



THEME 2.
DESIGN: FUNKY FORMS:
3 ARTISTS: CHEB, CONVIC
ADAM GOODRUM

FUNKY FORMS

CHEB: Deb Jones and Christine Cholewa, Cheb Concrete Product
CONVIC: Margaret River Youth Precinct Skatepark
Adam Goodrum: Concrete bench

CHEB: Deb JONES and Christine CHOLEWA

Deb Jones and Christine Cholewa have built a design business for themselves based on their realisation that working collaboratively was more fulfilling than only working in their own private practice. Both designers welcome a challenge and are willing to learn about new techniques and materials to achieve their goals.

The work: CHEB CONCRETE PRODUCT

What we see

CHEB'S collection of concrete tableware at first appears simple and bland as the raw base material has no embellishments. Objects appear unfinished with every detail of their casting mould evident on their exterior surface. The varying cylindrical proportions of the plates, candle holders and tall vases are contrasted by the more angular objects in the collection, maybe for holding cutlery or serviettes. This tableware would be ideal for outdoor use and keeping the table cloth firmly in place on the table.

The Designers

Deb Jones was born in 1963 in Parkes New South Wales, Christine Cholewa was born in 1979 in Toronto, Canada. They now live in Adelaide, South Australia.

Both designers have a history in glassblowing with each completing studies in glass at different university art schools. The two-year Associate Training Program at the JamFactory attracted both designers to Adelaide at different stages in their careers, to engage in the program. Jones arrived in 1993 from Canberra and Cholewa in 2004 from Canada. Both artists were also members of JamFactory's Glass Studio management team.

Jones and Cholewa met while working at Blue Pony Studios in Stepney, an artists' co-operative which encouraged and supported local artists by providing studio space and a retail shop to sell artworks. While at Blue Pony they worked closely together from 2007 to 2011. In 2013 although still maintaining independent practices they decided to work collaboratively on larger urban design and public art projects. They engage skilled artisans to support them on their bigger projects. Working alongside the steel fabricators and concrete workers Jones and Cholewa not only helped but enjoyed learning skills from these practitioners.

Context for the work

Both designers are keen to explore the possibilities of the vast range of materials they use to create their public art, urban design and product design projects. During their careers CHEB have created projects from steel, bronze, timber, glass, stone and concrete.

CHEB's tableware is made from concrete include bowls, dishes, candle-holders and vases, with a raw finish; no polishing finishes their pieces. The only post-casting process they use is rubbing the leather hard concrete items across the concrete floor in their workshop to level the base.

Methods and materials

The tableware was cast using a general-purpose industrial panel grout using a blend of **Portland cement**, high grade very fine **aggregates** and additives. The fine quality of this concrete mix is ideal for hand finishing jobs like filling small holes or gaps in concrete construction work to get a high grade finish. CHEB use only readily available materials such as cardboard and ducting tape to make their moulds for casting. They are quite at ease with their tableware bearing the surface characteristics of the materials used in their construction. The unique surfaces are only achieved due to the type of concrete used which is known for its ability to record every detail of its casting mould.

Left: CHEB, *CHEB Concrete product*, 2018. Photo: Craig Arnold.



Designer's statement

The designers describe their end products as 'rough, fast, not too precious, not over thought.'
Margaret Hancock Davis CONCRETE: ART DESIGN ARCHITECTURE exhibition catalogue JamFactory 2019

Other perspectives

"Cholewa and Jones both have a history in developing and producing hand-made products for retail sale and domestic use. Their evolving interest in and experiences with concrete through their public art projects have led to more recent experiments with casting concrete to create small-scale functional and sculptural pieces to add to CHEB'S existing product line, which include pieces in glass, ceramic, timber and fabric.

Margaret Hancock Davis CONCRETE: ART DESIGN ARCHITECTURE exhibition catalogue JamFactory 2019

"On a smaller scale, but just as ambitious, is a new range of tableware featuring glasses, plates and centrepieces that will be launched in October 2018 and can be found at chebart.com. This creative duo is unstoppable and their enthusiasm for collaboration is infectious. They agree that their power comes from working together, making CHEB highly productive. As a creative team they support each other, have life work balance and most importantly trust each other 100 percent."

<http://www.adelaidereview.com.au>

DESIGN QUESTIONS: Deb JONES and Christine CHOLEWA

1 CULTURAL

How is culture revealed in CHEB's handcrafted concrete objects?

After researching some cultural influences on these two designers, prepare an evaluation of how successfully their pieces reflect the place and times they were made in. Research their work beyond the exhibition to increase your understanding,

2 PERSONAL/SUBJECTIVE

Research the personal backgrounds of CHEB designers and describe how their personal careers and values contribute to their design work.

