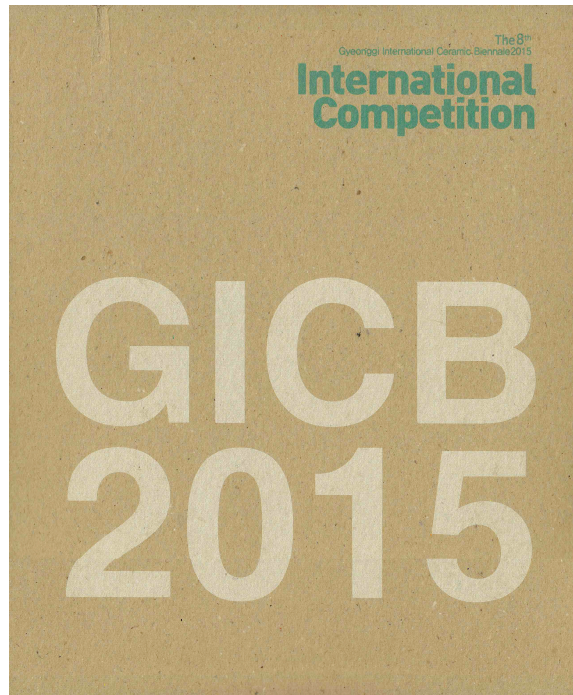


Relevant reviews, articles or catalogues #3

2015 Exhibition catalog *The 8th Gyeonggy international Ceramic Biennale*, International competition GICB 2015, Icheon, South Korea. Featured artwork: *Mach II (Honorable Mention)*.



2018 Article 2nd *Latvia International Ceramics Biennale* by Valentins Petjko, magazine *New Ceramics*, 2018/5, p.38-41. Featured artwork: *Always with Me (Bronze Prize)*.

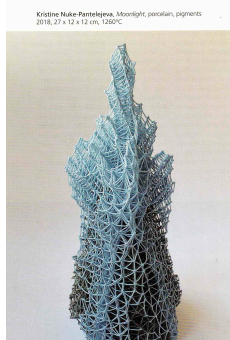


2nd Latvia International Ceramics Biennale

Recently in July, Latvia was hosting its second international ceramics biennale. Through a series of public events, it told a polyphonic story of contemporary ceramics in Latvia and gave a glimpse into ceramic tendencies and developments on the global stage. To celebrate the ceremony of launch on the three Baltic states, the biennale programme

MARTINSONS AWARD – International Ceramics Competition

BY VALENTINS PETJKO



Kristine Nake-Panttejeva, *Moonglight*, porcelain, pigments, 2018, 27 x 12 x 12 cm, 1280°C



Kaspars Geiduks, *Ligote / Nest*, porcelain, salt, wood firing, 2018, 26 x 47 x 95 cm, 1280°C

Featured exhibitions of contemporary ceramics from neighbouring Lithuania and Estonia. By established tradition, a group show of Latvian contemporary ceramics was held along with a range of individual projects that talked about remarkable representatives of Latvian and international ceramic art.

The central event of the Latvia International Ceramics Biennale is the international juried exhibition, the MARTINSONS AWARD. This year, it drew applications from nearly 600 artists, which an international panel of judges narrowed down to 100. Many-one of the selected works successfully reached Latvia and featured in the exhibition, representing 29 countries.

Much the same and humors, ceramics has undergone a long and complex evolution. By commanding all of nature's forces, people have learnt to harness clay. If not bend it to their will. Every potter, artist and even child who, either intentionally or not, picks up a lump of clay, starts to build

a dialogue with this material, trying to understand it and coax it into submission. By looking at a ceramics exhibition, we can see an amazing diversity of relationships between ceramic artists and their material. They are as different as the languages that shape these conversations or the cultures and traditions that frame them.

