

My mode  
By Jackey Coyle  
MELBOURNEmagazine April 2003

Linde Ivimey and Bruce Armstrong  
Sculptors  
Live: Richmond  
House: Converted warehouse  
With: Cats Stuart and Barry

LI "I was born in Sydney and worked at the art school in Perth and I waited until Bruce was ready for me before I moved over here. Bruce has been here 15 years."

BA "I rented the other side to make sculptures in, opened it up, put a few walls in here and there. I had a good sculpture commission that paid for the kitchen and bathroom."

LI "For a couple of years we lived here with no hot water, no oven, no stove, no gas. It used to be a car-wrecking yard and we ripped out a toilet and made a shower. By 5pm everyone in the street had gone... we'd wheel the barbeque out to the street and sit down in front of Bruce's. After dinner it was just too cold, we'd go to bed."

BA "There's romance to all that. The beautiful thing here is that you can do business because you're on the way from one place to another and whatever you want is close at hand. And I can walk into the city in a nice suit, have dinner and it's just a few bucks for a taxi home. This building's got one window here in the kitchen, but basically it's a completely enclosed space with skylights. So I'm not tempted to look out a window. I think it has an effect on the way you work and I'm moving more towards pictures at the moment in the work because I find it's like looking at windows."

LI "There's a frame there. He's been painting quite a bit lately."

BA "Yeah, you create this imaginary space that you look through; in fact that's what a Russian icon's originally supposed to be – it's not holy in itself; it was meant to be a window into heaven."

LI "There's no window in my studio, not even a door into the lane and it means you just get in there and work – you're not looking out to bigger pastures. I notice a huge difference when I work at the farm. There are wallaby, sheep and beef bones but they're bigger than the bones around here, which are generally from food we entertain people with. So the scale changes and the materials are different."

BA "I like having people round. With no windows there's no distractions during social activities, like when you get a bunch of people round a big window. There's no view, so you look at one another."

LI "A lot of our entertaining has to do with choosing foods according to what's needed for my studio."

BA "This is a place without any external space, no yard or courtyard. But we can leave here and have that at the farm. In the country no-one comes to see you because you're an hour away so you have peace and quiet, birds and trees and snakes and spiders. It's productive here. The main problem is living and working in the one place – where does the workday finish and where does the evening begin? It gets mixed up. To end the day it's usually a wine ceremony – for me it's having a shower; you get dirty. You put on some nice clothes and that uniform – the workboots and overalls – is gone."

LI "I'm just as likely to get up and go out there at nine o'clock at night and come out and find that the TV is on, *dz-dz-dzzzz* at three in the morning. We live together, we work together, but throughout the day we call each other and say, do you want to meet for coffee this afternoon?. We've got these phones..."

BA "This is what we call the Inter-Household Personal Communicator. It's a nice way to talk. Saves you walking all that distance."

LI "For me, this is like a hunting ground. I don't roam terribly far from it – between the laundry, the kitchen and the studio is pretty much my ideal working environment. I love it all mixed up together. Bruce thinks it might be good for his work if we have an apartment."

BA "Usually when the sculptures aren't going that well."

LI "I can't imagine being away from here – this is our home. This is also registered as a commercial kitchen for the edible cake sculptures I make. The coving on the floor and the hands-free sinks were necessary to get approval to make cakes but I don't want it as strictly a cake place."

BA "It's a 10-minute walk to the Yarra. It's a beautiful walk the whole way to the city; there's trees, there's water..."

LI "And cafés."

BA "Cafés galore... there's Pearl up the road, there's Duttons – I'm a fixture there – Chomps on Church have the best ham, cheese and tomato sandwiches. It's only 10 minutes to Victoria Market."

LI "We get the trolley out, stick it in the back of the ute... Who's coming over, what are we going to eat, do we need bones for this, have we got stock..."

BA "We're lucky, in this street is the best fillet steak in town at Dino's, a wholesaler halfway up the street."

LI "Just round the corner there's a poultry wholesaler. I bring home 15 kg boxes of chicken necks and boil them down. I'll show you the woven vertebrae I make."

BA "A 15-kg box of bones boils down to the most nuclear-enriched stock on the planet."

LI "We feed our friends."

BA "And then she gets all the bones and makes works of art from them."

LI "This is a nice hunting ground. I'm going nowhere."

Linde Ivimey's sculpture exhibition opened on May 19 at Heide Gallery, Templestowe

Bruce Armstrong's two solo painting shows open in November at Australian Art Resources, City Rd South Melbourne and High Street Armadale

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