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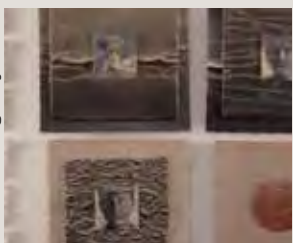
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Jack Doherty



Michael Keighery



Antonella Cimatti



Sunshine Cobb



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Antonella Cimatti

Ghost Still Life

Article by Monica Semprini



ARTIST ANTONELLA CIMATTI, SPANNING DESIGN AND installation, manages to combine different styles with a particular emphasis on ceramic material, reflected by continuous analysis and experimentation, honed over years of experience in an international context. The artist lives and works in Faenza, Italy a city synonymous with ceramics and known throughout the world for its historical ceramics production. At the same time, she continuously pursues artistic exchange abroad, in order to deepen her knowledge and broaden her field of research. Her research is related to models of the past, to classical forms of ceramics, reinterpreted and revisited with innovative results and alternative meanings. From her early works, *le Crespine* (based on the Faentine tradition used in the great European courts of the 17th and 18th centuries) the



artist refashioned the traditional form in porcelain paper clay, lightening the material with openwork interlacing, right up to her recent *Ghost Still Life* in the historical ceramic typology, recreated through the manipulation of shadows.

A constant theme in her work is the search for lightness and imperceptibility of the material, defying its essence, its derivation from clay, from the earthy mixture that invokes a sense of heaviness of matter. This is the reason that the surfaces are perforated, torn, translucent; they become delicate silhouettes, luminous filaments of light interwoven through grafts of optical fibres. Primary importance is attached to the light, for its ability to render the material slight and ethereal, as if suspended through shadows and reflections that disperse through the gaps in the intricate entanglements.

*Facing page: **Ghost Still Life.** 2014. Sintered alumina fired at 1600°C, Plexiglas. 30 x 70 x 7.6 cm. Honourable Mention – Gyeonggi International Ceramics Biennale 2015, South Korea.*

*Above: **Ghost Vessels.** 2014. Sintered alumina 0.6 mm fired at 1600°C, Plexiglas, laser printed acetate-sheet. 30 x 25 x 11 cm/ea.*

*Below: **Butterflies.** 2011. Porcelain. Installation in the exhibition *La scultura contemporanea in Italia, 2015*, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Roma. 180 x 240 x 20 cm. Photo by Paolo Emilio Sfriso.*

"I have always been fascinated by the long-established relationship in the work of Cimatti between object and shadow, which is not, as might appear at first glance, a physical link between an element and its natural projection, but the result of a deep reflection that the artist brings into being on her own research." These are the thoughts of Matteo Zauli, director of the Museo Carlo Zauli of Faenza, who points out that "a shadow, in fact, is not a visual element merely generated from the object that is the





Top left: **Ghost Still Life #1**. 2014. Sintered alumina 0.6 mm fired at 1600°C, Plexiglas. 30 x 70 x 7.7 cm. Taiwan Ceramics Biennale.

Photo by Manuela Giusto.

Top right: **Ghost Lamp**. 2014. Sintered alumina 0.6 mm fired at 1600°C, in collaboration with Manzi and Zanotti Design Studio. 28 x 20 x 10 cm.

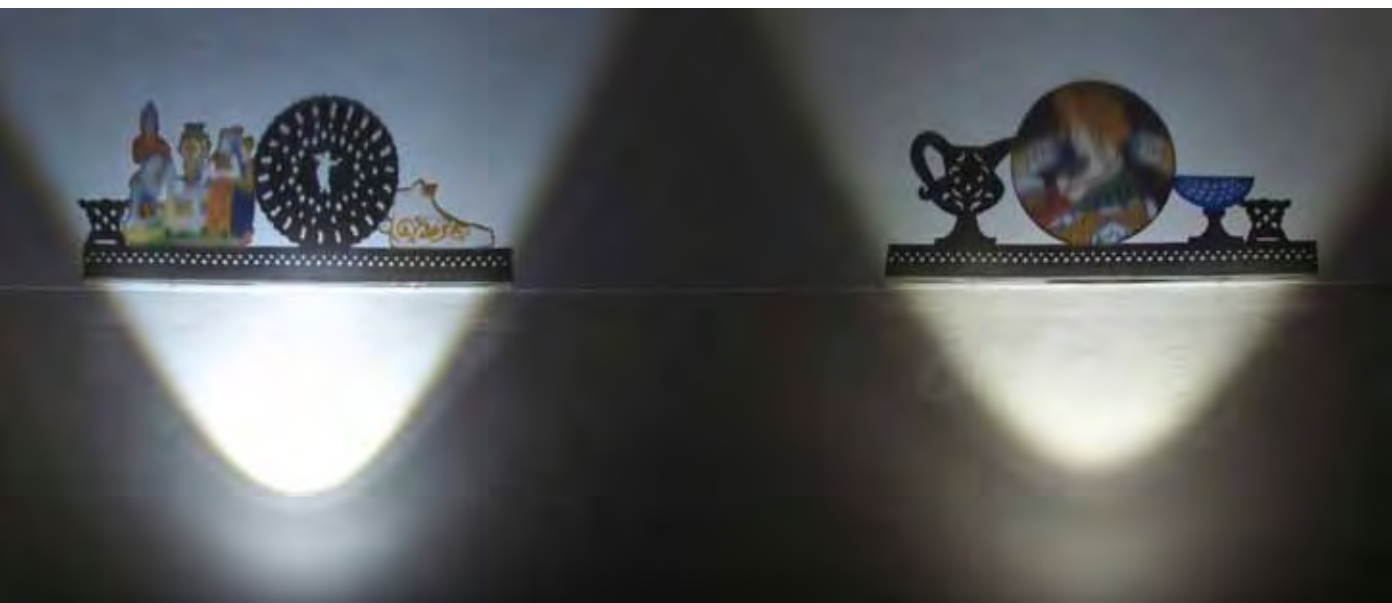
Below: **Museo Virtuale (Virtual Museum)**. 2015. Sintered alumina 0.6 mm fired at 1600°C, Plexiglas. 32 x 70 x 7.5 cm/ea. Collezione di arte Contemporanea Faenza MUS.T (Museo Territorio).

origin; it is neither natural nor artificial. The shadow is generated if and when a light source is placed behind a subject/object, and it is this light source that establishes the depth and position. As such, the sculpture and shadow relationship in the work of Cimatti is the result of an intentional choice of installation, that in choosing origin and intensity, sets the morphological relationship between the subject, the pureness and whiteness of the porcelain, and the dark portions that complete the aesthetic fulfilment.



And it is in this precise direction, in its antithetical relationship, that the Faenza artist's work is brought to life through the delicacy with which the complexity that Jung, for example, symbolised in the shadows, thus indicating intuitively the tormented, unresolved path of man in search of his deepest identity."

And so in the work *Butterflies*, Cimatti realises an installation project where every single butterfly is composed of both a material, tangible wing made of delicately-perforated thin paper clay and an ephemeral, intangible wing of shadow, arising from the projected light. The repetition of these two components, the real and the ethereal, produces an effect of alienation, revealing a change in our usual perception of the ceramic object, which we find here transformed into faint material that conveys





Above: **Butterflies (Detail)**. 2011. Porcelain. 180 x 240 x 20 cm.
Installation in the exhibition *La scultura contemporanea* in Italia.

Photo by Letizia Gatti.

Below: **Ghost Teapot**. 2013. Sintered alumina 0.6 mm fired at 1600°C.
In collaboration with Manzi and Zanotti Design Studio. 20 x 44 x 4.7 cm.
Credit: Foundation for Contemporary Ceramic Arts, Kecskemét, Hungary.

the idea of an imperceptible movement through the alternation of lights and shadows.

This is a particularly significant work, because it brings the art of Cimatti towards a key development, ever more intangible. More recent work, in fact, has seen her experiment with a new technique, the sintered alumina, an advanced ceramic material, fired at high temperatures (1600°C), the result of extensive studies at CNR-ISTEC Institute of Science and Technology for Ceramics of Faenza. The use of this most translucent, extremely thin material, cut with high-precision laser, allows the artist, on the one hand, to give tactile lightness to the ceramic and, on the other hand, to create an evanescent atmosphere on a visual level. The silhouettes of objects, which are cropped via a complex computerised technique, reproducing a kind of anamorphosis of Leonardo, are placed above a Plexiglas plate, also modelled in the same shape and hung on the wall; this device means that, in the twilight of the environment, illuminating the work, one can create profiles of these objects. In this way the still lifes assume their form through their projected shadows; fleeting, enigmatic, in a constant state of flux, prone to disappear at any moment should the light fail. It is a continual game of shadows and transparencies that gives life to these ephemeral figures, returned to full-scale; still lifes that combine both everyday objects and pieces produced in the city of Faenza between the 15th and 16th centuries and now housed in major museums around the world, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (US), the Victoria and Albert Museum (UK) and the

British Museum in London, creating a sort of virtual tour of these museum collections. Thus, together with teapots and cups, we can find the image of the *Portland Vase*, kept at the British Museum, from the Augustan era, one of the best known examples of vitreous cameo, which inspired an entire range of terracotta vases from Wedgwood. But Cimatti does not resume the grès or stoneware copy but rather that of the original glass, restoring, through her particular technique, all of the vitreous transparency and deep blue colour (*Ghost Still life*). In *Museo Virtuale*, some of the museum objects are deliberately blurred to evoke their own outlines, suggesting the presence, stimulating the memory. The shadow here takes





Above: *Museo Virtuale (Detail)*.

Facing page, above: *Museo Virtuale (Detail)*.

Facing page, below left: *Signature of Antonella Cimatti*.

Facing page, below right: *Antonella Cimatti*. Photo by Paolo Emilio Sfriso.

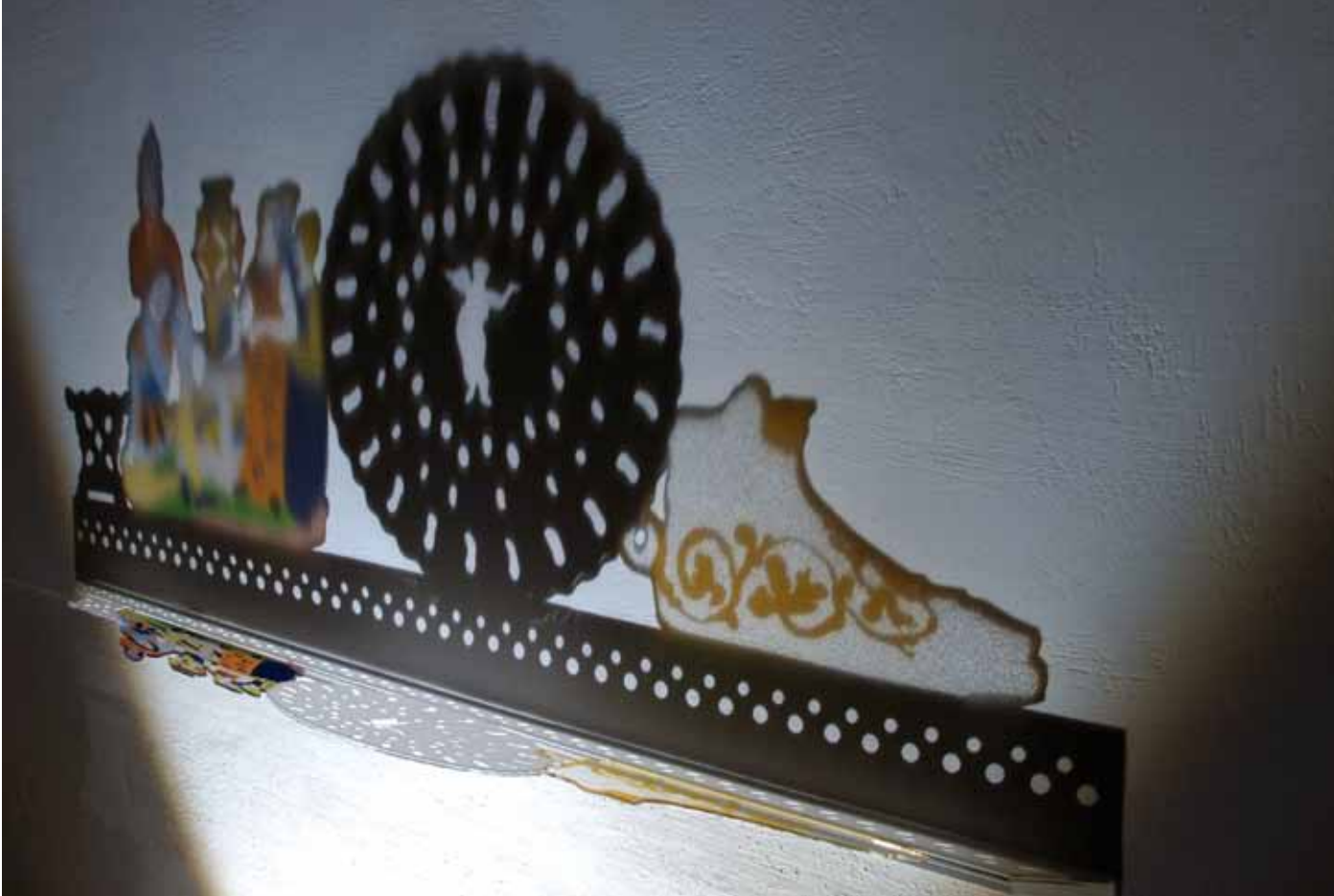
on a “mnemonic support function: it renders the present absent” (Victor I. Stoichita, *A Short History of the Shadow*).

In another series of works (*Ghost Vessels*), Cimatti focuses attention only on individual elements, each isolated in its own display case, which come to acquire a meaningful value. They are perhaps the most typical receptacles in the history of ceramics – the Greek vase, the Portland vase and the Chinese vase – reinterpreted in bright colours and reflections, suspended in an enchanting and emotional atmosphere.

Classical forms together with stereotyped forms: art in its highest form and art in its industrialised forms are given equal treatment in the works of Cimatti and have the same evocative importance; they establish a poetic and delicate dialogue just like the bottles, vases, bowls and carafes painted by Giorgio Morandi – observed over time, contemplated, allowing the dust to fall and settle upon them. Morandi, the artist who transformed such humble objects of everyday reality into the protagonists of his complex pictorial research, approached them from

the front of a table, a frontal approach that we find in Cimatti’s work, where vases, lamps, dishes, cups and teapots rendered in shadow, are arranged along a finely punctured tablecloth, a basis for her still lifes. Their texture is ethereal, yet concrete objects remain without which their ghostly doubles could not exist, in contrast to the work of Claudio Parmiggiani. With Parmiggiani, the barely perceptible dust becomes the base material of his artistic research, along with the study of shadow and light, creating works based on the theme of absence, works made of shadows, signs, traces of ash and smoke, footprints left by the objects removed from the walls (*Delocazioni*, 1970). Here the concrete elements disappear, with only their shadowy outlines remaining, their negative surrogates. The attention of Cimatti, however, is also reflected in the minute details of the ceramic objects, showing an aesthetic care and a typically feminine elegance. Furthermore, the references relate to the entire domestic and intimate world of women: the cups and teapots depict the most precious porcelain of the household and the little holes on the surface are reminiscent of the elegance of embroidery.

In *Ghost Teapot*, the cropped silhouette of a teapot is decorated with golden grafts using the Chinese technique. The decor is light, delicate, it does not weigh down upon the object, which here acquires refinement



and visual importance. Indeed, the observer is not only attracted by the shadow cast on the wall, but also from the same shaped and preciously decorated figure. The vision is moving on several levels: the shape, the silhouette, studied in detail and perfectly realised, and the light that allows the passage from the object of design to the object of shadow.

Shadow has always been an element that attracts and seduces the art world and the mindset of Cimatti is fully embedded in that approach. What is striking is the inconsistency of the shadow, its immateriality; it is absence, it appears only to suddenly disappear, it is darkness, it is ephemerality, it is the double of the object that projects it, it retains a function of reality, since its presence “verifies the consistency of an object, seeing as that which projects a shadow must be real” (Ernst H Gombrich, *Shadows*).

After all, it is shadow that plays an underlying role in the artistic practice: according to the testimony of Pliny the Elder, painting and sculpture do in fact have their origins in the shadow phase. An origin that is ‘negative’ because the image is frozen in time owing to the outline of its shadow cast and then it assumes consistency and acquires a bodily, sculptural form (Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia*).

From the figure of shadow to the gesture of the potter who fills the outline with clay, relief and plasticity is brought to its form. The work of Antonella Cimatti hinges on this duality and, from this, it

draws its expressive power: from earthy mixture to its most incorporeal essence, from concreteness to its evanescent duplicate.



Monica Semprini is Assistant Director of Museo Carlo Zauli. She also pursues independent curatorial projects.

Lecture by Matteo Zauli, Director of the Museo Carlo Zauli.

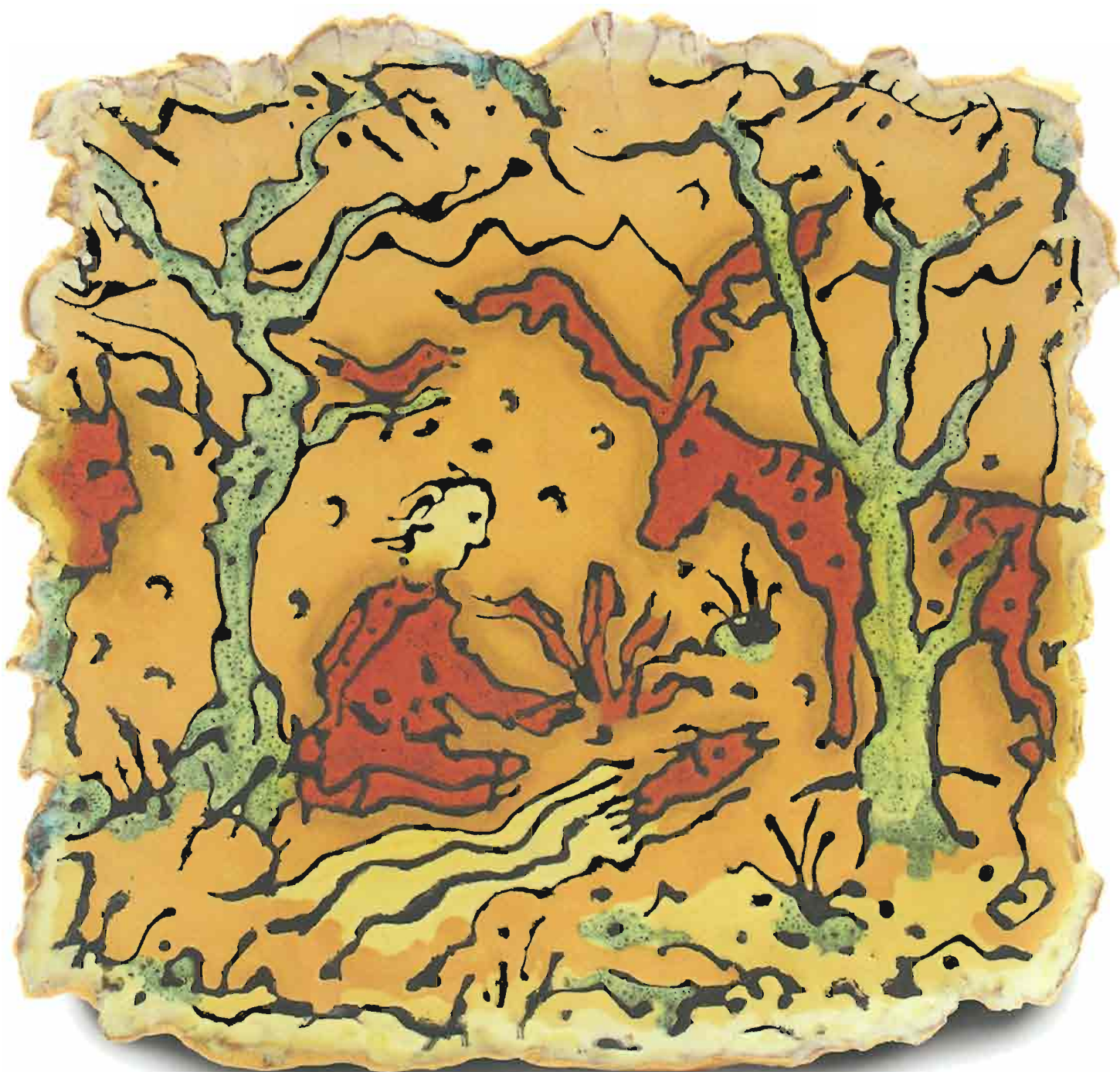
The Museo Carlo Zauli Faenza has, from 2002, explored and disseminated contemporary art, with particular attention to ceramics.

