

PACKAGING AND FREIGHT FOR CERAMICS - part two

August 2006 – Article by Sandra Black

Choosing a method of transport for your work As the artist you are most familiar with your work and the best means of handling your works. Where possible in dealing with local galleries and clients transport it yourself or arrange for the client to take it after careful packing and advising the client of the correct means to handle the work. Package with enough padding, secure the box lid and strap the box in to a car seat if possible, on the floor behind the seat or place in the boot of the vehicle. You don't want a car full of flying pots if caught in an emergency situation. Apart from you or your client transporting the work you have a number of other options.

Bus freight -Greyhound operates an Australia wide freight service. You can access their details online by typing in www.busfreight.com.au or phoning 1300 65 65 32. They provide a very good service into areas that are often more expensive to send works by courier. The bus also provides a soft ride for your parcels and price wise is very competitive. Disadvantages can be the fact that it is a depot to depot service only unless you pay an extra \$8.00 per parcel for pick up and \$8.00 for delivery at either end. This will save you money only if you and your client are close to the depots and can pick up and deliver yourself. Pickups can be booked on line. Prices are based on volumetric or actual weight and start out from 3kgs for \$15.00 to 20kg for \$35.00 Australia wide. See the website for more details.

Couriers.-There are many couriers operating around Australia that can offer good service. Currently I use Fastway. Their contact details are www.fastway.com.au or by phone 08-9353 6401. This is a franchising service with individual contractors working separate areas. Once the main office in Perth is contacted they will send a company representative out to you to signup. For sending parcels interstate to capital cities, this has been for me the cheapest method. The advantages are a door to door service at a good price. Disadvantages are that you have to purchase a booklet of 20 labels first and 50 excess labels for a total of over \$400 so you need to be doing a good number of shipments interstate to make this viable. Once however you have made this purchase you can buy smaller amounts later as a regular client. The labels are also bar coded so you can track your shipment online. With most parcels of mine coming out at around 14 kgs volumetrically it was costing around \$17 per parcel compared with around \$30 for Australia Post. The main disadvantage is in the return of goods. If your gallery refuses to pay return freight as many do these days, you would have to use triple the number of labels. So as a one way proposition it works fine. Road services interstate run from Perth only on Tuesday and Friday so you need to be aware of delivery deadlines. Check the website for more details.

Australia Post -Like most businesses today Australia Post has to be very competitive with other companies doing a similar service for goods delivery. For convenience and a range of services they are hard to beat. One main advantage is if you are running late they can offer an overnight airfreight service at a reasonable price. Packaging is critical as Australia post does not offer special services for fragile items and your parcel can get a fairly rough ride. Like all companies Australia Post also does volumetric pricing. You can pick up booklets at Australia Post to get local, interstate and overseas rates for comparison pricing.

Airfreight- For a number of years I used to deliver boxes of pots late at night to the airport for Ansett air freight. At the time one could get a great price including delivery. Sadly those days are over with the demise of that airline. You can get air freight door to door via Australian air Express through Qantas freight. There are a variety of options depending on the urgency of your delivery. I haven't investigated the prices. Call 13 12 13 for details. Generally I use the airfreight options offered by Australia Post. So those are some of your options. I use a mixture of all of the above depending on my particular circumstances at the time.

Points to remember

- Shop around and get lots of quotes·
- Check with other artists, arts organizations and your galleries for recommendations·
- Document your work before shipping and keep a copy of all details·
- Package well·
- Inform your client of the freight details and get them to confirm the arrival and condition of goods·
- Allow plenty of time to ship your work to meet deadlines