

Tomoko Obana

Biography

- 1985 Born in Kyoto, Japan
Live & works in Iga, Japan
- 2008 Graduated from Kyoto University of Art and Design, Department of Arts and Crafts,
Ceramics Course
One year residency at the Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park

Artist Statment

Ever since I was young, I've noticed how people such as my grandmother, mother, sister, and I all possessed a kind of impulsive obsession or attachment towards a certain subject. I had a vague feeling that this impulse would never die out. Despite always feeling a little bit of disdain towards this impulsive emotion, I still needed to quickly find a subject towards which I could direct my own obsessions. Using my limited knowledge and experience, I searched for something to obsess over and I came to the discovery of art.

After entering college, I studied two-dimensional and three-dimensional art, crafts, colors, concepts, and people. When I casted a glass bottle with clay and fired it in a wood-fired kiln for the first time, I knew that the journey of finding a subject to obsess over has reached its destination.

My next step was to observe, collect, record, and preserve.

And so, I began to work on recording, preserving, and crystallizing what happens in life, what I feel, what happens when the clay is fired, what changes, and the changes that continue to happen to me every day, in the form of ceramic vases.

The daily routine of looking back and accepting the phenomena that occur each day, transforming them into arrangements of physical objects ensued. In the beginning, I was aiming for a perfect arrangement, but little by little, I was able to create enough space for light and wind to pass through.

And now, I've come to think that it's permissible to even have butterflies flying between the bottles. I've also started to look at very small things so I can continue to work even when my hands lose its strength one day.

For me, chips and cracks are also a part of change for my works, and I sometimes intentionally choose to use them to create arrangements. When I was firing a kiln in Shigaraki, there was a potter who looked at a bottle with cracks and chips and said, "It tells a story". I like that phrase very much.

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| Selected Solo Exhibitions | 2022 | <i>Tomoko Obana</i> , Nonaka-Hill, Los Angeles |
| | 2017 | Gallery Fukka, Tokyo |
| | 2013 | Gallery Sokyō, Kyoto |
| Selected Group Exhibitions | 2022 | <i>not titled (not "Untitled")</i> , Nonaka-Hill, Los Angeles
FELIX, Los Angeles |
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| Display Work | 2014 | Hyatt Regency, Kyoto |
| Workshop | 2015 | International culture art dialogue, Turkey |
| | 2015 | International macsabal woodfiring symposium, Turkey |
| | 2014 | The 4th arctic clay symposium, Finland |