

new CERAMICS

# new CERAMICS

The European Ceramics Magazine



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Exhibition Review, Cluj Ceramics Biennale, Neue Keramik Magazine, Germany, Vol. 2 2016

# CLUJ INTERNATIONAL CERAMICS BIENNALE

## The Second Edition

by Ting-Ju SHAO



Bahar Ari  
Dellenbach  
"Reflection"



Alicja Bulawka-Fankidejska  
"Into the wild"

photos courtesy of Cluj International Ceramics Biennale

The second edition of Cluj International Ceramics Biennale is a synergic series of cultural events which, besides their artistic component, is aiming for an extensive intercultural dialogue as well as creating educational awareness in visual arts by introducing the Romanian viewer to contemporary ceramic artists and contemporary practice in the field. The biennale is also getting national and international institutions to work together with the aim of creating an environment for ceramics in the city of Cluj.

The Ceramart Foundation of The Second Edition of International Ceramics Biennale made the above announcement, about what is regarded as one of the most important activities in Romanian ceramics field. This event took place from 9 October – 3 November 2015 in Cluj-Napoca Museum of Art.

By way of the internet, 7 jurors re-

viewed digital slides and artists' files of 195 pieces; 110 works from 37 countries were finally selected.

The panel of Bernd Pfannkuche (Germany), Cristina Popescu Russu (Romania), Ruriko Miyamoto (Japan) and Ting-Ju Shao (Taiwan), who were present on site at the competition, awarded 12 prizes among 110 pieces from 37 countries, chose 3 awards of highest recognition without ranking, which went to:

Alicja Bulawka-Fankidejska, Poland for *into the wild* (top right)

Bahar Ari Dellenbach, Turkey for *Reflection* (top left) and

*The Thinker*

by Valerie Zimany, United States

The work *Into the Wild* by Alicja Bulawka-Fankidejska is a subtle dialogue between two simple symmetrical shapes, different only in dimensions. Russu commented, "The dynamic vibrant surfaces,

which underline the shape, create a mystery mood, sending us back into prehistory. They talk about materials and fire, about power and protection."

In Bahar Ari Dellenbach's work *Reflection*, the two face to face portraits are elevated, as Russu said: "It becomes a message in itself, with a social subject. It is our ego reflected in the mirror, it is a critique and self-criticism, a reflection over what's happening in the world, but also within us."

Valerie Zimany brings audiences to mysterious feeling. Miyamoto commented on *The Thinker*, "We can see the current complex relationships of Eastern and Western cultures through history. She uses the Japanese overglaze technique. Distantly familiar archetypes from 1970s electronics and design, traditional textile patterns, vintage enamelled china and manga or graffiti overlap to create seem-

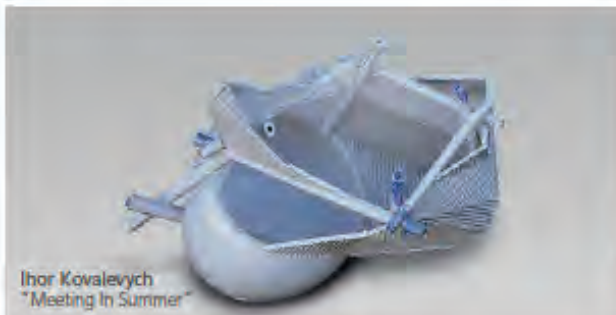




Agnes Husz, *Untitled*



Valerie Zimany  
*"The Thinker"*



Ihor Kovalevych  
*"Meeting In Summer"*



Brian Kakas  
*Architectonics #1*



Andrei Florian  
*"Relicvariul II"*

ingly improbable combinations."

Eight (8) Honourable Mentions went to Agnes Husz (Hungary), Andrei Florian (Romania), Brian Kakas (United State), Enver Güner (Turkey), Ihor Kovalevych (Ukraine), Irina Razumovskaya (Russian Federation), Ömür Tokgöz (Turkey), Simcha Even-Chen (Israel). And Young Artist Award went to Alupoai Andrei (Romania)

Miyamoto remarked on Agnes Husz's work *Untitled*, she thought she had great skill to control the work and the circling motion give us the hint of a cosmic nature.

Andrei Florian's work *"Relicvariul II"* is unified craft and sculpture. The work is made with painstaking care using thin clay, string like knitting.

*"Architectonics #1"* by Brian Kakas, is from a sculpture-architecture series inspired by nature. "The organic shape is counterbalanced with the geometrical

part. The profound blue gives strength to his shape and the graphic contour underlines its movement, rendering also a certain direction." (Comment by Russu.)

The four pieces placed together by Enver Güner, *"Together"* show audiences the contrary. Russu suggested the artistic expression dominates the industrial, suggesting that the pieces were just taken out of their moulds, with the flashings, become artistic, dynamic by repetition and solar.

Ihor Kovalevych using the three elements - cylinder, rectangular plane (with or without structures) and the sphere applied in his work *"Meeting In Summer"*, it is in a spontaneous ludic impulse, it is a game of architecture or architecture of the game all transposed in ceramics.

Irina Razumovskaya makes use of symbolic historical objects that incite the viewer to reflexion. "A simple utilitarian

object, perfectly fashioned, an artefact, raised on a higher level, where the viewer has access only through knowledge."

Ömür Tokgöz's work *"Technological and Primitive"* impressed by the simple sensitive and expressive shape of the porcelain.

As for Simcha Even-Chen's *"Folding in Motion"*, Miyamoto said the artist created motion by folding a thin clay slab. The organic forms have an extremely soft image by the property of low firing and the effect of the inside and the outside surface treatment.

The Second Edition of Cluj International Ceramics Biennale closed on November 3, 2015. It was a great success.

Ting-Ju Shao is a ceramist and author based in Taiwan. She is a member of I.A.C. Shao writes for international specialist art magazines. <http://web.me.com/shao36>

# exposure

for complete calendar listings  
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1 Valerie Zimany's *Hanazume Quartet* (detail), 13 in. (33 cm) in height, ceramic. 2 Yana Payusova's *Complications, Revolution series*, 18 in. (46 cm) in height, ceramic, 2017. 3 April D. Felipe's *Wade*, 15½ in. (39 cm) in length, porcelain, cotton thread, pastels, gold fringe, wood, 2018. 4 Lindsay Montgomery's *The Company of Wolves Charger*, 22 in. (56 cm) in length, press-molded earthenware, underglazes, stains, tin glaze, 2015. "Horror Vacui: Across the Margins," at Northern Clay Center ([www.northernclaycenter.org](http://www.northernclaycenter.org)) in Minneapolis, Minnesota, through November 3.



3



4





Horror Vacui Exhibition reception, Northern Clay Center, Minneapolis, MN, 2019



## exposure



1



2



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4



5

1 Fausto Melotti's vase, 17 1/4 in. (29 cm) in height, ceramic, enamel, polychrome, ca. 1950. 2 Fausto Melotti's vase, 17 in. (44 cm) in height, ceramic, enamel, polychrome, ca. 1950. 1-2 Copyright: Fausto Melotti archive. Photo: Fondazione Fausto Melotti. "Fausto Melotti," at NABA-Villa Paloma ([www.naba.org](http://www.naba.org)) in Morano, France, through January 17, 2016. 3 Kevin Snipes' Speed Diamond, 14 in. (36 cm) in height, porcelain, glaze, underglaze, oxide wash, 2010. 4 Jonathan Mees' Ruck in No. 35, 14 in. (36 cm) in height, various reclaimed materials, 2014. 5 Valerie Zisany's Moonwalker, 16 in. (40 cm) in diameter, porcelain, hand-drawn and raised Kutani enamel, gold, white gold, 2014. "CeramATTACK," at Duane Reed Gallery ([www.duanereedgallery.com](http://www.duanereedgallery.com)) in St. Louis, Missouri, December 10, 2015–February 13, 2016. 6 Waltraud Eich's vase, 9 1/2 in. (24 cm) in height, stoneware. Photo: Henning Thies/NAB. "Waltraud Eich," at Keramik-Museum Berlin ([www.keramik-museum-berlin.de](http://www.keramik-museum-berlin.de)) in Berlin, Germany, through January 25, 2016. 7 Roger Cookson's Deep Vessel, "Forty Years a Potter," at White Moose ([www.whitemoose.co.uk](http://www.whitemoose.co.uk)) in Devon, England, through January 9, 2016.



