



Artworks SetoMonogatari 1-4

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Christopher James McHugh Seto Monogatari 1 2015



Rafi Münz Ito 2014



Velimir Vukicevic One Summer Day 2007



Sandro Lorenzini Fire 2003



Luisa Maisel The girl from OSU 2009



Elizabeth Kelly Small City 2007



Alessandro Gallo JIRAIYA 2012



Monica Marcella Kjerstad Imago 2008

Seto International Ceramic and Glass Art Exchange Program

2020.9.26 sat.-11.1 sun.



Elke Huala Good Morning 2002



Alberto Vieira Good Luck 2008



David Patchen Murrine Foglio 2009



Barbara Jagadics Memories II 2014



Lim Mikang The transparent heat 2003

Greeting

The Seto International Ceramic and Glass Art Exchange Program has invited 68 ceramic and glass artists from home and abroad through the artist-in-residence program from 2000.

Seto has been home to ceramics since olden times, and there are still many ceramicists who work in the city today. Seto is also a producing region of silica sand, which is a raw material of glass. The adjacent educational institution for glass helps to make glass a familiar material to the local citizens. We hoped that world-known artists would deepen the cultural ties with citizens and local artists in Seto and the neighboring towns'. And then further develop the ceramic and glass arts in this region.

Living in Seto city, the artists create their artworks at the Seto Ceramics and Glass Art Center. In this exhibition, we exhibit 39 works of art executed by 13 artists. The art works exhibited here have something in common. The joys and sorrows of life, cultural depth and diversity passed down from generation to generation, the ardour of art, and the memory communicated between artists and local residents.

Meanwhile, the COVID-19 pandemic has completely changed our lives. It has exposed difficulties in everyday life: accommodation, healthy diet, the cost of living, and the work environment.

Japanese swimmer Ikee Rikako delivered a powerful message of hope from Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Stadium on 23 July 2020. Her message directly applied to the field of art. The following passages are direct quotes from her speech:

"I understand that there are those who feel it is not the right time to talk about sports when the world is going through such difficulties, but to overcome adversity, what we need most of all is hope. A flame of hope glowing in the distance allows us to keep trying, to keep moving forward no matter how hard it is."

In closing, we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all of you. We hope you enjoy experiencing the energy of the exhibition.

September 2020
Seto Ceramics and Glass Art Center

Message from Elke Huala

I would like to take this opportunity to send my warmest regards to all of you from my home in Austria! In these challenging times we face, it is important that we keep to ourselves, are careful, and, more importantly; show empathy toward others. It is a time, not to lose your creativity but to let it flow! Our ability to transform feelings into things artistic is a gift to all those who feel spoken to! Enjoy nature, find solace in it, and treat it with respect and honour; it is time to do so! I express my feelings in clay!

Stay safe. Be well. Enjoy your time on this planet and in your work!

Message from Velimir Vukicevic

The fantastic but lonely process of materializing the idea through final work had always fascinated me and filled with satisfaction. The desire for communication as well as quest for love pushed me to be curious to be optimistic about the future and to go on. Once shawn artistic work should provoke a reaction and resonance communicating on different levels with exchanging energy.

I value individual expression in the visual arts the most. I think it is necessary to dive deep into oneself and find what is unique to us. Art is about creating object that have a formula of its own and speak their own language, creating a dialogue that did not exist before.

Message from Lim Mikang

Dear Seto citizens and graduate trainees of Sinneikikougeikan,

I am Mikang Lim, a Korean ceramist who was invited to Artist-in-Residence in Seto in 2003 and 2005 .

When I think about that time, it feels like a summer night's dream. It was one of the most wonderful time in my life. I met the very nice people in Seto like the Curator Hattori san, and the staff of Seto Ceramics and Glass Art Centre, Kochi san, Yayoi san, Yoko san and Munehito san who managed me to make comfortable ceramic work and stay in Seto . And I got a chance to meet the Seto citizens and trainees of Sinneikikougeikan and Seto ceramic artists at that time. I still keep in touch some of people like Yoko san who is owner of craft shop near of Seto park hotel where I stayed at that time. She was so nice to me. Since that time I keep in Touch with her. I also keep in touch with some of trainees Taichiro kun and Aya chan. When I got a group exhibition in Seto on 2017, I met them again. It was big pleasure. And I think about Noda san who worked at Seto park hotel. She served with warm heart smile me every day in the morning nice breakfast. And I was also grateful to the assistants including Hiki san, Ken san, Shimada san and Sagae san for glass work, who have helped me a lot with my work. And it was very nice to meet Seto ceramic artists including Takeuchi san. Because of the time to meet of them is the memory in Seto is one of the most beautiful thing in my life.

