



FUNCTION  
REVIEWED

6 Aug—6 Nov 2016



06 Aug—06 Nov

Curated by Brian Kennedy  
As part of Kilkenny Arts Festival



“I have always loved the word VASE, its double pronunciation, and with it, its reference to place and class. Within the world of craft and design, this same small word is even more charged and divisive. It’s seldom found within contemporary ceramics, where the less functional word ‘vessel’ is almost always used. I wanted to curate an exhibition that would embrace the functional, examine its history and explore its boundaries.”

**Brian Kennedy**

Curator

Ever since the Grecian Urn, the vase has a tradition as a container of narrative and vehicle for storytelling. This exhibition looks at how contemporary artists are still addressing issues of the personal and the political within and on their work. Ceramics play a huge part in all our daily lives. We wash from a ceramic sink, drink our morning tea or coffee from a ceramic mug, eat from a ceramic dish and when we want to cheer up a room we put flowers in a ceramic vase. Many contemporary artists take these daily objects and rituals and investigate them through their work. This exhibition focuses on the vase, an object we all have in our lives, and looks at it through the eyes of the artist.

*VASE: Function Reviewed* debates issues of functionality in ceramics through a series of works by Irish and international artists. The exhibition showcases a range of objects, from the consciously matching to the gloriously mismatched, the proudly 'functional' to the emphatically 'dysfunctional', the 'useful' and the 'useless'. It offers a lively and stimulating debate on form versus function within contemporary ceramics and encourages an animated debate on hierarchies within contemporary ceramics, making us look anew at the objects that surround us.

### AGALIS MANESSI

Agalis Manessi's work lies within the tradition of maiolica and celebrates this rich historical medium through many diverse influences ranging from the sophistication of Italian Istoriated dishes through to the simplicity of humble folk wares. She strives for a poetic mastery through pictorial representation trying to retain a freshness of palette that belies the difficulty of the process. Once dipped in glaze, the modelled figures, dishes and vases, become like primed canvasses. Subject matter is derived from portraits, figures and animal studies in museum collections or drawn directly from life; a fusion of the observed and imagined.

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



#### AGALIS MANESSI

Geffyre's cloak, 2016  
H 34cm, Red terracotta with  
tin glaze and painted oxides  
and stains  
Photo: Rob Kessler

### AKIKO HIRAI

Akiko Hirai makes practical ware using the Japanese tradition of allowing the clay to show how it wants to be fired itself. Her work also allows the viewers to find out the language of the objects in their own ways. She focuses on the interaction between the objects and the viewers. 'I like working with dark clay. The white glazes I use act as a veil and give my work a feeling of stillness. I look for contrast in the rawness of the dark textured clay and the purity the lighter glazes.'

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



#### AKIKO HIRAI

Blue Moon Jar, 2015  
H 56cm, Stoneware

## ALISON BRITTON OBE

Alison Britton has dedicated herself to making, studying and understanding pots. Her distinctive, sculptural works blur the line between art and craft. Vessels are hand-built from rolled slabs of clay not thrown on a wheel. Surfaces are expressively painted with marks referencing more modernist painting than the decorative patterns we tend to associate with craft or completed by pouring across slip then glaze. Her pots exude authority and confidence, they are works that have been contemplated and carefully constructed by a dedicated maker. Britton's work has always embraced awkwardness and it defies classification, her work is as much about sculpture and painting as ceramics or pots.

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

### ALISON BRITTON

Egress, 2012  
H43cm, Hand built high fired red earthenware, poured and painted slips and glazes  
Photo: Philip Sayer  
Courtesy Marsden Woo, London



## ALISON KAY

Alison Kay's current work relates to the tradition of the vessel. Clean delineation, sharp outlines and well-defined curves create tautness and volume in the forms, each made with an opening to reveal part of the interior. Inspiration comes from many sources; from seed heads to the aerodynamic shapes of car designs. Her aim is to create objects that are contemporary, yet with an ancient and timeless quality. The pieces are coil built using white raku clay, then gradually pared back and attentively worked to achieve symmetry in the form. Much experimentation has gone into the use of Terra Sigillata with the addition of subtle colours, which when applied, is burnished to give a rich sheen.

