

# Passionate Potter: Megan Puls

Overall winner of the 2010 Gold Coast Potters Member's Exhibition



The evolution of the magnificent Megan – judging by the look on her face as a baby – Megan's been a deep thinker her entire life – even as a 70's Seaworld beauty queen!

Megan Puls is so interesting because she's *so interested* in everything. The whole universe is her oyster, including the spiritual realm. This short story has taken me a long time to write because I've been on so many unexpected journeys along the way. Log onto [meganpuls.com](http://meganpuls.com) and away you'll go into a wealth of wonderful new worlds. You get to see how Megan's mind works and it's a rewarding journey. Along with images of Megan's winning works, exhibitions, biography and blogs we come across some extraordinary people and take a peek into their lives. Euan the Potter – an Aussie living in Japan – is pure magic. Then there's Megan's heroine – a Californian potter called Beatrice Wood who lived to 105 and attributed her longevity to **"young men and chocolates!"** There's even a video of Beatrice loading her kiln and wheel throwing at 104! What an inspiration!



104 year old potter  
Beatrice Wood

It's all the things most of us didn't know about Megan that are the most interesting; 70's beauty queen, hairdresser, nude model to a famous Scottish artist, pen poised for dictation at secretarial college ("I hated it!"), enthusiastic organic gardener, painter and now a blogger!

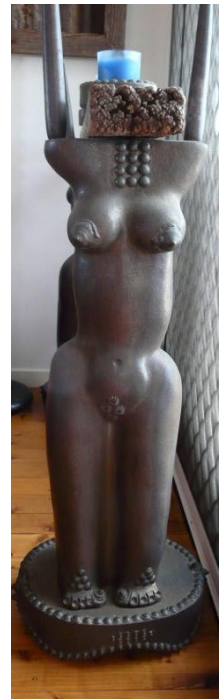


**Left:** A nude by Scottish artist, Alan Sutherland (who also painted HRH the Duke of Edinburgh) did many studies of Megan during his time in Australia

Megan's house is full of treasures and everything has a story and an order. "A place for everything and everything in its place. I like to have lots of empty cupboards. No junk or clutter. It allows more good to come into your life." Megan bought one of the original houses in Nerang which was owned (along with hundreds of acres of land) by Bill and Ursula Birmingham who have a large riverside park named in their honour.



There are gleaming wooden floors, antique furniture and colourful painting and art works. One is a portrait of Megan done by a well known Scottish artist, Alan Sutherland. "I used to pose nude for him so he did this portrait for me. I was about 30 I suppose." Turns out Megan was in good company. Allan Sutherland also painted the Queen's husband, the Duke of Edinburgh and lots of other lords, ladies and Prime Ministers!



It all started in a little town in rural New South Wales. Megan was the only girl growing up with four brothers and she was "daddy's girl..." I adored my father. He was a real bushman. He used to craft the most beautiful walking sticks. I grew up in Waitui, up in the mountains inland from Port Macquarie. My mother was a wonderful knitter. I learnt a lot of my country philosophy



from my mother... things like 'take a thread and run with it'. That's what I do. Visualize things in my mind's eye. I see everything, the whole piece or an entire exhibition before I start to make anything".

As you can imagine, Megan's studio is ordered. A 'shed' in the back yard with a big roller door and lots of lovely light, surrounded by her lush garden and a chorus of singing birds.

*Do unto others as you would have them do unto you -*

Megan's philosophy for living a good life





**Left: Megan with her award winning Obsidian pots made entirely from all the “slops” and off-cuts from classes at Benowa and home which are all recycled. Megan says some people think she’s pedantic and they are wrong! But, just check out that studio floor!!! O.M.G. It’s pristine (and you should see the kitchen too)**

**“Some people think I’m pedantic. Does my house look pedantic to you?” she asks... er... rather pedantically. “It’s not pedantic, it’s more eclectic (true), a collection of all different things. Look at my face – I’m**

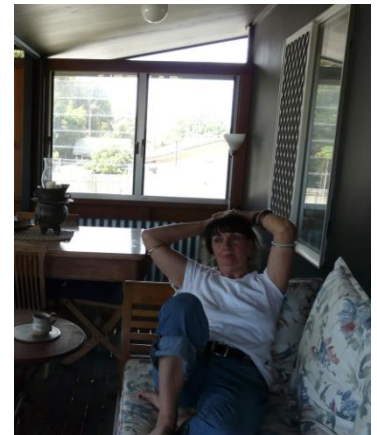
**an open book.”** Megan says and laughs. (Pedantic actually comes from the French word *pedant* – teacher or scholarly – so it’s probably often misused as a derogatory term. In fact it’s quite a compliment to someone like Megan who is regarded as a “great and inspiring” ceramic teacher by her students.)

**There have been so many awards over the years, but Megan’s most treasured prize was the Award of Excellence at the International Ceramic Art Award. This work (pictured left) was inspired by her father “who always said “a man lives 3 score years and ten” so the 70 pieces represented your lot in life basically. Beginning to end. Small, short, tall, stooped and I made one really tall one because there’s always one who stands out from the crowd!”** As we know now, it’s 78 years for men and 83 years for women. Some good news!



**Megan’s most treasured prize: The Award of Excellence at the International Ceramic Art Award 70 pieces inspired by her beloved father – “there’s always one who stands out from the crowd”**

There are so many places in the house for relaxing. Lovely day beds with squishy cushions that make you want to just curl up and have a doze. The back verandah has been extended to create a great all weather outdoor living area. You can batten down the windows for cold or stormy weather, luxuriate in the winter sun or open everything up for a lovely summer barbecue or dinner party. "This is where we have our Melbourne Cup lunch. All the girls from my Monday and Tuesday classes come out and we have hot ham and salads and of course a few champagnes."



Megan's had a few disasters in her time. Once she had a kiln full of water after a flood "and it takes months to dry the fibre out. A couple of people said to me "oh, just fire it" and so I did. You could hear it bubbling and belching and groaning as it heated up. I was sure it was going to explode. Another time I was saggar firing and it caught fire inside the kiln. Two big pieces blew up and the whole thing shook like crazy."

"I don't work as hard now because I'm a grandmother you know, hard to believe isn't it?" she says and roars laughing. Both Megan's daughters are sparkling with good health. Neither drink alcohol, tea or coffee. Jessica's arty – but Hetti's not. Jessica is a naturopath and dietician and Hetti's a child carer who is due to give birth to her fourth child and day now and they've picked a gorgeous name – *VIOLET FRANGIPANI*.



**Gorgeous daughters Jessica & Hetti**



What's next for Megan? "I'm always busy renovating, reinventing, revisiting. Right now I'm revisiting the *NAIL OF THE MOON* series (left) in the form of post and rail work. It's Japanese, the idea of the new moon being a piece of finger nail. It reminds me of my father. He was such a cool dude. When he died the moon became a metaphor – I can

go anywhere in the world and see my dad!"

**For more on the irrepressible Megan – go to [meganpuls.com](http://meganpuls.com). It's quite a ride.**

**Megan getting cozy with hubbie Ingo**

