BACK TO EARTH

THE CERAMICS AND GLASS SHOW
CURATED BY SHIRLEY BHATNAGAR
AT 47-A, BOMBAY

CURATORIAL NOTE

'Hey! Come back to Earth!'
In short, Get Real!

Fired clay has been in human consciousness for as long as 30,000 years : it has fed our spiritual needs through sculpture, and our design needs in the form of vessels and tableware. Through sunbaked and fired bricks, clay has provided us with housing and architecture.

Human civilization has always been fascinated by light, even considering light sources as divine. Materials with natural luminescence or translucence were considered precious. Therefore, when glass became accessible about 4000 years ago, it became a natural choice for many because of its unique quality for light to pass through.

Ceramics and glass are interrelated, minerals from the earth are transformed into hardy materials - opaque, translucent and transparent - for human use.
Glass gives a clear view of the world - both literally and metaphorically, and clay is the ground below our feet.

The basic forms in ceramic and glass and the way to create them have also remained the same since ancient times, yet they continue to excite and engage makers by repeating the traditions of centuries ago, keeping the link unbroken.

As boundaries between art, craft, and design blur in a world where the Real competes with the Digital, the hand-made object becomes so much more precious.

BACK TO EARTH brings together a selection of small studios in India working with the most ancient materials, grounded in solid studio work, who have perfected some aspect of their craft : a glaze recipe, a special form, the use of a brush, or simply combining materials. Each tell a story unique to their ethos.

This design show is meant to be a delightful sampling of contemporary and functional works, for the home.

They carry the dreams, memories, artistic musings and practices of the makers directly into your home.

They have a sense of wonder and place - which goods of the globalized and hyper-industrialized world cannot offer.

Shirley Bhatnagar
August 2022

SHIRLEY BHATNAGAR

Shirley Bhatnagar was trained at the National Institute of Design in Ahmedabad and has been a ceramist for twenty five years. She loves her craft, and has been deeply involved with her community of fellow designers, artists and craftsmen so much that reaching out to so many across India was a very exciting opportunity. Getting 'back to earth' really gladdened her heart!

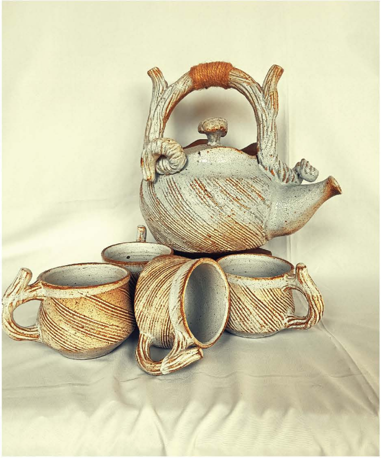
ADI UNWALLA

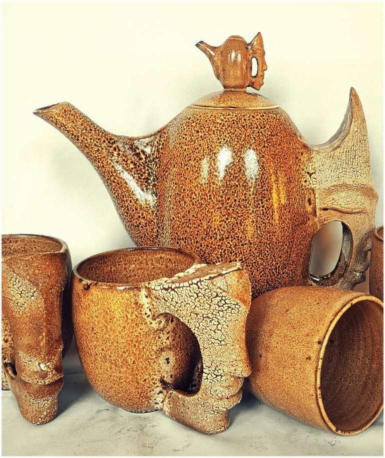
Adi was not allowed to be an artist by his parents and set up 3 factories by the time he was 28, where he started casting pewter objects in-between machine parts. That started his passion for glass, and at the age of 50 he went to study and train in Seattle, eventually setting up a studio in Bombay for glass fusion and casting. When he was no longer able to walk, his studio moved to his home, where he worked till he died at 85, in 2015. At this show, we present a special tribute to this incredible artist and designer.

AORANG STUDIO

Falguni Bhatt founded her studio in Kolkata in 2008, where national and international workshops abound. She works both on her own practice and leads the creation of small scale utility wares.

