



reviving the light

new zsolnay eosin ceramics

The Balassi Institute, New York & ILIAD present:

reviving the light: new zsolnay eosin ceramics

october 17 - november 30, 2012

at ILIAD, 212 East 57th Street, New York, NY 10022

artists

edina andrási

sándor dobány

viktor erdei

zsuzsa füzesi

julia kunin

eva zeisel



Curators: Julia Kunin and Andrea Megyes

Cover: Eva Zeisel, *Gold and Blue Vases*, 2011. Shape designed in 2008 for Royal Stafford. Earthenware with eosin glaze. Eva Zeisel Legacy Collection.

reviving the light: new zsolnay eosin ceramics

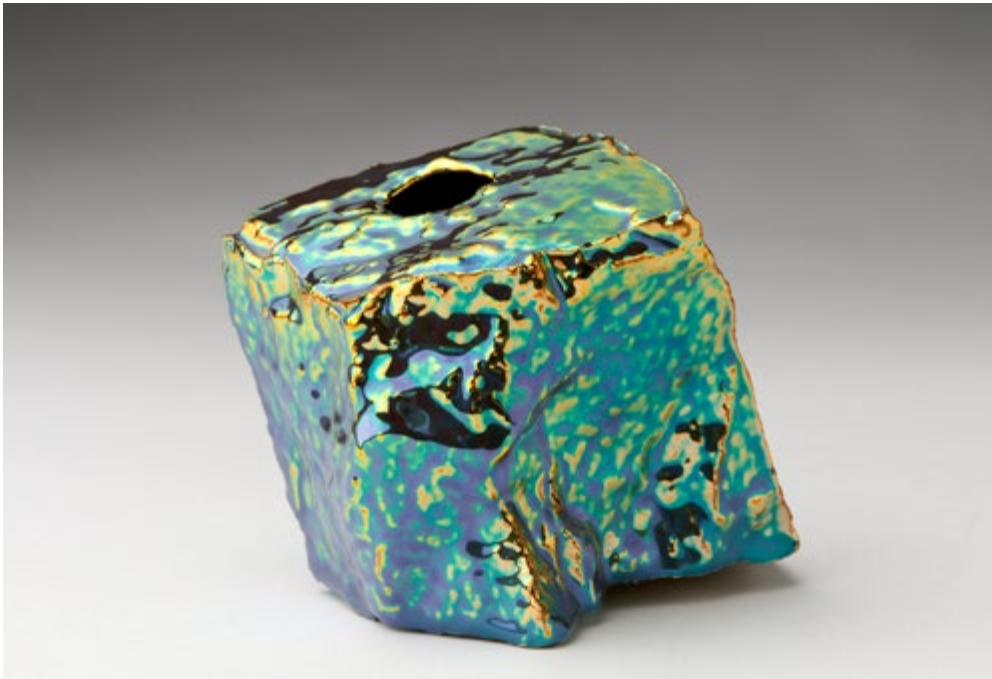
Introduction by the Balassi Intézet, New York

SOMETIMES, OPPORTUNITY DOES COME KNOCKING ON ONE'S door. Last summer, the Hungarian Cultural Center, renamed Balassi Institute to emphasize the common "brand" and the mission it shares with 19 other Balassi centers from London to New Delhi, had just undergone a major reorganizational period. The new crew was arriving and we were getting a sense of how rich a cultural environment the City is and how much effort it would take to make cultural events happen that would register on the radar of New York's numerous and hungry, but also picky arts and culture crowd.

One day, the office phone rang. It was Julia Kunin, who cut right to the chase: she told us she was trying to make a project happen and was wondering if the Balassi Institute was interested in getting on board. There had been a symposium in Siklós, and some interesting ceramic art had been created, waiting to be given its final form in the kilns of the Zsolnay factory. American and Hungarian artists had cooperated to rediscover and rejuvenate the eosin glaze, the trademark technique of Zsolnay. Were we interested?

Of course we were. Julia dropped by soon after and we found out that the people involved, including Eva Zeisel and some of the best artists in Hungarian ceramic design, not to mention herself, were in themselves a guarantee that the project would be exceptional. Getting behind it was the easiest decision to make.

We at Balassi strongly feel that Hungary, while being a small country, has a wealth of tradition and innovation to offer to the world. Sometimes, tradition and innovation meet in a lucky embrace. Eosin, the Art Nouveau trademark of one of the greatest design legacies in Hungary, the Zsolnay factory in Pécs can be successfully put to use – by those who have this special talent – to create objects that range from the purely artistic to the intricately functional where the glaze with its ever-changing hues and gleams accentuates the form. With its help, as evident in this show, artists can evoke the lush and sensuous flora of distant places, exotic beyond Baudelaire (Kunin), reflect on the most fundamental structural qualities of matter and fractals (Füzesi-Heierli), evoke, deconstruct and liberate the legacy of Zsolnay to once more serve as a vehicle of artistic self-



expression (Andrási). They can muse about the possibilities of providing narratives to design objects (Dobány), ask questions about the relevance of Art Nouveau forms for functional design in our day and age (Erdei) or explore the value added by Zsolnay glaze to the characteristically modern and organic shapes that helped define a truly exceptional career – Eva Zeisel's.

It is an exceptionally lucky situation that the great talent that Julia helped gather for this show also showcases the potential of Hungarian manufacturing traditions to produce objects – unique or serialized for the discerning consumer of art and design. While we do hope that many who visit the show will be inspired to visit Hungary, we at Balassi will strive to present further aspects of these traditions that persist – and that are in no way in contrast with what is new, innovative – and beautiful.



