

**SARAH TRACTON**

SOUND IS ILLUMINATED

4 - 28 MAY



**LIN  
DEN.** NEW  
ART

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**SARAH TRACTON**  
SOUND IS ILLUMINATED

LINDEN PROJECT SPACE  
4 - 28 May 2023

Many ceramicists throw vessels for solid objects – plants, fruit, more art. Sarah is making vessels for light.

Most artists won't produce their best work until they have been through some serious challenges. You could say spinning pain into gold is any artist's true vocation. There is one reason Sarah's lights are just so uplifting to look at, and not only after the bulb inside is switched on – it's because they are beautiful. She has transformed years of alienation and deafness-enclosed solitude into shining works that invite and inspire. At the National Art School, Sarah returned to her original craft and produced luminous works more vivid and delicate than even I could have predicted.

When Sarah Tracton's lights are suspended, they emit a rich honey glow as if ancient oil lamps are shimmering off a gold-plated Menorah. Yet these are lights that inspire wordlessly. No liturgy, blessings or sacrament can express what the lights say, because they speak through showing, they beam.

Sarah has gradually decluttered her own spaces as she has travelled and moved around for her art. She concurs with people who care about interiors that objects retained should be beloved and even perhaps beautiful. Our world is just so full of unloved stuff, she told me. She is not interested in high concept, low craft artworks. She wants to make fancy, gorgeous, special pieces that people can love and use. If this is what being an artisan is, perhaps Sarah has achieved that career goal, but to me there is more than successful craft in place when I see her ceramic pieces plugged in and switched on.

When I see these pearlescent porcelain shanks beaming, I feel the urge to celebrate the talents of this emerging artist who has emerged from the chrysalis of deafness to fill our world with light. Times are tough, and the earth thirsts. Art is still needed to blast our consciousness with brightness when the world feeds on darkness.

Around this city, in every town, young people and old are looking at themselves. The helpless magnetism of eye-stealing screens wants your heart, your mind. It's OK to dally in the electronic netherland, with desires and appetites never quite fully sated. The blue beams from your life online also gradually seep into the spaces of your imagination until it's flooded. Yet Sarah's ceramic lights are a beacon back to the solid land, the earth from which her clays were dug.

Dig your hands back into the earth, her lights are saying. Look away from your screens briefly, and feel the heat of the sun on your face. Look into a different light.

Dr Miri Jassy



Elwood Beach, Port Phillip.  
Photo: Oscar Colman

Linden New Art is proud to present *Sound is Illuminated*, the latest body of handcrafted porcelain lightworks by local Port Phillip artist and designer Sarah Tracton.

Floating weightlessly throughout the space, the gentle glow of Tracton's pendant lights distil the velvety warmth of dusk, disrupting the cool container of the gallery's white cube. Closer inspection reveals gilded fissures that shatter the porcelain into mosaics of organic shapes, its form the beautiful result of an artful Japanese technique employed by Tracton known as kintsugi, in which ceramic shards broken during the firing process are repaired with gold-leaf sheets. The pendants are

powered and suspended by minimalistic frame structures of near-invisible slimline wires, thus eliminating visible cables and creating a mysterious buoyancy.

For Tracton, this act of transformative repair exemplifies the philosophy of the circular economy, rescuing otherwise discarded materials with an approach that not only restores the functionality of the object but celebrates the scars of its history. Each pendant therefore becomes perfectly unique in its idiosyncrasies, objects that wear its beautiful wounds and in doing so, acquiring the independence to tell the story of its own being.



Environmentally sustainable methods precede Tracton's practice at every turn. Accordingly, *Sound is Illuminated* reflects the work of an artist determined to transcend the monotony of the mass manufacturing and the culture of waste and consumption that fuels it. But more than a challenge to excesses the fast-furniture industry, Tracton's embrace of the virtues of transformative repair is made all the more meaningful by her own transformative experience of profound deafness, whose hearing was made possible through cochlear implantation.

Describing her sensory deprivation as the catalyst behind her creations, Tracton says:

"Creating lighting is a response to rehabilitating my hearing with cochlear implantation. This journey into increased sound has brought enhanced colour perception. Once I regained my hearing, the atmosphere, colours and tactility of materials became intensified. Light has a powerful effect on those who experience hearing loss. Sound became an illuminating light in a literal sense for me, and the translucency of porcelain conveys this positive catharsis. Working with iridescent, vibrant pops of colour and the light of porcelain encapsulates this feeling."



