

# CERAMICS NOW

M A G A Z I N E



February 2026



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*Front and back cover: Masayoshi Oya, Tales of the Hand at Vandalorum Museum of Art and Design, Värnamo. Photos by Patrik Lindell (front cover) and Daniel Grizelj (back cover).*

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# Kathy Erteman

Kathy Erteman is a New York–based ceramic artist who works between studios in New York City and the Hudson Valley. With a studio practice spanning more than four decades, she creates vessels, wall-mounted works, and installations. Her work combines technical precision with a modernist sensibility, using a reductive formal language activated by abstract surface imagery and textured, energetic finishes.

Erteman is a full-time studio artist represented by Hostler Burrows Gallery. Her work has been exhibited widely in the United States and internationally, and is held in public and private collections including the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Taipei Museum of Fine Arts, and the Icheon World Ceramic Museum. She has also undertaken design commissions for companies including Tiffany and Crate & Barrel.

She has taught ceramics at Greenwich House Pottery in New York City since 1996 and has been involved in long-term cultural exchange and design consultancy projects in Yunnan, China, working with Nixi Tibetan potters through programs supported by Aid to Artisans, the U.S. Department of State, and the Fulbright Professional Fellows Exchange Program.

Erteman received her BFA in ceramics from California State University, Long Beach, and undertook additional undergraduate studies at UCLA. Early in her career, she worked with Judy Chicago on *The Dinner Party*, an experience that remains a formative point in her professional trajectory.

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Visit **Kathy Erteman's** website and Instagram page.

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



**Monoprint Vessel**, 2019. Glazed stoneware, hand-built. 14.5" H x 24" W x 10" D. Courtesy of the artist and Hostler Burrows



**Ochre Tall Bucket Vessel**, 11.5 x 11 x 10. Stoneware. Photo by Alan Wiener



**Mulberry + Black Long Vessel**, 2024. *Glazed stoneware. 5.75" H x 21.5" W x 4.5" D. Courtesy of the artist and Hostler Burrows. Photo by Joe Kramm.*



**Blue Figure Eight Tab Vessel**, 2024. *Glazed stoneware. 5" H x 16" W x 8.25" D. Courtesy of the artist and Hostler Burrows. Photo by Joe Kramm.*



**Black + White Tab Vessel**, 2024. Glazed stoneware. 6.25" H x 13" W x 9" D. Courtesy of the artist and Hostler Burrows. Photo by Joe Kramm.

*The clay vessel, and the dialogue between form and surface, are the ongoing conversation I have had with my work for four decades. The vessel forms are spare and formal, serving as a canvas for energetic color, complex texture, and emotional expression.*

*I use various unconventional ceramic techniques to complete my work, more like painting on a canvas than glazing. As each body of work flows into the next, it is always a response to what came just before.*

*The work from 2020–2024 suggests emotions present during the pandemic times: containment, isolation, and withdrawing inward—expressed with restrained ribbed vessels, with color and texture glaze stretched over and interrupting the even ribbed form, alluding to the human figure.*

*Texture made by my glazes is bold, rough, and often unpredictable, which I embrace. Concurrently, I formulate saturated, gouache-like color glazes and remain faithful to using fired ceramic surfaces. I aim for surfaces that hug the vessel form and describe its shape, while offering unpredictable and irregular textures, drips, and bubbles.*

# Paolo Porelli

Paolo Porelli (b. 1966) is an artist based in Rome, Italy, and a co-founder of CRETA Rome, an international centre for ceramics and fine arts. He graduated in painting from the Accademia di Belle Arti di Roma and later began an extended period of experimentation with ceramics, identifying the anthropomorphic figure as his primary expressive form.

Clay remains his principal medium, though he frequently incorporates ready-mades and casts of found objects into his sculptures. His figures range from life-size to small scale and appear either as individual works or in installations. In recent projects, Porelli has used 3D imaging and 3D printing to develop prototypes for series of figures, which are then individualised through additions, subtractions, and alterations.

His work often addresses contemporary social tensions, combining surreal elements, found materials, and references to archaic symbolism.

Porelli's sculptures have been shown in nearly 20 solo exhibitions and over 90 group exhibitions, including international biennials across the United States, Europe, and Asia. He has participated in residencies at institutions including The Bray, The Clay Studio of Philadelphia, the European Ceramic Work Centre, and Jingdezhen International Studio.

Porelli is currently preparing museum solo exhibitions in the United States, Germany, and Italy for 2026–27. In 2027, his itinerant solo exhibition *Figure Out: Catastrophe or Regeneration* will be presented at the Fuller Craft Museum for six months. He was elected a member of the International Academy of Ceramics in 2021.

Visit **Paolo Porelli's** website and Instagram page.

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



*Divinities & Idols*, 2018, slipped, glazed terracotta, overglaze, in-glaze luster, luster, decals, 25cm H max



# Nanxi Jin

Nanxi Jin is an interdisciplinary artist and educator who specializes in ceramics media. Originally from Jingdezhen, China, she is currently based in Chicago. Nanxi obtained a BFA in Art & Design from the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University in 2020 and her MFA in ceramics from the School of Art Institute of Chicago in 2022.

Nanxi explores the complexity of cultural identity and belonging from her lived experience as a Chinese-American artist through her artwork. Drawing from her upbringing in Jingdezhen, China's porcelain capital, and her twelve years in the U.S. Nanxi explores the tension of living between two cultures and the complexities of navigating a hyphenated identity. Grounded in traditional ceramic techniques, her art bridges Eastern and Western cultures, blending Eastern craftsmanship and aesthetics with the textures, colors, and Western design philosophy. This

synthesis of culture and identity creates a dialogue between tradition and innovation, the familiar and the foreign, addressing the paradox of cultural assimilation and the search for identity.

