

PRESS RELEASE

CERAMIC EXPRESSIONS

Japan Creative Centre (7 - 23 September 2017)
Mulan Gallery (26 September to 5 October 2017)

Mulan Gallery, in collaboration with Japan Creative Centre (JCC) of Singapore proudly presents *Ceramic Expressions*, the first edition of an annual group exhibition series showcasing works by Singapore-based ceramicists. This exhibition will feature new works by **Agnes Lim, Eddie Yee, Hazel Ng, Hiroko Mita** and **Tan Gek Lin**. In addition, our guest artist, master potter **Dr Iskandar Jalil** will also be showcasing a few of his recent works.

From Eddie Yee's works inspired by the Sahara Desert, Hiroko Mita's homage to the land and sky, Hazel Ng's whimsical Japanese knots and childhood snack-inspired pieces, to Tan Gek Lin's figurines swaying to music and Agnes Lim's intricate porcelain works infused with blue, these works feature explorations in new folds, styles and techniques for each of these ceramicists, all of whom are either long-time apprentices or comrades-in-clay of master potter and guest artist, Dr Iskandar Jalil. The latter has said that the "Way of the Pot" is typically not arrived at alone. Exchanges and partnerships can often be excellent ways to spur a potter's growth and learning.

At first glance, a work might suggest where the earth meets the sky, an interplay at once contiguous and remote – the contrasting azure blues and rustic oranges offering intimations of the forging fire, but also the varied expansiveness of the sky and the sea, the textures and terrain in a vessel that are inextricably linked to the energy of the earth from which it is formed. In the mind's eye, the horizon: a merging and meeting of the elements and of wills as materials are shaped into being, co-determining the form as they relay their own will to the potter's hand, grasping the world in a grain of sand – the constant tug and contrast between friction and slip, texture and smoothness, rusticity and elegance, craft and alchemy, at once willing and non-willing, on the path towards being one with the life force, with nature.

Central to the works in this exhibition is the theme of simplicity. *Shibusa*: the simple vessel with a quiet, unassuming beauty containing unexpected textures, designs and structures that, over time, rewards the viewer with a rich, hitherto unseen complexity. Allied with this aesthetic is the philosophy of *wabi-sabi*, which accepts that imperfections and impermanence are an essential part of life and beauty. These works, far from being static, embody *tsuchi-aji* (flavour of clay), or an earthiness and character that develop and deepen over the years.

AGNES LIM

b. 1977, Singapore

Agnes Lim is a practicing ceramics artist at Temasek Potters. She works predominantly with porcelain. In 2016, Lim was invited to participate in the creation of the Apollo's Dream mural (Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine), conceptualised by leading ceramicists Suriani Suratman and Hiroko Mita to commemorate the school's inaugural batch of students. In 2015, she was commissioned, alongside master potter Dr Iskandar Jalil, to curate a mural installation for a private collection. A 2016 Taiwan Ceramics Biennale Finalist, she has participated in various ceramic group exhibitions since 1997.

"Each clay body speaks a different language, and I have learned to respect and converse with porcelain, a fussy clay body that is susceptible to collapsing and warping during the process of creation, to create finished works that speak for themselves. Porcelain is said to be the most difficult to throw with, but it's also strong, translucent and once fired, is likely to last a long time. I work with my hands and create works that resonate with me. I listen to the clay and manipulate it to the form it can be. I get inspiration from everywhere, during my travels and sometimes, from all walks of life."

~ Agnes Lim

EDDIE YEE

b. 1953, Singapore

Eddie Yee is a full-time potter with an 18-year love affair with clay. A participant of the Nanyang Clay Group Exhibition since 2007, he is inspired by the tactile nature of the medium and the way it speaks to him, as well as by his surroundings and people – what he calls “an imaginary bazaar of sights, sounds, feelings and moods.” Yee’s works, adorned with glazes that enhance and intensify the varying surfaces and textures, bear the signature of his unique style. The natural and unpredictable effects of the glazes take on a life of their own as each piece is gas-fired, resulting in running and or pooling effects that imbue his works with a characteristic liveliness and spirit. It is this sense of joy and spontaneity that Yee hopes to ultimately convey to those who enjoy his pottery. He has participated in many group exhibitions, and a solo exhibition of his works was held in 2014.