# 500 prints on clay

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This beautiful gallery book celebrates the hottest area in modern ceramics today—image transfer on clay—with photographs of innovative designs from leading artists around the world.







**VALERIE ZIMANY**  
*Chigiri-e (Radio Gold)* ■ 2009  
 10 x 13 x 13 inches (25.4 x 33 x 33 cm)  
 Porcelain, decals, gold; multiple fired, cone 6,  
 cone 018, glaze, silk-screened, overglaze  
 PHOTOS BY ARTIST

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**VALERIE ZIMANY**  
*Chigiri-e (Kimono Blue)* ■ 2010  
 13 x 15 x 15 inches (33 x 38.1 x 38.1 cm)  
 Porcelain; multiple fired, cone 6, cone 018, glaze, original  
 silk-screen overglaze decals, vintage commercial decals, gold  
 PHOTO BY ARTIST

500  
prints on clay



# Bold Expressions from Artists and Asia

*A Review by Judy Seckler*



Above: Hirotsune Tashima. *Shino Chawan Boy*. 2011.

Stoneware, 6 x 12 x 7 in.

Below: Hirotsune Tashima. *Green Tea Frappuccino Girl*. 2011.

Stoneware, 8 x 12 x 7 in.

THE EFFECT OF GLOBALISATION AND PREVALENCE OF collage and assemblage was at the heart of *To Wander Out of Place: Artists and Asia*, an exhibition held at the Seattle Design Center in Seattle, Washington, from 26 to 31 March, 2012, in conjunction with the 2012 NCECA conference. The exhibition's title was a reference to the work of more than 12 participating artists who have stepped beyond cultural comfort zones and embraced outside influences, including collage and pop culture. Curator/Artist Valerie Zimany assembled a lively dialogue of ceramics with influences from Japan, China and Korea. Participating artists included Daniel Bare, Sin-Ying Ho, Ayumi Horie, Yuichiro Komatsu, Jae Won Lee, Hoon Lee, James Makins, Paul Mathieu, Lee Somers, Hirotsune Tashima, Shoko Teruyama, Masahiko Toide and Valerie Zimany.

Humour and satire were in abundance in the work of Hirotsune Tashima in a series of vignettes that introduced new narratives into the Japanese ritual of the bath. Tashima's *Green Tea Frappuccino Girl*





Above: Paul Mathieu. **Odalisque Bowl**. 2008.  
Porcelain and overglaze. 16 x 16 x 10 in.

Below: Paul Mathieu. **Hadron Collider With Nudes Tile**. 2008.  
Porcelain and overglaze. 12 x 36 in.

juxtaposed a cookie resting on a white dessert paper plate with a woman lathered up in a Starbucks-inspired hot cup with her leg extended as if reclined in a bathtub. Beyond the realism invested in the various marvellous textures found in the work, the bath ritual is a metaphor that has been usurped by other rituals and preoccupations of modern day life. Here bathing, which was once associated with modesty, has been replaced with a healthy dose of sexuality. Through the act of bathing or being immersed metaphorically, the artist explores the presence of corporate brands in daily life.

Another version of this has been explored in Tashima's *Shino Chawan Boy*, a vignette composed of a man/boy at rest inside a ceramic mug embracing an oversized shaving brush in close proximity to a dumpling on a small black lacquer plate. The placement of the brush gave it an erotic flourish. The power of American business is less an issue in this work than the emergence of modern addictions that have replaced cleanliness, purity and nature. Tashima may have been inspired, at some point, by watercolour painter Masami Teraoka, whose works exploring themes such as *McDonald's Hamburgers Invading Japan* and *31 Flavors Invading Japan* touch on the collision of contrasting cultures.

Paul Mathieu has also used Asian classical forms such as bowls and vases as canvases for his image assemblages.

*Odalisque Bowl* defied expectations by pairing an elegantly designed vessel with energetic photo imagery, hand-painted images and overglazes. A nude male holding a bouquet of daffodils was bisected at the chest as seen on the bowl's exterior. Mathieu lined up the figure's head on the bowl's inner walls with the torso displayed







Above: Lee Somers. *Portable Landscape*. 2012. Stoneware with engobes and underglaze decals, sintered glaze chunks, porcelain shards, laser etched Plexiglas, wood and Styrofoam. 80 x 29 x 7 in.

Below: Hoon Lee. *Untitled: Anthropomorphic Measurements and Quantitative Analysis of Facial Aesthetics: The Korean-American Woman's Face (6. Objective Correlates of Beauty: Europeanisation as an Apparent Correlate of Beauty.)* 2012. Mixed media. Dimensions variable.

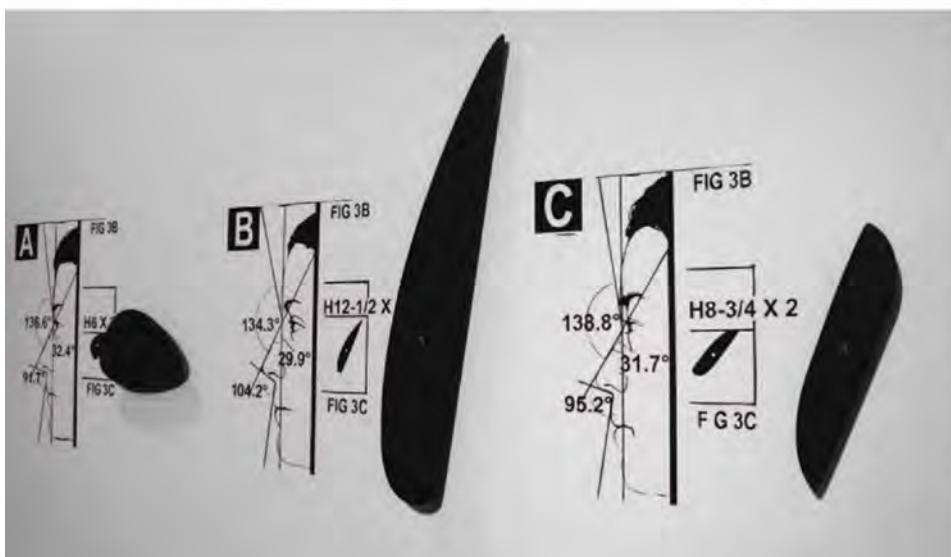
on the exterior wall for added visual interest. The bowl's interior was plastered with a bright, surreal landscape, where textures collided with elements from nature. The geography might have been uncertain but the lush collage effect was pure seduction.

Mathieu's vase *Hadron Collider* took a symmetrical form and introduced a vivid 3D component to the vessel's spherical mid-section in which the aerial views of architecture and a building atrium surrounded a male torso, providing plenty of hallucinogenic appeal in the round. Great design always provides the motivation for examining all 360 degrees of a form and such was the case here.

