

Invitational Exhibition of Neil Brownsword

FACTORY

The Gyeonggi International Ceramic Biennale (GICB2017) celebrates its 9th anniversary this year with its special guest British artist Neil Brownsword, who won the Grand Prize at the International Competition in 2015.

It introduces his performative installation FACTORY, which attempts to question the value and relevance of intangible heritage within the ceramics industry of his native Staffordshire.



Factory is a performative installation that reflects upon notions of place, skill, people and material objects left behind following the process of industrial change.

Since the 1970's and 1980's, progressive deindustrialisation that occurred in many countries in Western Europe and the United States has led to much of traditional manufacture being replaced by tertiary industry.

As many of Stoke-on-Trent's ceramic factories have been substituted by service, retail and distribution sectors, there exists a break in the passing on of trans-generational skills, and with few apprenticeships a danger of specific skills

disappearing. The opportunity to perform several of these endangered practices in South Korea – a country that gives status to individuals with exceptional artistic ability to preserve cultural heritage, provides a prestigious platform to raise greater awareness of the intangible heritage associated with industrial craft practices in the very nation where the industrial revolution began.



Rita Floyd



Rita Floyd has worked for over 45 years as a china flower maker at factories that include Adderley Floral and Royal Doulton. With changing fashion and the impact of globalisation, this industry in Stoke-on-Trent has all but disappeared, and Rita remains amongst the last of a generation who retains this skill. During her performance Rita Floyd re-enacts her former work, but her usual mode of production is disrupted by Brownsword's instruction to reject whatever she crafts. The delicate nature of making juxtaposed with the random force of discarding over the performance period accrues a linear deposit of waste forms, citing metaphorically the human fallout from this industry over recent decades.

James Adams



James Adams has worked as a modeller and mould-maker at numerous factories including Wedgwood, before shifting his profession (somewhat reluctantly) to the building trade. In the 18th century, the use of plaster moulds revolutionized the industrialization of ceramics in Britain and continues to this day as a key tool for mass production. Under Brownsword's instructions, Adams moulded a series of partially formed moon jars created in collaboration with Korean Intangible Asset Kwangsu Seo. Through this subtle clash of two distinct modes of cultural production, Brownsword fuses both high and low hierarchies of labour within one work.

Neil Brownsword and Korean Artisans



Sinhyun Cho

Ceramic Artist, Operation of the Ceramics Research Institute

As an act of regeneration, Korean artist Sinhyun Cho re-moulds discarded artefacts involved in the mechanics of ceramic production, that were found violently defaced at numerous post-industrial sites in Stoke-on-Trent. The moulds were subsequently put back into production by Brownsword who passed on clay casts to other Korean artisans to decorate.

He is one of the rare Korean artists who combine the tradition with the modern and makes pieces in a very neat design by using the traditional technique, called Millefiore.

Performative Installation of Sinhyun Cho

Ceramic Artist Yongjun Cho

Son of Yeosu master ceramic artisan Byeng Ho Cho, Yongjun Cho continues the Korean tradition of pierced and carved porcelain. His is exquisite craft applied to Brownsword's fragmentary casts of discard from insolvent factories in Stoke-on-Trent, creates tension points between ideals of perfection/value and non-value inherited through trans-generational knowledge.



Performative Installation of Yongjun Cho

Wonjeong Lee

Ceramic Artist

From the traditions of blue and white decoration that emerged during the 15th century, Wonjeong Lee, daughter of Icheon master artisan Hyuang-gu Lee, paints archetypal Korean motifs to a series of deconstructed cast forms salvaged from former factories. This collision of two very distinct traditions as means of reinventing obsolete, extends the cultural borrowing and cycles of knowledge exchange prevalent throughout ceramic history.



Performative Installation of Wonjeong Lee

The process of how indigenous knowledge travels to new environments and is innovatively applied to established materials and forms, remains a point of reference for Brownsword's collaboration with Korean artisans. Brownsword's material interactions with discard salvaged from post-industrial sites, were extended by who will impart their own traditional practices to this non-linear mode of ceramic production.

Neil Brownsword



Brownsword is currently Professor of Ceramics and Glass. Bucks New University, High Wycombe, and Professor II, Department of Fine Arts. University of Bergen, Norway

EDUCATION:
1999-2006 PhD, Brunel University, London
1993-1995 M.A., Ceramics and Glass. Royal College of Art, London

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS:
2017 Neil Brownsword, Bles & Knada, Stockholm (solo)
2017 Neil Brownsword: Factory, Korean Ceramic Foundation (solo)
2016 Re-Apprenticed: Factory, event Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
2016 Central China Ceramics Biennale, Henan Museum
2016 Master's Manner: International Contemporary Craft Art Invited Exhibition, Nanjing University of the Arts Museum

SELECTED AWARDS:
2017 The Woman's Hour Craft Prize Finalist, Crafts Council and Victoria and Albert Museum
2016 Award for Factory project, Arts Council England
2015 Award for Re-Apprenticed project, Arts Council England

SELECTED COLLECTIONS:
2016 Potteries Museum and Art Gallery (Contemporary Art Society Purchase), Stoke-on-Trent, UK
2016 Victoria & Albert Museum, London, UK
2015 Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art, Middlesbrough, UK
2015 Korea Ceramic Foundation, Icheon, Korea

This exhibition is part of the 'UK/Korea 2017-18' official programmes.

For more information: www.kocef.org/eng/