



**Sheniar Abdullah
&
Clay Love**

*By Yacoub alatom Ceramist
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يعقوب العتوم



Sheniar Abdullah

Born in the city of Ba'quba, Iraq in 1945, he received a bachelor's degree in ceramics from the Academy of Fine Arts, University of Baghdad (1967-1968), and a master's degree in ceramics from the University of Michigan (United States of America 1978), studied under the supervision of the Cypriot potter Valintinos Karlmbus) in Iraq.

Sheniar was the first to establish the (Raku) technique in Baghdad in 1979. He was distinguished by his long experience in the search for renewal and modernity to achieve ceramic forms that reflect his visual vision, philosophy and spirit, that mark the ancient Arab civilization.

"My vision goes between the goals of strict porcelain, modernity, and the dialectic of their relationship, and the significance of ceramic art remaining outside the traditional function. I do not have a strict and specific concept of ceramics. My work leads me to innovation, gives me energy to meditate, and my new murals cause me to remember the oldest times " Sumer , Akad and Babylon" and cause me to be inspired by the tiny things around me (old and contemporary) as if I was discovering my antiquities and rearrange them again...."

Sheniar Abdullah

2017/4/1



Regular and Irregular (Statistic and dynamic)

Most of the ceramics by potter Sheniar Abdullah are characterized by the regularity and irregularity, which contains the carefully examined technical elements, as if the work of art is a musical instrument that produces melodies that have an influence on spectator with the view to attract him, and dialogue with him, and think about him.

The various technical elements that make up the work lead to rhythms, and establish conflict between these elements, the absence of conflict between such elements means the absence of rhythm, and the artist reveals these conflicts between "statistic and dynamic."

The rule in art is to avoid regularity and to find an integral unit in the ceramic work that does not mean the similarity between all parts of the design but to show a lot of difference.

In his works , the artist depends on the picture, which explains the simple chromatic richness on the ceramic surfaces, and an exercise in which the system can be found to illustrate the linear configuration of the architecture of the geometric form presented. In a surprising manner, the artist went on to address the phenomenon of visual diversity in which his ceramic works, through his technical expertise to eventually form an experiment of aesthetic value with the techniques of oxidation and reduction of color oxides, which relied on the introduction of dramatic movements in the mass space and its form balancing between geometry and blocks dancing in the embrace of warm shape.

Abstract Organic (Spirituality of Human Form)



One of the most important works of ceramics by Sheniar Abdullah are ceramics body (sculpture icons) of mysterious and hidden human forms in its strange structure and composition, and in its colors, which give a temporal implication and an expression of its human experience which reveals the love of the potter and his longing for the past and the present, and the Iraqi environment in which he grew up, through which he created controversy over form, diagnosis, abstraction in the structure of human form, and spontaneity in the construction of human forms and their transformation and reduction within his visual and artistic vision.

The artist looks for creativity and innovation in his ceramic work, not just a work to copy it from memory. He chooses the method of burning in Raku in order to emphasize agility through the effects of smoke during the reduction of glass, color differences and texture surfaces that reflect the personality of the work and the search for the composition of the organic forms by emphasizing the sensory curves of the sculptural forms.

The use of Raku technique has enhanced the aesthetics of the shape. This indicates the importance of technical performance in highlighting the surfaces and showing the aesthetics of the form. Many artists may have been influenced by these shapes and different forms without limits, and inspired by the shape, nature and the world around them to learn the basics of balancing, harmony,

frequency, rhythm, organic growth of life, attractiveness, contrast, harmony and contrast, including sculptor Henry Moore, Hans Arp and other artists.

Chawan Pottery (Optimism)