Yuichiro Komatsu's *Schema* took abstraction one step further, using an Asian colour palette laid over a system of part white/part celadon-coloured pipe work done in white earthenware. The minimalist work referenced architectural infrastructure but also resembled the way bamboo furniture is often designed and constructed. Komatsu used building elements that seem familiar, yet the sculpture carved out space randomly. There was a logic to the way the individual pieces were assembled, but overall, ambiguity reigned supreme.

Lee Somers' *Portable Landscape*, although grounded in architectural iconography, was an impressive triptych that relied heavily on representational imagery to tell its story. The three sections of the sculpture were encased in wooden shadowbox frames that resembled industrial packing crates, which were secondary to the landscape collage that rested within. Somers used layered pieces of white pottery as airy as lace with shards of blue and white pottery to suggest clouds. Plexiglas etched with drawings of mountains was

strategically placed, while other geometric blocks of pottery suggested architecture. It was a modern interpretation of traditional Japanese watercolour paintings and the only thing missing was the calligraphy. Each piece of the collage alone was an abstraction but when one stood a few feet from the work the effect was like a George Seurat painting





in which his images came into electrifying focus.

Sin-Ying's *Made in the Postmodern Era*, a surrealist sculpture, was a sharp contrast to the works of Somers and Komatsu that were anchored in an architectural vocabulary. With Sin-Ying's sculpture, computer decal transfers dominated a form that sat like a disembodied frozen turkey with a drumstick for a head. Plenty of nooks and crannies in this hybrid work allowed for the placement of Asian motifs such as dragons, as well as images of the Mona Lisa, Marilyn Monroe, Andy Warhol and Chairman Mao. Sin-Ying demonstrated that American and Chinese cultures have co-mingled, represented by icons from politics, art and entertainment and creating a third hybrid culture. With the artificial superimposed on nature, a tension existed that was both fascinating and unsettling.

A quick mention here about Hoon Lee's *Untitled* a series of conceptual black and white vinyl diagrams embellished with wooden ribs, such as clay tools, used to describe various cosmetic procedures. In an exhibition dominated by richly detailed and aesthetically pleasing work, Lee's stark installation, accompanied by a video containing quantitative analysis of facial aesthetics prized by Asian culture along with illustrations depicting different degrees of visual attractiveness, was a courageous addition but was weighed down by factual content. Whereas,



Left: Sin-ying Ho. *Made in the Postmodern Era Series No. 4*. 2009. Porcelain, high fire reduction, hand painted cobalt pigment, computer decal transfer and terra sigillata. 15.5 x 11.25 x 8.5 in.

Right: Yuichiro Komatsu. *Schema No. 3*. 2011. Low fire white clay, glaze and decal. 11 x 11 x 8 in.

the majority of work shown provided the sparks to ignite dreams, Lee's work has more to do with what fuels our personal insecurities.

Judy Seckler is a Los Angeles-based magazine writer, specialising in art, design and architecture ([www.judyseckler.com](http://www.judyseckler.com)) ([www.twitter.com/judyseckler](https://twitter.com/judyseckler)). Her previous three reviews for *Ceramics: Art and Perception* were "On the Teapot Trail: Bellevue College Art Gallery Teapot Survey", "Design Delights: Contemporary Ceramics from Tokyo University of the Arts" and "Echizen, Japan: Twenty Contemporary Master Potters" (Issue 90/Dec. 2012).



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## Deconstructing / Reconstructing Kutani

Valerie Zimany's Ceramic Vessels



Talk: Akimoto x Valerie Zimany, July 28, 2012, 18:00-19:00. Photo courtesy of Kanazawa Artgummi.

← 15 of 15 →

"I think the comparison between art and craft is really over to a degree. Everyone has an element of art and an element of craft in their work." Ceramic artist Valerie Zimany is currently an assistant professor of ceramics at Clemson University in South Carolina, USA. Her connection to Kanazawa began when she was hosted at the [Kanazawa College of Art](#) as a Fulbright Fellow in Art History/Ceramics. Although Zimany returned to the US after the yearlong program, she found herself increasingly intrigued by Kanazawa's ceramics and art scene, commenting, "If I had gone somewhere else, like Tokyo, I might have done a year and gone home. I wanted to come back after that year." Zimany did indeed return two years later on a Japanese Government scholarship, completing her MFA at Kanazawa College of Art in 2002.

Zimany's passion is for *kutani*, an overglaze style local to the Kaga region that she incorporates into much of her work. To understand Kanazawa's special place in the art world, Zimany compared its ceramic art to that of Arita and Kyoto, the other two famous centers for overglaze, a process in which multiple layers of glaze or non-glaze substances such as gold leaf are applied to the ceramic piece. Arita remains more traditional and conservative, at times using large-scale production to generate their famous Arita-ware. Kyoto has, in recent years, embraced overglaze in a more sculptural sense, but Zimany believes that Kanazawa holds the richest array of artists bringing new



perspectives to the overglaze process.

An artist who decided to pursue ceramics and sculpture because of the physical possibilities of working in three dimensions, Zimany says she has a fascination with dense objects that matches her love of *kutani*. Her artistic style is constantly evolving as she experiments with new techniques, motifs, and designs. For example, her work during her three-year residency at the Utatsuyama Craft Workshop includes experimental pieces: sculptural vessels supported on an army of anemone-like legs and pieces reminiscent of coral for their densely packed shapes with names like *Tumble*, *Bramble*, and *Colony*. *Kadomatsu* is an organic tangle of bamboo and bulbs; *Tumble* is a cluster of pieces of children's toys. Recently, Zimany and her husband Daniel Bare, a fellow ceramic artist, have collaborated on exhibitions such as *Episodic Clustered & Migrating* (2011), creating large-scale installations made of found objects that they coat in raw, unfired clay.

Yet Zimany's art is not strictly contemporary. During her time at Utatsuyama, she produced small functional *kutani* craft pieces like *Bud Vases – Kutani Red and Gold*, small vases with simple designs in *kutani* red and gold glazes and wood-fired Raku-ware *chawan* (tea bowls) with deeply hued glazes. She describes her more recent *kutani* work as having design elements rooted in the functionality of *kôgei*. For example, the *Chigiri-e* series, some of which is displayed at the *Porcelain Fever* exhibition, blends the form of dense eggplant shapes crammed into a vessel with *kutani* glaze work. The surface is equally dense, with layers of gold and silver luster, ceramic decals of traditional floral designs, anime characters and faces, graffiti-like textual designs, geometric patterns, and the traditional raised *kutani* enamels.

The exhibition *Porcelain Fever* is the result of a Fulbright Hays Faculty Research Abroad Grant for Zimany's project *Porcelain Fever: Contemporary Kutani Practitioners and Processes*, a study of the historical evolution and contemporary practice of *kutani* techniques. During a presentation on her research, Zimany's work caught the eye of Yuji Akimoto, director of the [21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa](#), who suggested they meet to discuss contemporary *kôgei* and *kutani*. *Porcelain Fever: Contemporary Artists and Kutani Now* is the outcome – curated by Zimany, the exhibition was designed as a complement to Akimoto's interest in "future *kôgei*," on display as [Art Crafting the Future](#) at the museum.

Zimany's views on contemporary art and *kôgei* are reflected in both the *Porcelain Fever* exhibition as well as her personal artwork: she does not see the two as opposing forces but as points on a continuum, with the artists in the show, herself included, placed at irregular and mutable intervals. She notes that her location on the continuum shifts based on what her current projects are, as different styles and media work better with different content. "Ceramics isn't defined by craft, it's defined by itself. Ceramics is a medium that can go anywhere, one that overlaps with craft, overlaps with contemporary art, overlaps with design, overlaps with architecture, overlaps with industry."

