

Jane Bamford - Presenter

The Australian Ceramics Triennale Tasmania 2019

## Abstract

'Clay as Marine Habitat' is an insight into her scientific based, research driven art and design work resulting in site specific marine ceramic artificial spawning habitat (ASH) installations into the Derwent River, Tasmania. The whole project is headed by Dr Tim Lynch, Senior Research Scientist at CSIRO. The aim is to further secure the Spotted Handfish from extinction.

The Spotted Handfish (*Brachionichthys hirsutus*) which exists only in 8 sites in the Derwent River, Tasmania, has been listed as critically endangered on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature red list and the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. Its ongoing battle for survival relies heavily on production and deployment of ASH. ASH form a substitute for the stalked ascidian (*Sycozoa pulchra*) and other habitat previously used. This habitat has been depleted by the introduced invasive northern pacific sea star (*Asterias amurens*) and other factors.

In 2018 Jane created 3,000 ceramic ASH whilst undertaking an Art/Science Residency at UTAS School of Creative Arts. During winter, the CSIRO scuba team deployed the ASH into the Derwent River prior to spawning in September. This is a significant project intersects Jane's ceramic art practice with current scientific research and practice. It is rare that an art practice has the chance to engage so directly with the natural environment and has genuine possible positive environmental outcomes.

This presentation will outline how Jane came to be working with clay alongside marine ecologists. She will share extraordinary underwater images and track her making and unfolding outcomes with insights into this extraordinary conservation project that which will continue in 2019.