Above (clockwise from left): Julia Kunin, *Scholar's Rock #1*, 2012. Earthenware with eosin glaze. Sándor Dobány, *Shadows I*, 2011. Earthenware with eosin glaze. Zsuzsa Füzesi, *Eosin-Double I*, 2011. Earthenware with eosin glaze.



Above: Vase, 1906. Design by Sándor Apáti Abt. Stoneware, eosin and heat glaze, inv. no. 51.4642
Below: Chalice, 1898. Stoneware, eosin, inv. no. 51.4806. Both in the Zsolnay Museum, Pécs, Hungary



reviving the light: new zsolnay eosin ceramics



ILIAD
212 East 57th Street
New York, New York
www.iliadny.com

Introduction by ILIAD

IT IS OUR GREAT PLEASURE TO HOST THIS EXHIBITION OF CONTEMPORARY Zsolnay ceramics and present some of the most recent works created by artists in the kilns of the Zsolnay factory, Pécs, Hungary. The cultural heritage of Central Europe has long served as a primary focal point for our gallery, particularly, through the context of an extensive collection of Austro-Hungarian furniture, paintings, and decorative arts. That context has since broadened, and what you see exhibited about you here at ILIAD is equally narrative - an embrace of the breadth of the human experience through the medium of applied arts, reflected back to the viewer through a mirror of modern and contemporary imagery. Our aesthetic has come to reflect how contemporary visual culture distills traditions of centuries past; how form, line, and concept are integrated into new shapes by artists, are re-discovered, or are re-invented by craftsmen and designers separated by the gulfs of time.

In its affiliation with the 19th and 20th century artistic traditions of Hungary, ILIAD ranks as one of the few galleries in New York to have introduced the American public to Zsolnay pieces from the golden age of the factory, enhancing an appreciation for the unique, iridescent Eosin glazes which have adorned voluminous period examples in an abundance of ceramic forms. No wonder these glazes are surrounded by an aura of myth and secret: the technique is the result of focused experimentation, one where the artist must always take account of the element of surprise and unpredictability. Creating Eosin glazes is a harrowing combination of adept control paired with the capricious intervention of circumstance - the unseen hand of destiny. It is the finding out what happens after the fire - what pattern fate inscribes on process - that is part of the compelling lure of the art form.

It is a tremendous joy to be part of this adventure. We applaud the spirit of courage and discovery shared by the participating artists - Edina Andrási, Sándor Dobány, Viktor Erdei, Zsuzsanna Füzesi, Julia Kunin and Eva Zeisel - and opportunities created by that uniquely original Hungarian cultural and art historical institution - the Zsolnay factory. The new dawn of eosin ceramics has arrived.

Andrea Zemel and Adam Brown, Owners / Partners

essays
eve m. kahn
jeff taylor

artists
edina andrási
sándor dobány
viktor erdei
zsuzsa füzesi
julia kunin
eva zeisel

Right: Eva Zeisel, Gold Vase, 2011. Shape designed in 2008 for Royal Stafford. Earthenware with eosin glaze. Eva Zeisel Legacy Collection.





Phoenixes of Iridescence

Essay by Eve M. Kahn

IN THE 1890S, A SLEEPY CORNER OF SOUTHWESTERN Hungary became a renowned hotbed of chemical and artistic innovation. The Zsolnay factory, in a provincial capital called Pécs, set out to outshine rivals as celebrated as Wedgwood and Louis Comfort Tiffany in pursuit of iridescence.

The family business, founded in 1853, was run by the patriarch Vilmos (1828-1900, pronounced VEEL-moesh) and his children and their spouses. Their bread and butter products were as mundane as plumbing pipes and roof tiles. Their joy was mixing the likes of molybdenum and vanadium into glazes resembling rainbows evaporating and oil trailing across eddies.

They developed thousands of varieties of metallic iridescent formulas, which they collectively called “eosin.” (Romantic legend has it that the name derived from Eos, the Greek goddess of dawn, but in truth, German textile makers had been using the term for fluorescent dyes since the 1870s.) They were building on the Persian tradition of metallic-oxide lusters, which originated in the 9th century,

caught on throughout the Islamic world and then were revived in Renaissance Italy by Arab émigré potters.

The company applied the recipes to ceramic forms in the mainstream of the era's Art Nouveau: nymphs, droopy flowers and crustaceans were fashionable everywhere. The Zsolnays also offered quintessentially Hungarian designs, like peasant dancer figurines, high-shouldered bottles based on shepherds' flasks and vases with floral folk embroidery patterns.

Iridescent Zsolnay filled booths at world's fairs and expos, from Vienna to Turin to St. Louis, and won medal after medal. Tastemakers including Walter Crane and Joseph Maria Olbrich came to Pécs to meet the family, contribute designs and place orders.

About 800 people worked at the factory, assembling components that were cast, molded and wheel-thrown. A single vessel could require half a dozen firings in oxygen-deprived kilns, until the metallic oxide layers broke down, plus rounds of polishing and etching. The distribution network stretched from Istanbul to Chicago; Vilmos even helped finance a national rail line extension to Pécs, to reduce his own shipping costs.