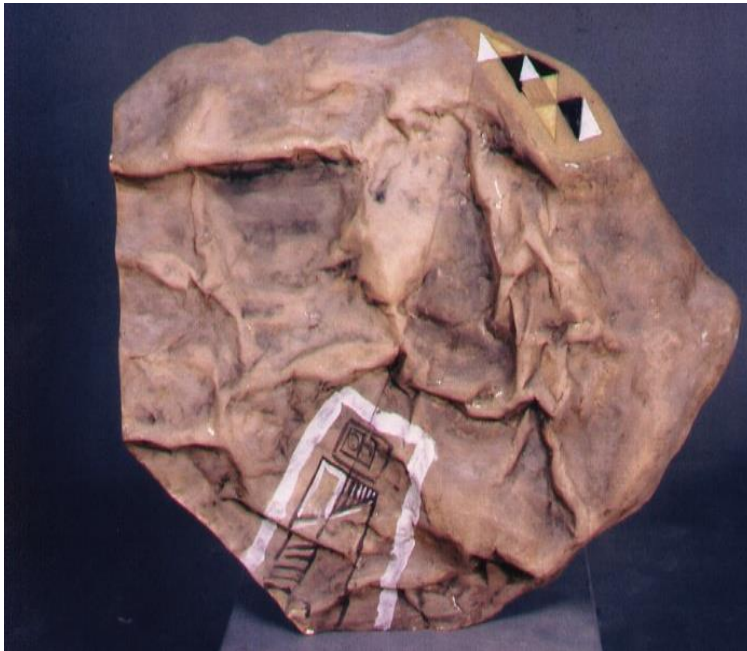


"When potter Sheniar Abdullah wants a rest, he goes to the (electric wheel) to show his fingers by making the cups of Chawan and he fondles them with his movements and paints them with his ever smiling spirit"

Yes, this is the real potter who was characterized by this skillful training in the formation of clay, through which he was able to penetrate the pores of form, consistency in design, and great in the blows of his brushes, and tenderness in the senses on the surfaces, we find the luster of his spirit on the glass. When we look closely at potter's Chawan, we find comfort and softness in form and delicacy in design, asceticism in color, and happiness in looking at it.

The potter used Raku technique in the production of cups of Chawan, which is characterized by the beauty of its surfaces, full of vitality and energy, in addition to the small size by hand, and this continuous circulation of the shape of the hand is believed to enhance the spirit of the subject. Moreover, the

simplicity of the form is a source of calm, calmness, pleasure and optimism, ease of shape capture and light weight.



**Random
(Greatness of Shape)**

" Exciting long experiments in ceramics led him to experimentation, and continuous technical performance, his dialogue with the mass, his love of clay, glass, smoke, waiting,

contemplation of fire and heat, to see with his own eyes the greatness of form in structure and silence to deliver his message through his thought and the words of his civilization. "

As the writer Khalil Quayah said in his article "The Ceramics' Nostalgia ... The Earth's Pulse ..." Sheniar approaches the geological perception of natural space, this is another horizon that would help the artist find in the bumps of the earth and the layers of their layers a form of the human conscience in the intensity of its emotions and fluctuations . This eloquent dialogue reveals Sheniar's ability to compose his plastic, aesthetic and expressionist world with clay, oxides, and transformations with fire on the symbolism level (earth, clay, flesh), and at the plastic level (visual and tactile space, the balance of the line and the mass, the silence and movement), we feel the artist's quest to own itself, and to evacuate its features within the features of clay dough flexible and

playful, as the mud brings birth to the dreams of art and the pulse of self-wandering, and between the fingers of the artist the world forms again and the act continues ... ".

In his article, "The temptation of sculpture, or the seduction of ceramics": Farouk Salloum said : " Sheniar confuses us every time he creates a hint of his artistic project, he who is preoccupied with analyzing his ore like a chemist discovering the properties of his country's soil, this Rafidi is more eager to talk about Iraqi soil than his art , he wasted a lot of precious technical time to reach the results of his argument ... "



(Semicircular shapes)
(Rotation of Life)

What distinguishes the potter Sheniar Abdullah is the formative richness of the square and semicircular shape; because he sees in them the elements of the vagueness, privacy, and his world loaded with symbols and meanings and words distributed on ceramic surfaces. The shape and the contacts of the potter have infinite sanctity, and the circular shape is divided by the forces of gravity, where the rotation and center, the semicircular shape may represent many forms, according to the artist's vision in his memory, and philosophy in the perception of the form, and analysis of reality that reflected on his works of ceramic. What does the potter want to show through these forms, and what provokes, and inspires him when building it?

The circle is "**the idea of the harmony of the universe and the change of creatures to exist.**" The circular shape indicates fertility, femininity and birth. Late plastic artist (Qutaiba Nouri) was one of the artists interested in the circular shape, he once said: " the theme of circle and sphere interest me because I feel them inherited in all beings including me " However, the theme of the circular, semi circular, elliptical and other derivatives of this form is a subject based on a technique of relations that foresees the final shape of the plastic art work. We note in the works of Sheniar Abdullah a repetition of certain decorative elements, bearing his prints but with varied rhythms, where the decorative elements interact with the geometrical shape, giving it a spirit

and movement, and more contemporary touch, proportional to its rotation, and its flow, horizontally and vertically, to coexist and adapt to it as if it were missing.

This link emphasizes the professional imagination of the artist and how he relies on imagination to create a ceramic work.

(Murals)
(Mural When Thinking)



According to Sheniar Abdullah, the ceramic work is based on the concept of "construction" in all its stages and then the construction of the features on each square, where the square becomes a world in itself, but to confirm at the same time the dialectical relationship between the part and all, the features formed on the soft wall of the clay takes forms using various techniques such as scratching, printing, polishing, and other actions may remain in the world of secrets and this gives the ceramic work a dimension different from other arts.