Nanxi's work has been exhibited internationally, including at NYCxDesign during NYC Design Week, SOIL in Seattle, Women's Made Gallery in Chicago, and Paris Design Week in France. She received awards including the Vermont Studio Center Fellowship, and the Anderson Ranch Arts Center Fellowship. Her work "Various Vase" has been collected in Guangdong Shiwan Ceramic Museum, China. Nanxi recently had a solo show, "Procedure" at Longquan Wanou TaoXichuan Cultural and Creative Block Yi Gallery, Longquan China.

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Visit **Nanxi Jin's** website and Instagram page.

<https://www.nanxijin.com/>  
@jincermics



**Intertwined**, 2024, Porcelain, 4 × 4 × 8 inches each. Photo by Daren Jin



**Soldier (detail) 2**, 2024. 7 × 4 × 23 inch. Photo by Daren Jin



# From Prehistoric Goddesses to Contemporary Mythical Beings: Martinsons Award 2025 Exhibition

By Aurelija Seilienė

The Latvia International Ceramics Biennale is gradually becoming one of the most significant ceramics events not only in the region, but also in Europe. This is evidenced by the growing interest among artists and their desire to be part of the biennale. Its extensive programme, curatorial work, distinguished selection committee and critical reception all contribute to the image of a promising and important event.

In 2025, the Latvia International Ceramics Biennale presented its fifth edition, consisting of a variety of exhibitions. Alongside the main juried Martinsons Award exhibition, dedicated to honouring one of Latvia's most important ceramic artists, Pēteris Martinsons, the programme features numerous solo and curated displays. The winner of the previous exhibition is invited to present a solo show at the Rothko Museum. In 2025, it was Lithuanian artist Milena Piršteliene with her exhibition *Matchstick in the Sand*. Here she presents small cube-shaped ceramic objects (an important element for emphasising craftsmanship), which serve as a basis for recording her everyday memories — a slow documentation process that becomes a form of personal therapy.

In recent years, the biennale has also expanded geographically. In addition to the main exhibitions, other cities have hosted events such as *Fresh – New Voices in Latvian Ceramics*, a showcase of young Latvian ceramicists, and *Windless*, a Baltic ceramics exhibition featuring artists from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. As a guest exhibition within the biennale's framework, the Rothko Museum also presented works by ceramicists from the The Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław, Poland, titled *Lost for Words*. Thus, the autumn ceramics season in Latvia was truly impressive, stretching across both time and visual experiences.



The 5th edition theme, *From Stardust to Lush Sprouts*, embraces the journey from primordial beginnings towards further development – much like the creative process from idea to physical form. According to the curators (Valentins Petjko and Aivars Baranovskis), it also reflects clay as a material that has accompanied humanity from its origins, first as a fundamental tool for development and later as a medium for artistic expression. This transformation from primal imagery to contemporary contexts – including feminist narratives and the depiction of woman as a creator of the universe (inspired by Marija Gimbutas' archaeomythological research) – can be seen in the work of U.S. artist Denny Gerwin. His *Venus* is a depersonalised and furious (yet restrained) female figure. Simple chamotte clay combined with wood firing references ancient cultural foundations, while the clearly expressed, declarative pose of the hands signals resistance to persistent gender stereotypes.

The exhibition showcases works of highly diverse themes, ranging from figurative to abstract. Understandably so – from nearly 1,000 applications, the international jury selected 80 artists. Thus, participation alone is a considerable achievement. Ceramics from 30 countries are included. As this is a competition, winners were selected in both the international and national categories. The concept of first, second and third prizes was abandoned, and instead gold, silver and honourable mentions were awarded.

There is also no shortage of humorous works that charm with their playfulness, lightness and sometimes ironic intent. Elements of humour can be found in works by Krisaya Luenganantakul (Thailand), Kauri Kallas (Estonia), Agate Kalcenaua, Laima Lauriņa, Zahars Ze, Rūdis Pētersons and Vita Valdmāne (Latvia). As can be seen, many such works come from Latvian artists.

In the national category, two artists received the gold prize: Lilija Zeiļa and Inese Brants. Both are representatives of an older generation with long-standing experience in the field. Zeiļa presents *Burnt Landscape*, a rhythmic work without a clear beginning or end, full of repeating elements. This is exactly her aim – to create the impression of boundless space. The familiar palette of deep red, black and grey, and the sheen achieved through terra sigillata technique, are immediately recognisable. She draws inspiration from traditional Latgalian pottery and, of course, from nature. By combining traditional techniques with contemporary forms (a hallmark of her work), she reflects on destruction and rebirth.

Inese Brants is widely known in Latvia as a master of porcelain and decals, and is considered one of the country's most significant creators. Art historian Dace Ļaviņa even compares her to Pēteris Martinsons, so it is no surprise that Brants was awarded the main prize in the national category. In addition to actively participating in local and international exhibitions, she also works in porcelain research and is one of the organisers of the Latvian International Porcelain Painting Symposium.

Not only the piece exhibited at the Martinsons Award, but Brants' entire artistic practice aligns closely with the biennale's theme. Her artistic trajectory connects past and present, aiming to create a link between them and leave a trace for the future. Like Zeiļa, Brants addresses time: it does not stand still, it does not disappear, yet always carries emotional weight. Yesterday's events become today's memories, and thoughts of tomorrow manifest as dreams. Everything is interconnected and cannot exist without the other parts.