The Western ritualist mind often compels artists to create constructive and conceptual works where it is incumbent upon the author to dominate the medium and shape it into a carefully calculated form that emerges from a negatively conceived, emotionally felt or imagined idea or conceptual framework. Meanwhile, the Eastern artist is more inclined to reverent and respect the material, surrender to its dictate and highlight its idiosyncrasies, which helps the creator convey an idea that is born in harmony with the material. Creativity, no artist is or ever will be an advocate of just one model of relationship. Artists always look for common grounds,

seeking and achieving excellence through a series of sophisticated experiments.

In present-day art, one often hears about interdisciplinary approaches and techniques in the organic material-art-interpreter communication. The same is fully applicable to ceramics. Increasingly, it begins to use previously uncharacteristic forms of expression, creating more or less successful synthetic cross-disciplinary works of art, which result in performances, dynamic installations etc. With countless enthusiasts, ceramic artists experiment with physical and chemical properties of matter, using unimaginable combinations of materials to embody insights drawn from the depths of their imaginations. And yet, every artist remains connected to the potter's trade, which, either as a force of the human collective unconscious or merely as a pleasant and fascinating pastime, now and again takes one back to a wheel-thrower or shaped vessel as the basic form for the artist's conceptual expression.



Juta Rindina, *50% Life* with a figure, stoneware, porcelain, porcelain foil, different clays, glazes, 2018, 20 x 45 x 23, 1260°C



Sara Dario, *Madrigal*, porcelain, photo serigraphy, 2017, 23 x 29 x 29 cm, 1280°C

All these diverse and different schools, traditions and innovations are present in the MARTINSONS AWARD Competition at Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre. Some artists whose creative energies were most successful in capturing the hearts of the jury received special prizes.

The jury of the MARTINSONS AWARD International Ceramics Competition, namely Marie-Josée Comello (The Netherlands), artist and International Gold Prize

winner at MARTINSONS AWARD Competition in 2016, Dainis Pundurs (Latvia), artist, associated professor of Ceramics Department of Latvian Art Academy, and National Gold Prize winner at MARTINSONS AWARD Competition in 2016, Ilona Romule (Latvia), artist, and council member of International Academy of Ceramics, Pille Kaleviste (Estonia), artist, and board member of Estonian Ceramists' Association, Claudia Casali (Italy), art historian, and Director of the International Museum of Ceramics in Faenza, Anthony Stellaccio (USA), artist, curator, researcher, and Artaxis International Curator, and Valentins Petjko (Latvia), artist, and curator of the Biennale, worked hard and professionally while rating the submissions and selecting the winners. And finally at the opening ceremony of the exhibition at Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre, the jury panel gave out Gold (EUR 5,000), Silver (EUR 3,000) and Bronze (EUR 2,000) awards in national and international categories, distributing the total of EUR 20,000 in prize money.

The National Gold Award was won by Juta Rindina, a distinguished Latvian ceramicist, for her artwork *STILL LIFE WITH A FIGURE*. Creative work for Juta is always a joyful process and travels into her own imaginary world, full of fantastic creatures and corresponding shapes.

Silver and Bronze Awards in the National category went to young artists – Kristine Nake-Panttejeva and Kaspars Geiduks respectively. Kristine impressed the jury with her *MOONLIGHT*, a series of porcelain structures, sophisticatedly created within a meditative process. Meanwhile Kaspars Geiduks, a talented and promising Latvian artist, exhibited his woodfired porcelain *NESTS* on impressive concrete pedestals, than made an unforgettable impression.

Internationally, the jury was most impressed by the work of Akiko Taniguchi, a Japanese artist, who received the International Gold Award for her artwork *ENDLESS FLAT NIGHTS*. She expresses her philosophy by her work, which consists of connecting many small parts of clay, and means that "There is no big difference each day, but exactly the same day never comes again. There is no big difference each person, but there is no one who is exactly the same. Each presence has a little different atmosphere."