The aftermath of World War I nearly shuttered the business. Serbia invaded the region. The Zsolnays lost access to quarries for their specialty metals. Luxury markets fizzled. Vilmos's son Miklós (MEE-kloesh), who had taken the helm, suffered a nervous collapse and died in 1922 in an asylum near Vienna. After his death, the staff managed to come up with some creative products into the 1930s,



Left: Vase, 1900. Design by Lajos Mack. Stoneware, eosin, inv. no. 51.5121. Zsolnay Museum, Pécs, Hungary.



hand-painting Japanese and Egyptian motifs on vases. But after World War II, a new Communist government seized the plant and drove the family into exile.

The Zsolnay reputation somehow endured under Communism, although the company was clumsily renamed the Pécs Porcelain Factory, a division of the National Undertaking of Fine Ceramics. The staff kept eosin alive, albeit by applying rather monotonous iridescent greens to statues of Communist leaders and even Elvis. Hungarians who had fled overseas and become famous were eventually allowed to contribute designs: the op-art artist Victor Vasarely (a Pécs native) came up with checkerboard tiles, and the industrial designer Eva Zeisel produced

gourds and spheres in lush purple and gold eosin. In the past few years, part of the Pécs factory grounds has been turned into parkland and galleries full of antique Zsolnay. The factory itself has revived vintage designs: nymphs, crusta ceans, droopy flowers and folk embroidery patterns have returned from exile. And the kilns have been made available again to innovators, like the participants in this shimmering show.

Eve Kahn is Antiques Columnist for the New York Times and Freelance Writer.

Right: Lidded vessel, 1912. Stoneware, eosin. László Gyugyi Collection





Vase, 1902. Designed by S. Apáti Abt. Stoneware, eosin. László Gyugyi Collection

eosin, even the pigment - color itself - carried immense artistic significance. By the advent of the age of Modernism, Zsolnay had achieved the most modernist of aspirations: an industrial corporation dedicated to the production and promotion of Avant-garde aesthetics - a firm supported by an expansive and complex business model that leveraged profits from industrial porcelain and mass-market dinnerware to subsidize its primary agenda - the creation a new visual culture. For much of the Hungarian public, the works of Zsolnay, either as objets-d'art or as Secessionist architectural details, were their first encounters with Modernism.

Time and again, when speaking about masterpieces of eosin glaze, like the orbs adorning the stairways of the Liszt Academy, or perhaps the folk motifs on Béla Lajta's Hecht storefront, a question invariably arose as I introduced non-Hungarians to the glories of Zsolnay: what had happened to Zsolnay? Why does the factory no longer produce works of this variety any more? The answer is primarily twofold: the loss of markets and raw materials after World War I and the Soviet/communist nationalization after World War II. The eclipse of eosin glaze, however, was another matter. Its disappearance from the chain of production was not in fact that it was "lost" - in accordance with the apocryphal narrative that says the precious mixture was forgotten as the Zsolnay family simply refused to turn the recipe over to the state - but rather, the true explanation lay in the Gesamtkunstwerk nature of the process: a 5-year hiatus from art ceramic fabrication and the concurrent loss of skills along the production line was primarily to blame. As insult to injury, an institutional contempt for bourgeois luxuries combined with the pressing need for electrification following the Second World War shifted both the emphasis and means of production, which equally harbingered the end of an era. Even after the resumption of decorative production, the emphasis remained on mass-produced items. One-of-a-kind output was never revived in any meaningful way.

Since the 1950s, eosin production had resumed with notable works by János Török, Judit Nádor and others, however these objects stood in stark contrast to those of the turn of the century both in their "art for the masses" large scale production quotas and in the lack-luster

Early Light at Dawn and the Rebirth of Eosin

essay by Jeff Taylor

ZSOLNAY, AT ITS PINNACLE, EMBODIED THE VERY ESSENCE of *Gesamtkunstwerk* ("a total work of art"). Each piece of art ceramic, every pyrogranite architectural element from the *fin de siècle* involved a complex collaboration by artists, designers, throwers, painters, and a host of other craftsmen who conducted their skill with precision and elegance. The shape of the object was art. The painting adorning it was art. And in the case of Zsolnay's



Vase, 1900-1901. Stoneware, eosin. László Gyugyi Collection

flatness of their eosin glazes. However, by the 1980's Zsolnay had begun to regain artistic initiative and commissioned new designs from respected artists like Eva Zeisel, but the delicate hues and intense variety of early eosin remained a lost and forgotten technique. After much meandering during the post-Communist period, Zsolnay finally launched itself on a concrete plan of re-

newal based on highlighting its own heritage. Much as its golden age was preceded by incubation in historicism, Zsolnay's current-day revival is predicated upon a similar emphasis on historical reference, one focused on its own cultural capital as a living, breathing, Hungarian artistic institution.

With a goal being to recover the full range and potency of *fin-de-siècle* eosin, American sculptor Julia Kunin (who had previously worked with Zsolnay in 2010), along with former Zsolnay designer Sándor Dobány, collaborated with the firm to organize the symposium at the Siklós Center for Ceramic Arts, with the caveat that the fruits of those efforts be exhibited on the international stage in New York. In addition to Kunin and Dobány, the symposium incorporated three other Hungarian designers: Zsuzsanna Füzesi, Edina Andrási, Viktor Erdei, and finally, the internationally renowned grande dame of industrial design, Eva Zeisel.

It is in the person of Eva Zeisel that the historic and symbolic links between Hungarian origins and the American market would be reaffirmed.