3 FORMAL/STRUCTURAL

Describe the properties of concrete that attracted CHEB to this material for their tableware.

4 CONTEMPORARY/POSTMODERN

Explain why concrete tableware might be acceptable as a part of modern day living.

Links to begin your research

<http://www.chebart.com/new-page/> CHEB contact page.

<http://www.chebart.com/projects-1/> description of Adelaide City Council project

<http://www.adelaidereview.com.au> Julianne Pierce talking to CHEB founders about their practice

Source:

CONCRETE: ART DESIGN ARCHITECTURE Exhibition Catalogue, JamFactory, 2019

Above: CHEB, *CHEB Concrete product*, 2018. Photo: Craig Arnold.



Above: CONVIC, *Margaret River Youth Precinct*, 2018. Photos: Sky Pixels.

CONVIC

CONVIC is a leading Landscape Architecture and Landscape Design company based in Melbourne.

This video was filmed in CONVIC's revolutionary skate park at Margaret River, a seaside wine and surf community, south of Perth in Western Australia.

The work: MARGARET RIVER YOUTH PRECINCT SKATEPARK

What we see

Built to support a youthful skateboarding population 20 years ago in 1999, Margaret River's concrete park is a mini landscape of brightly coloured hills and bowls, ramps and troughs that offer physical challenges and recreation for all skill levels. Wrapped around the skate-spaces are islands of shade greenery and curl-roofed shelters, shaped to echo the nearby famous surf breaks along the Indian Ocean coastline.

CONVIC colour their skate surfaces to increase their visual appeal; Margaret River's enticing skate surfaces are in various reds, yellows and blues adding a joyful quality for its young skaters. Colour and sculptural forms are now regular features in CONVIC's designs, along with boldly grand dimensions for various park forms. Margaret River's

'... skate area includes a 3.1m deep international-standard competition-level bowl and a 250m long pump track (a progressive structure using an up-and-down 'pumping' motion to propel a bicycle or skateboard forward without pedalling or pushing) encircling the sports area which itself includes climbing, bouldering and parkour facilities.'

Lara Merrington, JamFactory CONCRETE Exhibition Catalogue essay

CONVIC were invited back recently to revamp and update their original design for the Youth Precinct expansion, to enlarge the-park as a magnet for skaters and the general public. Margaret River's enlightened council understands that by supporting and legitimising their youth culture local community life has benefitted. The whole park is now 6,100m² of recreational space catering for families and visitors of all generations.

The Designers

Brisbane boys Simon Oxenham and his friend the late Cameron Melville met as teenage skaters in a backyard half-pipe in the 1980s. Dissatisfied with skating options in their home town they spent their teen years designing and building wooden ramps to challenge their skate skills.

After years designing collaboratively through trial and error experiments they remained committed to creating skate parks, with Melville training as a skate-park engineer and Oxenham maturing into a competitive vert skater. This perfect combination of specialist skills and understanding of the sport launched their careers as skate park designers and builders. Their company CONVIC was formed to take on their first major commission in 1998 in Margaret River, south of Perth in Western Australia. CONVIC is now widely admired and sought after for exciting ideas.

While many of CONVIC's Australian parks are close to beach and surfing communities, a standout difference is their Onslow Skate Space in Western Australia's Pilbara region, which is very inland and celebrates the town's Indigenous culture and the region's iron rich red landscape.

CONVIC has expanded into two design offices in Melbourne and Dubai with over 700 projects completed. Over 21 are in Australia, with CONVIC parks in almost every state. CONVIC are now considered global experts in skate park design and construction, earning commissions from many of the world's greatest cities to create new and active 21st century community spaces. Giant international commissions have been built in Dubai, New Zealand, Singapore and Shanghai, China.

Awards for CONVIC's projects have been coming thick and fast since 2007, only 9 years after their first project and include Guinness Book of Record entries for 2004 and 20014. Recognition of excellence has come from both international and local design bodies. Recently in 2018 they won the esteemed Iconic Innovative Architecture Award from a German jury of designers, also the Australian Institute of Landscape Designers (AILD) Award and the National Excellence in Building and Construction from Australia's Master Builders Association.

Context for the work

Asked to do the 20th anniversary renewal of MRYP park in 2018, CONVIC was given an opportunity to update and expand their original 1998 concrete park with new ideas. Twenty years after their first big park the world of skateparks has grown and changed enormously. The MRYP park was given BMX tracks, bbq and picnic facilities, performance and spectator areas and more landscaped zones and shaded seating.