"This series is inspired by the Sahara, the largest hot desert and the third largest desert in the world. Textures, unusual landforms, and rich yet subtle tones of colours can be found in the many desert features, such as the sand dunes, dune fields, stone plateaus, dry valleys and lakes, as well as the clothing of the nomads in the Sahara."

~ Eddie Yee

HAZEL NG

b. 1968, Singapore

Hazel Ng was first introduced to pottery in 1991. She began serious in pottery under the mentorship of master potter Dr Iskandar Jalil. Ng has been participating in various group exhibitions, and she was awarded Third Prize in "Teawares Singapore Potters Competition" in 1995. She continued to explore her pottery creation at Jalan Bahar Clay Studios in 2007. Ng holds a diploma in Graphic Design and Advertising from the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and Interior Design from the Rhodex International.

"In my childhood of kampong life, I loved playing with mud. Little did I know that this eventually played a big role in my gravitation towards the art of pottery. My inspirations are nature-inspired gaining from my extensive travels. These come together and presented in different forms and textures in my claywork."

~ Hazel Ng

HIROKO MITA

b. 1971, Japan

Hiroko Mita first learnt the techniques of pottery-making from renowned potter Dr Iskandar Jalil. Her journey began at Jalan Bahar Clay Studios in 2006 and continues to this day. Her works are inspired by nature, music and people around her. They reflect influences of Japanese culture, her study of fine art and graphic design in Japan and in America, and her life in Singapore for the last two decades. Mita was appointed by ROHEI Corporation to be an instructor as part of their Artisan series in 2015. She has been commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National Arts Council, National Heritage Board and Duke-NUS Medical School; and jointly participated in a mural project for NTU Lee Kong Chian School of Experimental Medicine Building. Mita has been a member of the Japanese Ceramic Art Foundation since 2016.

"Each clay and raw material has a different and unique character of its own, just like human beings. I enjoy spending time getting to know them. In my pottery journey, I have appreciated the many years of experiences of peoples with the knowledge and wisdom of pottery who have passed through life on this Earth. I have used Jalan Bahar local clay as clay slip and glaze in my work and ash from the Guan Huat Dragon Kiln – one of the last two remaining dragon kilns in Singapore and where Jalan Bahar Clay Studios is located – for my ash glaze recipe, in order to convey my respect to the peoples and the land where I live."

~ Hiroko Mita

TAN GEK LIN

b. 1969, Singapore

Tan Gek Lin is a practising ceramics artist whose attraction to all things handcrafted started when she was a child. Her interest in pottery took root when she attended an evening pottery course while studying in England in 1997. After her return to Singapore, she continued her journey with clay and learnt from master potter Dr Iskandar Jalil for a period of time. She has participated in various group exhibitions and had a solo exhibition, Show + Tell in 2013. Her works have been commissioned by organisations such as the National Heritage Board and Economic Development Board.

“I enjoy the process of pottery-making. I like the challenge of making good pottery. I am consciously & sub-consciously inspired by the designs of this world. I hope my works create moments for people to sense, feel, think, reflect.”

~ Tan Gek Lin

GUEST ARTIST

DR ISKANDAR JALIL

b. 1940, Singapore

Dr Iskandar Jalil is Singapore’s master potter and a towering figure in the field of Asian modern ceramics and pottery. His artistic legacy and practice has been marked with awards, accolades, citations and tribute exhibitions, honoring the breadth of his contribution and influence in the fields of ceramics art and education.

Bestowed the State’s highest cultural award - the Cultural Medallion in 1988, Dr Iskandar’s recent accolades include the *Meritorious Service Medal* in the Singapore National Day Awards [2015] and *Order of the Rising Sun - Gold Rays with Rosette* [2015] by the Emperor of Japan. A milestone retrospective of Dr Iskandar’s works with accompanying book publication was launched by the National Gallery, Singapore in 2016.

Dr Iskandar had received two Colombo Plan Scholarships for the study of textile weaving in India in 1966 and ceramics engineering in Japan in 1972. Upon his return to Singapore, he forged a formidable reputation as an outstanding educator and ceramist who evolved a distinctive artistic identity and philosophy. The significance of Dr Iskandar’s artistic practice and philosophy was honored in the conferment of an honorary doctorate, a Doctor of Letters (*honoris causa*) by the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in 2016.