[www.alisonkay.ie](http://www.alisonkay.ie)

### ALISON KAY

Wide Blue Vessel with Off Centre Opening, 2016  
H25cm W43cm, White Raku clay  
Photographer: Caryl Byrne





**ANDREW WICKS**

Porcelain Gamiture of Seven Vases, 2016  
 H29,5cm L75cm, Thrown, carved and glazed porcelain

**ANDREW WICKS**

Having worked in slip-cast porcelain for over ten years Andrew decided to take on a new challenge and taught himself to throw in porcelain clay in 2006. Throwing gives a versatility and freedom to create unique forms and differing scales. Once the vessels are thrown and turned the design is carefully marked up onto the smooth pot ready for the intensive process of hand carving. Andrew usually works in groups of vessels as he enjoys the visual relationship between the forms. The textured surfaces evident in Andrew's work are often inspired by patterns found in the natural world such as fossils, coral reefs and magnified plant forms.

[www.andrewwicks.co.uk](http://www.andrewwicks.co.uk)

**ANNE MARIE LAUREYS**

Anne Marie Laureys thinks of her ceramics as metaphors for feelings. She starts the process by throwing a classic, symmetrical pot. Whilst the clay is still soft and wet, she pulls, folds, pinches and punctures it. The tension of the clay underneath her fingers dictates the way the folds take shape. Her pieces have a spontaneous, unplanned quality but in reality she takes her time to find the shape of a vessel, remoulding and refolding the clay over and over again until it speaks with her unique voice. No two works are ever the same. Her ceramics are renowned for their sense of excitement, freshness and tactility.

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



**ANNE MARIE LAUREYS**

Clay-e-motion, 2010/14  
 H 29cm, Belgian clay  
 thrown on the wheel, altered  
 and assembled, "clay glazes"  
 & glazes, 1120°-1180°C

## BABS HAENEN

The ceramics of Babs Haenen is typified by expressive and impressionistic qualities where colour, line and form all play an equal part. The painterly way in which she adorns her vessels demonstrates the way in which abstract painting inspires her; landscape motifs, such as rippling water, are recurring themes too. She builds her vessels with coloured porcelain slabs which she manipulates by hand. The slabs are coloured with pigment and rolled to form thin ribbons which are deftly folded, cut and sculpted to form tactile works with a strong sense of movement; the notion of the vessel, be it a bowl, vase or plate, is all but left behind.

[www.tastecontemporarycraft.com/babs-haenen/](http://www.tastecontemporarycraft.com/babs-haenen/)



### BABS HAENEN

Wind Water, 2016  
H 49cm, Hand Built,  
porcelain, oxides and body  
stains, glaze

## CAROL MCNICOLL

Carol McNicoll is one of a group of female artists who transformed the British ceramics scene in the 1970s. Prior to this she worked as a machinist for the fashion designer Zandra Rhodes and designed and made stage costumes for Roxy Music. Her animated ceramic works are conceived to exist in the internal domestic sphere, while also taking on external elements of the world, through her composite sculptures using inventive modelling and moulding techniques, transfers and found objects. 'My work, which is made for the most part in slip-cast clay, is always conceived as inhabiting the domestic environment, I find function the most interesting challenge.'

[www.marsdenwoo.com/mcnicoll/cmc.htm](http://www.marsdenwoo.com/mcnicoll/cmc.htm)

### CAROL MCNICOLL

Helicopter Jug, 2013  
H 29cm, High fired slipcast  
earthenware decorated with  
transfers  
Courtesy Marsden Woo,  
London





**DEOK HO KIM**

Vestige, 2015  
H 20.8cm, White porcelain,  
wheel-thrown, faceting,  
polishing, marbling  
Courtesy Gallery LVS, Seoul

**DEOK HO KIM**

By showing things “how they really are”, Deok Ho Kim is rooted in the tradition of minimalism. “When we see a circle or a straight line, we subconsciously always look for basic characteristics, such as symmetry and precision,” he explains. And it is precisely these objective “basic attributes” that can be found as a recurrent theme in all of his ceramics. Kim combines between five and seven vessels to form a set, whose individual pieces of disparate sizes, whether they are round or edged, are always characterized by perfectly harmonized proportions. Not easy to work into shape, the white ceramic material requires superlative craftsmanship and maximized precision. In conjunction with repetitive movements of the hands and the turning of the potter’s wheel, Kim creates objects of captivatingly simple shapes.

[www.gallerylvs.org/?team=김덕호-kim-deok-ho](http://www.gallerylvs.org/?team=김덕호-kim-deok-ho)

**DEREK WILSON**

Derek Wilson’s practice as a ceramist centres on the making of a diverse range of contemporary objects – from the functional to the sculptural. He always starts with the same process, the potter’s wheel being his predominant tool, but his work is never static or fixed and in some ways reflects the multifarious identities of contemporary ceramics – a twenty-first century hybridization of studio potter and conceptual artist. Derek’s ideas spring from a complex blending of the abstract to the familiar, evident in both the functional ware and sculpture that he makes. His objects, in their colour, shape and materiality, reference the ideas of restraint, containment and minimalism.

