

CERAMICS NOW

M A G A Z I N E



October 2025

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office@ceramicsnow.org

*Front and back covers: Jo Taylor,
(Not) Guilty Pleasures, 2025. British
Ceramics Biennial Award 2025 Winner.
Photograph: Jenny Harper*

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Isys Hennigar

Isys Hennigar is an artist working in ceramics and metal. Her work invokes real and reimagined ecological encounters that underscore transformation, hybridity, and play as tools of renewal. Braiding forms and imagery from agriculture, mythology, and medicine, her work considers systems of sustenance and healing and the cultural and ecological legacies of land cultivation. Grounded in the landscape of the southeastern United States—a site of fantasy, precarity, and symbolic abundance—the work presents chimeric objects in which allegories of sustenance, danger, and purification merge.

Hennigar's sculptural vessels are hand-built and adorned with relief carvings and cast details of vernacular objects such as deer hooves, peach pits, puzzle pieces, electric fencing insulators, tools, and toys. Animals are often rendered in ambiguous states of metamorphosis, hunt, or performance. The work's layered surfaces are built through multiple firings and often incorporate metal components. In two-dimensional works, the carved porcelain imagery is

mounted on metal. Employing jeweler's techniques on a large scale, these works resemble engraved charms. Referencing objects of protection and historical depictions of infernal and sublime landscapes, they imagine possibilities of connection between wild and domestic realms, between chaos and play, and hybridity as an emblem of resiliency.

Isys received her MFA from the University of Georgia and BFA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is the 2024 recipient of the South Arts North Carolina State Fellowship, and recent exhibitions of her work include the American Museum of Ceramic Art (Pomona, CA), Sow & Tailor Gallery (Los Angeles, CA), Signature Contemporary (Atlanta, GA), Ferrara Showman Gallery (New Orleans, LA), and the North Carolina Museum of Art. She is currently in residence at Anchorlight in Raleigh, NC as the 2025 Brightwork Fellow.

Visit **Isys Hennigar's** website and Instagram page.

<https://www.isyshennigar.com/>
@isyshennigar



Fragile Guardian, 2023, glazed porcelain, brass, 36 x 12 x 1 inches



Sang d'encre, 2023, glazed porcelain, overglaze, gold luster, 14 x 8 x 7 inches

Selected works, 2020-2024



Like Milk from a Stone, 2022, glazed stoneware, overglaze, ceramic decals, copper, 11 x 6 x 8 inches



Cutting Teeth, 2024, glazed porcelain, overglaze, brass, 52 x 18 x 1 inches



The hunger that gives legs to wolves, 2023, glazed porcelain, brass, 36 x 10 x 1 inches

Luke Huling

Luke Huling is a ceramic figure sculptor from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He currently resides in North Carolina and is an Associate Professor and Coordinator at Sandhills Community College. He received his BFA from Edinboro University and his MFA from Indiana University. He is a past resident at The LUX Center for the Arts and Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts. He is a scholarship recipient from the National Society of Arts and Letters and the inaugural recipient of the Chris Boger Memorial Award. He actively presents his work in group and solo shows across the country at venues such as NCECA Conferences, The Clay Studio in Philadelphia, and the American Museum of Ceramic Art.

“Like all crustaceans, lobsters grow inside their shell and eventually become too confined and must molt; a process where lobsters swim to the ocean floor and cast off their old shell to then grow one that is new. With this work, I am inspired by this regenerative process and pair it with the human form to ponder the question if mental strife can be intrinsic to mental growth. If so, what do these new “shells” resemble in human form and how can we learn from the ones we have casted away?”

Visit **Luke Huling's** website and Instagram page.

<https://www.lukehuling.com/>
[@lukehuling](#)



Molted Mindset I, 2023, stoneware, underglaze, glaze, 15 x12 x10 inches



Molted Mindset IV, 2024, stoneware, underglaze, glaze, 18 x15 x16 inches

Adam Chau

Adam Chau is an artist that works between Connecticut and New York, USA. A graduate of the School of the Art Institute's Designed Objects program, his research into digital manufacturing in ceramics has been published widely. Solo exhibitions have included The Clay Studio, Northern Clay Center, and Harvard Ceramics. In 2018, Adam was awarded the NCECA Emerging Artist Fellowship and in 2019 he became a member of the International Academy of Ceramics. Adam is currently the Director of Exhibitions for one of New York State's largest Arts Councils and is also the Director of Exhibitions for NCECA.

"With a background in both craft and design, I research the evolution of craft technology from analog handwork to digital manufacturing in ceramics. I am interested in digital culture and how new rituals are being developed through selfies, emojis, and text messages.

As an Asian American artist, my concepts revolve around the rich history of blue-and-white porcelain aesthetics, deeply rooted in Asian culture. Fueled

by a desire to bridge the past with the future, I try to breathe new life into this medium to ensure that tradition evolves rather than fades. Also drawing inspiration from the evolving culture online such as social media and dating apps, I explore the nuances of contemporary self-portraiture as well as queer culture. In the pursuit of cultural commentary, my work serves as an example of when heritage meets the digital frontier.

