



Color of Fire

Andrew Livingstone

Fire leaves a trace and forms a palette of color in the works of Keka Ruiz-Tagle. This action of capture and embrace connects the work to the earth from where these figures are born and transforms them to a permanent existence, the analogy to life is all too clear. The age of the figures is ambiguous, intentional perhaps, belonging to near or far histories or perhaps both or neither, existing instead in a timeless history of authentication. This pre-historic and contemporary juxtaposition imbues these figurative sculptures with a sense of knowing and confidence, a gesture confirmed in the creative and technical skills of the artist. We are reminded at this moment that these figures connect to us through their gaze, we want to know their mind, abstract symbolic components erupting from their heads impart clues and develop narrative, yet they still remain mysterious. The various head-ware is suggestive of traditional costume and confirms a connection to far history, whilst the open heads render the sculptures as vessel and this develops the narrative and obvious connections that can be made between body and vessel. Whilst the headdresses are not rendered as facsimile, they enhance the symbolic essence contained within the work an element that is explored further by the artist in other works.

The horse within Keka's work is both stylized and also proffers a mythical status. One is reminded of the power of the Trojan Horse in the legend of the city of Troy and this is contextualized in the artists use of proportional scale as rendered between the large horses and much smaller figures. The horses are strong both visually and in construction, yet at the same time are softened by glaze pattern and marks created by the flames of the kiln. Here, the artist experiments with materials and processes and in combination with the playful figures atop of the horses, suggests a harmonious relationship between man and animal. This playful, even humorous element is contained within many of Keka's sculptures where many of the figurative heads appear to be smiling, one asks whether they are happy or do they hold knowing secrets?

Keka is an artist who works across many platforms and has expressed her ideas through several mediums. Her work in clay continues an exploration of the connectedness between reality and dreams an area that has appeared throughout art history and perhaps can be exemplified by the Surrealists and within the work of Marc Chagall. The use of clay to explore this arena is pertinent as the material connects us to the earth and thus reality – and its formlessness allows the artist to explore the notion of dreams through sculptural application. Keka's sculptures are accomplished considering the artist has no formal training in ceramics they capture elements of primal pottery yet the works are also grounded in the here and now. They have a feminine quality yet are also bold in approach and execution. This multifarious layering within the work invites multiple readings created by several points of departure no doubt this is with intention and adds to the mystery within the work.

In reference to the title of this text, the colors of fire are numerous, they are also bold and vivid, they leave a trace, an imprint in your eye that leads to the mind all of these things and more can be found in the ceramic work of Keka Ruiz-Tagle.

Andrew Livingstone Ph.D, Artist, Writer and Academic at the University of Sunderland UK.



Keka Ruiz-Tagle 凯卡·鲁伊兹 —塔格莱

火的颜色

安德鲁·利文斯通

火留下的痕迹在凯卡·鲁伊兹-塔格莱的作品上形成了五彩斑斓的调色板。这一揽一抱的动作，把作品跟孕育这些人物的泥土联系起来，并把它们转变成为一个永久的存在，生命的寓意豁然明了。人物的年代是模糊的，也许是有为之吧，可能属于或近或远的历史，或者两者都是，或者都不是，相反的，它们存在于一个永恒的历史的验证中。艺术家用创造性的技巧和技术，通过这种史前和当代的并置，为这些具象雕塑灌输了某种意义上的认识和信心，灌输了一种态度。它们的凝视使我们在此刻联想到这些人物跟我们的联系，我们想了解它们的思想，从它们的头上涌现的抽象的符号要素透露出线索，并形成了叙述，但它们仍然保持着神秘。各式各样的人头让人联想起传统服饰，明确了一种与远古的联系，同时，开放的造型使雕塑成为了容器，更增加了叙述和显而易见的联系，身体和容器之间的联系。虽然头饰不是什么摹本，但它们强化了作品中所包含的象征性的本质，艺术家在其他作品中对这种元素有进一步的探索。

凯卡作品中的马既有浓厚的艺术风格，又有一种神话特征。它让人联想到传说中的特洛伊城的木马的力量，艺术家使用的比例尺寸所造成的高头大马与小得多的人物之间的对比，更突出了这种语境。马从视觉和结构上都很强壮，但同时，窑火促成的釉彩图案和痕迹却把它柔化了。由此，艺术家的材料和工艺尝试与骑在马背上的快乐的小人相结合，营造出一种人与动物之间亲密和谐的关系。凯卡的很多雕塑中都有这种快乐，甚至有点幽默的元素，她的好多具象的人头都面带微笑，让人不禁要问，它们是因为高兴呢，还是知道了什么秘密？

