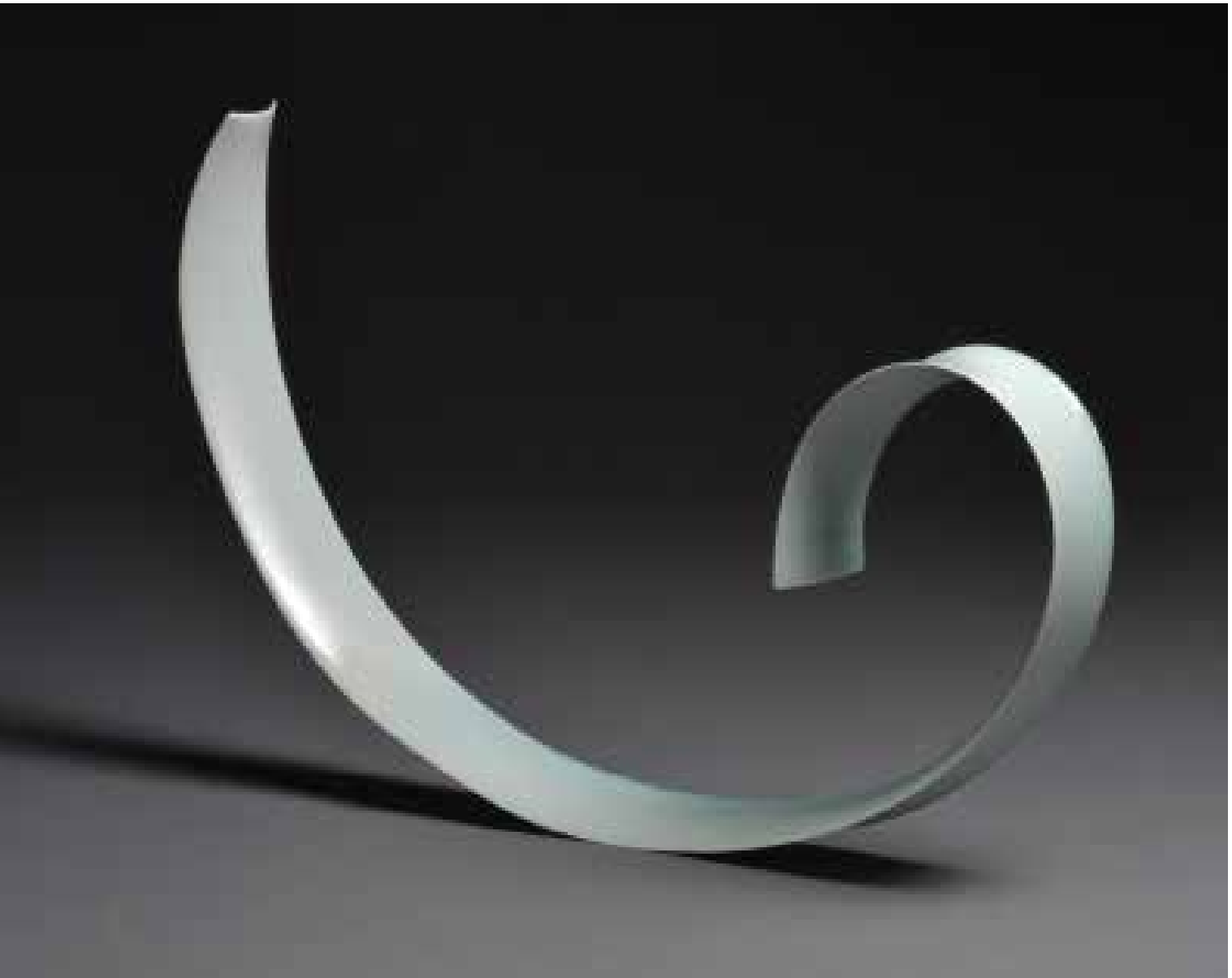


In Studio with Satoshi Kino

Evelyne Schoenmann



Satoshi, normally I start my interview by asking my guests about their ceramic background. What is yours?

While I was 15 years old for selecting the right high school education, I decided to enter the oldest art and craft high school in Kyoto. I chose ceramics as my major because I am more interested in working on three-dimensional than that on 2-D arts. From there, I started my life in ceramic arts. In order to learn not only techniques of craft but also creative

thinking of art, I continued to major in ceramics for my bachelor and master degrees. I was very lucky to work as a ceramic artist right after I graduated from school and build my first studio in Kyoto. Right now, I have my second studio in Taiwan.

Your waves or ribbons have their own aesthetic and sensibility. What pictures have you in mind while working on a ribbon? What inspires you?