All photos by Raffaele Tassinari, unless noted.

Translation by John Wheatley.

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The European Ceramics Magazine



In Studio with Antonella Cimatti

Antonella's aura of refinement infuses her "crespine". Her works are so light they seem to float. They are reminiscent of lace. She explains here how she found a way to create this sense of lightness.

Evelyne Schoenmann

Antonella, at the Istituto d'Arte in Faenza you were a student of the master, Carlo Zauli. How did working with him influence you?

Yes, for me he was a true master who taught me an artistic approach. He gave me the enthusiasm to become a ceramist and an artist. And he taught me the importance of devoting your life to art and to one of the oldest media of humankind: not only to study the various ceramic materials but also to observe the influence and processes of other art forms that lead to innovation.

also applies to this capital city of ceramics, so there is a danger of encountering tradition with too much respect. But all in all, I think it has been an advantage to grow up here. Although Faenza is a small town, there are several important ceramics institutions. For instance, there is the International Ceramics Museum MIC or the CNR, the National Research Centre. The museum has an extremely comprehensive collection of ceramics from all over the world and from all ages as well as a library with over 62,000 books on ceramics. For me this is a continuing

in Italy and elsewhere and how it influenced your methods.

My first trip to Asia in 1981 took me to Japan. I was 25 and I was able to participate in a cultural exchange with the twinned city of Toki-shi as part of a delegation from Faenza. I was immediately fascinated by Japan, and without wishing to make too much use of philosophical concepts, I would like to mention the love of beauty that was given to me and which impressed me in Japan. It is a way of looking at beauty that affects a mysterious inner world. You have to work hard



Do you feel it is an advantage or a disadvantage for a ceramist to be born and to grow up in Faenza, the ceramics city?

I am probably a typical example of how Faenza can shape and educate someone. I was born in Faenza and attended all the schools here. And with the exception of studying at the academy in Bologna and a brief spell teaching in other towns, my whole life is centred on this place. I think Italian artists tend to be weighed down by their cultural and artistic heritage. This

source of inspiration. Even as a student at the Istituto d'Arte and later as a teacher there, I was in touch with ceramists and artists from all over the world. Many of them came to Faenza to work here or to study in greater depth. When I later felt the need to travel and to gain new experience abroad, my training, which was also sound on the technical front, was a recommendation.

Tell us something about your training

to earn it. In recent years I have been to China and South Korea several times. Each time, I returned home with some small technical secrets about porcelain, a material that is almost unknown in Faenza. From an aesthetic angle, I was not influenced by Asia but by Italian fashion and Italian design. In recent years, a major tendency towards lightness and attention to detail has manifested itself, an attitude that is very close to the way I work and live.

Although you make work in majolica or installations with fibre optics, I am sure our readers would like to learn more about the background and the making of your delicate “crespine”. Could you tell us something about them?

As a material per se, clay is hard and heavy. My goal was to achieve an impression of lightness with ceramics, both with regard to weight and visual appearance. My intention was to create a kind of lace, a mesh or woven fabric. With this, I wanted to emphasise women's creative powers. A lighter, fragile, discreet, fresh kind of creativity was to get a chance. I took my inspiration from “crespine”, an ornamental object in the majolica tradition that was very popular at court in Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries. I have always been fascinated by these historical objects. In 2005, I started to experiment with porcelain paperclay and to reinterpret the crespine; this is how my collection of these items came about. In contrast to a traditional approach, where bowls thrown on the wheel were perforated and cut, I made my pieces with extrud-

veloping a suitable body, there were other problems to solve: I wanted the interior of the pieces to be smooth, so I had to work on a convex hump mould with the related problem that it is tricky to lift the piece off the mould, not to mention the question of shrinkage. Plaster was not suitable for the moulds. After I had made my delicate forms with slip threads, I could not lift them off the mould without breaking them. The solution was a special mould making process from a material that I developed myself, which permitted first the shrinkage of the paperclay piece and then allowed me to lift the fragile object off it easily. Drying is very fast and only takes one day, and then a high temperature firing to 1260°C in an electric kiln usually follows straight away. Even the glazed crespine are only fired once, the glaze is applied to the dry greenware. My self-glazing porcelain with its lovely matt surface is only fired once too. It was a huge but stimulating challenge to reinterpret objects that originated in ages long past with modern technology and a contemporary philosophy.

how “Ghost” was born, a conceptional project for interiors that creates a mood between design and art installation. The basic idea is to illustrate everyday items that are all around us, or items in a museum, and with their shadows to create “illusory”, light artworks.

The list of awards in competitions, workshops, residencies abroad and your exhibitions is very long. Are you satisfied with what you have achieved or have you got other plans for the future?

I am very satisfied with the results achieved so far because in my career as an artist I have been able to travel a great deal and have been fortunate enough to work with the leading Italian art critics such as Filiberto Menna, Enrico Crispolti, Vittorio Fagone and Franco Solmi. In 2011 I was invited to the Biennale in Venice by Vittorio Sgarbi and by Silvana Annichiarico to the Triennale in Milan for the Triennale Design Museum until 2017. I have a lot of plans but I am superstitious enough not to speak about them yet!



ed threads of slip (dripping threads) from a slip trailer or a pastry syringe. In contrast to the traditional method, mine is additive and not subtractive. With this idea and an image in my mind, I first had to master and perfect the special technique to achieve the desired results. It took nearly a year. I experimented with various clay bodies, various syringes and piping bags for confectionery. For this collection, it was essential to conduct tests with porcelain and additives of paper. Besides de-

In your studio, I saw these narrow mural pieces which throw shadows on the wall when they are illuminated from beneath. Would you tell us something about them or is it still too early?

This most recent installation is made with ultra-modern technology. With a laser cutter, the forms are cut out of a 0.6 mm vitrified aluminium oxide sheet, a material found in technical ceramics. A complex digital analysis of light projection accompanies this project. This is

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Evelyne Schoenmann will be conducting her next interview with

Agnes Husz (Hungary and Japan)

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Antonella Cimatti

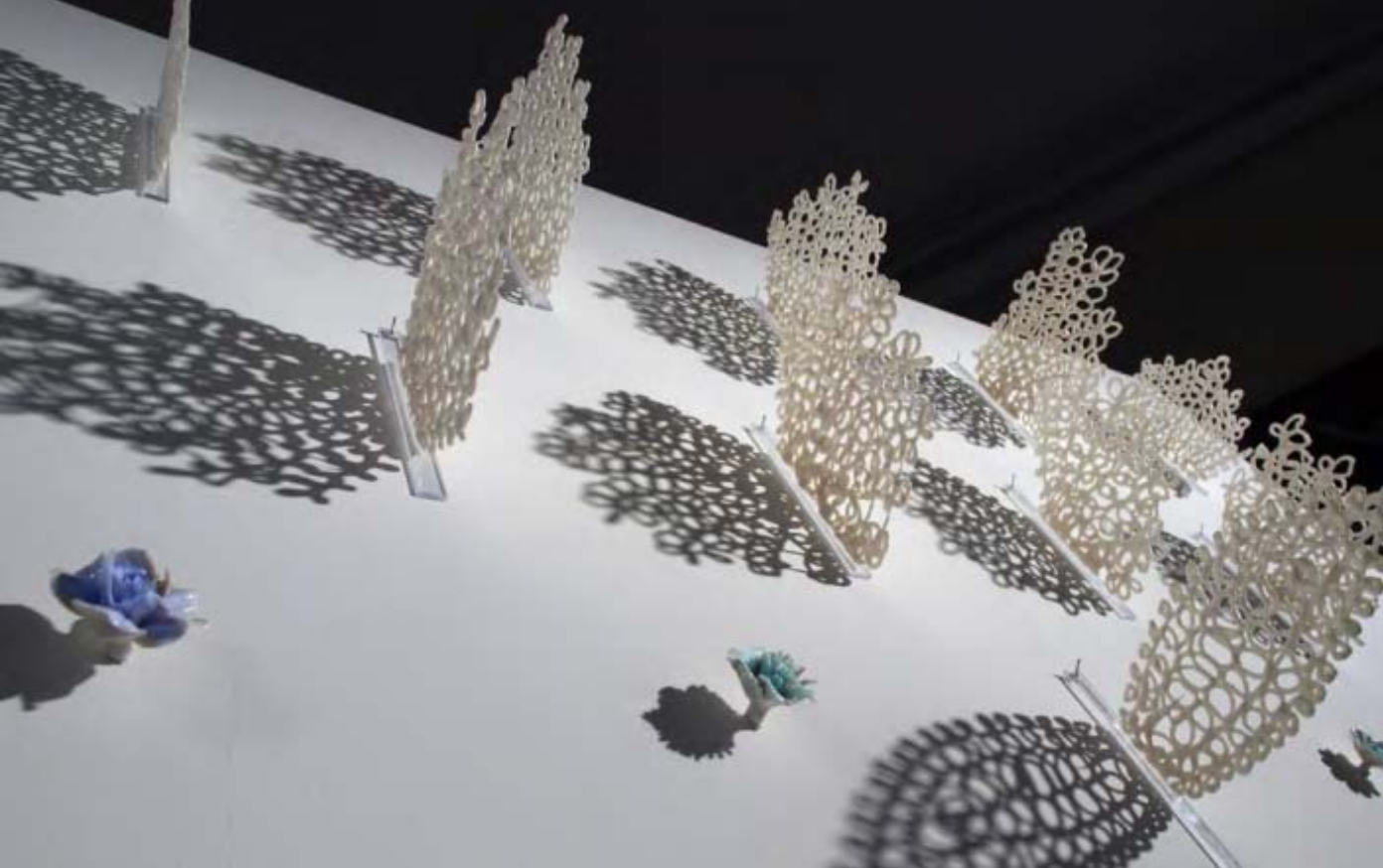
Refined Poetry of Porcelain and Light

ANTONELLA CIMATTI IS A CERAMICS ARTIST WHO LIVES in Faenza, Italy. She has been teaching Design at the G Ballardini Art Institute of Ceramics without interruption since 1979. During her own studies there, she met and studied under some of the greatest Italian maestros such as Angelo Biancini and Carlo Zauli, which was the beginning of a long list of some formative experiences for her. Following these studies, she went on to graduate from the Fine Arts Academy in Bologna. Even in her youth she understood the importance of travel and of learning from

other cultures and ways of making art. Ballardini's openness to foreign artists has made it a contemporary melting pot, as it has always been attended by many foreign students and the teachers have often been invited abroad for workshops and conferences. Cimatti's knowledge of creative processes and the idea of comparing techniques has led her to experience these first hand at different times: in Toki - Gifu, Japan, for Doban decoration technique; in Limoges, France, for porcelain; in Portsmouth, England for jewellery design; and in Turnhout, Belgium, for graphic design.

Article by Nino Caruso





Her creative philosophy has been established through innovative experimentation with aesthetics, design and technology. Technique exploration has been a long-standing interest of hers, combined with the desire to push materials beyond their limits. She is interested in the knowledge acquired through the process of doing, where technique and concept are of equal importance. The international dimension of Cimatti's experience and of her presence as an exhibitor is reflected by this, studded with recognition such as the Silver Prize at *The 4th World Ceramic Biennale 2007 Korea International Competition*.

The poetry of Cimatti's work is founded within creative research and through her innovative technique exploration. Her works are creations of refined beauty and are intended to arouse wonder and fascination: the whiteness of the porcelain woven crespines and the grand lace works hovering on transparent crystal stems, immaculate butterflies about to take off in flight with their projected shadows. The enchanting lightness and elegance evoked by the objects are not only the outcome of her inventiveness, inspiration and aesthetic taste (the spontaneous and impromptu fruits of intuition) but rather they insert themselves and take root in the obvious quality of her training. She has assimilated tradition with selective attention to contemporary trends. She expresses herself through tenacious and productive research, forward-thinking and experimentation that require expertise regarding complex processes and a mastery of materials and technologies.

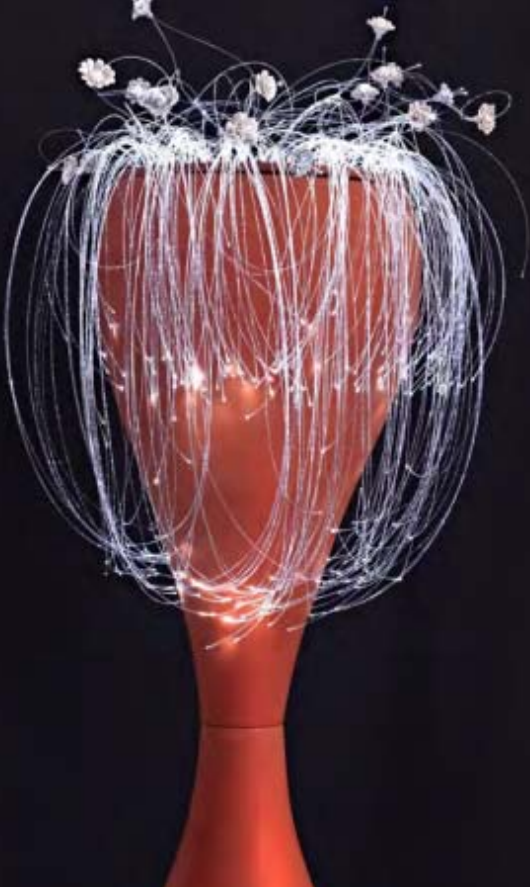
Mindful of the 16th century renaissance majolica

Facing page: Crespina con rose (Crespine with Roses). 2009. Self glazing porcelain paperclay with rose filigree, central rose handbuilt in porcelain and fired to 1250°C with glass base. 30 x 12.5 cm.

Above: Butterflies. 2010. Installation, wings in self-glazing porcelain paperclay, produced by slip trailing with syringe on refractory moulds, fired at 1250°C and mounted on plexiglass, handbuilt glazed porcelain flowers, lateral spot light. 150 x 110 cm.

Photos by Raffaele Tassinari

Compendiario Style 'whites' crespines (*i bianchi*), since 2005 she has been recreating her own modern versions in which decoration and form are one. Real and true embroidered sculptures, removed from any type of representative intent, instead call to mind a flow of personal emotions. Their refinement, grace and essentiality, accentuated by their absolute whiteness, synthesise all colours of natural light and evoke classical values. In her own words: "The way I work is not traditional. My goal is to create a sense of lightness in ceramics, not only regarding weight but also visually. My design is born from a rereading of past artistic production. The forms generated are aesthetically accurate and display a strong sense of their own female character, of beauty, of finesse and of attention to detail." Her collection of porcelain paperclay (mixed with cellulose fibre to obtain maximum resilience during the working phases), is almost immaterial; impalpable threads, pure white filigree lacework. The process calls for freehand drizzling by means of a syringe, with a gestural action of 'dripping' on to concave and convex refractory supports. The forms are created with a thin and light decorative weft which becomes the overall structure: it is the art of adding curlicues and swirls



Above: *La Clessidra (The Hourglass) (Detail)*. 2010. Illuminated sculpture in terracotta, fibre optics and handbuilt flowers in glazed porcelain fired to 1250°C. 60 x 60 x 175 cm. Photo by Bernardo Ricci.
Right: *Memory Containers*. 2012. Porcelain, glazed earthenware and gold lustre, blown glass base, flowers in Murano glass and gold leaf. 50 x 60 cm. Photo by Raffaele Tassinari.

of porcelain (whereas in the original crespine forms, the pierced effect was obtained through the art of subtraction). And finally, the pieces are strengthened by high temperature firing and sometimes mounted on blown glass bases, designed and manufactured in Tuscany. Although porcelain and glass are different materials, they contain many common elements that interact and communicate with each other. These simple forms transmit both power and fragility.

Since 2008, her research has become more technical regarding colour, light and volume and the ceramic



material responds to Cimatti's inquisitive exploration of different materials. It is a linguistic dialogue that attempts to deepen its meaning through a sculptural reflection. This development is evident in some of her more recent installations, creations that speak of porcelain and luminosity, ambient sculptures focusing on illumination by means of the use of fibre optic technology.

La Clessidra, 2008–2010, are extremely suggestive and provocative with their changing light tones. Wrapped over warm terracotta, they glow radiantly to the point of being dissolved in light. These works are contrary to the virtual noise and speed of contemporary, the hourglass speaks of contemplation, quiet and absorbed flowing into meditation: cascading time, like a thread, it accumulates in its unfolding and then disappears.

Trame di luce is the title of two installations splendidly exhibited. One at MIC (the International Museum of Ceramics, Faenza) in 2010 and the other in 2011 at the Italian Pavilion for the 54th International Art Exhibition of the Venice Biennale. A fountain of vibrant luminous fibres fill the space and intersect translucent pierced bodies of porcelain. Passing from fuchsia to white to azure to yellow, they vibrate and even change the colour of the vessels and the small roses suspended from their fibre optics, producing surprising visual effects. The fibres act as ties, wrapping, permeating, placing the material in space, easing and lifting the work which is raised and freed into emptiness.

As if magical, immaculate 'butterflies' appear to be on the point of taking off in flight while their long shadows are projected on to the wall. The idea of light also proposes that of shadow: one cannot live without the other and hiding one of them would mean not giving life to the other.

Porcelain, in a thin filigree of precious translucent clay body composed of valuable kaolin, quartz and felspar, when hit with light not only emits the



sensation of reverberation and luminosity but also of vibration and elusive shadows.