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

**DEREK WILSON**

Vases, 2016  
From H16 to 33.5cm,  
Thrown and assembled  
porcelain/stoneware with  
coloured engobe exterior





## FELICITY AYLIEFF

Working from her studio in Bath for more than three decades, Felicity Aylieff has more recently developed a collaborative relationship with factories in Jingdezhen, China. "Whilst looking at the traditional techniques employed it has become clear to me that my approach to painting and drawing on pots should not be to merely make copies of historic pieces but more importantly to understand and learn from them. My approach needed to be radically different, contemporary, with a clear personal voice. In the series 'Mapping Memory' I am working with a free form brush mark creating lines that are instinctively expressive but well rehearsed from painting many pots repeatedly to gain a confidence, a familiarity, and integrity of mark."

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



### FELICITY AYLIEFF

Ink Blue Wide Pot, 2012  
H 47cm, Porcelain, glazed  
with 'new ming' cobalt blue  
& iron oxides  
Courtesy Adrian Sassoon,  
London



## GRÁINNE WATTS

Gráinne Watts creates delicate and playful ceramic forms and vessels. Having previously worked primarily at the potter's wheel, Watts has begun to combine this method with a variety of hand building techniques. Her current work features a collection of thrown vessels and a series of sculptural forms in porcelain and stoneware. In these pieces, Watts explores surface detail through various decorative techniques. 'The coastline of Ireland has been a major source of inspiration in my work as a ceramic artist. Over a lifetime, I have collected and recorded 'treasures' that inspire my practice, from weather eroded flotsam and stones, to vibrant seaweeds that are used for my saggar firings.'

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

### GRAINNE WATTS

Midnight blue 'Bindu'  
Vessel, 2016  
H 30cm, Hand built  
Earthenware 5 clay, hand  
brushed underglazes



#### HEIDI BJØRGAN

Object 12, 2015  
H 14cm, Stoneware, fired  
to 1060 degrees

#### HEIDI BJØRGAN

Heidi Bjørgan has previously used found shapes and ready-mades, and these new works are also based on 'borrowings'. But instead of using mass-produced objects, she has hired a potter to throw perfect, functional shapes, which she has then deformed and turned into sculptural objects. In this way she erases all traces of learned skill and invents new techniques that offer the possibility for other effects. In short: the work method is to do everything that in theory shouldn't be done, such as blend glazes, clay types and other substances that cannot be mixed; to expose the works to treatments where the risk of making 'mistakes' is very high. Other examples would be to mix temperatures and fire objects between three and five times. A crack is allowed to be a crack with its own expression – it is not a mistake. She adds and subtracts until the result, in her eyes, becomes interesting.

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

#### HELEN DOHERTY

'I have always had an interest in the relationship between identity and place, in particular, the role which culture plays in molding who we become. Growing up in South Africa and Britain, yet receiving a British education in both places (1970's-1980's), had the peculiar effect of planting a different landscape in my head to the one which I physically inhabited. This experience has provided a rich reservoir of images and memories to draw on, and ceramics, which is rooted in cultural practice and identity, has allowed me to explore this dual consciousness. My work concerns myth-making: by drawing on the past yet bearing witness to the present, I tell stories both to pose and answer specific questions.'

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



#### HELEN DOHERTY

Turning, turning, 2016  
H 38 x D 28cm, Earthenware

## HITOMI HOSONO

Hitomi Hosono's ceramics experience is rooted in both Japanese and European traditions. The subjects of her current porcelain work are shapes inspired by leaves and flowers.

'I sculpted a leaf that I found in the garden at home. It was a simple leaf, not particularly special amongst other leaves. However, when I started sculpting its shape with clay, I was drawn into its intricacy; the manner in which the veins were branching, how the margins ended. I found many details that I admired in this small leaf. It is my intention to transfer the leaf's beauty and detail into my ceramic work, using it as my own language to weave new stories for objects.'