As Zsolnay's finest period works had been reserved for export, some of the most outstanding private collections (like that of László Gyugyi - now part of the Zsolnay Heritage) were largely collected and assembled in the United States. Born in 1906 and immigrating to America in 1938, Zeisel's precocious beginnings and gloriously long career trace a direct lineage to Art Nouveau and late Secession Budapest. Binding her highly evolved design aesthetic with egalitarian ideals arising from her tenure as the Artistic Director for the Soviet Ceramic and Glass Industry, Zeisel applied her craft deploying American mass-market sensibilities to productive ventures. In 1983, ARTEX, the government-run foreign trade company representing Hungarian artists abroad, invited her to return to Hungary to work at the Zsolnay factory to produce a series of modernist organic forms. Three decades later, American artist Julia Kunin encountered those works at Zsolnay and was struck by an insight. Believing that Zeisel's contemporary forms perfectly suited the subtle chromatic transitions of the Golden-Age eosin, Kunin would invite the 104-year-old Zeisel to participate in the Siklós symposium - her contribution was a vase originally

designed for Royal Stafford, from which Dobány made a mold.

The peak of Zsolnay production from 1890-1914 corresponded with the Art Nouveau movement, with its highly variegated amalgam of reference points and multiple identifiable influences flowing in to the cocktail. Correspondingly, each of the participants of the Siklós Symposium highlights a core ingredient from the firm's *fin-de-siècle products*. If Zeisel embodies the encroach-



Julia Kunin, *Scholar's Rock #4*, 2012. Earthenware with eosin glaze.

ing simplicity of late Secession - that impulse towards austerity and economy of form witnessed subsequently in the offshoot movements of Art Deco and Bauhaus design (to which the aesthetic of her work most closely belongs), it might equally be said that inspiration for Julia Kunin's sculptural works originates with the organic effervescence of the early Franconic variant of Art Nouveau, with its emphasis on lush foliage and Rococo asymmetry, suffused with a discourse on beauty, decay, sensuality, and death. Kunin's "Scholar's Rocks", an ode to the found object (a contemplative pass-time of Song dynasty literati), belie their apparent simplicity, however, and provide an undulating surface for an infinite variety of tone and reflection. Drawing inspiration from the building stones of a Franciscan monastery, sculpted ceramic "rocks" wrapped in eosin glaze become a medi-

tative stroll through a cloister of light and pigment.

Sándor Dobány's architectonic vases emphasize the turn of the century cosmopolitan urban milieu with its fascination for modernity and progress. The fine painting on his vases recall the firm's masterpieces of post-impressionist imagery, which adorned many of the vases from its golden age. For Dobány, cityscapes are now jarring, nature seems traumatized: iconography bearing weight and witness to the full force and loss of innocence of the 20th-century upheaval. Eosin glaze becomes the vessel of narrative that can preserve memory for all its terror and beauty.

The conceptual nature of Edina Andrási's work is woven in layers of post-modern abstraction - a play on the very notion of historical reference - on historicism itself. Like a house DJ, assembling digital samples ad hoc from earlier productions - fodder for their ephemeral creations - Andrási employs discarded plaster vase molds from the Zsolnay factory, dividing shapes into parts, drawing perpendicular lines along vertical axis to impart a distinct anthropomorphic character. Using proportions of the human body to emphasize movement, sections are reassembled to form a kind of deconstructed vase while referencing the iconic form of the medieval kuttrolf, the "medicinal flask". Of the group of six, the work represents perhaps the most cerebral confrontation with Zsolnay's heritage: a Cubist/Dadaist rendering of its very essence. More simply put: the firm's past is abstracted and subsumed by its future.

If Andrási's work is about dissemblance and deconstruction, then Zsuzsa Füzesi is about logos, ordering principle, and construction. Enthralled with ceramics as process, her shapes are but movements frozen in form, mixtures of degrees of order and disorder represented through matrices of quasi-organic design. Her double walled pieces are assembled with honeycomb-like fragility. The interplay of self-similar and mutating orders of clay crystals bears witness to an invisible part of her universality. Her works reference Zsolnay's early masterpieces of open-work elegance, however, Füzesi refuses her audience the opportunity to forget the wabi-sabi of the unique thing - the hand-made origins of ceramics.

Viktor Erdei, Zsolnay's newest and youngest 24-year-old designer, remains the one of the group who is the one most thoroughly wedded to traditional technique. Juxtaposing sheen and matt finishes to create atmospheric perspective, aligning both real and magical realities as his imaginary landscape, his ethereal forms appear as conjured specters - apparitions from an Arcadian past. Supple and wispy highlights evoke nostalgia through luminosity, emphasizing the works' vaporous forms and languid curves. Each design evokes the spirit of Art Nouveau with their organic floral reminiscences, their irregularity, and their appearance as living beings. Most beguiling are their illusion of movement. Their immediate impact on the viewer is to invite circumambulation - to see them from all sides - as they remain compelling and fascinating from every viewpoint.

A lustrous and precocious young goddess who presides at the advent of morning, she of rose red fingers to Homer's Odysseus, the term eosin is a reference to the very early light at dawn. Likewise, the story of Zsolnay and the light of eosin is one that cannot help but assume mythic proportion. Over a century now since its invention, eosin was the light that broke the bonds of art historical tradition with its subtle rays of intense and unbridled color. As stewards of the Austro-Hungarian Secession and Art Nouveau, the saga of the Zsolnay firm and its place in history is nothing less than a tale of a once and future golden age. A story of loss, and above all, a tale of rekindling the light - to reinvest in eosin's full chromatic range signifies the resurrection of Zsolnay's immense aesthetic potential.

Jeff Taylor, PhD, is a cultural historian and Assistant Professor of Arts Management at the State University of New York (SUNY), Purchase.