凯卡是一位跨平台创作的艺术家，她通过好几种媒介表达她的看法。她在陶艺创作中继续探索着现实和梦想的联系，这一领域的创作曾出现在艺术史的各个时期，你也许可以例举出超现实主义者的作品，或是马克·夏加尔的作品。用黏土探索这一领域是很合适的，因为黏土把我们跟大地、跟现实联系起来，它的无定形使艺术家能够通过雕塑创作，探索对梦想的看法。考虑到凯卡没有接受过正规的陶艺培训，她的雕塑是相当有成就的，它们抓住了原始陶器的元素，同时又立足于此时此地。它们有一种女性特质，但在方法和处理上又很大胆。作品中这种丰富的层次，引发了从多个出发点形成的多种解读，毫无疑问，这是有意为之，并增加了作品的神秘感。

谈到本文的标题，火的颜色是数不胜数的，它们也同样是大胆而明亮的，它们留下了痕迹，即你眼中的印迹，引发的所有这些思想，很多都能在凯卡·鲁伊兹-塔格莱的陶艺作品中找到。

安德鲁·利文斯通博士，艺术家、作家、英国桑德兰大学教师

Keka Ruiz-Tagle: "The Colors of Fire"

凯卡·鲁伊兹-塔格莱：火的颜色

Luisa Ulibarri
路易萨·乌里巴利

Ever since she started two decades ago with colorful paintings and etchings that alluded to human figures and life's frolics or magic spins, Keka Ruiz- Tagle has been in search of the magic of ancestral rites, the liberation of the spirit and the incessant flow or pilgrimage of our thousand-year-old existence.

The artist, trained at the Catholic University of Chile, and at the Southern Methodist University School of Arts in Dallas, has shown her work at many individual and collective exhibitions in Chile and abroad. Her exposition "Cartography to transcend" in 2005 revealed her first clay figures that featured the trail of her journey as well as the traces of the process of living. Her training at Ruth Krauskopf's Huara Huara ceramics workshop was not in vain.

Huara wara in aymará voice is the star that empowers the clarity of a cloudless sky of the universe's night. And this was the case that linked ceramists and sculptors of different nationalities and pedigree who utilized earth as material, light and main beacon. Keka was one of them. Another one, the Japanese professor Akio Takamori wrote: "I met Keka Ruiz-Tagle in Santiago at a workshop I conducted at Ruth Krauskopf's Huara Huara Taller de Cerámica. I was impressed with her ambition, energy and fearlessness. Keka knew exactly what she wanted to do with clay; Keka learned very quickly how to work with clay and took advantage of the material".

Her formerly dreamscape-like, naive, merry-go-round horses, turning to music, magic, and dance, now have acquired an almost patriarchal and protective shape and volume. And she also created enormous 60-80cm or larger heads, perhaps unconsciously and, not even resorting to Olmeca or Tibetan ancestors or to those of the even older African Nok culture of Nigeria of which there still exist vestiges,

We neither know whether the Buddhas, the sculptures of Ife - the old religious capital of the Yoruba, the Xian Terra Cotta warriors, or the impressive collection of Oba brass heads in Benin, which are considered as one of the great treasures of African art, resided with unexpected synchrony in Keka Ruiz-Tagle's so unique, personal and scrutinizing imaginary in her current exhibition: "The Colors of Fire".

"The Colors of Fire" granted her the privilege of in-depth research and more work than ever before with the four essential materials: earth, water, air and fire. "Fire and water rites appear in each and every culture as the symbols of transformation that allude to magic and generation of physical and spiritual light that regenerates and purifies," muses the artists.

"This time I chose ceramics as the proper means to touch feelings. . . The times of ceramics are definitely not the times of life. . . And that unavoidably opens the space for deep reflection. That was decisive for me."

And she added, "there is tactile pleasure, the contact with matter turns into a conversation and alchemy of wood, fire and ashes.

"I search for the origins and the traces of our identity. The work I present today is the product of an in-depth research of shape and volume as another form of life and existence," wrote the artist apropos of this exposition.

And this is what we see: Large horses, alone or accompanied by small human figures of equilibrists shaped by the hollowing-out technique applied in Africa even at the present time that consists in building hollowed molds. "I did not like the hollowing-out so much as the superposition of the pieces, which facilitates the control of the figures, and was applied by the ancestral ceramists. This is how the antique horse was born and baked at 800 centigrade as well as a blue horse baked at 1,300 centigrade with glazing, pigment and further firing."