After all, as Cimatti says, 'the aim of the piece is to shed light on the expressive and metamorphic world of shadows. One part of the piece is real while the other is temporary and ephemeral in perfect ambiguity and duality.'

Shadows of Light reveals pure white crespines arabesqued on to the wall, much like appliqués, each one with its own projected shadow, magnifying thin interwoven porcelain filaments, doodles, details that juxtapose the whiteness of the objects themselves.

They are meticulously designed and planned, precariously balanced between art and design, as if dealing with an experimental exercise in unique, unpredictable and theatrical objects. The attraction toward this sphere of creativity is strong and derives its origins from the Italian tendency to place the object of design into a more artistic context, unique and precious. One only needs to be reminded of the exclusive collections often displayed in the Italian art galleries. This is how the *Contenitori di memoria* were born, defined by Cimatti as: "containers to express the symbolic and ritualistic meaning of objects, where the formal fancy and inspiration of the object is that of memory: whether connected to personal memories in the present, either to a place or a life experience".

She speaks about the attraction to an essentially pure object, as well expressed in this 18th century style teapot with handle. From its finishing cannula to its spout and its embellished lid with delicate rose decoration, it is truly the 'essence of tea' and of its symbolic meaning. A decorative object placed in an environment serves to enrich it, and to create a relationship and a complicity with the viewer. With its purpose of evoking the fragrance of tea, it provokes emotions and memories, as a catalyst of experience, which also serves to pull the viewer into its daydream. A 'bridge' between East and West, thoughtful and silent it establishes a relationship with its audience.

Altogether, this is a true magical effect of hour-glasses, butterflies, crespines and installations: they are the fruits of the touch and the personal impressions of a delicate yet strong sense of femininity



Left: *Shadows of Light*. 2009. Light source on porcelain, slip-trailed with syringe on supporting moulds and fired to 1250°C. 30 x 15 cm. Photo by Raffaele Tassinari.

Above: *Trame di luce (Weft of Light)*. 2008. Installation with translucent porcelain paperclay, fibre optics and handbuilt flowers in glazed porcelain, temp. 1250°C. 300 cm. Shown at the Italian Pavilion for the 54th International Art Exhibition of the Venice Biennale. Photo by Bernardo Ricci.

that knows beauty, grace and elegance, dissolution and dissolving into light. These are undoubtedly invaluable characteristics resulting from the Antonella Cimatti's experimentation, in full merit of her national and international recognition and of which we greatly anticipate further growth and development.

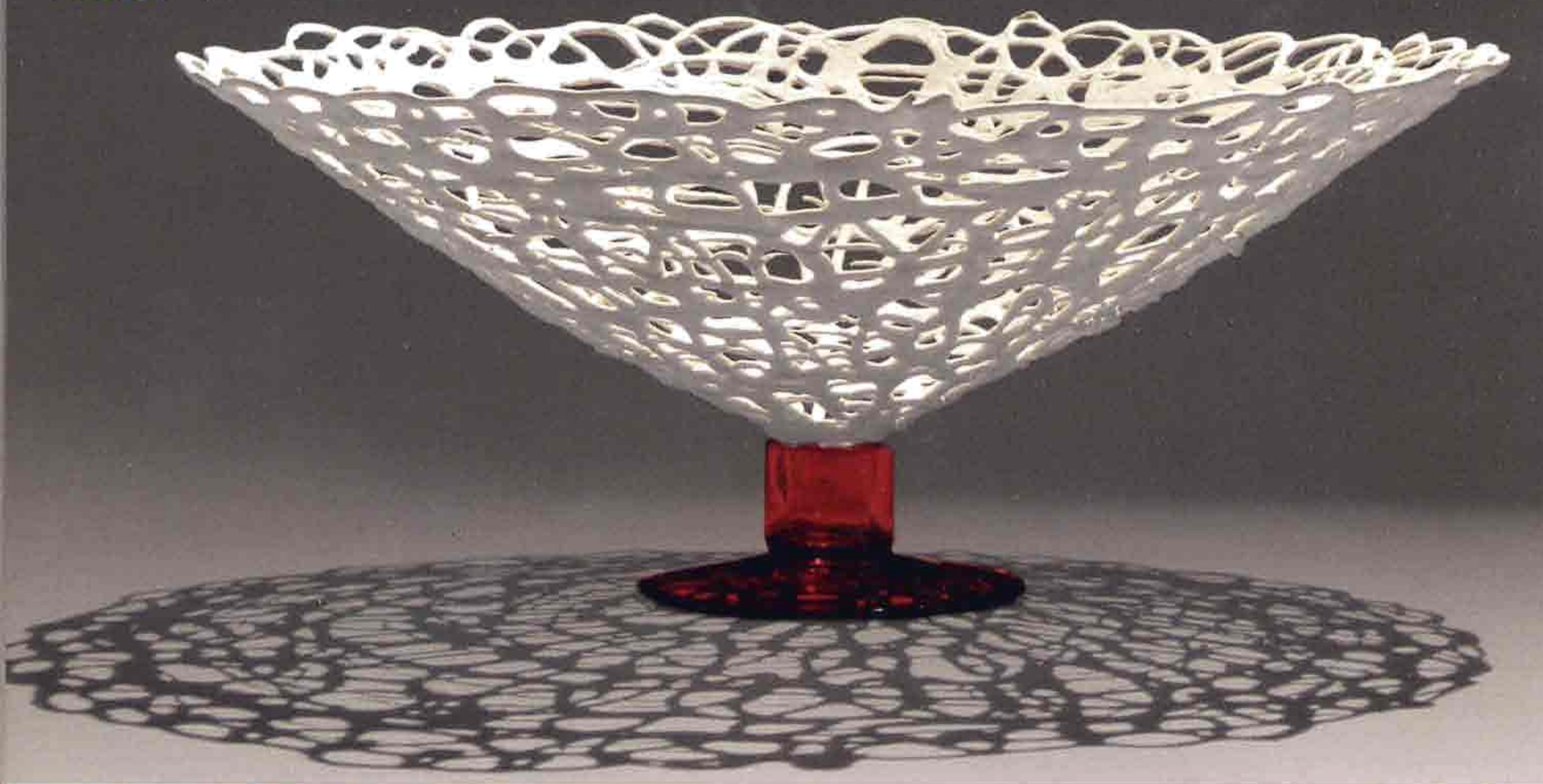
Nino Caruso is a sculptor and designer who lives and works in Rome and Todi, Italy. He is the author of numerous books on art and techniques of ceramics. nino@caruso.it

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ANTONELLA CIMATTI and Light

Rolando Giovanni

Antonella Cimatti lives and works in Italy, a country where the weight of its artistic history and ceramic tradition is felt, but where there are constantly many new stimuli from the world of design and fashion.

Indeed, in recent years in these fields, there has been a notable trend of expression characterized by lightness and attention to detail. In true harmony with her way of being and working, she has appropriated and interpreted the buzz coming from these sectors, which are in a constant state of evolution, creating never-before seen fusions.

This is, in summary, the concept of an artist who studied Ceramics in Faenza at the almost hundred year-old Istituto Ballardini (Ballardini Institute) and Fine Arts in Bologna, at the historic Accademia di Belle Arti (Academy of Fine Arts).

The strong Faentino tradition centred around majolica has distinguished her training and has been the main focus of her artistic studies, bringing to mind her hand painted majolica. In recent years, feeling the necessity to render her work more dynamic, she has begun using porcelain. Her fascination with this extraordinary and ancient material has not only derived from the idea of preciousity and refinement that Antonella Cimatti loves and interprets, but also from the context of the now, when globalization has allowed the full diffusion of materials and raw materials into every studio, and the use of "high fire" has definitively taken hold.

High temperature for the ceramicist signifies creating long lasting works with special effects: glazed, almost mysterious. With "low fire", much is left to the action of the artist's hand, while in "high fire", the fire takes the driver's seat, the objects become durable and pieces on the whole are an amalgamation of poetry, design and alchemist chemistry.

The intent of lightening up her work was motivated not only in terms of weight, but also regarding the visual aspect. The purity

and translucence of the porcelain are elements that give an unusual dimension quite different from traditional ceramics that are often heavy in form, in thickness and in materials. Then there is a secondary choice connected to the language of paperclay that is able to feed the greater impulse of this need of immateriality and lightness. The creation of these forms relies on the gestural action of dripping that the artist achieves by encircling the mould with repeated overlapping tracing actions.

Recently she demonstrated her way of working during the "paperclay/TODAY Artist Symposium", which took place in February 2010 in Laguna Beach, California, together with 16 other renowned international artists. Furthermore, she created a sculpture with paperclay during the second "2009 Nanfeng Kiln International Ceramic Work Camp", which was held in Foshan, Guangdong, China in August 2009.

In these most recent years the upper hand has been given the return of Minimalism in artistic language which has been interpreted by Antonella Cimatti through her creation of a dialogue between the simplification of form and its completion with the portrayal of its own shadow. The form is alive by virtue of the shadow and produces an illusion. You find yourself there in front of these compositions which have been duplicated due to their lighting effects; with the consequent creation of the completed work by means of its own virtual shadow. These "Butterflies" have one porcelain wing and one which appears only in the instant the light falls upon it.

The work duplicates itself, emphasizing a nonexistent reality, but within the ambiguity between real and artificial, it plays with that very splendour. She deals with pure porcelain forms, rendering the compositions both vibrant and mysterious. Curvy objects, concave and convex dishes which put forward duplicate gestures of both welcoming and repelling.



ILLUSTRATIONS -

opposite page - "**Le crespine**" - 30 cm x 14 cm h - porcelain paperclay
1250°C - majolica glaze 920 °C - 2005

top - "**Container for a few calories**" - porcelain - bisqueware -
porcelain glazed container and 12 flowers Ø 70 cm

right - "**Butterflies**" - installation - porcelain and lateral spotlight - 300 x 250 cm h

The porcelain and its interlacings remind us of the antique white majolica "crespines" (goblets) of the 17th century, becoming protagonists of layered backdrops and sets, dominated by traces imbued with twinkles and reflections. Works conceived in this way resemble intriguing sorts of story lines, bandaged and pulsating, which are at the same moment light and immaterial.

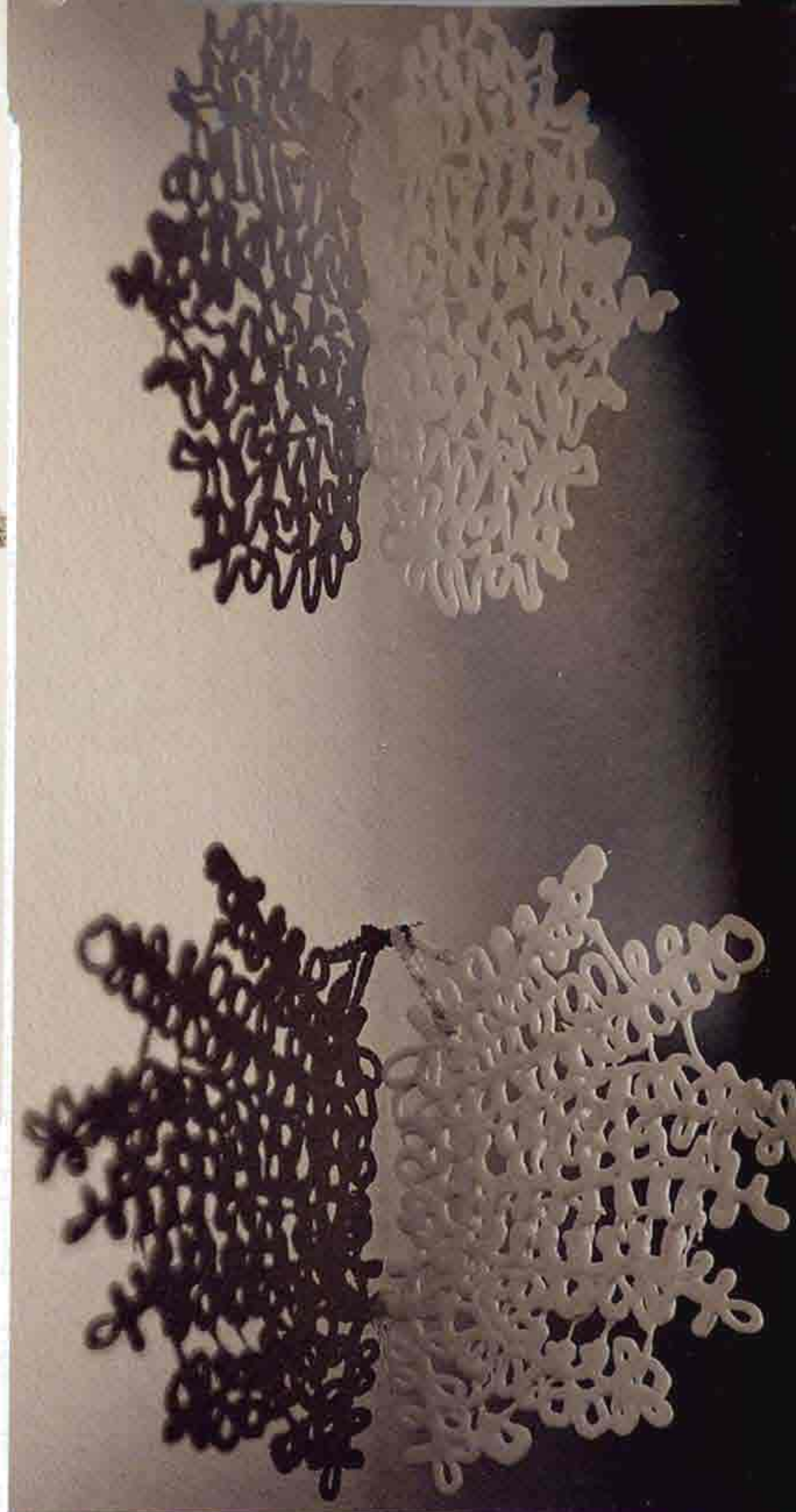
The light plays tricks and creates new forms, inserting itself into ceramics wrapped with light, losing their very materiality and sense of gravity and regaining the flexibility and dynamics of the forms. The emptiness is given life and a thick network of optical illusions emerges from obscurity. Thus it is a vibrant and dynamic scenography in which traces of light make your thoughts slip, sweeping them away on journeys of which you are only able to catch a vague glimpse and do not wish to end.

Rolando Giovanni is a ceramist. Since 2000 he has been a member of the Executive Committee for Arte, Fashion e Design in the monthly magazine *Ceramica Informazione*.

Antonella Cimatti was born in Faenza. One of Carlo Zauli's pupils at the Istituto d'Arte (State School of Ceramics) in Faenza, she went on to obtain a degree with distinction from the Accademia di Belle Arti (Fine Arts Academy) in Bologna. She has been teaching Design at the Istituto d'Arte (State School of Ceramics) in Faenza since 1979. In 2007 she was awarded the Silver Prize at the 4th World Ceramic Biennale 2007 Korea International Competition. Recently she was invited to participate in the 2009 Nanfeng Kiln International Ceramic Work Camp in Foshan, Guangdong, China, where she created a sculpture using paperclay. In 2010 she has been invited to paperclay 1TODAY Artist Symposium in Laguna Beach, California. She is a member of World Crafts Council - Europe.

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ARTIST'S STATEMENT - My design is born from re-interpreting past artistic production through a filter of formal personal sensibility directed towards the making of functional or sculptural objects. The forms generated are aesthetically accurate and display a strong sense of femininity, grace, elegance and attention to detail. Thus, "Crespines", traditionally Faentinian and used in the grand European courts of the 16th and 17th centuries, have been remade in porcelain paper clay for a new series which began in 2005. It has been challenging and exciting creating these historical forms, while having reconsidered them with completely new techniques and philosophies. These pieces have been formed using an incredibly thin decorative weft that ultimately creates their supporting structure: it's an art of addition, not of subtraction like the original Renaissance crespines, which were pierced and had shapes cut out creating their decoration. They are ample goblets in ceramic filigree - an interwoven lace of overlapping spirals in precious porcelain "thread", an effect which would have been unobtainable without the help of paperclay. They are objects of light and vulnerability, which live in illumination and shadow, in tactility, in supreme whiteness and imperceptible vibrations. It's a new way of interpreting this material, no longer speaking of "physical mass", but instead of evocative transparencies. In the installations, life and existence are given to shadows. The butterflies created on the wall are a combination of one porcelain wing while the other is only virtual - having been created by its own shadow, bringing life to the expressive and metamorphic world of shadows. One part of the work is real while the other is temporary because the shadows are ephemeral and elusive.

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Antonella Cimatti
Between Art Research
& Technology

Article by Rolando Giovannini



Fiori-frutta (Flowers-fruit). 2007. Collection of majolica vases with ceramic litho transfers. 30 x 30 cm.
Commissioned by the GestCooper Consortium, Turin



Positive and Negative. 2003. Vitrified vases from the Raku Dolce series. 32 x 17 cm. Photography: Foto Ellesse, Faenza, Italy

THE CITY OF FAENZA IS NOTED IN THE WORLD FOR being one of the motherlands of ceramics. In particular, it embraces more than a millennium of terracotta, first engobed, and then glazed with a typical surface treatment containing tin.

But the city, above all at the beginning of the 1900s, was characterised for combining aspects of creativity with those of technological research of materials and processes. In reality, thanks to the enlightened mind of Gaetano Ballardini, who not only founded a museum (1908) that quickly became international, also implemented a School of Art and Craft (1916) where the pupils – few at the beginning – learnt and experimented with different techniques.

It could be said that the particularity of the Faentino 'style' not only resides in the extremely high quality of its rich polychromatic decoration well evident in its superlative maiolica production, but also, above all, in its attention to detail regarding production, its perfection of processes and the careful attention that is paid to the ways in which things are done.

Antonella Cimatti, having been trained at Faenza's Istituto Statale d'Arte per la Ceramica (State Art Institute for Ceramics), and having been both a pupil of Carlo Zauli and of l'Accademia di Belle Arti (Academy of Arts) in Bologna, fits perfectly into this criterion. Not only is she creative, clever in management and skilled at colour combination, she is also precise and dynamic in her free-hand decoration, never losing sight of the importance of series production, while paying close attention to contemporary trends regarding concept and design.

This is her way of working, where conceptualisation and theory are fleshed out well before the clay is even entrusted to her hands, or for that matter to interpretation or to whim. Due to this, the experiments that characterised her post-modern flavoured work at the beginning of the '80s were welcomed into the artistic movement of the 'Nuova Ceramica' (New Ceramics), a group of artists curated by art critics Franco Solmi and Marilena Pasquali (1982-1984, having also had shows in the Tokyo Department Stores of Seibu) and the movement 'A Tempo e A Fuoco' (In Rhythm and In Fire), curated by Vittorio Fagone (1983-85).