I personally enjoy the view of nature

deeply, such as the vanishing line of the horizon, the clear and endless sky or the untouchable atmosphere of fog or cold air. The natural element always calms but excites my heart. However, all the beauty of natural elements is impermanent. I enjoy to see those art works which concentrate on social issues. And I watch news every day and am concerned by politics or philosophical problems like everyone else. However, I sometimes just feel tired of all the arguments and wish to seek the purest beauty that does not need



language to explain. I wish to create beautiful work which everyone can enjoy and be comforted by no matter we are good or bad person. I'd like to be that kind of artist. This series of ribbon-like forms is inspired by the invisible wind. The series title Oroshi in Japanese means the cool wind that blows down from the top of the mountain. The Oroshi series has several extant versions like Oroshi-Typhoon or Oroshi Spiral, which all represent different aspects of wind. I wish the form of the wind being smooth and free.

I read somewhere that you are also inspired by the phases of the moon. That is interesting! Can you explain please?

"Phases of the moon" was one of the titles of my solo exhibition before. It is fascinating to watch the gradual changes of the moon every day like a diary. That solo exhibition was just like a diary of a segment of my life at that time, and that is why I named the solo exhibition Tsuki-yomi (phases of the moon)

Would you agree with my assertion that your Oroshis are sculptural pieces (opposite to functional)?

Yes, I make Oroshi as a sculpture. Oroshi represents the abstract form of wind. It's a display art work. But I think it is free for the viewer or the collector to define what they think when they see the piece.

Do you see yourself as an artist or as a designer?

I define myself as an artist. I had never thought about becoming a designer because I define designer as a role of proposing ideas for those who have needs. I only create for myself. I create what I want to see in real solid form. I am seeking the deep relationship only between the art and myself.

In the first pictures in this article we see you throwing a 40 kg porcelain hump to a large circle. That's an unusual way to start a ribbon. Can you tell us why you chose to throw in opposition to other techniques?

Throwing on the wheel is one of the concepts of my ceramic art. The wheel is a very old and basic ceramic technique and it has naturally developed in many different regions all over



the world. It was originally a tool for making symmetrical functional wares for our daily use. However, I want to challenge the unexplored non-functional object art form from the potter's wheel. Therefore, the ribbon form is created under this working concept. Also, the centrifugal force allows me to create the perfect circle and curve. I take the advantage of this beautiful natural curve as part of my work to present the form of wind.

Please guide us through the pictures shown in this interview. We are especially interested in your technique, the finishing and the firing of the Oroshi. Oh yes, and whether you have distortion problems in the high fire of the porcelain.

The critical process of making Oroshi is throwing the ribbon form on the wheel. I cut and re-form the clay ribbon while it is still soft. I trim and sand the form both before and after the bisque-firing. I glaze the pieces with spray gun and fire them to 1230° Celsius in reduction. I had faced and cleared many critical challenges during the long learning process of developing this series of work. These include but are not limited to deciding the right hardness to form the shape and to design an appropriate support for the weak structure before firing. However, the most difficult is at the final stage of the Seihakuji reduction firing. Seihakuji (blue celadon) has a long history in Asian ceramic society. Many artists and collectors have their own favourite blue. I spent several years testing my glaze recipe and firing process. The sensitive touch of the force of the reduction gas will affect the colour dramatically. This is the challenge that I am still facing right now.

A question you maybe hesitate to answer: your friends advised you not to show the technique of your famous Oroshi-Spiral. Would you mind telling us why your friends suggested to be guarded?

Today, all information and data travel widely at an amazing speed that we hardly control. And people are very smart at learning the key elements and duplicate software, merchandise and even art works for their own advantage. Some people lack respect for





intellectual property rights nowadays. The style of art is free and hard to define with an equation. So a "style of art work" is what we, as artists, rely on. What I am afraid of is not "imitating the impression" but "exactly duplicating." Recently, I learned so many artist friends' works got copied by unknown people from other countries. Unfortunately, the "pirate artists" popularize themselves so well, so the original artists became the duplicators. I understand if the original pieces have very unique skill and high level of technique threshold, none of this need to be a worry. Good work will speak for itself. However, the guarding is a precaution to stop the problem occurring. Actually, I had been sharing my experience and lots of detailed images of my making process of Oroschi-Spirals during my exhibition and have lectured so far at many places. But I also ask my audience not to share them in public or internet.

Your list of exhibitions and award-winning competitions is very long. Congratulations on your success! What are the next steps in your life, in your career?

Thank you very much. I had been trained to join as many exhibitions as possible to build our experience since I was a student. My next goal is to stabilise my studios both in Japan and Taiwan in order to create larger scale of work. I also have several large projects of public arts in my mind. I had been challenging to create not only with ceramic material so the path could be broader. When the time comes, I wish to have a large solo exhibition in an art museum to express my passion for art.

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Evelyne Schoenmann's next interview is with **Juan Orti, Spanien.**

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