

# CAMERON WILLIAMS

This low-key Australian ceramicist's work is all about living large.

Despite the sheer size of his creations and his rare skill with scale, Cameron Williams isn't one for grandstanding. "I like being part of a bigger picture," says the softly spoken 58-year-old who plies his trade out of a bush-block workshop on NSW's picturesque South Coast. "I've always enjoyed taking on challenges and the huge pots I create fit in well with the minimalist architecture aesthetic."

For the past decade, Williams has worked alongside landscape designer Will Dangar, co-owner of outdoor furniture retailer Robert Plumb ([robertplumb.com.au](http://robertplumb.com.au)), making pots and planters for some of the country's most beautiful private gardens and public spaces.

"It's a process with pitfalls and every step is challenging," he says of honing the giant works. "You're managing anything up to 20 kilograms of clay on the wheel but my techniques are posture-friendly and I visualise every step before I do it so I don't find myself in difficult positions. It's a problem-solving exercise. I put on [radio program] *Country Hour* and tune out."

Demand for his pieces through special orders means Williams has never exhibited ("everything is sold prior"), the artist enjoying jobs where a client points to a spot and says, "Make me something!" Water features, figurative sculptures, tandoor ovens, a collection of ornate oversized teapots for artist George Gittoes – you name it, Williams has probably made it. "The work is addictive. I take January off and I'm itching to get back."

Playing with mud started as a kid in the southern Sydney suburb of Sans Souci, where Williams later learnt that the next-door neighbour had a pottery wheel. He took classes at St George TAFE then trained under master potters, churning out utilitarian pieces like casserole dishes and cups. "I clung to pottery because of the practicality of it," he says. "It was knowing I could make something people could use. The artistry of it? That was just a bonus." ●





**Where you'll find his work:** Parliament House in Canberra; the homes of clients, including Cate Blanchett and property mogul Vaughan Blank; and commercial developments, such as Westfield shopping centres and the Settler's Cove apartment complex in Noosa.

**Studied at:** East Sydney Technical College (now the National Art School) under potter Rod Bamford and at Queensland's Lyrebird Ridge Pottery with potter Errol Barnes.

**Breakthrough moment:** "The Parliament House commission of more than 200 pots. I was just 24 and thought it would take me 10 weeks. It took me 10 months."

