

FIRED UP

JANE JERMYN



2. Columba chapel display

What began as a casual conversation between two Kathryns on the Island of Paxos in 2018, has morphed into an ongoing collaboration between ceramic artists from Ireland and Greece which included concurrent exhibitions on the Island of Paxos and The Courthouse Arts Centre in Tinahely – surely a first!

After last year's, very successful, exhibition on Paxos, the Irish iteration took place at two venues this year, as well as a new exhibition on Paxos and a new venue in Athens in the Museum of Modern Ceramics.

This year's series of exhibitions opened in the magnificent setting of St Carthage's Cathedral, another first. The ancient Cathedral acted as a wonderful backdrop to the modern ceramics which were exhibited in three areas, St Columba's Peace Chapel, (Images 1, 2 & 3); the West End where they shared the display area with various artifacts, including carved stones dating back to the 9th & 11th Centuries (4) and the Cotton Library (5) which is not normally open to the public, but as the exhibition was invigilated at all times, there was the bonus of being able to see the collection of ecclesiastical books dating back to 1542. The exhibition was a huge success attracting a large number of people to visit the cathedral, resulting in the sale of over 40 pieces.



1. View into St Columba's Chapel with Haroula Koropouli, Eileen Singleton, Jane Jermyrn

3. Work by Haroula Koropouli, Marcus O'Mahony, Giorgos Vavatsis & Ann McBride



The next opening was in The Old Schoolhouse Gallery on Paxos, this time three of us attended the opening, myself, Isobel Egan and Ann McBride. Once again, we are very grateful to Culture Ireland who granted funds towards to costs of transportation and travel. The exhibition was opened by the Irish Ambassador to Greece, Iseult Fitzgerald and was a very crowded and busy evening with a number of sales. Musicians Donal O'Connor & Muireann Nic Amhlaoibh serenaded us in advance



4. The West End with work by Sinead Fagan, Bernadette Tuite, Giorgos Vavatsis



7. Ilias Christopoulos, Haroula Koropouli, Eileen Singleton, Bernadette Tuite, Jane Jermyn, Eileen Singleton & Sinead Fagan

When I saw an open call for exhibition for 2024/25, I applied for *Fired Up* to be exhibited there and was delighted that the Director, Kieran O'Toole thought it would be a great idea. The final exhibition will open in the Museum of Modern ceramics in Athens at the end of October.

This venture has been a wonderful opportunity to showcase Greek ceramics in Ireland and Irish ceramics in Greece. Four of the Greek artists featured are members of the International Academy of Ceramics – Ilias Christopoulos, Haroula Koropouli, Iosifina Kosma & Giorgos Vavatsis, the other artists were Manos Kalamenios, Ifigenia Tsiro & Mirka Drapaniotou.

Ilias Christopoulos is a very active member of the ceramic community in Greece. He co-founded, with Haroula Koropouli the ceramic artists association "Kerameon Ighi" and has shown widely internationally. His work is often inspired by traditional pottery forms including the *Pyxida* series, a series based on traditional ceramic jewellery boxes (9)

Haroula Koropouli's work has a very organic quality and her series of bowls are often worked using a small hammer echoing traditional copper ware. She also runs and teaches at a ceramic workshop in Patra.

Iosifina Kosma makes intricate twisting sculptures. She has taken part in many international symposia and exhibited widely. (10)

of their performance as part of this year's Irish Wings Festival. (6, 7 & 8).

The second opening in Ireland took place in the Courthouse Arts Centre in Tinahely and was opened by Liz McManus. Back in the 1980's Liz had been instrumental in saving the Courthouse from destruction. I'd been the secretary of the committee that worked with her to save it from neglect by Wicklow Co Council. It will celebrate its 30th Anniversary in 2026.

5. Cotton Library with work by Marcus O'Mahony & Kate Standen displayed on Adele Astaire's trunk.



Giorgos Vavatsis is probably the best known of the Greek artists. He has recently won 1st prize in the Biennale of Contemporary Ceramics (BCK) in Santorini. He founded “Hakah”, a ceramics design company and runs a gallery “6 exi - Contemporary Ceramics” in Thessalonki. He only uses natural or organic glazes. He exhibited a number from the series “Mineral Diaries” which show the reactions of various minerals with the clay bodies.



10. *Flow*, Iosifina Kosma

Ifigenia Tsirou works with Giorgos Vavatsis in “Hakah” and co-founded the “6 exi - Contemporary Ceramics” gallery. She exhibits regularly in Greece and France. Ifigenia and Giorgos travelled to Ireland for the opening of the exhibition in Lismore in May. Mirka Drapaniotou’s makes two distinct series of work – the black, more traditional, wheel thrown geometric forms are inspired by the Archaic era and are in strong contrast to her playful *Dancing Flower* series which hark back to the use of textiles, her first area of practice. (11). Manos Kalamenios live in London and received MA from the RCA in 2016. He exhibits widely and has received many commissions – he works mainly with slip-cast porcelain.



8. General view of The Old Schoolhouse exhibition

The Irish artists taking part are Ann McBride, Bernadette Tuite, Eileen Singleton, Isobel Egan, Jane Jermyn, Kathleen Standen, Marcus O’Mahony & Sinead Fagan. The Paxos iteration of the exhibition moves to the Museum of Modern Ceramics for two weeks in early November 2024 and will bring this collaboration to a close. It has been quite an adventure.

“Fired Up” Ceramics Exhibitions 2024 - 25th May-22nd June, St Carthage’s Cathedral Lismore / 5th July – 31st Aug, The Old Schoolhouse, Paxos / 11th- 25th Aug, Courthouse Arts Centre, Tinahely / 31st Oct – 16th Nov, The Museum of Modern Ceramics, Athens.

9. *Pyxida* series, Ilias Christopoulos



11. *Dancing Flower*, Mirka Drapaniotou

