

Press Release: Upcoming Exhibitions

Contained. New contemporary ceramics by leading UK and International ceramicists

Collect: Modern Art. Modernist paintings, sculpture, prints, drawings

Porthminster Gallery, St Ives and porthminstergallery.co.uk

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Contained. New contemporary ceramics by leading UK and International ceramicists

The Porthminster Gallery in St Ives has a strong reputation for showing quality ceramics by emerging and collected names and is delighted to launch its 2021 season of shows with 'Contained', a curated selection of new ceramic works for spring by artists showing for the first time with the gallery in St Ives: **Gabriele Koch; Ruth King; Sotis Filippides; Stephen Murfitt; and Mitch Pilkington.**

The collection will complement a major exhibition in the gallery of works by leading British artists from the Modern St Ives and British Art movements. A true celebration of Spring 2021, in our attractive new premises at 22 Fore Street, St Ives – close to the Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden.

Price range of ceramic works in exhibition: £100 – £2,000

Caption and courtesy information:
All images: © the artists
Courtesy the artists and Porthminster Gallery

Gabriele Koch (b. 1948, Germany)
Black Vessel – Wave Bands, 2021
hand built black stoneware, inlaid white porcelain 'waves'
h 290mm x w 220mm

Stephen Murfitt (b. 1939)
Lustred Vessel, 2021
hand built, Raku-fired, lustre-glazed
h 220mm x w 180mm

Sotis Filippides (b. 1963, Greece)
Large Bowl, 2021
thrown stoneware, shiny glazed interior, coarse exterior
h 190mm x dia 310mm

London-based **Gabriele Koch** is an award-winning, internationally renowned ceramicist whose work is represented worldwide in public and private collections, including the V & A Museum, London and the Museum of Art and Design, New York. After initially gaining an international reputation for her smoke-fired ceramics, in recent years Gabriele's work has taken a fresh and vibrant direction. Gabriele now produces hand-built vessels combining rough stoneware clay and fine porcelain which are deceptively simple in form but are in reality labour-intensive, complex and by her own admission, 'physically and mentally exhausting' to create. This, she explains, is why she does not produce large collections year on year despite having a wide and enthusiastic network of collectors worldwide, including Sir David Attenborough, who says of her work: 'Earth, water, air and fire. Gabriele Koch's lovely pots speak of all four elements as vividly as any I know.' We are therefore honoured and delighted to be able to include Gabriele in this showcase of ceramicists showing with us for the first time.

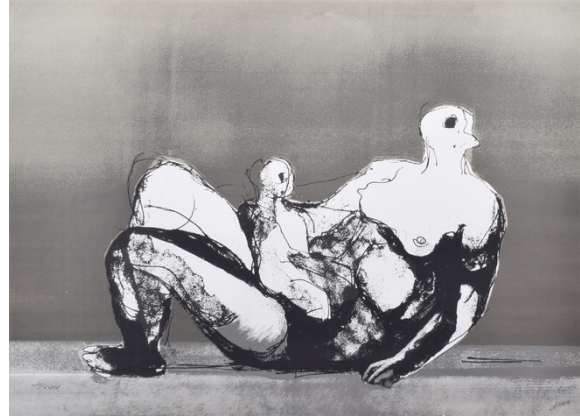
Yorkshire-based **Ruth King** trained at Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts and is one of the UK's foremost ceramicists with work held in many eminent public collections, including the V & A museum, London, the Royal Museum of Scotland and the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke on Trent. She has been selected for Ceramic Art, London on numerous occasions with past exhibitions held throughout the UK and Europe. Like her counterpart, Gabriele Koch, each of Ruth's salt-glazed ceramic forms is the culmination of an intense amount of energy and concentration. Her works are characterised by the implied notion of an interior pressure, often featuring a particular point or angle for the viewer to focus upon. Unusually for an artist working with salt glazing, Ruth is subtle in her approach to texture yet bold in her exploration of colour. Ruth believes 'forms have to feel right in my hands as I work, they must also look right standing on their own, apart from me – then they may touch someone else.' An innovative and forward-thinking artist, Ruth continues to challenge herself and her creativity – and in this she has a great deal in common with the St Ives and Modern British artists who feature in the gallery's concurrent Collect: Modern Art exhibition (details below), who also had a desire to push the boundaries of their own creativity and challenge the views of what constituted 'art'.

After several years spent as a tutor of ceramics and sculpture at Marlborough College in Wiltshire, **Stephen Murfitt** now lives and works from an established studio in a converted Methodist Chapel in his native Fens. Another artist who likes to work with small groups of related forms and vessels, Stephen creates hand-built Raku-fired one-off pieces which are completely unique. In describing his work and methods Stephen says: 'I am driven by an obsession with clay and its artistic versatility. I became addicted to Raku because of the direct involvement with each stage of the process. The pots absorb and reflect the intense drama of the firing. The effects of weathering, erosion and decay provide a constant source of reference and the slow, contemplative pace of coiling allows for considered developments and refinements to be made at each stage in the creative process.' Throughout his career, Stephen has exhibited widely throughout the UK, most recently at La Galleria, Pall Mall, London for the Royal Arts Prize. Stephen is a selected member of the Anglian Potters and the Craft Potters Associations and author of 'The Glaze Book', published by Thames & Hudson in 2002.