Viktor Erdei, *Folium 2*, 2012. Earthenware with eosin glaze



Zsuzsa Füzesi, *Eosin-Double 2*, 2012. Earthenware with glaze

edina andrási





An innovative and talented designer, Edina Andrási is a recent graduate of the Institute of Applied Art of the University of Western Hungary in Sopron, and from 2009 to 2010 she studied ceramics at the Glasgow School of Art. She is currently a doctoral candidate (DLA) at the Ceramics Department of the University of Pécs. Andrási created a series of vases called “Unsettled Movements” for the exhibition. Her work for the exhibition is inventive in its reference to and rethinking of Zsolnay’s established porcelain forms and its use of Zsolnay’s famous eosin luster glazes.

Ceramic expert and founder of the International Ceramic Studio (Kecskemét, Hungary) János Probstner wrote of her work: “Andrási radically changed the design while only slightly departing from the production technology. Maintaining the traditional function, she has created a set with personality. Selecting an existing set produced by the company, she combined them in the production process to create a new series. The result was a new hybrid set – eye catching, remarkable, even shocking. In focusing on developing the form, Edina Andrási has pushed the artistic aspect of design and her own way of thinking about it into the foreground. The historical, baroque forms have been deconstructed to create entirely new objects – paradoxically – they also recall the histories of the older tea sets, which are still manufactured in their original forms.”

Her exhibitions include: Design Festival DMY, 2012, Berlin; Portfolio Points, 2012, Labor K64, Pécs; Graduation Projects, 2012, Cieszyn Castle, Poland; Design from the Western Lands, 2011, MUSEION No. 1 Gallery, Budapest; Eyebrow Says Relax, 2010, Barnes Building, Glasgow School of Art, United Kingdom.

Previous Page: (from Left) *Unsettled Movements* #1- 6, 2011. Earthenware with eosin glaze. Above: (from left) *Unsettled Movements* #3, 2011. Earthenware with eosin glaze. *Unsettled Movements* #6, 2011. Earthenware with eosin glaze. *Unsettled Movements* #5, 2011. Earthenware with eosin glaze. Right: *Unsettled Movements* #1, 2011. Earthenware with eosin glaze.



sándor dobány



Sándor Dobány is an expert with porcelain and plaster, and has numerous architectural ceramic commissions to his credit. His architectural ceramic work can be seen in his native Hungary, Scotland and Greece. As a porcelain designer, he has created whimsical and functional objects, including tea sets and vases painted with highly detailed surreal imagery.

Dobány was born in Pécs, Hungary in 1954. He began his career as a plaster model designer at the Zsolnay Factory in Pécs in 1969. Working closely with old Zsolnay ceramics was a defining experience in his career. While at the factory, he studied painting and sculpture, with painters Ferenc Haraszti and Pál Lantos, and sculptor Tibor Csiky. In 1985, after opening his own studio, he created a porcelain teapot series which channeled his career towards the creation of functional porcelain objects. Since the end of the 1990s, his creative focus shifted towards works that emphasize the harmony between ceramic form and the painted surface.

Dobány became a member of the Studio of the Young Designers Association in 1986, the National Association of Hungarian Artists in 1988, and the Association of Hungarian Fine and Applied Artists in 1989. In the early 1990s he was a founding member of the DeForma group, which brought together ceramic artists of the day. Dobány was a guest teacher in the Ceramics Department at the Glasgow School of Art between 2008 and 2010. He is the recipient of several awards in the field of ceramics, and has had a number of solo exhibitions in Hungary. His work has been prominently featured in numerous group shows both in Hungary and abroad.

Selected solo shows: Balatonmagyaród, 2005; Gronningen, The Netherlands, 2004; Székesfehérvár, 2003; Pécs, Hungary, 2001; Starnberg, Germany, 1998; Göttingen, Germany, 1997; Mücsarnok (Kunsthalle), Budapest, 1995; Arts Center, Pécs, Hungary, 1992; Small Gallery, Pécs, Hungary, 1986; Visual Workshop, Pécs, Hungary, 1980





viktor erdei





Viktor Erdei is a young, talented ceramic designer currently employed at the Zsolnay factory in Pécs, working both in the porcelain and pyrogranite departments. A prestigious post at the firm, Erdei was chosen from among numerous candidates for this unique position - one of the most desirable in his field. He graduated from the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design in 2010, where he was a student in the Silicate and Porcelain Design Department, he has recently been included among the top 10 young Hungarian porcelain designers in Top List - Design 2012, the annual national publication compiled by Trend Guide Magazine, showcasing innovation and excellence in all fields of design in Hungary.

