

# curiosity shop

Artists show off objects from their private collections alongside works of their own making



GALLERY  
phil brown

If you're like me, you might often wonder what sort of stuff people have at home. I immediately scan people's walls to see what's hanging on them when I go to someone's place and try to suss out what form of objets d'art, if any, inhabit sideboards and cabinets.

Judith Brough, the curator of the exhibition Collectables – Vintage and Contemporary, now showing at CQGallery in Fortitude Valley, is obviously similarly curious. A sticky beak, even.

To find out what some of her favourite creative types have at home, she's flushed them out by curating an exhibition that juxtaposes things from their collections with things they've made.

"An individual's collection is often viewed as a reflection of their personality, their taste being an echo of their characters, an insight perhaps into eccentricities," says Judith, hopefully. With the accent on "vintage", she has assembled an impressive group whose domestic collecting habits have now been outed.

Eliza Cole, Barbara Heath, Sascha Joffe, Lasse

Kinnunen, Katie Pye, Roy Schack, Ruth Stoneley, Kerry Zerner and Stephanie Outridge Field are the featured artists.

One of the best known is Barbara Heath, jewellery royalty in Brisbane, renowned for creating the most delectable and desirable pieces.

With Barbara it's not so much about her collection, though. Her husband, designer Malcolm Enright, is a well-known bowerbird and Barbara lives in a "mini-museum".

"This immersion in such a rich humus of material culture must, of course, inform my own work," she points out. "The rare and strange are to hand." Some of these rare and strange objects are on loan and juxtaposed with some of her unique jewellery creations for this exhibition.

There are tiny charms, Tibetan brooches and a suite of intriguing, if spooky *Hampatong-Borneo Objects*, small wooden carvings used to ward off evil by tribes people. Barbara's exquisite *Venus Love Token*, a construction of silver, pearls, ebony and pearl shell, seems to relate well to the



Items of intrigue ... Barbara Heath's *Hampatong-Borneo Objects* are said to ward off evil

carvings. Her other offering is *Skulls Love Token*, a silver, pearl and ebony brooch which, she says, can actually be worn – if you don't mind wearing something featuring tiny silver skulls, that is.

Fashion designer and artist Katie Pye is another well-known name in the exhibition. Collected fabric and her own creations are featured. Veteran ceramic artist Stephanie Outridge Field has proffered a couple of her own tea sets for the show – an early 20<sup>th</sup> century *Shelley Tea Set* in pink and black porcelain and the wacky *Art Deco Aeroplane Tea Set* in green ceramic, which dates back to the 1930s. They are accompanied on a nearby wall by some painted stoneware panels that Stephanie made in 2000.

Furniture maker Roy Schack has included a

couple of Hans Wegner oak chairs, made in 1950, to be displayed alongside a more recent creation of his own, a stylish Tasmanian blackwood sideboard (which is possibly too prosaic a description for this unique construction), which he calls *Bon Voyage Mr Croker*.

Kerry Zerner has included some of her collection of Indian tribal fabrics that are totally in synch with her wall piece *Mehende Mudras Lotus Love Mandala*, intriguingly created with seaweed, thread, pins, pigment and beads.

Collectables – Vintage and Contemporary, until July 23 at CQGallery, 381 Brunswick St, Fortitude Valley. Open Tues-Sat, 10am-4pm. Ph: 3215 0800.

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