According to Zimany, *Porcelain Fever* "considers the intersection between historic and contemporary Japanese ceramics through the evolution of *kutani* enameled porcelain in western Japan." In her research, Zimany has traced the path of the original *kutani* polychrome porcelain (*ko-kutani*) to subsequent revivals, commercial production, and its "most recent, upstart incarnation as a postmodern approach for contemporary regional artists, within the dominant Japanese ceramics context of enduring modernist inclinations."<sup>1</sup> *Porcelain Fever*, held at the [Kanazawa Artgummi](#) gallery, is also part of [Satellite of Art Crafting Towards the Future x Kanazawa Art Space Link](#), a series of shows of contemporary *kôgei* at eleven galleries across Kanazawa.

Although she has returned to Clemson to teach, Zimany sees another visit to Kanazawa in the future, perhaps as a resident artist, to continue her research, or as part of an exhibition. Furthermore, she believes that Kanazawa's contemporary *kôgei* and *kutani* have a bright future: in the six-year gap between completing her residency at Utatsuyama and returning for research, the number of young ceramic and *kutani* artists has grown dramatically and now approaches the medium with newfound fervor, a comment corroborated by the scope and dynamism of the art in her show, from Akaji Ken's graceful impressionistic designs to Tanabe Kyoko's playful anime-inspired pieces. Citing a comment once made by *The New York Times* art critic Roberta Smith that "As a medium, ceramics is the new video,"<sup>2</sup> Zimany envisions a potential bridge between *kutani* and the contemporary art world, stating, "Traditional techniques and subject matter are being reexamined in all disciplines of contemporary art. In painting, postmodernism reintroduced representation; could this not be extended to the idiosyncratic explorations of over-glaze narrative and imagery of contemporary Kutani artists in ceramics?" What better place for her vision than Kanazawa, a modern city that embraces its very rich cultural past, to lead the way into the future of *kôgei*?

[Satellite/Art Space Link](#)

[Click here](#) to inquire about Kutani experiences or about Kanazawa Artgummi's latest exhibitions.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> "Porcelain Fever: Art Gummi Catalogue." p. 1. For more on Zimany's work, see

[www.valeriezimany.com](http://www.valeriezimany.com).

<sup>2</sup> Smith, Roberta. "'Paul Clay.'" *The New York Times*. June 30, 2011. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/01/arts/design/paul-clay.html>



# ceramics

M O N T H L Y



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Cover: Bryan Hopkins' functional constructions

Spotlight: A Potter's Pots, by Suze Lindsay

Clay Culture: An Exploration of Jun ceramics

Process: Lauren Karle's folded patterns

# To Wander Out of Place

by Tony Merino

Like words, contexts define images. Try this experiment: take a paragraph, put it in the online translator Babblefish, translate it to another language, and translate it back into English.

Here is how the last two sentences read after being translated into Russian and back. "Try this experiment, accept the paragraph, assumed to it into online translator Babblefish, transfer him to another language and transfer him back into English." We live in a great age of image tourism, where almost any image, from Mochian pottery, Batman, and Mao Zedong, to Russian religious icons and the Buddha are only a few seconds away from

anyone with a computer and access to a Wi-Fi hotspot. Any artist can pluck images out of another culture and shoehorn them into their own culture. Curator Valerie Zimany selected a group of US-based artists who have family or experiences connecting them to Asian cultures, and who mine, exploit, deconstruct, appropriate, and intentionally misappropriate images from a variety of cultures, time periods, and sources in addition to those from Asia in "To Wander Out of Place: Artists and Asia," which was on view at the Seattle Design Center during the 2012 National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) conference. The artists siphon and splat images in both banal and profound ways. Interestingly, it is the former process that resonates more in our imagistic wonderland.

Two artists, Sin-ying Ho and Paul Mathieu, contributed works that subvert tenets of our culture. Sin-ying Ho bounces culturally dense images over her surfaces to create works that question how the saturation of images affects our culture. In *Made in the Postmodern Era, Series No. 4*, a conglomerate







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1 Shoko Teruyama's *Commemorative plate: Kintaro Puppet Theatre*, 12 in. (30 cm) in diameter, electric-fired earthenware, 2012. 2 Valerie Zimany's *Chigiri-e (Full Leaded)*, 13 in. (33 cm) in length, slip-cast and wheel-thrown porcelain, vintage and custom silkscreen overglaze decals, Kutani overglaze, gold, 2012. 3-4 Ayumi Horie's *Whale and Cherry Blossom Plate*, 8 in. (20 cm) in diameter, porcelain with silver and gold luster, 2012. Ayumi Horie's *Love Birds and Cherry Blossom Plate*, 8 in. (20 cm) in diameter, porcelain with silver and gold luster, 2012.

tion of shapes bunched into a jagged mass, Ho mixes images of da Vinci's *Vitruvian Man*, and the *Mona Lisa*, along with those of Andy Warhol, Marilyn Monroe, and Mao swirled about a cobalt blue dragon. She creates a registry with the Mao portraits—a reference to the image being used on Chinese currency and stamping. The great Marxist leader is used to validate the authority of capital in China. Ho's placement of Andy Warhol, who famously embraced the superficial, peering out from behind all of the chaos adds a nihilistic counterpoint to the work. *Made in the Postmodern Era, Series No. 4* illustrates in a world where every image can be seen and appropriated, how can any image be sacred? Ho gives this thesis a feminist spin in *Bella Series No. 2: Ladies*. Ho taps different cultures and eras for images of idealized women. The viewer immediately recognizes Linda Carter, dressed as Wonder Woman. It is a loaded image. The image mixes archetype and glitz; the fertility goddess dressed for disco. Ho includes an image from an Asian print or drawing, a portrait of a Barbie doll, and *Livia Bella*, which is an image pulled from Italian maiolica. Two of the images, Barbie and Wonder Woman have overt salacious content, while Ho comments that in the other two these elements are more covert.

Hirotsune Tashima and Ayumi Horie contributed pieces that, in the use of humor, are similar to Ho's, albeit with varied sensibilities. A slightly amusing, erudite silliness distinguishes Tashima's work. Instead of two-dimensional forms, the artist presents three-dimensional images. Each of the four works included has a single figure in a drinking vessel paired with a plate. In *Green Tea Frappuccino Girl*, the artist depicts a woman bathing in a cup of tea. It elicits snickers.



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5–6 Sin-ying Ho's *Bella Series No. 2—Ladies*, 18 in. (45 cm) in height, porcelain, hand-painted cobalt pigment, high-fire reduction, computer decal transfer, enamel, 2009.

7 Sin-ying Ho's *Made in the Postmodern Era Series No. 4*, 15½ in. (40 cm) in height, porcelain, hand-painted cobalt pigment, high-fire reduction, computer decal transfer, terra sigillata, 2009.

The image questions our culture's cult of consumerism. The same dynamic plays out in *Shino Chawan Boy*, in which Tashima sculpts a boy about to bathe in a shino-glazed Chawan—the type of bowl used to mix and drink green tea in a Japanese tea ceremony. Associating the piece with this ceremony and placing it alongside the three other pieces, Tashima undermines the sanctity of the tea ceremony, lowering the idea of it from a sacred rite to just another consumer indulgence. Ayumi Horie's use of humor is different. She mixes images from different genres in her *Cherry Blossom Plate* series, which include a detailed rendering of a cherry blossom branch and cartoonish drawings of two birds and a whale. While Tashima and Ho both create strong political images, Horie's works read as whimsical.

