



Teapot

Julian Stair

Not on display

Title/Description: Teapot

Artist/Maker: Julian Stair

Born: 1998

Object Type: teapot

Materials: Porcelain, Wood (wisteria)

Technique: Throwing

Measurements: h 21.6 x w 16.4 x d 12.3 cm

Accession Number: LSC 5

Historic Period: 20th century

Production Place: Britain, England, Europe

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Credit Line: Bequeathed by Lady Sainsbury, 2014

This porcelain teapot is part of a body of work spanning a 10-year period, when Julian Stair began placing more emphasis on form over surface treatment in his work. Stair began producing thrown tableware as a result of an increasing interest in the philosophy of engaging with pots, ensuring the practice of the everyday remains important:

‘I think the experience of the tactile, the haptic, is so significant to our understanding of the world, and is so underused in the world of art. When we appreciate objects – touch them – hold them in our hand – somehow, it’s a material reinforcement of our physical selves. I’m really interested in the idea of how we negotiate our way through life physically, as well as intellectually.’ [1]

The teapot has a clear glaze and a Japanese wisteria handle, which has been traditionally used to make handles over centuries. Stair describes some of the influences that led to this new development in his work:

‘I came to the inevitable prospect that it wasn’t really enough to make pots that you looked at or may even picked up...but pots that could actually be used. I had started to have exhibitions and some public collections who had bought work...but I just couldn’t quite square what I was doing with what I felt I should be doing.

I can't stress enough how unfashionable it was to make pottery then...that was the dominant view of the day...views were so narrow. I was trying to negotiate a way. I started to look more to Europe, to people such as Lucie Rie and Hans Coper, who came out of the European Modernist tradition...so in the mid to late 1980s I started to make porcelain tableware. It was so far removed from what everyone else was doing...and people were responsive, and that was really interesting.' [2]

In hindsight Stair feels that artists such as himself and Joanna Constantinidis began a revival in throwing and using porcelain in the UK, that continued with Rupert Spira and Edmund De Waal. [3]

Katharine Malcolm, September 2020

[1] Julian Stair and others, *Julian Stair: Quietus Reviewed, Archaeology of an exhibition* (Bath: Wunderkammer Press, 2013), p.9.

[2] John M. Anderson Endowed Lecture Series: 'A Sense of Place', The Pennsylvania State University, 18 February 2014: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FTyzNba2KL4> (accessed 14 August 2020)

[3] Interview with Julian Stair, phone call 19/06/20.

Further Reading

www.julianstair.com

John M. Anderson Endowed Lecture Series: 'A Sense of Place', The Pennsylvania State University, 18 February 2014: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FTyzNba2KL4>

Stair, Julian, Michael Tooby, Helen Waters, James Beighton, Andrew Renton, and Sophie Hacker and others, *Julian Stair: Quietus Reviewed, Archaeology of an exhibition* (Bath: Wunderkammer Press, 2013).