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



### HITOMI HOSONO

A Petite Mangrove Bowl,  
2015  
H 20.5. Moulded, carved  
and hand-built porcelain with  
palladium leaf interior  
Courtesy Adrian Sassoon,  
London

## KAP SUN HWANG

Kap Sun Hwang creates series of cylindrical vases with thin blue stripes. His vases vary little by little in their sizes and shapes, but are equally incredible for their extreme structural precision. Hwang's blue stripes are not drawn, but in fact inserted as "joints"; he cuts a cylinder into numerous blocks, reattaches them with blue-dyed thin strip of clay in between, re-fires and finally re-polishes them without any crevices or irregularities. Hwang explains that his work combines the matte finish of prehistoric earthenware; over 1000 year-old celadon glaze; simple aesthetics of Joseon Dynasty; and crafting technique of the 21st century.

[www.gallerylvs.org/?team=황갑순-hwang-kap-sun](http://www.gallerylvs.org/?team=황갑순-hwang-kap-sun)

### KAP SUN HWANG

Vases, 2010  
H 23.5cm. White porcelain,  
thrown, cut and assembled,  
1280 degree oxidation firing  
Courtesy Gallery LVS, Seoul



## JANICE TCHALENKO

Janice Tchalenko trained as a studio potter in the late '60s. For ten years she produced hand thrown tableware in the 'Leach' tradition, but then introduced new shapes and bright colours to set a whole new agenda for the studio pottery movement. In the early 1980s' Next Interiors asked her to design a range of giftware for their new shops, and at the same time she became chief designer for Dartington Pottery, creating their signature ranges in high fired reduction stoneware. Alongside making individual exhibition pieces, she has collaborated with painters and sculptors, exploring common ground between fine art and ceramics.

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

### JANICE TCHALENKO

Blue Leaf Vessel Series,  
2016  
H 42cm, Porcelain,  
Oxidation firing



## JONATHAN WADE

'As viewer I measure an experience with personal and collective layers of filtering, selection and interpretation. I read symbols or register association, accept influence and relate to objects in space. In some circumstances I can experience an enhanced sensation of an object's existence - an aura or presence. Some objects are revered for this and other reasons, others not. My background is in ceramics, and a driving force behind my work is to investigate the expression of qualities that are specific and unique to ceramic - material qualities of clays in differing physical states, control and expression in making, and interaction between a clay 'body' and glaze.'

[www.jwadeceramics.co.uk](http://www.jwadeceramics.co.uk)



### JONATHAN WADE

Burr (002), 2014  
H34cm, Hand-built  
stoneware with applied  
porcelain texture and pale  
blue glaze



**KATE MALONE**

Bubbling Magma Mountain,  
2015  
H 30cm, Crystalline-glazed  
stoneware  
Courtesy Adrian Sassoon,  
London

**KATE MALONE**

'In my own ceramic art work I am inspired by the optimism and joy in nature. My highly-coloured, natural forms brim with a sense of growth and abundance and aim to communicate the 'Life Force' to the viewer.' Observations of nature, particularly its fruits, nuts and berries are the overriding influence in Kate Malone's work. In addition to her exploration of nature, Kate has spent her career pioneering glazing techniques via research and experimentation in the chemistry of glazing. The sophistication of her glazes has led to some interesting collaborations with prominent architects and designers, working on inspiring public art projects in hospitals, schools, parks and libraries.

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



**MIKE BYRNE**

Backward Glance, 2016  
H 46cm, Fired clay with  
multiple layers of engobe

**MIKE BYRNE**

Mike Byrne's work explores the edges of, and the connections between design, function, narrative and art. The use of a combination of fired clay and other materials, both found and worked, is an attempt to erode the boundaries between these disciplines. The way in which we consider familiar objects and their various relationships with metaphor, symbolism, history and ceramic culture is also part of the exploration. The pieces are slab built, with surface patina resulting from multiple layers of engobe. Numerous firings take place until the desired depth of surface is reached.

[www.mikebyrne.ie](http://www.mikebyrne.ie)

**NATASHA DAINTRY**

'My thrown forms are pared-down and minimal. Their potency comes from a tension of opposites. They defy gravity with their floating pale rims but are also steeped in a visceral materiality. The glazes are fat. They overflow, and roll plumply around bases with an edible quality, like luminous lemon curd. I revel in the exhilarating risk of making technically demanding large forms to show off porcelain's muscular power and simultaneous delicacy. Colour is pivotal. I try to harness the near physical power it has to immerse you, like being in water. I want to know if that luminous space inside a bowl, where the colour hovers, can increase in intensity.'

