



USD 820  
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GBP 515

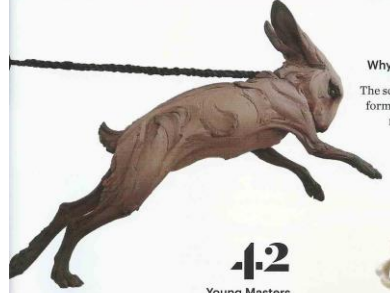
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Cover image:  
Outpour, 2012, Alison  
Britton, hand-built, high-  
fired red earthenware with  
poured and painted slip  
and glass (Height 52cm).  
Image courtesy of the  
V&A Museum, London.



**54**  
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It's a celebration of all aspects of  
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By Cynthia Corbett





# Young Masters

Written by Cynthia Corbett

In 2008 I came up with the concept for the Young Masters Art Prize. Having felt for a long time that there was a strong need for the art historical canon to be reflected in the voice of contemporary art and artists, it was this that inspired me to launch the first edition of the Young Masters Art Prize a year later, in 2009. I felt that an art prize was the best way to introduce this concept as it would bring together artists working across different genres who were united through the same theme. It's a celebration of all aspects of art history through the eyes of international contemporary artists.

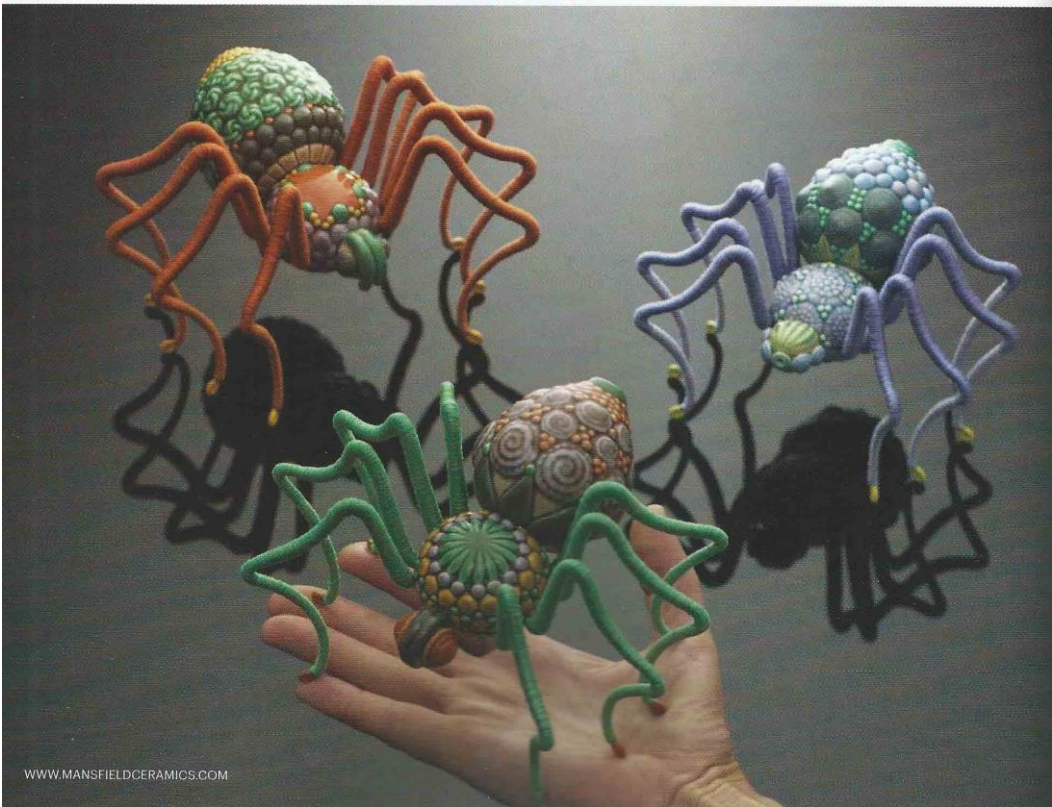
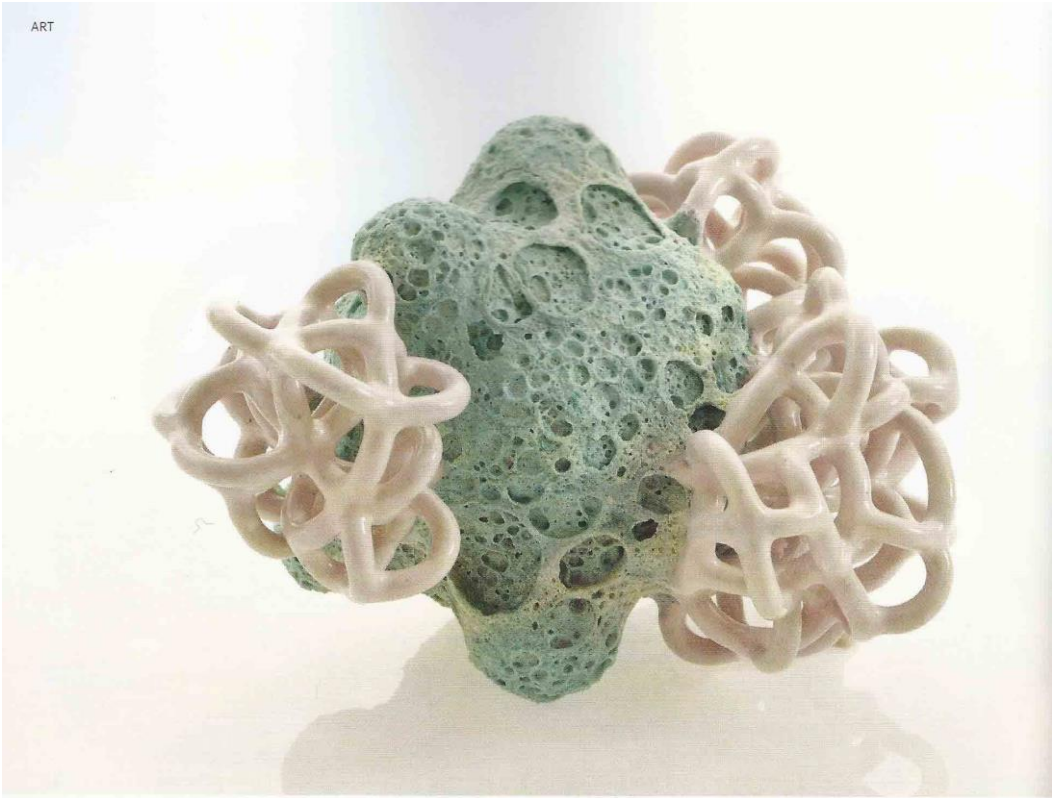
Ceramics is one of the oldest art forms. There is a long history of ceramic art in almost all developed cultures and the medium of clay can embody many forms – from domestic, functional wares to abstract, sculptural objects. Since the