Formally, Horie and Ho both layer images. This compositional device is repeated throughout the exhibition. Lee Somers and Daniel Bare use this device to create beautiful works. Somers constructs an implied landscape in *Portable Landscape*, a collage triptych made out of stoneware with engobes, underglaze decals, lattice fragments made from slip, sintered glaze chunks, porcelain shards, and Styrofoam. The narrative becomes irrelevant; the image is a crescendo of forms. Bare fuses several Yixing teapots into a chunk of glaze in *Round Green Tea Platter*. The glaze looks like a huge sea-foam-colored rice cake or a puddle of frothed tea. On







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8 Daniel Bare's *Green Teapot Platter*, 16 in. (41 cm) in height, Yixing teapots and glaze, 2008. 9–10 Lee Somers' *Portable Landscape*, 6 ft. 8 in. (2 m) in height, stoneware with engobes and underglaze decals, sintered glaze chunks, porcelain shards, laser-etched Plexiglas, wood, and Styrofoam, 2012. 11 Paul Mathieu's *Odalisque Bowl*, *Matt*, *Diego*, *Damian*, 16 in. (41 cm) in diameter, porcelain and overglaze, 2008.



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11

a conceptual level, Bare deals with issues of functionality, consumerism, and connoisseurship. Like the work itself, none of these contexts congeal to articulate a literal context. This is for two reasons. First—thework does not include anything in itself to decode any intended meaning. Second, the sheer visual impact of the work overwhelms any conceptual framework. Bare brilliantly creates visual rhythm and contrasts of hue, texture, and form. It is as if the work is pulsating before the viewer.

Paul Mathieu's work examines one of the more distinctive elements of ceramic production. In many disciplines, the less prestigious media have more leeway than those that are considered to be more respectable. One of the advantages of kitsch is that it gives an artist freedom. Dime novels, pulp fiction, underground comics, folk woodworking and black velvet painting—all have much broader criteria of what can be shown because of their kitsch quality. This dynamic reverses in ceramics. China painting, which is generally relegated to the antiquated taste of people who do not know any better is, if anything, more restrictive. Mathieu, who works with China paints, decorates *Odalisque Bowl*, *Matt*, *Diego*, *Damian* with a male nude posed in the same position of Ingres' painting, *Odalisque*. Mathieu's understanding of how people see comes through in two details. First, Mathieu's version is no more erotic than the source image, yet it reads as more

12 Jae Won Lee's *Prologue II: In Search of Streams and Mountains*, 5 ft. (1.5 m) in length, porcelain, decals, 2012. 13 Paul Mathieu's *Hadron Collider with Nudes Vase*, 16 in. (41 cm) in height, porcelain and overglaze, 2008. 14 Hirotsume Tashima's *Green Tea Frappuccino Girl*, 12 in. (30 cm) in length, multiple-fired stoneware, 2011. 15 Hirotsume Tashima's *Shino Chawan Boy*, 12 in. (30 cm) in length, multiple-fired stoneware, 2011.



shocking. This is in part due to the fact that getting accepted into the cannon of great Western art has dulled the eroticism of Ingres' work. However the change to the image removes the familiarity and focuses attention on the fact that eroticism is attributed more to the female gender. The Western mind has a far more difficult time with the objectification of a man than a woman. Second, it is done in the style of a Wedgwood porcelain bowl. The work is more discordant because Mathieu chooses China painting, a more kitsch-oriented discipline within the ceramic field as the foil for the image. Finally, Mathieu plays with perception. When viewed from one exact point, the image congeals into a single image of a naked man. Viewed from any other point, the image becomes illegible. So, in essence, to be offended by the nudity

of Mathieu's work, the viewer actually has to put themselves in a position to be offended.

Two distinct qualities dominate the exhibition. Formally, most of the works create complex layered surfaces. Conceptually, most of the works deal with appropriation/misappropriation of images. Artists like Ho and Mathieu present works tuned in to the mores and manners of images, which subvert the viewer's assumptions not just about ceramics, but about life. Other artists appropriate images, some apparently for no more profound reason than they are cool. Zimany's selection of both kinds of work makes each stronger by comparison.

the author *Tony Merino, a frequent contributor to CM, is an artist and critic living in Dallas, Texas.*



# ceramics

M O N T H L Y



March 2011 \$7.50 (Can\$9)  
www.ceramicsmonthly.org

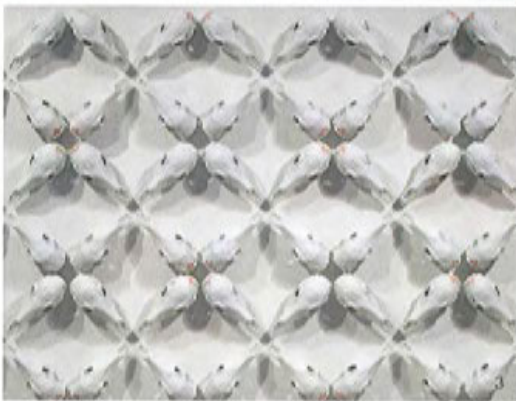
Spotlight: Nick Joerling shifts gears

Techno File: The forms and uses of iron

Profile: Eric Knoche's multipart constructions

Glaze: Many ways to get bubbly lava glazes

## exposure



1 Valerie Zimany's *Mori Mori Tenko Mori* (detail), 5 ft. (1.5 m) in length installed, wheel-thrown and slip-cast porcelain, glazes, 2009. 2 Peter Morgan's *Voracious Wombat*, 8 ft. (2.4 m) in length installed, ceramic and mixed media, 2009. 3 Blake Williams' *Four Hundred Square Inches of Orange*, 15 ft. 1 in. (4.6 m) in length installed, porcelain slip-cast doe skulls, reflective tape, reflective tacks, 2008. 4 Hae-jung Lee's *Hope*, 9 ft. (2.7 m) in height, cast porcelain and mixed media, 2009. 5 Daniel Bare's *Re/Claim, Cascade*, 18 in. (46 cm) in height, post-consumer found objects, porcelain, glaze, 2010. "Method: Multiple" at C. Emerson Fine Arts ([www.c-emersonfinearts.com](http://www.c-emersonfinearts.com)), in St. Petersburg, Florida, March 29–April 2.

Left: Steven Godfrey's *Talking Cardinal Urn*, 9 in. (23 cm) in height, porcelain, glaze, 2010. Right: Andy Shaw's place setting, largest plate is 12 in. (30 cm) in diameter, porcelain, glaze, 2010. "Steven Godfrey and Andy Shaw," at Santa Fe Clay ([www.santafeclay.com](http://www.santafeclay.com)), in Santa Fe, New Mexico, March 4–April 9.





# ceramics

M O N T H L Y



Cover: Installation by Clare Twomey

Spotlight: Creation with Purpose—an apprenticeship

Clay Culture: Disposing of "Thirds"

Resource: Residencies and Fellowships 2013

## ● Daniel Bare and Valerie Zimany: Raw Collaborations

Our collaborative work began about six years ago—the first piece, titled *Mergence and Abundance*, was a large raw porcelain and post-consumer ceramic installation for a two-person show we held at the Urban Institute for Contemporary Art (UICA) in Grand Rapids, Michigan. In addition to our individual work, which we often exhibit together, we decided in the UICA exhibition to explore a larger,

Daniel Bare and Valerie Zimany installing *Evergreen* at Indiana University Southeast, 2010. Photo courtesy of Brian Harper.







*Evergreen*, 15 ft. (4.5 m) in width, raw kaolin slip and post-consumer objects, 2010.

site-specific work that would be a blending of our complementary sensibilities and processes.