CONVIC's talent was recognised 20 years ago by the enlightened Augusta Shire south of Perth, Western Australia, which led to their first large commission at Margaret River. Twenty years later, Skateparks now add social diversity to city and town environments while providing recreation spaces for young skaters' social and physical benefits.

Skatepark designers are often briefed to provide even broader solutions for surrounding urban environments, as part of skate park concepts. These can include repurposing a defunct industrial site, installing a skate park within a much needed public park for the whole community, or perhaps as a refocus area to draw in street skaters away from illegal street-spots, to save on repairing damage to city furniture.

Many cities are making art and sculpture skate-able by allowing more legal skate spots to be combined with other city landscape art projects. As in Margaret River skate spots can be set in picturesque destinations for both skaters and non-skaters, as an activity magnet attracting people to their area.

Methods and materials

Technical advances have lifted skate boarding from a practice hobby for waveless surfers in the mid 20th century to a contemporary global sport and youth culture.

The shift from metal wheels to urethane in the 1970s allowed better traction, speed and new tricks. In turn, ramps and bowls got bigger, rolling concrete hills (or 'snake runs') were built, skate competitions evolved, and skate parks were in demand.

Lara Merrington, JamFactory CONCRETE Exhibition Catalogue

CONVIC is famous for specialised concrete techniques that achieve seamless curves and smooth transitions. Technical experiments by Oxenham and Melville led them to an innovative technique of spraying free-form concrete onto the ground. Their revolutionary technique stretches the usual limits of concrete, and enables CONVIC to install huge areas of fine, smooth, and free-form coloured concrete.

After shaping the ground into troughs and hills, bowls and pipes with diggers and shovel work, concrete foundation layers are built in (or onto) the ground with reinforcing mesh. This foundation must set properly before the final surface is sprayed on.

This final layer of coloured cement is then painstakingly shaped and **burnished** by hand to obtain a smooth skate surface that is long lasting & with a lustrous finish. A protective sealant is applied to keep it from weathering. Bowl edges and rails are usually of stainless steel. CONVIC regards their cementing process as more environmentally sound and less expensive than transporting pre-cast sections onto the site.

CONVIC insists on working with the local client community to understand their particular needs in a skate park. A distinguishing feature of CONVIC is their insistence that each project has a sculptural environment connecting with local people. CONVIC design teams pay great attention to **aesthetics** by including significant local motifs and natural colours that echo natural environments and reflect local histories.

Margaret River is a rural area with a strong surf culture so young people are a large part of the community. Wave-like shelters at the MRYP and park connect with the nearby ocean and its local surfing culture, while their Pilbara park in Onslow, northern WA, features sculpted mounds like termite hills and red orange colouring reflecting the iron rich landscape.

CONVIC staff control the whole design and building process. Their staff are mostly skaters and surfers themselves. Instead of hiring in contract supervisors they oversee projects from initial consultations with community and client councils, through the creative design process, to on-site construction and finally to the inaugural activation of their new sites.

Designer's statements

CONVIC Design Manager Jason Geralis said he was excited to return to the birthplace of the company and the site of our first skate park. "The Margaret River Skate Park was the catalyst for the growth of youth facilities across the state.

"There has been an evolution of modern youth and skate culture across Australia since then, but even now the Margaret River Skate Park remains relevant and still represents the unique skate identity of the region.

"CONVIC are proud to have contributed to this legacy and even more proud that we will now contribute to this important next phase in the development of the youth space upon its 20 year anniversary."

Shire Report <https://yoursay.amrshire.wa.gov.au/margaret-river-youth-precinct? Page=2>

Oxenham says *'making parks aesthetically pleasing reduces community angst. They don't just have to be grey blobs'*. K.Bradstreet,"The Business of Building: Australia's Convic Skate Parks", June, 2012, <https://www.adventuresportsnetwork.com/transworldbusiness/thebusinessofbuildingaustraliasconvicskateparks>

Other perspectives

When you receive project briefs like "It has to be the biggest, best and most innovative" you know you are at the top of your game. Building the world's largest skate park—13,700 square metres with 5000 cubic metres of concrete—for the SMP Skatepark in Shanghai, Melbourne-based multi-award-winning company CONVIC was up for the \$25-million challenge, and exceeded expectations.

Lara Merrington, JamFactory CONCRETE Exhibition catalogue

Describing CONVIC's latest brief for the world's largest skatepark for the city of Shanghai, China, Lara Merrington reveals CONVIC's stellar credibility in Landscape Architecture and skate park design.



Above: CONVIC, Margaret River Youth Precinct, 2018. Photo: Sky Pixels.

