

*Encompass*—new ceramics by Anita McIntyre  
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All things leave a footprint--the forces of wind and animals; the shiftings of tectonic plates and plants; the siftings and siltings of water, the [often problematic] activities of man. But even memory and thought can mark a plain. Anita McIntyre's current exhibition of ceramics traces all kinds of actions across the surface of the earth, rendering delicate maps of time, place, memory, and the kinds of meanings she – or we-- might attribute to the landscapes that inspire them.

Both intensely personal and quasi-objective documents, McIntyre's visual language embraces several qualities and techniques from contemporary to ancient: from moulding, printing, and glazing, to fusing and embedding slender tubes of glass [*millefiore* technique]; from arduous clay coating techniques to tissue paper transfers, McIntyre's finishes range from lustrous to opaque; milky to dry.

Her work moves across continents [“Canada will be my north; China will be east, the Kimberley, [my] Heart Country, my west, and the limestone plains [my] Home Country, my south”] and from lightness to weight: from the ghosts and shadows of ancestors, to model-like clay canoes, which carry the stories of journeys through these passionately re-remembered , ancient lands.

The exhibition acts as a kind of travelogue of places she knows well, remembers, or imagines. A series of delicate porcelain cups, laced with fossils and fish, show the influence of Chinese printmaking styles, but also hint at the paper rubbings a traveller might make up against walls in a foreign land. It is a way of taking a photograph through texture, like measuring touch's taste against the tongue.

Her *Canada* wall plate series reveal squirrels and fir trees, patterns of traditional Amerindian maroon and blue against a cream porcelain background. Footprints disappear into this clay 'snow': was the traveller ever really there, equal to the landscape and its histories, or are we only ever a blip passing through? These works contrast with the “explorer's maps” of the Queanbeyan district, printed with the surveyor's words and scratched with his journey lines, perhaps counting a round of endless days, or simply documenting a farmers' furrows in the land. Her *Kimberley* plates move into ochres and greys, and the rich yet delicate depth of the *millefiore* glass fragments lend the soilscape an ancient depth, excavating murmurs embedded in the land. One senses allegory at work: here, the water coursed; here, the fishes danced; here, the Spirits sang.

Do I see urban China in Plate 16? These thin 'buildings', if that is what they are, are tiny tubes within a much broader sense of time. Plate 25, *Collage*, is a delicate compendium like a dream traversing several lands.

Perhaps I am most surprised by the *Weereewa vessels*, so spare, so finely lined. Thin lines and tracks cross an almost plain porcelain ground. This resonates with my experience of this ancient lakebed: sparse, bare, but wildly full of very old slow song.