During this period, with her series *Le Preciose* (The Precious Ones), she furthered her work in industry production, in particular for the manufacturer, Flavia Ceramics (Bitossi), in Montelupo Fiorentino. Periods of study and teaching in Japan at Toki-Shi, in France at Limoges, in England at Portsmouth and in Belgium at Turnhout, served to broaden her awareness of a variety of materials, from porcelain to jewellery. In *Raku Dolce* of 2003, she produced an unpublished series of vases with a black and white motif, research that merited winning First Prize at the competition, *Il Vaso Officinale* (The Official Vase), in Collegno, Turin.

Like any artist belonging to the Faentino culture, which is dedicated to utility, her attention orients itself toward renewing the forms and design of the artisan. A sort of mix between artist and artisan, she moves toward a new language altogether where the work becomes – as if innately so – an object of the times, concrete. And this is where her collaboration



Le Crespine (Goblets). 2005. Installation porcelain paperclay bisqueware. 1250°C. 120 x 120 cm. Photography: Raffaele Tassinari, Faenza, Italy.

with two top quality botteghe (studios) in Faenza, those of Antonio Liverani and Laura Silvagni, was born. The former association being of a limited edition series of objects decorated with a floral motif. During his presentation at the Flora Magna Collection in 1997, the Director of the International Ceramics Museum of Faenza, Gian Carlo Bojani, said, "Now we are able to see in which direction those fleshy pinks are going, those swollen expanses: they have become rose vases, or are they vase roses? The forms of the vases work well with these floral designs: they are so well integrated that the vase is almost swallowed by its decoration. The surface treatment is strong with respect to its support, it devours it, it



Le Crespine (Goblets) detail. 2007. Installation. porcelain paperclay bisqueware 1250°C. 150 x 120cm. Objects were displayed while being projected onto with digital images of photos of the objects themselves.



Fiori-frutta (Flowers-fruit). 2007. Collection of maiolica vases with ceramic litho transfers. 30 x 30 cm. Commissioned by the GestCooper Consortium, Turin. Photography Raffaele Tassinari, Faenza, Italy.



Fiori-frutta (Flowers-fruit). 2007. Collection of majolica vases with ceramic litho transfers. 30 x 30cm. Commissioned by the GestCooper Consortium, Turin. Photography Raffaele Tassinari, Faenza, Italy.

transforms it; it is the fruit of an inspired mind. The form hasn't been wasted in its narration, but has been transformed into something else entirely, it speaks of surfaces and shapes. They are vivid, these petrified roses of Antonella Cimatti's."

Today, she uses photorealistic transfers (ceramic litho) of images taken from the natural world. The effect is that of wrapping the object with a sort of flow between form and decoration. While instead, since 2005, with Laura Silvani – a Faentina artist well known for her maiolica surface decoration – Cimatti has created motifs that have been inspired by undulating fabric: a precious, soft, pregnant and voluptuous garment in maiolica; – either coming from some unknown fashion trend or from the strength of tradition. The object's true second skin, or better yet, its melting of visual space, is a sort of deceptive accomplice, eluding the audience.

Along the same lines, she has created a series of *double-face* objects painted with the brush's tip. The design, although most evident externally, is continued on the hidden underside of the base, allowing the object to assume a double function and sense of versatility.

Also in 2005, she created *Crespine* (Goblets) in porcelain paperclay bisqueware. Some of them have been glazed, and have been used in experiments using triple fired gold lustre. They present themselves like ample goblets in ceramic filigree, a type of interwoven lace of overlapping spirals in precious porcelain "thread". It is an art of addition, not of subtraction, as is not uncommonly done in the making of

ceramics and, above all, in the original renaissance crespines, where the perforations were created by piercing and cutting out shapes from the existing closed forms.

The procedure is complex; apart from the anticipation of the freehanded formations created on concave or convex refractory supports, a high temperature firing is necessary and then subsequently the assembly on hand-blown glass bases, which have been designed and commissioned in Tuscany specially by the artist, Antonella Cimatti.

These pieces, having been selected by the ADI (Italian Design Association), for the exhibition *Ultratavola, Abitare il Tempo* (The Ultimate Table, to Inhabit Time), in Verona and for the exhibition *Artigianato Artistico Italiano* (Italian Artistic Artisans), in St. Petersburg, Russia, have also been recently awarded with the Silver Prize at The 4th World Ceramic Biennale 2007, Korea.

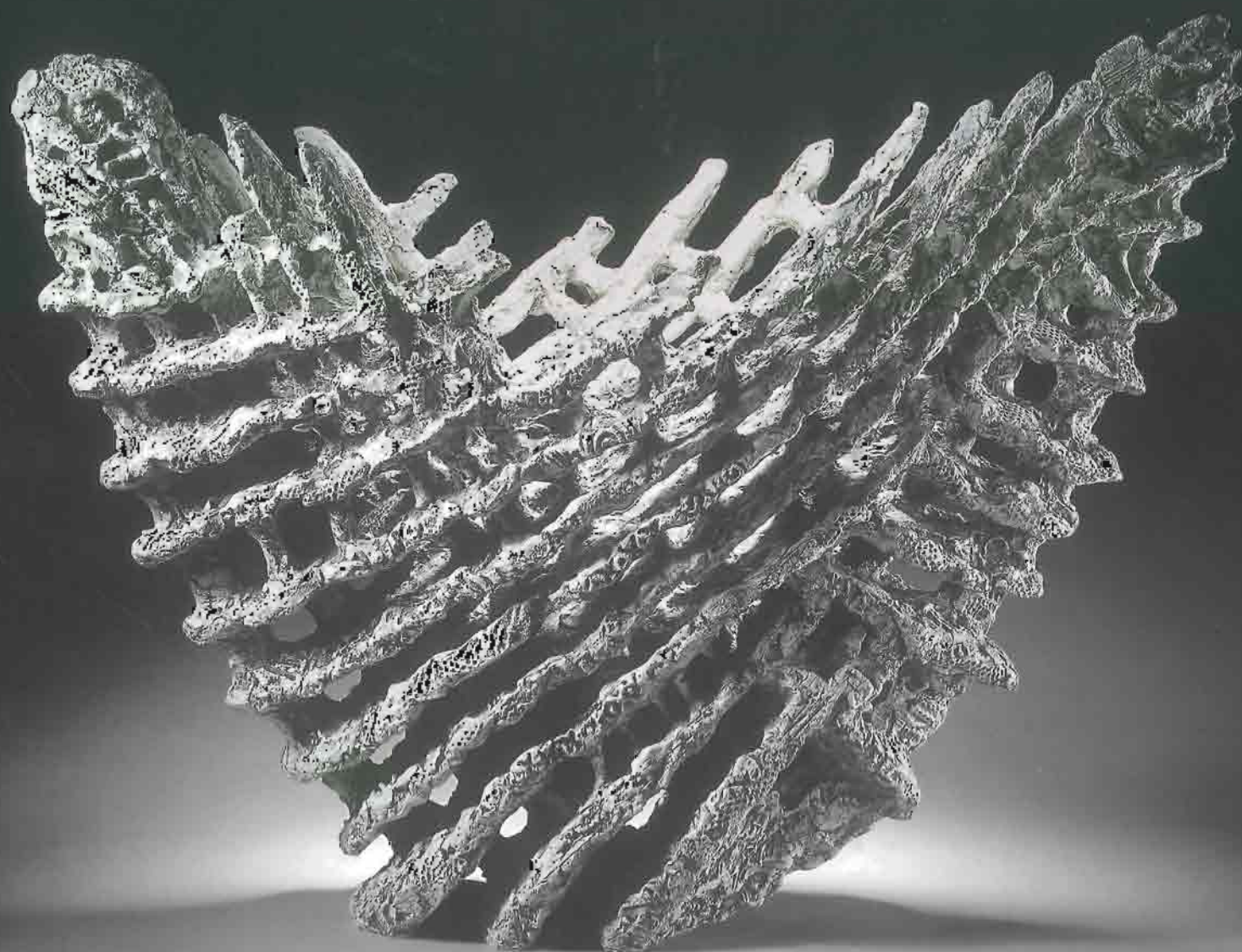
Agile, unique objects that live in light and tactility, that speak of supreme whiteness and imperceptible vibrations, exactly like the *modus vivendi et modus operandi* (the way that you live and the way that you work) of the author, Antonella Cimatti.

Rolando Giovannini is a ceramic critic and the Director of the Istituto Statale D'Arte per la Ceramica (State Art Institute of Ceramics). Faenza, Italy. Translated by Julie K. Shanks.

DAO CLAYFORM

道 陶本

2011 no.1



本半年刊包括国内外三本陶艺杂志精选内容

This bi-annual edition includes two international ceramic magazines and one local magazine with selected subjects.



ORIGINAL AND ELEGANT IS THIS ARTIST AND DESIGNER FROM FAENZA. SHE TAKES INSPIRATION FROM THE CERAMIC TRADITION OF HER CITY, TO CREATE WORKS THAT SKILFULLY COMBINE TECHNOLOGICAL MATERIALS, SUCH AS OPTICAL FIBRES, OBTAINING RESULTS IN HARMONY WITH MODERN STYLE



1

ANTONELLA CIMATTI 安东妮拉 · 塞玛迪

Gilda Cefariello Grosso
吉尔达·赛法瑞罗·格罗索

原创且优雅是这位来自意大利芬泽的艺术家兼设计师的作品风格。她从芬泽市的陶瓷艺术传统中汲取灵感，巧妙地在作品创作中加入科技材料，比如光学纤维，令作品充满现代风格。

It is a very interesting task to examine the wide collection of works produced by Antonella Cimatti, internationally famous artist and designer from Faenza. Her way of operating is based on a rigorous sense of harmony in organising forms that sometimes seem to come out from a surrealistic world. A clear example of this is represented by the works she created in the last years, where she combines with ceramic, the luminous effects obtained with the use of optical fibres. In these works, Antonella Cimatti skilfully captures the sparks of light using them as living matter originated by ceramic. The images offered by these creations are amazing and they attract us inside an appealing world where all the elements are skilfully organised with great harmony. This

研究安东妮拉·塞玛迪丰富的艺术创作是一项非常有意思的工作。她来自芬泽，是国际知名的艺术家兼设计师。她的创作方式基于一种很严谨的和谐感，造型形式有时看起来就像是来自一个超现实的世界。她最近几年创作的作品就是最好的例证。她在这些陶艺作品中加入了光学纤维，形成发光的效果。那些构思精巧的闪光就像是存在于陶瓷本身的生命物质。这些创作令人叹为观止，并把我們带入了一个引人入胜的世界，在那里所有的元素都被巧妙地结合在一起，极其协调一致。

她几年前创作的这些作品已经通过非常个性化的语言，取得了引人注目的成效。这其中最重要的成果就是曾于2008年和2010年在芬泽国际陶艺博物馆展出的装置作品《光波》(Weaves of Light)。此外台灯雕塑《沙漏》(Hourglass)也形成了强烈的视觉冲击。在一件很简单的赤陶雕塑作品上，从顶端抽出的光纤束形成了一个发

collection of works created some years ago has reached, through a very personal language, remarkable results. An important evidence of this is represented by "Trame di luce" (Weaves of light) installations presented at the "Museo Internazionale delle ceramiche" (International Museum of Ceramics) in Faenza in 2008 and 2010. Of great visual impact is also the lamp-sculpture "Clessidra" (Hourglass). On a very simple terracotta structure, optical fibres bundles come out from the top as a luminous crown decorated also by small porcelain flowers, which support the light sources. This kind of article was designed in two different sizes. The large dimension version of "Clessidra" (Hourglass) was presented at the "Otto scultrici in Fortezza" (Eight female sculptors in a Fortress), art exhibition curated by Gian Carlo Bojani,

光的皇冠，装饰皇冠的小陶瓷花同时也是光源的支撑体。这类作品有两种不同的尺寸。2010年5月，在法诺(Fano)的加诺山城堡(San Gallo Fortress)，由吉安·卡洛·博查尼(Gian Carlo Bojani)策展的艺术展《城堡里的八位女性雕塑家》(Eight Female Sculptors in a Fortress)曾展出过一件大尺寸的《沙漏》作品。

两种尺寸的作品在结构上是相似的，区别在于小件台灯的皇冠部分。在小台灯的光纤束里，我们能看到里面加了浆土瓷片。浆土是一种加了纸的陶瓷材料，加纸是为了让材料更结实，好处理。几年前，安东妮拉·塞玛迪开始对这种材料感兴趣，并且创作出了优秀的作品。通过研究可以追溯到16世纪的优雅的芬泽艺术品中所表现的图像矩阵，她创作了《巴贝利》(Crespine)系列作品。

独特的优雅、表面尽现精细的阿拉伯式花纹，以及严谨的结构设计，这是安东妮



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at the "Bastione San Gallo" (San Gallo Fortress) in Fano, in May 2010 (See D'A, 2010, No. 81). The two versions are similar in the structure except a difference in the crown of the smaller lamp. Inside the optical fibres bundles of this lamp, we notice the insertion of tiles in paper clay porcelain, a ceramic material to which paper is added to make it more solid during its processing. The interest of Antonella Cimatti for this kind of porcelain has started a few years ago, and she obtained excellent results. From this study, which has its iconographic matrix in elegant artefacts made in Faenza and dating back to the XVI century, the "Crespine" collection has been created. It is a modern key interpretation of objects characterised by a special elegance, surfaces rich in delicate arabesques, and

拉·塞玛迪 对创作对象的一种关键的现代解读。为了表彰她对这种特殊的表现形式所做的现代解读，2007韩国第四届国际陶艺双年展国际竞赛展授予给她银奖。她创作的一些茶壶同样是稀奇古怪且妙趣横生；茶壶也是以浆土为原料，能传递出一种轻盈的质感。2009年至2010年，她运用同样的材料，创作了一组题为《光影》(Shadows of Light)的壁灯。这是一组令人赏心悦目的壁灯，光纤被布置在灯具表面的接缝处，如蕾丝一般的光线投射到墙壁上，营造出绝佳的效果。在安东妮拉·塞玛迪的各项研究和实验中，我们不得不提到她在2005年创作的《流动》(Sinus Fluentes)系列作品。作品均由劳拉·西尔瓦格尼(Laura Silvagni)手绘，呈现出色彩斑斓的上佳效果。其中最有趣的是一件长花瓶。令人惊叹的沉稳造型，深思熟虑的容量设计，以及特殊的动感装饰效果，令这件花瓶显得异常优雅。

安东妮拉·塞玛迪是以其作品的原创性

a rigorous design of the structure. For her modern way of interpreting this particular expressive means, Antonella Cimatti was awarded the "Silver Prize" at the "4th World Ceramic Biennale 2007 Korea International Competition". Bizarre and interesting are also some teapots, realised in paper clay porcelain as well, which are able to transmit lightness sensation. With the same material, the artist has designed between 2009 and 2010 a collection of wall lamps, "Shadows of light". They are very pleasant objects, light as lace, that project, with great effects on the walls, their articulate surfaces through which the optical fibre lights pass. Among Antonella Cimatti's various studies and experimentations we must mention those from which, in 2005, she obtained the "Sinus Fluentes" collection. These objects

和优雅感吸引观众的，她好像无意偏离这一主旨去做毫无意义的炫技。她非常精确和理性的研究和实验能力有目共睹，并且得到了意大利乃至世界范围的认可，而她所揽获的众多奖项也很好地证明了这一点。

1. "Essence of tea", 2010, filigree paper clay porcelain bisque, glazed porcelain, and earthenware. Glass base, h cm 35 and h 12
2. "Shadow of light", 2009, porcelain, luminous source, diameter cm 30
3. "La clessidra" (The hourglass), 2009 and 2010, terracotta sculpture, optical fibres, and glazed porcelain, h cm 70 and h cm 170
4. "Trame di luce" (Weaves of light), 2008 and 2010, installation at the MIC in Faenza, paper clay porcelain, glazed porcelain, optical fibres, and LED illumination, h cm 300
5. "Sinus Fluentes", 2005, collection realised in collaboration with Laura Silvagni from Faenza, hand painted majolica, cm h 40

1. 《茶之精华》，2010年作，掐丝纸黏土陶瓷素坯、上釉瓷和低温粗陶。玻璃底座，高35厘米和12厘米
2. 《光影》，2009年作，瓷制，发光源，直径30厘米
3. 《沙漏》，2009年和2010年作，赤陶雕塑、光纤和上釉瓷，高70厘米和170厘米
4. 《光波》，2008年和2010年作，陈设在芬泽国际陶艺博物馆的装置作品，纸黏土瓷、上釉瓷、光纤和LED光源，高300厘米
5. 《流动》，2005年作，与来自芬泽的劳拉·西尔瓦格尼合作，手绘陶器，高40厘米

characterised by brush decoration by Laura Silvagni, present chromatic signs of great effect. Among these artefacts, very interesting is a long shaped vase. Its remarkably sober structure, the well thought-out calibration of the volumes, and the special dynamic effect of the decorations make it a very elegant object. What attracts us about Antonella Cimatti's works is the originality and elegance, since she seems not tempted to digress into a meaningless virtuosity. We are well conscious to be in front of very accurate and rational study and experimentation ability recognised both at national and international level, as the numerous awards conferred on her evidence.



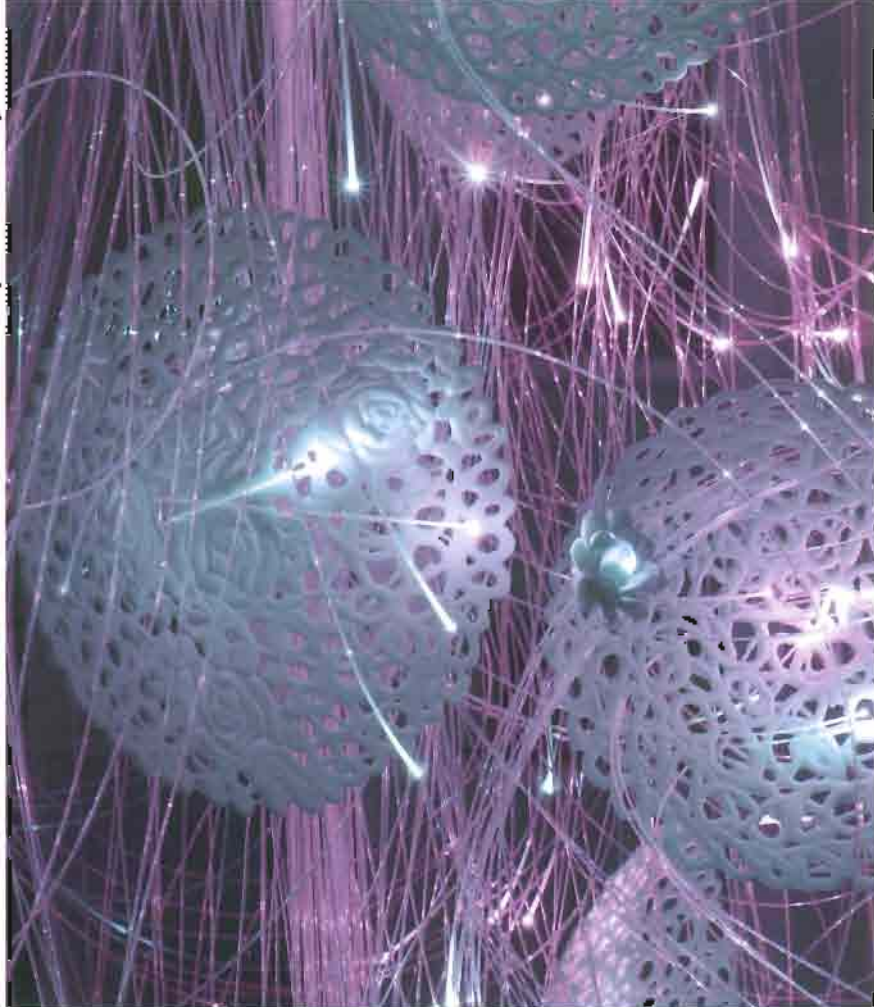
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antonella cimatti

TEXTO: DANIELA BRUGNOTO. FOTOS: RAFFAELE TSSINARI

Porcelana de luz

Antonella Cimatti parece que quiera invitarnos a entrar en su habitación, de cuya penumbra manan borbotones de luz que colorean el entorno, iluminando delicadas esculturas en paperclay, que decoran con ligera armonía el espacio expositivo y cuya luz y sombra se compenetran la una con la otra acariciando los sutiles hilos cerámicos entrelazados el uno con el otro, como bordados de un tejido blanco, puro, de una entidad casi etérea.