My newest body of work includes the use of Artificial Intelligence where large image datasets are referenced to collage new imagery – the content of this work has looked at imagined histories of queer couples. Put on found porcelain blanks, I reference the 1960's work of Howard Kottler who utilized commercially available decals to talk about queer culture in a time where it was taboo."

Visit **Adam Chau's** website and Instagram page.

<https://www.adamchau.com/>
[@adamcharleschau](https://www.instagram.com/adamcharleschau)



Secret Message, 2023. Porcelain, cobalt, white gold, 12 in x 4 in x 0.25 in



Anaïs Lelièvre

Anaïs Lelièvre is an artist who works at the intersection of ceramics, installation, and drawing, unfolding between meticulous detail and monumental expansion. With a spatial approach to drawing and a strong interest in geology, her creative work has developed through residencies since the end of 2015, both in France and internationally (Iceland, Brazil, Switzerland, Greece, Canada, Portugal).

Lelièvre holds a DNSEP (Diplôme National Supérieur d'Études Professionnelles) in Fine Arts from the École Supérieure d'Art et de Design de Rouen and a doctorate from Université Paris 1. She collaborates with the Capazza Gallery in Nançay, and her studio is based in Aubervilliers.

In 2023, a solo exhibition dedicated entirely to her ceramic works was held at L'Espace Jacques Villeglé in Saint-Gratien, followed by the co-organization of a study day at Paris 1 University titled "Ceramic Approaches:

Artists and Accidents" (proceedings published in the Plastik journal). In 2024, she completed two year-long residencies—at the Lyon Observatory and the Ceramics Museum in Lezoux—where she collaborated with geologists, astrophysicists, paleontologists, and archaeologists. The ENSAD School in Limoges also hosted her for the production of a ceramic piece nearly two meters tall.

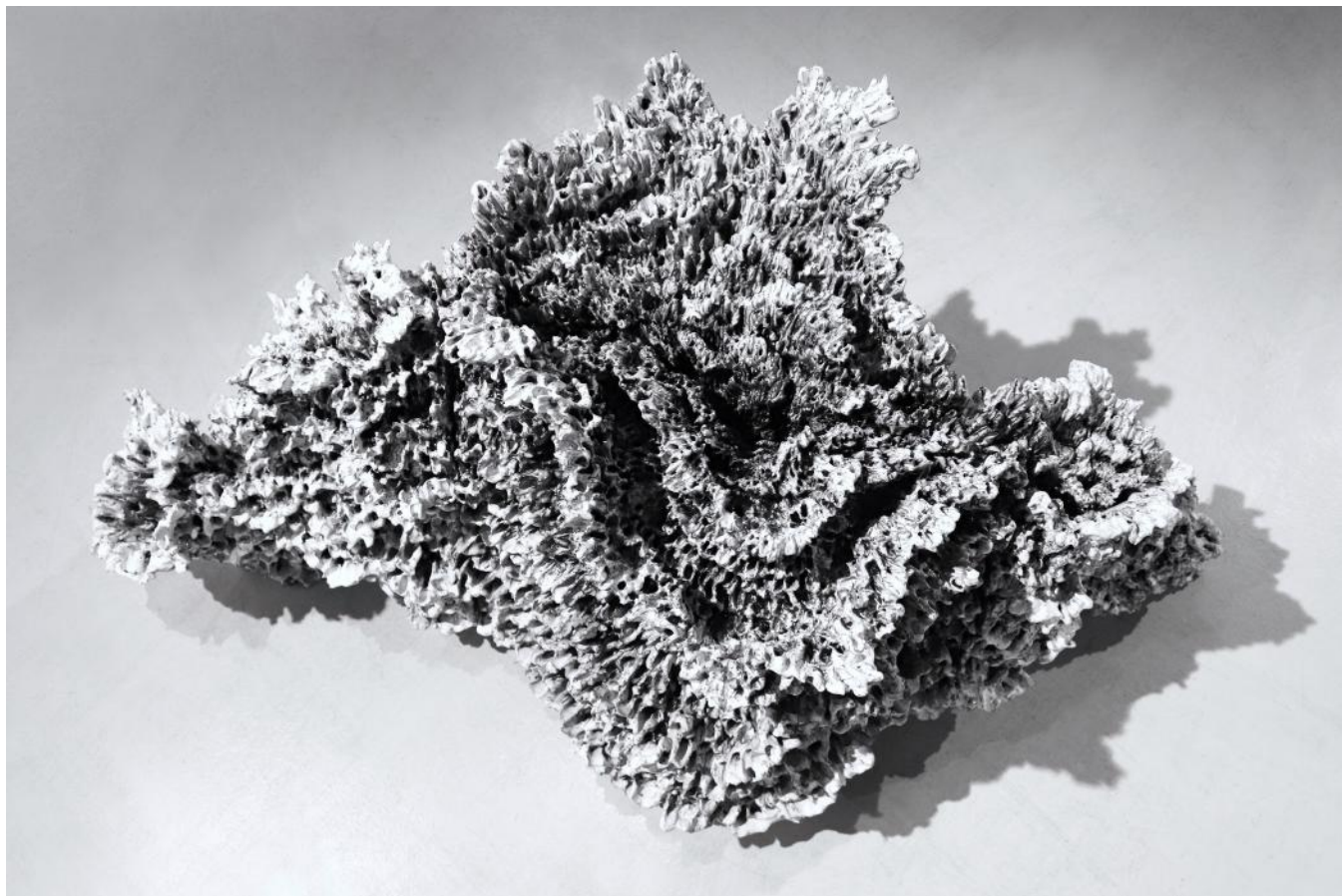
In 2025, Anaïs Lelièvre presented a solo exhibition at CCCLB La Borne, an installation in the reflecting pool of the Château de Renty, and a solo show at Art Paris with Galerie Capazza. She will also show her work in group exhibitions at the Centre Wallonie-Bruxelles in Paris and the Musée Adrien Dubouché in Limoges.