Exhibition Details

Title of Exhibition : CERAMIC EXPRESSIONS

Exhibition Period : 7 September - 5 October 2017

Exhibition Opening : 6 September 2017, Wednesday
7pm to 9pm, Japan Creative Centre, Singapore

Exhibition Venue : 7 - 23 September 2017 **Japan Creative Centre**
4 Nassim Road
Singapore 258372

26 September to 5 October 2017 **Mulan Gallery**
36 Armenian Street
#01-07
Singapore 179934

About Japan Creative Centre



Japan Creative Centre (JCC) was established on November 14, 2009, based on an agreement in 2007 between Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong. Taking Japanese tradition and innovation as its theme, JCC disseminates information on the creative side of Japan to people in Singapore and neighbouring countries and regions. JCC has five primary fields of focus: i) Fine Arts and Tradition, ii) Pop Culture and Lifestyle, iii) Design, iv) Science and Technology, and v) Food Culture. It is widely recognised as a centre for the projection of Japan's soft power.

JCC website: <http://www.sg.emb-japan.go.jp/JCC/> | JCC Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/JCCEO/>

ARTWORKS

Dr Iskandar Jalil



Bornholm (Denmark), 2017
Stoneware (heavily grog),
teak wood
H 61 x 37 x 15 cm



The Water Way Leading to the Mermaid, 2017
Stoneware (heavily grog),
teak wood
H 38 x 53.5 x 19 cm



The View from Mahazuru (Yokohama), 2017
Stoneware (heavily grog), teak
wood
H 35 x 47 x 15 cm



Pitcher (Egypt), 2017
Stoneware (heavily grog)
H 37 x 23 x 23 cm

Agnes Lim



Emerald Series, 2017
Porcelain
left to right
H 12 x 30 x 30 cm
H 8 x 17 x 17 cm
H 12 x 29.5 x 29.5 cm



Swans Series, 2017
Porcelain
left to right
H 35.5 x 9.5 x 10.5 cm
H 25.5 x 7.5 x 7.5 cm
H 33.5 x 8.5 x 8.5 cm



Stellar, 2017
Porcelain
H 16 x 17 x 17 cm



Guilin Series, 2017
Porcelain
left to right
H 14 x 12 x 12 cm
H 14.5 x 11.5 x 11.5 cm
H 16.5 x 14.5 x 14.5 cm

Eddie Lim



Rising from a Plateau, 2017
Mixed raku
H 45 x 10 x 10 cm



Sunset at the Sahara, 2017
Mixed raku
left to right
H 22.5 x 11 x 10.5 cm
H 25 x 11 x 10 cm
H 21 x 12 x 11 cm



Beyond the Horizon, 2017
Mixed raku
H 13 x 16 x 16 cm each



Dates, 2017
Mixed raku
left to right
H 16 x 13 x 10 cm
H 15 x 12.5 x 10.5 cm

Hazel Ng



Knot Series, 2017
Mixed clay
anticlockwise from left
H 25 x 25 x 20 cm
H 26 x 23 x 17 cm
H 22 x 22 x 16 cm
H 24 x 24 x 17 cm



Mami's Favourite Childhood Snack in Singapore, 2017
Mixed clay
Various sizes

Hiroko Mita



Textured Pot (A), 2017
White raku and local clay,
local clay slips
H 40 x 30 x 30 cm



In the Forest, 2017
White raku and local clay,
various clay slips
left to right
H 16 x 13 x 13 cm
H 20 x 13.5 x 13.5 cm
(excluding wood blocks)



Make A Wish/Three years on a Stone (Green), 2017
Make A Wish/Three Years on a Stone (Red), 2017
Mixed stoneware, paper and
local clay slips
left to right
H 55.5 x 11 x 13 cm
H 53 x 12 x 11 cm



The Creation of Thousand Forest in One Seed, 2017
Porcelain, transparent glaze on
Burma teak wood
H 50 x 29 x 8 cm

Tan Gek Lin



Posture #6, 2017
Mixed clay
H 30 x 36 x 36 cm



Posture #5, 2017
Mixed clay
H 39.5 x 17 x 17 cm



Posture #2, 2017
Mixed clay
H 39 x 16.5 x 16.5 cm