ART ICHOL STUDIO





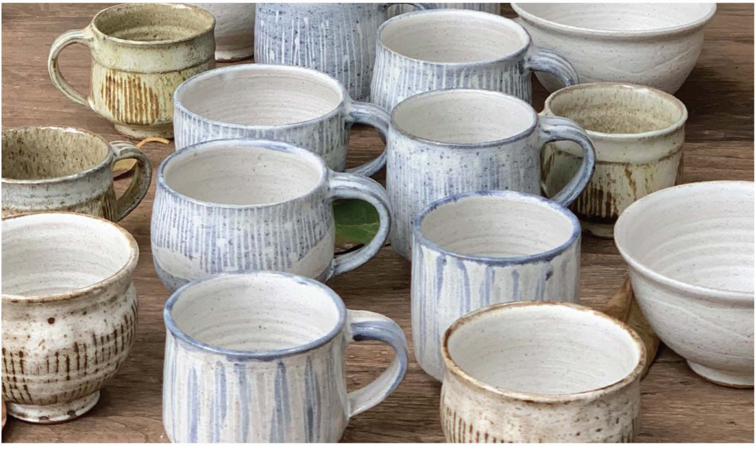
Milan Singh joined Art Ichol, Maihar as a resident artist. He draws inspiration for his work from nature and its elements, celebrating local clays and exploring the symbiotic relationships between humans and nature.

Ravi Kumar is also currently a resident artist. His work explores the relationships and emotional connections between humans despite their distances and differences. He specializes in miniature ceramicware and functional pottery.

CURATORS OF CLAY

Curators of Clay is a one-of-its-kind ceramic studio in Pune, co-founded by potters Bhairavi Naik and Rohit Kulkarni. Focused on handcrafted, high-fired functional ceramics, they showcase a love for the minimal with a nod to Japanese & Scandinavian design. Everything at the studio is hand made from start to finish, by them.They bring contemporary and chic lighting to the show.

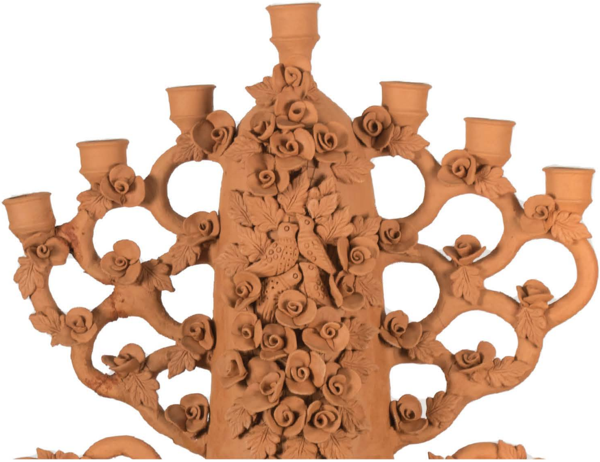
DEVYANI SMITH



Devyani makes mostly functional ceramics in her studio in Mumbai because she likes her works to be used and shared and to have a communal experience.

Her work is hand built and wheel thrown stoneware decorated with slips and glazes using inlay and scgrafito. Her design ethos, "muted, but with a distinct voice", is her tribute to the mountains where she grew up.

DOLON KUNDU



Dolon Kundu is a traditional pinch potter from Bengal who creates the most delightful and detailed pottery. Working with designer Nandita Palchoudhuri and using imagination and travel experience, she goes on flights of fantasy way outside her immediate environment and creates magical realism : one of our favorites is Frida, a candelabra she has created using Mexico as her inspiration.

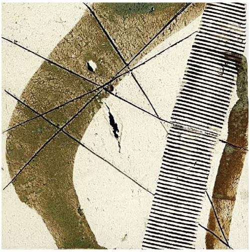
GLASS FOREST

Glass Forrest is a Delhi based design brand founded by Pallavi and Deeksha - glass lovers, passionate experimenters and crazy about nature! They take pride in each piece employing local artisans and craftsmen who work with utmost care, precision, detail and - most importantly - love.

IRREGULAR BEAUTY

Shirley Bhatnagar's studio is all about celebrating the irregularities in handmade. Her work is full of rich narrative and humour. She often works collaboratively with artisans in ceramics, textile and wood.

