

*This transcript is a written response to a series of submitted questions answered by Cobi Cockburn (13/02/2011). A long informal chat with Charles Butcher and Cobi (18/01/2010) is referenced in the thesis, but is not included among these transcriptions.*



Cobi Cockburn

*Shifting Fields*

2006

roll up cane, fused, slumped, hot formed and cold worked glass

16.5 x 92 x 12.3 cm

*How do you place yourself in relation to the work you do in glass?*

Cobi: I don't totally understand this question. I'm a contemporary maker working with glass. At this moment I'm making large-scale glass wall works – there I do not necessarily find any need to classify (or determine in terms of material). Personally this classification is not important.

*What training did you undertake for this (your work in glass)? How did this training ground your approach/philosophy and how is this approach/philosophy evidenced in your continuing practice?*

Cobi: I undertook a three-year degree at SCA, followed with a honours year at the ANU. I think the years of study combined with a three-year break in between have informed and grounded my practice. The majority of the first degree was technically based whereas the honours was more philosophical and resolved. I feel this is evident through my work as I continually reflect on the technical and conceptual foundations to create the work I do today.

*In the making of your work, do you see yourself working within a 'language'? If so, what are the elements by which you 'articulate' and 'read' your work?*

Cobi: Yes, it's a visual language and a very personal approach. The emotions felt, seen and embedded within the work is the message – therefore the way I hope it is read.

*Discuss the relationship between your work and the material/technique you chose.*

Cobi: I really enjoy working with my material, however I hope that it is never the reason I choose to make. I feel the material is there to help you speak your language not the language itself. Making art for me at this time seems similar to a serious addiction – I do not always feel that it is my choice. I'm drawn to express myself through techniques and material that I'm still a learner in.

*Does the ‘unexpected’ or ‘accident’ play a role in the development of your work?*

Cobi: Yes, but this is minimal.

*Take examples of your work and individually describe what you see, or feel, as you interpret them. Explain the elements in this work that you are ‘reading’.*

Cobi: This is something I feel is a little personal and can only be really discussed in person or with a work.

*What importance do you place on naming your pieces?*

Cobi: For me this is important. I like to give the viewer an entry point, or thoughtful place to go further and independently contemplate the meaning.

*Are you aware of differences between the way you perceive your work and the way others perceive it?*

Cobi: Yes, there will always be a great difference between the way in which the artist perceives the work and the way audience responds to a work. Unless personally informed I do not think a viewer will ever completely perceive the embedded thoughts, emotions and meanings. As we are all individual we will all draw on our own history to inform what we see ..... this may vary greatly from person to person.

*Do you find that the way you perceive a work changes as it is created and then again, after it is completed?*

Cobi: Again I think this is work and personal specific. Yes though, I do feel it changes ... the idea continually evolves and becomes more refined as generally I feel understanding comes from this intense time in questioning and contemplating.