

Keys to the collection— Faces

Suzanne Forsyth

“I’m a little teapot, short and stout: hair is my handle, mouth is my spout. When I’m all steamed up, then I shout “Get the gladdies, possums, and I’ll pour out!”

—*Living Likes*, Vogue Living Oct-Nov, 1982

1948 Suzanne Forsyth-Hatch was born in Australia.

1966-68 She trained at East Sydney Technical College where she became interested in non-functional ceramics.

1971 She held her first exhibition.

1974 Received an Australia Council Craft Board grant to undertake study at the North Staffordshire Polytechnic, England, where she began to make ceramic sculptures and funky vessels.

1980 Travelled to the USA, where she worked and lived before returning to Australia in 1989.

1989 Suzanne and her partner, artist Rick Hatch moved to Armidale, New South Wales. They acquired 37 acres of picturesque bush land, where they designed and built a studio (Weemala Pottery) and home.



The Dame Edna Everage teapot—

The Dame Edna Everage teapot was made for an exhibition of ‘celebrity teapots’ held in London. On hearing of this exhibition, Barry Humphries, who plays the character of Dame Edna Everage, decided that his character should also have a celebrity teapot. It was planned to make a limited edition of 25 teapots. Barry Humphries himself supplied details of various make-up colours Dame Edna used for lipstick, eyeliner and rouge and these colours were replicated by Forsyth in the final glazes on the teapots. Once completed, non-ceramic elements such as the diamanté glass in the earrings and hair-clips were added. The cups created for the teapot were small gladioli—Dame Edna’s signature bouquet.

Other teapots are also found in the collections of trustee of the Tate Gallery, London; the Orange Regional Gallery, the Queen Victoria Museum, Launceston; Mike Walsh (T.V personality) , and Barry Humphries himself.

**Geelong
Gallery**

Victorian Curriculum level 2 to 6
geelonggallery.org.au/learn

Suzanne Forsyth
‘Dame Edna Everage’ teapot 1982
glazed and lustred earthenware;
edition 7/25
Collection: Geelong Gallery

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G A L L E R Y



Suzanne Forsyth

born United Kingdom 1827;
worked in Australia 1834-57;
died United Kingdom 1886

'Dame Edna Everage' teapot 1982
glazed and lustred earthenware;
edition 7/25
32.0 x 26.0(diameter) cm
Collection: Geelong Gallery
Purchased through the Gordon
Jackson Trust with the assistance
of the Crafts Board of the Australia
Council, 1982

Questions

Describe what you see in this Dame Edna teapot.

- What shapes have been used and why?
- What colours have been used and why?
- How do the shapes and colours create emotion or expression?
- Can you discuss the form in the teapot?
(Sculpture and 3D design are about creating forms)

Research

Research cartoon characters to understand how colour, shape and form create expression, emotions and moods in characters e.g., happy, sad, excited, worried, lonely. Produce a series of small thumbnail sketches of faces with different expressions and moods.

Activity

Make a puppet head. Start with a clay form about the size of the palm of your hand, make sure you consider the facial expression of your character. Allow the clay to nearly dry and cover with several layers of paper mache, let this dry. Make a small cut in the back of the head and remove all the clay, cover the cut with a few layers of paper mache. Then the real fun begins, paint the head paying great attention to the expression of your character. You can add hair, wool and small found objects to enhance the character e.g.. Small plastic glasses, earrings, eye lashes let your creativity go wild. Once the head is finished you can create a puppet.