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

**NATASHA DAINTRY**

Turquoise & Pink, 2014  
H 54cm, Slip-cast and hand-modelled porcelain with various glazes

**NICHOLAS LEES**

'My current series of ceramics show an interaction between what is solid and material and what is often considered numinous and ephemeral. The vessels are exploring the uncertainty that rests within boundaries and across thresholds. This uncertainty is key to my enquiry; how to realise the physical and spatial representation of the blurred and uncertain edge - the penumbra of material. Within this body of work this edge can be seen and felt through cast shadows, within the certainty of materiality. The presence of the vessel on the surface is floating and shifting according to perception. My materials are porcelain, space and light - physical elements in the relationship between the object and the body of the viewer.'

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

**NICHOLAS LEES**

Four Leaning Vessels, 2015  
Dimensions: H 32cm  
Materials: Porcelain



### PETER TING

Blanc de chine,"...at the early age of 8, I remember being totally fascinated by the fragile looking items sitting on a traditional Chinese Bai Bao Ge display shelf. It is only much later did I understand that what I saw so many years ago was a connoisseur curating his collection and displaying it in an installation format." This is how Ting recalls his seminal moment after seeing his uncle's porcelain collection. "China Reformed" demonstrates Ting's understanding of history, respect for fine craftsmanship, while deliberately injecting it with a contemporary twist. New pieces created with Dehua artisans will be created for the VASE exhibition in 2016.

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

### PETER TING

Title: Communion 1, 2016  
H 23cm, Thrown and  
Turned Blanc de Chine  
Porcelain, Dehua, China,  
with hand made flowers



### PHILIP EGLIN

Philip Eglin's expressive ceramic work reflects and comments on contemporary culture. His work is laden with eclectic cultural references: from religion to football, from medieval woodcarving to the symbols used in contemporary packaging, from Chinese porcelain to English folk ceramics. His most recent work explores juxtapositions of imagery related to football, religion and sex. His ceramics tell a story, each one has the power to provoke emotion and to challenge. His post-modern aesthetic draws on many sources from popular culture and ceramic history through to high art; and from Gothic Madonna's to Abstract Expressionist painters of the 1950s.

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



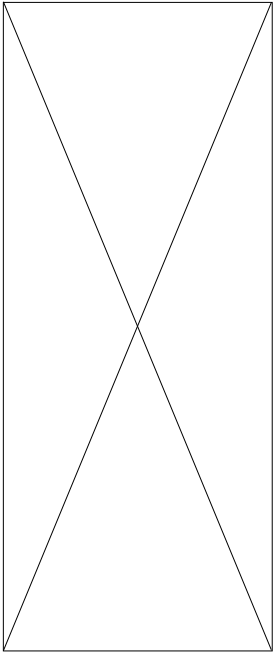
### PHILIP EGLIN

Looking For Mr and Mrs  
Andrews, 2013  
H 48, Earthenware inlayed  
and painted under a  
transparent lead glaze  
Courtesy Marsden Woo,  
London

## RUAN HOFFMANN

Ruan Hoffmann is a South African based artist, who has already gained a significant reputation for his highly individualistic ceramic pieces. One of the world's oldest and most fundamental art forms, ceramics is considered a medium in which art meets function, frequently occupying the rustic centre of the home. But none of Hoffmann's objects are intended to be functional – they are forms hi-jacked from the homey environs of the domestic sphere for the purposes of unfettered, spasmodic expressivity and quick stabs of stinging social commentary. Poetically confrontational turns of phrase undercut the ornamental decorativeness of their initial impact.

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



### RUAN HOFFMANN

'Little Vase Frisante' 2015  
H 30cm  
Earthenware decorated with  
underglaze copper oxide and  
gold lustre



### SARA FLYNN

Esker Vessel Group, 2016  
From H 17.5cm to 25cm,  
Manganese-Rich Glaze,  
Thrown, Altered, Slab-  
Constructed and Assembled  
Porcelain, Reduction fired  
to 1260°C  
Photo: Glen Norwood  
Courtesy Eriskine Hall &  
Coe, London

### SARA FLYNN

'My work concentrates on the challenges of thrown forms, which are then altered and changed at varying stages of the drying process, producing Sculptural Decorative Vessels. In essence, the major concerns that my work deals with are a love of the process of throwing, an on-going relationship with porcelain and a fascination with the theme of the vessel, in both literal and abstracted interpretations. Increasingly the main elements feeding the development of the work are Process and Finish; coupled with constant exploration and a deepening understanding of Form and Volume.'