Processing and research

On the porch of her home-cum-workshop, Keka set up a large table and worked day after day to create these figures, which until May were placed in rows on a window frame, on coffee, side and dining room tables, doorsteps, in the fireplace, occupying every space until parting to the furnace located in Llolleo. Keka gave each and every figure a name, linked to magic and primeval rites. As regards the process and research that originated this exhibition, the artist discloses indispensable details.



自从在20年前开始创作丰富多彩的、反映人物形象和生活中的快乐或神奇的绘画和铜版画，凯卡·鲁伊兹-塔格莱就开始探究祭祖仪式的魔法，神灵的解放，以及我们一千年来持续不断的流动、朝圣。

她曾受训于智利天主教大学和达拉斯南卫理公会大学艺术学院，在国内外许多个展或群展中展示过她的作品。她在2005年举办的展览“超越地图”上展出了她的第一件陶艺雕像，体现的是她的旅途足迹和生活印迹。她在露丝·克劳斯科普夫的“瓦拉瓦拉”陶艺工作室接受的训练不是徒劳的。

瓦拉瓦拉在艾马拉语里是指一颗星星，它能让万里无云的宇宙夜空清晰透明。而瓦拉瓦拉工作室是让不同民族和血统的陶艺家、雕塑家联系起来的纽带，他们都以泥土为材料，把泥土作为他们的灯和主要灯塔。凯卡就是他们中的一员。另外一个成员，日本的高森晓夫教授写道：“我是在圣地亚哥认识凯卡的，在露丝·克劳斯科普夫的瓦拉瓦拉陶艺工作室主持的一个创作讲习班上。她的抱负、能量和无畏给我留下了深刻的印象。凯卡明确地知道她想要用黏土做什么；凯卡很快就学会了如何用黏土创作，如何发挥材料的优点。”

她从前那些梦幻般的、天真的、转起来能唱、能跳、能变魔术的旋转木马，现在已经成熟、壮大了。她还做了好多60-80厘米或更大的头像，也许是无意识的，甚至没有参考奥尔麦克或藏族先民的文化，或是那些还残存痕迹的更古老的非洲尼日利亚诺克文化。

在她最近的展览，《火的颜色》中，我们不知道佛像、伊费（约鲁巴人古老的宗教都城）雕塑、西安兵马俑或在贝宁保存的令人印象深刻的奥巴黄铜头像——它们被认为是最珍贵的非洲艺术之一——是否不期然地同时驻留在凯卡·鲁伊兹-塔格莱如此独特、个性化、追根溯源的想像中。

“火的颜色”赋予给她深入研究四种基本要素——土、水、空气和火的特权和比以往更多的创作。“火和水仪式般地出现在每一种文化中，作为一种转换的符号，暗示着魔法，以及能够再生和净化的身体和灵魂之光的产生，”她若有所思地表示。

“这次我选择陶艺作为触动情感的适当手段……陶艺的时代绝对不是生活的时代……并且不可避免地打开了深刻反思的空间。这对我来说是决定性的。”

“那里有触觉的乐趣，与物质的接触变成了一种对话，一种木、火和灰的炼丹术。”

“我追寻我们的身份起源和踪迹。我现在展示的作品就是一种深入研究的产物，形状和体积是生活和存在的另一种形式。”她就这个展览写道。

而这就是我们所看到的：高大的马，或是孤零零的，或与走钢丝的小人儿为伴，那些人物是采用非洲的hollowing-out技术塑造的，这种技术至今还在制作中空模具时使用。“我不太喜欢把hollowing-out当作作品的叠加，它有利于把握人物，而且为祖先的陶艺家所用。那匹古风的马就是这么做的，并且烧到800度，还有一匹蓝色的马，上了釉和颜料，烧到了1300度。”

创作设计和研究

在她的家兼工作室的门廊上，凯卡支起一张大桌子，日复一日地创作这些人，把它们一个个摆在窗前，摆在咖啡桌、边桌和餐桌上，摆在家门口，摆在壁炉边，让它们在离开约耶奥的炉火后占据每一个空间。凯卡给每个人物都取了名字，是和魔法和远古的仪式有关的名字。关于本次展览缘起的创作设计和研究，艺术家透露了必不可少的的细节。

人物一旦成型，如何通过烧制来进行进一步的处理？

“烧制向来是让陶艺家费心的事，因为它神秘而有力量。至于不同的烧制方式，我现在展示的作品都是柴烧的，在一个传统的开放式窑炉里。”

要烧多久呢？

“穴窑要烧5天，在圆顶窑的特殊气流作用下，飞灰会附着到作品上。我用颜料和氧化物创作柴烧作品。我一步步把过程记录下来，包括节外生枝，要复现效果是很难的，但我必须要严格记录，