When I am thinking about life, I think life is a kind of road. On the road we meet may kinds of people. To find good company on the road is a great pleasure in my life. I really enjoy travelling around the world and meeting new people. When I have new company somewhere it remains in my heart forever. This ongoing process makes me happy. It's a hard time all of the world because of COVID-19 pandemic. People are supposed to stay home and not be allowed to travel freely. But when I received a message from the Seto Ceramics and Glass Art Centre's Curator Tsuyoshi Matsuo san asking me to write a Greeting message for the exhibition, I was happy to think of Seto's people and friends and that time. It was very nice journey by time machine to Seto. Once again, I would like to thank Seto shi and the people and friends for giving me that beautiful time.

Congratulation and I wish you successful exhibition.

Message from Sandro Lorenzini

In 2002, I had the pleasure of being invited to the artist residency program in Seto. Being a ceramic artist, I was very glad, because that should have been a perfect occasion for me to work on the field of the real Japanese ceramic world.

I spent a really pleasant time in Seto. The Staff of Seto Ceramics and Glass Art Center were so kind with me, treating me as an honorable guest, giving me all the necessary information and showing me so many attractive locations and art spots in town and nearby.

I admired the efficiency of the facilities in the ceramic studio, the very good organization and the enthusiastic participation of the trainees into my project. One of them, Mr. Shimada Atsushi, become not only a perfect studio-assistant, but also a good friend. As I was interested in the Japanese Culture, he was the same with Italian one. I invited him to come over to my country, and he did it. After a few months he went to Italy and worked in my studio as an assistant. He was a perfect one: he stayed at me for several months, learning my ceramic technique.

When I was invited for a residency at Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park, where I had to make the huge statue now standing up the hill of SCCP, Atsushi was close to me, working hard.

And also when I was invited for the second time at SCCP, in the occasion of the visit of Their Imperial Highnesses the Emperor Akihito and the Empress Michiko. Mr. Shimada came to Italy many other times, being my best studio-assistant. So I can well say that AIR in Seto was a really good cultural-exchanging project, giving me new friends, notions and, I can say it now, nostalgia.

Message from Monica Marcella Kjærstad

I am happy and honoured to have the opportunity to send you and other viewers of the exhibition a greeting. The days in Seto, working with porcelain, walking in the forest and meeting people of different ages through the love for craft, insects and the sensation through the ability of our hands is something that have been a moulding part of my adult life.

These days as we can not meet in the same ways as before, that physical contact is limited, and scarce, - the things that connect us and all coexisting beings are crucial to embrace. The nonverbal language is communication from the heart through the hand, more to feel than to intellectual grasp, therefore the ceramic art has something powerful to offer.

I hope we all can find meaning and strength to be someone of importance to each other in some way, and a healing force to a threatened nature that we can caress the world through the work of the hand. I am sending my greetings in words, but if I could I would send you the hopeful sight and touch of a crawling Tamamushi in your palm, ready to take off and head for the woods.

Message from Luisa Maisel

My recent works/sculptures reflect upon women, craft and accumulation. They draw upon references from art history, current events and my American culture and history. My sculptures often take the form of 'Face-to-Face' portraits or accumulations with 'Stacking & Piling', whereupon I question the meaning of everyday objects and the symbolic value or appropriation that we attribute to them. In addition to its great freedom of expression, clay constantly seduces me with its transformation from liquid to solid, from dirty to clean, soft to hard, and banal to sublime... LM

Message from Alessandro Gallo

I was really glad to learn that my work was selected for this exhibition.

The first reason is that after a lot of cancellations and postponements, due to Covid19, it is nice that things are starting to move again. Let's hope it's a sign of the end of the emergency and a cautious return to normality

The second, and main reason, is that I have such fond memories of my time in Seto. It was an incredible experience. It was my first time in Japan, a country that has always been part of my imagination, ever since I started watching robots, samurai and monsters anime as a little kid, that later in life became love of Japanese art, architecture, philosophy, books and movies. Having so many intellectual myths about Japan, I didn't know how it would be to actually travel there. It is common to find reality disappointing when you compare it to your fantasy. But that was not the case visiting Seto and traveling to neighboring cities. Visiting Japan filled me with wonder and admiration. I travelled a lot in my life but I don't think any other country I visited had the same impact on me.