Los últimos trabajos de Antonella Cimatti representan el importante resultado de su inagotable búsqueda proyectiva, unida a una infalible creatividad artística que ha regalado a las últimas obras nuevos lenguajes expresivos, unidos a una continua experimentación, desde siempre unida a la tradición cerámica faentina.

Por la aplicación de porcelana líquida mezclada con papel mo-



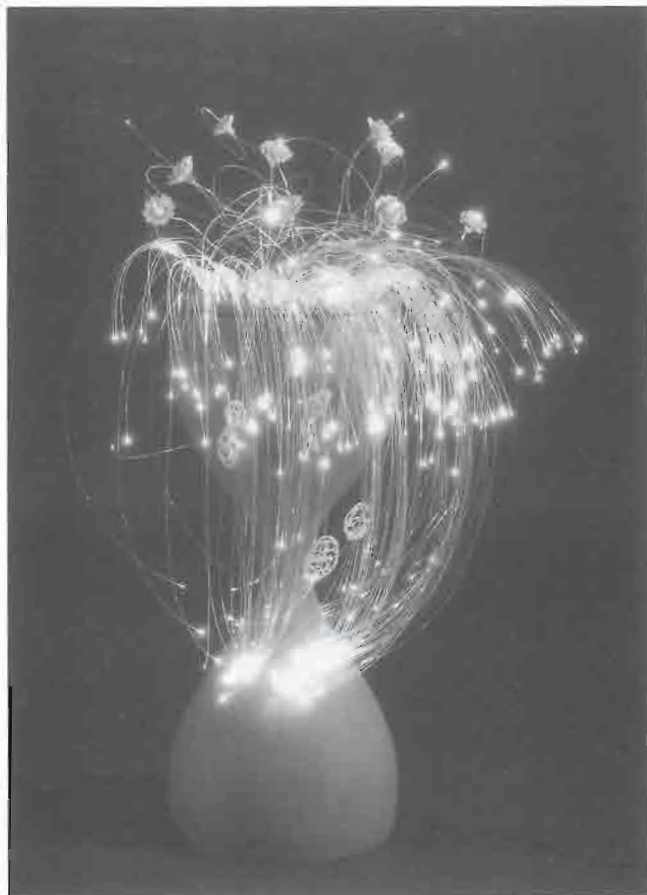
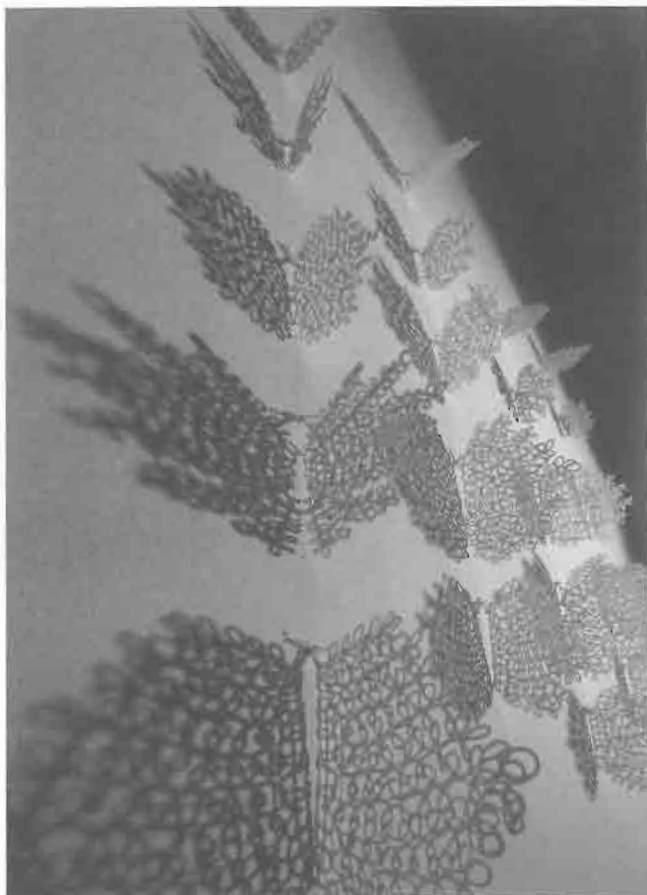
jado (de donde viene el nombre de "paperclay"), Antonella entreteje una sutil trama de enredos que dan forma al objeto, creando un tipo de bordado decorativo que es también la misma estructura de la obra. Los tradicionales "crespine" del típico "Estilo Compendiario" de la mayólica blanca, que hizo de Faenza un importante centro de producción cerámica en las cortes europeas entre el 1500 y el 1600 son actualizados por la gestualidad contemporánea informal que la artista aplica en placas, en cuencos y también en teteras, aún más flotantes por el cristal sobre el que se posan.

El elemento que es cada vez más fundamental en la continua búsqueda experimental de Antonella Cimatti es la luz, empleada como respaldo o como parte integrante de la misma obra. Por ejemplo, en "Weft of Light", espesas tramas de hilos de fibra óptica fluyen del interior de la escultura, difundiendo una sinuosa cascada chispeante de luz que envuelve delicadamente las delicadas formas. O bien en la serie de obras "Shadows of Light", en que el juego de palabras "sombras de luz" favorece compenetraciones de luz y sombra que se entrelazan en las sutiles tramas de porcelana de la obra, proyectando sobre la pared el dibujo de ella en forma calidoscópica, en cuyo centro la luz omnipresente hace que las sombras se mezclen, difuminándose hacia el exterior, confundándose con el fondo de las piezas.

La forma en que la sombra desempeña un papel fundamental en la poética de Antonella se puede constatar sobre todo en la instalación parietal "Butterflies Lights and Shadows", en la que las sombras de varias esculturas pegadas en la pared, por la exacta inclinación de las mismas y una exacta impostación de la luz, completan de hecho la obra, formando la imagen especular >

Arriba: Antonella Cimatti.

En la otra página. Arriba, a la derecha: "Trame di Luce", instalación, 2008 - 2010. Porcelana, fibras ópticas y luz. Alto, 300 cm. Arriba, a la izquierda: "Trame di Luce" (detalle). Abajo: "Crespine", 2007. Porcelana, paperclay y vidrio. Diámetro, 40 cm.



> completa, como alas de mariposas en el intento de volar en el espacio.

Por fin, en "Tramas de Luz", el espectador casi puede tocar con las propias manos la luz multicolor emanada por millares de fibras ópticas que resbalan de lo alto, desde donde son suspendidas pequeñas flores, de sutil y brillante porcelana, de las que gotea una intensidad luminosa que exalta con ello la preciosidad y la elegancia.

Las cerámicas de Antonella son expresión de una femineidad fina, delicada, pero también vigorosa y enérgica, que se compenetra bien con la ligereza y la armonía del cuerpo femenino, expresión de delicados movimientos. La musicalidad sensual del cuerpo danzante se armoniza con los hilos flotantes de la instalación, cuyas delicadas flores en refinada porcelana, iluminada por pequeñas luces intensas y pintadas, fluyen acariciando el cuerpo femenino y la piel de brillante cerámica.

Luz y ballet, irradiación luminosa y movimiento del cuerpo completan la obra de Antonella, la enriquecen, la enfatizan. Hacen posible la fusión de técnicas que sólo en apariencia pueden parecer lejanas. En estas instalaciones se rozan, se tocan, se empapan la una en la otra dando vida a una cautivadora obra muy totalizadora que hace cómplice cada sentido del espectador. Éste es uno de los múltiples y reconocidos resultados del artista que, siempre en la continua búsqueda de nuevas capacidades estilísticas, no dejará de sorprender también en el futuro.

La obra de Antonella Cimatti se caracteriza sobre todo por su desarrollo continuo, por la continua e incansable búsqueda que la artista efectúa en el campo de la planificación y la experimentación

de técnicas, siempre innovadoras y además seductoras, que transportan al espectador a un mundo flotante de porcelanas preciosas y fina elegancia, exaltado por el carisma místico de la luz que acaricia amablemente las formas casi impalpables, concibiendo en la sombra proyectada el contraste blanco-negro de la forma más delicada y sensual, que sólo una artista como Antonella es capaz de regalarnos.

Arriba, a la derecha: "Weft of Light", 2008-2010. Terracota, porcelana y fibras ópticas. Alto, 180 cm. **Arriba, a la izquierda:** "Butterflies Lights and Shadows", 2009. Instalación, porcelana paperclay, 130 x 130 cm.

Nota 1: Por la exhibición "Light Installations", de Faenza, del 23 de octubre al 7 de noviembre de 2010, ha sido proyectado durante el período expositivo un vídeo en que una bailarina danza entre las cerámicas de Antonella Cimatti. El vídeo ha sido dirigido por Carlo Conti.

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Lacy Porcelain

by Rekha Bajpe Aggarwal

Positive and negative, light and shadow, solid and space, all juxtaposed, form the beautiful lacy porcelain objects that Antonella Cimatti, renowned Italian potter, was invited to India by Delhi Blue Pottery Trust, to teach us.

Light and delicate, they mimicked paper in their thinness and translucency, making the best use of the properties of the materials used, porcelain clay and paper.

Antonella Cimatti was born in 1956 in Faenza, the place of the origin of Faience ware. She obtained the Diploma from the Istituto Statale d'Arte per la Ceramica (State School of Ceramics) in Faenza, and a Degree from the Accademia di Belle Arti (Fine Arts Academy) in Bologna.

She has been teaching Ceramic Design at the Istituto Statale d'Arte per la Ceramica in Faenza since 1979. And is currently showing and competing in Italy and abroad (France, Spain, Slovenia, Russia, South Korea, Australia, China, Portugal, Lithuania), winning awards and acknowledgments, the most prestigious being the Silver Prize, The 4th World Ceramic Biennale 2007 Korea International Competition.

In 2010 she was invited to participate in "Paperclay | TODAY" Artist Symposium, in Laguna Beach, California and in the shows: 2010 Second International Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary Teapot Art, Shanghai, China; Ceramica storia di donne, MIC, Museo Internazionale delle Ceramiche, in Faenza, Italy.

In 2011, she was invited to participate in the 54th International Art Exhibition at the Venice Biennial, in the Italian Pavilion, and to the workshop at the Gyeonggi International CeraMIX Biennale 2011, Korea. She is member of World Crafts Council - Europe.



"How did you get the idea to make these ethereal looking objects?", I asked Antonella, a petite blonde lady with a 1000 watt smile, when I went to receive her at the airport. Of course, I could not wait until the workshop to ask this question. Antonella told me she lived in Milan and was fascinated by fashion that is a large part of the identity of the city. She said she loved attending fashion shows and started incorporating influences of textiles in her ceramic work. Lace is an important part of traditional Italy and found its way into some designs on the runway. It caught Antonella's eye and her mind started ticking. She decided to make it in porcelain as well. But there was a lot more to this beautiful idea than this simple description would suggest.

In her words on her profile, she has described it thus: "My design is born from a re-reading of past artistic production through a filter of formal personal sensibility directed towards the making of a functional or sculptural object. The forms generated are aesthetically accurate and display a strong sense of the real feminine character, of grace, of elegance and of attention to detail

Thus, 'Crespine', objects originally of Faentinian tradition that were used in the grand European courts of the 16th and 17th centuries, have been remade in porcelain paper clay for a new collection which began in 2005. It was challenging and exciting to create forms derivative of the past, but reconsidered with completely new techniques and philosophies."



After a very educative and thought-provoking slideshow and talk, the workshop started with excited ooohhs n aahsss when Antonella showed us actual pieces and we held in our hands delicate frothy lacy porcelain which we had only seen in pictures thus far. The participants were really eager to see if they could also manage to create such beauty. The workshop started off with mixing the porcelain slip using toilet paper in a proportion of 1:4 or 1:5 in wet volume, depending on usage requirements, and sodium silicate, depending on the consistency required, and a heavy duty paint mixer. As usual everyone was excited to participate and took turns to mix the slip. Under Antonella's watchful eye we checked the smoothness and consistency many times and finally the slip was ready.

Antonella describes her work as the 'art of additions, not subtractions'. She had carried medical syringes and fine nozzles with her, as well as moulds she had made in her own studio. Here at Delhi Blue we also had made moulds according to her specifications, except that they were larger than what she had requested due to some confusion between inches and centimetres!!! However they all worked out well as the proportions were the same as required.

Antonella started off with a very precise demonstration of forming the piece on the mould, working with a steady and firm hand and smooth flow rotating the mould carefully. It was beautiful to watch and quite like the mehendiwalis at work or more to everyone's excitement, like the jalebiwalas at work! The workshop was promptly christened the 'Jalebi' workshop! After the demonstration, everyone was raring to try it out for themselves, but of course it was not as easy as it looked! This needed practice.



The work dried quite rapidly and slid off the moulds quite easily thanks to lavish applications of talc and the perfect proportions. The rest of the day passed in quiet practice and creation of delicacy. The next day the kiln was loaded and fired. When the kiln was opened with great excitement, we were not disappointed! The work was sitting there, as beautiful as we had expected and all participants were ready to create more.

During the course of the workshop Antonella also demonstrated rolled roses using small semi-dry porcelain slip slabs, and a technique of etching on porcelain using acrylic paint, much to the delight of the participants. Subsequently she also discovered the beautiful champa flowers on the campus and started coating them with slip and drying them. That immediately led to a spate of flowers and leaves and found objects being dipped in or brushed with the slip and fired! This experiment yielded interesting results testing the strength of the medium used.

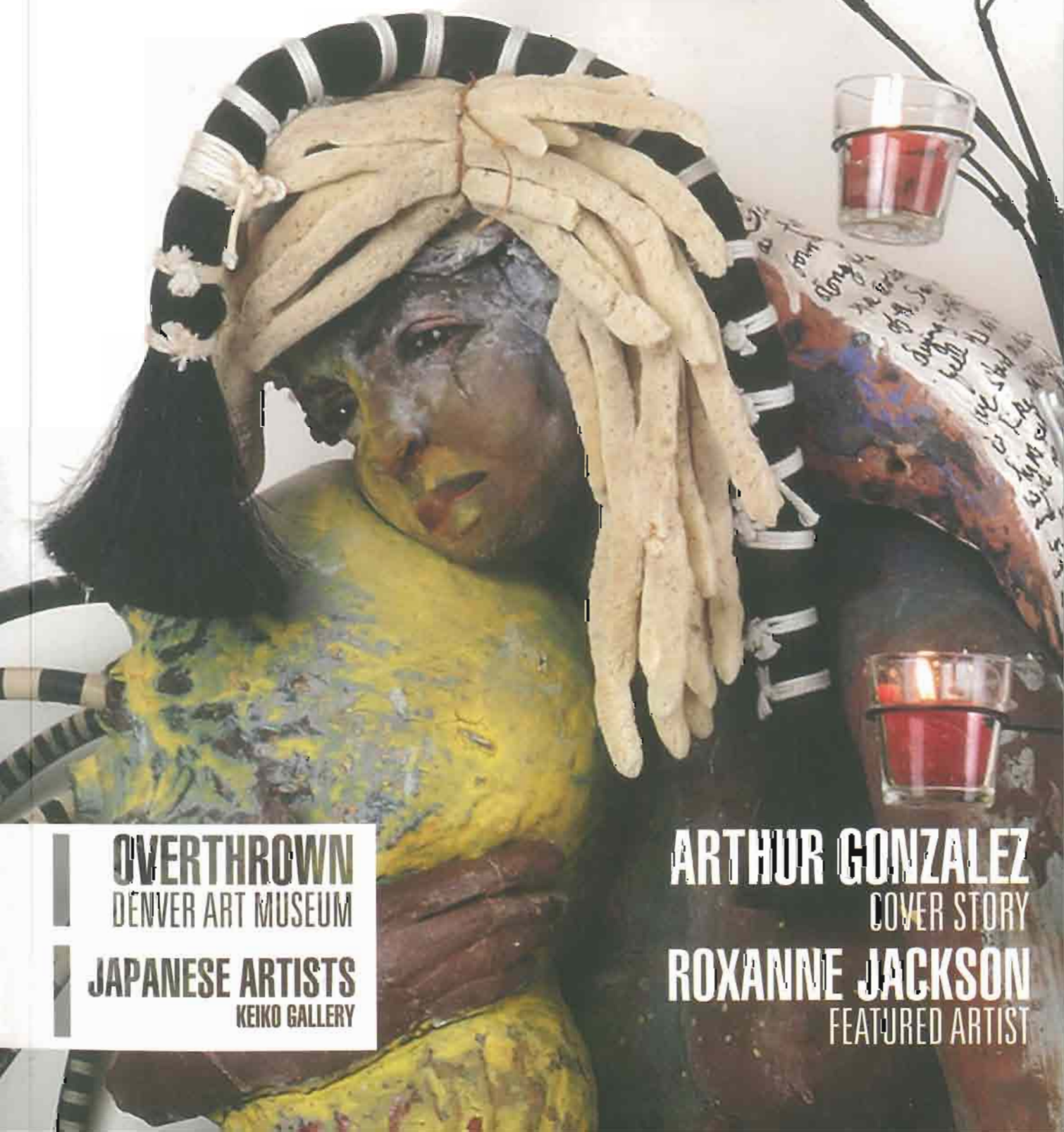
Ultimately despite the results being a little underfired, all participants were very happy with the results and Antonella and her husband, Rolando, who took innumerable pictures of the workshop, went back to Italy with very happy memories of their trip to India. We look forward to following her illustrious career online and hope she will visit us again.

