



Bowl

Ewen Henderson

Not on display

Title/Description: Bowl

Artist/Maker: Ewen Henderson

Born: 1988 c.

Object Type: Bowl

Materials: Ceramic, Porcelain

Technique: Pinching

Measurements: 150mm

Accession Number: 50743

Historic Period: 20th century

Production Place: Britain, England

Credit Line: Accepted under the Cultural Gifts Scheme by HM Government from Leslie Birks Hay and allocated to SCVA, 2016

This vessel is handbuilt from a collage of porcelain. Bands of white porcelain are pinched together with stained porcelain, to create a striated sculptural form that rises and swells. Ewen Henderson's ceramics are expansive and this can be seen here despite the small scale. The vessel's wide opening creates an uninterrupted terrain that connects the exterior with interior. Washes of brushed and dripped ochre glaze fuse into the surface, which is punctured by cracks and faults. There is an elemental beauty and energy to the work of Henderson that draws on the materiality of clay. However, throughout his career he fiercely rejected categorisation. He sought his work to be viewed as sculpture and for it not to be solely defined by its material.

Henderson initially trained as a painter. He studied ceramics as a mature student at Camberwell College of Art from 1965 to 1968, where his teachers included Lucie Rie and Hans Coper. His early work featured interpretations of traditional forms including tea-bowls. It was from the 1970s onwards that his work took on radical and larger sculptural forms (See 50744, 50745 and 50746).

On seeing Henderson's forms for the first time in 1977, ceramicist Henry Pim compared them to, '...meteorites recently arrived from another planet where no one had heard of traditional pottery techniques'. [1] Although Henderson maintained his independence from the conventions of studio ceramics, he was not alone in defying expectations and believed the work of Gordon Baldwin and Gillian Lowndes had a strong affinity with his own. [2]

Sim Panaser, August 2020

[1] Henry Pim, 'Creative Games', *Ceramic Review*, 98 (March/April 1986), 14 - 16 (p. 14).

[2] Ewen Henderson curated and selected works for the 1995 Crafts Council sculptural clay exhibition, *Pandora's Box and the Tradition of Clay*, which included works by Ruth Duckworth, Dan Arbeid and Angus Suttie. Henderson chose to display his work alongside that of Gillian Lowndes and Gordon Baldwin.

Further Reading

Berthoud, Roger and Christopher Reid, David Whiting, Ewen Henderson, (Yeovil: Marston House in association with Midlands Arts Centre, 1995)

Birks, Tony, 'Ewen Henderson', *Revue de la Céramique et du Verre*, 117 (March/April 2001), 34-37

de Waal, Edmund, 'Ewen Henderson', *Crafts*, (May/June 2001), 46-49

Pandora's Box and the Tradition of Clay, exhibition catalogue, (London: Crafts Council, 1995)

Pim, Henry, 'Creative Games', *Ceramic Review*, 98 (March/April 1986), 14 - 16