QUESTIONS: CONVIC

1 CULTURAL

Explain any cultural influences that were crucial influences on the two young skaters who built up CONVIC.

Describe the cultural movement that has resulted in global phenomenon of giant skate/entertainment parks.

2 PERSONAL/SUBJECTIVE

Describe how personal interests and concerns drove Simon Oxenham and Cameron Melville to become designers.

Describe how CONVIC connected several of their skate parks to the specific locations and landscape they are set in.

3 FORMAL/STRUCTURAL

Research and explain CONVIC's innovations that enable their concrete skate surfaces to be smooth and curved.

4 CONTEMPORARY/POST MODERN

CONVIC include stylistic and narrative elements in to their concrete park environments. Select a recent commission to evaluate in its contemporary context.

CONVIC links to begin your research

The biggest and best skatepark designer started in Margaret River - ABC
www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2012/11/20/3637222.htm

<https://convic.com/about-us/>

Shire Report: <https://yoursay.amrshire.wa.gov.au/margaret-river-youth-precinct? page=2>
(This Shire website tracks local community involvement (see Community Engagement Summary) and the practical stages of setting up a test site for the 3 metre deep bowl).

K.Bradstreet,"The Business of Building: Australia's Convic Skate Parks', June, 2012,
[https:// www.adventuresportsnetwork.com/transworldbusiness/thebusinessofbuildingaustralias-convicskateparks](https://www.adventuresportsnetwork.com/transworldbusiness/thebusinessofbuildingaustralias-convicskateparks)

DESIGN GLOSSARY

Aesthetics: in accordance with principles of good form, accepted standards of beauty in appearance.

Burnish: polish by rubbing, often employing a burnishing tool, depending on the material to be polished; metals and ceramics are more often burnished than concrete.



Above - Clockwise: Adam Goodrum, Detail of the angular fin like leg of the *Concrete Bench*, 2014. Photo: Joshua Ayett;
Adam Goodrum, *Concrete Benches for Ovolo Nishi (formerly Hotel Hotel)*, Canberra, 2014. Photo: Joshua Ayett.
Adam Goodrum in studio. Photo: Simon Whitebread

Adam GOODRUM

Adam Goodrum's fascination with building 'things' started at an early age in the family's back shed making objects to support his surfing lifestyle. Currently recognised internationally as one of Australia's leading Industrial designers Goodrum often acknowledges the role played by his early love of making objects and the importance of those foundations to his personal design philosophy.

The work: CONCRETE BENCH

What we see

Goodrum has created a large concrete slab which sits on two finely sculpted fin-like legs whose delicate angular edges provide a contrast to the solid qualities of the bench top. He has applied no finish to the raw concrete surface making it serviceable for its placement in an outdoor environment in Canberra City centre. The knee high bench is placed to complement nearby concrete seats which together provide an all weather outdoor **utilitarian** facility for the general public.

The Designer

Adam Goodrum was born 1972 in Sydney and grew up in Perth. While at school he combined his love of art and maths to fulfil another of his passions, making of objects. His younger years were spent in the back shed with his father or friends making roof racks or other surfboard accessories. As a fan of Lego he was challenged by its flexibility which allowed him to create his ideas. The simplicity of Lego's construction and bright colours, Goodrum acknowledges, were an important starting point for his creative mind. Leaving school Goodrum had planned to do a Visual Arts course. However he changed his mind when he was introduced to the possibilities of industrial design as a career path. To follow this new direction he enrolled at the University of Technology (UTS) in Sydney where in 1993 he graduated with a Bachelor of Industrial Design.

Although Goodrum basically works as a one-man business he does **collaborate** on projects with various groups of highly skilled professions who can provide the expertise he needs at the time. He has won many awards which have been important in establishing his reputation locally and internationally. They include the Bombay Sapphire Design Award in 2004 for his *Eve chair* and more recently in 2005 the prestigious Rigg Design Award for his flat pack folding houses installation called *Unfolding*. In Australia he has contributed furniture designs to leading furniture firms including Tait, Cult and Dessein. His international clients include Capellini, Alessi, Norman Copenhagen, Veuve Clicquot and Wallpaper. In addition to his business Goodrum is also in demand to share his knowledge by giving lectures in an Industrial Design course at UTS.

Context for the work

When the Molonglo Group of developers were planning Hotel Hotel (now renamed Ovolo Nishi) in the New Acton cultural precinct of Canberra they commissioned some local designers to contribute to the project. **Lou Weis** of **Broached Commissions**, was approached to help with design elements of the hotel for which Goodrum made his contribution. Goodrum has a working history with Broached Commissions so they researched and reflected on their final choice of decorative style collaboratively. **Walter Burley** and **Marion Mahoney Griffin**, the founding architects of Canberra, were selected as a basis for their single edition pieces for the hotel and its surroundings.