From that piece, we began to seek other opportunities to work together on installations in a variety of venues. We spent a summer at the Archie Bray Foundation a few years ago, and devoted that time to thinking more deeply about our strategies together, creating both fired and unfired installations, as well as our own individual work. As partners, we often share the same working space, and our installation concepts are a natural outgrowth of the conversations we have in our studio. As individuals, we each bring to the collaboration a diverse background and set of experiences, as well as a familiarity with different processes and technical skills.

Primarily, our individual works are fired ceramic sculptures and objects, although we have both pursued independent installation projects. We have different content that we address through our individual work, yet there are topical overlaps that intermingle well in joint projects. Working as two versus one encourages us to build beyond the familiar, sometimes discovering unexpected approaches through our brainstorming. Additionally, from a practical standpoint, we are able to take on larger-scale projects as a team rather than as individuals.

Our roles are very much blended from the time we begin researching and conceptualizing for a particular exhibition, all the way through the actual install itself. In the past, we have contributed parts of our own work to the process, or one of us may have prepped a portion of materials prior to beginning work, but more recently

we source all the materials together in our destination and build together on site. It's a very intuitive and organic process. We have also learned how to negotiate certain aspects of the larger vision amicably—although at times we do, temporarily, disagree on how a work in progress needs to develop!

We primarily source from recycle clearance centers, dumpsters, and other sites of idle waiting, and our materials are mundane, unwanted items available in large quantities. By coating our objects with raw porcelain slip, we unify the mass and abstract the remains—this also functions to re-purify the discarded objects and make them visually “clean” again.

Whether we are invited to or proposing a new location ourselves, we approach each site with specific content and goals in mind, however, we also allow for spontaneous contributions or recalibrations. For example, our recent series *Evergreen* comments on the environmental implications of mass-produced culture, and the balance between use and waste. Depending on the site, this has addressed different directions; for example, at Indiana University Southeast, the majority of our materials were post-holiday cast-off decorations, ersatz wreaths, and toys. At the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) 2011 in Tampa, Florida for our two-person exhibition “Episodic, Clustered, and Migrating” we began with an image of the Gulf currents and garbage gyres, then sourced local building materials, and were given objects out of the studios of artists in the cooperative attached to the gallery—items like dried out palm trees, boat bumpers, fishing nets, and other abandoned water-related or recreational goods.

We source our found object supplies from various related and relative resources each time we start a project. Our materials are always in flux depending on the season and what is available on location. One constant is our thick, flocculated, porcelain slip, for which we use primarily Grolleg kaolin, but sometimes vary the content to produce subtle color and value shifts. However, if we were to name a “most valuable player” in our arsenal for the installs themselves, we would likely single out our 18v DeWalt cordless drill. Whether its screwing together lumber, attaching groupings of wet, slip-dipped objects to the wall, braiding wire, or mixing enormous batches of porcelain slip, it gets a workout every time.

*Daniel Bare is currently an instructor of art at Anderson University and Clemson University in South Carolina. Daniel received his MFA in ceramics from the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University, Alfred, New York. He has participated in several national and international artist residency programs. To see more of his work visit [www.danielbare.com](http://www.danielbare.com).*

*Valerie Zimany is assistant professor of art and ceramics, at Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina. She completed her MFA in Crafts/Ceramics from Kanazawa College of Art as a Japanese Government (Monbusho) Scholar in 2002. Valerie has exhibited her work nationally and internationally in solo and group exhibitions. For more information visit [www.valeriezimany.com](http://www.valeriezimany.com).*



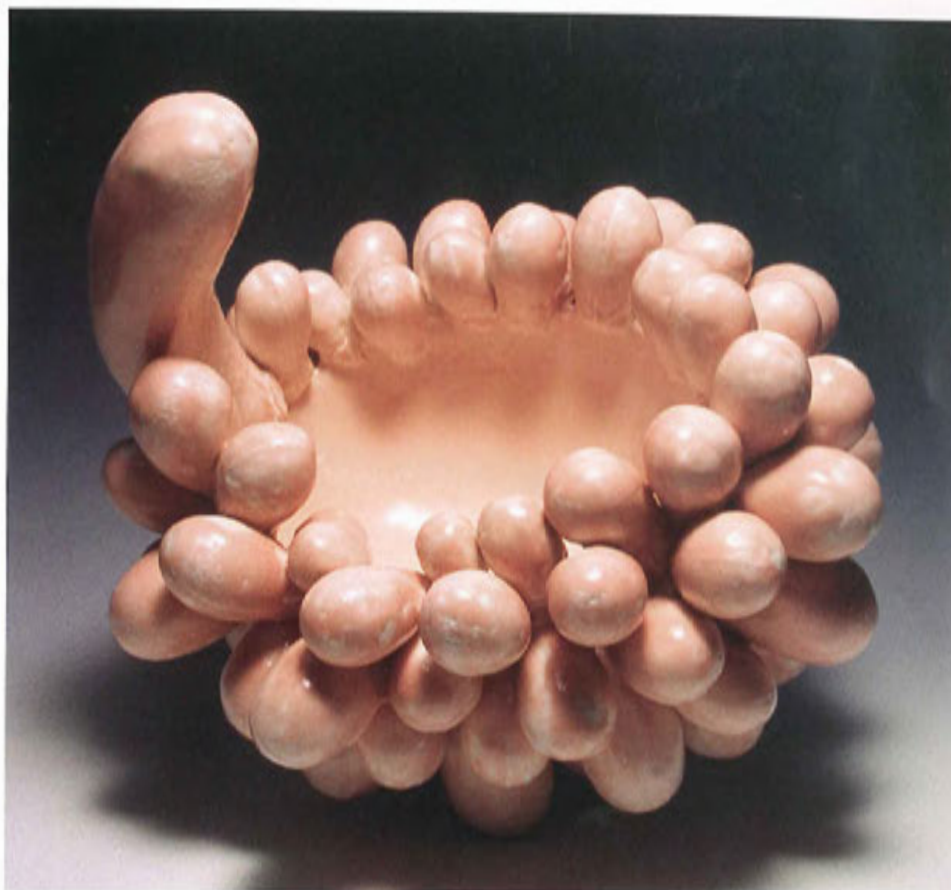
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**Valerie Zimany**

*Collocate* | 2005

10 1/4 X 11 13/16 X 9 7/16 INCHES  
(26 X 30 X 24 CM)

