

An Exhibition of Contemporary Ceramics

24th April - 15th May 2015

Under Construction

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Gallery Art & Soul

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Anjani Khanna | Nausheen Bari | Neha Pullarwar Gawand | Rashi Jain | Shayonti Salvi | Tejashree Sagvekar | Veena Chandran



Under Construction

Artists drawn to clay as a medium of expression, usually begin their journey immersed in the material and in the processes involved in transforming raw clay into fired ceramics to express ideas and intuitions in visual and tactile form. Clay reflects the immediacy of the moment fixed for eternity through a baptism by fire. Soft and plastic, it registers the mark of the artist's intent immediately. However clay is capricious and mastery of material and the fire usually comes with heartbreak, hard work, and patience. Clay will not be rushed and in an age of virtual reality and instant gratification clay work is an anachronism. Each piece has to be nurtured and grown with a careful attention to timing, guiding certain artistic choices. The fire too demands much awareness, and its effects cannot be completely controlled, adding an element of the unknown and a sense of wonder when the work emerges.

For the artists in this exhibition, the encounter with clay has been transformative. The practice of making clay suitable for one's work, creating form, and firing it becomes a metaphor for process that the artist undergoes internally as she grows both in her work and in life. As an artist moulds clay, so she is transformed by her work. Her work and her life is "Under Construction".

In this exhibition the artists explore the conceptual, narrative, formal and spiritual. Veena Chandran trained as an architect, and is influenced by the material she works with, as also by the natural world from which it is hewn. Cracked parched earth, emulated by stretched and cracking clay finds form in sculptural

work. Clay provides meaning to Tejashree Sagvekar and she immerses herself in the myriad possibilities it holds. Shayonti Salvi uses clay to elaborate spiritual concerns and philosophical conundrums, inspired variously by the sea and nature. For Nausheen Bari all of life is a celebration. Through her work Nausheen hopes to express this joy in the dance of life she surrenders to. Rashi Jain explores through figurative sculpture, the one-ness of the universe. Blurring boundaries between the human, the animal and the vegetative inform her work. Neha Pullarwar celebrates the simple organic constructions in the insect world and brings into question the human desire to construct in mortar and steel, where oftentimes such human constructed structures are colonised by insects, creating new dimensions, hitherto unimagined. Anjani Khanna investigates the seeming duality that confronts her and through her figurative sculpture playfully comments on the contradictions inherent in the process of being alive and the negotiation essential to keep afloat.

The artists in this show have varying preoccupations and work in disparate situations. Some operate from urban studios, while others work in more rural settings. But all are married to their medium as the most appropriate to give visual voice to their concerns.

Anjani Khanna

Alibag

April 2015

Anjani Khanna

"I've looked at life from both sides now

From up and down and still somehow

*Its life's illusions I recall
I really don't know life at all."*

.... Joni Mitchell

A random line from a song, a fleeting image as I walk down a street, a conversation with friends, an article read, a book loved, a film enjoyed, drives through the countryside, a feeling, or an idea that floats around in my head - find their way into my work. My "yalis" as I refer to my figurative sculpture begin to live for me and tell their stories in their living. Their stories reflect my search as they grapple with the modern and the ancient, the personal and the universal, the male and the female, the east and the west, the spiritual and the profane, the rational and the intuitive, the animal and the human, the religious and the secular, and the political and the non partisan.



Anjani studied ceramics with Ray Meeker at the Golden Bridge Pottery in Pondicherry. She has also worked with Ray Finch at the Winchcombe Pottery in the UK. Anjani has attended residencies in the US, Europe, China and in India. Most recently, she was part of the group who made work for the Indian exhibit at the international ceramics museum in Fuping, China. She is a recipient of a senior fellowship from the Government of India. Her work has been exhibited in India and abroad. She also has a degree in Natural Sciences from the University of Cambridge, UK and works at her studio in Alibag, across the Mumbai harbour.