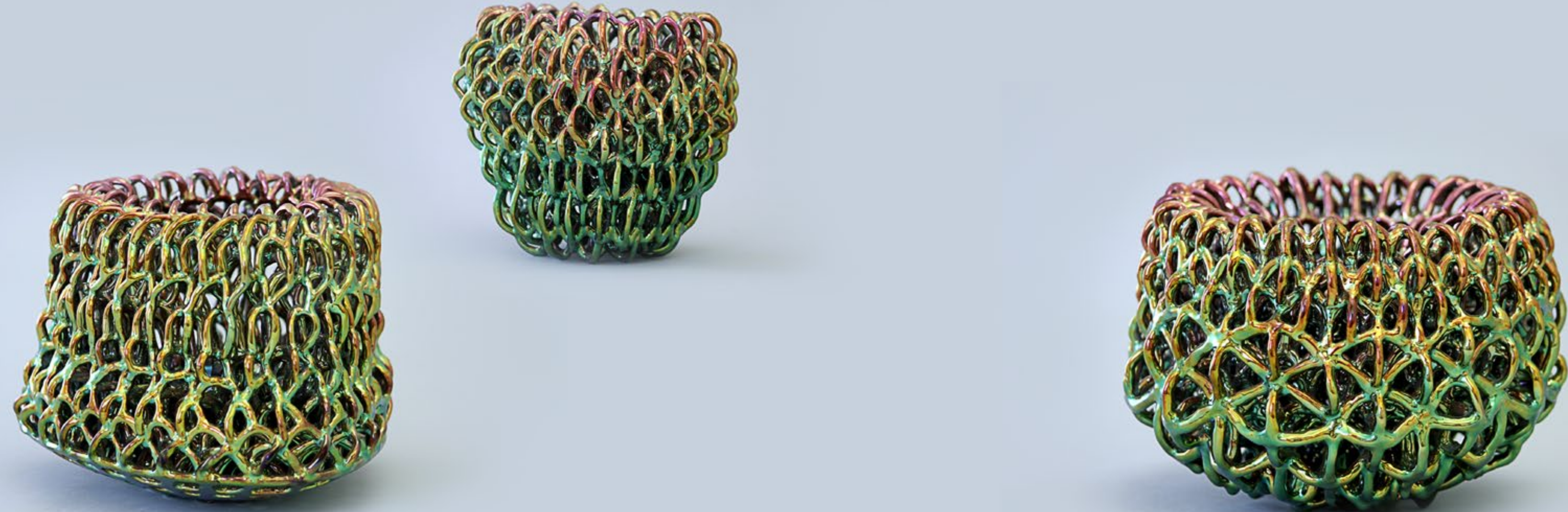
Erdei has both national and international credentials, having been featured in several shows both in his native Hungary and in Europe. For the current exhibition, Erdei has created a set of vases that are influenced by Art Nouveau using innovative luster glazes that he helped develop at Zsolnay. As a silicate designer working mainly with porcelain, his work bridges the divide between the artistic and the industrial. He is extremely conscious of the characteristics of porcelain as a material when bringing forms into being, and designs pieces with their logic and functionality in mind.

Selected shows: Zsolnay Eosin symposium, Pécs, Hungary, 2012; 12th Westerwald Prize, Hohn-Grenzhausen, Germany, 2009 - exhibited object: "Inner substance" (became the part of the collection of the Westerwald Ceramic Museum); Home Design Exhibition, Zalaegerszeg, Hungary, 2008

Previous Page: Aurora #1, 2012. Earthenware with eosin glaze. Above: Folium #3, 2012. Earthenware with eosin glaze. Right: Valinor #2, 2012. Earthenware with eosin glaze.



