

Getting to know Patricia Shone

Patricia Shone has been working with clay for over 40 years and has risen to be one of the most collected and respected potters working in the UK. With work in the Victoria & Albert museum, this Isle of Skye based potter discusses her journey from school in Devon to international recognition.

TSG: When did your relationship with clay begin?

PS: I met clay at secondary school in Devon. There was a wonderful pottery teacher called Dave Tellam and I just felt so at home with the medium. I gave up some academic subjects to pursue art.

TSG: Have you had formal training in ceramics?

PS: Yes, I was at Central School of Art, London in the 1980s studying ceramics.

TSG: How long do you feel it took until you found 'your voice' in your work?

PS: With hindsight my 'voice' has been there since college but it has taken decades to learn how to use it. Too many doubts and distractions and the practicalities of earning a living. But it's all part of the journey.

TSG: What stage of the process do you enjoy most when creating your ceramics?

PS: The actual making, the moments of stretching the clay from a textured block to a full form; seeing how the textures open and develop; pushing myself through the fear of spoiling a piece, to let it reach it's full potential.

TSG: Your work is held in the V&A Museum in London, how important is that kind of external validation to your practice?

PS: It has given me the means to silence my doubts, so it is hugely important. I feel I am no longer trying to prove myself but can concentrate on the the work and making each piece as good as it can be.

TSG: How does your environment in the Isle of Skye manifest itself in your work?

PS: I see similarities in the land all around me. The rock is ever present, strong and powerful, uncomfortable, severe. All life clinging on to the surface, it makes me aware how impermanent life is. I don't try to replicate the landscape because the material of clay is the land, so it's textures and substance will naturally manifest that.



TSG: What is your daily routine on a work day (If you have one)?

PS: My routines are changing as we are building a new studio. I will have to leave the house to go to work. I like to do a lot of displacement activity (mostly fiddling, tidying) I think of it as fallow time before I can fully concentrate. Often I come at a piece sideways, when I'm passing on my way to doing something else.

TSG: In this digital world why is it still important that your work is sold through galleries?

PS: My work is all about texture and form and how that combination feels in the hand. We live in a very smooth world in most of our lives. Every surface we touch is machine finished. I want my work to be more visceral to hold, uncomfortable even, to stimulate that sense of touch. Galleries offer their clients the chance to experience this. I also find the digital world can drain my creativity with its demands. I love the ongoing interaction with gallerists in other parts of the country, the real connection with people, like meeting social media friends in the flesh.

TSG: Could you name your favourite ceramic artist from both the past and the present?

PS: That's difficult, it changes by the day. Today I would say an unknown Hagi ware tea bowl maker and Gordon Baldwin

Patricia's work can be viewed on our website [here](#).

If you'd like to know more about Patricia's journey in ceramics, listen to the gallery podcast interview with Patricia [here](#)

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