Visit **Anaïs Lelièvre's** website and Instagram page.

<http://www.anaislelievre.com/>
[@anais_lelievre](https://www.instagram.com/anais_lelievre)



Fondements, 2022–2023, porcelain, ink, each piece 5–65 x 9.5 x 7.5 cm. Residency La Junqueira, Lisbon, Portugal.



Gloc 20, 2023, stoneware, glaze, 59 x 120 x 60 cm.



Oikos-Littera-Fluit, 2023–2024, stoneware, glaze, 49,5 x 53 x 34 cm. Residency Musée de la Céramique, Lezoux.



Wayne Ngan: Contemplative Materialism and the Artifice of Presence

By Doug Navarra

Wayne Ngan's ceramics resist easy categorization. Rooted in East Asian ceramic traditions and grounded in technical mastery of wheel-thrown form, his vessels elude familiar typologies: neither strictly functional, nor explicitly conceptual, nor overtly expressive. Instead, Ngan reorients the pot as a site of contemplative materialism, where clay becomes a medium not for symbolism, but for stillness and presence. His work embodies a profound attentiveness to material and process that blurs boundaries between maker, object, and viewer, inviting a mode of being that is both grounded and transcendent.

This sensibility is central to Wayne Ngan: Spirit and Form, an exhibition at James Cohan's Viewing Room, 48 Walker Street, New York, on view from September 5 through October 4, 2025. The show assembles recent works that distill decades of devoted practice into forms as meditative as they are material.

To call Ngan's pots an "artifice of presence" is not metaphor nor critique but one that stems from observation. My heart was thumping that morning when I was going into the gallery to preview the exhibition. Even before seeing the pots in-person, I knew beforehand that these works would hold a rare and quiet significance, an opus now complete, as Ngan's hands were stilled in 2020. Indeed, it was as if I were stepping into a quiet sanctuary — a gallery space, poignantly lit, yet filled with a whispering presence where each vessel breathed softly in a still air. These rare and unique forms existing not merely as objects but as moments of being suspended in time.

Entering the space, I had the uncanny sensation of walking into an orchestral performance.



Installation view, Wayne Ngan: Spirit and Form at James Cohan, New York

Stepping into the Viewing Room at James Cohan, I was struck by how different Ngan's work feels in-person compared to photographs. I spent nearly two hours in the gallery on opening morning and found myself unable to leave. What surprised me most were the surfaces, details that cannot be fully captured in reproduction. Many forms carried a skin of slip, brushed back in places to create a depth of tone, almost like breath in clay. Others revealed their construction, joints smoothed into seamless transitions, leaving a trace of process without distraction. The "wild clay", dug from the ground and tempered with sand and specks of iron, offered its own intimacy, a reminder of earth's quiet participation in the work.

The gallery, though modest in scale, gave each pot room to breathe. Two table-like platforms held groups of vessels, while wedge-shaped wall pedestals isolated others as singular presences. Entering the space, I had the uncanny sensation of walking into an orchestral performance. Each pot seemed to sound its own note, sometimes bright, sometimes muted, and as I moved among them, the pieces answered each other in turn, a kind of call and response unfolding across the room.

What made this orchestration so compelling was the way the works interrelated. *Clam Form Vessel* (2017), with its compressed organic suggestion, seemed to ground the more vertical lift of works like *Rust Coloured Vase* (2017). Nearby, the *Yellow Vase with Lugs* (2016) offered a softer, horizontal counterpoint, its matte surface diffusing light in contrast to the more angular precision of *Dark Metallic Glaze with Yellow Top Seed Pod Sculptural Vase* (c. 2010s). Together they created a rhythm of variation, vertical and horizontal, compressed and open, each amplifying the other's presence. Shared surface qualities, matte glazes, brushed slips, flecks of iron, bound them together like variations within a single breath, even as each carried its own voice. Seen together, the

exhibition became not a collection of objects but an orchestration of presences, a choreography of stillness and resonance.