My working time in the studio was also amazing and what you'll see in this exhibition is part of what I was able to achieve. I have very vivid memory of all the help, welcome and friendship from the staff and everyone I shared the studio with. I'm still grateful for the assistance I received and I'd like to say a special 'hi' to all the people that were there with me at that time. Thank you for your kindness, I smile every time I think about the great time we shared.

Seto's residency is one of the best artist residencies I've been a part of, without a doubt, and I hope it will continue offering amazing opportunities to other talented artists for many years to come. I also hope and dream that work will take me to your wonderful country again in the future. I hope you enjoy this show that I'm sure will have a wonderful variety of voices from all over the world.

Arigatou Gozaimasu! Ganbatte!

Message from Rafi Münz

Dear Seto citizens, directors of the Art Museum and teachers / students of the Ceramic and Glass center, Back in 2014 I was lucky to be warmly hosted as your artist in residence.

My work during the stay consisted of daily interaction with the director Mr. Hattori, the secretary, teachers, assistants and students of the Ceramic and Glass departments. These connections (while having lots of fun!) enabled the execution of 6 large ceramic figures, named "Portraits of Seto". Those in charge did not save on efforts and true devotion. Without the dedicated and so friendly attitude of you all this show could not have come to crystalize.

BIG THANKS TO ALL OF YOU!! – My days in Seto are unforgettable.

Thanks to Ito, who "labeled" me...



Message from Barbara Jagadics

„Memories“

I had the honour to spend 5 weeks in Seto International Ceramics and Glass Art Center in 2014. My residency program was about „Memories“. I was looking at everyday objects that had special meaning in my family.

Most of these objects were from my great-grandfather, who was taken to a working camp in Siberia. During the captivity he never gave up the idea of escaping. To keep his mind occupied he created simple objects: necklaces, pendants, frames from the most basic things he could find, such as horse tail, bones or wood.

All these objects were passed on to me through generations. Each generation had their own struggle and added more memories to the original story. In today's world, the only thing that can give us hope remained the same: all bad situations will pass, in the meantime creativity allows our soul to travel, to stay focused and positive.

Message from Christopher James McHugh

Almost five years have passed since I first visited Seto as a ceramic artist in residence. I remain fascinated by the city's rich ceramic culture, past and present, and I have since visited a further five times.

Then, the freedom to travel and experience new places and cultures seemed like an unassailable human right. Seto's residency programme is a reminder of the importance of grassroots global collaboration and understanding in this unprecedented time of international crisis. I will never forget the unparalleled camaraderie, kindness and hospitality I experienced during my time in Seto. The Covid-19 pandemic has offered us a chance to reflect on the past and plan for an alternative future. I am delighted to be represented in this timely retrospective exhibition.

I wish to thank the Seto City Cultural Promotion Foundation, the Shinseiki Kougeikan, and the people of Seto for the life-changing opportunities provided by this experience.

Elke Huala

Elke Huala studied the harmony between form and colour under the sculptor Hans Adametz at Glaz in Austria. Concerning the colours in her work, they are carefully chosen, even though they seem to be unrestrained.

A few years later, she relocated to Norway and over a period of several years worked with the following ceramicists: Magne Kvilstad, Kari Bugge Gjerstad & Odd Gjerstad.

These experiences would further deepen the expression and variation of her works of art which have affluent energy.

Lim Mikang

Though she is a ceramist, she also took on the challenge of working with glass material during the residency program at the Seto Ceramics and Glass Art Center. She took a fresh stance on using unfamiliar material. The following passages are taken from her statement.

"To me, it is not much important what I make with clay work. Whatever it may be, I expect it to be as natural as nature itself. Whether it is pottery or construction work, I feel the vitality of work if for a moment I forgot myself and indulge myself."

Sandro Lorenzini

His works are composed of solid geometrical simple figures. Fires, a cloud, a winged man, and a branch: representational motive and gorgeous color add lyricism to his works.

He uses clay for material and philosophical reasons. Clay is flexible and elastic enough to make any possible shape. But once it is fired, it becomes hard, stable, and incorruptible. He regards the ceramic making processes as human thinking. He finds intelligence in the fire. The philosophy is quite impressive.