*Everyone is first, on seconds we couldn't agree | 2015
wood fired stoneware | each approx 40cm x 15cm x 10cm*



*Waiting for Sam Chung | 2015 | ceramic
wood, brass, shells and nylon cord | 74cm x 65cm x 30cm*

Nausheen Bari



Nausheen has been a furnishing consultant for thirteen years and a yoga teacher for six. Clay found her in 2010 and it's a fascinating partnership. Like clay, she says, she is forever being created and broken down- always under construction.

*"The circle of life, with a twist. Infinite loop.
This series of work began from these questions:
Where do I begin and where do I end?
The WHOLE with a hole. Space within for life to flow through.
Or is the outside where life is? What is here and what is left out?
Looking for boundaries I find none.
Outside voices say toe the line, don't overstep; follow the known path.
All Life says there are no boundaries, only infinite possibilities.
So I go with the flow of life.
Rejoicing in the "Dervish's dance of life. Losing oneself is finding oneself."*



Dervish | 2013 | wood fired ceramic | 40cm x 20cm x 20cm



Infinite loop | 2015 | Anagama fired ceramic | 30cm x 15cm x 15cm

Neha Pullarwar
Gawand



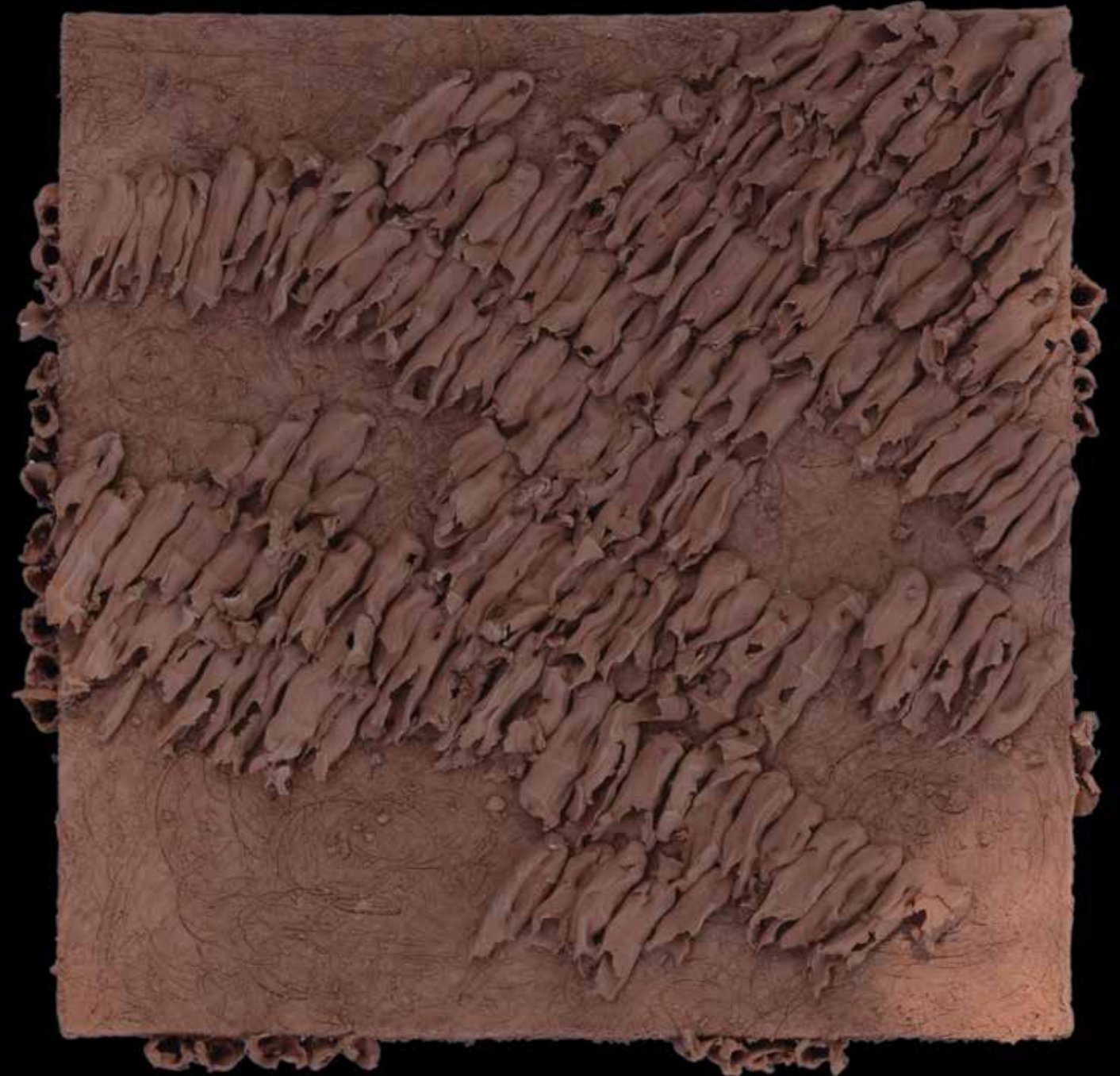
Neha studied ceramics at the Sir. J. J. School of Arts, Mumbai and graduated with a first class in 2005 and also earned an Indo-Swiss scholarship. She studied advance techniques with Ray Meeker and Deborah Smith at Golden Bridge Pottery, Pondicherry. Her first solo show “my-r-me-d—rome” was held at The Bajaj Art Gallery, Mumbai in March 2012. Neha has participated in several group shows and was recently awarded a junior fellowship by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. She has a studio in Alibag.