Rūta Šipalytė. *Silicon homes. Resonant frequency*. 2025



Valdas Kurklietis. *From darkness to...* 2025



Agate Kalcenaiva, *To strive and to play*, 2024



Kimie Ino, *Crafted printing. Torus IV*, 2025

Alongside conceptual strength, her work is characterised by exceptional technical mastery. She is particularly interested in re-using old decals from the now-defunct Riga Porcelain Factory in a contemporary context. She often incorporates found historical objects into her artworks: old factory decals or, in her latest series, historical photographs. Using contemporary technologies, she transforms these historical artefacts for present and – she hopes – future generations. The work exhibited at the biennale, *A Tribute to the Brass Bands of the First Independent Latvian State*, combines historical narrative, modern technologies and current global events. It depicts early 20th-century Latvian freedom fighters – members of military brass bands. The orchestra is chosen as a symbol of emotional strength and unity, striving for independence. In today's context, echoes of the past gain renewed relevance, resonating not only with Brants herself, but also with other artists. The connection with the author's historical roots is also conveyed through the work's color scheme. Surfaces lavishly decorated with gold and platinum lustres gleam and radiate luxury, and this brilliance is drawn from Latvian folk tales. It is also her personal way of honouring key historical

figures through what she excels at most – the demanding and delicate techniques of porcelain decoration, where corrections are almost impossible. Brants also undertook meticulous research, selecting the best photographs from 12 Latvian museums, processing them, creating decals via silk-screen printing and finally hand-painting them to produce the remarkable *A Tribute to the Brass Bands of the First Independent Latvian State* series – truly deserving of gold.

It is practically impossible to describe every artist in such a rich exhibition. This article aims to highlight the works particularly noted by the jury. Yet it must be stressed once again that the exhibition abounds in remarkable technical solutions, diverse ideas and outstanding craftsmanship. The biennale's theme is also excellently reflected in the physical presentation of the works and exhibition design. The interplay of light and shadow not only highlights individual pieces but also creates an overall atmosphere, where individual elements merge into a cohesive portrait of the Latvia International Ceramics Biennale.

*Aurelija Seilienė is a Lithuanian art critic and curator working mainly in ceramics. She earned her Master's in History and Theory of Arts from the Vilnius Academy of Arts. Seilienė published numerous articles in the cultural press, compiled catalogs, and wrote introductory articles. She participates in ceramic conferences and also works as an expert in various exhibition selection commissions and project financing programs.*



# Ceramics un-limited world – Clay takes the stage in an exhibition at SKB Artes in Bolzano

By Katherina Perlongo

With *Ceramics un-limited world*, the Südtiroler Künstlerbund opened the doors of its exhibition space SKB Artes in Bolzano to a vibrant exploration of clay in all its forms. On view from August 29 to November 7, 2025, the show brought together a carefully curated selection of artists whose works highlight the boundless potential of the material. *Ceramics un-limited world* invited visitors to reflect on clay's enduring presence in art and culture, tracing its meanings from ancient traditions to contemporary interpretations and into the future.

To reach the exhibition, visitors passed through a courtyard and ascended a staircase before entering the historical rooms. In this transitional outdoor space stood a white-glazed Rococo tile stove, a technical and artisanal masterpiece long retired from its original function. Gracefully positioned in the courtyard, it set the tone for the exhibition by evoking our most immediate associations with clay – the domestic, the functional, the everyday object. The stove also served as the site of an intervention by artist and stove builder Peter Chiusole (\*1958), who transformed the area into a small working and advisory studio during the run of the exhibition. On a wooden shelf, he combined historical fragments with his own handcrafted pieces – glazed roof tiles, shards of architectural ceramics, vases, and miniature models of tiled stoves – while a small replica of the Rococo stove joined the display. Once a week, he guided visitors through the construction, use, and artistic design of historical and contemporary tiled stoves, offering insights, demonstrations, and personal stories that connected the objects to Alpine craftsmanship and cultural history.



Upon entering the exhibition rooms, visitors were greeted by a shelving unit filled with small sculptures and vessels by various artists, showcasing the diversity of the ceramic medium – and, just beside it, a festively set table. The 25 soup bowls drawn from a private collection subtly referenced another familiar aspect of ceramics: their presence in daily life and domestic rituals. This intimate scene was complemented by wall decorations created with patterned rollers by **Luis Seiwald** (\*1969). For these, he used *terra sigillata* that he had personally extracted from a clay quarry in the Valle di Casies in Northern Italy. In this first room, Seiwald also set up a small production area where visitors could follow the process

step by step – from collecting clay in the quarry to the countless stages in between. His practice illustrates how a raw material becomes a finished ceramic object through skill, time, and meticulous refinement.

Following Seiwald's exploration of transformation, **Julia Schuster's** (\*1989) contribution shifted the focus from process to sensation, emphasizing the intimate physical engagement with the material. Her video-documented performance *LONGING* (2026) shows the artist's hands shaping and kneading raw clay. The work becomes a metaphor for sensuality and for the traces left by the human body in the act of forming, inviting viewers into



# Ceramic Cinema: A Report on the Third International Ceramic Film Festival of Manises

By Benjamin Evans

When I told people that I was going to Spain for a film festival devoted entirely to ceramic culture, the response typically involved the raising of eyebrows. The notion might well seem on the extreme side of “niche,” but the “CICEMA Festival Internacional de Cinema Ceràmic de Manises” is exactly what it says it is. It was not a playlist of YouTube videos on how to trim a pot, this was a professional festival, with a collection of sponsors, a submission process that brought in 60 candidates from 18 nations, a selection committee, a jury and multiple awards. Organized by Carlos Garcia and Rafaela Pareja, with a host of volunteers, this was the third time the event has been held.