(Rekha Bajpe Aggarwal is a ceramic artist based in Gurgaon, a Trustee of Delhi Blue Pottery Trust and Editor of Indian Ceramic Quarterly)

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"Container for a few calories" 2009, self glazing porcelain paperclay and slip trailed with syringe on supporting moulds and handbuilt porcelain flowers with vitreous coating, temp. 1250°C. Installation (wall or table) container and 12 flowers 70 cm diameter.

Photographed by Raffaele Tassinari



7 ANTONELLA CIMATTI

"Trans deluce" / "Welt of Light" 2004, installation with translucent porcelain paperclay, fibre optics and handbuilt flowers in glazed porcelain temp. 1250°C.

Exhibited at the 54th International Art Exhibition at the Venice Biennial in the Italian Pavilion for the Emilia Romagna region.

Photographed by Bernardo Ricci



► **You are a very consequent artist, having worked with ceramics throughout your career. Why did you embark on this journey?**

I was born in Faenza. I studied in Faenza at the "Saladini" Art Institute and I have been teaching at this same school for over 30 years. It has just been so natural to work with this material in this city, so well known throughout the world for its ceramics.

► **The techniques and subjects you are approaching are very different - paperclay, fibre optic installations, low temperatures. Working with so many different materials may be difficult; how do you manage to combine them?**

Well, I come from Italy, a country where the artists see the weight of our history and ceramic traditions, but where there are also many influences from the world of design and fashion.

In the last few years, in the design and fashion sectors, there has been a notable trend regarding lightness and attention to detail, which is so incredibly in line with my way of being and working.

I believe that the greatest undertaking of the artist is that of professional maintenance. As a matter of fact, along with spontaneous creativity, you undoubtedly must add an elevated professional competence regarding technique through reading and observation, the joy of experimentation, of combining and of moving forward.

► **Your attention to detail makes your paperclay works unique and pure within their shadows. Tell us about the constructing process.**

I tell you how you can transform and name my technique, while having your idea in mind.

My way of working is not traditional. My objective is to create a lightness in ceramics, not only regarding weight but also visually. I need to discover the right combination of materials in order to obtain the results you see. I have tried different types of syringes, clays and supporting moulds. For example, my experiments with plaster moulds weren't suitable because the objects made in paperclay were impossible to remove without destroying them.

Instead of creating holes by cutting out slippers, my pieces have been formed using a very thin decoration that creates their form. It's an art of addition, not of subtraction.

The use of shadows have always been important in my work. In the "Butterfly/Farfalla" work there is a special effect that uses light and shadow. The butterflies are created using one real wing and the other one, virtual. The idea is to minimize the use of ceramic material with the use of light to complete the work.

► **When did you start working with fibre optic installations?**

I started working with fibre optic installations in 2008. The installations, with their porcelain elements, are oriented towards the



design of an ambient sculpture focusing on the creation of light through the use of fiber optic technology. Ethereal lights, characterized by a floating lightness and luminosity, cross the boundaries between the art, fashion and design aspects of the piece.

The light plays and creates new forms inserting themselves into the ceramic. Wrapped by light, it loses its materiality and sense of gravity and regains its flexibility and dynamic of forms. Life is given to the emptiness and from obscurity emerges a thick network of optical illusions.

► **There are many influences that, put together, help you deliver the sense of uniqueness of your works; from the history of Faenza - the capital of ceramics, to the Italian Renaissance. What motivates you?**

My design is born from a rereading of past artistic production through a filter of formal personal sensibility directed towards the making of a functional or sculptural object. The forms generated are aesthetically accurate and display a strong sense of real feminine character, of grace, of elegance and of attention to detail.

Thus, "Crespines", objects originally of Faentinian tradition that were used in the grand European Courts of the 16th and 17th centuries, have been remade in porcelain paper clay for a new collection which began in 2005.

And it was actually for this collection that experimentation with porcelain paperclay was indispensable.

It was challenging and exciting to create forms derivative of the past, but reconsidered with completely new techniques and philosophies.

► **You recently participated at the Cheongju International Craft Biennale and at The Gyeonggi International Ceramix Biennale 2011 in Icheon. What was the atmosphere like?**

My experience in Korea was very interesting. At the Cheongju Craft Biennale, where I received a Honorable mention, I was able to see the international scene of applied arts, while at the Gyeonggi International Ceramix Biennale 2011 in Icheon, the exhibition of the competition showed us a panorama of extremely high level ceramics, particularly in relation to the contemporaneous use of mixed media and to the conceptual aspects of the pieces. The atmosphere of the workshop in which I participated was also very stimulating: 20 Korean artists and 20 international ones were able to compare and contrast their work with each other in a professional, yet very friendly atmosphere.

"Le crespine" (Goblets), 2005, installation 90cm x 80cm x 60 h, form with a "pierced" motif (a method of addition is used to create the appearance of subtraction), porcelain paperclay @ 1250°C, and majolica glaze @ 920°C.

Photographed by Raffaele Tassinari

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S U S A N P E T E R S O N

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Susan Peterson is Professor Emerita of Ceramics at Hunter College at the City University of New York and is a practicing ceramicist whose work has been exhibited throughout the world. The author of a number of books, including *The Craft and Art of Clay* (now in its third edition), *Pottery by American Indian Women*, and *Working with Clay*, she was responsible for setting up five ceramics departments: at the Wichita Art Association School, Chouinard Art Institute, University of Southern California, Idyllwild School of Music and Art (USC summer campus), and Hunter College at the City University of New York. She built the studios and designed the curriculum for the Appalachian Center for Craft. She is a Fellow of the American Craft Council and of the National Endowment for the Arts, and among her awards are the Binns Medal of the National Ceramic Society, the National Ceramic Educators Council of America award, and in 1999 a Lifetime Achievement award from Arizona State University. She is also a Knight of the Order of the Lion of Finland.

jacket back

- Goro SUZUKI, Japan
Yakishime-Dobin, 10³/₄ x 11 in (27 x 28 cm) Stoneware, woodfired
- Kurt WEISER, USA
Confidential, 18 x 12 in (46 x 30 cm) Porcelain, overglaze enamel
- Todd PIKER, USA
Oil Jar, 24 x 24 in (61 x 61 cm) Stoneware, woodfired
- Jennifer LEE, England
Slate-Olive Banded Pot, 9¹/₂ x 6 in (24 x 15 cm) Stoneware, engobes
- Antonella CIMATTI, Italy
Bottle, ht 12 in (30 cm) Earthenware, glazes
- Jose M. YAMUNAQUE, Peru
Humanity Series, 30 x 16 in (76 x 41 cm) Earthenware, burnished, engobes;
South American Indian tradition
- Hana NOVOTNA, Czech Republic
Chair, ht 15¹/₄ in (40 cm) Fire clay, wood, metal
- James MELCHERT, USA
First Person Plural, 12 x 12 x 2¹/₄ in (30 x 30 x 6 cm) Glazed porcelain tile
- Cara MOCZYGEMBA, USA
Fallen (triptych), 26 x 7 x 6 in (66 x 17 x 15 cm) Stoneware, metal, velvet flock,
acrylic
- Brian RANSOM, USA
Deities of Sound II: Peace Deity, 42 x 28 x 30 in (107 x 71 x 76 cm)
Stoneware wind instrument

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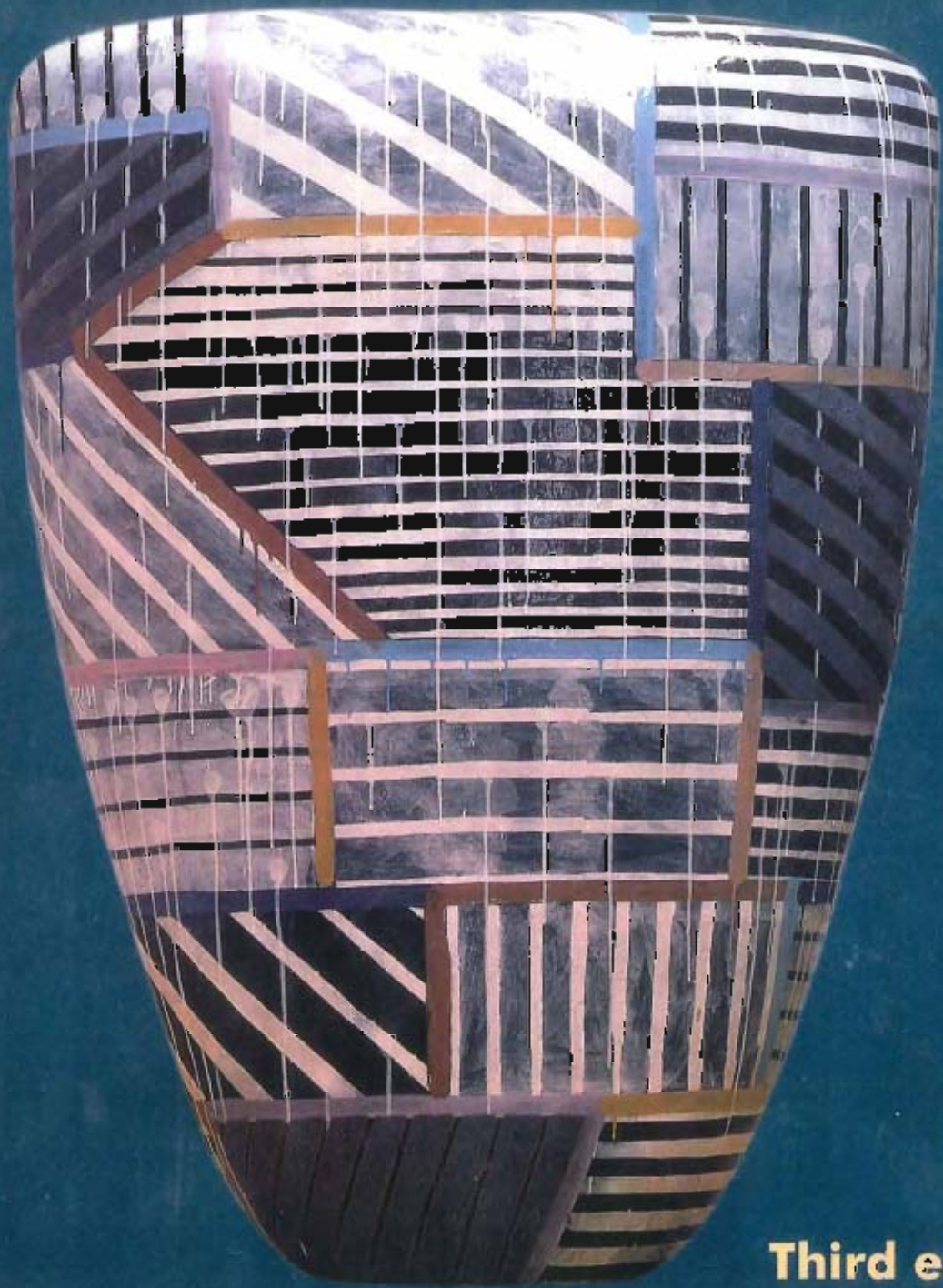
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Susan Peterson



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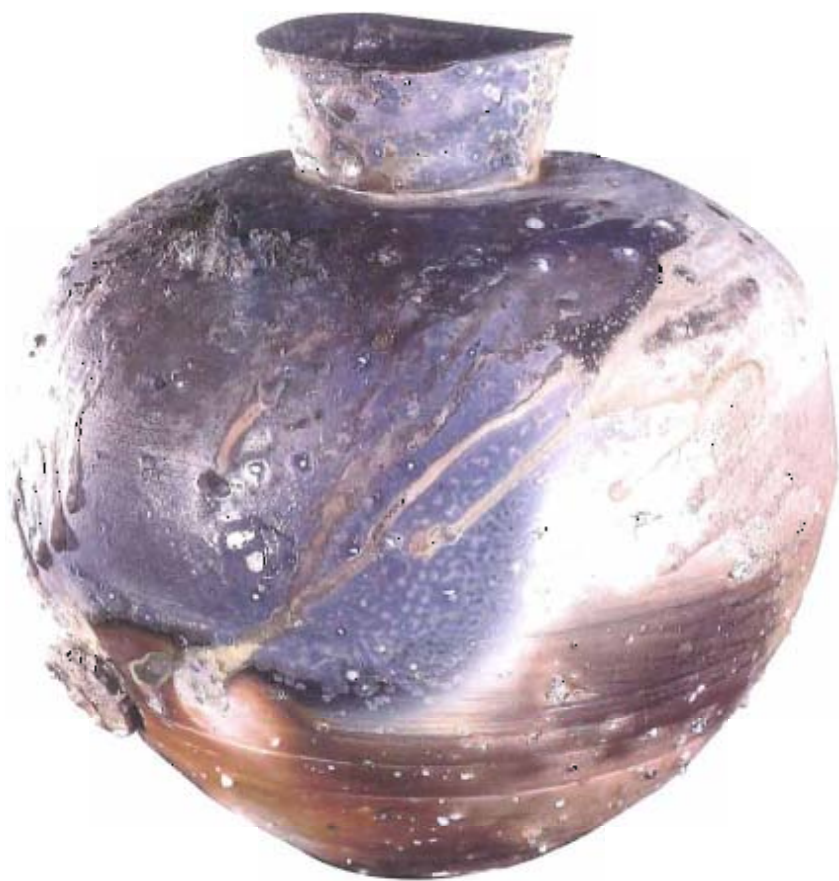
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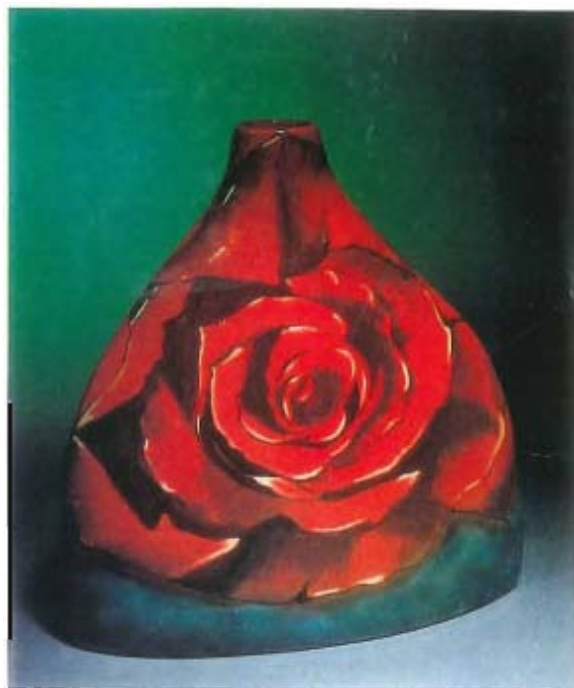
Paul CHALEFF

Studio: Pine Plains, New York

I am concerned with identity, chance, the fundamental elements, ways of thinking, and especially risk and the skill it takes to create ideas from these elements. Some of my works are wood-fired objects which refer to function. They're

strength comes from being rough, gestural, spilt, and in a way. My sculptural work is fluid, organic, and often forms a link about primitive industry, man's endeavor to control nature.

Above: Jar, wood-fired stoneware, 18 in (45.7 cm) high



Antonella CIMATTI

Studio: Faenza, Italy

Above: Earthenware vase with rose, low fire glazes



Philip CORNELIUS

Teaching: Pasadena City College
Studio: Pasadena, California

Working in clay is like having a conversation with your muse.

"Dragon," porcelain, charcoal fired, 10 1/2 x 17 in (26.7 x 43 cm)

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Printed in China

Half-title: Carol Aoki: "Pod No.6," 21 in (53 cm) high

Frontispiece: Ralph Bacerra: "Double Walled Portrait Vessel," 27 in (68.5 cm) wide,
porcelain, colored engobes, overglazes, and lusters
Studio: Eagle Rock, California

"The work is about visual stimulation. Color and pattern transform
the surface into spaces that move the vision in, out and around the surface,
describing the form as well as pleasing the eye."

TERZA EDIZIONE

NINO CARUSO

CERAMICA VIVA

MANUALE PRATICO
DELLE TECNICHE DI
LAVORAZIONE
ANTICHE E MODERNE
DELL'OCCIDENTE
E DELL'ORIENTE



HOEPLI

TECNICA DELLE PERLE E DEI FILAMENTI DI VETRO

La tecnica sviluppata dalla ceramista Antonella Cimatti consiste nell'applicazione, preferibilmente a 3° fuoco, di perle e filamenti di vetro su oggetti smaltati, mediante l'uso di opportuni collanti organici misti a cristalline basso-fondenti.

Come avviene per l'impiego delle tessere da mosaico, anch'esse utilizzate a scopo decorativo sullo smalto, va studiata ed individuata ciascuna composizione vetrosa e la sua compatibilità con lo smalto sottostante.

L'effetto decorativo è efficace per via della gamma cromatica molto ampia e delle diverse fusibilità.

Oggi anche l'industria si serve di questi processi: come l'uso di grossi filamenti o bacchette, oppure le composizioni di rottami di semplici vetri policromi; infine è recente l'impiego di graniglie, anche colorate, con intendimenti decorativi o di ricerca materica della superficie ceramica.

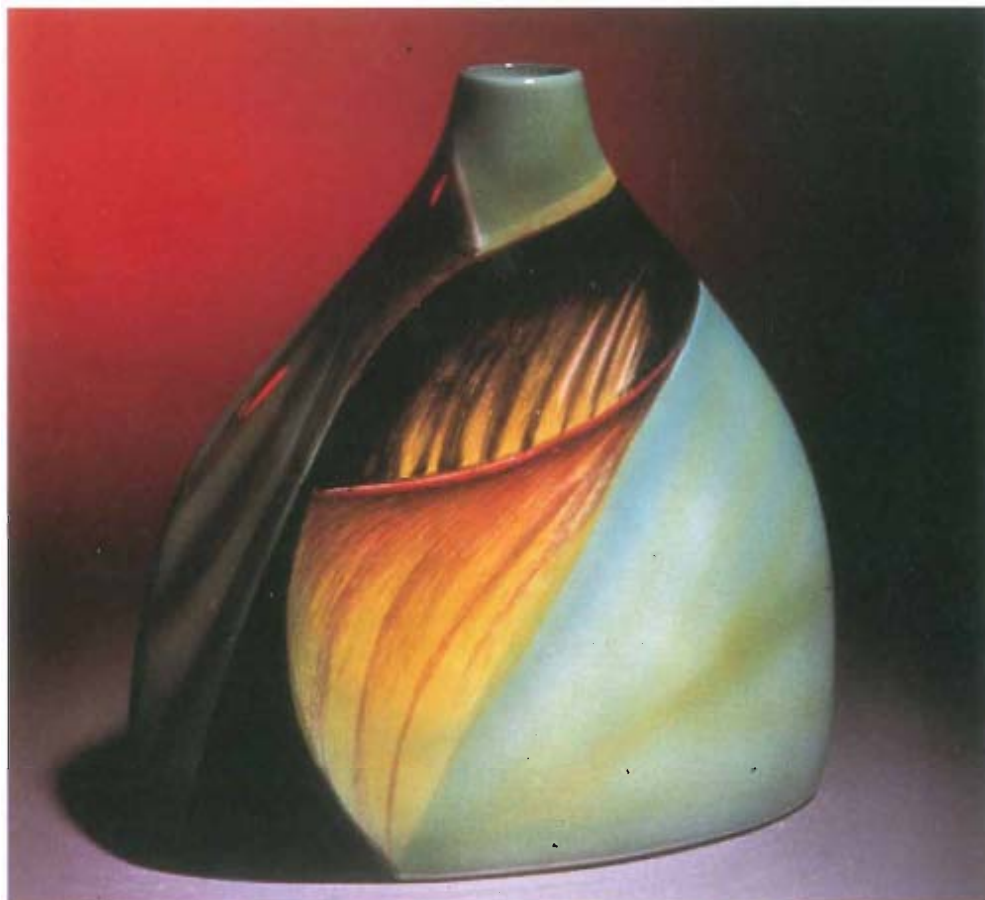


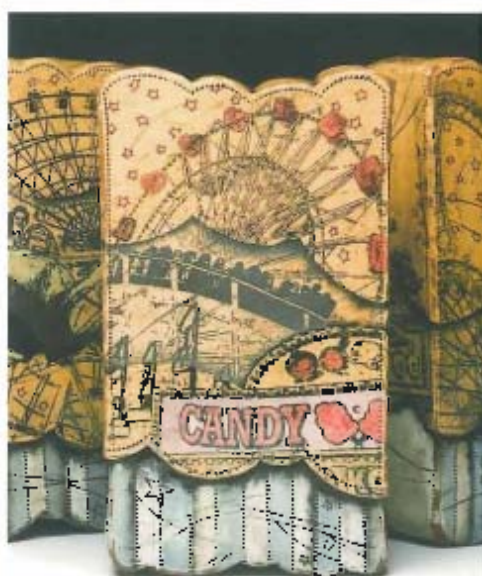
Fig. 456
Antonella
Cimatti, vaso.

