

Janet Selby  
Artist Statement

Fascinated by the connection between humans and the natural world, Janet explores the real experience of place and presence.

In the bush suburb where she spent her childhood, she became barefoot and intimate with the spirit of the place. The underlying profound happiness has been the basis for Janet's expressive ceramic sculptures for many years.

Exhibiting this work reveals a deeper exploration of the origins of the spiritual connections to be made with certain richly energetic places, particularly in nearby Royal National Park.

A long abiding practice of Zen meditation has informed her approach. Her recent foray into the Art of Bonsai naturally extended this relationship by exploring the hand-made containers and their connection to the character of the tree therein.

The ceramic trees of the past, and unique bonsai containers of the present have now been combined, to give a surreal poetry in clay reminiscent of the spiritual aspects of an Australian Zen garden.

The peace and calm can be found everywhere, but these three aspects are now expressed as one: sculpture, bonsai and poetry.

*The small container fills with water is placed in front of the winding balustrade.  
The old Zen master, placid, relishes the creation of forests and springs.  
The energy held by two cupped hands swallows the Bohai Sea.  
The momentum of a fist-sized rock quells the Himalayan Mountains.  
Apparently mist and clouds are generated by this tiny space.  
Certainly Sun and Moon are in the sky framed by this pot.  
  
Do not utter amazement at this absence of aspiration.  
A single hair can represent the universe.*

*Penjing Poem by Ding Henian, in Yuan Dynasty (1279 – 1368)*

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