zsuzsa füzesi

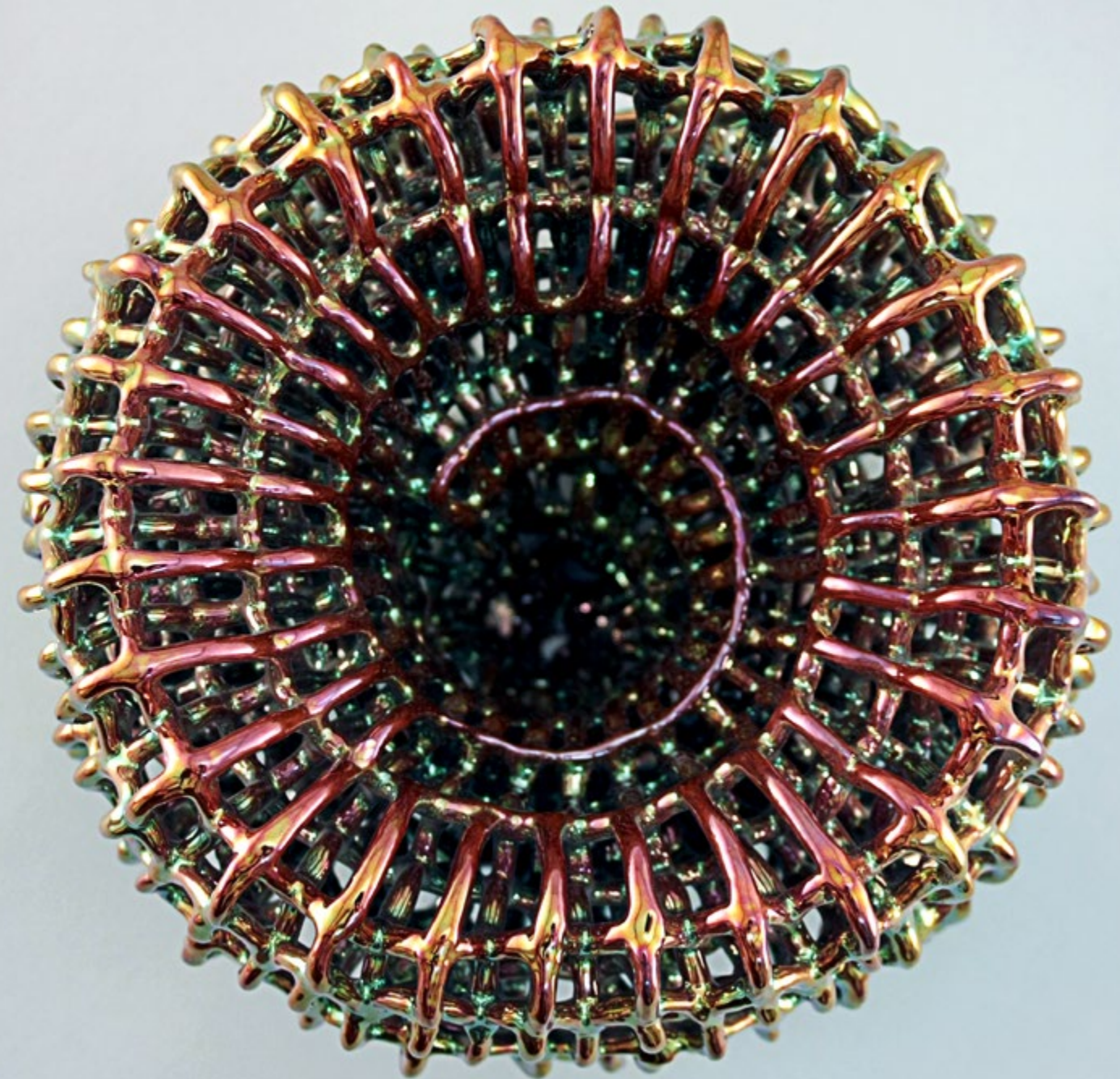




Zsuzsa Füzesi Heierli is an independent ceramic artist and sculptor, based in Pécs, Hungary and Basel, Switzerland. Her work incorporates intricate organic and geometric structures, creating web-like vessels. Füzesi was born in Nagymányok, Hungary in 1953. Following her studies at the Academy of Applied Arts (currently the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design), where she worked closely with Professor Imre Schrammel, she launched her career as an independent ceramic artist and sculptor, opening her workshop in Pécs. She relocated to Switzerland in the 1990s, opening a second workshop in Basel. At the same time, she continued to work in her native Hungary, becoming artistic manager of the Ceramics Centre in Siklós near Pécs from 1990 to 1994. She was awarded a membership in the Swiss Ceramics Association in 1996, and she has continued to pursue her theoretical interests, culminating in her summa cum laude DLA degree in 2008, from the University of Pécs.

Füzesi was at first inspired by prehistoric and ancient pottery, including Mesopotamian and Native American forms. Her chief aim was to create pseudo-vessels that “contained” a story or a memory, calling these objects “Containers of Spirit” or “Containers of the Soul”. Since 2000, a marked shift has taken place in her work. Her associative, at times surrealist host of shapes has been replaced by an emphasis on forms that reflect the universal, molecular structures of all life, a concern reflected in the pieces included in the present exhibition. While an accomplished art manager and theorist, Füzesi has found exceptional success with her work. With around two dozen solo exhibitions to her credit (mainly in Hungary, Austria, Germany and Switzerland), and over three dozen group shows in a score of European countries and the United States, she ranks among the most accomplished artists in her field today. Her work is featured in a number of public collections, including the Hungarian Museum of Applied Arts in Budapest and the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, DC.

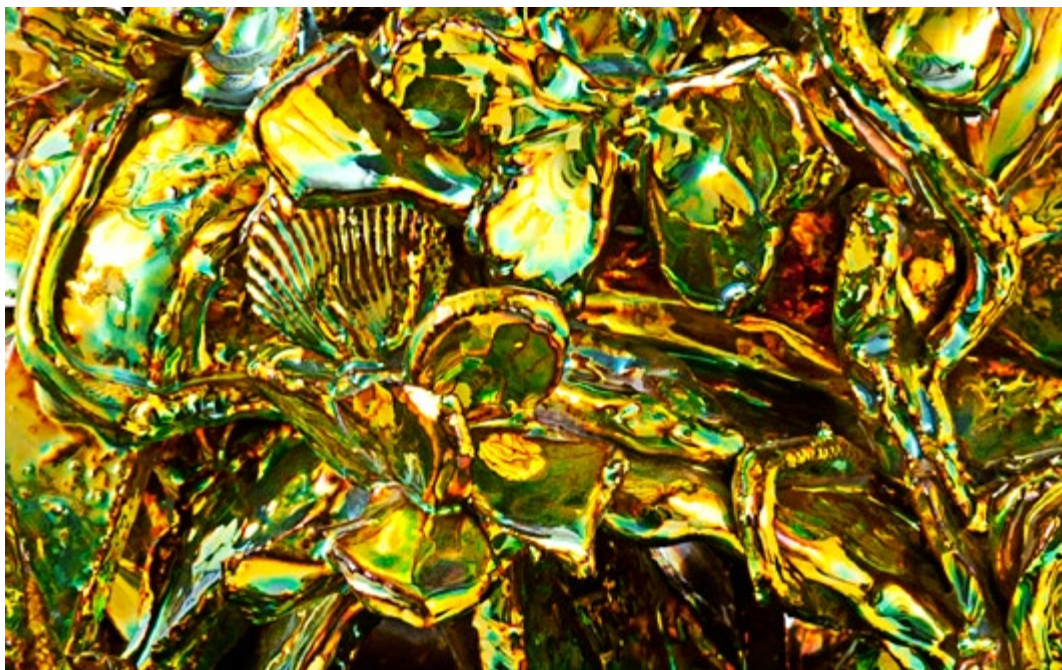
Selected solo shows: Parti Galéria, Pécs, Hungary, 2010; Galerie “Die Aussteller”, Basel, Switzerland, 2009; Keramikmuseum Kandern, Germany, 2006; Galerie am Brühl, Zell im Wiesental, Germany, 2005; Höhr-Grenzhausen, Formhaus, Germany, 2000; Ernst Múzeum, Dorottya Galéria, Budapest, Hungary, 2000; Galerie zum Kunos Tor, Basel, Switzerland, 1998; Csók Gallery, Budapest, Hungary, 1991; Képcsarnok Showroom, Debrecen, Hungary, 1988; 1988, Képcsarnok Showroom, Győr, Hungary; 1988, Budapest, Csók Gallery, Hungary; 1988, Singen, Germany; 1980, Szigetvár Mosque, Hungary