Sotis Filippides was born in Greece and completed a degree at Athens School of Ceramics before moving to the UK to learn English. Sotis's career began while he was at ceramic college here and was brave enough to approach Liberty's, London who gave him his first commission, since then his career has gone from strength. For the last 6 years Sotis has worked from his Fulham studio. Naturally impatient by nature, Sotis likes to work quickly in clay on the wheel, throwing, firing and colouring every individual piece with his own unique style and process, sometimes plating the pieces in 24-carat liquid gold from Italy. Using clay from the home of pottery, Stoke-on-Trent, he is able to produce works with a very fine yet textured finish which are surprisingly light in weight and yet which appear heavy and made from another material such as wood or stone. Working with simple shapes, Sotis believes people should be able to recognise and identify with each piece. He prefers matt glazes and natural oxides, such as copper and iron and colours which reflect his inspirations, tree bark, black volcanic rock, the colour of the sky in his native Greece and the whiteness of the buildings. There is a free, meditative and rich quality to Sotis's work which perhaps stems from his avid refusal to accept commissions. 'I must be happy with my work in itself,' he says. 'It has to be something I want to do or I don't think it will come out right.' Sotis works with many leading interiors designers such as David Linley, the Conran Shop and Harrods and is a selected member of the Craft Potters Association. He has been invited to do a demonstration for Tate Modern and his ultimate ambition is to have a solo exhibition there. It may just happen.

Born in Kent, **Mitch Pilkington** studied Ceramic Design at Falmouth School of Art during the early 1990s and now lives in North Devon working from her home studio. Mitch's work has evolved over the years and in Mitch's own words, 'it is the process of hand-building which drives my passion for creating sculptural ceramics'. Drawn to the organic, natural forms of coastal forays and the worn, dry spirals of weathered conch shells, gathered on warm Caribbean beaches, Mitch's sculptures are hand-formed

and intuitive in their construction. The rhythmic, meditative and mindful process of coiling and the many hours of scraping and sculpting means each piece is an emotional response to the clay and the day. This provides Mitch 'with a creative salve for dealing with life's challenges' and gives an underlying quality to her work which imbues each piece with a unique sense of calm, serenity and connection. Mitch has exhibited widely throughout the UK and was featured in Emerging Potters magazine in 2019, as well as in Ceramic Review's 'One to Watch' in 2019. Amongst many other achievements Mitch was also selected for Ceramic Art, London 2020 which has been rolled forward to 2021 (date still to be confirmed).



Collect: Modern Art. Modernist paintings, sculpture, prints, drawings

With the boost in growth of the Modern British Art market during the 2020 lockdown, the award-winning Porthminster Gallery in St Ives presents this curated online and in-gallery selling-exhibition: 'Collect: Modern Art', of rare artworks by some of the leading 20th Century St Ives and British artists.

The exhibition is the largest show of Modern St Ives and British Art that the gallery has hosted in its 20 years of business and is a great opportunity to view and buy artworks by globally collected names.

The gallery director and curator David Durham, said:

"Over the last 2 years we have seen a 60% upturn in sales of Modern St Ives and British Art. I think that during the months of lockdown, people have been staring at their walls at home, thinking about the sort of art they aspire to own. The ongoing interior design trend for Mid-Century Modernist furniture and design, is the perfect backdrop for artworks by Barbara Hepworth, Patrick Heron, and Henry Moore, all of whom feature in this exhibition. Acquiring these now-scarce works also provides exciting investment opportunities for new and seasoned collectors alike."

Modern St Ives and British artists whose works feature in the exhibition include:

Wilhelmina Barns-Graham CBE; Trevor Bell RA; Sandra Blow RA; Patrick Caulfield CBE RA; Lynn Chadwick CBE; Sir Terry Frost RA; Sir Antony Gormley OBE; Dame Barbara Hepworth DBE; Patrick Heron CBE; Bryan Ingham; Albert Irvin RA; Peter Lanyon; Henry Moore OM CH; Bryan Pearce; Victor Pasmore; CH CBE; and others.

Price range of works in exhibition: £500 – £35,000

Caption and courtesy information:

All images: © the artists' estates

Courtesy the artists estates and Porthminster Gallery

Patrick Heron CBE 1920–99

'January 1973 : 5', 1973

silkscreen print, signed in pencil
695mm x 910mm

Henry Moore OM CH 1898–1986

'Reclining Mother and Child', 1982

lithograph print, signed in pencil
545mm x 750mm