In addition to the concrete bench on display in the exhibition Goodrum designed a selection of pieces for Hotel Hotel such as outdoor concrete tables, wooden furniture for the bar area and glass pendant lights.

Methods and materials

Goodrum used precisely constructed aluminium moulds for casting his Griffin inspired concrete benches, now scattered around the environment surrounding the Ovolo Nishi hotel. He chose concrete, not only because it was cost efficient, but its finish complemented the urban environment in which the benches were placed. Concrete is hard wearing in an all-weather setting.

Designer's statements

*"The Griffins were a strange blend of **modernist** and **spiritualist** and this can be clearly seen in the suburb they co-created; their one true Australian Utopia, Castlecrag, on Sydney's lower North Shore. Some of the decorative fin-like rock formations at the front of some of the residences inspired the concrete bench."*

JamFactory CONCRETE: ART DESIGN ARCHITECTURE, Exhibition wall caption

"Every job is different, you've got to respond in a different manner,"he says, describing projects "where you've really got to think commercially... and keep production costs down."This is in contrast to his Broached Commissions work, for instance, which is "quite academic and high-end design."

www.indesignlive.com/the-peeps/indesign-luminary-adam-goodrum

Other perspectives

"As one of Australia's leading industrial designers, Adam Goodrum is world renown for his design innovation and distinct Australian aesthetic. Focusing on furniture, product and interior design, Goodrum delivers progressively original, intelligent and award winning collections, highly regarded for commercial and retail applications."

<http://madebytait.com.au>

Glossary

Collaborate: working cooperatively on an activity or project.

Modernist: art (and craft) movement established in 1919 with the opening of the Bauhaus school of design in Germany. A Bauhaus philosophy, 'form follows function', decided that the appearance of an object should be governed by its purpose, or function. Functionality, mass production and use of modern materials were important influences in modernism.

Spiritualist: of a spiritual nature, pure of heart, godliness, a belief that all humanity is spiritually linked.

Utilitarian: designing to make something that is useful and practical rather than decorated to be attractive.

Walter Burley and **Marion Mahoney Griffin:** Walter was a town planner who collaborated with his wife Marion, an experienced architect with excellent architectural drawing skills. In 1912 they won the competition to create the design of Australia's new federal capital city, Canberra. They arrived in Australia in 1913 but left the project in 1921 after many issues and disputes about the implementation of their original concept. They stayed in Australia for another 30 years contributing many contemporary buildings and planned environments into Australia's architectural landscape, particularly Castlecrag in Sydney. The Griffins were two of the first Modernist architects to work in Australia.

Lou Weis of Broached Commissions:

"Broached is a research driven design studio. We start with a context such as the Colonial Period, and work with scholars and curatorial experts in that context to develop a design response that connects our past to our present condition."

www.meltingbutter.com/the-curators-broached-commissions-lou-weis-on-rethinking-australias-cultural-aesthetic/

DESIGN QUESTIONS: Adam Goodrum

1 CULTURAL

Describe any Australian qualities visible in Goodrum's design work.

2 PERSONAL/SUBJECTIVE

What personal values influence this designer-maker?

Research the developing career of Australian designer Adam Goodrum and describe how aspects of his personal background and values have impacted on his design work.

3 FORMAL/STRUCTURAL

Explain why Goodrum chose concrete for his bench.

4 CONTEMPORARY/POSTMODERN

Taking into account concrete's long history as a building material, explore developments that have transformed this material into the foremost construction material of contemporary times.

Describe which aspects of Goodrum's furniture designs make him an important contributor to contemporary trends in interior design.

Links to begin your research and sources

<http://thedesigntfiles.net/2016/09/adam-goodrum-interview-with-Adam-Goodrum>

<http://thedesigntfiles.net/2015/04/hotel-hotel-and-the-nishi-building-Goodrum-and-Broached-Commissions>

<http://www.indesignlive.com/home-slides/the-rigg-design-prize-Goodrum's-latest-award>

<http://www.indesignlive.com/the-peeps/indesign-luminary-adam-goodrum-review-of-Goodrum's-career-path>

Source:

CONCRETE: ART DESIGN ARCHITECTURE Exhibition wall caption, JamFactory, 2019



Above: Adam Goodrum, Detail of the angular fin like leg of the *Concrete Bench*, 2014. Photo: Joshua Ayett.
Right: Candalepas Associates, *Punchbowl Mosque*, 2018 Concrete ring to timber dome and oculus. Photo: Rory Gardiner