把我自己的方法系统化。烧窑有点像炼金术。涉及到观察，知道人可以干预过程，例如，稻灰（一项有千年历史的日本技术）就是我在研究古代方法时发现的。如今，我的一些釉料里就有稻灰。”

那些人头和塑像是源自你的绘画吗？

“这些人物来源于我的绘画，来源于平面的支持，我把魔法盒传递给雕塑。加冠的头饰不是帽子或头巾，而是能量和思考……”

这在你的创作中是决定性的飞跃，契机是什么？

“我的精力都集中在我的《旋转木马》展览上，在国家美术馆，在美丽都互动博物馆，现在在康塞普西翁大学美术馆，但我还在不断思考关于起源、历史符号的问题，关于用黏土、用土壤创作的问题。我跟泥土有很牢固的联系。我在农田上长大，在那里生活过，土地是和谐的，在土壤和我们的手之间会发生很特别的事，这就是为什么我开始创作关于魔法和祖先的主题。”

“这些是我们继承的人物，它们有含义。它们的名字有某种超自然的东西，就像一个魔法师的主祭。这是要超越的地图。我的整个工作就是找回魔法；人物和马表现的是唤醒的那一刻。”

手和黏土之间的稳定流动是如何发生的？

“从内到外，我的手将黏土和窑炉结合起来，创造与时间无关的造型。所有东西都是用手做出来的，没有精细的工具。眼睛是图形信号或空洞。我使用的石膏来自西班牙，8至10公斤一袋。我用它是因为它最适合我，而且很容易买到。它是粘土和熟料混合的。”

烧制过程本身如何？

“先在火口烧低温，然后用颜料、盐、二氧化硫做处理，并观察烧痕。能用土、水、空气和火这四种元素搞创作真是太幸运了！一个非凡的结合就此产生，条纹、褪色渐变、形成许许多多形状。在窑炉中，一个人的帽子是闪亮和不透明的样子。至于那些马……它们正在痊愈，并被用作治疗手段，因为它们能够让自己与人类很好地沟通。我的动机是要表达我自己的感受，通过我的一部分陶艺语言。闭上眼睛，抚摸着马，轻抚那曲线，那平滑。体积和颜色再加上对烟的研究，火的气息就出来了。”

当一切大功告成，你把手放在作品上时，感觉如何？

“我会让雕塑风干15天，然后带到我在约耶奥的窑去烧，在第一次和第二次烧制的过程中，我会尊重材料的节奏和时间。我现在就是这样周而复始，今后我还会继续研究，永远不会失去探索、发现的乐趣。我喜欢未知的东西，我无所畏惧。”



"Keka knew exactly what she wanted to do with clay, as she had fully developed her images in paintings and prints of vibrant colors. Keka learned very quickly how to work with clay and took advantage of the material. Through form and subtle colors, the characters appear to express their individuality; even though they seem timeless and ageless, the surface and textures seem to reveal some kind of history. Having both a sense of gravity and lightness, her horses and riders came out of her canvases into a real and believable space. I imagined this place was a Horse Land where the horses are huge and strong, like the earth, and the people are small, secure and happy, like children. The people show their affection of these earthy horses with their acrobatic dances. The contrast of the stability within in the clay form with the lighthearted movements feels nice. It is like a

carefree childhood that develops upon the stability of a mother's consistent love."

- Akio Takamori

“凯卡明确地知道她想要用黏土做什么，因为她已经在绘画和版画上充分开发了她那些色彩鲜明的形象。凯卡很快就学会了如何用黏土创作，以及如何发挥材料的优点。通过造型和柔和的颜色，那些人物开始表达自己的个性；即令它们看似是永恒不老的，但从表面和纹理似乎能看出某种历史。带着重力和轻盈感，她的马和骑手从她的画布走出来，走进了一个真实可信的空间。我猜这个地方是一个“马的家园”，这里的马都是硕大、健壮的，就像是大地，这里的人都是小小的，安全又快乐，像小孩一样。他们用杂技般的舞蹈，表达着自己对这些大地之马的爱。黏土造型内在的稳定性与轻快的动作之间所形成的对比，让人感觉很好。它就像一个无忧无虑的童年，在母亲始终如一的坚定的爱中展开。”

——高森晓夫







Once the figures have been shaped, how are they processed further by firing?

"Firing has always occupied the ceramists' attention because of its mystery and power. Among the diverse firing procedures, the pieces I present today have been wood-fired in a traditional open-stack kiln."

How long does the firing take?