julia kunin





Julia Kunin lives in Brooklyn, New York. She works in a wide variety of media, including sculpture, video and drawing. Kunin's ceramic sculptures are composed of elements from the natural world such as insects, shells and rock formations, where figure and landscape merge. These complex baroque structures are glazed in exquisite and unique lusters. Her recent ceramic sculptures are miniature otherworldly landscapes and surreal figures inspired by scholar's rocks and the garden grotto. Kunin received her BA in 1984 from Wellesley College, and her MFA in 1993 from Rutgers University. She is represented by Greenberg Van Doren Gallery in New York. Her work has been widely exhibited in the United States and Europe, and over two dozen group exhibitions have featured her work in the past two decades.

Selected solo shows include: "Nightwood" at Greenberg Van Doren in the Spring of 2012. "Crimson Suede" at the Deutsches Leder Museum, in Offenbach Germany, 2002. She had a two-person exhibition at Greenberg Van Doren Gallery, NY in 2007. Selected group exhibitions: Salon 94 Bowery, NY, NY. "Paul Clay". Inman Gallery, Houston, TX, 2009; Fordham University Gallery, NY, NY, 2009; Black and White Gallery, 2009; Abrons Art Center, 2009; Moti Hasson Gallery, NY, NY, 2008; John Michael Kohler Art Center, Sheboygan, WI, 2008; Karyn Lovegrove Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, 2006; Sandra Gering Gallery, NY 2006; Artists Space, NY, 2004; Schroeder-Romero Gallery, NY 2003; The Museum of Art and Design, NY, and the Museum of Applied Art and Design, Frankfurt, Germany, 2002-2003; Selected fellowships and residencies include: A Fulbright to Hungary for 2013; A Pollack Krasner Grant in 2008; Art Omi: July 2008; The John Michael Kohler Arts Industry residency: June- Sept. 2007; The MacDowell Colony: July-Aug. 2006; Marie Walsh Sharpe Art Foundation: 1999 -2000; Artslink: July-Aug. 1999; Yaddo: July, 1995, 1991, 1990; The Vermont Studio Center: July 1996; The Millay Colony: June-July 1989 and Skowhegan, 1984.

The current exhibition is an outgrowth of her sustained and intensive investigations into the potential of the eosin glaze and ceramic art in general. She is both a contributing artist, and exhibition organizer. As one of the main curators, she has had a defining role in both conceiving and realizing this exhibition.

Previous Page: (from left) *Golden Grove*, 2011 and *Hanging Gardens*, 2012. Earthenware with eosin glaze. Above: Detail of *Gargantua*, 2011. Earthenware with eosin glaze. Right: *Gargantua*, 2011.



eva zeisel



Eva Zeisel was one of the most influential ceramic artist-designers of the 20th century. She was born in Budapest, Hungary to a prominent family of Jewish intellectuals. She studied painting at the Royal Hungarian Academy of Fine Arts and later completed a guild apprenticeship in ceramics. As a qualified journeyman, she worked in Hungary, then in Weimar Germany - Schramberg, Berlin and Hamburg - and finally in the Soviet Union, where she became artistic director for the Soviet Porcelain and Glass Industries. After being arrested for her alleged participation in a plot against Stalin, she spent 16 months in prison, then was unexpectedly deported to Austria in 1937. Her memories of this period were memorialized by close friend Arthur Koestler in his *Darkness at Noon*, who drew heavily on Zeisel's experiences when writing the book. Barely escaping the Nazi occupation of Austria a year later, she fled to the United States in 1938 via the United Kingdom with her future husband, Hans Zeisel. Once in the United States, she soon found her footing among American ceramic designers: in 1939 she established a course at the Pratt Institute in New York to teach Ceramics for Industry, worked for several factories as a designer, and her growing fame led to her first solo exhibition in 1946 at the Museum of Modern Art. She continued to develop new designs and saw many of her earlier series brought back into production while working for an exceptionally broad spectrum of companies such as Chantal, Nambe, Crate and Barrel, and KleinReid. She also introduced her own line, Eva Zeisel Originals and went on exhibiting her work in a series of successful shows, mainly in the US.

Despite her success as an artist, Zeisel referred to herself as a “maker of useful things”. Her design, true to this credo, emphasizes functionality both in the objects themselves and in their use of space, wedding these considerations to a rich array of organic forms almost always inspired by curved bodies (human or other) found in nature. Critics and peers have often commented on her “organic modernism”, usually interpreted as a creative response to the angular design associated with the Bauhaus style. Less frequently noted is her recurrent use of motifs, especially representations of birds, having their origins in Hungarian folk art.

At present, her works are featured in some of the foremost permanent collections of design in the world, including the Metropolitan Museum, the Brooklyn Museum, the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum and the Museum of Modern Art in New York, as well as the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.



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Réka Vácz, Symposium organizer, Former Director of Siklós Center for Ceramic Art; Siklós, Hungary

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Balassi Institute
Hungarian Cultural Center
New York



212 EAST 57TH STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10022
WWW.ILIADNY.COM