KARA SABI



Kritika Soni brings textile design into her ceramics. Her studio, Kara Sabi, Delhi draws from the Japanese aesthetic of Wabi Sabi, a timeless idea that honours all things old, weathered and imperfect. As a result, she makes ceramics that show and celebrate the flaws, the wear-and-tear and the inconsistencies of life, thereby adding more character and beauty to each piece.

KOORM

Ruddhi Vichare works from her Pune studio, Koorm. She primarily makes tableware, and enjoys painting lively colours and carving in clay to create patterns and textures, reveling in the interaction between hands, eyes and the intimate feel of clay.

KOPAL SETH STUDIO

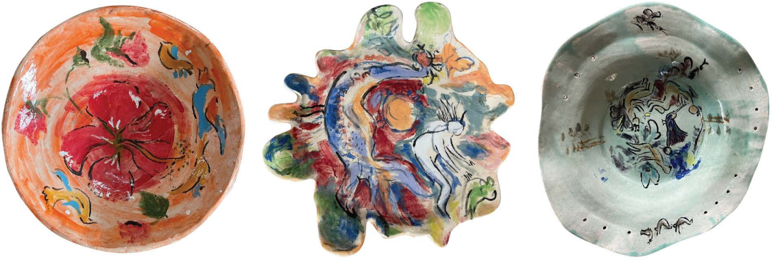
Kopal Seth is currently a resident artist at Art Ichol in Maihar. Her works are designed to function as interactive art, to become part of someone's daily rituals and to add a sense of whimsy to the simple pleasures of life

KUPRKABI STUDIO

Kuprkabi Studio has evolved as a design house and a social enterprise developed by Vanmala Jain.

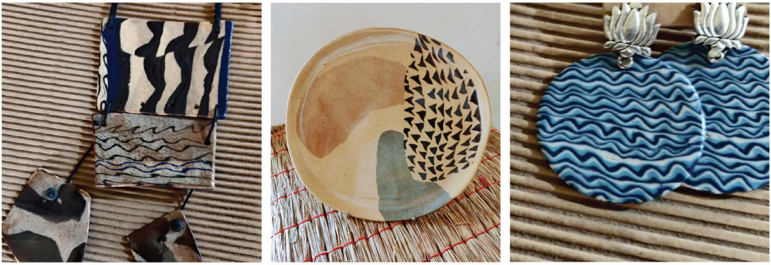
Since 2000, the Studio has explored countless possibilities from craft to functional ceramics as limited-edition work. It supports women and school dropouts from underprivileged sectors of society by offering them training.

NITA BARUA



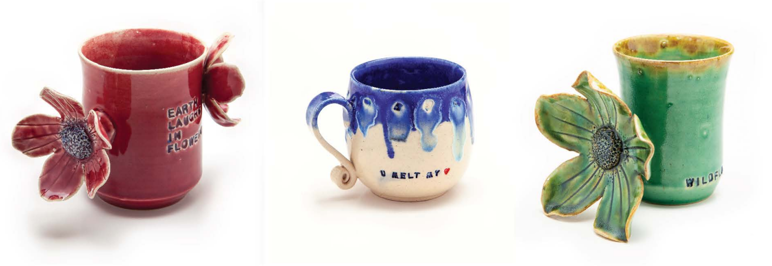
Nita Barua is a trained graphic designer who took up pottery as a hobby when she was 60, in a studio in Israel. Her work is whimsical and unique, with a style of painting that is all her own. At 90, she has lost most of her eyesight but has a large body of work that friends around her in Bombay are all delighted by. This is the first time they are on show.

OCHRE



Kavita Pandya Ganguly specializes in the Nerikomi technique. She has worked with craft, art, and design for the last 27 years, setting up Ochre at Anand, teaching and collaborating with artisans. She has created plates and jewellery carefully orchestrated in colored clays.

