

DONNA MARCUS

You are best known for sculpture inspired by aluminium, the now obsolete kitchenware popular in the 1940s. While in recent years your practice has been dominated by public art, this year sees you working again with your archive of discarded aluminium. Why?

Creating large works for the public realm in the last five years really coincided with not having a large studio. I had moved to Brisbane (away from my Mt Tamborine studio) while working on a number of large-scale projects. At the other end of the scale I began to make small objects on my living room floor. When making a decision to leave my academic job at Queensland College of Art (at the end of 2016), I had the sense that I had tubes of paint open in my studio needing to be used: it was timely to consolidate and push further my studio works.

What drives the work you are producing for Bolt, your first solo exhibition with Andrew Baker Art Dealer?

I have a new, purpose-built studio, a sink, a sorting table, a composing table and a working wall. I am revisiting the collection I have amassed over decades, making new work that will be shown with key older works. I have a rich archive and an incomplete project. My approach this time is different. I am paring things back and processing ideas that I began working on when I had the Australia Council Greene Street studio, New York (2014).

What inspired the title of the show, also used for a wall-based sculpture made from hexagonal aluminium cake tins?

I love the link between the industrial and the domestic, the mechanical and organic. Visiting the Statue of Liberty in New York, I noted the huge bolts used to hold the statue to its base. The word is also used for a bolt of fabric; it is a word that means something that may be soft or hard, constrains but also frees. In *Bolt*, the shaped cake tins sit within (and are constrained by) another.

Your work refers to modernist repetition and the versatility of aluminium, and you have explored new technologies like three-dimensional printing. This new work includes plastic componentry in a small sculpture titled *Volt*. What draws you to old

materials but at the same time to the new?

I have always collected industrially produced things and there is a timeliness to the aluminium material. Reducing waste has, for me, been a lifetime pursuit and I have a new sense of urgency about it. Aluminium cookware is no longer available in quantity. *(In)finite* (2017) uses horse shoe shaped tins that resemble magnets in a star-like pattern and underlines the finite nature of the resource. *Volt* (2013) is made from industrial electrical componentry, and talks to other works from a conceptual and modernist place.

These works have poignancy in the age of their materials, and their jolt of recognition. The used Bakelite knobs in *Beam 2013* speak to generations.

I am reminded always of the process of mining (of bauxite) and its manufacture into aluminium, the creation of sets of objects sent off into the world. They get lost and I put them back together in new relationships; it is a cycle of loss and retrieval. There is something about these objects that have their own voices, which speak to the history of manufacture and dispersal.

Louise Martin-Chew

AN EXHIBITION OF WORKS BY DONNA MARCUS ENTITLED *BOLT* WILL BE HOSTED BY ANDREW BAKER ART DEALER, BOWEN HILLS FROM 12 JULY TO 12 AUGUST, 2017.

1. // Donna Marcus, *Glimmer*, 2017. Plastic and aluminium, 34 x 50 x 4cm.
2. // Donna Marcus, *Dissolve* 2011. Aluminium, 117 x 190 x 4cm.
3. // Donna Marcus, *Burst*, 2017. Anodised aluminium, 90 x 76 x 7cm.
4. // Donna Marcus, *Radiate*, 2017. Anodised aluminium, 95 x 83 x 7cm.

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND ANDREW BAKER ART DEALER, BOWEN HILLS.



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