"Anagama firing takes five days and the fly-ashes impregnate the piece in the course of the dome kiln process. I apply wood firing with pigments and oxides. Recording the process step by step including what was unexpected to repeat the effect means hard work, but it must be rigorously done so to systematize one's own method. The working with your own kiln is somehow alchemistic. It involves observing knowing that one can interfere with—for instance, rice ashes (a millenary Japanese technique) I discovered in my search for antique processes. Nowadays some glazes are prepared with rice ashes."

The heads and your figures stem from your painting?

"These figures stem from my painting, from the flat support, I passed from magic boxes to sculpture. The crowning headwears are not hats or turbans ... but energy and thinking..."

This is a decisive leap of your work, what triggered it?

"I was focused on my exhibition 'Merry-go-round' (Giros de Magia) at the National Museum of Fine Arts, at the Interactive Mirador Museum (MIM), and now at the Art Gallery of the University of Concepción, but continuously thinking about the origins, the symbology of history, and working with clay, with soil. I have a strong link with soil. I was raised and have lived on farmland, the soil is integrating, something very special occurs between the soil and our hands, and that is why I began to work on magic and ancestral themes."

"These are personages we have inherited, they had meanings. Their names have something supernatural, like a magician's officiants. This is cartography to transcend."

My entire work is the salvage of magic; figure and horse are an excuse for showing the stirring instant."

How occurs the steady flow between hands and clay. . .

"In and outside, my hands blend clay and kiln and generate untemporal shapes. Everything is made by hand without fine tools. The eyes are graphic signals or cavities. The paste I utilize comes from Spain in 8 to 10-kilo pouches. I use it because it is the most adequate one for me and is easy to obtain. It is clay mixed with chamotte."

And how is the firing process itself?

"Low fire at first at kiln mouth and then one treats the piece with a pigment, salt, sulfur oxide, and observes the fire signals. How lucky one is to work with the four elements: Earth, Water, Air and Fire! An extraordinary bond arises, streaks, fading, creating many shapes. A person's hat in the kiln is a pattern of sparkles and opacities. As regards the horses.... They are healing, and are used as therapeutic means, because they are able to communicate themselves with human beings at fine level. My motivation is to express myself by feelings, a matter that is part of my language with ceramics. Close your eyes and touch the horse, you stroke the curve, the smoothness. Volume and color jointly with the research of smoke and the scent of firing are stimulating."

What does one feel when all is done and one's hands put down the work?

"I let the figures dry during fifteen days and then I take them to my kiln in Llolleo, while respecting the materials' rhythm and times during the first and the second firing. I am now in this cycle and afterwards I shall continue researching and never lose the ludic feeling of discovery, of wonder. I love the unknown, I am fearless, and daring as regards the materiality that never lets one alone with what is stored in one's memory."

Santiago de Chile, May 2008



Keka Ruiz-Tagle

Education

Pontifical Catholic University Of Chile
 Southern Methodist University; School Of Art;
 Dallas; Texas.
 2004 Started to study ceramics at HUARA
 HUARA ACADEMY OF CLAY with Ruth Krauskopf

教育背景

智利天主教大学
 美国得州达拉斯 南卫理公会大学艺术学院
 2004年起开始在“瓦拉瓦拉陶艺工作室”跟露丝·克劳斯科普夫学习陶艺

Solo Exhibitions 个展

1988 Galería del Cerro (Santiago, Chile).
 1990 Galería Arte Actual (Santiago, Chile).
 1994 Galería Plástica Nueva, (Santiago, Chile).
 Messengers of Time.

Group Exhibitions 群展

2000 Queens Wharf, (Wellington, New Zealand).
 Emotions Across the Ocean.
 2002 Galería Isabel Aninat, (Santiago, Chile).
 Dream-Ketcher.

2005 Galería Isabel Aninat Santiago, Chile,
 Cartography for Transcendence
 Museo Regional de Rancagua, Rancagua,
 Chile
 Universidad de Talca, Talca, Chile
 MAC Museo de Arte Moderno de Valdivia
 Museo de Arte Moderno Carlos Merida,
 Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala
 2006 Museo de Bellas Artes Santiago, Chile
 Giros de Magia, Loops off Magic
 Museo Interactivo Mirador MIM, Santiago,
 Chile Giros de Magia, Loops off Magic
 2008 Pinacoteca de la Universidad de
 Concepción, Concepción Chile, Giros de
 Magia, Loops off Magic
 Galería Arteespacio, Santiago Chile, El
 Color del Fuego, The Color of the Fire.

Collections 收藏

Museo de Artes Visuales, LAN, American
 Airlines, Nestlé, Masisa, CCU, Asociación
 Chilena de Seguridad, Clínica San
 Sebastián, Editorial Tiempo Presente,
 Laboratoria Maver, among others.

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