OFF CENTRE

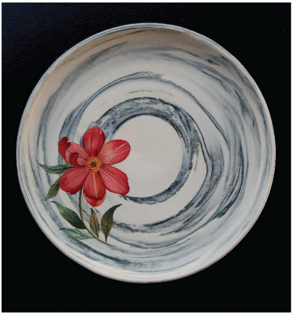


Sadhvi's latest collection symbolises effervescence, colour and life itself. Using her skills as a graphic designer, artist and potter, she brings beauty and functionality into her designs. The collection comprises cups of all hues and for every mood – a beautiful petal, a quirky message, a pop of colour, an unconventional pattern. The designs are inspired generously by both nature and the digital space that occupies much of our lives today, incorporating an ergonomic design philosophy. True to her Punjabi nature, the goal is to bring vivacity in the everyday objects she crafts – making them 'hatke', yet relatable, accessible and always practical.

OLEE MAATEE

Bharati Pitre is the principal designer; she is an artist and sculptor based in Pune who works extensively with papier mache. She also experiments with other mediums like ceramics and is working with rural artisans in Ratnagiri to create delightful objects for the home.

PATTTERENED STUDIO

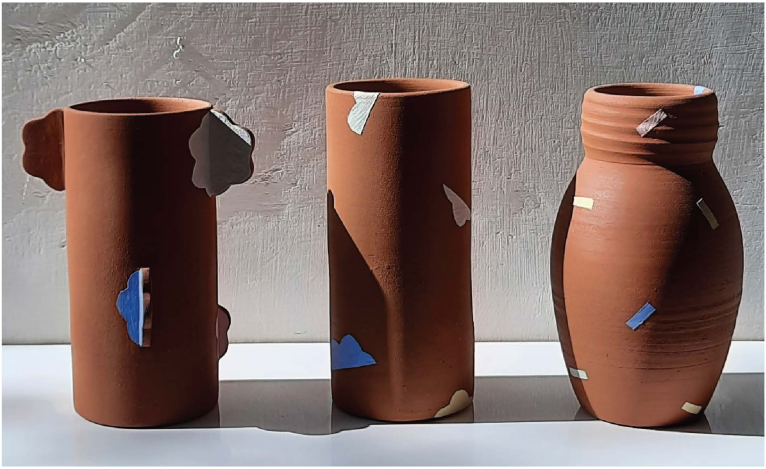


Pattterned Studio is a young and innovative design studio, founded by Astha Malu. Astha shares stories through her utility yet playful ceramic wares. She studies insects, reptiles and their habitats which are well reflected in her collections and she also conducts therapeutic clay workshops for kids, and adult

RARE STUDIOS

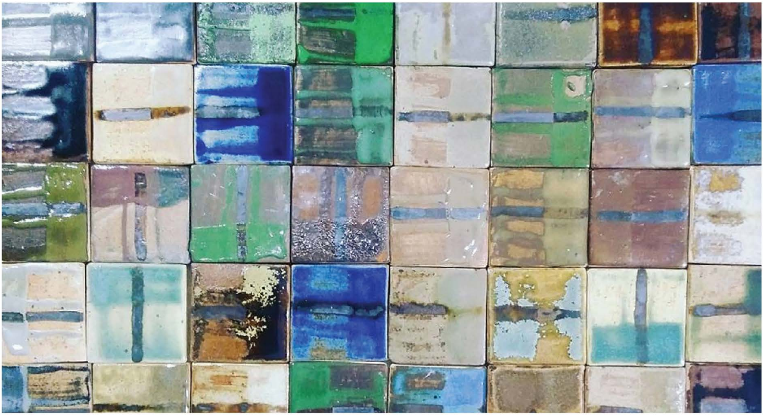
Revati set up Rare studio in Gurgoan to explore ceramics and glass. Her interest in craft and design inform her practice that push the boundaries of creativity. She has created cups in her signature style in rich purple glaze.

REYAZ BADARUDDIN



Reyaz Badaruddin lives and works from Himachal Pradesh. Using simple forms in red earthenware clay, Reyaz's forms explore different themes. He revisits the studio's signature style to create a series of unique artist's pots presented in limited editions.

SANDEEP MANCHEKAR



Sandeep excels in challenging surface decoration techniques and firing methods not limited to lustre and Raku. He is a well-known educator and mentor in the field of ceramics in India and has set up studios in universities and schools.For the show he has created table tops based on his extensive glaze collection and knowledge.