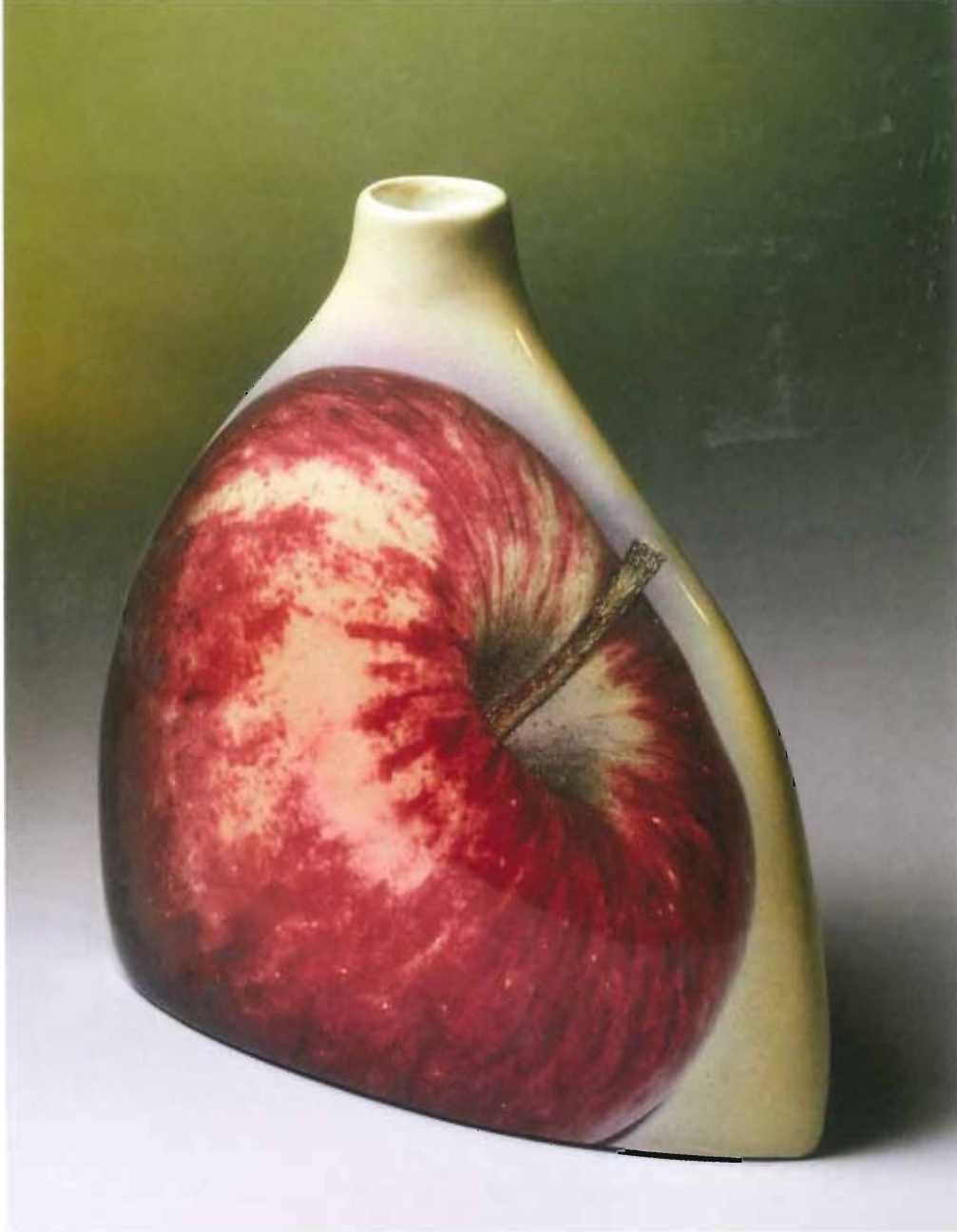
500 prints on clay

Paul Andrew
Wandless
JUROR



LARK CERAMICS





ANTONELLA CIMATTI

Fiori-Frutta ■ 2007

11½ x 4½ inches (29.2 x 11.5 cm)

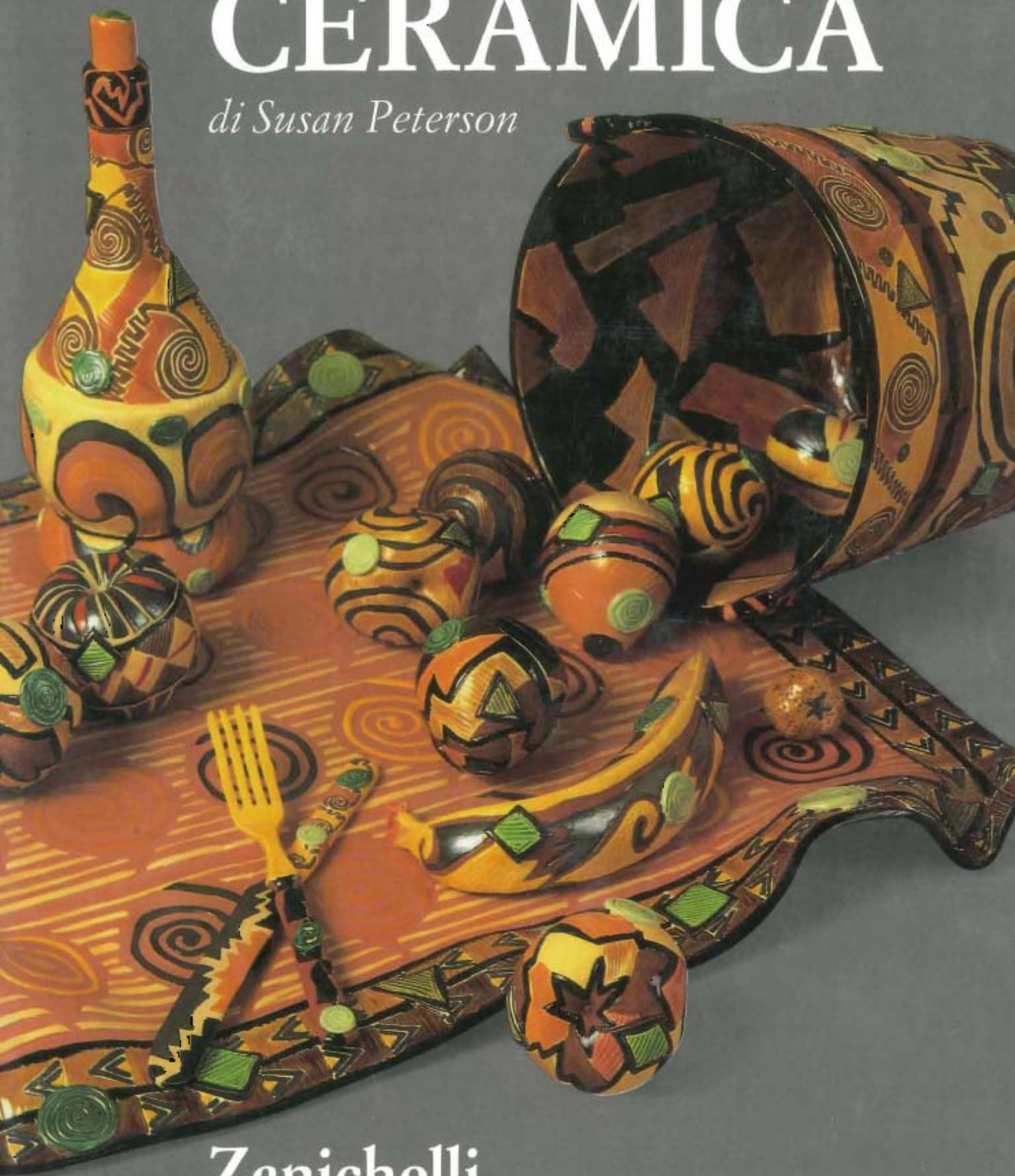
Earthenware clay, majolica, digital decal;

multiple fired, cones 08, 09, and 010, overglaze

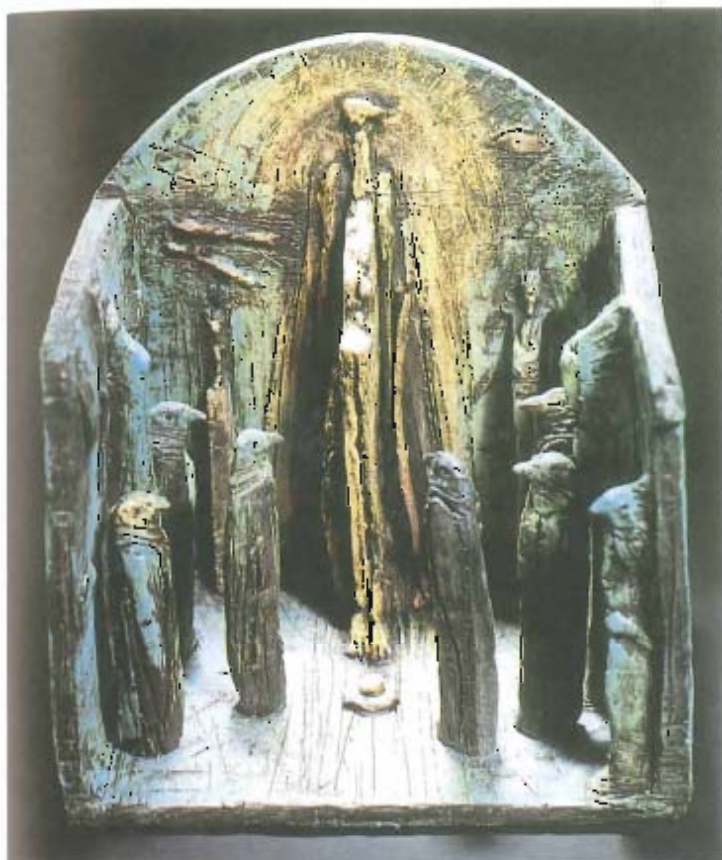
PHOTO BY RAFFAELE TASSINARI

FARE CERAMICA

di Susan Peterson



Zanichelli

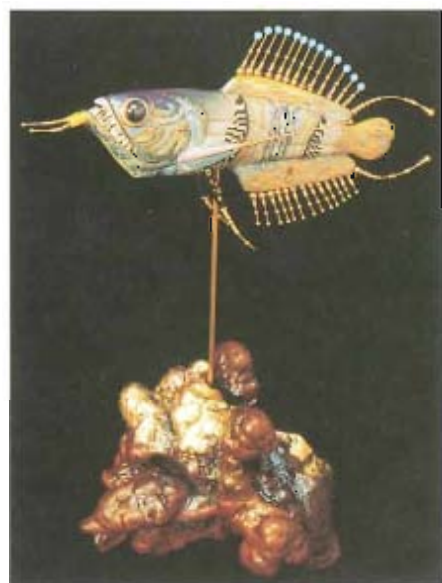


Kari CHRISTENSEN

Oslo (Norvegia)

Il mio lavoro è basato sul mio «fug o' kot», il mitico popolo degli uccelli.

Sopra: «Il popolo degli uccelli»; gres sabbia 1200 °C, riduzione 30 x 26 cm

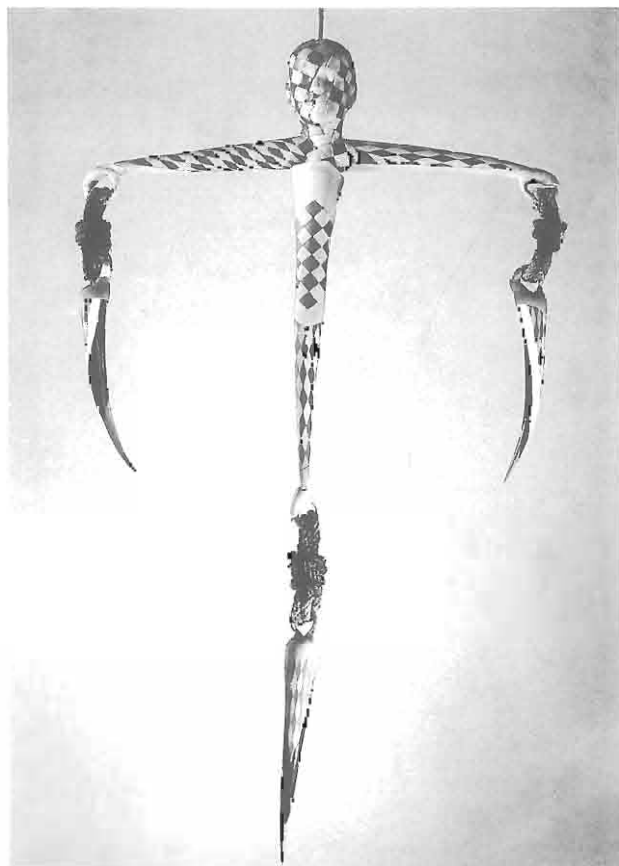


Cynthia e Erh-Ping Tsai CHUANG

Taipei (Taiwan)

Anche se siamo stati influenzati da Matisse, Picasso e Kandinsky, la nostra maggiore fonte d'ispirazione è forse la natura.

Sopra: «Arwana fish», porce ana, lilo d'ottone, tecnica mil chiori sottosmalto; soprasmalto con 7,6, 016, ossidazione, 25,5 x 19 x 5 cm

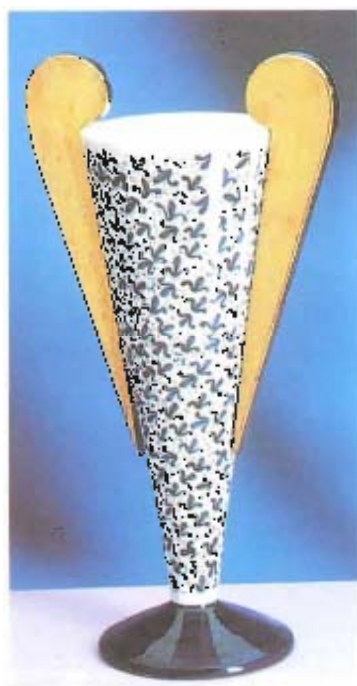


Barbara CICHOCKA

Olesnica (Polonia)

Il mio lavoro in ceramica parla di una donna lacerata fra affetto, languore, attesa ed esigenze di tutti i giorni.

Sopra: «The Harlequin»; ceramica, argille colorate 1250-1270 °C 159 x 90 cm



Antonella CIMATTI

Faenza (Italia)

La mia progettazione parte da una rilettura della produzione artistica del passato attraverso il filtro di una personale sensibilità formale, diretta alla costruzione di un oggetto funzionale e puro esteticamente ineccepibile, che non tradisca (ma nemmeno mascheri) la propria femminilità, grazia, eleganza e cura fino al particolare.

A sinistra «Floralia» maiolica oro a terzo fuoco: h 39,20 x 12 cm

Ceramics TECHNICAL

US\$22 £14 CAN\$27 Euro 20

\$22.00US \$27.00CAN

31



0 73361 64540 1

Clay Mixing • Painted Pottery • Paper Clay
Woodfiring • Residencies • Historic Ceramics
Computer Aided Design • Simple Form
Porcelain • Ferrochromium Fly Ash

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COVER

Curtis Benzle

Detail of Blaze Benzle

Photo by
Curtis Benzle

Ceramic Camp



In Foshan, China

Rolando Giovannini relates his experience at an ancient kiln site in China

The opening Ceremony of the Camp.
The artists signed a tile as a symbol of the initiation; the group of artists pictured from left: He Yonghao, Xie Jinlin, Rolando Giovannini, Wei Hua, Lu Bin, Tan Hongyu, Mr. Dailun Qiu, Erik Roren, Antonella Cimatti, Kim Hyeog Soo, Kim Saeng Hwa, Ciji Zhang, Kim Dong Jun, Yoon Ji Yong, Li Jingjing, Chen Guanghui, Mr. Chao He Xu and Meren Zu (Bobo).

IT IS REALLY QUITE AN HONOUR: TO COME FROM THE COUNTRY where the explorer Marco Polo was born and from the State Art Institute of Faenza to participate in Foshan (South East China) at an international workshop, immersed in a park entirely dedicated to the antique culture of ceramics. The 'Holy Land' Park in Shiwan includes a lake, a museum with antique collections, a contemporary gallery, an arts centre for teaching art to children, various extraordinary historical art studios and numerous 'small figurine' production sites. Also included are an ancient village with typical buildings from the Ming and Qing dynasties, a temple dedicated to the God of the North, numerous open air sculptures in different materials and an impressive building for artists in residence. Above all, however, is the presence of the enchanting dragon kiln, which has been woodfiring for over 500 years. Among other things, it has also been connected to industrial production, with expository and commercial fields dedicated to the art of mosaics, sanitary fixtures and tile production. There are numerous show rooms which exhibit the most avant-garde industrial commercial pieces.

The fascination of ancient Chinese ceramics culture had already been imparted to us at our Italian ceramics school; where, included in the didactic



curriculum, are some Chinese ceramics and porcelain production techniques and the sequence of styles throughout the most important dynasties century after century.

