

## **KAISER Virginia (Aus)**

### ***Old Traditions - New Ways - paper***

The art of contemporary basketmaking has, from the late 60s and early 70s when Ed Rossbach experimented with new materials, crossed many boundaries because of the processes and materials used to create the finished object. Examples of this are the loom woven forms of Canadian Dawn McNutt and American Dianne Sheehan, the knotted sculptural forms of Jane Sauer, the current work of Sculptor/Basketmaker John McQueen, the new work of Jan Hopkins using orange, grapefruit and fish skins. Also Australian artists using anything from recycled junk mail to plant materials indigenous to their area.

It is a medium that has been hard to categorise, is constantly evolving and has no common material or technique. It comes under the umbrella of textiles because of the traditional "weaving of fibres" but has now expanded across many mediums including jewellery, ceramics, wood and glass.

Yet artists have clung to the title of "Basketmaker" which connects them to the oldest of cultural and spiritual traditions. Contemporary Basketmaking is very much in "the space between" textiles, art, design and in some cases fashion, as in Issey Miyake's bamboo breast plates.

I would like to present to the conference examples of the way many contemporary basketmakers are referencing tradition in their practice while presenting their work in a very contemporary way using a range of non-traditional materials. This will be done with the assistance of a visual presentation.

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I have been a practicing studio artist using basketry techniques to create 3D forms for over 20 years. I exhibit regularly in group and solo shows and my work is represented in public and private collections. I am currently doing a Masters Degree at the University of Wollongong and lecturing part-time.

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