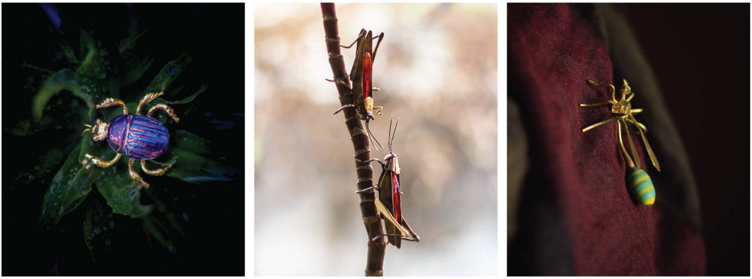
SARASWATI RENATA

Saraswati is based in Auroville and co-founded White Peacock Clay Studio - a space for children and adults interested in learning ceramics. She abandoned miniatures for more scale, mostly developing architectural themes, and is known for her whimsical and sculptural works in porcelain with the use of gold, and her detailed workmanship.

SRILA MOOKHERJEE

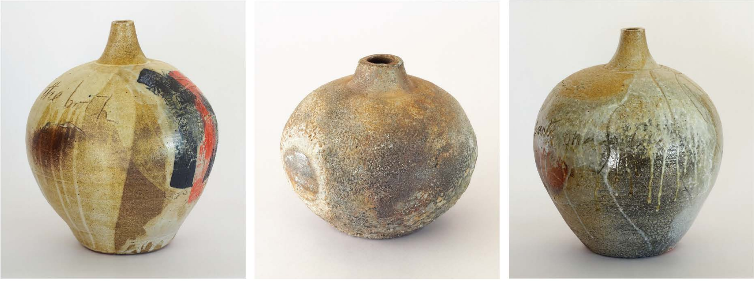
Srila Mookherjee is based in Kolkata where she set up the first studio for blowing glass, sourcing all her material and equipment indigenously. Her work is an innovative mix of form with function, craft with art and every piece she creates is one-of-a-kind.

STUDIO GLASSIC



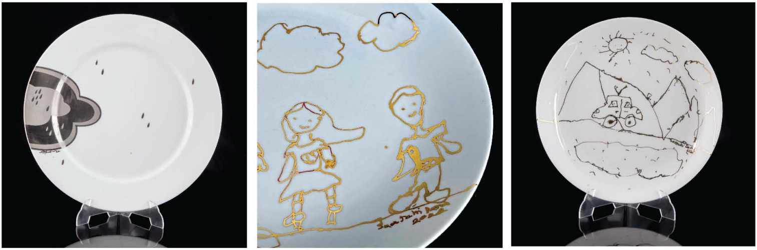
Vineeta Oswal and Manoj Pilli are inspired by the wonders of nature and the magic of glass. Their work is a free interplay of art, craft and design, and a celebration of the handmade. Their brooches, sculpted in glass and brass, are an acknowledgement of the tiny creatures inhabiting the planet, our companions on Earth.

STUDIO KARVVA



Rashi Jain has been teaching ceramics since 2004 at educational institutions and at her Mumbai workspace. Her works for the show are ancient urn and jar shapes, created in anagma wood fired kilns, that display beautiful, rusty textures with words inscribed on to them.

STUDIO SAATCHI



Vinod Daroz's work is a wonderful amalgamation of Indian and Oriental aesthetics. He brings a quotient of glamour with the use of precious metal lusters of gold and platinum on a humble dinner plate - a nod to his lineage of goldsmiths. For the show his 7 year old daughter has tenderly depicted a family trip on porcelain showing incredible control over gold.

47-A is a new exhibition venue for design.

It is set in one of our most favourite places : the beautiful Khotachi Wadi, one of the original villages of Bombay, in the culturally historic area of Girgaum, rich in its diversity and inclusiveness

47-A Khotachi Wadi is a 19th century Portuguese-style house, and its ground floor is now our new gallery.

47A | BARO MARKET