's Not Just a Game (2010)*

porcelain, american walnut timber, black lacquered board

dimensions 900 x 900 x 500h (mm)

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**Liz Williamson**

*Shadows from the Wardrobe* (2011)

hand woven from various types of black fabric

dimensions 360 w x 1900 h (mm)

dimensions 400 w x 1900 h (mm)

*Scarlet Guard* (2011)

hand woven from silk fabric dyed in cochineal or chemical dyes; red leather lacing.

dimensions 240 c x 1300 l (mm)

**Roderick Bamford**

*Tobe (jug) - the sequesteror* (2011)

porcelain

*Tobe (jug) - the trustee* (2011)

porcelain

*3D print investigations* (2011)

clay, ceramic waste material