Ngan's vessels emerge from a process where breath, body, and material are in quiet dialogue. There is no spectacle or bravado, only distilled attentiveness that manifests materially. The finished forms do not convey narratives to decode, like one may find in the conceptual ceramic works of Mai Thu-Perret, but rather a state of being to be felt. By contrast, clay for Ngan is a medium of attunement in that he lets the pot take its own breath. The results are not works that impose performatively, but rather as spaces conveyed by receptivity, where our perception slows and presence is felt.



Wayne Ngan, *Clam Form Vessel*, c. 2010s





Wayne Ngan, *Abstract Figure with Brown Glaze*, c. 2010



Wayne Ngan, *Dark Metallic Glaze with Yellow Top Seed Pod Sculptural Vase*, c. 2010s

These are pots that hold space rather than demand it. Their presence is tonal rather than theatrical. These works resonate rather than declare. They do not clamor for attention but deepen it. In this, Ngan's practice resonates less with modernist ideals of autonomy or conceptual critique, and more deeply with a Zen-inflected ethos that embraces the highest form of making through non-intervention, a Far Eastern principle known as *wu wei* (non-doing).¹ For the sake of passion, we might call it a "spiritual ecology," one that honors material, time, and gesture as coequal collaborators in the creative process.

Historically and spiritually, Ngan's work also connects with the aesthetics of the Sung Dynasty, celebrated for simplicity, restraint, and poetic form.² His affinity with the quiet grandeur of Sung ceramics as in historic celadon bowls, temmoku glazes, and subtle asymmetry, is palpable in both surface and silhouette. These resonances are not mimicry but kinship, reflecting a belief that beauty emerges from understatement and depth of spirit.

His philosophy also shares affinities with the Mingei movement, particularly the values championed by Soetsu Yanagi, Kanjiro Kawai, and Shoji Hamada: the dignity of handmade craft, the spiritual dimension of labor, and the unity of utility and beauty.³ This may be more apparent in his earlier works of the 1960's and 70's. Yet while not formally aligned with Mingei, Ngan's work embodies its quiet humility and reverence.^{4 5} His pots offer a world where making is simultaneously every day and transcendent, where the maker's hand is felt not as assertion but as the sensitivity of a tender touch.

Bernard Leach's legacy is present as well, especially in Ngan's early training and his interest in bridging Eastern and Western traditions.⁶ Yet where Leach often emphasized synthesis through cultural narrative, Ngan's is an elemental synthesis: the pot as breath, its surface as sky. During his formative years in Vancouver, British Columbia, Ngan moved within a milieu that included Leach-trained potters whose presence helped shape the broader ceramic climate of the region, including such potters as John Reeve, Ian Steele, Glenn Lewis, and Mick Henry.⁷



Exuberance, Resilience, and Clay: At the 2025 British Ceramics Biennial

By Vasi Hîrdo

Visiting Stoke-on-Trent for the first time felt like stepping into a city — really a group of six towns — that has been tied to ceramics for centuries. The train from London takes about an hour and a half or longer if delays get in the way, as they did on my trip. Still, once I got there, I was impressed. The ninth edition of the British Ceramics Biennial filled the former Spode Works factory, turning its industrial halls into spaces for art, conversation, and most importantly, ceramics. The timing was also special: Stoke is celebrating its centenary this year, marking a hundred years since it was granted city status.

I arrived with certain expectations and fixed notions. I thought the Biennial would primarily showcase the best of contemporary ceramics in the obvious setting of the Potteries. What I found was something broader. The Biennial has a clear mission: to make change through clay. It creates projects that bring the community together, involve visitors, and demonstrate

how ceramics can still play a role in shaping the city's life. Many factories in the area have closed in recent decades, yet clay remains an integral part of Stoke's identity and future. The Biennial works closely with this history, always shaping programmes that connect with the legacy of the place, its social issues, and its possibilities. And while community work is central, the exhibitions manage to present fantastic ceramic art. Artists are encouraged to push their practices, to go further, create complex work, and to share that journey with others through the films and artist talks organized during the Biennial.

The centrepiece of the Biennial is the Award 2025, which brought together ten artists: Kyra Cane, Fernando Casasempere, Noor Ali Chagani & Clio Lloyd-Jacob, Susan Hall, Leah Jensen, Charlotte Moore, Jane Perryman, Alison Rees, Daniel Silver, and Jo Taylor — selected by a jury from hundreds of submissions. Jo Taylor was announced as the winner of the Biennial's £10,000 Award Prize for her exuberant ceramic sculptures. Their baroque twists and flourishes seemed to pose a playful challenge: why shouldn't clay celebrate exuberance? Her work can bring a smile to everyone's face, a clear invitation to be happy and enjoy the moment.



