

Press Release

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'Roelof Uys: Works Of Function, Works Of Art'

Preview: Friday 6 July 2018, 6-8pm **Exhibition:** 7 July - 7 October 2018

The Leach Pottery is excited to announce 'Roelof Uys: Works Of Function, Works Of Art'. Roelof's first solo show since joining the Leach Pottery 5 years ago, this exhibition presents an exclusive body of work comprising 200 new pots. It features functional domestic wares like mugs, teapots and sake cups, as well as larger decorative jars, chargers, and vases.

Eclectic in influence, 'Works Of Function, Works Of Art', responds to Roelof Uys' early experiences as a potter in South Africa and to his work in today's Leach Studio. Roelof has undertaken a series of studies examining the different aspects of his material practice. For example, one body of work focuses on how tenmoku glaze reacts with the clay beneath. Similarly, Roelof also focuses on amber, celadon, copper, and white glazes. There is also a selection of wood fired pieces.

As Lead Potter, Roelof Uys supervises the training and management of full-time potters, apprentices, interns, volunteers, and oversees the design and production of Leach Standard Ware. He began as the Leach Pottery's Senior Production Potter in May 2013, becoming the Lead Potter in 2017.

Roelof Uys studied Art at East London Technical College, South Africa, and founded his first ceramics studio in Limpopo Province in 1992, where he collaborated with potter Solomon Matatoko. He went on to work in Knysna as a Resident Potter at Bitou Crafts, founded by Clementina van der Walt, before starting his own production pottery in Cape Town, where he also served on the Committee of the Western Cape Potters Association.

The exhibition runs in the Leach Pottery Entrance Gallery.

All works for sale. Prices from £25 to £800.

Roelof Uys said: "In my early days in South Africa, I discovered the pots of Andrew Walford - this was my first contact with the Leach tradition. I then found a group of potters, in Cape Town, inspired by Michael Cardew. This contact with the Leach legacy made me think about what I wanted to make and the skills required. Now my pottery is as much about what to leave out – sometimes just letting the material speak for itself.

"The preparation for this exhibition is exciting and revelational: the Leach Studio's doctrine is based on working towards a standard using gauges, weights and sizes. This requires discipline and once this discipline is achieved, it's possible to exercise freedom. This exhibition is something of a 'holiday' - I don't have to weigh and measure everything, so can work with a looseness. As fun and as challenging as the making is, the final

satisfaction comes when the pots are displayed and taken home – this is when they're truly complete, when they've taken on a new life.”

Libby Buckley, Leach Pottery Director, said: “It's great to see Roelof's thinking and approach to pottery ceaselessly responding to the changing environment and influences at the Leach Pottery. While Roelof takes his influences and methods from past experience and the day-to-day challenge of his job as Lead Potter, he is able to express, from the midst of things, his own voice as an artist-potter. I, for one, eagerly anticipate his first well-earned and deserved solo exhibition at the Leach Pottery.”

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Notes for Editors

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Leach Pottery

Founded in 1920, the Leach Pottery is considered to one the birthplaces of British Studio Pottery. Bernard Leach, one of the great figures of 20th century art, played a crucial pioneering role in creating an identity for artist potters across the world. The Leach Pottery was restored and reopened, in 2008, as a Museum, to celebrate the life, work, influences and legacy of Bernard Leach. The exhibition, gallery and shop spaces regularly showcase work by leading regional, national and international studio potters. The Studio provides training for the next generation of potters who learn by making Leach Standard Ware tableware.

The Leach Pottery is managed by the Bernard Leach (St Ives) Trust Ltd, a registered charity founded in 2005 reg. no 1111263. The primary objectives of the trust are to further the development of studio pottery, provide training in the art, craft and making of pottery and to advance the public education of the life and work of Bernard Leach and his circle.

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