Films were organized into multiple categories. There were several documentaries focusing on the tradition of a particular region or artist, like *Oropesa y el Collar de Perlas* (“Oropesa and the Pearl Necklace”), which showcased rural figurative ceramics in Chile, or *Tras las Huellas del Barro Andalusi* (“In the Footsteps of Andalusian Pottery”), which explored how the cultural identity of the region has been shaped by a now-fading but ancient ceramics tradition. Another, “After Celadon” by ceramic film pioneer Tan Hangyu went in a different direction, exploring how several celebrated artists both in and outside China are bringing new ideas to celadon (and ceramics in general). If these attempts at capturing different traditions can be placed at one end of a spectrum, on the other end were “Experimental” films of artists using clay as an inspiration for performance through movement or narrative. In one, “Exuvie”, a woman slowly descended through a house filled with Egyptian symbols, entering rooms where she was handed intricately carved vessels by a mysterious priestly figure. In another, *Coreografía de un Crecimiento*, (“Choreography of Growth”), a woman in a billowing nightgown maneuvered, danced and jumped among clays

and ceramic objects before being covered in slip by an older, Aquarius-like figure. In the Italian short “Aeon” (my favorite in this category), abstract ceramic forms were presented like so many asteroids or planetoids in a science fiction film, in extreme close-up, slow-motion shots of their textures as they slowly moved through a pitch-black space. There were also a few animated films, but not in the big-budget “Claymation” style we have become familiar with. These were humbler but often effective creations using the malleability of clay itself to express larger ideas. A real highlight in this regard was a lecture on ceramics and animation focusing on absurdist master Jan Švankmajer, which included a screening of some of his unrivaled ceramic animations (and if you have not heard of this guy you should look him up immediately!). There was even a work of fiction, a touching and unpretentious film about an elderly former ceramic instructor slowly losing his memory. His adult granddaughter, herself at a crossroad in life, reintroduces him to his studio and encourages him to teach her, and the two both grow as a result. This film, *La Niebla* (“The Fog”), ended up winning the Audience Choice award.





# New Japanese Clay at the Asian Art Museum

By Vince Montague

The late filmmaker Yasujiro Ozu (1903-1963) became known in cinematography for his “tatami shot”, a camera angle that places the optical lens much lower to the ground. In Western cinema, the camera is usually placed at shoulder height. Ozu’s pioneering perspective placed the camera at knee-height, the same perspective as if sitting on a floor. The viewer is not above the work, but is equal to or just below it, developing a more intimate visual relationship with the subject.

The change in perspective is key to understanding the exhibition, *New Japanese Clay*, at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco (through February 2026). The long, dark exhibition room employs a waist-high platform that stretches the length of the space, spotlighting nearly thirty vessels from contemporary Japanese ceramicists. The viewer walks the length of the tall winding countertop, taking in each vessel in a manner that makes each artwork in this show feel monumental yet accessible.

New Japanese Clay represents highlights from the collection of Dr. Phyllis A. Kempner and Dr. David D. Stein. The exhibition is framed by the presence of Mingei pots that open the gallery show. There are only a few, like for example a “Bamboo-shaped Vase” (approximately 1925-1950) by Kitaoji Rosanjin, and of course “Oval Vase” (1970) by Shoji Hamada. These quiet pots cast a deep shadow over the exhibition, as the weight of centuries of craft and the discipline of making unobtrusive functional pottery can’t be easily ignored.

Stepping away from those Mingei pots, one instantly feels the change in perspective approaching the work by these contemporary artists; each of these ceramicists have mostly broken free from the constraints of function into individual and expressive works using a variety of methods and processes to achieve their visions. Rather than seeing this work from the traditional viewpoint of the influence of Mingei, I wondered if I encountered these works in a different context, from a different perspective, how would I respond? What is it beyond the echo of Mingei that these artists and these works have in common? Are there qualities in this collection of contemporary artists that separates them now from other cultures? The internet and the advances in communication and sharing of ceramic information in the last thirty years has created a wide sphere of influence. And although the

Minghei tradition might be in the background, there are other signs of cultural influence and artistic independence.

In all of the vessels of New Japanese Clay, each work itself feels like a tour de force of technique, discipline, and tenacity. Standing out are two pieces by Yukiya Izumita, whose two works feel like a master class in patience and technique. His free-standing geometric shapes initially remind one of origami, but they also read like cross-sections of exposed earth, his organic vessels possessing both the discipline of craft and the randomness of fire and clay. In particular, “Aurora No. 4” from 2012 reflects a deeper wisdom that comes from the contradictory lightness of the interlocking forms and the density of the fired clay.

Nagae Shigekazu’s “Forms that Entwine” (2017) is proof of his dexterity as a craftsman, but also his conceptual thinking about porcelain slip-casting. Like Yukiya, Shigekazu works with free standing origami-inspired shapes where the viewer is left wondering how the artist manipulated the paper-thin clay into shapes that seemingly betray gravity. In the end, the ribbon-like form surprises and almost transforms itself into an abstract figure. The poetry in this work lives in the lightness of the porcelain and the arching shapes that display both strength and fragility.





