

PATRICIA CASSONE



Anagama,
yakishime,
ido chawan

Nearly 30 years of working in ceramic art ... Freedom has always been a guiding force for my work. Freedom is a direction to maintain with the pleasure, the love to create with clay as sole guide.

The first person who enabled me to feel this is RYOJI KOIE in Japan, 20 years ago already ... I had the opportunity to be one of ten who participated in this first official visit of meetings between French potters and Japanese potters in 1995. This Japan, I had dreamed about ... for such a long time, doubtless since my last life as a Japanese potter, as my Japanese ceramist friends say jokingly, so much my ties seem obvious and sensitive.

It was thus the beginning of my journeys in Japan and then

About my work: "Painting with fire in the kiln" (Anagama)

invitations to have exhibitions, to participate in workshops, to stay in residence, to live in Japan ... After 2003, when I was invited to participate in the international workshop IWCAT, in 2005 I stayed six months in residence at Tokoname, working in a studio lent by the Art Nagoya University, which was supported by ceramic artists SUGIE JUNPEI and SHIBATA MASAOKI. I had the kind fortune to stay in the Japanese family which had already welcomed me two years previously. In 2005, I started a project about the Japanese technique, SHINO. I practiced this technique for several years in France. This led to the invitation to take part in 3 exhibitions, one of which was the World Fair AICHI EXPO 2005.

I worked, fired in three friends' anagama kilns, I also helped in



above - Anagama, porcelain yakishime, curved & transparency
 opposite page - Anagama, porcelain yakishime, guinomis, curved

the construction of three others and finally I worked to set up nine exhibitions in six months in Kasama, Osaka, Kanazawa, Seto and several at Tokoname ...

After that, I became used to go in Japan for exhibitions, and this year, 2016, I was again in Japan for my exhibition in a Kyoto gallery near the Ginkakuji Temple. I also had the great pleasure to visit RYOJI KOIE Sensei again and other friends including Chikako and Masamichi YOSHIKAWA, Yuichi HIRANO at TOKONAME and many ceramist friends all over Japan: MASAHO ONO at MASHIKO, with whom I met SHINSAKU HAMADA twenty years after my first visit; at KASAMA: my friends TERAMOTO, TSUTSUI, ITO, KIKUCHI, MORITA, friends of 20 years, at SETO: SHOZO MICHIKAWA with whom I built my anagama in France and whom I very often invite to my studio to teach workshops, at BIZEN: friends MATONO and SO ISEZAKI, JUN ISEZAKI's son,

at IGA finally, I met YO TANIMOTO.

Japan is thus the backbone of my life as a ceramist with its strong friendships which improve my inspiration but are far away from any imitation.

For the last 5 years, I have also developed and built ties with Korea and Taiwan, which have created strong connections with Korean ceramic artists each time I've been invited to Korea at the international CHASABAL TEABOWL Festival and with Taiwanese friends during exhibitions and symposiums.

And new links with China announce future beautiful adventures ... Thus Asia will have been the hub which created links all over the world because quite naturally these friendships gave birth to others all over the world and I greet here my friends in Argentina, USA/Canada, India, Australia, New Zealand, and Europe of course...

So presented here is one of the facets of my potter's personality: ceramic friendship shared around the world.

One other part of my ceramic life is WOOD FIRING.

This choice to fire in a wood kiln made me cross France from Provence to Limousin to set up my second studio at LA VALETTE, where two generations of potters had already lived and had fired in a noborigama kiln, which was worn and after some years using it, I decided to take it down to build in its place an anagama with the help of SHOZO MICHIKAWA ..

This kiln named by Shozo SHIZENGA-MA, the "natural kiln", became the essential companion that gives me the wonderful results about which I had dreamed, especially YAKISHIME porcelains (natural ash results), without glaze or engobe, which come inside the kiln bare, only biscuit, and go out of it dressed in real paints which the fire likes to paint for my ever-renewed delight. The colours obtained, purple, orange, pink, depend mainly on the quality of the ashes produced during the firing and the moment when they are burnt.

But the process is not so heavenly...

Wood firing is extremely hard work. From the time that the wood is delivered through to the moment the works are taken out of the kiln, there is an incredible amount of effort required to cut and stack the wood, to make, glaze the shinos, stack about 500 pieces and stoke the kiln with 3 tons of wood for 5 days ... it's not the easiest technique of making pots.

Nevertheless, the rewards can be spectacular and there is no other way to fire pots that results in surfaces with the depth and richness of high temperature wood-fired ceramics. Not every pot is a success of course ... wood-firing is an intensive way to fire and things may go wrong. Every wood-firing is a new opportunity for me to connect with my kiln and to give birth. Opening the kiln is always a thrill because I'm sometimes stunned by works. In my mind, these works have been chosen to pass through the ages ... Ceramics can last for a long, long time after me.

I need to work in two directions: I love tea and learnt a lot about it, so I work on teaware (Japan-China-Korea).

So, for Chinese Tea I use porcelain clay and for Korean Tea and Japanese Tea, I love to create new stoneware clays for yakishime and shino chawan teabowls. For many years, I researched shino recipes which I found satisfactory for Anagama or Feller wood-kiln firing. I produce my original stoneware clay by mixing clays with wild feldspars and sand that I collect around my workshop, in the countryside. Most of my works are thrown on the wheel, generally shaped, sculpted, cut out with some tools which I have created for my needs.

The yakishime firing (in the anagama woodkiln) of rough clays, which I prepare for each tree according to a special recipe, accentuates the traces of the origins with the firings, which last for 4 to 6 days. For each tree, the



So I feel responsible about works I put on Earth. I have to choose the best that will stand the test of time. So I usually break the others.

The third point concerning my potter's life is that

colours are the result of the unique fusion of the chosen clays and the ashes of the wood, hard or tender, burnt at specific moments of the firing. The season, the moon, the quality of the wood and the enthusiasm of the "kiln-feeders" do the rest ...



Patricia Cassone

Teaware and sculptures mainly woodfired in an anagama built with help of SHOZO MICHIKAWA. She is known for her shino stoneware in the Japanese tradition and, more recently, with porcelain as yakishime (natural ashes) woodfiring in the anagama. She has also experimented with Oribe. Over the past 20 years, Patricia has regularly visited Japan, where her work is exhibited in numerous galleries. 2005 Artist Residence in JAPAN from May to October. She exhibited at the Aichi Expo 2005 - the UNIVERSAL EXPO - Seto Art Museum in Japan. Exhibitions in Kasama (Ibaraki pref.), Kanazawa, Osaka, Seto and Tokoname. Since 2011 she has been invited to exhibit at the International Mungyeong CHASABAL Tea Bowl Festival in South Korea.

Her work is permanently on show in JAPAN: Gallery ISOMURA - Tokoname – Aichi pref. She also manages the CERAMIC ART CENTER PROMETER, for professional potters, teachers and good practitioners – masterclass only with international ceramic artists. www.ceramique-prometer.com

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