



Ruth Park *Jade Dragon Vase* Southern Ice porcelain

In Chinese mythology, it is believed that dragons create clouds with their breath. They have potent and auspicious powers over water, bringing rain, causing floods, controlling the tides. The venue for this show lies at the base of Wollumbin 'the cloud catcher', a sleeping volcano, a gently breathing dragon. The clouds around it merge, scatter and disappear in an endless cycle over the ancient landscape. Wollumbin is like Fucanglong, the Chinese 'hidden treasure dragon', the underworld guardian of precious stones and volcanoes.

Three artists, Sue Fraser, Ruth Park and Louise Fulton have carved, molded, pressed, sculpted, glazed and fired each object. The work has been slowly made by hand using clay with its history far more ancient and widespread than any other art material. The vessels are based on forms built in universal and ancient metaphors of our human origin, the body as container of wishes and desires.



Sue Fraser *Night Shining Bright* Porcelain

Contemplating on each artwork is a way to touch an existence beyond us. The dragon's breath gives one the raincoat of invisibility, allowing navigation between heaven and earth. Epiphany comes when the metaphorical essence of the artwork is inhaled. We are a container into which art is poured. We understand and experience one kind of thing in terms of another. Like food and water, we eat and drink at the banquet table of art.

Chinese language is critical to understanding Chinese culture. The nature of the artwork is a creative engagement with China not just a reiteration of traditional Chinese forms and techniques. The ongoing technical connection with celadon, porcelain and cobalt brushwork show these artists are China literate.

The horses have dragon energy and dragon speed. The gourds are spawn of the dragon. The clouds are dragon's breath. The fangs drip with dragon's blood. The jade jars contain the dragon's hot ginger pickle. The moon jars have the beauty of imperfection and lack of self-consciousness of a lunar landscape.



Louise Fulton *Cloud Cauldron* Earthenware & timber

In seeking the dragon, the artist must take risks to find the pearl, to gain a benefit, to be granted a wish. The creative process is making connections, linking different concepts until the elusive pursuit of resolution is accomplished.

Completely ephemeral, the ideas in *The Dragon's Back* are suggestive, then evaporate like a summer cloud. Each piece has escaped the bonds of the artist and is unconstrained. Each piece tells of possibilities and explores the exotic. Each work is a piece of our culture, generation and time. It is something inexpressible and of the heart, something to hold and protect because it is indefinable.

The Dragon's Back

23 March – 6 May 2012

New works by

Sue Fraser Ruth Park Louise Fulton



Sue Fraser *Dappled Lion* Earthenware



Louise Fulton *Fang* Earthenware



Ruth Park *Jade Dragon Ginger Jar* Porcelain



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Cover Ruth Park *Celestial Dragon* Earthenware
Photo David Young

