

Paul Maseyk: Jugs in New Zealand Painting

TEACHER RESOURCE



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Paul Maseyk's studio is in New Plymouth, where he also lives. He has a Diploma in Ceramic Design and Production from Wanganui Polytechnic. He has worked with some of New Zealand's best-known potters such as Barry Brickell and Ross Mitchell-Anyon.

As a potter, Maseyk's 'bread and butter' is his domestic ware such as mugs, plates, and bowls. Throughout his career he has made hundreds of jugs, but the jugs in this exhibition are less about their utilitarian function, and more about seeing the beauty in the art form of the jug showcasing different forms and styles.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

This exhibition, Jugs in New Zealand Painting, brings together two of Paul Maseyk's loves: paintings and jugs. He took on a personal project, researching the work of Aotearoa New Zealand artists who featured the humble jug in their artwork.

In response, Maseyk spent 5 years making over 60 jugs inspired by these paintings. Jugs in New Zealand Painting brings together many of these paintings, and places them alongside their jug 'offspring'.

The paintings span a wide range of artists from Colin McCahon to Joanna Margaret Paul; Frances Hodgkins to Francis Upritchard; Edith Collier to Milan Mrkusich. Maseyk operates like a time-traveller, plucking the jugs from the paintings like a pottery version

of photocopying, a playful game of spot the clay doppelgänger: “I like to imagine that I have made a facsimile of the jug the artist had in his or her studio at the time they were creating their work.”

If you ask Maseyk about the inspiration behind this project, he has two stories for you!

The first comes from spotting a striking jug in Dick Frizzell’s Still Life with Dragon Vase (1983). The jug’s handle, shaped like a dragon’s body, made Maseyk wonder if it had ever really existed. Curious about how a potter might create something like that,

he decided to make the jug himself to find out. The second spark of inspiration came from an oil painting Maseyk had hanging in his studio, created by an unknown artist and picked up from a second-hand shop. One day, he placed a jug next to the painting and suddenly realized how perfectly they matched.



ART TERMS

Clay- a natural material composed of fine particles of minerals, which is malleable when wet and hardens when fired.

Glaze- a thin, glass-like coating applied to pottery or ceramics to give it a shiny finish, improve durability, and add colour.

Glazes are typically made from a mixture of minerals and metals.

Hand Building Techniques- methods of shaping clay by hand, like pinching, coiling, and slab-building.

Wheel Throwing- a pottery technique that involves shaping clay on a rotating wheel. The potter uses their hands to form the clay into various shapes while it spins on the wheel.

Form- the 3D structure or volume of an artwork.

Function- the practical purpose of an artwork or object.

Still Life- a genre of art that depicts inanimate objects, such as flowers, food, or everyday items, arranged in a composition. Still life paintings focus on the arrangement, details, and textures of the objects.

Composition- the arrangement of elements within an artwork, including the balance, contrast, focus, and overall layout.

PRE/POST VISIT IDEAS

EXPLORE hand building clay technique: try pinching, slab building and coil building. Can you make your own jug?

MAKE a still life: set up your own still life to draw.

DESIGN a Pop-Up Diorama: Using a shoe box, create a pop-up diorama that features a still life scene, or experiment with scale by making an incredibly small version in a matchbox.

EXPERIMENT with Painting Techniques: Explore various painting methods such as dry brushing, washes, sgraffito, and colour mixing.

TELL a Story with a Jug: Select a jug that speaks to you and design a scene or setting for it. Jugs have lots of personalities—what kind of still life would you imagine your jug belonging to?

RESEARCH a New Zealand Artist - Choose one of the painters in the show to research. Then choose a favourite artwork they painted and use that artwork as a spark to write a short story inspired by what the painting depicts.



ABOVE STUDENT ARTWORK EXAMPLES, CLAY AND PAPER SCULPTURE. 2024.

ALL OTHER PHOTOGRAPHS ARE INSTALLATION DETAILS FROM PAUL MASEYK: JUGS IN NEW ZEALAND PAINTING, THE DOWSE ART MUSEUM. IMAGE COURTESY OF ELIAS RODRIGUEZ FOR MARK TANTRUM PHOTOGRAPHY.



**The
Dowse
Art
Museum**

45 Laings Road, Hutt
Central, Lower Hutt 5010
T 04 560 1260
E education@dowse.org.nz