[www.saraflynn ceramic.com](http://www.saraflynn ceramic.com)



## SUSAN NEMETH

'Interaction with the material is a two-way process. My practice of making, destroying and remaking parallels cycles of decay and renewal. I build, soak, push, squeeze, break, cut, tear and repair. To destroy and rebuild allows a lack of control, increasing motion in the making. The construction methods remain visible, similar to that of drawing, erasing and adjusting. Porcelain is chosen for its purity, sensitivity and paradoxical qualities of fragility and strength. It has its own energy during the firing. Surfaces are often painted with layers of coloured porcelain slip to present a skin-like membrane. Digitally printed ceramic transfers together, with glaze and gold leaf allude to the porcelain's history.'

[www.susannemeth.co.uk](http://www.susannemeth.co.uk)

### SUSAN NEMETH

Inverted Fil et Ruban with Fresh & Dried Hellebores, 2016  
H 57cm, Porcelain, coloured slips, ceramic transfers, 23ct gold leaf



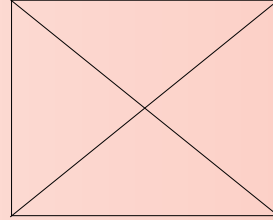
### TANIA GOMEZ

Group of Vessels, 2014  
H 34cm H 24cm H 18cm,  
Thrown porcelain

## TANIA GOMEZ

'Working in porcelain, I use a range of approaches in my throwing to create forms that will capture qualities of fluidity, movement and provide a sense of space. It is through a process of energetic making and rigorous selection I have learnt to observe how the clay works and find new ways to go forward. The throwing is dynamic and cutting and assembling make the forms. I make these works conscious of natural phenomena, dramatic landscapes and the diverse qualities of the sea. I spent five years working on private yachts travelling the globe absorbing colour, shape and diverse cultures. I have also always lived by the sea and it is where I currently have a studio. All of these inspire my work.'

[www.tgceramics.co.uk](http://www.tgceramics.co.uk)



Brian Kennedy is an independent curator working predominantly in the craft and applied art area. Between 2002 and 2010 he curated a series of major exhibitions for the Crafts Council of Ireland. Following this he curated the highly acclaimed exhibitions, "Material Poetry" and "Dubh – Dialogues in Black" at the American Irish Historical Society, New York. In 2014 he curated the critically acclaimed exhibition "Vase Vessel Void" for the Oliver Sears Gallery. Other notable projects are Walpole's "Crafted - Makers of Excellence" exhibitions at Somerset House, London in 2013 and at the Royal Academy, London in 2014. In 2015 and 2016 he curated Taste - Contemporary Craft Exhibition at Art Geneva and a major exhibition for the Oliver Sears Gallery in London.

# Verdant Vessels

15–28 Sep

Sculptural Floral Arrangements  
by Lamber de Bie as part of the  
programme of events for *VASE:  
Function Reviewed*



“Many years ago I saw an exhibition of work by a Japanese ceramicist. It was of tea bowls and vases. All of the vases held simple and elegant floral arrangements. In the catalogue he said that for him the vase was never complete until it held flowers. I have long forgotten the potter's name but his thought has always remained with me, the question ‘does use enhance or diminish the ceramic object’ was one of the starting points of the exhibition *VASE: Function Reviewed*.”

**Brian Kennedy**

Curator

As part of *VASE: Function Reviewed* at the National Craft Gallery, exhibition curator Brian Kennedy has invited Master Florist, Lamber de Bie to design a special floral installation for two weeks in September. Lamber will select a number of vases featured in this exhibition, allowing their forms to influence the choice of flowers used to create sculptural floral arrangements in dialogue with the exhibition.

A range of floral techniques will be embraced, from the traditional to the modern, reimagining the vases and reinterpreting them through use. Lamber will explore two themes: Shape and Form from Thursday 15 – Tuesday 20 September followed by Heritage and Materials from Thursday 22 – Wednesday 28 September. These two installations aim to explore the boundaries of art and craft; form and functionality; by addressing the debate: 'only when flowers are in the vase does it become a complete object'.



Lamber de Bie grew up in Holland where flowers were considered staples of life. His work has always been influenced by art, design and travel, which leads him to create designs with flowers that are architectural and structural with a rich sense of color and pattern. He often deconstructs or reimagines traditional bouquets and his passion for Dutch orange tulips is paired with an appreciation of an indigenous Irish hedgerow, rich with brambles, texture and plant forms that come together and work as a painting. Lamber is interested in pushing the boundaries of how flower sculpture can be reinvented, much like the vase itself, a traditional object that has been reimagined by each generation.

Verdant Vessels brings communities together through a community tourism initiative for diaspora and is presented in partnership with Kilkenny County Council, Fáilte Ireland and IPB Insurance.