Velimir Vukicevic

Vukicevic Velimir started playing with clay in his father's studio. Passing through changes and different phases, he has been trying to solve two visual problems. One is to unify forms with illusional painting; the other is to unite one solid part with a lot of fragile parts. According to his artist statement, he hopes his works provoke a response, mutual communication with others and a quest for love.

Elizabeth Kelly

Elizabeth Kelly studied glassmaking in Adelaide and Sydney, Australia. Her works of art, such as the Small City, create a peaceful atmosphere. Her work also connotes a narrative and layered depths of culture in each piece. These house-shaped glassworks refer to local architecture such as homespun dwellings, the Kamagaki-no-Komichi walls, the Nagoya castle, and so on. Each piece has a tiny window that connects the internal private room with the community outside. She created emblematic and intimate works of art.

Monica marcella Kjærstad

Monica Marcella Kjærstad concentrated all her attention on Japanese nature, mostly insects. Her keen observation skills allow her to create works that give her a sense of fulfillment. According to her latest email, she is passionately interested in Kumagusu Minakata (1867-1941), a great biologist, peculiarly in the field of slime mould, and a Japanese Folklorist. She deeply sympathizes with his ideology. I sensed a profound admiration of nature from her works of art and words.

Alberto Viera

Alberto Viera stayed in Seto during January 2009. It is easy to imagine that he was greatly impressed by *Eto*, or the twelve zodiac signs in Chinese astrology, which can be seen here and there in Japan. He created splendid ox sculptures using the Cubism approach; an art form often showing from many different angles at the same time.

By a curious coincidence, nearly 12 years (one zodiac cycle) have passed since his visit. Next year is the year of the ox again. I believe that it is a hopeful sign.

Luisa Maisel

Luisa Maisel took some photographs of young girls in Nagoya city who were wearing a Manga fashion. It inspired her to sculpt portraits that refer to those pictures. Her works of art are formed with an excellent technique and profound observation. In 2018, she resided in the Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park and created some sculptures there. She generally works for one year or more on a particular theme or series. It is interesting to compare her recent work with what she made in Seto in 2009.

David Patchen

After a career as a musician for two decades, David Patchen studied glassmaking under Afro Celotto, a maestro and a former assistant to Lino Tagliapietra in Murano, an island in the Venetian Lagoon, northern Italy.

His technique consists of “cane” and “murrine,” which are colored rods and patterned cross-sections of glass. He carefully arranges them to create a host of geometric patterns using different color combinations. He makes elaborate preparations for his works of art before the glass blowing process.

Alessandro Gallo

Integrating an animal head with a human body, Alessandro Gallo expresses the individuality and disposition of the subjects used as models for his sculptures.

A female with a crested ibis head is named after the girl who is the heroine of Hayao Miyazaki’s “*Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind*”. He observed the behavior of a Japanese giant salamander in a night observation research meeting at a river in Seto, and then brought it to life.

As far as the Sumo wrestler with a torii head is concerned, the muscle strain conveys the tense atmosphere of a Tachiai moment, or the initial charge at the start of a Sumo bout.

Rafi Münz

During his residency at Seto Ceramics and Glass Art Centre, Rafi Münz created several sculptures while interacting closely with some of the trainees and technical staff. They wrote Rafi’s name in kanji, phonetic equivalent to Chinese characters. Rafi is not only a ceramicist but also a calligrapher, a printmaker, and a painter, so he has long cherished his kanji name. He sculpted each model in his way to express their varying personalities using unique forms and vibrant colors.

Barbara Jagadics

Barbara Jagadics recreates her grandmother’s cherished objects moulding them with silicon or bee wax and a kiln casting technique, “Pâte de Verre.” She packs powdered glass into a plaster mould, then fires it in an electric kiln. Afterward, she pours hot glass over them, symbolizing how our memories change throughout the generations.

She also works with reject glass that is produced from the mistakes that typically arise during the glass creating process. Rather than considering the defective items as rejects, she wishes to exploit them.

Christopher James McHugh

In his Artist Statement, he regards his art activities as “a form of research through which I interact with particular sites, communities or historical museum collections.”

During his residency, he took photographs around Seto. Many of these were used as the basis for the ceramic decals that decorate his works: the porcelain pot and Ema. Dumped ceramic objects were incorporated into his works.

Surrounded with material culture, he attempted to express the continuities and changes in Seto.



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