

## **Samstag's Class of '95**

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This publication witnesses the achievement of eleven artists who were awarded **Anne & Gordon Samstag International Visual Arts Scholarships**, tenable for twelve-months of study overseas, commencing from 1995.

These nine women and two men are beneficiaries of Gordon Samstag's vision to level the playing field for Australian artists, whom he knew to be as good as their international peers, but restricted unreasonably by geographic isolation. Consequently, this third group of Samstag Scholars will be embarking shortly on enviable creative adventures to New York, Utrecht, London, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Glasgow and Dundee.

Following the good news of their award, the preparations which "Samstagers" must make to secure their overseas study opportunity are invariably complex and taxing. For example, while under no obligation to enrol in formal degree courses, their project must nevertheless demonstrate a full commitment to studio practice, under the bona fides of an appropriate institution. Negotiations for acceptance into a preferred institution can be arduous and slow.

While concerned primarily with artistic development and enrichment, the Samstag experience is thus also distinguished also by endeavour and self-reliance. Moreover, when confronted directly by the formidable of international contemporary art, scholarship recipients may discover, beneficially, that own indigenous artistic character distinct and viable.

In each of these first three years of the Samstag Program, it has been possible to award a larger number of scholarships than would usually be the case. This is because funds accumulated in Mr Samstag's bequest after his death in 1990 and before the program commenced in 1992. From 1995, the number of Samstag Scholarships awarded will stabilise at approximately five, annually.

One final matter. This "Class of '95" Samstag catalogue is intended simply as a document of record and neither accompanies an exhibition, nor aspires an analysis of recipients' work. However, the catalogue does illustrate the selection committee's flexible criteria for art practice and its good judgement, in awarding the scholarships equitably between experienced artists of demonstrated achievement and those at the very beginning of their careers.

The selection committee of artists for the 1995 Samstag Scholarships were Max Lyle (Head of the South Australian School of Art) Barrie Goddard (Senior Lecturer at the school) and, performance and installation artist, Lyndal Jones.