beginning of Young Masters we have celebrated ceramic artists, and over the years witnessed how much this creative medium was evolving. We felt it deserved its own platform and prize to reflect the quality of work being produced in ceramics. In 2014, the Young Masters Maylis Grand Ceramics Prize was introduced for the first time thanks to the support of collector and philanthropist, Maylis Grand.

The Old Master tradition in clay started with earthenware, the lowest fired clay, evolving to stoneware, and finally porcelain. Although it's seen as a traditional material, clay can be used in the most contemporary, experimental and forward-looking ways, and this was beautifully captured in the work of the 10 artists shortlisted for the 2017 edition of the Young Masters Maylis Grand Ceramics Prize. These artists, of course,

**The Young Masters Maylis Grand Ceramics Prize is an important opportunity for artists who are at the cusp of success and who need an international platform to take them to the next level.**

ART



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use tradition to underpin their work but they present a breadth of practice that documents a move from functional to fine art; their work consolidates the position of ceramics in contemporary art.

Seven nationalities were represented in our 10 selected artists. They included Danish artist Malene Hartmann Rasmussen whose figurative and narrative pieces have been influenced by the 15th century potter Bernard Palissy and his love of insects, story-telling and life-casting techniques; British ceramicist Katie Spragg, who creates miniature worlds modeled in porcelain; and American artist Andrew Casto whose use of porcelain and gold lustre and the physicality of his abstract forms hark back to the development of historical bone china such as Sèvres and Meissen.

Opposite top:  
Mini Baby Cloud Bundle,  
Tessa Eastman  
Opposite Bottom:  
Spider, Malene  
Hartmann Rasmussen  
Top: Snow Cloud,  
Tessa Eastman  
Left: Squirrel Gun, Malene  
Hartmann Rasmussen

ART

Our winner was South African-born Lucille Lewin, who came to ceramic art late in life following a high profile career in fashion. In her mid-60s she went back to college, eventually completing an MA in Ceramics and Glass at the Royal College of Art. Lucille Lewin's work is the result of research into the origins of 18th century European porcelain and the alchemists who invented it.

Her pieces, which combine porcelain with other media including glass and salt crystals, reference the Victorian Cabinet of Curiosities and the early microscopic photographs of the natural world by Karl Blossfeldt.

The prize judges – James Blackburn, former Curator of Arts and Crafts at Sotheby's; collector Preston Fitzgerald; collector and philanthropist Maylis Grand and the Crafts Council's Daniella Wells – felt that her work was completely original and unlike anything they'd seen before. Since winning the prize, Lucille's work has been in much demand by collectors, and she is planning a solo show in November.

The Young Masters Maylis Grand Ceramics Prize is an important opportunity for artists who are at the cusp of success and who need an international platform to take them to the next level, you could say it's a barometer for future success. Matt Smith, the winner of the prize in 2014 has since gone on to do a residency at the Victoria and Albert Museum and his work is sought-after by many international collectors. Although 2017 marks only the second edition of the Young Masters Maylis Grand Ceramics Prize, the standard and volume of entries proved how quickly this prize has established itself in the international art prize calendar. There is clearly a need for a prize that highlights and celebrates the creative and innovative potential of this artistic medium. ■

**About the Author**  
Cynthia Corbett is the Founder of the Young Masters Art Prize and Director of The Creative Crafts Gallery. The Young Masters Art Prize exhibition was held at The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London, from 26 to 14 October 2017 and will be an international tour throughout 2018. [www.youngmasters.co.uk](http://www.youngmasters.co.uk)



Tower of Babel  
Lucille Lewin