The invitation was for the 2009 Nanfeng Kiln International Ceramic Work Camp held in Foshan, Guangdong, from 15 to 30 August, 2009, at the 1506 Creativity City with the Chairman, Mr Dailun Qiu. There were 16 artists from different parts of the world: from China there were, the Artistic Director Wei Hua and Tan Hongyu, both Professors at the Academy of Fine Art of Guangzhou; Lu Bin, Professor at the Nanjing Art Institute (noted in Italy for his award at the 52nd *International Ceramic Art Competition* in Faenza); Chen Guanghui from Shanghai and three young artists, Li Jingjing, Xie Jinlin and He Yonghao. Then from Korea there were Kim Hyeog Soo with one of his Chinese students, Ciji Zhang; and the young Yoon Ji Yong, Kim Dong Jun, as well as Kim Saeng Hwa, a Korean artist who makes her living with her own atelier in Foshan. From Europe, the Swede Erik Roren was there, well-known for his urban installations and public art projects. There were also two Italian artists from Faenza: Antonella Cimatti, teacher of Design at the State Art Institute; G Ballardini and myself. All of the artists at the Camp contributed in the artistic and creative activities with popular and theoretical aspects through lessons and conferences. The lessons were carried out by means of slide shows dealing with topical themes or about research regarding the art and technology of ceramics according to the culture and traditions of each country represented. Also, panoramas and critical visions were presented on contemporary art trends, such as the development of design in Europe and ceramics for architecture and urban furnishings.

The synthesis of knowledge and different languages (it was sometimes necessary to explain oneself using all four; Chinese, Korean, English, French) were the key points of this new international experience; the Camp was set up as a place of exchange of consolidated technical and artistic skills assisted by an extraordinary staff made up of lab assistants coordinated by Meren Zu (Bobo) and by young planners and designers available to assist with research. Official translations also played a part, carried out by Miss Sunny for the English speakers and by the artist, Kim Saeng Hwa, for the Korean ones.

The organisational capabilities of the Director and creator of the project, Qiu, made it possible to give life to sculptural pieces within just a few days, which have since remained as a legacy of the occasion. The proceedings of the event were carried out with a detailed and precise protocol: first there were presentations of the ateliers and of the equipment at our disposition. Even just the choice of work table and its location including tools and materials gave the idea of the approach that each artist and sculptor wished to take.

And to follow was a technical meeting. The Advisor of Technology, Clay and Glazes for use in the dragon kiln and the Camp itself explained each application to all artists involved. This was the most loved part of the ceramists, where ways of working join and intersect. It was an international



Top left: Technical meeting on the first day. Mr. Chen Chao, assisted by his staff, briefs the participating artists. From left : He Yonghao, Meren Zu (Bobo), He Junwu, Chen Chao, Li Jingjing, and Sunny. The designer Xie Jinlin (collaborator on the large scale waterfall sculpture entitled Toilet Waterfall, October 2009), is present in the photo, but being covered by a colleague in the foreground.

Top centre: Erik Roren and his piece. Includes bamboo rods 5 metres in length.

Top right: Professor Wei Hua. This piece requires the assembly of numerous statues in varying dimensions, made from moulds from plastic models.

Above: Toilet Waterfall. The sculpture measures 100 metres long and five metres tall and was designed by Chinese artist Shu Yong. 1506 Creative City, Foshan, October 2009.



has been operating for over 500 years. It is the oldest dragon kiln in China and perhaps the world. The place where it is situated is seen as an important national cultural site, heritage of the State Council and is noted in the *Guinness Book of World Records*, cited as a “live cultural relic, an unmovable national treasure”.

Traditionally, people of that place have called ceramics firing kilns, ‘Shiwan’. There are many types of kilns but the most famous are the dragon kilns, since their form is that of an enormous sleeping dragon. Since the Qing Dynasty, there have been 107 dragon kilns but at the moment there are only three, of which the Ancient Nanfeng Kiln is the most famous. For almost 500 years, the flame has not gone out and it has been constantly in production. In this way, the kiln has been kept in complete working order without damage. Next to the kiln, with an enveloping embrace that appears to be protecting it, lives a 200 year old tree whose roots sink below the structure of the kiln and seem not to feel the effects of the high temperatures. As legend would have it, touching the roots brings good luck, which is in tune with the Taoist dynamic of Yin and Yang where the wood feeds the fire and the kiln helps to grow the tree: a perfect balance. Throughout the years, production has never ceased for repairs, although the chimney was built in modern times. The kiln is a total of 34.4 metres in length. There are 29 rows of fire holes (five for each row) on the kiln. The firing holes are used to feed the wood throughout the firing process. There are four openings on one side of the kiln for loading and unloading pieces. The layout and heat emitted during the combustion of the wood cause infinite changes to the clay and glazes. The dragon kiln is divided into upper, mid and lower sections with three temperature ranges (low, medium and high and varying from 900-1,300°C) which are managed and controlled exclusively by the Kiln Master. To maintain an atmosphere of reduction, the Master of the kiln controls the duration and the extent to which it is heated as well as any changes to be made during the firing; only he knows how to make decisions with his expert eyes based on the constantly changing conditions within. For 20 hours after the firing is the waiting period as the kiln must cool down before it is ready to be opened. Every five days the cycle can be repeated, meaning that in a year, numerous firings are able to be carried out.

The varying slopes in different sections within are characteristic of the dragon kiln and establish maximum output for Foshan. In fact, depending on the angle and the slope produced, the kiln feeds the temperature and the passage of heat. The kiln operates with a flue, rendering maximum performance, the preheating of the secondary air allows for best combustion. The firing begins with large pieces of wood being burnt completely, then passing to smaller pieces until finally reaching a maximum temperature of up to 1280°C. With regard to the Camp, every artist produced a piece based on a previously defined project (which had been communicated via email), not smaller than 1.5 metres, adapted for inclusion and installation in the park. All of



Top left: Chen Guanghui, Professor from Shanghai, begins with thin slabs for making complex sculptures. The modelled parts were covered with engobe.

Top centre: Professor Lu Bin from China, assembling his installation dedicated to the city of Foshan. The piece, before the execution phase, was preceded by a series of impromptu sketches, designed with pen and paper.

Top right: The young Korean artist, Yoon Ji Yong demonstrates the final stages of his coiled sculpture which has been smoothed out.

Above: Kim Saeng Hwa, artist from Korea who lives and works in Foshan, during the final stages of modelling this feminine figure. The piece is propped up by a support to avoid any deformations during the drying phase.



Above left: The young Chinese student, Ciji Zhang, completes her piece made up of geometric shale and modelled in the atelier. Behind Zhang, her Professor Kim Hyeog Soo, is working on his the ceramic tower.

Above centre: Rolando Giovannini. His piece called for the insertion of a neon light that wraps the sculpture.

Above right: The monumental sculpture by Professor Kim Hyeog Soo, which was placed in the park. It is a tower expressed by means of an architecturally geometric composition, with texture and engobe effects. The Korean

Master used a drill to create holes and indentations.



the works were finished on time, although they were fired later, due to the necessary time needed to dry.

The techniques presented by the artists were wide ranging: from mould making employed using preexisting antique moulds for Wei, as through large plaster mould components for Tan, to traditional modelling by Lu with a composition dedicated to the City of Foshan, by Kim Saeng Hwa with her production of human figures and by Yoon with the construction of a 'figurative composition'. Then the artist Kim Dong Jun used coil building for the creation of a monumental circular form. Finally, there was the use of slabs of different dimensions and thicknesses, such as the thin ones used by Chen to create his amorphous forms and the thick slabs used in the impressive geometric sculpture by Professor Kim Hyeog Soo, as well as Ciji Zhang, where on his column, he also added clay modelling.

The applications of different materials rendered certain pieces quite articulate and complex, including locally harvested stimulus, for example, the use of bamboo by Roren and an appropriated steel structure for Cimatti's sculpture. For Roren, the use of bamboo poles five metres in length ideally represented China's expansion in the world, starting with an architectural structure made out of a clay shield which was of high quality construction. On the other hand, Cimatti wanted to represent the five elements (fire, earth, wood, water and metal) through the use of porcelain filigree anchored to a minimalistic metal tree. And I had designed a conclusive installation with the application of coloured neon lights.

In short, a reflection on this type of event: it is not just a question of technical communication and the exchanging of experiences. It is more about an osmosis of cultures and methods of approach regarding ceramics experiences. The artists are inspired by techniques that become their own concrete expressions or otherwise introduce their own styles, while expressing their personalities and energies to the fullest. They work by confronting the standard procedures and, in this way, are able to raise the bar, bringing their creations to new heights, allowing for further innovations and development of style. Even in the sciences, mutation is frequent and necessary. It is in the variables, in the ingeniousness of the unpublished work, where the real novelty lies. Besides the awareness of ancient standards and practices, it brings simultaneous reflection and re-examination.

The invitation was for the 2009 Nanfeng Kiln International Ceramic Work Camp held in Foshan, Guangdong, from 15 to 30 August, 2009, at the 1506 Creativity City with the Chairman, Mr Dailun Qiu. There were 16 artists from different parts of the world: from China there were, the Artistic Director Wei Hua and Tan Hongyu, both Professors at the Academy of Fine Art of Guangzhou; Lu Bin, Professor at the Nanjing Art Institute (noted in Italy for his award at the 52nd International Ceramic Art Competition in Faenza); Chen Guanghui from Shanghai and three young artists, Li Jingjing, Xie Jinlin and He Yonghao. Then from Korea there were Kim Hyeog Soo with one of his Chinese students, Ciji Zhang; and the young Yoon Ji Yong, Kim Dong Jun, as well as Kim Saeng Hwa, a Korean artist who makes her living with her own atelier in Foshan. From Europe, the Swede Erik Roren was there, well-known for his urban installations and public art projects. There were also two Italian artists from Faenza: Antonella Cimatti, teacher of Design at the State Art Institute; G Ballardini and Rolando Giovannini.

Rolando Giovannini is a ceramics critic and the Director of the *Istituto Statale D'Arte per la Ceramica* (State Art Institute of Ceramics founded by Gaetano Ballardini in 1916 and known for Art, Technology and Ceramic Restoration), Faenza, Italy. Translated by Julie K Shanks.

Foshan Creative Industry Park and 1506 Creative City, named after the foundation of the Nanfeng Ancient Kiln in the year 1506, are a reality of extraordinary growth. An example was their participation at the *Shanghai World Expo* in August 2010, with the *Foshan Pavillion* which held 51 *CHINA Kung Fu* figurines created by Mr Dailun Qiu and the renowned artist Shu Yong who was awarded the *Lorenzo il Magnifico Career Award 2009* at the *Florence International Arts Biennale*, Italy.

Faenza

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Francesco Damiani La leggerezza del peso massimo
Vittorio Bulgarelli Il mosaico del nuovo millennio
Raffaele Babini La carovana rosa dei ciclisti

Giuliano
Casalini
Il manager della musica

EDIZIONI
INMAGAZINE

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EDITORIALE di Andrea Masotti

Un campione vero, dentro e fuori dal ring, apre questo numero di Ravenna In. Francesco Damiani si racconta a 360 gradi, dai successi passati agli obiettivi futuri, in veste di direttore tecnico delle nazionali italiane di pugilato. Dopo la boxe parliamo di musica con l'imprenditore Giuliano Casalini, che da Faenza lancia la sua nuova formula per il Festival di Castrocaro. Da Sant'Alberto di Ravenna, invece, Vittorio Bulgarelli esporta in tutto il mondo materiali musivi di sua invenzione mentre Raffaele Babini di Solarolo guida la carovana dei ciclisti per il Giro d'Italia. A seguire, le creazioni ceramiche della faentina Antonella Cimatti, le origi-

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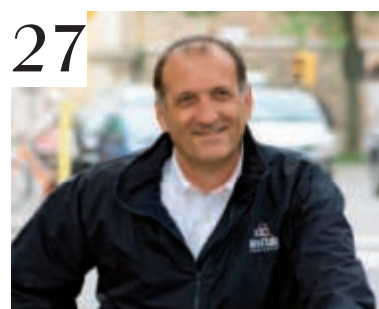
nali composizioni del poeta Franco Costantini e gli eventi musicali curati da Emanuele "Christopher" Angiolini. Un tuffo nel passato con la suggestiva storia di Santa Maria in Porto Fuori e uno sguardo al mondo dalla Rocca Brancaleone, affacciati da un appartamento "italo-argentino". E poi le originali opere in ferro battuto di Aurelio Brunelli, le creazioni della birreria "La Mata" e le performance teatrali di Francesca Mazzoni. L'imprenditoria che guarda all'innovazione chiude la rivista, con la smart elettrica nello showroom De Stefani e l'85esimo dell'azienda Cisa, festeggiato presentando le novità e le linee guida per il futuro.

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Scolpire Ricamando

testo Aldo Savini - foto Lidia Bagnara

Geroglifici e arabeschi finemente traforati caratterizzano l'opera della ceramista faentina **Antonella Cimatti**. Capace di dar vita ad opere intriganti e raffinate, con la sua porcellana *paperclay*.

Nella variegata galassia della ceramica contemporanea **Antonella Cimatti si distingue per la sperimentazione di soluzioni originali e innovative**, anche se non rinnega la tradizione faentina, soprattutto quella rinascimentale dei bianchi in stile compendiario.

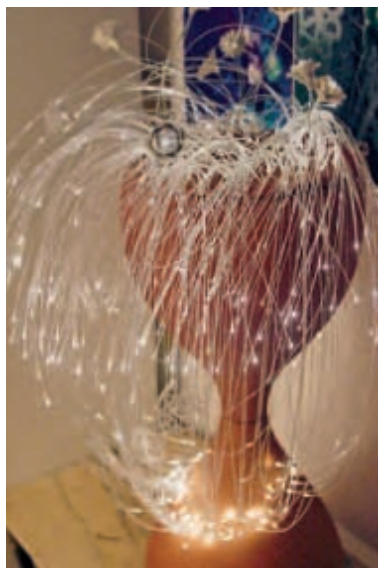
La tensione creativa che stimola la sua ricerca progettuale si avvale degli apporti formali e delle tecniche tradizionali della cultura ceramica, riaggiornati in un'ottica estetica che sul piano funzionale, pur mantenendo la componente artigianale e quindi l'esclusività dell'oggetto, sconfina nel **design** e nell'**arredamento d'interni** e, su quello artistico, nell'installazione e nella ridefinizione degli spazi. **Il materiale ceramico delle sue creazioni è la porcellana *paperclay***, pasta miscelata a fibra di cellulosa che consente sia maggiore duttilità e resistenza in fase di lavorazione, sia la realizzazione di oggetti dalle forme libere e imprevedibili: geroglifici e arabeschi finemente trafo-

rati che potrebbero essere il lavoro di una ricamatrice, in cui l'elemento decorativo non è pittorico ma è dato dalle struttura formale che insiste sul rapporto tra il pieno quasi filiforme e il vuoto che affiora. **Per la preparazione del *paperclay* occorrono argilla da colaggio in polvere, carta e acqua**. Il procedimento è relativamente semplice: s'inizia bagnando con poca acqua calda la carta fino ad ottenere una poltiglia, si versa l'argilla da colaggio in polvere e si aggiunge altra acqua calda, mescolando bene fino a ottenere una pasta densa e omogenea. A questo punto si può passare alla foggatura, utilizzando una forma in refrattario ingobbato sulla quale l'oggetto modellato sarà posto durante l'essicamento e la cottura a 1250°; con una siringa o altro strumento si può dare forma a un intreccio che costituisce la trama delle finissime *textures* decorative di superficie.

Con questo materiale Antonella Cimatti realizza le **"crespine"**,

vere e proprie sculture ricamate che, sottraendosi a qualsiasi intento rappresentativo, rinviano a flussi emotivi personali e per la loro raffinatezza, la grazia e l'essenzialità, accentuate dal bianco, colore assoluto che sintetizza tutte le tinte della luce naturale, **richiamano i valori della classicità**. Recupera anche la luce artificiale della corrente elettrica ordinaria, per sfruttare il gioco e gli equivoci percettivi delle ombre, sia quella delle fibre ottiche, per sospendere nel vuoto luminoso e avvolgente piccole rose di porcellana e produrre così sorprendenti e intriganti effetti visivi, che conferiscono leggerezza e trasparenza a un materiale per sua natura non legato a queste proprietà.

L'itinerario artistico di Cimatti inizia nella prima metà degli anni '80, quando intraprende un'attività di progettazione e design con importanti aziende come la Cooperativa Ceramica d'Imola, la Ceramica Flavia di Montelupo Fiorentino,



A fianco, alcune originali creazioni.
Sotto, l'artista nel suo studio.

Dall'atelier faentino al mondo

Antonella Cimatti è nata a Faenza dove vive e lavora, nell'atelier di via Garibaldi 16. Allieva di Carlo Zauli, Bianco Ghini, Alfonso Leoni, Augusto Betti e Aldo Rontini all'Istituto Statale d'Arte per la Ceramica di Faenza, ha conseguito il diploma all'Accademia di Belle Arti di Bologna, partecipando poi a stage di perfezionamento all'estero, a Toki-Gifu in Giappone nel 1981, a Limoges in Francia nell'85, a Portsmouth in Gran Bretagna nel 1988. Presente a mostre e concorsi in Italia e all'estero (Francia, Spagna, Slovenia, Russia, Sud Corea, Stati Uniti, Australia, Cina), ha ottenuto prestigiosi riconoscimenti e premi, tra cui il *Silver Prize* "The 4th World Ceramic Biennale 2007 Korea International Competition". Dal '79 insegna Progettazione all'Istituto Statale d'Arte per la Ceramica, ora Liceo "Ballardini" di Faenza, ed è membro del World Crafts Council-Europe.

alcune manifatture di Murano ed Empoli e, successivamente, l'antica e famosa Fabbrica Casa Museo "Giuseppe Mazzotti 1903" di Albisola Marina, oltre a note botteghe di Faenza. Insieme alla ceramista faentina **Laura Silvagni**, che lavora "all'antica maniera", studia forme e decorazioni nuove per una produzione ceramica d'alto artigianato, ancora strettamente legata a modelli di tipo tradizionale, soprattutto per quell'aspetto essenziale della ceramica faenti-

na di essere "contenitore". **I pezzi esclusivi della serie *Sinus Fluentes*, però, più che essere destinati a contenere cose e oggetti occasionali ed estranei, trattengono emozioni e sensazioni visive** suggerite dai colori accesi dei decori, ispirati ai drappaggi di stoffe pregiate i cui vorticosi avvolgimenti e le morbide volute sanno creare un movimento plastico, corposo e sensuale. Così, al di là delle abilità tecniche, sia nelle *crepine* che nei *sinus fluentes*, **la Cimatti tende costantemente a un alto livello di sintesi e astrazione in sintonia con quella tendenza dell'arte contemporanea**, che al racconto e all'illustrazione antepone il puro visibilismo evocativo. Non esclude, inoltre, il ricorso ad altre stimolazioni sensoriali, alla musica, alla danza e, in particolare, al video, come quello realizzato da Carlo Conti e sperimentato nella recente personale alla Riunione Cattolica "Torricelli" di Faenza.^{1N}

