

Swindon Museum and Art Gallery

Fenella Elms  
*Large flow pot* (2014)  
Porcelain, clay  
50 x 50cm (approximately)

Grant Aston  
*Radioactivitat* (2013)  
Fired clay  
65 x 55 x 60cm

For their Omega Fund acquisition Swindon Museum and Art Gallery identified **Fenella Elms** and **Grant Aston** as two contemporary ceramists who would diversify and energise their collection of twentieth- and twenty-first-century studio ceramics.

**Fenella Elms** (b.1964, Münster, Germany) is a contemporary ceramist based near Swindon who is inspired by natural forms, rhythm and motion. Her work was recently presented at Arts, London (2014); Bluecoat Display Centre, Liverpool (2015); and Collect, Saatchi Gallery (2015). In her previous career, Elms worked in mental and occupational health. Dreams, instinct and the subconscious continue to influence her practice. Her work is of special interest to Swindon Museum and Art Gallery as she studied ceramics at Swindon College and was taught using many of the ceramics now in the museum's collection. For her *Large flow pot* Elms used beads in white and cobalt as a reference to traditional cobalt decorated pots. The craftsmanship, scale and traditional references of Elm's practice complement Swindon Museum and Art Gallery's existing craft collection while demonstrating important trends in contemporary ceramics.

**Grant Aston** (b.1980, Stoke on Trent, UK) is based in London. His work has been included in a number of exhibitions including the British Ceramics Biennial, Stoke on Trent (2012); the Ceramic Art London Fair at the Royal College of Art, London (2014); and at Bluecoat Display Centre, Liverpool (2013).

Aston's robust clay sculptures are inspired by contemporary life, metalwork, architecture and science. The Omega Fund acquisition *Radioactivitat* is striking in terms of its innovative use of material in which different types of clay and glazes are used to expand the boundaries of ceramic art. Aston's expressive pieces echo the abstract brushwork of artists such as Basil Beattie and Christopher Le Brun, while simultaneously reflecting the hand-built innovation of Sara Radstone and Gordon Baldwin and therefore enable Swindon Museum and Art Gallery to make a link between the ceramics and modern art collection.

Presented by the Contemporary Art Society through the Omega Fund, 2015