Fernando Casasempere, *Sedimentary Selves*, 2025



Jo Taylor, *(Not) Guilty Pleasures*, 2025. Award 2025 winner



Leah Jensen, *It Was Lost in the Move*, 2025



Noor Ali Chagani and Clio Lloyd-Jacob, *Existing to be Removed*, 2025



“Crashing Ceramics” at Taoxichuan Longquan Wangou Museum

By Marc Leuthold

“Crashing Ceramics,” a multi-media, installation-based group exhibition curated by Mr. Feng Boyi, Ms. Li Yifei, and Mr. Gao Wenjian, featured 30 avant-garde artists at the Taoxichuan Longquan Wangou Museum in China. Longquan is the site of extraordinary celadons dating back to the Song Dynasty, a thousand years ago.

Exhibiting artists are based in China unless otherwise noted: Chen Xiaodan, Clarissa Falco of Italy, Elysia Athanatos of Cyprus, Feng Feng, Gan Haoyu, Geng Xue, Hong Hao, Juju Wang, Li Binyuan, Jaffa Lam, Liu Jianhua, Liu Xi, Lu Bin, Marc Leuthold of USA and CH, Ryan Mitchell of USA, Patty Wouters of Belgium, Richard Garrett Masterson of USA, Song Zhifeng, Sun Yue, Susan Kooi of Holland, Tobias Kvendseth of Norway, Wongil Jeon of Korea, Xiao Li, Xie Wendi, Yang Xinguang, Walter Yu, Kerry Yang, Stella Zhang of USA, Zhou Hehe, Zhou Jie.

The lead curator of “Crashing Ceramics,” Mr. Feng Boyi, is a conceptual curator who is interested in material-based artists. In the West, such artists are often referred to as “craft” artists—a term usually dismissed in the broader art world. Mr. Feng does not embrace media-based prejudice, and as a close friend and collaborator of artist Ai Weiwei, recognizes that art knows no boundaries. Mr. Feng’s early career included groundbreaking essays about Chinese contemporary art interwoven with Ai Weiwei’s political philosophy. In Shanghai in 2000, he curated the exhibition titled “Fuck Off,” which was known in China as “Uncooperative Attitude”. The exhibition was closed almost immediately by the government. Currently, Mr. Feng directs the He-Xiangning Museum in Shenzhen, and next year will oversee some of the projects that the International Academy of Ceramics will host at its meeting in Jingdezhen.

In Feng Boyi’s “Crashing Ceramics” curatorial statement, he invokes the term Pengci, invented by late Qing Dynasty (ca. 1900) Beijing residents who would clutch a delicate porcelain vessel

while jaywalking in such a careless fashion that drivers would accidentally collide with and destroy the porcelain, thus requiring a financial settlement. Mr. Feng believes that Pengci is a useful metaphor for the “Crashing Ceramics” artists who are routinely “breaking through the restrictions and limitations imposed by traditional ceramics.” Mr. Feng, using the concept of Pengci, ably tables the endless “art vs. craft” debate.

This complex exhibition project resulted in mostly solo installations by thirty artists. As such, the exhibit occupied the entire two-story Museum. Such an enormous undertaking would not have been possible without the assistance of Mr. Feng’s curators, Li Yifei, Gao Wenjian, and other staff.

As a finishing touch, Mr. Feng invited one of his frequent curatorial collaborators, Bjorn Follevaag of Norway, as a keynote guest during elaborate opening ceremonies.



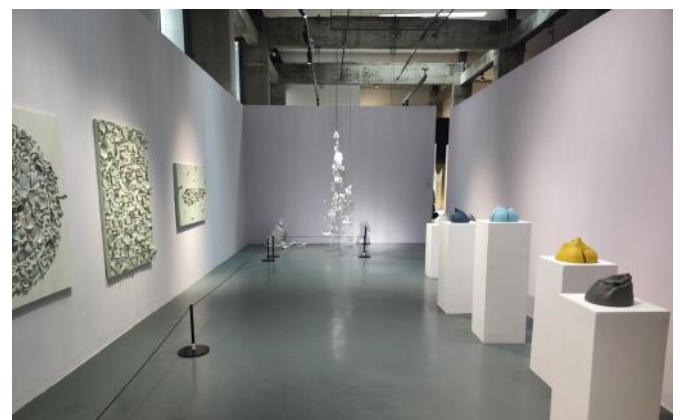
Crashing Ceramics opening day portrait ceremony



Museum signage for the Crashing Ceramics exhibition



Bjorn Follevaag and Marc Leuthold at opening



Crashing Ceramics installation with Liu Jianhua's work (right)

Languages: Rosaire Appel and Robert Ellison – A Life in Art & Collecting at Sculpture Space NYC, New York

September 12 – October 25, 2025







With her open structure in fragile equilibrium (*Familie*, 2025), her take on ready-mades with industrial jugs stacked topsy-turvy in infinite columns forming the seat of a small individual (*Untitled*, 2025), or her slender silhouettes (*Terra United*, 2025), Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen goes by her intuition. She is concerned with moments, drives, trances —instances of movement, when things float, and thoughts and feelings stop.*** Her love for clay, on which the slightest touch impresses itself forever on the memory of the matter, is paralleled by her love for the accuracy of words. That love can be seen through the titles of her sculptures and her original way of using language. *New knits for war(mer seasons)* (2025) is a wall relief with glaze mimicking knit stitches. Wool comes up often in her work, as a reminder of her life at the farm. She used wool to weave a copy of her to-do list (*Dosmerseddel*, 2022), cramming a school meeting, a dentist appointment, the laundry, the cleaning of the henhouse, and parcels to pick up in one day. In her research, wool can also embroider incomplete sketches on canvas before clay comes to make it whole.

Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen seeks alterity, imperfection, and a kind of chaos. By reunifying improbable elements, her works invite us both to discover what we have in common and to live the unpredictable and the trouble as a potential. With great humility, her works are an ode to boundless creativity and to the search for new ways to live together. Giving life, being, disappearing —all on the same level. The archaic rubs shoulders with the bare and the overflowing, the ugly can be beautiful, and the beautiful is constantly redefined.

*Donna Haraway: Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene.

** Glenn Adams in the monograph mobil statue / sarkofag fartøj, 2023.

*** Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen in the monograph mobil statue / sarkofag fartøj, 2023.

About Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen

At just 38, Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen (born in 1987, Denmark) can already boast of a brilliant career. The artist lives and works in Denmark. She graduated from the Royal Danish Academy (design section, 2012) in Bornholm. The artist benefitted from the Danish Arts Foundation programme, The Young Artistic Elite (2021-2022) and received several grants: Martha og Paul René Gauguins Fond, Ole Haslunds Kunstnerlegat, Danish Arts Foundation, and Silkeborg Kunstnerlegat.

Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen has also undertaken large-scale commissions. Her work is presented in several collections: at the MAD, Paris, at the Designmuseum Denmark, at the CLAY Museum of Ceramic Art Denmark, in the Erik Veistrup collection, and at the Danish Arts Foundation.

Since her beginnings, she has been exhibiting in galleries and art institutions in Denmark and abroad. Her work was presented in Everyday Life – Signs of Awareness, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Japan (2017), Mindcraft17, Milan (2017), at the HB381 in New York and in Los Angeles (2021), in Ceramic Momentum – Staging the Object, CLAY Museum of Ceramic Art Denmark (2019), and in Alkymistisk Træf, Vejen Kunstmuseum, Denmark (2023).

The first presentation of Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen's work at Galerie Maria Lund dates to the collective show Terres (2013), followed by the duo show Chaotiquement vôtre with Esben Klemann (2014), and the solo show rv à l'air libre (2020). Galerie Maria Lund also presented her work at various fairs: Art Paris (2023) and Ceramic Brussels (2024). In 2023, mobil statue / sarkofag fartøj, a bilingual Danish-English monograph on her work, was published.

Captions

- Installation views, Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen: Vous ne pouvez pas l'avoir comme papillon préféré s'il n'est plus là, Galerie Maria Lund, Paris, 2025. Photos © Céline Dominiak
- 1. Familie, 2025, glazed ceramics, 17.32 x 13.39 x 6.69 in (44 x 34 x 17 cm). Photo © Jacob Friis-Holm Nielsen
- 2. Silkedragt (medium) / Habit de soie (medium), 2025, glazed ceramics, 19.69 x 8.66 x 8.66 in (50 x 22 x 22 cm). Photo © Jacob Friis-Holm Nielsen
- 3. Vous ne pouvez pas l'avoir comme papillon préféré s'il n'est plus là, 2025, glazed ceramics, 16.54 x 13.78 x 9.45 in (42 x 35 x 24 cm). Photo © Jacob Friis-Holm Nielsen
- 4. Drød (petit), 2025, glazed ceramics, 15.75 x 9.45 x 9.45 in (40 x 24 x 24 cm). Photo © Jacob Friis-Holm Nielsen
- 5. sans titre, 2025, glazed ceramics and earthenware, 55.12 x 10.63 x 9.45 in (140 x 27 x 24 cm). Photo © Jacob Friis-Holm Nielsen
- 6. New knits for war (mer seasons) glat, 2025, glazed ceramics, 23.62 x 17.72 x 4.72 in (60 x 45 x 12 cm). Photo © Jacob Friis-Holm Nielsen
- 7. Dosmerseddel (hverdag jeg har en liste der hedder hverdag) / Pense-bête, 2022, silk, wool, metal, clothes, wire and peg, 110.24 x 39.37 x 9.84 in (280 x 100 x 25 cm). Photo © Jacob Friis-Holm Nielsen
- 8. Ordet for verden er skov (introvert) / Le mot pour monde est forêt (introverti), 2025, glazed ceramics, 33.07 x 23.23 x 1.57 in (84 x 59 x 4 cm). Photo © Jacob Friis-Holm Nielsen
- 9. 8, 2025, glazed ceramics, 9.84 x 7.87 x 5.91 in (25 x 20 x 15 cm). Photo © Jacob Friis-Holm Nielsen

At the King's Table – From dinner services to contemporary ceramics at Queen Sonja Art Stable, Oslo

On view through December 17, 2025









In his third solo exhibition at Berg Gallery, John Rainey explores error as a form of creative reimagining. In his latest works, made in cast parian porcelain, Rainey deconstructs and recomposes figures from the long and varied history of sculpture. The shapes we think we recognize—fragments of classical statues, mythological beings, and ornamental forms—are taken apart and reassembled in unexpected ways. These intentional “errors” challenge traditional ideas of beauty, craft, and coherence, inviting viewers to imagine the possibilities that emerge when things don’t conform to expectations.

