

Karin Putsch-Grassi

Florence, Italy

Inspiration for my ceramic pieces comes from Tuscan architecture, especially old Tuscan buildings such as the towers of San Gimignano or the Leaning Tower of Pisa, old farms, and even used machinery.

While I was studying the towers of San Gimignano, I became fascinated with the different layers of bricks. To emphasize that surface on a clay vessel, I used a cut-and-stretch technique. The technique consists of making incisions in the wet clay surface and then pushing the form out from the inside while throwing.

The inspiration from Tuscan farms led me to an old plowshare used in agriculture. What I really liked about that tool was not only the shape, but also the rusty texture, which I achieved by adding metal to the clay, scratching the surface, and unevenly spraying a dry glaze on top.



Above left: Photo of the towers of San Gimignano. **Above right:** *Towers*, 19½ in. (50 cm) in height, wheel-thrown stoneware, fired to 2336°F (1280°C), 2012. **Bottom left:** Photo of a plowshare. **Bottom right:** *Plowshare*, 21½ in. (55 cm) in length, handbuilt stoneware, fired to 2336°F (1280°C), 2014.