# Linda Víková: I Will Give You Everything

By Viera Kleinová

If you are interested in contemporary ceramics in Slovakia, you will encounter it only rarely in a gallery context. A restrained shift toward the increased visibility of the ceramic medium has, however, been indicated by several exhibition activities that have taken place in both private and institutional spaces in recent years.

A number of heterogeneous authorial modules have thus entered the public sphere, articulating the transcendence, conceptual nature, and hybridity of ceramic materiality. They are not afraid to communicate interdisciplinarily, to speak with passionate personal and communal engagement, and to discuss ceramic thinking and making in their own voice. One such project was Linda Víková's exhibition at Staromestská Galéria Zichy in Bratislava, which brings together a selection of works from the past five years, created between 2020 and 2025.



*Shapeshifter (2022)*



*Curious Discoveries vase*



*Copper Age vase (2024)*



*From Ashes (2025)*

Linda Viková (b. 1977) is an established figure on the Slovak ceramic scene. Her work is grounded in direct contact with the materiality of ceramics and porcelain, moving along a flexible trajectory between design, sculpture, drawing, and painting. With the exhibition *I Will Give You Everything*, she declares her relationship to ceramics as unconditional; yet it does not succumb to the tyranny of technology, avoids the traps of hermetic sentimentalism, and reforms its current position through concentrated material and ecological research.

Viková has long approached ceramics through the concept of vessels, continuously sending them into motion within living habitats and encouraging active coexistence with them. Her vases, bowls, and objects accumulate the energy of natural and ceramic processes; they function as (auto-)transformative references to an intuitive as well as guided dialogue between the artist and the work. The vessel, as the centre of her interest, condenses several urgent as well as slowly smouldering questions of contemporary ceramic discourse: What does ceramics mean to us today? Is it still the centre of our lives, as understood by Livingstone and Petrie in *The Ceramics Reader*?<sup>1</sup> Or do we read the vessel more intensely through transmuted, digitally filtered visual exhibitions feeding a pampered Instagram audience, as suggested by contemporary ceramic criticism through the term *Hyper Pot*?<sup>2</sup> Is it the symbolic form of the holistic human being—body and soul—a female—male archetype of creativity and life, as perceived by visual artist and ceramicist Mária Bartuszová?<sup>3</sup>

# HOMO CERAMICUS at the Gyeonggi Museum of Contemporary Ceramic Art, Icheon

September 19, 2025 – February 22, 2026





Homo Ceramicus is a neologism first articulated by the Gyeonggi Museum of Ceramic Contemporary Art (GMoCCA). In its most literal sense, the term designates humankind that works with clay.

In this exhibition the concept is employed in a more deliberate and focused sense, referring to potters who transcend mere technical practice and who, through clay, articulate a distinctive attitude toward life and a unique spirit. By framing the exhibition in this way, we seek to illuminate the identity of potters from a multidimensional perspective and hope that audiences will encounter their existence with greater depth and empathy.

### List of Artists from the GMoCCA Collection on Exhibit

Kim Junmyung, Naoki Kato, Nelson Lim, David Hicks, Dyah Retno, Lana Kova, Lisa Creskey, Rika Herbst, Lindsey Dezman, Magari Kazuma, Mee-sun Kim Park, Park Songkuk, Stephanie Lanter, Takefumi Aoki, Eliza Au, Christine Yiting Wang, Irina Razumovskaya, Ley. Wang, Choi Myungjin, Kathryn Baczeski, Ke Tang, Claudi Casanovasu, Tamaki Risa

In the novel by Hwang Sunwon (1915–2000), *The Old Potter* (1939), the protagonist is portrayed as a figure of steadfast conviction, meticulously inspecting the pottery taken from the kiln and tolerating no flaw, however small. This image, representing a popular perception of the potter, has been shaped over a long history.

While past and present ceramists reveal considerable differences in their methods and environments, they display a remarkable continuity in their attitude toward life and in their craftsmanship. These inner commonalities are quietly and faithfully preserved within the ceramics they have created, the tangible fruits of their labor.

The GMoCCA, attentive to these similarities and continuities, seeks to illuminate the existence of the ceramist through the concept of Homo Ceramicus. Homo Ceramicus is a neologism first proposed by the GMoCCA, signifying “humanity shaped through clay.” In this exhibition, the concept is employed in a more specific sense, defined as “the ceramists who shape clay” and “those who speak through clay.” It thus designates not mere technical practitioners, but beings who possess a distinctive way of life and a singular spirit.

Through this new designation, we seek to perceive the ceramist, much like the figure in Hwang Sunwon’s novel, in a more multidimensional and profound way. Furthermore, by illuminating their identity through an analytical and multilayered lens, we hope to foster a deeper public understanding of the ceramist. We also aim to reflect upon their attitude and their practice as we live through these weary times. We are then led to pose the following question to ourselves:

“With what attitude toward life are we shaping our today?”