Rainey draws inspiration both from the disruptive, rule-breaking approach of Dadaist collages and the shapeshifting spirit of ancient myths and folklore. His sculptures typically capture bodies in moments of transformation: humans caught in the process of shifting into animal form, shadows becoming embodied and three-dimensional, and fragments coming together to create entirely new forms. These alternative states of being point to more fluid identities, where categories blur, and rigid definitions give way to flexibility and change.

In Rainey’s work, the “error” is treated not as a flaw, but as an opportunity to reimagine and reshape reality. This approach aligns with certain strands of feminist theory, including glitch feminism, in which glitches and deviations are valued for their disruptive potential. Influenced by such ideas, Rainey alters and recombines familiar forms to show how errors can serve as acts of liberation, breaking with fixed ideas and offering new ways to think about identity and the body.

John Rainey (b. 1985) holds an MA in Ceramics and Glass from the Royal College of Art in London. Since graduating in 2012, Rainey has undertaken residencies at the Digital Stone Project Residency in Gramolazzo, the British School at Rome, and Konstfack University of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm. His works are represented in public collections such as the UK Government Art Collection, the Irish National Collection, the Ulster Museum, the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland Collection. Previous solo exhibition venues include Golden Thread Gallery, Belfast (2025), The Drawing Schools Gallery, Eton College, Windsor (2024), Naughton Gallery, Belfast (2022), Berg Gallery, Stockholm (2022, 2019) and Marsden Woo Gallery Project Space, London (2013).

CONTACT

info@berggallery.se

BERG GALLERY

*Hudiksvallsgatan 8
113 30 Stockholm
Sweden*

Captions

- Installation views, John Rainey: Errors, Berg Gallery, Stockholm, 2025
- 1. John Rainey, Belvedere Iris Disco, 2024, Parian porcelain, 41 x 22 x 15 cm
- 2. John Rainey, Composite Venus, 2025, Parian porcelain, 62 x 30 x 28 cm
- 3. John Rainey, Shard Face, 2025, Parian porcelain, 66 x 33 x 27 cm

Photos by Sanna Argus Tiren

The Month's News In The Ceramic Art World

01

Applications are now open for the XVII International Ceramic Biennial of Manises, Spain (May 8 – July 31, 2026). Organized by the Manises Town Hall, the biennial promotes creativity and innovation in both artistic ceramics and ceramic product design, while strengthening Manises' reputation as a historic center of ceramics. The competition features two categories: Artistic Ceramics and Ceramic Product Design. A total of €16,000 in prizes will be awarded, including the First Prize "Ciutat de Manises" (€8,000). The deadline for applications is November 20, 2025.

02

Applications are now open for the 6th International Ceramics Triennial UNICUM, Slovenia (May 15 – October 15, 2026). Held every three years, UNICUM is a leading platform for contemporary ceramic art, showcasing innovative and sustainable practices that reflect global artistic trends. The 2026 edition will emphasize eco-friendly approaches. An international jury, including Irene Biolchini, Alenka Gregorič, and Danijela Pivašević will select the works. Applications are due by December 1, 2025.

03

Applications are now open for the Biennale of Contemporary Ceramics (BCK), Greece (June 7 – October 2026). Taking place on the island of Rhodes under the title Where the Day Starts, the second edition highlights the Mediterranean as a space of shared histories, migrations, and artistic innovation. Open to artists born in, based in, or with meaningful ties to a Mediterranean country, the Biennale emphasizes contemporary ceramics as an evolving art form. Prizes include €5,000 for the winning work and €1,000 for special mentions. The deadline for applications is January 10, 2026.

04

Applications are now open for the Jingdezhen International Ceramic Art Biennale 2026, China (June 26, 2026 – March 31, 2027). Open to ceramic artists, designers, students, faculty, and interdisciplinary creators worldwide, the Biennale invites works that engage with both tradition and contemporary life. Submissions are accepted in the categories of vessels, sculptures, paintings, installations, and video. Prizes include the Jinglan Prize (~\$42,000) and five Kaolin Prizes (~\$14,000 each). Deadline for applications: December 25, 2025.

05

Applications are also open for two major ceramic fairs in 2026. The Ceramic Market Andenne – Li Dièle, Belgium (May 24–25, 2026), will take place across three locations in Andenne, with Hélène Loussier (France) as Guest of Honor. Deadline: December 7, 2025. The Höhr-Grenzhausen Ceramics Market, Germany (June 6–7, 2026), will bring together around 130 exhibitors from across Europe for its 46th edition, showcasing the rich diversity of ceramics. Deadline: January 18, 2026.