Some universes are constructed in order to destroy. And others, destroy in the process of construction. Neha’s world of images is based on erosion and shelter; a finely articulated world full of anthills! It is as though they could invade human territories in order to overwhelm and overpower human worlds with their fragile silences. Strange, organic images of homes of ants and insects hang perilously from the pithy architecture that we devise with human fallibility. From the armpits of these walls, hang Neha’s works and in a cosmic sense, these are works of an absent ant which, notwithstanding its frail, tentative nature, may oust an established empire of mortar and steel.

- Anahite Contractor , Art critic and writer



Area 2 sq inch | 2014 | terracotta, cotton, found box
10cm x 10cm x 8cm



Home Sweet Home | 2015 | terracotta | 28cm x 28cm

Rashi Jain



Rashi studied ceramics at the Golden Bridge Pottery, Pondicherry, under the guidance of Ray Meeker and Antra Sinha in 2007. She also trained at The Valley School, Bangalore, The Ruskin School of Art, U.K and with Sandeep Manchekar. Rashi has apprenticed with various artists, participated in residencies with Indo Korean and Lalit Kala Akademi and exhibited in solo, group and international shows. She co-founded with Anjani Khanna, the Studio Potters' Market in Mumbai at the Kala Ghoda Arts Festival. She has engaged in community based arts and vocational training programs, with traditional potter communities, from Kumbharwada, Mumbai and the Northeast of India. She has documented these communities through collaborative short films ('Clay-Station' and 'Postcard from Kumbharwada'). Rashi is passionate about teaching ceramics and works at her studio- Studio Karva in Mumbai.

When I express the creative process, I work on bridging my intuitive thoughts, with symbols that arise in my inward being, and flow through my hand in figurative sculptures.

Nature is a strong inspiration. The natural rhythm of the earth, the relationship between the inner and outer world, the ever changing but constant core, find expression in mystical figures.

The advaita (oneness) manifests in duality. The oneness is achieved through integration. I see in each form the interdependent nature of the cosmos, personified through a merging of elements. In my quest for that final expression of the oneness of all being, I follow a symbolic route through pagan imagery, impressions gathered from temple architecture and dualistic juxtaposition.



*There is a hole in my bucket | 2013 | glazed porcelain
28.5cm dia x 8cm*



There is a hole in my bucket | 2013 | glazed porcelain | 26.5cm x 26.5cm x 8cm

Shayonti Salvi

Within our perceived realm of existence, we are part of a constant cycle of creation, destruction and rejuvenation, which I find very intriguing.

That nature is in a constant state of creation is not new to us, but the extent of perfection within that creation - the divine proportion, the Phi - is one of the most amazing phenomena. That every one of us, and everything that

surrounds us, is a product of this divine proportion at play, without any one orchestrating the process, is a miracle that we are still not able to, nor ever will fathom. In our limited understanding, we have coined many names for it... I simply call it 'Nature'.