### Participating Artists

**Part 1.** Neil Brownsword, Back Inkyo, Saito Yuna, Lim Jihyun, Tontouristen

**Part 2.** Kang Youngjun, Moon Chanseok, Park Miran, Park Songkuk, Shin Hyunchoul, Woo Sihyeong, Lee Heami

**Part 3.** Kim Woonhee, Kim Yeji, Park Sunyoung, Yang Hyejung, Lee Joonsung, Cho Younsang



Neil Brownsword, *Marl Hole*, 2009, *Looped Film*



*Tontouristen Kollektiv, Mine is Mine*



*Back Inkyo, Traces of Color, 2025*



*Lim Jihyun, Image Error: Fragment Assemblage, 2025*



*Saito Yuna, Drawing by Ceramic Series and Dyed Structure Series, 2021-2025*

This exhibition is organized into three parts. **Part I: Breathing Humbly** highlights the cycle of clay, the destiny of ceramists who must live within that cycle, and their attitudes toward nature. Clay circulates, life that springs from it nourishes other life, and all existence ultimately returns to it. Within this principle of circulation, humanity has long revered clay as sacred. From the Bible, Sumerian and Greek mythology, and Native American beliefs to Korea's agrarian traditions, clay has been honored as the very origin of creation and of life. In ancient Greece, Keramos was venerated as the god of pottery and became the very root of the word "ceramic." Pottery itself was at times regarded as an act akin to divine power.

Contemporary ceramists likewise carry forward this tradition. They immerse themselves in the material of clay and the process of creation, finding wonder in moments of unpredictability. The practice of ceramics is deeply conditioned by natural forces such as temperature, humidity, fire, and wind and is imbued with variables that cannot be controlled by human will alone. Confronted with these limits, ceramists yield to a force beyond the self and approach their work with humility.

The video artwork of Tontouristen, which reveals such aspects of the ceramist, recalls the naturalness and materiality inherent in ceramics. It also reminds us that the ceramist, within such a landscape, is a being who contemplates deeply on the themes of human intervention and the restoration of nature. Neil Brownsword, in turn, conveys the identity of the ceramist through an elemental approach of engaging clay and laboring repetitively. Lim Jihyun, as an artist who works with the material of clay, introduces experimental artworks that present perceptions of both the digital world and the material world. Back Inkyo, through large-scale installations, embodies the enduring ceramist's spirit of inquiry that embraces even failure. Saito Yuna discloses the vision of the ceramist who does not see nature as separate from the self but as an existence that enfolds the artist.

Together, these artists' humility, which drives them to accept themselves as part of nature's order and attune to its subtle changes as they continue their work, evokes the distant past when humanity encountered the world as something sacred. Even today, ceramics remain a mode of creation in which human beings engage the world in its deepest essence.

# Masayoshi Oya: Tales of the Hand at Vandalorum Museum of Art and Design, Värnamo

January 24 - May 5, 2026





# Bouke de Vries: UNBROKEN at the Princessehof National Museum of Ceramics, Leeuwarden

July 5, 2025 - August 16, 2026





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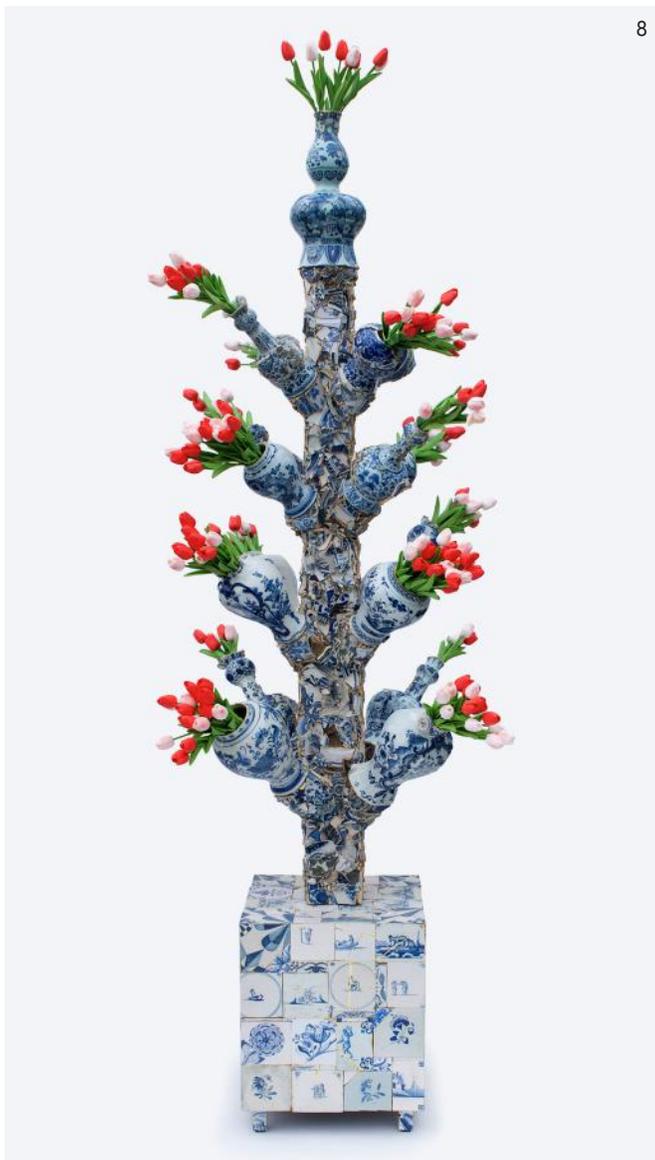
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The Prinsessehof National Museum of Ceramics in Leeuwarden (NL) is proud to present the major retrospective exhibition UNBROKEN, dedicated to the internationally acclaimed artist Bouke de Vries. This exhibition offers a unique perspective on the work of an artist who transforms broken ceramics into new and unexpected artworks in innovative and multifaceted ways. De Vries, born in Utrecht and now based in London, was originally trained as a restorer. His craftsmanship forms the foundation of an artistic practice that centres on fragility, impermanence, sustainability, and repair.