Elwood Beach, Port Phillip.  
Photo: Oscar Colman



# ABOUT THE ARTIST



## SARAH TRACTON

Drawn to exploring the infinite possibilities of porcelain translucency, fine artist and designer Sarah Tracton handcrafts lighting that is luminous, experimental and ethereal. To achieve her lighting's remarkable diaphanous effect, Sarah honed her artistry at the National Art School in Sydney, developing a unique technique to handcraft architectural clay sheets by pouring porcelain slip on a plaster slab before firing, then heightening the luminous properties of her lighting by adding iridescent colours to the porcelain which results in exquisitely luminous and ethereal translucency when internally lit.

Sarah's handcrafted lighting is a conceptual & metaphorical response to rehabilitating her Deafness with cochlear implantation - a journey into increased sound that has brought enhanced colour perception.

Having achieved exceptional results and recognition as a trained fine artist with mastery over her materials, Sarah has refined a niche clay slip poured on plaster slab technique. She is built a reputation for using innovative techniques to create bespoke lighting that is functional, beautiful and mood-enhancing. Sarah uses Australian-made porcelain clays for their distinctive translucent qualities to create her handcrafted artisanal pieces. She fuses innovative cordless technologies with traditional craft processes to create lighting that emits exquisitely luminous and ethereal outcomes when paired with LEDs.

Tracton is a finalist for Australia's Next Top Designer, which showcases breakthrough concepts shaping the future of design. She has exhibited at Design Fringe, Australian Design Centre and held solo exhibitions at Abbotsford Convent (2018), Glowing Structures (2022) and Linden Project Space (2023). She is a Good Design Award winner, Circle Awards finalist, AMP Tomorrow Maker, Macquarie Group Emerging Prize Peoples Choice winner, and recipient of Creative Victoria's Creators Fund and the Rupert Bunny Fellowship Special Projects Grant. She was a finalist for the Circle Awards in 2022, which recognises design creating positive environmental change. Her works are held in private collections across Australia and New York.







S O U N D I S  
I L L U M I N A T E D

CATALOGUE OF WORKS

**MELBOURNE  
DESIGN WEEK**



Powered through a single wire, TriVertex is a light system of stunning balance and geometry. When turned off, TriVertex is a fine art sculptural object. Turned on, it becomes a light that appears to float in space weightlessly. Its bespoke wire junction fixtures are completely minimalist, creating an individual balancing adjustment of each end of each linear, allowing power to be transmitted through a single upper wire.

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Triptych Float, 2023  
Porcelain, perspex, LED, gold leaf, wire  
\$3,600 AUD



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Triptych Float, 2023  
Porcelain, perspex, LED, gold leaf, wire  
\$3,600 AUD



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TriVertex, 2023  
Porcelain, perspex, LED, gold leaf, wire  
68 x 68 x 9 cm  
\$4,600 AUD

Powered through a single wire, TriVertex is a light system of stunning balance and geometry. When turned off, TriVertex is a fine art sculptural object. Turned on, it becomes a light that appears to float in space weightlessly. Its bespoke wire junction fixtures are completely minimalist, creating an individual balancing adjustment of each end of each linear, allowing power to be transmitted through a single upper wire.



The handcrafting process in making this light involves pouring liquid clay, onto plaster slab. Slip is then poured layer by layer onto the slab, then the sheets are peeled away. The sheets are hand wet/dry sanded, clear glazes and fired twice final to stoneware temperatures of 1280 degrees. The unique translucent qualities of the pure Australian porcelain clay body I use delivers unparalleled iridescent, ambient and luminous qualities. With varied colour stain additions, marbled chromatic landscape panorama coloured surfaces akin to landscape topography are the result.



A cascading design of three linear cylinders infused with green and gold gradations, Ladder Light is suspended and powered by a minimalistic frame system of near-invisible slimline wires, each lit clay surface reveals a celestial luminosity when internally lit.

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Ladder Light, 2023  
Porcelain, perspex, LED, gold leaf, wire  
51 x 58 x 10 cm  
\$5,400 AUD



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Firelight, 2023  
Porcelain, perspex, LED, gold leaf  
44 x 23 x 6 cm  
\$1,880 AUD





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Earth at Night, 2023  
Porcelain, perspex, LED, gold leaf  
44 x 23 x 6 cm  
SOLD



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Zig Zag Flame, 2023  
Porcelain, perspex, LED, gold leaf, wire  
44 x 23 x 6 cm.  
NFS





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Sound Makes Light, 2023  
Porcelain, perspex, LED, gold leaf, wire  
44 x 23 x 6 cm.  
\$1,880 AUD



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Blue Luminance, 2023  
Porcelain, perspex, LED, gold leaf  
44 x 23 x 6 cm  
\$1880



Photo: Karl Halliday,



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Horizon Forcefield, 2023  
Porcelain, perspex, LED, gold leaf  
44 x 23 x 6 cm  
\$1880



Photo: Karl Halliday,



Photo: Karl Halliday,



Inquiries

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