

phil gordon—

celebrating national tree day



Slip Cast Whisky Bottles.

I collected antique bottles as a teenager dug from an old saw pit used as a dump on our land in Toowoomba. A massive gum tree grew from the pit/dump. The dump was used by the local Qld Govenors residence in the late 1800s and contained many rare and beautiful bottles.

The most desired were the ceramic whisky bottles with their naive child like Scottish and Irish imagery and writing. Such brands as *Happy Days* stayed in my memory along side *Doctor Williams Pink Pills for Pale People*.

The bottles I created for this show apply the same style depicting six different native Tasmanian trees. The imagery is inlaid with coloured clay and then under glazed and finished with a satin clear glaze.

The boxes are made from the timber of the tree presented on the bottle.

After the show the 700ml bottles will be filled with a complimentary Port Wood matured single malt whisky that has just won a gold medal in its class as the RQA Spirit Awards in Brisbane. The whisky was matured in the Highlands of Tasmania and the bond stores of *White Label Distillery* at Huntingfield, of which I am a partner, and now presented by my own brand *Trees + Rain Single Malt Whisky*. This brand comes under my company umbrella of *1838 Spirits Pty Ltd* (1838 being the year that Lady Franklin asked her husband to ban stills in Tasmania ... another story)

The name *Trees + Rain* was derived from a large bronze sculpture that I made several years ago that now sits in the atrium of the Islington Hotel in Davey Street. The sculpture is about the relationship between trees and rain and how transpiration from the leaves of trees creates moisture in the atmosphere and rain, a scientific fact that was lost on farmers that cut the trees out to create pasture and land for agriculture. The sculpture is depicted on the label of *Trees + Rain Single Malt Whisky*, completing the narrative of the relationship between water and wood for Whisky.