UNBROKEN features a selection of highlights from Bouke de Vries' career, in which he experiments with the theme of decay and repair. This retrospective includes still lifes, relics, and monumental installations: in total, some 95 objects and installations, 11 of which are new works created especially for this exhibition.

Many of the works on view are based on historical objects, yet they also engage with a wide range of contemporary cultural phenomena and elements from the artist's personal world. Playful references, such as a porcelain sculpture of Marge Simpson as Guan Yin, and other childhood memories appear alongside tributes to the artist's father and husband, as well as allusions to drug culture and war.

In total, the solo exhibition UNBROKEN features around 95 objects and installations, including eleven new works created especially for this show. The exhibition runs from July 5, 2025, to August 16, 2026.





Visitors are guided through five rooms showcasing the oeuvre of Bouke de Vries. The works are displayed in thematic clusters. In Dutch Stories, De Vries's Dutch heritage takes centre stage. Especially for this exhibition, he created a life-sized state portrait of King Willem Alexander and Queen Máxima using 17th- and 18th-century Delftware – a regal tribute and, at the same time, a playful reflection on national symbolism and ceramics as cultural heritage.

Next, Early Chinese explores Bouke de Vries' quest for a deeper human connection with ceramics throughout history, and the prominent role ceramics play within archaeology. A striking example is his response to Ai Weiwei's conceptual and political photo triptych 'Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn'. De Vries responds with humour and tenderness: "I saw the photos and, in my mind, I picked up the shards and put the vase back together." By repairing a similarly broken Han vase (dating from 206 BCE to 220 CE), he engages with the enduring value of this cultural heritage. Using the Japanese technique of Kintsugi – developed only in the late fifteenth century – he visibly mends the vase, merging ceramic traditions from different times and places.

In this space, De Vries reveals not only his fascination with the fragility of objects, but also with the fragility of context and meaning. Displayed in tall vitrines, the works evoke the atmosphere of a historical cabinet of curiosities, or Wunderkammer.

The Memory Vessels theme room displays shards of broken ceramics in glass moulds. During the COVID-19 pandemic, these Memory Vessels struck a powerful emotional chord with people. The works resonated so deeply that people around the world had them tattooed on their bodies. For this exhibition, De Vries responds to this unexpected tribute with a new series of 'flat' ceramic Memory Vessels,

onto which a tattoo artist re-applies the original designs in ink.

Muses brings together sculptures of De Vries's muses – from the Virgin Mary to figures from popular culture, with a focus on contemporary themes. Highlights include his (unbroken) homage to the late Princess Diana, celebrated as an icon within the LGBTQ+ community.

The exhibition ends grandly with War and Pieces, an eleven-metre-long installation offering a contemporary take on the opulent table centrepieces once favoured by European aristocracy in the 17th and 18th centuries.

At the heart of this chaotic battlefield of shards stands a dramatic and inevitable centrepiece – the ultimate act of war: a nuclear mushroom cloud composed of countless fragments of white porcelain. The cloud is formed from ghostly cherubs, skulls, and decapitated or distorted porcelain dolls – or "Hummels gone wrong," as De Vries calls them. Christ on the cross and Guan Yin, the Chinese goddess of compassion whose name means "One who hears the world's cries," witness the death and destruction; atop the cloud, an angel weeps.

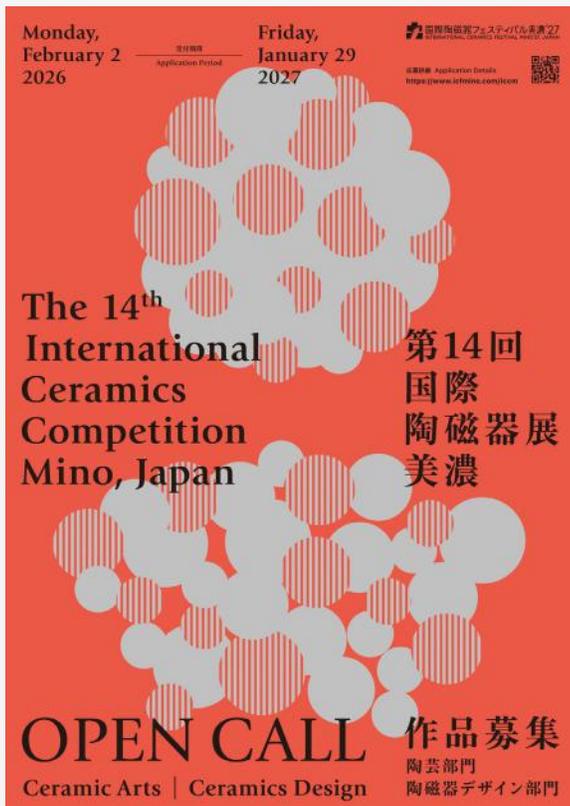
In stark contrast to the whiteness of the porcelain, other figures have mutated into cyborgs, adorned with brightly coloured bionic limbs and heads fashioned from fragments of plastic toys. De Vries refers to these plastic additions as "modern invaders." He notes: "The ever increasing ubiquity of non-biodegradable plastic, supposedly indestructible, brings the installation into our own, more toxic age."

The work has already received significant international acclaim and powerfully captures both the fragility and resilience of ceramics. Since 2012, War and Pieces has toured across Europe, Asia and the United States, with De Vries subtly adapting the installation to each location.

