





**Ashley Fiona is an artist living on the Central Coast of New South Wales, Australia. Her creations include porcelain tableware and jewelry; however, her heart's purpose is in the creation of her bespoke, porcelain Ashkeepers. Equally beautiful, they each serve a higher purpose. All are designed to deepen rituals in our daily life in their own unique way.**



#### **Here is her story...**

My name is Ashley Fiona. I'm an artist. I create porcelain Ashkeepers to help others celebrate those loved and lost. The motivation behind my porcelain creations draws inspiration from my personal journey of love and loss.

I was only 13 when my mother died in May, 2000. Since her death, I have created artworks around the subject of death and absence as a form of enquiry and healing. I still remember the plastic container that held her ashes for many months. It was put away in a dark cupboard next to my dad's bed and we never looked at it. It was unsightly and unrefined--everything she wasn't. I wanted to create a beautiful, bespoke vessel for those left behind after a death – a sacred tribute, a vessel to nourish and replenish the soul with memories of your beloved.

My mother was only 44 when she died suddenly leaving behind my father and three teenage daughters. I was the youngest and for many years felt utterly alone. No one we knew had been through the same experience. We struggled with how we should remember someone so immensely important to us.

For the first few years after her death, we would come together and visit her favorite beach on birthdays, anniversaries, and special days. But there was nothing for those days in between.

My emotional healing process was long and difficult. I now have an Ashkeeper filled with some of my mother's personal treasures and souvenirs. It's there with me every day and once in a while, I'll light a candle in celebration of the amazing woman she was and will always be.

Ashkeepers bring to life the beauty of the complex ritual of death and mourning. I create Ashkeepers to help families and individuals celebrate those loved and lost. Intentionally spherical, created from high fired porcelain, Ashkeepers bring life to the sadness of death and encourage us to cherish positive memories forever. Each vessel is designed to hold the ashes of a loved one, to then be replaced with personal souvenirs. Once inverted, the lid of the Ashkeeper creates a special candle holder for times of remembrance. Each piece is handmade, by me, in every way. An outcome of my own personal healing, an Ashkeeper is designed to do just that.

*"The Ashkeepers I create are for those who have loved and lost."*





As I become more familiar with death, I am closer to making my peace with the experience. Once traumatic and unspeakable, I am now able to recognise an element of beauty and inevitability in the process. This has instilled within me an ability to pause and take pleasure in the simple things in life.

Ultimately, my work is an expression of my life's experience. Creating artworks to help others celebrate those loved and lost edges me closer to making my peace with the journey. My hope is that by incorporating these special pieces into your daily life, you too may uncover the gifts and wisdom they have to offer.

*To see more from Ashley*

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