Thu 15 – Tue 20 September

**Floral Installation:** Shape and Form

Fri 16 Sep, 6pm

**Talk:** Flowers and Form Brian Kennedy in conversation with Lamber de Bie

Thu 22 – Wed 28 Sep

**Floral Installation:** Heritage and Materials

Thu 22 Sep, 6.30pm

**Live Demonstration:** Sculptural Arrangements with Lamber de Bie

# Programme

Sat 06 Aug at 3pm

## **Curator's Talk with Brian Kennedy**

Brian Kennedy introduces the thinking behind the VASE: Function Reviewed exhibition, highlighting some of the key works and the narrative behind them. He is joined in conversation by a number of exhibiting ceramic artists.

Sat 06 + Sun 07 Aug, 12.30pm – 4.30pm

## **Interactive Installation**

Clay Collections with Caroline Getty, Amy Mackle and Ashley Sheppard. Reflecting the theme of groupings and multiples in the VASE: Function Reviewed exhibition, ceramic artists Caroline Getty, Amy Mackle and Ashley Sheppard construct an expanding installation of handmade clay pots in the Castle Yard. All are welcome to drop in to coil, pinch or build and decorate a pot, adding to the growing clay collection.

Tues 09 – Thurs 11 Aug, 2pm, 3pm, 4pm

## **Kilkenny Arts Festival Children's Workshops [B\*]**

### **Geometric Shapes with Mary Conroy**

How do designers create 3D designs? Find out how with ceramic designer Mary Conroy, using laser cut flat pattern nets to construct unusual geometric 3D shapes. Be inspired by surface drawings in the exhibition to sketch designs and create your own bespoke vases.

### **Vivid Vases with Kate Murtagh Sheridan**

What imprint texture patterns will you design? Ceramic artist Kate Murtagh Sheridan leads a playful clay and plaster casting workshop. Draw inspiration from the textured, bold and bright pieces in the exhibition and Kate's colourful ceramic sculptures, to create vivid pattern vases.

## **Clay Creatures with Brid Lyons**

Imagine a fantastic fun clay creature. Inspired by animal shapes and creatures in the exhibition and Brid Lyons' clay sculpted people and animals. Design your own imaginary creature, then get your fingers into wet clay to sculpt and model your clay creature in 3D.

Thurs 25 August, 6.30pm

## **Meet the Maker event as part of Heritage Week**

Traditional Skills Contemporary Approach with Mike Byrne  
Join ceramicist Mike Byrne as he talks about his experience working with clay; beginning his career in Kilkenny Design Workshops, and his use of traditional ceramic skills combined with a contemporary design approach. This event is programmed as part of Heritage Week.

Thurs 1 September, 6.30pm

## **Meet the Maker event as part of the Ceramics Ireland International Festival**

### **Culture, Identity & Myth in Clay with Helen Doherty**

Helen Doherty gives a special gallery talk to coincide with the Ceramics Ireland International Festival in Thomastown. Helen is of Dutch and Irish origin and grew up in South Africa and England; providing her with a rich reservoir of images and memories to draw on. Helen speaks about her interests in the relationship between identity and place; myth making and the role culture plays in moulding who we become.

Thurs 8 + Fri 9 September, 10am + 12noon

## **Primary School Workshops [B]**

### **Function & Form with Maeve Sookram**

Pupils are encouraged to look, describe and examine some of the pieces in the exhibition; thinking about purpose and use. Maeve leads a hands-on workshop to design and build functional clay vessels. Through an exploration of form and function your class explore how design impacts our lives. The students vessels will be fired and return to the gallery to be showcased on Culture Night.

# Programme

Tues 13 Sep– Fri 28 Oct

## **Primary & Secondary School Tours [B]**

### **Guided Gallery Visits Exploring Design and Making**

Our experienced educators are keen to ignite sparks of curiosity in our young visitors and will introduce your class to design ideas and processes as well as craft techniques through an engaging talking-tour of the VASE: Function Reviewed exhibition. Pupils are encouraged to join in, discussing the thinking behind the designs and share their own responses. School visits last approx 40 minutes.

Thurs 15 Sep - Wed 28 Sep

## **Verdant Vessels by Lamber de Bie**

Master Florist, Lamber de Bie, has been invited to design a special floral installation as part of the VASE: Function Reviewed exhibition for two weeks in September. Lamber de Bie will respond to a number of the vases, allowing their forms to influence the choice of flowers utilised in creating sculptural floral arrangements in dialogue with the exhibition. Different floral techniques will be embraced, from the traditional to the modern, reinterpreting the vases through use. This floral installation is kindly supported by Fáilte Ireland, Kilkenny County Council and IPB Insurance.

