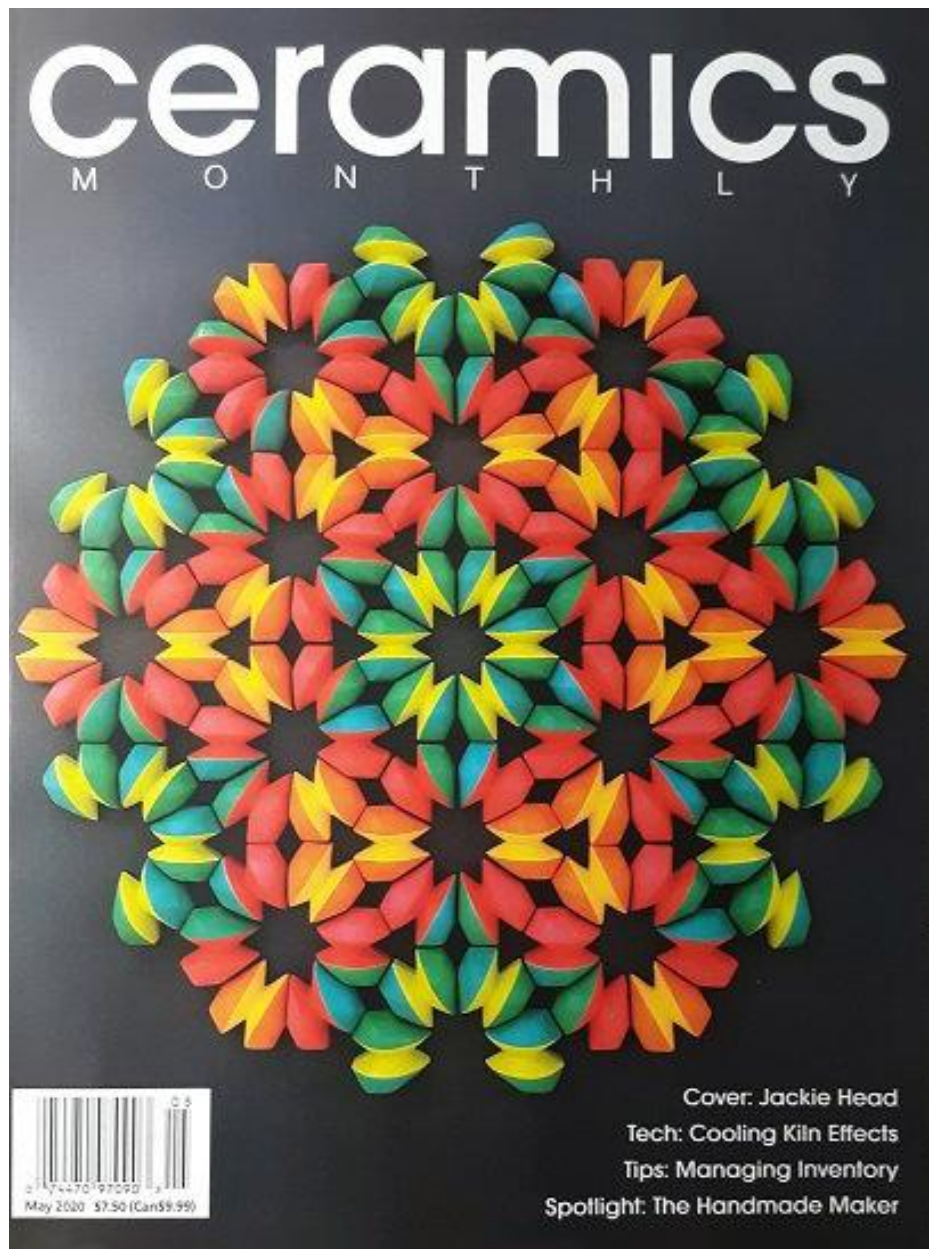


Interview in the American ceramics magazine Ceramics Monthly, May issue 2020, page 51.

The interview was made as part of the Emerging Artist selection 2020.



DIANA BUTUCARIU

VENDELSÖ, SWEDEN

Ceramics Monthly: What excites you about the field of ceramics?

Diana Butucariu: As a ceramic artist, the palpability of ceramic materials inspires me, as does the fact that you follow the material like a companion through all its life stages. I love how deeply connected the material is to nature, and to human history, and how we keep finding new uses for it, in medicine, science, and technology.

I enjoy the communal aspects of working with ceramics, like building a kiln together and working in shifts to complete a firing. When working with ceramics, sometimes you really need the help of your colleagues to move or process a big, heavy piece, and I enjoy this feeling of common achievement.

There is also the excitement of working with fire, seeing how it transforms the clay. You can try to anticipate the changes that will occur during the firing, but the end results are always a surprise. The fired ceramic object ceases to be a malleable material and becomes a document; looking at the finished piece, you can retrace the steps it took to get to that stage through the imprints of fingers and tools.

CM: What do you think is the role of a maker within our current culture and how do you think you contribute to it?

DB: In my artistic process, I make sculptural objects using different techniques from craft fields. Diversity in materials, textures, and colors creates the feeling of the pieces being in flux, rather than resting, and invites the viewer into a dialog about identity, cultural differences, traditions, and social norms.

I think the role of a maker is to slow down time, make people pause and connect to an object, and hopefully question some of their assumptions about life. To me, being a ceramic artist means using clay in any constructive way, whether creating teapots or making floors and houses from earth and clay. At this point in time, I feel that it is important for ceramic artists to experiment with new techniques and technologies, and search for more ecological ways of living using ceramic materials, perhaps in collaboration with researchers in different fields.

The world is so full of things, and with everything I make, I feel a certain guilt for adding another object to the planet. Lately, I'm working more with the pieces in my head than with actually making them. When I'm actually in the studio creating, the pieces become compositions combining different ideas, making it feel almost like it is another artist making the finished piece. I have many ideas for pieces that I don't know if I will ever have time to realize, so I keep working on them in my mind to not forget about them.

1 Diana Butucariu's *Trying to Connect I and II*, to 27½ in. (70 cm) in height, stoneware, fired in oxidation to 2282°F (1250°C), 2017. 2 Diana Butucariu's *Templum IV*, 23½ in. (60 cm) in height, stoneware, fired in oxidation to 2264°F (1240°C), 2018.



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