

PRESS RELEASE

Date:	17 August 2010
Subject:	Australian Accent: The Designs of <i>Annan Fabrics</i> and <i>Vande Pottery</i> in the 40s and 50s
Date of Release:	For immediate release
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AUSTRALIAN ACCENT
The Designs of Annan Fabrics and Vande Pottery in the '40s & '50s
Mosman Art Gallery
4 September – 10 October

The 1940s and 1950s saw the burgeoning of a distinctive Australian design style which drew inspiration from Australian flora and fauna and Aboriginal art and culture. Two enterprising Mosman design businesses both large and small who reflected this trend will be the focus of a new exhibition titled *Australian Accent* at the Mosman Art Gallery from 4 September to 10 October.

Kangaroo hunts, emu tracks, strelitzia's, banana fronds, lyrebirds and rock carvings made their appearance in the bold and decorative silk screen prints produced by Nan Mackenzie and Anne Outlaw who combined their names to form Annan Fabrics in Mosman in 1941. The two women converted an old cordial factory and mixed the dyes and screen printed the lengths of cloth themselves. These fabrics became wildly successful in the international and domestic marketplace and their designs were used by Qantas to help brand 'modern' Australian tourism and to decorate all the street banners for the 1954 Royal Tour. During the 1950s, small businesses like Mosman based Vande Pottery catered to the thriving tourist trade and produced hand crafted 'Australian' themed souvenir ware.

Australian Accent is presented in association with the Powerhouse Museum who hold many of the exquisite and bold lengths of *Annan* fabrics. Combined with photographs of the two women in action in their workshop, taken by Max Dupain, war time Cinesound film clips and the many magazine features in *The Australian Home Beautiful* and *Australian House and Garden* from the 40s and 50s the Annan Fabrics story is an important and fascinating one. Margaret Preston who was instrumental in championing Aboriginal art as "the new way of being modern" was a friend to Nan Mackenzie and visitor to their business when she lived at the Mosman Hotel. Two of Prestons' artworks, *Kangaroo Hunt* and *Emus* are also in the exhibition.

Vande pottery was typical of the Australian themed ceramics produced by the numerous commercial potteries that could be found in Australian suburbs during the 1950s and 1960s.

Many of these ventures were owned by post-war European immigrants whose traditional training gave Australian motifs and themes a new interpretation. This combined with the fact that Australia was a post-war tourist destination satisfied and revived the souvenir and travel memorabilia industry.

Samuel Vandeslius, an English immigrant, established his pottery, Vande in Mosman, and like many of the contemporary potteries, employed recent graduates for the National Art School. These artists inspired by Australian Aboriginal motifs, local tourist brochures and the magazine *Walkabout* created and decorated a range of pots including ashtrays, vases, serving platters, pin dishes and wall plaques.

The exhibition will be opened on Friday 3 September at 6.30pm by the former Deputy Director of the Powerhouse Museum, Jennifer Sanders.

A series of public programs and a 36 page catalogue will accompany the exhibition.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Sunday 5th September, 2.00pm

'As modern as Tomorrow' the designs and story of Annan Fabrics

Curator Julie Petersen examines the extraordinary success story of the creators of Annan Fabrics, Anne Outlaw and Nance Mackenzie who started their screen printing business in the depths of World War II and went on to represent modern Australian textile design internationally and domestically.

Sunday 12th September, 2.00pm

Something for mum: Souvenir pottery of the 1950s

Curator Donna Braye provides an illustrated overview of the commercial potteries of the 1950s.

Sunday 26th September

Sydney Textile Design Symposium 10.30am – 3.00pm

Mosman Art Gallery, Free Bookings essential 9978 4178

This free event is a great opportunity for those interested in the contemporary textile design scene to hear from the experts. Speakers will address a range of issues including; sustainable design practice, creating original designs from client briefs and the issue of copyright, the relationship between small designers and the media and a fascinating comparative study of the work of designers Nance Mackenzie, Jenny Kee and Catherine Martin. Examples of the work of contemporary designers will also be on display. Speakers include; Lindie Ward, Curator, Powerhouse Museum, Cecilia Heffer, Senior Lecturer, School of Design, UTS, Penny McIntyre of *Think Designer Prints*, Martine Kilo, Production Manager of *cloth* Fabrics and design journalist Andrea Jones.

For Press Enquiries

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Mosman Art Gallery

Cnr Art Gallery Way and Myahgah Rd Mosman

Open 7 days (10am – 5pm) Free