Slip-cast and press-molded  
porcelain; electric  
fired, cone 9; glazes

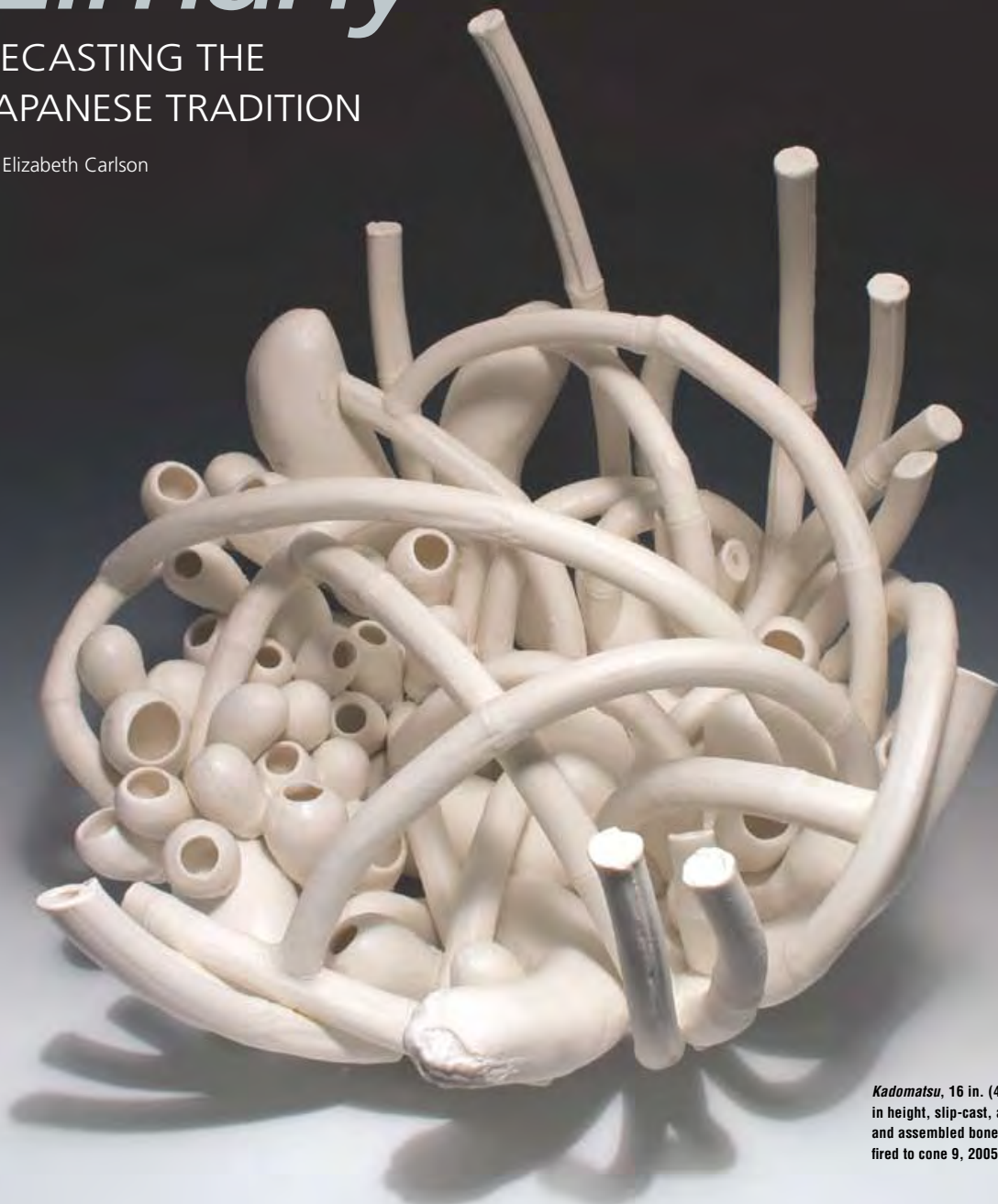
PHOTO BY ARTIST



# Valerie Zimany

RECASTING THE  
JAPANESE TRADITION

by Elizabeth Carlson



*Kadomatsu*, 16 in. (41 cm)  
in height, slip-cast, altered  
and assembled bone china,  
fired to cone 9, 2005.



Valerie Zimany, a studio ceramist and Fellow at Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin, first traveled to Japan in 1996 on a Fulbright Fellowship after graduating with a B.F.A. from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It was nearly ten years before she decided it was time to leave. Zimany was undoubtedly influenced by the rich traditions of Japanese culture unique to Kanazawa, such as their delicate Kutani porcelain, the tea ceremony and flower arranging. Rather than mimicking the traditional vessel types, glazes and designs of Japanese ceramics, Zimany has developed her own vocabulary, fusing tradition and experimentation to develop biomorphic shapes that resist the classifications so often assigned to more traditional Japanese vessels. The ambiguity of her forms strengthens their impact. They defy the categorizations that we so often want to assign to art, especially ceramics: natural or artificial, traditional or contemporary, sculptures or vessels, Japanese or American. Instead, Zimany's work dwells in a space between concrete answers, making such labels seem useless and artificial.

After arriving in Kanazawa, located on the Sea of Japan, Zimany was both intrigued by this foreign culture and a bit apprehensive about trying to integrate into it. She was expected to blend into her new community, the ceramics department and the university, but was unable to forget that she was a foreigner. She describes a powerful image from her first days in Kanazawa of roped trees, bound together for support during the snowy winter months. The sense of cohesion and community that the scene evoked stayed with Zimany, which only emphasized her own sense of isolation. Soon, the people, culture and traditions of Kanazawa that had initially felt so foreign began to inform her work, and she developed a strong connection to the community. In fact, she decided to stay in Japan when her fellowship ended, returning in 1999 on a Japanese Government Scholarship and then complet-

ing her M.F.A. at the Kanazawa College of Art. After graduation, Zimany stayed in Kanazawa for a three-year residency at the Utatsuyama Craft Workshop. Rather than replicating Japanese folk traditions in her vessel types and glazes, Zimany's work reflects her experience with Kanazawa—a desire to connect with another culture and unfamiliar surroundings while incorporating her own background.

Zimany's artwork reinterprets Japanese traditions without completely resisting them. Her early pieces, such as *Tumble*, utilize casts of souvenirs associated with post-war Japanese culture—cute Kewpie dolls and action figures. The casting technique implies mass production but they exist as unique artworks. While they have been taken apart and reassembled, the various



*Moriawase #2*, 14 in. (36 cm) in height, wheel-thrown and slip-cast porcelain, glaze, fired to cone 9, 2006.

*Through her work, Zimany reminds us that meaning,  
form and beauty are always transforming, unable to be  
contained, cast and classified.*



*Stroll*, 14 in. (36 cm) in height, press-molded and  
wheel-thrown porcelain, glaze, fired to cone 9, 2005.



## CASTING WELL

by Valerie Zimany

Mold wells are convenient for a number of reasons. They allow you to pour more slip than your sprue (opening at the top of the mold) can hold, so you don't have to top off molds. The weight of the slip will help push it into smaller places. You can keep sprues small, using less plaster for your molds. Any plastic funnel that fits your sprue tightly will work, otherwise, it is simple to make a well:

1. Cut off the bottom of a 500ml bottle.
2. Invert it in a small plastic container, attaching the lip to the bottom of the container with clay, wax or hot glue.
3. Pour in a small amount of plaster until the well base is about 1 inch thick. This will make the well heavy enough to be held in place via gravity on the top of your mold.
4. Clean the edges after casting with a rasp and 600+ grit wet/dry sandpaper.

Once made, your wells can fit a wide variety of molds.



In order for the well to work, the tops of your mold must be sanded flat and level, otherwise the wells will leak! If you always use a well with the same mold, it's possible to mark "fill lines" on the side of the well, so even if your mold gets progressively more damp, you can be sure you are using approximately the same amount of clay for each casting.

parts are still connected to the doll and the action figure; it's difficult to separate the work from its cultural connections with mass-produced tokens.

Zimany transitioned from casting trinkets to vegetation that she associated with Japan and Kanazawa. Looking closely at Zimany's work, one notices that the protruding "legs" and biomorphic forms are recognizable objects—bamboo and eggplants that are cast into the works and shaped, like the Japanese tradition of flower arranging, into a sculptural composition. She recalls the sights she saw walking daily to and from the mountaintop studio: "I searched for the things that appeared as harbingers of spring—bamboo shoots and other mountain vegetation. The rate at which they sprouted, surged and grew became a source to inform my work." Casting local vegetation seems to arrest their growth—making a souvenir out of something that can't be preserved and immortalized. By incorporating organic objects rather than store-bought souvenirs, the meaning of her pieces becomes much more equivocal.