Thursday 15 – Tuesday 20 September

### **Floral Installation: Shape and Form**

Thursday 22 – Wednesday 28 September

### **Floral Installation: Heritage and Materials**

Fri 16 Sep, 5pm – 10pm

### **Culture Night Throwdown, highlights include:**

**Talk:** Flowers & Form Brian Kennedy in conversation with Lamber de Bie

**Music:** Electric Ceramophone with Rory Grubb

**Demo:** Raku Barrel Firing with Jane Seymour

**Workshop:** Pinched Vessels with Maeve Sookram

Bring your picnic and join us for a craft Throwdown on Culture Night! Adults can enjoy a glass of wine while children roll up their sleeves and get crafting in our clay workshops. Curator Brian Kennedy talks Flowers & Form with Master Florist Lamber de Bie. Musician Rory Grubb performs with The Electric Ceramophone; his very own custom-made, ceramic percussion instrument. Our Culture Night focus is on clay; from discovering where it comes from to workshops exploring tactility, creating vessels and surface decoration; to seeing dramatic Barrel Firings.

## **Floral Demonstration [B]**

### **Sculptural Arrangements with Lamber de Bie**

Thurs 22 September, 6.30pm

As part of the floral installation in VASE: Function Reviewed Lamber de Bie presents a special demonstration in creating sculptural floral arrangements. Lamber's designs with flowers are often architectural and structural, with a rich sense of colour and pattern. He often deconstructs or reimagines traditional bouquets and his passion for Dutch orange tulips is paired with an appreciation of an indigenous Irish hedgerow, rich with brambles, texture and plant forms that come together and work as a painting.

Wed 21 Sep + Wed 5 Oct, 10.30am

## **Adult Workshops [B] €5**

### **Drawing as Research with Inga Reed**

Designer maker Inga Reed leads workshops exploring drawing as a tool for developing ideas. This series will utilise the VASE: Function Reviewed exhibition and Lamber de Bie's floral intervention as a basis to explore drawing from life, using these shapes and forms as a starting point for further design development.

# Programme

Sat 08 Oct, 10.30am + 12noon

## Family Day Workshops [B]

### Nature Shapes in Clay with Laura McNamara

Join ceramic artist Laura McNamara to create your own clay vase with a nature-inspired design. Find out how Laura's interest in biology inspires her ceramic creations in a curious way. Explore the exhibition and see how artists can be influenced by patterns and shapes from the natural world. Learn new sculptural skills and fun techniques to decorate your ceramic vase.

Thurs 27 Oct, 6.30pm

## Meet the Maker event as part of Savour Kilkenny Festival of Food

### The Craft of Eating with Akiko Hirai

As a special event for Savour Kilkenny we invite ceramic maker Akiko Hirai to speak about her carefully crafted ware; teabowls, teapots, sake bottles and platters. Akiko creates series' of beautiful practical ceramic ware in organic hues, seeking to reflect beauty that is found in the natural world. Her work is influenced by ceramic traditions of Japan and Britain; and seems to nod to the sense of ceremony around sharing food held in both cultures.

Friday 28 October, 10am - 4pm at Island Mill,  
Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny

## Talk and Masterclass with Akiko Hirai [B]

Akiko Hirai makes practical ware using the Japanese tradition of allowing the clay to show how it wants to be fired itself. Her work also allows the viewers to find out the language of the objects in their own ways. She focuses on the interaction between the objects and the viewers. 'I like working with dark clay. The white glazes I use act as a veil and give my work a feeling of stillness. I look for contrast in the rawness of the dark textured clay and the purity the lighter glazes.' [www.akikohiraiceramics.com](http://www.akikohiraiceramics.com)

Events are free, unless indicated €  
[B\*] Kilkenny Arts Festival workshops,  
limited to one per child, to book call 056 7752175  
[B] Book by emailing [events@nationalcraftgallery.ie](mailto:events@nationalcraftgallery.ie)  
or call 056 7796151

## Team:

Brian Kennedy: Curator  
Aileesh Carew: Project Director  
Brian Byrne: Gallery Assistant  
Susan Holland: Education and Outreach Officer  
Lamber de Bie: Floral Installations

Opening hours at the National Craft Gallery:  
Tuesday – Saturday: 10am - 5.30pm  
Sundays and Bank Holidays: 11 am - 5.30pm  
Closed Mondays.  
Admission is free.

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