



glass : art design architecture

THEME 3: *SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS*
Jamie and Abigail Forsyth and Elliot Rich

Jamie and Abigail FORSYTH

Work: *KeepCup Brew* and *KeepCup Brew Special Edition Cork*, 2014, soda lime glass, polypropylene, polyethylene, polymer (TPU), silicone



Melbourne based brother and sister team Jamie and Abigail Forsyth run a string of cafes and developed a growing concern over the extensive use of disposable cups in their industry. Their research showed them that throughout the world over a million disposable cups a minute are sent to landfill, having been used once. To reduce this waste the Forsyth's pioneered the design of a new product in the form of a portable cup for hot drinks.

Their first *KeepCup* products came on the market in 2009, wholly manufactured in Australia. Their design was driven by the personal requirements of the Forsyth's for a barista standard, on the run coffee cup, that was both sustainable and re-usable. *KeepCups* are designed with both the needs of the coffee maker and coffee drinker in mind. The proportions of the cup allow it to sit comfortably under the barista's machine. When handed to the customer the hot liquid is well sealed with a lid, which has the traditional drinking hole but with a difference; it could be closed with a splash proof seal. Brightly coloured components provides choice for the buyer to personalise their *KeepCup*.

In 2014 a new range of *KeepCup* were made in glass and named *KeepCup Brew*. Some carefully thought out improvements were included, especially the use of tempered soda-lime glass to make them dishwasher safe. At the end of a cup's life this glass can be recycled. Transparent glass allows the 'coffee purist' drinker to see the contents while several improvements were made for splash-proof components and better sealing. Lastly changes to the overall shape gave *KeepCup Brew* a new aesthetic appeal.

Designer's statement

Abigail knew that for the *KeepCups* to catch on they had to be something people wanted to use, like an iPod or a SIGG water bottle.

“We had a good idea of the aesthetics. We wanted to echo a paper cup, but also be visually distinctive,” Abigail explains. “[The KeepCup]’s reason for being is sustainability, but it’s the form and colours that people love and it’s probably why you buy it. And, it’s certainly why you enjoy using it.”

www.beanscenemag.com.au

Other Perspectives

When Abigail Forsyth first started developing the KeepCup, she thought it would be “a nice little Project ” to have on the side while she raised her children. Four years later, the KeepCup has become Australia’s leading reusable barista standard coffee cup, distributed by many of Australia’s biggest names in coffee and launching into markets worldwide. Her humble plans, it seems, have taken off beyond even her most ambitious dreams. From her small office in the hip inner-northern Melbourne suburb of Fitzroy, Abigail laughs at the nostalgia of the beginnings of a project she hoped would keep her mildly occupied during motherhood. Her children, she reveals, were her primary inspiration in the initial design, as she took notes from her daughter’s “sippy” cup.

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Forsyth’s vision is for KeepCup to be the reusable cup of choice for people who regularly drink espresso coffee. Forsyth is excited about the positive changes she has seen in consumers’ behaviour as a result of her business. “A product that is well designed, conceived and marketed can change the way people behave without top-down legislation, without being forced to do it,” she said. “People are just doing the right thing through word of mouth and following by example.”

Forsyth estimates that if 80 per cent of her users drink eight takeaway coffees per week, in one year KeepCup users will have diverted 300,000 million cups or 4,000 tonnes from landfill, and saved enough energy sufficient to power 5,000 homes for a year. And with that, there will be more than 50,000 trees left standing in a forest somewhere.

“That’s a lovely thought,” she mused.

After seeing a gap in the market, Forsyth’s passion for finding a creative sustainable solution has resulted in a product that is changing the way consumers think about their impact on the planet. Growth to Forsyth is about doing things more efficiently and what you think is right but also “having a business that is viable with your lifestyle and that people are enjoying the journey”.

www.beanscenemag.com.au

Elliat RICH

Work: *Urban Billy* 2013, **hand formed borosilicate glass**, mountain ash



Culturally the making and sharing of tea is more than just an act of quenching the thirst; it is a ritual. In the early years of Australian society and still today in some parts of our country the brewing of 'Billy tea' provides the opportunity for working people to sit together quietly or chat as the tea brews on the campfire prior to it being shared.

Elliat Rich recognised the importance of this practice in creating her *Urban Billy*, a beautifully crafted glass and wood billy set that allows the tea drinker to boil water and then watch their tea brewing in the same vessel. The *Urban Billy* comes with two cups, suggesting it could be a shared experience of contemplation or conversation while boiling and brewing takes place before sharing tea together.

Every aspect of Rich's design is carefully measured, right down to the quantity of heating spirits to be placed in the lower bowl, which burns just long enough to boil the correct quantity of water held in the billy above.

Each component neatly packs away within the confines of the billy itself for ease of transportation and storage. The designer has also considered the importance of insulation by wrapping the drinking cups with snugly fitted laminated mountain ash holders. This wood ring also provides cushioning for the cups while in transit.

Designer's statement

"I grew up mostly in Canberra surrounded by eucalypt blue mountains and perpendicular streets, in yr10 I discovered design. Design seemed the perfect blend between my creative body and my political drive to save things for the better. After a wonderful year traveling around Australia with my family picking cherries, sorting capsicums and discovering unimaginable corners of the country I began the Design course at COFA (College Of Fine Art, UNSW). I loved this time to play experiment and think. They even gave me a medal for having so much fun"

<http://then-was-now.tumblr.com/tagged/history>

Other Perspectives

Concerning another work:

Yala Sofa by Elliat Rich in the *Sustain Me* Exhibition; *Celebrating coming together in the comfort zone*.

Yala is a furniture piece that blossoms in the company of others. Based on the concept of Ipomoea; a plant that grows throughout the central deserts of Australia, the Yala Sofa provides an inspiring space for people to come together. Using a thermochromatic ink, the Ipomoea flowers remain invisible until the heat from the bodies of those sitting on the sofa 'activates' the ink and the flowers are revealed.

The Ipomoea plant, otherwise known as Bush Potato or Yala by Pintupi people, provides a rich source of bush food for those who live in harsh conditions in the central desert. A potato-like tuber grows in the roots of the plant, and digging these up is an opportunity for socialising. The Yala plant flowers after desert rains

Elliat is an inventor, designer and part time explorer based in Alice Springs, Australia. Elliat uses slow-motion-seeing to identify small things and everyday moments that deserve or facilitate contemplation. She then expands, exaggerates or enhances these through designed objects...

Whether it's a cup of tea with a good friend or watching mould grow, she finds beauty in unexpected places and reveals it through the objects she designs. Her underlying aim is to deliver an experience that lends itself to an everyday ritual, the ritual sustains the object and in turn the object sustains the experience.

<http://www.elliatrich.com/>

THEME 3: SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

Guiding Questions and Research

- All three designers focus on the importance of sustainability in their creative design solutions. After visiting the exhibition and reading the Education Resource website, list the qualities evident in these projects that demonstrate sustainable design.
- Look at the works by all contributors to this exhibition to find more examples of sustainable practice. Evaluate and explain the success of these ideas.
- Could sustainable art and design works be an important part of your art practice? Explain why or why not?

Research

<http://www.keepcup.com.au/news/2014/12/100-keepcup-introduces-reuse-hq> KeepCup home page

www.abc.net.au/local/audio/2011/06/15/324 - The Guestroom-interview with Elliot Rich