# The Month's News In The Ceramic Art World

## 01

Applications are now open for the 14th International Ceramics Festival MINO, Japan, one of the most prestigious international events dedicated to contemporary ceramics. Taking place between October 8 and November 7, 2027, the competition is open to artists worldwide across two categories—Ceramic Arts and Ceramics Design (Factory and Studio)—under the theme Potential of Ceramics. Eligible works must have been produced after February 2024. The festival will award several prizes, including a Grand Prix worth over \$30,000. Submissions are due January 29, 2027, with no registration fee.



Poster - The 14th International Ceramics Festival MINO, Japan

## 02

Applications are also open for the sixth edition of the Officine Saffi Award, the international prize dedicated to contemporary ceramics across art, design, and craft. Participation is free of charge, with a €10,000 First Prize, six Residency Prizes in collaboration with international institutions, and inclusion in the finalists' exhibition. For 2026, artists are invited to respond to the theme Forms of Belonging, exploring ceramics as a material language of connection and shared experience. Applications are open until June 26, 2026, with the exhibition opening in late September 2026.

## 03

Artists, researchers, and museum professionals are invited to submit proposals to Ceramics Research Centre-UK for the conference Permanence / Impermanence: Collecting and Archiving Contemporary Clay Practices, taking place in London on June 24–26, 2026. Organised by CRC-UK and the University of Westminster, in partnership with the V&A Museum, the conference explores how ephemeral, performative, and site-specific clay practices can be collected, documented, and made accessible for the future. Proposals are due March 16, 2026.

## 04

The Everson Museum of Art will host the 16th Annual Ceramic Arts Lecture featuring Sam Chung on Thursday, March 5, 2026, at 6:30 pm in the Hosmer Auditorium. The Korean-American ceramic artist will discuss his practice, which reframes historical ceramics through a cross-cultural lens, drawing on Korean art, symbolism, and questions of identity and belonging. The lecture is pay-what-you-wish and will also be accessible via Zoom.



6th International Siegburg Ceramics Prize. Photo credit: Articus & Roettgen

## 05

Registrations are now open for the 33rd Mediterraneo Contemporary Ceramics Competition, organized by the city of Grottaglie (Italy). Open to individual artists and collectives, the international competition promotes innovative and contemporary ceramic practices. Selected works will be exhibited in Grottaglie from July 4 to October 18, 2026, and several prizes will be awarded, including a €5,000 first prize, a solo exhibition award, an artist residency, and a €10,000 large-scale work prize. Applications are due May 5, 2026.

## 06

Preparations are underway for the 8th edition of Révélations, the international fine craft biennial returning to the Grand Palais, Paris, from May 19–23, 2027. Following its 2025 edition, which brought together more than 550 creators and 45,000 visitors, the fair invites applications from artists, galleries, art dealers, institutions, and other organizations. Participation is geared toward professional exhibitors, with a participation fee starting at around €3,000 for a shared stand.

## 07

The exhibition of the 6th International Siegburg Ceramics Prize has recently opened at the Siegburg City Museum (Germany), presenting 67 selected works from 335 submissions by artists from 23 countries. The First Prize was awarded to Philsoo Heo (South Korea) for *The Touch of Ignorance*, followed by Heidi Hentze (Denmark) with *Mining* and Marianne Wesolowska-Eggimann (Switzerland/Poland) with *Trust the Process*. The exhibition is on view through April 12, 2026, and is accompanied by a newly published catalogue.

## 08

Students and emerging ceramic artists based in the United States are invited to apply to the Warren MacKenzie Advancement Award, a grant supporting up to 12 months of independent research and professional development. Founded in 2014 in honor of Warren MacKenzie's legacy in ceramic education, the award supports projects involving mentorship, travel, skill development, and cross-disciplinary collaboration. One recipient will be selected for the 2026–27 grant year. Applications close April 5, 2026.

## 09

The School of Art and Design in the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University is seeking candidates for the Robert Chapman Turner Teaching Fellow in Ceramic Art. The Turner Teaching Fellow will be an emerging artist with an MFA or equivalent degree. Prior teaching experience is welcome but not required. The fellowship is non-tenure-track and renewable for up to 3 years. A stipend is provided for professional development along with a studio space and full access to ceramic facilities. The start date is August 2026.

# What's on View



**Nicole Cherubini: Hotel Roma at Friedman Benda, New York**

January 16 – February 21, 2026



**Pippin Drysdale: Infinite Terrain at the Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth**

December 6, 2025 – April 6, 2026



**Surface & Structure: Contemporary Ceramics on the Edge of Form at The Sculpture Center, Cleveland**

January 30 – March 28, 2026



**Philip Eglin: Bucket List at Canopy Collections, London**

January 15 – February 20, 2026



**Sustainable Ceramics #2: Investigating a footprint at the Princessehof National Museum of Ceramics, Leeuwarden**

November 22, 2025 – October 26, 2026



**Figurative at Galerie Handwerk, Munich**

January 16 – February 14, 2026



**Kentarō Kawabata: By Heart at Mai 36 Galerie, Zurich**

January 22 – March 28, 2026



**Masayoshi Oya: Tales of the Hand at Vandalorum Museum of Art & Design, Värnamo**

January 24 – May 5, 2026



**Anina Major: Moments of Being at Shoshana Wayne Gallery, Los Angeles**

January 24 – March 21, 2026



**Tamara Van San: Hope Spots at Florian Daguet-Bresson, Paris**

January 29 – February 28, 2026



**Otila Efras: Stilyte at Galatea Contemporary Art, Bucharest**

February 11 – March 10, 2026



**Voxels: Clay As Data Holder at Saratoga Clay Arts Center, Schuylerville, NY**

February 7 – March 14, 2026