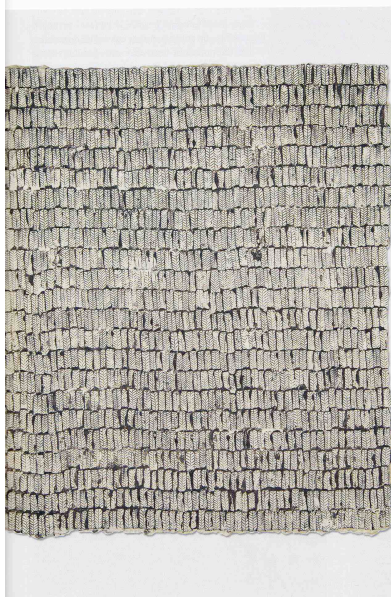
Silver Prize went to Sara Dario, an Italian artist, for her artwork *MADRIGAL*, which fully reflects her interest in photography and printing techniques not only in traditional ways, but mainly in non-conventional ones like photoengraving and photo-serigraphy printing on various materials and supports.

The International Bronze Prize was earned by Ruta Šipalyte from neighbouring Lithuania for her artwork *ALWAYS WITH ME*, an outstanding minimalist architectural sculpture.

The jury also gave honourable mentions to Andris Vezis (Latvia), Helmie Brugman (The Netherlands) and Kimie Ino (Japan). A special surprise was prepared by Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian companies who supply materials to ceramic artists. Elina Titane, an outstanding Latvian artist, received an honourable mention from the jury and a EUR 200 gift card from Keramservis Ltd. Estonian artist Annika Teder became the recipient of a EUR 200 gift card from Estonian company Kerako, and Lithuanian artist Rytas Jakimavičius received a EUR 200 gift card from Keramikams.lt.

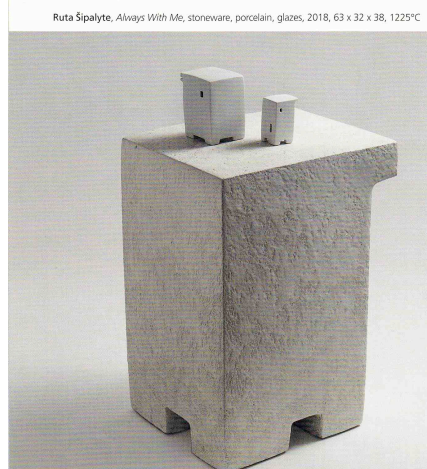
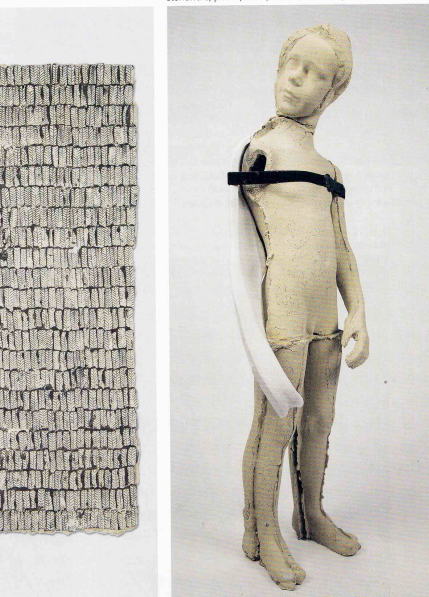
VALENTINS PETJKO
is a ceramist and the curator of the Biennale.

Akiko Taniguchi, *Endless Flat Nights*, clay, 2017, 4 x 30 x 33 cm, 1230°C



Kimie Ino, *Stretching*, porcelain, slip, 2018, 33 x 17 x 17, 1230°C

Helmie Brugman, *The Delicate Boy*, stoneware, plaster, 2018, 120 x 40 x 40 cm, 1220°C



Ruta Šipalyte, *Always With Me*, stoneware, porcelain, glazes, 2018, 63 x 32 x 38, 1225°C