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Ursula Dutkiewicz (28 January 1958 -)

Ursula Dutkiewicz was born in Adelaide in 1958. She grew up surrounded by the abstract and expressionist paintings of her father, and his younger brother whom were part of the influx of migrant artists after World War 1. Ursula was encouraged to paint as soon as she could hold a paintbrush, as her father was keen to encourage his children's artistic development. The family home was an artist's studio that turned into a gallery every year, either for a pre-Christmas show or for the biennial Adelaide Festival of Arts. The family hosted regular salons and parties and their home was the hub of creative life in Adelaide.

It was this interesting up bringing that led to her involvement in the arts industry. From the age of 17 she was involved in alternative performance events which started with Bijou at the Crafers Town Hall, later becoming involved with La Mezzanines a monthly women's performance evening in Adelaide, and also regular Ware House Performance Events.

From 1984 until 1987 she worked as a shelter worker at Western Area Women's Shelter a feminist run shelter.

In 1986 a band formed from jams that happened in her home in St Peters. The band got its first gig for a lesbian women's 40th Birthday Party and was called Thin Ice but after a few line-up changes they changed the name to Sticky Beat and performed from 1987 until 1993. Ursula was the drummer and the band being one of the only women's bands at the time played just about every woman's only event and many political fundraiser held in Adelaide from 1987 until 1990.

In 1990 she moved to Melbourne were she was active in organizing and running women's performance events, stage-managing for bands and theatre productions. She was co-founder of the women's Jazz bar, Jazz Tails at the Tote Hotel on Friday nights and Co-Organiser of a monthly Women's music night on Wednesday's at the Tote Hotel in Collingwood. She founded a women's band night Royal Sunday's at the Royal Derby in Fitzroy introducing women's bands from Adelaide and Sydney to Melbourne as well as providing a venue to local performers.

In 1990 she undertook a Bachelor of Fine Art majoring in ceramics at the Victorian College of the Arts and since Graduating in 1993 she has been a professional ceramic artist and is currently a resident artist at Gasworks Arts Park in Albert Park. www.ursuladutkiewicz.com

In her arts practice she create a diverse array of works that includes ceramic paintings, sculpture, functional wares and murals and she also work's on project commissions, community projects, residencies and design workshops specifically for people of all ages and abilities.

In 2007, she was artist in residence at the Brighton University (UK) School of Health Professions, and also exhibited work and took part in a Sociology Conference for a research project on women artists at the East London University.

In 2008 she co-created The Art of Suff-Rage, a travelling installation along with artist Fern Smith, commemorating the centenary of women gaining the vote in Victoria. Ursula created one hundred ceramic suffragist sculptures—fifty-four of which were faceless to acknowledge the number of additional years it took for Indigenous people to win the vote.

Ursula has been an active member of the Women's Circus since the first show in 1991. During this time she has had many roles within the circus, including Stage Manager, Technical Coordinator, Assistant Production Manager and Community Adviser as well as a six year stint on the organization's Board of Management. www.womenscircus.org.au