And it is this very 'Nature' that destroys too, at unfathomable scales. This destruction by wind, waves, dust, flames allows the possibility of exploring the completion of the cycle, with rejuvenation, almost another kind of creation. When we attempt to rejuvenate an object, we try to give it a new lease of life, and in this process do a minor service to our rapidly dwindling resources.

It is these three aspects that I explore in this series of work. It is my constant endeavour, to bring about the divine proportion in my work. The same nature that is so integral to the art of creating ceramic, within the kiln, fire, earth and air at play, transforms or destroys the work into intense visual displays. And then it is my job to rejuvenate what emerges. I find beauty in the destroyed forms because nature has added its craftsmanship to them too....

... For aren't we under the same emotional process ourselves? Being created, destroyed and constantly rejuvenating our fragile mental makeup? Constantly Under Construction..."



Shayonti, an interior designer by profession, worked in Bombay for seven years with two prominent architects. The birth of her two children proved to be a catalyst, urging her to shift professions and follow her dream of being an artist. She has trained at the Golden Bridge Pottery, Pondicherry, under Ray Meeker, Deborah Smith and Cory Brown. She has also earned a Diploma in Ceramics from the L.S. Raheja School of Art, Bombay. She currently works in her Bombay studio, where she creates sculptures, pots and teaches her students to love clay.



Kowrie | 2015 | Anagama fired stoneware | 27cm x 13cm



Barnacle | 2014 | Soda fired stoneware | 27cm x 13cm dia

Tejashree
Sagvekar



Tejashree has done a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Ceramics from the Sir J. J. School of Arts and has received a national scholarship for junior artists from the Government of India. She was in charge of the ceramics studio at the L.S Raheja School of Art, Mumbai and has done a course at Golden Bridge Pottery with Ray Meeker and Cory Brown. She has participated in various group shows and received several awards.

I strive to create a harmony in growth and endless time while inventing surfaces in my art work. The interior and exterior of an object suggest the surface below that is not visible in the physical form of clay. Finding what clay wants to be and bringing out its best has always been a challenge for me. My current work explores bricks which are an important constituent in construction. In the Bricks series I vigorously tear, pound, and peel surfaces while giving attention to the form of a single brick.



*There is a crack in everything and that's how the light gets in
2015 | Soda fired stoneware | 10cm x 10cm*



Brick | 2015 | Smoke fired earthenware | 64cm x 64cm

Veena Chandran

I see the world in lines and planes. A mish-mash of shapes interplaying with each other, coming together to create a tangential universe. This is where I dwell, where I sculpt and mould clay and strive to bring sense and order to my life. I bend with the wind but stay strong in my ideas and beliefs.

In this universe, clay feeds my soul.

A main source of my inspiration has always been nature. It keeps surprising me, how the same tree can inspire me over and over again in various contexts.

I strive to re-create the earthy tones I find in soil and rocks. The intricate network of cracks on the surface of dry parched earth enamours me. Tree branches and leaves; play, arch and curve in mysterious and magical ways.

Using nature itself as my medium in the form of clay, I try to express these everyday visuals. This is where I also start to express my most innate thoughts and desires; and combine my inspiration and Me in the work I create. In that moment a part of me gets captured in clay and finds a voice.



Veena is academically an architect and a ceramist by soul. Trained under Ray Meeker and Deborah Smith she took to her calling and set up “Studio Farishtey” a ceramic space with a gas kiln. Apart from working and teaching pottery at her studio, Veena also teaches at an architecture college. She has been a part of a number of group and solo exhibitions in India and abroad and on an annual sabbatical makes it a point to visit Golden Bridge Pottery, Pondicherry to be a part of various Anagama and wood firings.



Groggy Podgy || 2015 | Anagama fired stoneware
31cm x 26cm x 21cm



Circumvolution | 2015 | Anagama fired stoneware
46cm x 18cm x 44cm



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UNDER
CONSTRUCTION