06

October 2025 is a busy month for ceramics, with major events worldwide. The Australian Ceramics Triennale takes place in Walyalup (Fremantle), Australia (Oct 2–5), while C14 Paris runs in Paris, France (Oct 2–5). Portugal hosts two key events: the XVII International Biennale of Artistic Ceramics of Aveiro in Aveiro (Oct 18, 2025 – Jan 18, 2026) and Oeiras Ceramic Art in Oeiras, Lisbon (Oct 16–19). Other highlights include the Sydney Ceramics Market in Sydney, Australia (Oct 18–19), the Ceramic Art Fair in Paris, France (Oct 21–25), and the Jingdezhen Prize in Jingdezhen, China.

07

Ceramic brussels recently announced the Guest of Honour of the 2026 edition, Elmar Trenkwalder, and the ten laureates of the 2026 Ceramic Brussels Art Prize: Lorie Ballage (FR), Uriel Caspi (IL), Danny Cremers (NL), Kira Fröse (DE), Ninon Hivert (FR), Santiago Insignares-Martínez (US), Faye Papargyropoulou (GR), Marie Pic (FR), Angelika Stefaniak (PL), Walter Yu (CN). The artists will be exhibited during Ceramic Brussels (January 21-25, 2026).

08

The Public Statues and Sculpture Association (UK) will host a half-day webinar titled **Approaches to Unfired Clay on October 24**. Clare Twomey, Phoebe Cummings, Cristiano Di Martino, and Davinia-Ann Robinson will discuss their use of unfired clay and its potential in their respective practices. By considering the fragility, vulnerability and impermanence of the medium, they will explore themes of transience and natural process, and the way the clay's malleability and fluidity engender an immediacy of connection. Participation fee: £5.

09

Join Clay in Conversation 12: Collaboration on October 16, 2025, at County Hall Pottery, for an exploration of how artists working with clay collaborate with others, with communities, and with concepts. Taking place alongside the exhibition Collaborative for London Design Festival (13 September–9 November 2025), this event features presentations by Francesca Anfossi and Ciara Neufeldt. The discussion will be chaired by Ashley Thorpe, followed by an audience Q&A. Curated by Julia Ellen Lancaster.

10

For more than forty years, La Meridiana International School of Ceramics (Italy) has been the meeting place of artists and students from all around the world, offering hands-on workshops in a wide variety of ceramic techniques, including throwing, sculpture, glazing, nerikomi, jewellery, atmospheric firing, and more. Alongside short masterclasses, the school also offers in-depth professional programs such as the three-month On Centre, which gives participants the opportunity to experiment, develop their skills, and refine their personal vision. Discover La Meridiana's complete list of courses on their website.

11

The North West Ceramics Foundation is pleased to announce its next **Speakers Series**, scheduled for Sunday, October 19, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. PST, featuring Denis Longchamps. His talk, *Why Crafts And Where Are We Going?*, will discuss what brought him to be a curator and scholar of the decorative arts and crafts. He will talk about his work editing and publishing the seminal journal *Cahiers métier d'art/Craft Journal*, and some of the major curatorial projects he has worked on. He will share his views on the field today and discuss what it means in a time of reconciliation, decolonization, and global unrest.

12

Book recommendation: *Beyond Blue and White - The Hidden History of Delftware and the Women Behind the Iconic Ceramic*, by Genevieve Wheeler Brown. The book uncovers the untold stories of women connected to 17th–19th century Delftware. Through makers, patrons, and collectors, Genevieve Wheeler Brown reveals how this beloved ceramic tradition reflects female experience across centuries, richly illustrated with historic objects and documents.

What's on View



Rando Aso: Innerspace at Nonaka-Hill, Los Angeles

September 13 – October 25, 2025



Gordon Baldwin: Little hard clouds becoming vessels at Officine Saffi, Milan

October 3 – December 23, 2025



Inhwa Lee: At the Edge of Light at Galerie Maria Wettergren, Paris

September 12 – October 31, 2025



What Holds: Ceramic Boxes and the Language of Containment at Vessels + Sticks, Toronto

September 22 – October 22, 2025



Jo Taylor – BCB Award Winner Artist Showcase at Vessel Gallery, London

September 19 – October 17, 2025



Nora Arrieta / Keigona Stumpf at Galleria Antonella Villanova, Florence

September 20 – November 22, 2025



Sèvres Extraordinaire! Sculpture from 1740 until Today at Bard Graduate Center Gallery, New York

September 10 – November 16, 2025



Mel Arsenault: Floranymphisme at Florian Daguet-Bresson, Paris

September 26 – October 25, 2025



22nd Annual Ceramics Invitational at Abel Contemporary, Stoughton, WI

September 19 – November 2, 2025



Anders Børjesen: The Life of Forms at Galerie de l'Ancienne Poste, Toucy

September 6 – November 6, 2025



Donald Locke: Resistant Forms at Ikon Gallery, Birmingham

October 1, 2025 – February 22, 2026



Amalia Bille: Ankarpunkt at Berg Gallery, Stockholm

October 2-31, 2025