As the writer Habib Al-Ra'i said: "Fortunately, touching here is not forbidden. The presence of raw material

is strong, attractive and noble. The process of viewing will not be merely a process of normal vision. Rather, it will touch, slide on a flat surface or follow a straight start with straight and curved lines, which draws geometric shapes that reinforce the geometry of the squares that make up the work. "

Certainly, this way of thinking astonishes us. We expect that we are facing an architect who works calmly and with great patience, dealing with his ceramics with elegance in planning, organizing spaces, and sometimes in making

proportions and symmetries between the shapes he digs in shape before hardening them in the fire.

As Mr. Adel Kamel said, "Sheniar Abdullah did not find it difficult to re-establish the foundations of the art of ancient murals, through modern treatments, his understanding of the factors of the geographical environment, as well as the aesthetics and symbolic of historical dimensions, Sheniar was inspired by the work of the sculptor in the manufacture of his frescoes, or by the art heritage. Perhaps these ceramic murals have given an effective presence because Sheniar adopted a masterful artistic approach in terms of the cohesion and sobriety of these works. He uses a few colors, close to the color of the earth, to suggest the elegance, the freedom and the time dimension and to create a kind of nostalgia to the innocence and spontaneity of that history in the shape creativity , and the depth of the substance in all its visual challenges in the world of ceramics. He adapted the cuneiform character within his murals units and its interaction with other units (balls, soft and coherent lines , lined in the spaces in a balanced and designed manner).

Sheniar Abdullah

Born in Iraq 1945

BA – MFA in ceramic –Iraq –USA

Member of Iraqi Artists Society

Member of Iraqi Artists Union

Member of IAA France

One Man Show

Czechoslovakia Culture Center –Baghdad 1968

Iraqi Artists Society Baghdad 1971

PB Gallery Williamston Mi – USA – 1977

MI State Artists Gallery USA – 1978

Rewaqa Gallery – Baghdad – 1980

Rewaqa Gallery Baghdad – 1981

Orfali Gallery Baghdad – 1985

Orfali Gallery Baghdad – 1993

Alia Gallery Amman – Jordan 1995

Nathar Gallery - Baghdad – 1997

Atemis Gallery - Tunis – Tunisia – 2002

Orfali Gallery - Amman - 2007

Group Exhibitions

Iraqi Art Contemporary Exhibition – Info – club – Baghdad – 1972

Alwasety Festival – Baghdad 1972 - 1982

6 Ceramics Artists – Lansing –MI - USA -1976

Ceramics Contemporary Exhibition - Damascus – Venezuela - 1979

Aseela Festival Morocco - 1979 -1980

Art Day –Exhibition Baghdad

4 Ceramic Artists Orfali Art Gallery - Baghdad -1987

Baghdad International Exhibition 1988

8 Ceramic Artist Orfali Art Gallery - Baghdad - 1988

Iraqi Contemporary Art Exhibition Amman – 1992

Ceramic Contemporary Exhibition Shoman Art Gallery Amman - 1995

Tunisian Artist Union Exhibitions 2002 - 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 -9 – 10

Galiga Art Gallery Exhibitions – Tunis - 2002 - 2004

Three Iraqi Artists Exhibition - Kan Gallery - Tunis - 2008

His work exhibit in Iraq Museum of ART

His work collected in most Arabic countries and USA, Canada, Mexico, European countries and North Africa

He awarded first prize in Ceramic Iraqi Artists Society 1992

Former professor of Ceramic in Institute of Fine Arts - Baghdad

Former Professor of Ceramic in College of Fine Arts –University of Baghdad

Professor of Ceramic in Higher Institute of Fine Arts in Tunis

His mural works are hanging in Baghdad international Airport ,Basra international Airport,Tunis Via in Tunis

International Ceramic Exhibition

Cairo 2000 and 2002 / Mahris 2000 / Tunis 2003 /Almutawasty Tunis 2002

Aseela Festival- Morocco – 1979 – 1980 / Baghdad International Festival – Baghdad – 1980

Cairo International Ceramic Festival 2000 – 2002

Al-Mahrace Festival - Tunisia – 2000- 2011

International Ceramic Festival – Tunisia 2002.

Greece International Ceramic Festival 2014.

Tolne Ceramic Festival – Greece 2015 .

La Mardiana Ceramic Festival-Italy-20156.

Vidava Ceramic Festival- Latvia – Vaidava – 2015.

Tunisia International Ceramic Festival –Safex – Tunisia – 2016 .

International Ceramic Festival – Mino – Japan – 2017.

Cluj International Ceramic Festival –Cluj – Romania – 2017 .

Shanyar45@yahoo.com