

ceramics

M O N T H L Y



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Cover: Jane Margarete
Contest: 2022 Emerging Artists
Techno File: Bentonite vs. Kaolin
Spotlight: Stephanie Galli

Chanakarn Semachai

BANGKOK, THAILAND

Ceramics Monthly: Who is your ideal audience?

Chanakarn Semachai: In my utopia, my ideal audience includes people who are on the quest of finding themselves. Clay connects people to art, so I hope my work connects people to their community and to their home, whether that is a place or a person. I hope my artwork both challenges and encourages my audience. In 2016, I moved from Thailand to the US to pursue my master's degree and was unavoidably immersed in an entirely new culture. I spent years telling stories about my experiences through an awkward dinosaur as a representative of myself who was finding a sense of belonging. The more time I spent observing others, I saw more and more people from all around the world who shared similar feelings. I realized that you don't need to fit in to be happy. Everybody should be unique and there is nothing wrong about being different. So, essentially my ideal audience is those dinosaurs, those who are trying hard or who used to fit in, wishing my work could spark some happiness in their journeys.

CM: What do you see as the current trends in ceramics and where do you see yourself in that field?

CS: Personally, I think combining clay with other materials is a current trend in ceramics. While it is not a brand-new methodology, once



I started to make multi-media work in my own studio practice, I started to notice and be drawn to that kind of work in general.

I have developed a special technique for creating casting color effects on my work by layering colored plexiglass. I welcome other materials to my ceramic work, aiming to make a statement about cross-cultural experiences and dual or multicultural backgrounds. The use of various colors in my work is a way for me to demonstrate everyone's differences. Each person has their own color. Looking through colored plexiglass is a metaphor for seeing something from other people's perspectives, and hoping as a result we learn or realize something new and compassionate. Another trend I have noticed in the current ceramic community is that people/artists are being more supportive. Artists are sharing messages through their art, conversations, and other mediums in discourse to encourage one another, and they genuinely want to see changes. We are opening up more about how our clay community to stand up regarding social issues such as race, identity, and sexual orientation, and so on. It is both fascinating to observe and to be a part of in this phenomenon.

Learn more at www.numpuch.com.

1 Controlling Their Dreams, 19 in. (48 cm) in diameter, stoneware, underglaze, glaze, fired to cone 04, with plexiglass, 2021. 2 Heaven can wait (left), Sketchy (right), 13 in. (33 cm) in height, stoneware, underglaze, fired to cone 6, luster, nichrome wire, 2022