The forms ultimately lie somewhere in between natural objects and man-made artworks. The invasive bamboo shoots—a nuisance for the Japanese farmer or urban developer—are transformed into delicate aesthetic objects in the gallery. Her vessels, in shades of greens, blues and salmon, seem part of the natural landscape. The identity of the vegetation disappears, as new forms sprout spores and bubbles, emerging more as creatures than objects. Their undulating curves reference the lips of Japanese tea vessels but also

## recipe

### UArts CLAY BODY

(cone 6–10)

Nepheline Syenite	23 %
Grolleg (English Kaolin)	55
Flint (Silica)	22
	100 %

Add: Bentonite or Macaloid . . . . . 1 %

For cone 10, use Custer feldspar instead of nepheline syenite.

#### Mixing a Batch of Casting Slip from UArts Clay Body:

The water should be no more than 50% of the total weight of the dry materials. Darvan should be 0.4% of total weight. Bentonite should be 0.5% of total weight—up to 1% if desired. A batch of 10,000 grams of dry materials, when mixed with water, makes about 5 gallons of slip.

#### Step 1

Blunge water and Darvan with a heavy-duty drill and a squirrel-cage or jiffy mixer. Add the bentonite and continue blunging until thoroughly mixed:

Water	5000 g
Darvan #7	40 g
Bentonite	50 g

#### Step 2

Add dry materials while continuing to mix:

Grolleg (English Kaolin)	5500 g
Nepheline Syenite	2300 g
Flint (Silica)	2200 g

After mixing thoroughly, add up to 18g (0.2%) more Darvan (no more than 0.6% total) as needed. Small amounts of water may also be added to improve viscosity (use drops of water at a time and go slow).

#### Step 3

Check the specific gravity of the slip. Specific gravity is the measure of the density of a substance. For liquids, we compare the density to water. Weigh a specific volume of slip and divide that weight by the weight of the same volume of water. The ideal result should be 1.7–1.8. This means that the slip is 1.7–1.8 times as dense as water. Most good slips are in the 1.75–1.78 range.

#### Step 4

Let the slip stand overnight (or continue mixing overnight if you have the equipment to do so). Mix once again the next day and recheck specific gravity before using. It is possible to use the slip right away, but waiting helps to insure all particles are thoroughly wet. As you mix, try to avoid causing a multitude of air bubbles by going too fast—the bubbles can get trapped in your slip and reappear in your castings.



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- 64 NATHAN PROUTY, Philadelphia, PA
- 65 EHREN TOOL, Berkeley, CA
- 68 AMY SANTOFERRARO, Philadelphia, Pa
- 69 VALERIE ZIMANY, Appleton, WI
- 72 NIELSEN AMON/RUBY LEVESQUE, Brooklyn, NY
- 73 GILLIAN PARKE, Durham, NC
- 76 GWENDOLYN YOPPOLO, Belmont, NY
- 77 MYUNGJIN CHOI, Philadelphia, PA
- 80 JENNI BRANT, Lincoln, NE
- 81 ALWYN O'BRIEN, Saltspring Island, BC, Canada
- 86 PATRICK COUGHLIN, Gainesville, FL
- 87 MISTY GAMBLE, Oakland, CA
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## VALERIE ZIMANY, Appleton, WI

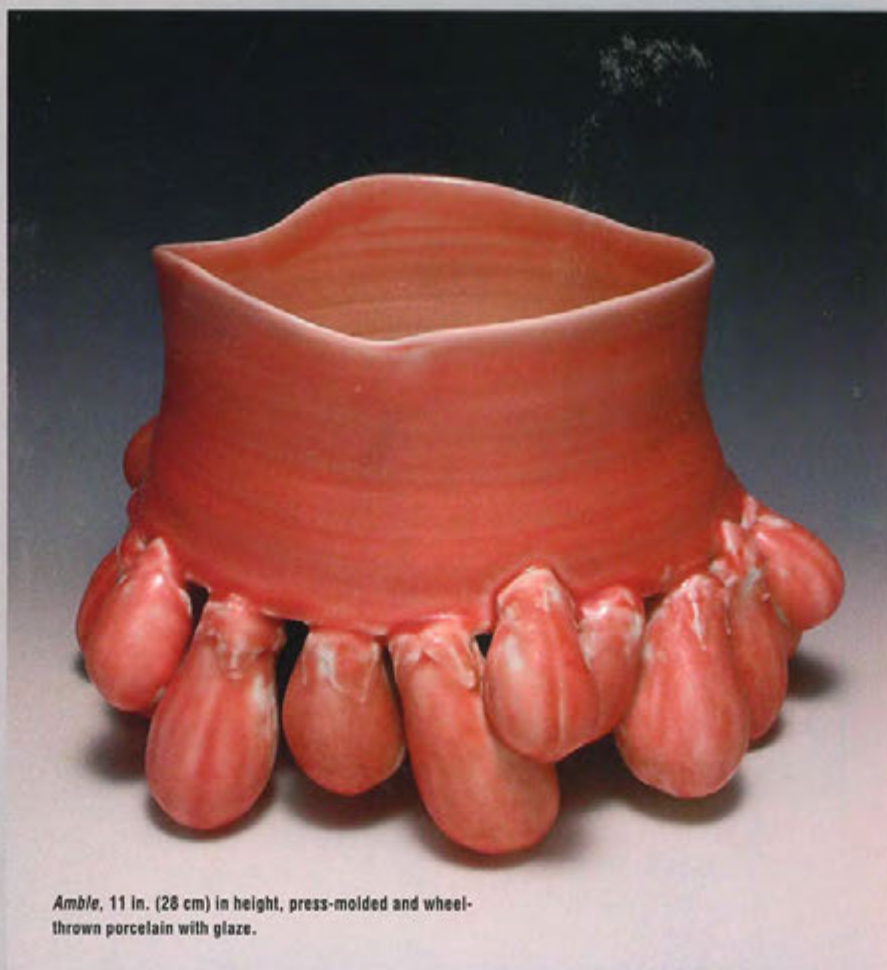
*Nature employs strategies for survival in an environment that requires living forms to be strong yet resilient, attract yet repel, and endure through constant evolution.*

My first serious encounter with clay as an artistic medium came in an elective course with Jim Makins, while a freshman at the University of the Arts (UArts) in Philadelphia. I had originally intended to major in painting, but that class with Jim taught me the vast potential of working in clay. I changed my major, and am glad to this day that I did.

I have been fortunate to be able to support myself and continue my work since I left undergraduate school, mostly through grants and international residency opportunities. After UArts, I received a Fulbright Fellow grant to research Japanese ceramics and craft history, then returned again to complete my M.F.A. at Kanazawa College of Art through the Japanese Government (Monbusho) Scholarship. The final three years I was a resident artist at the Utatsuyama Craft Workshop, a fully funded program sponsored by the city of Kanazawa.

After a number of years being able to focus wholly on my own work, and having built up a good network of fellow artists and galleries, it was at first an adjustment to return to the States. While keeping an active studio practice, I decided to pursue an interest in teaching at the college level, and after short stints in a few programs, I was offered my current position as a Fellow at Lawrence University. I find working with undergraduate students and seeing their own relationship with clay develop highly rewarding.

My dream is to build my own studio! I am



*Amble*, 11 in. (28 cm) in height, press-molded and wheel-thrown porcelain with glaze.

interested in exploring the effect of working on a larger scale again, and investigating other materials, such as metals and plastics in relation to clay. And, I am feeling the itch to return to Japan. I miss the qualities of Japanese porcelain, and I want to keep the connections I have there alive to continue to foster international exchanges with Japan and the U.S. in ceramics.